

THURSTASTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

PART 2 – CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared for Wirral Council by Donald Insall Associates Ltd, 2007 – Wirral Council 2009

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PART 2 – CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.0 ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1.1 At this stage of the process the Management Plan is an agenda for future action and consideration. There has been insufficient time to resolve all the consultation and technical implications. This part of the document relies on the analysis contained in the appraisal to set out the issues and negative factors affecting both the private and public realm. As such it is the first stage in a management plan process which will refine the plan through further consultation, joint officer working and budgetary request.
- 1.1.2 It is recommended that the Appraisal, as an audit of the Conservation Area, is adopted by the Council and used as a material consideration in determining any planning applications within or visually affecting the conservation area. The Management Plan should be adopted for the time being pending further consultation with the local Conservation Area Advisory Committees and further review. In accord with English Heritage guidance, the Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed every 5 years. This review process may be tied into that of the key Local Development Framework documents to ensure consistency in approach and referencing.

2.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTER - THURSTASTON

- 2.1 Thurstaston Conservation Area's special character can be summarised as follows:
- Ancient settlement dating from the pre Norman period
 - Retains the quintessential features of an historic small English hamlet with Manor house, church, farm houses and farm buildings grouped loosely around a public 'green'.
 - A quiet and picturesque location, it became a place where the wealthy could live and define a lifestyle far removed from the grime and clamour of port and city.
 - Here a few extremely rich individuals sought to recreate a medieval idyll by constructing a new church in the style of the C13th, a new model farm, and new baronial hall (Dawpool House).
 - Private residential grounds in the northern and western parts of the conservation area are camouflaged by the wood.
 - The church is the focal point of the conservation area and a fine mid C19 recreation of C13 style by an eminent Victorian architect.
 - The dominant feature of the Hall, although 'multi period', is its late C17 façade and entrance gate way which has survived as a remarkably intact and relatively rare example of its type.

- Dawpool farm, old school house and lodge to the former Dawpool residence (Zone D) form a fine tightly knit group of buildings from the 1860s to 1880s. The use of common building materials (red sandstone) and common architectural style based on late medieval and Jacobean precedents reinforce the cohesion of the group. The ‘model’ farm buildings are excellent examples of their period.
- The historic farm houses and barns within the south side of the conservation area (Zone A and C) are vernacular in character based on a rural tradition rather than designed to a ‘period style’.
- The mid to later C20 residences which characterise the north part of the conservation area (Zone E) are generally hidden from public view.
- The existing sandstone boundary walls and close cut hedges add to the rural character of the area.
- Remaining areas of cobbled surface, rough ‘un-metalled’ tracks and soft verges which support wild flora are all important to maintaining the area’s rural appearance.
- The vista, from above the village looking down to across the fields to the church with the Dee estuary and Welsh hills beyond, is picturesque and provides a defining image of the west Wirral landscape.
- The views, within the conservation area across the ‘green’ towards the church and hall, and over the adjacent fields, still retain a strong rural character. They also show the sensitivity of the changes brought about in the mid C19 to the notions of the picturesque and an idealised concept of the ‘medieval’.
- The wooded private residential grounds which make up the northern and western parts of the conservation area and the open fields to the east make a positive contribute to the wider landscape of west Wirral.
- Thurstaston Hall dates from the middle ages and has archaeological potential within the grounds and also concealed within existing building fabric.
- There is some evidence to suggest that there may have been a substantial house on the east side of the ‘green’ with a pleasure garden on the wooded knoll above, possibly C18. This could be the subject of further investigation.

3.0 ISSUES, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

3.1 UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN & OTHER EXISTING PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1.1 Thurstaston Village is a designated Conservation Area and contains a number of Listed Buildings. Section 11 of Wirral Borough Council’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) contains a range of policies relating to the historic environment. Those of particular relevance to Thurstaston are CH1 (Listed Buildings and Structures), CH2 (Development in Conservation Areas), CH3 (Control of Demolition in Conservation Areas) and CH13 (Thurstaston Conservation Area Policies) as well as Supplementary Guidance Note SPG 33.

- 3.1.2 The village is located within the Green Belt and this places restrictions on the range of acceptable uses, new development, re-use of buildings, extensions to existing dwellings or their replacement either within the village, its setting or open land beyond. Green Belt policies are set out in Section 7 of the UDP.
- 3.1.3 There is a general presumption against inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Applications for planning permission are currently assessed for compliance with the policies set out in Section 7 and Section 11 of the Unitary Development Plan, as well as Supplementary Guidance Note SPG33.
- 3.1.4 The following Conservation Area Management Policies relate to the implementation of the UDP. Each policy is structured to show the issue or potential threat, a policy and other actions to reduce that threat.

