

SHIFNAL CONSERVATION AREAS APPRAISAL

This appraisal was approved by Bridgnorth District Council's Planning Committee on 11 December 2000.

NOTE: The Appraisal is an analysis of the special architectural and historic interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Areas. It is not a definitive list of every element and feature which contributes to or detracts from the Conservation Areas.

1. SHIFNAL CONSERVATION AREAS

- 1.1 The Shifnal Conservation Areas were designated on 4 September 1978, and extended on 2 February 1981. Further extensions and amendments to the boundaries were designated on 23 April 2001.
- 1.2 Shifnal is a small historic market town 3 miles east of Telford. The larger Conservation Area comprises Church Street, the churchyard, the adjacent section of railway embankment and the east side of Innage Road; Market Place; the railway viaduct; the south-eastern corner of Bradford Street and the western part of Aston Street up to and including the Railway Inn; most of Victoria Road and of Shrewsbury Road; and the east side and parts of the west side of Park Street down to and including No. 62 and Park Court. The Broadway Conservation Area comprises the southern part of Broadway from No. 82 and the Wheatsheaf public house in the north to Nos. 23 and 24 in the south.

2. Topography

- 2.1 Shifnal is set on a low ridge running north-south, with a gentle slope westwards down to the shallow valley of the Wesley Brook. The Brook meanders through the town, but has little visual impact as it runs largely hidden from public view between or behind property boundaries. The town is surrounded by principally agricultural land, which can be seen in some distant views out.

3. History

- 3.1 The name Shifnal derives from Scuffanhalch, first recorded in a forged 7th-century charter dating from the 12th-century. 'Scuffa' is probably a person's name, while 'halh' means valley. Other variations of the name used from the middle ages until the 18th century include Shifnael, Schopenale and Shiffenhall. The town may have originated as a settlement around an Anglo-Saxon minster church and a crossing of the Wesley Brook, on what is now Church Street. After the Norman conquest the manor was, like most of Shropshire, granted to Roger De Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury. The entry in Domesday Book in 1086 is the first significant documentary record. The manor, held by Robert Fitz Tetbald, is referred to as Iteshale, meaning Iddi's valley; later variants included Idesalla, Hideshal and Idsall.
- 3.2 Shifnal continued to prosper in the Middle Ages as the centre of a large agricultural parish. A moated manor house south of the church was occupied in the 13th and 14th centuries. In the 13th and 14th centuries a planned town developed to the east of the original centre around the church, along the main road north-south (Broadway/

Bradford Street/ Market Place/ Park Street). In 1245 the lord of the manor, Walter de Dunstanville III, was granted a royal charter permitting a weekly market and an annual fair. A further charter was granted in 1315. Mediaeval prosperity is reflected in the considerable size and high quality of the parish church. In 1591 a major fire damaged the church and destroyed many buildings.

- 3.3 For a long period Shifnal's economy was dominated by agriculture. Most of the population were either directly involved in it or were in trades linked to it. However, in the late 17th and 18th centuries the number and range of trades greatly expanded. They included weavers, dyers and tailors, masons, thatchers and brickmakers, with leather trades including skinners, curriers, tanners, saddlers and shoemakers forming the largest group.
- 3.4 In the late 18th and early 19th centuries coaching traffic brought significant prosperity. The main road through the town was turnpiked (made part of a toll road) as part of the London to Shrewsbury route in 1726. The Irish mail coaches between London and Holyhead began to pass through the town in 1785, and the coaching trade became a major contributor to the economy. The Jerningham Arms and the Star (on the site of The Oddfellows wine bar) were the main coaching inns. Victoria Road, initially known as New Street, was laid out in the 1820s as a more direct route forming part of Thomas Telford's improvements to the Holyhead Road.
- 3.5 By the 1840s coach traffic had declined considerably, and with the opening in 1849 of the Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury railway line straight through the centre of Shifnal it rapidly disappeared altogether. The railway had a dramatic effect on Shifnal's appearance but did little to benefit its prosperity, as it enabled local farmers to reach more distant markets and effectively bypass the town. In the second half of the 19th century Shifnal's population grew only slowly. It reverted to a small market town serving chiefly local needs, with the well-established trades continuing together with the usual range of shops, coal merchants, bankers, solicitors etc. Many of these continued to flourish well into the 20th century, although the weekly market ceased in 2000. Shifnal remains an important local centre, but has largely become a dormitory town for Telford and Wolverhampton.

4. Archaeology

- 4.1 Shifnal's continuous history of occupation suggests that relatively substantial archaeological deposits from the mediaeval period and later may survive, particularly in the areas least affected by 19th and 20th-century development. Archaeological investigation has so far been very limited, with little systematic excavation. Limited excavations of the moated site of the mediaeval manor house (outside the Conservation Area) carried out in 1961 prior to development found mediaeval remains.
- 4.2 There is currently no information on buried deposits from the post-mediaeval (16th-century and later) period. In 1991 a small trial excavation in Park Street found only 19th and 20th-century deposits. The Central Marches Historic Towns Survey concluded in 1996 that overall Shifnal has moderate potential archaeological importance, but surviving remains could provide important evidence relating to the extent and types of occupation in various parts of the town.

5. Pattern of Development

- 5.1 Shifnal's historic street pattern remained largely unaltered from the middle ages to the early 19th century. The form and boundaries of the mediaeval market town, as plotted by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, are fairly well preserved in the street pattern and the survival of some of the early property boundaries. The Wesley Brook formed much of the western boundary. The Conservation Areas include most of the area occupied by the mediaeval town, but exclude Bradford Street and Cheapside due to drastic alteration and redevelopment in the early 1970s.
- 5.2 The area around the church, originally known as Idsall, is the earliest part of the town. Church Street is of mediaeval origin, forming the access to the church and the manorial enclosure (destroyed by the mid 20th century housing development of Manor Close). The boundaries of the earliest tenement plots (mediaeval holdings) partly survive in the very irregularly shaped areas of land between the southern side of Church Street (including Nos. 7-15 and the open space) and Park Street from the Jerningham Arms to No. 26, and to the north of Church Street between the church and Wesley Brook.
- 5.3 The very large churchyard forms a major open space. The western end of the street, around the church, has large detached houses set back in large gardens. They reflect encroachment onto the mediaeval churchyard and the fashionable status of the area by the 18th century. East of the churchyard, largely hidden from Church Street and Market Place, the former gardens and grounds of Old Idsall House and Brook House formed part of a mediaeval tenement plot. This was developed in the mid 1990s as a standard suburban layout of cul-de-sacs and detached houses known as Church Meadow which has obliterated any traces of its historic form.
- 5.4 East of the church and Old Idsall House, Church Street has an irregular pattern. Plots are irregularly shaped, of varied but generally narrow widths subdivided from the mediaeval tenement plots. Most buildings directly front the street in blocks, rows and terraces, with a scattering of outbuildings to the rear, but built-up frontages are interspersed with large open areas, producing a fragmented effect. The northern end, where the street narrows and joins Market Place at an acute angle, is much denser and wholly urban in feeling.
- 5.5 The strong north - south axis of Broadway/ Bradford Street/ Market Place / Park Street is probably an ancient route which was collectively known as High Street until the 19th century. In the 13th and 14th centuries it became part of the development of Shifnal as a planned town, forming a wide market street with development plots (known as burgage plots) laid out fronting it. Traces of these remain in the surviving long narrow plots in parts of Park Street such as Nos. 1 and 3 (the Nell Gwynn), 12 and 14, and on Broadway such as Nos. 25-43, some bounded to the west by the Wesley Brook. The original plot widths may survive in some properties, but many were later subdivided.
- 5.6 Within the Broadway Conservation Area the historic pattern is substantially intact, although Idsall Court and the Library has obliterated a short section of it. The east side has generally small buildings in blocks and terraces, fronting the pavement, with few breaks. The west side is more varied and less dense, with many breaks in frontages, a mix of individual, paired and attached buildings of much more varied size set slightly back from the pavement.

