

Conservation Area Appraisal

Planning Guidance for Owners, Occupiers and
Developers



Meole Brace

July 2006

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INTRODUCTION

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities to determine which parts of their area are **“areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as Conservation Areas.”**

Having designated the Conservation Area, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that those elements that form its particular character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced, especially when considering planning applications. It is therefore necessary to define and analyse those qualities or elements that contribute to, or detract from, the special interest of the area and to assess how they combine to justify its designation as a Conservation Area.

The Appraisal takes the form of written text and an Appraisal map. In both respects every effort has been made to include or analyse those elements key to the special character of the area. Where buildings, structures or features have not been specifically highlighted it does not necessarily follow that they are of no visual or historic value to the Conservation Area. The document is intended to be an overall framework and guide within which decisions can be made on a site specific basis.

Meole Brace Conservation Area was first designated on August 4, 1972, and the original boundary was extended in 2006. The Conservation Area is bounded by the solid green line indicated on the Map (Appendix 3) and comprises the historic core of the settlement centred on the Church, glebe land and ornamental grounds to Meole Brace Hall. For the most part the boundaries run along existing fences, watercourses, walls or other property boundaries.

This appraisal of the Meole Brace Conservation Area follows its review in 2005 by Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council and explains what its designation means for those who live and work in the area.

LOCATION AND POPULATION

Today, Meole Brace is a peripheral suburb of Shrewsbury, having once existed independently of the county town, first as a village in Saxon times, and then as a medieval township. It is situated a little over a mile to the south of the Town Centre and is connected to it via Upper Road to Belle Vue, a fashionable 19th Century suburb of Shrewsbury. Hereford Road skirts the village to the east, forming the principal continuation of Belle Vue Road. Much of the historic core of the settlement is surrounded by late 19th Century terraced housing that was built on the back of the burgeoning railway industry in Shrewsbury. Meole Brace would have been home to a significant proportion of the workforce employed by the five railway companies based in the town. More recent inter-war and late 20th Century development forms infill the 19th Century housing situated on the fringes of the old village of Meole.

The population of Meole Brace is about 4,725 (2001 census).



ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Although now a suburb of Shrewsbury, there are indications that Meole is an ancient settlement, possibly much older than Shrewsbury.

Meole lies on the line of a Roman road, which ran from Viroconium (Wroxeter) and forded the Rea Brook at a point near the entrance to the present Moneybrook Estate. The road then ran through the village (adjacent to the Hall) beneath the gardens of Church Row and across the lawn of Ivy House to the entrance of Meole Walk. One hypothesis is that the road branched at this point, with the right fork leading to the Old Roman Road at Kingsland, and thence to Llanymynech. The main route proceeded due west along the line of Stanley Lane and Mousecroft Lane to Cruckton. At the latter the remains of a Roman villa and settlement have been found, situated en route to the Roman camps at Caer Flos (Forden) and Caersws. Along the course of Stanley Lane the remains of Roman road construction have also been uncovered.

making it Meole Bracy. To strengthen his hold he demolished the Saxon manor house and built a stone castle on the site. Upon the death of de Bracy the manor passed to the Lords la Zouche who had large possessions in Derbyshire and seldom visited the village. Meanwhile the Castle stood firm though the village was twice devastated, once by Llewellyn the Great in 1215 (en route to his occupation of Shrewsbury) and then by Owain Glyndwr in 1403 (following the defeat of his ally Hotspur at the Battle of Shrewsbury).

Early Modern History

In 1500 Arthur, Prince of Wales, paid one of his visits to the Castle, which was tenanted by Thomas Mackworth, Groom of the Chamber to King Henry VII. The manor was bequeathed by the Zouches to the Mackworth family in 1537 and then sold in 1579 to Thomas Edwards of Shrewsbury. The manor remained in the Edwards family until 1779 when it was sold by Lady Malpas, last of the line, to one John Bather of Shrewsbury. The Bather family, who are still connected with the Church, has provided no less than five vicars of Meole Bracy and has constantly contributed to the welfare of the village.

Holy Trinity Church

The Parish Church has been rebuilt a number of times. The first three all stood on the same site adjacent to the manor house, to the east of the present Church. There is no record of the building



Medieval development

After the withdrawal of the Romans and eventual Saxon occupation, a manor was established and named Melham (from the Welsh word “moel” or “meol” signifying a hill or rise). The manor house was situated on the Roman road just inside the present Hall driveway and controlled an area of some 2,000 acres including Nobold, Pulley and Edgebold. After the Norman Conquest the manor was held by Ralph de Mortimer but eventually passed to one Adulph de Bracy who added his name to the title,



of the first Church but the date of the second is about 1250. This Church was built of stone with a half-timbered tower, but by the 18th Century was showing signs of decay. Repairs were undertaken in 1724 and again in 1789, but in 1799 it was decided to build a new Church. This third Church was of brick and only lasted seventy years, being considered neither beautiful nor dignified. Archdeacon Bather instigated the building of the fourth and present Church in 1866 with the foundation stone laid in 1867. The site chosen was that of the Old Vicarage and its substantial garden. The new Church was completed in 1869 to the design of Edward Haycock Junior, at a cost of £7,500.



Above: Old School House Cottages
Below: Vicarage Row Cottages



The stained glass windows were executed by William Morris from designs by Sir Edward Burne-Jones and are its most celebrated feature. Mary Webb, the Shropshire novelist, worshipped regularly in the Church from 1902 until her marriage in 1912, as confirmed by a plaque fixed to the old family pew.



