



SIX

Summary of Negative Factors

This appraisal has identified a number of factors which detract from the architectural and historic character and general amenity of the conservation area. These are summarised below:

6.1 The built form or private realm

- The presence of a number of modern **buildings of mediocre quality** as described in this appraisal.
- **Insensitive alterations** to both commercial and residential properties resulting in the loss or obscuring of original detail. Re-windowing in UPVC and using top hung or other inappropriate designs is now widespread within the conservation area. Very few original sash windows now remain as exemplars. The illustration is a rather extreme though not unique example of the fashion for replacement windows.



- **Poor or mediocre quality shopfronts and signage;** whilst there are some good examples, several are of poor or indifferent quality. External roller shutters are commonplace and detrimental to the character of the street scene especially when shut during daytime. A related issue of local concern is the perceived proliferation of **unauthorised signage**.



This large poster may be authorised but its scale is excessive in relation to its host building.

- **Maintenance and upkeep** - the majority of Standish's business premises are well kept but a few would benefit from upgrading; like these premises in High Street.



- **Vacant premises** - these are few in number suggesting that commercial confidence in Standish remains relatively buoyant but the presence of vacant business premises if prolonged will have a detrimental effect upon the vitality of the area.



6.2 The public realm negative factors

- **The impact of traffic** on the main thoroughfares, particularly the presence of more or less constant queues of vehicles on all the approaches to the cross roads traffic lights. The dominance of traffic space over pedestrian space is especially noticeable around the cross roads where footways are relatively narrow. There are no areas reserved exclusively for pedestrians. In the foreseeable future there will be no relief from the pressure of through traffic. The Unitary Development Plan shows the A 49 and A 5209/B5239 routes through the village centre as part of the designated strategic route network.
- **The visual impact of street furniture.** In Standish this is more apparent because of the domestic scale of most of the frontage buildings. Street lighting columns for example tend to loom over the adjacent buildings
- A related issue is the **uneasy juxtaposition** of items of street furniture including traffic signs, guard rails, telephone poles and overhead lines with buildings and features of heritage interest.



This is one of the more unfortunate examples of juxtaposition of signage and heritage feature located prominently on the southern approach to the village centre.

- The almost ubiquitous **tarmacadam surfaces** of roads and footpaths resulting in a bland uniformity lacking in textural interest.
- **Gap sites** which open up unappealing views, as described in this appraisal,
- **The area adjacent to the Methodist Church** is a particular problem area subject to a variety of detrimental factors as mentioned in this report.
- **Pole Street** is an area of mediocre quality buildings and discontinuous frontages. Clutter such as these concrete bollards, redundant planter and patched tarmacadam surfaces detract further from the overall appeal of the street scene.



- **Limited public realm trees or greenery.** The green spaces within the conservation area make an important contribution to its amenity but whilst woodland trees and areas of green space are concentrated around the Parish Church there is only limited provision elsewhere.

SEVEN

Summary of Positive Factors

- Standish Conservation Area lies at the heart of the village which has a long and proud history as an independent settlement, spanning from the pre-industrial manorial era to modern times. Its basic street pattern can be traced back several centuries. Its Parish Church dedicated to St. Wilfrid is believed to have been established by 1205.
- The present Church, rebuilt in the 16th C, is Standish's foremost heritage feature and recognised as one of Lancashire's finest churches, being Grade I Listed. Indeed it is Wigan's only Grade I Listed Building. The Church and its setting by an ancient market place with its well, cross and stocks are important survivors of the pre- industrial era of Standish, its War Memorials part of its more recent social heritage.
- The built form of the conservation area is predominantly mid-late 19th C but several surviving buildings were extant in 1845, representing a transition from a predominantly rural economy to the industrial and mining era of the 19th and early 20th C.(Plan 5).
- High Street is of historic interest in its own right as a former turnpike road on the 'Great road north' - or the 'coaching road to London', -only superseded as a trunk route by the M6 motorway.
- The scale of the Conservation Area is largely domestic and its buildings of unpretentious, modest style befitting of the area's recent history as a mining settlement.
- The spatial arrangement of buildings varies from the organic layout of the Market Place area to the more linear form of High Street with its unusual offset cross roads.
- Many of the present commercial premises occupy former houses, demonstrating the adaptability of the village to changing circumstances. The area defined In the UDP as 'Town Centre' is now almost wholly commercial but the balance of residential and commercial uses is one of the appealing features of the Conservation Area as a whole. (Plan 4).



- Over the years, a number of buildings of local interest have been lost and their modern replacements have occasionally fallen short of the design standards which are now applicable in a conservation area.
- **Undoubtedly however, conservation area status has preserved the basic character of Standish preventing the gradual erosion of historic frontages and has undoubtedly served to maintain commercial confidence and provide a catalyst for civic improvement initiatives. Today the village is a bustling centre for the locality with a range of specialist and independent shops and services remarkable for its size.**
- **It is now over 30 years since the conservation area was first designated. Standish conservation area now stands both physically and metaphorically at a cross roads! This report has aimed to identify the special qualities which justify conservation area status and has highlighted some of the detrimental factors which, if not addressed, threaten to erode the special architectural and historic qualities of the area.**
- **If the important spatial and visual and historic qualities of Standish Conservation area are to survive, the commitment of the resident and business community to work together with an agreed conservation focussed agenda will be needed.**

EIGHT

Current Planning Issues

8.1 Policy issues

As well as being a conservation area, the central core of Standish is designated in Wigan's Unitary Development Plan (adopted 26th April 2006), as a Town Centre as shown in Plan 4. Policy S1 applies, (Appendix 2). Within the defined town centre a smaller zone centred on the cross roads, is designated as a Principal Shopping Area, where Policy S1A applies. Standish is one of several smaller town centres with a range of food and non-food shops and other services. Standish has a low vacancy rate and a high proportion of units in retail use and the objective is to maintain this profile by promoting it as a principal location for shopping and related town centre activities. The A49 and A5209/B5239 routes through Standish are designated Strategic Route Network; A49 is designated for physical improvements to the bus network; policies A1N; A1G;

The UDP is intended to provide the planning framework for Wigan up to 2016. It does not make any specific new development allocations in the area. However the plan indicates substantial areas of 'safeguarded land' to the north-west and east of the present built up area of Standish. Safeguarded land comprises sites that lie between the urban area and green belt which may be required to meet longer term development needs beyond the plan period without the need to alter the green belt boundary. The main policy applying to safeguarded



land is GB2, (Appendix 2), which aims to keep the land free of permanent development so that it may fulfil its purpose of meeting possible longer-term development needs.

