



Astley Village, Tyldesley

Conservation Area Appraisal

April 2011



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1. Introduction

Astley Village Conservation Area located in Tyldesley, was originally designated on 20th December 1989. The boundary covers an area of 12.76 hectares and it has been characterised as a village. There are currently 3 listed structures found within the conservation area boundary and one Scheduled Ancient Monument.

1.1 Purpose of this Appraisal

Conservation area appraisals are a method by which local authorities can evaluate the important architectural and historic features within an area and provide a basis for character assessments and the production of a management strategy.

English Heritage as statutory advisor to the government on the historic environment, define a conservation area as being *“an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”*. Conservation areas are designated in legislation under the provision of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Under Section 71 of the same Act, local authorities are required to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any conservation areas under their jurisdiction. Section 72 of the Act specifies that when making decisions on development applications within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the ‘desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area’.

This document has been produced in response to these statutory requirements and in accordance with the government’s national planning policy statement Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) and English Heritage’s accompanying good practice guide. English Heritage has also published guidance which includes “Conservation Area Appraisals: Defining the special architectural or historic interest of conservation areas” (1997) and Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (2005)

Conservation area appraisals are a way of defining the special interest of an area, identifying any issues which may threaten the special qualities of that area and providing guidelines in order to prevent damage to and achieve enhancement within that area. This document should provide basis on which planning applications for development within the conservation area can be assessed to ensure high quality development which is not detrimental to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

1.2 Community Involvement

In accordance with Part 6, Section 24(4) and Part 6, Section 36 of the Town and

Country (Local Development) (England) Act 2004, Wigan Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement on the 12 July 2006. This statement sets out the council's policies for involving the community in the wider planning processes, including the preparation of the Local Development Framework and Conservation Area Appraisals. It provides advice as to how and when communities and interested stakeholders can become involved in the planning process. In line with this statement, when undertaking this assessment of Astley, the local community and interested stakeholders including elected members, were asked to contribute their thoughts, opinions and suggestions regarding the current conservation area and draft report.

1.3 The Planning Policy Context

This document should be read in context with the wider policy framework of land use, planning and development. For Wigan Borough this is the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted in April 2006.

Wigan Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

This document contains the Council's adopted planning policies and proposals for the use and development of land for the period 2006-2016. Under Policy EV4 'Conservation', the council conserves the historic built environment through not permitting development which would harm the character or appearance of a conservation area. To this end, the policy maintains the character and appearance of its conservation areas through protecting buildings that lie within them, Ancient monuments, sites, buildings and structures of archaeological interest and historic landscapes. Buildings of local interest are protected and enhanced through the application of development control powers. (see Appendix 3 for expanded UDP policies).

This Conservation Area Appraisal will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications affecting Astley Village.

Current planning policy also provides planning authorities with additional permitted development controls within conservation areas. Article 4(2) directions can be applied within residential areas to give extra protection to their character and appearance. These effectively remove specific permitted development rights within the conservation area therefore introducing the need for planning permission. They can be used to control the installation of satellite dishes, cladding, removal of windows and doors and the fitting of dormer windows. Separate to this, the demolition in whole or in part of any building within a conservation area requires conservation area consent and there are also controls over works to and the removal of trees within conservation areas.

2. Summary of Special Interest

2.1 Key Characteristics

Astley Village has changed quite dramatically over time, beginning life as a small rural settlement based around agricultural industry and small scale domestic textiles. The conservation area today is primarily residential in nature, with the bulk of the conservation area being centred on and around the original Astley Estate grounds.

There are several key features which can be found within the village, including:

- Red brick and stone construction
- Slate roofing materials
- Open spaces
- Trees and planting.

Red Brick and stone construction

The properties within Astley Conservation Area are primarily brick, and the new build residential development which comprises 2 and 3 storey properties is also characterised by a red brick. Older buildings within the Conservation Area, such as the properties along Church Road are a mix of red and brown brick, whilst some of the older cottages along Manchester Road are rendered in white.

Slate Roofing

All properties within the Conservation Area have grey slate roofs. This material is evident on both modern and older properties, and is a traditional feature which gives identity to the area.



Photograph 1: Dam House

Trees, Greenspace and Landscaping

Trees and large green open spaces form important features within the conservation area and provide an attractive backdrop to the residential development. The surrounding area outside the defined conservation area boundary is largely urbanised and predominantly residential, with a smattering of commercial development, so the greenspace within Astley offers a visually pleasing aspect and setting. Within the Conservation Area boundary is an area of ancient woodland and pond, which are pleasant features in a parkland setting, and offer informal recreational opportunities within the area.

The importance and significance of green infrastructure, such as open space and trees are discussed in Section 5.

2.2 Justification for Designation

Astley Village conservation area is relatively large in size, currently covering an area of 12.76 hectares. Officially classified as a 'village', the conservation area falls under the wider settlement area of Tyldesley. Several notable buildings are located within the conservation area boundary, some of which have had a varied and interesting history as well as having significant roles in the development of the area. Of these buildings, the most significant is Dam House, which forms an important landmark in the centre of the Conservation Area. The parkland setting within which it sits contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by virtue of a varied landscape of ancient woodland, lakes and green spaces.

The principle buildings within the Conservation Area date from the late 19th century, with the remnants of several earlier structures surviving in some locations. The conservation area is situated in the larger settlement of Astley; a linear, post-medieval industrial settlement which grew up mainly as a result of booming textile industries during the industrial revolution.

2.3 Boundaries and Extent of the Conservation Area



Map 1: Astley Village Conservation Area boundary (edged red)

The conservation area focuses on the historic Astley Estate grounds; incorporating Dam House and its many ancillary buildings. This large space accounts for over half the conservation area and has undergone extensive transformations throughout its varied history. The boundary of the conservation area also incorporates one of the main historic route ways between Leigh and Manchester.

As well as the historic and architectural significance present, Astley Estate grounds also includes one of the Boroughs 'Sites of Biological Interest' and so is protected by UDP Policy EV2B (See appendix 3 for details). The grounds have also been identified as a Historic Park under UDP Policy EV4D. This status ensures the estate grounds are adequately protected from unsympathetic or inappropriate development.

Development in the conservation area is not very dense with a high proportion of the area comprising green open space, gardens and woodland. Areas of new development to the north of the conservation area are denser in nature and stand out from the surrounding older properties and structures.



Photograph 2: Open Space within the Conservation Area



Photograph 3: Open Space within the Conservation Area



Photograph 4: Trees within the Conservation Area

3. Historical Development

3.1 History

Roman Period

A Roman road is known to have run through the nearby town of Tyldesley and is believed to have linked the Roman settlements of Wigan and Manchester. There is no evidence of any specific Roman remains or occupation at Astley.

Medieval Period

Astley is believed to pre-date the Norman Conquest, when it was one of 34 unnamed Manors in the Warrington Hundred. The first recorded tenant of the Manor was Hugh, son of Henry de Tyldesley, who resided here in the 12th century. The name Astley is thought to derive from the Anglo-Saxon for 'East Field' and was first recorded as 'Astleghe' in circa 1200. During this early period the surrounding areas were covered in dense woodland and agriculture was the dominant industry. It is most likely that the first manor house at this location was built during this period.

