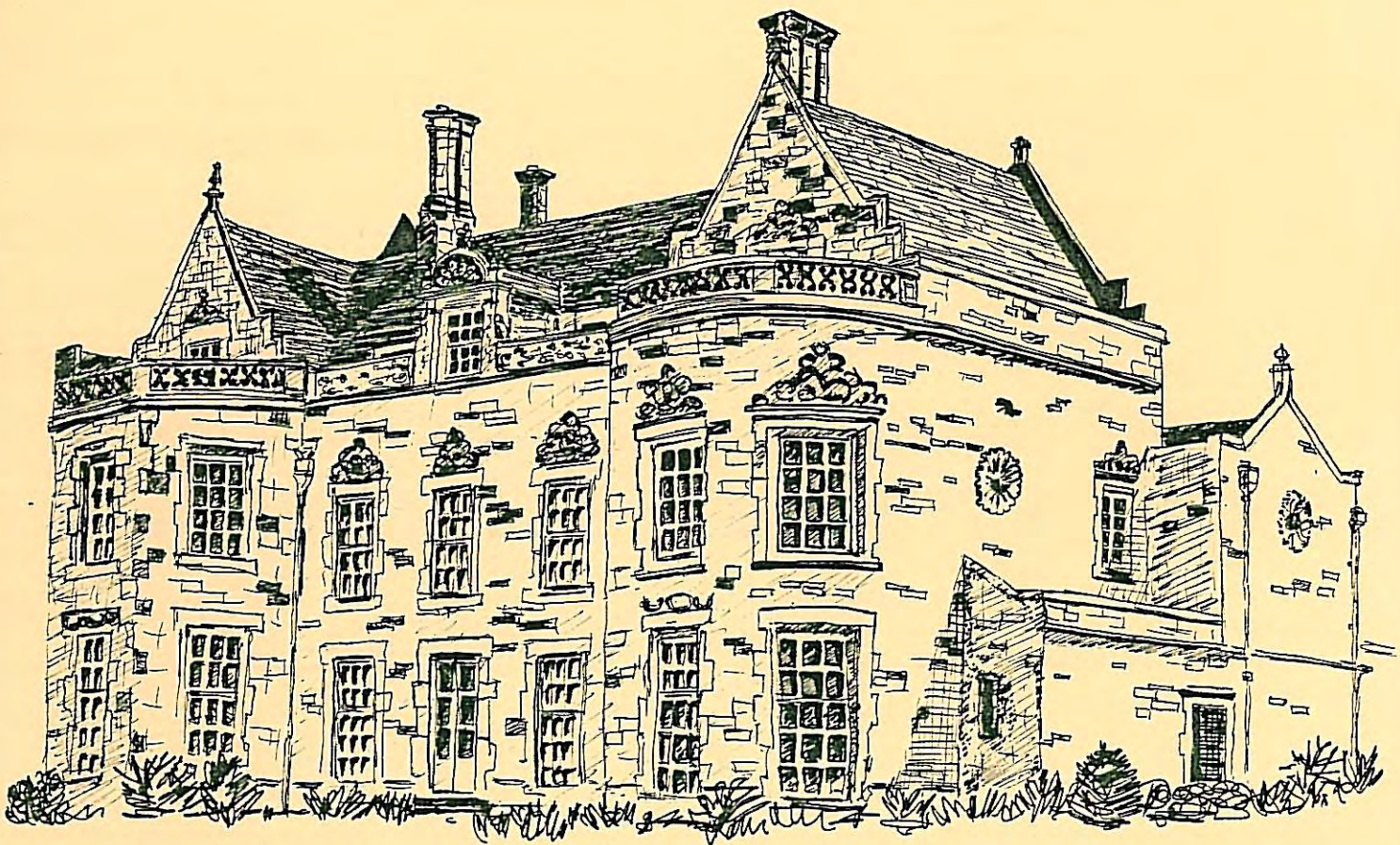


MEAFORD Conservation Area



MEAFORD CONSERVATION AREA

Meaford Conservation Area was designated by Stafford Borough Council on 6th October, 1987, under Section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971.

A public meeting was held in Meaford on 21st July to discuss the Conservation Area following which the Borough Council resolved to make various minor modifications which have been embodied in this document.