Should development of safeguarded land around Standish ever be contemplated, there would be a need to consider its impact upon the village centre conservation area and its infrastructure.

8.2 Infilling and other planning issues.

Within the conservation area, the only current planning proposal of any significance is for the development of land to the rear of nos. 29-35 High Street for residential purposes. An outline approval for 12 flats on this backland site was granted 12.12.05. Access to High Street will require the partial demolition of no. 29 and the rebuilding of its north gable. Illustrative proposals indicate a pair of two storey blocks of a style well matched to the local vernacular. A further outline for this site was submitted for the site 3.4.06, not yet determined.

There have been concerns about the proliferation of unauthorised signage in the village in response to which the Council has an ongoing enforcement programme. A recent appeal regarding an illuminated fascia at 37 High Street was dismissed on the grounds that it was considered too large and appeared crude and aggressive out of keeping with the host building, harming the conservation area. The inspector noted that the host property was built of stone and was part of a typical row of attractive 19thC vernacular housing.

There has been an ongoing planning issue in regard to the expansion of parking facilities on former grazing land for Chadwick's Emporium. A recent appeal relating to this proposal was dismissed on highway safety grounds.

NINE

Issues for Conservation Management

Challenges and opportunities - Policy related issues.

The designation of the centre of Standish as a Town Centre should reinforce its role as a service centre for the district but may raise tensions in regard to conservation policy where pressures arise for new buildings or infrastructure of a scale that may be inappropriate to the traditional built form of the historic village. The area around Market Place forming the setting of the Grade I Listed Parish Church is of particular sensitivity. The UDP however provides a framework for balancing these factors. **Pressure for redevelopment in Standish town centre must not compromise conservation objectives. Such pressures should be channelled positively to secure the replacement of mediocre quality modern buildings by more appropriate forms.**

Similarly, where public realm works are proposed, for example relating to the strategic route network and bus corridor, the opportunity should be taken to achieve solutions which enhance rather than diminish the special qualities of the conservation area. The proposed highway works described in this report exemplify this approach.



Enhancement of the conservation area is likely to be a challenging and long term process which will involve the following types of action:

9.1 In the private realm:

- Encouraging consistent standards of upkeep and maintenance of buildings and land.
- Where opportunities arise for infilling or other new development, ensuring good quality design which reinforces local distinctiveness and enhances the street scene.
- The appraisal has identified some of the local building styles which could be used as a basis for design guidance, for example the shallow roof pitches and the simple unpretentious gable-end cottage type. The use of a limited palette of typical local materials such as brick, terracotta, render and grey slate or similar is appropriate. Interest can be added by such features as entrances, eg the use of semi -circular arches, stone or similar, lintels and sills and the detailing of eaves. Occasionally, a more innovative design may be appropriate but reference should be made to the scale, height and proportions of neighbouring buildings.
- Encouraging good quality shopfronts and signage in accordance with the Council's new guidelines and discouraging inappropriate or unauthorised signage.
- Encouraging residents to use more historically appropriate forms of

replacement windows and external maintenance and finishes. The widespread installation of replacement windows is a particularly vexed issue.

- The use of Article 4 (2) directions which could bring such alterations under additional planning control is probably not supportable given the changes already made. In the majority of cases window openings have not been changed so that original sill and lintels survive. The life of replacement windows is finite. A publicity campaign could be applied to encourage the use of appropriate designs which over a longer term might gradually result in the reinstatement of more authentic designs. Some initial examples of good practice -at competitive cost - are required to encourage others.
- Identifying opportunities for redevelopment or renewal which would replace buildings of mediocre quality with more appropriate forms, for example the single storey structures on High Street; the flat roofed buildings at the corner of Cross Street and High Street; the group of shops 10-14 Market Street.

9.2 In the public realm:

- It is recognised that the status of the main routes through Standish limits the discretion over the size and location of highway signage and street furniture. However a review of the position and extent of highway signage and other street furniture, especially where they intrude upon important



building views or the street scene, would be desirable. Where such items are essential, painting metalwork black rather than leaving galvanised finishes would diminish their intrusiveness.

- 'Eliminating overhead 'wirescape'- likely to be a long term measure requiring the co-operation of the utilities.
- Seeking opportunities for public realm enhancement- for example the approved works to improve pedestrian safety in the Market Street area; landscaping the former car park in front of the Parish Church.
- Investigating the feasibility of reinstatement of some areas of sett or cobbled paving, especially in Market Place.
- Devising an action plan to improve the general appearance of Pole Street and Market Street.
- Investigating the scope for increasing the space available for pedestrians.
- Tackling key problem areas such as the area adjacent to the Methodist Church. This might best be achieved as planning gain through redevelopment.
- Seeking opportunities to introduce more trees/ and or planting in the street scene, especially in High Street for example by investigating the use of planting tubs in areas where roadside trees are not practicable.

It is anticipated that the community's response to this appraisal will raise further issues for consideration.

