

**WEST STREET CONSERVATION AREA
CONGLETON
CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**



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Section 1 Introduction

The West Street Conservation Area was designated by Congleton Borough Council in 1969 and the boundaries were amended in 1980.

A Conservation Area as defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is an “area of special architectural or historic interest” the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.¹ Designation of a conservation area increases control over significant or total demolition of unlisted buildings, strengthens control over minor development and protects trees within its boundaries. It also ensures that any new development maintains or enhances the character of the area.

Section 71 of the Act imposes a duty on the local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Proposals must be publicised and incorporate public comment.

The purpose of the Appraisal is, in accordance with the methodology recommended by English Heritage,² to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the West Street Conservation Area. This has been used to prepare a Management Plan setting out actions to maintain and enhance the special character of the Conservation Area. These documents will support the proactive management of the Conservation Area through the development control process, including support for appeals.

The Cheshire Historic Town Survey Programme was carried out by Cheshire County Council and English Heritage. Based on that research, Cheshire County Council published a Historic Towns Archaeological Assessment in 2003.³ In November 2007, Cheshire County Council also published the results of the Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project.⁴ The Conservation Area Appraisal draws heavily from these sources.

While this Conservation Area Appraisal goes into some detail, a reader should not assume that the omission of any building, feature or space from this appraisal means that it is not of interest. If in doubt, please contact the Conservation Officer at Cheshire East Council.

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

² *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (London: English Heritage, February 2006).

³ Cheshire County Council, *Cheshire Historic Towns Survey: Congleton: Archaeological Assessment* [online] (2003).

⁴ Cheshire County Council, *The Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation* [online] (Chester: Cheshire County Council, November 2007).

Section 2 The Planning Policy Context

Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment stresses the need for local planning authorities to define and record the special characteristics of each conservation area. The existence of a clear definition of an area's character helps reduce uncertainty for owners and developers and provides a sound basis, defensible on appeal for local plan policies and development control decisions⁵.

The local planning policy context includes the Congleton Borough Local Plan that was adopted in 2004. The relevant policies within this document are as follows; BH2 which relates to the demolition of Listed buildings, BH3 relates to change of use and conversion of listed buildings, BH4-5 relate to planning permission and listed building consent, BH6 relates to the local list, BH7 concerns enabling development and BH8-10 are concerned with conservation areas including their designation, management and demolition and construction.

Policy GR1 is a general requirements policy that relates to the standard of design, GR2 lays out the design criteria that need to be satisfied to acquire planning permission and GR21 relates to flood prevention and development within flood plains.

Further relevant policies include H4, which relates to residential development within Towns. H15 provides guidance on extensions to dwellings within towns and villages. Policy NR1 concerns development on a site with trees and woodlands. Policies S11-S15 provide guidance on shop fronts and advertisements. Supplementary planning guidance on shop front security has also been adopted by the council.

Relevant policies in The North West of England Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 include DP7, EM1, and EM1c. DP7 focuses on environmental equality, EM1 and EM1c relate to the enhancement and protection of the region's environmental assets.

Conservation Area Consent is required for alterations that affect the character of the building, and it is an offence to carry out such works without consent. Planning Permission may also be required in conservation areas, where there is an Article Four Direction in force.

The full policies from the Congleton Local Plan are included in the appendices. This Appraisal will be a useful contributor to future Area Action Plans or Supplementary Planning Documents for the area.

⁵ Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (London: Department for Communities and Local Government, 2010).

Section 3 Summary of Special Interest

The Archaeological Assessment calls Congleton “one of Cheshire’s most important medieval towns”. The special character of West Street Conservation Area derives from the following elements:

- A mixture of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century residential and retail buildings on a historic thoroughfare, with their origins in the medieval street layout and burgage plots;
- The number of buildings or monuments listed or of local architectural or historic interest;
- Traditional craftsmanship, natural resources and energy of production embodied in original building materials and architectural features;
- Visual harmony resulting from use of a limited palette of natural building materials of timber, brick and slate roofs and a limited variety of styles;
- Hard and soft landscaped spaces and historic street surfaces in parts of the conservation area enhancing the environment.

A detailed definition of the special interest of the Conservation Area is set out in section 4 of the character appraisal.

Section 4 Assessing Special Interest

4.1 Location & Setting

Location and context

Congleton lies in east Cheshire, 8km west of the border with Staffordshire. It is 53km east of Chester and 19km north of Newcastle-under-Lyme. The town lies at a nodal point in the road network. The 'King's Way' (A34), was a major route from Manchester and the north-west to Newcastle-under-Lyme and the south. This is crossed by the east/west road (A54) running from Chester and North Wales to Buxton and the Peak District.

The underlying solid geology comprises clay, overlying which are deposits of sand and fine gravel. To the south are deposits of glacial sand known as the Congleton Sand, used for foundry sand, and to the north, in the area of the River Dane, are alluvium and river terrace deposits. The foothills of the Peak District comprise millstone grit sandstone, which has been extensively used for building and walling stone, as well as for use as millstones.

The West Street Conservation Area lies to the west of the town centre, with its eastern extremity within the medieval core. Its boundaries follow the backs of properties to the north and south of the street, as far as the junction with Antrobus Street, and also include the properties around the triangle formed by Little Street and Swan Bank but not those on the north side of Duke Street.

General Character and Plan Form

Although it is not certain where the first settlement of what is now Congleton was located, at the time of the first charter the market may have been at the natural meeting point of Swan Bank, Duke Street and Mill Street. Some of the timber-framed buildings from the medieval centre remain but many were swept away in the eighteenth century building programme and streets became dominated by brick-built houses. West Street became further built up in the nineteenth century with terraced workers' houses.

The West Street Conservation Area is a linear area with extensions at the eastern end, following property boundaries as well as streets.

Landscape Setting

Congleton is situated on the southern slopes of the valley of the River Dane at around 90 to 100m, falling to 80m by the river. To the west is the flat Cheshire plain and to the east are the Pennines. The Cloud, which lies just 3km east of Congleton, rises to a height of 343m.

The main significant views in the West Street Conservation Area are east/west along West Street and up Little Street. The main landmark

is the Lion and Swan public house at the junction of West Street and Swan Bank. Within the proposed boundary extensions there are additional significant views northwards from the cricket ground towards St James the Great and Overton House on West Street.

The main landmark in the current Conservation Area is the stone and timber-framed Lion and Swan public house at the junction of West Street, Swan Bank, Little Street and Wagg Street. An additional landmark within the proposed boundary extensions is the Church of St James the Great.



Lion and Swan Hotel

4.2 Historic Development & Archaeology

4.2.1 History and Development of Congleton

Early History

There is evidence of occupation of the area in Neolithic and Roman times but it is not certain when Congleton was founded. It is believed that the town owes its name to the bend in the River Dane: the Old English word for turn or bend is 'cong' and 'ton' is the Anglo-Saxon for town or settlement. The river and a number of wells would have provided fresh water, the hillside of the nearby Cloud would have made a convenient look-out point, the flat plain allowed agriculture and the Moss would have been a source of peat for fuel. The first reference to Congleton is in the Domesday Book of 1086, by which time there were at least six families and communal woodland.

The town's first charter of 1272 created a free borough in which people could buy the right to trade, with a merchant guild, but it was also under manorial administration. There were also the beginnings of a textile industry at this time with a fulling mill on the Dane by 1353 and later records of drapers and mercers. The privileges granted to burgesses included the right to elect a mayor, a catchpole for legal enforcement of certain offences, and official ale tasters. The main street ran along a natural bench from what is now Lawton Street to Bridge Street, with the Dane to the north and the houses along its bank. The first market may have been in the area of what is now Swan Bank, Duke Street and Mill Street. A huge flood of 1451 swept away many buildings and the townspeople were allowed to cut a new channel which is presumably the present course of the Dane. A new mill was built with a bakery, granary and communal bake house, cutting down the risk of fire. A new town cross was constructed in 1501, decorated with the borough and national coats of arms. The parish church was at Astbury, two miles away, but Congleton had two churches of ease. A grammar school was founded sometime in the 1400s and a new one was built in 1600. The population at this time was around 400, of whom some were involved in the woollen industry. Timber cutting in Town Wood was strictly controlled, providing wood for buildings of which several examples survive in Lawton Street. Smaller houses and stables began to infill the areas behind houses but the areas flooded in 1451 were not built on until the 1840s.

In 1584, Elizabeth I granted the town a new charter which gave it more independence from manorial control. By the time of the Hearth Tax of 1668, there were 349 houses. Forty people were engaged in the leather trade and the town would have reeked of the stench of its preparation. Other trades included carpenters, ironmongers, felters, coopers, tallow chandlers, glaziers and farmers. By 1594, Henry Oldfield had established a bell foundry which lasted until the early 1700s. The town was also noted for its bear-baiting and cock-fights; the location of the bear pit is unknown but the cock pit was near the grammar school.

Plague hit Congleton on at least three occasions: in 1559, 1603 and 1641-43. This last was particularly virulent and caused trade almost to stop completely. Civil war in 1640 brought further trouble to the town. John Bradshaw, of Congleton, was president of the court which tried Charles I. The town's republican leanings had to be hidden after the Restoration of Charles II in 1661. The Borough had some control over religious matters in the area and was particularly hostile to Catholics and Quakers, who were persecuted until the early 1700s.

The Eighteenth Century and the Silk Industry

Until the 1700s, Congleton was still a market town, industry being on a small scale and associated with the leather and wool trades. In 1755 a large five-storey silk spinning mill was opened by the Dane as a joint venture between a London silk merchant and a Stockport manufacturer. There was a large trained but unemployed workforce which was willing to accept low wages because of depressed economic conditions. The Dane provided a water supply and source of power and the Borough provided the site free of charge. By 1771, the mill employed 600 people and led to the building of other textile factories. People also turned attics into weaving garrets. Alternative sources of employment were ribbon weaving which started in the 1750s, and cotton spinning from 1784, as well as other small family businesses such as rope making. Other people were attracted to the town and the population grew from 3,861 in 1801 to 6,405 in 1821.



High Street



Bridge Street

A building programme swept away congested medieval areas and replaced them with four-room cottages with an outside privy and a yard or garden. Mill owners built large houses with sash windows, handsome door cases and slate roofs. The old wooden Upper Chapel, on Chapel Street, was re-built in brick in 1740-42 as St Peter's and a stone tower added in 1786. Nonconformist churches began to be established, the first being the Congregational Meeting House. The Wesleyan Methodists founded a society in the 1740s and built a new chapel on Wagg Street in 1766. The poor condition of many roads led local business people to establish turnpike trusts to facilitate improvements; the road to Manchester was turnpiked in 1781, the Buxton road in 1789 and the Macclesfield road in 1796.



High Street



Chapel Street

The Nineteenth Century

The silk trade improved and by 1840 Congleton produced more silk than Macclesfield, but the trade suddenly declined and population growth slowed. The industry was dealt an almost fatal blow when duties were reduced on imported silk. Local people seemed to find it difficult to introduce new processes and machinery and Congleton struggled to adapt. However, in 1867 fustian cutting and the manufacture of velvet were introduced, both labour-intensive processes which provided employment for many people. Fustian is the parent fabric of velvet, velveteen and corduroy. Berisford Brothers established one of the most successful and largest mills in 1858, one which is still running, but most businesses were small, only employing six or seven people. Despite the fustian trade, there was a decline in manufacturing as better transport links enabled goods to be brought in more cheaply from elsewhere and allowed people to travel to shop in Hanley and Manchester.

Local brickworks were run in backyards because local roads were often in poor condition, restricting the movement of materials. Stone quarries on Congleton Edge provided stone for foundations and a few buildings. One of the largest retailers was the Co-operative Society, founded in 1860 to give customers a share in the profits and many people on low wages appreciated the 'divi' or dividend.

Congleton was only joined to the canal system in 1831 by a branch from Marple but this was largely used for carrying coal. After three proposals by railway companies, the north Staffordshire Railway Company opened a line between Macclesfield and Stafford in 1848. The station, built a year later, included a large freight building for silk. A second railway line was opened to carry coal from the Potteries and provide additional passenger services.

Civic Amenities

Official buildings were replaced at this time, including the Guild Hall in 1804 and again in the early 1860s. In 1835 a new Municipal Corporation replaced the old administrative system. Local business people established the Congleton Gas & Lighting Company in 1833 and the Corporation took this over in 1866. Outbreaks of typhoid forced the Corporation to provide a supply of clean water. Water was pumped from springs to a tower on West Heath and another at Mossley. In 1865 the Corporation acquired land for a public park. It also held a competition to design a new Town Hall which E. W. Godwin won with a design showing an elaborately decorated building. Godwin was an architect-designer in London who, at this time, worked in the polychromatic Ruskinian Gothic style and had just completed the Northampton Guildhall in a very similar style. Despite escalating costs which resulted in reduced decoration, Pevsner has described it as 'a specially good Gothic Town Hall'.⁶ A new police station was constructed in 1870 next to the Town Hall and is now the Town Museum. New Anglican churches were also built to cater for a growing population and to combat the rise in nonconformity, including St James the Great in West Street in 1844. Congleton was becoming a centre of religious dissent and, by 1811, Methodism was the dominating nonconformist sect. There were also chapels for the Congregationalists, Baptists and Primitive Methodists. An influx of Irish weavers led to the building of a Catholic church. Churches also provided schools which were so effective that the 1870 Education Act had little impact locally. No Board schools were built but the Board concentrated on improving attendance.



Town Hall, High Street

⁶ Joan P. Alcock, *History & Guide – Congleton* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2003) 116.

The Twentieth Century

Congleton was becoming regarded more as a pleasant place to live than as a place of employment and professional people were attracted to the town. The First World War led to the loss of men in the trenches, the loss of work for mills from Europe and the arrival of refugees from Belgium. The town's War Memorial was unveiled in Lawton Street in 1923. A hospital was also constructed as an additional memorial, opening a year later. The Council tried to provide employment by public works during the Great Depression of the 1930s; a public swimming pool was built and roads paved, eliminating many of the setts and cobbles. The Council also started building houses to replace slum dwellings in the same form as that proposed for most of Britain: a semi-detached house with internal toilet and water supply and a garden. Electricity supply arrived in 1931 and Berisford Brothers was one of the first mills to take up the new power.

The Second World War led to vacant mills being used to house conscripted men, railings being removed for scrap (although most were probably dumped at sea) and spare land being dug to grow food. Congleton was a place of refuge for evacuees from Manchester and Liverpool and very little bombing occurred due to the lack of industry. Dutch and, later, American troops arrived in town. After the War some new industries were established in vacant fustian mills, including the manufacture of paper and cardboard packaging. Congleton also became a commuter town for the Potteries and Manchester.