K. Platt,
Borough Planning Officer,
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ST16 3AQ

Price 1.00

MEAFORD CONSERVATION AREA

Purpose of Designation

A Conservation Area is defined by Section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 as an area of "architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Conservation Areas exist in many forms varying from historic town and village centres to stately homes and their parkland, or sites of industrial and archaeological interest.

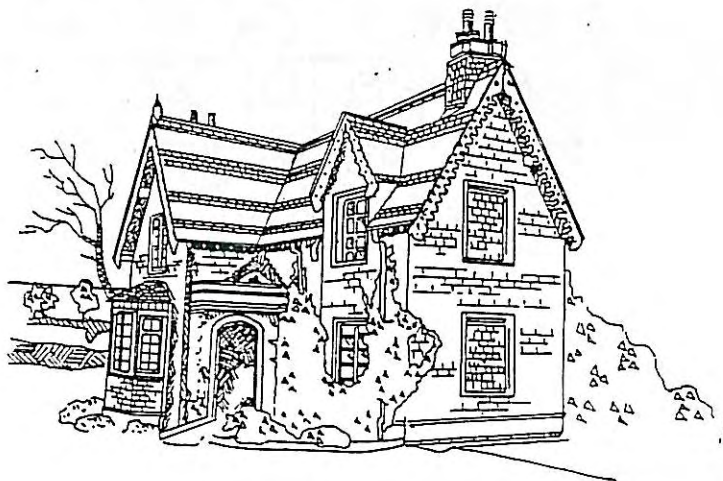
Meaford is considered to be of interest for its notable historic buildings, which are listed as being of architectural or historic interest, the original parkland setting of Meaford Hall and the associated village of Meaford consisting of a group of workers cottages, the village inn and school.

The Meaning of Designation

Designation of a conservation area draws public attention to its architectural and historic interest and emphasises the need for any new development, either within or adjoining the area, to be sympathetic to its character. Local Authorities have certain additional powers of control in conservation areas: conservation area consent is required for the demolition of most buildings and structures, and written notice must be given to the Local Planning Authority of an intent to carry out works to trees, with certain exceptions.

Future Action

Designation of a Conservation Area delineates the architectural or historic interest of an area. This may be followed up by proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area. Local people, the Parish Council and amenity groups are invited to come forward with suggestions for schemes which might be carried out for the benefit of the conservation area and its setting.



Meaford Lodge

MEAFORD

Meaford is a small village located on the north side of the A34 - Winchester to Preston Trunk Road - close to its junction with the A51, approximately 1 mile from the historic town of Stone. The River Trent flows by to the west and the Trent and Mersey Canal to the east.

The village of Meaford developed on the site of an ancient communications crossroads at Bury Bank, the areas most important prehistoric relic. Bury Bank is one of a chain of ancient hill-forts, the lines of which have been slightly obscured by tree planting. It is surrounded by steep slopes, designed for defence and may have been used by the Britons in retreating before the Romans. Later, Wulfere, King of Mercia 656-675 is supposed to have resided in a castle at Bury Bank, hence its old name 'Wulfercester'.

Meaford itself is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) both as Mepford and Metford, and was later known as Mayford before today's interpretation - Meaford. The Hall at Meaford was first built in 1686, however, there is evidence that it was once the home of monks. In the cellars are to be found portions of a crypt, a benitier for holy water and an ancient doorway, all of which evidently formed part of the old monastery.

The conservation area boundary has been drawn to include Meaford Hall and the Old Nursery House, together with their associated stables and outbuildings. The attractive parkland setting of the hall with streams, ponds and mature copses, slopes gently down to the River Trent and to the tiny picturesque village of Meaford, which retains the original workers cottages, the school and village inn with its associated outbuildings. The area is included within the North Staffordshire Green Belt.



Group of cottages for the workers at Meaford Hall

Darlaston became the principal seat of the Jervis family in 1655 being owned, prior to the Dissolution of the Monasteries, by Burton Abbey. The Jervis family remained at Darlaston for 2 Centuries or more.