TEN

Conservation Area Boundaries

This Appraisal can provide a basis for assessing the relevance of the designated area boundaries and the need or scope for amendment. The current conservation area already embraces the historic core of the old village. Undoubtedly, certain parts of the conservation area, most notably Pole Street, have been adversely affected by modern development of mediocre quality. However it would not be sensible to cut back the conservation area boundaries. A long term approach should be taken to secure better quality development as and when the opportunity arises, by means of the rigorous design standards which apply within conservation areas. Moreover the continuation of conservation area status will provide a stimulus to secure better quality shop fronts and signage and improvements in the appearance and amenity of the street scene.

Two potential extension areas have been considered provisionally.

- 1 A westward extension to take in School Lane and the area up to and including St. Marie's R.C. Church.
- 2 an extension to include the central portion of Church Street.



10.1 School Lane Extension

School Lane is one of the roads forming the cross roads and is shown on the 1763 Standish Hall estate map. It leads 450m westwards from the cross roads before turning abruptly northwards becoming Almond Brook Road. At the bend, Beechwalk, a minor lane leads southwards. St. Maries R.C. Church is located on the bend facing towards the village. Almond Brook Road, named Windy Harbour Lane on the 1845 OS and Beech Walk formed the boundaries of the Standish Hall Estate there being no road directly westwards across the estate lands. Beech Walk once lined with beech trees was one of the principal approaches to Standish Hall. Its southwards continuation as Standish Wood Lane was an ancient direct route to Wigan.

Assessment of Conservation Merit

The south side of School Lane today, contains little of conservation merit. A row of late 18th or early 19thC cottages shown on the 1845 map had been cleared by the 1960s; Unusually, they were set well back from the road. The Quaker Meeting House and grammar school are long gone, the latter's site occupied by Green Acres care home. The remaining frontage is mainly inter-war or recent suburbia of no special merit. A public house, the Dog and Partridge is of late 19thC date; central porch; rendered; the stained glass windows were widened probably 1930s. Also set back 5m from the road.

A pleasing feature of the south side are tree groups at Quaker's Place and a copse adjacent Beech Walk. Garden trees are also a pleasing feature.

On the north side are a pair of cottages formerly belonging to Almond's Brewery, identified as buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest, though modernised.

The north side features an impressive row of c.1900s terraced houses in three groups of four and one of six. The stepped roof profiles rising up the hill are a pleasing feature. The houses are set behind shallow front gardens with low walls. Nos. 42-52 have ground floor bay windows. The end of the row is marked by a larger semi pair of similar period. Replacement windows are however universal.



Beyond is a gap revealing views into a modern housing estate, then 'The Beeches' a large Victorian villa set within spacious wooded grounds. It is 2 storeys, of gabled form featuring stone dressed round arched windows in 2s and 3s flanking a central arched porch in similar detail. Extensions and outbuildings have been added. It is also identified as a building of Local Architectural or Historic Interest.





Once part of the Standish Hall estate, the Beeches was used as a military hospital during WWI. Its is now a hotel/restaurant.

The massive tree canopies within the grounds are a most impressive feature especially on the approach to the village from the west.

Open land abuts the bend, offering a good prospect towards St. Marie's Church flanked by woodland.



St. Marie's Church dates from 1884. It is in hard red brick with terracotta detail in a plain Victorian Gothic style. East gable has triple lancet windows with open belfry. The nave is flanked by pent-roofed aisles. A presbytery and Church hall form a group with the Church. The Church was built on land gifted for the purpose by Mr. Henry Standish together with donations for its construction and the provision of a graveyard. Hitherto Catholic worship had taken place in Standish Hall Chapel but by 1883 this had become too small for the growing congregation. The graveyard to the rear offers fine prospects over open countryside which falls away westwards. Nearby Beech Lodge, sited on Beech Walk is a relic of the Standish Hall Estate.

Whilst this area undoubtedly contains a number of features of interest, they are not contiguous and do not readily combine to form a cohesive grouping. It is difficult therefore to justify their inclusion in an extended conservation area.

If there is sufficient community support, a conservation area centred upon St. Marie's, the adjoining woodland and possibly including the Beeches, could be an option.

10.2 Church Street- centre section

Historically the main route through the village was almost certainly via Church Street. It is still mainly residential, comprising mainly late 19th century terraces, one group dated 1889, with some later infilling. Nos. 42-52 and nos. 54-64 have been refaced in stretcher bond brick. The street is unusually narrow with buildings at back of footway generally only 10-15m apart.

Mid way along the west side are a social club- the Oddfellows Hall- and a public house, 'Potters Bar'. The former built 1939, is a hipped roofed single storey pavilion in hard red brick but re-windowed. The 'pub' is a plain single storey building rendered. Its windows have roller shutters and canopies.

Assessment of Conservation merit.
The narrowness and curved alignment of this old street which offer unfolding



views towards the Lychgate Inn and the Church are almost reminiscent of a medieval arrangement, though its frontages are 19thC. As elsewhere in the village, double glazing salesmen have passed this way and conservation area status would achieve little in arresting the loss of original features.

Kerbside parking is visually intrusive. The street is one way southwards no doubt taking traffic precluded from the left turn from Market Street to High Street.

Below - over 50 years separate these photos! Note the patched setts in the c.1950 view. The Lychgate was then the Black Horse.



Inclusion of the central section of Church Street could possibly only be justified in historic terms and for the townscape value of its alignment and serial views.

However there is little of intrinsic architectural merit not already marred by alterations, especially replacement windows. As such conservation area status would serve little practical purpose. Significant community support would be needed to justify its inclusion within the conservation area.

