

# MALVERN HILLS

## Conservation area appraisal

### Little Malvern



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## PART 1. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

### 1. Summary of special interest

#### 1.1

The special architectural and historic interest of a place is derived from its buildings, and the spaces between them, the layout of streets, views, boundary treatments and trees.

#### 1.2

Little Malvern is a tiny settlement set into the foothills of the Malvern Hills. Its remote position within a fertile, wooded landscape with abundant sources of water supported a settlement that dates back nearly 900 years. Religion has shaped the development of Little Malvern, from the foundation of the monastery of Little Malvern Priory in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and throughout its establishment as a manorial residence of notable Catholic recusant families after the Dissolution. The connection of the community with Catholicism remains apparent to the present day, with two Catholic churches positioned at either end of the conservation area.

#### 1.3

These principal phases of development have left a rich built heritage of high historic and architectural quality. The settlement pattern has changed very little in the last hundred years and historic connections with the Church and agriculture remain apparent in built forms. The setting of Little Malvern below the hills, defined by open fields, woodland, churchyards and gardens, makes an important contribution to the gentle, rural character of the conservation area.

#### 1.4

The special interest of Little Malvern that warrants its justification as a Conservation Area includes:

- The importance of its setting within the Malvern Hills AONB, and how the constraints and opportunities of the landscape have influenced the development of the area.
- The significance of religion in the development of the settlement, demonstrated by the presence of churches from two significant periods in religious history and church building.
- The landmark quality of Little Malvern Priory as part of the landscape, and the importance of views of the tower from many vantages within and outside of the conservation area.
- The demonstration of social hierarchy in the area through the contrasting scale, form, materials and density of buildings.
- The high quality and variety of architectural details and survival of historic fabric.
- Evidence of the former Malvern stone quarrying industry in both buildings and landscape.
- The significant contribution made by the natural environment including trees, woodland, hedges and gardens.
- Associations with notable figures including the composer, Sir Edward Elgar.

The conservation area boundary has been drawn to reflect this special interest.



## 2. Introduction

### 2.1

This appraisal identifies the special interest and character of the Little Malvern Conservation Area, and provides guidance for the preservation and enhancement of its character and appearance. The Little Malvern Conservation Area was originally designated as part of the review of, and subsequent extension to, the Malvern Wells Conservation Area in January 1995. A further review of the boundary of the Malvern Wells and Little Malvern Conservation Areas was undertaken between August 2018 and June 2019 during the preparation of both appraisals. As a result of this process the Malvern Wells Conservation Area was proposed to be divided into two separate conservation areas to reflect their unique characteristics and development. These areas are: Malvern Wells and Little Malvern. The revised boundaries are shown at Appendix 1.

### What is a conservation area?

### 2.2

A conservation area is an area of "special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" (Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*.) Conservation areas were introduced by the *Civic Amenities Act 1967* and exist to champion and protect the features and characteristics that make a historic place unique and distinctive.

### How is a conservation area designated?

### 2.3

Conservation areas are normally designated by the local planning authority, in this case Malvern Hills District Council. Designation imposes a duty on the Council, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. In fulfilling this duty, the Council seeks to manage change in a sensitive way, so that those qualities which warranted designation are sustained and reinforced.

### What are the benefits of designation?

### 2.4

Historic areas make an important contribution to the quality of life in local communities. They are a link to the past that provides a sense of continuity and familiarity in a rapidly changing world. Change is inevitable but need not be harmful. Championing local distinctiveness can encourage regeneration and inspire well designed new development in order to bring social and economic benefits to the local community.

### 2.5

Broadly, the effects of designation are:

- **The local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting;**
- **Control over the substantial or total demolition of unlisted buildings or structures;**
- **Control over works to trees;**
- **Some types of advertisement will require consent to be displayed;**
- **Restriction on the types of development which can be carried out without the need for planning permission (Permitted Development rights);**
- **Support for the use of Article 4 Directions to remove Permitted Development rights.**

Further information can be found on the [Council's website](#) and on the [Planning Portal](#).

### What is the purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal?

### 2.6

A conservation area appraisal outlines the history of an area and identifies and explains what makes it special. It recognises the contribution that individual buildings make to the historic townscape, together with spaces between and around buildings, street patterns, trees, views and other elements such as ground surfaces and boundary treatments.

## Policy context and definitions

### 2.7

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with local planning policy as outlined in the *South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP)* adopted in 2016, and national planning policy, set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. Broadly, these policies seek to ensure that the character and significance of a conservation area is preserved. A conservation area is defined in both the SWDP and NPPF as a *heritage asset*, described as, ‘a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.’

### 2.8

Section 16 of the NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policy on *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*. Paragraphs 186, 200 and 201 give specific guidance relating to conservation areas.

### 2.9

The SWDP contains policies that set out a positive strategy for protecting and managing the historic environment, including through the encouragement of high quality design. The relevant policies are:

- **SWDP 6: Historic Environment;**
- **SWDP 21: Design;**
- **SWDP 24: Management of the Historic Environment.**

### 2.10

The Little Malvern Conservation Area is situated within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. *SWDP 23: The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Area of Natural Beauty* and the draft policies within the *Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan (2019-2024)* are relevant in safeguarding the special qualities of the landscape.