- 5.7 The historic, strongly urban pattern of buildings in pairs, rows and terraces fronting onto the street with few breaks is at its most concentrated around Market Place and the northern end of Park Street. Here buildings fill the full width of the plots, and many extend back into them with rear wings, extensions and outbuildings. A few of the larger buildings have vehicle access via original openings onto the street, such as those of 15 Market Place and the Jerningham Arms. Park Street has relatively large buildings on long plots of varying widths. Some are detached, and there are breaks in frontages. On the west side the Jerningham Arms car park, created by demolitions, forms a large gap which disrupts the historic pattern, and The Grove junction creates another wide break.
- 5.8 Further south surviving historic development is more scattered and on a smaller scale. On the west side it ends with two modest detached houses, Nos. 12 and 14, and on the east side with the terrace of small houses Nos. 11-21. Beyond this, on the east side the historic pattern has been destroyed by late 20th-century redevelopment. Idsall House brings a marked change. Both it and Park House were originally large detached houses set back from the street in extensive grounds on the outskirts of Shifnal, but are now absorbed into the town. Until the late 20th-century the southern part of Park Street was largely undeveloped. No. 62 and Park Court, the former Union Workhouse, were once relatively isolated buildings some way outside the town.
- 5.9 The construction of the railway viaduct in 1848 had a very dramatic impact on Shifnal. It cut across the north-south axis, splitting the town in two and dividing Market Place from Bradford Street, Aston Street and Victoria Road. Aston Street is probably of mediaeval origin, but the viaduct arches on the south side have obliterated any trace of earlier development. Immediately around the junction of Aston Street, Bradford Street and Victoria Road the pattern is strongly urban, with buildings fronting directly onto the pavement. 2 Victoria Road (Noram House), is a large building on a corner site orientated towards the Market Place rather than Victoria Road, and Nos. 1-13 are in blocks fronting the pavement or set back slightly behind shallow forecourts and railings.
- 5.10 Victoria Road and Shrewsbury Road largely consist of varied 19th and 20th-century suburban development. Detached, semi-detached and short terraces of houses, generally of modest size, are set back behind short front gardens. Two churches, a former chapel (later the Magistrates Court), a factory and a former mill interspersed among the houses vary the general pattern. Plots vary in size, but are generally long and narrow, with building fronts parallel to the road. However, the northern side of Victoria Road is more fragmented. Plots are much more varied in size, shape and orientation. Some buildings are set at an angle to the street, parallel to Shrewsbury Road. At the north-west end the Roman Catholic church and Presbytery occupy one side of a triangular site between the two Roads which was once entirely separate from the town.

6. Buildings

- 6.1 Despite serious losses due to 20th-century demolitions, especially in Bradford Street and Cheapside, Shifnal still retains many buildings of historic and architectural interest which make an enormous contribution to the Conservation Areas' special character and appearance. They include commercial buildings such as shops and public houses, banks and offices, churches, and houses, cottages and outbuildings in a wide range of forms, sizes, styles, materials and details.

- 6.2 Numerous buildings are listed for their special interest. The parish church of St. Andrew, listed Grade I as of exceptional national importance, is a major mediaeval building dating from the 12th and 13th centuries with 14th and 15th century alterations. It has Norman elements, but the general appearance is Gothic, with Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular work. The church and the Grade II listed timber-framed Old Idsall House, built in the late 16th century and altered in the 18th century, are probably the only buildings which survived the devastating fire in 1591.
- 6.3 There are numerous early to mid 17th-century timber-framed buildings, ranging in size and elaboration from the simple and irregular 1½ storey 12 and 14 Market Place, to the more ambitious 2-storey 8-10 Market Place with jettied (overhanging) upper storey and gable on carved brackets, and the complex patterning of the 3-storey 15 Market Place. Some buildings conceal early origins behind later facades. The formal early 19th-century front of 47 Broadway hides a 2-storey 16th timber-framed house raised to 3 storeys in the 17th century, while the irregular 18th and early 19th century front of 24 Broadway was added to a 17th-century timber-framed building. All are Grade II listed.
- 6.4 Idsall House (now part of the Park House Hotel) is listed Grade II* as of major national importance. Its symmetrical 3-storey 5-bay façade dated 1699 is the earliest and finest example of the formal, classically-influenced architecture in brick or render which dominated Shifnal's development in the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries. Vertical proportions, symmetry or regularity, sash windows and panelled doors are characteristic of a wide range of buildings. The Old Vicarage and Innage House in Church Street are mid/late 18th-century 3-storey detached houses with fine detailing. 25 and 27 Broadway are a pair of 2-bay houses of similar date and quality. The original 3-bay range of the Jerningham Arms dated 1705 was remodelled in about 1800, with a high 2-storey addition having huge sash windows to a first-floor assembly room. Smaller and less ambitious buildings with simpler details are more widespread. They are generally of 2 or 3 bays and 2 or 3 storeys, such as 22 Market Place, 43 Broadway, 28-32 Church Street, and 16-18B Market Place. All are listed Grade II.
- 6.5 Park Court (the former Workhouse) of 1817 and Brook House of about 1820 are examples of the slightly irregular and less formal designs which became increasingly popular in the early 19th century. In contrast the Park House Hotel of about 1835 is a large and rather grand stuccoed 2-storey house with Grecian detail, while the front of the former Magistrates Court in Shrewsbury Road is a smaller example of the pure Greek Revival style. No. 7 Park Street (Lloyds Bank) of about 1840 shows the stucco classical style of the early 19th century modified with Italianate detail. More modest buildings show other early 19th century developments, such as the deep eaves, shallow slate roofs and broader proportions of 7 and 9 Victoria Road, a pair of 3-storey 2-bay houses. 7 Shrewsbury Road, dated 1830, is a plain 2-storey 2-bay house with simple detailing. All are Grade II listed.
- 6.6 Equally important to the Conservation Areas' character and appearance is the large number of unlisted 18th and 19th century houses and cottages in simpler versions of these styles. They include plain 2- or 3-bay 18th and early 19th century houses, whether individual such as 23 and 41 Broadway, or pairs such as 60-62 Broadway. There are terraces of simple one-bay 2-storey cottages such as the late 18th or early 19th-century 64-72 Broadway. Particularly notable are terraces of early Victorian small houses with simple classical details including 17-23 Victoria Road, 17-25 Shrewsbury Road, and 11-21 Park Street. Later Victorian houses in a wide variety of designs also make an important contribution, ranging from larger properties, detached such as Inglewood (1855-6) in Church Street and 25 Victoria Road, or pairs such as 37-39

Broadway and 27-29 Victoria Road, and more modest terraces such as 22-28 Shrewsbury Road.

- 6.7 The Victorian period's architectural diversity is even more powerfully reflected in a variety of major buildings of considerable interest. The most dominant structure in the town is the railway viaduct with its vast arches, completed in 1849 but regrettably marred by the replacement in 1953 of the original iron bridge over Market Place. Noram House (2 Victoria Road) is a large and imposing mid Victorian commercial building with stuccoed Italianate details, on a very prominent site. The red sandstone Roman Catholic church at the junction of Victoria and Shrewsbury Roads, designed by J.C. Buckler and built for Lord Stafford in 1860, is in the pure Gothic Revival style typical of its period for modest churches. It contrasts strongly with the eclectic mixture of details in brick and terracotta of the 1880 Methodist church in Victoria Road. The mid 19th-century former steam-powered mill in Shrewsbury Road is plain and utilitarian in comparison, but is a powerful presence in the street scene. 5 Park Street, dated 1892, is an interesting piece of late Victorian commercial development influenced by the 'Queen Anne' style.
- 6.8 Late 20th-century buildings have regrettably had an almost entirely detrimental impact. Idsall Court and the Library in Broadway, built in 1971, is a large 3-storey flat-roofed block wholly unsympathetic to its location in scale, massing and detail. The demolition of the large railway station building in the 1960s was a serious loss to the appearance of Market Place; the public conveniences which replaced it are in a dull building wholly unworthy of such an important site.

7. Materials

- 7.1 The considerable diversity of traditional building materials in Shifnal makes a major contribution to the Conservation Areas' appearance and interest. Red sandstone is used for a number of prominent buildings. The parish church and the churchyard walls have random coursing and fine ashlar finishes. The Roman Catholic church and Presbytery are rock-faced, while the adjacent factory is ashlar. The railway viaduct has rock-faced stone in the arches to Aston Street and around the station entrance. Otherwise stone, exposed or painted, is generally limited to dressings and details of brick buildings such as Park Court and the railway viaduct.
- 7.2 Timber framing dominated until the 18th century, and numerous examples survive. Most have infill panels of wattle and daub, lath and plaster or plastered brick, and in most cases the timbering has been painted black. Old Idsall House has 16th-century close studding. The simplest buildings, such as 12 and 14 Market Place, have the type known as small or square framing, with the timbers forming small square or rectangular panels. A more elaborate variation on this is 8-10 Market Place with jettied (overhanging) upper storey and gable on carved brackets. Most elaborate of all are 13A and 15 Market Place and the Nell Gwynn (1 Park Street) which have the jetties and complex decorative patterning characteristic of 17th century Shropshire work.
- 7.3 Old Idsall House has been partly rebuilt and enlarged in painted brick but its framing remains clearly visible. The timber-framed origins of numerous other buildings are partly or wholly concealed by later brick, painted or rendered facades. 3 Park Street (now part of the Nell Gwynn) has a rendered front with sash windows, but the timber framing of the originally much lower building is exposed in the right return side. 13 Market Place has a late 18th-century 3-bay brick front block to the street, but behind it is a 17th-century timber-framed 2-storey rear range. 2 Church Street has a painted

19th-century brick front, but the rear elevation is exposed framing. In some buildings, such as the Wheatsheaf public house, 24 and 47 (The Old Malthouse) Broadway, the framing is almost entirely concealed on the exterior.

