



4.3 Standish in the 18th and 19th Centuries

The basic structure of the village can certainly be traced back as far as 1763 from a plan of the Standish Hall Estate held by the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust Heritage Service.



Extract from the 1763 estate map

It has not been possible to locate plans of an earlier date. The 1763 map, shows a cluster of buildings around Market Street, Market Place and the northern end of Church Street.

High Street is indicated but has little frontage development. Fields abut onto its west side with some scattered buildings possibly farmsteads. The lack of early development centred around the cross roads and the straight and wide alignment of High Street suggest that this road was a form of by-pass

constructed as part of the turnpiking of the road north. This occurred as early as 1727 with the establishment of the Wigan –Preston (South of Yarrow) Trust to manage and maintain the present A49 and A5106 roads. (Webb, Images of England).

High Street is thus quite different in character from the other village streets in that it is relatively straight and wide in comparison to the narrower winding route via Church Street, Market Place and Pole Street. These contrasts continue to influence the character and appearance of the conservation area today.

Two fairs were recorded in 1779; one on St.Peter's Day, Jun.29th and the other on St.Cecilia's Day, Nov.29th, the latter being for horses, horned cattle and toys. Porteus believes this fair was probably founded by Cecilia daughter of Ralph Standish (d. 1756) who married William Towneley and who held Standish manor until 1778. (The 1763 map, opposite, is a plan of the estate belonging to Mrs.Towneley). Porteus comments that the market place was mentioned in 1792 where tradition recalled that a butter market was once held. Standish Manorial Court continued to function until well into the 18thC. The courthouse was located to the rear of the Eagle and Child Inn, Market Place.



Standish –a colliery village

Coal reserves in the Standish area had been exploited from as early as 1500 at Welch Whittle and at Shevington on the Standish Hall estate in the 17th and 18th C. Porteus refers to the rich veins of coal in this township having been continuously worked from the 1730s. He mentions a reference to coal pits near Standish Hall in 1653. The exploitation of local coal reserves went hand in hand with improvements in communications initially by the canalisation of the River Douglas in 1742, then by the Leeds and Liverpool canal from 1772. Mineral railways linked the various collieries to the canal for example at Shevington. From the opening of the Wigan- Preston railway in 1838 the collieries became linked to the main network. Five collieries at Standish are referred to in 1851.

The transition from rural settlement to mining village that took place during the 19thC is suggested in a discourse by local historian and benefactor *Mr.J.M. Ainscough. Writing in 1911, he referred to 'quaint old thatched cottages in Church Street, Preston Road and in the Grove with their old fashioned gardens' having given place to 'new bricks and mortar. The old hand loom weaving shop at the corner of Squire's Hey has been pulled down and commodious offices for the Urban District Council have taken its place. The old Court house still remains (to the rear of the former Eagle and Child Inn, Market Place,) but the small triangular green in front of it with its overhanging beech tree has disappeared.'

He refers to the 'handsome Wesleyan Chapel with a trimly kept foreground' replacing a former marl kiln pit.

