

Elford Village

Vernacular and Townscape Assessment

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1.1. Introduction

This Vernacular Study has been produced to complement the design process and guide future architectural development within the village of Elford, as well as provide a record of Elford's architectural identity.

There is evidence of a settlement located in Elford since the Saxon Era. The longest surviving building in the village however, is St Peter's Church being having been constructed in the 14th century. The village itself has a mixture of buildings which display a rich historic variety of architectural styles, from nogged wooden frame farmsteads with decorative brick infill to modern glass, brick, and render houses.

2.0. Permeability and Streetscape

Overview

2.1

Elford's streetscape strongly reflects its historic rural past with many of the original buildings being workers cottages with typically low ceiling heights, small casement windows with leaded lights and timber frame infill walls of varying style located in the center of the village. Through the centuries, development in the village featured individual properties filling existing spaces within the historic core, as well as building on the outlying land surrounding St Peter's Church. Many of these later properties grew in size along with the affluence of their occupants, especially in the 1800s. In the nineteen fifties and sixties, several residential properties were constructed to the north of the village, adding to the Beck and Croft Close. These new builds were characteristic of their time, with a popular use of roughcast, pebbledash and brick with larger floor plans and driveways for automotive transport. The latest developments in the Village's morphology have been the three modern infill developments on The Osiers, the A513 and Croft Close. These modern builds have maintained some elements of historic vernacular detailing in order to fit in with the overall townscape.

Permeability

2.2

The natural morphology of Elford means that some elements of the village's street and footpath structure are not as permeable as in a planned settlement. For road users, driving in Elford is not particularly fluid due to the narrowness of the village streets. Elford's pedestrian facilities are similarly affected by the narrowness of the roads, which has led to a lack of space for pavements. At non-peak hours, the roads themselves are relatively pedestrian friendly and easy to navigate. Cycle infrastructure in Elford is somewhat limited, however, the roads within the village centre are quiet enough to cycle easily.



(Figure 1: Elford Village Roads and Footpaths)



(Figure 2: Main Road)



(Figure 3: Principle Road)



(Figure 4: Culs-de-sac)

The images above illustrate the changing character of streetscape from rural farmsteads, main roads and principle roads to the village centre where the predominant road patterns are narrow, organic streets with culs-de-sacs.

Local Roads, Tracks and Footpaths

2.3

Elford's roads, tracks and pathways have not changed much since the medieval period. The early village had a natural morphology from St Peter's Church following Church Road adjacent to the River Tame and expanding northward via 'The Square'. many of the streets in Elford are characteristically narrow as they were originally used by pedestrians and horse drawn transportation.

Key Streetscape and Design Points:

- Organic street layout in Village Centre
- Narrow streetscape in Centre of Village with larger connecting roads bordered with hedgerows
- Walkable due to settlement size and quietness of roads

3.0 Built Form

Figure ground Analysis

3.1

The figure ground for Elford is demonstrative of an organic street pattern which follows geographic features such as rivers, steep gradients and topographical features. Organic street patterns also follow boundary lines, particularly agricultural border lines. What is immediately clear from this figure ground is the quantity of historic farming cottages spread evenly throughout the settlement.



(Figure 5: Figure Ground of Elford Village)

Building Lines

3.2

The figure below demonstrates how inconsistent and irregular the building lines are in Elford. The explanation for this is that many of the properties constructed in the village were built incrementally over a long period of time often on an individual basis without any planning or design regulation. The only consistent building lines are located on the Beck and Croft Close where several buildings have been planned and built together. One of the key aspects of the inconsistency of the settlement building lines is the variety of setbacks and infill properties giving the village its unique organic charm.

The building lines in the centre allow for greater enclosure and emphasize the human scale of the settlement, this dissipates in the periphery of the settlement due to the increase of garden sizes and position of building set back from the road. The image below demonstrates how the building lines get further away from roads and paths the further they are from the urban core. Like with many older settlements with similar unplanned natural morphologies, Elford's centre has the majority of the village's oldest buildings, and which dissipate from a character area defined by rural village cottages into historic farmsteads and modern infill buildings which are designed for cars and people.



(Figure 6: Elford building Set-backs)

Building Footprints



The Beck and A513 Early 1920s Footprint



3.3
 The footprint above shows the uniform building line of early 1920s housing along the north end of the Beck. These properties, located in the periphery of the village, have large front and back gardens, and are all a standardized size and floor-plan, with 2 storeys and designed to house small modern families. These properties, as with many examples of municipal housing in the village, follow a linear format with the road as the dominant factor in their layout.