- 7.4 Shifnal's pre-eminent building material is brick, chiefly in varied shades of red. Idsall House of 1699 is probably the earliest surviving example in the Conservation Areas. Good quality 18th and 19th century brickwork, frequently in Flemish bond, is a major element of the town's distinctive appearance. It predominates for buildings from small cottages such as 60-62 Broadway to fine individual houses like the Old Vicarage, commercial buildings such as 5 Park Street, and the Methodist Church. The narrow joints and traditional lime and sand mortar are essential elements of this historic brickwork's appearance, but in numerous cases unsympathetic repointing in hard cement mortar with crudely treated joints has harmed the appearance.
- 7.5 Other brick types and colours can also be seen, especially in 19th-century buildings. The railway viaduct is constructed primarily of blue engineering brick, while the former mill building in Shrewsbury Road has the variegated mix of buff, russet and purple usually referred to as Broseleys. 3 (Holly Cottage) and 2-8 Shrewsbury Road are of buff brick. The Oddfellows in Market Place in a variety of shades has a ground floor of hard, bright red brick typical of its period, combined with painted render to the upper floor.
- 7.6 Numerous brick buildings have been painted, at least on the front elevation. In some cases, such as Old Idsall House, this was probably originally done long ago, but in many others it has been done much more recently, and often in modern synthetic paints and non-traditional colours such as the brilliant white of 24 Broadway. Painting may add to the variety of townscape, but regrettably it has frequently obscured good quality brickwork. Moreover, the painting of individual frontages disrupts the intended uniformity of rows and terraces, such as 11-21 Park Street marred by the painting of No. 21.
- 7.7 Various types of render are fairly widespread. Painted fine stucco can be seen on high status buildings constructed or altered in the early to mid 19th-century, whether smooth as on No. 4 Market Place, the former Magistrates Court and the Park House Hotel, scored to imitate the blocks and joints of fine ashlar stonework as at the Jerningham Arms, or rusticated as at No. 7 Park Street (Lloyds Bank). Stucco is also used for architectural dressings and details of 18th and 19th century buildings such as the plinth and sill bands of Idsall House and the Old Vicarage and the eaves cornice of Innage House, and the quoins and window surrounds of Noram House and Inglewood in Church Street. Other, less ambitious, buildings have coarser finishes ranging from the render of the Wheatsheaf, 23 and 47 Broadway and 3 Park Street (Nell Gwynn) to the pebbledash of The Cottage, Park Street. Recent non-traditional 'tyrolean' render has been applied to other buildings such as the Railway Inn in Aston Street and the Old Bell in Church Street, obscuring original materials and finishes.
- 7.8 The dominant roof material is clay tiles. Old, and in some cases hand-made, tiles on buildings such as Old Idsall House, 22 Market Place and 24 Broadway have attractive colours and textures. Their irregular appearance is an important element of the town's picturesque roofscape. In contrast, newer machine-made tiles such as those of the parish church or Innage House have a flat, uninteresting appearance unsympathetic to the character of old buildings. A few old buildings have concrete tiles which are entirely alien, such as those of Idsall House or No. 20 Shrewsbury Road. The traditional treatment of gables is a simple mortar verge, perhaps with a tile undercloak,

but recent replacements with asbestos or board undercloaks result in sharper lines and contrasts of colour which damage traditional appearance.

- 7.9 Among 19th-century buildings natural blue slate is fairly widespread, with roofs of significantly lower pitch than those of tiles. It is used for a variety of buildings, including small houses such as Nos. 17-23 Victoria Road, much larger houses such as Brook House and the Park House, and commercial buildings including Noram House and Barclays Bank. The obviously artificial slates of No. 13 Victoria Road contrast unfavourably with the natural slate of Nos. 1 – 11.
- 7.10 Unfortunately little historic paving and other streetscape elements survive. Some vehicle accesses such as that to the Jerningham Arms, retain their original setts. Road and pavement surfaces are generally of tarmac with concrete kerbs, but recently some enhancement works using more traditional materials have been carried out. In 1994 the pavements in Market Place were relaid in brick paviors and John's Street was paved with 'tegula' imitation setts; this was extended to Bradford Street/Cheapside in 1999.

8. Architectural Forms and Details

- 8.1 Much of the special architectural and historic interest of Shifnal's buildings is due to the variety of traditional forms and details. Plan forms vary: a few are formal and regular, such as the Old Vicarage, Innage House and Park House. A small number have a deliberately designed formal but asymmetrical plan, such as Brook House, Park Court and Noram House, or the simple rectangle of the former Magistrates Court. Many more are irregular, reflecting piecemeal additions and alterations. Along Broadway, Market Place, the northern end of Park Street and the eastern part of Church Street, where most buildings are in blocks fronting the street, many have gabled rear wings. In the historic commercial centre around Market Place these can be very long, as at Nos.13 and 15-15A Market Place, and Nos. 1 and 3 (The Nell Gwynn) Park Street. They are often of several different builds, and tend to reduce in height and width as they recede from the street.
- 8.2 The most ambitious treatments use large-scale architectural features. The former Magistrates Court has projecting end bays with pediments framing the central entrance. 7 Park Street and 4 Market Place have projecting 2-storey entrance bays with pilasters. Perhaps grandest of all is the Park House Hotel's entrance portico with fluted Greek Doric columns. These are all stuccoed but impressive effects are achieved in brick, such as the corner piers and slightly projecting centre of the Old Vicarage. Park Court has its entire façade enlivened with giant arches. Idsall House and Noram House have rusticated quoins to the angles, and Idsall House has string courses between floors.
- 8.3 Front elevations are generally flat, especially where buildings directly abut the pavement, with few projections other than shallow shopfronts and doorcases. There are exceptions such as the bay windows of the Jerningham Arms and 17 Shrewsbury Road, and the two-storey bays of 27 and 29 Victoria Road. A few buildings have projecting features to upper floors, notably the large first floor bay window of 13 Market Place (the ground floor bay was destroyed by mid-20th century road widening), and the bays and recessed balconies of No. 5 Park Street. Where buildings are detached and set back more varied forms are possible, such as the gabled cross wings and recessed centre of Old Idsall House, and the gabled cross wing with bay window of 25 Victoria Road.

- 8.4 Many buildings have some type of eaves cornice or other detail, ranging from simple to elaborate according to status and style. The most widespread is the 3-course brick dentil cornice, used in a wide variety of 18th and 19th-century buildings from terraces of small houses and cottages including 17-25 Shrewsbury Road, 11-21 Park Street and 52-6 Broadway to larger individual houses such as 32 Church Street, 45 Broadway and Brook House, and commercial and former public buildings such as 16-16B Market Place and Park Court. Variations include the brick dog-tooth cornice of 7 Shrewsbury Road and the Railway Inn in Aston Street, and the canted cornice of the former mill building in Shrewsbury Road.
- 8.5 Moulded cornices in stone (now generally painted) or render are also widespread, ranging from relatively modest buildings such as 22 Market Place to larger commercial buildings and houses including 2, 4 and 13 Market Place and 25-27 Broadway, and fine houses including Idsall House, the Old Vicarage and Innage House. Park House has a cornice combined with a parapet. Most elaborate of all are the mid 19th-century cornices with big moulded brackets supporting deep eaves of 7 Park Street and Inglewood, Church Street. Some early/ mid 19th-century buildings – notably 1-21 Victoria Road – have a simple flat frieze band combined with boxed deep eaves, usually to shallow-pitched slate roofs. Simpler still are the plain boxed eaves of early/ mid 19th-century buildings such as Barclays Bank on the corner of Aston Street, and 7-13 Church Street.
- 8.6 Pitched roofs predominate. Roof spans are relatively narrow. Although roof slopes generally run parallel to the street, some have gables to the front. These tend to be the earlier buildings, particularly those of 16th and 17th-century timber-framed origin, such as 8 Church Street and Old Idsall House with one or two large gables, or the smaller multiple gables of 13-15 Park Street and the Nell Gwynn, all with timber bargeboards.
- 8.7 A few buildings have 18th- century parapet gables, such as the wide one to the front of 24 Broadway, and those to the ends of 22 Market Place and 43 Broadway. A much more formal gable treatment is the classical pediment to the central bay of the Old Vicarage. Some large 19th-century buildings have very prominent gables to the street, notably the Roman Catholic and Methodist churches with parapet gables, and 5 Park Street with painted timber bargeboards. Many other buildings have gables to return sides or to rear wings; the most widespread treatment is plain mortared verges.
- 8.8 A limited number of buildings have hipped roofs, such as 11 Market Place, Innage House and the Old Vicarage, and the main block of Idsall House. Slate hipped roofs are of a much shallower pitch, making them less prominent. Examples include 7-13 Church Street, Park Court, Brook House and Noram House. A few buildings have roofs hidden behind elaborate rendered parapets on their principal elevations, as at Park House or the former Magistrates Court. 6 Market Place has a tile roof hidden behind an 18th-century brick and stone coped, ramped parapet.
- 8.9 Chimneys are a vital element of the appearance both of individual buildings and of the townscape as a whole. The most widespread type by far is the simple, plain stack containing several flues, generally with simple string courses or over-sailing tops. Most are sited on the ridge as at 23 Broadway, or at the ends of the roof as at 32 Church Street, or both as at 25-27 Broadway. Less common variations include internal stacks sited on a roof slope away from the ridge as at 64-72 Broadway, and external stacks projecting from an outside wall as on the front of Old Idsall House.