### 2.11

The *South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD* (adopted March 2018) is also relevant in the assessment of development proposals within the Little Malvern Conservation Area.

## 3. Assessment of special interest

### Location

#### 3.1

Little Malvern is the smallest and most southerly district of 'the Malverns', lying beneath the eastern slope of the Malvern Hills, around 15km south west of Worcester. The northern boundary of Little Malvern abuts the parish of Malvern Wells, approximately 5km south of Great Malvern. The settlement straddles the southern end of Wells Road and the A4104 where it branches east towards Welland.

### Landscape setting

#### 3.2

This setting of Little Malvern is dominated by the elevated ridge of the Malvern Hills which forms a striking boundary visible from a considerable distance between the Worcestershire lowlands to the east and rolling Herefordshire countryside to the west. Little Malvern is nestled into the tree covered foothills of the Malverns which recede beneath the exposed grassland hill summits. The area has complex pre-Cambrian hard rock geology with localised, prominent rocky outcrops. The quarrying of Malvern Stone is notable in both the surrounding landscape and built environment.

#### 3.3

Land to the east of the conservation area drops gently to a variegated agricultural landscape of arable and pasture land divided by hedgerows and blocks of woodland on the western plain of the River Severn. There is a low intensity of development surrounding Little Malvern with a small number of isolated farmsteads in between higher areas of built intensity to the east at Welland and to the North at Malvern Wells. The overall impression of the setting of Little Malvern is of a predominantly undeveloped, pastoral landscape.



The view towards Little Malvern from the east.



A view of Little Malvern Priory in the wider landscape from the hills.



Fields to the east of North Farm with well defined foot paths and Bredon Hill in the distance.

## Archaeology, history and development of Little Malvern

### 3.4

The historic interest of the Little Malvern Conservation Area comes from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through the place to the present. It provides the context in which to understand the impact that its history has had on its current character and appearance.

### 3.5

The area now occupied by Little Malvern historically existed as part of the wilderness surrounding the Malvern Hills. There is limited evidence of prehistoric settlers in this area before the Early Bronze Age though the hills are thought to have formed part of an upland trade route that avoided the dense forest and marshland of the lower valleys (Smith, 1978 p2). The Hills may have held sacred or ceremonial significance to early settlers and several Early Bronze Age structures and finds have been recorded including two barrows on Pinnacle Hill and a potential burial site at Mathon. The division of the landscape with the hill-ridge earthwork known as the Shire Ditch is suggested to have been begun by Late Bronze Age settlers (Hurle 2007).

### 3.6

The hills are crowned by the distinctive earth work remains of two Iron-Age two hill-forts at Midsummer Hill and the Herefordshire Beacon. These are suggested to have accommodated several thousand settlers over a period of four or five hundred years (Hurle 1989). A large hoard of Iron Age currency bars were found near Wyche Road, indicating trade took place in this area (Hurle 2007).

### 3.7

Roman occupation of the area around the hills appears to have been focused at Malvern Link where a number of kiln sites have been found suggesting an intensive pottery industry was present in this area (Bowden 2005). This would have relied upon the local abundance of clay and water and well-managed woodland for fuel. A hoard of Roman coins suggested to date between

286 and 311ACE was found near Little Malvern in 1847 on a track leading to British Camp (Hurle 2007).

### 3.8

For much of its early history the area now inhabited by Little Malvern formed part of the Anglo Saxon Forest of Mercia. After the Norman Conquest, William I established the area as a royal forest for hunting game which became a chase after he allowed it to be used by favoured noblemen. Forest laws governed the protection of the vegetation and game which substantially restricted the development of the area between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 3.9

The area encompassing Little Malvern was recorded in the Domesday Book as belonging to the Bishop of Worcester. The remote position of Little Malvern beneath the Malvern Hills, and the presence of holy wells including Ditchford's Well, imply the significance of the hills as a 'ritual landscape' which attracted 'holy men and hermits' (Bowden 2005). Fertile soils and ample supplies of water and timber would also have made the area ideal for arable and pastoral land use. In around 1125 Bishop Simon of Worcester granted land at Little Malvern for a Benedictine Priory, which was managed as a cell of the Cathedral and Benedictine Monastery at Worcester. The priory church was dedicated to St Giles, who is fittingly the patron saint of forests and woodlands (Bryer 1993).

### 3.10

The early medieval parish at Little Malvern revolved around the monastery at Little Malvern Priory. Well preserved ancient footpaths can be seen radiating from Little Malvern Priory to the present day. The wilderness of the Chase was gradually brought into cultivation by the tenants of the monastery and the population is thought to have reached its peak by 1565 when there were 37 families in the parish (Bryer 1993). In monastic times there would have been a number of outbuildings along Pipes Line including a dovecote, barns and stables, and there were mill ponds and fish ponds to the south of the priory (Smith 1978).

### 3.11

The decline of the population of the parish appears to have been caused by the suppression of Little Malvern Priory during the Dissolution of the late medieval period and the disafforestation and a sale of one third of the Chase during the reign of Charles I. Forest industries and employment gradually disappeared and the economy diminished. By 1781 the population of Little Malvern had shrunk to 6 families (Bryer 1993).

