

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



NEEN SOLLARS

DESIGNATED 10TH FEBRUARY 1994



PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREA) ACT, 1990

NEEN SOLLARS CONSERVATION AREA

STATEMENT

CONTENTS

1. EXTENT OF CONSERVATION AREA
2. DESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION AREA
3. HISTORY
4. CHARACTERISTICS
5. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK
6. PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE 15
7. GUIDANCE ON POLICY CRITERIA
8. OTHER CRITERIA

APPENDIX

1. PLAN OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT, 1990

NEEN SOLLARS CONSERVATION AREA

1.0 THE EXTENT OF NEEN SOLLARS CONSERVATION AREA.

- 1.1 The Neen Sollars Conservation Area consists of the village of Neen Sollars in the Parish of Neen Sollars with Milson as illustrated in the Neen Sollars Conservation Area Plan.

2.0 THE DESIGNATION OF NEEN SOLLARS CONSERVATION AREA

- 2.1 Neen Sollars Conservation Area was designated as a conservation area by South Shropshire Council on the 10th February 1994 in accordance with the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.



3.0 THE HISTORY OF NEEN SOLLARS

- 3.1 Historically Neen Sollars has always been an agricultural community, though records show that a paper mill was situated at the Sturt in 1816, being one of a number on the course of the Rea Brook. Hop yards and orchards existed in the parish at one time with considerable reputation, as can be seen on the field names map.
- 3.2 The name Neen is the old British name of the River Rea and would seem to derive from some earlier connection with water, i.e. Neen Savage, Neenton, both in Shropshire and the River Nene in Northamptonshire. Neen Sollars has been known as Lower Neen to distinguish it from Neen Savage – Upper Neen (Oxford Place Name Dictionary).
- 3.3 At the time of the Domesday Book, Neen was in the Hundred of Condetree but was shortly after annexed to the Hundred of Overs. In 1086 it was held by Osbern Fitz Richard, Lord of Richard's Castle, the tenant being the Saxon Lord Siward. By the 12th Century the manor was held by Baldwin le Poer. On his death before 1190 the manor was left to his three daughters. The then Lord of Richard's Castle, Hugh de Say granted the overlordship of Neen to Roger de Solars from Dorstone in Hereford. The two of the co-heiresses of Baldwin le Poer married into the De Solars family. Thus, by 1255, the manor called Nene Baldwin was held by William de Solars of Dorstone; from this time the village became known as "Neen Sollars".
- 3.4 Then the overlordship passed jointly to the Mortimers of Richard's Castle and Wigmore. In 1327 19 inhabitants were assessed for the King's subsidy. John

Corbett from Habberley held Merebrook (Milbrook) and Tetneshull (Tetstill), Tetstill having been a separate manor in 1086 held by Siward under the Church of Worcester. In 1530, it is known that “blo-shoppes”, i.e. iron forges, were at Milbrook. Smelting by charcoal implies a thickly wooded area. In 1623, Herald’s Visitation gives the pedigree of the Coningsby family of Neen Sollars. Humphrey Coningsby the traveller was born in or about 1567. He travelled widely around Europe up until 1610, when on a journey to Venice he never returned. His monument is in the Church of All Saints.

4.0 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEEN SOLLARS CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

4.1 Neen Sollars is a small village set in undulating countryside. It has a number of early timber framed dwellings and farms together with some brick houses dating from the period of the introduction of the railways. There used to be a school, post office, shop and railway station. These have sadly all gone. However, the two public houses still remain, as does the 14th Century church. The population of the parish in 1991 was 138 persons, which is less than in earlier years. In 1901 the population was 197 and in 1921 was 194.

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
Negative Factors

Setting

4.3 The village of Neen Sollars is in the parish of the same name and is 3 miles southwest of Cleobury Mortimer, equi-distant between Ludlow and Kidderminster, close to the boundary with Hereford and Worcester County.

Archaeological Significance

4.4 There are no known archaeological sites in the vicinity of Neen Sollars though halfway between Neen Sollars and Milson stands the Rectory circa 1730 which has in its grounds a dry homestead moat, 1.6m in depth.