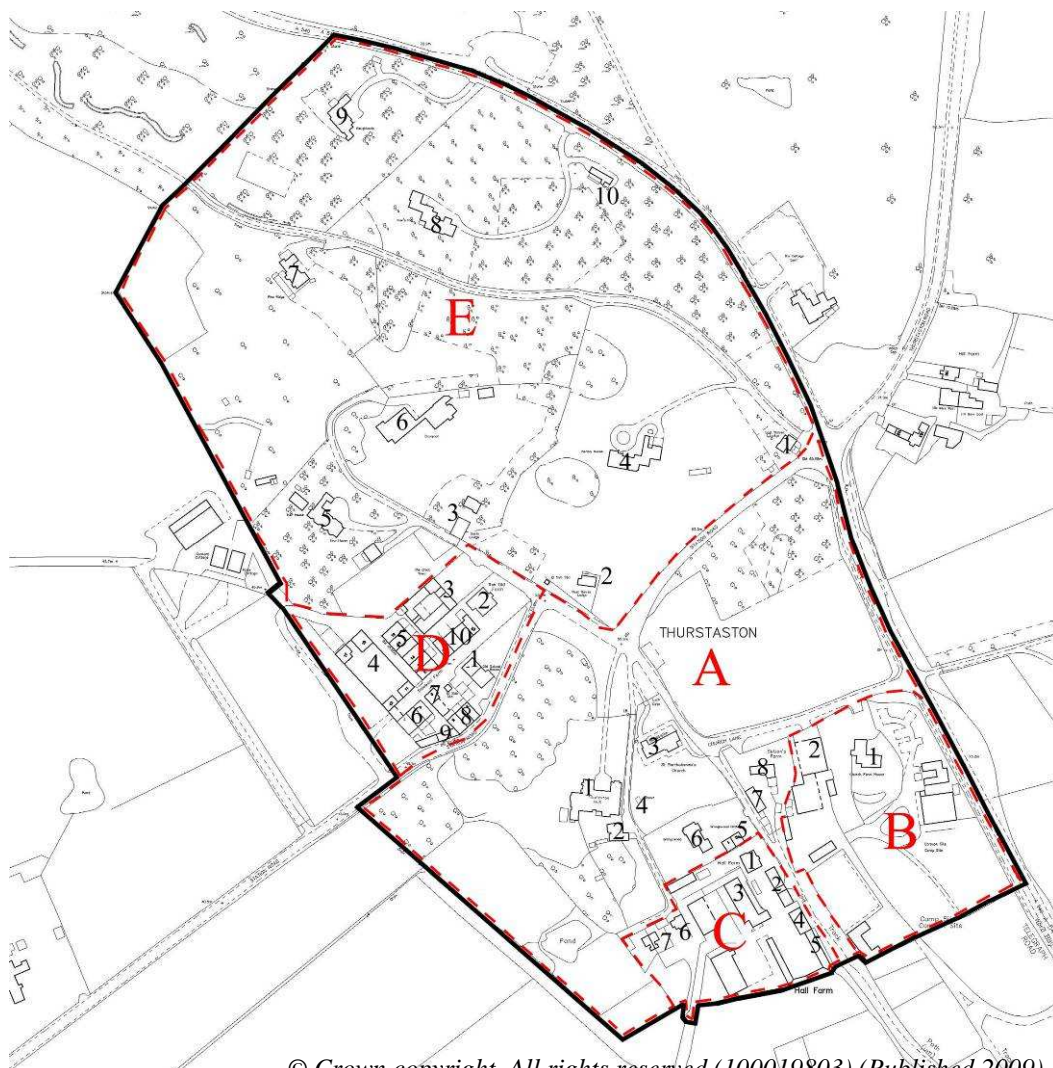
GREEN BELT POLICY	
Issue	Location
The application of Green Belt policy to development of land or buildings within the conservation area or affecting its setting may overlook the need to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area .	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
In the application of Policies GB2, GB3, GB4 and GB5 the effects of any proposals on the special character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting should be strong material considerations	
Action	Priority
Consider the special character of the Thurstaston Conservation Area in the application of policy	Immediate

NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONSERVATION POLICIES	
Issue	Location
Policies CH1, CH2, CH3 and CH19, together with the guidance in PPG15, may not always be rigorously applied during the planning process, resulting in development or changes to buildings which are detrimental to the character of the conservation area.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
Ensure that all new development within the conservation area complies with policies CH1, CH2, CH3 and CH13 together with the relevant sections of PPG15.	
Action	Priority
Rigorous inspection of planning, conservation area and listed building consent applications. Improve allocated resources and knowledge of planning staff to ensure that proper consideration is given to these issues in applications.	Immediate

