

Chapter 5 - Focal Points, Landmarks & Vistas

5.1. Overview

5.1.1. Local character is heavily influenced by the unique blend of focal points, landmarks and vistas. The ever present views out to surrounding countryside or glimpses of landscape from the village thoroughfares contribute significantly to the village atmosphere.

5.1.2. There are several focal points in the village and four historical landmarks lie within the parish boundary¹. Significant parish landmarks include Kirkstead Abbey, St Leonard's Chapel, Wellington's monument and the Tower on the Moor. There are no tall buildings in the village, so the most referenced, but unintentional landmark and focal point is arguably the mini-roundabout; the point by which most people are directed around the village. However, the most important focal point of them all is:

5.1.2. The Spa Baths Area. As specified in the Parish Plan this area represents the original heart of the village; the area which determined its future as an inland resort. The buildings and the sylvan woodland setting were specifically created to promote the health and well-being of the Spa visitors. It comprises the Spa Baths (img 5.1), Kinema in the Woods and Tea House in the Woods. All three buildings lie in an area of managed woodland on Coronation Road. The Victoria Hotel was also in this area but burnt down in 1920.

5.2. Focal Points

5.2.1. **The Spa Baths.** The Baths complex is, in many respects, the most important building in the village; without it, the village would not exist. The first buildings were erected in 1838 although substantial additions were made in the 1880s. The rather irregular plan of the Baths betrays the gradual growth of the building and its facilities and from the outside the 19th century elements hide the earlier building. The original Hotchkin building of 1838-49, however, survives behind the early C20 pebble-dashed eastern elevation. The pump room entrance and some attractive Victorian brick and slate detailing are evidence of the building's former glory.² The Baths closed in 1983 when the well collapsed, and the fabric of the building has been deteriorating ever since. However, it is still the focus of much tourist interest as it lies on the main visitor route from the village centre to Jubilee Park. Unfortunately, attempts to list the Baths with English Heritage and seek a new, acceptable use have so far failed³.

5.2.2. The view west from the Spa baths is dominated by large trees including some Wellingtonia, a species of Canadian Redwood, which were planted as part of the Victoria Hotel's ornamental gardens. The stretch of the road running west to Stixwould Road was not laid out until the 20th Century but it is now an attractive narrow lane with

Focal Points



5.1. The derelict Spa Baths



5.2. Kinema in the Woods



5.3. Jubilee Park



5.4. Petwood Hotel



5.5. Golf Hotel



5.6. Tea House in the Woods

¹ All focal points and landmarks are described in detail on the Woodhall Spa Community website: www.woodhallspa.org/heritage

² Woodhall Spa Conservation Area Appraisal - July 2008

³ The Woodhall Spa Baths Trust put the baths up for sale in 1983 and they are now in private ownership. The Trustees now operate as a medical charity only.

mature trees on either side. At its junction with King George Avenue is a set of directional signs, which match the other Victoriana fingerposts found in the village, erected in the 1960s.

5.2.3. The 'Tea House in the Woods'⁴ (Img 5.6) was originally a delicate timber-framed pavilion with an open veranda, built around 1905. The current building, however, despite its open colonnade and metal roof, bears little relationship to the original building charmingly portrayed in numerous early postcards. Opposite the Tea House is a wall with a doorway which was part of the Victoria Hotel's stable wall. This, and a metal fence now hidden in the undergrowth, is all that remains of the Victoria Hotel.

5.2.4. The Kinema in the Woods (Img 5.2) was built firstly as a barn and converted or rebuilt around 1888 as a concert/dance pavilion. In Edwardian times it was a cricket and tennis pavilion for Petwood House and was converted in 1922 to a rear-projection cinema. This single storey building is of timber, render and brick and sits 'in the woods' surrounded by mature trees.

5.2.5. Jubilee Park. The Park (Img 5.3) is the sporting centre of the village, and is the home of the Woodhall Spa cricket, tennis, croquet and bowling clubs. The park also contains a heated outdoor swimming pool (a rare survival of the "Lido" form popular in the 1930s), play-park, camping and caravanning site, a bandstand, putting course, café and gardens. The park is a popular tourist attraction, particularly during the summer months.

