

Environment Subgroup of Parwich Village Action Group

*(In conjunction with the Peak District National Park Authority's
Community Development Officers and Parwich Parish Council)*

12th May 2008

Sue Adam
Conservation Officer
Cultural Heritage
Peak District National Park Authority
Aldern House
Baslow Road
Bakewell
DE45 1AE

Dear Sue,

Comments on the Parwich Conservation Area Appraisal (draft dated April 2008)

Firstly we would like to commend you on the undoubtedly high standard of your work. We are most impressed with the Draft overall, but feel an even better result can still be achieved by further consultation with local groups, such as the Parish Council, the Local History Society and ourselves. It is important that the consultation engages with the community as a whole and not just with individuals on a one to one basis.

We wish to raise some points of detail, to raise the idea of extending the boundaries of the Conservation Area, but **most importantly to state our concerns relating to the document's overall characterization of the village**. We also have some suggestions relating to 'The Potential for Improvement'.

1. **The detail:** a number of specific points were raised, and individuals may contact you directly with those not included here. However we are unanimous in asking you to consider the following:
 - i. **More twentieth century buildings deserve a mention**, particularly Retlendon on the corner of Creamery Lane and Church Walk. The modern buildings reflect the ongoing development of the village and are part of the character of the Conservation Area. There should be further discussion with the community about which of these buildings are particularly valued. See also section 2i. below.
 - ii. **The Sycamore Inn's 'dustbins'** (paragraph 11.18) are in fact the village recycling point. They were deliberately located at this central point some years ago. However the landlady would be happy to work with yourselves and the Parish Council if it a new location is felt to be desirable. Obviously this has potential resource implications.
 - iii. **"The Conservation Area merges into the surrounding landscape** and has few defined edges" (paragraph 1.4, see also paragraph 9.9). We feel this statement is confusing as it leaves people living on the edge of the Conservation Area not

knowing whether this document has any implication for them or not. See also section 2. below.

- iv. **The specific features omitted** from paragraphs 3.1 and 6.12 over and above those in the HER, which we feel should have been mentioned, include those listed below. However again we feel more work is required to identify all that should be included in the Appraisal document.
 - a. The wells at Brook Cottage and the Fold, relying on the higher water table near the Brook.
 - b. The pumps at the Sycamore Inn and Church View (note at least one pump has been lost within the last 18 months).
 - c. The two (partially damaged) stone troughs at the Kiln Lane spring, forming one of the pre-1950s domestic water supplies in the village.
 - d. The surviving stone rain water troughs in their original domestic situations, such as the one in Church Cottage garden. There are also significant domestic troughs at the Stables in Church Walk and at the Old Post Office in Main Street, both of which may have been moved from their original locations. (Again at least one domestic rain water trough has been lost within the last 18 months).
 - e. The steps from Creamery Lane onto Kiln Lane Green and from Pump Hill onto Kiln Lane in front of Parwich Hall.
 - f. The various ancient stone gate posts such as the particularly fine gritstone one at the eastern entrance to Orchard Farm.
 - g. The various squeeze stiles within the conservation area (e.g. the one at the western end of the footpath from the Dam to Dam Lane).
 - h. The remaining stone agricultural buildings and garden sheds in the village, need monitoring.
2. **The Conservation Area boundaries:** although this may seem controversial, we are in agreement that serious consideration should be given to extending the Conservation Area boundaries to include all of the village, and more of the surrounding fields. We would counter paragraph 10.1 *“There are no proposed amendments to the existing Conservation Area boundary”* with the following:
 - i. **The modern housing currently excluded**, namely in Creamery Lane, West View, Chestnut Cottages, Sycamore Cottages and Smithy Close reflect the various styles and changes in the village over the twentieth century and are as an important a part of the village as the Georgian houses and as Church Walk, Rathbone Croft and Croft Avenue that are included in the Conservation Area. We propose that the entire village should be included in the Conservation Area.
 - ii. **The cross shaped wood on the summit of Parwich Hill** (also known as Carr’s Cross) has a historical and visual significance to the Conservation Area. It also contains a Bronze Age burial mound. The Conservation Area’s northern boundary stops at this wood and we propose it should be extended to include it.
 - iii. **The slopes up to the Flatts and Sitterlow** south of the village have as much of an impact on the Conservation Area as the slopes of Parwich Hill to the north. The arguments for including these southern slopes are perhaps even stronger than those for the northern ones already included, because of their significant landscape features and the burial mound Catlow. We propose the Conservation Area’s southern boundary is extended to include this land.
 - iv. **The Wings** similarly has a strong visual impact on the Conservation Area and contains significant historical landscape features. We propose that the Area’s

eastern boundary is extended up to Highway Lane, with its ancient hedgerow and bank.

