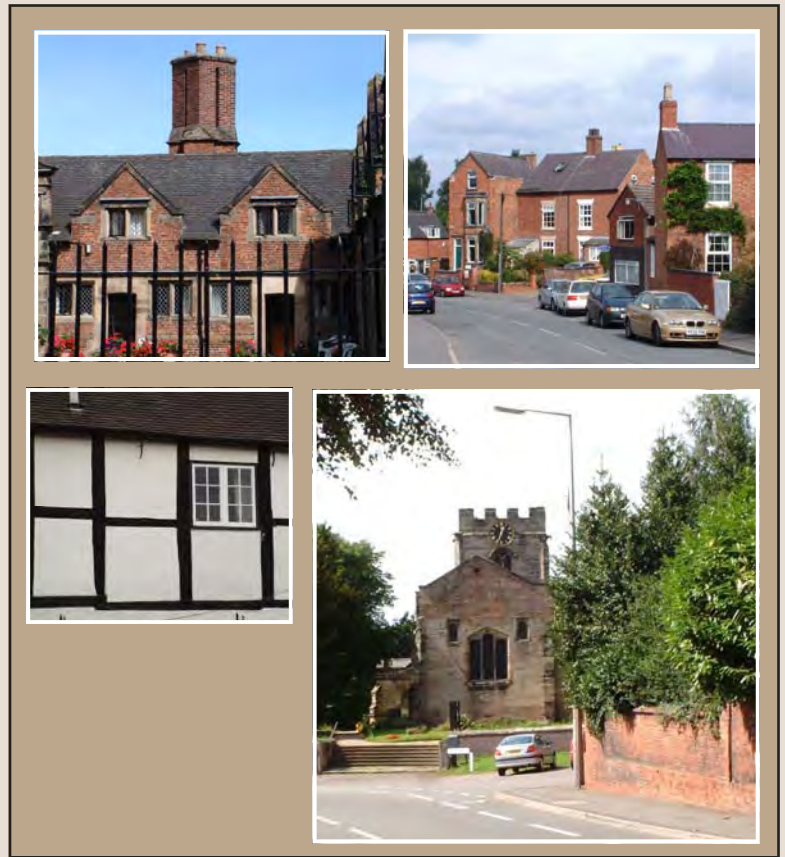


# Etwall *Conservation Area* Character Statement



**2011**

**SOUTH DERBYSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# Etwall *Conservation Area*

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# Etwall *Conservation Area*

## **Introduction**

This statement has been produced by Mel Morris Conservation for, and in association with, South Derbyshire District Council. It sets out the special historic and architectural interest that makes the character and appearance of Etwall worthy of protection. It also assesses the degree of damage to that special interest and thus opportunities for future enhancement. This document will be used by the Council when making professional judgements on the merits of development applications.

The Etwall Conservation Area was designated by South Derbyshire District Council on 10th April 1975.

## **Summary**

Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century Etwall was a small, nucleated village, with the principal roads leading to the church. It is now dominated by the only surviving through route, now the main road (Main Street). The heart of the village is probably Anglo Saxon in origin, its name originating in the Anglo Saxon forename Eata. It has buildings from almost every period of architecture from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century on, giving visual evidence of continual occupation over 400 years. However, its complex historic development is difficult to unravel. There are many unanswered questions about the village, its development and the reasons why it looks the way it does today.

To the west of the village lies Etwall Brook, which more or less defines the historic western perimeter of the settlement. Along the north-south route of the brook the land is low lying and the ground is made up of silty clay with sand and gravels. The clay would have provided resources for brick making although there is no direct evidence of brick making within the village. The current route of the Etwall by-pass runs roughly parallel with the route of the brook, where it skirts the village. The brook is now lined with trees, which screen John Port School and the village from the wider landscape.

The character of the village is dominated by strong contrasts between lush mature gardens, the verdant tree-covered setting and strong red brickwork. There is occasional punctuation by painted and rendered brickwork and timber-frame with rendered and painted panels and the sandstone of St. Helen's Church, the only stone building in the village since the demolition of the Hall. Many of the timber-framed buildings are not immediately visible from the Main Street or to passing visitors and are only evident on further exploration of the back yards and gardens.

The village sits on top of a hill, with the ground falling away to the west towards the Etwall Brook, which runs to the west of the former Etwall Hall (now replaced by the John Port School), and falling away to the north, immediately beyond Burnaston Lane. The centre of the village is at the junction of Main Street and Church Hill, where the road widens out. Here, the space may have been used at one time as a market place or village green. The

space is now dominated by the wide road. The generous width continues along the length of Main Street, and suggests a street of important status.

The proximity of Etwall to Derby has meant that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it has developed as a commuter village, with a substantial amount of housing to its east.

The distinctive characteristics of Etwall can be summarised as follows:

- a compact nucleated settlement
- a semi-wooded setting and large trees in mature gardens
- generous spaces forming wide streets, with wide pavements, enhancing the foreground setting of historic buildings
- a variety of architectural details and some historic buildings of distinguished architectural merit, some of them prominently placed, such as the Church
- a high proportion of genteel red brick Georgian houses
- continuous enclosure formed by tall, brick boundary walls and buildings sitting on the same alignment (see pictures below)
- lush planting within private gardens and the churchyard, with plants overhanging red brick boundary walls, softening the views



## Area of Archaeological Potential

An area of archaeological potential has been defined through an assessment of the known archaeological, documentary and plan-form evidence of the settlement. It has been carried out as part of the review of each conservation area in consultation with the County Archaeologist, the Development Control Archaeologist and the Sites and Monuments Record Officer at Derbyshire County Council.

An area of archaeological potential may encompass both statutory designations (including Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens) and other non-statutory site information from the Derbyshire Sites and Monuments Record. It shows the probable extent of settlement and industrial activity during the medieval and/or post-medieval periods.

Within the area of archaeological potential there may be reasonable expectation that archaeological evidence relating to the medieval and/or post medieval periods may survive below ground.

Over the centuries, as settlements grow and develop, their focus may shift. Consequently, an area of archaeological potential need not necessarily coincide with the boundary of the conservation area

## Conservation Area Analysis

### Historic Development

Etwall sits on top of a small hill on the edge of the Trent valley. It shares a similar topography with other settlements nearby, such as Sutton on the Hill and Burnaston, also built on ground that is higher than the surrounding flat land. These small hills were served by numerous small springs, which in turn drained into the local tributaries of the River Trent – here the Etwall Brook. The name Etwall comes from “Eata’s Well”, a Saxon name. It is possible that the location of these springs and wells has in part led to the pattern of development encountered in the village. The settlement pattern is nucleated with the focal point being the church. Its strategic importance and physical presence was much more pronounced when the road to Sutton originally ran past the western flank of the churchyard and ran north in the direction of the current graveyard. This route is still preserved in the track running between the churchyard and the garden wall to Etwall Hall, which now terminates at the graveyard.