- 8.10 Some buildings have chimneys located on the far side of the ridge, as with the Old Vicarage where they rise from the back wall. These are largely hidden from the street, but they can often be seen from other points and in distant views. A few Victorian buildings have chimneys with decorative details in brick, such as those of Inglewood in Church Street. Some buildings have had chimneys truncated, as at 13 Market Place, or removed altogether as at Park Court, damaging their architectural and historic interest and diminishing the contribution they make to the Conservation Area's appearance.
- 8.11 Treatment of openings varies considerably. Timber-framed buildings generally have windows and doors simply fitted within the framing members. Many buildings have simple arches to openings, segmental as at 24, 45 and 60-62 Broadway, and 19-25 Shrewsbury Road, or cambered at 11-21 Park Street. Some more elaborate buildings have these on subsidiary elevations to the side or rear, as at the Old Vicarage and Innage House. Numerous 18th and 19th-century buildings have flat arches of shaped or rubbed bricks, as at the Old Vicarage, 28-32 Church Street and Park Court. A variation on this is the addition of a plain or decorated keystone, as at Idsall House, 6 and 22 Market Place and 43 Broadway. 2-8 and 3 Shrewsbury Road have mid 19th-century 'Tudor' brick hoodmolds.
- 8.12 Many other buildings have lintels of painted stone or render. Some are entirely plain as at Barclays Bank and 7 Shrewsbury Road. Others are rusticated or channelled, as at 17-23 Victoria Road, or with keystones as at 7-9 Victoria Road. These are brick buildings, but similar details can be seen on rendered facades such as the Jerningham Arms and Lloyds Bank. Most of these types are combined with painted stone or render projecting window sills.
- 8.13 Most elaborate of all are the architectural surrounds in painted stone or render of the most ambitious buildings. The Old Vicarage has moulded lugged architraves to the central windows, with a frieze and cornice to that on the first floor. The former Magistrates Court has moulded surrounds to tall narrow windows, while the doors have a cornice on moulded console brackets; Park House has similar cornices and consoles to many windows. Noram House has big rendered surrounds, one with a pediment, to the ground floor's arched windows. 37-39 Broadway have heavy Italianate surrounds extending from ground to first floor.
- 8.14 While the simplest buildings have only an arch or lintel to the main door, the majority have some additional detail. Some have hoods, whether simple as at 64-72 Broadway or more elaborate such as that of 13 Market Place with shaped brackets, and notably the semi-circular hood with carved brackets of Idsall House. 25-27 Broadway have moulded and panelled hoods on shaped brackets combined with doorcases of panelled pilasters.
- 8.15 Painted timber doorcases are very widespread. The simplest comprise pilasters, either flat or panelled, and a plain or panelled entablature with shallow cornice, as at 17-23 Victoria Road or 19-25 Shrewsbury Road. Slightly more elaborate variations include brackets, as at 28-32 Church Street, or simple pediments such as those of 13 and 17 Shrewsbury Road. 7-9 Victoria Road have pilasters with incised decoration, triglyph friezes and panelled reveals. Most ambitious of all are the half or three-quarter Doric columns, friezes and pediments of the Old Vicarage, Innage House and the side entrance of 7 Park Street, the rendered Doric porch of 18 Church Street, and the porch of Greek Doric columns and entablature to the Park House.

- 8.16 Traditional doors and windows are a very important element of the Conservation Areas' appearance. Boarded doors are generally found in the simpler buildings such as 47 and 64-70 Broadway; on more elaborate buildings they are used for secondary doors to through passages, such as those of 23 Broadway and 28-30 Church Street, and to outbuildings. Panelled doors are more widespread. Many 18th and early 19th-century buildings have 6-panelled doors, often with fielded panels as at 28-30 Church Street. Some are part-glazed, such as that of 32 Church Street, but in grander houses such as Idsall House, the Old Vicarage and 25-27 Broadway light is provided by a decorative fanlight above the door.
- 8.17 Another type found particularly in early 19th-century buildings has flush panels, usually surrounded by sunk beads; examples include 7-9 Victoria Road. Later 19th-century buildings are more likely to have 4-panelled doors, often with moulded panels as at 17-23 Victoria Road. A few higher status buildings have late 18th or early 19th-century half-glazed doors, such as those of Brook House, the Jerningham Arms with intersecting Gothic tracery, and the pair of doors to Park House. In some cases solid panelled doors have been part-glazed at a later date, as at 19 and 21 Victoria Road.
- 8.18 Original glazed doors are also important features of the town's historic shopfronts. 6 Market Place has an early 19th-century type, possibly partly original, with pilasters and shallow bow windows of many panes. Most of them have rendered stallrisers, with painted timber windows, fascias and cornices. Perhaps the earliest intact example is that to 22 Market Place: the left part is mid/late Victorian, with iron glazing bars and timber mullions, half-glazed panelled door and moulded cornice. This was carefully copied for the right part in 1998. 12 Market Place has late Victorian arched windows and glazed panelled door, but unusually, no fascia or cornice. 5 Park Street has two good original shopfronts of about 1892 framed by fluted pilasters, brackets and finials, and slender columns with acanthus leaf carving and carved spandrels to the shaped windows.
- 8.19 The most widespread window type is the painted timber vertically sliding sash, dating from the 18th to the 20th centuries. 12-pane (6 over 6) sashes include early/mid 18th-century examples with thick glazing bars and exposed sash boxes almost flush with the walls, as at Idsall House and 22 Market Place. Late 18th-century versions have slender glazing bars and concealed sash boxes recessed within openings, as at 25-27 Broadway and the Old Vicarage. Early 19th-century examples have still more slender bars, such as 16-18B Market Place and the Park House. An equally popular early and mid-19th century type is of 16 (8 over 8) panes, as at 43 and 47 Broadway, and 1-9 Victoria Road.
- 8.20 In many buildings windows reduce in size on upper floors. Larger buildings such as the Old Vicarage or 7-9 Victoria Road reduce from 6 over 6 or 8 over 8 on the ground and first floors to 3 over 3 or 4 over 4 on the second floor. Smaller properties such as 19-25 Shrewsbury Road or 11-21 Park Street go from 6 over 6 or 8 over 8 to 3 over 6 or 4 over 8 on the first floor. A later 19th and 20th-century type is of 4 panes, as at 8 and 16-18 Victoria Road. Other variations include the tripartite window of 25 Broadway, the arched bay window of 13 Market Place, and the sashes with margin bars of 25 Victoria Road.
- 8.21 Timber casements with side-hung opening lights are characteristic of many of the more modest buildings and of the less conspicuous parts of grander ones. A few 18th/19th-century examples have iron-framed opening lights hung on hooks on the

outside face of the frame, such as those of 8-10A Market Place which have distinctive diamond-pattern glazing. The leaded timber and metal casements of the Nell Gwynn are a 20th-century copy of a 16th and 17th-century type. The majority have timber opening lights and glazing bars. Fixed and opening lights are generally identical, with opening lights set flush with or recessed within the frame: the modern standard version with storm-sealed opening lights and fixed lights glazed direct to the frame without a sub-frame look very different. Glazing patterns vary: multi-paned, as at the Railway Inn; a single horizontal glazing bar, as at 3 and 2-8 Shrewsbury Road, two or more horizontal bars as at the Wheatsheaf and 64-70 Broadway, and 18-20 Shrewsbury Road.

- 8.22 Traditional doors and windows are particularly vulnerable to unsympathetic alteration and inappropriate replacement. The character of many buildings has been badly damaged by the unnecessary removal of historic joinery which could easily be repaired. Replacement doors and windows are frequently of totally different materials and types to the originals, with stained tropical hardwood or PVCu rather than painted softwood, top-opening lights rather than vertical sliding sashes, and crude details that either fail to match the subtlety of original mouldings or are completely different. This is particularly damaging in terraces of properties designed as a single composition where unsympathetic alteration of one property can damage the whole, as at 72 Broadway or 21 Victoria Road. As a result the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Areas is being eroded.

