

December 2006



STANDISH
CONSERVATION
AREA APPRAISAL



Environmental Services Department



STANDISH
CONSERVATION
AREA APPRAISAL

Martin Kimber

Director of Environmental Services
Environmental Services Department
Civic Buildings, New Market Street, Wigan WN1 1RP

email: environmentalservices@wigan.gov.uk
tel: 01942 404252



Environmental Services Department

December 2006



STANDISH

CONSERVATION

AREA APPRAISAL





To assist people with particular needs this document can be made available on request in larger print, braille and in a number of alternative languages.

Arabic

"بالإمكان توفير هذه المعلومات في اللغة العربية."

Cantonese

這些資料可提供中文譯本。

Farsi

این اطلاعات به زبان فارسی هم میتواند در دسترس شما قرار گیرد.

French

Disponible en francais sur demande

Gujurati

આ માહિતી ગુજરાતીમાં મળી શકે છે.

Urdu

یہ معلومات اُردو میں بھی دستیاب ہو سکتی ہیں۔



Contents

ONE

- 1.1 Purpose of the report
- 1.2 Conservation Areas
- 1.3 Standish Conservation Area
- 1.4 Planning Controls in Conservation Areas
- 1.5 Conservation Area Appraisals

TWO

LOCATION AND SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

- 2.1 Strategic Location
- 2.2 Land Form and Landscape setting
- 2.3 Form and character of the settlement
- 2.4 Population and administration
- 2.5 Form and layout of the Conservation Area

THREE

SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF STANDISH CONSERVATION AREA

- 3.1 The 1976 designation based upon Market Place
- 3.2 The 1988 designation based upon High Street
- 3.3 The Conservation Area as a whole
- 3.4 Heritage Audit

FOUR

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Local Histories
- 4.2 Origin and development of the settlement
- 4.3 Standish in the 18th and 19th centuries-mapping analysis
- 4.4 20th Century development
- 4.5 Summary of historical development



FIVE	CHARACTER AREAS	35
	5.1 Character Area1 □ Appraisal	35
	5.2 Character Area2 □ Appraisal	46
	5.3 The Public Realm	56
	5.4 Trees and greenery	60
	5.5 Backland areas	61
SIX	SUMMARY OF NEGATIVE FACTORS	63
	6.1 The built environment/private realm	63
	6.2 The public realm	64
SEVEN	SUMMARY OF POSITIVE FACTORS	65
EIGHT	CURRENT PLANNING ISSUES	66
	8.1 Policy Issues	66
	8.2 Infilling and other planning issues	67
NINE	ISSUES FOR CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT	67
TEN	CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES	69

