

High Ercall

Conservation Area

Proposed Boundary Extension November 2008



Telford & Wrekin
COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

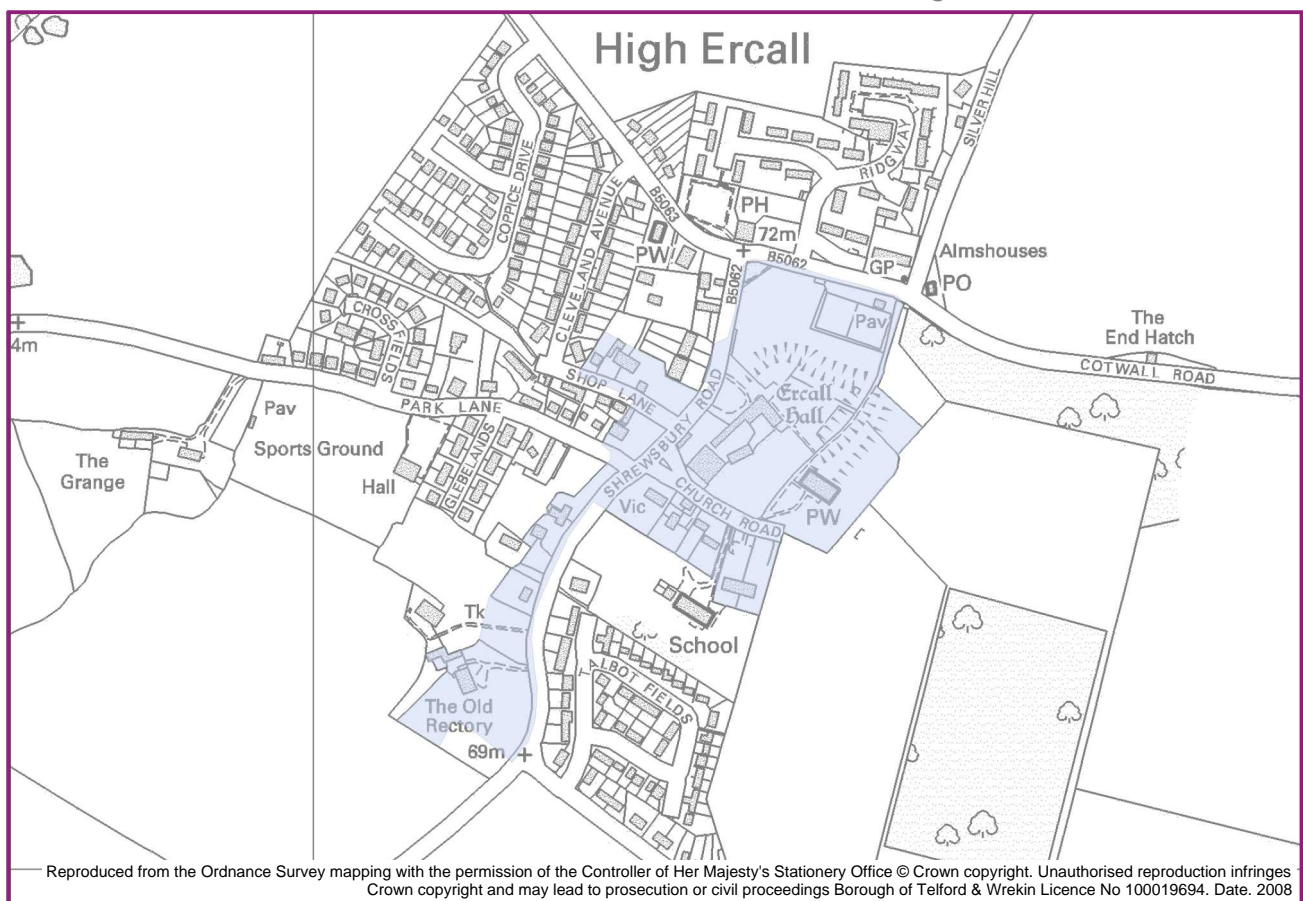
1.1 High Ercall Conservation Area

High Ercall is located approximately 7 miles to the North West of Wellington and 8 miles to the North East of Shrewsbury. The village lies within Ercall Magna Parish which is situated on the Shropshire plain at an altitude generally of 240 feet (70 metres) above sea level and is the largest rural parish (in area) in the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. The River Roden flows to the West and South West. The High Ercall Conservation Area was designated in March 1981 and since then the boundary has not been reviewed.

1.2 Background to the Proposal

During the preparation of the Conservation Area Appraisal document for High Ercall and the subsequent Management Plan (currently out for consultation Nov/Dec 08) a standard review of the existing boundary was carried out. This was done in line with conservation 'best practice' principles set out by English Heritage in their publications "Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals" and "Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas" both 2006.