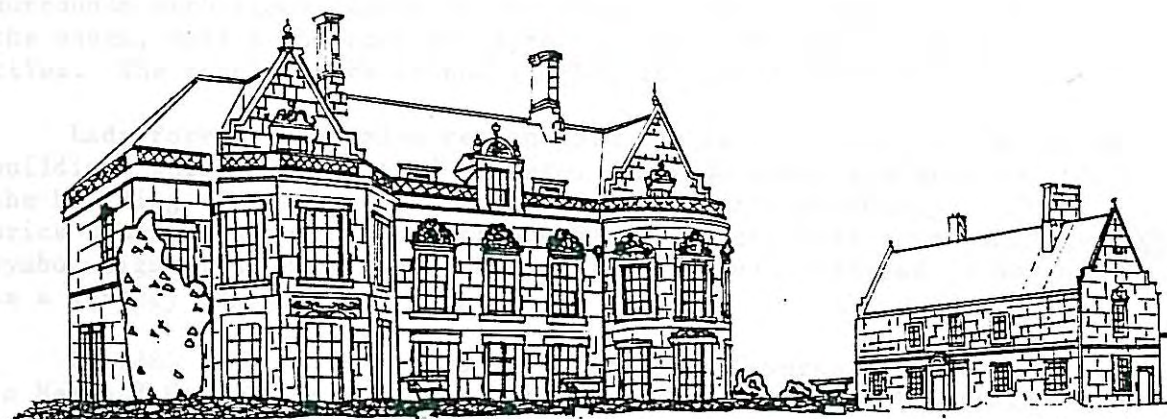
The most celebrated member of the Jervis family was John Jervis. The Nursery House in which he was born is the oldest surviving part of the original hall and is a Grade II* listed building. It was originally attached to the Manor House by a connecting wing and covered passage which have now been demolished. It is of two storeys, built in sandstone, the doorway being reconstructed with the original pilasters having foliated capitals, and a good shell ornament over the cornice, below which is an inscribed tablet recording that "John Jervis, Earl St. Vincent, was born in the room above on 20th January, 1735."



Doorway to the Nursery House

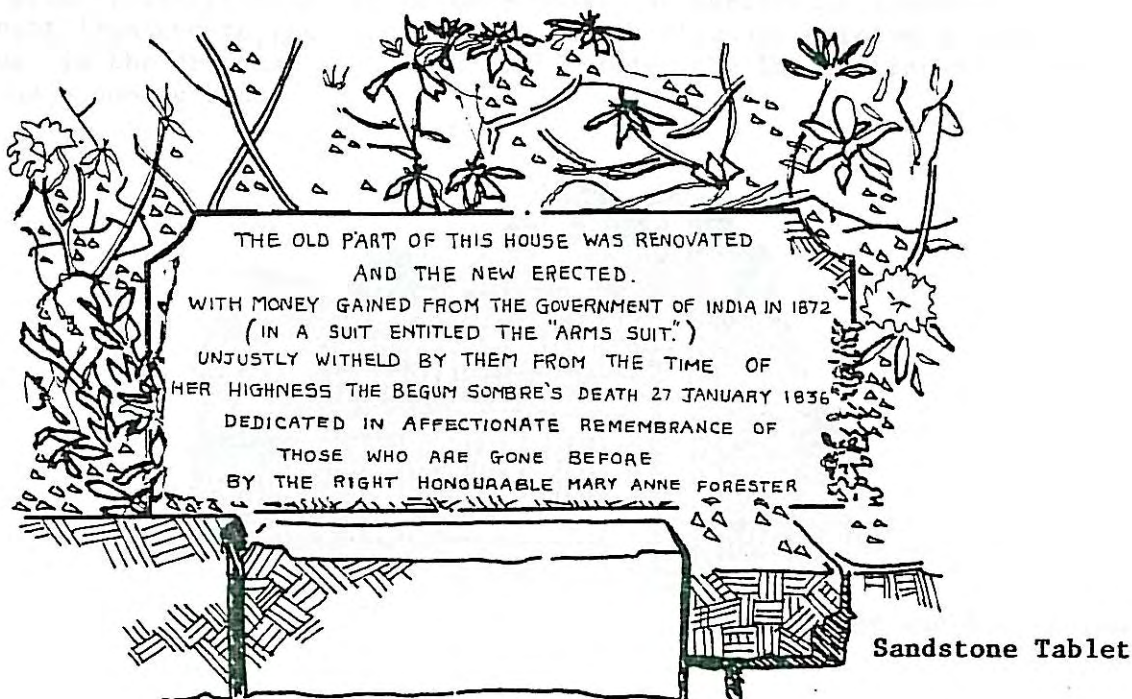
Joining the Navy at the age of 13 John Jervis had a distinguished career. Involved in the storming of Quebec under General Wolfe in 1759, he reached the summit of his career in 1797 when, as Admiral John Jervis, he led the English Ships to victory over the Spanish fleet at the Battle of Cape St. Vincent. As a result he was honoured with the titles Earl St. Vincent and Viscount St. Vincent. The Earl eventually became Admiral of the Fleet, and on his death in 1823 was buried in Stone and his tomb is to be seen near the east end of St. Michaels Church. A Marble tablet inside the church recounts in detail the Earl's life and career. A monument was also erected in his honour at St. Paul's Cathedral.

