

5.6 Modern Shaftesbury (1946- Present Day)

5.6.1 Historical Summary

The period after the end of the Second World War was a time of considerable change for Shaftesbury. There was major suburban expansion to the east and a new by-pass meant that through traffic no longer needed to negotiate the narrow streets of the town centre. The population of the town grew significantly, particularly during the 1980s, and is now more than double the pre-war population with 7090 inhabitants in 2006.

In 1974, Shaftesbury lost its borough status through local government reorganisation and became part of North Dorset District Council.

The construction of the by-pass along Christy's Lane in the 1970s altered the flow of traffic through Shaftesbury and helped open up the eastern side of the town promoting the expansion of the town on the east side of Christy's Lane for both industrial and housing estates. This expansion initially began in 1963 with the development of a laundry and egg-packing factory east of the junction of Christy's lane and Wincombe Lane. Further residential and industrial development followed, with the period of greatest expansion being in the 1980s.

Shaftesbury has continued to function as the main shopping and service centre for the surrounding area. The market itself dwindled and the covered market house became disused, later becoming Shaftesbury Arts Centre. The fortnightly cattle market was moved to new purpose-built premises on Cockram's Field after the war. The cattle market still operates today. Tourism has become a more important part of the town's economy.

There has been a resurgence of light industry in Shaftesbury in the post-war period with the opening of two industrial estates at Longmead

and Wincombe.

The rise in population of the town and its increasing birth rate led to the expansion of the Westminster Memorial Hospital. Castle Hill House was acquired and converted into a separate maternity unit. The workhouse or 'Alcester House' was used to house chronically sick patients until it was demolished in 1949 and additional wards were built on to the main hospital instead. The gas works were demolished and replaced by a new ambulance station.

The 1944 Education Act led to significant change in the education provision in the town. The Boys Grammar School and Girls High School became free to local pupils and a new Secondary Modern School was built on Mampitts Lane immediately after the war. The old National schools continued to be used for primary education until 1963 when a new Primary School was built on Mampitts Lane. In 1983, comprehensive education was introduced and a new co-educational upper school built on the playing fields of the Grammar School on Salisbury Street. A new Middle School was built on Wincombe Lane. The school system was reorganised in 2004, which saw the closure of the Middle School, which then reopened as the new primary school and the Mampitts Road school was closed.

5.6.2 Town Layout

There have been some major changes in road layout in the second half of the 20th century. The most obvious is the creation of the bypass and new sections of the A30 trunk road to the east of the town. The new bypass along Christy's Lane included in the construction of the large Ivy Cross and Royal Chase roundabouts (Figure 44). Another small roundabout was added on Christy's Lane as part of the



Figure 42: Christy's Lane.



Figure 43: Suburban houses on Imber Road, built c. 2000 on estate east of Christy's Lane.

Tesco supermarket development. The junction of the Upper Blandford Road was altered and many of the other roads in this area had altered priorities. The road layout in the historic core remained relatively untouched.

The biggest change in the settlement of Shaftesbury was the large increase in suburban housing, particularly to the east of Christy's Lane, but also around Enmore Green and to the south of the town. The former workhouse was also replaced by a modern housing estate. Within the historic core of the town, there was infilling of historic plots and a supermarket built on the former cattle market site.

The area of Barton Hill along the west side of Christy's Lane was developed for recreational and commercial use with a new cattle market, football ground and supermarket. To the east of Christy's Lane are extensive housing estates, built around a complex network of curvilinear access roads and culs-de-sac, interspersed with industrial estates and schools.

5.6.3 Modern Town Plan Components

The main plan components of the twentieth century town are shown on Figure 46 and are listed below.

1. *Bimport*. A small number of detached houses were built to the south of Bimport and along Love Lane, infilling some of the larger vacant properties.

2. *The Abbey*. A purpose-built museum was constructed on site during the 1990s and is now one of the major tourist attractions in Shaftesbury.

5. *St Peter's Church*. St Peter's was neglected for much of the 20th century. It was renovated as the town's main Parish Church in 1974, following the deconsecration of Holy Trinity Church.

6. *Wesleyan Methodist Chapel*. There has been no significant change to the Methodist Chapel



Figure 44: View towards Royal Chase roundabout with the former Cann school on left.

during the second half of the 20th century except for a minor extension to the north wing.

7. *High Street*. The High Street frontage was fully developed by the early 20th century and there has been no significant change in the modern era. The covered market house became a cinema for a time. There has only been limited development in back plots and many burgage boundaries remain intact. Those modern developments that have taken place have been contained within a single burgage plot as at High House Court, for example. Other developments have seen the renovation of historic buildings as shopping arcades.

8. *Barton Hill*. Barton Hill House has been extensively extended as a boarding house for Shaftesbury School (Figure 45).