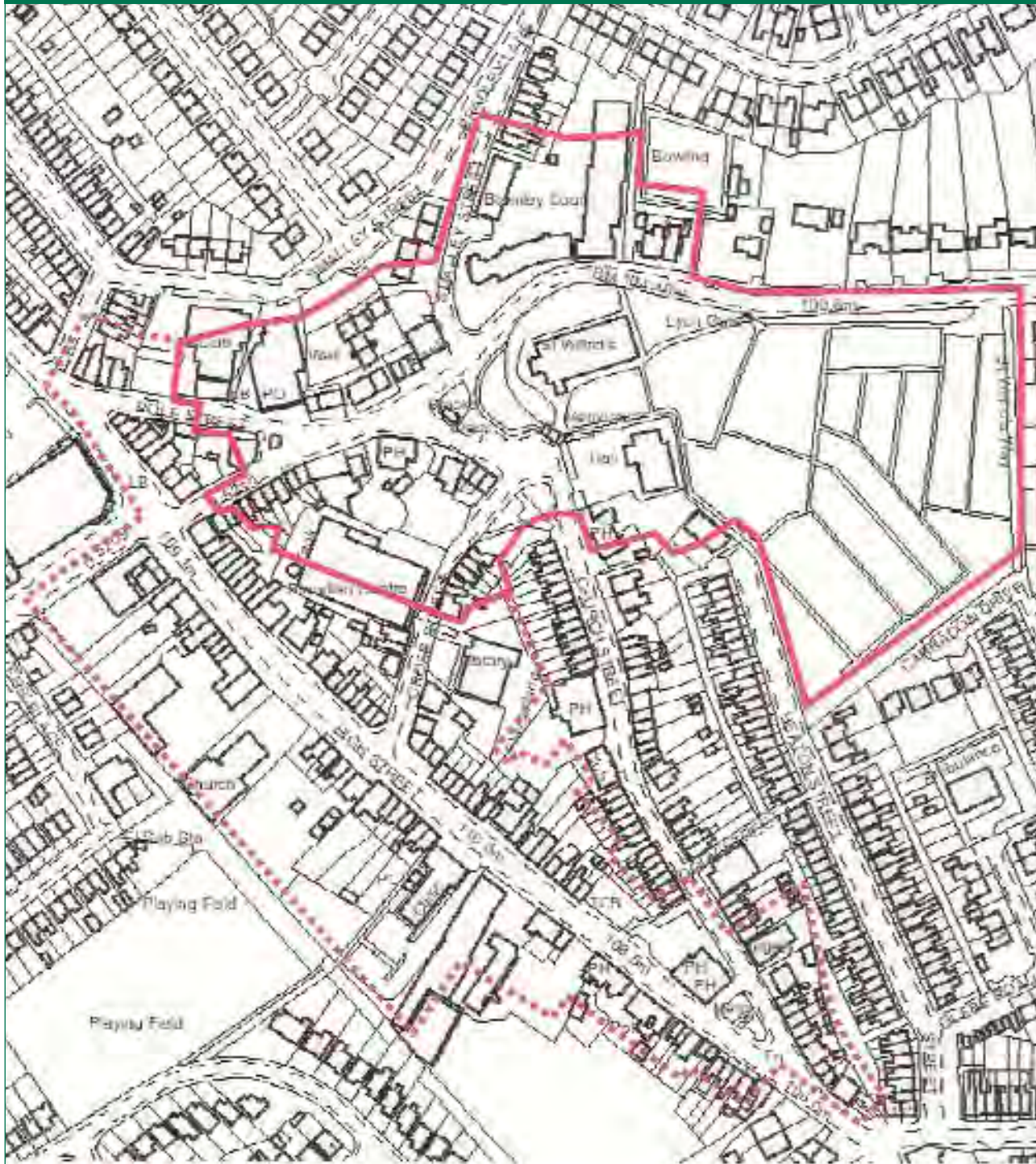


Appendices

APPENDIX 1	DESCRIPTION OF CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES	73
APPENDIX 2	RELEVANT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES	73
APPENDIX 3	GEOLOGY OF THE AREA	73
APPENDIX 4	HERITAGE AUDIT	75
APPENDIX 5	ASPECTS OF LOCAL HISTORY	76

Plan I The Standish Conservation Area

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



Old Conservation Area Boundary 1976



Extension to Conservation Area Boundary 1988



ONE

Background

I.1 Purpose of this document

This report provides an assessment of the character and appearance of Standish Conservation Area. Its principal purpose is to identify and evaluate the important architectural and historic features of the area to provide a basis for a conservation area management strategy which will protect the best of the past whilst meeting modern needs.

I.2 Conservation Areas

The legal framework to secure conservation of the built environment was introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967.

Conservation Areas are defined as ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

The current legal framework for conservation areas is contained in section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990. Local Planning Authorities are empowered to decide which parts of their area should be designated as conservation

areas. Indeed they have a duty to review their areas from time to time to consider the need for new conservation areas. In England there are now over 9,000 designated conservation areas. The Borough of Wigan has 22.

Standish and Haigh Village were the earliest designations in the Borough, both being designated 2nd April 1976.

