



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

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**Stoke Golding
Conservation Area Appraisal**

**September 2013
(Adopted 15 October 2013)**

STOKE GOLDING CONSERVATION AREA

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Conservation Area in Stoke Golding was declared in June 2004. The principle purpose of the designation was to protect those parts of the village which are closely associated with the village's past.
- 1.2 The Conservation Area has been subdivided according to areas of different character. Each area is analysed in terms of its buildings of townscape merit, distinctive details, features of interest, green spaces and vegetation.

2.0 Historical Development

- 2.1 Stoke Golding was established in the Anglo Saxon period. There is a Saxon burial ground in the grounds of Park House close to the village centre. The same area also contains medieval fish ponds. Although not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1084 because, according to Nichols writing in 1811, the village at that time was a township of Hinckley, of whose parish it had been a chapelry. The chapel itself was rebuilt during the reign of Edward III 1327-1377 and is among the most noted decorated churches in Leicestershire. The area around St Mary of Antioch represents the village's earliest foundation. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the village developed with an essentially agricultural based economy.
- 2.2 Of major significance to the village is the connection with the battle of Bosworth Field 1485. Crown Hill to the northwest of the historic core is where Henry Tudor was crowned king of England following his victory. The development of the coalfields to the north in the nineteenth century led to the construction of the Ashby Canal and a railway opened in 1873, both of which follow the edge of Crown Hill. The domestic framework industry developed as in other villages eventually moving into factory based production in the second half of the nineteenth century. New places of worship were also built for non-conformists and formal education facilities and additional social facilities created.

3.0 Setting

- 3.1 The distinctive setting of the area is derived from its location as a ridge top settlement overlooking the rolling countryside and the Ashby Canal to the north. To the south views are constrained by lines of hedges. The old core of development is still clearly defined along the north–south ridge.

4.0 Gateways

- 4.1 The settlement can be seen from all approach roads to the village with the spire of St Margaret's Church dominating the view. The western approach along Station Road is characterised by open views of farmland with distinctive ridge and furrow. Crown Hills farm, a three storey brick farmhouse and its associated barns, marks the entrance to the Conservation Area. From the north the dogleg road from Dadlington and the canal tow path provide fine views of the Church of St Margaret of Antioch at the heart of the settlement. Ivy House farm similarly marks the north-eastern edge of the village. To the south-east, separated by pockets of open land, are the modern estates of the village.

5.0 Character of Stoke Golding

- 5.1 The character of the Conservation Area is primarily derived from the agricultural origins of the settlement. This can be identified through a number of former farmhouses and farm buildings within the area, strong visual links to the countryside and several very important green or hard surfaced spaces. The ancient street pattern with its unique twists and turns has added a further layer of local distinctiveness to the area.
- 5.2 Buildings and relationship to the road layout dominate the appearance of the Conservation Area. It is a mixture of loose fit residential properties punctuated by larger public or commercial buildings, of which the Parish Church, Park House the Baxter Hall and the former Halls' hosiery factory are important examples.
- 5.3 *The Victorian commercial heart of the village:* Top Town, lies at the junction of Station Road, Main Street and High Street. Here, in close proximity, are two neighbouring inns, a shop, a modern post office and Park House, the principal house in the village. A short distance to the north, connected by Church Walks, is St Margaret's church and Blacksmiths Yard, two further historic features in the settlement. This area has developed out of several former farmhouses and their yards which despite some recent changes are still clearly evident and important to the rural grain. Park House,

although much extended, was previously an important farm. Its range of barns and outbuildings, now converted into residential use, the open courtyard and views of the countryside reinforce its agricultural connections. On the opposite side of the High Street/Station Road the yards and ranges reduce in scale. These and sections of old brick walls extend northwards towards the church and until comparatively recently into the countryside. Laburnum Cottage and its stable, another former farm, link to the open space which lies beyond.