Proposed redevelopment of the town centre in the early and late 1960s never took place, resulting in the survival of much of what a Council for British Archaeology report had described as "an exceptionally interesting town". In 1980 the dual carriageway, Mountbatten Way, was constructed through the lower part of the town, destroying the medieval street pattern. By this time, Bridge Street and part of High Street had been pedestrianised, enhancing the shopping area. Congleton also created a Town Council which took possession of the old insignia and the town archives.

4.2.2 History and Development of West Street

The east end of the West Street Conservation Area is within the medieval core of Congleton. The Cheshire Historic Towns Survey discusses the medieval components of the town in detail.⁷ The Upper Chapel, now the site of St Peter's Church, was in existence by 1418 and was re-built in brick in around 1740. In 1826, the Catholic church of St Mary's was built in West Street with a schoolroom underneath. In 1831 Samuel Maskery founded what would become the most important of the town's 15 bakers and confectioners on Swan Bank. His son, also Samuel, continued the trade and added a restaurant. The Bull's Head public house, probably founded in the late 1600s, was re-built in the early nineteenth century. This became

⁷ Cheshire County Council, *Cheshire Historic Towns Survey: Congleton: Archaeological Assessment* (Chester: Cheshire County Council, 2003).

an important coaching stop for travellers on the route from London to Manchester; the building was renovated in 2002. By 1845, all the streets had been built up, with the exception of Antrobus Street which was still flanked by fields. It is believed that the bricks to build many of the houses constructed in the 1840s came from the large number left over when a proposed railway viaduct was abandoned. The streets were also paved at this time; a post office is shown on the tithe map of this date. In 1848, the Mechanics Institute was founded on Swan Bank but ran into financial difficulties and closed in 1871. In 1865 a brick Unitarian chapel was built on Cross Street, which the Pentecostal group later took over and used as a church hall.



West Street



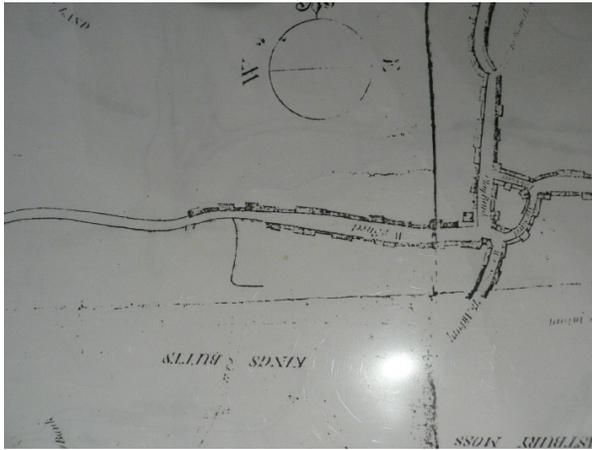
The Lion and Swan Public House



The Lion and Swan Public House

By 1875 Antrobus Street was mostly built up, the space within the triangle formed by that street, West Street and Wagg Street was becoming infilled and the grid plan of Silk Street and Booth Street had been constructed. The Church of St James the Great and a girls' school had been constructed in the former field at the west end of West Street. A boys' school had also been built on North Street, behind Antrobus Street. The areas to the north and south of West Street were still largely fields. The Lion and Swan public house is visible on the corner of West Street and Swan Bank. A bowling green had also been established to the south behind Wagg Street. In 1877 a Congregational Chapel was opened on Antrobus Street and in 1883 a new Pentecostal Chapel opened on Cross Street, built of pink sandstone from the Tegnose Quarry near Macclesfield. The Electric Picture Theatre was Congleton's first permanent cinema, created in 1911 from an abandoned fustian mill, and provided seats for around 680 people.

4.2.3 Maps Showing Sequential Development of the Area



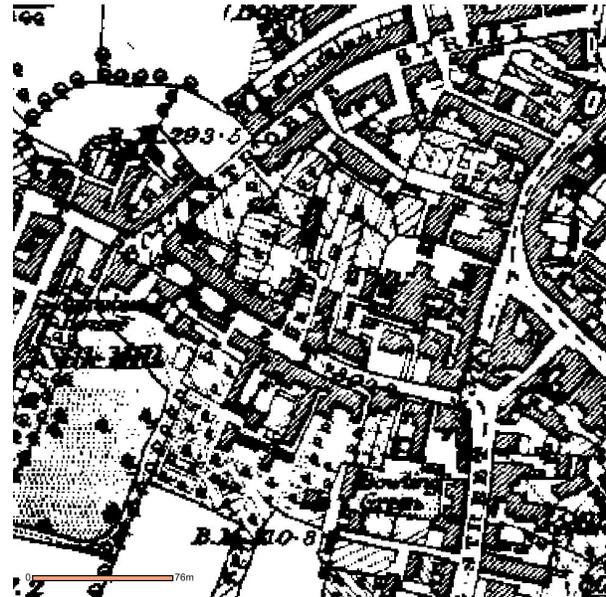
1772



1808



1845

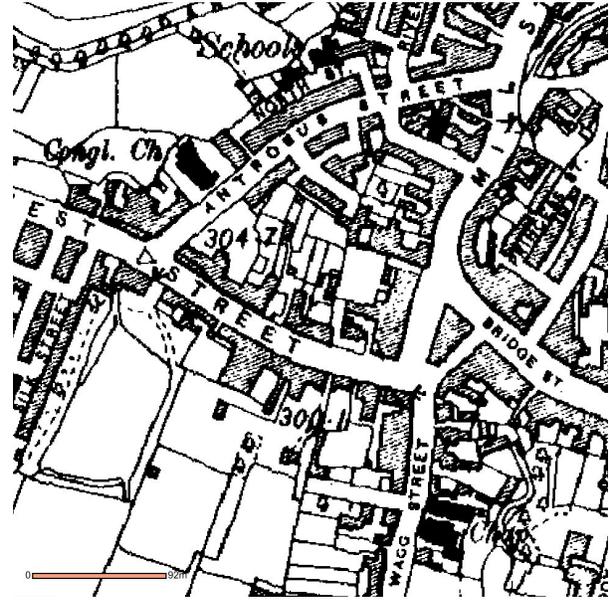


1875

West Street Congleton: Conservation Area Appraisal



1879



1910



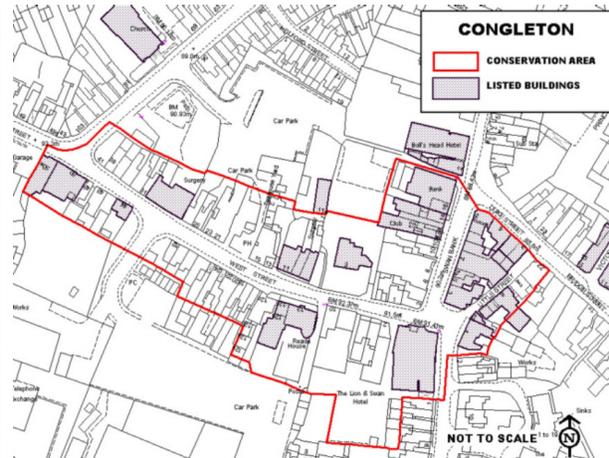
1963



1970



1975



2008

4.2.4 Significance of the Archaeological Resource

Much of the town's historic street pattern survives to the present day, especially in the upper town. The pattern in the lower town has been disrupted by the insertion of Mountbatten Way. The limited amount of archaeological work carried out in the town precludes detailed assessment of the survival and preservation of archaeological deposits. Nevertheless, the evaluation carried out close to the Town Hall demonstrates that important archaeological deposits do survive, albeit truncated by later development. A certain amount of destruction of earlier levels can be expected by the construction of large mills in the Dane valley. Priorities for archaeological work were set out in the Cheshire Historic Towns Survey.⁸

Sites and extant buildings identified on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) are described and located on a map at Appendix 1.

⁸ Cheshire County Council, *Cheshire Historic Towns Survey: Congleton: Archaeological Assessment* (Chester: Cheshire County Council, 2003).

4.3 Spatial Analysis

Character and Interrelationship of Spaces

There are no significant open spaces within the current West Street Conservation Area or private gardens at the fronts of properties. However, within the proposed boundary extensions there are small front gardens along West Street, as well as the cricket ground to the south of West Road. These open spaces provide a contrast to the built up and largely enclosed character of the town. The small formal garden off Antrobus Street provides a small but constrained open space in contrast to the surrounding built up area.



Formal Garden off Antrobus Street

In addition, there are larger open spaces in the area of allotments and woodland in the proposed boundary extension to the south and east of Swan Street. These areas lead on to other areas of open fields and grassland.



Allotments South of Swan Street



Woodland East of Swan Street

Key Views and Vistas

The main significant views in the West Street Conservation Area are those east and west along West Street itself. Another significant and surprising view is that up Little Street towards Wagg Street.



View Westwards along West Street



View South-West up Little Street

The main landmark within the current Conservation Area boundary is the stone and timber-framed Lion and Swan public house at the junction of West Street, Swan Bank, Little Street and Wagg Street. Within the proposed boundary extensions, the church of St James the Great forms another landmark.



The Lion and Swan Hotel

Within the proposed boundary extensions there is a significant view of the mills to the north from the northern end of Antrobus Street and a view towards St James the Great and Overton House from Booth Street.



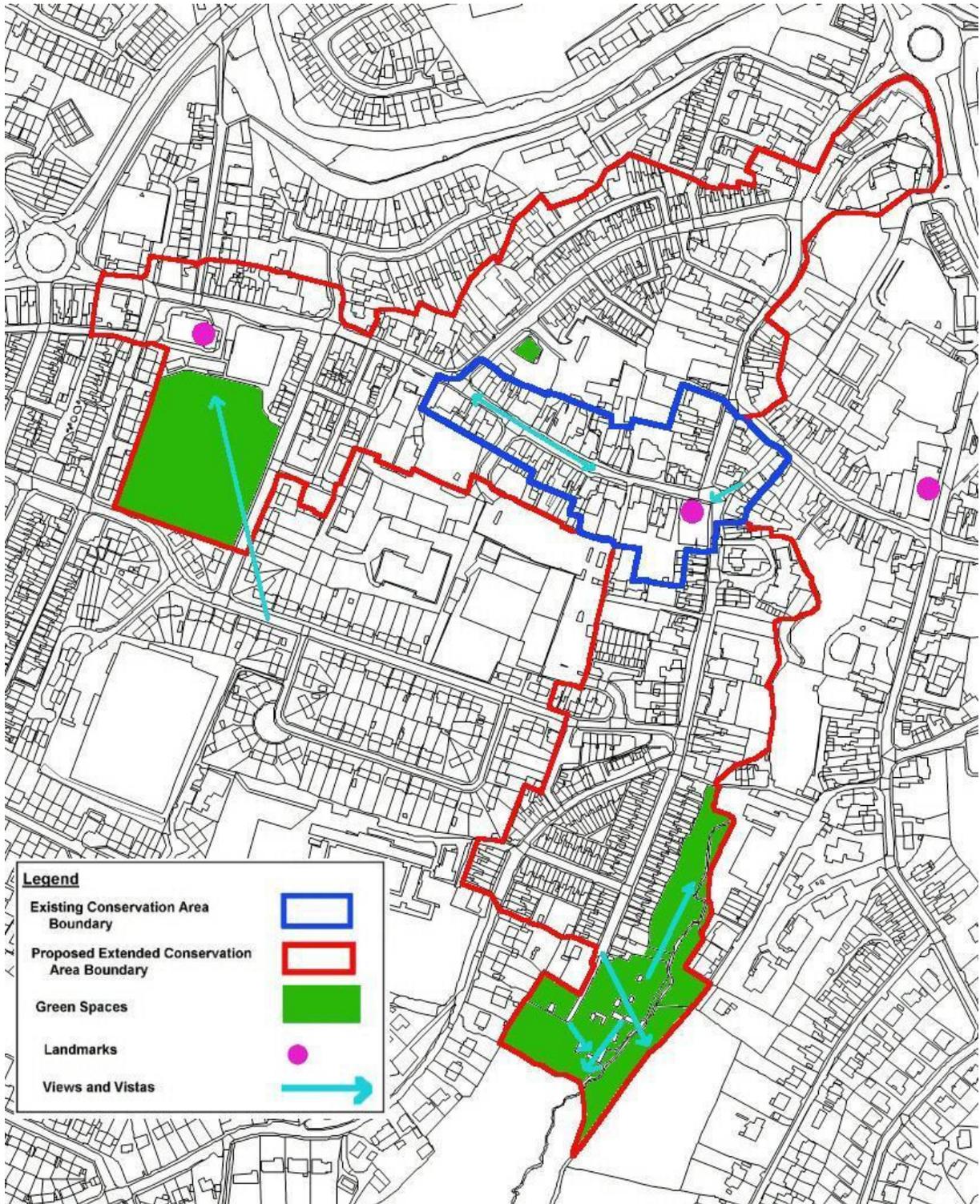
View Northwards from the North End of Antrobus Street



View Northwards towards St James the Great from Booth Street

Also within the proposed boundary extensions to the south and east of Swan Street there are significant vistas and views through the woodland and over the allotments.

Townscape Analysis including Proposed Extension to Conservation Area



Townscape Analysis for West Street Conservation Area and Proposed Extensions

4.4 Character Analysis

Character Areas

The proposed boundary extensions would result in the formation of new character areas, in addition to that formed by the existing Conservation Area. West Street, Swan Bank and Mill Street form one character area which is largely residential and commercial, with its mixture of largely brick eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings. Antrobus Street and the small streets running off it are characterised by early to mid-nineteenth century simple terraced workers' houses. Another character area is the late nineteenth century enclave of terraced workers' housing formed by Swan Street, Nelson Street and the northern end of Waggs Road. The grid development of terraced workers' houses and industrial buildings of Silk Street and Booth Street constitute another character area. The area of allotment gardens, open grassland and woodland to the east and south of Swan Street form another character area.

