

HOAR CROSS



Conservation Area

May
1997



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

 **East
Staffordshire**
Borough Council
Development Services

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990

Borough of East Staffordshire

Cover: Church of The Holy Angels, Maker Lane, Hoar Cross

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Hoar Cross Conservation Area

Introduction

This Hoar Cross Conservation Area Statement has been produced following a review of the Conservation Area. Its purpose is :

- (1) to indicate revisions to the boundary of the Conservation Area and clarify the legislative implications, and Borough Councils' policies for development in the Conservation Area;
- (2) to recommend proposals for the enhancement of the Conservation Area;
- (3) to provide supplementary design advice for development in the Conservation Area.

The aim is to ensure that future development is based on a considered understanding of the areas historic qualities so as to contribute positively to the future of Hoar Cross and preserve and enhance its special character.

The rural character of the area can be influenced by relatively minor developments, alterations to buildings and the spaces around them. This statement is therefore for:

- developers, architects, builders, engineers, designers and planners;
- householders and businesses within the Conservation Area;
- statutory bodies and public authorities.

Scope of the Conservation Area Statement

This statement will be adopted by the Borough of East Staffordshire as supplementary planning guidance in conjunction with the Councils Countryside Design Summary, and its recommendations be taken into account when planning decisions are made.

Conservation Areas

The concept of conserving the character of entire areas was first introduced in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. The provisions were consolidated into the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act subsequently the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conservation Area legislation emphasises the importance of the character of an area as a key consideration when decisions are made in respect of development proposals. A Conservation Area is defined as :

"an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance "

Although Conservation Areas usually include a high proportion of listed buildings, their character is also derived from other qualities such as the relationship between buildings, the spaces which surround them, a historic street pattern or features of archaeological interest.

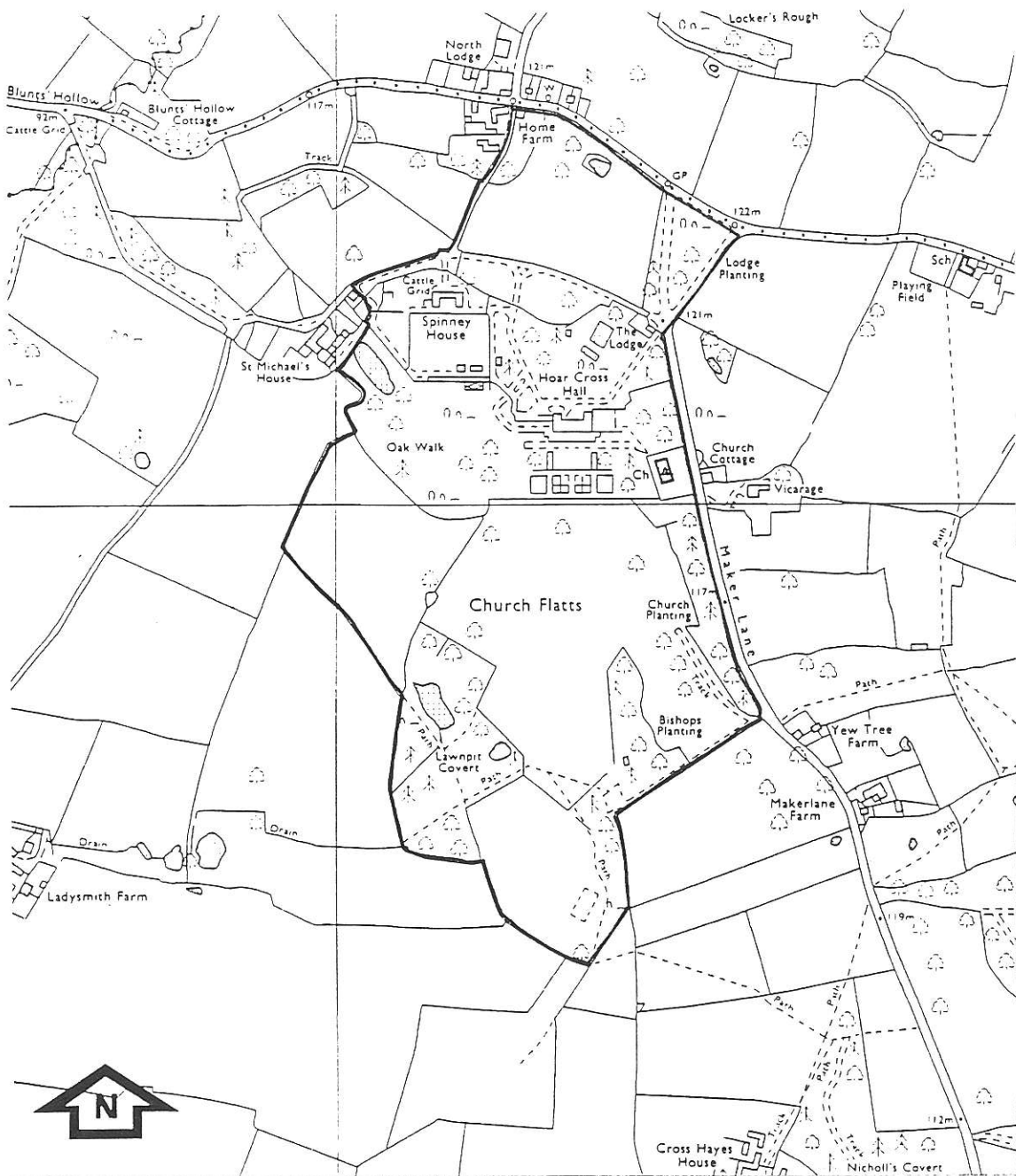
There is an important difference between preservation, by the listing of buildings, and conservation. Preservation implies no change, but conservation is a more dynamic approach which allows change, but change that is controlled so as to retain the inherent quality of a place.

The Hoar Cross Conservation Area was first designated in March 1980. Since then land has been developed in the area and awareness of the environment generally has changed particularly with regard to new and old buildings and their landscape settings. Government advice and local planning policies have also become more detailed in an attempt to influence the character of development in Conservation Areas. The Department of the Environment Guidance for Historic Areas, PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment (September 1994), advises local planning authorities to review existing Conservation Areas to identify extensions and retractions to the boundaries.

