

HAUGHTON VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The Haughton Village Conservation Area was designated on 2nd February 1981

LOCATION

Haughton Village is a tiny hamlet adjoining the town of Shifnal, approximately 13 miles north of Bridgnorth and 3 miles east of Telford.



The Conservation Area of Haughton Village is hemmed in by the M54 to its north, the A464 to the west and south and the town of Shifnal on its eastern fringe. The Conservation Area includes the major part of the village of around a dozen or so dwellings, a Listed guest house, a collection of redundant farm buildings together with a mill, pond and a caravan site. Narrow country lanes allow access to Haughton Village from

Shifnal and the encircling main roads.

An absence of directional signs and nameplates give scant indication of the existence of the Haughton Village settlement. The Conservation Area starts in Haughton Road, on the east side of an unmetalled track running south to north between a Care Home, which lies outside the area, and Bridge Cottage, inside the boundary line. The Conservation Area boundary then runs at right angles to Haughton Road, up the track and towards the rear of Haughton Village Farm before turning west between the farm buildings and the farmland to their rear. It continues west, running between the rear boundaries of the dwellings facing the north side of Haughton Road before turning south on the east boundary of Twin Oaks and towards Haughton Road. At this point the Conservation Area boundary skirts the northern edge of the road before crossing it at a point opposite the western edge of the caravan site on the opposite side of the road. Here it closes the Area on its western extremity and heads south, across the road, and continues on in a southerly direction until it reaches the south bank of the Wesley Brook to the rear of Haughton Mill. At this point the boundary line runs east, parallel with Wesley Brook, crossing it just east of Haughton Bridge before it turns north again to cross Haughton Road to the track east of Bridge Cottage.

LANDSCAPE

Mature trees east of the Haughton Bridge close views to the south of the Conservation Area as far as Haughton Cottage. Here Haughton Road rises through a cutting with high banks and mature trees either side closing the view south and north. To the north views are closed by the dwellings lining the north side of Haughton Road as far as a modern dwelling, Twin Oaks, where the road enters a cutting with high banks and spasmodic outcrops of pink sandstone which obscure the views to the fields beyond. At the western edge of the Conservation Area the road bends, closing the view further west. Agricultural activity on farmland north and south of the settlement makes an important contribution to the strong rural character of the area.



HISTORY

The earliest known reference to Haughton is in a grant of 1185 when the Lord of the Manor of Shifnal granted Roger de Haughton land in the Shifnal hamlets of Haughton and Knowle. In the early 14th century the Haughton estate was sold to John Charlton of Apley Castle and remained in the Charlton family until 1520 when the estate passed to Richard Moreton upon his marriage to William Charlton's daughter Cicely. During the 16th century the Moretons, like many notable families, benefited significantly from the redistribution of former Church lands following the dissolution of the monasteries and chantries.

The Crown later accused Richard Moreton of defaulting on his payment to the Queen of profits resulting from the chantry lands. His defence, that the land supported a schoolmaster and therefore was exempt from forfeiture to the Crown, was not upheld. To make matters worse the local inhabitants of Shifnal also brought an action claiming that some of the acquired land carried with it the responsibility of maintaining a charity known as the St. Andre's Dole, whereby bread was distributed to the needy on St. Andre's Day. This action also went against him and he was ordered to continue paying the dole.

As Richard had no sons the property again changed hands in 1587 when his daughter Anne married Humphrey Briggs. The history of the Briggs family was typical of many amongst the landed gentry of the 17th and 18th centuries. During this period the role of wealthy landowners rose and expanded, although little is known of the activities of the Briggs family at that time. The only remaining record is one of an apparently long running dispute with the Prior of Wombridge Priory over pasture rights in Haughton. Many generations of Briggs' served as a justice of the peace and tax returns from 1672 show that the original Haughton Hall was one of the largest houses in the parish.

The third Humphrey Briggs died in 1699 leaving a large family of ten children, including four sons. Humphrey, his eldest son, built the present Haughton

Hall in 1718 and died in 1735. The second eldest son was (Sir) Hugh, who died in 1736. The youngest sons also died at around this time. The sons all died unmarried and without issue so the lands passed to Sir Hugh's sisters, Barbara and Elizabeth.

After the death of Elizabeth and her husband, Leigh Brooke of Bobbington, a long dispute over ownership of the lands ensued. In 1880 the entire estate, comprising of some 590 acres was awarded to George Townshead Brooke and Haughton Hall was the family home of the Brookes until they departed the house in the 1920's.

BUILDINGS



The Grade II Listed Haughton Hall stands outside the Conservation Area boundary and since the 1920's has been put to many uses, including a children's' home, a private school and a state school, during which time it had additional wings added, one in the 1950's and the other in the 1970's. After several years of disuse and neglect, the building was subjected to acts of vandalism before being purchased in

1996 together with its remaining 34 acres. Since that date it has seen an ongoing programme of restoration and conversion for use as a training and leisure centre.

