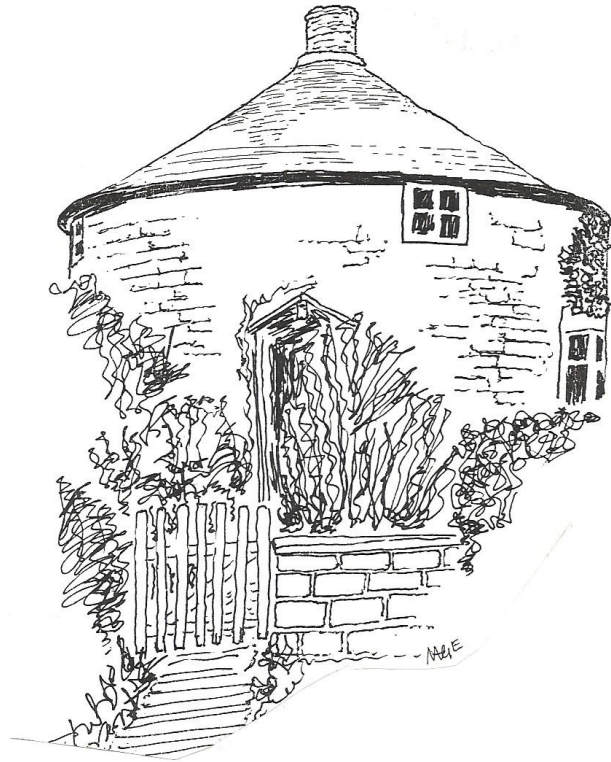


CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



ASTON-ON-CLUN

Designated 16TH DECEMBER 1993



PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREA) ACT, 1990

ASTON-ON-CLUN CONSERVATION AREA

STATEMENT

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1. PLAN OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT, 1990

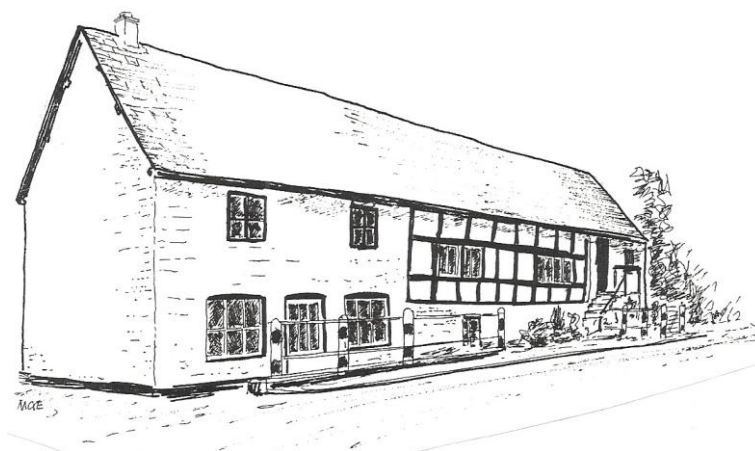
ASTON-ON-CLUN CONSERVATION AREA

1.0 THE EXTENT OF ASTON-ON-CLUN CONSERVATION AREA

- 1.1 The Aston-on-Clun Conservation Area consists of most of the village of Aston-on-Clun and its immediate environs, as illustrated in the Aston-on-Clun Conservation Area Plan.

2.0 THE DESIGNATION OF ASTON-ON-CLUN CONSERVATION AREA

- 2.1 Aston-on-Clun Conservation Area was designated as a conservation area by South Shropshire Council on 16th December 1993 in accordance with the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.



3.0 THE HISTORY OF ASTON-ON-CLUN

- 3.1 The name of the village refers to the River Clun which passes close to the settlement and the word “Aston”, a common name derived from the Old English “East-Tun” meaning eastern-tun; “Tun” being enclosure, farm etc.
- 3.2 Aston-on-Clun is famous for its Arbor Tree. Every year on the last Sunday in May, a black Poplar in the centre of the village is decorated with flags. The ancient custom of tree dressing derives from a Celtic ritual. The shrine of the Celtic Goddess Bride was a tree and trees used to be dressed in her honour. In Aston-on-Clun, a pageant leads the mock bride and groom to the tree where dancing takes place.
- 3.3 Several of the village’s houses date from the 17th and 18th Centuries. The oldest remaining properties have 14th Century origins.