10. *St James Church*. There have been no significant changes to St James' Church during the second half of the 20th century.

11. *St James Suburb*. This area has witnessed a significant amount of infilling of back plots and paddocks with modern suburban housing and short terraces during the late 20th century. Ratcliffe's Garden is a cul-de-sac of 13 detached bungalows. A short row of historic buildings was demolished to make way for modern semi-detached and terraced housing at the junction of St James Street and White Hart Lane. Modern large detached and semi-detached houses have also been built in vacant plots along Tanyard Lane.

12. *St Rumbold's Church*. St Rumbold's ceased to be the parish church of Cann in 1971 when it briefly became the chapel of the Grammar School. When the Grammar School became a comprehensive in 1983 the church became the Upper School Arts Centre (Innes 1992, 107).

13. *Cann*. The character of the historic settlement of Cann at Butts Knap and along the Salisbury and Blandford roads has been significantly altered by the major rearrangement and



Figure 45: Modern school extensions to Barton Hill House.

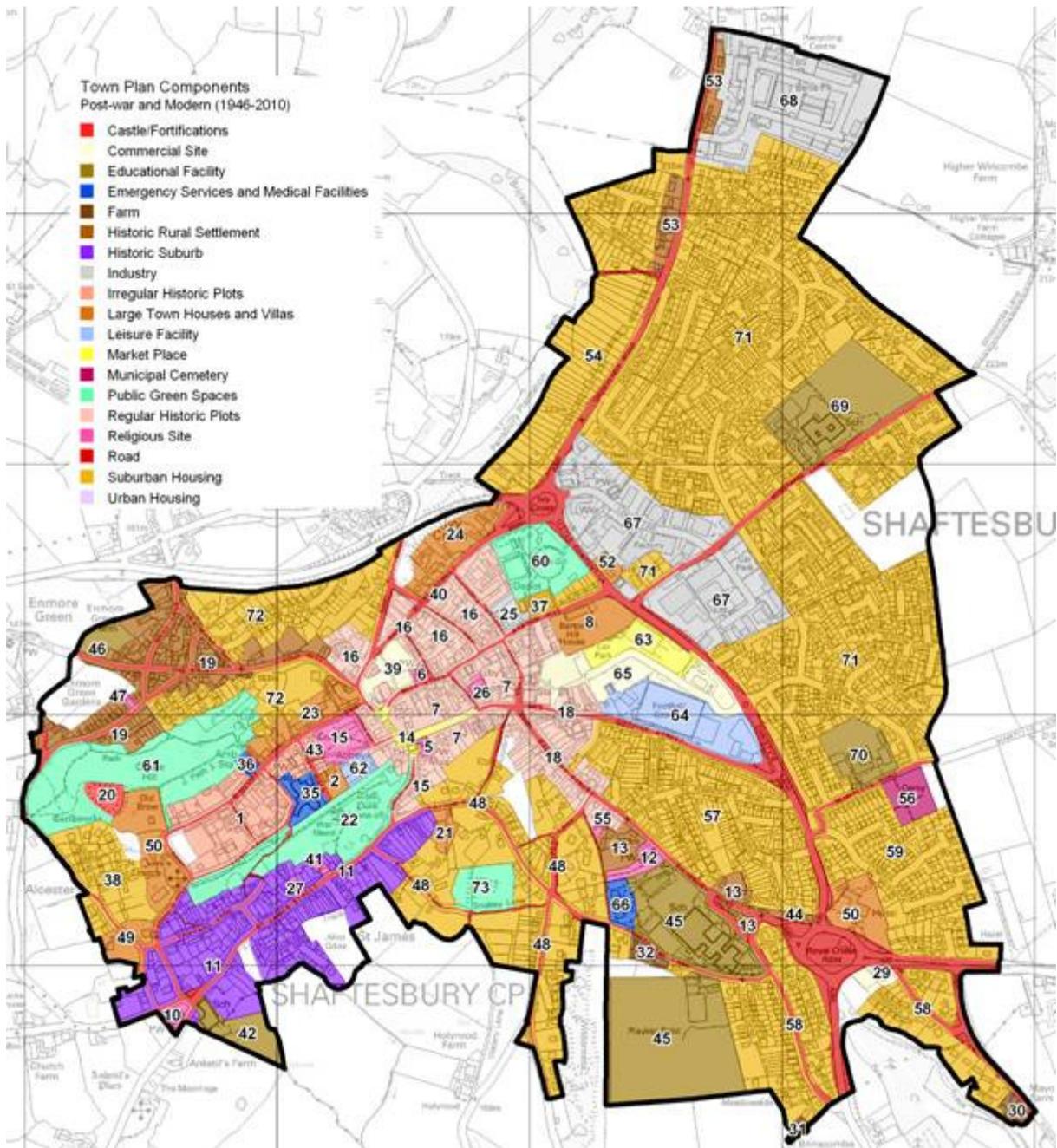


Figure 46: Shaftesbury Modern Town Plan Components

realignment of the road and the construction of the Royal Chase roundabout in the 1970s. Several buildings have been demolished.