High Ercall Conservation Area



2. Boundary appraisal

2.1 Location and context

A review of the existing boundary highlighted areas where the boundary to the Conservation Area was as little as 10m wide in some areas. It is apparent that the boundary has been drawn tightly around some of the period properties. In order to preserve the character of the Conservation Area, the extension of the boundary is proposed partially to create a “buffer zone” in the areas to the south west. This should help to ensure that if development is proposed, which cannot be ruled out, material consideration can be given to the design scale and massing of development so that it compliments the Conservation Area.

It was also recognised that certain parts of the existing boundary were drawn without reference to a distinct topographical or built feature, that being the boundary where it crosses a field to the north of the Vicarage. The consequence of this is that a portion of the field is within the Conservation Area and a portion without. To rationalise the boundary and in light of the need to widen the boundary we propose to extend the boundary to cover the full field boundary and to follow the line along the field to the north, where it meets Park Lane. This should both create a clearly definable boundary and a wider conservation zone at the point where it is narrowest. Secondly, it is also apparent that some of the more significant buildings of the

old medieval core of High Ercall have been omitted from the Conservation Area. Principally, these include, The Cleveland Arms PH, The Almshouses and the Toll House - all sited along the B5063, all three forming key elements of the historic landscape of High Ercall.

The Almshouses and The Toll House



2.2 Extension to the south west

The extension to cover the fields to the south west end of the Conservation Area is partly being considered as a means to rationalise an existing boundary. Boundaries in conservation areas should be clearly definable and where possible follow existing clearly identifiable boundaries for clarity. Boundaries that split existing plots can have a detrimental effect on that plot in the creation of a perceived divide between that part which is within the boundary and that which is without. This can undermine the integrity of the the plot as a whole and its interpretation and may contribute to a physical division, the subdivision of plots in Conservation Areas is to be resisted. The boundary of the Conservation Area, which can be seen in the map on page 3 (and in appendix 1) will show that the boundary crosses

the existing field splitting it in two, where no such division physically exists. Linked to this is the realisation that some parts of the Conservation Area are relatively narrow and that encroachment of development here may have a detrimental effect of the character which would only survive in thin belt. By rationalising the boundary to include the field as a whole, we would create a more easily definable boundary and create an additional buffer zone of green space within the conservation area which will offer protection to the existing central belt running between The Vicarage, Stackstones and The Grove. This area is also known to contain evidence of historic ridge and furrow.

Field to the south west of the conservation area showing some of the mature boundary oaks





Sandstone wall fronting the properties off Park Lane.

As well as rationalising the boundary and offering a protective buffer zone, the extension here will bring in an open green area. The field has a pleasant pastoral feel and reflects the character of the surrounding landscape and its use. There are a number of mature oaks along the boundary which contribute positively to the pastoral feel of the site. Similarly the two adjoining field plots running south from Park Lane and between the dwellings on Glebelands and Shrewsbury Road, would also provide some protection to the existing properties within the Conservation Area along Shrewsbury Road. The field leading immediately off Park Lane borders with a row of properties, in - between the two is an access footpath the boundary with the dwellings is a very nice sandstone rubble wall, which it would be beneficial to bring into the Conservation Area as this type of boundary construction is a core feature of the Conservation Area.

2.3 Extension to the Cleveland Arms Public House

The Cleveland Arms is a significant building within the Conservation Area, though not listed and by no means the oldest property in the village, its position at the junction of the Shrewsbury Road (B5062), where it meets the B5063, places it in a critical location. It forms the terminus of the view out of the Conservation Area looking north and is therefore a landmark building. The historic core of the village is based on a strip settlement along the Shrewsbury Road therefore views along this road north and south are central to the character of the area.



The Cleveland Arms is in a prominent location at the junction of the B5062 and B5063 and forms the northern terminus point to the High Ercall Conservation Area.

The property is a pleasantly proportioned 19th century red brick and slate building, with a prominent gabled wing to the left. It has large mullioned wooden windows (through some of the windows have been replaced, presumably mid to late 20th century). It has a small extension to the eastern end in keeping with the original. It was built as a school in the 19th century, before becoming a pub and something of the character of the school can still be seen in the style of the windows, which

are clearly not of a domestic scale. It is a quite dominant building when taken together with its prominent location (where it is one of the few buildings that fronts on to the road) and to consider an appraisal of the character of the existing Conservation Area without including the Cleveland Arms PH is a clear omission and therefore its inclusion within the boundary is being proposed here.