Prevailing or Former Uses and Their Influence on Buildings

The medieval core of the town encompasses the junction at the west end of West Street, Swan Bank and Little Street. This junction may have been the location of the town's first market place and there is still a mix of retail, commercial and public buildings. Most of West Street is residential, although there are some buildings with shop fronts. The large townhouses would also have acted as status symbols and their owners incorporated architectural decoration to indicate this. There are middle class terraced houses further south on Wagg Street which also have some degree of decoration. There is a contrast with the simpler terraced houses built for workers further north on Antrobus Street. The former bank on Swan Street is built from stone, to look solid and dependable. Numbers 12 and 14 Swan Bank appear to have been constructed as commercial premises in the 1700s and converted to shop use in the twentieth century. The listed number 31 is a former townhouse which is now a surgery and has had its entrance infilled and moved further along the road. Within the proposed boundary extensions buildings are largely residential but with some commercial and industrial use, particularly in the grid of Silk and Booth Streets.



Numbers 12 and 14 Swan Bank



Number 31 West Street

Qualities of Buildings



Lion and Swan Public House

There are 31 listed building within the current Conservation Area, of which one is grade II*. The earliest are timber-framed former cottages on Little Street from around 1600 which, although they have been much altered, are unusually well preserved. The Lion and Swan public house, with its magpie work, is typical of timber-framed buildings in Cheshire. There are a number of fine brick-built three-storey Georgian townhouses, including the listed number 3, which has stone quoins and Gibbs surrounds to the door case and the central first floor window, and Milford House at number 12, which has a stuccoed front, a grand portico and bracketed cornices over the central windows. There are also some early nineteenth century cottages with less architectural decoration. The former bank building at number 16 Swan Street is English Revival in style, built of pink sandstone with some timber-framing, and there is a fine polychrome building with decorative panels on the ground floor and a large canted bay window extending to the first floor.



Timber-framed houses at Numbers 6 to 10 Little Street



Number 3 West Street



Milford House



Former Bank Building



Polychrome Building

Within the proposed extensions there is an enclave of simple nineteenth century terraced workers' housing in the triangle formed by Swan Street, Nelson Street and Waggs Road. By the junction of Swan Street and Waggs Road are two unusual buildings, one built in the 1890s as a shop and house with brick and terracotta detailing and the purpose-built bakery, which has been altered in the twentieth century but retains its window architraves and a stone plaque. Within the enclave there is a variety of architectural detailing and evidence from the brickwork that sections of terrace have been built at different times. On Swan Street some fanlights are constructed from cut-brick with egg and dart moulding and some are of keyed stone with moulded cornices; some of the windows have moulded and segmented flat stone heads and some are tri-partite and covered with drip-moulds which continue to run over the doors. Number 54 has a decorative gable finished with a finial. At the northern end of Waggs Road the houses have bay windows at the ground floor, some being canted and some rectangular with leaded windows.



1890s Shop and House



Waggs Road Patent Hygienic Bakery



Houses on Swan Street



Houses on Swan Street

Building Materials

The earliest buildings in the Conservation Area are timber-framed with sandstone footings. In the 1700s most new building was in brick, mostly from small-scale brick works. Plans for a railway viaduct in the 1840s which was never built left a large quantity of bricks which are believed to have been used for terraced housing on Antrobus Street. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings tend to be built from machine-made brick, the latter also incorporating concrete. Many of the buildings in the Conservation Area also have sandstone dressings.

Roofs in the Conservation Area are generally covered with non-locally derived slate. The opening of the canal and railway in the mid-nineteenth century enabled the cheaper and lighter Welsh slate to be imported for local use. One building, at number 43 West Street, has a stone slate roof, which may have been prevalent throughout the Conservation Area before the arrival of better transportation systems.

Local Details

The six-over-six sliding sash window would have been almost universal throughout the Conservation Area and some survive, but windows have largely been replaced. However, number 44 West Street has original small side-opening casements at the first floor and one on the ground floor. A sliding sash window has been inserted later. Some original doors and fanlights also appear to have survived; a good example is at number 27 West Street. Some windows replaced in around 1900 are two-over-two sliding sash windows but some six-over-six sashes survive on Nelson Street.



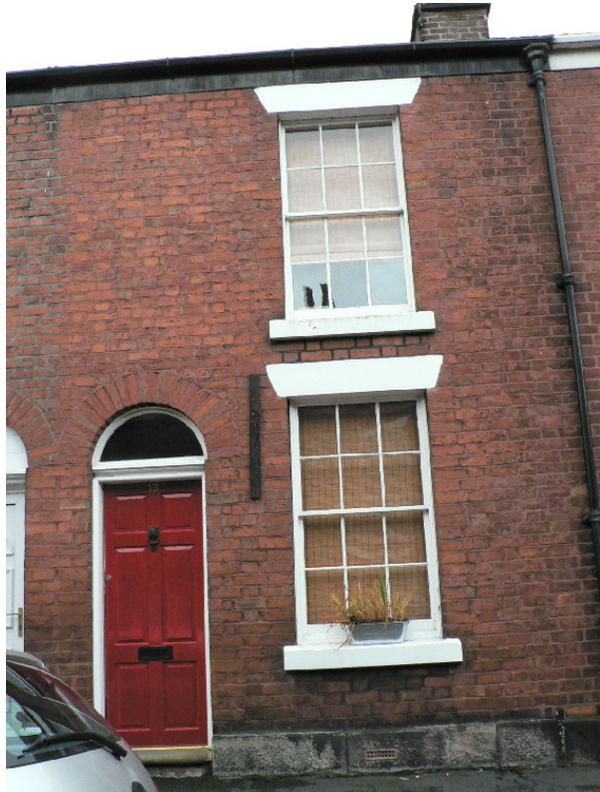
Original Door Case and Windows on West Street



Original Casement Windows on West Street



Tripartite and Sliding Sash Windows on Swan Street



Six-over-six Sash Windows on Nelson Street

The Public Realm



Tarmac Street Surface

Street surfaces are almost exclusively tarmac throughout the Conservation Area, apart from the entrance to the Lion and Swan car park, which is cobbled, and pavements, which are concrete. A proliferation of street furniture on the proposed boundary extension of Bridge Street obstructs views along this historic thoroughfare as well as the passage of pedestrians and the surface is inappropriate red setts.



Proliferation of Street Furniture and Red Setts on Bridge Street



Cobbled Entry By Lion & Swan Hotel

Green Spaces and Biodiversity

There is no public green space within the current Conservation Area, the gardens at the front of the listed number 3 West Street having been converted into a car park and the remainder of the properties built up to the pavement.

Within the proposed boundary extensions there is a small formal garden on the eastern side of Antrobus Street, which provides a welcome change from the more urban nature of the current Conservation Area. The cricket ground south of West Street also provides a useful amenity for the local community. In addition, the allotments to the south of Swan Street provide another useful amenity for the local community. The area of woodland to the east and south of Swan Street is important as the only area of woodland within the conservation area and the proposed boundary extensions.



Garden off Antrobus Street



Woodland East of Swan Street

Intrusion or Damage

Intrusive twentieth century development in styles out of character with the rest of the Conservation Area occurs in the form of the Spar shop at number 48a West Street. An inappropriate beer garden mars the appearance of the Staffordshire Knot public house. Within the proposed boundary extensions the former Methodist New Connections Chapel has been converted for use as a garage with the loss of the original ground floor.



Intrusive Twentieth Century Development



Intrusive Beer Garden



Intrusive Entry by 12 West Street

There are some intrusive car parks and entrances to car parks on private land providing parking for clients, especially that in front of the listed number 3 West Street, but also the entry by the listed Milford House at number 12 West Street.



Intrusive Car Park in Front of Number 3 West Street

Neutral Areas

One neutral area has been identified; the entry between nos 6 and 8 West Street. This area does not have specific negative impact, but rather has the potential for active improvement. Appendix 4 lists the neutral areas.

General Condition

The physical condition of the area is generally good and most buildings are maintained by owners. However, there are a number of properties within the Conservation Area which are vacant and could be at risk of damage, especially numbers 20, 22 and 24 West Street. Number 20 is in very poor condition and is propped to prevent collapse. The stucco has been damaged by the removal of ivy from the front of number 12 West Street.



Number 20 West Street

Problems, Pressures and Capacity for Change

There are a number of threats to the character of the Conservation Area, in particular those caused by neglected and empty buildings, the use of modern replacement windows and doors and poor control over development and alterations.

A Congleton Town Centre Plan has been adopted as an interim document and will be developed and consulted on further over the coming months, with the aim of gaining Area Action Status.⁹ Within this, public realm improvements are proposed to parts of the current Conservation Area, particularly improved public squares at the road junctions. If the work is not carried out in a manner sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area, its significance could be affected.

Parts of the proposed boundary extensions are also affected, such as the garage near the junction of West Street and Antrobus Street and the car park off Antrobus Street, which have been identified for residential development. The site to the south of the junction of Mill Street and Antrobus Street and the area to the east of Mill Street have been identified for retail development.

⁹ Congleton Partnership and Congleton Town Council, *Congleton Town Plan* [online].

Section 5 Community Involvement

There is a strong level of interest in conservation issues in Congleton, amongst both elected members and the public. It is therefore essential that preparation of the Appraisal and Management Plan involves those with an interest in the West Street Conservation Area. Consultation was carried out in line with the principles set out in Cheshire East Council's approved Statement of Community Involvement. The Appraisal was published for comment during March 2010. Cheshire East Council placed draft documents on its website, wrote to all local residents and businesses and held a public exhibition and consultation.

Section 6 Suggested Boundary Changes

Conservation Area boundary changes are detailed in Appendix 5 and in the Management Proposals. When the West Street Conservation Area was designated, boundaries were often drawn very tightly. It is now recognised that conservation area boundaries need to be seen within a wider context of urban development. Designated areas should provide protection to buildings that were perhaps not previously considered to be of architectural merit, such as twentieth century buildings, and to the spaces between buildings, such as streets and neutral areas. It is also the case that further information can come to light about the historic importance of buildings and spaces.

The proposed boundary changes reflect the results of a detailed survey of the Conservation Area and include previously unrecognised buildings which deserve the additional controls provided by a conservation area.

There are buildings of sufficient quality west along West Road, beyond the West Road roundabout, to justify the consideration of a new Conservation Area, which would include a church and interesting eighteenth and nineteenth century properties.

A separate area comprising the historic mill buildings and associated industrial properties either side of the River Dane contains buildings of a sufficient quality to justify the consideration of another conservation area. This could include Rope Walk, the river bridge, Royle Street and the buildings southwards along the Dane.

Section 7 Local Generic Guidance

Existing guidance is available in terms of what designation means and design criteria.

The consequences under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for a designated conservation area are:

- No building in a conservation area shall be demolished without the consent of the local planning authority.
- Trees in a conservation area are protected by the Act. Special provisions also apply to trees within conservation areas. An applicant is required to give the local planning authority six weeks' notice in writing for work on trees which are greater than 7.5 centimetres in diameter (measured 1.5 metres above the ground) or 10 centimetres if thinning to help the growth of other trees.

Congleton Borough Council has published Supplementary Planning Guidance for Shop Front Security¹⁰. Many of the original doors and windows in the Conservation Area have been replaced with modern materials. Guidance on appropriate shop front design, energy efficiency measures, the replacement or repair of traditional doors and windows, boundary walls and the external treatment of building walls, such as pointing, would be helpful.

¹⁰ Congleton Borough Council, *Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 3: Shop Front Security* (Congleton Borough Council, September 1994).

Section 8 Summary of Issues

- Loss of historic street surfaces, with tarmac and concrete pavements occurring throughout most of the Conservation Area, resulting in some diminution of character and appearance;
- Inappropriate red setted paving on Little Street;
- Intrusive and inappropriate 20th century development in styles out of character with the rest of the Conservation Area, particularly the Spar building on West Street;
- Intrusive tarmacked beer garden at the Staffordshire Knot public house on West Street;
- Inappropriate window designs and materials,
- Intrusive car parks on private land and entrances to car parks;
- Inappropriate use of cement mortar across the Conservation Area;
- A number of properties for sale or to let and some vacant properties, some of which are in poor condition;
- Some diminution of character and appearance caused by neutral sites;
- Lack of buildings represented on the statutory list compared to what might be expected of a town of Congleton's history and importance;
- Lack of open spaces within the Conservation Area;
- Lack of awareness among residents of what it means to live and work in a conservation area and of the planning controls that apply;
- Work proposed within the Congleton Town Plan on the public realm which could diminish the area's significance if carried out insensitively. Parts of proposed boundary extensions have also been identified for development for housing or retail use which could threaten the area's significance.

Section 9 Management Proposals

The West Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal has provided the basis for developing management proposals for the Conservation Area. The following pages contain proposals for the management of the area for the final version of the management plan, subject to public views and information.

Proposal 1

Amend the boundary of the Conservation Area as shown on the proposals map to include:

- The properties on both sides of Wagg Street, Bakers Villas, Fountain Street and Wesley Court;
- The properties on both sides of Swan Street, Nelson Street, Lime Street, Lion Street and the North part of Waggs Road (numbers 1 to 42 and 57);
- The properties on both sides of Silk Street, Elizabeth Street, Booth Street and Queen Street;
- The properties further west along West Street and West Road as far as the property boundary of number 12, near the West Road and the roundabout and the recreation ground on the west side of Booth Street;
- The whole of Antrobus Street, North Street and the Masonic Hall on the North-west side of Mill Street;
- The whole of South Street, Holeford Street and Cross Street;
- The whole of Mill Street and the site of Brook Mill;
- The allotments to the south of Swan Street and the wooded areas to the east of Swan Street and east of the allotments.

Best practice guidance contained in PPS5¹¹ and English Heritage guidance¹² states that the boundaries of existing conservation areas should be kept under review. Parts which are no longer special should be excluded. Where drawn too tightly, the conservation area should be extended to include more recent phases or plots associated with buildings of historic interest.

The West Street Conservation Area Appraisal considered that it is now recognised that conservation area boundaries need to be seen within a wider context of urban development. Designated areas should provide protection to buildings that were perhaps not previously considered to be of architectural merit and to the spaces between buildings, such as streets and neutral areas. It is also the

¹¹ Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (London: Department for Communities and Local Government, 2010)

¹² English Heritage, *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*, London, English Heritage, 2006.

case that further information can come to light about the historic importance of buildings and spaces.

It is therefore considered appropriate to include the terraced workers' houses on Swan Street, Nelson Street, Lime Street, Lion Street and the north part of Waggs Road, Silk Street, Elizabeth Street, Booth Street and Queen Street, Antrobus Street, South Street, Holeford Street and Cross Street. These houses document the growth of Congleton and retain many original features.

