

Church Stretton



A Conservation Area Design Guide



St Laurence's Church, from Cunnery Road

Content by Cllr Hilary Claytonsmith with valuable input, which is gratefully acknowledged, from the following:

Lisa Bedford, Shropshire Council

Heather Bradley, Shropshire Council

Cllr Richard Hickman, Church Stretton Town Council

Phil Holden, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

Charlotte Orchard, Shropshire Council

Rachael Parry, Shropshire Council

Dougald Purce, Shropshire Council

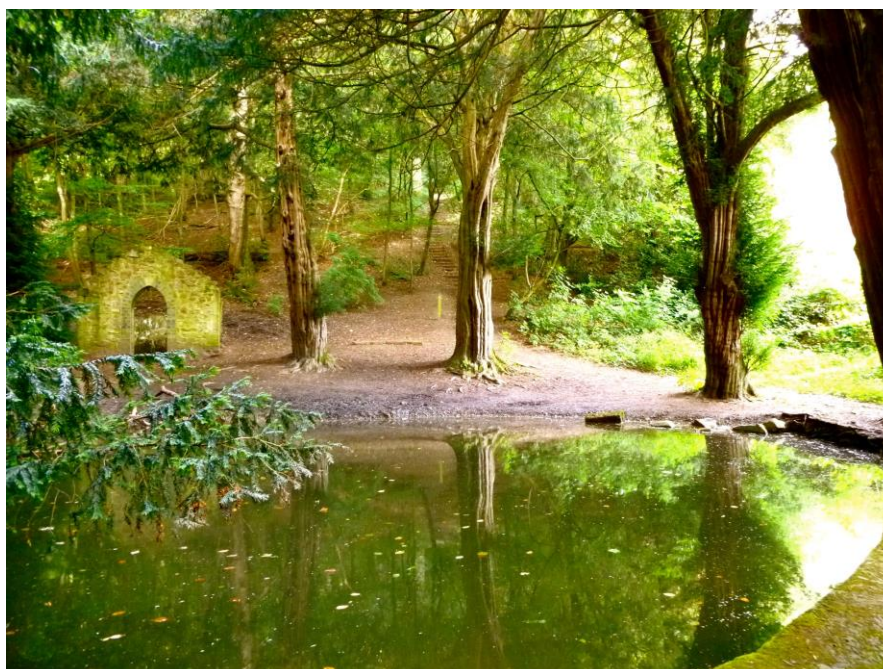
Charles Simmonds, Church Stretton Civic Society

Joy Tetsill, Shropshire Council

Ben Williscroft, Shropshire Council

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Rectory Wood Pool, dating from 1767

1. Purpose and objectives of this Guide.

The Church Stretton Town Council strives to ensure a high standard of design in local development, which preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area within the setting of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

In addition to this it seeks to retain its historic buildings, the setting and tree cover of those buildings, as well as any vistas, street patterns, surface treatment and building lines. It looks to retain any historic architectural features including boundary walls or any other elements, which contribute to the unique character of the area.

As the name suggests this document is a guide and sets out general principles and good practice. It does not seek to be prescriptive. It should be read in conjunction with the Church Stretton Town Design Statement and the Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide + Appendix B.

This Conservation Area Design Guide has been written to help those seeking to build new developments, residents carrying out modifications or alterations to premises, architects, Councillors and planners.

The Guide has the following objectives:

- To ensure that any new development preserves and where possible enhances the character of the town's Conservation Area (five areas, subtle and distinct in character, considered now as one)
- To offer advice on individual aspects of design which, taken together or separately, influence the character of the built environment
- To highlight the importance of the context and setting of buildings and open spaces and to raise the appreciation of drawing on the vernacular to inform future design
- To raise the general design standard to ensure a sustainable community
- To encourage preservation of mature healthy trees as well as other tree cover (as set out in the Town Design Statement), which contribute to the setting of the historic settlement
- To retain and enhance the landscape as well as improving open spaces and vistas
- To encourage the use and re-use of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Although this Guide is designed specifically for the conservation area, the general principles can equally be applied to those areas of Church Stretton not in the conservation area but which are in the AONB.



Looking West over Church Stretton from Clive Avenue

2. Church Stretton in its setting

Church Stretton nestles between the ridge of the Long Mynd to the west and the hills of the Ragleth, Hazler, Helmeth and Caer Caradoc to the east. Church Stretton parish includes Minton, Little Stretton and All Stretton. The population has risen from 924 in 1801 to 4,671 according to the 2011 Census.

The Church Stretton Conservation Area Appraisal succinctly describes the special interest of the extended Conservation Area as follows,

“ It is a settlement with a long history of market and travel related functions with a large planned expansion in the Edwardian period.

The pattern of development broadly follows the patterns set by the ancient roads and the historic layout of residential and business curtilages...

The discrete siting of the original settlement is greatly contrasted with the prominence of the Edwardian developments, which were specifically designed to exploit the dramatic landscape possibilities and topology.

It has an architectural heritage spanning ten centuries with two major periods of activity- c1595-c1640 following a ‘great fire’ and 1865-1914 when the town was developed as a residential resort.

It has buildings [see Shop Front Design Guide and Appendix B] and spaces, which give it unique character.

Its low density of development provides some street spaces of a rural aspect very close to the centre of the town.

It has tree cover of extraordinary quality and extent.”



Grade II listed Bucks Head, late c 16 with 17th, 19th and 20th century extensions

3. What is a Conservation Area?

A Conservation Area is defined under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as an area of *“special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”* The allocation of a conservation area covering the vast majority of the town indicates that Shropshire Council and Church Stretton Town Council consider that the town and its area has a special character and identity that is worthy of being protected for future generations.

Designation introduces extra planning considerations where conservation area status is a material consideration as well as general control over demolition, extensions, alterations, minor development, tree preservation and advertisements. These will be dealt with separately.

The special nature of conservation areas means they are particularly vulnerable to insensitive development. Any development, including new buildings, extensions or other alterations should be carried out in a way that does not harm the character of the area.

In some cases (as in burgage plots in the core of the town) care must be taken to survey and if necessary protect any archaeological remains below ground.

The Church Stretton Town Design Statement says, *“The grain of the medieval street pattern, including burgage plots where applicable, should be retained.”*

Conservation areas are not museums and they must evolve over time, however care must be taken that any new buildings make a positive contribution to the distinctive character of an area.



The first Market Charter was granted by King John in 1214

The historic core of the town around the church and The Square was designated a conservation area in 1986 and was extended in 2005 to encompass a wider area to the north and south west side of this designation.

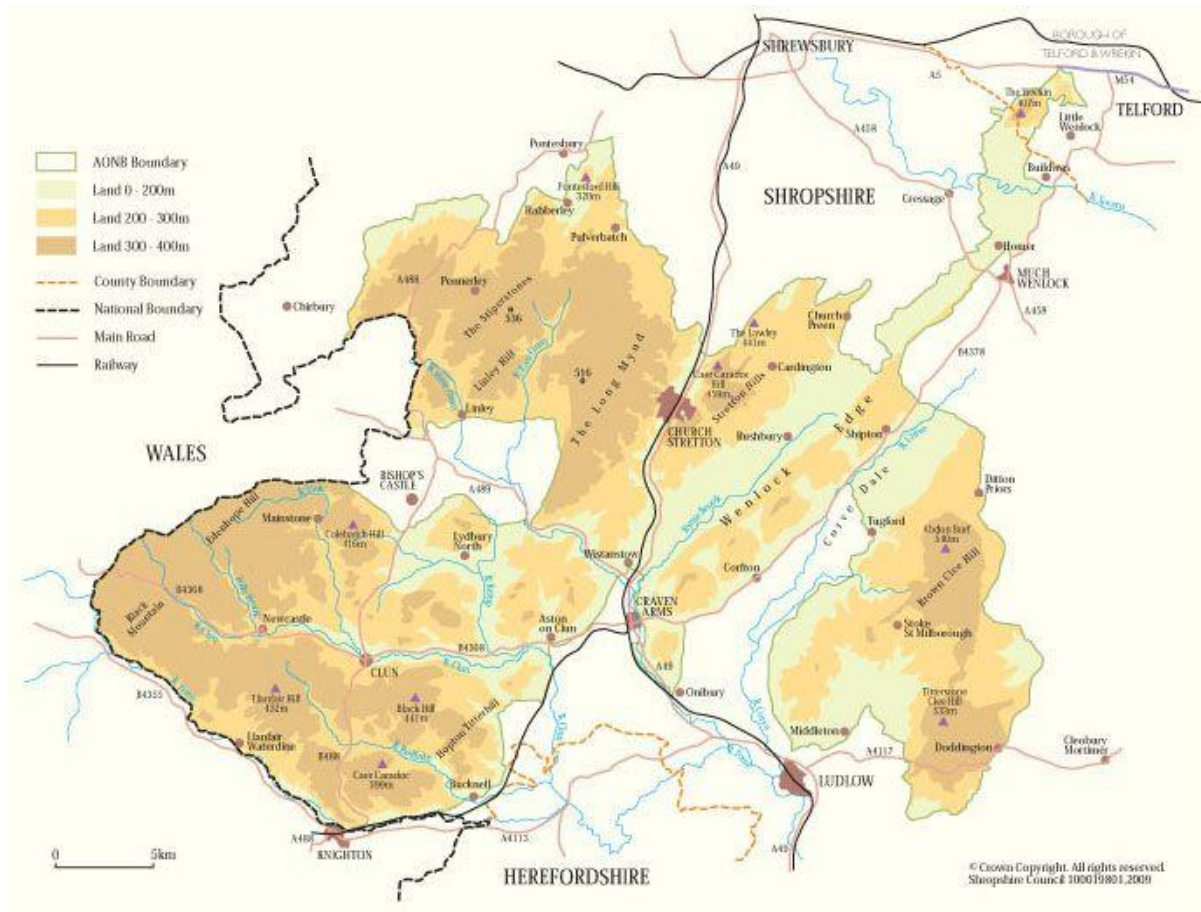
In 2007 the Town Council proposed to the then South Shropshire District Council (SSDC), an extension to the conservation area to include the Carding Mill Valley. This was not acted on at the time leading up to the change over from SSDC, to a Unitary Council in 2009. In 2012 the Town Council started work with the Shropshire Council on four new designations:

- Sandford Avenue & Cunliffe Road
- Sandford Avenue & Hazler Road
- Clive Avenue & Watling Street South
- Carding Mill Valley

Following public consultation, these areas were designated in September 2013.