The Cleveland Arms PH where it forms a terminal point with the B5063



2.4 Extension to the Almshouses and Toll House

The Almshouses to the north of the B5063 are listed (Grade 2) and were constructed in about 1694 by the Earl of Bradford. The wall fronting the site has been rebuilt in an inappropriate modern fashion, the original gate posts, also listed, have survived. The Jacobean style building is one storey and attics and is principally constructed of red brick with a slate roof. It is built on a shallow u-form with projecting gabled ends each with dressed stone parapets. A central stone door surround to the front

incorporates a dedication tablet bearing the date 1694. The property is relatively unspoilt, though the windows have been altered some time ago. It is unfortunate that the surrounding wall has been inappropriately re-built but altogether the wall, piers and houses form a pleasant group. The historical association of this historic building and its relationship with the history of the church and village makes it a significant property within the medieval/post medieval core of High Ercall.



Listed 17thC Almshouses fronting the B5063, High Ercall

Its previous exclusion from the boundary can only be assumed to have been made by virtue of its listed status. This protection is more comprehensive than that offered by Conservation Area status and inclusion within the Conservation Area boundary will not give any additional protection to this building, however, Conservation Area designation is not based solely on the protection and preservation of

buildings and structures but also on the recognition of all those elements that contribute to the historic character of the area. Such a historically significant building cannot therefore be excluded from the Conservation Area; it is recommended that it be included within the boundary.



The Toll House, High Ercall

The early to early to mid 19th century Toll House is a two storey semi-octagonal in form with a splayed frontage, allowing clear views of the road either side, typical of toll houses of this age. It is principally built of contrasting red brick and stone details to the corner edges, with a low pitched roof of slate and a stone plinth, standing at the side of the old Newport to Shrewsbury Road. The original building is relatively unchanged though an overly dominant two storey extension has been built on the North West elevation. The original portion of the house has had some insensitive replacement windows inserted but has otherwise survived with its character intact. It is the first building reached on entering High Ercall from the east and essentially sets the tone for the Conservation Area. Its presence indicates that this is a settlement of some age and local historical significance in terms of historic routes, it is a gateway building to the Conservation Area.

It is a building of Local Interest and as such is protected under saved policy (HE25 - Buildings of Local Interest) in the Wrekin Local Plan and under Core Strategy (policy CS15 - Urban Design). Like the Almshouses mentioned previously, it may have been deemed appropriate to exclude this property from the Conservation Area because of its existing protection however, with reference to comments above, issues of protection aside, the property is a key one in terms of historical association, architectural style and prominent location and is therefore essential to the interpretation of the overall character of the historic core of High Ercall, it is recommended that it is included within the Conservation Area boundary.

2.5 Archaeology

It is likely that the field extensions will bring within the Conservation Area boundary, areas of ancient ridge and furrow land. This has been identified in the Marches Historic Towns Survey, referenced in the Conservation Area Appraisal. As all areas proposed for extension are either within or bordering the recognised medieval core of High Ercall and therefore surviving

archaeological deposits of scatters may be possible. Little invasive archaeological work has been carried out in High Ercall and any opportunity for such, allowed under PPG16 Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1994) should be explored.

Areas of potential ridge and furrow proposed for inclusion into High Ercall Conservation Area



3. Management proposals

3.1 Planning Context

In Conservation Areas, the development and natural evolution of communities is not prevented from taking place, there is simply a more careful and widespread consideration of certain aspects of change within the planning process. The demolition of any structure, or significant part of a structure requires planning permission. Works to trees and hedges over a certain size are also controlled through the planning process.

The Local Authority has a duty to protect Conservation Areas (PPG15). Local Development Framework Core Strategy policy CS15: Urban Design and saved Wrekin Local Plan Policies HE1 to HE13 contain policies related to Conservation Areas and will affect the determination of any planning application within the Conservation Area or in the surrounding area. The Local Plan is available to view at Darby House/Civic Offices or on the Telford and Wrekin website. There are additional policies affecting Listed buildings and Buildings of Local Interest.

