

Repton and Milton's inheritance:

Introduction:

By their physical presence, their historical importance or evidence of the development of the community, some structures, boundaries and geographical and geological features are important in helping to define the character and to understand the origins of a settlement.

Nostalgia alone is not enough to argue for preservation as it diminishes rapidly with time and passing generations. However age is a property that cannot be replaced and if members of this community or others with interest in the heritage these entities embody, find them of value or will in future regret their passing, then it is worthwhile identifying them and their contribution with the intention of offering them some protection.

1 Archaeologically sensitive Repton and Milton

1.1 Background:

Repton is an ancient settlement with evidence in flints and associated debitage of Mesolithic and Neolithic activity dating back some 5000 years. Work in 2012 preparatory to the building of the Repton School Science Priory found Roman or Romano British ditches and Roman pottery sherds indicating 4th century Roman or Romano British occupation in the area – supported by a Diocletian silver coin and Roman pottery fragments found in a number of other locations probably resulting from manuring fields with the contents of middens. There are references to a barrow or mound on Askew Hill which may have been of the Bronze Age.

The Science Priory work also identified Anglo-Saxon pottery, metal working evidence and ditches – one of which could well have been the circular eaves drainage ditch around a large circular Anglo-Saxon hall. If so, it would suggest a settlement perhaps of some 30 dwellings. This settlement may well date from 550 AD onwards.

By 650 AD Repton was already a Mercian royal place and it was here in 653 that Paeda, son of King Penda, returned with his bride and 4 priests to embark on a campaign of Christian conversion. Archaeological rescue digs prior to the building of the telephone exchange and the split level houses on the Glebe Garth also identified Anglo-Saxon finds and stonework thought probably to originate from the Anglo-Saxon monastery in Repton. Founded by St Werburgh about 660 AD, this famous and important double monastery was the resting place of St Wystan and some of Mercia's Kings.

The Viking attack in 873/4 AD via the Old Trent Water resulted in the destruction of the monastery and the incorporation of St Wystan's church into their defences. While the size of this "Great Heathern Army" is debateable, it is unlikely that they could have fitted into this defended space. So the areas around the church – including the river flood plain – are all candidates for their winter occupation.

Following the Norman Conquest, the Earl of Chester built a Motte and Bailey castle roughly where Repton Hall is. This land and the associated mill were soon given to the Augustinian Canons at Calke for a Priory which

survived until the dissolution in 1538 and the subsequent destruction of its church and related buildings. The mill remained in use until at least the 1600s.

Medieval pottery sherds and evidence of ridge and furrow ploughing over most of the fields surrounding the core of the village suggest an extensive medieval settlement. There was a market in Repton from the early 1300s – which may well be from when The Cross dates.

Milton and Repton are, and always have been, part of the same parish but with separate identities and characteristics. They share the entry in Domesday and it is likely that one of the 2 mills mentioned was at Milton. With St Wystan's as the Minster Church to the Walecross Wapentake, Repton was for a long time bureaucratically important, and with the presence of Repton School, had higher proportion of professional and well educated men than usual. Repton had maltings as well as the usual farms, shoemakers, basket weavers, tailors and the like, while Milton was very much more agriculturally based.

Milton is a typical linear medieval hamlet, almost certainly started as a small Anglo-Saxon settlement coeval with Repton – with narrow medieval field divisions still running back from the main street which runs parallel with the Milton Brook that meanders along the bottom of a broad based valley shaped by glacial action. Evidence of this is found in the large "Erratic" stone now standing in the front garden of Old Brook farm, Milton, whose composition is found nowhere else in Derbyshire.

The only evidence of any Roman presence is a 3rd century coin, minted in Lyons, discovered at a depth of 4 feet when foundations were dug for the pumping station on the Foremark Road in 1934.

The brook supported a water mill and there are remains of the leat to the mill pond and the shell of the Mill building (now incorporated into the Mill's house). The present day buildings show evidence of multiple alterations and it seems very likely that buildings were rebuilt over the centuries and it is therefore possible the site may date from late Saxon times. In the late 19th century Mill Farm became Fishery Farm and the remains of the fishery stews are still visible.