The moated site at New Hall Farm also dates from the medieval period and is one of only 3 moated sites remaining in the borough. The farm house dates from the post-medieval period and was previously listed however, as a result of loss through dereliction, fire and vandalism the house was delisted in 1987.

Post-Medieval Period

The first written reference to Dam House was in 1574 when Thomas Mort was referred to as being 'of Dam House'. Research by Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit suggests that much of the fabric of the early portion of Dam House dates from the late 16th or very early 17th century. The bulk of the house as it stands, dates from 1650 and was built by Adam Mort who purchased the Manor of Astley in 1606.

Adam Mort died in 1631 and left substantial monies to provide a Chapel and Grammar School in the village. These were both constructed in 1631 although neither of them survive today. Astley chapel was replaced in the late 18th - early 19th century with St Stephen's Parish Church, which was in turn destroyed by fire in the 1960s.

The local economy at this time was agriculture based and would have also been combined with small-scale domestic textile industries. Towards the end of the 17th century, woollens were being replaced by linens, fustians and then muslin in the late 18th century. Cheese and brick making were also strong industries in the

area, although these have since died out. Small scale coal mining was also developed in the area during the 17th century.

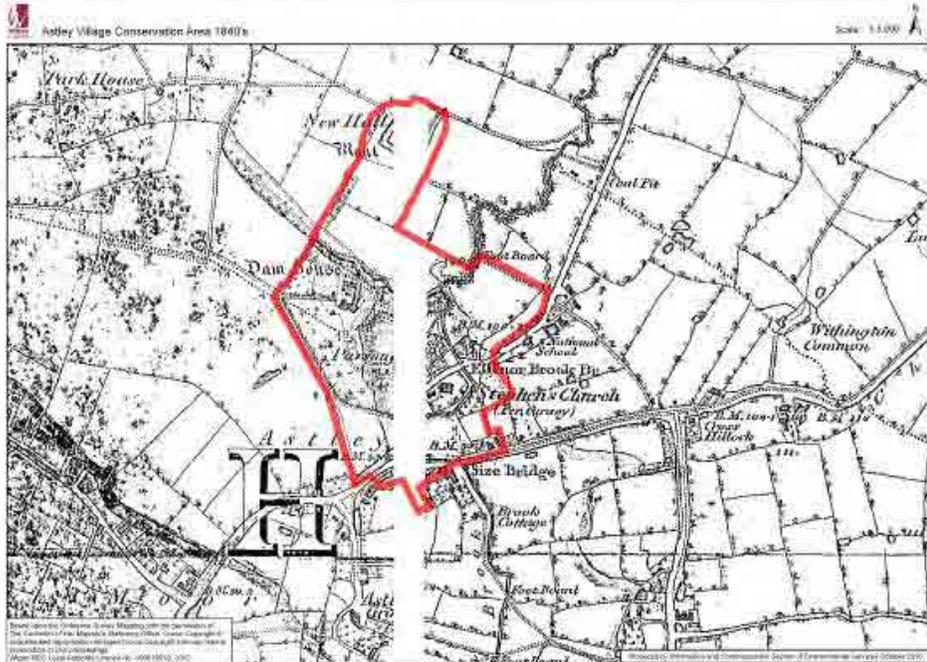
Modern Period

It was during the inter- and post- war periods that the village of Astley began to develop more rapidly, spreading northwards towards Tyldesley. Dam House and its associated grounds were sold in 1895 to Leigh Hospital Board and developed into an isolation hospital for the treatment of diseases such as Scarlet Fever and Typhoid. Over the years the hospital was expanded to accommodate a nurses' training school, accommodation units, operating theatre, laboratories and a mortuary.

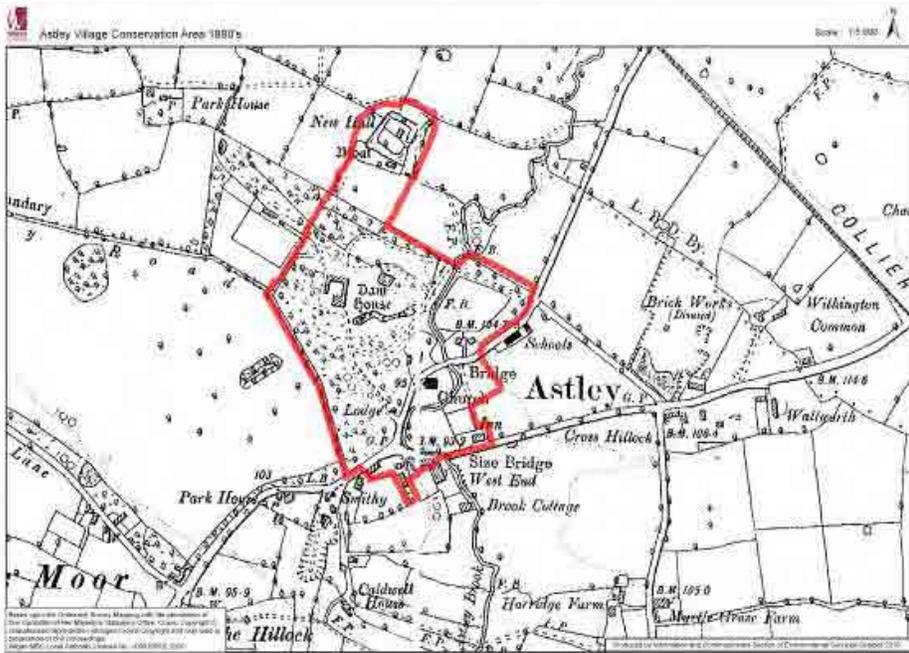
The hospital was closed in 1994 and much of the ground was sold off and developed for housing, including the lands associated with The Meads (216 Church Road). After its closure the house was abandoned and fell into a state of disrepair. In 1999 Morts Astley Heritage Trust was established and through heritage funding they restored the building. It has now been converted to house a variety of community services including a tea room, offices, doctor's surgery and children's nursery as well as providing meeting and conference facilities.

It was also during this time that the site of New Hall Farm underwent extensive restoration. Previously listed, the property was removed from the national list in 1987, as a result of extensive neglect and damage. The remnants of the medieval moat on site have been designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

