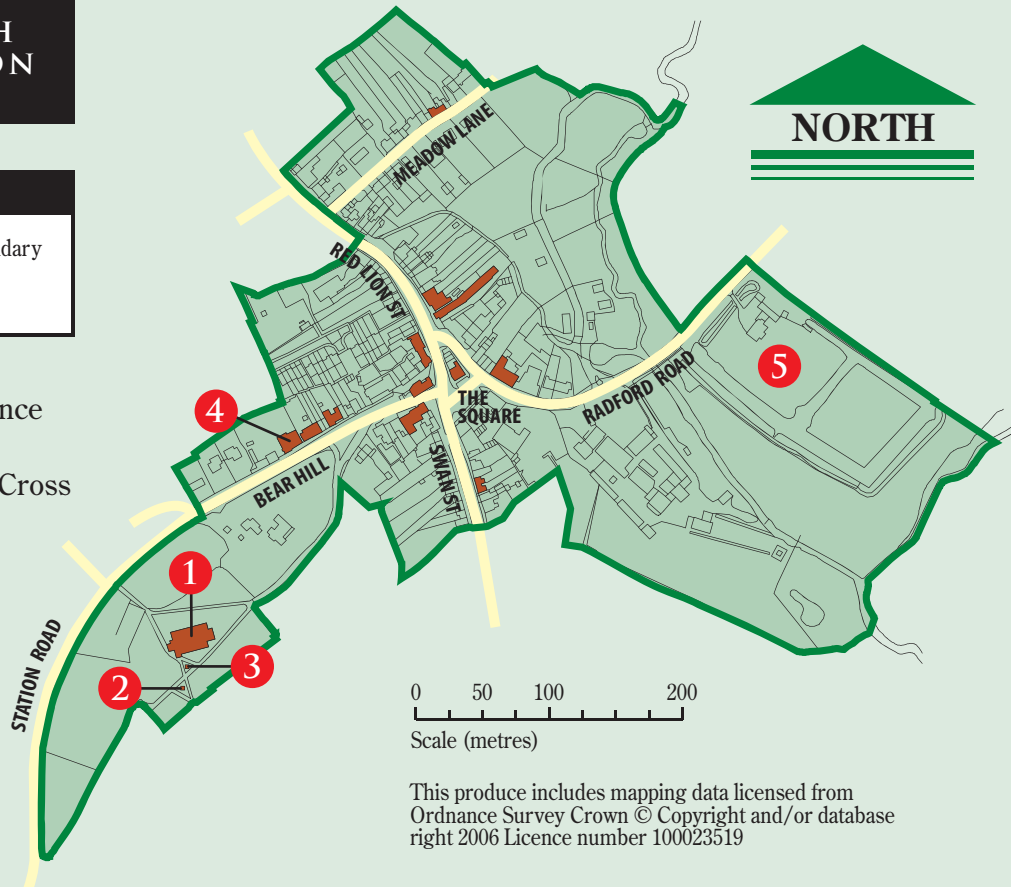


# ALVECHURCH CONSERVATION AREA

## KEY

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Listed Building

- 1** Church of St. Laurence
- 2** Windsor Memorial Cross
- 3** Medieval Cross
- 4** The Old House, 32 Bear Hill
- 5** Site of Bishop's Palace at the Moat House (Ancient Monument)



## GRANTS

The Council can make grants available for the repairs of buildings of historic importance. Subject to funding, eligible work would include conservation repairs to the external structure, including the reinstatement of authentic architectural details. The Council also has provision to make grants available for conservation area enhancement schemes.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Advice can be obtained from the Planning and Environmental Services Department of Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council.

**Conservation Officer** - Tel: (01527) 881326 Conservation Area consent, planning, listed building matters and historic building grants.

**Tree Officers** - Tel: (01527) 881321/1320 Tree matters including tree protection, consent and tree preservation orders.

