

GRINSHILL CONSERVATION AREA - SUMMARY CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Designated September 1976 Population 245



Origins and development of the settlement

Dating back to Saxon times, Grinshill's overall character has been shaped by the local Quarry, the activities of which, can be traced back to the Romans, in their use of the characteristic free-stone at Uriconeum, nr. Wroxeter. Grinshill stone has also been found in the mediaeval Abbey at Buildwas, Moreton Corbet's 13th Century Castle, to many buildings in Shrewsbury itself, including the 17th Century Shrewsbury School (now the library), the Old Market Hall in The Square and the Welsh and English Bridges. The stone was used to build the railway stations at Crewe, Chester Gloucester and Cheltenham, and at the Prime Minister's country retreat, Chequers.

The popularity of the stone provided large employment in the area, which saw the population of the parish rise. In 1676 there were 70 inhabitants, but by the 19th Century, the following figures were recorded: 170 in 1801, doubling to 334 in 1891. Although the Quarry closed in 1926, it is still active today, albeit on a much smaller scale. Many of the houses in Grinshill are built or decorated with the stone, whether with the white free-stone or the red sandstone but all of them also have one common feature – a low wall providing a boundary for the property, although varying in colour and block size, but using readily available materials to enhance and unify the village.

Areas of distinctive character

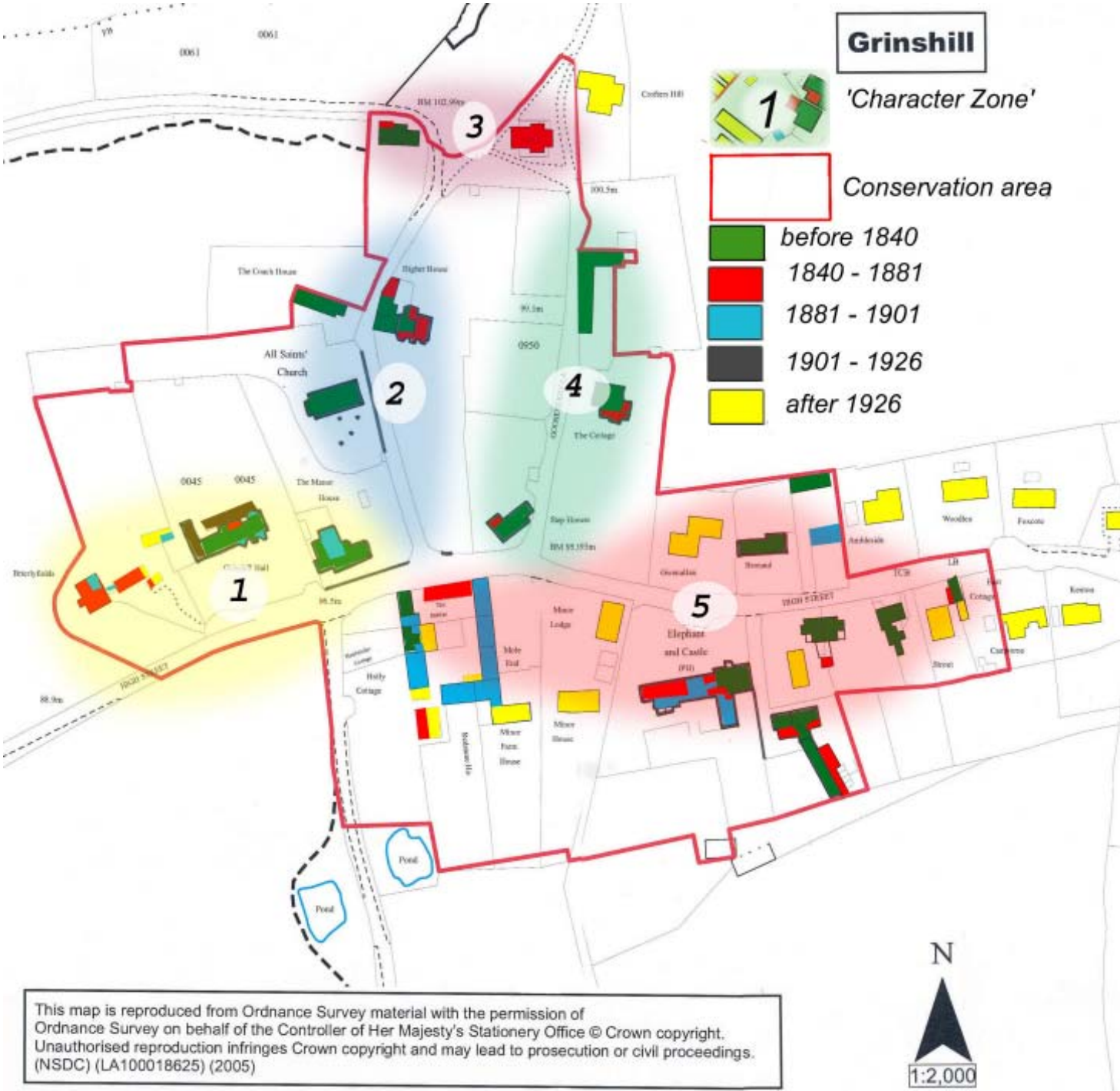
Area 1: Western Entrance to Grinshill - The quieter entrance to the village from the Clive and Wem direction, down a wide single lane. Hedges either side turn into low red sandstone walls, with views across the North Shropshire plane to the right.