The National Heritage Act, 1983, established the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, (English Heritage), which is required to compile a register of gardens and other land which it considers to be of "*special historic interest*". The main purpose of the register is to identify and draw attention to the best historic parks and gardens and in so doing encourage their protection and maintenance. Land at Hoar Cross Hall has been recommended for inclusion on the register by Staffordshire County Council (see Map 1) and the Conservation Area Boundary has been extended to include this. Whilst the Register does not provide statutory protection or additional powers to control development, the historic interest of a park or garden is established as a material planning consideration.

In addition the break up of the Meynell Estate is linked to increased pressure for development throughout the area and in designating an extended conservation area attention is drawn to the historic context of Hoar Cross.

This statement provides an assessment of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. A detailed appraisal has been undertaken and a description of the special architectural and historic interest of Hoar Cross is included. Following this analysis proposals for enhancement are included together with advice for new work and repairs to existing buildings.



Map 1: Proposed Boundary of Land to be Included in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. (SCC February 1996)

The Effects of Conservation Area Designation

The effects of Conservation Area designation are two-fold :

- (i) There are specific policies in the East Staffordshire Local Plan which seek to ensure that development proposals preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.
- (ii) Legislative restrictions which control certain types of development.

Local Plan Policy

The Borough Council has specific policies which seek to safeguard, and enhance the character of the Conservation Area. The East Staffordshire Local Plan as Proposed for Modification states:

En20 Development will not be permitted in a Conservation Area, unless it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- (1) *If an application for outline permission is made within a Conservation Area, the Local Planning Authority will require details of siting, design and external appearance of all buildings, under the provisions of Article 7(2) of the General Development Order.*
- (2) *Consent to demolish an unlisted building in a Conservation Area will not be granted unless it can be shown that it is wholly beyond repair, incapable of reasonable beneficial use, of inappropriate structure or design or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of an area. Redevelopment involving demolition will only be permitted where there are detailed plans for the site already approved.*
- (3) *New development should respect the character of the existing architecture in scale, grouping and materials.*
- (4) *Proposals for development adjacent to Conservation Areas should be designed to be in harmony with the character and appearance of the area.*

- (5) *When considering development proposals the Council will take care to ensure that views into and out of the Conservation Area remain unspoilt.*
- (6) *Permission will not be granted for development on sites identified in Conservation Area Designation and Enhancement documents which contribute to the appearance and character of the Area even if that site is also within a development boundary.*

En21 The Council will be prepared to consider making exceptions to other policies in this Plan where this would enhance the character of a Conservation Area.

Legislation

In addition, to the normal planning controls which apply to everyone but are not covered in this statement the principal effects of Conservation Area designation are that written authority from the Borough Council is required for:

- demolition;
- the cutting, lopping or topping of most trees;
- cladding the outside of a house with stone, timber, tiles, or any synthetic imitation material.

Furthermore:

- the installation of satellite dishes without planning permission is restricted in Conservation Areas;
- house extensions or garden buildings regulations differ in Conservation Areas, as do those concerning some boundary walls and fences;
- additions and alterations to the roof of a house (including dormers), are restricted in Conservation Areas.

It is always advisable to contact the Area Planning Officer, Tony Young, or the Conservation Officer, Ian Kilby, at the Borough Council, about the effects of Conservation Area designation. Not all works in a Conservation Area require consent but its character is comprised of many building types, with a wide range of details. The cumulative effect of changes to windows, doors, chimneys and roof materials, can have a major adverse impact on the overall character of the area. For this reason the Borough Council may resolve to

resolve to make Article 4 directions in the future to control minor alterations to buildings. In making an Article 4 direction certain permitted development rights would be withdrawn for a prescribed range of developments materially affecting some aspects of the external appearance of houses, such as windows, doors, roofs and frontages. Householders in areas affected by an Article 4 direction would need to make an application to the Local Planning Authority for permission to undertake such work.

Register of Historic Parks and Gardens

Land at Hoar Cross Hall has been recommended for inclusion in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The Register does not provide any statutory control over development although it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Inclusion in the Conservation Area recognises the historic character of the parkland of Hoar Cross which it is desirable to preserve, and enhance. Effective management of woodland will be encouraged where this preserves the character of the landscape, although some minor works to trees or hedgerows may have a detrimental effect upon the intrinsic quality of the parkland. It is advisable to contact the Area Planning Officer, Conservation Officer or Landscape Architect prior to commencing any work.

The following section provides a detailed description of the Conservation Area of Hoar Cross.

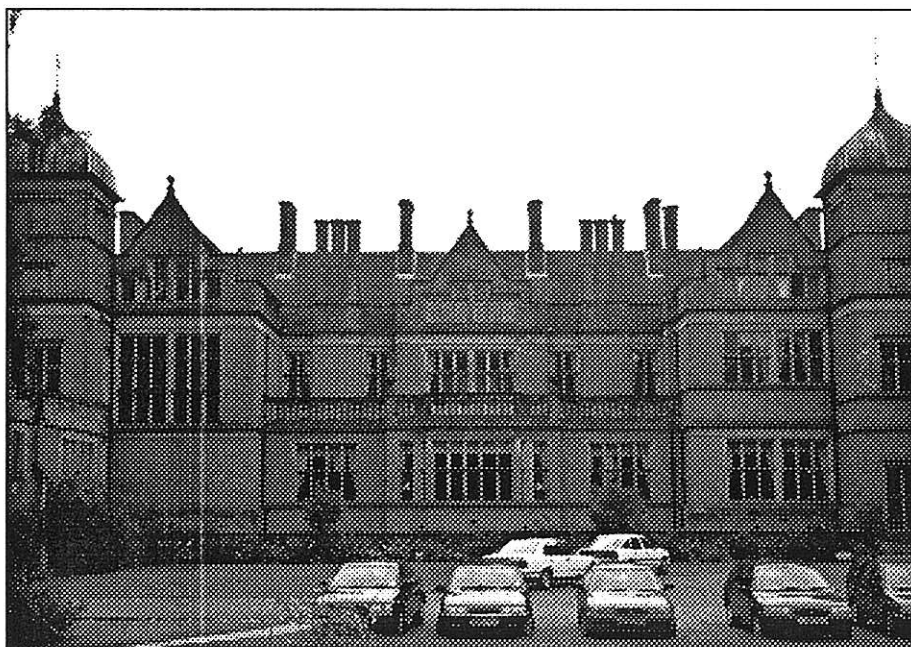


Plate 1: Hoar Cross Hall, North Elevation

The Conservation Area

Hoar Cross Conservation Area was first designated in 1980. The parkland to the south of Hoar Cross Hall was recommended for inclusion in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in February 1996 by Staffordshire County Council. A proposal to include this and Hoar Cross Hall in an extended boundary to the Conservation Area was approved by the Planning and Transportation Committee in July 1996. At a Full Council meeting in September 1996 this extension was ratified.