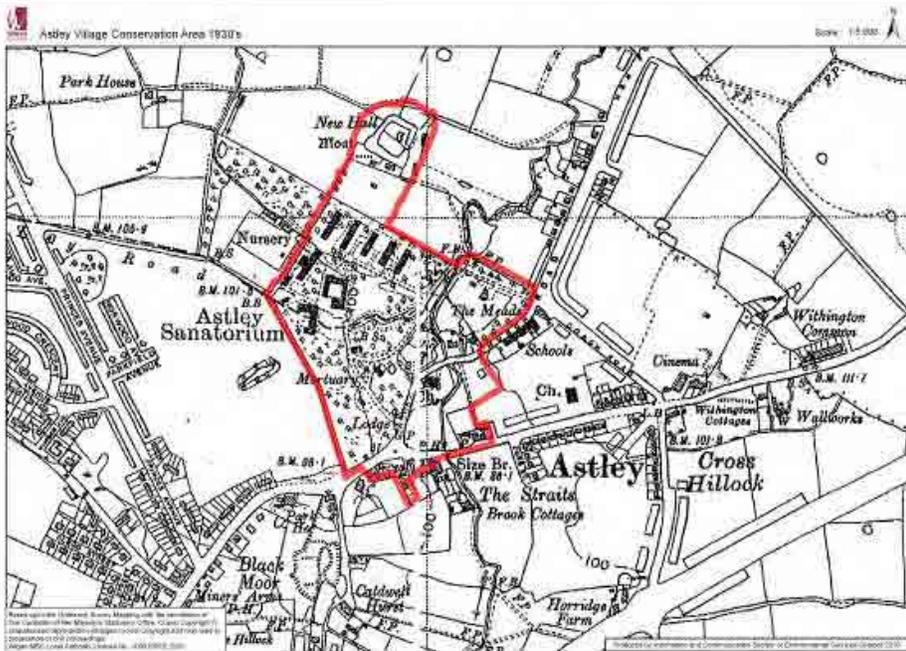
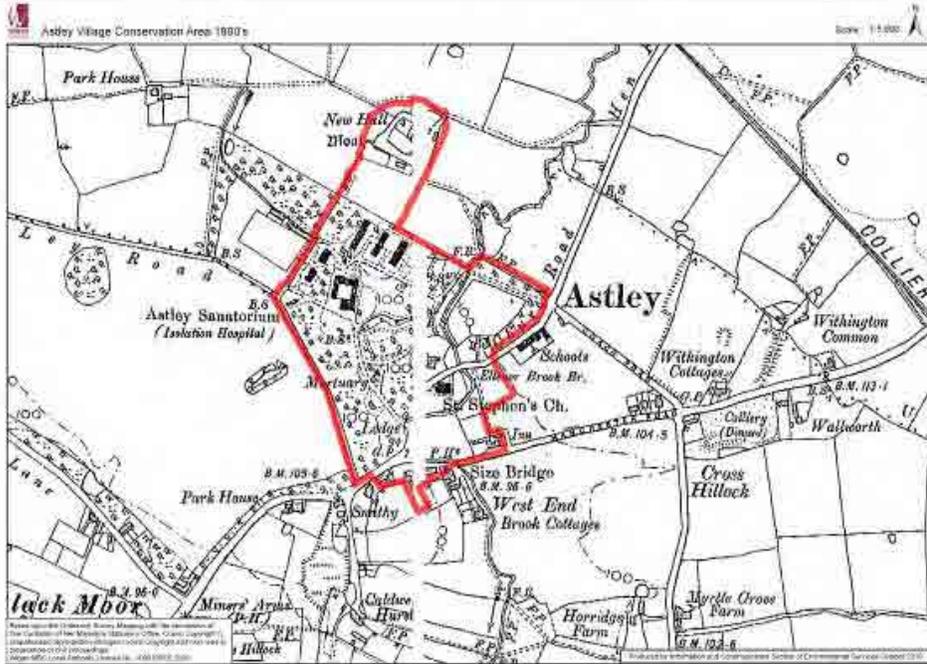
In more recent years further development has taken place within the conservation area. Recent developments include permission for 3 detached dwellings within the curtilage of The Meads in 2000. In addition, grounds surrounding Dam House have also undergone extensive redevelopment during the last 10 years, to form the residential area we now see today along Astley Hall Drive. Much of the large open space has been sold off and a modern housing development now stands on two sides of the original house. The large expanses of remaining woodland and open space form an important area of community woodland, which is enjoyed by both residents and visitors to the area.



Map 2: 1840's Historic Map

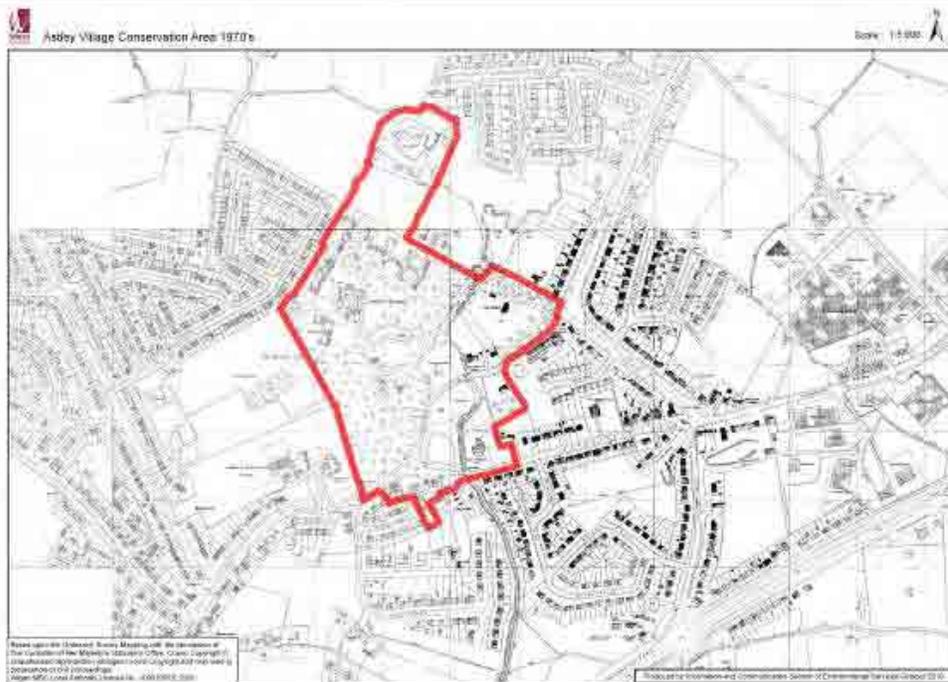


Map 3: 1890's Historic Map





Map 6: 1960's Historic Map



Map 7: 1970's Historic Map

3.2 Archaeology

The conservation area has several sites of potential archaeological interest. The site of Astley House itself could yield archaeological remains as there has been

settlement on this site since the 17th Century. Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit has carried out some investigative work within Astley House, and discovered the remains of an early timber framed exercise corridor on the upper floor, which evidences an earlier dwelling on the site.

Also within the boundary of the conservation area is the grounds of St Stephen's Church. The original chapel was constructed here in 1631, and this structure replaced in 1760 with a larger brick building which was destroyed by fire in 1961. The churchyard of St Stephens still remains today, and is an area of undeveloped land situated to the east of the church road, opposite the entrance to the Astley Estate. The nature of this land lends itself to a high archaeological potential.

4. Location and Landscape Setting

4.1 Geographical Location

Located in the east of the borough, the village of Astley forms part of the larger township of Tyldesley. Situated close to the East Lancashire Road, the settlement at Astley is ideally located for commuting to nearby towns and cities such as Wigan, Warrington, Manchester and Liverpool.

4.2 Topography and Landscape

As part of any character assessment it is important to take into consideration any topographical, geological or landscape features which may impact upon the character of the conservation area. The geology of the surrounding area is predominantly made up of red sandstone to the south and Permian rocks and coal measures to the north. The areas surrounding Astley are rich in coal deposits and as a result of coal mining activity carried out in this area during the industrial revolution, the remnants of underground workings which potentially could have an impact on any future development.