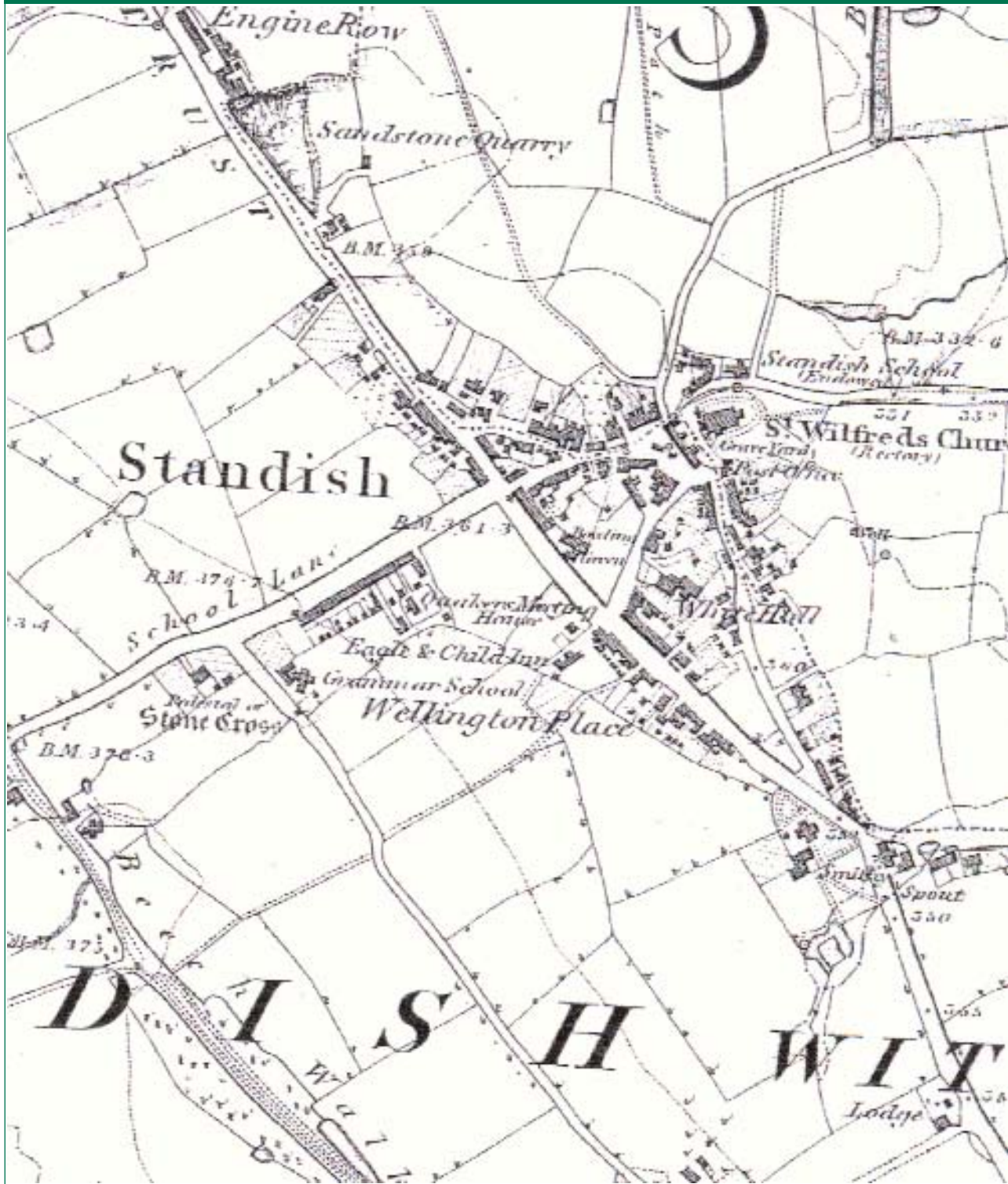
* Quoted in Standish Eighty Years of Change ,S.Aspinall 1981.

1845 OS (Plan 8)

The first edition OS 1845, shows the street layout in the centre little changed from the 1763 estate map. The village is still a small nucleated settlement surrounded by agricultural land. Buildings are clustered around Market Place, Market Street, Church Street and Pole Street and some limited frontage development on both sides of High Street south of Cross Street. No buildings are shown south west of the cross roads but there is built frontage on both sides of Preston Road between the cross roads and Pole Street. A bowling green is indicated on the north side of Cross Street. The Eagle and Child Inn is shown to the rear of High Street west side. This name is normally associated with the 17thC inn located in Market Place and may be an anomaly of the 1845 map. Market Place is also the location of a row of cottages situated immediately in front of the Church. These were known locally as 'Spite Row.' Beyond the village core, isolated groups of cottages form the beginnings of ribbon development notably 'Engine Row' on Preston Road. A further group of cottages are shown on the south side of School Lane near the grammar school.