### 3.12

After the dissolution of the monastery in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Manor of Little Malvern was granted to the Russell family and later passed through marriage to the Beringtons. The former priory became the manorial residence of Little Malvern Court and what was left of the priory church became the parish church. The successive owners of the court continued to practice their Catholic faith despite its suppression. Their status and connection with Catholic families throughout the three counties served to protect them from persecution during this time and the Court provided a hidden chapel for worship attended by people from many miles away. The Catholic relief Act of 1791, followed by The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1828 enabled the family to open a public chapel at the Court which served a congregation of 115 by 1861 (Bryer 1993).

### 3.13

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century land lying to the north of the parish was sold by the Little Malvern Estate to the Monks of Downside Abbey for the erection of a new parish church. This site remains separated from the court and priory by a large field associated with North Farm, previously cultivated as orchard, though now used for grazing animals. It is not clear why this location was chosen as the slope of the land appears to have caused problems in the construction of the church. However the siting has defined the subsequent development pattern of the settlement.

### 3.14

Funds were secured for building the new church in 1861 during the height of the popularity of Malvern as a spa destination. The Church of St Wulstan opened the following year, constructed of Malvern stone which was quarried in Little Malvern until 1925 (Bryer

1993). Sir Edward and Lady Elgar attended services at St Wulstan's when they lived in Malvern Wells between 1899 and 1904. They are buried together in the churchyard, and their grave, designed by Troyte Griffith, remains a pilgrimage site.

### 3.15

Only a single new dwelling was built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century replacing an earlier dwelling to the north of Poplar Cottage. The early 19<sup>th</sup> century tollhouses situated on Wells Road and the curve of the A4104 were also removed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century though the latter was rebuilt at the Avoncroft Museum. The eastern side of the courtyard at North Farm was removed and modern agricultural buildings were added to the north during the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century. However Little Malvern has changed very little in the last century and maintains its peaceful, rural character to the present day.

## 4. Character Analysis

### General character

#### 4.1

Little Malvern is a tiny settlement set in picturesque surroundings at the foot of the Malvern Hills. The settlement consists of only a few of buildings dispersed along the edge of the roads tracing the hillside, however these are representative of a variety of functions and architectural styles spanning its long history. Intervening trees, hedgerows and open fields are significant to the character of the conservation area and form a dominant feature of views.

### Spatial character

#### 4.2

The spatial character of Little Malvern has been influenced by its steep topography and the pattern of its roads. The conservation area has a dispersed settlement pattern split into two groups of buildings that are separated by a large expanse of pasture. The group to the north has a linear arrangement set astride the southern end of Wells Road. This part of the conservation area comprises the Church of St Wulstan, set into the slope of the hill below road level, and a handful of wayside dwellings set back slightly from the road behind shallow boundaries.

#### 4.4

The A4104 peels off Wells Road to the south and curves east down the hill towards Welland. The historic nucleus of the settlement straddles this road, with Little Malvern Court and the Priory Church of St Giles on the south side, and the complex of buildings around North Farm to the north.

#### 4.5

The Court and Church are notably set back from the road within spacious grounds that stretch to the south. The walled garden is separated from the rest of the grounds by Pipes Lane, which runs north to south along the western edge of the gardens to the Court. The buildings at North Farm

are set back from the road behind the former farmhouse set against the wayside. These buildings form a courtyard containing a mixture of cottages, and traditional and 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural buildings.



Looking south along Wells Road



Looking west towards North Farm



Little Malvern Court and Church of St Giles viewed across the gardens to the south.

## Open space, parks, gardens and trees

### 4.6

The dispersed nature of the settlement within a fundamentally rural setting beneath the tree covered hillside contributes significantly to the overall green character of the conservation area. The large grazing field to the north of North Farm forms a substantial gap between the historic core of the village around Little Malvern Priory and settlement around the Church of St Wulstan. This open space provides connecting views between both areas of the conservation area as well as far reaching views across the Severn valley.

### 4.7

The small burial ground to the Church of St Wulstan has a peaceful and secluded character, set down from the hillside below the Church and Kirklands. The distinctive row of crown lifted lawn cypress trees along the eastern edge of the churchyard provide a peaceful, sheltered character to this space while allowing long distance views to the east.

### 4.8

The formal gardens of Little Malvern Court are significant for their size, and for containing a diverse collection of well established trees, ponds and formal planting. This includes the distinctive topiary hedge that runs along the boundary with Pipes Lane. The walled garden on the western side of the lane is unusual in that its eastern side is open, which visually connects this space with the formal gardens on the east side the lane.

### 4.9

The large domestic gardens, roadside trees, hedges and grass verges soften the boundaries between properties and along road edges. Roadside trees lend a green and shaded character to parts of the conservation area, particularly when travelling along the A4104.



Looking across the field from Wells Road to Little Malvern Priory.



A row of crown-lifted lawn cypress trees in St Wulstan's Churchyard



Topiary hedges along Pipes Lane.

## Key Views and Vistas

### 4.10

Views form an important component of the Little Malvern conservation area and help to define areas of special interest and character. Alterations to individual properties, the removal of trees and development of open spaces can have a significant impact on how the area is viewed and experienced.