The idea for Conservation Areas arose out of the growing pace of redevelopment of our towns and cities which had gathered momentum during the 1960s. It was increasingly realized that locally valued buildings and places were being eroded by piecemeal demolition or mediocre new buildings. Standish was no exception, a number of locally distinctive buildings having been lost in modern times to demolition and redevelopment.

Concerns about the potential further erosion of the village’s character and heritage led to the extension of Standish village centre conservation area in 1988 by the inclusion of High Street.

The **special interest** of a conservation area will generally derive from the relationship between buildings of historic or architectural significance and the spaces which provide their setting. The prevalence of locally sourced construction materials and craft traditions in their use may contribute to the special character of an area as may aspects of the public realm, for example, paved surfaces, walls, railings, trees and green spaces and waterways.



1.3 Standish Conservation Area

As originally designated, Standish conservation area was based upon the historic core of the village including the Parish Church of St. Wilfrid, with its extensive churchyard and the area around Market Street and Market Place. Market Place contained a number of features of historic significance including an ancient cross, stocks and well, the whole dominated by the imposing 16th century Church, itself a Grade I Listed Building.

On 27th April 1988 the Conservation Area was extended to include properties fronting High Street up to its junction with Church Street and the east side of Preston Road between Market Street and Pole Street.

The enlarged conservation area extends some 460m on its north-south axis and a maximum of 400m on its east-west axis. It occupies an area of 8.92 hectares (22 acres).

The two designation boundaries are shown on **Plan I** (at the start of this section) and described in Appendix 1.

1.4 Planning Controls in Conservation Areas

The legislation relating to conservation areas brings the demolition of unlisted buildings located within such areas subject to planning controls, i.e. the so called 'conservation area consent'.

In addition, Local Planning Authorities have stronger controls over certain types

of minor development and must publicise planning applications for development within or likely to affect a conservation area. There are also additional powers to protect trees. In exercising their planning powers, Local Authorities are obliged to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

It is not the purpose of conservation area designation to preserve areas 'in aspic, rather to ensure that changes necessary to meet evolving social or economic conditions are managed in such a way as to ensure the survival of the local distinctiveness and sense of place which warranted their original designation.

The demolition of Almond's Brewery and the Wheatsheaf Public House and replacement by the Somerfield Store, represent examples of the continuing adaptation of the village to modern needs, (though this site was not within the Conservation Area).



This development has undoubtedly strengthened Standish's role as a service centre. Efforts have been made to blend in the large building by gabled bays but



the lack of upper floor windows contrasts with the more traditional styles of building.

New buildings may sometimes be necessary but conservation area status should ensure that careful consideration is given to their design and layout to ensure they are complementary to the overall character of the conservation area. Similarly, works involving the public realm should aim to preserve or enhance the area's special qualities –not detract from them.

The Local Planning Authority has the means to achieve these objectives by the application of the relevant policies within its Unitary Development Plan. These are set out in Appendix 2.

Councils can also seek to preserve or improve the character of conservation areas by the careful design and implementation of works which are within its corporate control, for example the siting and design of street furniture, paving and traffic management schemes.

1.5 Conservation Area Appraisals

As well as designating Conservation Areas, Local Planning Authorities have a duty to formulate and publish from time to time, proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to submit them to a public meeting in the area to which they relate. Following the first designation, steps were taken to form a conservation area partnership involving the local community but it is believed that this has since lapsed.

In 1994, Government published Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, Planning and the Historic Environment. This important policy statement inter-alia, reminded Local Planning Authorities of their duties relating to conservation areas, stressing the need to make an assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their districts.

Conservation Area Appraisals are now one of the Council's Best Value performance indicators and the Council is committed to undertaking a programme of such reviews.





It is now 30 years since the original Standish Conservation area designation was made. Over this time there have inevitably been changes affecting the both the village itself and the framework for conservation policy, for example the recent adoption of Wigan's Unitary Development Plan.