**Archaeology Officer** - Tel: (01905) 855454 Archaeology protection/recording.

## REFERENCES AND PUBLICATIONS

Bromsgrove District Local Plan

Worcestershire Structure Plan 1966 - 2011

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy 2001 - 2021

The Emerging Bromsgrove District Local Development Framework

Planning Policy Guidance No 15 - Planning and the Historic Environment

Planning Policy Guidance No 16 - Planning and Archaeology

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Guide to the Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings. BS 1793



**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
HEAD OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES  
THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE B60 1AA

# ALVECHURCH CONSERVATION AREA

DESIGNATED  
NOVEMBER 1968



**BROMSGROVE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT



*'Parish Church of St. Laurence' and 'The Old House', Bear Hill*

Alvechurch is notable for being a planned medieval market settlement which has retained much of its form. The village is rural in character although it lies barely two and a half miles from the edge of the West Midlands Conurbation in the north and about the same distance from Redditch in the south. It is thought to have originated in 8th Century when it was called Aelfgithcirce and based around a medieval church which existed on the site of the Church of St. Laurence. Through the years the name was modified in various stages to be Alvechurchie in the time of the Domesday survey, to the present day Alvechurch.

Established through a grant by the Saxon King Offa, King of the Mercians, Alvechurch changed ownership several times before being established as an important seat for the Bishops of Worcester. The site of the Palace with the fish ponds can still be seen. Because of this ecclesiastical relationship, Alvechurch became important and prosperous at a time when Birmingham did not exist. However, growth of the village was restricted by the Black Death which visited several times during the 14th Century.

The architectural character of the village centre can be attributed in part to the sub soil or clay and marl and plentiful supplies of oak. Timber framing remained the most suitable method of construction to withstand the shrinkage and expansion which took place in periods of drought and excessive rainfall. As a result, timber framed buildings were still being built at a time when new construction methods were becoming fashionable. The Square includes a number of such buildings in prominent positions such as those either side of Bear Hill. The oldest buildings in the village are 24, 26 and 28 Bear Hill which were built around the 15th Century, although partly rebuilt in the 19th and 20th Centuries. One house which remains in a more original state is The Old House, another timber framed building on Bear Hill dating from the early 17th Century.

The combination of timber framed buildings alongside Georgian brick buildings in the historic village centre, gives Alvechurch its particular style and apparent small size. This has been retained latterly as modern housing developments are not obviously visible from this area. Recognition of this special character led to the designation of the Alvechurch Conservation Area in 1968, one of the first two to be designated in the Bromsgrove District.



*'Red Lion Street and Bear Hill'*

## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA



Conservation areas are designated by the District Council as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which the Council considers desirable to preserve or enhance.

Designation gives additional planning controls, but the success of measures to protect and enhance an area depends on there being community support, particularly from property occupiers. It is the special quality and interest of the area, rather than the merit of individual buildings that is the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas.

It may be the group value of listed buildings, their relationship to each other, property boundaries, archaeology, spaces and landscape between the buildings and their materials and craftsmanship that are important.

The interest often extends beyond the physical character since the social and economic history is usually instrumental in how the area still appears today.

## COUNCIL CONSERVATION AREA RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council has other duties in respect of conservation areas. These include the preparation of character appraisals, which say what is historically and architecturally special about the area and what detracts from it.

These are necessary before proceeding to the preparation of policies and proposal for preserving and enhancing the conservation area, which are a statutory requirement. These measures require public support and consultation is implicit.

Where the character of an area is threatened by development that is normally permitted, such as replacement of original windows with UPVC ones, the Council can instigate additional controls requiring planning permission for such changes.

## CONSERVATION PLANNING POLICY

Planning policies effecting how the Council will deal with development proposals will be included within The Local Development Framework. Any policies affecting conservation areas will be produced in consultation with the public.

## WHAT DOES DESIGNATION MEAN



The Council is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas and their settings when determining planning applications.

The applications have to be advertised and the Council must take account of material objections in their decision.

Conservation area consent is required for the demolition or substantial demolition of buildings and complete boundary walls and gates.

Additional planning controls apply in conservation areas, which would normally be permitted in other areas. These relate to the size of extensions, the type of external cladding permitted, inserting dormer windows and satellite dishes.

## TREES

Trees can make a significant contribution to the character of Conservation Areas. You must give the Council six weeks' notice in writing if you want to carry out work on trees, which are more than 7.5 centimetres in diameter (measured 1.5 metres above the ground).

Non-compliance with this provision is an offence under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.



These provisions are only a summary and full details of the exact legal wording can be obtained from the Council.