### 4.11

The elevated and exposed position of Little Malvern within the landscape means that views are ubiquitous and highly significant to the character and significance of the conservation area. Due to the nature of the landscape and topography, and the pattern of roads and development views are experienced in a number of different ways:

- Into the conservation area – including from long distances, from the hills above and valley below.
- Out of the conservation area – including up to the hills and far reaching views across open countryside.
- Within the conservation area – Including oblique views across the hills; framed views along roads, lanes and pathways; between trees and buildings; over rooftops and woodland.
- Dynamically – views are not just experienced from specific static vantage points but take in the changing character of streets and the landscape when travelling along roads, footpaths and public rights of way.

### 4.12

As views are so important to the character of the conservation area, the impact of development on views into, out of and within the conservation area requires consideration on a case by case basis.

### 4.13

Several important views have been identified as part of the Little Malvern Conservation Area Appraisal. These are highlighted on the Feature Map at Appendix 2 and described below. However each view and vantage point is indicative and this list should not be considered exhaustive:

### 4.14

The tower of the Church of St Giles is a landmark feature in many views from various points within and outside of the conservation area. The tower is particularly striking in views along the A4104 over open fields, against the backdrop of the wooded hillside. It is visible from the hills in the context of a wider undeveloped landscape and from Wells Road in long range views.

### 4.15

Views from the conservation area to wider countryside are significant in emphasising the sense of remoteness of Little Malvern and its connectivity to the landscape. This includes views to the east of North Farm and Little Malvern Priory, particularly those that take in the well defined public rights of way that run diagonally across the fields to the east, with distant hill ranges visible in the back ground.

### 4.16

Trees and hedgerows form an important part of the experience of the conservation area, giving roads and footpaths a leafy, shaded character and providing glimpses of views of features of the landscape.

### 4.17

The formal topiary and large established trees along the western boundary of the Little Malvern Court lends a whimsical character when travelling along Pipes Lane, especially where these frame views of the Priory and walled garden.



### 4.18

Views south from the church yard of St Wulstan's Church provide an oblique view across the hillside. The undeveloped nature of this setting lends to the peaceful character of this space.

## Architectural interest and built form

### 4.19

Architectural interest can be derived from the conscious design of a place, as the result of artistic endeavour, but equally, can be a consequence of the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time. The architectural interest of Little Malvern combines these two aspects, containing a mixture of buildings types that allude to the historic origins of the settlement and reflect local vernacular and architectural customs over time.

### 4.20

Building use in the conservation area is principally residential, spiritual or agricultural, with no civic or commercial building present. Building types include the manorial court, churches, designed houses, vernacular cottages, and agricultural buildings.

### *Little Malvern Court and Gardens*

### 4.21

Little Malvern Priory became a private residence following the Dissolution and its footprint covers the area formerly occupied by the domestic buildings of the monastery. It has been altered in accordance with the requirements and finances of its occupiers for almost every generation in its history. This is reflected in its piecemeal character which juxtaposes a variety of architectural styles and materials including randomly coursed stonework, timber-framing, red brick, and ashlar.



The view of the north elevation of Little Malvern Court.

### 4.22

The walled garden was built to the west of the formal garden to the Court by the 1860s. It is constructed of red brick with buttresses and moulded coping. There are a few small garden buildings that are integral to its north wall. Unfinished brickwork to its east corners give the appearance of its east wall having been demolished, though it is not clear if this side of the garden was ever built. Its open nature is a distinctive feature along Pipes Lane.

### *Churches*

### 4.23

The tower and truncated chancel are all that remain of the Priory Church of St Giles. It was originally cruciform in plan, though its nave was condemned and quarried for materials in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and its side chapels were destroyed during the Dissolution. However the remaining ruins of the 12<sup>th</sup> century arcades give the church a picturesque quality. The 15<sup>th</sup> century tower is a landmark feature in views towards Little Malvern, equally from the hills above and lowlands below. Its later pyramidal roof gives it a distinctive Romanesque character in the landscape. The remaining medieval stained glass in the east window is notable for its rare depiction of Edward V.



The tower and chancel of the Church of St Giles.

### 4.24

The Church of St Wulstan was designed by Benjamin Bucknell in a medieval French Gothic style. The second Catholic church in the parish was built between 1861-2, with a hexagonal baptistery added in 1866. The substantial height of the church and slope of the hillside made the completion of the choir and sanctuary prohibitively costly and the east chancel

arch remains blocked up with brickwork. The church is constructed from Malvern stone with a striking west rose window and green-hued lattice glazing to north and south windows. Being set down from the road, within a tree-lined churchyard the church has a subtle presence in the conservation area which adds to the intimacy of its setting.



The rose window at the Church of St Wulstan.

## Houses

### 4.25

Now a private residence, the building known as Kirklands was erected as 'the Priory' in 1845, initially to house a new Benedictine foundation. This historical significance is evident through the carved stone Benedictine heraldry to its front west elevation, including an inscription above the door representing the Rule of Saint Benedict, *Nihil Operi Dei Praeponatur* – 'Let nothing be preferred to the Work of God'. The building has an imposing character in the conservation area, set over three storeys with vertical emphasis implied by double height bay windows and gabled dormers. It is constructed of tooled Cradley Stone with ashlar window dressings and quoins.