Later Development and Social History

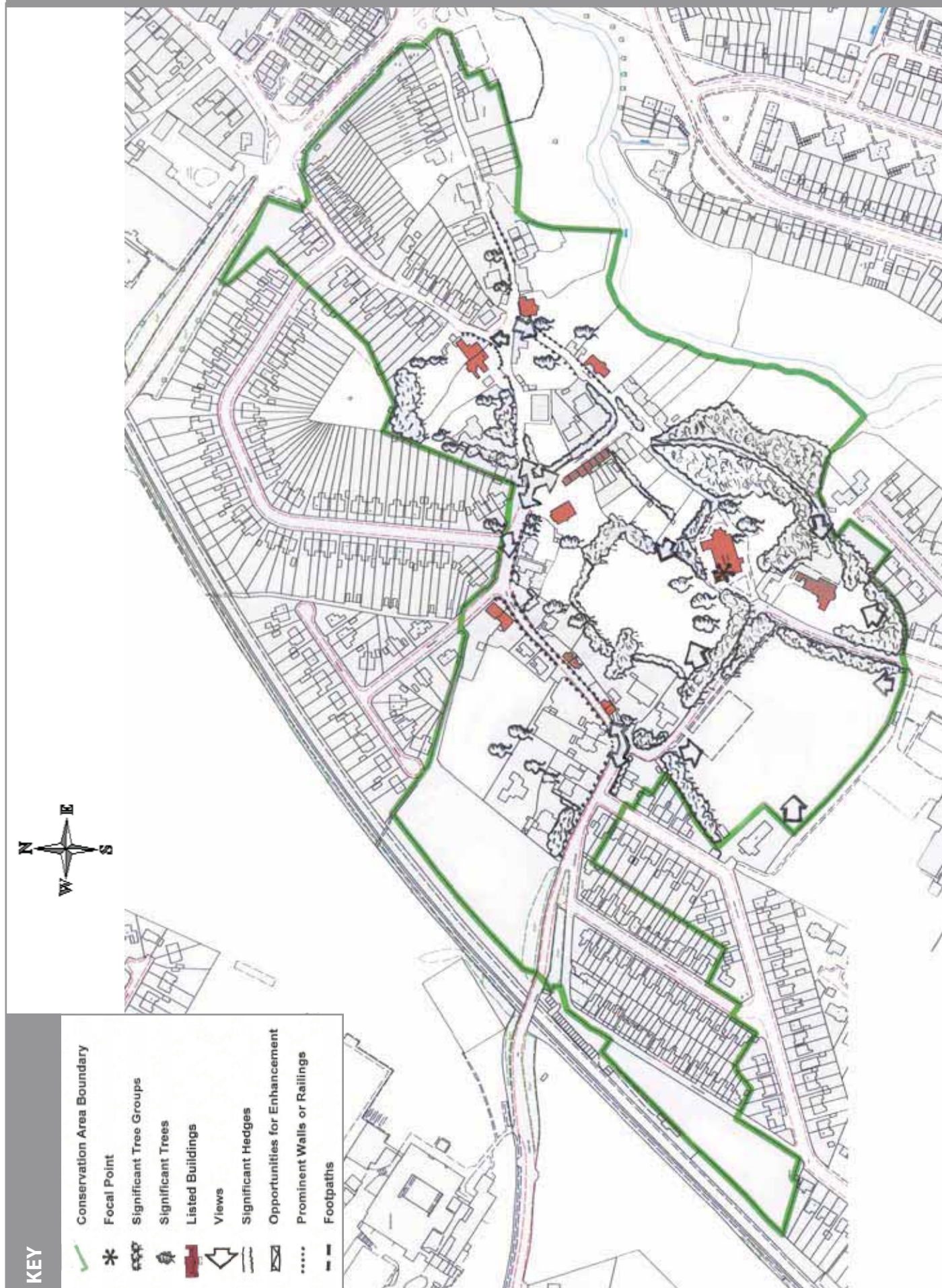
The earliest surviving buildings in the village, including Ivy House (below), and the Old School House and its adjoining cottages, date from the 1680s. Further building occurred during the late 17th Century in Mill Road (where an inn is reputed to have stood) as well as Vicarage Road where a terrace of cottages was constructed.



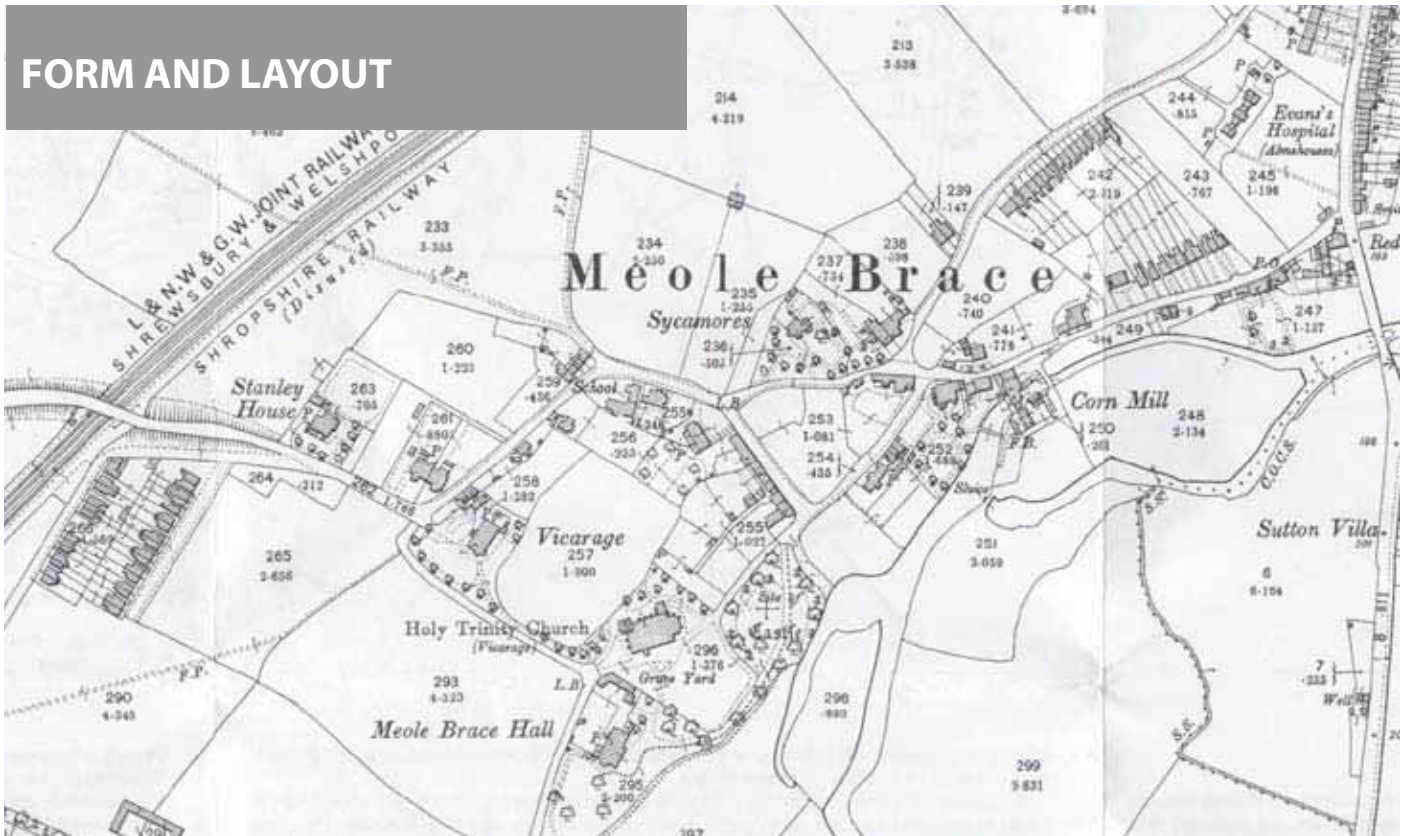
The last village 'wake' to be recorded was in 1843, when sports and dancing were held on the village green. The vicarage field or 'glebe' was used for sports on the occasion of the marriage of the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra in 1863 and again for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. In 1897 the Church started a village library, thirteen years before the free library was started in Shrewsbury.