4.5 The following are classed as monuments in the Neen Sollars Conservation Area: -

- High House Farmhouse (Grade II Listing)
(17th Century to early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1600 AD to 1913 AD
A farmhouse, which is now a house, of the early 17th Century with an earlier wing and later alterations. It is of painted timber frame construction with painted render and painted rendered plinth, the gabled plain-tile roof is hipped to the east)
- Fern Cottage (Grade II Listing)

(17th Century to early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1600 AD to 1913 AD – House

Early 20th Century (pre WW1) to 20th Century (post-WW2) - 1903 AD to 1969 AD – Post Office

This 2-storey and attic house, which is of the 17th Century and has 20th Century alterations and extensions, is of painted timber frame construction with painted brick and rendered infill panels on a stone rubble plinth. It has tiled roofs. The painted render imitates timber framing on the single-storey and attic rear extensions. It was used as a post office from 1903 to 1969)

- Houghton Farm (Grade II Listing)
(17th Century to early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1600 AD to 1913 AD
This 2-storey and attic farmhouse, which is now a house, is of the early 17th Century with late 19th Century extensions. It is of painted timber frame construction with painted brick and rendered infill panels, and has a plain-tiled roof with 19th Century bargeboards and finials to the gables. The 19th Century addition has a slate roof. Houghton Farm has a 3-bay main range and a single-bay cross wing to the rear, 19th Century infilling between the wings to the rear, and an extensive late 19th Century range adjoining the rear)
- Church of All Saints (Grade II* Listing)
(Medieval to early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1066 AD to 1913 AD
A church of the late 13th and 14th Century that was restored in 1859 and the chancel rebuilt)
- Memorial to Joseph Mantle 4m east of chancel of Church of All Saints (Grade II Listing)
(18th Century - 1700 AD to 1799 AD
A ashlar headstone of the early to mid 18th Century. It is a rectangular slab set horizontally with twin inscription with a raised foliate ornament at the head. The upper edge has a double raised curve. It commemorates Joseph Mantle d.1741 and his wife)
- Memorial to Thomas Wall 4m south of chancel of Church of All Saints (Grade II Listing)
(Late 18th Century - 1767 AD to 1799 AD
A ashlar pedestal tomb of the late 18th Century with a shallow pyramid lid with cornice and frieze, and a 2-stage plinth of moulded upper and plain lower sections. The plain inscribed panels have fluted corner sections. It commemorates Thomas Wall d.1778 and Thomas Wall d.1808 and also commemorates Edward Wall d.1887 and Elizabeth d.1864)
- Memorial 3m south of south transept of Church of All Saints (Grade II Listing)
(Late 18th Century - 1767 AD to 1799 AD
A ashlar and brick raised slab tomb of c. 1785, it has a simple inscribed slab with moulded edges set on a 5-course brick plinth. It commemorates. ...Marlton d.1785)
- Memorial 15m south of nave of Church of All Saints (Grade II Listing)
(18th Century - 1700 AD to 1799 AD
A ashlar pedestal tomb of the 18th Century. The lid has an octagonal ogee-shaped raised centre on a plain slab with cornice. It has plain

inscribed panels, beaded corner sections and a moulded plinth. It commemorates Walter Pooler d.1745 and his wife Susanna d.1754, Walter his son d.1761 and Ann his wife d.1794. Also commemorates John Giles d.1821 and his wife Mary d.1823, William his son d.1824. Also John Giles d.1840 and Sarah his wife d.1857)

- Church Farm Cottage and Church Cottage, now just Church Cottage (Grade II Listing)
(17th Century to early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1600 AD to 1913 AD
This 2-storey cottage, which was formerly a pair of cottages, is of 17th Century timber-frame construction with painted brick and part painted imitation timber frame. It has a tiled roof and a brick gable eaves stack to the rear)
- Old Smithy Cottage (Grade II Listing)
(17th Century to early 20th Century (pre WW1) - 1600 AD? to 1913 AD – Toll House / Blacksmiths Workshop / House
The house, which was formerly both a toll house and a smithy, is of the early 17th Century and has 20th Century extensions. Of timber frame construction with painted rendered infill panels on a restored brick plinth, it has painted rendered extensions and plain-tiled roofs)