Kirklands

### 4.26

'The Priest's House' was built in 1873 as a lodging house, originally known as St Wulstan's Villa and later St Wulstan's presbytery. It is the only building in the conservation area that is faced with render to its principle west elevation, though is constructed of brick to the rear. It has a symmetrical form with classical proportions and arched niches around ground floor windows.



Wintercott

### 4.27

Wintercott was built by the estate in the late 18th century. It was originally known as 'The Farm' and later became the dower house (Bryer 1993). It occupies a prominent position on the roadside opposite to the entrance to the Court. The house is constructed of red brick laid in distinctive Flemish bond. Windows are leaded with chamfered ashlar dressings beneath segmental brick arches.

## **Cottages**

### **4.28**

There are a number of surviving cottages in Little Malvern that are representative of the local vernacular. These include Poplar Cottage, Coach House and Stable Cottage. It has been suggested that more cottages existed along the A4104, though these do not appear to have survived into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The existing cottages are modest in scale and form and are constructed from a combination of timber box-framing, red brick and Malvern Stone. They have few architectural details, though there is an interesting conical tower to the roof of the Coach House.



**Poplar Cottage**

## **Farm Buildings**

### **4.29**

North Farm, to the north of the court was previously known as the Home Farm and was retained by the lords of the manor when they ceased to farm their own estate in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century (Bryer 1993). The remaining historic farm buildings are laid out in two parallel ranges and form a small courtyard open on its east side. The buildings are predominantly red brick, under pitched plain tile roofs. Some have visible timber framing, infilled with brick. The barn to the north-west corner is laid in garden wall bond with a large central opening, brick dentil course and

decorative ventilation patterns in the brick work. The barn to the south east is constructed of Malvern Stone, with a metal window and a red brick surround to its east elevation. Much of the historic fabric of the traditional farm buildings has been well preserved and the group makes a positive contribution to the traditional agricultural character of the conservation area.

### **4.30**

Some of the modern farm buildings present to the north east, by virtue of their scale and materials such as breeze block integrate less successfully with the traditional character of the farmstead. However, their siting to the rear of the North Farm complex and agricultural context allows their impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area to remain neutral at their current density and scale.



**Farm buildings at North Farm**

## **Listed buildings**

### **4.31**

There are a number of buildings located within the Little Malvern Conservation Area that are listed on the National Heritage List for England for their architectural or historic interest. These include

- The Church of St Giles – grade I
- Little Malvern Court – grade II\*
- The Church of St Wulstan – grade II
- The Elgars' Grave – grade II

The site of Little Malvern Priory is also designated as a Scheduled Monument.

#### **4.32**

Other buildings and structures attached to, or pre-dating 1<sup>st</sup> July 1948 and forming part of the curtilage of the identified buildings are also listed by association (curtilage listed). The Council's Heritage Team should be contacted for advice on whether a building or structure is listed by virtue of its association with a listed building before any works are carried out to potentially listed buildings or structures.

#### **4.33**

While the aim of the listed building legislation is to preserve these buildings for their own sake, any proposed changes will also be considered in terms of the potential effect on the Conservation Area.

#### ***Unlisted buildings of interest***

#### **4.34**

There are a number of buildings which, while not listed on the National Heritage List in their own right, have qualities of age, style and materials that are locally important and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. That many of these properties retain much of their original character and appearance is to the credit of those owners who have carefully preserved them. However these properties are vulnerable to future change.

#### **4.35**

The Management Proposals at Part 2 include a proposal for consideration of Article 4(2) Directions to provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations. The effect of the Direction would be that certain alterations that currently fall under permitted development would require planning permission. However, this would only be where the change affects those parts of a property fronting a highway or public open space.

Locally important buildings have been identified on the feature map at Appendix 2.

## Materials and local detailing

### 4.36

Much of the architectural character of the Little Malvern Conservation Area comes from the variety and historic quality of the building materials used. The earliest and more modest building types typically used materials that were available locally, while the materials used in later, or higher status buildings reflect the increasing availability of materials from further afield and changing architectural fashions. The following materials are apparent in the Little Malvern Conservation Area:

### Walls

#### 4.37

- **Red Brick** can be seen laid in traditional bonds such as Flemish, English and garden wall bond with fine mortar joints. The use of stretcher bond and wide mortar joints has a less traditional appearance.
- **Timber framing** - Box framing is apparent to cottages and farm buildings, while close studding can be seen at Little Malvern Court. Infill panels are made from both brick and render.
- **Malvern Stone** granites are found in subtle black, pink and green hues. Owing to the highly fractured nature of the rock, it was almost impossible to produce dimensioned stone leading to the distinctive random rubble style of construction. Buildings and walls made from this material require particularly skilled use of mortar and are often dressed in softer stone or brick at door and window openings and corners. As Malvern stone is unique to the locality and no longer quarried is difficult to replace or replicate.
- **Tooled ashlar** such as Cradley Stone.
- **Render** is used infrequently in the conservation area, only visible to the front of The Priest's House.
- **Concrete block** construction is visible to some of the 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural buildings at North Farm. This appears stark in contrast to the traditional use of brick and timber framing in this complex.