It may be argued that it would be a more effective use of resources to concentrate on measures to conserve and enhance the acknowledged special qualities of the existing designated area rather than extend into areas of marginal conservation merit.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Description of Conservation Area Boundaries

The boundary is irregular and best described by reference to Plan 1. The boundary can be traced in a clockwise direction as follows. Starting from its northern-most point on Preston Road, the boundary follows the rear of properties fronting onto Pole Street and Market Place but cuts through the social club and Coop store. Well Court and part of Bramley Court are included and nos. 7,9 Rectory Lane. The boundary then follows the perimeter of the Churchyard including no. 97 Heaton Street, returning along the southern and western sides of the Lychgate Inn. The boundary continues westwards then southwards on an irregular course following the rear plot divisions between Cross Street, High Street and Church Street. The boundary returns eastwards to include nos. 59-75 Church Street and no. 100 High Street, its southern extremity. The boundary returns northwards following the rear plot boundaries of properties on the west side of High Street, for much of its length defined by the trackbed of the former mineral railway. At School Lane the boundary turns eastwards to the cross roads then northwards onto Preston Road to Pole Street excluding Preston Road west side.

APPENDIX 2

Relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies

Wigan's Unitary Development Plan was adopted 26th April 2006. The principal group of policies relevant to conservation areas are those relating to Environmental protection and enhancement. The general policy is EV1, supported by: General design

policy EV3; Design of new development EV3A; Advertisements, EV3B; Design of frontages to shops and commercial premises, EV3C; Landscaping of development, EV3D; The general policy for Conservation of the built environment is EV4; supported by EV4A, Development and design in conservation areas; EV4B, Listed buildings; EV4C Buildings and structures of local architectural or historic interest; EV4E, Archaeology, Ancient Monuments and development.

Other policies directly relevant to Standish are: AIG, Physical Improvements to bus network; AIN, Strategic route network; SI, Hierarchy and role of centres; SIA, Principal Shopping Areas; SIB, Town Centres. (Ref. section 8 in main text.)

Other UDP policies may be of relevance in specific circumstances.

APPENDIX 3

Geology and Drainage of the area.

A simple description of the geology of the Standish area is given in the Kelly's Directory of 1923. "The soil is clay; subsoil clay, stone and coal." The chief crops locally were wheat and oats.

In 1995 a report entitled 'A Geological Background for Planning and Development in Wigan' was published by the British Geological Survey in association with Roger Tym and Partners. Volume one is the technical report of survey; volume two sets out the geological considerations involved in planning and development in the Wigan district, an area with a long history of mining and heavy industry, with associated problems such as land contamination, subsidence and flooding.



The reports are held in Wigan reference library in the 'History Shop'.

Whilst the reports do not focus specifically on Standish, the generality of the geology of north Wigan will be relevant to Standish.

The following notes are extracts from the above document.

Geologically, the Wigan area is underlain by rocks and soils deposited during 3 different periods of geological time. The upper carboniferous rocks of about 320-300 million years age outcrop over the northern part of the area. These consist mainly of shales and sandstones with the coal measures inter-bedded in the upper part of this sequence. The carboniferous rocks in particular have been heavily faulted and folded. Most of these rocks are covered by glacial or post-glacial superficial deposits. The area was glaciated at least three times, the last the Devensian glaciation being the most significant in terms of shaping the landscape. Till, (boulder clay), deposited from ice sheets is the predominant superficial deposit but sands and gravels deposited by melt water, laminated clays deposited in lakes, wind blown sands, organic peats formed on poorly drained areas and alluvium deposited along more modern river valleys by flooding are also found.

In the Standish area, the bedrock is heavily faulted longitudinally in a generally north-south direction but there are also numerous transverse faults. Owing to the extensive and thick cover of superficial deposits, the bedrock is very poorly exposed and its sequence established mainly from mine shaft and borehole readings. The local superficial geology is mainly glacial sand and gravels with an area of till and glacial drift to the east and west, the boundary between these zones approximating to the course of the river Douglas.

The main mineral resource is coal (in 1995, coal was being worked at three open cast sites. Glass sands were worked in the west of the area. Brick clay was worked from glacial till and carboniferous mudstones and clays. Extraction of coal in the Wigan area has been carried out for at least 7 centuries and workings have been uncovered which may date from Roman times. In the area west and east of Standish, coal seams outcrop near the surface. The earliest workings occurred where coal could be seen in exposed slopes or river valleys. These workings followed the seams as adits and later shafts were sunk. The greater Wigan coalfield contained a number of thick seams at shallow depths but the disposition is complicated and disrupted by widespread faulting.

Carboniferous sandstones from the millstone grit and lower coal measures have traditionally been a source of building stone and flag stone in Lancashire. Cannel rock and sandstone above the Ince 7 foot seam were for example worked for local use on the Haigh Estate. The 1845 OS indicates a sandstone quarry adjacent to Preston Road immediately north of the old village. It is probable this was a source of local building stone and perhaps road stone used for repairing the turnpike. The Turnpike Trusts had powers to extract materials available locally for this purpose. The sandstones used for buildings still extant in the village were almost certainly sourced from local quarries. Similarly bricks were often made locally from suitable clays associated with coal mining. The 1892 OS shows the Standish Brick and Tile Works located just north of Engine Row off Preston Road. It was probably a source of local construction materials, though many later houses in the area were built of the ubiquitous hard red Accringtons.

Standish occupies a spur of high ground above the River Douglas. *The Douglas is a tributary of the River Ribble and flows from its headwaters on Rivington Moor through the Rivington reservoir



complex at a height of approximately 70m AOD southwards through a relatively steep narrow valley into Wigan passing about 2km east of Standish via Worthington Lakes. From Wigan the river veers north-west as it loops around the high spur of land at Standish. The valley narrows again close to where the M6 crosses the river. From Parbold the valley opens out onto the south west Lancashire plain on its course to the Ribble estuary. The River Yarrow also flows from the Rivington Reservoirs in a northwest direction towards Chorley, meandering round the southern side of Chorley in a moderately sloping valley, joining with the Douglas south of the Ribble.