The parish of Hoar Cross lies on the boundary between Newborough and Yoxall parishes in East Staffordshire, approximately seven miles west of Burton upon Trent. Hoar Cross Conservation Area consists of two parts, the hamlet of Hoar Cross, and the area surrounding the Hall. The hamlet consists of a number of houses and cottages, centred on the Meynell Ingram Arms public house. The second part consists of Hoar Cross Hall, its Gateway and Lodge, the walled garden, the Church of The Holy Angels and the Vicarage and a group of cottages to the west of the Hall.

Much of Hoar Cross owes its existence to the Meynell Ingram family which built the Hall on a spur of land west of the hamlet. The Hall, Lodge and Church are listed buildings, the Hall and Lodge are listed grade II, and the Church listed grade I, set in wooded grounds and parkland.

The Hall was built between 1862 and 1871, by Henry Clutton, a renowned architect of the Victorian era. It is a two storey mansion in the Jacobean style of red brick with a slate roof, and mullion and transom windows. The two cupolas are topped with ornate weather vanes



Plate 2: Hoar Cross Hall, South Elevation

bearing the initials of the Meynell Ingram family. It now functions as a Health Spa, which has facilitated the need for an extension to the west. The gardens to the south of the Hall have been restored. The enclosed formal gardens were originally designed in accordance with Francis Bacon's "Essay on Gardens" (1625), and consist of clipped yew hedges, and topiary. The stone gate piers which mark the east, west and southern entrances to the garden, are also features of Bacon's essay. Those separating the upper terrace, from the lower terrace are listed grade II*. Built in the seventeenth century, they were moved to Hoar Cross from their original home in Temple Newsam, Yorkshire circa 1870. The deliberate fall in level of the terraces allows for uninterrupted views across the parkland, towards the spires of Lichfield Cathedral. This view of the spires was framed by the woodlands of Church Planting, Bishops Planting and Lawnpit Covert. Typically seventeenth century garden design would deliberately define and enclose the formal garden from the parkland beyond. Such features were not used in landscaped gardens of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries where formal gardens were disposed of to allow parkland to roll apparently up to the house with lawns often separated by a ha-ha to create the impression of a continuous parkland setting. The enclosed garden at Hoar Cross Hall is separated from the parkland to the south by a low wall, built on top of such a ha-ha. This wall contains a set of listed gate piers with elaborate wrought iron gates (circa 1600) believed to be the work of Robert Bakewell.



Plate 3: Gate Piers and Wrought Iron Gates, South of Hoar Cross Hall

To the west of the Hall a group of Victorian cottages lies to the rear of the nursing home, hidden largely behind the boundary wall to the enclosed garden of the pair of cottages to the north. A courtyard is enclosed by the cottages and nursing home forming a focal point for this group. The two cottages fronting St Michael's Drive are late nineteenth century, plaques on the gable ends date these at 1873. The cottages are red brick, with clay tile roofs. The garden of the southern most cottage is enclosed by a three metre high red brick wall. The wall is topped with flat rectangular coping stones, and includes an arched wooden door. Also forming part of this group is the former stable block to the Hall now

converted to a private dwelling. The former stables were designed by Bodley, and built in 1871. It is set back from the road, and screened by wooded copices to the east and west of the entrance. Post and rail fences bound the road along the properties boundary.

To the east lies the Church of The Holy Angels, the Vicarage and Church Cottage. The Church of The Holy Angels was built between 1872 and 1876 as a memorial to Hugo Francis Meynell Ingram. Built by G F Bodley, a leading light in the Gothic revival of the late Victorian era, this Church has been described as his finest piece of ecclesiastical work, and houses an elaborate interior. An avenue of Yews leads from the east entrance, to Maker Lane. Directly opposite a semi circle of five trees mark an attractive view eastwards down to the valley floor and hamlet below. Opposite the Church is Church Cottage. This single storey half timbered building screens the larger and more imposing Vicarage to the rear. Built predominantly of red brick with shaped gables and timber framed elements, the Vicarage is hidden from Maker Lane by mature trees although it is visible from the footpath which runs to the valley floor, from the Church. It is topped by four impressive red brick stacks, which dominate the buildings roofscape and add interest to this secluded building.

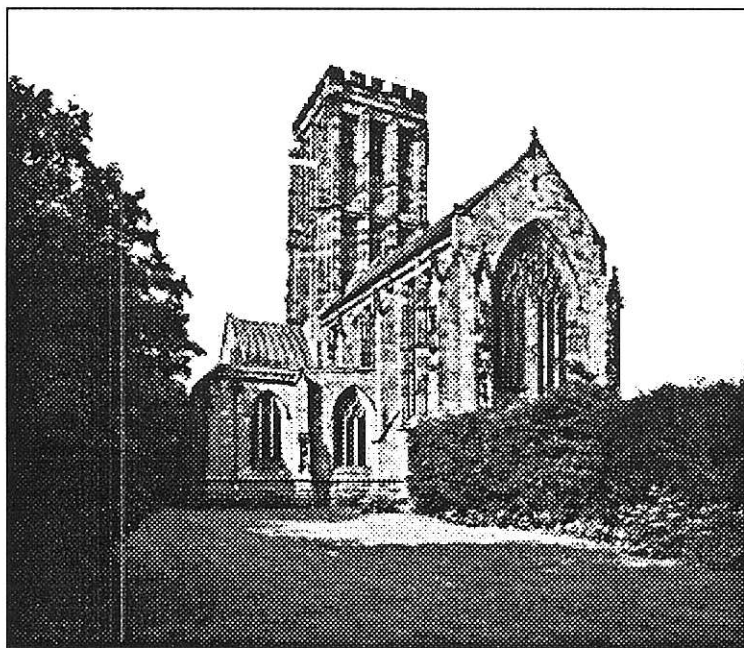


Plate 4: Church of The Holy Angels

Travelling north, the west side of Maker Lane is bounded by a three metre high red brick wall, topped with blue clay saddle coping stones. The wall encloses the eastern side of the Hall, and drops deliberately for a two - three metre section to allow views directly across the valley from the east wing of the Hall. The road level was originally lowered to prevent views back to the Hall, but the level has since been raised.