3. **The characterization of the community:** we emphatically state that the draft Appraisal significantly misrepresents our community. A number of paragraphs present conclusions without supporting figures, and seem to suggest that the Authority has a fundamental misunderstanding of Parwich as a living working community. Historically Parwich has been an economically diverse community from the late medieval period, and this has been a significant factor in the development of the village's layout and buildings. If we are to genuinely conserve the village, we need also to recognize and conserve the existing mixed living and working community that today continues to be Parwich's strongest asset.

- i. **Numerous second homes and holiday cottages?** The Draft states "*The number of second homes and holiday cottages has dramatically increased in the village in the last 40 to 50 years*" (paragraph 2.5) and "*there are numerous second homes and holiday cottages in the village*" (paragraph 4.10). Perceptions within the village vary from person to person, some agreeing with a dramatic increase citing figures in the region of 40, others saying that levels have been largely unchanging over the last 20 or 30 years. We estimate the following (see Annex 1) figures for Parwich village:

Second homes	6?
Holiday homes (with secondary lettings)	4
Commercial lets (independent dwellings)	3
Commercial lets (subsidiary parts of other houses)	7

Total 20

This represents less than 10% of the houses in the village. The second homes belong primarily to weekenders; indeed a number of them would argue that they spend more time in Parwich than elsewhere. Further the weekenders often participate as fully in village life as those that are here full time. The commercial holiday lets that are subsidiary parts of main dwellings are nearly all single bedroom units that are unlikely to be given planning permission as separate dwellings. Of the ten commercial lets only one belongs to people not resident in the village. Though any significant increase in number would impact on our community, it is hardly appropriate to refer to *dramatic increases* or *numerous second homes and holiday cottages*. What needs to be included in the draft Appraisal is an evaluation of how we can maintain our current balance.

- ii. **The statement "*The only amenity in the Conservation Area is now the public house, the Sycamore Inn*"** (paragraph 4.10) **is patently untrue**. Within the Conservation Area there is Parwich Primary School, St. Peter's Church (housing both an Anglican and a Methodist congregation), Parwich Royal British Legion Club, Parwich Memorial Hall (also housing Stepping Stones, a preschool group) and the children's play area on the Green, in addition to the public house, the shop and the recycling point at the Sycamore Inn. Further outside the Area but within the village are the bowling green and cricket pitches with their associated pavilions, the hard play area and the football pitch. The village website PARWICH.ORG lists some 28 currently active voluntary organizations and groups based in the village. We need to consider how the Appraisal can support these aspects of our community.

iii. The statement *“Parwich has now become a dormitory settlement, with residents commuting to employment elsewhere”* (paragraph 4.10) is **unfounded and untrue**. Farming remains an important part of the local economy. Although there are now no working farms within the Conservation Area, there are several on the edge of the village, there is one smallholding, some stables and land in agricultural use within the Area. We estimate there are well over 80 businesses, employers, consultancies and sole traders based in the parish (this figure includes businesses mainly trading elsewhere with working offices here, but excludes private individuals employing domestic or garden help, see Annex 2), and we also estimate over 25 people commute into Parwich from elsewhere for work (this excludes such as self-employed gardeners, window cleaners etc, whose main base is elsewhere). We estimate the resident working population of Parwich village is made up as follows (see Annex 3, these are our least accurate figures as they were compiled on the basis of the personal knowledge of a small group of people, however we believe they are likely to be a good approximation):

Work that is based in Parwich parish	49%
Commute less than 2 miles	10%
Commute less than 10 miles	20%
Commute more than 10 miles	21%