The recreation area west of Booth Street and the small park east of Antrobus Street would provide much-needed green space for the Conservation Area. The private allotments to the south of Swan Street were historically owned by residents of Swan Street, Nelson Street, and the surrounding areas, and are still currently largely owned by local residents. The allotments are proposed for inclusion both for the historic connection and for the amenity value. The wooded areas to the east of Swan Street and to the east of the allotments are proposed for inclusion due to the historic use for industry along the stream and for the value as much needed green space within the conservation area.

There are good examples of Georgian properties of similar merit to others currently included in the Conservation Area further west along West Street, as well as the church of St James the Great. Wagg Street, Bakers Villas, Fountain Street and Wesley Court also contain a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial properties of good quality and historic interest.

Retail, industrial and commercial properties along Mill Street, including Brook Mill are also of similar merit to others currently included in the Conservation Area and their inclusion would join up this Conservation Area with the Moody Street Conservation Area at Bridge Street. Inclusion would also enable controls over street surface and furniture. Best practice for the management of historic streets is contained in English Heritage guidance.¹³

Proposal 2

Merge the West Street Conservation Area with the nearby Moody Street Conservation Area.

The West Street and nearby Moody Street Conservation Areas both have their origins in the medieval street layout and the limits of burgage plots and are both a mixture of residential and commercial use and of styles and dates of construction. As they currently lie so close to each other, it is proposed to merge them to create one conservation area, which could be called the Congleton Town Centre Conservation Area.

¹³ English Heritage, *Streets For All North West*, English Heritage, 2005.

Proposal 3

Protect the following historic routes from amendment to their plan form wherever possible within the scope of the Planning Legislation:

- West Street;
- Little Street;
- Swan Bank;
- Duke Street;
- Antrobus Street;
- Silk Street;
- Booth Street.

All the main streets were in existence by 1772 and are likely to have been in use for a considerable time before that. Antrobus Street and the industrial area of Silk Street and Booth Street are shown on the 1845 map.

Proposal 4

Preserve and enhance important visual axes including:

- West Street (in both directions along its length);
- Northwards along Little Street;
- Views from the North end of Antrobus Street over the River Dane towards the former mill buildings;
- Northwards from Booth Street towards St James the Great on West Street.

Not only is it important that the plan form of historic routes in respected, but also that the significant linear views (visual axes) are preserved from encroachments, inappropriate developments or loss of enclosure. The quality of these visual axes is subtle, and is subject to a wide variety of potential threats including demolition of corridor walls, installation of street signage and other visual clutter, or encroachment by large buildings, projecting signs, advertisement hoardings and so on. These threats will need to be assessed and managed as they arise.

Proposal 5

Any new development should ensure that the footprint of new buildings fits into the urban grain and respects the character of the area.

The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the layering of history in the Area is of interest. However, the introduction of large volume buildings could damage the mix and the surviving lines of burgage plots that give interest to the Conservation Area. In general terms, high volume buildings can threaten the scale and grain of the conservation area and would be intrusive here.

The Conservation Area is not homogenous in built form and larger buildings currently within it include the listed Lion and Swan Hotel.

This policy does not preclude a terrace or cluster of such structures. It seeks to ensure that the scale and grain of development is appropriate, in accordance with advice contained in paragraph 7.9 of the English Heritage document *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*.

Proposal 6

Opportunities for the improvement of the intrusive buildings and areas identified within this Appraisal will be sought should an application for planning permission be submitted on those sites.

Opportunities for improvement within conservation areas should be considered to ensure the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Proposal 7

Action may be considered under Section 215 of The Planning Act 1990, and/or sections 48, 54, and 76 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to secure the repair of listed and unlisted buildings within the Conservation Area, and to ensure that untidy lands and sites are addressed where appropriate.

Buildings were identified in the appraisal as being at risk. Urgent works and repairs notices can be very effective in helping to secure the future of historic buildings and local authorities should make full use of their statutory powers if listed buildings, or unlisted buildings that contribute positively to the special interest of a conservation area, are falling into decay.¹⁴

Proposal 8

Preserve existing visually important woodland, trees and shrubbery at:

- Mature trees either side of the property boundaries by the telephone exchange at the south end of Silk Street;
- Small landscaped area within the proposed boundary extension on Antrobus Street.

The Conservation Area Appraisal identified that woodland and trees make a significant contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area. These landscapes should be respected and the key features retained. However, there are very few trees within the built-up area. These examples deserve protection for their contribution to the local townscape. Applications for development which threatens the future of woodlands, trees and hedgerows will be guided by Saved Local

¹⁴ English Heritage. *Management of Conservation Areas*. London, English Heritage, February 2006

Plan Policy NR1. Proposal 11 provides detailed advice for applying Saved Policy NR1 as well as guidance for dealing with proposed tree felling in the Conservation Area. Saved Policy NR1 is outlined in Appendix 6.

Proposal 9

An Article 4(2) Direction will be considered to bring within specific planning control the following classes of permitted development:

- alterations to elevations visible from highways or open spaces
- change of roof material
- insertion of roof windows
- removal of chimneys
- alterations to doors and windows
- painting of exterior brick and stonework
- textured paint or render
- construction of an external porch
- hard standings and curtilage walls and railings
- fixing of satellite dishes

The Conservation Area Appraisal identified that the strong local identity provided by the mixture of medieval, Georgian and Victorian residential and commercial buildings was being eroded by the cumulative effect of small scale inappropriate alterations to individual buildings. These small alterations include the fixing of satellite dishes and painted or rendered exteriors. The proposed Article 4(2) Direction will be targeted at bringing under control those alterations which, if not sympathetically designed, pose the greatest threat to the distinctive local character.

Proposal 10

A publication setting out the controls applying within a conservation area, the controls applying with an Article 4(2) Direction, if relevant, and a brief description of the area's history and significance will be produced, circulated to residents, businesses and locally active solicitors, and published on the Town Council's website.

The Conservation Area Appraisal identified a lack of awareness amongst residents of what it means to live in a conservation area and therefore the need to apply for permission for certain alterations to properties. Designations are recorded as a local land charge and this should be revealed during house purchase, but solicitors often do not have this information to hand.

Proposal 11

Survey the area around Rope Walk, the Dane river bridge, Royle Street and the buildings southwards along the Dane for consideration of the designation of a new conservation area.

An area comprising the historic mill buildings and associated industrial properties either side of the River Dane contains buildings of a sufficiently high quality to justify the consideration of another conservation area. This is not continuous with the boundary extensions proposed in this document and the area in between is of indeterminate quality so the new area may function better as a separate entity.

Proposal 12

At a future date, survey the area along West Road, west of the West Street roundabout for consideration of the designation of a new conservation area.

An area comprising good quality Georgian buildings and a church contains buildings of a sufficient quality to justify the consideration of another Conservation area. This is not continuous with the boundary extensions proposed in this document and the area in between is of indeterminate quality so the area may function better as a separate area.

Proposal 13

A mechanism for monitoring change on a regular basis will be developed.

English Heritage guidance recommends the development of procedures¹⁵ for monitoring change in conservation areas on a regular basis, such as photographic surveys and recording.

Proposal 14

An enforcement strategy to address unauthorised development will be developed.

English Heritage guidance also recommends that the special character of conservation areas is protected and enhanced by enforcement of the controls applied. In March 1998, the Cabinet Office, in partnership with the Local Government Association, published the central and local government Concordat on Good Enforcement, a voluntary non-statutory code setting out best practice.¹⁶

¹⁵English Heritage. *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*. London, English Heritage, 2006.

¹⁶ Cabinet Office and Local Government Association. *Enforcement Concordat*. London, Cabinet Office and Local Government Association, March 1998.

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- 2008 Ordnance Survey

Archives and Libraries Consulted

- Congleton Museum

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APPENDICES: SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Appendix 1: Sites of Archaeological Interest

The following Sites of Archaeological interest recorded below are situated within the existing Conservation Area, and were recorded by the Cheshire Historic Environment Record.

PRN2887/50
Swan Bank
Swan Bank Mill

A now demolished mill built for silk throwing, which requires a low power capacity. The mill is situated away from known water sources which may suggest the use of horse power though by the 1870's it would have been steam powered. There is a mill building marked on the OS 1st ed. 25" 1875 map of Cheshire, at Swan Bank.

The following sites are situated within the proposed boundary extension for the Conservation Area.

PRN2887/5
Booth Street
Booth Street Textile Mill

Now demolished mill listed in the Gazetteer of East Cheshire Textile Mills .

PRN2887/15
Booth Street
Booth Street Textile Mill

Documentary evidence for a mill at this site. The arrival of the silk industry in the 1750's brought new prosperity and growth to Congleton with up to thirty four mills operating in the town using the River Dane & Howty Brook.

PRN2887/44
Silk Street
Silk Street Textile Mill

A now demolished mill is known to have been occupied by Fred Jackson in 1924, a member of the Jackson family, who owned numerous notable sites in the area. Marked on the 1st edition OS 6" (1881-82) and 25" (1875) maps of Cheshire.

PRN4446/0/0
Mill Street
Congregational Chapel

Congregational Chapel built in 1790 but superseded in 1877 by the chapel in Antrobus Street. It was sold and used as a Masonic hall and now carries this name plus a date of 1878. Interestingly the 1875 town plan of Congleton states as the number of seats "300 sittings of which none are free" suggesting that the Chapel was either very popular or very exclusive.

PRN4447/0/0
Antrobus Street
Congregational Church
Grade II

Congregational Church designed by William Sugden of Leek, 1876-7 and superseded the chapel on Mill Street.

PRN2887/9
Mountbatten Way
Brook Mills

Grade II listed Mill, built in 1835. It is five stories high with cast iron columns for internal support. One of only three sites in Congleton where silk spinning took place in the 19th century. The mill produced both silk and cotton, and used both water and steam power sources. It is shown on the 1st edition OS 6" (1881-82) and 25" (1875) maps of Cheshire.

PRN2887/76/0
Cross Street
Agricultural Machine Work

Agricultural Machine Works marked on the 1875 town plan of Congleton. It is possibly on the same site as Cross Street Textile Mill.

PRN2887/11
Cross Street
Cross Street Mill

There is documentary evidences for a mill at this site. The arrival of the silk industry in the 1750s brought new prosperity and growth to Congleton with up to thirty four mills operating in the town using the River Dane & Howty Brook.

PRN4446/0/0
Mill Street
Congregational Chapel,
Post Medieval

Congregational Chapel built in 1790 but superseded in 1877 by the chapel in Antrobus Street. It was sold and used as a Masonic hall and now carries this name plus a date of 1878.

Interestingly the 1875 town plan of Congleton states as the number of seats "300 sittings of which none are free" suggesting that the Chapel was either very popular or very exclusive.

PRN4446/1/0
Mill Street
Graveyard at the Congregational Chapel,
Post Medieval

Graveyard at the Congregational Chapel, Mill Street. Marked on the 1875 town plan of Congleton.

PRN4447/0/0
Antrobus Street
Congregational Church
Post Medieval
Grade II

Congregational Church designed by William Sugden of Leek, 1876-7 and superseded the chapel on Mill Street.

PRN2887/69/0
Blacksmiths Workshop, Waggs Road
19th century

Blacksmiths Workshop marked on the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25inch and 6inch to 1 mile maps

PRN2887/70/0
Sand Pit, Waggs Road
Post Medieval Sandpit

Sand Pit marked on the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25inch to 1 mile maps, and the Second Edition 6inch to 1 mile maps.

PRN2887/57
Wagg Street Mill

A now demolished, mill is marked on the 1st edition OS 6" (1881-82) and 25" (1875) maps of Cheshire. The mill was built for silk throwing, which requires a low power capacity. It was situated away from

known water sources which may suggest the use of horse power though by the 1870's it would have been steam powered.

PRN2887/7
Bridge Street Mill

Now demolished Mill shown on the 1st edition OS 6" (1881-82) and 25" (1875) maps of Cheshire.

The arrival of the silk industry in the 1750's brought new prosperity and growth to Congleton with up to thirty four mills operating in the town using the River Dane and Howty Brook.

PRN2887/77/0
Blacksmiths Workshop, Wagg Street

Post medieval. Blacksmiths Workshop marked on the 1875 town plan of Congleton.

PRN2887/78/0
Brewery, Little Street

Post medieval brewery. Brewery marked on the 1875 town plan of Congleton.

PRN164/0/10
Houses on Little Street, Congleton

A range of Grade II listed late 16th early 17th century former cottages with later alterations. Timber framed with a roughcast exterior the cottages are single storey with attics and recent shop fronts. Wood was in plentiful supply as a building material in Britain until the 17th century. It was therefore the most practical material for house building. Timber framed buildings consist of a wooden framework (usually oak) that was infilled to create solid walls. Infill material used included wattle and daub, lath and plaster, brick and weather board. Brick nogging, (brick infill) was often used in the 17th and 18th centuries to replace earlier wattle and daub or lath and plaster infill as it was longer lasting.

PRN164/0/13
Former NatWest Bank site

A watching brief on the former Natwest Bank site revealed 18th and 19th century deposits about 1m below present ground level. A stone wall foundation or footing and two brick built rectangular structures (each c.1.10m long by c.1.50m wide) The fill of these features consisted of loose black ash, cinders, brick fragments and rounded stones, pot sherds and clay tobacco pipe fragments. There was no ground disturbance below level of these features and so it is possible that deposits and features pre-dating the 18th century lie protected at lower levels.