Standish is not a riverside settlement. Its source of water via a well is possibly derived from the presence of water bearing sands and gravels contained in the till in the form of 'lenses' or thin layers. These strata have provided modest quantities of groundwater from shallow wells mainly for domestic and agricultural use in the Coal measures area. A spring located on the north side of Standish village feeds the Bradley Brook, a tributary of the Douglas.

* Notes from 'Fluvial Douglas Flood Risk Management Strategy', Scoping Report, Environment Agency N.W. and Baktie, Brown, Root, 13/2/2004.

APPENDIX 4

Heritage Audit Listed Buildings:

Church Of St.Wilfrid, Market Place; Grade I. Probably 1582-4; west tower 1867. East vestry 1913-14 by Austin and Paley.

Gatehouse to Church of St.Wilfrid, Market Place; Grade II. 1927 by Austin and Paley.

Village Cross and Stocks, Market Place. Grade II. Cross base and steps probably medieval, the rest C18 or C19.

The cross is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.(See below).

No.39 Market Place; Grade II; group value;(former shop now a house.) C 17th. (The Eagle and Child Inn until 1916).

St.Wilfrid's Church Club, Rectory Lane. Grade II. Former School,1829. Now converted to apartments.

Jubilee Drinking Fountain, High Street. Grade II. 1897.

Heritage features included in the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record (With kind acknowledgements to Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit).

- 579.1.0 18-20 Market Street : medieval and Roman pottery sherds
- 588.1.0 Stone coffin adjacent Church tower; 13th Century.
- 589.1.0 Stocks, Market Place; post medieval; 1540-1900.Stone stocks with wooden inner; One pillar probably original; erected at present location 1887.
- 589.1.1 Village well, Market Place; probably C14th; possibly 'cooling pool' said to be latterly used for washing fish; restored 1930 and to present condition in 1998.
- 3272.1.0 Worthington's Butchers shop (now a house);17th C; scored stucco over stone; stone flagged roof (now felted over). Part of a group with Parish Church, cross and stocks.
- 4241.1.0 Wellington House; stone built house with thicker stone at base; stone plinth corners, flag roof. Date plaque of GJ1817.



- 4242.1.0 Malt Kiln Farm,(site of).post medieval. No trace now.Wesleyan Chapel built on site 1897.
- 4610.1.0 Wheat Sheaf Inn; 19th C .Since demolished.
- 4641.1.0 Market Cross, Market Place. Late medieval stone base. Shaft is more modern and Listed. Scheduled Ancient Monument ref.25717
- 4642.1.0 Miss Smalley's House, part of row, nos. 41,43,45,market Place. Brick built on sandstone base, opposite cross and stocks. Reference in Porteus.
- 4748.1.0 St.Wilfrid's Church; Medieval probably 1582-4;West tower with octagonal spire 1867.Personal Stndish Chapel; Choirs aisle built 1589,restored 1878; Piscina in chancel.Two chest tombs. Various interesting memorials.
- 4854.1.0 Standish Village Core: medieval 1066-1539. Settlement named in Yates Map of Lancashire 1786. Buildings post medieval-1900.Standish is Old English for "the stony pasture".
- 5424.1.0 White Hall, (site of), formerly the 'Brick House'; now occupied by Standish Library.
- 5488.1.0 Black Bull; public house; 19th C.
- 11258.1.0 land adjacent St.Wifrid's Church (site of Parish Hall). Excavations 1999 to explore evidence of medieval settlement; site of Victorian post office. Evidence of medieval occupation probably destroyed by 19th C building.
- 4748.2.0 Gatehouse to Church of SDt.Wilfrid. 1927 Austin and Paley as described elsewhere.
- 12032.1.0 Jubilee Drinking Fountain; 1897 as described elsewhere.
- 12209.1.0 Rectory Lane.Archaeological investigation of land adjacent Smalley Street August 2000 revealed a linear ditch

which ran towards the centre of Market Place.The ditch represents a land boundary of the period, separating the manorial land to the west from Glebe lands to the east.The ditch revealed over 50 sherds of medieval pottery; also well of c.1700s and numerous pits containing ferrous waste and 19th C pottery; possibly evidence for small scale industrial activity eg smithing.

Other features of interest not included in Sites and Monuments Record.

- Wall to Churchyard and Lychgate of 1854.
- War Memorial ,High Street, 1920
- Low stone wall with piers to west of Church and plaque commemorating demolition of 'Spite Row' in 1930.
- No 52-54 High Street a late 18th or early 19thC town house containing a wooden loft ladder within yard entrance and cast iron columns and brackets.
- *Buildings identified as of Local Architectural or Historic Interest:
- 6,8 School Lane –formerly part of Almond's Brewery.
- The Beeches; late C19th mansion; used as military hospital during WWI.

* Outside conservation area.

APPENDIX 5

Aspects of local History A5.1 Strategic Standish

Porteus mentions that the ten townships of the ancient parish lay chiefly on the eastern and western loops of the Great North Road (from London to Carlisle), beginning at Boar's Head and ending at



Bamber Bridge. On the western Branch is Standish with Langtree, Shevington off the highway to the west, Coppull, Welch Whittle and Charnock Richard. On the eastern branch, are Worthington and Duxbury, while on another road from Bolton to Chorley joining the eastern branch at Duxbury are found the three remaining townships, Anderton, Adlington and Heath Charnock. The two branches were regarded as constituting one road in the Wigan to Preston Road Act of 1727 and were jointly described as the 'ancient accustomed road to north Britain' and the 'common post road to London'.

Boar's Head inn dates from the mid 15thC. The Inn was possibly built by the Standish family - their 'owl and rat' crest is built into its front wall - as a hostel for pilgrims since it stood at the parting of the routes north to Furness and east for Whalley and Fountains.

'Standish 80 Years of Change' Aspinall.