A charter of 1271 reveals that one of the eight chapels of St Wystan's Church was situated at Milton. The presumption is that the site of this medieval chapel is Common Farm, the Orchard of which stands adjacent to the floor of the demolished 'Smithy'. It is not certain that this building, whose surviving floor maybe interpreted as indicating a two roomed medieval dwelling, was used as anything other than a stable. Although the hamlet did at one point have a brazier, and there was evidence of burning found in the buildings at Mill Farm, it is not certain there was a blacksmith. The cottage opposite the 'Smithy' site (Blacksmith's Cottage) has revealed a cruck beam.

Primarily a farming hamlet, following the enclosure agreement of 1756 Milton was also producing cheeses with the four largest farms all having their own presses (the two stones from the one at Brook Farm still stands within its curtilage) and according to Farey there was tanning possible at Old Post Office Farm which had both a slaughterhouse for fallen stock and a shop for the sale of meat for animal consumption only. The bricked up shop window can still be clearly be identified.

On the outskirts of the hamlet is the Sawmill. Although the mill and the building housing it are quite new, the buildings standing adjacent to it on the site are older and industrial in nature.

1.2 The Anglo Saxon Monastery and Royal Centre:

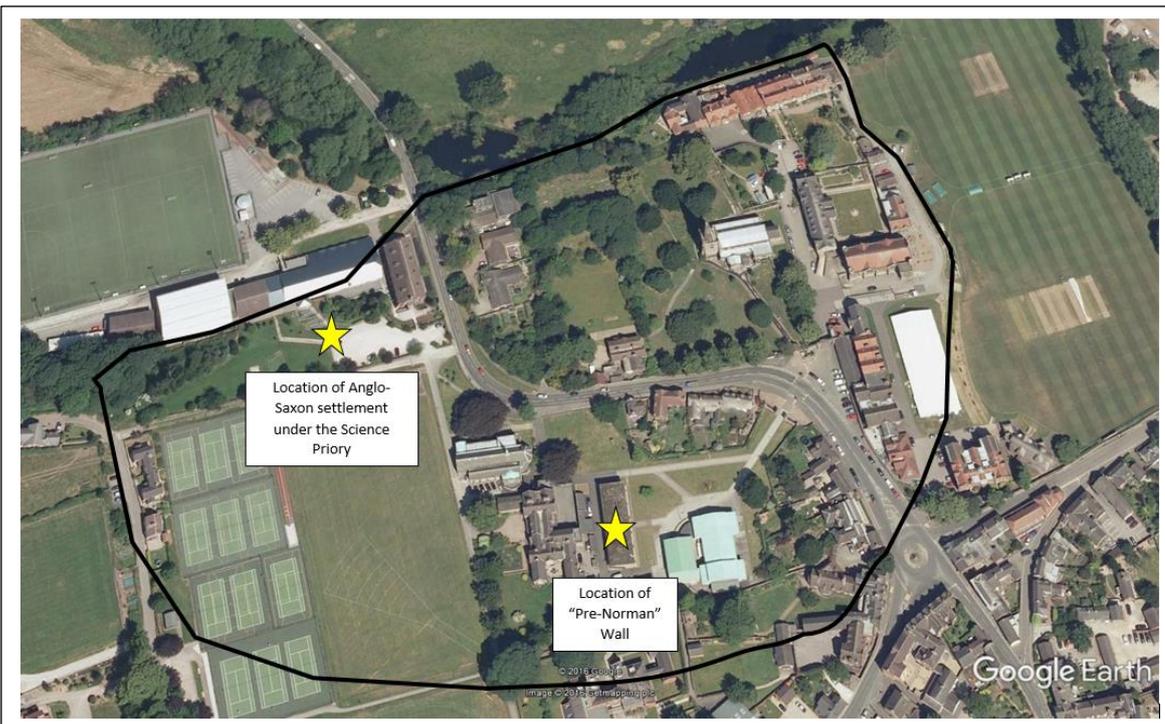
Ongoing investigations by Bristol University suggest that the Monastery's boundary was probably roughly where B5008 runs west in front of St Wystan's turning north where the modern road runs between the two Bunter Sandstone bluffs towards Willington, then east along the escarpment south of the Old Trent Water to



a point immediately beyond Repton Hall where it runs south along the top of the noticeable drop to the paddock and Repton Brook.

1.3 The Anglo Saxon Village

The archaeological work on the Science Priory indicates that there was likely to be a significant Anglo-Saxon settlement west of the Monastery site. An archaeological watch when the new Maths and Physical Education block was built near the 400 Hall identified the foundations of a wall thought to be pre-Norman (i.e. Anglo-Saxon). So there is an archaeologically sensitive area to the west and south of the potential monastery site.