3.2 NEW DEVELOPMENT AND ALTERATION TO EXISTING BUILDINGS AND SITES

3.2.1 In the rare event of any new development being acceptable in relation to the UDP policies (particularly Green Belt policies) set out above then the following recommendations should be applied to ensure suitable standards in the quality and character of new development, its scale, materials, layout and the effect on views. These policies are aimed at preserving and enhancing the ‘character’ and appearance of conservation areas. It should be noted that at Thurstaston, while the settlement’s overall character can be described in general terms, it has a number of distinct sub zones in which character is a product of differing historic periods and land use. Where appropriate detailed policy recommendations are specific to individual sub areas, namely (see plan below):

- A. The historic core includes the area’s ‘defining’ structures and their landscape setting namely: Thurstaston Hall, St Bartholomew’s Church, Suttons farm, the houses adjoining the south of the church yard and the wooded hillside fields leading up to the A540. This open area is bounded by Station Road and Church Lane both of which are narrow lanes cut through occasional outcrops of red sandstone bedrock with no pavements and high banks on either side.
- B. Church Farm comprising the main farm residence together with a collection timber structures and out buildings related to the ‘farm’s’ various economic activities and all of which are of relatively recent construction and are screened from the historic core of the settlement by high perimeter hedges and landscaping.
- C. Hall Farm lies to the south of the historic core and is a self contained complex of farm buildings with some attractive C19 brick barns as well as more utilitarian structures.
- D. Dawpool Farm together with the old school house is visually separated from the historic core by the wooded grounds of Thurstaston Hall. The area represents a ‘set piece’ model farm of the mid C19 with tightly packed fine sandstone farm buildings, principal residence and school all in late Gothic style.
- E. The former Dawpool estate now comprises ten residences. Only the lodge at the A540 entrance and the gate house on the drive off Station Road date from the C19 the other plots being occupied by substantial C20 properties only one of which, Warren House, can be glimpsed from the historic core with the others hidden deep within wooded grounds.



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Character Zones (shown in red)

QUALITY OF NEW BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Any potential buildings constructed within the conservation area may not be of a sufficient quality and may not have the design attributes of the historic buildings that characterise the area, therefore failing to preserve or enhance its character.	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
In any new development within Thurstaston Conservation Area, there should be a strong presumption in favour of using traditional materials such as local red sandstone, soft textured red or brown brick and Welsh slate. (Notwithstanding that some existing historic buildings have red roof tiles, replacements should always be in similar material)	
The use of smooth render may be considered on developments in parts of the settlement where the use of this material has become well established.	
Any new buildings should match the quality of materials and level of architectural design of the original buildings, although some simplification of the detailing may be acceptable.	
The use of contrasting modern materials of the highest quality may be appropriate if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that they do not have an adverse effect on the setting of neighbouring existing buildings.	
The use of imitation materials such as reconstituted stone or slate should not be permitted.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details including materials	Immediate

CHARACTER OF NEW BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
The appearance of any potential new buildings constructed within the conservation area may be detrimental to its predominant character zones comprising ‘vernacular agricultural’, ‘later C19 period’ and mid C20 building styles’.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
In any new development within the parts of Thurstaston Conservation Area containing vernacular building (Zones A and C), there should be a strong presumption in favour of using simple building forms and detailing that characterise most traditional buildings in those areas.	
In any new development within the parts of Thurstaston Conservation Area characterised by ‘later C19 period building styles’ (Zone D) there should be a strong presumption in favour of building design which has similar general characteristics in terms of general form and materials to the existing historic buildings while at the same time being early C21 construction not confusable with those of earlier date.	
In any new development within the north parts of Thurstaston Conservation Area (Zone E) characterised by the large ‘mid and later C20 residences, there should be a strong presumption in favour of building siting and building forms which retain the secluded nature of the existing development pattern and do not intrude upon the wider landscape.	