MAP 1: PRINCIPAL FEATURES OF INTEREST IN MEOLE BRACE



FORM AND LAYOUT



The village grew up around the site of the Saxon Church and later the castle, which stood within a roughly lozenge shaped piece of land to the east of the existing Church. The modern village took shape around the glebe land which now forms the heart of the village. This land has been used for grazing livestock since medieval times.

Many of the lanes that once provided the established means of communication in the area can still be traced along footpaths. These trackways established the layout of the village and determined the position and size of the plots along and between the roads. The routes were not engineered but used the relief of the land to establish the most convenient course. This has resulted in a wonderfully random pattern of roads; broad, narrow, straight and winding within the village, giving rise to a rich diversity of vistas.



The existing older lanes within the Conservation Area retain their rural character, being hemmed in by walls of stone or brick or hedges that are closely cropped.

Since medieval times, it would appear that Mill Lane was the main road in the village, leading through the present churchyard to the former corn mill at Maesbrook. During this period, Upper Road, linking Meole with Shrewsbury, was known as the "back lane" and there was probably a track leading to the brook which later became known as Washford Road.

Alexandra Avenue and Victoria Road were built in the 19th and early 20th Centuries, whilst Meole Walk and Meole Crescent were developed in the inter-war years. In the mid 1930s, the Shrewsbury by-pass was constructed (known as Roman Road) and





the County Council acquired some glebe land for this purpose. This effectively separated that part of the settlement which stretched along the Hereford Road towards Shrewsbury from the historic village core.

The enclosure of the old village by new housing was completed during the 1950s and 1960s with the building of the large Council estate across the brook and more recent development of private houses immediately to the south of Meole Brace Hall.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND POTENTIAL

The chief archaeological interest in Meole Brace is the area comprising Holy Trinity Church and the land to the east of the Church, where the 11th Century castle stood. The latter was built on the site of a Saxon manor house, which was probably of timber construction. The Saxon Church which stood somewhere nearby was possibly a stone building. Mature trees now obscure the area, however a small mound may indicate the site of the Norman motte (pictured above right).

The remains of the Roman and medieval road layout represent an important aspect of Meole's development. The process in which these ancient highways became redundant occurred gradually over successive phases of development and building activity. As the village grew in the shadow of Shrewsbury, the routes of communication altered along with the pattern of settlement in accordance with the movement of people and goods to and from the county town.

Meole Brace provides an excellent example of the effect of the urbanisation process on the layout of a medieval village. The remains of these highways have been shown to retain evidence of ancient road construction, artefacts of historic interest and also important primary evidence of an earlier communication and trading network dating back to Roman times.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES OF MEOLE BRACE

The ancient form of the village can still be gleaned from its existing layout, however its appearance was to change considerably during the 18th and 19th Centuries. The impressive Victorian Church, quaint 18th Century cottages and Regency style brick villas give the area the character of a model village, and indeed these "early modern" improvements added considerably to the visual and arboricultural interest of Meole Brace.

Contribution Made by Listed Buildings

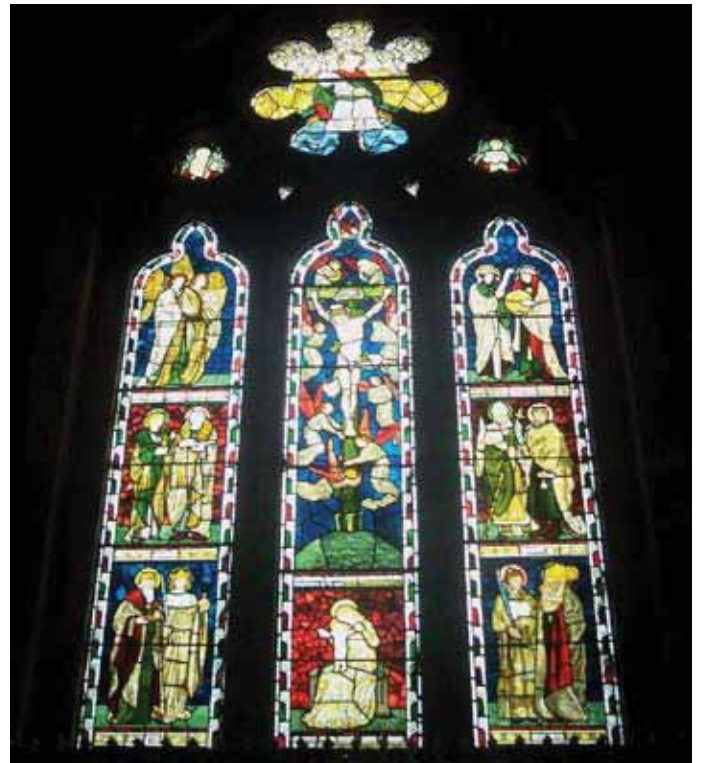


Holy Trinity Church

The new Church was considered by Pevsner to be “surprisingly ambitious”, given the relatively small size of the village when it was built in 1867-9. The expense lavished on a new place of worship, however, suggests that plenty of funds were forthcoming from wealthy parishioners and local benefactors. The style is middle pointed gothic, the idiom most favoured by its architect, Edward Haycock Junior. Haycock was familiar with the work of influential London architects such as George Edmund Street and John Loughborough Pearson both through their work in Shropshire and more particularly through their publication in architectural journals like *The Ecclesiologist*.