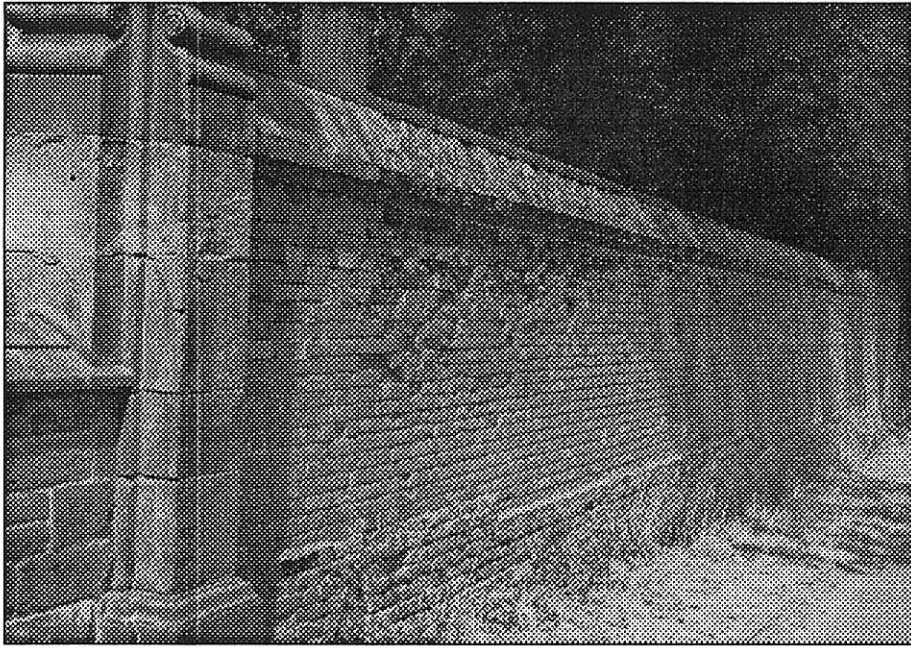


Plate 5: Boundary Wall to Hoar Cross Hall, Maker Lane

Maker Lane joins the Abbots Bromley - Newchurch Road which leads down the gentle slope of the valley to the hamlet. A combination of mixed thorn hedges and post and rail fences bound the road. The hedges here are approximately two metres high and enclose the road, this is especially noticeable when on foot. The School, School House and Brakenhurst Farm make a small but picturesque group of buildings to the south of the road, acting as a prelude to the focal point of the hamlet, the crossroads of Abbots Bromley - Newchurch Road, and Newborough - Yoxall Road. The School was originally founded by Lady Emily Meynell Ingram, the widow of Hugo Francis Meynell Ingram, in the 1880s. It continued as a school until the mid 1980s, and now operates as a day care nursery. This group of buildings stand back from, and above the falling road level, in contrast to those on the valley floor, at the crossroads. They have steep pitched roofs and clay tiles like their counterparts below. The School and School House both have timber framed elements adding to their picturesque qualities.

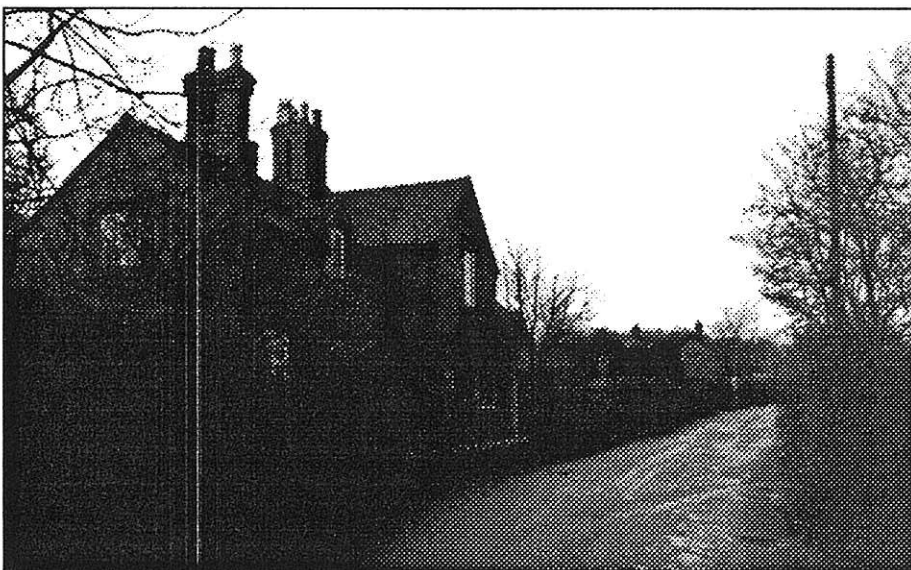


Plate 6: Threefold Cottage, Abbots Bromley - Newchurch Road

Looking Back towards the Hall, the Church is framed by the woodland to the north and south, and dominates the western horizon. The undulating landscape and well established hedgerows provide interest to the foreground.



Plate 7: The Meynell Ingram Arms

The Meynell Ingram Arms forms a focal point at the crossroads. A two storey brick building with tiled roof, it has shallow bay windows, and a small courtyard to the rear. The public house has single storey buildings to the rear enclosing the courtyard, and a flat roof extension protrudes from the main west-east wing towards the car park. Adjoining the public house is a large gravel car park bounded by trees. Opposite is a line of six yews which provide glimpses into and out of the hamlet. A cast iron signpost still remains at the crossroads, which was once topped with a Staffordshire Knot. Diagonally opposite the Meynell Ingram Arms are two Victorian Cottages also brick and tile, the windows have hood mouldings, in stone, which are typical features of Hoar Cross. The southern most cottage retains an original white wooden picket fence, which was also once typical of Hoar Cross. At the north east corner of the crossroads stands another building now converted to a dwelling.