## Roofs

### 4.38

- **Plain clay tiles** are the dominant roofing material in the conservation area.
- **Slate** is used infrequently but can be seen on the roof of St Wulstan's Church, with contrasting coloured bands of scalloped slates to the baptistery.
- **Conical roofs** are featured on several buildings in the conservation area, including at the Court, Coach House and the baptistery of St Wulstan's Church.
- **Decorative ridge tiles** and **pinnacles** are a feature of the roof at Kirklands.
- **Corrugated** roofs are apparent to 20<sup>th</sup> farm buildings.



The banded slate roof and latticed windows at St Wulstan's church

## Windows

### 4.39

- **Casement windows** are the dominant window style in the conservation area, traditionally with metal or timber frames.
- **Leaded lights** are seen frequently to the churches and some domestic properties.
- **Sash Windows** are present at the Court.
- The replacement of historic windows with uPVC or storm casements has had a negative impact on a number of buildings in the conservation area.

## *Dressings and quoins*

### 4.40

- **Ashlar** is used for dressing and quoins on higher status buildings constructed of brick and stone.
- **Brick** dressings are seen on agricultural buildings and stables constructed from Malvern Stone.
- **Carved stone** window and door frames feature prominently on buildings with religious connections in the conservation area.

## *Doors and porches*

### 4.41

- **Timber doors** are most common, some with decorative metal strap work.
- **Arched door frames** are common in the conservation area with round, pointed and Tudor arches visible.
- **Pitched roof porches** have been added to some buildings in the conservation area.

## *Boundaries*

### 4.42

- **Malvern stone walls** are present around the Court capped with flat coping stones, while the walls around Wintercott and Poplar Cottage have cock and hen coping.
- **Hedges** include the impressive topiary hedges along the western edge of the gardens to Little Malvern Court, boundary hedges along Wells Road and hedgerow along the A4104.
- **Estate Fencing** is present along Wells Road
- **Timber post and rail fences** delineate some boundaries around agricultural land.



The front door to Kirklands with carved inscription above



The Malvern stone boundary walls around the Court

## 5. Development pressures and vulnerabilities

### 5.1

Little Malvern is an attractive area that has seen little pressure for development and most of its special historic and architectural features have been well preserved. However, there are some instances where past development or alterations have led to the erosion of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The impact of these changes to the Conservation Area has allowed development pressures to be identified where these have the potential to erode the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### 5.2

The following development pressures and vulnerabilities have been identified:

- The intrusion of new development within and in the setting of the Conservation Area
- Loss of important trees and woodland.
- Loss of architectural details including historic windows and doors and their replacement with features of different design, detail, material and finish.
- Unsympathetic extensions where these have not respected the character and materials of the host building.
- The loss of front gardens and boundary features to hard surfacing and garages.
- Intrusive features of the public realm such as the transformer at the junction of Wells Road with A4104, telegraph poles, wires and signage.

### 5.3

The purpose of highlighting these vulnerabilities is not necessarily to aim at the re-development of existing features, but to guard against the impact of these features from becoming too dominant, either through future additions or alterations or by setting precedents for future development within the conservation area. However the Council welcomes the

opportunity of discussing the scope for improving these features.

### 5.4

The Management Proposals at Section 2 consider how these might be addressed to ensure the continuing preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## NOTE

### 5.6

Although it is intended that this appraisal should highlight significant features of the Conservation Area which are important to its character or appearance, omission of a particular feature should not be taken as an indication that it is without merit and unimportant in conservation and planning terms.

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## PART 2 - MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1

These management proposals are a mid-to-long-term strategy for preserving and enhancing the Little Malvern Conservation Area, addressing the issues arising from the appraisal. These proposals are prepared in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) duty under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

### 2. Management Proposals

#### 2.1

The appraisal has highlighted the following pressures and vulnerabilities in the Little Malvern Conservation Area:

- New development within the Conservation Area and its setting.
- Loss of important trees and woodland.
- Loss of significant architectural features and materials.
- The design quality of alterations and extensions.
- The loss of front gardens and boundary features to hardstanding or garages.
- Quality of features of the public realm

#### New development within the Conservation Area and its setting

#### 2.2

The character of the Conservation Area is vulnerable to encroachment of new development. Insensitive new development within the rural setting of the conservation area poses a particular risk.

#### Action

The LPA will:

- Assess the principle of new development within and in the setting of the conservation area against the NPPF and relevant and Local Plan Policies.
- Assess new development against Local Plan Policies on design, conservation areas, listed buildings and the AONB; Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design and the Little Malvern Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Attributes including the scale, siting, orientation, massing, roof profile, materials and architectural details will be important considerations in new development to ensure that it is sympathetic to the special historic and architectural character of the conservation area.

#### Loss of important trees and woodland

#### 2.3

All trees are protected in the Conservation Area. Written notification must be given to the LPA before carrying out any trees works within the designated Area. Some trees are individually protected by Tree Preservation Orders and consent is need from the LPA before any works to them are carried out

The LPA's Landscape Team can provide further advice on protected trees, the type of works which would need to be notified or need consent, the procedures and the likelihood of getting consent for the works. The contribution of individual trees to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be a factor in the consideration of a notification or application.

