



Derby City Council

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Derby Conservation Areas

Darley Abbey



INTRODUCTION

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine areas of special architectural or historic interest, 'the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. These areas are called Conservation Areas.

Derby is a city of considerable historic interest and architectural merit with a range of streets and buildings spanning many centuries. In an effort to conserve important elements of our built heritage, the City Council have designated fifteen such areas. The City Centre and Friar Gate Conservation Areas are at the heart of the city centre. Seven are based on aspects of Victorian Derby (Railway, Arboretum, Little Chester, Strutts Park and Hartington Street, Highfield Cottages, Leylands Estate, Nottingham Road) and the remaining five are focused on former village centres (Darley Abbey, Mickleover, Spondon, Allestree and Markeaton). This document outlines the history and mentions some of the exceptional buildings contained within one of these areas.

There are legal requirements and constraints which apply to Conservation Areas which do not apply elsewhere and the City Council therefore must pay special attention to the 'character' and 'appearance' of these areas when exercising its planning powers. This is a positive process in which a continuing effort is being made to control the nature and scale of change.

With the exception of certain buildings, no building in a Conservation Area can be demolished without consent from the Local Authority. This is enforced to maintain some of the more ordinary buildings that nevertheless contribute a great deal to the character of the area. An application for Conservation Area Consent must be made separately from any application for planning permission for redevelopment of the site.

There is also special protection for trees within designated Conservation Areas and anyone wishing to cut down, lop, top or uproot such a tree, must, with limited exceptions, give six weeks' notice to the City Council of their intention. This is to allow the authority an opportunity to formally inspect the tree and decide, in the interest of public visual amenity, whether it is appropriate to make a Tree Preservation Order.

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Darley Abbey Conservation Area

The Darley Abbey Conservation Area, designated in 1970 and extended in 1975 and 2003, is centred around the historic village core of Darley Abbey.

The 12th century Abbey of Darley was founded on land given to the Church by Robert de Ferrers, Earl of Derby. A further piece of land, described as Little Derby, was also given by Hugh, Dean of Derby. The once prosperous Abbey was surrendered by the Abbot in 1538 under the Dissolution of 1538, and within two years, most of the abbey buildings had been dismantled and their materials used elsewhere.



Darley Abbey Public House, Darley Abbey

Of two surviving buildings, the larger, known locally as the Old Abbey Building, is thought to have been originally The Abbey Guest House. It was once threatened with demolition but has been restored privately for use as a public house. The restoration has been carried out sympathetically and without obliterating evidence of the building's chequered history. Nos. 7-9 Abbey Lane is also believed to be part of a former abbey building.

The main reason, however, for the designation of the Conservation Area is the continued existence of the majority of the industrial village built by Thomas Evans in the 18th and early 19th centuries.



Although a paper mill and a flint mill already existed on the west bank of the River Derwent, it was the construction of The Boar's Head Cotton Mill in 1783, one of a series of important industrial enterprises in the Derwent Valley, that was of major significance in the Industrial Revolution. Others were at Derby, Milford, Belper and Cromford. In 1903, the mill passed out of the hands of the Evans family and today is no longer used for cotton spinning.