Although part is terraced to make sports fields and tennis courts, there may still be archaeological evidence present.

1.4 The Viking encampment

The previous winter (872/3), the Great Heathen Army had occupied a site of some 26 hectares. On the basis that could not have fitted into the D-shaped fortified area identified by the Biddles, then there are a number of candidates for the location of the camp.

- One view held by some archaeologists is that they were living in islands across the Old Trent Water (then the main channel). It is believed that there were several channels and there is good evidence for them from maps, documents and the palaeochannels.
- Another possibility is that they occupied the Anglo-Saxon village and the monastery buildings
- And a third is that they were based on high ground around the enclosure – Parsons Hills, Askew Hill...

All three could apply.



Of possible Viking origin is The Buries – a low rectangular mound close to the river bridge. Once considered a Roman fort or timber castle, it's most plausible uses are as a cattle flood refuge, a dock or rabbit warren pillow mound. Archaeological evidence (Charles 2nd coin and pottery) suggests a medieval use or construction.

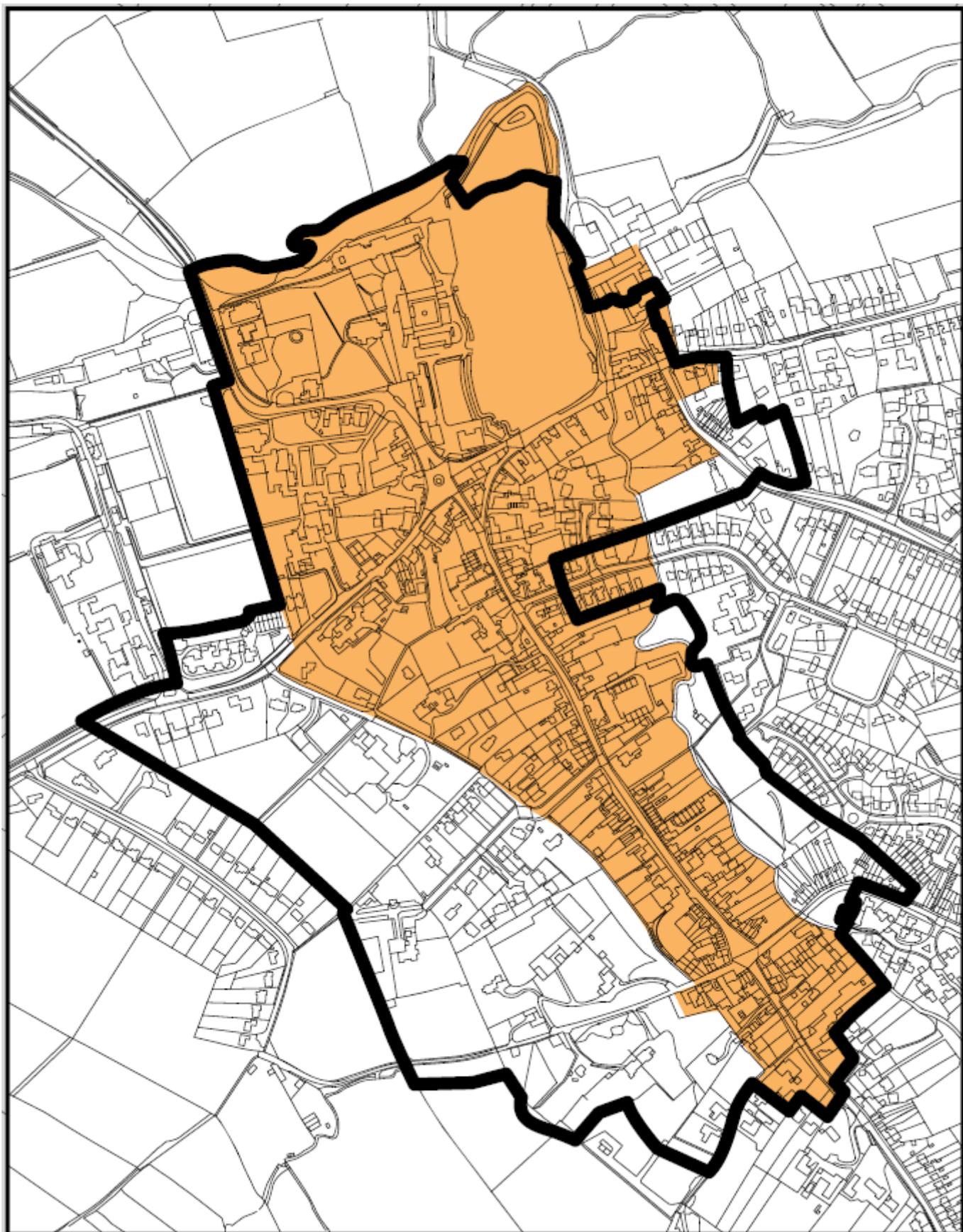
1.5 The Medieval Priory

The Priory site is well defined by the Priory Wall. Although repaired and rebuilt continuously right up to the present time, its footprint is likely to be unchanged – save the SE corner where the brook originally entered the site where a small adjustment to the wall was made in 1905.



1.6 The Medieval Village of Repton

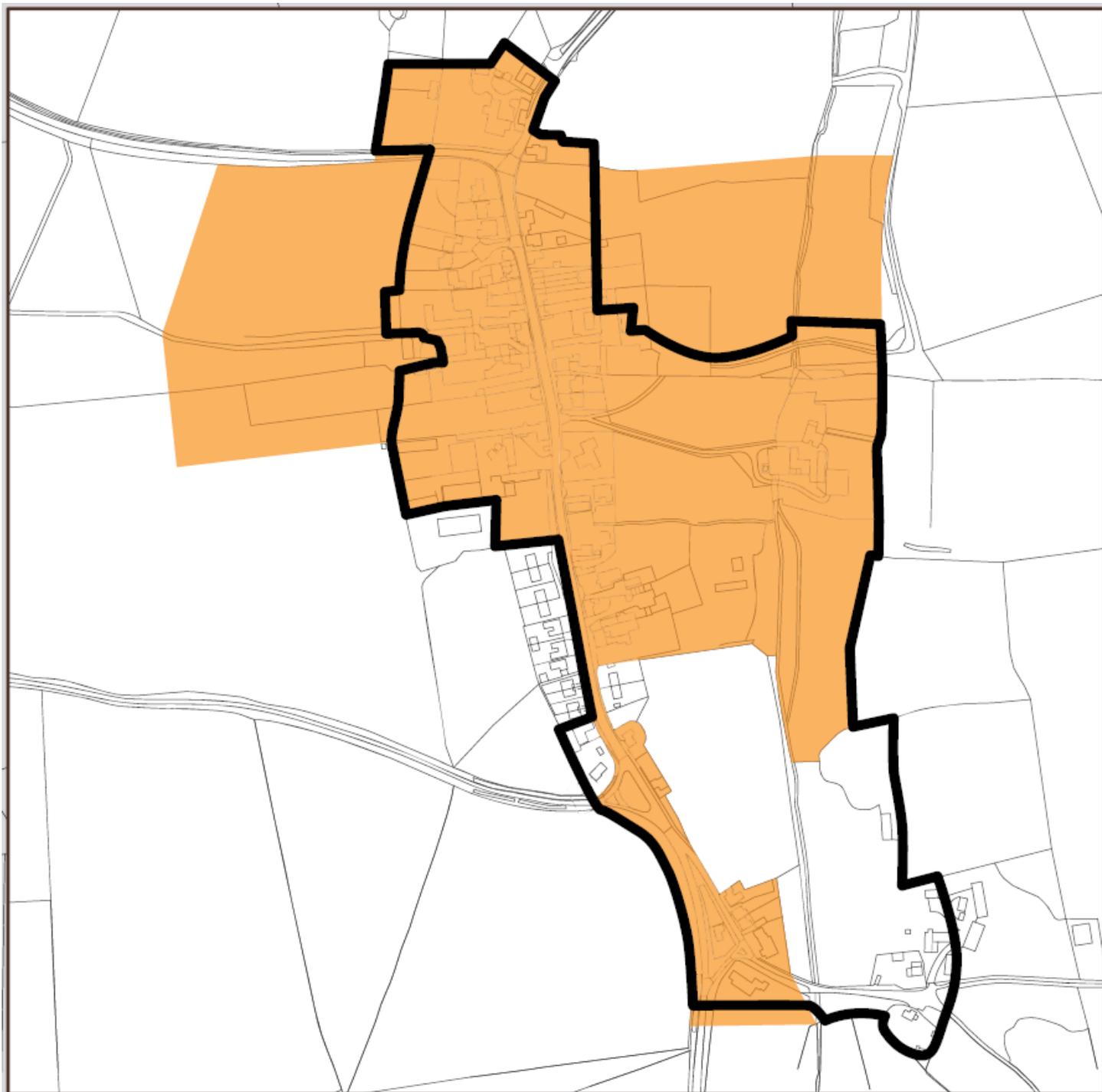
The Conservation Area Design Statement adopted in 2013 includes a map of the area of high archaeological potential. ■ It includes most of the early sites (but predated the work on the Science Priory) and includes the sites likely to be of Medieval importance. To this should be added St Ann's and St Thomas' holy wells on Parson's Fields and a medieval fish trap in the course of the old Trent Water and possibly the Buries although this could be earlier.