9. The Character of the Conservation Areas

- 9.1 Shifnal is a historic small market town of considerable variety. Although parts of it have suffered badly from 20th-century demolitions and unsympathetic redevelopment, a great deal of interest survives. The buildings are the most visible evidence of the town's history, but history has shaped its character and appearance in other, less obvious ways. The varied street and boundary patterns reflect its early origins, mediaeval planned development, 19th-century expansion and 20th-century development. The uses of buildings and spaces are very much part of its distinctive character. Different parts of the Conservation Areas have their own distinctive qualities.

10. Market Place/ Park Street

- 10.1 Market Place and Park Street form part of the former High Street laid out in the 13th/14th centuries. They are the principal route for through traffic on the A464. Traffic volumes are significant and contribute to the busy character of this part of the town, but do not at present have an unduly harmful impact. Market Place and the northern end of Park Street are part of the historic commercial centre of Shifnal, although the actual market moved northwards to Cheapside and the majority of shops are on Bradford Street/ Cheapside. Nevertheless, almost all of the buildings are in commercial use, including shops, pubs, banks and offices; most are independent local or regional rather than national businesses. The upper floors of some buildings are vacant, but many are in varied use including storage and staff rooms, office and residential.
- 10.2 Strictly speaking **Market Place** comprises the short, broad street between Aston Street and Victoria Road in the north and John's Street in the south, but visually the northern end of Park Street from Lloyds Bank to the Nell Gwynne forms part of it, and it is partly enclosed to the south by the side elevation of the Jerningham Arms. The

northern end of Market Place widens slightly, but it is dominated and enclosed by the massive bulk of the railway bridge high above, which frames views of buildings beyond. It has a strongly urban character, with largely continuous built-up frontages to both sides.

- 10.3 On the west side a small opening leads to **Tanhouse Shut**, its name a reminder of one of Shifnal's historic trades (leather), with cottages along a narrow, irregular historic alley. The building line abruptly steps back and changes direction to align with the oblique angle of Church Street rather than the rest of Market Place, and views down the narrow street open up. There is an equally abrupt change from 3-storey masonry facades to much lower timber-framed buildings. Beyond Church Street the building line reverts to run parallel to Market Place and tall brick buildings resume.
- 10.4 **John's Street** is a narrow road lined on its north side by 18th and 19th-century brick buildings stepping attractively down the slope. Recent repaving in artificial setts has improved its appearance, but the retaining wall and 20th- century railings to the car park on its south side are particularly unattractive. Until the 1930s a timber-framed building on the corner of Park Street enclosed the southern side of Market Place. Its demolition destroyed the enclosure and opened up the area now used as a car park between Park Street and Church Street. This provides a view of the church and other buildings and trees in Church Street, but creates a visual 'hole' which destroys the sense of enclosure and historic urban character. The unattractive expanse of tarmac and poor quality concrete bollards and railings seriously harm the historic appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. Reinstating buildings on the corner of John's Street and along Park Street to recreate the original pattern could be a major improvement.
- 10.5 On the east side of **Market Place** and **Park Street** the building line is more irregular, notably with Lloyds Bank set back from the pavement. Narrow gaps between some buildings and vehicle entrances within others provide intriguing glimpses of buildings and areas between and behind. A number of buildings have long irregular rear wings, but some 20th-century additions and free-standing buildings are unsympathetic in scale, materials and detail. The demolition of the station building has left a very damaging gap, exposing parts of the viaduct which were never intended to be seen. The public toilets are a very poor substitute, alien to their historic setting in scale, materials, design and position far back from the general building line.
- 10.6 The adjacent drive opens up views of the viaduct's stone piers and brick arches dwarfing the insignificant and undistinguished modern station entrance set far back from the street. The sloping tunnel leading to steps up to the platforms on the viaduct has a strong character. From the platforms there are fine views across the roofscape of the town, with the church tower particularly prominent, out into the surrounding countryside. However, the poor state of the station itself significantly damages the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The 19th-century buildings are badly damaged, having lost their original roofs and canopies and with openings crudely blocked up, the steps have an unsightly corrugated sheet roof and large areas of track are disused and overgrown with scrub.
- 10.7 With the exception of the rather bland mid 20th-century No. 7, Market Place is made up entirely of historic buildings ranging from the late 16th/ early 17th Nos. 8-10 and 13-15 to the early 20th century Oddfellows wine bar. Contrasts of size, materials, styles and details give variety and interest, especially to upper floors. Most buildings are relatively tall, predominantly of 2 storeys and attic or 3 storeys. Frontages vary in

width, generally of 2 or 3 bays but with some larger buildings such as the Jerningham Arms and Lloyds Bank. Timber framing and casement windows, whether elaborately patterned as at 13-15 Market Place and 1 Park Street or simpler around the end of Church Street, contrast with brick or rendered Georgian and Victorian facades and sash windows. Gables, cornices, parapets and chimneys create a varied roofscape. Repaving in 1995 replaced tarmac footways with brick pavements toning with the dominant building material. However the very tall street lights at odds with the general historic scale and character remain.

- 10.8 Some buildings retain their historic ground floor facades largely intact, such as the bay windows of the Jerningham Arms, the Oddfellows with its stone-framed openings contrasting with bright red brick, and the sash windows of 3 Park Street (part of the Nell Gwynne) and Lloyds Bank. Others have later alterations of historic interest such as 4 Market Place's 2-storey bay. Some have been unsympathetically altered, notably No. 13 where road widening in the 1960s resulted in the destruction of the original Georgian bay window to the ground floor, leaving the first-floor bay awkwardly suspended above a recessed modern window and non-matching brick.
- 10.9 There are some attractive traditional shopfronts, of varying dates and types, including the early 19th-century type bow windows of 6 Market Place, 22 Market Place's mid/late Victorian rectangular bay, and 5 Park Street's excellent original shopfronts of about 1892. The late 20th-century fronts of Nos. 16-18b and 20 are traditionally constructed of painted timber, but have rather crude detailing, with an intrusive roller shutter housing to one of them, while the mahogany finish of No. 2's frontage is very much a late 20th-century fashion.
- 10.10 Signage emphasises the commercial character and has a considerable impact on appearance. The remains of an old painted sign on the gable end of No. 16 is a rare survival. Some premises have traditional painted timber fascias, such as Nos. 5 and 22. Others have much less sympathetic applied fascias with integral lettering of non-traditional materials including plastics and aluminium, as at 16-18b. Applied lettering in shiny plastic, as at No. 2, is equally unsympathetic to the traditional appearance.
- 10.11 The traditional method of signwritten lettering on timber fascias or framed panels can be seen on some premises, such as 8A and The Oddfellows. There are no internally-lit fascias, and external lighting is limited and generally unobtrusive. A limited number of hanging signs are part of the traditional commercial character. They are generally of painted timber with sign-written lettering, of 'portrait' form and hung from brackets of simple design, as at 22 Market Place. The Jerningham Arms has the remains of an unusually large decorative wrought iron bracket.
- 11. Park Street (south of The Grove)**
- 11.1 **Park Street** has a varied character, with a mix of residential and commercial uses. South of the Jerningham Arms and Lloyds Bank it is more fragmented and less obviously urban than Market Place or Broadway. There are fewer historic buildings more randomly dispersed, and extensive late 20th-century residential development. Distant views southwards are closed by mature trees around a bend in the road and a glimpse of Park Court.
- 11.2 On the west side the pattern of buildings fronting directly onto the pavement is continued only by Nos. 12 and 14, considerably altered modest 18th-century detached houses before the building line breaks back to the late 20th century dental surgery immediately outside the Conservation Area. On the east side there is a wide break at

the junction with The Grove. Lawns, 18th/19th-century brick boundary walls to north and south with short sections to Park Street, and some mature trees provide the setting for the formal side elevation of Lloyds Bank with its twin pediments and classical doorcase. However, the suburban road layout and mid 20th-century bungalows appear quite alien to the historic character. With the terrace of small houses Nos. 11-21 there is a brief return to the characteristic pattern of a long built-up frontage at the back of the pavement, but on a significantly smaller scale than around Market Place.