Each one of these areas will be dealt with in Section 6 of this Guide.

Although this Guide deals only with Church Stretton, it should be noted that much of Little Stretton, Minton village and the majority of All Stretton are also covered by Conservation Area designation.



Map of Shropshire Hills AONB, courtesy of Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

4. The Shropshire Hills AONB

Church Stretton lies entirely in the Shropshire Hills AONB. As such there is an added requirement to observe the principles of retaining the character of the area and limiting the impact that development may have on the AONB.

The Shropshire Hills AONB was designated in 1958 and covers a quarter of Shropshire. It is one of 46 AONBs in the UK which, along with National Parks, make up some of our finest landscapes.

The Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan states, *“Development should not contribute to the loss of irreplaceable habitats or established ancient trees. All development should integrate well into the historic pattern and character of the surrounding built environment and landscape. Building style should reflect local tradition and design should be of a high standard in keeping with the nationally designated landscape.”*



Church Stretton viewed from the Long Mynd

5. Planning policy background

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

In 2012 the Government set out its planning policies for England in the NPPF. A major part of this Governmental guidance is concerned with the requirement for good design. *“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”*

It is more specific in Paragraph 58 and says development should...

“...add to the overall quality of the area...”

“...establish a strong sense of place...”

“...reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials...”

“...be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.

In Paragraph 14 in relation to decision taking on approving development, the NPPF states that, *“where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or indicate development should be restricted”*. In footnote 9 it then lists protected sites included in which are Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt and Local Green Space.

In Paragraph 59 it says *“Local planning authorities should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes.”*

In Paragraphs 63 & 64 it goes on to say, *“...great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Permission should be refused for development of poor design....”*



New development in keeping with the surroundings - Village Pointe on the main A49

The NPPF infers that design should:

*“..be truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas,
reflect the highest standards in architecture
significantly enhance its immediate setting and
be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.”*

Paragraph 64 says *“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area...”*

Reference should also be made to SAMDev Adopted Plan, MD2 on Sustainable Design

The most important paragraphs in the NPPF in relation to preserving the natural beauty of our area in relation to planning are, Paragraphs 115,116 and 118.

Paragraph 115 says,

“Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty...”



Church Stretton houses nestled in tree cover

Paragraph 116 goes on to say,

“Planning permission should be refused for major development in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest....”

Paragraph 118 states, *“...planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland..”*

Reference should be made to the SAMDev Adopted Plan, MD12 The Natural Environment.

Reference should also be made to the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

In relation to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment....

Paragraph 126 states, *“Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan, a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets.....In doing so they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance...”*

Paragraph 128 says *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting”.*

In paragraph 132 it goes on to say *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation....Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.”*

The NPPF Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out how the government’s planning policies are expected to be applied.

5.2 Local Plan Policies.

The Local Plan consists of two documents: the Shropshire Core Strategy (adopted March 2011) and the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (adopted December 2015).

The relevant Core Strategy policies are CS6: Sustainable Design and Development Principles and CS17: Environmental Networks.

Policy CS6 says that:

“To create sustainable places, all development will be designed to a high quality... which respects and enhances local distinctiveness. This will be achieved by ensuring that all development:

- *Protects, restores, conserves and enhances the natural, built and historic environment and is appropriate in scale, density, pattern and design, taking into account the local context and character and those features which contribute to local character, having regard to national and local design guidance, landscape character assessment and ecological strategies where appropriate.”*

The explanatory text to CS6 says that:

“4.82 There are a substantial number of heritage assets in Shropshire, which are of significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. Such assets require careful consideration and management in accordance with national guidance where change is proposed.”

4.83 Trees and woodlands are important landscape, wildlife and cultural assets and there are approximately 900 Tree Preservation Orders covering all sizes of woodlands and many individual trees in Shropshire. In addition, designated or important wildlife sites or species are often found within or around urban areas as well as in the wider countryside. Development should be sensitive to these valued features and make a positive contribution to the overall appearance and environmental quality of the area through the use of appropriate good quality locally sourced materials; the support and encouragement of traditional skills; the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and the protection of important buildings, trees and environmental networks. Particular regard should be paid to Village and Town Design Statements and Conservation Area Appraisals.”



*Helmeth Hill – an ancient woodland to the East of the A49,
covered by a Tree Preservation Order*

“4.86 High quality design will be expected in all new developments to ensure that the development is appropriate to its setting and surroundings and to ensure that local character is reflected. Appropriate landscaping and tree planting will form an integral part of any proposal to ensure that development is better assimilated into its surroundings...”

Policy CS17 says that:

“Development will identify, protect, enhance, expand and connect Shropshire’s environmental assets, to create a multifunctional network of natural and historic resources. This will be achieved by ensuring that all development:

- *Protects and enhances the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire’s natural, built and historic environment, and does not adversely affect the visual, ecological, geological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets, their immediate surroundings or their connecting corridors;*
- *Contributes to local distinctiveness, having regard to the quality of Shropshire’s environment, including landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets, such as the Shropshire Hills AONB, the Meres & Mosses and the World Heritage Sites at Pontcysllte Aqueduct and Canal and Ironbridge Gorge;*
- *Does not have a significant adverse impact on Shropshire’s environmental assets and does not create barriers or sever links between dependant sites;”*

The explanatory text to CS17 says:

“7.7 All new development should take account of the features which generate local distinctiveness, both within Shropshire and its surrounds. Evidence from the Landscape Character Assessment, Historic Landscape Characterisation and Urban Characterisation Assessment should be used to ensure proposals contribute towards retaining and enhancing these assets and thereby making a positive contribution to the environment. For development affecting the Shropshire Hills AONB, particular regard should be paid to the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan.”



Horses adding local character to the Long Mynd, looking towards Church Stretton

The relevant SAMDev policies are MD2: Sustainable Design and MD13: Historic Environment.

Policy MD2 says:

“Further to Policy CS6, for a development proposal to be considered acceptable it is required to:

- 1. Respond positively to local design aspirations, wherever possible both in terms of visual appearance and how a place functions, as set out in Community Led Plans, Town or Village Design Statements, Neighbourhood Plans and Place Plans.*
- 2. Contribute to and respect locally distinctive or valued character and existing amenity value by:*
 - i. Responding appropriately to the form and layout of existing development and the way it functions, including mixture of uses, streetscape, building heights and lines, scale, density, plot sizes and local patterns of movement and;*
 - ii. Reflecting locally characteristic architectural design and details, such as building materials, form, colour and texture of detailing, taking account of their scale and proportion; and*
 - iii. Protecting, conserving and enhancing the historic context and character of heritage assets, their significance and setting, in accordance with MD13;”*

The explanatory text for MD2 says:

“3.7 Delivering well designed places appropriate to the local context is a key part of creating sustainable communities. Shropshire’s localised planning approach recognises that each place has its own characteristics not only visually in the built and natural environment but also in terms of how each place functions, which provides a local sense of identity. Understanding this local context and evaluating the constraints and opportunities that are present is an important part of the design process for any new development. Community led guidance needs to inform the design of development, ensuring that it appropriately maintains and enhances the location’s sense of place and respond positively to local design aspirations, wherever possible.”

“3.8 To respond effectively to local character and distinctiveness, development should not have a detrimental impact on existing amenity value but respond appropriately to the context in which it is set. As such, new development should respect the existing pattern of development, both visually and in relation to the function of spaces, retain and enhance important views and landmarks and respond appropriately to local environmental and historic assets, in accordance with MD12 and MD13. “

Policy MD13 says:

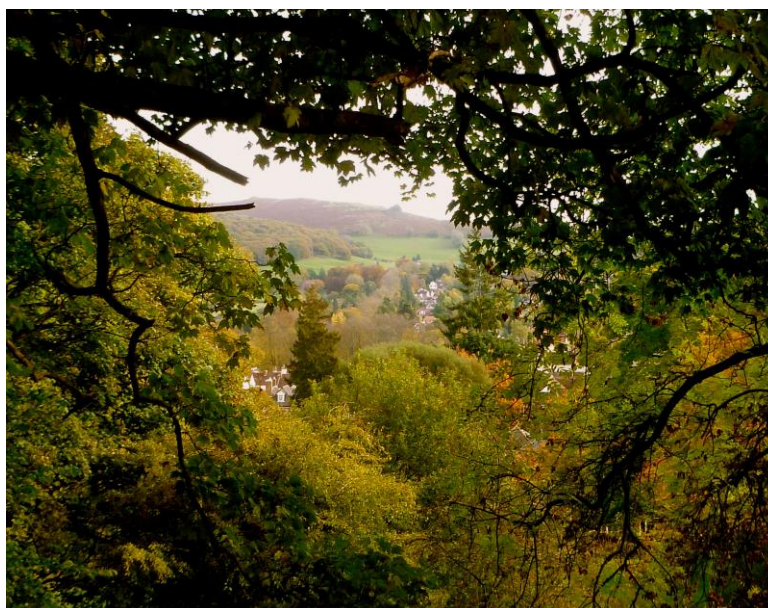
“In accordance with Policies CS6 and CS17 and through applying the guidance in the Historic Environment SPD, Shropshire’s heritage assets will be protected, conserved, sympathetically enhanced and restored by:

1. Ensuring that wherever possible, proposals avoid harm or loss of significance to designated or non-designated heritage assets, including their settings.”

The explanatory text to MD13 says:

“3.132 Heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes that merit consideration as part of the planning process. The term includes all designated and non-designated assets. Designated assets comprise Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.”

“3.133 Non-designated heritage assets include structures, features or deposits with archaeological interest, historic buildings, historic farmsteads, the historic character of the landscape as expressed in the patterns of fields, woods and heathlands and the locally distinctive character of settlements. The latter includes locally derived building materials and the distinctive forms, details and design of buildings. Policy MD2 requires new development to respect, enhance or restore the historic context of buildings. The Shropshire Historic Environment Record sets out Shropshire’s non-designated heritage assets.”