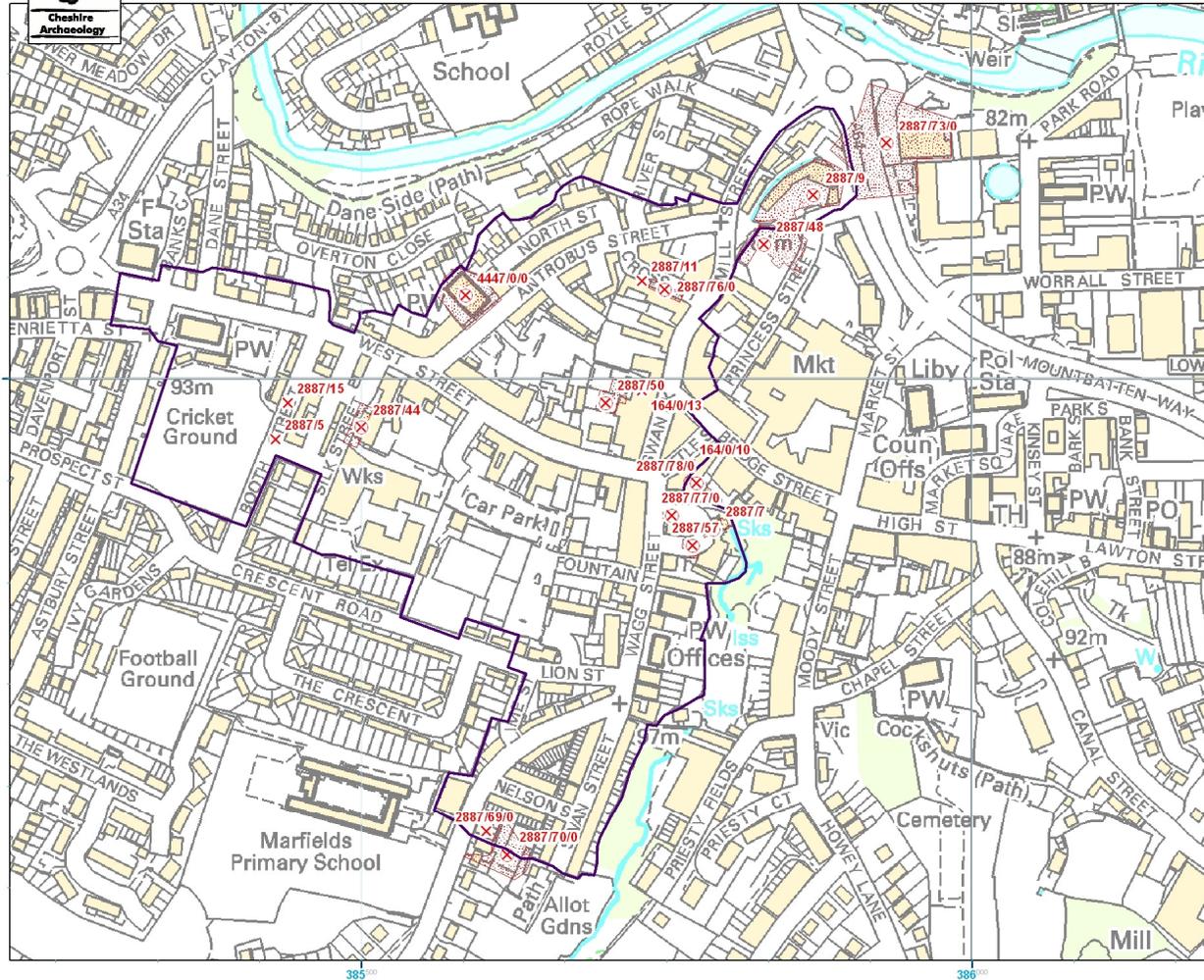
PRN164/0/3
Unnamed Site in Congleton Parish

One of two watermills in Congleton with medieval origins, this was situated south of the town in the Howty Brook. It survived to be shown on 18th century and early 19th century maps. One of these cornmills was rebuilt or substantially altered by James Brindley in 1758.

West Street Congleton: Conservation Area Appraisal



Cheshire Historic Environment Record



HER Consultation for: West Street, Congleton

- Proposed Extension
- CHER Site (point)
- NGR Qualifier*
- 4 Figure Ref
- + 6 Figure Ref
- x 8 Figure Ref
- Approximate Position
- x Central Point
- ♦ Linear
- Possible Position
- CHER Site (Polyline)
- CHER Site (Polygon)

Warning

This map only shows data which lies within your area of interest. Additional data held at the CHER may have been excluded from this map.

The location and extent of any designated site or area is shown for illustrative purposes only. Please refer to the appropriate documentation for further details.

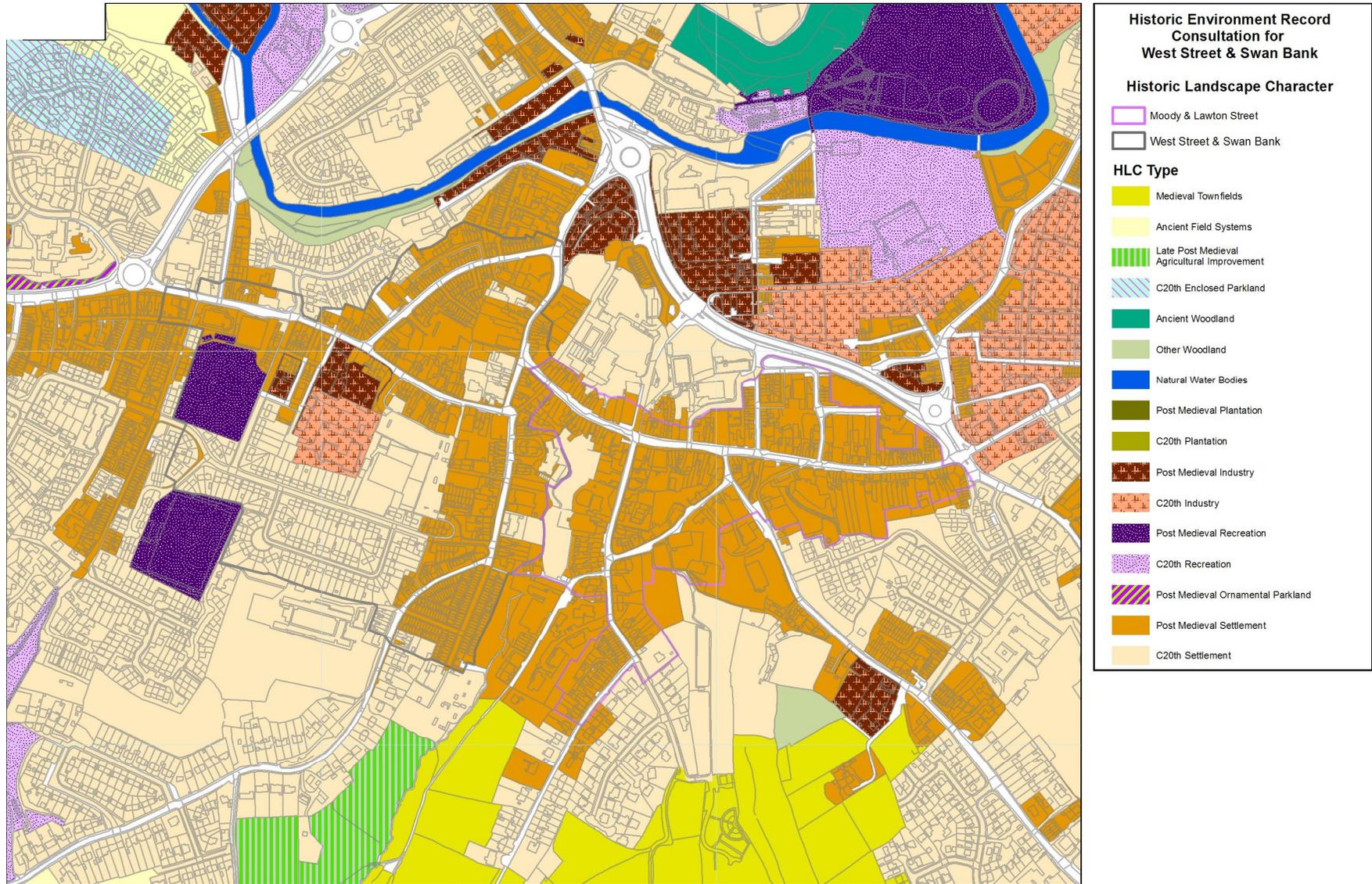
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East Cheshire Council & West Cheshire & Chester Council.
100049045 & 100040298



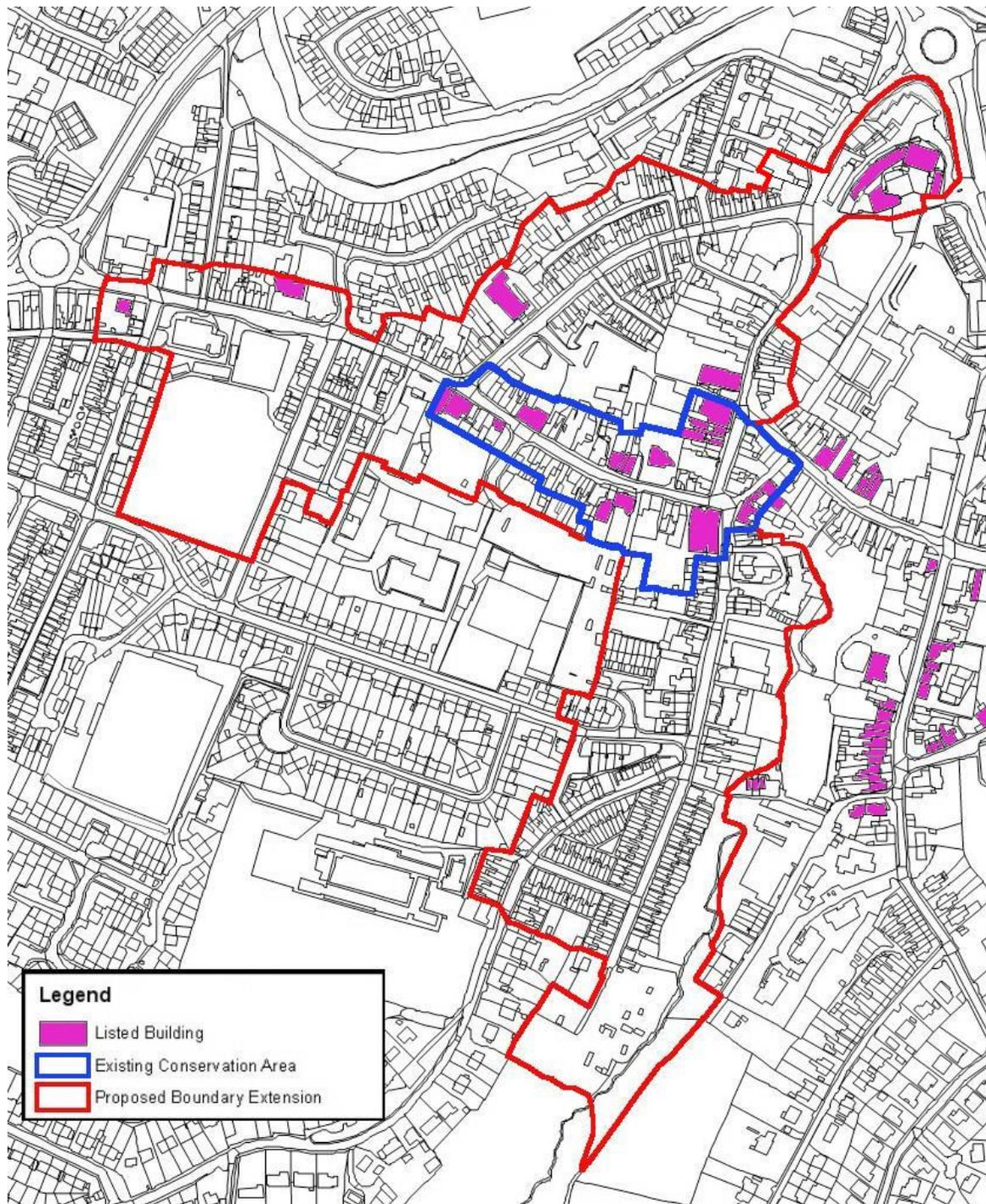
Appendix 2: Historic Landscape Character

The following map shows the Historic Landscape Character for an area covering the extensions to both the Moody Street Conservation Area and the West Street Conservation Area. (The map was provided by Congleton Borough Council from the Cheshire County Historic Environment Record.)

West Street, Congleton: Conservation Area Appraisal



Appendix 3: Listed Buildings



The West Street Conservation Area and proposed boundary extensions, detailing listed buildings

Below are details of the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area and within the new proposed extension to the area at the date of the publication of this document.

WEST STREET
No 3 (Damian House)
Grade II
SJ 8562

Good mid C18 detached house in grounds, marred by addition of 3rd storey (probably in Victorian times). Red brick; 3 storeys; 3 sash windows (single glazing bars only) the outers with flat brick arches and keyblocks and the central featured in rusticated stone surround with double keyblock; central doorway in rusticated stone surround with pediment and modern glazed door in place of former 6-panelled door; stone quoins at sides; original modillion cornice over 1st storey; brick and moulded stone eaves cornice over 2nd storey addition, which is generally in keeping; hipped slate roof. C19 single-storey addition on right-hand to rear.

WEST STREET
Nos 7 to 11 (odd)
Grade II
SJ 8562

A block of 3 early C19 houses. Red brick with stone ground storey; 3 storeys; 6 sash windows with flat brick arches and stone sills. No 7 has stone pilaster doorway (cornice or pediment missing), rectangular fanlight and 4-panelled door; No 9 has doorway in plain reveals with rectangular fanlight and 4-panelled door and No 11 a doorway with plain rectangular fanlight, stone cornice on consoles and 4-panelled door; stone parapet cornice;

WEST STREET
11A (to rear of Nos 7 to 11)
Grade II
SJ 8562

Early C19. Former coach house to No 11, now used as joinery workshop. Red brick; 2 storeys; pitching eyes in stone surrounds and 2 modern wood casement windows. Ground storey has 4 semi-circular headed windows and doorway on left-hand side with blocked segmental arch and doors replaced by later arch window; modillion eaves; tiles. Stone mounting block standing against adjacent wall to right.

WEST STREET
Nos 29 and 29A
Grade II
SJ8562

Late C18. Red brick with stone plinth; 3 storeys; 3 sash windows with flat brick arches, those to ground storey tripartite, the central replacing former doorway; moulded stone parapet cornice. No 29A is a 2-storeyed wing (one window) with tripartite window to ground storey, plain eaves. Slate roof throughout.

WEST STREET
Lion & Swan Inn
Grade II
SJ 8562

A picturesque 'black and white' - fronted C17 inn and former staging post for coaches. Part of core may be earlier. Much restored and with later alterations. Front only timber frame and plaster, the remainder brick of various dates but mainly C19. 2 storeys and gabled dormers. Ground storey front of later date than upper part. 1st storey arcaded over C18 central open porch on 2 stone roman Doric columns, which is set well above street and reached by stone steps; doorway has moulded wood doorcase with C18-C19 glazed door; windows mostly C18 sashes with glazing bars; part old stone slate roof, part slates and, at rear, part tiles. Interior generally much altered but retains some exposed ceiling beams.

WEST STREET
No 44
Grade II-
SJ 8562

Early C19. The core probably earlier. Russet brick; 2 storeys; 3 small-paned iron casement windows. Ground storey has one casement window and 2 sash windows (one without glazing bars) and simple wood pilaster doorcase with ledged door; plain eaves; slates.