4.0 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ASTON-ON-CLUN CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

- 4.1 Aston-on-Clun is one of the small villages situated on the B4368, Craven Arms to Clun road. It still contains services that many similar villages have lost; a public house, shop and garage. A new village hall has been constructed.
- 4.2 A character appraisal of the village has been carried out and the main findings are

set out under the following headings: -

Setting
Archaeological Significance
Architectural and Historic Quality
Street Scene
Key Buildings
Materials
Natural Features

Setting

- 4.3 Aston-on-Clun is a village situated in the picturesque Clun Valley. Part of the settlement is within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The village is in the parish of Hopesay and contains approx. 90 dwellings.

Archaeological Significance

- 4.4 The following are classed as monuments in the Aston-on-Clun Conservation Area: -

- The Old Court House (Grade II Listing)
(A late 18th Century farmhouse, now house
Late 18th Century to 20th Century (post-WW2) - 1767 AD to 1999 AD
The Old Court House was originally a farmhouse and is now a house, and is of the late 18th Century with later additions and alterations. It is a 2-storey with attic building in uncoursed limestone rubble with a slate roof and a stone dentilled eaves cornice; it also has a cellar.)
- The Malthouse and No 14 (Malthouse Cottage, formerly listed as 'Naylor's Stores') (Grade II Listing)
(A mid 17th Century house
17th Century to 20th Century (post-WW2) - 1600 AD to 1999 AD
A house, which was latterly partly converted to a malthouse, then a shop and which has now reverted to domestic use. A 2-storey building with 3 storeys to the malthouse, including a semi-basement, it is of the mid 17th Century and was partly remodelled in the early 19th Century with later additions and alterations. It is of timber frame with rendered infill construction with a painted uncoursed limestone rubble plinth and additions, and has a plain tile roof)
- Aston Hall (Grade II Listing)
(Early 19th Century - 1800 AD to 1832 AD)
- Nos 1 and 2, Brook Cottage (Grade II Listing)
(16th Century to Early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1500 AD to 1913 AD)
- No 5 Mill Street (formerly listed as Round House opposite Baptist Chapel) (Grade II Listing)
(Late 18th Century - 1767 AD to 1799 AD
(A 2 storey estate cottage of probably the late 18th Century, with the eaves raised in 1825 (datestone) and minor later additions and alterations. It is of roughly coursed limestone rubble construction with a conical slate roof with slates becoming smaller to the top)
- Former Primitive Methodist Chapel
(A nonconformist chapel of 19th century date

Mid 19th Century - 1862 AD

Red brick and slate, altered three-bay front with round-arched entrance and tablet '...1862 Ebenezer'.)

- No 4 Clun Road (Grade II Listing)
(Late 18th Century - 1767 AD to 1799 AD
An estate cottage of probably the late 18th Century with minor later alterations in uncoursed limestone rubble construction with a conical graded slate roof)

Architectural and Historic Quality

- 4.5 The buildings of the village are mainly of stone construction, several are buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest and date from the 17th and 18th Centuries. The oldest properties, 1 and 2 Brook Cottages have a 14th Century core of cruck construction and were remodelled in the 17th and 18th Century. They are now mainly roughcast finish over timber frame. Aston-on-Clun also has two round houses, built in the 18th Century in uncoursed limestone, with conical graded slate roofs. These were former estate cottages.

Street Scene

- 4.6 Other buildings of the settlement add to the townscape value of Aston-on-Clun. For instance, Nos. 8 to 11, a terrace, and No. 12 are stone cottages, which form a valuable group. The Kangaroo Inn and the small cottages at the eastern approach to the village are of particular value. The pleasant Mill Lane, with its stone and brick buildings, including two former chapels, adds to this special character.