In any new non residential development associated with the Church Farm complex (Zone B) characterised by later C20/C21 agricultural or other non residential structures there should be a strong presumption in favour of continuing the recent precedents of simple rectangular timber clad structures sited so that they not intrude upon the historic views within the conservation area or the wider landscape

Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and insist that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

SCALE, MASSING, POSITION AND PROPORTIONS OF NEW BUILDINGS

Issue	Location
New buildings may detract from existing buildings in terms of their scale, massing, position or proportions	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
New buildings should respect the footprint sizes, shape and massing of existing neighbouring buildings and their relationships with each other (spacing), the road and their site boundaries.	
New buildings generally should be no higher than existing comparable buildings within their immediate vicinity in terms of both their eaves and ridge heights.	
New buildings should match the floor-to-ceiling heights and general proportions of existing neighbouring historic buildings.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

PLAN FORM AND LAYOUT OF NEW BUILDINGS AND INFILL DEVELOPMENTS

Issue	Location
New buildings and infill developments may detract from the townscape, rural appearance, spatial quality and historic development patterns that determine the various character zones within the conservation area.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
New buildings and infill developments should fit within the existing settlement pattern within the conservation area's character zones.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

EFFECT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT ON VIEWS	
Issue	Location
New development or extensions to existing buildings may adversely affect views of buildings within the conservation area, the setting of the conservation area or important views out of the conservation area.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
Applications for planning permission for new development or significant extensions to existing buildings within the conservation area must demonstrate, where appropriate, that views of existing buildings, the setting of the conservation area and views out of the area are not adversely affected.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

3.2.2 SPG 16 “Landscaping and New Development” and SPG 17 “Trees and Development” set out guidance on landscaping throughout the Wirral. The following landscape features are matters which have been identified as particular issues in the Thurstaston Conservation Area. Significant parts of the conservation area are covered by two tree preservation orders (TPOs).

LANDSCAPING FOR NEW OR EXISTING BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Poor or inappropriate landscaping around new buildings or extensions to existing buildings can detract from the character of the area	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
A detailed landscaping scheme should be submitted with any planning application for new buildings or significant alteration to existing sites.	
The magnitude of necessary car parking should be considered alongside the level of occupation of any proposed building. Schemes for buildings that require an extent of car parking / number of cars that will detract from the character of the conservation area should be rejected.	
New buildings should preserve existing areas of mature trees and other landscaping. Where any trees are removed, they should be replaced with semi-mature trees of the same or more appropriate native species, where these will not interrupt important views either when planted or when mature.	
New boundary treatments should reflect the prevailing historic boundary treatments of the area particularly the sandstone boundary walls.	
Surfacing for public track ways, private drives, paths and hardstanding should reflect the prevailing informal surfaces found within the area.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special landscape qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by full landscaping schemes.	Immediate

PROTECTION, RETENTION AND PROVISION OF HEDGES AND TREES	
Issue	Location
To maintain and enhance the character of the area attention needs to be paid to the retention of hedges as well as trees that contribute to the character and appearance of the area and the provision of new trees and hedges where appropriate. At Church Farm boundary screening has been provided by quick growing non native evergreen hedging. While this is helpful in providing initial concealment they are alien to the traditional landscape character. Their height should be controlled and over time they should be replaced.	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
Agricultural field and residential property boundaries comprising hedges of native species and 'green verges' should be retained for their visual appearance and to encourage wild flora and fauna.	
Trees which contribute to the character of the conservation area should be retained and if needing to be removed for reasons of tree health or safety, replaced by trees of appropriate species and maturity.	
Planting of hedges of native species should be promoted, particularly on boundaries that currently have unsympathetic boundary treatments.	
When new trees are planted the impact of the tree on important views, both now and when it reaches maturity, must be carefully considered.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special landscape qualities of hedges and trees within the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by full landscaping schemes showing the retention of trees and hedges and any replacement planting.	Immediate

3.2.3 Extensions to dwellings are covered by Policy HS 11 in the UDP. The policy covers matters relating to scale, materials, design details, dormers, set backs of house extensions and the retention of amenity space. The following are additional matters which have been identified as potential issues in the Thurstaston Conservation Area.

3.2.4 While it is chiefly historic buildings that are likely to suffer through poorly designed extensions there are a number of modern buildings whose original design was sympathetic to context of the village's historic buildings. These original design characteristics could be threatened by inappropriate alterations

EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Extensions to buildings within the conservation area may detract from the significance of the individual building or the setting of adjacent buildings	Throughout
Policy Recommendations	
Extensions should only be permitted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the additional structure has does not detract from the character and appearance of the area or of any building that makes a positive contribution to it. Extensions should be subservient to the parent building. Where extensions are proposed they should be prioritised towards the less significant areas of the building (for example a rear	

elevation or previously altered area).	
Alterations should be chosen that require the least possible degree of permanent loss of or change to historic fabric (for example minimising the size of new structural openings).	
The choice of the materials of the extension should minimise visual distraction from the original structure. Generally, it should be assumed that materials should match in terms of colour and texture. Traditional and/or natural materials such as sandstone, brick, timber and slate should be used unless an alternative can be adequately justified in terms of its visual effect on the conservation area. Where buildings are extended using traditional forms and materials, the subtle dating of the new element should be encouraged.	
Where a building has existing detrimental features (for example a poor quality porch or inappropriate windows), the opportunity should be taken if possible to secure improvements as part of the new building work.	
Dormers should not be accepted on former agricultural buildings or domestic buildings constructed before the late 19th century that do not already feature dormer windows. Roof lights may be considered acceptable for such buildings. They should be confined to rear elevations and of a scale and design appropriate to the building in which they are installed.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications.	Immediate