WEST STREET
No 50
Grade II
SJ 8562 SJ 8563

Early C19. Red brick house; 2 storeys; 4 sash windows (single glazing bars only); 2 stone string-courses; eaves cornice; slates. Side to street marred by modern projecting bay to ground storey with shop fronts. Elevation to garden at rear has 4 sash windows with glazing bars and canted bay to ground storey, moulded stone eaves cornice and blocking course.

WEST STREET
No 50A (Anfield House)
Grade II
SJ 8562 SJ 8563

Late C17 or early C18 narrow, single-gabled house; red brick; stone end quoins; 2 sash windows with flat brick-arches; windows generally restored and without glazing bars; 2 stringcourses; former doorway in yard removed and new doorway formed on right-hand side having wood pilaster doorcase, cornice and re-used 6-panelled door; stone coped end gable; slates.

WEST ROAD
No 12 (Ivy Cottage)
Grade II
SJ 8563

Late C18 small detached house. Red brick; 2 storeys and attic; 3 sash windows with flat brick arches and stone sills; centre doorway with panelled and reeded pilasters, pediment, wood surround and 6-panelled door; moulded wood eaves; gabled ends with pointed arched window in each gable; slates.

DUKE STREET
No 2
Grade II
SJ 8562

Early C19 with later alterations. Pebble-dashed; 3 storeys; 2 sash windows (single glazing bars); doorway with semi-circular head; plain fanlight and 6-fielded-panelled door; plain eaves; slates. Late C19 shop front on left-hand side. Included for group value.
Nos 2 and 4 form a group with No 1 LITTLE STREET and Nos 3 to 15 (odd) SWAN BANK

DUKE STREET
No 4
Grade II
SJ 8562

Mid C19. Red brick; 3 storeys; 3 sash windows (no glazing bars) with flat brick arches; sill band; corbel table coursing at each storey; moulded wood eaves; slates. Modern shop fronts. Included for group value.
Nos 2 and 4 form a group with No 1 LITTLE STREET and Nos 3 to 15 (odd) SWAN BANK

LITTLE STREET
Nos 6 to 10 (even)
Grade II
SJ 8562

A picturesque range of late C16 or early C17 former cottages with later alterations. Painted roughcast to earlier timber frame revealed on gabled ends and at rear; one storey and attic; 2 gabled dormers with C19 iron casements and 2 C19 rectangular dormers with casement windows and slate pentice roofs; slate roof with old stone slates to rear fall. Ground storey generally altered with C19 and modern shop fronts. Timber framing of gabled ends, which rest on stone base, unusually well-preserved. Nos 6 to 12 (even) form a group with No 1 Wagg Street

LITTLE STREET

No 12
Grade II
SJ 8562

Probably early C19 although core may be earlier. Modern alterations. Red brick; 2 storeys; one modern casement windows; modern bowed shop window and doorway to ground store, both with glazing bars; coved eaves; slates. Included for group value.

Nos 6 to 12 (even) form a group with No 1 Wagg Street

SWAN BANK

No 12 (Constitutional Club)
No 14
Grade II
SJ 8562

Early C19. Brick with stone plinth; 3 storeys; 5 sash windows with flat brick arches and stone sills. Ground storey has a half-elliptical rusticated arch at centre, the opening fitted with later fanlight and divided ledged door; a semi-circular headed doorway to each side of this, that to left with plain fanlight and 4-panelled door and that on right with radial fanlight and modern glazed door and steps up; moulded wood eaves; slates. Modern office-type fronts that to No 14 with glazing bars.

Nos 12 and 14 and National Westminster Bank form a group with No 2 and Bull's Head Hotel, Mill Street

SWAN BANK

National Westminster Bank
Grade II
SJ 8562

Late C19. Tudor style. Stone; 2 storeys; slightly projecting bay at centre having sham timber framing at 1st storey and projecting gable, 4-light mullioned and transomed window and a 5-light mullioned and transomed window below; canted bay on left-hand side, tiered over 2 storeys and with mullioned and transomed windows; polygonal bartisan on right-hand side surmounted by slated pinnacle roof with finial; 2 pointed arched doorways with hood moulds, that on right with 16-fielded-panelled divided door and that on left with similar door of 12 panels; stone clustered stacks; steep hipped roof of green slates. Pointed arched gateway on right-hand side.

Nos 12 and 14 and National Westminster Bank form a group with No 2 and Bull's Head Hotel, Mill Street

SWAN BANK
Nos 3 to 15 (odd)
Grade II
SJ 8562

Early C19. Red brick; 2 and 3 storeys; 14 sash windows (no glazing bars to No 15) generally with flat brick arches and stone sills. No 7 has slightly projecting bays at each side (one window) and moulded stone eaves with parapet and the rear elevation in Little Street has ground storey of heavily rusticated stone with segmental arched doorway. Nos 11 and 13 have moulded brick eaves, elsewhere plain wood eaves; slates. Returned side of No 3 has stone plinth, 2 sash windows and wood pilaster doorcase in arched reveal with radial fanlight and 4-panelled door.

Nos 3 to 15 (odd) form a group with Nos 2 and 4 Duke Street and No 1 Little Street

The following listed buildings are situated within the proposed boundary extensions to the Conservation Area.

WEST STREET
No 12, Nos 12A and 12B
Grade II
SJ 8562

Formerly listed as Premises of G H Burgess (Solicitor) adjoining No 12)

Late C18 house. Stucco with stone plinth; 3 storeys; 3 sash windows, the outers tripartite with flat brick arches, and that at centre with cornices on consoles; central doorway, now with modern door, and flat roofed porch supported on Roman Doric columns and pilasters; moulded wood eaves; gabled ends; slates. Good, 2-storeyed semi-circular bay at rear with roof of green graduated slates and iron finial at apex. Nos 12A and 12B on right-hand side now in separate use but originally part of No 12: Front marred by removal of stucco. 2 storeys; slightly projecting bay at each side, each having tripartite sash window; 2 doorways, that on left having restored wood doorcase with panelled reveals and 6-panelled door, No 12B has doorway with cornice and C19 flush-panelled door; moulded wood eaves; slates.

WEST STREET
No 61 (Overton House)
Grade II*
SJ 8563

Good mid C18 house set back from road. Red brick with stone plinth; 3 storeys; slight central projection with stone eaves cornice and pediment; 5 sash windows, the central featured in stone surround with arched pediment and the outers with key-blocks and flat brick arches; end and centre stone quoins; 2 stone stringcourse; good central doorway in stone surround with double keyblock and pediment on flat

consoles, 6-panelled door; moulded stone eaves cornice; stone coped gabled ends; plain stacks; green slate roof.

ANTROBUS STREET
Congregational Church
Grade II
SJ 8563

1876-7. Architect, William Sugden of Leek. Generally in Gothic style but with unconventional features. Stone with slate roof. Nave with east gallery. Squat octagonal north-east tower. Double portal with pointed arched doorways and linked gables. Polygonal west apse.

MILL STREET
No 2
Bull's Head Hotel
Grade II
SJ 8562 SJ 8563

Late C18. Originally one house. No 2: red brick; 3 storeys; 2 sash windows (no glazing bars) with flat brick arches; semi-circular headed doorway to right; tall, narrow staircase window on returned side to left; modern shop front. Hotel portion on right is evidently a remodelling of circa 1850: painted brick and stucco; plain stuccoed pilasters and frieze; 2+1+2 sash windows (no glazing bars); stuccoed pilaster doorcase with cornice on consoles, rectangular fanlight and 10-panelled divided door. The whole with continuous moulded stone eaves and blocking course. No 2 and Bull's Head Hotel form a group with Nos 12 and 14 and National Westminster Bank, Swan Bank.

MOUNTBATTEN WAY
(North West side)
Brook Mill and attached railings and yard wall
Grade II
SJ 8563

Includes: Brook Mill, attached railings, outbuildings and perimeter wall with gatepier, BROOKSIDE ROAD
Includes: Brook Mill, attached railings, outbuildings and perimeter wall with gatepier, STONEHOUSE GREEN
Silk throwing and weaving mills, water and later steam-powered; silk spinning mills from 1835, now factory. 1785-early C19, extended 1835. Brick with stone foundation courses, and slate roofs. PLAN: irregular layout of the two original 4-storey mills following the water course, and the 1835 5-storey weaving mill at an angle at the E end, with ancillary buildings in the yard to the S. EXTERIOR: 4-storeys; 4:9:9-window range, with 1835 5-storey; 8-window E range. Earlier mills lower and narrower with stone lintels; narrower W end section of 4 windows with a 1-window stair tower at the end; wider mill to the W has a lavatory tower in the angle on the S side; the two earlier mills canted at a slight angle to one another. 1835 mill has dated rainwater hoppers, a parapet and coped gables, and rubbed brick flat arches; the 4-window W gable has a left-hand half-round dry shute

privy tower with small openings to each floor and an open ashlar base for removal of the soil; formerly with a round stair tower attached to the E gable adjoining the earlier mill, now demolished. INTERIOR: earlier mills have timber cross beams and king and queen post roofs, the 1835 mill has 2 rows of cast-iron columns to box beam floors. OUTBUILDINGS: an L-shaped range of ancillary buildings extends to the S, comprised of a gabled building with a wide arched opening in the W side wall with flanking ground floor windows, and an asymmetrically-pitched roof building aligned E-W, and with a glazed clerestory, possibly a former roof louvre. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached iron spear-headed railings to the wall bordering the stream on the N side. Perimeter wall with ashlar base extends from the W end along the stream and returns to the E as a stepped brick wall with ashlar coping, and terminating at an ashlar-capped gate pier with arched recess to front face. HISTORY: originally built for throwing and weaving silk, by 1821 both water and steam were used as complementary power systems, both by day and only water by night. The 1835 mill was for powered weaving; the privy shute is a particularly good example of the improvements in mill worker amenities. The whole site was converted for silk spinning in 1835. The various processes of silk dressing and spinning were carried out on the ground floors, with weaving on those above. This is the largest surviving complex of silk mills in Congleton, and the only remaining example in the region of a works used for silk spinning. This is a site of considerable historical interest at the centre of the local textile industry, illustrating the modest water power sites which silk mills could exploit, and the increase in scale of late C18 to mid C19 mills. Bibliography: (Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England), East Cheshire Textile Mills (Anthony Calladine and Jean Fricker et al), 1993, Page(s) 83, 86.