- 11.3 Idsall House, a large house standing well back from the street in its own garden, brings a dramatic change in pattern, type and scale. The garden walls, railings and gates are important features of the street scene. It forms part of the Park House Hotel which dominates the east side. Park House itself is another large but contrasting house, of 2 storeys rather than 3, stucco rather than brick. It is much more dominant in the street, set only a little way back and raised above it with a retaining wall which continues as a garden wall along the street and round into Silvermere Park. The principal façade is to the south, facing Silvermere Park. Mature yew trees in its grounds to the south are a particularly important feature of the street scene to Park Street and dominate views eastwards along Silvermere Park.
- 11.4 Much of the setting of both Park House and Idsall House has been compromised by major additions linking them together, and mid and late 20th-century housing development immediately outside the Conservation Area. Dyas Mews of 1991, comprising 2 parallel terraces of small houses with a staggered building line set back from the road around a cul-de-sac, is alien to the historic pattern. The bland design, dark brick, and mass-produced stained joinery are a painful contrast to both Nos. 11-21 and Idsall House opposite. The large late 1990s speculative housing development opposite Park House has done nothing to enhance its setting and is equally unsympathetic.
- 11.5 The construction of **Silvermere Park** destroyed much of the setting of Park House, and conversion of most of the remaining grounds to parking areas has caused further harm. The remaining trees and planting, notably a fine cedar in Silvermere Park, are important to the appearance of the conservation area. The former stable block of Park House is now severed from it and much altered by conversion to houses, but its largely intact rear elevation directly onto Park Street is a prominent feature retaining much of the historic appearance. Further south large trees, especially around 27 Park Street and a high brick estate wall along the road are equally important. Together with glimpses of converted former farm buildings beyond the Conservation Area and countryside beyond, they retain some vestiges of Park House's original character as a country house and estate just outside the town.
- 11.6 The Cottage (No. 62) and Park Court were once relatively isolated buildings some way outside the town. The Cottage is an irregular 18th and 19th-century building with some attractive Gothick details, set well back from the road and partly hidden by some fine mature trees which dominate the approach to the town. Looking northwards, the distant view is closed by Lloyds Bank and 5 Park Street. Park Court is more formal, as befits its original public function as the Union Workhouse, and on a considerably larger scale than its neighbours. It dominates its position at the bend in the road which hides the town from view from the south. Some parts of its high brick boundary walls survive, but its setting has been greatly altered by 20th-century development.

12. Market Place/ Aston Street/ Bradford Street/ Victoria Road junction

- 12.1 The viaduct with its massive brick and stone abutments dominates the junction and divides it from the rest of Market Place. Like Market Place this area has a strongly commercial character. The east side retains a tightly-enclosed urban feeling with three-storey late Georgian and early Victorian buildings fronting the pavement flanking the narrow entrance to Aston Street; the canted corner of Barclays Bank is an important feature. The west side is more open, with the wider Victoria Road running off at an angle between the viaduct and a boundary wall on the south. The prominent frontage of Noram House (2 Victoria Road) on the north side is orientated at an angle towards Market Place rather than to Victoria Road itself, and is on an altogether larger scale than other buildings on Victoria Road.
- 12.2 Demolition of the buildings on the west side of Bradford Street in the 1960s destroyed the close-knit historic pattern, leaving Noram House standing alone, and opening out the junction to the north. The result is an awkwardly shaped, rather diffuse space with unattractive views northwards of the unsympathetic 1960s shops on Cheapside and 20th-century redevelopment of Bradford Street. Enhancement works carried out in 1999, with brick paving, traditional railings and trees, have considerably improved this area and mitigated some of the damage.
- 12.3 **Aston Street's** western end is dominated by the viaduct's massive rock-faced stone arches forming its southern side. They are a major element of its strong 19th-century character, but the intrusive concrete block and corrugated sheeting infill to some of them detracts from their powerful architectural effect. The north side of the street is more varied but is also tightly enclosed by 19th-century buildings. The high single-storey red brick No. 1, marred by unsympathetic 20th-century alterations, contrasts with the brightly painted, rendered 3-storey Railway Inn with its late 19th-century frontage of pilasters, entablature and arched windows. A gap between them opens up a view of a 19th-century industrial building to the rear, marred by unattractive fencing. Immediately beyond the Inn the sense of enclosure abruptly gives way to 20th-century paving, fencing and a sectional garage which detract from the setting of the conservation area. Looking westwards the view is closed by the side elevation of Noram House and the fronts of 1-3 Victoria Road.

13. Church Street

- 13.1 **Church Street** begins as a narrow street of little more than single carriageway width, dropping down from Market Place. The northern end has a strong historic, urban commercial character, but on a smaller and more intimate scale than Market Place. On the north-western side there is a continuous built-up frontage from Nos. 2 to 10 of small, narrow 2-storey and attic buildings, mostly with painted or rendered fronts; some conceal timber framing. They have 19th and 20th-century shopfronts and a variety of simple 18th, 19th and 20th century details to upper floors. Some are in both commercial and residential use.
- 13.2 The continuous frontage gives way to larger detached and semi-detached buildings. The Old Bell and Church Cottage and No. 16 appear to be largely 19th-century buildings, but have been unsympathetically altered with 'tyrolean' render, UPVC windows etc. The pattern of buildings fronting the street is interrupted by the entrance to No. 18: its late 19th-century gate piers and mid 19th-century cast iron gates are important features in the street scene. The large mid-19th century house, set far back in a large garden, is considerably grander than its neighbours, with a dignified,

symmetrical stuccoed front and handsome Doric porch, although the windows have been altered. It makes an interesting contrast to the less formal surrounding buildings, adding to the varied character of this part of the Conservation Area. Its high brick wall along the Brook, gable end and trees in the grounds are very prominent, especially seen across the open space adjacent to No. 28.

- 13.3 The south-eastern side is much more fragmented. The timber-framed rear elevation of 4 Market Place and a painted brick 2-storey building dated 1759 front the pavement, but its recent single-storey extension with heavy brick detailing and non-traditional stained joinery is set back behind a wall. Above and between this and a small, nondescript single-storey rendered meeting room, the irregular rear elevations of buildings on Market Place are made more prominent by their higher level. The 2-storey back-of-pavement pattern is briefly re-established by the 2-storey red-brick Nos.1-1A of c.1900, with contemporary shopfronts. Looking northwards up the street the view is rather unattractively closed by the public toilets and exposed rough brickwork of the viaduct.
- 13.4 From No. 1 southwards the street widens rapidly. The tight enclosure between buildings suddenly disappears south of John's Street with the large and unattractive expanse of car park rising steeply to Park Street. The only redeeming feature is the view of historic buildings on Park Street, and the irregular gables and roofs to the rear of the Jerningham Arms. The frontage of the garage with concrete block, render and corrugated sheet buildings set back behind a tarmac forecourt is equally intrusive.
- 13.5 The road turns westwards, and the footpaths of brick pavements laid in 1995 end at the bridge, giving way to tarmac. From this point the character of Church Street changes noticeably from urban to suburban. It becomes almost entirely residential, and the pattern of development is more diffuse. The Grade II listed early 19th-century Nos. 28-32 and mid-19th-century Nos. 7-13 front onto the street, but there is much more space around buildings, notably due to the open areas of grass and trees adjacent to the Brook on both sides of the street which make an important contribution to its appearance. The boundary walls to the southern side are significant features of the street scene, but the large galvanised gates to No. 15 and concrete and board fences to gardens backing onto the open space are intrusive.
- 13.6 The entrance to Church Meadow created in 1993 opens up a view of the irregular side elevation of No. 32. The red brick wall with piers and fencing, erected as part of the housing development, is unsympathetic in design and materials to the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed Old Idsall House and No. 32. Church Meadow itself comprises standard types of detached houses completely unrelated to their historic context in design or layout. They contrast painfully with the very strong form of the viaduct looming above which dominates the whole development. The development has also largely destroyed the historic setting of Brook House, an early 19th-century villa whose main elevation faces towards and is partly obscured by the houses.
- 13.7 West of Church Meadow the area around the church, originally known as Idsall, is the earliest part of Shifnal. This is one of the most important parts of the entire conservation area historically, architecturally and visually, with a small group of larger historic houses in large plots set around the church itself. The road curves gently south-west and then west, throwing the irregular partly timber-framed front of Old Idsall House into greater prominence. It has areas of historic cobble and brick paving, and gate piers made of single pieces of stone, but its setting is marred by a badly placed and unsightly concrete street light. The right return side has traces of a

demolished wing. Trees in its garden are important in views from the street and churchyard.