3.2.5 UDP Policy GB3 (Re-Use of Buildings in the Green Belt) sets out the criteria and principles for their conversion including having no greater impact on the Green Belt, adequate access, restriction on traffic generation and ensuring buildings are in keeping with their setting.

3.2.6 Few of the historic farm buildings in Thurstaston remain in agricultural use. However, SPG 15 (Conversion of Redundant Agricultural Buildings in the Green Belt) provides guidance on minimising alterations and new openings and the simple landscape treatment of the setting. The English Heritage publication *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings* (<http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Traditional-Farm1.pdf>) provides detailed information and advice on good practice.

CONVERSION AND ALTERATION OF FORMER AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
The conversion of former farm buildings can often result in the loss of the agricultural character of the building.	All former agricultural buildings
Policy recommendation	
Schemes for conversion and refurbishment should be carefully designed to retain the form and character of the original structure, strictly minimising the size and numbers of new openings or alterations to existing openings.	
The construction of new 'domestic' features such as porches, dormers, chimneys, garages and garden walls/fences should be avoided.	
The choice of landscaping treatment around the buildings is also important with high quality hard landscaped courtyards more appropriate than domestic lawns.	

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Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of original farm buildings within the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications.	Immediate

CHANGES OF USE	
Issue	Location
Changes of use of an existing building (subject to Green Belt Policy) can result in a number of incremental changes which result in an adverse effect on the conservation area.	All buildings
Policy recommendation	
In considering applications for change of use, the council will require information on the design of refuse storage, waste pipes, ventilation fixtures, satellite dishes and aerials, any other fixtures, signage and car parking.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area. Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate

- 3.2.6 UDP Policy CHI (Listed Buildings and Structures) and the national guidance PPG15 Annex C Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/142838.pdf>) set out the controls over work to listed buildings. Any alteration, internal or external, which affects the special interest of a listed building, structure or its curtilage, requires Listed Building Consent.

CHANGES TO LISTED BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Certain changes to listed buildings, such as insertion of replacement windows and changes to chimneys, boundary walls and roof coverings, can not only be detrimental to the appearance of the individual buildings and their immediate setting, but they also give a poor precedent for other building owners.	Listed buildings
Policy recommendation	
Ensure that any proposed alterations to a listed building are sympathetic to its historic fabric and appearance, and that the need for any alterations is fully justified.	
Owners of listed buildings should be notified of unauthorised changes to their buildings. Where evidence is available, (e.g. in the form of dated photographs) enforcement should be taken to ensure the reinstatement of the original fabric or retrospective consent granted for alterations that are considered acceptable.	
Action	Priority
Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	Immediate for new applications. Short to mid-term for other measures.
Carry out a survey of all listed buildings, photographing them and noting any changes.	

Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Notify building owners of unauthorised changes and take necessary enforcement action. Where changes are unenforceable and not attributed to the current owners, the potential for grant-funded reinstatement should be investigated.	

3.3 GENERAL GUIDANCE AND CONSERVATION AREA ENHANCEMENT

- 3.3.1 In addition to the rigorous and consistent implementation of existing policies local authorities can carry out a wide range of activities to further preserve and enhance conservation areas. These relate to building condition, management of the public realm, highway matters, extended planning controls, public information and involvement of local groups in securing improvements to the Conservation Area.
- 3.3.2 Some of the following recommendations have implications in terms of staff resource and finance. They are set out as an agenda for future action.
- 3.3.3 Most of the buildings in Thurstaston Village are in use and well maintained but there are also a number of prominent agricultural structures which are not so well maintained or appear underused.. Local authorities have a range of powers to secure the repair of historic buildings, both listed and unlisted, which are seriously at risk. Keeping buildings in use is the best way of ensuring that they are well maintained. Good maintenance of historic buildings is the key to avoiding costly and often damaging repairs.