Plan 8 Extract of 1845 Ordnance Survey

Based on the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Wigan MBC Local Authority Licence number: 100019578. 2006





1892 OS (Plan 9)

The impact of the industrial revolution upon the form of the settlement becomes more evident on the next edition OS of 1892. Ribbon development in the form of terraces of worker's cottages stretches northwards on Preston Road, whilst infilling again mainly by small cottages is evident in Church Street and the other streets which form the village core. Many of these cottages remain today, some converted to business use. It is interesting to note that even by the late 19th C, expansion had taken the form of intensification within the basic plan rather than by the laying out of new streets. Open fields still abut onto the backs of properties east of Church Street, north of Pole Street and Market Street. The presence of mining in the area is indicated by the appearance on the 1892 map of the mineral railway running at the back of High Street. Almond's Brewery is shown on land to the north west of the cross roads. The Wesleyan Methodists occupied the former Quaker Meeting House at Quaker's Yard off School Lane. Signs of urban administration include the presence of a Police Station (High Street) and Local Board Offices (Market Street). Education is represented by a grammar school at School Lane and a junior school opposite the Church on Rectory Lane.

4.4 20th Century developments

1909 OS (Plan 10)

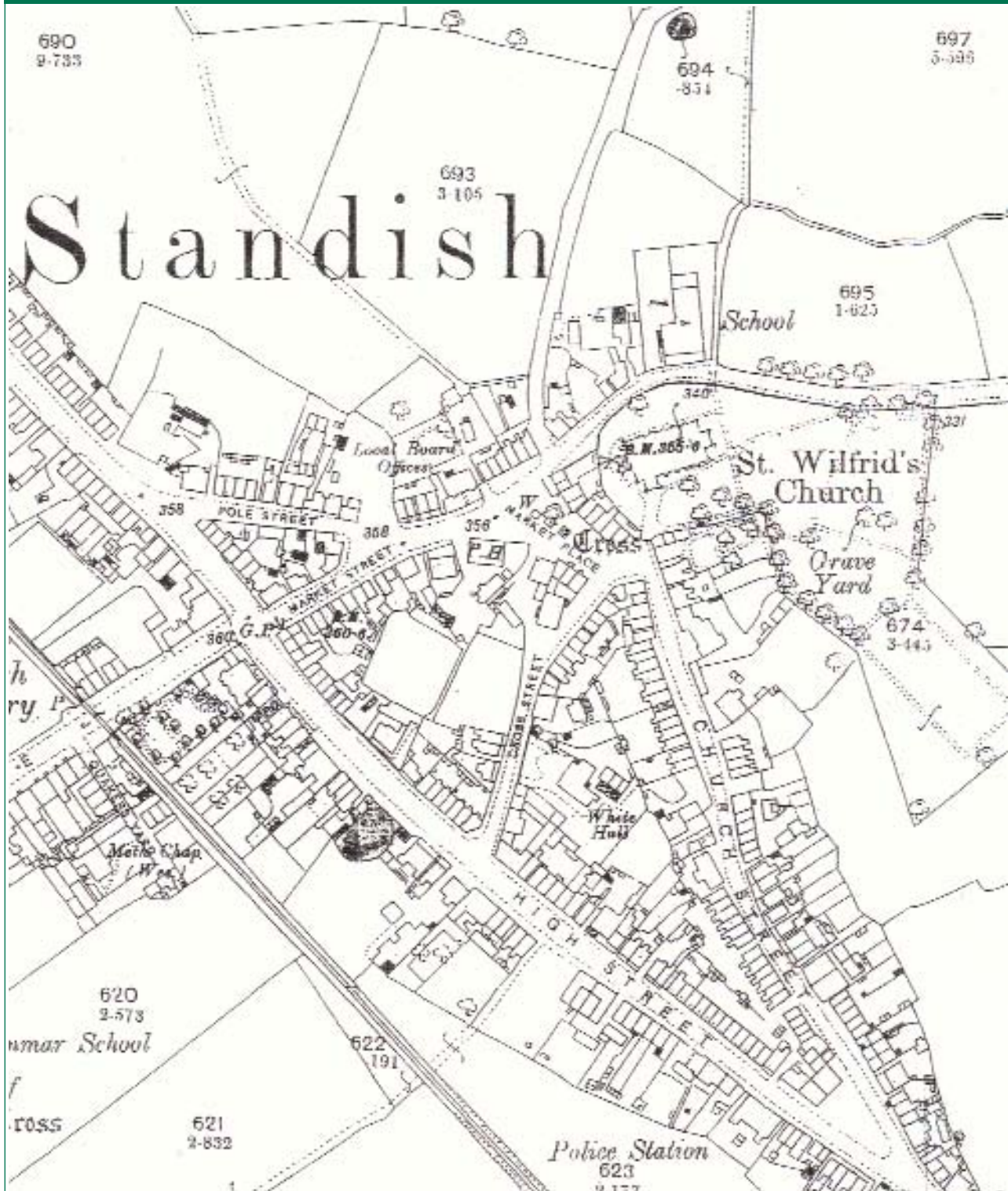
By the next edition OS revised 1908, the pattern of development within the core streets is little changed but new streets of terraced housing appear in the form of Heaton Street to the east of Church Street and Collingwood Street, north of Pole Street. A row of terraces is also shown on the north side of School Lane.