It was in the mid 19th Century that the part of Meaford Hall which still stands today was built; it is now a Grade II* Listed Building. Altered and restored in 1874-87, it is of Jacobean style of 3 storeys in warm tinted sandstone which matches the old Nursery House. The architecture is ornate particularly around the ground floor windows which are surmounted by elaborate strapwork entablatures. The central doorcase has panelled pilasters with foliated capitals supporting frieze with 3 escutcheons and cornice surmounted by urns. The elevation to the gardens has a 3-light canted bay to the left and a 3-light convex bay to the right hand side, both tiered over two storeys with recessed stepped gables behind the bays, also a central dormer with semi circular pediment which encloses a shell ornament. A pierced parapet runs the length of the building. The north side is largely reconstructed following demolition of a wing in 1946.



Meaford Hall and the Nursery House

In 1851 Mary Anne Jervis daughter of the Second Viscount St. Vincent of Meaford inherited immense personal fortune, reputed to be worth £2 million, a large proportion of which she used for the 'benefit of the people of Stone and Meaford'. An inscribed sandstone tablet to this effect remains in the grounds of Meaford Hall.



Sandstone Tablet

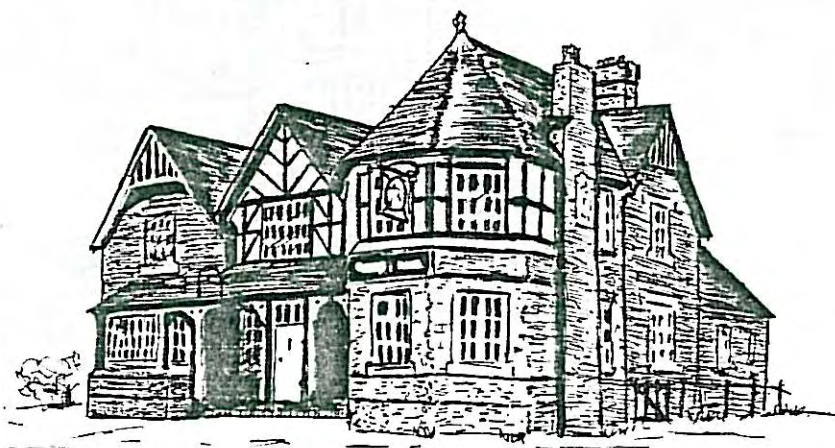
Her influence on Stone and Meaford was considerable. She donated substantial sums towards the building of a Market Hall and Town Hall in Stone. At great expense, she renovated the old part of the Hall and built an imposing new wing with clock tower, known as the East India Wing designed by Burn and McVicar Anderson in 1877. Warm tinted, fine grained sandstone was brought from Scotland to build the wing which sadly was demolished in 1946 due to extensive dry rot.

Whilst Mary Anne Jervis (then Lady Forester) was renovating Meaford Hall, her husband was responsible for building a stable block on the site of the old stables. Two inscribed circular tablets record this fact. The new, 2 storey block ranged around 3 sides of a courtyard and is built of red brick with stone dressings. The central block has a gabled gatehouse at the centre with carriage arch, clock and wind vane. The casement windows and doorways to ground storey have stone keyed surrounds with stone quoins to all angles. Gabled dormers break above the eaves, whilst the roof has sprocket eaves and attractive fish scale tiles. The stable block is now a Grade II Listed Building.

Lady Forester was also responsible for the picturesque cluster of buildings which form Meaford Village. In 1880 money was provided for the building of a school which served as a church on Sundays. The red brick schoolhouse with decorative gables, feature bell tower and the **M** symbol signifying Mary Anne, remains largely unaltered and is now used as a nursery school.