5.2.6. Petwood Hotel. The hotel (Img 5.4) is one of the most attractive buildings in the village and certainly one of the most visited, due to its historical association with 617 (Dambusters) Squadron, its broad range of social functions and the beautiful annual display from the Rhododendron hedge in the extensive grounds.

5.2.7. Golf Hotel. This hotel (Img 5.5), built to a Came design, was erected in 1888. Eight years later it was converted to become Clevedon House Preparatory School for Boys, and then in 1906, Clevedon Gentlemen's Club. Alterations, such as the addition of a ballroom, followed and by the end of the Edwardian period, the building had become the Clevedon Hotel. It was renamed the Golf Hotel in 1921, Squire Stafford Hotchkin, owner of the Golf Course, having taken it over during the war, when the soldiers were accommodated there.

5.2.8. The Hotel had several owners and varying fortunes in the second half of the twentieth century. At one time, well known golfers stayed there and there were also famous television personalities such as David Attenborough, Magnus Magnusson and some of the cast of the long running soap opera; Coronation Street. A splendid and extremely busy occasion was the day of the Queen's Silver Jubilee, in 1977, when 650 people were served with meals, as well as the 90 golfers who were staying at the hotel!



5.7. Woodhall Spa Railway Station

5.2.9. Site of railway station and crossing. An important heritage location is the junction of The Broadway and Station Road. Standing with one's back to the modern police station, one looks across to the Post Office with its VR crest clearly visible on the wall (Img 5.9). The Post Office was purpose built, opposite Woodhall Spa railway station. Beyond the Post Office, to the right, Clarence Road follows the line of the railway on its way to Kirkstead, while in front of this, on Station Road, there is a small group of Victorian shops, including the Clocktower Jeweller with its little clock turret (Img 5.13). Then there is the Mall Public House, another Came design from the Victorian era, with its timber work and tall chimneys.

5.2.10. On the opposite side of Station Road, Laura Fowlers' dress shop (Img 5.10), at one time, belonged to a Mr. Dickinson who sold bicycles, then motor cars and who had a line of petrol pumps at the roadside. The premises became Laura Fowlers just after the Second World War.

5.2.11. Looking to the left of the Post Office is the black and white timbered Woodhall Spa Hotel. This was built as a family house in the 1870s and was converted into the Eagle Lodge Hotel in 1882. There was further alteration in 1889 and that date is written on a pipe at first floor level of the front elevation. In 1935 it was to be auctioned but was withdrawn from the sale at £5,500. It boasted thirty-seven bedrooms at this time. In the late 1960s it became a Local Authority Home for the Elderly and then reverted to being Eagle Lodge Hotel towards the end of the 20th century. It was given its present name after its purchase by Hoby Hotels Ltd.

⁴ This is now known as 'Macauley's Restaurant and Tea House in the Woods'.

5.2.12. To the left of the Police Station is the Millennium Garden, complete with a small section of railway track marking the original route of the railway line. Woodhall Spa station was behind the shops, where the car park and recycling bins are now located.

Focal Points



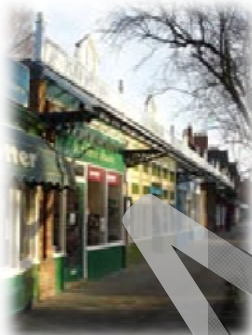
5.8. Broadway Shops



5.9. Post Office



5.10. Laura Fowlers



5.11. Broadway shop canopies



5.12. Dambusters Memorial



5.13. Clock Tower Jewellers

5.2.13. Looking further up the Broadway, opposite the Woodhall Spa Hotel, the old line of shops is maintained, with recently restored wrought iron and glass canopies projecting over the pavement (Img 5.11)⁵. The wide, tree lined Broadway was the centrepiece of Mr. Richard Adolphus Came's original Woodhall Spa design. It was laid out at the beginning of the 1890s and now forms one of the most attractive vistas in the village.

5.2.14. **Dambusters Memorial.** The memorial (Img 5.12) to airmen who died on the infamous Dams raid of 1944 was erected in 1987 and is located near the mini-roundabout, the generally accepted village centre. The memorial attracts many visitors, particularly aviation enthusiasts and is the focus of annual visits by the 617 Sqn Veterans Association and Remembrance Day parades.

5.2.15. **Hotchkin Golf Course.** A classic golf course ranked amongst the world's top fifty, which now accounts for the highest proportion of visitors and income to the village. It also places Woodhall Spa on the international map.