- 5.4 Away from this core are two further clusters of nineteenth century buildings. On the High Street these are centred on the Old Swan Public House and on Station Road, the former Methodist Chapel.
- 5.5 *The High Street:* The streetscape around the Old Swan is characterised by close knit development with many properties built up to or close to the back edge of the footway. This ensures a strong sense of enclosure and channels views along the street in both directions. The decorated façade of The Birches on the High Street provides a visual stop at the S bend. Further north the gable of the out-building to Ivy House Farm achieves the same effect. It is unfortunate that the appearance of the buildings of Mulberry Farm in the centre of this cluster, which are constructed of pre-cast concrete and timber and date from the 1950's, badly detract from the general quality of the area. They also have a detrimental impact on the setting of Crown Hill, the site of the crowning of Henry following the Battle of Bosworth. This site has been identified as an Improvement Area.
- 5.6 *Station Road:* This street links the commercial centre with the railway station which is sited on the western side of the Ashby Canal. Although the railway along this part of the route is no longer in existence, the former station buildings remain but have been adapted to other industrial uses. These buildings include the station itself, an engine repair building and the station master's house. Although not within the Stoke Golding Conservation Area, all are important local heritage buildings and will be added to the Local Heritage List when it is compiled. The buildings along the edges of Station Road which is comparatively straight, include residential properties, former hosiery factories, a former school, and a former Baptist Chapel. The houses date mainly from the Victorian/Edwardian period and are typical villa solutions. Set behind short front gardens which are defined by hedges or low walls, they present an imposing presence in the street scene. This is emphasised by their tall rectangular windows, overhanging roofs and occasional steps to front doors. An artificial pinch point has been formed in the road at its junction with Higham Lane to reduce

traffic speed. This is emphasised by its location adjacent to a very fine former hosiery factory, recently converted into apartments. Its projecting high level clock is a key landmark in this part of the street.

- 5.7 These clusters have gradually been linked by, for the most part, good quality residential buildings from later periods. However since the 1970's there has been development in depth around the church on its north and west sides.
- 5.8 Apart from the listed buildings, there are a number of other buildings which positively contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area. These are identified as buildings of local interest on the map of the Conservation Area.

6.0 Building Style Scale and Detail

- 6.1 There is no dominant building style. However influences from the Arts and Craft Movement, Dutch Gables and the Victorian Gothic Revival are evident. With few exceptions buildings are two stories in height and simple in plan. In some instances the roof space forms a third storey using gable windows but this is not common. Elevations in the main are plain and simple. Only an occasional canted bay window at ground or first floor or a modern porch addition breaks this tradition. Garages are not a feature of the area. Parking is mainly confined to yards at the rear or as hard-standing in front of properties which detract from the setting of the area.
- 6.2 Up to the modern period, the widespread use of red bricks of various tones gives a continuity of appearance throughout the Conservation Area. Subsequent rendering has been generally detrimental. Common architectural details include polychromatic brickwork, raised string courses and dentil eaves. The principal stone built structure within the Conservation Area and its focus is the Parish Church of St Margaret. The predominant roof materials are dark blue plain clay tiles or, to a lesser extent, Welsh slates. Modern replacement concrete tiles generally detract from the roofscape. Brick chimneys are particularly prominent in the historic clusters.
- 6.3 Windows to Victorian properties were predominantly double hung, vertical sliding sashes. The heads to window openings have various details, including fine-gauged brickwork, flat segmental brick arches, stone/plaster lintels and canted brick sills.

- 6.4 The doors to late eighteenth/early nineteenth century houses of some architectural pretention are typically of a panelled design, set within door cases with fanlights above. Similar panelled doors would probably have been installed in later nineteenth century properties although most properties now have replacement doors of late twentieth century date.

7.0 Boundary Treatments

- 7.1 Walls of local brickwork, often with blue brick saddleback copings are common on street frontages throughout the area. These promote an urban feel and help to channel views along the street. Properties towards the edges of the settlement have planted boundaries reinforcing the transition to the countryside.

8.0 Contribution of Spaces and Natural Elements

- 8.1 Small front gardens are a characteristic of most of the area and consequently most of the streets are devoid of any significant tree cover. Mature trees are concentrated on pockets of space around the church, Park House, adjacent to Crown Hill Villa or in the former garden of The Birches. There are also fine rows of mature trees at the entrances the Conservation Area from Higham and Wykin. These trees make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 8.2 The spaces around the church, Park House, the rear of Woodyard Cottage, Crown Hill and the yards are important to the rural character of the Conservation Area.

9.0 Factors having a Negative Influence on the Character of the Conservation Area

Buildings of Poor Visual Quality

- 9.1 Within the designated area there has been new development within the post war period. Nevertheless those buildings which have been erected have for the most part not strengthened the traditional qualities of the area and have encroached on the edges of Crown Hill. Andrew Close and Church Close, by reason of their design, scale and layout appear discordant with the traditional streetscape.

10.0 Enhancement

10.1 The enhancement of the character and appearance of a Conservation Area can be defined as the reinforcement of the qualities providing the special interest which warranted designation. It may be through the sympathetic development of sites identified in the detailed analysis of the area as opportunity or neutral sites; it may involve physical proposals or by the application of sensitive detailed development control over extensions and alterations. Areas which warrant special consideration for enhancement are marked on the Conservation Area Plan and are Church Walk, the area adjacent to Baxter Hall, the former factory site and Station Road, the frontage to the Old Swan car park and the green area behind Woodyard Cottage.