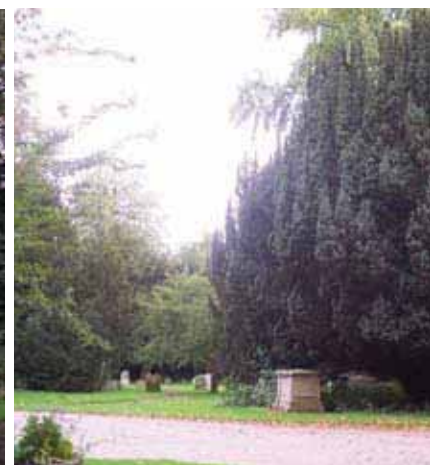
The strong north west tower, polychromatic stonework and geometric tracery are all typical of the High Victorian phase of church building. Haycock and his contemporaries sought to employ details and motifs that were authentic to the spirit

of what was then considered to be the national style. The layout of the Church is typical, although the polygonal apse is more reminiscent of the churches of 13th Century France rather than English examples.



The spacious interior is impressive, especially the stained glass which ranks among the finest ever produced by William Morris. These were executed to the designs of Edward Burne-Jones, a leading figure in the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. The main window in the chancel is an especially beautiful design.

The well maintained churchyard provides a perfect foil for the gothic architecture of the Church, with its mature English and Irish Yews. Shady undergrowth partially conceals copious numbers of gently tilting tombchests and headstones. The backdrop of mature deciduous trees adds to the sense of enclosure.



Meole Brace Hall

Meole Brace Hall has a venerable, dignified appearance that perfectly matches its fine setting. The building is virtually invisible from the public highways and open spaces, being effectively screened either by high brick walls or mature trees.



Contribution Made by Other Listed Buildings

The listed buildings in Meole Brace include cottages of 17th Century provenance with higher status dwellings that were re-fronted during the 19th Century in the Regency style. The group provides an ensemble of domestic buildings that draw on a broad variety of local building traditions and styles spanning some 300 years. Much of the historic core of Meole Brace exemplifies the mixed and varied character of English house building.



The finest example of the elegant Regency style in the village is Broome Cottage (above and below right). It has three bays with a projecting porch to the slightly advanced central bay. Both the porch and central bay are emphasised by shallow pediments, providing a fine sense of cohesion and unity to the symmetrical design. An intricate ironwork trellis enlivens the entrance, and convex walls on either side frame the elevation.



The Hall presents handsome Georgian frontages to the main drive and garden of circa 1780. The detailing is plain but not without enrichment. The grand bow window to the garden rises through three storeys and the symmetrical entrance front is enlivened by a dentil eaves cornice and fine doorcase resting on Greek Doric columns.



Meole Cottage (above) is less harmonious, having many 19th Century additions. There is a fine 18th Century two-storey bow window overlooking the garden. The enriched stucco window lintels have raised keystones.

Church Row (below) forms an attractive terrace of cottages with an adjoining stable and coach house. The lively elevation incorporates sash windows to both storeys, with external shutters to the ground floor, timber casements and simple doorways.



The adjoining coach house (below) belongs to Ivy House, a typical late 18th Century house with dentilled brick eaves, pictured in bottom left photo, page 4.



The remaining listed buildings include the Old School House and the cottages in Vicarage Road. Nos. 82 and 84 Upper Road provide a fine example of a Regency villa adapted into a large semi-detached dwelling of the early to the mid 19th Century. The scale is apt for the village setting and the detailing is a good example of the period.



There are many surviving examples of service buildings such as stables, servants quarters and coach houses within the Conservation Area. Notable examples include the coach house to Broome Cottage (above), the outbuildings to Meole Brace Hall (below), and also those to the Corner House.



Prevailing Materials and Local Details



Acting as the unifying element of all the varying built forms are the brown tiled or slate roofs, often incorporating decorative courses, and the use of brick or stone boundary walls to the front of the properties.

In villages throughout Shropshire locally available materials have determined the predominant method of construction and consequently the main architectural features. Apart from the general prevalence of local hand made red bricks, in Meole Brace this meant the use of a locally quarried red sandstone. This abundant material is generally of a good quality and hard wearing. Unweathered old stone is often found adjacent to heavily eroded stone of the same colour, which is clearly much softer and with a tendency to shale. It is ideally suited to random stone walling, though it has been



successfully employed for coursed stonework and as an ashlar facing material. Tooled freestone, such as that found on Holy Trinity Church and various other houses, tends to be in yellow/grey Grinshill sandstone.

Many of these boundaries meet the highway without a pavement, though a narrow section of paving or grass verge is also typical. There are dry stone walls as well as those of traditional lime mortar construction. Most incorporate a variety of copings and stone sizes.

Low front walls of pressed red brick are common to the frontages of the large numbers of semi-detached and terraced houses to Mill Road, Upper Road, Victoria Road and Washford Road. Many



of these walls support decorative iron railings or cresting. These are typical late 19th Century/early 20th Century features.



There is much small scale and architecturally intact detailing to be seen in Meole Brace, including fine sash windows, well-proportioned Georgian doorways, enriched window lintels, intricate ironwork porches and railings, cobbled courtyards, and many instances of simple unspoilt vernacular detailing, a selection of which is illustrated here.