The Church is dedicated to St. Helen. More “holy” wells were named for Helen than any other non-biblical female saint and the link with wells and springs is the most likely explanation for this dedication. The church contains some memorials to the Port family, including the tombs of Sir John Port who died in 1541 and his son Sir John Port who died in 1557 and the Cotton family, to whom the Etwall Hall estate passed in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The proximity of the church to the former Etwall Hall is a common medieval relationship, although the original Hall is only thought to date from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when it was first built by the Port family following the marriage of Sir John Port the Elder to Jane Fitzherbert in 1495. The Hall was built on the hillside overlooking the floodplain to the south and west and had a defensive position. Its landscaped grounds (now the site of John Port School) once dominated the western side of the village. The Hall was eventually demolished in 1955



and the School was built on the site. Very little of the site of Etwall Hall falls within the conservation area.



*Sir John Port Almshouses*

To the north of the church stands arguably Etwall’s best-known historic building, the Sir John Port Almshouses (pictured left). The current almshouses date from 1681 (with a later row of 1714), although the original almshouses built on this site were founded in 1557, in accordance with the will of Sir John Port. He also ordered that the churchyard be made level, possibly to create a more fitting and spacious foreground setting for his new almshouses.

The development of Etwall from around 1800 can be seen on a series of historic maps at the County Record Office: a Plan of the Parish of Etwall by John Sanders dated 1798, which accompanied the Enclosure Award (DRO Q-RI 43) and a later parish map of 1849 (DRO D798A PI 10-2), followed by the first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps of ca.1880 and ca.1900. The appearance of the village before 1800 has been largely determined by observing the physical evidence.

Main Street is not a linear street, as it bends this way and that, and in several places opens out at the entrance to semi-public courtyards behind the main street frontage, such as that between nos. 58 and 70. These “courtyards” may have evolved as a result of providing



*Main Street*

access to communal wells. The best survival is the wellhead near the churchyard wall, built from ashlar sandstone, a grade II listed building. None of the others are now readily identifiable or accessible.

The earliest houses surviving in the village are probably early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century in origin. These are timber-framed, built in a regional form known as small box-framing. Most, although not all, of these buildings are built with their gable ends facing the highway (e.g. Nos. 74 and Lawn Cottage on Main Street), a common trait of houses built in the pre-Georgian period.



*Blenheim House Hotel*

The similar orientation of houses such as Etwell Lawn and Nos. 22, 54 (Inglenook), and 58 (now part of Blenheim House Hotel) suggests that these houses may have an earlier core or that they were built on the footprint of an earlier house. The position of the timber-framed pair of cottages (Nos. 48-50 Main Street) and the similar alignment of the original part of Blenheim House Hotel suggests that the later brick buildings that front Main Street might

have been encroachments onto a much larger public space. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, houses such as no.78 and no.56 were built in a much more self-conscious symmetrical design, which faced the main street frontage.

This encroachment would certainly help to explain the reason for the splayed angles of the houses along this side of Main Street and may also explain why the three adjoining houses (Etwell Lawn, The Red House and The Limes) were physically attached on the same odd alignment. They may be a continuation of the back building line formed by Nos. 48-50 and 74 Main Street.

The western side of Main Street appears to have been largely undeveloped until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and was apparently almost entirely within the land owned by the Rectory. The relationship between the high status Rectory and the church can also be seen further down the Trent valley at Stanton-by-Bridge, which also has a fashionable Rectory residence and extensive landscape grounds. Some of the garden of The Old Rectory may have been sold off to construct The Gables and Piers Ridding, or their predecessors. A small parcel of land was provided for the Parish Room. Today the “infill” houses on the west side of Main Street are all 20<sup>th</sup> century (with the exception of the converted Parish Room) and have a neutral effect on the character of the conservation area.

The construction of the railway line in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the creation of the station would have had an impact on the economic development of the village, most particularly its

commercial heart and the development of Willington Road, which at the time of the 1798 map was no more than a few houses grouped around the bottom of Portland Street. By the time of the 1849 map, a number of buildings had appeared, including no.19, the Methodist Chapel and numbers 25-41 Willington Road. The railway had little physical impact on the village, as it ran through the parkland landscape of Etwall Hall.

The demolition of the Hall in 1955 and the construction of the school led to changes in the character of the centre of the village. The original gates and focal point to the entrance to the Hall sat immediately opposite the end of Willington Road. The loss of these and the creation of a large turning area and splayed entrance into the school grounds have had the most radical impact on the character of the village in recent years.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the east side of the village has been transformed with the construction of huge areas of housing, increasing the population from 1,065 in 1951 to 3,339 in 1981. These are not visible at first on entering the village.

## Approaches

The Etwall by-pass, constructed in 1992, runs in a cutting to the west of the 19<sup>th</sup> century railway embankment, which formerly skirted the village. From the by-pass, which in part sits within a tree-lined cutting, there are no views of the village or of its immediate setting and it is well hidden. The historic approaches into the village from the north and south offer largely the same immediate impressions of the village as they did before the construction of the by-pass.

The setting of the village and the conservation area is semi-wooded. The grounds and parkland of Etwall Hall were planted with distinctive Scots Pine plantations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century around the western periphery, which form dramatic silhouettes throughout the year.

From the roundabout on the A516, approaching Etwall from Derby, the road follows a rural landscape of arable fields lined by hedgerows until the ground rises up in a continuous gradual slope to the village. This northern approach best illustrates the topography, as the settlement can be seen perched on a hill with a backdrop of trees, which distinguishes the village from the surrounding countryside.

From the south a broad road sweeps into the village around a large bend, with views of the expanding John Port School to the north. This and the raised platform of the widened road now dominate the approach into the village. There were originally two roads into the village from the west (Sutton Lane and Hilton Road). Sutton Lane was closed with the construction of the by-pass and Hilton Road has been widened in recent years. Only Egginton Road to the south (and outside the conservation area) is still easily distinguishable as an historic route, with small cottages and long narrow plots running alongside the road, typical of encroachment.

The approach from the east originally took two routes – one along Burnaston Lane and the other along Willington Road. Willington Road now leads to a residential area, dominated by 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estates, and is no longer a main approach, being cut off by the Toyota Car Factory.



From Burnaston village, the road follows a winding route along wide hedge-lined lanes with deep drainage ditches and narrows as it enters the village at the junction with Main Street on Burnaston Lane. The only encroachment into this rural setting and approach is the modern housing development “Lawn Avenue”, which lies outside the conservation area and which runs roughly parallel with Main Street. Along this approach “The Mount” stands out as a local landmark.

## Views

Every conservation area has a multitude of changing views, both close-range and more expansive, too numerous to cover comprehensively in a document of this scope. This section describes a selection of general and more specific views that are likely to impress themselves most strongly in a visitor’s experience of the conservation area. Some of the viewpoints referred to are included in the conservation area map included in this document.

From within Etwell, there is a sense of elevation over the broad floodplain, although the village is inward looking and there are no distinct views out over the wider landscape. The high points in the conservation area, dominated by “The Mount” and a few houses on Sutton Lane, offer a handful of properties views across the landscape.