CONDITION OF INDIVIDUAL SITES AND BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
The condition of an individual site or building can be detrimental to the appearance of the area and may set a poor example to other owners. Notwithstanding that, traditional farms and rural settlements are not always highly cared for or ‘manicured’. A fine balance has to be struck between retaining the informality and charm of a traditional agricultural environment while avoiding obvious neglect and ‘eyesores’.	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
The local authority should serve Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 notices on owners of buildings or land whose condition adversely affects the amenity of the area, requiring them to remedy the detriments or face the necessary costs for the local authority to do so.	
Under section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, urgent works notices should be used to secure emergency or immediate repairs on any unoccupied building (or part of a building) within a conservation area where it adversely affects the character of the area. Where the building is unlisted a direction from the Secretary of State may be required.	
Action	Priority
Prepare a guidance leaflet and issue to all residents within the conservation area explaining the benefits of good, regular maintenance and appropriate repair techniques.	Immediate to midterm

Regularly visit the conservation area, noting any sites or buildings in a poor condition. Serve relevant notices where appropriate.	
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3.3.4 The public realm is a major feature in the overall appearance of an area. As part of its role as the highways authority the local council can make a major contribution to the well being of conservation areas. Changes to highway alignments, safety and traffic management measures can make a very significant impact sometimes visually beneficial but often detrimental.

3.3.5 Unmade tracks are also a key feature of the area and hard surfacing would seriously undermine the areas rural attributes.

3.3.6 The installation of street lighting, signage and other street furniture also requires careful consideration due to the rural character of the area and the importance of views out across the Dee Estuary.

CONDITION / MAINTENANCE OF THE PUBLIC REALM	
Issue	Location
New installations or furthering the extent of existing tar macadam surfacing to currently un made surfaces in the conservation area could have a detrimental impact.	All public roads and pavements
Policy recommendation	
The existing public realm areas should be well maintained and where necessary repaired to a standard that befits the conservation area and enhances the setting of the existing buildings.	
Any new service installations must take account of the area's special interest.	
Action	Priority
Regularly monitor condition of public realm areas and make any necessary improvements	Mid-term

HIGHWAYS MODIFICATIONS MARKINGS AND SIGNAGE	
Issue	Location
Proposals to introduce a new round about at the junction of the A540 and Station Road will have a significant impact on the setting and entrance to the Conservation Area. Highway markings and signage can be visually intrusive and detrimental to its character and appearance. Future highways features, such as street name signs and double yellow lines may be visually obtrusive and of an inappropriate design / materials.	All public roads and pavements
Policy recommendations	
Any major changes or additions to the existing highway layout may have negative impacts on the conservation area. New proposals should be subject to a heritage impact appraisal at an early stage and adequate mitigation measures introduced.	
Ensure that the objective of preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area carries due weight when considering proposals to improve road safety or traffic flow.	

Ensure that all future highways features are proven to be necessary and are of an appropriate design and constructed of appropriate materials.

Action	Priority
Obtain advice on appropriate alternatives to standard practice	Mid-term

3.3.7 While many local residents may be interested in the history of their area and derive pleasure from the conservation area status of Thurstaston Village others may be unaware of the benefits and responsibilities that designation brings. The Irby, Thurstaston, and Pensby Amenity Society is a local group active in promoting public understanding of the history of Thurstaston and acting to preserve the historic environment.

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND CONTRIBUTION	
Issue	Location
Residents are often inadequately aware of the purpose of a conservation area, the benefits designation may have to them and how they may influence its future. The skills and expertise of local residents groups, individuals or major landowners may be underutilised.	Throughout
Policy recommendations	
Make conservation area information readily available to residents, for instance making appraisals / management plans available in local libraries (or other well used public buildings) and on the internet.	
Prepare a guidance leaflet and issue to all residents within the conservation area.	
Encourage the involvement of The Irby, Thurstaston and Pensby Amenity Society to help preserve its special character and to instigate enhancements where appropriate.	
Residents groups may be particularly useful in the recording of the area in terms of its present day character and historical development.	
Encourage dialogue between local residents groups and major landowners to promote enhancement and maintenance works within the conservation area.	
Action	Priority
Dialogue between local authority, residents groups and major landowners	Mid term.

3.3.8 In carrying out conversions or alterations to the fabric of existing buildings and boundary structures the following good conservation practice should be applied. Some development within conservation areas, particularly for householders, is within permitted development rights. Depending on the scale of the building works planning permission may or may not currently be required. Even when a statutory consent is not required, the local authority is in a good position to offer advice to property owners and so help them to maintain both the historic interest and commercial value of their property.