Around half Parwich residents work within the parish, and of those that do commute we estimate well over 10% either work some of their time from home or have secondary part-time work in Parwich. This demonstrates a diverse working community. It is likely that compared with 25 or even 50 years ago, fewer people now travel out of the village to work. This trend is likely to continue now Broadband is available in the village. Further the PDNPA website indicates that overall for the Park some 25% are self-employed and 24% are employed in tourism or catering, in contrast we estimate that for Parwich the figures are 41% self-employed and 6% tourism & catering, indicating that the work profile in the village is significantly different to the Park as a whole. We are concerned that falsely characterizing us as a ‘dormitory settlement’ will predispose the Authority against future business related and commercial planning applications within the village.

4. **The characterization of the buildings and their interrelations:** we feel more work is required to fully understand the nature of our buildings and the layout of the village. We feel the current document leaves the Conservation Area open to inappropriate planning decisions such as the coursed stone work, contrary to the local vernacular, imposed on the three new houses at Parson’s Croft, and vulnerable from threats to our open spaces such as the relatively recent County Council proposal to tarmac an area of the Green (Church Green).
- i. **The stonework** found in the walls of Parwich’s buildings varies in type according to the age, function, size and status of the building. A fuller analysis is required than that given in the Draft: paragraph 6.2 *“Walls are generally of coursed, roughly coursed or uncoursed limestone construction”* (see also P61). We would add to this list, giving the following spectrum: random rubble limestone, partially coursed rubble limestone, random dressed limestone (an non-vernacular modern intrusion), random coursed dressed limestone, regularly coursed dressed limestone and ashlar. All of these are found in the village. In

designing extensions and new buildings it is important that the type of stonework used reflects its context and the form and function of what is being built. The Planning Service should not, as seems to have happened in recent years particularly on new builds, simply impose an over simplified ‘vernacular’ of ‘dressed stone in courses’ regardless of the context. The draft should set out clear guidelines to help Planning Officers understand the village vernacular.

- ii. **The orientation of dwellings** and their relationship to the road are repeatedly stressed in the Draft (paragraphs 1.3, 5.2, 5.3, 7.4 to 7.6 and 7.46). The photographs included in the Draft also seem to contain a disproportionate number of gable views. We agree with the Draft in paragraph 1.3 “*This variety of orientation and layout creates a sense of openness and informality that characterizes the Conservation Area*”, but find the repeated returning to the topic of rear and side aspects puzzling. Consequently we have quantified the orientation of the pre-1900 houses in the Conservation Area in relation to the roads (see Annex 4):

The principal orientation in relation to the compass:

South	39 (50%)
West	16 (20%)
East	13 (16%)
North	11 (14%)

The principal orientation (defined by front door) in relation to the modern road:

Front	48 (61%)
Side	22 (28%)
Rear	9 (11%)

Further, of those with a principal orientation not onto the modern road some 23% have had their orientation altered by planning decisions within the last twenty years, some 45% face onto tracks or footpaths that may have been the principal route when they were built (this rises to 56% when just looking at houses backing onto the modern road), and some 71% have three or more faces clearly visible from the public domain (road and/or footpaths). Of the few that appear unambiguously to have been built backing onto the road most have a relatively large number of windows onto the road (e.g. Close Farm and Slate House). The post-1900 houses (not included in these figures) almost universally face onto the road regardless of compass orientation, with the possible exception of Pool Croft. The orientation of buildings is predominantly to the south and west, but there is also a stronger prejudice towards building houses facing onto the road. That the sides and rears of so many buildings are visible is undoubtedly secondary to the more important characteristic of the Conservation Area, namely the openness of the village and the spaces between the houses.