- 13.8 A flight of old stone steps to the churchyard adjacent to Old Idsall House and the high sandstone churchyard wall following the bend are important features. The northern side of the street and views westwards are dominated by the massive bulk of the church, the largest, most historically important historic building in Shifnal. Gate piers at the entrance are very prominent in the street scene, but the concrete steps and ugly concrete street lights are notably inappropriate. The view continues uninterrupted to the end of Church Street and out to countryside to the west of the town.
- 13.9 On the southern side the historic character and appearance is seriously marred by the wide entrance, mid 20th-century bungalows and concrete block boundary wall of Vicarage Drive, immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area. They are out of keeping with their historic context in every respect. But immediately to the west the Old Vicarage, its garden walls and trees make a major contribution. Set back slightly behind a shallow front garden with stone-coped brick walls directly opposite the church, it is a particularly handsome and striking Georgian house, tall and wide with fine detailing. A fine mature sycamore is particularly prominent in the street scene. Another concrete street light is intrusive, and this is exacerbated by a new metal one very close to it.
- 13.10 Immediately to the west of the house a long, high 18th-century brick wall encloses a garden with a strong historic character. The wall, yew trees behind it and in the churchyard overhanging the street, and another high brick wall to the frontage of Innage House very tightly enclose the street, creating a tunnel-like effect. Innage House is another fine Georgian house in a large garden, of 3 storeys like the Old Vicarage but with a narrower frontage and deeper plan, set much further back from the street with its ground floor largely hidden by the wall. Trees in its garden, especially a large sycamore, make an important contribution to the street scene.
- 13.11 The tight enclosure ends with the much more open frontage of Inglewood. The mid 19th-century iron gates, gate piers and railings and the symmetrical house with big brackets to its deep eaves make an attractive group. At the end of the street, on the edge of the conservation area, a high stone and brick wall and numerous trees in the garden of The Innage are prominent, but the irregular and much altered house is not of great visual interest. Looking eastwards the view is dominated by trees, walls and the church tower; the town centre is almost entirely hidden.

14. Innage Road

- 14.1 **Innage Road** bounds the west side of the enormous churchyard. The road was on the very edge of the town until housing development began in the early 20th century on the east side, to the north of the railway. This comprises modest but attractive houses, detached, in pairs and short terraces, set back behind small walled front gardens with original walls, gate piers and railings, on long narrow plots. Many original features give variety, such as the gables with wavy-edged bargeboards to Nos. 38 and 42, the big central gable with decorative 'timber framing' to Nos. 32-4, half-glazed panelled doors, rectangular bay windows, and decorative brackets to the porch roof of Nos. 44-46. Extensive housing development on the west side of the road was built in the mid 20th-century.

- 14.2 Nos. 2 and 4 are small, altered 19th-century cottages fronting the pavement. A large, rather tired-looking mid 20th-century landscaped area fronts onto the road. Its concrete bollards, concrete and tarmac paving, cobbles, shrubs and cherry trees are not sympathetic to its location adjacent to a historic churchyard. A sandstone ashlar boundary wall curves round to front the road, continuing up to the railway embankment, with a good 19th-century wrought iron pedestrian gate to the churchyard. The high retaining walls, abutments and narrow arch of blue engineering brick to the railway bridge largely block views north or southwards.
- 14.3 The churchyard is by far the largest open space within the conservation area. Extensive tree cover within the churchyard makes an important contribution to the appearance of both the churchyard itself and of Innage Road. The areas immediately around the church have been cleared of gravestones and memorials, destroying most of its historic character, but grass and many mature trees provide an attractive setting for the church. The gravestones have been used to pave an area around the war memorial, but the mid 20th-century seats, railings and gates, tarmac paths with concrete kerbs and rather dull planting are unworthy of their historic setting.
- 14.4 Further north is a large area with 19th and 20th-century memorials and many trees which retains a traditional burial ground character. The concrete street lights along the path are not sympathetic. The railway embankment clothed in scrub and trees forms a dense green boundary looming high above. The path on the eastern side of the churchyard runs beneath the viaduct: looking eastwards there is a very striking view through a long succession of arches in the viaduct piers receding into the distance.

15. Victoria Road

- 15.1 **Victoria Road** comprises a wide, straight, planned road of constant width laid out in the early 19th century as part of improvements to the Holyhead Road. It remains a principal traffic route as part of the A464. It is very largely residential: there is some commercial use, but this is concentrated almost entirely at the eastern end. It has a varied but strong 19th and 20th-century suburban character and appearance.
- 15.2 On the southern side the viaduct is very prominent above and behind the buildings. At the eastern end it is separated from the street only by a small area with a 19th-century brick wall and timber gates to the pavement. The entrance to Brook House gives a glimpse through the second arch to trees and part of the Church Meadow housing development. Beyond this, Nos. 1-13 is a long block of early 19th-century 2 and 3-storey houses of various builds, some painted, largely in commercial use. Nos. 1-5 front directly onto the pavement, with undistinguished 20th-century shopfronts to Nos. 1-3.
- 15.3 Nos. 5-9, listed Grade II, have deep eaves and good quality details including panelled doors and doorcases. The 3-storey Nos. 7 and 9 are set back behind shallow forecourts with railings. Their doorcases are particularly notable, with incised decoration influenced by the work of Sir John Soane, triglyph friezes and pediments. In contrast, No. 13 is marred by a large shop extension built out over the forecourt, an artificial slate roof and UPVC windows.
- 15.4 The stone-capped brick parapet to the bridge over the brook effectively marks the change from a dense urban to a more varied suburban pattern. A wide break in the frontage opens up with the car park dropping steeply away from the road. Numerous trees along the brook and the car park rear boundary are a significant feature, partly

screening the viaduct. The public house (No. 15) is an early/ mid 19th-century building, but drastically altered by coloured pebbledash, 20th-century bow and top-hung windows, an extension with concrete tile roof, and coloured concrete slab forecourt with posts and chains. It contrasts painfully with the adjacent Nos. 17-23, a terrace of small houses of similar date and type but almost entirely intact with original brickwork, sash windows, panelled doors and doorcases, garden walls, gates and railings. It is marred only by UPVC windows to No. 21.

- 15.5 **Church Walk** runs between the side wall of No. 23 and the boundary wall and high hedge of No. 25. It is a quiet, secluded path giving a view southwards towards the viaduct and glimpses across the long rear gardens of Victoria Road. A large 19th-century cast iron vent pipe with ornamental detail is a significant feature. Ravenbridge House, in the shadow of the viaduct, is a 19th-century building with a prominent pyramidal roof, but has been considerably altered.
- 15.6 Beyond this point the pattern is of late 19th-century houses on long plots of varying widths, detached, semi-detached and in short terraces, which retain their original details. They are set parallel to the road but varying distances back from it behind front gardens, with walls, railings, trees and hedges all making an important contribution to the street scene. No. 25 is a large and imposing detached house set well back, contrasting strongly with the much smaller Nos. 19-23. Nos. 27-29 have some interesting Gothic details in stone.
- 15.7 Beyond No. 35 there is a change to modest but attractive early to mid 20th-century detached and semi-detached houses, set back behind front gardens enclosed by walls, hedges and railings, on plots of varying width and length. Many original features provide interest and variety, such as the 2-storey canted bay windows of the Edwardian Nos. 45-47, decorative applied 'timber framing' to the first floor of the larger, gabled No. 49, and the chamfered lintels and rectangular bay windows of Nos. 51-59. No. 61 is larger and more ambitious, double-fronted and set in a wide garden at an angle to both Victoria Road and Innage Road, forming a focal point at the junction.
- 15.8 The north-eastern end of the street, with the exception of Noram House, has been badly damaged by intrusive late 20th-century development excluded from the Conservation Area. From No. 8 onwards the much more attractive historic suburban character survives. Some buildings are set parallel to the road, but others such as the Methodist church, R.C. Presbytery and Nos. 10 and 12 are at an angle to it. Together with their plot boundaries they appear to be orientated towards the earlier Shrewsbury Road, reflecting subdivision of plots laid out along it. Late 19th and early 20th-century 2-storey houses (apart from the single-storey No. 10) are mainly detached, set back varying distances from the road, with walls, railings and hedges to front gardens. The most dominant building by far is the Methodist church. Its considerable size and scale is a dramatic contrast to the general domestic character. Details such as the corner turret and wide gable to the street are very prominent from many viewpoints. Looking eastwards the staggered side elevation of Noram House is particularly prominent.
- 15.9 No. 20 has an intrusive high wall of unsympathetic 20th-century brick to the road, with glimpses over it of the sandstone, concrete tile and corrugated asbestos works building fronting Shrewsbury Road. The sandstone Gothic Presbytery forms a distinctive architectural composition with the gable of the church rising above its roof, but is unfortunately damaged by the loss of part of its chimneystack. The long hedge to the road continuing round into Shrewsbury Road is an important feature of the

street scene. The long low front of the church with its dominant roof and set in a large garden forms a particularly attractive start to the Conservation Area on the approach from the west.