Spite Row and 'Whitehall,' remain, the latter a large town house in Cross Street later becoming the site of the modern library. The Urban District Offices are shown, whilst the Methodist Church was established in its fine new building on High Street in 1897. The frontages of all the core streets are almost fully built up with the exception of a large gap site in Cross Street, formerly grazing land and a bowling green. The acute angled junction of Church Street and High Street is occupied by a small triangular space with the Jubilee fountain shown. Further signs of urbanisation are the tramlines which linked Wigan and terminated at Standish crossroads.

The 1929 OS reveals little further change within the village core streets but further terraced housing has spread to the north and east. A war memorial is now placed in the Green at the apex of Church Street and High Street.

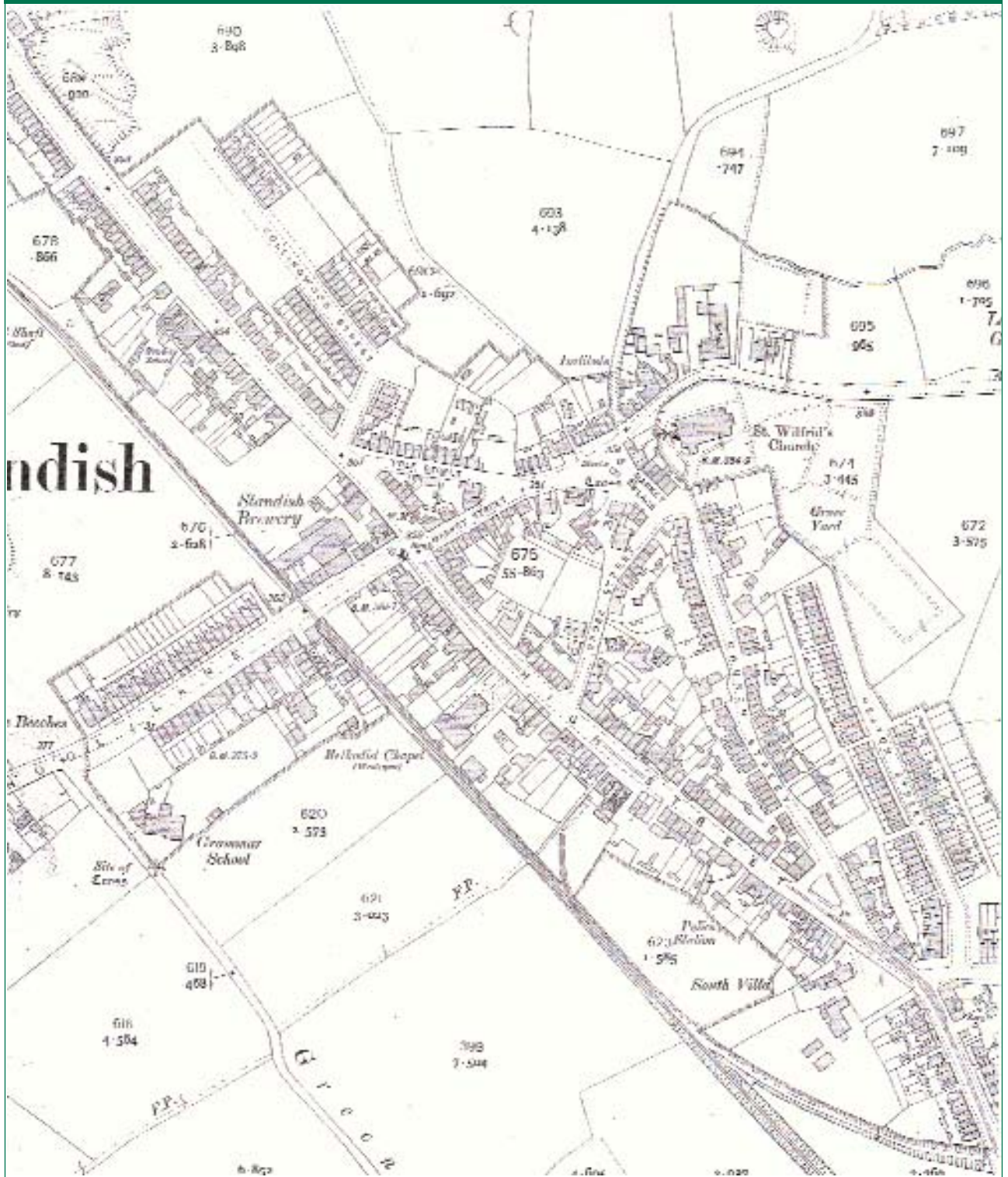
Plan 9 Extract of 1892 Ordnance Survey

Based on the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Wigan MBC Local Authority Licence number: 100019578. 2006



Plan 10 Extract of 1909 Ordnance Survey

Based on the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Wigan MBC Local Authority Licence number: 100019578, 2006





The 1938 map (Plan 11)

is of interest in that it reveals the beginnings of the ribbon development on the A49. This was encouraged by the release of land for building consequent on the sales of the Standish Hall Estate in 1912 and 1920. By 1938 housing development was in progress on the north side of the village. However in the period immediately before WWII the village remained a compact settlement within a predominantly agricultural landscape though with scattered collieries and spoil tips. From the Churchyard for example, fields extended eastwards up to the railway about 1km distant. Within the village perhaps the most significant change was the demolition in 1930 of Spite Row, opening up views of the Church from Market Place.