Church Stretton viewed through its characteristic tree cover

6. Church Stretton's Conservation Areas

6.1 General

In 2012 the Church Stretton Town Council worked alongside the Shropshire Council to look at the possible extension of the existing conservation area. It was particularly interested in bringing in the East side of the A49 as proposed in the Town Design Statement Appendix 2.

The consultation period began in January 2013, meetings were held with all interested parties, publicity was given via all available outlets and letters were sent to owners of properties, which would be effected by the extensions. The designation took effect from September 2013.

The 'Church Stretton Conservation Area Appraisal 2013' is available on line and from the Historic Environment Team at Shropshire Council. This document deals with the townscape sequences that make up the Conservation Area in detail.

Management of the Conservation Area

The Town Council would favour a Management Plan being put in place to address:

- A rolling programme of streetscape renewal, including surfaces, signage and street furniture
- A review of highway and other signage, with a view to rationalisation to lessen adverse visual impact and cut down on clutter
- Boundary treatments (walls, fences and hedges) with advice to owners on ways of achieving high quality renewals
- The removal of overhead power lines and telecommunication cables and rationalisation of the use of telecommunications masts
- A full tree survey, with specific proposals for long- term management and updates on Tree Preservation Orders
- A record of any proposed demolition
- Protection of views and vistas
- Outdoor advertising and "A" boards



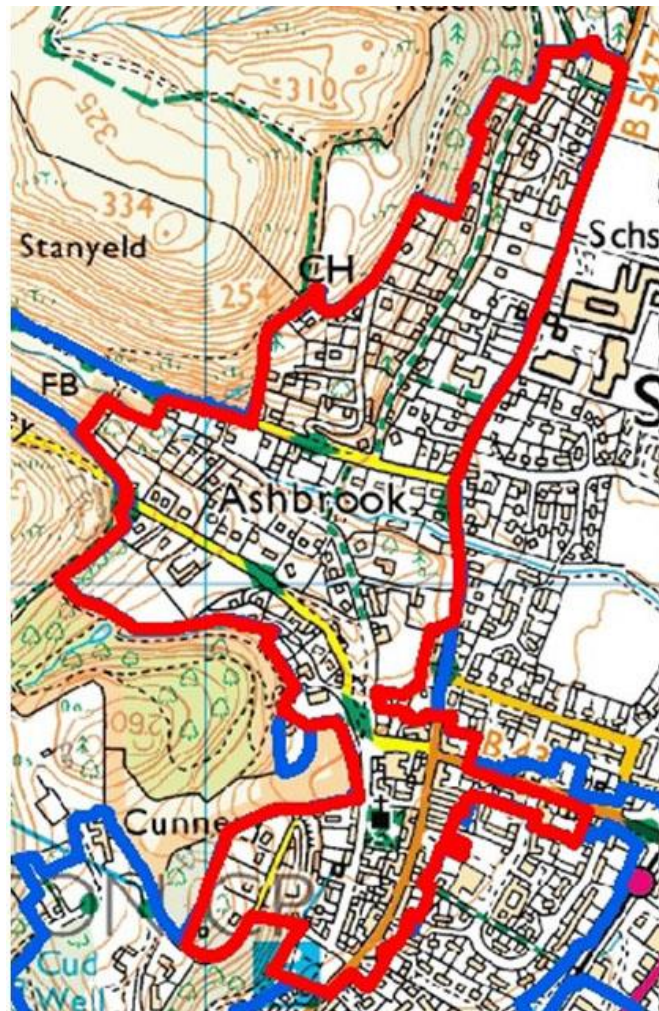
*High Street in Church Stretton looking South, with the Square on the right.
Burgage plots lie off the High Street*

6.2 Town Centre

The original Conservation Area designation in 1986 covered the main historic core of Church Stretton including the following streets: Church Street (part), Church Way, High Street, part of Longhills Road and Sandford Avenue, The Square and the open area adjoining Old Rectory Wood. This part of town contains many historic and listed buildings including the Grade 1 listed church of St Laurence surrounded by its grade 2 listed wall built in 1798 (thanks to each member of the parish contributing to the cost of its erection), the Tudor Cottage, built after the fire in 1593 at the southern end of High Street and the Bucks Head in the centre of High Street, which goes back to the 13th Century. Church Street contains a mixture of cottages dating from the 1800s along with The Priory built in 1832, which could have been constructed on the original site of a building linked to the church.

One of the beauties of this particular townscape sequence is that it contains a rich mix of premises and vistas. Large detached town houses, narrow alleys with closely packed properties, living accommodation above shops, incongruous modern infill (pre planning regulation) and glimpses of the countryside provided by views up Cunnery Road and across Rectory field and woods.

Part of the magnificent Sandford Avenue containing shops at its western end with in the main, well preserved frontages (see Appendix B of the Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide) and the remains of Rev Holland Sandford's tree planting vision for the avenue, were in the original town designation. Small areas of modern in-fill were excluded from the original Conservation Area designation.



Map of town centre Conservation Area

6.3 Sandford Avenue and Cunnery Road

The extension to the Sandford Avenue original designation now takes in Sandford Court because of the enlarged and well-defined space it creates. The Crossways area around the railway station also comes under this sequence. This at the moment mainly comprises light industrial buildings and is not visually cohesive. The conservation area designation was put in place in this case, to ensure that any future redevelopment of this important piece of land would be in character with the area and would improve the visual amenity around the entrance to the railway station and the town.

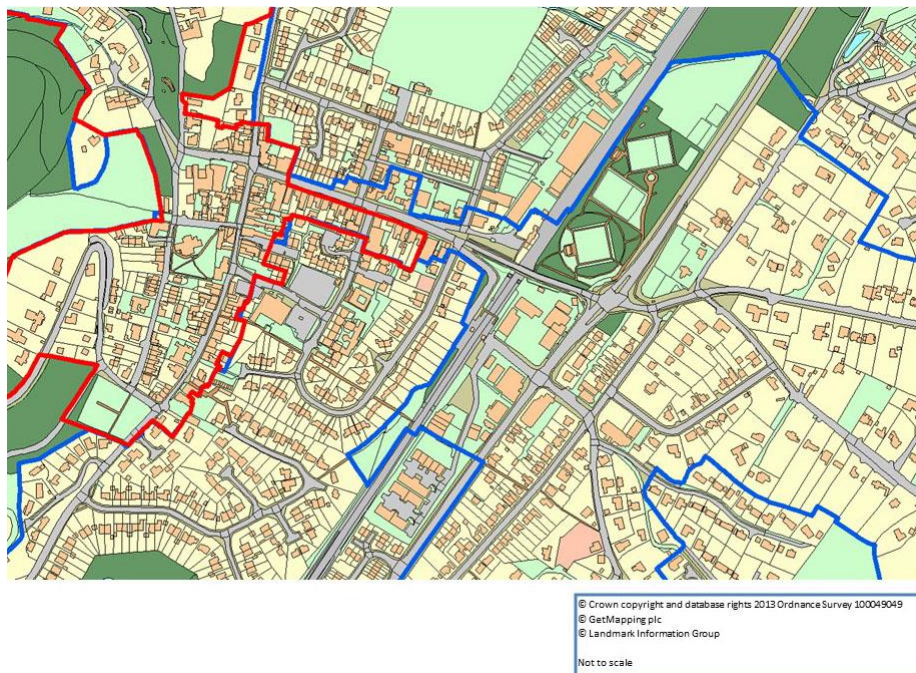
The old Electricity Power Station lies in this area, built in 1904 it provided power for the town until the 1930s when access to the grid was provided.



The original power station in Church Stretton on the A49

The designation now also covers the old railway station and the park area to the North of the road junction to the west of the A49.

The lower section of Cunnery Road formed part of the original conservation area. In the 2013 extension, the upper part of Cunnery Road where it runs out into a track, was included. This area brings in some old hedges and walls and large Victorian/Edwardian houses, Westville, Southcroft, Trefnant and Tiger Hall, set in a magnificent wooded backdrop, which adds to the town's setting; this area is dominated by the Old Rectory Wood and Allen Coppice.



Map of Sandford Avenue and Cunnery Road Conservation Area

6.4 Sandford Avenue and Hazler Road

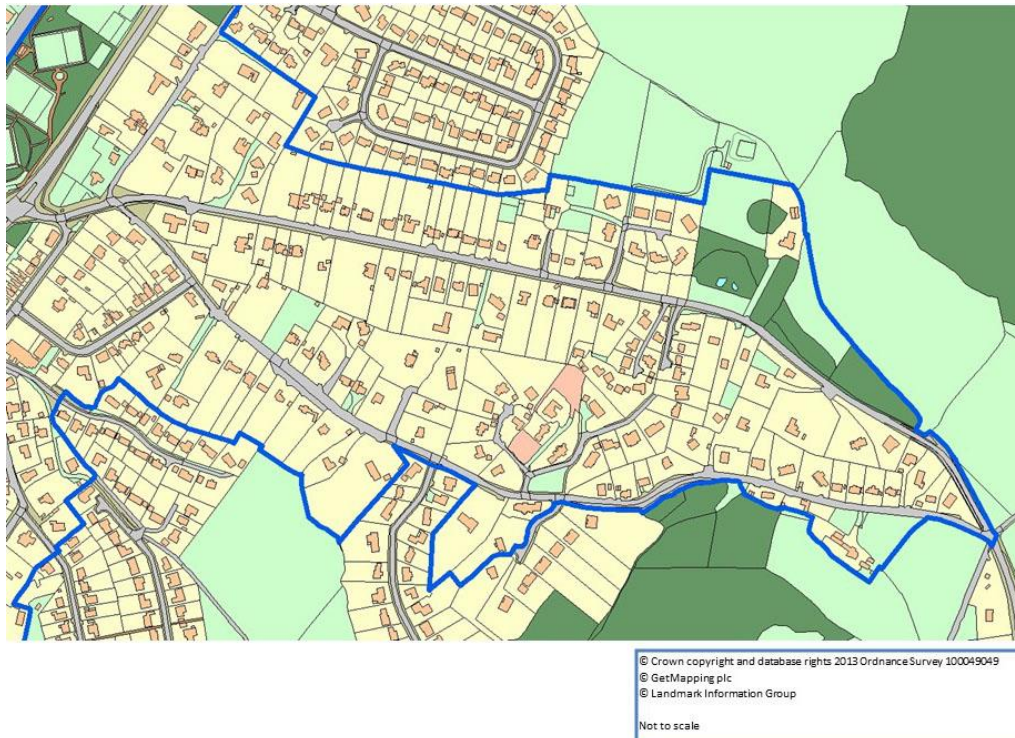
Land either side of the original road from the east into Church Stretton, Hazler Road and its bypass Sandford Avenue, were included in the conservation area in the 2013 extension. The difference between the two roads is marked. Hazler Road is more inconsistent in its character and retains its country lane feel, albeit flanked by large houses of diverse yet imposing style, along with more modern side developments.