Equally, there are no views into the village from the wider landscape. From Sutton-on-the-Hill views towards Etwell are dominated by the trees within the former parkland of Etwell Hall and other mature trees that continue along the length of Main Street. The settlement is enshrouded with trees and the buildings are hardly visible.

Within the village, the gently undulating landform provides changing long and short views within Main Street, between the brow of the hill at Sutton Lane, St. Helen’s Church, and the buildings on the southern limit of the conservation area.

The road gently curves along Main Street. The two main bends and the rising ground provide two distinct areas with important views along the street – between no. 72 and the Church (looking in both directions) and between the brow of the hill at Sutton Lane and to the south as far as Blenheim House Hotel.

The lush planting within private gardens and the churchyard, often incorporating plants overhanging the red brick boundary walls, softens many views.



*View of Almshouses from Churchyard*



*View along Willington Road*

The other key views are:

- from Main Street looking at the churchyard, the large landmark yew tree and the church
- from the churchyard looking north towards the Almshouses
- from the Church and Church Hill looking south to The Spread Eagle
- from the east end of Willington Road, where it meets Oaklands Road, looking north west.

The main landmark in Etwall is St. Helen's Church, at the intersection of several historic through routes.

### Glimpsed views

As a result of the large number of cottages and outbuildings located behind Main Street, there are occasional glimpses of spaces between buildings and other cottages and outbuildings deep within the village framework. There is an interesting glimpse to the side of No. 42 of some traditional brick outbuildings at the rear. The same sort of glimpsed views can be had of No. 60 (behind No. 70) and The Nook (behind No. 50).



*Glimpsed view behind  
42a Main Street*

### Spaces

The conservation area is largely made up of a series of informal spaces running along Main Street and Church Hill, created by the wide road and pavements and the large, private, hidden gardens. Amongst these private spaces are the private courtyard of the Sir John Port Almshouses, the gardens to The Old Rectory and the gardens to Etwall Lawn.

The formal public spaces include the churchyard and the open spaces to the south of the churchyard and to the west of The Spread Eagle.

The first of these, the churchyard, is built upon a raised platform, a large part of which is retained by brick walls, thus increasing the church's presence overlooking the surrounding streets. The north side of the churchyard (formerly the graveyard) is now an open space simply planted with silver birch, which add an ethereal quality of light.



*The Sir John Port Almshouses*

The grassy area south of the churchyard may once have formed part of a village green, although its precise appearance and extent are not documented. It is now dominated by a large lime tree. This and the green "island", to the south of this space, with its clump of yew trees are the most important elements of this western perimeter of the conservation area, although slightly lost amidst the lay-by and road network at the entrance to John Port School.



*View from the Church towards The Spread Eagle Public House*

Early photographs show the space to the west of The Spread Eagle (now a car park) was once a major meeting place, a kind of village square and a focal point of activity fronted by commercial buildings. The shop, which sat on the corner defining the junction of the streets, no longer exists leaving the public house comparatively isolated. Recently constructed boundary walls have helped to re-introduce some structural definition to the space.

Some of the road junctions within the conservation area are spacious and enhance the semi-rural and leafy character of the village, particularly the junction of Sutton Lane and Main Street, which has a broad generous grass verge, and the space in front of the churchyard wall at Church Hill, which also has a broad grass verge to both sides of the street, the west side incorporating a mature copper beech. The corner of Willington Road, where it passes the garden of No.19, is also marked by a section of grass verge, another important fragment of its original rural setting.

## **Building Materials and Details**

Local geology and availability of building materials directly influenced the form and appearance of Etwall. The range of materials and the way in which they were used in local building details is intricately linked with local identity. Appendix I lists the special and typical traditional building details encountered within the conservation area, supplemented by photographs, which provide a palette of the local vernacular details.

### **Timber-framing and stone**

Lack of building stone within this part of the Trent valley has meant that up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the principal building materials for the smaller houses were timber, with panels of wattle-and-daub. The main exceptions to this timber-frame tradition were the large and ornate buildings built by important patrons, where no expense was spared on importing stone or fabricating costly bricks - the Almshouses and the Church.

As Etwall was in a low-lying area where there was no locally quarried building stone, imported stone was reserved for stone copings, dressings for windows and doors and thresholds, and was used throughout both the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The only building in the conservation area to be built entirely from stone is the church. This is distinctive pink and buff sandstone, possibly brought in from as far afield as Hollington in Staffordshire. Etwall Hall was remodelled in 1714 using stone, reputedly from Tutbury Castle.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century stone cills were being used in Etwall in combination with segmental brick arches (25-41 Willington Road) and stone wedge lintels (13-15 Willington Road, The



Hawk and Buckle and “Wychwood”, Sutton Lane). No. 58 Blenheim House Hotel has distinctive rusticated wedge lintels but is the only example of this practice in the village.

The well-head outside the church was built in pink sandstone, probably erected as a benevolent gesture by the owners of Etwall Hall. Stone was also used for thresholds, as it was hardwearing, and later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century blue clay bricks were used. Both practices can be seen at 25-41 Willington Road.



*Well-head near the Church*

## Brickwork

Brick is now the principal building material within the village, sometimes painted or rendered. It is likely that bricks would have been made in the village in temporary clamp kilns from time to time. The earliest known example of brickwork is the 17<sup>th</sup> century garden wall to the former Etwall Hall, which stands to the west of the churchyard. The Almshouses, rebuilt in 1681 were also largely constructed from the distinctive long, thin, hand-made bricks of their period. The external chimney stacks visible on 42 and 74 Main Street were built from narrow red bricks and hint at early 17<sup>th</sup> century origins. The gable end of No. 70 Main Street also incorporates fragments of an earlier, possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century, building with a chamfered and moulded brick plinth.



*Etwall Hall - late 17th century garden wall*

Fine quality facing brickwork can be found on a number of the best houses, such as the Flemish bond brickwork at The Red House and Wychwood, but in many cases there is evidence that the brickwork on the smaller cottages and outbuildings was painted with limewash. Traces of limewash can still be seen under the eaves on the coachhouse to The Old Rectory and No.72 Main Street, amongst others.

Brickwork is also occasionally embellished with other stone dressings, such as stone copings to the raised parapet gables (The Almshouses and 78 Main Street) and stone kneelers to match the decorative verge brickwork at 11 Willington Road.

During the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, stone cills were not normally used, relying on the simple weathering properties of the brickwork. Plain brick cills, with simple lead flashings added recently, can still be seen at The Old Rectory and the Old Parish Room, whilst 78 Main Street has no flashing. Each of these examples is used in combination with gauged brick lintels. 36-40 Main Street and 3, 9 and 11 Portland Street all share a segmental or



cambered arch and a plain unprotected brick cill.

78 Main Street shares the common characteristic of raised parapet gables with a number of other houses in the village. Here, the brick parapet gables are finished with stone copings in combination with stone “kneelers”. At The Old Rectory and 22 Main Street the parapets were finished with a plain brick coping. The earlier form of moulded stone coping, seen at The Almshouses, was generally reserved for the more illustrious buildings.