Church Road and The Ossiers Modern Footprint



3.4

Some of the most recently constructed properties constructed in Elford are located on the banks of the River Tame. Unlike the 1920s municipal properties discussed above, the contemporary properties in Elford are not as uniformly organized and are much smaller in footprint size. The layout of these properties follow a characteristic Cul-de-Sac orientated structure typical to most modern suburban developments, however, they have also been planned as infill developments, trying to blend in with the existing settlement's character.



The Beck footprint



3.5

Many of the original properties in Elford were constructed as functioning farmsteads and cottages. The footprint shown above is a classic example of an early 19th century set of farmers cottages and farmsteads, identifiable by the long narrow footprint of the buildings and purposive interconnecting buildings. These buildings are often not aligned with the main roads, and instead are often disjointed from the main settlement with narrow roads which follow the sides of fields. Gardens are generally not uniformly or symmetrically shaped and give the impression that they were an afterthought as the town developed around them.

Character Areas

3.6

In this section of the built form analysis, the study will identify character areas within Elford, based on building age, vernacular and architectural period. The image below displays the village's various character areas. It is key to note that due to Elford's natural incremental growth as a settlement, many buildings located within the character areas do not fit the prevailing profile and are thus colour coded to show their individual time period.

From the rendered character areas map, it is easy to see how the village has grown from west to east, with a number of pocket like infill developments over the years. Another key point to note is the linear layout of the village's eastern side compared with the more natural centre and western areas.



(Figure 7: Character areas)

Before 1900

3.7

The image below shows the varying character areas of Elford based on easily distinguishable architectural forms. The character areas focused around Elford hall, St Peter's Church and Elford House are predominantly of the Victorian revival era while the core and outlying farmsteads are mostly farmers cottages and farmsteads dating from the 17th century onward which have a more robust vernacular.



20th Century Housing

3.8

Displayed below is an image showing the large addition of properties to Elford in the mid 20th century. This development followed a more linear morphology on the periphery of the settlement, and has been located near the main road for easier vehicular access. These properties were constructed in groups and built under the welfare state's mandate, which embraced equality and modern technology.



Post 1980s Housing

3.9

Shown in the diagram below are the key developments which have taken place in Elford from the 1980s onward. It is interesting to note that many of the contemporary developments within the village boundaries have been well contained in the village boundaries and reflect a more natural infill pattern, thus preserving the village's strong character.



Archetypes

Traditional Farmhouses and Cottages

General Characteristics:

3.10

The oldest surviving residential buildings within the Elford conservation area can be classified as 17th century timber frame houses, many of which will served economic functions as well as residential. Examples include The Forge and The Cottage. Apart from St Peters Church it is unlikely that any of the existing buildings in Elford predate the 17th century, however many of the buildings have been upgraded from thatch roofing material and wattle and daub infill walls, to brick infill combined with tile or slate roofing materials.

Fenestration:

3.11

The shape and size of the windows of Elford's older buildings generally tend to be either bay windows or smaller timber framed casement leadlight windows. In the roof spaces, the fenestration is typically dormer styled with slated gable roofs with decorative gable end barge boards. On some properties in Elford there are some strong examples of Rondelle glass pains, often known as bullseye or bottle bottom glass.



(Figure 8: 17th century cottage)

Detailing:

3.12

Much of the detailing in the 17th century properties is not particularly ornate, but intended for more a practical farming lifestyle. Most of these buildings are detached with the occasional extension. Key features are the timber building frames with brick infill walls, bracketed porches, gable porches, lead step flashing, and purlins which extend beyond gables. On some of the properties there is fish-scale tiling on the roofs, although this is uncommon. One particular detail which is evident in some properties is the use of decorative barge boards located on the gable ends and dormer window gables, which also have decorative wooden finials.

Massing:

3.13

Many of the buildings from this period follow a typical farm house construction style which commonly have a long and slender footprint with outlying agricultural buildings in close proximity. The height of these structures tend to be two to three storeys high with low floor to ceiling heights.



(Figure 9: Timber Frame Brick Infill Gable)



(Figure 10: Stepped Lead Flashing)



(Figure 11: Bullseye Glass Panels)

Victorian Gothic Revival

3.14

Perhaps the most legible archetype in Elford can be found in Elford House and its surrounding buildings, which strongly reflect the late 19th century Gothic Revival architectural style. This style was heavily influenced by medieval ecclesiastical architecture and followed a detached or semi-detached layout. Chimney stacks, walls and window surrounds were intricately patterned, and symmetry was generally avoided in the built layout.