The origins of the route though Standish have been traced to Roman times. According to Margary,* author of 'Roman Roads in Britain', the route via Wigan and Standish was a secondary route linking Northwich and Warrington (and thus the Roman fort at Chester) to Preston and Lancaster, possibly continuing into the Lake District, (the route from Manchester through Ribchester and Penrith to Carlisle being the principal route, the modern A6).

T.C. Porteus refers to the road through Coppull being known as Watling Street c.AD1230.

'Watling Street' is in fact a network of Roman roads, some possibly following ancient British trackways. The main route of Watling Street led from Dover via London to Wroxeter on the Welsh borders but branches are also found in Cheshire and Lancashire.

* Hic-bibi Lane, north of Standish is believed to follow the line of the Roman Road towards

Coppull. Porteus considered that this curious name derived from the Latin Hic bibe 'drink here', probably a monastic derivation relating to a spring fit for drinking, located on the pilgrim route to the great Abbey at Furness.

Whatever its precise alignment, the route has, throughout history, been of strategic and economic importance.

"To the Romans it was the road between the legionary fortress at Chester and the western half of Hadrian's Wall. It was the invasion route for 2nd C Picts and later Scottish raiders; It was the route taken by Royalist Armies and their pursuers during the Civil War. In 1715 and 1745 Jacobite rebels would have trudged along it. (The nearby Standish Hall, home of the Lords of the Manor of Standish, played an important role in this period). After the road had been turnpiked in the first half of the 18thC, as well as being the west coast route to Scotland, the route was used by the increasing numbers of visitors to the new holiday area, the Lake District."

From "Lancashire" ,Bagley.

Standish would have been an important staging point along this route. There is for example reference to grazing for horses on a field behind the former Eagle and Child Inn in Market Place. Being located at the summit of a 3 mile climb from Wigan would have doubtless made Standish a welcome service facility in the days of horse drawn traffic!

In modern times the route through the village is the A49 which becomes A6 north of Bamber Bridge. Southwards it leads through Cheshire and Shropshire to Shrewsbury and Hereford. The importance of A49 as strategic route may have been diminished by the nearby M6 motorway but it retains its status as a vital regional artery.



It is noteworthy too that this strategic north-south Lancashire corridor is also used by the west coast mainline railway which crosses Rectory Lane 1.5 km east of Standish centre.

A 5.2 Manor and Village

The history of Standish prior to the Norman conquest is obscure but Standish is thought to have been the location of one of twelve 'towns' fortified by the Saxons in their attempts to expel the Danes.

Before the Norman Conquest, the lands between the Ribble and the Mersey were held by the Crown.

Standish is not mentioned in Domesday. The manor of Standish became established as a result of the grant of lands in Standish by William the Conqueror to the descendents of one Warin De Bussel who had played a part in the conquest and had married Amiera the niece of the King's cousin, Roger of Montgomery. Richard, grandson of Warin de Bussel gave two carucates of land in Standish and Langtree to a Richard Spileman on the latter's marriage to his sister in 1153. (A carucate was the area of land that one team of oxen could plough in a season).

The earliest documented use of Standish as a place name is however dated 1178. Almost certainly it is formed from two Old English words stan (stone) and edisc (park or enclosure).

The de-Standish name was adopted by Radolphus c.1206, a grandson of Richard Spileman. By 1240 Rudolphus owned both Standish and Langtree manors and the advowson for Standish Church. (The advowson was an important privilege which included the right to appoint a lay rector who would could appoint a priest and administer the Church lands by arrangement with the lord of the manor). From About Standish Smith M D

The Manorial lordship was subsequently held by one resident gentry family- the Standishes - which dominated the life of the village and survived in the direct male line from the 12thC up to the death of Ralph Standish in 1755. The estate subsequently passed through the female line.

"As Lords of the manor, principal landowners and sometime rectors of the parish, the Standishes exerted great influence over the economic, social and religious life of the area for a period of 700 years."

"Standish is of considerable intrinsic interest, many elements of its past reflecting national history." Webb.

Notable -or notorious - among these events is the slaying by Ralph de Standish of Wat Tyler leader of the 'Peasant's Revolt' on 15th July 1381, allegedly in defence of the young King Richard II. For his trouble, Ralph received a knighthood for his services in defence of the King at Smithfield. The episode is celebrated by a fine stained glass window in the Standish Chapel within the parish Church.

Standish had developed along the ancient road north from Wigan and Wigan's influence as the main local market and economic centre has ensured that Standish has enjoyed close ties with Wigan over the centuries. The Standish family, (Lords of the Manor), for example owned property in medieval Wigan and at one point even claimed the right to appoint Wigan's rector. The village and its Church was the centre of a typically large and sprawling Lancashire parish comprising ten townships, and the influence of the Church has been great, but as in many parts of Lancashire a strong Roman Catholic tradition survived the reformation and has flourished in more recent times.



“The Standishes remained loyal to the Roman Catholic faith after the reformation and like many other Lancashire gentry families, had to steer a fine course between their beliefs and avoiding the wrath of the Protestant State.”

Although Standish escaped major incidents in the civil war, the support of the Standishes for the Jacobite cause involved the village in national events when first William and then Ralph Standish were lucky to escape with their lives and to preserve the family estates intact.

Webb, Standish 800 Years of History.

Despite the religious and political intrigues and persecutions of the period, the Standish family were able to build Standish Hall in 1574 as the new manor for the estate. Standish hall was located in extensive grounds 1.2km south west of the village centre. The building was of the H plan type and of oak timbers and plaster on a brick base and surrounded by a moat. It contained its own private chapel. Later extensions were added in brick in the Georgian style.

The old village Church which had existed from the 13thC had by the mid 16thC become dilapidated. It was rebuilt c.1589 in the perpendicular style aided by contributions from the local great families. The size of the Church, dominating the village, is derived from the need to serve the extensive parish with its ten constituent townships. Its hilltop position enabled the spire to be seen from a wide surrounding area.