GUIDANCE ON STRUCTURAL ALTERATION TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Alterations to the main historic fabric of a building can lead to the loss of some of its historic value and visual qualities and can be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area as a whole. The same concern applies to more recent buildings whose original design was sympathetic to the area's character and appearance.	<i>All buildings making a positive contribution to the area.</i>
Policy recommendations	
Where alterations are necessary for the continued use of the building they should be prioritised towards the less significant areas of the building (for example a rear elevation or previously altered area).	
Alterations should be chosen that require the least possible degree of permanent loss of or change to historic fabric (for example minimising the size of new structural openings).	
Where replacement of existing original or early fabric is proved necessary it should always be done on a like-for-like basis where possible, not exchanging traditional materials for modern alternatives (for example repairing a stone wall using stone, not concrete blocks).	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

GUIDANCE ON ALTERATION OR LOSS OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES	
Issue	Location
Alterations to or loss of existing features on historic buildings that contribute to their character and appearance can be detrimental to the individual building and the area as a whole. The same concern applies to more recent buildings whose original design was sympathetic to the area's character and appearance.	All buildings making a positive contribution to the area
Policy recommendation	
Existing original or early features should be retained if at all possible. Where their replacement is necessary, it should be on a like-for-like basis in terms of materials and design. Any changes to primary features such as windows, doors and chimneys should be carefully considered by the local authority.	
Repair of worn or damaged features should always be considered before replacement. For example partially decayed timber doors and windows may be easily repaired by a suitably skilled joiner.	
Upgrading to meet modern requirements should be considered before replacement. For instance draft stripping and secondary glazing should be installed in preference to the wholesale replacement of existing windows.	
Action	Priority

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Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

GUIDANCE ON ALTERATIONS TO MODERN BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
Alterations to more modern buildings in the conservation area may offer opportunities for enhancing the character and appearance of the area as a whole. Poor design choices may make an unsympathetic building worse in terms of its wider contribution..	All buildings making a negative or neutral contribution to the area.
Policy recommendations	
The fundamental character of the existing building should be respected so that alterations do not appear incongruous.	
Colour for painted elements of a building must be carefully considered for their impact on the wider area and setting of the conservation area.	
Natural and locally traditional materials should be considered as an alternative to man made, for instance painted timber window frames or fascia boards in place of uPVC	
Where traditional details are not out of character with the building their use should be considered, for instance side hung casements not top hung opening lights	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

LOSS OR ALTERATION TO BOUNDARY WALLS	
Issue	Location
The loss of or alteration to boundary walls and gateposts would adversely affect the character of the conservation area.	Throughout
Policy recommendation	
All existing historic boundary walls and gateposts should be retained.	
Alteration as part of any planning permission should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and when fully justified and mitigated.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	Immediate for advice to residents' queries and planning applications. Mid term for other measures.
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	

EXISTING UNSYMPATHETIC ALTERATIONS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS	
Issue	Location
There are a number of instances of detrimental changes to un-listed buildings carried out in the past, most notably the insertion of replacement windows and work such as poorly executed pointing to boundary walls, unsuitable fences and unsympathetic paving. These are not only detrimental to the appearance of the individual buildings and their immediate setting, but they are also setting a poor precedent to other building owners.	Listed and un-listed buildings which contribute to the conservation area
Policy recommendation	
Through example and encouragement promote reinstatement of historic features and replacement of unsuitable modern elements.	
Action	Priority
A guidance leaflet should be issued explaining the benefits of reinstatement works.	Mid-term

3.3.9 The installation of new fixtures can adversely impinge on the character of buildings and the Conservation Area. Recent changes to the General Permitted Development Order 1955 (October 2008) now mean that planning permission can be required for a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe on a dwellinghouse on its roof or wall fronting a highway and forming a principal elevation or side elevation of the dwellinghouse.

INSTALLATION OF NEW FIXTURES	
Issue	Location
The installation of new fixtures, such as aerials, satellite dishes, rooflights and ventilators, generally detracts from the character of the individual building and the area as a whole. Particular care should be taken in the use and location of microgeneration equipment to minimise intrusion on the building or its setting	<i>All buildings</i>
Policy recommendation	
The installation of rooflights into existing roof slopes should not generally be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that they are not visible from public areas or adversely affect the setting of other buildings. Any rooflights installed should be of a ‘conservation’ type and fixed flush with the roof covering.	
Building owners should be strongly encouraged to only install satellite dishes and aerials in positions not visible from public areas or adversely affect the setting of other buildings.	
Building owners should be strongly encouraged not to install ventilators and other fixtures onto roof slopes or prominent elevations. Where they are absolutely necessary their visual impact should be minimised in terms of their location, number, size and design.	
Microgeneration of energy is to be encouraged in terms of environmental conservation principles but the impact on buildings and their settings within the conservation area should be minimised by careful positioning in parts and areas not visible from public locations	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area.	<i>Short term</i>
Prepare guidance leaflets for local residents.	
Through example and encouragement, promote good conservation practice for older buildings and sympathetic change to more recent buildings.	
Consider putting in place article 4 directions to protect features of unlisted buildings that form part of the character and appearance of the area.	
Take enforcement action where appropriate for unauthorised work.	
Use more stringent design criteria in determining future planning applications and require that all applications are accompanied by relevant design details.	