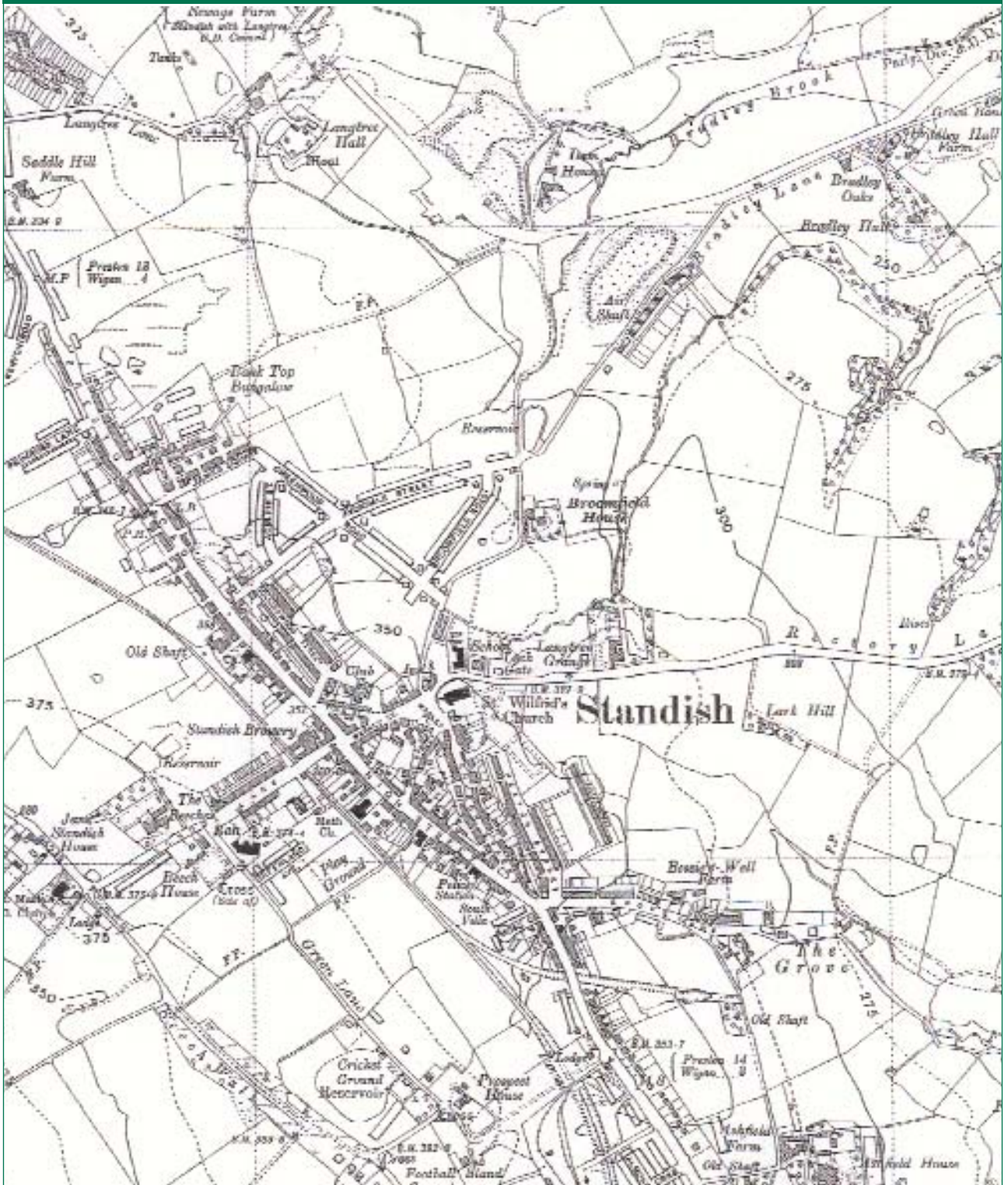
The 1965 OS (Plan 12)

reveals a pattern of increasing suburbanisation, beyond the old village core. New estate developments are still however mainly concentrated to the east and north of the village centre.

Further changes within the village centre prior to conservation area designation were the replacement of Whitehall by the new library and the large building on Cross Street now occupied as the Standish Centre, dating from the 1960s and originally a builders merchants depot.