Architectural and Historic Quality

- 4.6 The Church of All Saints, which dates from the 14th Century, is of a cruciform plan that is uncommon in small churches of the period. Close to the church is a listed cottage dating from the 17th Century that was a pair of cottages at some period. Across the road junction is the Old Smithy and further up the hill Haughton. Both are early 17th Century timber framed buildings that together with Church Cottage form the centre of the village. The remainder of the dwellings are spread out along the east west access. Down towards the River Rea is High House, which is also of early 17th Century origin with later additions. Fern Cottage is probably late 16th Century and used to be the Old Post Office; it has been repaired and extended. On the road to Milson is Hill Top Farmhouse, a late 18th Century redbrick front on an earlier timber frame dwelling. An adjoining timber framed barn has been restored and converted into a dwelling. In 1864 the railway from Bewdley to Tenbury was completed and passed through Neen Sollars. The remains of the station are to be found down the Station Drive in the centre of the village. The rail bridge has been removed though the abutments and the track bed still remain. Neen Court, a blue brick house near Station Drive, dates from the rail period, as does the School House over the river bridge, which is now a dwelling.
- 4.7 There has been some development in Neen Sollars in recent years; several cottages have been enlarged as they have been updated to modern living standards. Six new houses have been erected and the barn, stockyard and cow byre of Neen Court converted into two dwellings. Planning permission on one or two plots has been refused.



Street Scene

- 4.8 Much of the attractiveness of Neen Sollars stems from its location tucked under the surrounding wooded hills to the north, east and west. The open southerly aspect of fields down which the River Rea flows and the old rail line passes is also important. Approached by steep narrow lanes from three sides it is the junction of these accesses that form the centre of the village around which the cottages and farms are loosely grouped.

Key Buildings

- 4.9 The **Church of All Saints** is of the late 13th and 14th Century and it is believed that an earlier Saxon church (AD 597-1066) once stood on the site. All Saints was restored in 1859 and the chancel rebuilt. It is of stone rubble construction with ashlar dressings, and the plain-tile roofs have ornamental ridges. The chancel has an ashlar-coped gable and the spire is partly tiled and partly shingled. All Saints is of cruciform plan with the chancel, north and south transepts and the nave with the south porch all radiating from the central crossing tower. The chancel has a Decorated-style east window of 3 cusped lancets with trefoils and a cinquefoil and a 19th Century south window of triple cusped lancets. The diagonal buttresses are of the 19th Century. The north transept has single cusped lancets in the east wall and at high level in the north wall; the north door has an ogee-chamfered pointed arch. The south wall of the south transept has a restored 2-light window with a quatrefoil and hoodmould and a blocked cusped lancet to the west. The nave has a broad cusped lancet to the north and a west window that is similar to the south window of the transept. To the right on the south wall is a broad cusped lancet, and to the left is the south door with porch. The south door is plain with a 19th Century south porch that incorporates earlier trussed oak framing. There are flat buttresses on the west corners. The tower has cusped lancets on the east and south faces, and its pyramid-tiled roof is surmounted with a shingled broach spire with timbered louvred lucarnes with cusped heads on each face at its foot.
- Interior: The chancel has a 2-bay roof with a restored painted arch-braced collared rafter roof with a central truss and arch-braced principals. The stencilled plaster decoration is of the 19th Century as is the painted reredos. The north transept has a trussed-rafter roof of 7 cants formed with a collar, arched braced rafters and ashlaring; the south transept and nave have restored scissor-truss roofs. The central mast, hip-rafters and spire hip-rafters with struts of the spire are all of probable 14th Century date with 18th Century repairs. The south transept contains the Conyngesby monument, which is a alabaster canopied tomb to Humfrey Conyngesby, dated 1624, with a central reclining figure in armour. Below this are 2 panels of trophies of arms, the edge of the canopy arch is decorated with red and blue alternate flowers, and above are shields of arms and supporters surmounted by a figure of a coney. The arch spandrels have low-relief figures and the pillars on each side have capitals of mixed palms and

Corinthian foliage. The entablature has a cherub's head and is surmounted by allegorical female figures.