Contribution Made by Key Unlisted Buildings



The contribution made by key unlisted buildings is significant. They display innumerable variations on a common theme through the use of irregular fenestration and materials that were both expedient and fashionable during the late Regency and early Victorian periods. Many houses epitomise late 19th Century urban styles in their use of pressed brick of various colours, Welsh slate, hand made tiles, traditional sash windows and occasional mock timbering. The best examples include the Old School (above) and School House (right), Mary Webb Cottage (above right), The Corner House, The Gables, Burnside House, Fairleigh and Brent House (below), Glebe House and Stanley House. Stanley House is attributable to Samuel Pountney Smith, a very prominent local architect who developed a prolific architectural practice throughout Shropshire and mid Wales during the 19th Century.



The Larches is another good quality unlisted building characteristic of the domestic style in vogue during the early 19th Century, with an ironwork porch. Milford Lodge is a typical example of a modest suburban villa of the mid Victorian period (below).



Stanley House (below) in many respects resembles Smith's own house, Oakley Manor in Belle Vue, and was built as a Vicarage to the new Church in about 1870. It is clearly marked on the 1901 map, found on page 6. The interior is lined with oak panelling made from the box pews that were removed from the third Parish Church demolished in 1869.



General Features and Other Characteristics

Entering from Shrewsbury, the first impression of the area is of a haphazard layout in which buildings define the road edges and brick walls screen spacious back gardens from public view. The walls vary in height and often combine or give way to hedges of various types, both mixed and single species, though traditional deciduous and evergreen varieties are prevalent. These include Yew, Privet, Box, Holly, Laurel and Beech. The houses to the roadside take their place behind or on the line of the walling, which helps to sustain the intimate scale and strong sense of enclosure.



In many instances buildings are sited on the very corner of a property so as to close a vista effectively and, as one passes, reveal a completely new aspect of the village. Good examples are Meole Cottage, The Corner House and the Old School House. Additional interest is provided by subtle changes in level along each of the lanes as they pass through the village, giving rise to a rich diversity of vistas.



The large number of terraced and semi detached houses within and adjacent to much of the Conservation Area are excellent examples of domestic design from the turn of the 20th Century. These buildings contribute positively to the setting of the Conservation Area as well as providing a valuable historic contrast to the older core of Meole Brace.

It is important that the impact of the buildings mentioned above is not undermined through the introduction of inappropriate UPVC doors or casement windows in the future.





The approaches to the Conservation Area give little indication of Meole's historic importance and follow largely homogenous terraces of typical late 19th Century housing. The latter provide plenty of visual contrast and some architectural interest. Various cast iron gates, railings, street lamps and water pumps associated with some of the older properties in Meole Brace lend further interest.

CHARACTER OF SETTING AND TOPOGRAPHY

A 1972 article in Shropshire Magazine made the following observation: "Meole Brace is something unique and valuable to Shrewsbury; a village that is still a village, closely attached to the Borough yet effectively separated by the A5 Holyhead – London road to the east – and cut off the south by the Rea Brook." Today these comments still hold true regarding the setting of Meole Brace. The old village which forms part of the Conservation Area is easily identifiable, being surrounded on three sides by comparatively recent housing in Meole Crescent, Meole Walk, Alexandra Avenue, Church Road and, to a lesser extent, in Upper Road and Mill Lane.



Dorothy Wren, in her 1964 biographical study of Shropshire novelist and poet Mary Webb, described the village as follows: "In the middle of the straight

rows of box-like houses, the original village is still intact, huddled around its sandstone Church, a ring of old trees protecting it from the glaring newness of the suburb." Today this impression of a self-contained village set in rural surroundings can still be gained from Longden Road when viewed across the secondary school playing fields and from the Moneybrook estate looking across the Rea Brook.

The suburb is now not so glaringly new, but the Conservation Area is still easily distinguishable by the evident relationship which exists between buildings and open spaces, by the profusion of trees and greenery, and by the dominating presence of the Church. The character of the village is not determined by the quality of its individual buildings but by the subtle relationship which exists between houses, gardens, trees and open spaces. It is this that provides a natural unity as well as beauty and variety.

Contribution Made by Green Spaces to the Setting

A feature of the Conservation Area is the amount of open space it contains. The Church Road playing field, the perimeter of which forms the south-western boundary, and a smaller area of land between the Hall and Rea Brook are in public ownership. Private open space comprises the Holy Trinity churchyard and the adjacent glebe land, which has the appearance of a village green. This Church land together with the extensive grounds of Meole Brace Hall to the south contains a considerable number and variety of trees as further described below.



These green spaces are integral to the semi-rural character of the Conservation Area because they help to maintain the soft boundary that exists between village, countryside and the adjacent urban landscape. These areas of undeveloped land permit excellent views both into and out of the Conservation Area as they allow the adjacent land to penetrate and break up the pattern of the settlement. As outlined in local policy HE8, the Council will seek to preserve important views and areas of open space that are significant in relation to the setting of the Conservation Area. The chief views are indicated on Map 1 on page 5.

Significance of Spaces Within the Conservation Area



The older part of Meole Brace, found within the Conservation Area boundary, forms a compact settlement arranged with picturesque irregularity around the glebe land at the heart of the village. The Conservation Area includes valuable green spaces that help to define its special character. Within the settlement there are large gardens to many of the older houses and also the substantial grounds to the Church and Hall. Together these constitute outstanding open spaces that provide archetypal settings to the most important buildings in the village. The churchyard and gardens to the Hall are also crucial to the historic character and feel of the village in general.

Within the Conservation Area the chief public spaces are created by the roads that pass through the village. The intricate network of the highways



contributes much interest and variety to the character of Meole Brace. The configuration of the roads defines the setting of the listed buildings and allows a high level of visibility throughout the settlement.

Contribution Made by Trees

The importance of trees, hedges and shrubs within the Conservation Area should not be overlooked. Whether for their aesthetic value such as foliage, fruit or shape or for practical reasons, for example providing shade, shelter, screening, enclosure or privacy, the use of flora helps to enhance and thus create a pleasant neighbourhood. Trees, hedges and shrubs that contribute to the character of the area are identified on Map 1.