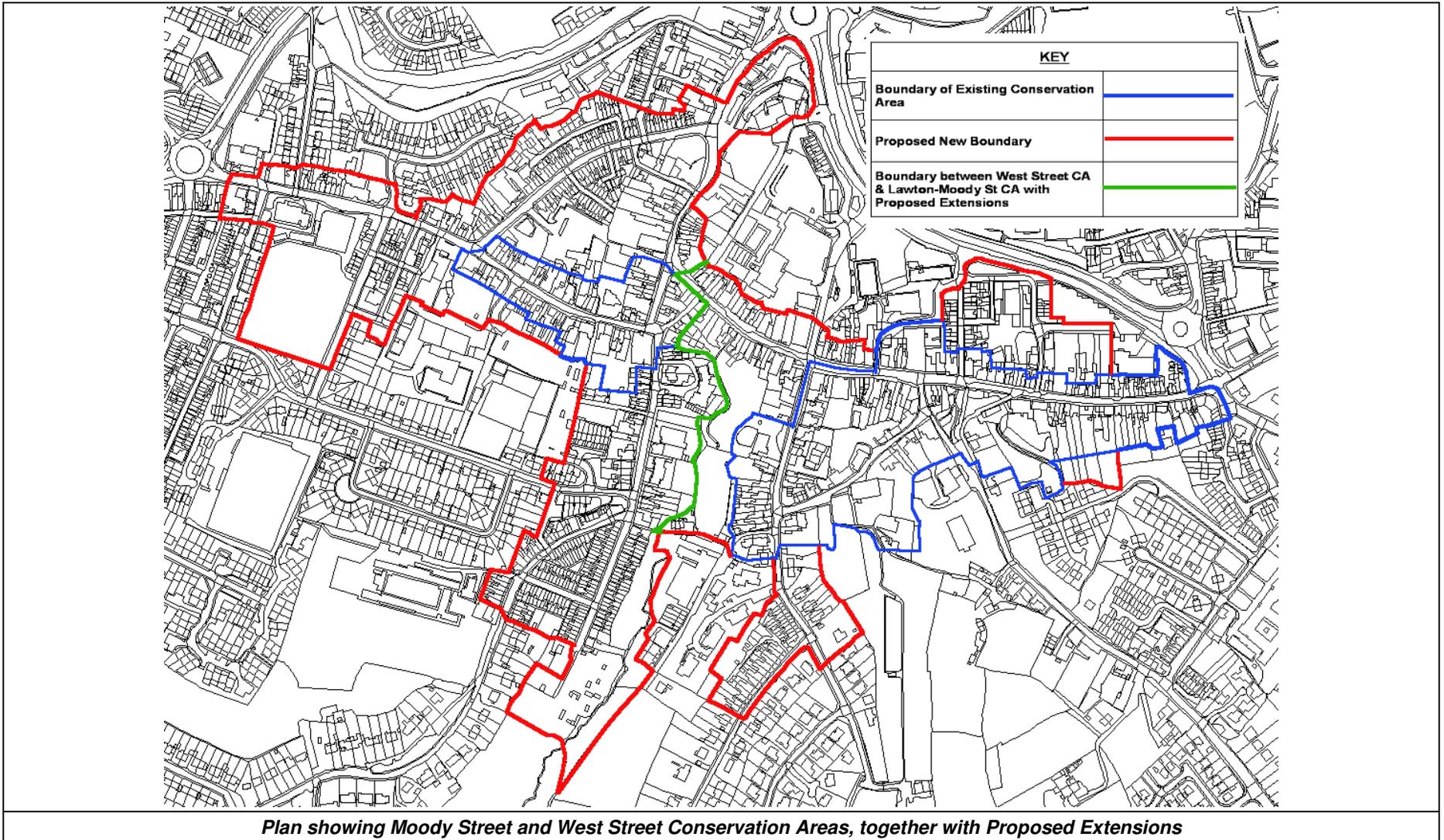
Appendix 4: Neutral Areas

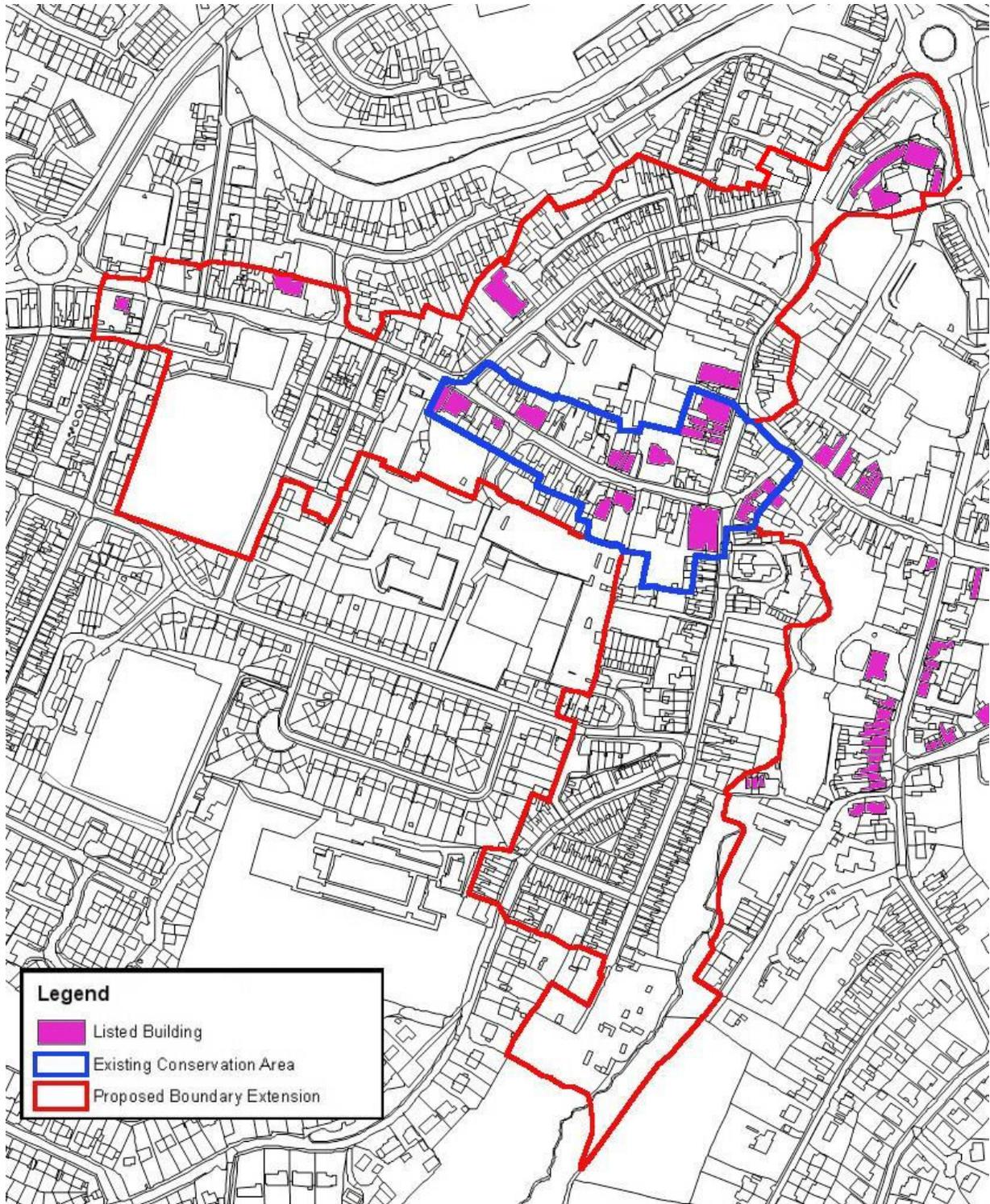


The entry between 6 and 8 West Street

***Entry Between 6 and 8
West Street***

Appendix 5: Suggested Boundary Changes





Map Showing Proposed Extensions to West Street Conservation Area

West Street Congleton: Conservation Area Appraisal



Wagon Entry by Fountain Street

To include Wagg Street, Fountain Street, Bakers Villas, Wesley Court, Swan Street, Nelson Street, the northern part of Waggs Road (to numbers 42 and 57), Lion Street, Lime Street. This would enable this Conservation Area to be joined up with the Moody Street Conservation Area along Vale Walk to Priestly Fields, as proposed in the Moody Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan. This would include a variety of good quality 18th, 19th and 20th century houses, church buildings and commercial property, similar to that already in the Conservation Area. It would also encompass an enclave of terraced workers' housing and the former Royal Oak public house with weavers' garrets proposed for the Local List.



18th Century Townhouse



Wesleyan School of 1869



1890s House With Adjoining Shop



Waggs Road Patent Hygienic Bakery of 1891



Lion Street



Former Methodist New Connections Chapel

To include Silk Street, Elizabeth Street, Booth Street and Queen Street. These comprise 19th century terraced workers' houses of a similar quality to those proposed in other boundary extensions and the remains of the 1836 Methodist New Connection chapel, now a garage. At the north end of Silk Street is a view of mature trees either side of property boundaries.



19th Century Shop Front at 43 West Street

To include properties further west along West Street as far as number 12 West Road, near the West Road roundabout, including the bowling green and cricket ground. This would add brick-built 18th and 19th century houses and former shops with 19th century shop fronts of a similar quality to buildings already within the Conservation Area as well as the church of St James the Great and the Grade II* listed Overton House. Number 45 has a canted bay to the first floor with a moulded gutter cornice and a stone slate roof, number 49 is built with brick in a diaper pattern running upwards and a keyed arched cart entry. Inclusion of the bowling green and cricket ground would also provide protection to the recreation ground and cricket pitch, as well as the view northwards to St James the Great and Overton House on West Street.



19th Century Former Shops With Stone Slate Roof



The Diaper Pattern and Keyed Cart Entry at 49 West Street



St James the Great



Number 12 West Street



Workers' Terraced House

To include the whole of Antrobus Street, North Street (with the exception of the 20th century numbers 23, 25, 29 and 31) and the Masonic Hall on the north-west side of Mill Street, proposed for addition to the Local List. Antrobus Street contains good examples of 19th century brick-built terraced workers' housing with slate roofs (a type which is currently under-represented within the Conservation Area), the listed United Reform Church, a significant view north to the mills as well as retail properties. Number 103 has a good 19th century shop front with scrolled brackets to a cornice; number 93 has an early 20th century shop front with a round bay at first floor with original leaded windows; number 69 had been much altered in the 20th century but has a moulded bracketed gutter cornice and cast-iron downspout; number 47 is a 18th century townhouse with six over six sliding sash windows and an open-pedimented door case with pilasters; the public house at the northern end is decorated with fluted pilasters on the ground floor and has keyed headers to the first floor windows.



Early 20th Century Shop Front and Bay Window at Number 93



Moulded Cornice at Number 69



18th Century Townhouse at Number 47 **Late 19th Century Public House**

To include South Street, Holeford Street and Cross Street as they contain good examples of 19th century brick-built workers' cottages, as well as the Pentecostal Chapel and the former Electric Picture Theatre. Numbers 1 and 2 Cross Street have decorative door cases and a moulded cornice, although number 1 is now vacant and boarded up. The now vacant Electric Picture Theatre is rendered with stone ashlar pilasters and has a dentillated and moulded cornice over the entrance with a decorated tympanum carrying the building's former name and an advert for Jacksons Hercules Cycles. The cobbled back entry between South and Holeford Streets has been proposed for addition to the Local List of Artefacts.



South Street



Holeford Street



Pentecostal Chapel on Cross Street



1 and 2 Cross Street



Former Electric Picture Theatre

To include the whole of Mill Street as it contains good examples of 19th century shop fronts and other commercial premises, as well as the listed Bull's Head public house. Examples of 19th century shop fronts are numbers 24, 13 and 11, the latter two having terrazzo flooring at the entrances and two over two sash windows at the first floor. The Post Office is a fine building in red brick with terracotta decorative panels, the name being sculpted over the entrance under a bracketed cornice, with mullion and transom windows.



Shops on Mill Street

The Post Office on Mill Street

To include Brooks Mill, between Mill Street and Mountbatten Way, including the outbuildings, perimeter wall and gate pier. Brook Mill is Grade II listed, dating from 1785 with an extension in 1835. Due to its height, the mill is a prominent feature in the town centre, and documents the silk industry in Congleton.



The Allotments From the Entrance on Swan Street

To include the allotments situated to the south of Swan Street. A pathway extends to the south down the centre of the area and the individual plots extend from the pathway to the east and west. Several of the plots are divided by wooden fences, others are divided with mesh fencing. A number of the plots contain small sheds or greenhouses that are still in use. To the eastern boundary of the allotments there are several mature trees of a variety of species. The privately owned allotments were originally bought by residents of Swan Street, Nelson Street and the surrounding area shortly after the houses were built. The majority of the plots are still owned by residents of the neighbouring streets. The allotments hold historic and social value for the local community and are an important element of the local environment.



The Allotments



The Allotments, Facing East, Toward the Wooded Area

To include the wooded areas to the south and southeast of Swan Street. The area to the southeast of Swan Street and the east of the allotments is comprised of a mixture of mature trees of a variety of species and a mixture of grasses and shrubs. This area provides much needed green space within the conservation area, and provides a pleasant countryside walk along Priesty Walk, which is also proposed for inclusion in the conservation area. The area also holds historic value, as due to the areas location next to the river, it was at one time a place of industrial activity. The remnants of a stone wall remain in situ, possibly from an earlier industrial building. The boundary to this wooded area will be drawn along the eastern edge of Priesty Walk.



Wooded Area to the East of the Allotments, to the South East of Swan Street



Wooded Area, Priesty Walk and Remains of a Stone Wall, from the South

The wooded area directly to the east of Swan Street and the west of the mill is an area of mixed fauna, grasses and young and mature trees. The local residents consider the area an important aesthetic element of the locality. According to a local resident there are wildlife species inhabiting the area that should be protected (namely bats). The east boundary of the area is formed by the edge of a tarmac paved area, presumably the property line to the rear of the mill, which also encompasses the rear of a row of terrace houses. The proposed east boundary line to the south of this area runs along the back of a car park and two modern blocks of flats.



Wooded Area to the East of Swan Street, Looking Northwest



Wooded Area to the East of Swan Street, Looking Southwest

Appendix 6: Congleton Local Plan Policies

Congleton Local Plan¹⁷

Policy BH2: Demolition of Listed Buildings

Proposals which involve the complete demolition of buildings or Structures included in the statutory list of buildings of special Architectural or historic interest will be granted listed building Consent only in exceptional circumstances where all of the following apply:

- i) the building is structurally unsound;
- ii) its repair is not an economically feasible and practical alternative to demolition;
- iii) alternative uses for and the disposal of the building have been investigated;
- iv) detailed plans for redevelopment have been approved.

In those cases where, exceptionally, demolition is permitted then provision will be required to be made for the recording of the listed building and for the storage of materials/features for reuse.

Policy BH3: Changes of Use or Conversion of Listed Buildings

The change of use/ conversion of listed buildings will only be authorised if the borough council is satisfied that all of the following criteria can be satisfied:

- i) the change of use and associated conversion or alteration works would preserve the character of the building;
- ii) the intended use of the building does not detract from its setting;
- iii) the building's architectural features and historic interest are preserved;
- iv) the overall proposal is generally consistent with other policies of the local plan.

Policy BH4: Effect of Proposals

Planning permission and listed building consent for the extension or alteration of a listed building or for proposals affecting the setting of a listed building will only be granted where the following criteria are satisfied:

- i) the proposal is in keeping with the character of the listed building as regards scale, style, appearance, materials and architectural detail;
- ii) the proposal would not result in a loss of identity of the original listed building;
- iii) the listed building's architectural features and historic interest are preserved;
- iv) the proposal would not adversely affect the setting of the listed building;

¹⁷ Congleton Borough Council. *Congleton Local Plan First Review (01/05)* [online]. Adopted January 2005.

- v) the overall proposal is generally consistent with other policies of the local plan.

Proposals which affect the structure, character, appearance or setting of a listed building will generally require the submission of a detailed planning application, and in appropriate cases the submission also of an application for listed building consent.

Policy BH5:

Listed building consent, advertisement consent, conservation area consent or planning permission, as relevant, will not be granted for proposals which, in the opinion of the borough council, would have a detrimental effect upon the existing special architectural and historic character or appearance of a listed building / structure as a result of:

- i) advertisements, shop fascias or signs which are unsympathetic by virtue of their design, siting, colour, size or materials;
- ii) changes to elevational detail, particularly in the case of shop fronts, of an unsympathetic design which do not respect the local character;
- iii) development where the design, siting, scale or use of facing, roofing or paving materials are inappropriate in relation to the integrity of the building/structure itself, neighbouring buildings or to the area generally.

Policy BH6: Non-listed Buildings and Structures of Architectural and Historic Interest

Development proposals involving buildings and structures locally listed as being of architectural and/or historic interest will only be allowed if the borough council is satisfied that the architectural and / or historic character is conserved and that in those instances where demolition is involved this is unavoidable.

Policy BH7: Enabling Development

Proposals involving enabling development will not be permitted unless all of the following criteria can be satisfied:

- i) the enabling development will not materially detract from the archaeological, architectural, historic or landscape interest of the asset, or materially harm its setting;
- ii) the proposal avoids detrimental fragmentation of management of the heritage asset;
- iii) the enabling development will secure the long-term future of the heritage asset and, where applicable, its continued use for a sympathetic purpose;
- iv) the justification for enabling development arises from the inherent needs of the heritage asset, rather than the circumstances of the present owner or the purchase price paid;
- v) financial assistance is not available from any other source;
- vi) it is demonstrated that the amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the heritage asset, and that its form minimises disbenefits;
- vii) the value or benefit of the survival or enhancement of the heritage asset outweighs the long-term cost to the community (i.e. the disbenefits) of providing the enabling development.

If a scheme of enabling development fully satisfies all the criteria specified above, planning permission will only be granted if the scheme is submitted in the form of a full planning application and the achievement of the heritage objective can be securely and enforceably linked to the granting of planning permission, in compliance with the guidance outlined in circular 1/97

Policy BH8: Conservation Areas

The borough council will designate new conservation areas or extend or alter the boundaries of existing areas according to the following general criteria:

- i) areas whose special architectural or historic interest has been revealed as a result of recent research, survey, investigation or discovery;
- ii) any conservation areas whose extent or character has been affected by development since their original designation.