- iii. **The greens and open spaces** are what characterize the village. The property boundaries, the medieval ‘crofts’ and ‘tofts’ and the gaps between buildings are of more historical importance to the village, than the more recent Georgian farmhouses and cottages that were slotted into the already existing pattern. The Draft does mention this (see paragraphs 1.3, 7.3, 7.35, 7.44, 7.60, 7.69, 7.74, 8.1 to 8.5 and 11.17), but it does not stress it as the main defining characteristic of Parwich Conservation Area. Also there needs to be more stress laid on some of

the more significant open spaces over and above the historical Greens (namely Church, Sycamore, Nether, Kiln Lane and Townhead Greens). We would want to highlight amongst other the Square, Bells Yard, the Croft, Dodd's Dill and Hallcliffe (the field on Kiln Lane). Again this is something that needs further local discussion. We would not argue that no new development should take place, quite the contrary. However new development should not be in-filling, but involve single or small groups of buildings scattered at the edges of the village, preserving the open characteristic of the Area.

iv. Roads, verges, footpaths and signs represent a current creeping urbanization (e.g. the chicane at the entry to Parson's Croft), and a potential area for further erosion of the character of the Conservation Area, which the Peak Park Authority seems powerless to halt. Indeed the draft even uses the word 'urban' at one point in relation to the village. It seems rare to remove redundant signs, and over reliance on road markings and engineering solutions seems a feature of Highways. The Draft makes some mention of street furniture (paragraph 6.12), modern street lighting (paragraph 6.13), road surfacing and kerbs (6.14), overhead wires (11.1) and maintenance (11.19 and 11.20), but not enough has so far been made of the opportunities this Appraisal allows. The Parish Council is currently in discussion with the County Council on some of these issues. We strongly support the introduction of a 'shared space' concept for the roads of Parwich; the creation of a 20mph zone with no signs or road markings within the Conservation Area; no further footpaths or pedestrian hard standing; the investigation of more suitable surfacing for the existing hard standing (e.g. the bus stop at the Pump Shed); the investigation of alternative more appropriate street lights; the investigation of more appropriate road signs where they are strictly necessary; and the removal the current urban features such as the chicane with its bollards and concrete blocking at Parson's Croft. The Draft gives detail of many trees and shrubs, a relatively modern feature of the village, but makes no evaluation of the appropriateness of this, especially the use of non-native varieties in some settings. It mentions the specimens of Jacob's ladder near Creamery Cottage (these were planted some two years ago), but makes no evaluation of the other plant species found. The Authority could lead the way also in promoting the diversity of native plants in the verges within the conservation area. Again these have resource implications that will need addressing.

5. The potential for improvement (paragraphs 11.1 to 11.20): There are significant opportunities in the Conservation Area Appraisal to take a fresh look at a number of aspects (see also sections 4iii and 4iv above). However these opportunities have either financial implications or time implications for the community and volunteers. To achieve their potential the suggested improvements need to be fully embraced by the community, the parish council, local groups (such as the Village Action Group and the Local History Society), the District Council and the County Council, as well as various Peak District National Park Authority teams, including the Ecologists, Community Development Officers, the Planning Service, in addition to the Historic Buildings Officers. This joint action will only be achieved if all have input into setting the objectives and have a feeling of ownership of those objectives. At present we feel this is the weakest part of the Draft. We would like to see joint consultation on this looking at:

i. Planning for development in relation to affordable housing, and promoting innovative contemporary design along the lines proposed in the Authority's

2007 Design Guidelines and embodied in examples such as the new garden room at Church Cottage. So far the Park has not made significant achievements in domestic design, and the current Appraisal draft focuses more on preservation rather than proactive managing of change.

- ii. **Co-operative inter-agency working in writing ‘*the potential for improvement*’ section** to put in place jointly owned aims taking into account both the environment and the community. The section needs to consider how the identified improvements will have to be addressed, so that those who will have to explore the solutions also are part of identifying the problems. The potential holders of the purse strings and the people who are going to have to fill in the grant application forms need to be part of the process at the draft stage, not left to run with someone else’s objectives.
- iii. **The report makes no mention of the Memorial Hall Project** (except in relation to the electricity sub-station) though the building of a new eco-friendly sustainable community hall and the associated landscaping in the centre of the village is likely to be the most significant development in the Conservation Area for the foreseeable future. It is important that the Draft takes this into account, and that those involved in the project (in the Peak Park Authority, the Memorial Hall Committee, the Parish Council and others) also have input into this section of the Draft.

We would welcome the opportunity to see the new draft before it goes to Committee, and would like to know how the subsequently agreed version will be used prior to the completion of any new Conservation Area Management Plan. We would further be grateful if you could supply us with a copy of the Original 1987 Conservation Area Management Plan, and give us some idea of the timescale in establishing a new Management Plan.