One of the many attractive frontages on Hazler Road

Sandford Avenue shows signs of planned development. The Reverend Holland Sandford had a vision of an avenue stretching from The Hotel in the centre of town, past the railway station and eastwards towards Much Wenlock, it was to be lined with lime trees. The tree planting ceremony took place in December 1884. Large plots of land were sold either side of the road for development in the early 1900s and over time the impressive properties still surviving, were built. The Mount was built in 1904, The Leasowes in 1905 and the White House, built for Silvester Horne (father of Kenneth Horne of BBC 'Round the Horne' fame), in 1913. The houses are of a similar size, mostly from the Edwardian period, all set back from the road but not in a linear way, to retain interest. Much tree planting took place in the gardens, which helped to establish the character of the area. Many gardens are now being divided up for infill development which is changing the character of this once pleasant part of the town.

The retention of the avenue of trees creates an impressive 'gateway' into the town much loved by the community and visitors alike.



Map of Sanford Avenue and Hazler Road Conservation Area

6.5 Clive Avenue and Watling Street South

Development on the east side of the A49 was ambitious and organised.

The Church Stretton Building Company Ltd was set up in 1899 to oversee the works at Crossways, Watling Street South, Clive Avenue and Hazler Crescent. Large numbers of building plots were made available, ranging in price from £150 for Watling Street South to £400 for plots on Clive Avenue.

Prior to the division of land for sale, the land around Clive Avenue had many tracks through the woods, one being the medieval Coffin Trail from Ragdon to St Laurence's Church.

The woods were exploited for charcoal and some of the remains of the pits and platforms can still be traced on the hillside.

Clive Avenue was a developers dream with grandiose plans, which never fully came to fruition. The road curved up from Watling Street South and descended to the A49 again further south around Laundry Bank. Views from the upper sections of the road are some of the finest in Church Stretton (see page 6).



"Overdale" house and garden in the 1950s

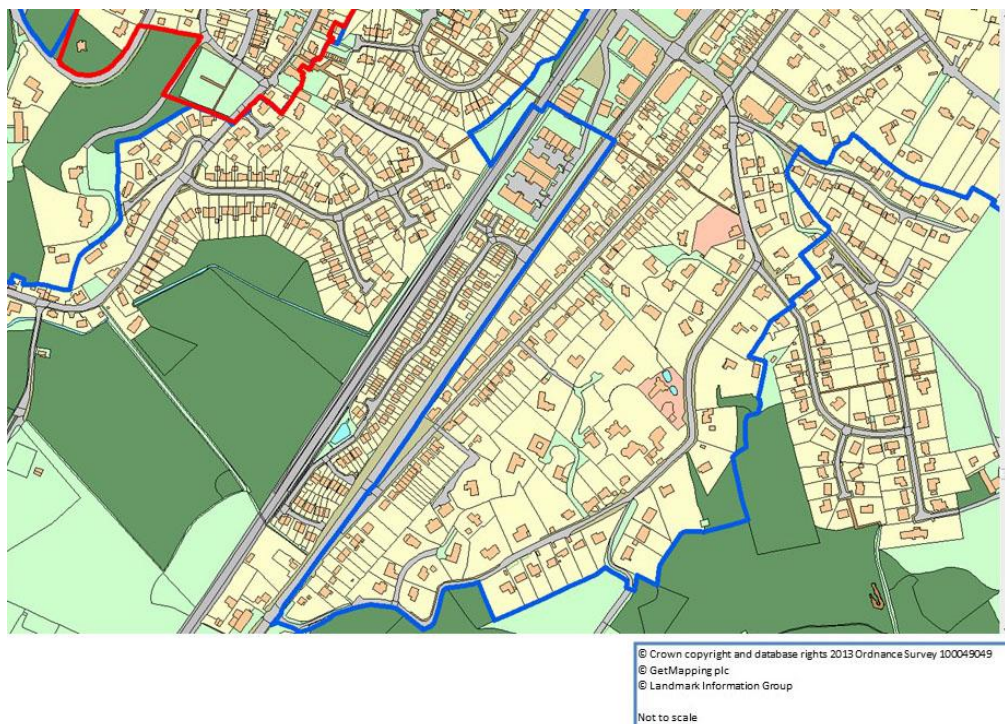
The impressive Edwardian development produced some notable houses on the road, including Overdale, Hill Cottage, Clivedon and Holmwood all set in spacious grounds. Over the last 20 years, the gardens surrounding these dwellings have seen intensive infilling, which has dramatically changed the character of the road from semi-rural to suburban, totally altering the feel of the area. Clive Avenue is at present an un-adopted road, which winds majestically up the hillside with wide grass verges and magnificent mature trees along the roadside and in private gardens.



Clive Avenue, an 'unadopted' road with wide verges and imposing houses

The road has its own Clive Avenue Residents Association (CARA), which seeks to work with residents, the Town Council and Shropshire Council Planning Department to conserve and enhance the remaining historic features of the road. Its priorities are (in line with this Guide) to protect grass verges, retain good tree cover, standardise street furniture and ensure that any future building respects the vernacular of the area.

Watling Street South was once part of the Roman Road from Wroxeter to Caerleon but over the years became more of a country lane and still had no tarmac surface as late as 1906. The south end of Watling Street South is ill defined but the eye soon rests on the terrace of 'Railway Houses,' which leads the eye into the striking linearity of the road. The houses vary a lot in period, with a concentration of older ones in the central section. There is a good mix of styles and sizes, in spite of this the unity and alignment is not compromised. The junction at Crossways is dominated by The Sandford and the Methodist Church. Continuing North the road becomes less linear and the Edwardian character dominates.



Map of Clive Avenue and Watling Street South Conservation Area

6.6 Carding Mill Valley

This sequence of the Carding Mill Valley Conservation Area stretches from the reservoir at the top of the valley, down the sweeping road to the junction with Shrewsbury Road. The name of the valley comes from one of the processes involved in the production of yarn. The original function of the mill was to card wool, this was done by children, using carders with hooks, to tease out the wool, making it easier to spin; the wool was then spun by local women in their own homes.



Carding Mill Valley, looking West to the Long Mynd and East to Shrewsbury Road

The largest building in the valley is the former mill itself with other buildings opposite forming a constricted space, which is in stark contrast to the open areas to the west and east. The other houses in the vicinity exhibit the random distribution of workplaces and cottages, which over time have been altered, extended or rebuilt.

Moving eastward towards Shrewsbury Road there is a wide expanse of open space, creating a pastoral feel, before the houses take on an Edwardian splendour as one crosses over the cattle grid into the town proper.



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 Not to scale

Map of Carding Mill Valley Conservation Area

7. Additional Planning Considerations

When dealing with planning applications in a conservation area the Shropshire Council is required to 'pay special attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. This means that there is a higher standard of design required in a conservation area than elsewhere. Consideration should be given to the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings Act 1990 as amended which has relevant guidance here.

It is an offence to demolish a building or structure in a conservation area without the consent of the Shropshire Council. There is a presumption in favour of retaining buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character of an area.

It is also an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy a tree in a conservation area without having given six weeks' notice to the Shropshire Council.

The council tries to ensure that satellite antennas in a conservation area are carefully sited so as not to detract from the appearance of the area.

The Shropshire Council promotes the retention of traditional shop fronts as illustrated in the Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide.

Permitted development and the right to display advertisements are more limited in a conservation area than elsewhere.

The Shropshire Council promotes the retention of traditional street furniture and surfaces and will seek suitable replacement of non -conforming street furniture and surfaces.

8. New Development and Design Considerations

All new development should seek to preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. Proposals should be developed taking into consideration the context of the conservation area and the buildings already in it.

The best new buildings in historic towns result from a dialogue between the architect, the planning authority and the local community.



An example of modern Church Stretton building in keeping with its surroundings

Successful architecture can work either in close harmony with the local vernacular or by adapting to it or by sympathetically contrasting with it.

A successful development will:

- Relate to the surrounding land and the historic backdrop
- Sit comfortably in the existing environs
- Respect existing important views
- Respect the scale of surrounding properties
- Reflect the highest quality of building methods and materials in neighbouring properties
- Consider and reflect local character and distinctiveness appropriate to the area

8.1 Local vernacular

In Church Stretton there is a mix of architecture from Tudor black and white buildings through Victorian and Victorian Gothic, Edwardian and into the modern era. Vernacular can imply architectural styles, key design elements, construction materials or local building traditions.

New development can pick up on any of these things. Where modern architecture sits in a historic setting, key elements of the surrounding buildings could be 'lifted' and echoed within the modern form. This allows the building to 'key in' to the surrounding street scene. New development should respond positively to the local surroundings. This means taking note of street patterns, the scale of neighbouring buildings, proportions and fenestration patterns.

The Church Stretton Town Design Statement says, *"A variety of building styles sympathetic with and complementary to the older buildings of the town should be used, avoiding over fussy combination of too many details. Inappropriate use of pastiche and the use of porticos and styles foreign to the town should be avoided."*

8.2 Settlement Pattern

New development should respect the existing settlement pattern and urban grain. The way buildings are sited is referred to as the settlement pattern or urban grain, in other words it is the pattern of arrangement and the size of the buildings within their plots and the degree of density or spacing used.

In some areas of Church Stretton the grain is obvious, for example the layout of the burgage plots in the original conservation area in the centre of the town. The planned layout of Clive Avenue is one example, where Edwardian houses were designed to complement their surroundings, Overdale being the prime example.