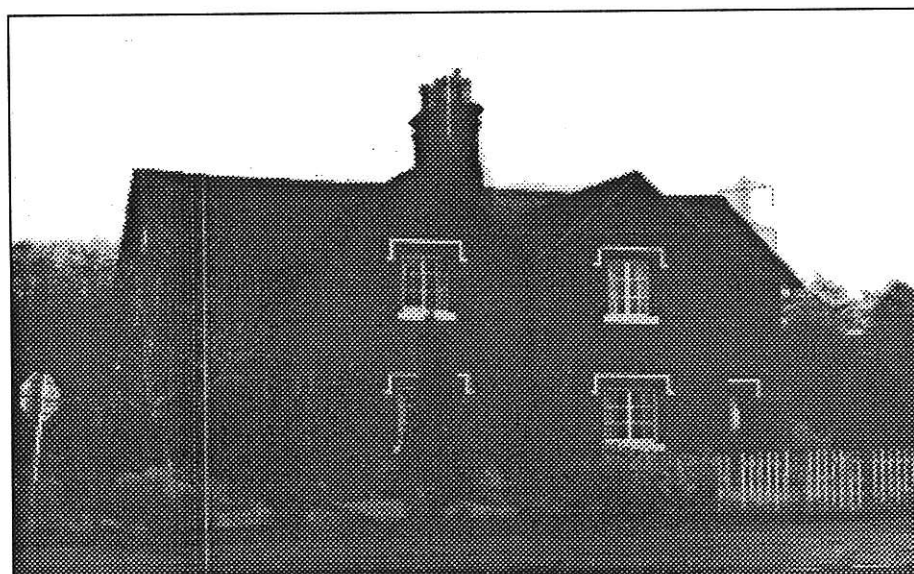


Plate 8: West and East Cottages, Hoar Cross

Looking north from the crossroads the skyline is dominated by the overhead power cables and pylons which are visually intrusive upon the landscape.

Hedgerows and individual trees throughout the Conservation Area make an important contribution to the landscape. In some areas these hedgerows have been replaced by post and rail fences. Hedgerows provide a more typical boundary treatment and their retention, and reinstatement is desirable.

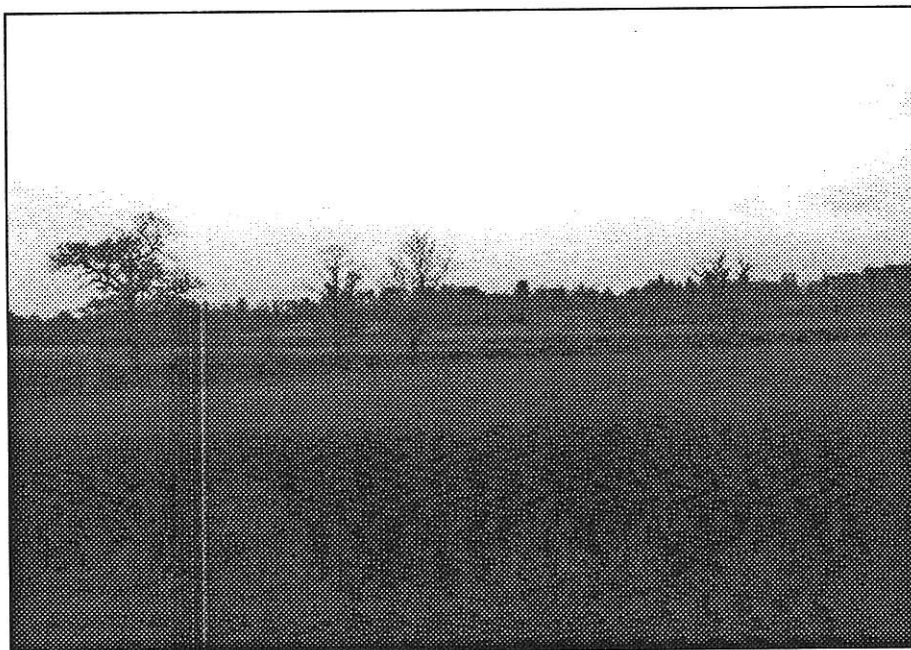


Plate 9: Looking west towards the Church of The Holy Angels,
from Yoxall - Newborough Road, Hoar Cross

The area that has been designated for conservation purposes is centred on land which formed part of the former Meynell Ingram Estate. It includes the principal buildings associated with the Hall, the attached landscaped gardens, and historic parkland, down to the picturesque hamlet of Hoar Cross in the valley below. The area has a distinctively rural character which is derived from its historical association, and the patronage of the Meynell Ingram family.

Proposals for Enhancement

Much can be achieved if everyone is aware of the advantages of Conservation Area status. Positive protection of the attractive features of the area, improvements in the physical and visual amenities, and ensuring that the continuous activities of repairs, decorating, and maintaining buildings all contribute to the quality of the environment.

Most of the buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area are well maintained, with few areas in need of visual improvement.

Many of the enhancement proposals outlined below apply generally throughout the Conservation Area, and then seek to encourage the repair of buildings, prominent structures such as boundary walls and the improvement of spaces between buildings with landscape proposals. The plan identifies areas where specific enhancement opportunities exist. The success of the enhancement proposals will depend largely on the level of local support and the extent of public, and private financial resources. However opportunities may exist to bring forward such schemes in association with applications for planning permission, or other projects undertaken by private developers, the Local Authority, or statutory undertakers.

Maker Lane

- Promote grant aid for the repair of the red brick wall enclosing the Hall, fronting Maker Lane, especially the area nearest the Church.
- Diagonally opposite the Church an electricity sub station is only partially hidden from view. This structure could be screened more effectively especially considering its prominent position regarding the lowered section of the boundary wall.
- The Borough Council would encourage repairs to the external stone work of the Church of The Holy Angels.

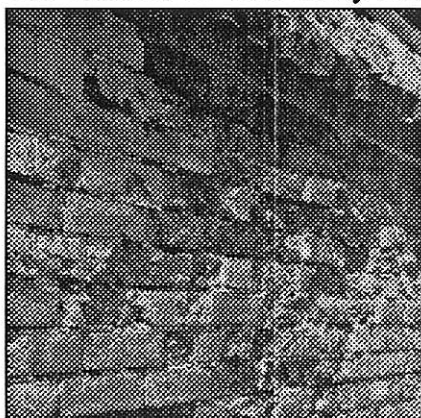


Plate 10: Boundary Wall, Maker Lane



Plate 11: Stonework, Church of The Holy Angels

St Michael's Drive

- Promote planting of woodland to screen the cabins used for the golf driving range more effectively from the road.
- Encourage the reinstatement of mixed thorn hedgerow alongside the golf driving range, particularly that area which is currently enclosed by a barbed wire fence.
- Encourage the repair of the wall enclosing the garden of Park Cottages.