Yours sincerely

Peter Trehitt

Chairman

cc.

Simon Spencer, District Councillor

Christopher Carr, PDNPA Member (Parish Council Rep.)

Karen Wigley, Clerk to Parwich Parish Council

Andrew Robinson, Chairman, Parwich & District Local History Society

Amanda Johnson, Secretary, Parwich Memorial Hall

Annex 1

Holiday Cottages and Second Homes in the Parwich Village

This information has been confirmed by the owners or by independent sources, with the exception of one of the second homes (see also www.parwich.org). An unedited list is available for local consultation.

Property	Location	Within CA	Type	Comment
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Second home	
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Second home	
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Second home	Not confirmed?
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Second home	Not confirmed?
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Second home	
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Second home	
Sub Total				6?
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Holiday Home + secondary lettings	
High Barn Cottage	Monsdale Lane	Yes	Holiday Home + secondary lettings	
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Holiday Home + secondary lettings	
xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	Yes	Holiday Home + secondary lettings	
Sub Total				4
Orchard View	Creamery Lane	Yes	Commercial let (a)	
Green Gates	The Square	Yes	Commercial let (a)	
Rose Cottage	Smithy Lane	Yes	Commercial let (a)	
Sub Total				3
Hallcliffe Cottage	Hallcliffe	Yes	Commercial let (b)	Under refurbishment
Hallcliffe Barn	Hallcliffe	Yes	Commercial let (b)	
Douglas' Barn	Orchard Farm	Yes	Commercial let (b)	
Tom's Barn	Orchard Farm	Yes	Commercial let (b)	
Church Gates Cottage	Church Gates	Yes	Commercial let (b)	
Croft Cottage	The Croft	Yes	Commercial let (b)	
Brook Close Cottage	Brook Close Farm	No	Commercial let (b)	
Sub Total				7
Total				20

Commercial let (a) are independent dwellings

Commercial let (b) are subsidiary part of other houses

There are additional holiday cottage and second homes in the parish but not included here: 3 at Parwich Lees, 1 at Upper Moor Farm (recently changed hands so we do not know if it will continue as a holiday let), and possibly further properties at Cobbler's Nook and Pikehall.

Annex 2

Businesses and sole traders in Parwich Parish

This information has been compiled by a small group based on their personal knowledge, though where possible confirmed by independent sources (phone directory, internet, etc.). Where possible within time constraints we have confirmed this directly with the companies or businesses involved. It is thought that any errors will be undercounting of self-employed individuals not known to the group (see also www.parwich.org). A partial list is available for local consultation, but as some is confidential information it is not for publication in any way.

Total Working Farms	12
Total Haulage Companies `	2
Individual Haulage Contractors	4
Vehicles & Motor Maintenance	3
Self employed motor mechanics	1
Building Firms	3
Trades & Crafts men	9
Pub, shop & Legion	3
Tourism & leisure	10
Businesses with offices here	4
Other small businesses	3
Garden design & maintenance	5
Various consultancies	11
Sole traders & self employed	5
Education/tutors & artists	8
Other Employers	
Parwich Primary School (LEA)	
Stepping Stones	
Parwich Memorial Hall	
Parwich Parish Council	
Sub-total	5
Total	88

Excluding those employed in private house the gives a total of 87 employers, businesses, consultancies and sole traders in Parwich parish, the majority of which are based in the village.

We also roughly estimate that between 25 and 30 people commute into Parwich from elsewhere to a main work base in the village. This excludes domestic, gardening, window cleaning contractors that have a main work base outside Parwich but travel here to do specific tasks.

Note: Private households (Domestic & Gardeners)

A very rough estimate is that some 25+ people are employed in private households of which some 5 commute into the village.

Annex 3

Estimates of levels of Commuting within Parwich village

This information has been compiled by a small group based on their personal knowledge, though where possible it has been confirmed by the individuals concerned. Given constraints of time and resources it was not possible to confirm the information with everyone. These are likely to be our least accurate figures, but are thought to be a good approximation. (Because this is potentially sensitive information any further break down not available for consultation.)