1.7) Milton's archaeological potential

Milton is a typical linear medieval village which probably started as a small Anglo-Saxon settlement coeval with Repton and still with narrow field divisions running back from the main road. Evidence of the water mill powered by the brook running parallel to the road and its leet and dam which may have Saxon origins. Evidence of later fishponds on the brook and the floor and possible hearth of a stable and earlier blacksmiths shop opposite the village hall.

An area of archaeological potential  was defined in the Milton Conservation Area Character Statement of 2013:



2) Listed Structures:

Buildings and other structures with acknowledged importance historically, architecturally or aesthetically are listed on the National Heritage List for England. (<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results?q=repton&page=1>)

There are 53 entries for Repton and Milton:

Grade I

The Old Priory, attached walls and gate pillars,
Priory Gateway (Arch) Precinct walls, "Tithe" barn, and the Lodge.
Repton Hall with prior Overton's tower,
Remains of Priory Church and chapter block, Repton School.
Market Cross
Church of St Wystan.

Grade II

1 High Street, Repton
Willington Bridge,
31 Burton Rd,
Brook Lynn 29 Brook End,
Loscoe farmhouse,
Kirby Holt, Milton - plus walls and railings,
Easton House, The Pastures.
Engine House at Easton House, The Pastures,
Brook Farm Dovecote, Milton
100- 106 High St.
Tudor Lodge, High St.
46 High St. Repton
Lawn Bridge.
Weir and water management system, Red Lane Repton (Park Pond)
Repton School Chapel, Willington Rd.
Repton School war memorial,
The Stone House, 21A Main St
Post Office 3 Main St.
The Grange, 16 Main St.
Entrance gate to The Grange
Mill Farmhouse, Main St Milton.
Brook Farm House, Main St, Milton
The Farm - House and attached walls and railings, Main St, Milton
Common Farm House, Main St Milton. (Likely site of one of the Chapels of Ease attached to St Wystan's)
Brook End House, 1, Monsom Lane.
United Reformed Church, Pinfold Lane.
Ruin of Stable in Repton Park,
Danesgate, Well Lane, Repton
Pears School, Repton School
1 Willington Rd, Repton
Gymnasium and attached gates, Repton School.
St Wystans, 30 High St, Repton.
The Highways, 34 High St, Repton
Hazeldene, 45 High St Repton.

3 and 5, The Cross, Repton.
 Homelands 76 High St Repton.
 27 – 29 High St, Repton
 The Hayes, Knights lane, Repton.
 Gate Piers Repton School, Willington Rd
 The Thatched House, 5 Willington Rd.
 10 Burton Rd (Recognised by Barbara Hutton as the remnants of a 14C Aisled hall)
 Lychgate and churchyard wall at St Wystan’s Church.
 The Croft, Bursar’s office and attached gate piers to west.
 11 The cross Repton.
 K6 telephone kiosk, Main St Milton.
 Dovecote at ridgeway farm
 Ridgeway Farm House

3) Other structures of merit:

These are structures not officially listed, but which form part of the heritage of the settlement which would be missed if lost. They need not be particularly old, but are likely to have some heritage value when considered from a point in the future.

The Buries earthwork

33 Pinfold Lane – Derby Buildings Record 31

Holly Bank Cottage, Broomhills lane - Derby Buildings Record 166.

The Boot Inn Boot Hill, Repton.

The Red Lion Burton Rd, Repton

The Bulls head, High St Repton

The Mount Pleasant Inn, Mill Hill, Repton.