At The Red House the vernacular form of parapet gable was used in combination with a brick parapet wall running along the front of the building, which also incorporated a moulded stone cornice. A moulded stone cornice was similarly used at The Limes, in combination with a hipped roof.

Brickwork is used for structural details such as corbelled eaves, some plain with several courses of brick projecting one above the other or dentilled brickwork (e.g. the cottages on the east side of Portland Street), where the alternating header bricks project to create a decorative effect, or sawtoothed brickwork (42a and 86a Main Street and The Spread Eagle), where the bricks are laid diagonally.

Another decorative brick detail found in 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings is the use of a raised brick band on the gable end of brick houses. This follows the verge, to provide a drip moulding (e.g. No. 7, Horseshoe Cottage and Holly Farm, all on Willington Road), and is occasionally stepped, as can be found at The Old Rectory, or dentilled and corbelled as at 52 Main Street.

With the exception of The Almshouses, Etwall Lawn, The Mount and The Walnuts, chimney stacks are generally quite plain, built in brick with a few simple oversailing courses.

Brickwork is generally plainly treated, although it is often neatly executed, with extensive use of Flemish bond. The occasional exception to this can be seen in the combination of red Flemish bond brickwork with headers picked out in a subtle different colour, e.g. 19 Willington Road and Wychwood on Sutton Lane.

There are a handful of properties that incorporate a small amount of polychromy – the use of several different colours of brick to create more interesting surface decoration.

During the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century blue bricks started to be introduced into Etwall. The dark colour of these bricks (occasionally referred to as “engineering bricks”) is the result of firing clay with high iron content in a high temperature kiln. These blue bricks are dense and strong. In Etwall these were only used in small quantities, and tended to be where a harder and more durable brick was required. They can be found used as a plinth or damp proof course, steps and areas of paving, and as shaped copings to boundary walls. Blue clay bricks can be found, introduced here for their durability rather than decorative character, as oversailing courses on brick chimney stacks (for example, at 36-40 Main Street, Holly Farm and 70-72 Main Street).

Blue bricks were used decoratively on a handful of buildings in combination with other coloured bricks in polychromatic brickwork, e.g. 16 Portland Street, 30 Main Street and The Methodist Chapel, which has blue and buff banding, with buff bricks used for buttresses and to frame the pointed arched windows.

## Roof Materials

The earliest roofs in Etwall would have been either thatched or tiled. There are a number of examples where the form of the steeply pitched 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century tiled roofs survive, although there are no surviving examples of thatched roofs and in most cases the original red clay tiles have been replaced with Staffordshire blue clay tiles. These tiles were easily imported into the area after the Trent and Mersey canal opened in 1777. They are extremely durable and, from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century on, they tended to replace the local red clay tiles. Original handmade blue clay tiles also incorporate subtle fluctuations in colour, which are not found in the new Staffordshire blue clay tiles being manufactured today, so it is important to preserve the early examples of both red and blue tiles.

The majority of pitched roofs in Etwall are finished with a plain close verge, where the tiles or slate simply overlap the brickwork. Other types of verge have been discussed above.

A distinctive feature of Main Street is the succession of hipped roofs. At Blenheim House Hotel the hipped roofs of the single and two-storey additions are roofed in grey slate with both blue clay capped angle ridges and plain angle ridges, mortared onto the hips. Plain angle ridges and special “bonnet tiles” were used on the Staffordshire blue clay tiled hipped roofs of The Hawk and Buckle and the outbuilding to No. 22 (Pear Tree Farm), whilst the graduated slate roofs of the coach-house at The Old Rectory are finished with lead-clad rolls. All are traditional treatments, although lead-clad rolls and bonnet tiles are becoming more rare and frequently replaced with blue clay ridge tiles.

## Render and Stucco

Within Etwall render was a traditional finish for buildings, covering wattle-and-daub in combination with timber-framing. Examples of this can still be found within the village, although many of the panels have been replaced at a later date in brick. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century brick had become the main building material in Etwall although sometimes the brick-built properties were coated with render or limewash. During the Regency period, brick masonry was frequently hidden behind a coat of stucco scored to imitate ashlar. This was a deliberate choice as it was fashionable to create the impression of fine smooth stonework.

Etwall Lawn is a good example of the practice where the early 19<sup>th</sup> century fashion for stucco was combined with gothic building details such as small-paned pointed arched windows, in a style known as “cottage orné”. These characteristics are also shared with No. 42 Main Street. The chimney stacks at Etwall Lawn are a very unusual alliance of these two traditions, a highly decorative roofline accented by tall chimneys (the gothic influence), which are finished in stucco and “rusticated” in a classical style. By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the fashion for render had declined as the Victorians considered its use dishonest in a backlash against Georgian architecture. The late 19<sup>th</sup> century extensions at Etwall Lawn were notably finished in brickwork, rather than attempting to blend the distinctions between the two building phases.

## Boundary Treatments

There are a large variety of boundary treatments in Etwall, many of the gates and railings having survived the massive national depletion of railings during World War II, which were removed in the mistaken belief that they could be reprocessed into weapons. The only instance of a traditional stone boundary wall is the dwarf ashlar panel plinth wall in front of

Nos. 36-40 Main Street, which would have used imported sandstone from further afield in Derbyshire. The wall was originally finished with a set of railings, each one set straight into the stone with molten lead, but all now cut off.

Brick boundary walls are often capped with an ashlar sandstone coping or a purpose-made moulded clay coping (there were a number of permutations) and topped with a fine set of railings creating a very secure boundary to the grander residential properties, such as The Rectory and The Limes. Occasionally a hedge has been added as well – as at 48 and 70 Main Street. Where there are boundary walls, generally these are tall and prevent views into private gardens, sometimes defining the edge to large sections of street frontage, particularly along Main Street, where the enclosure has been often maintained with a close-boarded gate.

## **Description of Principal Streets**

### **Church Hill**

Church Hill is a wide street, which narrows where it reaches the allotment garden wall to the almshouses and eventually continues north as a public footpath. The Ordnance Survey plan of 1900 shows how Church Hill was balanced with a street on the west side of the churchyard, now a back lane to the graveyard. The width of Church Hill, which partly established its historic importance, is now masked by extensive car parking. A large copper beech stands on the grass verge outside the churchyard walls. To the south of the church a large yew tree overlooks Main Street.

The main building in this area is the courtyard of late 17<sup>th</sup> century almshouses, the Sir John Port Almshouses articulated by large dormer windows with chamfered stone surrounds and diamond section chimneys. The whole front is enlivened by the fantastic Robert Bakewell decorative wrought-iron gates, which were formerly situated near the Hall.

The large houses - Piers Ridding, The Old Rectory and The Gables - each stand in their own garden setting, enhancing the individuality of each house, although none are clearly visible from public vantage points. The modern houses to the rear of these have a neutral effect on the character of the conservation area.