The contribution made by trees within the village is very significant, with wooded areas accounting for a large proportion of the land enclosed by the Conservation Area. It is the trees as much as the buildings which help to give the Conservation Area its shady aspect and attractiveness.

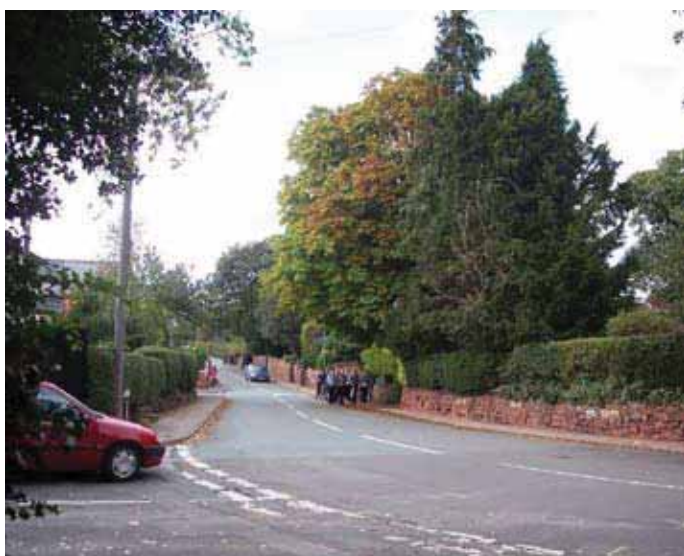
There is an abundance of mature indigenous trees in most parts of the settlement, especially within the



glebe land, churchyard and also the grounds to the Hall. Handsome groups include mature specimens of Ash, Alder, Grey Poplar, Sycamore, Yew, Beech, Lime and Horse Chestnut. There are also instances of Black Locust, Sweet Chestnut, Scots Pine and Black Pine. Fine examples of Japanese and North American Maples are to be found in the grounds to Meole Brace Hall.



Many mature trees flourish within the large gardens to the majority of dwellings in the village. Handsome roadside trees are also prevalent, as well as the characteristic hedging that augments much of the sandstone boundary walling. The latter helps to form soft edges to the attractive road vistas. The hedges and walls contribute enormously to the distinctive appearance of old Meole Brace.



The Extent of Loss, Intrusion or Damage

The character of Meole Brace Conservation Area is little changed since its initial designation in 1972. Its historic buildings and spaces continue to prevail since there has been little to no obtrusive development. The section below looks at steps that have been taken and may be taken in order to help preserve and enhance its special character. The reinstatement of original timber casements and sashes that have been replaced should be encouraged, especially in unlisted buildings of special interest.

NEUTRAL AREAS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

The neutral areas within the Conservation Area include the land adjacent to the Rea Brook, and various plots of undeveloped land. Most of the open spaces are designated green spaces and are protected from development under the Local Plan.

The land adjacent to the original Conservation Area boundary has been developed piecemeal over time. Much of the housing dates from the late 19th Century, being of good quality and retaining a large proportion of original joinery and general character. As noted earlier, these houses are excellent examples of domestic design from the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. As these buildings contribute positively to the setting of the Conservation Area as well as providing a valuable historic context to the more ancient core of Meole Brace, it was deemed appropriate to extend the Conservation Area boundary in 2006 to include these well preserved residential areas.

The character of any new housing within the Conservation Area should endeavour to be sympathetic to the historic context and be of an appropriate scale. This could be achieved through the use of matching materials and the incorporation of elements of domestic design that are characteristic of the Meole Brace area.



Landscape proposals

The character and setting of Meole Brace may be improved through the execution of environmental works to various features within the Conservation Area. These include the road signage, traffic markings, pedestrian pavements and road surfaces. The latter would benefit from some appropriate re-surfacing work. The existing material is an unattractive dark tarmac that could be improved by being re-dressed with a lighter coloured aggregate which is perhaps less smooth, in keeping with the semi-rural character of the village.

Traditional cast-iron finger posts with embossed lettering could be introduced to furnish the principal junctions as an alternative to the generic modern signage, which also tends to detract from the special character of Meole Brace. Other street furniture such as litter bins could also be upgraded.

Redundant Buildings

There is currently a very minor problem in the Meole Brace Conservation Area regarding redundant buildings. The preservation of buildings that contribute positively to the character and appearance of Meole Brace which may at some point in the future become redundant is an important aspect of the Borough Council's Conservation Area policy for the village.



Road markings and traffic signs are unduly prominent within the Conservation Area, and are often intrusive elements to the important road views. These features could be removed from places where they are not strictly necessary and made more discreet where they are essential, such as in the case of one way or no-entry signs.

APPENDIX 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

POLICIES FOR MEOLE BRACE CONSERVATION AREA

The broad objectives of the local planning authority for the Conservation Area will be to safeguard and where possible add to and enhance the basic character and appearance of Meole Brace.

In particular it will:

- Endeavour to safeguard those buildings and structures statutorily listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
- In the control of new development, have special regard to the external appearance, scale and siting of the new building so as to ensure a continuity of local building. Proposals likely to have a material effect on the character of the area will be published and representations made to the Borough planning authority will be considered when determining the application.
- Preserve important views and vistas within, into and out of the Conservation Area including vistas and views outside the boundary of the Conservation Area or adjacent to and affecting the setting of Meole Brace. (HE8)
- Encourage the renovation, retention and reuse of any dilapidated or empty buildings or damaged walls that make a contribution to the maintenance of the visual unity, sense of enclosure and basic character of Meole Brace. Wherever practical the re-use of sympathetic second-hand building materials will be encouraged.
- Seek the retention of and endeavour to safeguard those special features of the area such as stone boundary walls, decorative railings, fenestration, pumps, items of street furniture and other features of interest. The close juxtaposition of buildings to highways, small access courtyards and entrance roads are also prevalent and help to provide an informal, small-scale layout amongst the buildings.

- Seek the retention of and endeavour to safeguard important hedgerows, trees and open spaces within the Conservation Area.
- Promote the maintenance of the existing fine stock of trees and shrubs by the making of Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate and encourage the planting of new specimens where losses occur.
- As and where possible and in co-operation with the statutory bodies concerned, endeavour to secure the removal of unsightly overhead wires and supporting structures.