The borough council will undertake and publish assessments of existing and proposed conservation areas as a means of aiding the implementation of policies BH9 and BH10.

Policy BH9: Conservation Areas

Planning permission, conservation area consent or advertisement consent, will not be granted for proposals which, in the opinion of the borough council, would have a detrimental effect upon the existing special architectural and historic character or appearance of a conservation area as a result of:

- i) advertisements, shop fascias or signs which are unsympathetic by virtue of their design, siting, colour, size or materials;
- ii) changes to elevational detail, particularly shop fronts, of an unsympathetic design which do not respect the local character;
- iii) development where the design, siting, scale or use of facing, roofing or paving materials are inappropriate in relation to either neighbouring buildings or the area generally;
- iv) the significant loss of important trees, topographical features or areas of open land;
- v) intrusiveness within the setting of a conservation area or in relation to existing views into, out of, within or across the area.

Proposals which would significantly affect the existing special architectural and historic character or appearance of conservation areas may require the submission of further details or a full planning application.

Policy BH10: Conservation Areas

Conservation area consent and/or planning permission, as relevant, for the demolition of a building or group of buildings which significantly contribute to the present character or appearance of a conservation area will not be granted unless the harm from the loss was outweighed by the public benefits of an approved and fully committed replacement scheme. In this respect, the demolition of such unlisted buildings in conservation areas will be considered against the same criteria as those relating to listed buildings.

Policy GR1: New Development

All development will be expected to be of a high standard, to conserve or enhance the character of the surrounding area and not detract from its environmental quality, and to have regard to the principles of sustainable development.

Proposals will only be permitted if considered to be acceptable in terms of the following, as appropriate:

- Design
- Landscape
- Amenity and health
- Accessibility, servicing and parking provision
- Traffic generation
- Infrastructure
- Open space provision
- Provision of services and facilities
- Wider environmental considerations

The development should also have regard to any supplementary planning guidance and standards relating to the proposal or the site which has been approved by the borough council. Where appropriate, the borough council will require the submission of statements or assessments to accompany the application in respect of design principles, air quality and environmental, traffic and retail impact.

3.23

This policy sets out the various aspects of the built and natural environment which the Borough Council will consider in respect of all applications seeking permission or consent as appropriate to the nature of the proposal. The detailed requirements which will need to be met in respect of each of these aspects are set out in the subsequent policies. Currently approved Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes and standards are contained in the Technical Appendix. The circumstances under which statements and assessments will be required to accompany the application are also set out in the subsequent policies

Policy GR2: Design

Planning permission for development will only be granted where the proposal satisfies the following design criteria:

The proposal is sympathetic to the character, appearance and form of the site and the surrounding area in terms of:

- The height, scale, form and grouping of the building(s);
- The choice of materials;
- External design features, including signage and street furniture;
- The visual, physical and functional relationship of the proposal to neighbouring properties, the street scene and to the locality generally;
- Where appropriate, the proposal provides for hard and soft

Landscaping as an integral part of the scheme which is satisfactory in terms of:-

- The balance between the open space and built form of the development;
- The relationship of proposed areas of landscaping to the layout, setting and design of the development;
- The screening of adjoining uses;
- Maximising opportunities for creating new wildlife/ nature conservation habitats where such features can reasonably be included as part of site layouts and landscaping works;

Where appropriate, the proposal respects existing features and areas of nature conservation, historic, architectural and archaeological value and importance within the site;

Where appropriate, the proposal incorporates measures to improve natural surveillance and reduce the risk of crime;

Where appropriate, consideration is given to the use of public art and the creation of public spaces to benefit and enhance the development and the surrounding area;

The proposal takes into account the need for energy conservation and efficiency by means of building type, orientation and layout, sustainable drainage systems and the use of landscaping.

Proposals which, in the opinion of the borough council, are for large-scale or complex development or involving sensitive sites will require the submission of a statement of design principles to accompany any application for planning permission.

3.24

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that a high standard of design is achieved and that new development contributes positively to the character of the locality of the site. It is concerned with the relationship between all the elements of the built and unbuilt environment which give buildings and areas their unique character and distinctiveness. The criteria do not seek to stifle creative expression, but rather to develop awareness of context and to encourage sensitivity to the townscape. This policy will apply to all proposals for new development requiring planning permission regardless of its land use, both in the urban and rural areas. Appropriate supplementary planning guidance and adopted standards will be applied with regard to current government guidance.

3.25

The provision of landscaping and public art helps enhance the quality of the built environment, provides identity to an area, adds to the quality and variety of our natural landscapes and improves the attractiveness of an area to encourage investment. The provision of any public art will be through negotiation with developers for those schemes which, by virtue of their scale, nature or location, would be visually prominent to the public. Any such works will be considered as part of the amenity features of the development.

3.26

The reduction of crime and improving community safety is a high priority of the Borough Council's Corporate Strategy. Circular 5/94 advises that crime prevention is capable of being a material consideration when planning applications are considered. In this respect the design of new development can play a part in reducing the risk of criminal activity both to individuals and to property.

3.27

Planning decisions also need to reconcile the interests of development with the importance of conserving the environment. Energy conservation and efficiency measures are important in helping to achieve global sustainability aims and reducing the consumption of non-renewable energy resources. Appropriate measures need result in little or no additional cost to the developer. Guidance on suitable measures is contained in the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development and in its Green Guide to Development.

3.28

A statement of design principles is considered necessary for certain proposals to enable the Borough Council to properly understand the design concept and facilitate consideration of design issues. This is in accordance with the advice in Annex A of PPG1. Such statements should show the wider context as well as the development site and its immediately adjacent buildings.

3.29

A sensitive site is one which includes or adjoins areas designated as of value or interest in the Local Plan which are likely to be significantly affected by the proposal. The Borough Council's requirements in respect of design and layout and the provision of private and public open space in respect of all new housing development are set out in the Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes.

Policy GR21: Flood Prevention

Proposals for new development or the intensification of existing development within flood plains, as identified on the proposals map, will only be permitted where all the following criteria are satisfied:

- Appropriate flood prevention and mitigation measures are provided as part of the development to avoid unacceptable risk of flooding;
- The proposal would not create or exacerbate flooding elsewhere;
- The proposal would not unacceptably affect landscape character, nature conservation, geological, historic or archaeological interests;
- The proposal would not result in extensive and unacceptable culverting;
- The proposal would not adversely affect the integrity or continuity of existing flood defences or hinder access to watercourses for maintenance purposes;

- The proposal accords with other policies of the local plan.

3.56

New development and redevelopment can have significant implications for flood risk. The Environment Agency has identified those areas within the Borough, as shown on the Proposals Map, within which new developments may be liable to flooding and may increase the risk of flooding in other areas by reducing the storage capacity of the floodplain and increasing surface water run-off. The boundaries of those areas shown on the Proposals Map are based on information which is not definitive and may be subject to change in light of more detailed surveys. In determining applications for development, the Borough Council will apply the risk-based approach through a sequential test of the potential risk of flooding as set out in paragraph 30 of PPG25. In the application of the sequential test, the Borough Council will consult and take advice of the Environment Agency.

Policy H4: Residential Development in Towns

Proposals for residential development on land not allocated for such purposes within the settlement zone line of those settlements identified in policy PS4 will be permitted where the following criteria are satisfied:

- The proposal does not utilise a site which is allocated or committed for any other purpose in the local plan;
- The proposal complies with policies GR2 and GR3;
- The proposal accords with other relevant local plan policies;
- The proposal does not give rise, individually or cumulatively, to housing supply totals significantly at variance with the provisions of policies H1 and H2.

In considering planning applications the borough council will also have regard to the following criteria:

- The availability of previously-developed sites and empty or underused buildings and their suitability for housing use;
- The location and accessibility of the site to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car, and the potential for improving such accessibility;
- The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure, including public transport, water and sewerage, other utilities and social infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals) to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure;
- The ability to build communities to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide sufficient demand to sustain appropriate local services and facilities;
- The physical and environmental constraints on the development of the site such as the level of contamination, stability and flood risk taking into account that this risk may increase as a result of climatic change.

7.29

Whilst it is expected that the bulk of new housing development will be on those sites allocated in policy DP2, additional residential development on unidentified sites also has to be allowed for. This policy accords with policies PS3 and PS4 and is aimed at ensuring that new housing is located within the Settlement Zone Line and is of a scale appropriate to the size and character of the settlement. Control over the housing supply totals is necessary in order to maintain an appropriate distribution of housing supply across the Borough.

Policy H5: Residential Development in Villages

Proposals for residential development on land not allocated for such purpose will be permitted within the settlement zone line of those settlements identified in policy PS5 provided that the proposal is for development or redevelopment appropriate to the local character in terms of its use, intensity, scale and appearance and that it accords with other relevant local plan policies, in particular policies GR2 and GR3.

In considering planning applications the borough council will also have regard to the following criteria:

- The availability of previously-developed sites and empty or under-used buildings and their suitability for housing use;
- The location and accessibility of the site to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car, and the potential for improving such accessibility;
- The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure, including public transport, water and sewerage, other utilities and social infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals) to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure;
- The ability to build communities to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide sufficient demand to sustain appropriate local services and facilities;
- The physical and environmental constraints on the development of the site such as the level of contamination, stability and flood risk taking into account that this risk may increase as a result of climatic change.

7.30

New residential development within existing villages is required to provide for the growth in the existing population and contribute to the maintenance of local services and community life. It is important that such development is related to the existing pattern of settlement and has proper regard to government policies which aim to protect the countryside for its own sake. The sites allocated in policy dp2, in addition to those sites already having planning permission, are expected to provide for the bulk of new residential development in the rural areas sub-division up to 2011. However, suitable sites may come forward which for various reasons cannot be identified at the present time. Other exceptions may also be allowed in the context of policy h14 - affordable housing: rural exceptions policy.

Policy H15: Extensions to Dwellings in Towns and Villages

Planning permission for extensions to existing dwellings in towns and villages will be granted where the proposal is in keeping with the character of the property and the area generally in terms of siting, size, design and materials used.

7.50

A substantial proportion of planning applications submitted to the Borough Council relate to proposed extensions to houses in towns and villages. Such developments, whilst small in scale, can have major impact on the street scene and affect the privacy and amenities of adjoining householders. This policy allows for such forms of development providing they are appropriately designed and have regard to neighbouring properties. The Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes provide detailed guidance on the standards which are required to be met.

7.51

In the case of two storey extensions a pitched roof is desirable in order to improve the appearance of the extension and will normally be required where it is clearly visible from the public highway or other public areas.

Policy NR1: Trees and Woodlands

Proposals for development which affect a site containing existing trees or woodlands must include sufficient information to enable assessment of the potential impact on such trees. Proposals for development will not be permitted where it is apparent that there would be an adverse effect on existing healthy trees of amenity value. Any permission given will include conditions for their protection during development where appropriate by requiring submission and implementation of detailed method statements for construction and arboricultural works.

Policy S11: Shop Fronts

Proposals for new shop fronts or alterations or replacements to existing ones requiring consent should satisfy the following criteria:

- Shop fronts should respect the scale, proportions, character and materials of construction of the upper part of the structure and where relevant the setting of the building in relation to adjoining buildings and the street scene in general;
- Shop fronts of architectural or historic interest should only be removed in exceptional circumstances;

Fascia signs:

- Should not be so deep as to be detrimental to the proportions or scale of the building;
- Should not link two buildings with separate architectural identities;
- Should, where appropriate be of a common depth on single buildings consisting of two or more shop units;
- Windows to upper floors should not be enlarged for display purposes.

8.34

The borough council wishes to ensure that any proposals for new shop fronts or alterations to existing shop fronts take into account the character and appearance of the building and general street scene particularly where the development is within a conservation area or affects a building of special architectural or historic interest.

Policy S12: Security Shutters – Solid Lath

The installation of solid lath or similar security shutters on shop fronts will not be permitted unless alternative physical protective measures, including the use of closed circuit television surveillance, are demonstrably inappropriate or inadequate.

8.35

To maintain the vitality of the Borough's towns, the Borough Council wishes to extend the time during which the town centres are in active use and therefore consider it to be important that the attractiveness of the town centres are maintained in the evenings and on Sundays. Shop fronts are an important feature of any street scene and have many roles. They permit after hours window shopping, allow supervision by Police and passers-by and allow additional illumination of the street which is itself a disincentive to crime - against both the property and users of the town centre. It is considered, therefore, that the use of solid lath shutters within town centres would be inappropriate. The Borough Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on shop front security in the Appendix of the Local Plan gives advice on the design of alternative security measures.

8.36

The use of such shutters in neighbourhood shops are also considered to be inappropriate given their often prominent position within primarily residential areas.

Policy S13: Security Shutters/Lattice Mesh Grilles

Proposals for the erection of external lattice grille (roller grille or demountable mesh screens) within conservation areas or on listed buildings will be resisted unless their use is shown to be imperative and alternative physical protective measures, including the use of closed circuit television surveillance, are demonstrably inappropriate or inadequate. Elsewhere such proposals will only be permitted if they satisfy all the following criteria:

- i) the grille, when in the closed position, should not cover the fascia, pilasters or stall-risers;
- ii) the grille should be integrated into the overall colour scheme of the premises and not be galvanised or unpainted;
- iii) the grille spindle box is, wherever possible, located behind the fascia or integrated into the overall design of the shop front.

Policy S14: Advertisements

Proposals for the display of new, or the retention of existing, advertisements will only be permitted which satisfy all the following criteria:

- i) the proposal is not out of keeping with the style or character of a building or its surrounding;
- ii) the proposal would not be detrimental to amenity or safety, by reason of general design, size, colour, position of sign, type or degree of illumination;
- iii) the proposal would not affect views into or out of a conservation area;
- iv) in the case of proposals within a conservation area, it complies with policy S15.

S15: Advertisements in Conservation Areas

In its consideration of applications for express consent made under the Town and Country Planning (control of advertisement) regulations within conservation areas, the borough council will only allow signs which satisfy all the following criteria:

- i) signs shall be either painted or individually lettered in a suitable material and shall be of an appropriate size and design in relation to the building upon which they are to be displayed and the character of the area in which the building is situated;
- ii) signs shall preferably be non-illuminated but where illumination is justified, it should be discreet and in the form of uncoloured illumination integrated into the design of the shop front;
- iii) the form of signs shall be of a traditional fascia or hanging type depicting, by means of painting or three dimensional techniques, the trade or service offered;
- iv) signs shall, other than in the most exceptional circumstances, be of a minimum size necessary to convey their message.