### **Main Street**

The character of the conservation area is dominated by Main Street. Along the north section of Main Street, beyond the church, the buildings are generally well preserved, many are listed, and there is a strong sense of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century former affluence of the surroundings. Here, individual and distinctive houses are spread out, interspersed with generous gardens and tall brick boundary walls, which hide the views of mature private gardens behind them. Within the garden of Etwell Lawn, two huge beech trees stand just within the boundary wall and create a bold canopy along Main Street.

The continuous brick walled enclosure is reinforced by close-boarded gates and only broken by entrance passages between buildings or the occasional variation in boundary treatment replacing a wall with a low plinth, stone coping and traditional railings or privet hedge. The tall brick boundary wall encircling The Old Rectory is a typical example of this strong pattern of enclosure. This tight framework is mirrored by the continuous brick wall of The Hawk and Buckle and its outbuildings alongside.

Trees are important to the character of the conservation area, particularly along Main Street where the tallest specimens form a dynamic, striking and lush contrast with the open spaces and strong red brickwork. Within the former garden of the Old Rectory stand tall and mature native deciduous trees and to the north of the Old Parish Room is a clump of yew, perhaps planted as a visual reminder of its spiritual link with the church. All of these trees now help to break up this side of Main Street, adding interest. Many now fall within the gardens of 20<sup>th</sup> century houses.

There are a large number of buildings located at the rear of Main Street, behind the main frontages. Some of these started life as outbuildings and parts of former farms, such as Blenheim Mews, a 20<sup>th</sup> century development within a former farmyard of Blenheim Farm, but some were also dwellings. This tangle of buildings is difficult to interpret and unravel.

The entrance to Sutton Lane is framed by two houses; The Walnuts, a late 19<sup>th</sup> century house, which is particularly prominent in approaches from the south, and Wychwood, a slightly less prominent villa of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both houses were probably positioned to make the most of a south-facing aspect, rather than adhere to a particular building line. The open triangular space created between these two houses (now the splayed junction) is indicated on the map of 1798, which predates the creation of this part of Sutton Lane, and suggests that the space may have had a semi-public role, possibly as the location of a communal well. This space was formalised when this section of Sutton Lane was driven through after 1798. The south-facing aspect of Wychwood, hidden behind a tall brick boundary wall on Main Street, once overlooked its large south-facing garden but this relationship is now obscured by the later housing – Applegarth and No. 55.

In other parts of Main Street, there are instances where is a strong relationship between the houses and either their garden setting or a public open space; the opening between Blenheim House Restaurant and 70 Main Street (where the buildings open out to embrace the entrance), the unusual alignment of the conjoined houses The Limes, The Red House and Etwall Lawn (which lead the eye deep into the site) and the position of The Mount, which straddles both Main Street and Burnaston Lane.

The scale of the buildings running along Main Street varies with occasional three storey houses amongst two-storey buildings and outbuildings, creating picturesque groupings such as that between No. 44, The Hawk and Buckle and its outbuildings, where three hipped tiled roofs in succession climb up Main Street, with each eaves level stepping up the street.



*Succession of stepped hipped roofs on Main Street*





The south section of Main Street, from the church to No. 22 is built-up with a more regimented urban character. Portland Street also has an urban character. It is dominated by the painted brickwork of buildings lining the street and gardens are absent from the front aspect.

The street opens out between Nos. 30 and 42 Main Street, with a wide tapering pavement. The building line continues beyond Willington Road in the

alignment of The Spread Eagle, but is then truncated with the presence of the row of buildings incorporating Halo Hair Design and the former farm buildings to 22 Main Street, which effectively closes the southern side of the space.

The rendered building opposite the former entrance to Etwell Hall (42-42a Main Street), with its arresting shaped gables, is an odd structure. The cast-iron casement windows with their gothic glazing suggest an early 19<sup>th</sup> century origin, with earlier sash windows at the sides. The building has a deep plan with suggestions of paired wings and a brick chimney stack on a side wall, indicating that it may have early origins. The render is recent and covered earlier limewashed brickwork, perhaps added to unify its appearance. The whole structure is a bit of a mystery although it is quite imposing in the streetscene.

The gothic glazing bars of No. 42 are also reminiscent of No. 80 Main Street (Lawn Cottage). The gable-end of this house was also “re-faced” in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, although who or what inspired this move to the “cottage orné” architecture is not clear. It is often associated with estate ownership and it is possible that one of the local landowning estates (perhaps the Mosleys of Burnaston) was adapting buildings in the village, albeit in a rather half-hearted way.

Next to 42 Main Street are a couple of early 18<sup>th</sup> century brick cottages (nos. 38-40 Main Street). These were originally built in Flemish bond brickwork, with cambered arches and raised brick bands. They also had a later ashlar plinth panel wall, topped with railings, which they shared with no. 36. These are particularly high quality details for workers’ cottages. This may reflect an estate interest in the properties or simply the fact that they were built opposite the main entrance to the hall and were therefore treated a little more generously.

## Willington Road

The buildings lining the northern side of Willington Road appear to date from after 1800 (ref. 1798 map). In fact, this is the main area of the village to develop in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Several of these buildings are built with their gable-end or gable-front facing the road. This includes both modern and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings (9, 11, 19, Ivy Court and The Dental Surgery). The narrow form of development is an unusual characteristic of this part of the village.

The character of this part of Willington Road has its own strong identity, dominated by red brick buildings, which follow the curve of the street as the vista unfolds, the changing height from two to three storey gables creates plenty of movement in the eaves and roofline.

The unusual dog-leg in Willington Road, clearly shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map, seems to have come about as a result of former open field or common land being taken into private ownership before Parliamentary enclosure (the triangular-shaped field now contained by Oaklands Road and Willington Road was described in 1798 as Great Intake). The original dog-leg adjacent to the Methodist Church now has the impression of being a side street to Oaklands Road.

The terrace of houses nos.25-41 (built circa 1838) and the adjacent Methodist Chapel of 1883 now stand out as a historic remnant amidst a sea of modern housing, which surrounds them to the south and east. Although the gardens and tall hedges to no. 20 opposite are outside the conservation area, they form a useful foil to the terrace, and help to preserve some of its historic integrity.

## Loss and Damage

The concept of conservation areas was introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967, as an acknowledgement of the need to conserve the “cherished local scene” in the face of accelerated change following the Second World War. It was not intended that development should be prevented, but rather that settlements should develop over time in a way that reflects and strengthens their special character. At Etwall, some of the undesirable changes described below predate the designation of the conservation area in 1975. The designation was put in place as a safeguard against further harmful development, so far as this could be achieved by the need for planning permission.

In defining the character of the conservation area we can also identify instances where the village has suffered alterations or losses that either individually or cumulatively have diluted this character. It is hoped that identifying these will help householders, designers and the planning authority to reverse some of the damaging alterations and to avoid the same mistakes in the future.

## Boundary Treatments

Along the east side of Main Street several properties were provided with a front garden. Historically, these often had a low stone or brick plinth wall, surmounted by railings, fixed into the coping with lead. There has been widespread loss of railings, e.g. 78 Main Street and Nos. 36-40 Main Street. In some cases new railings have been installed, as at 72 Main Street.