16. Shrewsbury Road

- 16.1 **Shrewsbury Road** is, like Victoria Road, a wide, straight planned street. Although it was laid out in the 18th century it was developed much later, and is strongly 19th and early 20th-century in appearance. The eastern end has been much altered by late 20th-century demolition and redevelopment, excluded from the Conservation Area, but views eastwards are still attractively terminated by the 3-storey Georgian façade of the Grade II listed North View. Shrewsbury Road is now largely residential on both sides, with a generally 19th and early 20th-century suburban character, but uses have been more mixed until relatively recently. Some commercial and industrial use continues, with the works building on the south side and the former mill on the north, as well as the garage outside the Conservation Area. On the south side are the former Magistrates Court and former Fire Station; both were disused at the time of preparing this appraisal.
- 16.2 On the north side the irregular mass of the mid 19th-century former mill (later a brewery) directly fronting the road is by far the largest and most prominent building, rising high above the adjacent houses. Built of a Broseley-type brick, it retains many original features of interest including giant blue brick arches, cast iron windows and the lower part of the large round chimney which provided its original steam power. At the south-western end of Shrewsbury Road is another large industrial building fronting the pavement. Its long, regular front of sandstone ashlar makes its corrugated asbestos roof look particularly incongruous in the street scene. The large sandstone Gothic gable of the Catholic church makes a very effective end to the built frontages on the south side.
- 16.3 Nevertheless, the dominant pattern is of small detached, semi-detached and terraced 19th and early 20th century 2-storey houses. They are set back from the pavement behind small front gardens or forecourts of varying depth enclosed by low brick walls or iron railings, or both. On the south side there is a wide range of types on plots of varied width and length, reflecting piecemeal development. The earliest is probably the Grade II listed No. 7, dated 1830, a plain symmetrical 2-bay house with a simple doorcase and original railings. No. 13 is of similar date and has a 2-storey bay window, but is marred by an unsympathetic concrete tile roof. Its small outbuilding fronting the pavement adds variety to the street scene. Nos. 15 and 17 (Trinity Manse) - 25 are mid-19th century houses with simple classical details similar to others in Victoria Road, but the Manse has a rather overpowering late 19th century addition. The unaltered mid 19th-century Holly Cottage has simple brick 'Tudor' hood moulds to the windows, original cast iron railings and gate piers carrying the house name.
- 16.4 The general domestic pattern and scale is interrupted by the late Victorian or Edwardian Fire Station with its painted 'timber-framed' gable and large doors to the street and timber bell turret on the roof. Set much further back behind a forecourt with fine cast iron railings and gates between classical rendered piers is the Magistrates Court. Its original function as a chapel is indicated by the 19th-century tombs surrounded by their own iron railings in the forecourt. The building is a plain red brick and slate box typical of Non-Conformist chapels but has a handsome Greek Revival stucco front of about 1835.

- 16.5 The north side of Shrewsbury Road is more regular, with small groups of similar houses on largely uniform long, narrow plots, suggesting planned speculative development. Nos. 2-8 are similar to Holly Cottage but smaller; Nos. 2 and 4 have been drastically altered, ruining the original unity of the terrace. Nos. 10-16 are largely intact, typically Edwardian houses of bright red brick with sash windows in pairs with upper sashes much smaller than the lower ones. Nos. 18-20 are unaltered tall, narrow late 19th-century houses with unusual floor-length windows. Nos. 22-28 are similar but with prominent gables to the end houses, and have been altered; they are on much narrower long plots.

17. **Broadway**

- 17.1 **Broadway** forms a separate Conservation Area. As the name indicates, it is a wide street on the main north-south axis of Shifnal. It formed part of the High Street of the planned mediaeval town, and remains a principal traffic route. The southern part is straight, but from No. 62 onwards it splays eastwards. Broadway is primarily residential, but with some historic and current commercial uses scattered throughout. This includes a former malthouse to the rear of No. 47, the Wheatsheaf public house and Darcy's bar, shop and warehousing adjacent to No. 43, and shops and food takeaways at the south-eastern end both within and outside the Conservation Area.
- 17.2 The dominant pattern is of brick buildings of varying sizes and heights on plots of varying width. On the east side buildings front directly onto the pavement in rows and terraces with few breaks between them. The northern part has plain 18th and 19th-century brick houses with simple details, generally small, of one or two bays and 2 storeys, on narrow plots. Most have flat frontages, but No. 62 has a bay window. Many have been unsympathetically altered with inappropriate windows and doors of stained hardwood, UPVC etc. The disruptive effect of this is particularly shown by Nos. 64-72, a terrace with identical traditional timber boarded doors and casements to all but No. 72 which has mahogany-effect 'leaded' UPVC windows. To the north the continuous frontage ends with No. 82, a 19th-century building in commercial use which is much altered and has unsightly flat-roofed additions excluded from the Conservation Area.
- 17.3 This pattern is crudely disrupted by the public library and Idsall Court built in 1971 on the site of earlier buildings. This is completely out of scale and sympathy with its context, and so is excluded from the Conservation Area. It is set back from the general building line, is much taller and bulkier than surrounding buildings, with the upper floors projecting forward on concrete columns and flat rather than pitched roofs. The access road (Tudor Way) built beside it further disrupts the built frontage and opens up unattractive views of flat roofs and a shabby fence to the rear of No. 32, and 20th century development beyond. Pavements are wide, but concrete kerbs and extensively patched tarmac and concrete detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 17.4 With Nos. 28-32 the original pattern of old buildings resumes, but the building has been unsympathetically altered with coloured render, aluminium and UPVC shopfronts and 'woodgrain' UPVC windows. The Grade II listed No. 26 (Darcy's, formerly the Plough Inn) has an early 20th-century appearance, but the sham timber-framing conceals a genuine 17th-century timber-framed building. No. 24 is also Grade II and also has largely concealed timber-framing. This is much more varied than most

buildings on the east side, with a gabled 18th-century range and 19th-century shopfront projecting forward, a forecourt with iron railings, 19th-century bay window and porch.

- 17.5 The west side is somewhat different in appearance and character. Many buildings stand on very long plots bounded by the Wesley Brook. These appear to be mediaeval burgage plots, though some have been subdivided. They give an open character to this part of the Conservation Area, contrasting with the more intensive surrounding development, particularly when seen looking northwards from Shrewsbury Road. Numerous breaks in frontages give attractive glimpses of the gardens and trees to the rear.
- 17.6 At the northern end of the conservation area the Grade II Wheatsheaf is the only detached building. Of one storey and attic with dormers, it has a much lower frontage than most other buildings on Broadway, with a 17th century timber frame concealed beneath rendered 19th century brick. It stands relatively isolated between Broadway Close to the north and a wide gap to the south, left by the demolition of a Georgian house, which opens up unattractive views of the factory to the west. The large area of patched tarmac around it is an unsympathetic setting for the listed building.
- 17.7 The built-up frontage resumes with Nos. 57-49, unremarkable early/mid 20th century houses. No. 47 is of much greater interest and importance: the simply detailed late Georgian 2-storey and attic façade of rendered brick conceals a 2-storey 16th century timber frame raised in the 17th century. The former malthouse to the rear reflects the fact that although most buildings are now residential, historically uses were always mixed, often within a single plot. Some commercial use continues: beyond the 3-storey 3-bay late Georgian No. 45 the building line steps back to No. 43, which comprises offices and a shop, with other, unsympathetically altered and enlarged buildings behind visible through the arch. The early 19th century right-hand range is on a different scale to the 3-storey No. 43 itself, as tall but of only 2 storeys with a high carriage arch and semi-circular sash window above, and late 20th century shop windows.
- 17.8 With No. 41 the building line steps still further back, making the corner of No. 43 prominent in views northwards. 18th and 19th century brick houses, many larger than those on the east side, predominate. They are mostly individual or in pairs, of varying types. They include plain, rendered or painted late 18th or early 19th century 2-storey, 3-bay houses with casement windows (Nos. 23 and 41), and modest red brick late Victorian semi-detached properties (Nos. 29-35). These are interspersed with Grade II listed 3-storey Georgian houses including the pair Nos. 25-27. Nos. 37-39 are a distinctive pair of Victorian houses with heavy Italianate stucco detailing quite unlike anything else in the street. Moving southwards the building line continues to step back a little at a time from the road, adding to the variety and interest of the street scene.
- 17.9 From Nos. 23 to 43 most houses are set slightly back from the pavement behind shallow front gardens. These have iron railings and gates, which make an important contribution to the appearance and interest of the street scene. They include very simple railings, such as those of Nos. 25-27, 43 and 45, combined with a hedge as at No. 23, and dwarf walls with elaborate cast iron railings as at Nos. 37-39. A line of lime trees along the pavement is a particularly important feature, softening the visual impact of the built frontages. Beyond No. 23 on the southern edge of the conservation area the view southwards is terminated by the railway viaduct in the distance. 20th century redevelopment has destroyed much of the original dense historic pattern

which lay further south along the remaining part of Broadway, Bradford Street and Cheapside, outside the Conservation Areas.

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

01743 252586

historic.environment@shropshire.gov.uk