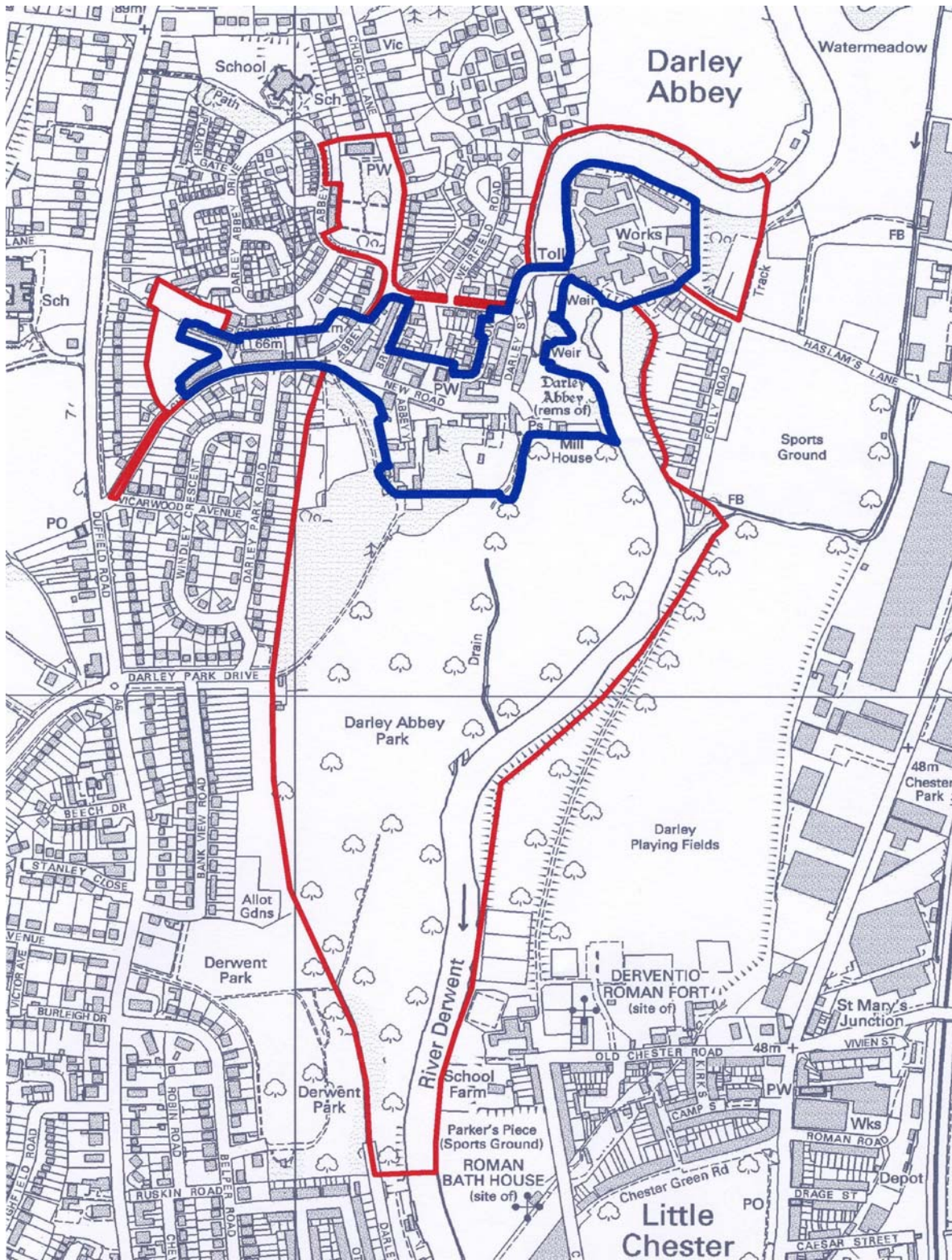
Darley Abbey Mills, Darley Abbey

To attract a labour force to the newly constructed mills, neat houses with a sewage disposal system – then a great innovation – were built. Many of these houses survive in The Square, Darley Street, Brick Row and Lavender Row and form the core of a desirable residential area.

The school erected in 1826 at the end of Brick Row was the direct result of the altruistic attitude of the Evans family in providing for its workforce. The Church of St Matthew, just outside the Conservation Area, built to the designs of Moses Wood of Nottingham in 1818-19 also reflects the benevolence of the Evans's towards the inhabitants of Darley Abbey.

The boundary of the Darley Abbey Conservation Area was extended in 2003 following further research into the historic importance of the settlement as part of [The Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site](#). For a full and detailed Conservation Appraisal of Darley Abbey, please [Click here](#). There is also a book review of "[The Derwent Valley Mills & their Communities](#)".

Darley Abbey Conservation Area (as extended)



Proposed Boundary **Current Boundary**

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