

Great Dalby Conservation Area

Designated: October 1981

Designating Authority: Melton Borough Council

Area: 24.62 hectares

Introduction

Conservation Areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Designation of a conservation area recognises the character of an area worthy of preservation and enhancement and ensures the safeguarding of the best of our local heritage as represented by both the buildings and the ambient environment, ie: the spaces between and around buildings when viewed as a whole. Local Planning Authorities have a general duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas, consequently there are more stringent planning controls and obligations in respect of new development, demolitions, alterations, highway works and advertisements.

Conservation Area status is not just about the attractive areas of settlements. In some instances, areas, which either contribute little, or are even detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area are included within the boundary because of their potential for enhancement. Conservation Area status does not mean that new development may not take place but must reflect the local architectural vernacular in scale, siting, massing, details and materials. Special attention should be paid not only to building form but also to fenestration and materials.

A Character Appraisal is seen as the best method of defining the key elements that contribute to the special historic and architectural character of an area. It is important that all interested parties are aware of those elements that must be preserved or enhanced. It is intended that the Character Appraisals will guide the local planning authority in making planning decisions and, where opportunities arise, preparing enhancement schemes. It will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the conservation area.

Location and Context

Great Dalby is an attractive small village located on a hillside set in undulating countryside some 3 miles south of Melton Mowbray.

The village was previously known as Dalby Magna and the name is derived from 'Dalbi' after Godfrey, Bishop of Lincoln

The Conservation Area Boundary

The conservation area was designated in 1981 and the boundary includes most of the built up area of the village but is widely drawn to include swathes of open land north of Burrough End and east of Main Street.

Special Character and Townscape Quality

The village is essentially linear in form with buildings fronting the main village roads with little back-land development. The townscape is characterised by a mixture of buildings of varying age, height and situation. Some are sited gable end onto the highway, others set at angles and some principal elevation on, leading to considerable visual interest together with the containment of vistas along streets which in turn limits views across and out of the village. Variation of land levels within the conservation area also give rise to interesting views of the different roof lines.

Somewhat unusually the Church does not form the focal point of the village as its siting and dense tree coverage ensure that it is virtually unseen from within the village, only glimpsed from certain points between properties.

Burrough End

There is an open feel to this part of the conservation area as buildings are generally set back from the highway. Older properties are interspersed with new and this mixture of ages together with the varied styles, materials and layout add character and visual interest. Roofscape and chimneys are a strong visual feature of Burrough End and greenery including boundary hedges, trees and highway verges add

further to the character softening the building lines and enhancing intimate views. Here are also examples of granite kerbs.

From the junction with Woodgate Hill, affectionately known locally as 'shiton lane', looking in a westerly direction the outbuilding of Ivydale Farm forms a visual stop enclosing the street scene. There are several fine historic buildings including No's 10 and 12 (grade II listed), a pair of thatched mud and brick cottages dating from the mid eighteenth century. No 14 is another listed building with early eighteenth century origins. Dairy Farm and its associated and unspoilt traditional outbuildings, set around a courtyard to the rear of the host farmhouse, form a particularly fine group and present an example of a model farm. Gravel Farm is another unspoilt building.

There are wide grassed verges at the junction with Thorpe Satchville Road and the views are contained by the converted farm building on the opposite corner.

Main Street

Leads gently downhill towards the village green, mature trees to either side framing and channelling the view with White Cottage (No 26) forming a visual stop in the distance. Linby House, an unspoilt listed building set back behind a well tended privet hedge boundary, together with the K6 telephone kiosk beyond, the Old Post Office and Rose Cottage – dated 1887 form a nice grouping which typify the varied street scene. These are supplemented by Nos 32,34 and 36 and opposite the Methodist Church formerly the Wesleyan Chapel (1846) with original railings to the frontage and adjacent thatched Ivy Cottage set down at lower level.

The village green houses the War Memorial enclosed behind railings, the sign, pump and a single tree and is the focal point of the village. The Old Vicarage, with its fine timber porch, is set behind the green within its own grounds and overlooks it.

Rounding the sharp bend and continuing downhill properties on either side follow the natural topography, the resulting roofscape and its changes of levels being a strong visual feature. On the east side the group of properties are particularly pleasing with a mix of materials, colours and textures, whilst on the west side the cobbled courtyard fronting Church Cottage and associated buildings and the thatched Royal Oak (PH) add to the visual experience of the street scene. Opposite are a group of properties built on higher ground which dominate the street scene.

Greenery is a strong feature in the street and includes boundary hedges, grass verges and trees – an extensive bank of mature trees forming a backdrop in the far distance.

Nether End

There is a much wider aspect to Nether End as the properties are set well back. On the north side is an extensive grass verge which forms the banks of the brook. There are a group of older buildings clustered in the corner to the rear. Ford Farm is a particular example, a red brick and slate dwelling with outbuildings that is isolated behind tall hedgerows. Great Dalby House is set further back off the highway and can only be glimpsed through the cluster of mature trees within its grounds. Opposite No 2 is a fine cottage with a corrugated iron roof masking the thatch beneath which has a beautiful manicured garden.