The three houses on the left introduces the character of the rest of the village. They are made of either sandstone or brick with sandstone features. They have the air of respectability about them, and seem rather prestigious in their rural setting. The gated entrances are formal with grand gate posts, again using the local stone or brick.



The wrought-iron gates and cast-iron gateposts of The Manor House are emulated over the road on the boundary of a row of red sandstone cottages.



This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (NSDC) (LA100018625) (2005)



Half way up the lane, on the left, is the entrance to the church. The present building dates from 1839-40, although this was consecrated ground before 1130. Although Neo-Norman, part of the West wall may date from the 17th or 18th Century. The South wall is built on the foundations of the old church.



Area 2: Lane up to the Church - The entrance to this single-track lane is flanked with the low stonewalls, with garden hedging behind them, turning them into boundaries above eye-level, which differs from the characteristics of the village.

The churchyard entrance is ornate, but not as formal as others seen in Area 1, with its stone gateposts and wrought-iron archway. There is also evidence of a cobbled road here.

The churchyard contains many listed items, including the church itself. These include the boundary wall and gateway, sundial, the font (now used as a churchyard ornament) and two chest tombs.

The lane itself is fairly quiet, but used by visitors for access onto the hill.



Area 3: Base of Grinshill Hill - A quiet area at the top of the village, at the base of the hill, it feels rather secluded. However, it is accessed via two lanes, and is well used by walkers accessing the hill from several tracks, leading into the trees. The old Sunday school is here, which is now the Village Hall.

Again, local stone is used on the buildings here. A green painted circular metal bench seat around a tree provides rest for weary walkers.



Area 4: Gooseberry Lane - This is the only unadopted lane in the village. It is sandy, which reflects the makeup of the bedrock in the area. It was possibly cobbled at one point but now coarse sand lies on top.

Of the three dwellings on this lane, two of them are timber-framed and therefore do not fit into the overall characteristics of the village, and both have evidence of the roof being raised. Step House has been raised at the front and back, suggesting that the house was once single-storey or one-and-a-half storeyed and thatched. The Cottage has been raised at the front, and the red-nogging, referred to in the list description for the house, has now been painted white. It has been gentrified, with the addition of sash windows, a portico over the door and pediments.



The barn at the north-end of the lane is currently being converted into a dwelling.

It is a very quiet lane, and the lack of traffic is probably due to the nature of the lane's surface.



Area 5: High Street - Essentially, this is the eastern end of the village, although it expands to include the first buildings on the right, as the village is entered from the west. It is interesting to follow the progression of trends through this area of the village, as the buildings to the West are red-sandstone, moving to a majority of brick-built buildings to the east. Even though this is the case, elements of the local stone is still evident. For example, Bronhaul, dated 1771, is red brick on a sandstone plinth.

The east seems to be the busier end of the village. The lane widens, and several amenities are located here – the post box, a telephone box and the bus stop. There is also a restaurant, The Inn (formerly The Elephant and Castle).



The character of the village is still maintained, even beyond the conservation area, by the low stonewall which has run throughout the village, although here we meet an exception. The boundary to The Inn is traditional iron hurdles.

It is the east end of the village that new developments have emerged amongst the older buildings.



Traditional Building Materials

A variety of traditional building materials have been used from timber framing and brick but most notable is the use of the locally quarried Grinshill stone. Its use throughout the village is extensive. Roofs are slate or tiled. Good survival of these traditional materials.