The local planning authority when considering any proposal within the area will actively encourage:

- The correct use of natural stone for boundary walls.
- The use of pitched roofs in extensions to existing pitched roof buildings.
- Careful study and analysis of existing buildings; their form, materials, scale and treatment of openings and detailing of fenestration, so that new building work can be designed to match and complement its surroundings.
- The careful siting and positioning of new buildings of the correct scale and grouping so as to prevent new development seeming obtrusive or suburban in character.

In addition the local planning authority will, when it thinks it necessary, seek approval of the Secretary of State for the Environment to bring under control particular classes of development otherwise permitted by the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (see section on Article 4 Directions below).

The local planning authority will not grant planning permission in respect of an outline application unless satisfied that the development proposed will be of the requisite standard. The powers available under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1990 (and subsequent amendments) will be used as necessary to prevent the display of inappropriate advertisements.

The Borough planning authority will welcome the

co-operation of the Parish Council, local Associations and members of the public in implementing these policies.

The character and appearance of Meole Brace could be affected detrimentally by development taking place in the surrounding countryside immediately next to the edge of the Conservation Area. This area of related open space is essential to the setting of the suburb. The way in which this land flows simply to the outer buildings provides an important contrast and should be safeguarded. Accordingly the Borough Planning Authority will endeavour to ensure that the existing relationship between the suburb and landscape setting is maintained.

Implications of Conservation Area Status

Designation as a Conservation Area has the following implications:

Conservation Area status does give additional Planning protection from unsympathetic development which might otherwise spoil an area's special character. From a planning point of view this designation means that there is a duty placed on the Council to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of each Conservation Area and its setting. In practice, this means that all development proposals are extremely carefully considered to ensure that every scheme either improves the existing situation, or at least make it no worse. Proposals which would spoil the special character will be resisted. Therefore, the scale of a proposal, the quality of its design, and the suitability of its materials will all be important issues in the consideration of any development scheme. These additional controls, which operate in conjunction with ordinary planning restrictions, are summarised as follows:

- The demolition of certain buildings, walls, fences and structures within Conservation Areas requires the submission of a formal application for Conservation Area Consent to the Borough Council.
- The range of "Permitted Development Rights" (which allow certain works and alterations to properties without the need for Planning Permission) is more limited within Conservation Areas. Hence, planning applications can be

required for things like extensions, satellite dishes, dormer windows, and outbuildings where ordinarily they would not be necessary.

- Similarly, applications for Advertisement Consent can also be necessary for signs which might not otherwise need formal approval.
- Planning permission is required to change the exterior of buildings with either stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles.
- Owners are required to give at least 6 weeks notice in writing to the Borough Council of any intention to cut down, lop or top any tree with a trunk over 75 mm in diameter (measured at a height of 1.5 m above ground level). A criminal offence would result if such notice is not given.

As the planning legislation is constantly being revised and updated, you are advised to contact Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council to establish whether your proposals require formal approval. In fact, it is strongly recommended that pre-application advice is first sought, to avoid unnecessary time and expense in producing unacceptable plans.

Implications of New Development within Conservation Areas

As every development must either preserve or enhance the appearance and character of a Conservation Area, the local planning authority will only permit new development that:

- achieves a high standard of design sympathetic with the character of the area
- is compatible with the scale, mass and form of adjacent buildings and their settings
- uses appropriate materials
- includes appropriate, good quality landscaping that compliments the area
- does not result in the loss of important open spaces or features of interest, and
- does not impinge upon views, into, out of, and within the Conservation Area.

Article 4 Directions

The character of Meole Brace Conservation Area has been largely unaffected by development since its initial designation in 1972. Its historic buildings and spaces continue to prevail and there has been little obtrusive development. The following measures have been proposed in order to help preserve and enhance its special character.

Article 4 Directions are a means of regulating changes made to the frontages of unlisted buildings facing a public highway. This may include front walls, railings and hard landscaping as well as the façade itself. The mechanism of the Article 4 involves the removal of certain permitted development rights, such as the right to replace doors, windows or apply cement render to brickwork without planning permission.

The aim of making an Article 4 Direction is to assist in the retention or reinstatement of original features like external joinery and to promote the sympathetic replacement of damaged components. It is details such as these that are fundamental to the special character of a street or built up area. A Conservation Area Enhancement Grant scheme is operated by the Council to support the kind of works that concur with this objective.

Protection of Trees in Conservation Areas

The importance of trees is recognised in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which makes special provision for trees in Conservation Areas. Under Section 211 of the Act anyone proposing to carry out any works to trees at a property situated in a Conservation Area are required to give the Council six weeks notice of their intentions, in writing. Those who own trees that are located in a Conservation Area but covered by a Tree Preservation Order are not affected, as they are already required to obtain permission from the Local Authority before any works are carried out to their protected trees.

The notification of intent to carry out work should give the location and species of the tree/s and state exactly what works are proposed. An officer from the Local Authority will then inspect the tree/s and assess the proposal. If the tree/s have a high amenity value and the proposed work would be detrimental to the tree/s, the Council may decide to protect them with a Tree Preservation Order. If no Order

is made by the time the six week period expires, however, then the Local Authority has no objection to the proposal and work may commence.

There are some exemptions from the requirement to submit a notification. Works can be carried out without prior notification to trees that are dead, dying or dangerous, and saplings or young trees with a trunk diameter of less than 75 mm when measured at 1.5 m above ground level. In the case of dead, dying or dangerous trees, however, proof that the tree was in an adverse condition may be required by the Local Authority. It is recommended that, except in emergencies, the Local Authority is given five days notice prior to carrying out the work. If there are any queries or concerns the Tree Officer will be able to assist you.