Plan II Extract of 1938 Ordnance Survey

Based on the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Wigan MBC Local Authority Licence number: 100019578, 2006





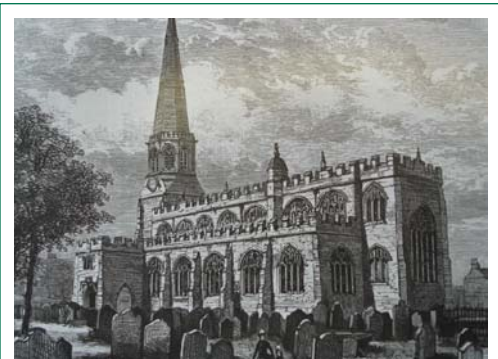
4.5 Summary of historical development

It is evident that the basic street pattern of the village centre had been established by at least the early 18thC and that it has changed little up to modern times. The settlement owes its origins to its role as an estate village located close to the manorial seat of Standish Hall, its large Church serving an extensive ecclesiastical parish. Its hilltop position at the intersection of historic strategic routes and the availability of a water supply would also have influenced its original siting and subsequent development. Many of the present buildings can be traced from the 1892 OS and some are almost certainly those indicated on the small scale 1845 OS.

The development of terraced housing in the late 19thC proceeded in parallel with the expansion of mining and industry in the area. Population growth fostered the development of Standish as a local service centre, a process assisted by the ease of adapting cottages for commercial purposes. The sales of the Standish Hall Estate in 1912 and 1921 released large areas of building land, encouraging a suburbanisation process which gathered momentum in the inter-war years. Initially mainly in the form of ribbon development along

the main roads, building of large estates has subsequently occurred as Standish has developed as a popular residential location, its accessibility greatly enhanced by proximity to M6 junction 27.

These photographs of historic Standish together with the old Ordnance Survey Maps are reproduced by kind permission of the Archivist, Heritage Service, Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust.



An atmospheric view of St, Wilfrid's Church from a litho, post dating the erection of the 'new' steeple in 1867.



Market Place early 1900s showing the cross and north side. The sett and cobble paving provided a unifying textural effect to the public space.



The cottages known as 'Spite Row', because local legend had it that they were built by Catholics to block the view of the Church.

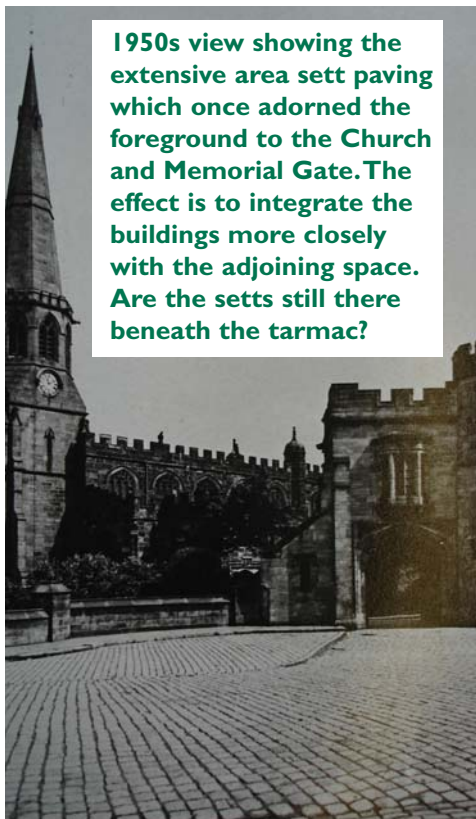
Cottages of similar form are shown in an 18thC painting of the Church reproduced in 'Images of England, Standish and Shevington, N.Webb, 1999. They were certainly of late 18th or early 19th century style and probably incorporated weaving rooms. Had they survived into the modern era it is arguable that they may have become a better appreciated part of the architectural heritage of Standish- despite blocking some views of the Church!



Standish High Street c.1914, looking South at Cross Street. The old stone cottages on the corner have been replaced by a nondescript flat roofed commercial building. Note the tramway which linked Wigan with Standish.



The Urban District Council Offices, High Street, demolished 1989, to be replaced by the Standish Clinic. Note the extended shopfront to Wellington Place, now a conservatory extension.



1950s view showing the extensive area sett paving which once adorned the foreground to the Church and Memorial Gate. The effect is to integrate the buildings more closely with the adjoining space. Are the setts still there beneath the tarmac?