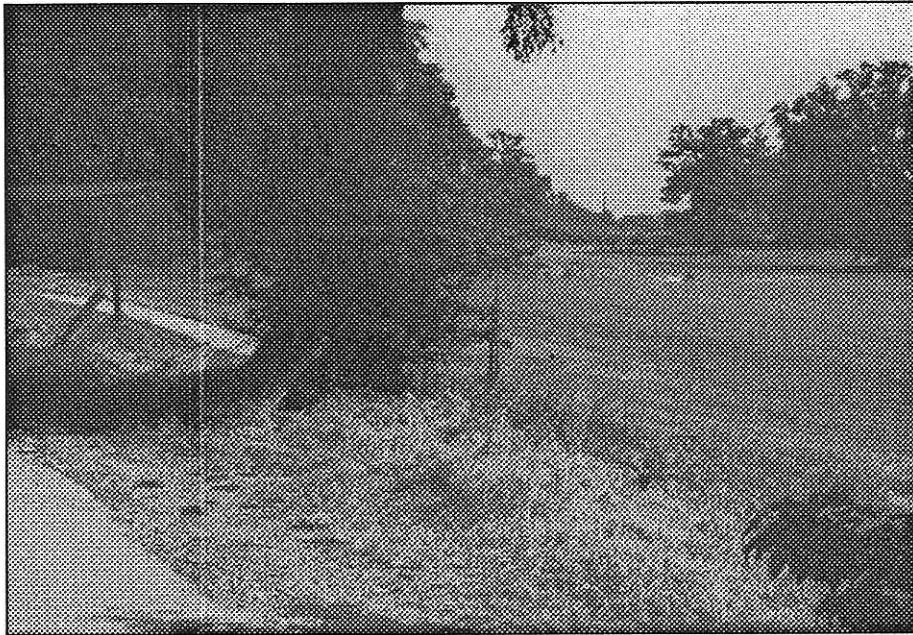


Plate 12: St. Michaels Drive, Hoar Cross

Abbots Bromley - Newchurch Road

- The erection of a stable block to the rear of Yew Tree Cottage, has proved to be rather intrusive on the landscape. A scheme which would integrate the stables more effectively in the landscape would be welcomed.
- The car park of the Meynell Ingram Arms is enclosed to the left and rear by a thin line of trees. A scheme of planting especially to the left of the car park would be encouraged in order to screen the telephone exchange. The roadside verge of the par park could also be improved with the planting of small shrubs and trees.



Plate 13: Meynell Ingram Arms Car Park

Cross Roads

- The Borough Council will encourage the reinstatement and repair of the white picket fences on the road frontage of West and East Cottage, and the reinstatement of the Staffordshire Knot to the cast iron signpost.



Plate 14: Signpost and White Picket Fences, Hoar Cross

General Proposals

- The Council will promote awareness of its policies for the Conservation Area.
- The Council will encourage the repair of listed, and other traditional buildings within the Conservation Area with the promotion of its historic building grants scheme.
- Statutory undertakers will be encouraged to have regard to the amenities of the Conservation Area, when undertaking work. Attempts will be made to improve the standards of finishes/materials where possible, and to provide telephone and power lines underground.
- The care and maintenance of the trees and hedges which contribute to much of the character of the area will be supported. Advice about these matters is available from the Council's Landscape Architect.

Design Guidance

Design Advice for New Buildings

Successful building design is not just a matter of what a new building or extension will look like. It is the relationship new buildings and structures will have to the prevailing character of the area. The historic layout of property boundaries, the scale and proportions of buildings, their relationship to the street, characteristic materials and detailing and the quality of landscaping between buildings all contribute to the particular character of the Conservation Area.

A method of achieving this is to encourage new buildings to perpetuate and complement traditional styles. Whilst it is not intended that all new buildings directly copy traditional buildings new developments should establish a good relationship with existing buildings and the landscape setting. Successful buildings will only come through a shared understanding and a partnership between the planning authority, developers and the local community. A lot will depend on careful consideration of siting, form, detailing, scale and materials. These elements are considered below in greater detail.

Siting

Hoar Cross Conservation Area covers a large rural landscape. The principal building of the Hall is set back some way from the road in mixed woodland, and parkland. The other buildings of Hoar Cross are clustered in small groups to the west and east of the Hall.

In the Hamlet itself there are two groups of buildings, those centred on the former School, and those centred on the crossroads of the Meynell Ingram Arms. The group of buildings centred on the former School stand slightly back from the roads, whilst those focused around the cross roads front the road.

Form

Hoar Cross is characterised predominantly by its brick buildings with steeply pitched roofs, many clad with Staffordshire blue clay tiles, with moulded barge boards, and others with brick detailing to verges, hood mouldings are also prevalent. Many of the cottages are one and a half storeys with rooms within the roof space. Most of the nineteenth century and earlier buildings have narrow gable widths, and some have single or two storey extensions or outbuildings. Gabled dormer windows appear throughout the Conservation Area often with moulded barge boards and other buildings have dormers within roof space. Robust chimney stacks, door cases and porches add interest.

Detailing

Many of the vernacular buildings in Hoar Cross have window, door and roof details that can be found throughout this part of Staffordshire. Designers are advised to study the detailing of buildings within the locality before deciding on the details to be used.