5. Spatial Analysis

5.1 Key Views

There are two key views within Astley conservation area, each one providing a different focal point and aspect.

1) View along Astley Hall Drive towards Dam House

This view highlights the rural character of the conservation area; tree lined road with large areas of open space to either side. This view creates a picturesque image of the old estate grounds and house. Care should be

taken to maintain this important vista and ensure it is protected from inappropriate development.



Photo 5: View towards Dam House

2) **View overlooking village green (St Stephens church yard)**

This view is of significant historic importance within the conservation area being the site of the original local church. Since its destruction in 1961, this area of land has remained as public open space. Several remnants from the original churchyard can also be seen scattered amongst the vegetation.

5.2 Open Spaces, Focal Points, Landscaping and Trees

Open Spaces

There are several open spaces within the conservation area, of varying sizes and significance. The largest of these open spaces is within the old estate grounds, with large grassed areas and an area of community woodland. This space is well used by residents and visitors and provides a pleasant area of greenspace within the urban area.

The other significant area is the old churchyard of St Stephens; an area of local historical interest this space is relatively underused and neglected. Today this space seems to lack function within the community when compared with the grounds at Dam House.

Focal Points

The main focal point in the conservation area is obviously the imposing Dam House. Located in the centre of the conservation area this visually dominant

building stands out from its immediate surroundings. Its size, colour and architectural style also contribute to its impact on the character of this area. The house as it stands dates in the most part from the 19th century, with some earlier sections incorporated into the main structure.

Trees

Trees can contribute significantly to the character and appearance of a conservation area. Located south east of Dam House is a semi-natural ancient woodland which is designated as a Site of Biological Importance (SBI) and provides a very positive impact on the character of the area.

Away from this area along side the main road and in the private gardens along Church Road, mature planting and trees are also common features which enhance the appearance of the overall conservation area.

6. Definition of the Special Interest

6.1 Current Activities and uses (see appendix 1 for map)

Astley Village Conservation Area is principally residential, however Dam House, the most significant landmark is used for community purposes. Dam House is now home to several community based services, including Astley Clinic, Primary Care Trust, Children's Nursery and Heritage Tea Rooms. The building is managed by Morts Astley Heritage Trust and also provides conference and meeting facilities.

The grounds surrounding Dam House once housed the ancillary buildings for the hospital, these have since been demolished and a new housing estate now sits within the original estate grounds. Built in a sympathetic manner, the modern housing estate does not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding conservation area or nearby listed building.

Sites such as the scheduled ancient monument at New Hall Moat also have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The site has undergone extensive restoration to bring it back into residential use and is now occupied. Tucked away and surrounded by modern development the property is almost hidden within the conservation area, yet this does not prevent it from having a positive impact on the area.

6.2 Architectural and Historic Character

The dominant architectural style of the conservation area is of 2 storey brick built structures of varying sizes. There is also a 3 storey apartment block which is in keeping with the 3 storey Dam House in respect of scale, height and massing.

The properties along Church Road are 2 storey, detached dwellings dating to the late 19th - early 20th centuries and are all set within individual mature, private

garden areas. These properties have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The properties to the south of the conservation area form small terraced rows which are the only terraced properties found within the boundary.



Photo 6: new build (1990s)



Photo 7: Dam House (dating from 1650)



Photo 8: Detached residence, Church Road



Photo 9: Tudor-style properties on Manchester Road



Photo 10: Astley Vicarage

6.3 Building Materials and Local Details

Red brick with slate roof is the dominant construction style within the conservation area, however there are a few properties which have been rendered white, several of these are found along Church Road and Manchester road and as a result they are visually dominant in the streetscape. The new development is also constructed of red brick, although due to varied production methods and advances in technology the buildings have a very 'untraditional' finish.

6.4 Buildings of Townscape Merit

There are currently three listed structures and one Ancient Scheduled Monument within the conservation area boundary:

- **Dam House - Grade II***
The house dates from 1650 in the most part, confirmed by date stone which reads "erected by Adam Mort and Margaret Mort 1650". It has been extended to the rear in the early and late 19th century to form a quadrangle. Constructed of rendered brick with stone dressings and a slate roof the building was designed in the vernacular style.



Photo 11: Dam House

- **Astley Vicarage - Grade II***

This property dates from 1704 and was built for the original chapel and commissioned by Adam Mort. The building is constructed of red brick with a late roof with symmetrically placed windows with brick arches above. The property was an early attempt at classicism and has undergone very little alteration since it was built.



Photo 12: Astley Vicarage

- **Gate piers and boundary wall to Astley Vicarage - Grade II**

Original stone gate piers and boundary walls to the former vicarage, dating from the 18th century these form part of the overall character of the vicarage and its settings.



Photo 13: Gate Piers

- **New Hall Farm - Scheduled Ancient Monument**

Situated 200 metres north of the former Astley Hospital, this site includes a house platform surrounded by a moat. The current farm house dates from the late 18th century and occupies a third of the island. The building has been extensively renovated and is constructed of brick with a slate roof.

All of these structures are occupied and in good condition. New Hall Farm and Dam House have both undergone extensive restoration schemes to bring them back into active use.

There are also several unlisted buildings worthy of note within the conservation area, which have a positive impact on the character and appearance. The following non-designated buildings within the conservation area have significant townscape merit and are buildings which have positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. These buildings may be possible candidates for future listings.

- **The Meads**

The land here was originally part of the land associated with Astley Manor. When the hospital was sold in 1893 this area of land was also sold and The Meads was built in 1925. The grounds are designated as one of the boroughs Historic Parks under UDP policy EV4D (see appendix 3 for expanded policy). Despite the modern development within the grounds of the property, The Meads still contributes positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- **232 Church Road (former Astley Grammar Headmaster's House)**

This property dates from 1848 and was built to house the headmaster of Astley Grammar School. The house is one of several large detached properties along Church Road. These properties are constructed of red brick with slate roofs and are set within extensive mature gardens. They are an essential feature and contribute positively to the appearance of the area.

- **Samson House, 457 Manchester Road**

Standing opposite what was once the village green, this property is centred between two terraced rows. This provides a distinct southern boundary to the conservation area and has a positive impact on the character of it in this area.

6.5 Public Space: Floorscape, Street Lighting and Street Furniture

Tarmac is the dominant paving surface found within the conservation area and the vast majority of the surfaces are in good condition as they are relatively new. The paving surfaces found within the conservation area do not have a detrimental impact on its overall character and appearance.

Street lighting is provided by various styles of lighting columns. Within Astley Hall Drive, the lighting columns are of a standard design but have been painted green in order to blend in with the surrounding greenery which makes up such a large part of the area's character. On and around Church Road and Manchester Road the street lighting is of a standard design and colour. To the rear of Dam House there are several examples of heritage style lighting columns providing lighting for the rear car park. These lights have a positive impact on the area as they are in keeping with the historic nature of the adjacent building.