Fenestration:

3.15

The window detailing during this architectural period had a strong emphasis on tall and slender design. Lancet windows were often used, however, in Elford, the buildings from this period tend to feature sash windows with dormer and bay window styles.

Detailing:

3.16

The construction of this period tended to favor the use of gauged and rubbed brick work on walls and chimneys. This brick work was generally quite decorative with Gothic cathedral column style chimneys and patterned gables. On the corners of the buildings there are examples of dressed stone quoins and similarly dressed stone window surrounds. The Gothic revival style also commonly featured patterned gable end barge boards, turrets, and fish-scale roofing tiles, all of which are present in many of the late Victorian buildings in Elford.

Massing:

3.17

Because the Gothic revival style was so ornate, it can be associated with opulence and the upper classes in Victorian society who favoured larger houses with three or more storeys and large footprints.



(Figure 12: Gauged Brickwork)



(Figure 13: Elford House in Manorial Farm)



(Figure 13: Gothic Revival Chimney Stack)

Victorian Domestic Revival

General Characteristics:

3.18

The Victorian Domestic revival style has its roots in Tudor and late medieval construction styles. The domestic revival style is apparent in Elford and can be identified by key features like jettied upper floors, decorative Tudor style wooden veneers and leadlighted windows. Buildings of this style were generally detached or semi-detached.

Fenestration:

3.19

The fenestration of properties featuring the domestic revival commonly have Diamond shaped leadlight casement windows which are frequently arranged in a dormer style for the upper floors and a bay window style on the lower levels.

Detailing:

3.20

Some of the finer details of this style which are present in Elford's late Victorian built form are bracketed porches or decorative treillage porches. On some properties, there are strong examples of decorative crenelated chimney pots. The materials commonly used for these buildings were brick with timber decoration and slate roofs. Another detailing feature of this style which can be seen in many examples across Elford is decorative lead step flashing used on sloping corners where roof meets brickwork.

Massing:

3.21

The Victorian domestic revival, although embracing historic tradition in detailing and fenestration, departs from tradition in terms of height and massing. Generally, properties tend to be larger, with two or three storeys, with much larger footprints and with larger planned gardens.



(Figure 15: crenelated chimney pot)



(Figure 14: Casement gable window)



(Figure 16: mixed shingle tiled roof)



(Figure 17: Victorian Domestic Revival house)

Victorian Functional

General Characteristics:

3.22

Many of Elford's 19th century buildings are relatively simply designed and functional Victorian dwellings. These are often constructed from brick with minimal decoration and in either a terraced or semi-detached style. Examples can be found in the Old School building and Village Pub.

Fenestration:

3.23

These properties generally tend to feature casement windows with segmented arch window surround tops.

Detailing:

3.24

Functional Victorian buildings in Elford were almost all built from brick in Elford with very few decorative features. Although non-decorative, some properties in Elford feature retaining anchor plates to assist the structure of the buildings which add to the historic vernacular of the village.

Massing:

3.25

This style of building generally tends to be functionally designed as a measure of quality and not style, thus these properties are relatively small in footprint and height, with two to three storeys and low floor to ceiling heights.



(Figure 19: Old School House)



(Figure 20: Wall Tie)



(Figure 21: Victorian functional style)



(Figure 22: Victorian Functional cottage)

20th Century Modern Municipal Housing

General Characteristics:

3.26

Identifiable by the use of materials such as pebbledash or roughcast, timber cladding and brick, the standardized buildings constructed in the 1950's and 60s are probably the easiest to distinguish in the village townscape. This housing style arrived at a time of suburban idealism, in which it supposed that every family could have a house and car. The buildings are generally structured to the same symmetrical specifications in a semi-detached form with well-proportioned front and back gardens.

Fenestration:

3.27

The window detailing of these properties is generally simplistic PVC windows which are either inset or flush with the outer wall. Some properties also have arched window frames. In some cases, the fenestration of the 1960s features mock diamond leadlight windows pains.

Detailing:

3.28

The detail specifics on these properties is the use of pebbledash roughcast as a veneer which is either painted or left bare. Many of the properties have driveways and garages, as well as bracketed porches above the entrance. Another key detail is the wooden gable veneer clad on the upper levels of the houses. The roofs are generally tiled with ceramic tiles, and have a single central chimney which also serves adjoining property.