Scale

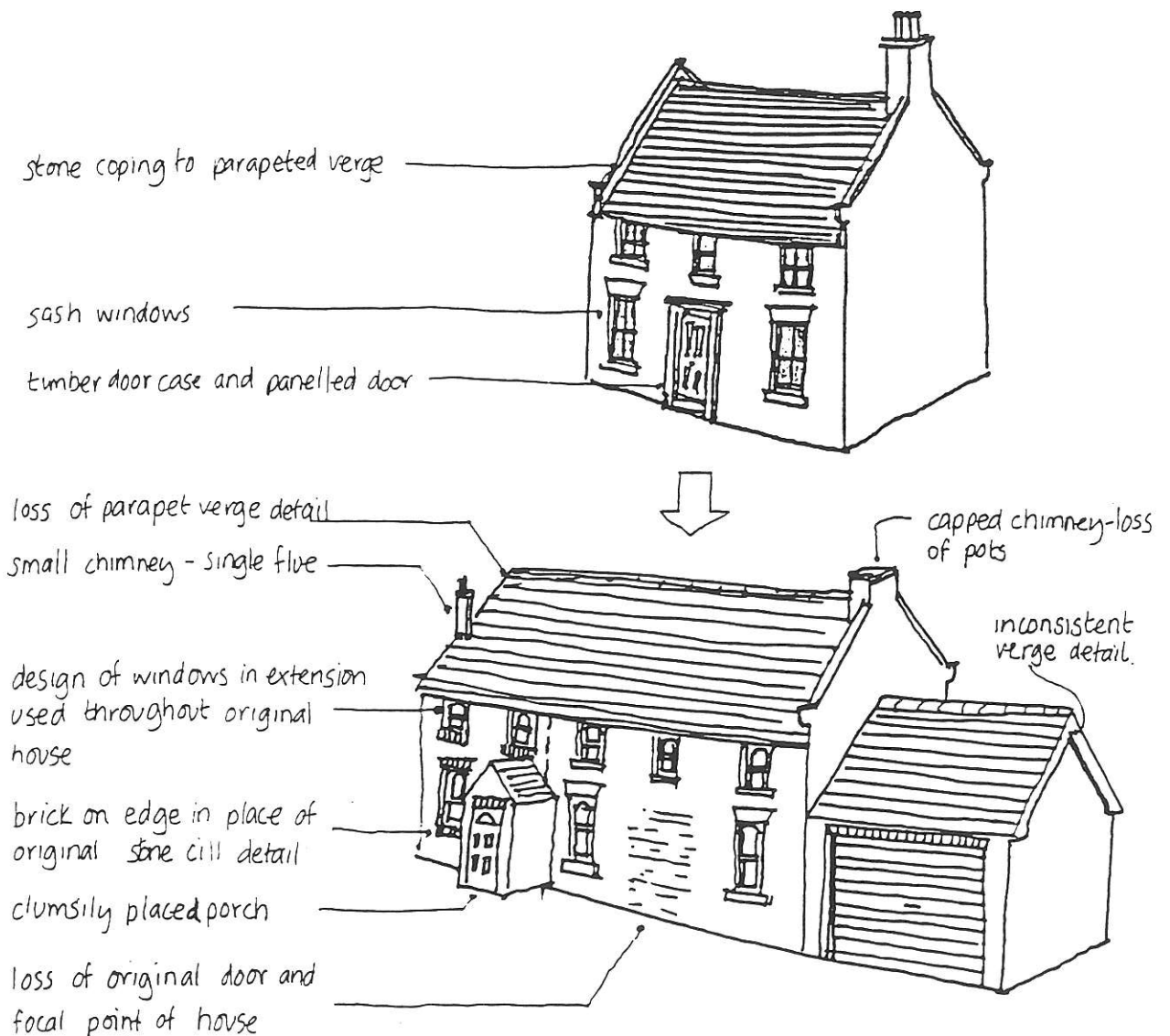
If infill sites are identified the question of scale is particularly important. The design of new buildings is influenced by building regulations, contemporary construction practices and expectations of room size, height and layout. This can result in buildings which are out of scale with their surroundings. In particular new buildings or extensions should respect the scale and proportions (such as gable width and roof pitch) of existing traditional buildings.

Most sites will require special designs which respect the particular qualities of the area.

Design Advice For Extensions

As with new buildings, it is the Borough Council's intention to require the design of extensions to be of a high standard. Many of the domestic properties in Hoar Cross are traditional buildings with steeply pitched roofs, narrow spans and restrained but careful detailing. Poorly designed and/or excessively large extensions can completely envelope the original building such that its character and identity are lost. In many cases extensions in excess of 25% of the volume can be visually detrimental to the original character of the building. A successfully designed extension is usually one that appears to be part of the original design in terms of its form, materials and detailing. It should also be of a scale that ensures that the original architectural character of the building continues to prevail. Where an extension will be prominent it is often desirable to provide a visual break between the new and existing work. If new walls are set back from the plane of existing walls this helps to avoid unsightly bonding and colour differences in brickwork. When planning permission is required designers are advised to discuss their proposals with the Borough Council at an early stage to identify any particular constraints of a site.

The charm of a traditional cottage can be systematically eroded and overwhelmed by unsympathetic extensions and alterations. See illustration below.



The Repair Of Buildings

Modernisation, restoration, alteration, repair, and maintenance, are words used by those involved with old buildings, although some have come to mean different things to different people whilst the repair of a building in a Conservation Area is nearly always desirable the same is not necessarily true for modernisation.

a) Modernisation

The installation of a fitted kitchen and bathroom, loft installation and central heating are works often described as modernisation although none of these features need alter the appearance or character of the building. Modernisation can equally refer to the use of contemporary materials such as uPVC windows, large concrete roof tiles, tyrolean render, etc. many of which can have a significantly detrimental effect on the character of a traditional building.

b) Restoration

Restoration is to return a building or feature back to what it used to be in previous times. It can refer to minor repair and reinstatement of, for example, a window frame or it could mean the rebuilding of a dilapidated part of a building. Unfortunately many humble cottages lose their identity as a result of over zealous "*restoration*". It is understandable that owners will wish to refurbish their newly purchased property. However, all too often features such as chimney stacks, doors, windows, staircases and low ceilings are removed in the name of restoration. Restoration is an ambiguous term which serves as a catch-all for a range of associated activities. Where restoration is desirable its success relies on accurate interpretation of historic detail. For further advice on appropriate methods of restoration contact the Borough Council's Conservation Officer.

c) Alteration

An alteration can consist of the removal of a partition wall or the provision of a casement window in place of a vertically sliding sash unit. It can also refer to the replacement of floors or the provision of a new window or chimney stack. Equally the removal of features from a particular period to reveal earlier work is also an alteration. Often the character of a building is derived from features representative of a number of different periods. Many fine Georgian or Victorian interior fittings such as doors, panelling and fireplaces can be found in seventeenth century or earlier buildings. The value of many historic buildings is derived from the way they have been adapted or altered to reflect changes in taste. To remove eighteenth and nineteenth century interior features in an effort to recreate earlier work is usually undesirable and simply produces a modern pastiche.

Old buildings should be appreciated for what they are. It is not possible to make a traditional building perform as efficiently to provide the same level of amenity as a contemporary building without damaging or removing some feature of interest. Prospective and existing owners of historic buildings, particularly where these are listed, should be aware that living in such buildings may impose additional lifestyle constraints. It is always advisable to seek advice from the Borough Council first.

d) Repair

Repair work refers to a reinstatement of a damaged part of a particular feature, structural element or component. This could mean the splicing of a new cill section to a window frame, the re-pointing of a chimney stack or the replacement of a damaged section of guttering.

A repair implies that no alteration will take place i.e. a repair of window joinery will recreate the exact profile of original features such as the glazing bars. The Borough Council operates a grant scheme to offer financial assistance towards the cost of repair works to Listed Buildings and other traditional buildings situated within the Conservation Area. Contact the Conservation Officer for details.

e) Maintenance

Maintenance generally refers to minor works or repairs to ensure the building performs as it should. It includes the cleaning of gutters and gulleys, the painting of joinery, the replacement of slipped roof tiles or the re-pointing of brickwork.