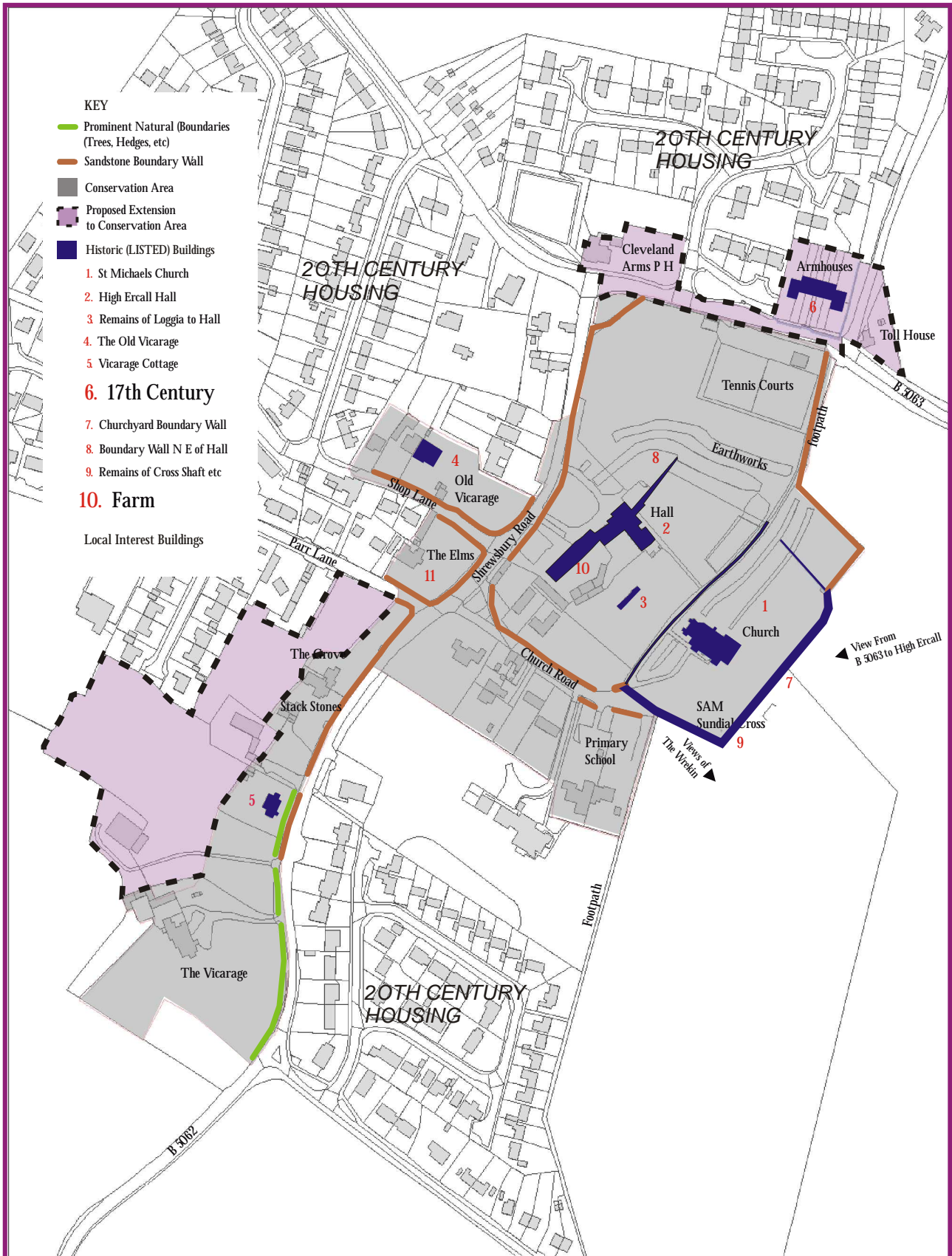
The Council will seek to proactively use these policies to preserve and enhance the character of all the Conservation Areas within the Authority boundary. The policies affect all aspects of the historic environment including Conservation Areas, listed buildings, locally listed buildings and archaeology. Additionally there are

other policies which are relevant to conservation areas such as retail policy. These policies are used to determine whether an application for development is appropriate for the Conservation Area. These policies can be supplemented by additional policy guidance that can give more specialised and detailed information of how such policies will be interpreted or applied.

3.2 Management plan

The High Ercall Management Plan is currently under going public consultation (November/December 08), following public consultation the Management Plan will be formally adopted and will apply to all those areas affected by the Conservation Area. The Management Plan contains a plan identifying those areas contained within the current boundary. If the proposed boundary revision is approved, those areas identified within this proposal will be formally adopted into the Conservation Area and will be subject to the constraints of both the Management Plan and the applicable policies mentioned in the previous section. Interested parties are encouraged to review both documents in tandem.

Appendix 1:




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Title: High Ercall Conservation Area Proposed Boundary Extensions

Scale: **Not To Scale**

Drawn By: **Steve Anslow**

Date: **January 2008**

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Appendix 2: Bibliography

Below is a limited bibliography of relevant source material:

PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (DoE 1994)

PPG16: Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1994)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Wrekin Local Plan (Saved Policies)

Local Development Framework Core Strategy 15: Urban Design

Central Marches Historic Towns Survey 1996

The Buildings of England: Shropshire - Nikolaus Pevsner

Victoria County History: Shropshire