In 1884 Lady Forester rebuilt the group of workers cottages close to Meaford Hall Lodge. The detached cottage which is set back from the road was for the butler, the other attached group of cottages were built for the gardeners and cooks from the Hall. Again the buildings remain largely unaltered, with attractive timber framing and feature brickwork. The tithe map of 1842, however, indicates that there was a house and gardens on this site before the workers cottages.

The village would not be complete without a village inn, and Lady Forester was responsible for that too. In 1887 she provided money for the erection of the George and Dragon Inn replacing an earlier inn which stood near the same spot and in its time was a famous coaching inn on the great route from London to Liverpool. Of particular interest is the wrought iron and copper hanging sign, which although painted several times, is the original sign from 1887. Today the Inn continues to be run as a public house.



The George and Dragon Inn

Adjacent to the George and Dragon Inn is an attractive row of outbuildings; the original stables when the Inn was a coaching house. Used as a garage in more recent years, today the stables stand empty and in danger of falling into disrepair.



The Old Stables, George and Dragon Inn

At the southern end of the old stables is a brick cottage, with timber framing, feature brickwork and a symbol **M** presumably signifying Mary Forester, with the date 1884 beneath. The Cottage garden extending to the south was originally encircled by a sandstone wall, a small portion of which remains. In the east elevation at first floor level an old sandstone window has been inserted, with the date 1656 cut into the stone, the date around which the Jervis family acquired the Meaford Estate. Local folklore has it that the window came from an old lock-up on the Lichfield Road between Stone and Rugeley, though an alternative theory is that the stone window came from an old school cum church which was sited on a spot opposite the George and Dragon Inn. Whichever theory is true, the window is certainly very old and an interesting feature of the building.



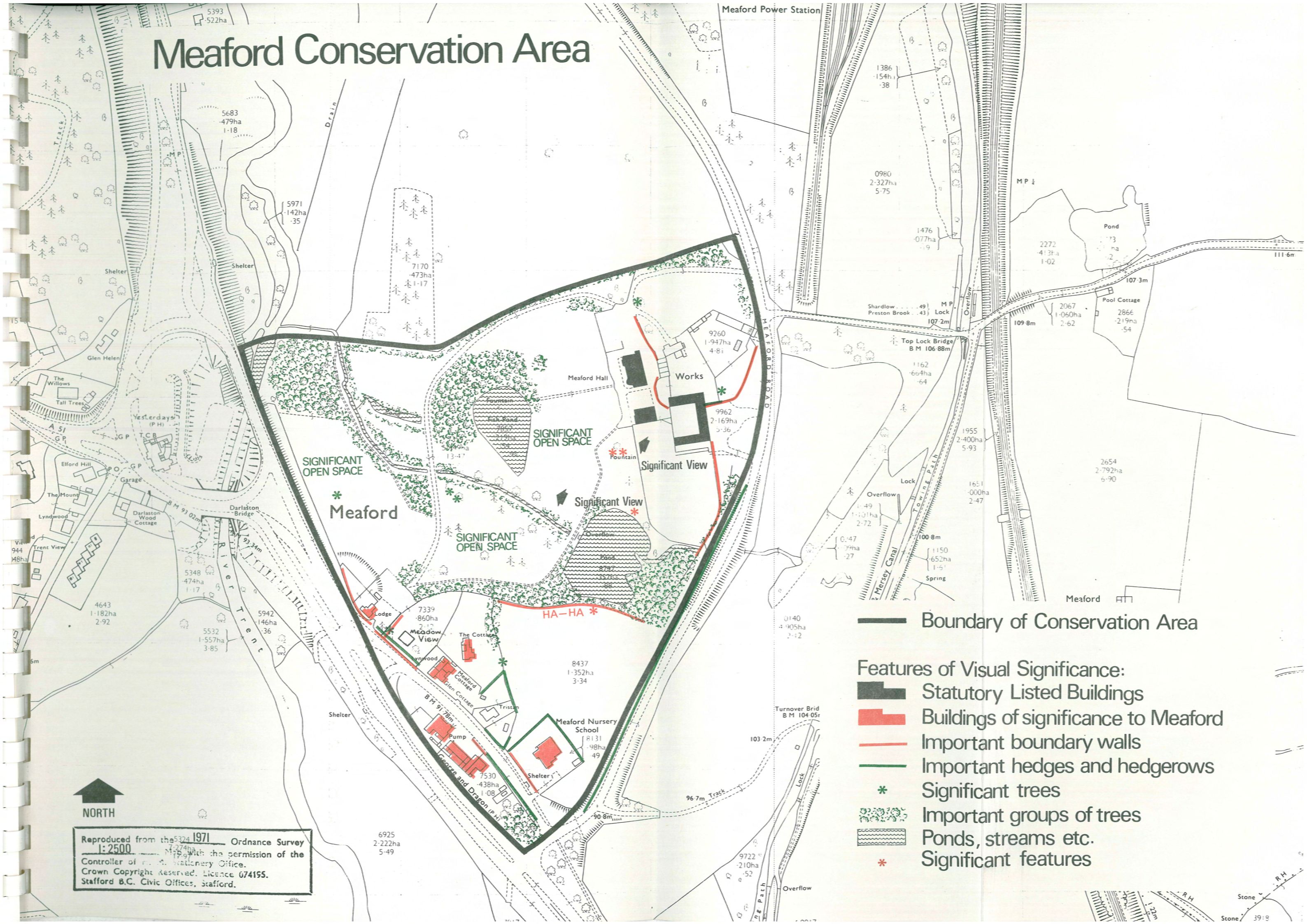
Sandstone window dated 1656
inserted into outbuildings