Swan Inn, Milton



Old pubs which have played important parts in the social life of the villages

Brook Farm, Brook End, Repton - built in three distinct phases. The old structure at the back which is the old two up and two down, then a later middle section addition, followed by the much later front section. In the attic rooms there were/ are impressive timbers which came from an old ship and a pane of glass which was etched with the name of a lady who once lodged in the attic many many years ago.

Brook End Farm, probably much rebuilt about the turn of the century (1900) but on the site of a much earlier Farm building.

Bank House farmhouse, Main Street Repton

The Court House, Brook End. Repton - when the Petty Sessions moved out of the pubs

The Old Mitre, Burton Rd. (Old Inn/malt House)

Holly Bank, Main St Repton

Methodist Chapel Well lane (9 Well Lane)

5 and 7 Well lane, Repton. The last remaining small cottages and once housing a school room upstairs.

Bramcote Lodge, Milton – once home to the Burdett Estate Agent

42 High St – Repton – Taylors Top Shop, one-time site of the Institute and the post office.

Milton Village hall/ Mission hall.

45 Main Street, Milton which though recently extended appears on the 1829 map and appears to have a cruck beam.

Milton Sawmill i.e. old buildings, Sawmills Cottage and 24 Main Street both of which are 3 bedroomed detached buildings which have been little altered over the past 70 years plus and appear on the 1829 map.

11-15 Main St., Milton – terraced cottages that were once the site of an old barn

Bower Hill, Well lane, Repton.

Morley’s Yard, Main St Repton – one of the last of such yards or crofts at right angles to the main road.

Numbers 108 - 112 Main St Repton – the other remaining little yard or croft at right angles to the main road.
Wood End Mission, Wood End, Repton. (Now converted to a dwelling)

Laurel Hill, Main St Repton.

Main St Mill, Repton - Likely to date before 1606. This portion of Long St was once Mill St. The Mill has now gone but the site still reveals the leet, the bypass channels and the bridge into the mill yard.

WWII Blacker Bombard spigot mount beside the bridge at Repton's Main St Mill. The other at Jeremiah's walk has been recently re-instated, having been rescued by the builders of the Science priory.

WWII Pill box on the Somersgate development, Repton. All that remains of what is believed to have been a WWII searchlight site with barrage balloon tether point and wooden accommodation building.

The elevated pavement in Monsom Lane (Meadow Lane) Repton.

The Gas House, 39 Main St Repton - last remnants of the Repton Light coke and gas works.

Repton Village School – now Repton School's Art department. Built with the assistance of Repton School to provide an education to local children and thus release Repton School from that obligation in the will of Sir John Port. Upon the new school building on Springfield Rd, the old building reverted to Repton School.

Goodall's Garage (frontage) now Mercia Court.

4) Open spaces:

The parish of Repton includes the village of Milton, the Village of Repton and two hamlets – Wood End (also known as Park End) and Mill Hill now both generally regarded as integral with Repton. However they were separate entities and very much self-contained communities. Wood End was known as Bottom Repton and folk living there rarely went up to Top Repton since they had local shops, a pub and Chapel and had to travel no farther than The Square to find a bakers. They remain defined by open spaces. The land (1) to the west of Mount Pleasant Rd separates the Mount Pleasant Pub and the small community of farm cottages that once served Ridgeway farm. The open fields (2) east and west of Main St (in front of the old depot site) and south of the Mill footpath define the separation of Wood End. The modern houses are rebuilds of a row of early cottages mostly demolished in the early 70s.



A third open space between Pinfold lane and Brook House separates and protects the linear structure (originally Medieval) of the village along Long Street (now High St.) from the modern developments on the eastern side and secures the remaining vestiges of a settlement where the agricultural characteristics were dominant with narrow strips of fields at right angles to the main road and open areas beyond.



Repton and Milton are separate villages with distinctly different characteristics and backgrounds and social groupings and activities and although families have moved between the villages over the centuries, this distinction is physically preserved by the fields between the two villages. They also preserve the historic linear structure of Milton and its agricultural past. The gap is sufficient for Repton to be largely out of sight from Milton and vice-versa.

Similarly the land to the east of the village preserves the distinction from Foremarke – very much a Burdett Estate village – and very different in heritage terms from Milton. Again the villages are currently out of sight of each other. The line of the brook hosts the site of the mill, leet, and fishponds – all of heritage value.