- 3.3.7 Many of the historic buildings that contribute to the character and appearance of the Thurstaston Conservation Area are unlisted. Features that contribute to the area such as windows, roof materials and boundary walls are at risk from future alteration and loss. Guidance, such as that set out above, can help people to make good decisions about their historic properties. However the full public benefit of conservation areas can only be ensured through extended planning controls.

ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS	
Issue	Location
Small scale alterations to buildings in the conservation area can lead to a gradual and progressive loss to its character. Article 4 directions can bring such alterations under control, by restricting permitted development and requiring	<i>All buildings</i>

planning permission for a variety of building works.	
Policy recommendation	
Consider the need for article 4 directions in respect of windows and doors, roof coverings and roof features; colour and surface treatment of elevations; and boundary walls.	
Action	Priority
Promote an understanding of the special qualities of the conservation area, discuss the need for and extent of Article 4 directions, and determine the priority for them in relation to other conservation areas and the resources available.	Short to mid- term

- 3.3.8 Section 4 of this Appraisal and Management Plan discusses Article 4 directions in more detail

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS AND PROVISION OF ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

4.1 BOUNDARY AMENDMENT

- 4.1.1 The current boundary fully covers the extent of the historic settlement to the west of the A540 and incorporates much of the late C19 landscape and C20 residences associated with the former Dawpool House. In these terms the present boundary is clearly defined by the roads and boundaries, wherever it has been practical to do so. At section 3.1, this study also notes buildings of interest to the east of the A540 which are outside the present boundary. On Irby Lane there is a group of pre C20 buildings (Hill Farm and adjacent) one or two of which are shown on the 1830s Tithe map. These are of historic interest and have group value. Also the A540 rock cutting has landscape and historic value and to the south of the cutting, the Cottage Loaf makes a positive contribution to the wider scene. Although, of some local historic importance these features have no direct visual link with the core of the conservation area and on this basis their exclusion from its boundaries is not inappropriate. Furthermore they are severed from the conservation area by the A540 and their visual separation will increase if the new round about is to proceed at the Station Road junction. Consideration has also been given to Church Farm and its associated non residential buildings. It could be argued that, this being a relatively recent development, it is not part of the historic settlement and could be excluded from the conservation area. However, it sits within the settlements historic field pattern and, in terms of planning controls, the conservation area is better protected by its remaining within its boundaries. It is therefore recommended that the conservation boundary does not change.

4.2 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

- 4.2.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 allows building owners to carry out a range of minor developments without planning consent subject to limits and conditions. These ‘permitted development’ rights are automatically limited within conservation areas: restrictions include the addition of dormer windows, various types of cladding and render the erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway and the reduction in the size of extensions.
- 4.2.2 Amendments for Part 40 for domestic microgeneration equipment (April 2008) and for Part 1 development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse (October 2008) have altered these rights chiefly in regard to the extent of ancillary buildings in back gardens and solar panels on the front of properties.
- 4.2.3 Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order enables local authorities to withdraw some specified permitted development rights on buildings or land, such as removal of a chimney, changes around the front boundary of a building, construction of porches, painting of houses or removal of architectural features such as windows and doors. Local authorities must notify local people and take account of their opinions before confirming an Article 4 direction and in certain instances obtain approval from the Secretary of State.
- 4.2.4 Article 4 directions are not just an automatic consequence of conservation area designation, but should derive from a careful assessment of what is of special interest within an area and should be preserved. Permitted development rights should only be withdrawn where there is evidence to prove that such development would damage the character of a conservation area and is currently taking place.
- 4.2.5 In the case of Thurstaston, there are currently no article 4 directions associated with the unlisted buildings. In order to protect the existing unlisted historic buildings and to encourage the reinstatement of lost features, it is recommended that article 4 directions are used to withdraw permitted development rights for the following elements:
- Windows and doors
 - Roof coverings and roof features
 - The colour and surface treatment of elevations.
 - Boundary walls.
 - Solar panels on front roofs.
 - Microgeneration