11.0 Summary of Significance

11.1 The village's nationally important connection as the site of the crowning of Henry Tudor following the Battle of Bosworth Field

11.2 Distinctive townscape character featuring late Georgian and Victorian working class cottages and artisan housing interspersed with landmark buildings of significant architectural importance.

11.3 The retention of former farmhouses and agricultural buildings highlight the settlements rural origins.

11.4 The clusters of historic brick cottages and the prominent position of the Church highlight the rural character of the area.

11.5 Large scale mature trees are an important element in the rural village character of the historic core of Stoke Golding and reflect its history as a distinct village settlement within the Leicestershire countryside.

11.6 The importance of framed views within streets, through gaps between buildings and the vista to St Margaret's Church from the canal and beyond.

11.7 The importance of private greenery from return frontages in residential streets.

12.0 Vulnerability

12.1 Deterioration or loss of brick boundary walls.

12.2 The impact of traffic on the rural village character of the conservation area.

- 12.3 Insensitive alterations to historic buildings and to building elevations that face the street.
- 12.4 Loss of key spaces between buildings.
- 12.5 New development that does not reflect the established street pattern.
- 12.6 The threat to green space from infill development.
- 12.7 Loss of mature trees impacting on the green and leafy character of parts of the town.
- 12.8 Poor maintenance of the original built fabric threatens the area's heritage value. It leads to the loss of historic architectural features and detailing, such as traditional doors and windows, roofing materials and features, or locally distinctive construction materials. This can lead to their replacement with unsympathetic styles and materials.
- 12.9 Church Walks in the centre of the Conservation Area is a narrow picturesque jitty along which are the remnants of historically interesting garden plots and small scale historic buildings which could easily be destroyed by large scale redevelopment.
- 12.10 The character is vulnerable to the cumulative impact of alterations to windows, doors, roofs, painting of brickwork and the loss of chimneys.
- 12.11 Inappropriate proportions of fenestration and architectural details to new development.
- 12.12 Threat of demolition of remnant industrial buildings and the loss of character that represents.
- 12.13 The loss of historic public houses and shop frontages.
- 12.14 Victorian architecture is now more highly valued and steps have been taken to preserve its integrity. All new development should seek to enforce this integrity rather than reduce it.
- 12.15 Where infill projects are permitted, they should respond to the existing architectural scale, predominant building materials and character of the original buildings.
- 12.16 Demolition of domestic front boundary walls and hedges to permit car parking in front gardens interrupts the consistent property line, which is an important characteristic in the Conservation Area.

13.0 Opportunities for Enhancements

- 13.1 Conservation area designation is a planning tool to help protect and enhance areas of special architectural interest. There are elements within the Conservation Area that could be enhanced to help preserve the established character.
- 13.2 Traffic has a significant effect on the historic environment and the quiet rural village character. A system to control or manage parking should be investigated.
- 13.3 There is limited street furniture in the street, but when replacement is necessary it should be with more sensitively styled street lights and pedestrian barriers.
- 13.4 Trees are an important characteristic of the Conservation Area. Old or dying trees should be replaced and the opportunity for further planting should be investigated.
- 13.5 The use of local building materials should be encouraged to help maintain the continuity of the Conservation Area.
- 13.6 Traditional brick boundary walls should be retained. Any damage should be carefully repaired using appropriate materials and traditional methods of construction.
- 13.7 Open spaces between buildings should be retained to conserve the views of greenery between buildings. They are a key feature of the character of the area.
- 13.8 The richness and diversity in architectural detailing should be conserved through the repair and, where necessary, reinstatements of traditional elements such as timber sash windows, appropriate doors, correct roofing materials, boundary walls, etc. These changes not only harm the character and appearance of the property itself but the cumulative effect impacts on the visual continuity and integrity of a street and inappropriate replacements should be avoided.
- 13.9 Rationalisation of street furniture would greatly enhance the street scene. There is a tendency towards cluttering with signposts, road signs, bollards, lights, and bus stops etc. that are visually detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. An audit of street furniture should be considered to determine whether all existing signs etc. are necessary and that some of the clutter on the pavements can be reduced.

- 13.10 Road and pavement surfaces are patchy in places and would benefit from being resurfaced, from both a visual and safety point of view. Any remaining historic road surface should be retained.
- 13.11 Where infill projects are permitted, they should respond to the existing architectural scale, predominant building materials and character of the original buildings.
- 13.12 Where planting has been removed or trees have died, they should be replaced with appropriate species to maintain the leafy character that is so strongly associated with parts of the Conservation Area. Additional planting may also add to the streetscape in some places, especially where there has been new development.
- 13.13 Encourage the reinstatement of architecturally appropriate railings. Railings were generally removed during WWII and, in the majority of instances, have not been replaced. Where they have, they are often of an incorrect design and height.