So many costly building repairs could be avoided if a few simple rules of maintenance are followed.

A watchful eye and an understanding of how buildings work pays dividends. Very often buildings which are unused or underused are left by their owners without even the most elementary degree of maintenance. Some of these essential maintenance jobs cost nothing.

Water is the most common agent of destruction and water penetration can lead to hundreds, and in the long run, thousands of pounds worth of damage when left untreated.

Ten simple, and mostly inexpensive, rules of maintenance are given here. Check them off against your own building and save yourself money.

1. Regularly Clean Out Gutters and Gulleys

- Continual leaks from gutters, hopperheads and downpipes will throw water against specific parts of outside walls. As well as producing unsightly stains and encouraging vegetable growth, these points will become saturated and any timber built into them will rot.
- All rainwater goods should be inspected once a year to make sure that leaves and silt do not collect and cause blockages, and to make sure that all joints are watertight.
- Always start from the top and work downwards.
- Finally, at ground level, make sure the gulleys and drains are free from blockages.

2. Replace Slipped Roof Tiles and Check All Copings and Flashings

- Make sure replacement tiles match. Rosemary (Staffordshire Blue) tiles are still made but demolition contractors can often supply good second-hand tiles. If you find a good supply, buy enough to keep some spare.
- Check battens are sound before laying new tiles. Most repairs to old roofs require expert skills, especially repairs involving joints and flashings.

3. Remove Banked Earth From The Foot Of Walls

- One of the simplest and most beneficial maintenance jobs is the removal of banked earth from the foot of walls. If a building has a damp proof course (d.p.c.), the outside earth-level should be at least 6" below it. Even if there is no d.p.c., (and most houses built before about 1875 do not have one) it is sensible to keep the outside ground level below the inside floor level so that the parts of walls abutting floors can "breathe" and dry out.

4. Ventilation

- If the free-flowing of air is impeded in roof spaces, in cellars, under suspended timber floors and in disused chimney flues, there will be a danger of damp leading to rot. Because of this, air bricks or vents should be inspected and cleaned annually to ensure they never become blocked.

5. Remove Ivy From Badly Pointed Walls and Remove any Plants Which are Growing Out of a Wall

- In walls, copings, gutters, chimney stacks and elsewhere this is an obvious elementary task that is nevertheless often left undone.
- If left to grow, the roots of saplings and the aerial roots of ivy can cause severe cracking and, eventually, structural failure and collapse.
- When cutting down ivy, sever it at the roots and leave it for a season so that it is quite dead before ripping it off. This way any damage to the wall will be minimised.

6. Paint External Walls Every Four Years

- External woodwork and ironwork should be painted about every four years if the protective coat is to remain effective. Basically, the process should include washing to remove dirt, rubbing and scraping down to remove flaking paint, stopping up cracks, painting all bare wood or metal with the correct primer, then an undercoat, which is rubbed down before the application of a top coat. Remember to paint the tops and undersides of doors and windows and cills.

7. Recreate-Point Walls and Chimney Stacks When Necessary

- Re-pointing is important when necessary but so often it is done badly and some times it is carried out when not necessary. Contact the Conservation Officer for advice before re-pointing.

8. To Clean Stone and Brick, Wash It- Do Not Blast It

- The use of sand blasting as a technique for cleaning stone and brickwork is growing in popularity but in most cases it is a bad choice since it has two basic drawbacks. Firstly, it removes the surface skin or crust of stone and brick which can vastly increase the vulnerability of the materials to weather attack, and secondly, it blunts sharp edges, thereby spoiling any architectural details the building may have, such as mouldings around doors and windows.
- Please seek professional advice before cleaning brick and stone.

9. Avoid Cheap Substitute Materials - They May Cost You More In The Long Run

- A stop-gap repair job using a cheap substitute material rather than the proper thing usually leads to a waste of money in the long run.

For example, there is no real substitute for lead for flashings. Cheap alternatives soon need to be replaced. To take another example, blue clay tiles and stone slate roofs, once laid, will outlast concrete tiles.

- Also, there is the likelihood of spoiling the appearance of a building if a "*proper*" job is not done. A good example of this is the use of "*off-the-peg*" replacement doors and windows instead of obtaining reproductions of the originals from a joiner. Admittedly, this usually costs more but often the *real* price of a factory-made substitute is the loss of the building's character and could devalue the property.

10. Do Not Alter Listed Buildings Without Permission

- If you own a listed building or think your building may be listed, always check with the Borough Council before you get involved in detailed building plans. Not only can this save you from prosecution (in most cases where work is carried out without consent) and from planning delays, but it can also save you time and money since you will be able to obtain expert advice upon the best way to tackle the problem.
- If you intend to undertake major works you should retain the services of a professional architect sympathetic to historic building practices. You will be likely to recoup the cost of professional fees in the long run by obtaining an attractive and trouble-free job.

Contact Points

- 1 For further advice on development proposals for new buildings, extensions etc:

Tony Young, Area Planning Officer, tel: (01283) 508539

- 2 For advice about listed building control, methods of repair, suitable materials and grant aid:

Ian Kilby, Conservation Officer, tel: (01283) 508661

- 3 For advice about trees, hedges and landscaping:

Peter Wood, Landscape Architect, tel : (01283) 508553

at the:

East Staffordshire Borough Council,
Development Services,
Midland Grain Warehouse,
Derby Street,
Burton upon Trent,
Staffordshire,
DE14 2JJ.

Bibliography and Suggested Reading

Borough of East Staffordshire (1993), **“Countryside Design Summary”**

Brunskill, R.W. (1987), **“Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture”**
Faber.

Harris, R. (1979), **“Discovering Timber Framed Buildings”** Shire Publications

Johnson, A. (1980) **“How To Restore and Improve Your Victorian House.”**
David & Charles.

Lander, H. (1989), **“The House Restorers Guide”** David & Charles.

Summerson, J. (1980), **“The Classical Language of Architecture”** Thomas &
Hudson.

Watkin, D. (1990), **“English Architecture”** Thomas & Hudson.

A series of Technical Pamphlets have been published by The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings which provide useful advice about the repair of historic buildings.

These are available from:

The S.P.A.B.
37, Spital Square,
London.
E1 6DY.