

Somersal Herbert

Conservation Area Appraisal

7. Condition

- Problems, Pressures & Capacity for Change



CONDITION

Problems, Pressures & Capacity for Change.

The overall condition of built development in the Conservation Area is extremely good. There are no buildings within the Conservation Area that are defined by the District Council as being 'at risk'. Residential properties appear well maintained, as does associated private garden land. Non-residential property such as the Church and village hall appear in good order. Apart from a few poorly maintained outbuildings associated with farming enterprises, the surrounding farms and agricultural land also appears well managed.



Poorly maintained agricultural outbuildings

Partly due to the limited size of the built settlement, coupled with its rural location, there appear to be few negative factors associated with the Conservation Area i.e factors which detract from the special quality of the area. Over the latter decades of the 20th century (since the designation of the Conservation Area) there have been a number of modern residential properties constructed. In terms of their respective plot size, scale of property, and building materials they are considered to not be at odds with the overall character of development in the area and have a 'neutral' impact overall.

In 1979, it was stated in the original designation report that there was a need to protect the area and to retain "a completely unspoilt settlement from pressures for development" and that "great care was needed to ensure that the character of the village with its subtle balance of houses and green spaces between was not damaged by unsuitable 'infill' schemes".

It is considered that this remains a desirable consideration in respect of any potential future development. However, Conservation Area designation is not intended to restrict all forms of development, but to ensure that where development

is in accordance with planning policies and legislation it respects the nature, scale, design and materials found in the area, and is in keeping with the 'special' qualities of its character and appearance, that have been defined via documentation, such as this Character Appraisal.

Development in any part of the District which requires planning permission has to be in conformity with both local and national planning policy guidance. As such, under the policies in the Derbyshire Dales Adopted Local Plan 2005, Somersal Herbert has no defined Settlement Framework boundary. This means that proposals such as the introduction of further residential development in the village, are unlikely to be supported as they would be contrary to policy (*See Section 8*). Similarly there are also planning constraints where existing non-residential properties are proposed for residential conversion. In both cases – new build and conversion works, there have to be exceptional planning reasons why such development should be supported. Therefore pressure for additional residential development in the area, at the current time, is likely to be negligible.

It is more likely that pressures for development will arise from individual householder aspirations to add or improve the property e.g., - extensions, upgrading works, garages etc. Recent planning applications in the area have primarily been for detached garages, extensions and stabling facilities. These types of development would be considered in the context of their impact on the 'special character and appearance' of the Conservation Area. Previous introductions of this nature of development are not considered to have caused harm to the area. As such whilst the District Council can, on reviewing a Conservation Area, consider the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to control various forms of 'permitted development' (*see Section 8 page 36*). However, it is not considered necessary to recommend such a Direction for properties within the Somersal Herbert Conservation Area.

As previously identified, the majority of the properties in the village are residential and located within a relatively large plot. Therefore many dwellings have adequate driveways, hardstandings and garages for car parking. Parking, which is problematic in many towns and villages throughout the District, does not appear to be a major issue in the village. This is despite the narrowness of the access lanes, which preclude roadside parking and limited areas for parking and manoeuvring.

In respect of local details, the post box, telephone box and fingerpost are all in reasonable condition. There is a small spring at the head of Grove Lane and a larger well close to the village fingerpost. The latter appears to be constructed above ground level from concrete kerbs laid horizontally to form the upper walls of the well. Vegetation has grown over the structure, but it is a relatively unsightly detail at the heart of the village.



Concrete kerbs line the well

Similarly, small but cumulative details can also detract from an area. For example galvanised metal flue pipes (which would be less visible painted black) particularly on low level buildings and prominent public elevations are features which cumulatively add to 'roof clutter' and visually diminish the historic streetscape.



Galvanised flue pipe