Street signs and other street furniture have been kept to a minimum within the conservation area. The junction of Church Road and Manchester Road has the most street furniture due to it being the intersection of two main roads. Street signs are necessary to direct traffic and they do not create a cluttered streetscape in this location.



Photo 14: Pavement and road treatments



Photo 15: Bollards



Photo 16: Dam House signage



Photo 17: Signage for Dam House and Woodland area



Photo 18: Street surfacing



Photo 19: Street furniture and signage on entrance to Astley Hall Drive

7. Issues

This appraisal has highlighted several issues within the conservation area which have both positive and negative impacts on its overall character or appearance.

7.1 Positive

- Trees are a key feature within the conservation area and they help to create a sense of rurality. Tree lined streets and wooded areas provide screening and privacy for residents and along side gardens create vibrant and pleasant streetscape within the summer months. A large number of properties have their own private mature garden areas and the continued survival of these will have a positive impact on the character of each individual property as well as the wider landscape.
- The successful restoration of Dam House and New Hall Moat. Previously these buildings were falling into disrepair and their subsequent restoration has had a hugely positive impact on the appearance of the conservation area. The community focus of Dam House also helps to reinforce the importance of community values within the conservation area.
- Survival of quality historic buildings and detailing provides a substantial link to the historic nature of the conservation area and also helps promote a visually pleasant and diverse streetscape. Although the historic buildings here were in the most part designed and built at around the same time, they are all unique and have retained their individual style and character.

- Good maintenance of buildings is also apparent throughout the conservation area. In the most part properties have been maintained to a relatively high standard. This has a positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and it can help to promote a sense of pride of place within communities.
- The retention of the village green and site of St Stephen's Church has a positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. This space provides a large area of public open space and is a pleasant area of greenery. The retention of the old church yard establishes a continuity from past to present and provides a unique historical record of the area.

7.2 Negative

Similarly the area of St Stephen's church yard looks slightly unruly and in need of maintenance. This could be attributed to the report being undertaken during the winter months and so may improve later in the year. This detracts slightly from the overall appearance of the conservation area as it accumulates litter and encroaches upon the neighbouring open spaces.

- Car parking is another issue which has a negative impact on the appearance of the conservation area. Cars parked in front of Dam House on a regular basis detract from the appearance and architectural quality of the building. Traffic manoeuvring is also an issue, with pavements and verges beginning to show signs of wear and tear from traffic mounting them to pass stationary cars. This issue is currently being investigated by the Council's highways team to try and find an appropriate solution to the problem.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Article 4 Directions

The loss of architectural features such as timber windows, doors and other historic features has occurred in some areas within the conservation area, however, it has not been prevalent. In isolation these changes can seem insignificant, however cumulatively they can have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the streetscape within the conservation area.

Article 4 directions are a method by which the local planning authority can control such changes and thus prevent the continued loss of historic fabric.

8.2 Opportunities for Enhancement

The following list is drawn from the negative issues highlighted in section 7. It identifies areas and methods by which the qualities providing the special interest of the conservation area can be preserved and enhanced.

- The regular maintenance of trees and shrubbery should be actively promoted. Trees and greenery contribute significantly to the character of the conservation area and it is important they are maintained to a high standard to ensure they continue to have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area. A woodland management plan has been drafted on behalf of Morts Astley Heritage Trust. This management plan will ensure that the woodland is managed and form the basis for a woodland grant application to the Forestry Commission.
- There is very little opportunity within the conservation area for future infill development. Should proposals be put forward for any future development, care must be taken to ensure it is sympathetic and that it does not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- There are opportunities for minimal traffic management along Astley Hall Drive. Any implemented parking restrictions should be marked using minimal signage or materials. This would help to combat a problem which does detract from the rural character of the conservation area. The introduction of sympathetic signage directing traffic to the car parking areas would also be an option which should be considered.

8.3 Boundary Changes

During the reappraisal of the conservation area, the current boundary was examined and the conservation area surveyed to ensure that it provides adequate protection. At this point in time, it is proposed that no amendments are made to the conservation area boundary.

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Wigan Council Unitary Development Plan (2006)

Wigan Council Statement of Community Involvement (2006)

Wigan Council Shop Front Design Guide (2005)

Old Maps: www.old-maps.co.uk

Dam House Website: <http://www.damhouse.net>

Glossary of Terms

Ancient Monument: "any building, structure or work, whether above or below the surface of the land, and any cave or excavation" or any site comprising the remains of such things or comprising any "vehicle, vessel, aircraft or other movable structure or part thereof." A scheduled monument is any monument included in the schedule to the act.

Cladding: a non load bearing or structural protective skin on a building, the purpose of which is to help keep the building wind and watertight.

Classicism: Aesthetic attitudes and principles manifested in the art, architecture, and literature of ancient Greece and Rome and characterised by emphasis on form, simplicity, proportion, and restraint.

Listed Building: A building included on a list of buildings of architectural or historic interest, compiled by the secretary of state. Listing covers any structure or erection or any part of a building, or any building or structure falling within the curtilage of a listed building and dating prior to 1948. Listed buildings are divided into three categories; I, II* & II in England.

Render: a term used to describe any durable, protective coating applied to an external wall. Renders are not intended to be decorative as such, and should not be confused with plasters such as stucco which are applied with the intention of imitating stone.

Tree Preservation Order: A direction made by a local authority which makes it an offence to cut, top, lop, uproot or wilfully damage a tree without first obtaining the permission of the local authority.

Vernacular: an indigenous building constructed of locally available materials, to local detail, usually without the benefit of an architect. Somehow it is now taken to imply a fairly humble or practical origin, but this is not the case.