14. *The Market.* Apart from the paving of the roads, there has been no significant change to the market area during the 20th century.

15. *Holy Trinity Church.* Holy Trinity Church was the main parish church of Shaftesbury until 1974, when structural problems resulted in the decision to transfer the parish church to St Peter's and deconsecrate it. The building was retained with its churchyard and is now used as community centre and gym (Innes 1992, 107).

16. *Bell Street and Bleke Street.* This is the part

of the medieval town centre which has undergone the most modern changes. Most obvious is the car park and supermarket at the top of New Road, built on the site of the former cattle market (Figure 47). Some modern large detached buildings occupy the New Road frontage and modern infill also occupies the former back plots between Parson's Pool and Haimes Lane. There has also been some modern infill along Victoria Street. Modern urban housing also fills former historic plots on the south side of Bell Street, opposite the former malt house. The former Market House fronting on to Bell Street is now a community arts centre.

17. *Gold Hill.* Gold Hill shot to national recognition

as the subject of a Hovis advert in 1973. Its cobbled street and historic street frontage have remained largely unchanged.

18. *Salisbury Street and Coppice Street.* The street frontage of Salisbury Street at its north-west end has remained largely unchanged since the 19th century. Numbers 40-44 were demolished to provide access to a modern suburban estate behind. There is a small area of modern development on the south side of Coppice Street at Woodman Court. Both Spillers and Chubb's almshouses have been demolished and replaced with modern blocks of sheltered housing (Figure 48).

19. *Enmore Green.* Enmore Green has successfully retained its rural village character. There are two small housing estates and a few modern detached houses are dispersed among the historic buildings.

20. *Castle Hill.* Castle Hill forms part of the larger Castle Hill open space area, administered by the Town Council.

21. *Layton House.* There has been little significant change to Layton House during this period.

22. *The Park.* The Park, Park Walk and Pine Walk are a public park, administered by the Town Council. A children's playground has been built at the southern end.

23. *North Bimport.* Castle Hill House was acquired as the Maternity Unit of the hospital in 1945. The Savoy Cinema was demolished and replaced by flats in 1986.

24. *Belle Vue.* A number of new houses have been built in the gardens of the large villas along the north side of Bleke Street. The most striking is the modernist inspired Box House.

25. *Old Granary.* The old granary has been re-developed as housing, as has the row of stables to the rear.

26. *Congregational Chapel.* The chapel has

been converted into a restaurant.

27. *Friends Meeting-House.* The meeting-house became derelict by 1950. It was later renovated and is now a private dwelling.

29. *Half Moon Inn.* The inn survives, but its surroundings have been transformed by the construction of the Royal Chase roundabout. The car park has been enlarged.

30. *Mayo Farm.* The historic farm buildings survive at Mayo Farm, although a number of large modern barns have been added.

31. *Brinscombe Farm.* A significant proportion of the historic farm buildings survive at Brinscombe Farm.

32. *Hawkesdene Farm.* The historic farm buildings have been converted into dwellings and some new houses built adjacent.

35. *The Westminster Memorial Hospital.* The National Health Service was introduced in 1948 and the hospital has expanded in stages since that time.

36. *Ambulance Station.* The gas works on Bimport were demolished and replaced by an ambulance garage.

37. *Water Works.* The water works were demolished, but leaving the swimming pool. The area was redeveloped for sheltered housing and other housing was built along Barton Hill up to Christy's Lane.

38. *Shaftesbury Union Workhouse.* 'Alcester House', the former work house was demolished in 1949 and a small modern housing estate has been built on the site.

39. *The Cattle Market.* The site of the cattle market was moved to Cockram's Field in the 1960s (Figure 47) and the old site on Bell Street was developed as a supermarket and car park.

41. *St James Primitive Methodist Church.* This is no longer in use and has been converted to a



Figure 47: Bell Street Car Park, on site of former cattle market.



Figure 48: Spillers House; on the site of the former almshouse, Salisbury Street.

private dwelling.

42. *St James National School*. This school remains in use as a primary school. The school grounds were enlarged.

43. *Shaftesbury National Schools*. The schools were closed, probably in 1963, with the opening of the new primary school on Mampitts Lane. The school buildings have been converted into housing.

44. *Cann School*. The school has been converted into a private house.

45. *Shaftesbury Grammar School*. In 1983 the Grammar School was amalgamated with the Girls High School to form the comprehensive Shaftesbury School. A new school was built on the playing fields of the Grammar School. The sports field was moved to the south side of Hawkesdene Lane.