8.3 Building Line

It is usual for new development to respect the building line already set for frontages as these define the road or open space. In built up estates this is quite obvious but in rural areas where boundaries tend to be more organic it is more difficult and in this case the wider area should be taken into account.

The filling of gaps between properties can alter the street scene if the infill property is built out of step or out of context with existing houses.

Side extensions, if poorly designed, can harm the appearance of the street scene by excessively infilling the rhythm of spaces between buildings to create a “terracing” effect, thus removing continuity.

8.4 Garden Infill

In many areas of Church Stretton there is evidence of planning of roads and layout of gardens. Much of this stems from the Victorian and Edwardian period. Houses tended to be built for views and so were constructed on large elevated plots on the hillsides. These gardens are now being sub divided, with garden infill seen as a way of managing large estates.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in paragraph 53 says, *“Local authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.”*

Church Stretton Town Council supports the NPPF in relation to inappropriate infill, especially in areas located on the hillsides where water run-off due to ‘urban creep’ threatens properties and drainage systems in the valley bottom. In the future, with the anticipated changes in the climate, the whole issue of dealing with water run-off from hard surfaces will have to be addressed.

Development in the conservation area should always respect the local context in terms of scale, mass, footprint and layout. The existing urban grain in relation to road layout, plot size, rhythm of building, materials used and local detailing, needs to be understood and appreciated. This is particularly important in the case of garden infill.

Spaces between buildings should be designed so as to ensure that privacy is respected and that there is no overshadowing or over-dominance and that an outlook is ensured. Planting and landscaping, including the planting of standard or half standard trees should be considered to soften any infill development where applicable.

The Church Stretton Town Design Statement says. *“Any building permitted by sub-division of the larger plots must be at a density which will ensure that the natural landscape continues to dominate the area.”*



In-fill development in the grounds of “Overdale, which can be seen rear left

8.5 Scale, proportion, height and massing

New development should respect the scale, proportion, height and massing of surrounding buildings.

The scale, proportion, height and massing of any proposed new development in a conservation area should be carefully weighed against the surrounding buildings and also against the wider area. This is to ensure that the character and overall appearance of the conservation area is not detrimentally affected in any way.

Particular attention should be paid to the size and scale of any new build. New buildings should fit within the context and setting and should not dominate those buildings around them. To make a positive contribution to the overall setting, buildings should be of a similar scale to those in the immediate surroundings.

When designing a house to fit into a conservation area, notice should be taken of the proportions of surrounding properties and every effort made to respect and tie in with them.

In deciding on the appropriate height of a proposed new building, it is important to assess the impact the building will have on surrounding properties. In addition to this, the height of the new building may have a visual impact over a more extensive area. The potential impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole should be borne in mind.

In some modern buildings with unconventional modular construction, the combined effect of the height, bulk and outline can result in inappropriate massing which is not in keeping with the topography or character of the conservation area.

The Church Stretton Town Design Statement says, *“Any building permitted must be at a density appropriate to the area and allow adequate space for landscaping.”*

8.6 Rooftops and skyline

New development should preserve and enhance the characteristics of the skyline of the conservation area. In those areas where houses were constructed in the Victorian or Edwardian periods the attention to detail at roof level can provide enormous architectural interest and provide design details which could be picked up in any new build. A large number of these houses are on the hillsides and can be seen from a distance, providing interesting views of rooftop decoration and chimney pot design.

The shape, height and variety of chimney stacks and pots contribute greatly to the local character of an area and should be retained and repaired.

The roof is one of the most visually important features of a property. Roofs are especially important in Church Stretton, given its distinctive topography, that makes certain roofscapes even more prominent. Where possible the original roof material should be retained or replaced with the same type of material.

The Church Stretton Town Design Statement says, *“Contrasting grey or dark roof tiles, natural slate or mellow clay roof tiles should be used. Bright red roofs (or other inappropriate colour eg. green) and concrete roof tiles should generally be avoided. Wall and roof colours should be different to provide contrast”.*



Examples of decorative chimney stacks and pots found throughout Church Stretton

8.7 Building materials

New development should use high quality and natural building materials, which respect local architectural styles and detailing. The building materials chosen should reflect and reinforce the character of the conservation area.

Church Stretton has a mix of building materials depending on which section of the conservation area is being considered. The centre of town for example has the most variation, ranging from half timbering through whitewashed rendering to red brick and stone. Whatever the materials, it is important that they should be of good quality and appropriate to the surroundings. Artificial stone and slates or plastic such as uPVC will not usually be acceptable in a conservation area. Local building materials are to be encouraged.

8.8 Views and open spaces

Open spaces which form an important part of the character of the area, should ideally remain undeveloped. Two such areas are the green 'corridors' between Church Stretton and All Stretton and Church Stretton and Little Stretton.



All Stretton viewed from Caer Caradoc

Areas, which form the setting of heritage assets or 'special places,' should also ideally not be developed.

Open spaces can be as important to an area as its buildings. The character of an area can be influenced by spaces between buildings be these formal, such as squares or informal such as parks or surrounding open countryside.

Any proposal for new development, which is abutting a conservation area, should be carefully considered in respect of its effect on the views into or out of the area. Siting of new buildings should be considered in terms of how they will impact on the natural surrounding features and tree cover.

Any vista, which contributes to the appreciation of a conservation area, should be preserved.

8.9 Landscaping

Any new development should be sympathetic to the conservation area and should factor in appropriate landscaping in keeping with the surroundings. Landscaping is one way to ensure that the impact of a new build is softened. Hard and soft landscaping designs should be an integral part of any new scheme.

It is important that the most appropriate trees and shrubs are selected for any new development in or near a conservation area. Native and long established species should be selected.

Large-scale developments in or abutting the conservation area and affecting a designated landscape area such as the AONB, may require a comprehensive Land Management Plan or an Environmental Appraisal.

8.10 Affordable Housing

Affordable housing does not automatically mean poor or diluted design. Innovative design solutions can be in keeping in or abutting a conservation area but the design quality needs to be high and carefully considered. Well-designed contemporary affordable housing can work.

Working to a set price can be a constraint but where local materials are expensive alternatives could be sought however these should respect the form, colours and scale of surrounding buildings. The use of artificial stone and slate along with external cladding should be avoided.

It is important that the affordable houses forming part of a development should be well integrated and in sympathy with any surrounding market housing. Ideally Housing Associations should work with the Town Council and community on design concepts.



Phase I of the Ashbrook development (L) and Phase II developed with community involvement

8.11 Employment buildings

Where buildings designed for employment use are proposed in or near a conservation area high quality design solutions will be sought, which function well and add to the overall quality of the area not just in the short term, but, over the lifetime of the development. Employment buildings should be designed so as to improve the character and quality of the area rather than negatively impacting on it.

8.12 Telecommunications

Most proposals for telecommunications equipment will need planning permission in a conservation area. This includes such things as radio and phone masts and towers, antennas, poles and overhead wires, equipment housing and cabinets, in other words anything that can have a detrimental impact on existing buildings, views, vistas, street scene, surrounding landscape and the skyline.

Planning authorities should aim to keep the number of radio and telecommunications masts to a minimum and existing masts and buildings should be used for additional requirements (mast sharing). Where new sites are needed, especially on nearby skylines, the masts and equipment should be 'sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate' (NPPF).

8.13 Alternative energy

Solar panels

Solar panels could be considered as 'permitted development' and do not require planning permission except if they are to be placed on a listed building or a property in a conservation area when restrictions may apply. Solar panels can have a negative effect on the overall amenity of an area.

Most solar panels are obtrusive when installed on roofs facing a roadway but especially so in a conservation area within the AONB, however some are less obtrusive than others. Wafer thin solar panels are barely noticeable as long as the colour of the panels is the same as the roof tiles. Solar tiles are also available and if the same colour as the rest of the house tiles, are more suitable in a conservation area.

Solar panels should ideally not be on roofs facing the road or neighbours. Ideally they should match the colour of the tiles as closely as possible and should not stand proud of the roof.

Another option is to have the panels ground mounted as long as they are not visible from the roadway or from the surrounding hills. Planning permission for these installations is complex and subject to change so advice should be sought from the Shropshire Council's Planning Department. The Planning Portal states, "If your property is in a conservation area...panels must not be fitted to a wall which fronts a highway".

Applications and section 211 notices for the lopping or removal of significant trees in order to accommodate solar panels will be resisted unless a genuinely sustainable argument is presented in support of such actions.

In all cases the installation should be located so as not to appear prominent or to detract from the character of the building or area as a whole. In the Strettons, consideration should also be given to the effect the solar panels have on the visual amenity, as they will be seen from the surrounding hills.

In the case of terraced properties, the insertion of solar panels on one of the houses could have a detrimental visual effect on the whole row.

Check on the latest position with Shropshire Council before considering installation.

See www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/solarpanels



Local examples of unsightly solar panels facing the road in a Conservation Area

Wind Turbines

It is not considered appropriate to have building mounted or stand-alone wind turbines in a conservation area.

Permitted Development Rights do not apply to wind turbines in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Turbines should not be placed on a wall or roof facing a highway.

Planning conditions are complicated and should be checked with Shropshire Council.

See www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/windturbines

8.14 Outdoor Advertising

Special care should be taken to ensure that outdoor advertising preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Common forms of advertising include, fascia signs on town centre shops, projecting signs from shop frontages, garage and manufacturing signs, hoardings, "A" boards, posters and banners.

Church Stretton has many beautiful buildings, the appearance of which can be spoiled by poorly designed or insensitively placed signs using inappropriate materials, colour or illumination which is alien to the building's design or fabric.

Placing inappropriate signs in open spaces such as parks and at the entrance to the town can give a negative impression of place.

All advertising material should be designed to fit in with the street scene and blend with the surroundings. The Town Council has a policy on "A" boards which should be consulted in relation to this section. In general, "A" boards should be positioned as close to the shop wall as possible to avoid cluttering the pavement and creating a safety hazard.

Large poster hoardings or banners are not usually appropriate in a conservation area. Planning permission may be needed.