Key Buildings

- 4.7 **Aston Hall** is a house, which is now divided into flats, of circa 1830 with later additions and alterations. It is constructed of roughcast brick or rubblestone with a low-pitched hipped slate roof concealed by a moulded eaves parapet with a rendered ridge and integral lateral stacks. 5 x 5 bays with 3 gables are to the rear, with the centre recessed. It has 3 storeys with continuous stone sill bands, moulded to the second floor, a moulded eaves cornice and 5 windows with glazing bar sashes, including some dummies to the returns. The central entrance has a stone Greek Doric porch with 2 pairs of fluted columns and moulded entablature with triglyphs and metopes over a recessed 6-panel door (upper panels now glazed) with panelled reveals and a rectangular barred overlight.
- 4.8 **Nos 1 and 2, Brook Cottage** was originally one house and is now divided. It has a 14th or 15th Century core and was remodelled in the 17th and 18th Centuries with later additions and alterations. 2 storeys, of roughcast timber frame and partly of cruck construction, and on a regularly coursed and dressed limestone block plinth, it is higher to the right, with roughly coursed limestone rubble to the right gable end, and a slate roof. Originally it was probably an open-hall house of 4 cruck-framed bays, floored over, with a stack inserted and extended in the 17th Century, and with the eaves raised in the 18th Century. 2 storeys. The casements are of the 20th Century with 6 directly below the eaves and 2 on each side of the roughly central 20th Century half-glazed door under a contemporary gabled hood. The prominent rendered octagonal brick ridge stack has concave sides, with a dripstone and capping directly above, forming a baffle entry. The capstone is a mid 20th Century addition. There is a small red brick stack immediately behind the ridge to the right. The former roofline is visible to the right gable end. The interior of No. 1 (left part) has the timber frame (square panels) fragmentarily exposed throughout including to the wide single-bay 17th Century addition to the rear on the left, which has a collar and tie beam end truss. The left ground-floor room has a deep-chamfered

crossbeam with heavy joists and a partly infilled inglenook fireplace with a chamfered wooden lintel; an Oak winder staircase is to the right of the fireplace. The first floor has wide boarded oak floorboards and a chamfered cruck blade with the remains of arch bracing visible in the room behind and to the right of the stack (bathroom). The apex of this cruck blade is not visible in the roof space (plastered over and apparently truncated) but part of the corresponding blade is visible to the front. There is apparently another cruck truss to the left of the large plaster-covered stack and possibly also to No. 2. The left ground-floor room of No. 2 (to the right of the stack) is noted as having 2 chamfered spine beams with heavy joists and an inglenook fireplace with a chamfered wooden lintel. The right room (now divided) has 2 chamfered spine beams and heavy joists.

4.9 **No 5 Mill Street**, formerly listed as the Round House opposite the Baptist Chapel, is an estate cottage of probably the late 18th Century. The eaves were raised in 1825 (datestone) and minor additions and alterations were later carried out. A 2-storey circular building of roughly coursed limestone rubble construction, it has a conical slate roof with slates becoming smaller to the top, a circular stone stack to the centre and a crude dentilled eaves cornice. The small casements are of the 19th and 20th Centuries with those to the first floor directly below the eaves and with a late 19th Century canted bay window (former shop front) to the right of the front entrance. It has a 4-panel door under a gabled timber porch and a datestone "FM/1825" above. The interior has exposed joists and a stone fireplace to the front ground-floor room.

4.10 **No 4 Clun Road** is an estate cottage of probably the late 18th Century with minor later alterations. A 2-storey circular building in uncoursed limestone rubble, it has a conical graded slate roof with a circular stone stack to the centre. It has 19th Century cast-iron casements, one on each floor to the front with the one on the first floor directly below the eaves and with a tall narrow 20th Century window to the left on the ground floor. The round-headed entrance to the front has a boarded door with a semi-circular fanlight. The interior has one ground-floor room with an open fireplace with a segmental wooden lintel and has unworked tree branches as joists.

Materials

4.11 The building materials used in Aston-on-Clun include uncoursed limestone rubble, brick, timber framing, painted limestone and slate roofs. The use of these traditional materials is complemented by the natural stonewalls that mark the frontage of many of the properties.



Natural Features

4.12 One of the main factors contributing to the character of Aston-on-Clun is the high landscape quality, as would be expected on the edge of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Besides the wealth of hedges and shrubs, there are many fine

mature trees. Those of particular note are the black Poplar already mentioned, the Cypresses adjoining the Kangaroo Inn and the trees within Aston Hall grounds. The stream, a tributary of the River Clun, which flows through the village, makes its own contribution to the village scene.

5.0 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 Conservation areas are defined by section 69 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as "...areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". This is a strictly applied definition and should not be confused with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or other designated areas.
- 5.2 Conservation areas are designated by Local Planning Authorities, usually after public consultation, although this is not a legal requirement.