No 41 Willington Road is the only property in the terrace (25-41) to have lost its original boundary treatment – a red brick wall with shaped blue clay bricks laid on edge. It has been replaced with an artificial stone wall, out-of-keeping with the character of the conservation area.

Along the length of Main Street there is a fluctuating change of level between the pavements and the road. This is most marked in front of no.22 Main Street and between nos. 56 and 78 Main Street. This change in level may be historic and is marked by a broad strip of stone pebbles set in concrete. This is an odd finish, which has no vernacular

precedent in Etwall, but was probably adopted to provide a more attractive finish than plain concrete. This has deteriorated in places and has been repaired with concrete. The original finish was probably at one time a grass verge, which defines the road edge at Church Hill, and was also used to separate two levels in nearby Repton. It would be desirable to replace this surface treatment in keeping with the semi-rural character of the village. However, a grass verge would be difficult to attain as the present day highway drainage requirements would demand a kerbed edge to the road and a grass strip may be too difficult to maintain.

Etwall is noticeably dominated by tarmac and traffic controls; by wide roads with white-lined parking zones, wide tarmac pavements, large road junctions and double rows of concrete kerbs, which line the road and separate the pavement from the higher level of the road. The construction of the Etwall bypass has removed much through traffic from the village which may enable a more sympathetic handling of highway works in the future.

## **Loss of Building Details**

Throughout the village there has been a loss of building details. Overall, the character of Etwall remains strong but this has had a negative impact. Some of the more damaging losses are:

- replacement of traditional roofing materials with concrete roof tiles – 5 Church Hill, 25-41 Willington Road
- replacement of traditional window joinery with modern forms (including uPVC and stained hardwood) – 30 Main Street (Etwall Take-away), 36-40 Main Street, 44 Main Street and 70 Main Street, 3-11 Portland Street, 13-15 Willington Road and 25-41 Willington Road. This has affected the character and rhythm of the pairs of cottages and terraces, particularly the brickmakers' cottages 25-41, which no longer have an identifiable original window pattern, although when built as a terrace they would have been unified by one pattern.

## **Setting**

Sutton Lane was closed with the construction of the Etwall by-pass. The road into Etwall from Willington has also been terminated with the development of the Toyota site at Burnaston. The closure of these local routes has meant that the village is now seen primarily from the main route through the village along Main Street and its strategic importance and historic links with local villages is less obvious today. As a result, the wider setting and historic context of the conservation area is more difficult to appreciate.

## **New Development**

There has been little new development that can be said to damage the character of the conservation area. Whilst there are several hundred houses immediately to the east of Etwall conservation area, these are largely hidden from Main Street and the main views within the conservation area.

At the Willington Road end of the conservation area the boundary of the conservation area has been drawn tightly along the northern pavement edge between nos. 9 and 41 and deliberately excludes modern properties on the south side of the street (nos.10-14). Along this street modern properties do take over the character of the village, and the historic

components are slightly lost amidst later development. Oaklands Road now appears to be a natural continuation of Willington Road and the unusual form of the original dog-leg in the road has been lost.

Whilst the conservation area boundary has been drawn tightly to exclude properties on the northern edge of the village, the cluster of late 20<sup>th</sup> century houses seen on the Derby approach road is built on raised land and still has an impact on the setting and northern approach into the conservation area. Likewise, John Port School also has an impact on the historic setting of the conservation area in the southern approach, where it continues to expand across the former parkland.

## **Loss of Buildings**

Portland Street was once lined on both sides by buildings. The western side of the street is now dominated by the rear car park to The Spread Eagle, which is large enough to contain coaches. The loss of buildings and lack of enclosure along this length of the street is a significant loss to the character of the conservation area. The edge of the street is now marked by a line of concrete bollards, a lamppost and a white-painted line denoting the highway. The redevelopment of the “gapsite” or a new boundary wall would be desirable. Planning permission has recently been granted for such a development







The three cottages Nos. 36-40 Main Street were formerly a longer row, the south end now gone, making room for Etwell News “R” Us, which is set behind the main frontage. The brick gable to no. 36 was at the same time re-faced in pinky-brown bricks. The gap formed by the removal of these two properties creates a small “gapsite” in the street frontage, although the main damage to the conservation area is the newsagents building, which has a flat roof, large signs and horizontal proportions. This is the main building within the conservation area that is out of place.

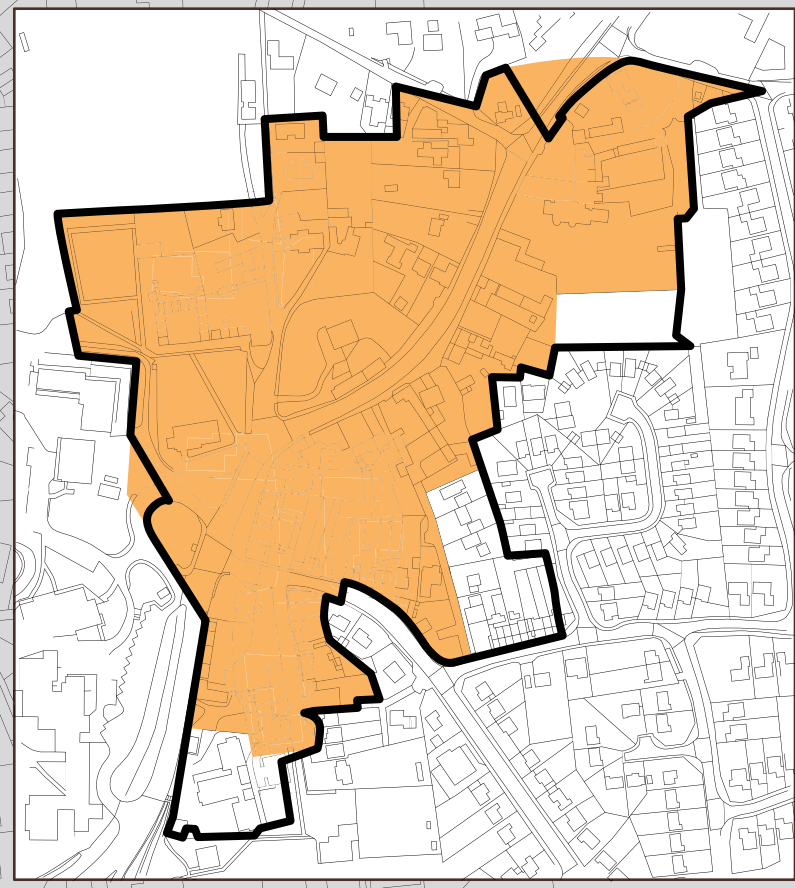
Although outside the conservation area boundary, the site of Etwell Hall was a major element of the historic settlement and a principal focal point in the street pattern. The main 20<sup>th</sup> century change to the character of the village has been the loss of Etwell Hall and the development of the school site.