Both the Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Methodists were active in Standish at an early period in their history; the Quakers registered a burial ground at Langtree in 1693, while the Methodists began to preach in the village as early as 1790.”

Webb op cit

The ecclesiastical history of the parish in Tudor and Stuart times according to Bagley is complex but full of interest. Both Congregationalists and Quakers were early entrenched. Puritanism and enthusiasm for the Parliamentary cause are very evident but are matched in other parts of the parish by equally resolute support for Roman Catholicism, for Charles I against Parliament and for James II against William III.

Bagley ‘Lancashire’. Op cit.

The Standishes continued to exert influence on the village into the 19th and early 20th Centuries. Thomas Strickland Standish (d 1813) was colonel of the Wigan Militia. His son Charles, who succeeded to the Standish Hall estate, was elected M.P. for Wigan in 1837 and again in 1842.

The village and much of the surrounding land had for centuries been in the ownership of the Standish family but during the latter part of the 19th C the estate became run down as a consequence of the agricultural depression of the 1870s, the family’s increased residence on the continent and the rapid development of the mines with its inevitable environmental degradation.

The Hall was let to Wigan notables such as Thomas Darwell, (Mayor in 1823 and 1830) and mill owner Nathaniel Eckersley (also a Mayor of Wigan in the 1870s).

The last member of the noble line, Henry Noailles Widdrington Standish, b.1847; m. Helene, daughter of the Count de Cars, 1870, inherited the Standish estate in 1883, d. at Contrexeville France 31st July 1920.

Finally in 1921 the estate was sold and broken up. Webb summarises the dramatic changes which occurred as a result of the breaking up of the Standish Hall estates at sales in 1912 and 1921 following the Settled Land Acts of 1882-90.



“The result was a rapid release of land around Standish which accelerated a suburbanisation process begun from the 1920s.”

(Note the reference to early suburbanisation refers primarily to the onset of ribbon development especially along the main road to Wigan. The 1929 OS shows no evidence of suburban development in the immediate vicinity of the village centre. Suburbanisation was however under way by the onset of WWII, as exemplified by the large inter-war estate north of Rectory lane).

Standish Hall itself was partly demolished in 1923, the half timbered central portion being dismantled and reputedly shipped to America, the remainder being cleared in later years. “Nothing now remains of this once fine old building”, (Smith MD).

5.3 Population and Administration

Historically, Standish with Langtree had been one of 10 townships which were administrative subdivisions of the extensive ancient ecclesiastical parish of Standish.

Standish was a typical manorial village, the manor court functioning at least up to the 18thC.

At the first census in 1801, the population of Standish Parish was 5,489 of which Standish with Langtree Township accounted for 1,542. The old Wigan Borough by comparison had a population of 11,000.”

In the larger parishes, township ‘vestries’ administered local government such as it was. The townships lost their powers during the 19th C to new and larger units of local government such as boards of Guardians, Local Boards of Health and their successors the district councils. Following the New Poor Law Act of 1834 Standish was placed in the

Wigan Poor Law Union. The Methodist Chapels of Standish were placed in the Wigan circuits.

By 1861 the Parish population had grown to 10,410 of which Standish with Langtree township accounted for 3,054.

Standish with Langtree Local Board was formed in 1872 after the Local Government Act of 1858.

In 1894 Standish became an Urban District, reflecting its changed status as a populous mining village. The 1901 population of the township had grown to 6,303.

Kelly’s Directory of 1923 described Standish as an extensive parish, township and village on the old road from Wigan to Preston. The acreage of the township and Urban District of Standish with Langtree was 3,266 (1,321 ha) and its population in 1921 was 7,293 in two wards, north and south. (About Standish). op cit.

The status of Standish as an Urban District within Lancashire County remained until the Local Government reorganisation of 1974, when Standish was finally absorbed into Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.

Vestiges of local institutions survive for example in the village stocks, rescued from a field and reinstated c.1900 ; the constabulary station, 1877. Until 1989, the Urban District Council Offices, survived but the site was redeveloped as a Health Centre, 1990, in a style which has faint echoes of the old building. The substantial Parish Church is itself a remainder of the extensive ancient Parish it was built to serve. The former Sunday School of 1829 survives though as part of Bramley Court, a modern residential development. The Standish Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1897, High Street, also survives.



The historic village core has been enveloped by successive phases of development from the 19th C to the present day. Development has taken place in depth both sides of High Street and Preston Road, but with a greater concentration to the north- east of the cross roads.

“Semi detached villas, council houses and the many private estates built since the 1950s increased the population to 11,000 by 1971, the last figure for the old Urban District, despite a decline in heavy industry and mining.”

Webb. op cit.

‘Village’ is described in Concise Oxford Dictionary alternatively as: a group of houses and associated buildings, larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town especially in rural areas; the inhabitants of a village regarded as a community; a self contained district or community within a town or city regarded as having features characteristic of village life.

Undoubtedly Standish is regarded as possessing some of the characteristics mentioned above though its modern population is sizeable in village terms and its centre is a designated town centre in the Unitary Development Plan. Standish today is a hybrid of village, suburb and small town. It has for example a Township Forum which provides a basis for representing the interests of the area to Wigan Borough Council. The term village nonetheless provides a convenient and popular means of reference, especially in regard to the historic core, acknowledging its origins as the focus of a once extensive ancient parish.

The conservation area can with justification be described as an historic village centre.

5.4 Mining, Industry, Communications

The townships consisted mainly of hamlets and farmsteads but mining and small scale industries had been long established in the area. Due to the relatively easy accessibility of the coal seams, coal had been part of the economy from medieval times. The earliest documented reference to mining rights was in a deed of 1350 where ‘secole’ (ordinary coal) and ‘fyrston’ (cannel) were mentioned.