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APPENDIX 1

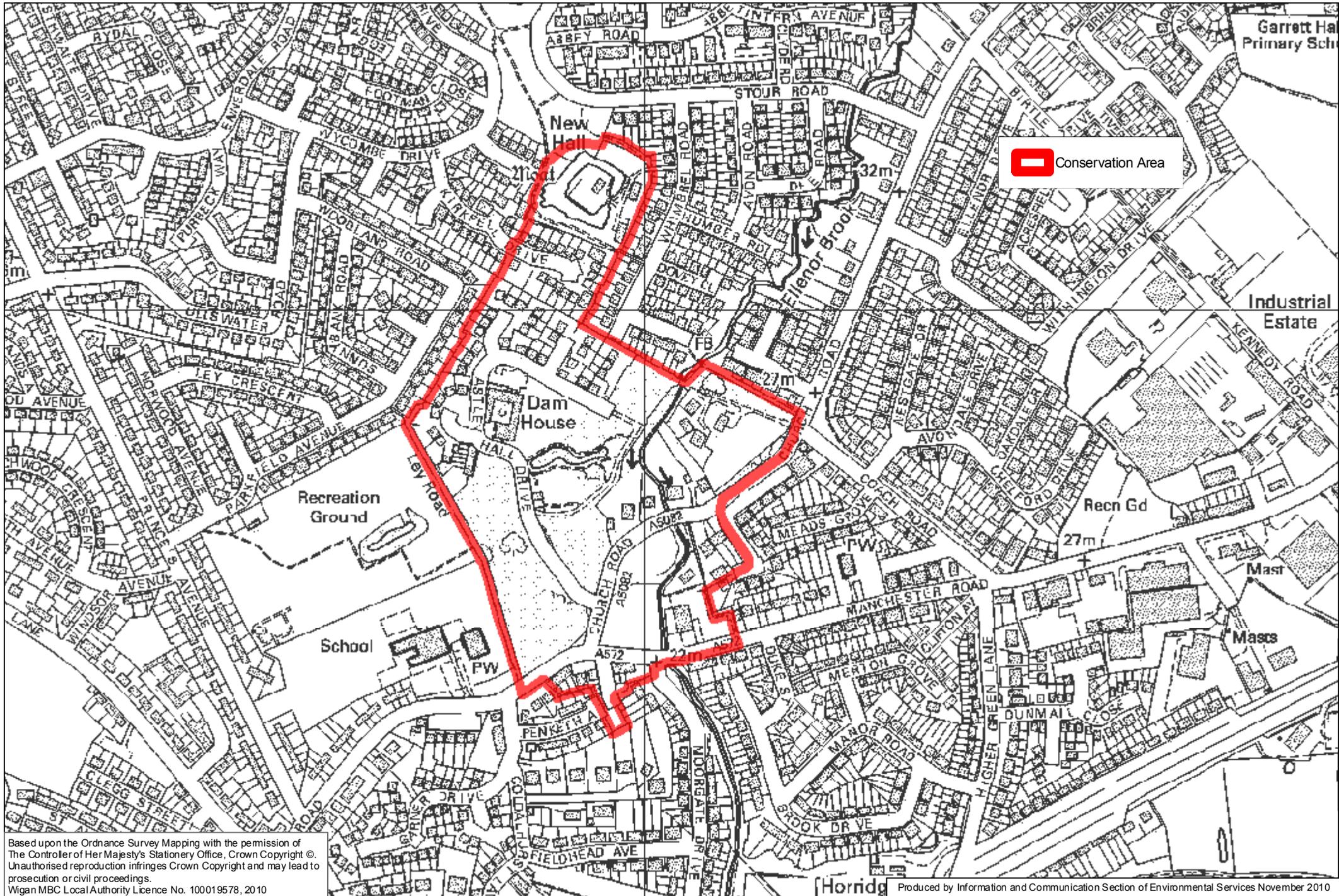
Astley Village Conservation Area

Astley Village Conservation Area – Building use/types

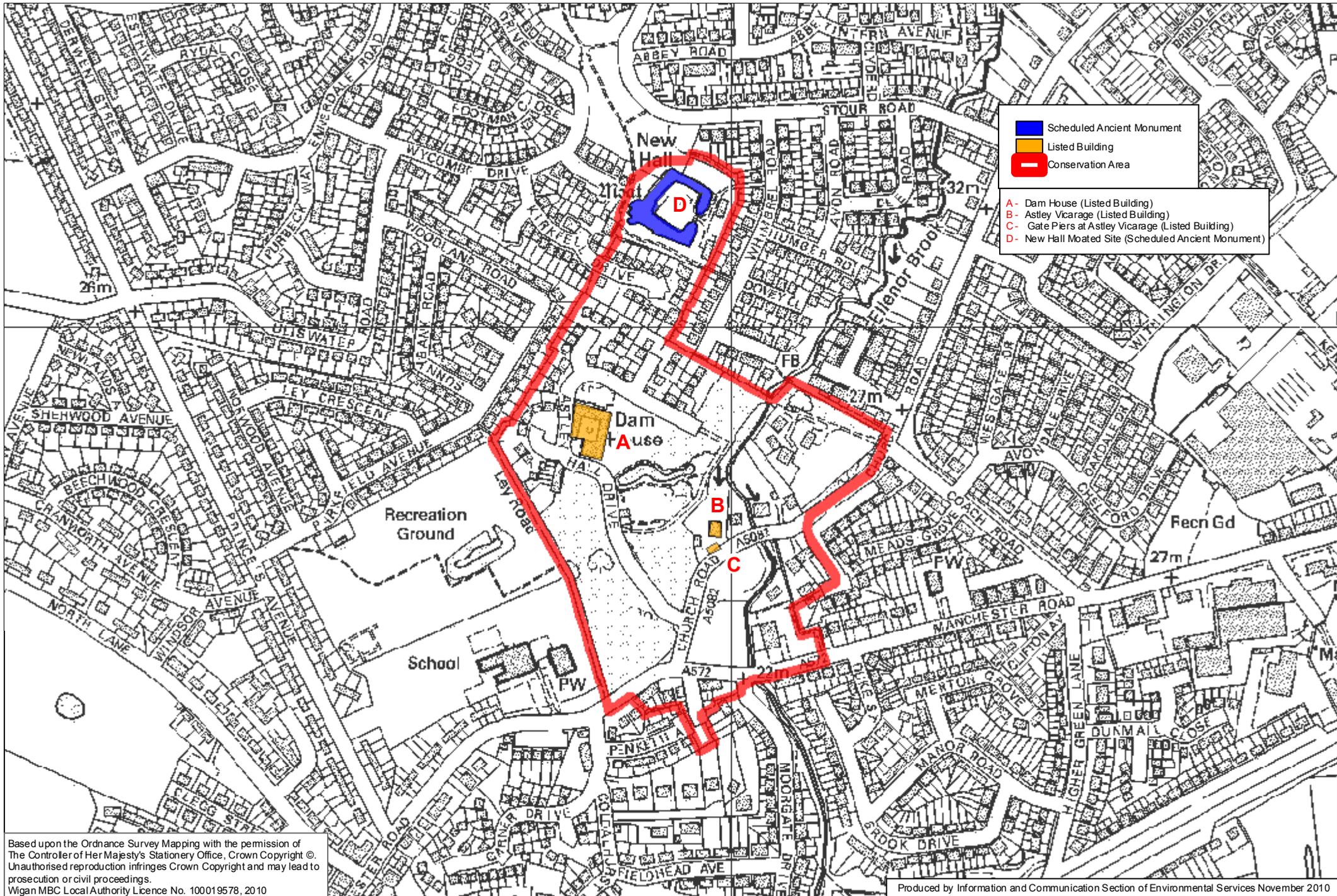
Astley Village Conservation Area – Listed Buildings

Astley Village Conservation Area – Buildings which contribute positively towards the character