Number of individuals with their main work base in parish	98 (49%)
Number commuting less than 2 miles	21 (10%)
Number commuting less than 10 miles	40 (20%)
Number commuting more than 10miles	42 (21%)

Total **201**

Number self-employed	83 (41%)
Number working in tourism/catering	13 (6%)

Of those commuting (the following may be significant under estimations)

Number working part time from home	6 (6%)
Number with secondary part time work in parish	7 (7%)

Annex 4

List of pre 1900 house orientations in the Conservation Area

House	Compass orientation	Face to modern road (based on front door)	Faces visible from public domain	Original face on to other trackway or footpath	Orientation altered within last 20 years
Townhead	South	Side	3		
Crown Cottage	West	Front	2		
Truncliffe	West	Front	2		
Slate House	West	Rear	3		
Close Farm	West	Rear	3		
The Rookery	West	Front	2		
Rookery House	West	Front	2		
Rose Cottage	South	Side?	2		
Wheatsheaf Cottage	South	Front	2		
Hallgates	East	Side?	2		
Parwich Hall	South	Front	3		
Gardeners Cottage	South	Front	3		
Lea House	West	Side	3	Yes	
Gibbon's Bank 1	South	Front	2		
Gibbon's Bank 2	South	Front	2		
Littlewood	North	Front	3		Yes
The Orchards	West	Side	3		
Orchard Farm	South	Rear	4	Yes	
Bank Cottage	South	Front	3		
Creamery Cottage	West	Front	3		
The Cottage, Creamery Lane	West	Front	2		
End Cottage, Creamery Lane	West	Front	3		
The Croft	South	Side	1	Yes	
Croft Cottage	South	Side	2	Yes	
Rowan Cottage	South	Side	3		
Knob Hall	West	Front	4		
School View	East	Side	3		?
Station Road Farm	South	Front	3		
Staines Cottage	South	Rear	3		
Lenscliffe Cottage	South	Front	2		
Lenscliffe	South	Front	2		
Lenscliffe	South	Side	3		
Lenscliffe (Knowl Cott)	South	Side?	2		
Cliffe Cottage	East	Front	2		
Pear Tree Cottage	East	Front	2		
Rock House	East	Front	3		
Walnut Cottage	South	Side	2		Yes
Hope Croft	North	Side	2		Yes
Flatts Stile	North	Side	3	Yes	Yes

Lilac Cottage	North	Front	4		
? Mount Pleasant	North	Front	2		
? Mount Pleasant	North	Front	2		
Honeysuckle Cottage	South	Front	3		
Hideaway Cottage	East	Side	2	Yes	
The Square, School Lane	North	Front	3		
The Square, Pump Hill	West	Front	3		
Green Gates	West	Front	3		
Shaw Lane House	West	Rear	2	Yes	Yes
Shaw Lane Cottage	East	Front	2		
Fernlea	South	Front	1		
Old Post Office	South	Front	2		
Brentwood	North	Front	3		
Flaxdale	South	Front	2		
Ivy Cottage	South	Front	1		
Cottage on the Green	South	Front	1		
Willow Cottage	South	Front	1		
Hallcliffe	South	Front	2		
Japonica	East	Front?	2	Yes?	
Dam Farm	East	Side	4	Yes	Yes
Church Gates House	South	Side	3		
Church Gates Cottage	South	Side	3		
Church Cottage	South	Rear	4	Yes	
Church View	South	Side	3		Yes
Jasmine House	South	Front	2		
Farm View House	East	Front	2		
Farm View Cottage	East	Front	2		
Church Farm	South	Side	4		
Old Farm House	West	Front	3		
Orchard View House	South	Front	3		
Orchard View Cottage	South	Front	3		
Sycamore Inn	North	Front	4		
Brook Cottage	North	Rear	3	Yes	
Brook House	North	Rear	3	Yes	
Nethergreen House	South	Front	3		
Brook Cottage	East	Rear?	3	Yes	
Nethergreen Farm	South	Front	3		
Nethergreen Cottage	South	Side?	3	Yes	
Blanche Meadow Farm	East	Side	3	Yes	
Rose? Cottage, Nethergreen	South	Front	3		