#### Loss of significant architectural features and materials

#### 2.4

Some buildings in the conservation area have been adversely affected by the loss of significant architectural features and materials. The introduction of inappropriate modern materials has further detracted from the character of these buildings.

## Action

The LPA will:

- Advise owners/occupiers of buildings of appropriate use of materials and detailing where opportunities arise, and the need for prior consent for works, where relevant.
- Consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to bring such works under planning control, to ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings of local significance are protected.
- Seek retention of historic fabric where opportunities arise through development proposals.
- Assess new proposals against Local Plan Policies, supplementary planning guidance on design and the Little Malvern Area Character Appraisal.
- Address unauthorised alterations to buildings through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with the LPA's Enforcement Policy.

## Design quality of extensions and alterations

### 2.5

The extension and alteration of some buildings has introduced features that contrast with the established characteristics of the conservation area. Others are let down by poor attention to detail or materials.

## Action

The LPA will:

- Seek improvements to existing sites where the opportunity arises through development proposals.
- Consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to bring hard surfacing under planning control.
- Assess new proposals against Local Plan Policies, supplementary planning guidance on design and the Little Malvern Area Character Appraisal.
- Address unauthorised development through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our Enforcement Policy.

## The loss of front gardens and boundary features to hardstanding and garages.

### 2.6

Front gardens are vulnerable to replacement with hard surfacing for car parking and garages. The associated loss of boundary walls, fences and hedges, is to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area.

## Action

The LPA will:

- Seek improvements to existing sites where the opportunity arises through development proposals.
- Consider the need for Article 4(2) Directions to bring hard surfacing under planning control.
- Assess new proposals against Local Plan Policies, supplementary planning guidance on design and the Little Malvern Area Character Appraisal.
- Address unauthorised development through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our Enforcement Policy.

## Quality of features of the public realm

### 2.7

Some features of the public realm such as the transformer at the junction of Wells Road with A4104, telegraph poles, wires and signage are intrusive to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## Action

The LPA will:

- Seek improvements to existing sites where the opportunity arises through development proposals or discussions with concerned parties.
- Assess new proposals against Local Plan Policies, supplementary planning guidance on design and the Little Malvern Area Character Appraisal.

## 3. Article 4(2) Directions

### What is an Article 4(2) Direction?

#### 3.1

An Article 4 Direction is an Order that the District Council can make to provide long-term protection against unsympathetic alterations to unlisted dwellings in Conservation Areas by restricting certain "permitted development" rights. This means that alterations that formerly did not require planning permission would need permission in the future. This would only apply to elevations or parts of a property which front public roads, rights of way or public open spaces. It would not normally affect the rear of a property or the rear garden, and does not affect interior alterations.

### Why consider them for Little Malvern?

#### 3.2

The Conservation Area at Little Malvern has been designated in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest and a desire to preserve its character and appearance. Although many alterations to all types of buildings can be controlled in a Conservation Area by planning permission, changes can still take place to unlisted dwellings and their sites that can damage the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, but which are "permitted development", i.e. they do not require planning permission.

#### 3.3

There are several buildings in the Little Malvern Conservation Area which, although not listed, have qualities of age, style and materials which are locally distinct and which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. That many of these properties retain much of their original character and appearance is to the credit of those owners who have carefully preserved them. There is, however, no guarantee as to their future and these properties are vulnerable to future change.

#### 3.4

An Article 4(2) Direction will be considered for Little Malvern. If implemented it would mean that the

works included would no longer be permitted development and planning permission would be required to carry out those particular changes in future. We would check to see if what was proposed would harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. If not, permission would usually be granted. There would be no planning fee for any planning application required as a result of an Article 4 Direction.

#### 3.5

If an Article 4 Direction is considered suitable for Little Malvern a separate consultation process will take place with the owners of any properties affected. All views expressed would be taken into account in making the decision on whether to proceed with the direction.

*To be completed before adoption*

## 4. Statement of Community Involvement

### Introduction

#### 4.1

This statement provides a summary of community involvement in, and public consultation undertaken by Malvern Hills District Council in respect of, the Little Malvern Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals and proposed changes to the conservation area boundary.

### Background

#### 4.2

A report to the Council's XXX Committee on XX XX XXXX explains the reasons for preparing a character appraisal and management plan for the Malvern Wells Conservation Area. Specifically, the character appraisal and plan is drafted in accordance with the requirements on Malvern Hills District Council imposed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to:

- keep its conservation areas under review;
- prepare policies and proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of its conservation areas; and
- pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in exercising its planning functions.

#### 4.3

The preparation and publication of Conservation Area appraisals and management proposals is a key step in the Council fulfilling these statutory duties.

### Community Involvement

#### 4.4

Community involvement has taken the form of:

- briefing sessions with the XXXXX Parish Council and District Council Member for XXXXX Ward

- a public meeting at XXXXX on the evening of XX XX XXXX
- letter to residents affected by the review of the XXXXX on XXXXX

### Consultation

#### 4.5

The consultation period began on XX XX XXXX and ended on XX XX XXXX

Consultation was by:

- A public meeting held at XXXXX on the evening of XX XX XXXX
- Publication of the draft appraisal, management proposals & proposed Conservation Area boundary changes on the Malvern Hills District Council website, accompanied by an electronic feedback form
- Placing of the same documents for public inspection during the consultation period at:
  - xxxxxx
  - XXXXX
- Letters to XXXXX residents affected by the review of the Conservation Area, XXXX Parish Council, Worcestershire Archaeological Unit, Historic England, Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire County Highways, Malvern Civic Society.