The Effect of Conservation Area Status

The consequences of designation as a conservation area are as follows:

- 5.3 The Local Planning Authority is under a duty "from time to time" to publish and consult on proposals to preserve and enhance conservation areas.
- 5.4 In dealing with planning applications in conservation areas, the Local Planning Authority 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 conservation areas than elsewhere.
- 5.5 Outline planning applications will not normally be entertained.
- 5.6 Planning applications in conservation areas must be advertised as prescribed by Regulations.
- 5.7 It is an **offence** to demolish a building or structure in a conservation area without the consent of the Local Planning Authority. There are some exceptions – please ask before taking action.
- 5.8 English Heritage has the power to make grants or loans for preservation or enhancement, although none are currently available.
- 5.9 It is an **offence** to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy a tree in a conservation area without having given 6 weeks notice to the Local Planning Authority. There are some exceptions – please ask before taking action.
- 5.10 Permitted development and the right to display advertisements are more limited than elsewhere.
- 5.11 Telecommunications operators have more onerous obligations placed on them.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 5

PPS5 is the current policy guidance on protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

Development proposals in conservation areas will need to take into account the requirements of PPS5 and in particular the extracts below.

6.1 Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the Historic Environment

HE10.1 Special regard should be given to such matters as scale, height, form, massing, respect for the traditional pattern of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, and detailed design (e.g. the scale and spacing of window openings, and the nature and quality of materials)

HE10.2 Whilst the character and appearance of conservation areas should always be given full weight in planning decisions, the objective of preservation can be achieved either by development, which makes a positive contribution to an areas character or appearance, or by development which leaves character and appearance unharmed.

6.2 In determining applications for proposals to which this policy guidance applies, the Council will have regard to:

Any conservation area statement or village design statement;

The quality of the design and the appropriateness of the proposed use;

The appropriateness of materials and building techniques

Reasons

- a) To ensure new development in a conservation area preserves or enhances its character and appearance and conserves its distinctive qualities;
- b) To ensure that the character or appearance of a conservation area is not adversely affected by the demolition of buildings;
- c) To conform to Policy QE5 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy;
- d) To conform to PPS5

7.0 Guidance on the policy criteria

7.1 **Special regard given to the scale, design and materials** means that new developments must blend in with the character of the area, not that individuals building styles must be copied.

7.2 The requirement for **demolition of buildings in conservation areas** to be part of the scheme of redevelopment is to avoid unsightly gaps occurring in street frontages.

7.3 There is specific **Supplementary Planning Guidance**:

- Conservation Area statements for most conservation areas
- A variety of Town and Village Design Statements

7.4 **Quality and appropriateness of design, materials and use** is required for all proposals in conservation areas. In considering applications for new development in Conservation Areas, the Council will generally have regard to the following criteria:

- The siting of the development must conform to the general pattern of development in the area and not dominate existing buildings or occupy part of their curtilages.
- The scale of the proposal must be in conformity with the scale of existing buildings within that part of the Conservation Area.

- The use should be one, which is appropriate to the area and will give rise to development of an appropriate scale.
- The proportions of the building and its fenestration must be in keeping with the characteristics of existing buildings in the area.
- The alignment of the proposal along its highway frontage must conform to the pattern of development in the area.
- The proposal must maintain the characteristics of the roofline of the street as regards height, shape and pitch of roof and is not be of a height, which would intrude onto the skyline from any viewpoint.
- The proposal should conform to the existing pattern of door and window openings and their detailing prevailing within the area.
- The proposal should be constructed in materials traditionally used in the Conservation Area matching exactly the colour and texture of that material.
- The proposal should retain, restore or add traditional boundary walls in stone or brick in accordance with the tradition in the Conservation Area.
- The proposal should retain existing trees and provide for the planting of new specimen trees where possible.
- The proposal should retain, and take account of traditional burgage plot layouts or other historic plot and layout forms and ancillary buildings and boundary treatments.

8.0 OTHER CRITERIA

- 8.1 As far as possible the Council aims to conserve **traditional shopfronts** by preventing their removal and discouraging unsuitable alterations. Proposals for **new shopfronts and fascias** within conservation areas will be permitted provided: -
- they complement both the architectural character and detail of the building onto which they are to be fitted.
 - they do not result in the removal of any existing separate access to upper storeys or preclude the restoration of such an access if already removed.
- 8.2 Where appropriate the Council, in consultation with the Highway Authority, will seek to introduce schemes to **rationalise traffic and pedestrian signs and other street furniture** in conservation areas in the interests of the amenity. It is recognised that obstructive traffic signs and other street furniture can create 'clutter' and form a visual intrusion that detracts from the appearance and character of the District's conservation areas. The intention of this guidance is to minimise such impacts.
- 8.3 Through the control of new development and Enhancement Schemes carried out in conjunction with the Highway Authority, the Council will ensure that **traditional paved areas** are conserved and maintained. Considerable investment has been made on many listed and non listed buildings in the conservation areas throughout the County. The purpose of this advice is to ensure that similar attention is paid to the space between the buildings in particular the traditional paved areas.

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