Meaford


Lady Forester died in 1893 without children and in 1943 the estate was sold to the Roden family. Following use by the army during the war, works to facilitate reoccupation by the Roden family involved the demolition of the East India Wing and a central section creating separate dwellings; the present Hall and the Nursery House. A rose garden was laid between the two dwellings.

Until 1963 the Hall was used as a market garden and nurseries, it was then purchased by Percy Bilton Limited and the Hall and Nursery House used as offices for a plant hire business. The stables had many uses after the Roden family left including ice cream manufacture, cabinet spraying, plant hire and sign making. However, the stable blocks have been kept in good repair and the business uses have not detracted from the hall itself because of the surrounding high brick walls which originally encircled the walled gardens. The beautiful mature trees and shrubberies create an attractive parkland setting for the Hall and a significant backdrop to the village of Meaford itself.

Meaford Conservation Area



-  Boundary of Conservation Area
- Features of Visual Significance:**
-  Statutory Listed Buildings
-  Buildings of significance to Meaford
-  Important boundary walls
-  Important hedges and hedgerows
-  Significant trees
-  Important groups of trees
-  Ponds, streams etc.
-  Significant features

 NORTH
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FUTURE ACTION

The Conservation Area has been carefully considered by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Parish Councils, local people and amenity bodies.

Designation of a Conservation Area is only a prelude to action for preserving and enhancing its character and appearance. The present document is concerned with the reasons for designation. It analyses and defines the basic qualities of the particular features and groups of buildings which are considered to make a significant contribution to the character of the area. The following Guidelines for Development include advice on how suitable forms of development may be achieved.

Improvement and enhancement of Conservation Areas is not dependent only upon long-term proposals. Much can be achieved in the immediate future by local initiative in removal of untidy signs planting trees, and sensitive resurfacing of parking areas. Public participation, local interest and voluntary action by amenity bodies in restoring and improving the environment within and adjacent to the Conservation Area is essential following the Local Planning Authorities' initiative in designating the area.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT

In order to assist in the positive enhancement and improvement of the area, the Stafford Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority to whom all planning applications are to be submitted) have prepared "Guidelines for Development" which are set out overleaf.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These guidelines have been prepared in the context of the proposals made in the Stone Area Local Plan, which includes the village of Meaford, and the Approved Development Control Policies of Stafford Borough Council, which set out the overall planning policies for Stafford Borough as a whole, including Meaford.
- 1.2 These guidelines are the principles by which planning applications for development will be considered and to which development permitted by the General Development Order, 1977 should seek to conform (see paragraph 5.1(c)) of this document. Applications not in accordance with these guidelines may prove to be acceptable; but it is expected that this will only be the case in the most exceptional circumstances.
- 1.3 The value of engaging an architect or designer who is experienced and creative in approach to design in a Conservation Area cannot be emphasised too strongly.
- 1.4 The Local Planning Authority (Stafford Borough Council) in view of the need for particularly careful control, will not consider planning applications in outline; details of the siting and design of a proposed building, including elevations which show the proposal in the context of its surroundings, should be submitted.