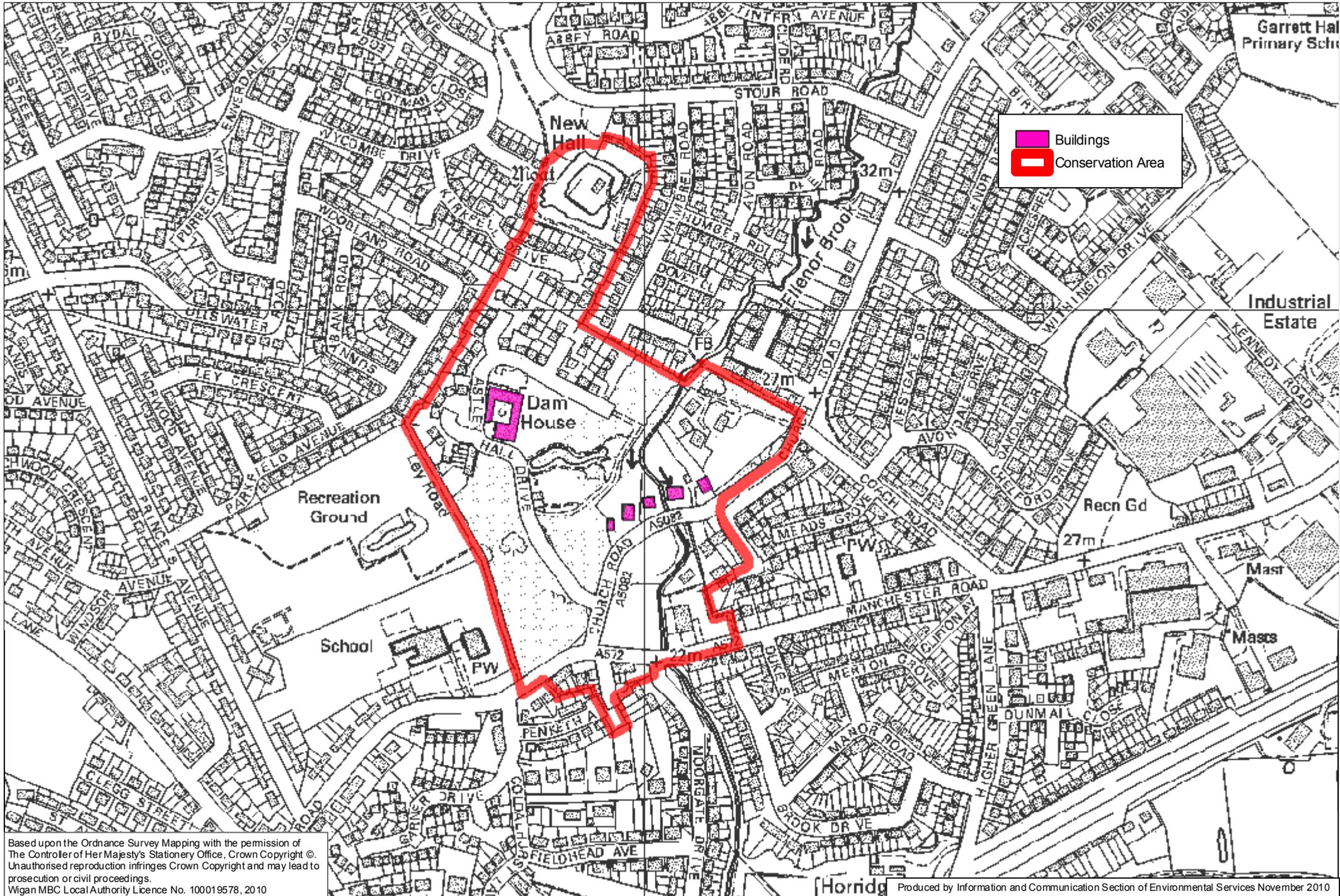
Astley Village Conservation Area – Historical Development



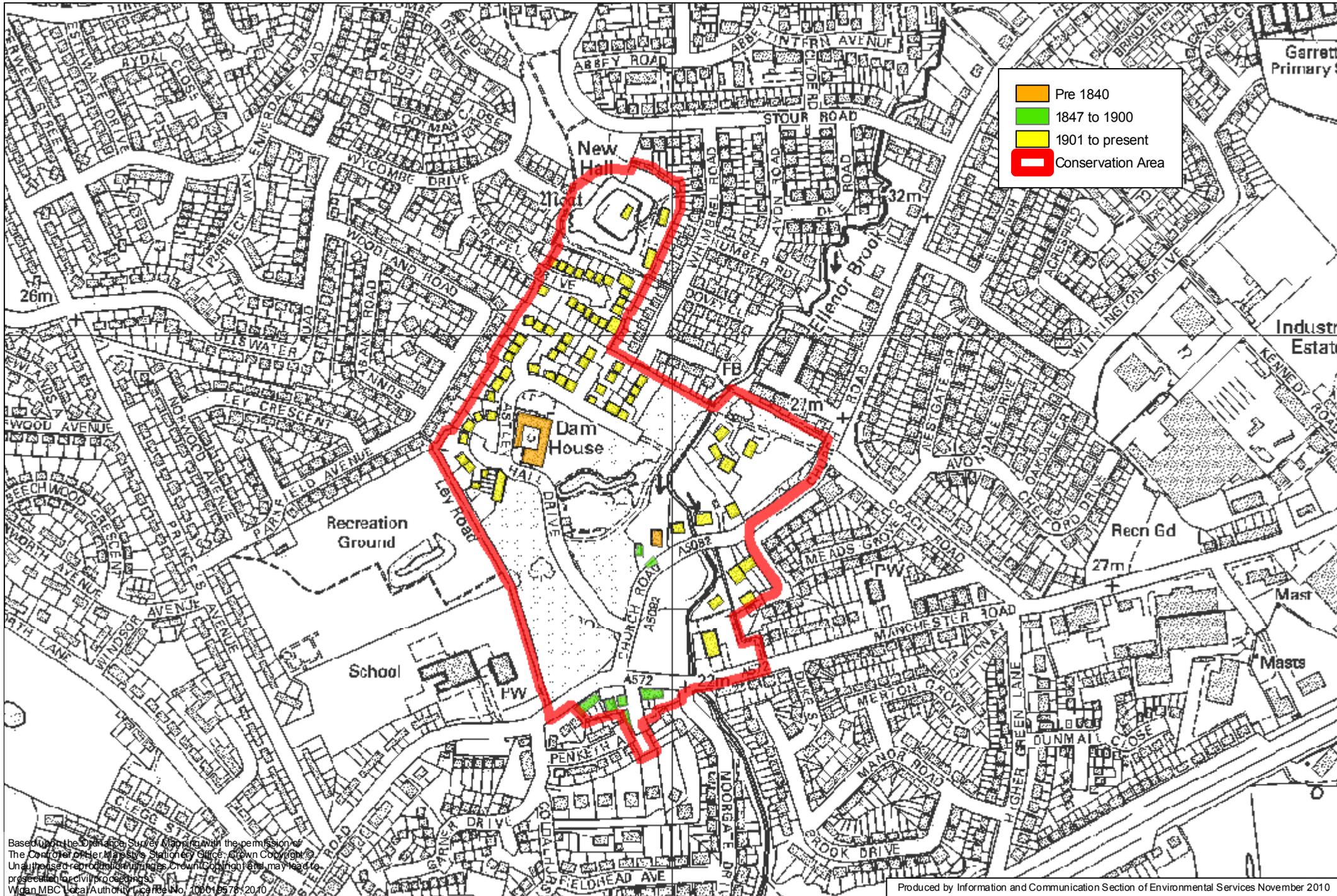
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APPENDIX 2

MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

1. Introduction

This management proposal is intended to stand along side the Astley Village Conservation Area Appraisal. Whilst area appraisals assess and document the elements that combine to make up the special character of a conservation area, management proposals are intended to act as a reference for all those who make decisions which may impact on that special character.