Grants for Conservation

Subject to the availability of funds, the Council can offer assistance towards the cost of repairs to Historic Buildings and works to maintain or enhance buildings within Conservation Areas. These grants are administered under Sections 57 & 58 of the planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and funds are offered to offset the increased cost related to the repairs of buildings conserved to be Historic or Architectural interest. Grants are generally offered at a rate of 40% with a maximum offer of £5,000 per application. Types of projects which may be eligible are:

- The repair and restoration of Historic Buildings, features of prominent buildings, for example the roof or external joinery and also free standing structures, such as waterpumps, summerhouses, etc.
- The renewal or introduction of paving schemes and landscaping, for example around a public building.
- The replacement of existing or the erection of new items such as Parish notice boards, dovecotes, village clocks, fountains, sundials, seats, etc.

Priority will be given to properties within the Conservation Areas and properties covered by Article 4 and 4(2) Directions restricting the installation and replacement of windows, doors, porches and front garden walls.

The Role of the Public

Much can be achieved if everyone is aware of the advantages of Conservation Area status. Positive protection of Meole Brace's attractive features and improvements in the physical and visual amenities of the area is a priority for the Borough Council. Ensuring that the process of incremental repair, decoration and maintenance continues will contribute to the quality of the environment in this area.

Design Advice and Guidance

Shropshire Council is always happy to give information, advice and guidance on the care of Conservation Areas.

For further information contact the Historic Environment Team on:

**Address: Historic Environment
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
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historic.environment@shropshire.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

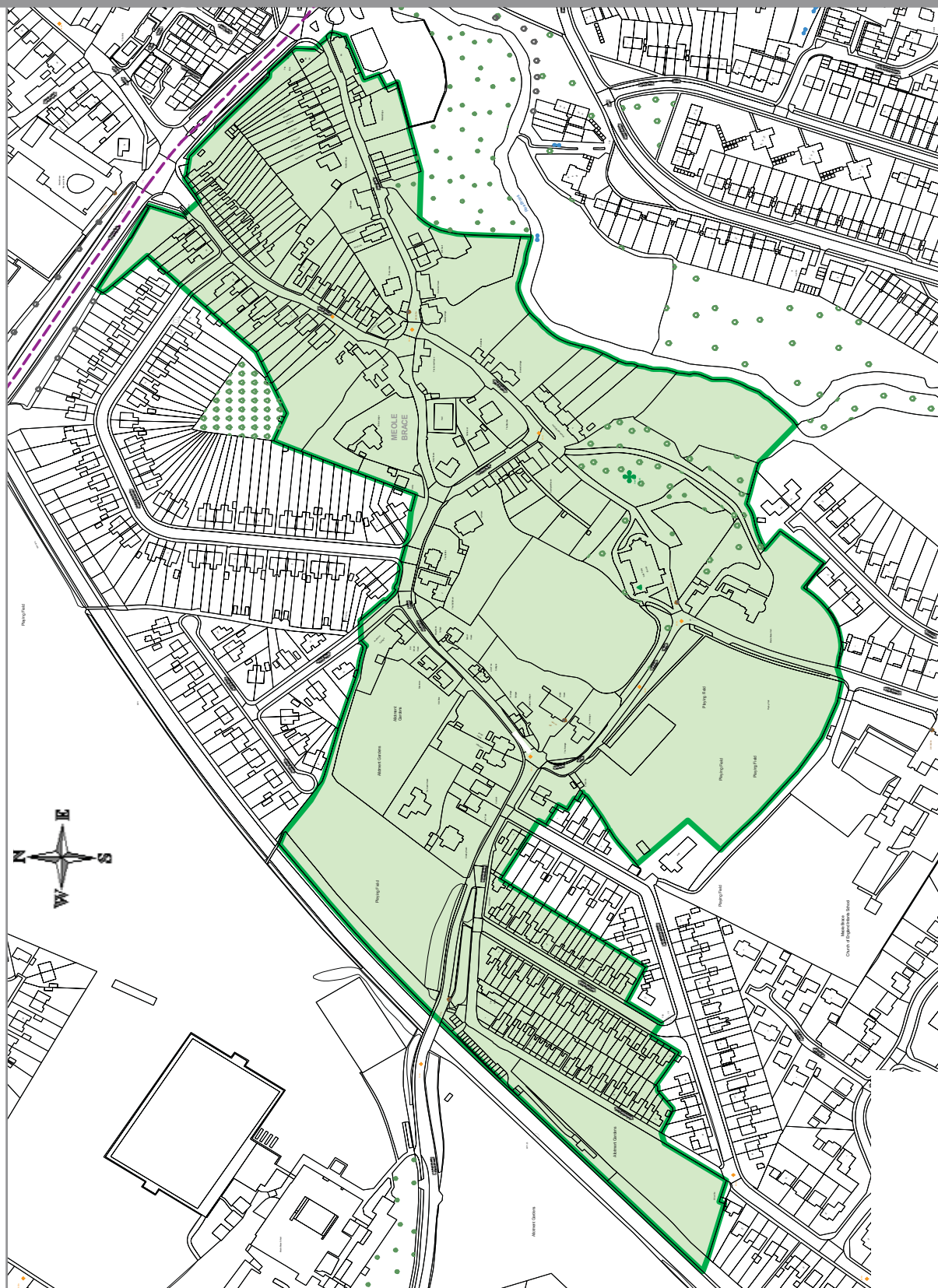
Much of the historical information contained in this document has been taken from the Victoria County History for Shropshire, Volume VIII.



APPENDIX 2: LISTED BUILDINGS IN MEOLE BRACE CONSERVATION AREA

Broome Cottage and garden walls, Church Road, Meole Brace	II
Church of the Holy Trinity, Church Road, Meole Brace	II*
Meole Brace Hall, Church Road, Meole Brace	II
Nos. 1-7 (consecutive) and adjoining stable and coach house, Church Row, Meole Brace	II
Ivy House, Church Row, Meole Brace	II
Melville House and Wheatlea House, Upper Road, Meole Brace	II
Nos. 1 and 2 Limetree Cottages, Vicarage Road, Meole Brace	II
Old School House and Prudence Cottage, Vicarage Road	II
Vicarage Cottages, Vicarage Road, Meole Brace	II
Meole Cottage, Mill Road, Meole Brace	II

APPENDIX 3: MAP OF MEOLE BRACE CONSERVATION AREA



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Conservation Area Appraisal**

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