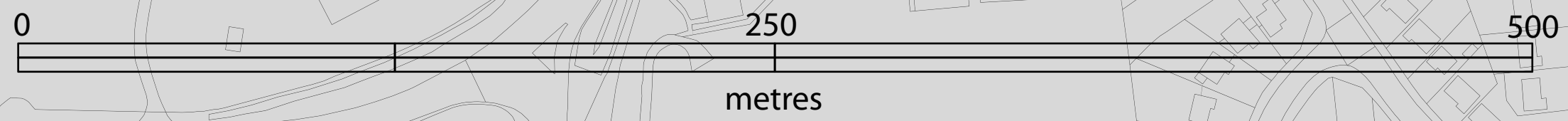
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-  Conservation Area boundary
-  Open spaces
-  Principal views
-  Listed buildings
-  Other buildings which contribute positively to the special architectural or historic character
-  Areas of high archaeological potential



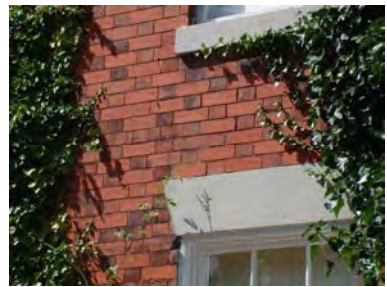
**Etwall Conservation Area**  
Designated : 10th April 1975



# Appendix

## Distinctive Architectural Details

### ETWALL



## Checklist of details

The details in this appendix illustrate those building elements that help to define Etwall's particular character. These may be common everyday vernacular details found repeatedly throughout the conservation area or may be more exceptional, consciously designed features.

This appendix may prove useful in providing inspiration for new development, whether traditional or contemporary, if used with care. Paradoxically, the outstanding architectural details of a conservation area may not be the ones that are most typical of the area. They often belong to the important key buildings of a village and may look out of place on smaller buildings in subordinate locations. The majority of buildings in the conservation areas of South Derbyshire are plainly and simply detailed.

### Gates and railings

- Decorative scrolled wrought-iron gates (by Robert Bakewell of Derby)
- Square section wrought-iron spike-headed railings and cast-iron urn finials
- Cast-iron gateposts (made by Bayliss Ltd.), with baluster finials
- Cast-iron gates with Gothic ogee cresting and crocket flourishes
- Slender round-section steel railings with alternating hoops and teardrops
- Square-section railings with fleur-de-lys finials
- Close-boarded timber gates with strap hinges and wicket gate

### Boundary walls and copings

- Red brick walls with ½ round and faceted dressed ashlar sandstone copings
- Purpose-made red or blue clay copings in triangular and elliptical profile
- Shaped blue brick copings laid on edge
- Dwarf ashlar panel plinth wall

### Doors and doorcases

- Decorative door canopies with scrolled brackets
- Close-boarded doors with decorative strap hinges and Gothic arched panels
- 6-panel doors with bead mouldings
- 6-panel doors with raised and fielded panels and bolection mouldings
- Timber-pilastered doorcase with cornice and fanlight
- 4-panel doors with bolection mouldings

### Roofs

- Stepped, dentilled or plain corbelled verges
- Plain close verges
- Raised coped brick gables with red clay copings, red brick on edge or moulded Stone copings
- Hipped tiled and slate roofs
- Decorative tiles (blue beaver-tail & alternate bands of red and blue)

### Walls

- Painted or limewashed brickwork
- Brick banding in raised red brick and flush blue bricks and dentilled bands
- Flemish bond brickwork
- Corbelled and dentilled eaves
- Projecting eaves band and moulded brick eaves
- Box-frame timber framing
- Smooth render and stucco

Continued overleaf

### Windows

- Timber casements with horizontal glazing bars and deeply chamfered frame
- Cast-iron and timber gothic casement windows
- Gothic timber sashes
- Vertically-sliding multi-paned sashes
- Horizontally-sliding multi-paned sashes
- Timber multi-paned shop window, narrow pilastered surround and cornice

### Lintels and cills

- Cambered brick arch and segmental brick lintels
- Pointed arched brick lintels
- Gauged brick lintels with stone keystones
- Plain stone wedge lintels and rusticated stone wedge lintels
- Stone cills and no cills

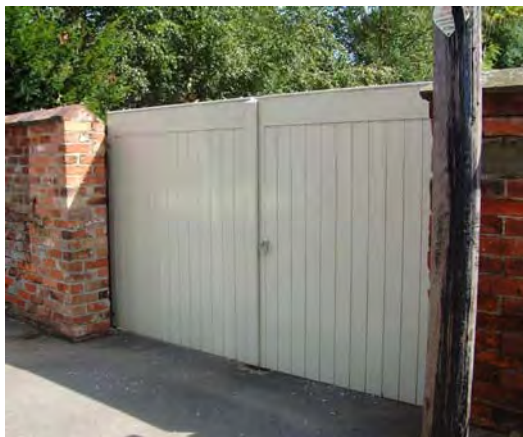
### Paths, paving and steps

- Red and blue brick paving
- Stone thresholds and steps



# BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

## Gates and railings



The use of ornamental cast and wrought iron was limited to the best houses until the mid 19th century. The cast iron urn finials and simple railings (below) are at the almshouses. Close-boarded timber gates, however (above) are a common feature within Etwall and provided privacy and security.



The earliest example of the use of decorative wrought iron is the Robert Bakewell gates (above) outside the Almshouses. These are some of the best examples of decorative wrought iron to be found in any village setting, made by a master of the craft and were moved here from the Hall. Cast iron started to be used during the early stages of the industrial revolution. The gates at The Old Rectory (below) illustrate the early use of cast iron and show how cast iron could be fabricated to create complex panels (here they incorporate a Gothic design of repeated cusped quatrefoils, ogee cresting and crocket flourishes).







Etwell once had many frontages embellished with a fine set of railings. These were predominantly slender, square-section, wrought-iron railings, such as those in front of The Limes (above) and The Old Rectory (below left ). Each vertical bar was fixed into a horizontal rail which was in turn fixed to a moulded brick or ashlar stone coping. The railings at The Limes - above - replaced an earlier set, which were fixed directly into the coping with molten lead.



The slender replacement railings in front of 70-72 Main Street (above) were originally of the late 19th century, constructed from hooped steel with miniature cast finials.



In some instances wrought iron railings were combined with cast iron finials, which could be ordered by the local blacksmith from a catalogue. Examples may be seen at the Almshouses and a small remnant at Nos. 38-40 Main Street (left), which incorporates cast iron fleur-de-lys.



# BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

## Walls and copings

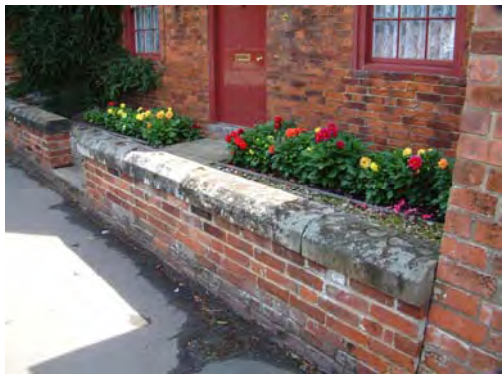


The majority of the walls within Etwall are built from brick. For economy, boundary walls are primarily faced with “stretchers”, with the occasional “header” added to tie the inner and outer walls together. Walls are occasionally topped with a set of railings. The only exception to brick walls is the ashlar panel wall in front of 36-40 Main Street (bottom right).