Massing:

3.29

The height of these houses is between two to three storeys with a relatively uniform rectangular footprint. In some cases, the style of the properties is that of a bungalow design and thus are very low density with single level utilized space.



(Figure 23: 1950s municipal Housing)



(Figure 24: 1920s municipal housing)



(Figure 25: Decorative arc sill windows)

Contemporary Housing

General Characteristics:

3.30

The most extensive developments in Elford have occurred in the last 30 years with construction of a high volume of infill homes behind existing properties along The Beck road. These buildings are generally semi-detached or detached and homogeneous in look with few individualized features. Almost all the contemporary housing in Elford have enclosed garages within the property and drive space for car parking. Other key features are the small size of gardens and white detailing on sills, gutters, garage doors and barge boards. Chimneys are also rare feature, if featured at all, they are usually relatively slender for gas fireplaces.

Fenestration:

3.31

Windows on these modern properties are almost all PVC windows with white sills. Also very common is the reflection of traditional vernaculars by including mock leaded casement style windows, and bracketed casement style bay windows.

Detailing:

3.32

Although there is very little ornamentation featured in this style of building there are a few interesting vernacular details including the loggia style porch canopies which add to the overall footprint of the buildings, and the ceramic tiled roofs. These buildings are also almost all made from brick.

Massing:

3.33

The footprints of this style of building are relatively small in order to accommodate a larger number of houses in an area with low two to three storey building heights. The floor to ceiling height is also relatively low compared with many of the historic properties in Elford



(Figure 26: contemporary cul-de-Sac)



(Figure 27: Contemporary residential property)

RoofScape and Landmarks

3.34

In Elford, the majority of properties have front to rear roofing pitches, however, due to the inconsistency and lack of strong building lines combined with poor alignment of buildings, there are few characteristics that repeat across Elford's entire roofscape.

Relatively common to Elford's skyline is a combination of low rise buildings with casement and gabled dormer windows arranged symmetrically on either side of a front door, with decorative chimney stack on the end gables of the buildings.



(Figure 28: Village Centre Cottage Roofscape)



(Figure 29: 1970's residential Roofscape)



(Figure 30: 1920 Residential Roofscape)



(Figure 31: Victorian Functional Roofscape)



(Figure 32: Gothic Revival Roofscape)

Enclosure

3.35

Many properties on Elford are well enclosed with high brick garden walls, these generally tend to be the more affluent properties constructed in the Victorian era. Most of the properties however are enclosed by natural boundary vegetation such as shrubberies and trees, or wooden fences.

Key Features of Built Form

3.36

- Rural farmsteads, cottages and municipal housing most prevalent
- Non-uniform building lines in village centre
- Uniform planned building lines in peripheral areas
- Detached and semi detached building footprints most common
- Casement windows
- Gablett windows
- Dormer windows
- Bullseye glass
- Timber treillage porch detailing
- Leadlight style window detailing
- Timber frame brick infill walls
- Stepped lead flashing
- Materials used: brick, timber, pebbledash, resin
- Crenelated chimney pots
- Gauged and rubbed brickwork
- Fish-scale and flat shingle tiling
- Decorative barge boards
- Low level roofscape, between 2 to 3 storeys

4.0 Materials

Materials Palette

4.1

The predominant building material utilized in Elford is brick. There are also, many examples of painted brick and pebbledash. Generally, painted buildings are white but there are exceptions to this. Many properties are also constructed using wooden frames and have either slated or ceramic tiled roofs.

Boundary walls are also commonly made from brick, and border partitions are in most cases created from wood or hedgerow.



Materials Colour Pallet



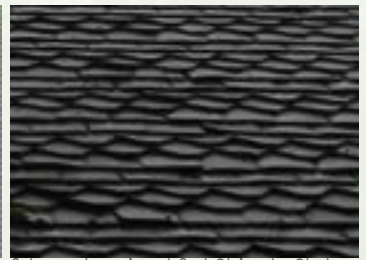
Course Flat Shingle Slate Roof



Ceramic flat shingle Tiles



Flat Shingle Slate Roof tiles



fish scale mixed flat Shingle Slate Roof



Victorian Brick work



Sandstone Lintels and decoration



Victorian Brick work



Victorian Brick work



Brick infill with painted timber frame



Lime-wash exterior wall



pebble dash infill on timber frame



Lime-wash with painted decoration