46. *Enmore Green School*. The school was amalgamated with St James in 2003. The school building has been converted into a private house.

47. *Enmore Green Methodist Chapel*. The chapel became redundant and has been converted into a private house.

48. *Layton Lane and Great Lane*. Much of the remaining frontage of the lanes has been developed mainly with detached houses set in large gardens.

49. *Alcester*. There was little major change during this period.

50. *St Johns*. There was little change during this period, though part of Old Brow is currently being developed.

51. *Belmont House*. This is now the Royal Chase Hotel.

52. *Little Content House*. There has been little change during this period, though the surroundings have been heavily transformed by the Christy's Lane bypass and the Longmead In-

dustrial Estate.

53. *Little Down*. There was some modern infill along the historic roadside settlement of Little Down. The surrounding area was completely transformed by modern suburban housing development.

54. *Ivy Cross*. The ribbon development of detached houses begun in the inter-war period was extended post-war. A small bungalow estate was built at Homefields behind the historic cottages of Little Down.

55. *St Andrew's RC Church*. A Presbytery was built to the rear of the church.

56. *Shaftesbury Municipal Cemetery*. The cemetery was expanded slightly to the east some time after the early 1970s.

57. *Old Boundary Road Housing Estate*. The council house estate at Old Boundary Road was expanded to the southeast along St Georges Road and Belmont Close in the post-war period.

58. *Cann Suburban Housing*. There was an expansion of suburban housing along both the Lower and Higher Blandford Roads at the southeastern extremity of the area.

59. *Suburban Housing South of Mampitts Lane*. The Secondary Modern School was built south of Mampitts Lane in the early post-war years. It was demolished in the 1980s and the area between Mampitts Lane and the Salisbury road was developed for housing.

60. *Recreation Ground*. The area of the recreation ground was truncated by the new bypass development of the 1970s. It still has a bowling green and a skateboard park has been added. Daly House has been built over the northwest corner. The former allotments along Barton Hill were developed for housing.

61. *Castle Hill*. There was little significant change during this period.

62. *Abbey Gardens and Museum*. The abbey



Figure 49: Shaftesbury Cattle Market, Cockram's Field.



Figure 50: Tesco Supermarket.

gardens and museum remain open to the public.

63. *Cattle Market, Cockram's Field.* The Cattle Market moved to a new site off Christy's Lane in the early 1950s (Figure 49).

64. *Football Ground.* Shaftesbury Football Club's ground was established on Cockram's Field in 1974, adjacent to the cricket ground. The football ground was rearranged following the construction of the Tesco supermarket in 2004.

65. *Supermarket.* A Tesco supermarket, car park and petrol station was constructed on Cockram's Field in 2004 (Figure 50).

66. *Abbey View Medical Centre.* A large medical centre was built adjacent to the Shaftesbury School site in the 1980s or 1990s.

67. *Longmead Industrial Estate.* Initial development took the form of an egg packing station and laundry at the junction of Christy's and Wincombe Lanes during the 1960s, which has subsequently expanded into the present industrial and commercial estate (Figure 51). It includes a fire station, veterinary centre, Post Office sorting office and filling station.

68. *Wincombe Business Park.* This modern industrial and commercial estate was built at the northeastern limit of the urban area hard against the county boundary (Figure 52).

69. *Shaftesbury C of E (VC) Primary School.* In 1983 the King Alfred's Middle School was opened on Wincombe Lane, and closed in 2004 following reorganisation of the local school system. The buildings were refurbished and it reopened as Shaftesbury C of E (VC) Primary School in 2005.

70. *Shaftesbury Primary School.* A Primary School was built on Mampitts Lane in 1967. It became a First School in 1983. It moved to the site of the former Middle School in Wincombe Lane in 1983. The school on Mampitts Lane has

been demolished and the site redeveloped for housing.

71. *Suburban Housing Estates East of Christy's Lane.* A series of council and private housing estates were built on land to the east of Christy's Lane. The earliest housing was built along Grosvenor Road in the 1960s and much of the rest of the area north of Wincombe Lane was developed in the 1970s and 1980s. The area south of Wincombe Lane dates from the 1980s and from the late 1990s/early 2000s.

72. *Enmore Green Modern Housing.* Two small areas of modern housing lie between the village of Enmore Green and the town of Shaftesbury, either side of Tout Hill. The northern estate essentially comprises Yeatman's Close, a cul-de-sac of detached houses. The southern estate comprises Castle Hill Close, Byzant Court and a few large detached houses on the slopes north of Bimport.

73. *Snakey Lane.* The former abbey fishponds are now a public open area administered by the Town Council.



Figure 51: Longmead Industrial Estate.



Figure 52: Wincombe Business Park.