Porteus describes a reference to coal pits near Standish Hall in 1634 when three gentlemen lost their way among them. Whichever path they took they were warned by the snuffing of their horses of the presence of these “Tartarean cells.” They were evidently in the grounds of Standish Hall.

(The pits were then worked by horse ‘whim’ to draw up baskets. Early pits in nearby Welch Whittle were sunk to depths of 12 to 57 yards deep; A pit mentioned in 1742 at Charnock Richard, one of the first townships to exploit its minerals, was 72 yards deep).

The exploitation of the Wigan coal field went hand in hand with improvements in transport, initially with the canalisation of the river Douglas in 1742 which provided an outlet to coastal seaways via the Ribble. This was followed by the opening of a direct canal link to Liverpool in 1772, which later became part of the Leeds and Liverpool canal, completed in 1816. The Leeds and Liverpool canal sweeps around Standish and Wigan in a wide arc, closely following the course of the River Douglas. The canal passes about 2.5 km to the east of Standish at Red Rock. An underground canal was created c. 1800 to link Standish mines with the Leeds and Liverpool canal. It operated until c. 1845. At Crooke about 3km to the south west of Standish, a canal pier was built in 1859 for loading



coal into barges. Served by tram-roads, it connected John Pit and other local pits via the Kirkless Hall Coal & Iron Co's. railway.

During the 19thC a network of tramways or mineral railways was established linking the collieries with the developing main line railway system in the region, the Wigan- Preston line being opened by 1838. One such mineral railway serving collieries on the north side of Standish ran parallel with High Street and crossed School Lane within 50m of Standish cross roads. By 1953 it had been cut back south of the village. The 1953 OS shows opencast mining still taking place southwest of the village.

The 19thC industrialisation was to dramatically change the character of the area.

"The story of Standish over the last two centuries again mirrors to some extent that of northern England as a whole. Small scale industrialisation based on local coal reserves developed in Victorian times into extensive mining which in turn led to a rapid growth in population, further industrialisation and the expansion of workers housing and other urban features." Webb.

Webb describes the 19thC as "wreaking tremendous change to the villages; being in the Wigan coalfield meant that Standish and Shevington became industrial villages. The importance of agriculture declined, and industrialisation caused serious environmental degradation. Webb op cit

"By the time of the first household census in 1841, industrial occupations were employing a large proportion of the people of Standish. Of these, coal mining was the most important. During the 17th and 18th Cs the Standish family began to exploit the coal deposits beneath their estates and the Standish collieries developed rapidly in the 1800s. In Victorian and Edwardian times Standish

was essentially a colliery village. Five Standish collieries were working in 1851, namely Almond Brook, Standish, Victoria, Broomfield, Bradley. The Standish and Shevington collieries joined with others in 1865 to form the Wigan Coal and Iron Company.

Porteus T.C. History of Standish 1927

A new shaft at Victoria colliery near Boar's Head was sunk in 1900 by the Wigan Coal and Iron Co. Webb op cit.

Mining reached the peak of its importance around 1914. Some 11 pits were active in Standish and neighbouring Shevington at its peak. Decline was equally rapid and the collieries began to run down after the First World War. The last working mine at Standish was the Robin Hill drift mine opened in 1953 and operating until 1963. (About Standish MD Smith. 2003).

The Standish estate had benefited over the centuries from the exploitation of coal reserves. Interestingly, the mineral rights and revenues were excluded from the sale of the estate in 1921. These were only finally extinguished in 1942, the Government handsomely compensating the niece and heiress of Madame Standish (d. 1933).

The French connection with Standish finally drew to a close in the 1960s when the new owner Vicomte de Noailles sold his manorial rights to a Wigan based company. Subsequently the Opencast Executive of the National Coal Board acquired the Standish Estate. Smith M D op cit.

Porteus describes some of the other industries to be found in the district, mentioning tanning and the growing of flax for linen spinning and weaving in the 18th C as adjuncts of agriculture. A 'cotton



engine' was leased by the Standish family with premises to a tenant in 1792. Weavers and bobbin winders were numerous in the census of 1832. Malt making was in evidence in 1706 indicating a tradition of local brewing. The Standish Brewery located on School Lane was founded c.1870 by J.B.Almond.

Weaving sheds were opened at Bradley on the east side of the village c.1900. The manufacture of chemicals had been long established in the lower ground area including the Roburite factory at Gathurst which from 1888 manufactured explosives for mines and quarries.

At Worthington a watermill on the River Douglas had been in existence from at least the 1300s. In the late 1700s the Cromptons established a paper mill there; by the 1840s a steam engine had been installed. Reservoirs were built above the mill between 1855 and 1872 by the newly established Wigan Corporation Waterworks, the river Douglas being culverted beneath the reservoirs and the factory. Paper making ceased in 1883 and the mill was developed as a bleach and dye works for the local cotton industry. Bleaching ceased in 1907 and the factory operated latterly as a textile finishing plant, closing in 1998. (Webb Images of England series).

Webb concludes his introduction to the above publication by commenting "Through all this rapid change, however, Standish never completely lost its village atmosphere. The tide of industry has receded in modern times, the last colliery closing in 1963. The railway has gone (presumably referring either to the closure of Standish station on the WCML or the former mineral line which ran a few metres west of High Street), and the motorway has by passed the old north road, leaving Standish once more to enjoy its peaceful residential character."

N. Webb 'Standish 800 Years of History'; WHS

Since Webb's account, the growth in local traffic has ensured that the A49 remains a principal traffic route. **The volume of traffic through the village, is a legacy of its strategic location and continues to exert a strong influence on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Likewise the unpretentious style and modest scale of much of the built environment of Standish is a reminder of its former role as a mining village.**

A.McGreavey 6/7/06