2. GUIDELINES

- 2.1 In terms of general principles, development should be designed to reflect the character of the area by drawing from the local character in terms of scale, materials, form, details, exploiting existing features by providing or emphasising views; and where appropriate retaining or providing stone and brick boundary walls, trees and hedgerows.
- 2.2 New buildings and extensions shall be well designed in themselves, and be of a type and form in keeping with and positively contributing to the character of the area. This may be achieved by the buildings:-
 - (a) being designed to suit the context of the surroundings, landscape buildings and spaces, attention in particular being paid to ensure that they are appropriate in scale with visually distinct spaces between buildings;
 - (b) having suitable external materials used in a visually appropriate way. Acceptable materials are listed below; materials other than these will be considered in exceptional circumstances:-
 - (i) sandstone;
 - (ii) red and red brown brick;
 - (iii) brown/red brown clay tiles, plain and/or decorated, darker in tone than the walling materials;

- (iv) the use of second-hand bricks, tiles and slates should be considered in order to integrate extensions and new buildings with the existing;
- (v) the number of different materials should be minimised to avoid visual confusion;
- (vi) extensions to traditional farm buildings should be in red and red brown brick with a dark tile roof.

On new buildings, where cladding is to be utilised for walls and roofing, this should be coloured integral with the material and should be selected from the colour range of dark blue, dark grey, dark brown and dark green, and be appropriate to the location.

- (c) the disposition and massing of new buildings and extensions shall be designed to relate satisfactorily as a harmonious whole within the context of the surroundings:-
 - (i) extensions should be designed to avoid unbalancing a building's proportions; this may be achieved by making them visually distinct by means of setting back and change of roof line, whilst utilising similar shapes and forms;
 - (ii) new buildings may be of an irregular plan form but should nonetheless form a harmonious whole;
- (d) windows should be well proportioned in relation to the elevation and the adjacent buildings:-
 - (i) where possible existing window openings should be retained;
 - (ii) window openings are generally best arranged in patterns of vertical and horizontal lines, with a minimal number of window types;
 - (iii) wall area should predominate;
 - (iv) large windows close to the edges of elevations are to be avoided.
- (e) architectural detailing should be used to reinforce good points of design and the character of the area:-
 - (i) detailing which detracts from the elevation by unbalancing its proportions should be avoided;
 - (ii) detailing should be used to improve the appearance of the building in its context; examples from the area worth consideration include:-

- (1) garages, porches and individual dormers should have pitched gable roofs with dormers having a pitch appropriate to and running at right angles to the main roof;
 - (2) window size and form should reflect the existing style of the property;
 - (3) string courses, eaves and verge details around a building;
 - (4) tall chimney stacks and chimney pots;
- (iii) detailing should be of an appropriate scale for the feature being emphasised.

2.3 Landscaping, surface treatment, the treatment of boundaries and roadside furniture should reflect the following factors:-

- (a) new development will need to be accompanied by landscaping treatment including the planting of trees and shrubs to reinforce the existing character of the site and the surrounding area. Trees and hedges form an important part of the Meaford Conservation Area and proposals should pay particular regard to both the existing trees and hedges and new planting to supplement and enhance the character of the Conservation Area;
- (b) any development must pay special regard, where appropriate, to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders where such Orders have been made and hedgerows. In addition, regard must be paid to the provisions of Section 61A of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971 whereby six weeks notice of works to trees within a Conservation Area must be given to the Local Planning Authority, subject to certain exceptions;
- (c) attention should be paid in development proposals to the treatment of boundaries, in particular the existence of a variety of stone and brick boundary walls and hedges which exist in the Conservation Area. Development proposals which effect such features or call for their extension or establishment should be considered with care and sympathy for their surrounds and the character of the Conservation Area;
- (d) in development where the provisions of paved areas for footpaths and vehicular access are required, these areas shall be surfaced with materials appropriate to the character of the area and consultation with the Local Planning Authority is recommended;
- (e) the Staffordshire County Council has a nursery of trees some of which may be made available for enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Areas;
- (f) there are a number of woodland areas and significant trees within the Conservation Area which require careful management in order to ensure their continued survival. These are shown on the map. Advice may be secured through the Local Planning Authority.