This management proposal is set in context by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, plus amendments 2008, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It should also be read in conjunction with the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006) policies EV3 Design and EV4 Conservation which set out the Council's aims to help protect the character and appearance of conservation areas, as well as promoting high quality design in any impacting new development. (See section 3(c) for expanded policies)

The thoughts and recommendations put forward in this management proposal may influence future policy development for the area, depending on the availability of resources and effective partnership between the local authority, private sector and the local community. It is of vital importance that owners and contractors recognise their actions can have a significant impact on the quality of townscapes. Every action, good and bad, forms the legacy we leave behind for future generations.

1.1 Article 4(2) directions

Local Planning Authorities, under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order 1995, may apply for the removal of permitted development rights within a conservation area. This would result in previous alterations which did not require planning permission being brought under the control of the planning authority and therefore would require planning permission.

This document and the appraisal go some way in identifying issues and locations where an Article 4(2) direction could be useful in protecting the special character of the conservation area. At this time there has not been an abundance of unsympathetic or unauthorised changes occurring within the conservation area boundary. However, some changes have been undertaken, which if left unchecked could begin to have a negative impact on its character and appearance.

It may be appropriate for the council to consider the possibility of introducing an Article 4(2) direction in the future, should this issue begin to pose a significant threat to the integrity of the buildings and their wider settings.

2. Preservation and Enhancement

This guidance must be considered in conjunction with the relevant policies in the Wigan Unitary Development Plan 2006 and supplementary planning documents such as the Residential Design Guide for House Extensions. In order to ensure the preservation and enhancement of Astley Village conservation area, the council will ensure the following in relation to its buildings and townscape:

2.1 Buildings

2.1.1 Dormers and Rooflights

The council will not permit the introduction of inappropriate dormer or roof light windows, which are large in scale or of non-traditional design.

These are not a common feature within the conservation area. Due to the nature of the conservation area the installation of such features would be visually prominent on many properties. Dormer windows should be resisted where possible, especially on houses where the roof line would be dramatically impaired by such alterations. Roof lights are a more acceptable way of allowing the conversion of a roof space but again they should have a minimum impact on the townscape and be of the smallest unit used which fits the requirement.

2.1.2 Windows and Doors

The council should consider imposing an Article 4(2) direction on the residential properties in order to prevent the further loss of historic fabric such as windows and doors.

Legal agreements were placed on the new housing estate on Astley Hall Drive which stated that the changing or painting of windows and doors was restricted due to the historic and architectural significance of the area. The imposition of an Article 4 (2) Direction may enable a greater level of control over insensitive changes than that which currently exists.

2.1.3 Brickwork

The council will promote the use of appropriate materials and techniques for the repair and maintenance of buildings and structures within the conservation area.

The management of brick work is critical in preserving historic detail and character. Brick is the most common construction material found in the conservation area and detailing such as corbelling, and some timber detailing is common. These details all contribute to the character and appearance of the area and should be retained and appropriate maintenance carried out. The use

of appropriate mortars is essential in the preservation of these buildings and the use of lime mortars should be promoted where required. Regular maintenance of brick work will also help to prevent accumulative problems such as water damage.

2.2 Townscape

2.2.1 Floorscape

The council will encourage the continued maintenance of the floorscape within the conservation area as a method of improving the overall appearance of the area. Regular inspections throughout the borough will highlight areas of concern and focus required works.

The upgrading of paving materials should be promoted and actively encouraged when required within the conservation area. The repair of cracked and patchy materials is essential to enhancing the visual impact of the conservation area.

2.2.2 Open Spaces

The council will ensure that open spaces within the conservation area are protected from infringing development or unsympathetic proposals.

Open space is not common within the conservation area and so it is important that where it occurs, appropriate protection is provided. The main areas of open space are within the private gardens of the properties along Church Road, the grounds of Dam House and the village green area. It is therefore important that these areas are protected against inappropriate development proposals.

2.2.3 Trees

The council will seek to provide new and replacement trees within any proposed new development or within areas where trees are dying or damaged.

Trees are a key feature within the conservation area and it is important that they are maintained. They are a positive asset to the character and appearance of the conservation area. They provide privacy and screening for residents, habitat for wildlife as well as a pleasant environment and it is important that they are maintained appropriately.

The regular maintenance of trees and shrubbery should be actively promoted. It is recognised that trees and greenery contribute significantly to the character of the Conservation Area, and it is important that they are maintained to a high standard to ensure they continue to have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area. A woodland management plan has been drafted by the Red Rose Forest on behalf of Morts Astley Heritage Trust. This management plan will ensure that the woodland is managed and form the basis for a woodland grant application to the Forestry Commission.

2.3 General Points

2.3.1 Demolition and Alterations

The council will seek to preserve the areas character and buildings which are deemed to be of local architectural or historic interest. The demolition or inappropriate alteration of buildings which make a positive contribution to the historic, architectural or industrial archaeological character or appearance of a conservation area will not be permitted.

Under Sections 8 & 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the local authority has control over the demolition of all buildings within the boundary of a conservation area. PPG15 states that proposals to demolish unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area will be assessed against the same criteria as proposals to demolish a listed building. Within conservation areas permitted development rights are somewhat limited in order to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the areas character and appearance. Some alterations have already taken place within the conservation area and a monitoring scheme should be considered in order to prevent further damage to the special interest of the area. Enforcement action should also be considered where alterations have had a significant detrimental impact on a building or streetscape.

2.3.2 New Development

The council will ensure that any proposals for new development within a conservation area will preserve and enhance and will not harm the character or appearance of that area.

In line with national guidance document PPS 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment', the council will not accept outline applications for proposals within conservation areas. Applications should be submitted in full; supported by plans, sections and elevations and depending on the size of the proposals analytical drawings showing the development in context.

The council would also recommend that applicants seek consultation with experienced professionals as well as planning services; this helps to ensure that the proposal is of high quality design as well as meeting the expectations of the planning authority.

3. Monitoring and Reviewing

This document along with the associated conservation area appraisal should be reviewed every five years in light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area;
- A photographic record of the conservation area;
- An assessment as to whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A building condition survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action required.

APPENDIX 3

Implications of Conservation Area Status

Conservation area status is not intended to stifle new development nor preserve areas as museum pieces. Conservation areas will be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands although the council when taking development control decisions will take extra care to ensure that the special architectural and historical qualities are not eroded. The normal requirements for planning permission and building regulation approval apply with some additional restrictions.

1. Planning applications will be carefully considered by the council to ensure that they enhance or preserve the special character of the area.
2. The impact of any development outside the boundary of the conservation area, which might affect its setting and character, will also be carefully considered.
3. Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of most buildings or structures.
4. The council must be given 6 weeks notice of any intention to undertake works to cut down, lop, prune or uproot any trees over a certain size in the conservation area.
5. In order to be able to consider the implications of development proposals, the council will normally require proposals within the conservation area to be submitted in the form of a full, and not outline, application. In addition, works which elsewhere are classified as permitted development in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 may require planning consent. Developers are advised to check with the council at an early stage on the need for required permissions. Unauthorised works can lead to prosecution and the council may take enforcement action requiring the works to be 'undone'.