### Consultees

#### 4.6

The following were consulted on the draft appraisal and management plan:

- XXXX Parish Council
- District Council Member for XXXX
- XXXX residents affected by the Conservation Area review
- Worcestershire County Archaeological Service
- Worcestershire County Council
- Worcestershire County Highways
- Historic England

### Publicity

#### 4.7

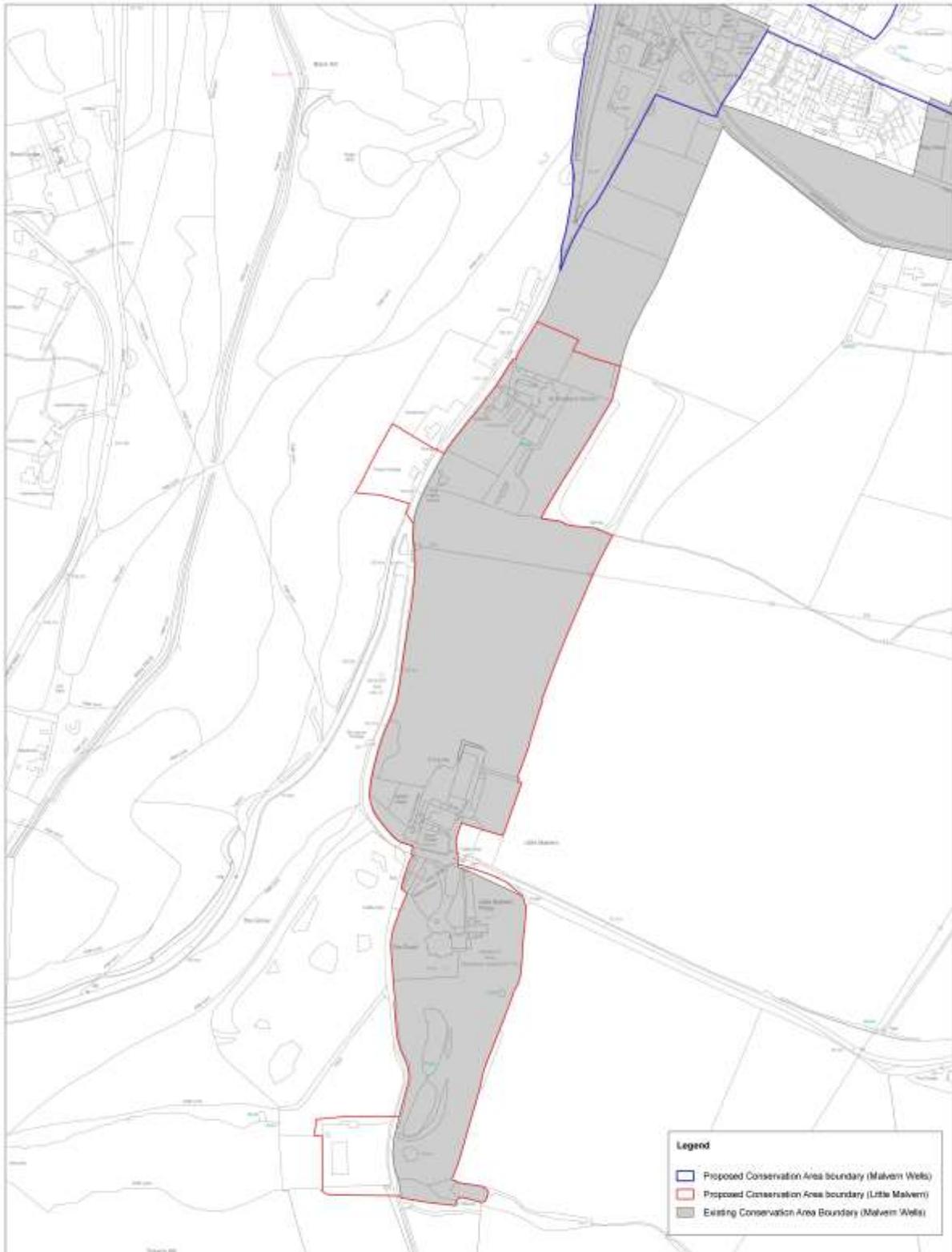
Notice of the public meeting and consultation was given by way of:

- Posters placed around Little Malvern and at the Council House, Malvern and Malvern Library
- Letters to residents affected by the Conservation Area review on 12 July 2019
- A public meeting held at 6pm on 25 July 2019
- Information item on the XXXXX Village website
- Notice placed with the documents at the Council House, Malvern; Malvern Library and on the Council's website
- Information forwarded to consultees

## Community input

**4.8**

## APPENDIX 1: Boundary map



### Little Malvern Conservation Area Boundary

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Scale: 1:1,000



## APPENDIX 2: Feature map



### Little Malvern Conservation Area Appraisal

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June 2016

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