Off Nether End, Burdetts Close is a rather bland development of Council Houses which is considered to be a neutral area within the conservation area. Opposite the junction, gable end onto the highway is The White House, a grade II listed whitewashed cottage under a thatched roof of early eighteenth century origins. It was formerly two cottages and was latterly used as an agricultural store prior to restoration back to a dwelling. The Yews, adjacent, is an unspoilt 2½ storey brick and slate building with unusual semi circular windows at high level. Glebe Farm is another historic building with a group of important outbuildings set around a courtyard to the rear, all in need of restoration.

The brook flows under the road and reappears on the southern side. All properties are of course set back and are accessed via a series of small bridges. These display a mixture of ages and styles. There is a group of newer dwellings built to the rear of roadside properties on higher ground. Nos 8, 10 and 10A form a group of unspoilt buildings, all in red brick but with a mixture of slate and thatched roofs. Taken as a whole these buildings represent the essence of the conservation area in this part of the village.

Top End

From the village green Top End climbs out of the village. Near the junction on the south side there are a group of older properties, interspersed with newer ones, randomly situated in relation to the topography,

some set back on higher ground and others closely following the back edge of the highway. By contrast those newer properties on the north side are set lower and back from the highway. The churchyard sits behind and glimpses of the Church Tower can be seen through gaps between buildings.

Trees and other greenery including boundary hedges and garden areas are widespread within the street scene with mature trees framing views along the street. Varied roofscape materials, including thatch also form a strong visual feature.

Off Top End, Pebble Yard has an intimate setting with four properties approached uphill by a pebble track, as the name suggests. Old Manor Cottage, which sits in an elevated position at the top of the track, is a grade II listed building dating from the mid seventeenth century but has later additions. It is built in roughcast coursed rubble and brick under a slate roof and enjoys extensive views over open countryside. The buildings on the opposite side of the yard are thatched.

At the brow of the hill Great Dalby Primary School and its associated playing field stand back from the highway. The original Victorian red brick and slate building, dating from 1876, has long been engulfed by a series of extensive modern extensions. Adjacent Dale Farmhouse and adjoining stables date from the late seventeenth century but have been altered, extended and refurbished and now form an intimate residential group.

The north western end of Top End as it leaves the village, entering open countryside, is typified by a mixture of new build and older properties

Quality and Character of Buildings

The village contains a variety of building styles, many arranged in attractive groupings throughout the conservation area. Most are constructed in local red brick mostly under slate or thatched roofs. There are however examples of painted or rendered brickwork and some concrete roof tiles are evident. The Church provides the only example of local stone construction. Some of the older properties that were once thatched have unfortunately been roofed with corrugated iron sheeting although there have been examples where that trend has been reversed.

There are ten listed buildings within the village, most of which have been mentioned. Amongst those of particular note however are;

The Parish church of St Swithun, grade II*, is set back from the highway behind properties on Main Street and Upper End and as such is relatively discreet within the village. It is of thirteenth century origins and built in ironstone with limestone dressings and has a Swithland slate roof. The Church has a tower as the spire fell down in January 1658 and as a result substantial repairs were subsequently undertaken to the nave and aisle.

The Royal Oak public house is on Main Street. It is a timber box framed building with brick and brick noggin infill with a recently re-thatched roof. The building dates from the mid eighteenth century, with later additions and internally has chamfered span beams and two bay posts.

Also situated on Main Street is another fine grade II listed building, Linby House Farmhouse and adjoining stables which date from the late eighteenth century.

On Burrough End there are three more listed buildings; The Checkered Cottage and two simpler vernacular cottages, White Cottage which is built from mud and brick and the cottage at Pinfold Farm which probably dates from the late sixteenth century but was rebuilt in the nineteenth century.

Natural Elements

The built up area of the village is complemented by a backcloth of undulating countryside, particularly to the east and west of Main Street, dominated by Woodgate Hill. The tracts of open land between Burrough End and Nether End is an important characteristic of the village comprising orchard land, paddocks and open grazing.

Within the conservation area the enclosed open spaces interspersed between the buildings, notably land surrounding the Church and village school together with the Green emphasise the character of the settlement. Whilst tree cover is relatively sparse there are some mature tree groups around St Swithuns, the Green and fronting Great Dalby House.

From beyond the village there are good views in, particularly when approaching from Melton Mowbray.

Negative Factors

The use of inappropriate materials such as upvc double glazed window units and plastic rainwater goods has been kept to a minimum within Great Dalby although there are some examples which do adversely affect the character of the conservation area.

Overhead cables are also widespread throughout the village.

For further help and advice please contact:

The Regulatory Services Section
Melton Borough Council
Parkside
Station Approach
Burton Street
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE13 1GH
Telephone: 01664 502502

The Council has prepared a leaflet entitled 'A Guide to Conservation Area' which gives general advice. Copies are available from the Regulatory Services Section as detailed above

The above is an appraisal for the Great Dalby Conservation Area which highlights the most significant factors which make it worthy of Conservation status. The omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to apply that it is of no interest.