

APPENDIX 14 – HERITAGE & CONSERVATION BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historical development of the area

Melbourne is an attractive, appealing and historic settlement, with a vibrant and varied social mix and a strong community spirit. With a population of 4845 in 2011, the parish is large enough to have plenty of life of its own, yet small enough to preserve a village atmosphere.

Bounded to the north by the Trent Valley, Melbourne sits in a stretch of picturesque countryside extending southwards into the parklands of Calke and Staunton Harold. Melbourne is also a gateway to the developing National Forest, whose newly planted woodlands have augmented the existing natural appeal of other local features, such as the disused limeworks at Ticknall and Calke and the 20th century reservoirs of Staunton Harold and Foremark. The Staunton Harold Reservoir was created in 1960-64 by damming the millstream, which gave Melbourne its name. The manorial mill at Melbourne, rebuilt c1632, still survives, and was powered by Melbourne Pool. The mill closed in 1968, so the pool's purpose is now purely ornamental.

Mediaeval Melbourne boasted a huge Norman church of St. Mary, a second church of St. Michael, a 14th century castle, a 13th century Royal hunting park, 13th century charters for a fair and market, and a secondary seat of the Bishop of Carlisle (now Melbourne Hall), Nevertheless, the village at that time was rural and agricultural. The agricultural roots of the settlement are still strongly in evidence near the Parish Church: the former farm buildings of Chantry House, the Dower House and Melbourne Hall remain key features of the street scene, despite conversion long ago to other uses. They include two mediaeval barns, one timber framed and the other of stone.

Source: Melbourne Parish Plan 2009.

Listed buildings

Melbourne and Kings Newton have about a fifth of the 711 listed buildings listed in the district (134 listed buildings detailed in Appendix 13)

Of these 24 are of Grade 1 status and are mainly in the grounds of Melbourne Hall. The Parish Church and the Barn at Melbourne Hall are also of the same status.

Sources: Melbourne Parish Plan 2009 and Listed building list on SDDC website.

Conservation areas

Melbourne's has three of South Derbyshire's 22 conservation areas (see Appendix 14 for maps of the Conservation areas)

Descriptive Conservation Area guides were produced by SDDC in the 2000s. These were followed by very detailed Conservation Area character statements adopted in 2011 for Melbourne and King's Newton. The Woodhouses character statement (2013) is still at the draft stage. These documents are essential reading when considering development applications in the Conservation Areas.

Source: SDDC website - Conservation area character appraisals consultations.

Scheduled monuments

Melbourne Castle, described as a fortified manor with earlier medieval manorial remains is a scheduled monument.

Source: Historic England website

Locally listed buildings

Melbourne Civic Society has approached SDDC about producing a Local Heritage List for the parish.

Source: English Heritage Guide to listing non designated historic assets.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

The gardens at Melbourne Hall are one of five sites in South Derbyshire in this category.

Landscape designation and character statements

Much of the open land around Melbourne can be described as “undulating mixed farming landscape” and belongs to Melbourne Parklands, a National Character Area which is described by Natural England as an area with “distinctive villages and estate farmsteads that should be carefully managed and protected”.

Melbourne Parklands has been further divided into several local landscape character types by DCC in its Landscape Character Assessment. The area that includes Melbourne comes under the description of Estate Farmlands. The Estate Farmlands landscape is described as “A broad, gently rolling lowland mixed farming landscape with occasional red brick villages, scattered estate farmsteads and country houses. Tree cover is well represented with small estate woodlands, dense watercourse trees, scattered hedgerow trees and localised parkland trees.”

It is the quality of the landscape that endears it to both locals and visitors, especially walkers, alike

Soils/Land quality

Much of the local market garden land threatened with development is quality agricultural land. The land either side of Jawbone Lane, for instance, is classified by DEFRA as Grade 2 land which is defined as “very good agricultural land.”

It is obvious by looking at the land to be developed on King’s Newton Main Street by Persimmon Homes that this was also prime growing land.

Sources:

Natural England: NCA Profile 70 Melbourne Parklands NE384 DCC: Landscape Character of Derbyshire (2014), DCC website.

Open Spaces

These include greens, common land areas, rights of way, recreation areas and allotments. Two areas have been registered as village green spaces (though accessing the register has proved problematical). No land is registered as common land as all of Melbourne Common was lost when the village was enclosed in 1791. There are 36 public paths in the parish which amount to more than 12 miles of walking. There is a large Recreation Ground on the edge of the village which will soon offer a wide range of sports through the

Sporting Partnership. Smaller open spaces include the Lothian Gardens, mainly for children, and several small play areas maintained by SDDC. There are two private allotment areas, one on the Hilly Field and the other off Blackwell Lane. Please see separate section on Open and Green Spaces.

Key issues

1. Historic assets play an important role in maintaining the distinctiveness and historic character of Melbourne parish.
2. Archaeological remains, both seen and unseen, have potential to be affected by new development e.g. the castle site.
3. The effects on historical and cultural heritage assets from inappropriate development and poor design.
4. Buildings at risk. At present we are fortunate that there are no Grade I or II* buildings at risk, which would make them eligible for inclusion on the Historic England “at risk” register. However, there are four buildings at risk which are either Grade II listed or in a conservation area, and these are on the buildings at risk register kept by the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust on its website. One of these, i.e. the rear wing of 60, High Street, has now been repaired and no longer needs to be on the register. The register needs updating, which may result in new buildings being added.
5. The need to ensure sustainable use and re-use of heritage assets.
6. Effects on the local landscape characteristics that inappropriate development could bring e.g. any developments which would lead to the coalescence of King’s Newton and Melbourne.
7. The protection of open spaces from development is vital; the designation of some areas of the village as Local Green Spaces (NPPF paragraphs 76 to 78) deserves strong consideration.
8. New developments should actively improve the rights of way network by adding routes to the Definitive Map and include the provision for dedicated cycling lanes.
9. Melbourne is probably the only settlement in the South Derbyshire district that can entertain visitors for a whole day visit. As the local population increases, it needs to be ready to accommodate increasing numbers of visitors with the demands that such an increase entails, such as “meeting and greeting”, car parking, a healthy retail offer and good WC facilities.
- 10 Melbourne’s inclusion of the Melbourne Estate, and proximity to the neighbouring large estates of Calke (NT), Severn Trent Water and Staunton Harold, offers opportunities for co-operative working which should be explored to the best advantage.
11. The National Planning Policy Framework places considerable emphasis on non-designated heritage assets and information on these should be actively collected and shared via the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record so that full consideration of them is enabled at early stages in the development control process.
12. Despite large areas of modern development on the north fringe of the town, the road network has so far retained its “legibility” and the historic roads still retain their function as main vehicular approaches to the centre. Any future new development should acknowledge the primacy of these routes.
13. Good quality building materials are important to the preservation of local distinctiveness. The most locally distinctive materials include Derbyshire gritstone rubble (once local but now only quarried in the north of the county) and Staffordshire

blue clay tiles which are hard to match with modern tiles because of the change from coal to gas firing.

14. The remnants of Melbourne's horticultural heyday in the 19th century are still evidenced in old garden fruit trees, abandoned orchards, and the few remaining market garden families that are still in business. They provide a link with the 21st century movement towards sustainability and local produce, represented locally by Melbourne Area Transition. Every effort should be made to preserve and foster traditional horticultural skills and know-how, and to maintain local produce as part of the future landscape and economy.

15. Inability to "absorb" much more new development without a severely detrimental effect on historic character.