The only historic building lying within the Conservation Area is Haughton Grange, also Grade II Listed. Haughton Grange, a 17th century timber framed structure, was heavily refaced and extended in the 19th century. It currently operates as a bed and breakfast establishment. The heavy rough cast rendered and colour washed brickwork facading belies the early origins of this 1½ storey, L-plan baffle entry type house. At the front, in its plain clay tiled roof, it has three gabled eaves dormers with arched headed, leaded light metal casements and four pairs of painted, soft wood french casements on the ground floor. Metal inward curving hoods cover the French casements. A catslide roof covers an outshut to the rear and there is a huge 20th century chimneystack to the right.



There is no particularly strong pattern to the layout of buildings other than that they are all strung out along the side of the Haughton Road, which runs east to west, bisecting the Conservation Area. One or two dwellings front directly onto the road, but most are set well back from the road, screened by mature trees and high hedges. Houses are all detached and of varied size. Most

buildings have largely unbroken frontages to the road, with wings and projections restricted mostly to the rear.

CHARACTERISTICS

There appears to be very little of significance that characterises the hamlet's built environment. Twentieth century infill and frontage housing developments predominate in the area. The remaining pre-19th century traditional farm buildings have already been converted to residential use or are subject to planning approvals for their residential conversion, for example the Haughton Village Farm complex of barns and ancillary outbuildings.

Most roofs are hipped or gabled with clay tiles, ornate bargeboards and deep eaves. These are all traditional elements and materials that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area; the concrete or machine-made clay tiles of some 20th century buildings are less appropriate.

A rather incongruous 20th century, two-storey, buff coloured brick house fronts the Haughton Village Farm complex, obscuring the older buildings from view from the roadside. Three or four similar early and late 20th century infill developments, which are clearly visible from the road, are totally at odds with the more traditional materials of the older buildings. Many of the earlier properties lie well back from the road and are enclosed within stone boundary walls and high hedges, rendering the dwellings almost invisible to the outside world. Haughton Cottage, a two-storey house with tile-hanging to its upper floors and colour-washed walls below, stands in its own grounds behind tall trees and high hedges and is accessed by a long narrow driveway. The two-storey red brick barn to the rear of Haughton Cottage is now a separate home called The Coach House. Further along the driveway to the south east of Haughton Cottage are the remains of Haughton Mill, a former watermill. A red brick house of that name occupies the brook-side plot while the now disused former corn mill of similar age and materials serves as a storage shed.

Haughton Grange, standing end-on to a right-angled bend in Haughton Road, is probably the only other building of note despite its Victorian makeover and Gothick pastiche. Two large 1980's dwellings, Badgers Folley, with whitewashed render and tile-hanging, and The Villa, a brown brick built residence, stand side-by-side in their own plots. They are hidden behind embankments and vegetation as Haughton Road slips through a cutting and rises towards the M54 and its service area eastwards beyond the settlement.



Even the traditional black and white timber framed Brook Cottage, conspicuous by being the only exposed timbered structure in the village, is compromised by the modern, dark brown brick, detached double garage linked to its east end elevation and all clearly visible from the street.

A badly maintained black-topped path runs half heartedly along the northern side of Haughton Road, between Bridge Cottage on the western fringe of the Conservation Area to Haughton Grange at its epicentre. Here pedestrians wanting to travel back along the road towards Shifnal must cross to its southern side in order to use a similar path skirting the now roadside Wesley Brook and the small road bridge that spans it linking Haughton Road to Haughton Lane. Footpaths, however, disappear towards the western end of the Conservation Area, where Haughton Road cuts through the sandstone ridge. The high embankments and mature trees here contribute strongly to the rural character of the hamlet.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES

The only commercial activity within the Conservation Area comes from the Haughton Grange bed and breakfast establishment. However, industrial and commercial activities can be found in the surrounding area, which includes Shifnal to the east, Haughton Hall Training and Leisure Centre immediately south of Haughton Road and the motorway service area just outside the western boundary of the Conservation Area. A care home for the elderly sits immediately outside its eastern boundary. Arable farming is evident on farmland running along the northern and southern boundaries of the settlement but former farm buildings in support of that industry have long ceased to be used for their original purposes.



DEVELOPMENT

The spacing between dwellings is very generous and some modern infill and frontage development has taken place.

Much of the traditional building stock is sited well back from the roadway, up long driveways or hidden away from view by boundary walls, mature trees and/or high hedges or embankments.

Modern housing developments have occurred on the Conservation Area's northern edge in Haughton Lane and towards the east and Shifnal.

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