See www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/advertising



Large Banner in the setting of a Grade II listed building detracting from the visual amenity

8.15 'Secure by Design'

This refers to an initiative by the police to encourage designing out crime in new builds. Part of the initiative is to look at boundary treatment, which includes a selection of fencing. Care should always be taken when deciding the best way to enclose a new premise. For example, six-foot close board wooden fencing may be good to deter intruders in an urban area but may not be appropriate in an area where boundary walls are all stone or brick in a rural setting where crime is low.

New development should incorporate measures to reduce crime while preserving the character and appearance of the area. This can be done in the following ways:

- By using high quality architecture and landscaping
- Ensuring natural surveillance
- Sensible building layout
- Creating a distinction between public and private space.

Producing new builds using high quality materials which respect the local vernacular can promote a greater sense of ownership and identity and foster a feeling of pride in the area.

The fronts of houses ideally should overlook the fronts of others. Houses are safer when neighbours can see the properties around them thus providing natural discrete surveillance.

Good design and building layout on new estates plays a crucial role in helping to prevent crime. Under-used links/alleys and poorly lit roads and access to backs of properties, create opportunities for crime.

Making a clear distinction between public and private space helps people understand what is expected of them in the different areas.

8.16 Heritage Assets

Within the Church Stretton Conservation Area and in the surrounding landscape are a number of heritage assets. Heritage assets comprise buildings, monuments, sites, places and areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance and making a positive contribution to the local character of an area and its sense of place, thereby meriting consideration in planning decisions.

Heritage assets can take the form of designated heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments (e.g. Caer Caradoc Hillfort, Bodbury Ring Enclosure, Nover's Hill Enclosure), listed buildings (see Appendix C) and Conservation Areas. The local planning authority may also identify non-designated heritage assets, including those with archaeological interest, which are not formally designated.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) and other information (e.g. information provided by applicants and/ or objectors, other historic documentary sources, Shropshire Council's expert advisors professional judgement) is used to define non-designated heritage assets, including those with archaeological interest.



View from the Heritage Asset of Caer Caradoc looking across its setting to Church Stretton

There are a number of buildings, structures and historic features within Church Stretton which, while not statutorily protected, may be considered non-designated heritage assets of local architectural and historic interest, that make a substantial contribution to the significance, quality or local distinctiveness of the area. Buildings that could be considered iconic or landmark such as HSBC Bank, TSB building, Barclays Bank, Silvester Horne Institute and The Hotel could be considered non-designated heritage assets. These buildings tend to be more “polite” in character and appearance and also contribute to the general vernacular character and appearance of Church Stretton.

Special care should be taken with new builds, which are in the immediate vicinity of any of the designated and non-designated heritage assets in the conservation area, so that scale, materials, massing and landscaping are in keeping with the surrounding properties.



Two of the many iconic buildings in the centre of Church Stretton

Non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest, that hold or potentially hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point, comprise the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. Where there is a reasonable expectation of such interest, the heritage asset is deemed to hold archaeological potential. Within Church Stretton conservation area, the historic core of the settlement in particular is considered to hold archaeological interest and has been defined by the Church Stretton Archaeological Referral Area. Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Team is automatically consulted on any applications within this area, as well as those within the wider conservation area.



Lion Court possible c11-12 remains



Remains of summer house in Rectory Wood

As directed by Paragraph 128 of the NPPF, an applicant will be required to describe the significance of any heritage assets that will be affected by a development proposal, including any contribution made by their setting, and provide an assessment of any impacts on that significance, both positive and negative, that the proposals may have. As indicated in SAMDev Policy MD13: Historic Environment, this information should be submitted in the form of a Heritage Assessment, which may include where necessary, a field evaluation. When assessing the implications of development proposals on the setting of heritage assets, Heritage Assessments should follow the framework established in Historic England's guidance (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets).

9. Public Realm

9.1 Treatment of roads and pavements

These are two of the aspects, which tend to get neglected in conservation areas. It is often difficult to see whether there has been any thought put into trying to make sure road surfaces and pavements complement the surroundings or architecture as regards materials used, colour or texture chosen.

Surface treatments should reflect the rural 'feel' of Church Stretton. What is appropriate on an urban road is not necessarily best for a rural market town. Road markings should be kept to a minimum and preferably only used on main roads. Back roads should have minimal road markings. Visually obtrusive coloured surfaces should be avoided



Intrusive road marking more suitable to an urban setting

Pathways should complement their surroundings in design, materials, colour, texture and detailing. Where historic paving remains, this should be preserved and maintained as it contributes to local distinctiveness.

All pavements should be 'user friendly' with ample room for people to pass with buggies and mobility aids. They should be uncluttered by street furniture and "A" boards.

9.2 Car Parks

Car Parking is important in a tourist town like Church Stretton. Unfortunately, these areas are overlooked when it comes to them complementing and assimilating into the historic context of the town. Many car park areas are in locations, which contain the town's most historic buildings (houses in The Square, The Bucks Head, Entertaining Elephants). The large expanses of tarmac in various stages of disrepair do not enhance these assets of the town. Care should be taken that the car park surfaces do not visually dominate the street scene and that the contrast between the surfaces and the building materials used in the surrounding area is kept to a minimum. Car parks are usually surrounded by walls or fences or as in Church Stretton by waste disposal units. All these things constitute hard surfaces and detract from the historic beauty of the town. Thought should be given to introducing soft landscaping on the periphery to break up the urban solidity, as well as the use of less obtrusive waste disposal methods.



Overground collection bins and (right) underground storage units more in keeping with a Conservation Area

9.3 Street Furniture & Road Signs

Over time, street furniture can accumulate until it becomes 'clutter' which detracts from the street scene. Street audits should be carried out at regular intervals to identify superfluous items, which should then be removed.

Any new furniture and signs should be kept to a minimum and be in keeping with existing street furniture and surrounding architecture.

To create a sense of place, Church Stretton Town Council will seek to promote, conformity of design, colour and quality of finish for all street furniture and signage. Every effort will be made to ensure that there is a uniformity of design and colour for bollards, posts, boxes, bins, benches and railings and that the town colours of British Racing Green and Gold are used within the conservation area.

All historic road signs and marker posts should be retained, maintained and where necessary, restored.

Road signs should not be duplicated and should be of appropriate size to the environment. Signs should be regularly surveyed to see if they can be rationalised to reduce any adverse impact and to see if they are where they are required.

The streetscape can be improved by removing unnecessary and damaged signs. Signs should be regularly cleaned to improve the look of the street scene.



Duplicated signs



Street clutter

9.4 Street trees & public area planting

Trees and Church Stretton are inseparable. Trees are so important to the people of Church Stretton that they warrant an Appendix of their own in the Church Stretton Town Design Statement. Trees related to planning will be dealt with in Appendix A.

Trees enhance, improve and soften an area.

All trees lining the roads and avenues in the conservation area make a positive contribution to the character of the town and should not be removed unless dying or dangerous.

New planting in public areas should reflect the surrounding setting. The type and species should be appropriate to the size and type of open public area, whether it is a structured formal setting or more rural in form.

When raised planters or containers are used they should be sensitively designed of appropriate materials and placed in areas, which are safe.

Where new housing estates are built in or abutting the conservation area, thought should be given to well-designed landscaping schemes that seek to appropriately incorporate existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, with new planting either lining roads or grouped to form a focal point of interest. This serves to soften hard edges and to link into the existing landscape.

9.5 Lighting

Every opportunity should be taken to reduce the visual impact of lighting columns on the street scene in the conservation area. Suitable column heights should be selected to ensure they are in keeping with the local area.

The historical period the area belongs to should also be taken into consideration, for example if different light and column styles were used at different times in history.

The choice of lights and columns should therefore take account of the character of the conservation area. Careful consideration should be taken when selecting suitable locations for lighting equipment so that it is not in a position to spoil the street scene.

Columns should not be positioned where they block important views or historic buildings. Existing historic lamp columns and lamp holders should be preserved and reused in their existing locations wherever possible.

Softer light frequencies may be used in preference to orange low pressure sodium lighting in conservation areas, including any columns and brackets that should be painted black.

The implications and impacts of siting new street lighting in close proximity to existing amenity trees needs to be given due consideration in order to avoid damage to the trees and calls for ongoing management of the trees.



Examples of decorative lamps in the Strettons

10. Specific Design Considerations

10.1 Roofs

Most of the older buildings in Church Stretton have plain roof tiles, which show the influence of the arts and crafts movement and feature strongly in the Edwardian houses in the suburbs.

In the conservation area, coloured, shiny, artificial and highly textured roof tiles are not considered appropriate. When viewed from the surrounding hillsides the roof-tops have an overall cohesion, which is pleasing to the eye. The introduction of red, blue or other strong colours of tiles, as well as a coloured mix forming patterns, would be incongruous.

When replacing roof tiles it is important to reuse any existing tiles and to match any new ones as closely as possible to the originals. Sourcing locally (new or reclaimed) is always a preference.

Care should be taken if any change is to be made to the shape or pitch of the roof, as this may have a detrimental effect on the character and proportion of the building and the wider area. Roof levels should be varied to provide interest. Roof tiles should provide contrast with the walls.

Any period features or decoration on the roofs should be retained.

The shape, size, pitch and colour of a roof can have a significant impact on the overall design of the building.

In the main, pitched roofs are preferred to flat ones but in all cases it will be necessary to demonstrate that the design respects the context of the conservation area.

A mixture of gable-end, semi-hipped and hipped roof styles should be avoided on the same building.



Roof-line detailing adding interest to the street scene

10.2 Dormer Windows

New dormer windows in period dwellings will not usually be acceptable unless they are in keeping with the age and style of the building. When inserting dormer windows in a period house, which already has dormers, they should mirror those already in place.

The insertion of dormer windows into a historic building can change the character of a building, in particular wide, flat-roofed dormers, which can detrimentally affect the character and appearance of an area.

In a conservation area, dormer windows on all roof slopes require planning permission. Dormers on rear roof slopes may be acceptable as the impact on the street is limited. On front roof slopes, they may be only acceptable where dormer windows are an original feature of the house or in streets where there are a large number of front dormers, which have materially altered the visual appearance of the road.

In all cases, dormer windows should reflect the architectural character of the existing building and its neighbours in their form, detailing and materials. Dormers should be well spaced and positioned within the existing roof slope, set in from the party wall on each side and down from the ridge. Generally, the width of a single dormer should not exceed half the width of the roof.