- 4.10 The **Old Smithy Cottage** is an early 17th Century house that was formerly both a toll house and a smithy. It is a single-storey and attic timber frame building with painted rendered infill panels on a restored brick plinth and has plain tiled roofs. The painted rendered extensions are of the 20th Century. The large projecting stack to the rear has a brick shaft. The street front has square framing 3 panels high with two 20th Century casements and two 20th Century boarded doors and there are also two 20th Century casements to the single timber-framed gabled dormer. To the right is a single-storey extension. The left return gable has square framing 2 panels high with a straight tension brace and three 20th Century casements. The gable-end truss has a straight tie beam, collar with twin raking struts over, and 4 raking struts that frame the three 20th Century casements. The rear is covered by hipped single-storey and gabled 2-storey extensions.
- 4.11 **High House Farmhouse**, which is now a house, is of the early 17th Century with an earlier wing and later alterations. It is a 2-storey painted timber frame construction with painted render, a painted rendered plinth, and a gabled plain-tile roof that is hipped to the east. The stone stack has a 20th Century ridge chimney. The south front has square framing 5 panels high with a straight tension brace to the left, the framing is underbuilt to the right with rendered masonry painted in imitation of a timber frame. There are three 20th Century metal casements with leaded lights and a single earlier casement situated to the centre right. The left-hand gable end has square framing 5 panels high with straight tension braces at the first floor and a single 2-light casement also at first-floor level. The right hand side has the wall frame of the earlier cross wing bays with square framing 3 panels high. At the rear 3 bays of the main range are square-framed with twin straight tension braces at both storeys in the middle bay, and there are three casements. The ground floor is covered by a 20th Century lean-to extension. To the left is the gable-end of the earlier cross wing with square framing, a cambered tie beam, vertical struts and collar; 20th Century casements are at both floors. The interior has twin chamfered bridging beams with stepped concave chamfer stops in the ground floor middle bay, and a large ashlar stack with back-to-back inglenooks and chamfered mantel beams with ogee chamfer stops.

Materials

- 4.12 The early construction in Neen Sollars is in the main timber framing with plaster or brick nogging on stone rubble bases with tiled roof. The more recent buildings are in mainly redbrick with tiled roofs, with the exception of Neen Court, which is a deep blue/grey brick with yellow coursing and a slate roof.

Natural Features

- 4.13 The land to the south of Neen Sollars is mostly reseeded grassland and cereals, the earlier hop yards and orchards having gone. Much of the arable is grown as fodder for the beef cattle and sheep reared on the slopes around the village. The woodland on the Shakenhurst and Tomkinson Estates is maintained for the rearing of pheasant and their shooting during the winter months. Many of the properties in Neen Sollars have very attractive gardens that add to the landscape value of the village.
- 4.14 Neen Sollars is on the whole a very attractive, well cared for village in a beautiful setting. The conserving of its existing character has to be paramount and by the

restriction of any further development this should be achieved. Additional tree planting in the way of screening to some of the less attractive features in the area might be of benefit.

Negative Factors

- 4.15 The coming of the railway in 1864 was probably the most disruptive factor in Neen Sollars in recent times. The legacy of the railway is the drive down to the station, which is now a private house. The old corrugated iron shop/store together with recent farm buildings and a general unkempt appearance to the area detracts from the village. In addition some of the recent development is perhaps out of scale with the existing cottages.

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.

Historic Environment Team
Shropshire Council
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6ND

01743 252586
Historic.environment@shropshire.gov.uk

Updated 2012

Source:
Shropshire Council Sites and Monument Records