5.3. Landmarks

5.3.1. **Tower on the Moor.** The tower (Img 5.14) was built by Lord Treasurer Ralph Cromwell in 1440, probably to serve as a hunting lodge. It is a Grade II listed building and continues to be used as the village symbol. Unfortunately, the tower is on private land, cannot be accessed by the general public and is difficult to see unless you play a round of golf on the Hotchkin course.

5.3.2. **Kirkstead Abbey & St Leonard's Chapel.** The ruins of Kirkstead Abbey (Img 5.15) can be clearly seen to the west when travelling along Tattershall Road. The abbey was founded in 1139 by Hugo Brito, but only part of the south transept remains. Nearby, the

Cistercian monks built a chapel outside the Abbey complex for lay people in 1230, now known as St Leonard's Church. Both are grade one listed buildings⁶ and scheduled monuments.

5.3.3. **Wellington Monument & Waterloo Wood.** The wood was planted to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo and the monument (Img 5.16), with Wellington's bust atop it, was built in 1844 by Colonel Elmhirst. The monument is sited on the north side of Monument Road, one hundred metres from the junction with Sandy Lane. It lies in the north east corner of the parish approximately one and a half miles from the village centre.

⁵ This work was carried out under the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS). HERS is wide-ranging and intensively funded, grant-aiding building restoration, renovation and environmental improvements (including improvements to the street scene), as well as building repairs. HERS are principally directed at the repair of business and retail premises although dwelling repairs may be eligible for grant aid in very specific circumstances: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk

⁶ Grade 1 buildings are those deemed to be of exceptional interest by English Heritage.

5.4. Village Vistas

5.4.1. Internal. The village is blessed with a number of picturesque internal vistas which owe their existence to the plan laid out by Adolphus Came. As a result, many of them have a degree of protection because they lie within the Conservation Area and are/will be subject to an Article 4(1) Direction and Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Tree-lined Stixwould Road and Manor Road, King George Avenue, Stanhope Avenue, Sylvan Avenue, Arnhem Way and The Broadway are particularly noteworthy⁷. Views north out of the Conservation Area are generally of the golf course and over the surrounding fields. Looking east along The Broadway, the view is constrained by the avenue of trees which continues out of the village for a little while, screening the more modern development behind it. Views south from Tor 'O' Moor Road are through a screen of trees and, in part, over the school playing fields.

5.4.2. External. Views from the parish boundaries are extensive, however, with the notable exception of Green Lane views from public areas within village are limited due to the river embankment to the west, settlement and heavy tree cover. However properties on the north side of Witham Road and south side of Woodland and Grove Drives have clear views of the countryside south of the village.

5.5. The Future

5.5.1. Focal Points. In respect of the Spa Baths area it is absolutely paramount that the wooded character and the scale and general style of the buildings is maintained (and restored where possible). All the focal points mentioned above are important to the village and should continue to be protected by the Conservation Area and Article 4(1) Direction

5.5.2. Landmarks. Kirkstead Abbey (and the fishponds) and St Leonard's Chapel are scheduled ancient monuments and are therefore protected from disturbance or unlicensed metal detecting and have priority over other forms of land use. The Tower is afforded a degree of protection whilst on private land, however, in the long term a more open aspect would be preferred.

5.5.3. Vistas. The current vistas in the village should be preserved and protected and opportunities to enhance or create views in new developments should be taken where possible.

Landmarks



5.14. Tower on the Moor



5.15. Kirkstead Abbey ruins



5.16. Wellington Monument

Focal Point, Land Mark & Vista Guidelines

Encourage

- The maintenance of internal and external vistas surrounding all focal points and landmarks.
- The preservation of all focal points and landmarks (roundabout not included!).

Discourage

- Adjacent development that might detract from the significance of any of the focal points and landmarks mentioned, or make access to them or future archaeological investigation more difficult.
- Inappropriate permanent or temporary constructions, extensions, artefacts or buildings that would interfere with the aesthetic attributes of the site and which may prejudice future access as an amenity area or for archaeological investigations.
- Any form of pond or sub-surface working that might affect the water table or aid future subsidence within an area to be directed by the County Archaeologist.

⁷ CUBE property Surveyors & Consultants (2008) Woodhall Spa Conservation Appraisal map