10.3 Roof-lights

Roof-lights should always be designed and positioned to respect the character of the building and the appearance of the conservation area.

If new roof-lights are being considered they should be sited on roof slopes, which do not overlook the road or other public areas so that the main elevation of the house retains its original appearance. The use of 'conservation,' or low profile roof-lights is preferred.

Roof-lights are usually allowed under Permitted Development Rights.

10.4 Chimneys

Church Stretton has an extensive array of decorative chimney pots and stacks. These are mainly to be found on the Victorian and Edwardian houses in the conservation area.

Chimneys are an important townscape element as they make a vital contribution to the skyline. Care should be taken to preserve them as removing them would impact on the visual amenity of the area.

If a chimney needs repair it should be done with matching material and original chimney pots should always be retained and re-bedded, or where they have been lost, reinstated with an original or replica design.



Examples of chimney stacks adding interest to the skyline

10.5 Windows

Windows are one of the most important design features of a building. Even small changes can have a significant effect on their appearance. The position of the window in the opening, the proportions of the sashes, the arrangement of the opening lights, the thickness of the glazing bars and rails, joints, frame or even the glass itself can have an effect on the overall appearance of the property. Unsympathetic replacement windows particularly plastic/uPVC, are the single biggest threat to property values in conservation areas. Windows are the 'eyes' of the building and if not replaced sympathetically will do great damage to the character of the building.

When the replacement of an original window is unavoidable, any new window should as far as possible, be an exact match for the original. Where an additional window is being added to a property it should reflect those used throughout the house. This is most important in the period properties, which abound in Church Stretton.

Replacement windows in uPVC will never replicate the pleasing finish that painted timber provides. uPVC windows, unlike traditional timber windows are usually incapable of being repaired and require outright replacement. Plastic windows lack the detail, finish and texture of wood. Timber is a more sustainable choice than uPVC. It takes eight times more energy to manufacture a uPVC window than an equivalent wooden one.

Traditional window frames are usually painted rather than stained. Wood stain is being used more and more but it is not usually considered an appropriate finish for an historic building. Gloss paint in heritage colours (see Appendix A of the Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide for examples) will give a more pleasing finish.



Period window detailing should be retained if possible

10.6 Doors

Doors are an important part of the historic and architectural character of a building. If a door needs replacing it should as far as possible be an exact match to the original. If this is not possible the door should be appropriate to the age and style of the building.

When replacing a door in an area of similar aged properties care should be taken to choose a replacement, which is also not incongruous with the neighbouring houses.

Attention to detail is also necessary when a door has door furniture, which includes ornamental hinges, door-knockers and letterboxes these should as far as possible be replicated.

Doors should be constructed in wood (softwood or hardwood). uPVC is not considered an appropriate material to be used in a conservation area, as doors made of plastics can significantly harm the overall character and appearance of buildings and the wider area. In limited circumstances uPVC may be used in inconspicuous areas such as areas fronting away from areas in public view (ie rear or some side elevations).

Where doors originally had glass or stained glass panels these should be preserved rather than being replaced by solid wood plank doors, as the original character could be lost. Special care should be taken with listed and iconic buildings.



Fine examples of Church Stretton period doorways

10.7 Satellite Dishes

Satellite dishes should be sited in unobtrusive positions and should not be visible from the road as this affects the visual amenity of the area.

Not all satellite antennas in a conservation area need planning permission. However, Shropshire Council will try to ensure that satellite antennas in conservation areas are carefully sited so as not to detract from the appearance of the area. Satellite dishes on listed buildings will need consent.

The siting of satellite dishes should take into consideration the existing and potential influence of neighbouring trees, and be sited to avoid predictable conflicts between trees and reception.

The requirements for dishes should be checked with Shropshire Council or by accessing the Government's Planning Portal.

A dish will have less impact on the character of a conservation area if it is positioned at the rear or side of the property. It is better to place a dish where it will not detract from the appearance of a clear expanse of wall for example under the eaves. If possible the dish should be painted to blend with the background it is mounted on.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/antenna/>

10.8 TV Antennas

If a house is in a conservation area, you do not need to apply for planning permission to install an antenna on your property, as long as:

- There will be no more than two antennas on the property overall
- If you are installing a single antenna, it must not be more than 100 cm in any linear dimension (not including any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets)
- If you are installing two antennas, one is not more than 100 cm in any linear dimension, and the other is not more than 60 cm in any linear dimension (not including any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets)
- The cubic capacity of each individual antenna is not more than 35 litres
- An antenna fitted onto a chimney stack is not more than 60 cm in any linear dimension.
- An antenna mounted on the roof only sticks out above the roof when there is a chimney-stack. In this case, the antenna should not stick out more than 60 cm above the highest part of the roof, or above the highest part of the chimney stack, whichever is lower
- An antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from, a road.

The siting of TV antennas should take into consideration the existing and potential influence of neighbouring trees, and be sited to avoid predictable conflicts between trees and reception. The lopping or removal of trees to facilitate good reception will be resisted by the Council unless supported by a convincing sustainable case for such measures.

It is always advisable to check with Shropshire Council for the latest up-to-date information or on the Government's Planning Portal (see above).

10.9 Cladding

Any alteration to the external appearance of a building in a conservation area by the application of cladding should be avoided and will require planning permission.

Cladding can have a detrimental effect not just on the dwelling involved but, on the street scene and the wider conservation area where original facing materials may be defaced or destroyed thus causing erosion of character

Artificial materials such as false stone and wood, plastic sheeting and metal roofing tiles are usually not acceptable in a conservation area.

10.10 Railings, fences gates and walls

Occasionally original ironwork (gates & railings) may have survived in an area and these should be retained where possible or replicated. The reinstatement of replica historic gates and railings should be encouraged where there is evidence that the original ones were of a certain type and design.

New railings should be chosen carefully to reflect the age of the property and should ideally be in traditional wrought or cast iron painted in an appropriate colour. Some modern versions are not appropriate as they may lack the period detailing and tend to be over ornate.

Fences should be carefully chosen to tie in with those already established in the conservation area.

In a conservation area you might need planning permission for relevant demolition, to take down a fence, wall or gate. A check should be made with neighbours if the wall is a party wall. (See Appendix B)

Highly decorative panels and six-foot close board timber fencing should be avoided.

Most boundary walls tend to be of the same period as the houses and reflect the architectural style. Where at all possible, walls should be kept in good repair. Walls are important contributors to the overall feel of a conservation area and they define the public and private space.



6 ft close-board fencing “secure by design” adding nothing to the street scene

Removal of walls should be avoided, as should the paving over of gardens as this has an impact on the character of the area not to mention the effect on water roll off.

Any walls, which need remedial work, should be treated in a sympathetic way using matching stone, coursing and detailing.

10.11 Extensions

When considering an extension, care must be taken to ensure that the extension does not dominate the original building in size, scale or materials. The finished affect should be one of unity, with a seamless transition from original to new. Choosing matching or sympathetic materials is key here.

Front extensions should be avoided, as this tends to alter the street scene, especially in areas with small or no front gardens. Side extensions should not be forward of the building line and ideally slightly stepped back.

Rear extensions should be in keeping with the architectural style of the building even though they may not be visible from the road. This especially applies to the shape and slope of the roof. Extensions, which cover the whole of the rear of a building, can completely alter the character of the house.

Extensions should not result in a substantial loss of garden space or plot, nor the alteration of the historic character of an area.

Extensions should not result in a substantial loss of significant trees woodland or hedgerows unless a sustainable case is presented justifying the need for that loss, and where such losses are justifiable offering appropriate compensatory planning to mitigate for the amenity being lost.

When choosing materials, these should normally match those of the original building and stones, bricks etc. should be of the same size, type, colour and finish.

Details, such as style and shape of windows, doors, eaves, down pipes and guttering should match with those of the main building.

The rules governing General Permitted Development in relation to extensions have recently changed and may go through more changes after 2019. It would be advisable to check with Shropshire Council as to the latest position.

<https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/planning/applications/do-i-need-planning-permission/>

Porches

New porches on historic houses should respect the architectural style and proportions of the house. Porches on the front of a property facing the road have the potential to change the feel of the street scene and should be considered carefully. They may not be appropriate where the house forms part of a terrace or a group of houses where porches are not traditionally found.

Reference should be made to neighbouring properties to ensure that any proposed porch is not out of keeping in style or materials with those in the locale. uPVC porches attached to traditional buildings are not considered appropriate.

Conservatories

Conservatories will generally not be permitted on the front of properties. If constructed at the side of the property they should not be forward of the building line and should not be prominent in the street scene. The style of conservatory should be in keeping with the architectural style of the main building and be constructed of sympathetic materials. The conservatory should not cut across or impinge on first floor windows.

If wooden frames are used for windows in the main house, the conservatory windows should match. It is not appropriate to build a conservatory of uPVC against an historic, character property. The frames should be treated in the same way as the main building (painted, stained).

10.12 Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings and properties within conservation areas are given additional protection in order to protect special architecture or historic interest and townscape. Works that wouldn't normally require formal consent could require listed building consent or planning permission because of this protection.

Certain minor alterations and small extensions to dwellings in conservation areas can be undertaken without planning permission but you will need to check with Shropshire Council beforehand. You may need additional consent to:

- Alter the external appearance of the property
- Alter the physical characteristics of the building, either internally (for listed buildings) or externally demolish any part of the building, including interior partitions in listed buildings.
- Extend the building
- Replace or alter windows, doors or roof lights
- Paint previously unpainted surfaces
- Add any type of cladding
- Attach objects to the building, such as satellite TV dish, meter boxes, burglar alarm boxes, external lights
- Replace or alter gates or boundary walls
- Replace or alter roof coverings
- Alter other buildings within the curtilage of the property.

This list is not exhaustive so please seek advice from Shropshire Council before carrying out any work.

A list of Listed Buildings in the Strettons can be found in Appendix C

10.13 Sheds & Outbuildings

In the grounds of some historic houses, outbuildings may be of architectural interest and contribute to the overall setting of the dwelling. Any repair or replacement should be carried out sympathetically using original materials as far as possible. This is especially important if the building can be seen from the road, as this would have an effect on the street scene and wider area.