14.0 Listed Buildings

- 14.1 Church of St Margaret. Grade I. An early C13 church that was refashioned and enlarged between 1290 and 1340. It includes a west tower, 4-bay nave with a south isle and a 2 bay chancel.
- 14.2 The Birches. Grade II. A two storey red brick building with a slate roof. It has a three window front with shallow central brick projection.
- 14.3 Woodyard Cottage. Grade II. Red brick with plain tiled to left and large brick ridge stack to left of centre, rebuilt later in C19.
- 14.4 No. 12 Station Road formerly listed as the Limes with forecourt railings on brick plinth. Mid C18 house. Red brick with Swithland Slate roof behind a cooped parapet and brick end stacks.

15.0 Important Local Buildings

- 15.1 Crown Hills Farm Complex. This is a good example of an early farmstead complex. The present arrangement dates back at least as far as 1844 and some of the buildings appear to be a lot older. The principal farmhouse itself contains elements dating back to the seventeenth century.
- 15.2 Park House. This building is a late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century building. Its barns are probably nineteenth century in date. Although much altered, Park House and its

associated agricultural buildings is a fine example of Midlands's agricultural architecture.

- 15.3 The Old Grammar School. This building dates back to the sixteenth century.
- 15.4 The Mangle House. This was for many years the village wash house. The original structure was two cottages which have been linked and extended.
- 15.5 Baxter Hall. 1850, formerly the Workmen's Hall.
- 15.6 Blacksmiths Yard.
- 15.7 White Swan Public House, High Street.
- 15.8 George and Dragon public house, Station Road.
- 15.9 Three Horseshoes public house, High Street.
- 15.10 Ivy House Farm, High Street.
- 15.11 Zion Baptist Chapel 1853 and schoolroom added 1874.
- 15.12 Former Co-op, Station Road.
- 15.13 Laburnum Cottage, High Street.
- 15.14 Methodist Church 1933, Main Street.
- 15.15 Original Primitive Methodist Church 1857, became the Women's Hall, Station Road.
- 15.16 Former Railway Station and Goods Shed on the Willow Park industrial estate.

General Conservation Area Guidance, Planning Controls and Policies

16.0 Development Guidance

16.1 Any new development must take account of the established character of the area by being of appropriate scale and density and utilising appropriate materials so that the buildings will make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

16.2 The policies relating to conservation areas are contained within national guidance and will form the basis for determining planning applications. This appraisal should be considered in conjunction with those policies. The following checkpoints are to be taken into account when submitting development proposals:

- To be of a high standard of design that respects the established character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Materials to be of a quality and type appropriate to the development and its surroundings.
- Retain and protect important landscape and ecological features.
- Preserve or enhance the special character and setting of listed buildings, conservation areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- The re-use of redundant buildings is encouraged for uses compatible with their character and setting.
- Historic buildings identified on the appraisal map and areas of open space between buildings are to be retained.

16.3 To maintain the distinctive character and appearance of the Stoke Golding Conservation Area it will be necessary to:

- Retain the listed buildings and buildings of local interest.
- Ensure new development contributes positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area regarding siting, scale, design and materials used.
- Ensure house extensions satisfy the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Resist development proposals in key areas, which have been identified.
- Ensure the consistent application of positive, sensitive and detailed development control.
- Ensure important views are protected.

- 16.4 Special attention is given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area. Planning Applications in Conservation Areas are separately advertised. The principal effects of the designation of a Conservation Area are summarised as follows:
- Consent is required for the total or substantial demolition of any building exceeding 115 cu metres or any wall, fence, gate or railing over 1 metre adjacent to a highway or two metres elsewhere.
 - Applications for outline planning permission are not normally acceptable. Full planning applications are likely to be required.
- 16.5 Planning permission is required for:
- The external cladding of any building with stone, artificial stone, pebbledash, render, timber, plastic or tiles.
 - Alteration of the roof which results in its enlargement.
 - A satellite dish on a chimney, wall or roof fronting a highway.
 - The enlarged part of the dwelling house that would extend beyond the wall forming a side elevation of the original dwelling house, or:
 - The enlarged part of the dwelling house that would be more than one storey and extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling house.
- 16.6 The design of all new shop fronts, advertisements and security grilles should be in accordance with the Council's Shopping and Shop Front Design Guide.
- 16.7 Anyone proposing works to a tree in a Conservation Area must give six weeks written notice to the local planning authority.
- 16.8 These requirements do not cover all aspects of control in Conservation Areas and you are advised to contact the Local Planning Authority.

Barry Whirrity
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