Red brick wall to the churchyard (above) with copings of shaped “dressed” stone, tooled by a stonemason to a fine surface finish (see also middle right).



Red brick wall with triangular blue clay coping (Willington Road - below). The capping to the brick gatepiers has been replaced in concrete.







A variety of copings co-exist. Red clay half-round copings (above and middle right) at The Old Rectory.



Triangular red clay copings at The Gables, Church Hill (bottom right) and triangular blue clay copings at the graveyard adjacent to the Almshouses (top right).



Stone copings (below) and shaped blue brick (bottom).





# DOORS

Etwell has a number of fine original 19th century panelled doors and doorcases (Blenheim House Hotel and 72 Main Street - right).

The 4-panel door has bolection mouldings in combination with raised, fielded panels.



Decorative door canopy with scrolled brackets (left - 78 Main Street). The 6-panel door has bead mouldings.

Simple vertically boarded doors (below), embellished with a pointed Gothic arch, either in the boards or brickwork



Along Main Street, simple classical doorcases can be found, incorporating a moulded cornice, frieze rail and narrow pilasters (above and below).



## ROOF TYPES AND DETAILS



Hipped roofs are a distinctive feature of Main Street in Etwall. Hipped roofs in Staffordshire blue clay tiles incorporate special clay “bonnet” hip tiles. Graduated Burlington slate, used at the Old Rectory stableblock (above and right), has hips cloaked with lead flashings covering timber rolls. Other

Welsh slate roofs have blue clay capped angle ridges and plain angle ridges.



Hipped roofs (left and below) in tile and slate; Main Street, Etwall



Left - the use of decorative timber bargeboards was commonplace in the 19th century for “picturesque” buildings, such as the former parish room (left), but is rare in Etwall.





Etwall has a number of raised coped gables, dating from the late 17th century (Almshouses - left), the late 18th and early 19th century (middle and bottom left) and one from the mid 19th century (below).

These were generally used on the higher status buildings. These have a variety of copings, including moulded ashlar stone, brick laid on edge and moulded red clay copings.



Decorative tiles appear in the mid 19th century: coloured tiles (above) - horizontal bands of red and blue clay tiles (dated 1896), patterned tiles (below) - horizontal bands of Staffordshire blue plain and "beaver-tail" tiles in the mid to late 19th century.





## WALLS - Brickwork details



The use of stone as decorative kneelers to match the moulded brick verge, at 11 Wellington Road (above), is a one-off in Etwell.

The most common roof type used for the majority of small cottages is the pitched roof with a plain close verge (below).



Pitched roofs with decorative verge details (right and below) -

- a raised brick band on the gable end of brick houses follows the verge, to provide a drip moulding (right and below):
- a corbelled and stepped verge (middle right)
- plain corbelled verge (bottom)





Corbelled eaves (right and below):

A plain corbelled eaves (right) with several courses of brick projecting, one above the other. The example at Blenheim House Hotel (below) has a convex moulded brick band as well, which has a softer profile.



Painted brickwork (above) - a practice which originated in limewashing.

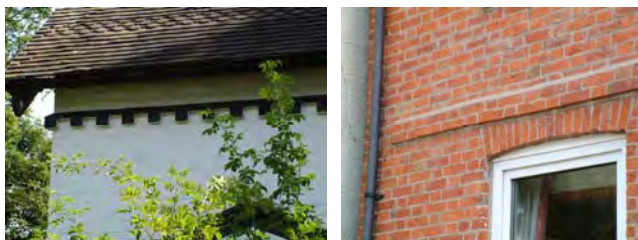


Left - corbelled and dentilled brickwork at the eaves, where the alternating header bricks project to create a decorative effect. The examples (left) were both probably originally painted in limewash. Modern emulsion has replaced limewash (left top). Only small traces of ochre-coloured limewash can be seen at the eaves (left bottom).



Below - 17th century brickwork from garden wall to Etwall Hall, hand-made in a local clamp kiln.

Above - mid 19th century Flemish bond brickwork.



Simple decorative bands of brickwork - dentilled (above left) from the late 19th century, and two courses of plain bricks in a raised band (above right) from the mid-late 18th century.



Below - small elements of buff and blue polychromatic brickwork introduced in the late 19th century.

Late 19th century, regular, smooth-faced brickwork with date stamp (above).





## WALLS - Timber frame and render



Up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the principal building materials for the smaller houses were timber, with panels of wattle-and-daub. The type of timber-frame used in Etwell is known as small box-framing - a combination of posts and short horizontal rails.

Within Etwell, render was a traditional finish for buildings, covering wattle-and-daub in combination with timber-framing (above).



It can also occasionally be found used to cover brick. During the Regency period, brick masonry was frequently hidden behind a coat of stucco (above), sometimes scored to imitate ashlar and sometimes left plain. This was a deliberate choice as it was fashionable to create the impression of fine smooth stonework.



## WINDOWS



Within Etwall the main historic window types were vertically sliding sashes (above, below and bottom right) and timber casement windows, sometimes set within chamfered timber frames (right) or Gothic style metal windows (third from top) . There were also, occasionally, horizontally-sliding sashes, also known as Yorkshire sashes (top right).





There are still a few original shopfronts in Etwell. Glazed with small panes of glass, narrow pilasters framing the glazed openings, with a narrow fascia, simple classical details and a heavily moulded cornice are all features typical of the first half of the 19th century.



## LINTELS AND CILLS



**Brick lintels** - in Etwall, brick lintels incorporate the full range of techniques available to the bricklayer, from the cambered arch (above left) and the pointed arched lintel (above right) to the segmental arch (below left), and the gauged lintel (below right).



Above - segmental brick arch

### **Stone lintels and cills**

No. 58 Blenheim House Hotel (right) has distinctive rusticated wedge lintels but is the only example of this practice in the village. The use of a stone cill was limited to some of the grander houses and those built in the mid 19th century.







### Stone lintels

Left - plain wedge lintels



### Cills

Most of the 18th century houses did not have stone cills, although by the early 19th century the larger properties generally have stone cills (bottom). The smaller cottages were generally built without proper cills and sometimes have simple lead flashings added more recently, but equally there are many large grand houses of the 18th century without cills, such as the example at 78 Main Street (below).



## **PATHS, PAVING AND STEPS**



Blue clay engineering bricks, fired to a high temperature, are durable materials for paving, and were usually laid in even courses (above and left). They sometimes incorporate subtle shades of red clay. The example at 25-41 Willington Road (above) incorporates a stamped grid pattern to provide better grip. The blue bricks at the rear of 70 Main Street (left top) have raised diamond shapes for the same reason.



Stone was commonly used for both steps and thresholds (below right), with the occasional variation with blue clay bricks from the later 19th century (below left).