If a new outbuilding is being considered, it should ideally be out of sight of the road and in keeping with the architecture of the main house. The additional building should be of a suitable size (not dominant in relation to the main building) and in proportion to its surroundings, made of appropriate materials (matching the main house) and in an appropriate position.

With more people choosing to work from home, the number of outbuildings being used as offices has increased. Many are pre-fabricated and may not be in keeping. If the main house is made of stone or brick an external office may be more appropriate in similar materials, whereas an overly large modern log cabin may be considered totally out of place.

Always check with Shropshire Council as to what is and isn't acceptable. Demolition of any original garden building will need consent.

Garages should be built as far as possible behind or on a level with the building line. The roof-line should echo that of the main building. Doors and windows should be of the same material as the main house. If window frames and doors are of wood the windows & doors of the garage should not be of uPVC.

10.14 Demolition

Demolition in a conservation area needs planning permission. Demolition amounts to the removal of the whole building not just part of it. However the removal of all the building except the façade would constitute demolition, as would the removal of an entire garden front wall.

At one time, Conservation Area Consent had also to be acquired if demolition was to be proposed. This has now been merged into the process of Planning Permission

Demolition applies to demolition of a building that:

- Is situated in a Conservation Area in England
- Is not a building to which Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 does not apply by virtue of Section 75 of that Act, for example, listed buildings, ecclesiastical buildings, scheduled monuments.

APPENDIX A Planning and Trees



An autumn walk in Rectory Wood

One of the outstanding features of Church Stretton and its surroundings is its abundant tree cover. This is especially appreciated on the steep hillsides, which provide a soft verdant backdrop to the historic core of the town.

The Church Stretton Town Design Statement deals with the town's trees in more detail in its Appendix 1.

Trees and hedgerows can enhance a development, conferring character, creating an attractive landscape and even raising property value. Equally, poor design or the retention of inappropriate trees can lead to issues of nuisance, damage and conflict with future occupants. Thus the careful consideration and appropriate retention of existing trees and hedgerows, in conjunction with planting new ones as necessary, are essential factors in contributing towards sustainable development and this is controlled by law.

What is a Tree Preservation Order?

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is an order made by Shropshire Council, to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of public amenity.

A tree order prohibits the: cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, willful damage and destruction of trees without the local planning authority's written consent. If consent is given, it can be subject to conditions, which have to be followed. Cutting roots is also a prohibited activity and requires the authority's consent.

What are a tree owner's responsibilities?

Owners of protected trees must not carry out, or cause or permit the carrying out of, any of the prohibited activities without the written consent of the Shropshire Council. As with owners of unprotected trees, they are responsible for maintaining their trees, with no statutory rules setting out how often or to what standard. The local planning authority cannot require maintenance work to be done to a tree just because it is protected. However, the authority can encourage good tree management, particularly when determining applications for consent under a TPO. This will help to maintain and enhance the amenity of the local area provided by protected trees.

Shropshire Council tree officers, will help to inform tree owners of their responsibilities and options. It is important that trees are inspected regularly and necessary maintenance carried out to make sure they remain safe and healthy.

Trees in Conservation Areas

The local planning authority is under a duty to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas as a whole. A key part of that character and appearance in Church Stretton is the trees.

Anyone proposing to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area must give at least six weeks' notice to the Shropshire Council planning department.

There are exceptions to this requirement, including when the tree is dead, or has become immediately dangerous. However, unless work is urgently necessary because there is an immediate risk of serious harm, five working days prior written notice must be given to the authority before cutting down or carrying out remedial work under an exception. This notice period gives the local planning authority the opportunity to decide if it is necessary to impose a TPO on the tree in order to discharge its duty 'to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.'

If the authority decides the tree is not a part of the special character or appearance of the area it may give consent or allow the notice to lapse without response, in which case the work may go ahead as identified in the notice. Otherwise it should object and consider imposing a Tree Preservation Order. It is a criminal offence to carry out works to a tree where consent has been refused or where notice was required and not served on the local planning authority.

Trees in conservation areas that are already subject to TPOs are subject to that regime only and no separate conservation area notice is required.

Where a tree in a conservation area has been removed illegally, or is dead or is *immanently* dangerous, or causing a *legal* nuisance, a replacement tree must be planted by law. The tree must be of an appropriate size and species. The local planning authority can enforce this requirement and ultimately come onto the land itself to carry out the planting and recover the cost from the owner. If a tree is thought to be worthy of protection any person can contact a tree officer at the council to request that the Council considers placing a TPO on that tree.

For information on the national legislation relating to this issue see the Planning Practice Guidance available on the internet at:

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/tree-preservation-orders/>

APPENDIX B The need for Planning Permission in a conservation area

If you are unsure if your property is in the Conservation Area, you can check with the Shropshire Council planning department.

Various categories of development that would normally be allowed without planning permission are more restricted in Conservation Areas. These are in addition to the normal planning requirements and are:

Cladding any part of the exterior of a dwelling house with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles (cement and pebble dash render does not require planning permission)

Extensions where the enlarged part of a dwelling house would extend beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original dwelling house;

Extensions, where the enlarged part of a dwelling house would have more than one storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling house.

Conservation area designation also introduces control over the demolition of most buildings within the conservation area. Consent is required for the demolition of:

- A building greater than 115 cubic meters
- A wall over 1 metre high fronting a public highway
- A wall over 2 metre elsewhere
- A pre 1914 agricultural building
- An entire building except its façade

In addition, anyone proposing to cut down or prune any tree in a conservation area is required to give the Local Planning Authority six weeks' notice.

Even if your proposals do not include the work mentioned above, you should still check with Shropshire Council if an application is required.

If your application is refused, granted with conditions or not determined within 8 weeks of it being validated by the council then you have the right to appeal to the Secretary of State.

Further information on planning issues can be obtained from:

<https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/conservation-areas/conservation-areas-faqs/>

APPENDIX C Listed Buildings in Church Stretton & Surroundings



Tudor Cottage, Grade II* listed

Some building names may be abbreviated or partial; this is how they are recorded in the original register.

10 and 12, Cunnery Road

Grade II

10 Cunnery Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

13 and 15, High Street

Grade II

High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

1603, The Row, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Grade II

The Row, Church Stretton, Shropshire

17, High Street

Grade II*

High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

2, The Square

Grade II

High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

24, High Street

Grade II

24 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

3, The Square

Grade II

High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

41, Church Street

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

43 and 45, Church Street

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

49 and 49a, High Street

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

54 and 56, High Street

Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

57, High Street

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

59, High Street

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

61, High Street

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

63, High Street

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

65, High Street

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Ashford House

Grade II

High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Barn and Cowshed and Store to South of Brook Farmhouse

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Little Stretton, Shropshire

Barn and Cowsheds Approximately 5 Metres West of Churchyard of All Saints

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Little Stretton, Shropshire

Barn Approximately 20 Metres South East of the Manor House

Grade II

Shrewsbury Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Barn to the North of Old Hall Farmhouse

Grade II

Little Stretton, Shropshire

Barn to West of New House Farmhouse

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Bircher Cottage

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Botvyle Farmhouse

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Brook Cottage

Grade II

Burway Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Brook Cottages

Grade II

Little Stretton, Shropshire

Brook Farmhouse Including Attached Stables

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Burway House Including Railings

Grade II

Burway Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Church of All Saints

Grade II

Elms Lane, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Church of St Lawrence

Grade I

36 Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Churchyard Wall and Stiles and Gates to North and West of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Churchway, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Cloverley

Grade II

Farm Lane, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Courtyard Cottage

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Darrell Cottage and Owls Cottage

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Dudgeley Mill

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Farmbuildings Immediately North of Botvyle Farmhouse

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Greengates

Grade II

79 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Insurance House

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Ivanhoe

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Kings Arms Public House

Grade II

43 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Linden Lea

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Little Hamperley

Grade II

Lydbury North, Shropshire

Long Mynd House

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Lower Botvyle

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Manor Cottage

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Manor Farmhouse

Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 10 Metres South East of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

44 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 11 Metres South East of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

44 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 13 Metres South of South Transept of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 13 Metres South of West End of Nave of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 14 Metres South of West End of Nave of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 15 Metres South of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 17 Metres South of South Transept of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 2 Metres East of South Transept of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 24 Metres South of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence
Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 26 Metres South of Chancel of Church of St Lawrence
Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Memorial 4 Metres South of South Transept of Church of St Lawrence
Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Milestone 27 Metres South West of the Malt House
Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Milestone Approximately 90 Metres to North East of Dudgeley House (That Part in All Stretton)
Grade II

B4370, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Milestone at Ngr So 4655 9642 on the B4370
Grade II

B4370, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Milestone in Front of Number 47 High Street (Number 47 is Not Included)
Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Minton House
Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

New House Farmhouse
Grade II

Church Stretton, Shropshire

Old Barn
Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Old Hall Farmhouse
Grade II

Starr Lane, All Stretton, Shropshire

Old Hall Farmhouse
Grade II

Little Stretton, Shropshire

Ragleth House
Grade II

79 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Ragleth House
Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Scotsman's Field Including Garden Balustrading
Grade II

Burway Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Somershey Including Railings

Grade II

79 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Spring Cottage

Grade II

Burway Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Sundial 2 Metres South of South Transept of Church of St Lawrence

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Ancient House

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Ancient House

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Bucks Head Public House

Grade II

46 High Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Malt House

Grade II

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Manor House

Grade II

The Row, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Manor House

Grade II*

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Priory

Grade II

Church Street, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Ragleth Inn

Grade II

101 Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

The Tan House

Grade II*

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Tudor Cottage

Grade II*

Ludlow Road, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Well Cottage

Grade II

Minton, Church Stretton, Shropshire

West Cottage and the Old Rectory House and Old Rectory Cottage

Grade II

Rectory Gardens, Church Stretton, Shropshire

Yew Tree Inn Public House

Grade II

Shrewsbury Road, All Stretton, Shropshire



*The Strettons viewed from the air, looking North
Courtesy Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership*

This guidance document has been prepared on behalf of the Church Stretton Town Council as part of a suite of community planning documents including:

Church Stretton Town Design Statement

Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide

Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide Appendix B

Spring 2016



St Laurence's Church, showing Sheela na gig