A review of the changes that have taken place and assessment of the current issues, challenges and opportunities affecting the village is therefore all the more pressing in order to ensure that future conservation area management strategy is relevant and effective.

This report relating to Standish Conservation Area aims to follow the approach to appraisals recommended by English Heritage in their guide to practice issued in 2006.



The purpose of an appraisal is:

-  To evaluate and analyse the character and appearance of the conservation areas and to explain its special qualities;
-  To provide an understanding of current issues and challenges which threaten the survival of its special qualities;
-  To provide a basis for a management strategy, the aim of which will be to protect the best of the past and ensure that new development and public works contribute to the area's special qualities.
-  To provide an opportunity to review the boundaries of the conservation area to ensure that they remain relevant.

The appraisal will be a basis for public consultation in regard to future conservation area management strategy. The appraisal should not therefore just be an academic exercise. By identifying the special qualities of the area, the appraisal can be used as a practical management tool to ensure that those qualities which local people value can be protected for future generations.



TWO

Location and Setting of Standish Conservation Area

2.1 Strategic Location

The conservation area as extended takes in most of the centre of the old village of Standish. Standish was once an ancient township, one of ten such settlements within the extensive ecclesiastical Parish of Standish with Langtree and is located astride the A49 Wigan-Preston road. The place name is believed by historians to derive from the Old English stan (stone) and edisc (park or enclosure), or perhaps stony pasture. Standish is not mentioned in Domesday. The Church at Standish is first mentioned in 1205. An outline of the historical development of the settlement is set out in Section 4, with further historical material in Appendix 5.

The centre of modern Standish is focussed upon the cross-roads formed by the intersection of A49 and an east-west secondary route. From this cross roads, Preston is 24 km (15 miles) to the north and Wigan town centre 5km (3.1 miles) to the south via High Street. School Lane, classified A 5206, leads westwards towards Burscough and to Southport on the Lancashire coast, some 32km (20 miles) distant. Market Street ,B5239, forms the eastward arm, becoming Rectory Lane from the Parish Church and leading towards Aspull and ultimately to Bolton some 16 km (10 miles) distant.

Interestingly, the 1953 11 inch to the mile OS shows B5239 continuing westwards of Standish cross roads. The reclassification to A5206 probably occurred as a result of the connection of this route to M6 at junction 27, 2km west of Standish cross roads.

The boundary between Wigan Borough and the Lancashire District of Chorley is located 2 km (1.2 miles) north of the cross roads. The next village northwards on A49, Coppull is 4km away. All distances are quoted as the crow flies.

Despite being by- passed by the M6, A49 remains a heavily trafficked road. The proximity of the motorway junction to the village centre means that its main roads are subject to flows to and from the M6. Indeed The A49 and A5206/ B5239 routes through the village are identified as part of the Strategic Route Network in the Unitary Development Plan. (UDP Policy A1N).

The position of the conservation area astride these important traffic routes inevitably means that the impact of traffic is a major influence upon its character and environmental quality.

Plan 2 Strategic location

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



Standish Village Centre



2.2 Land form and Landscape setting

Standish is effectively a hilltop village. The main road through the village traverses a ridge of high ground forming a spur jutting out from the Pennines. The spur extends north-westwards from Wigan above a loop of the River Douglas. The approach from Wigan town centre which lies at approx. 39m AOD, involves a steady rise. The highway at Boar's Head at the southern extremity of Standish, is approx 77m AOD, reaching 106m at the south end of High Street on the edge of the conservation area. High street rises further to 110.3 m at Cross Street falling 1m to the cross roads. A benchmark at the Parish Church is 108m but Rectory lane falls rapidly eastwards to 100m within a distance of 150m. With the exception of Rectory lane and the slight gradient of High Street there are no significant changes in level within the conservation area itself. The river Douglas flows in a southerly direction to the east of the village, looping around the ridge and the town of Wigan turning northwards to the Ribble and thus flanking the village on its western side also. The river is not however noticeable from within the village centre.

Plan 3 (on the next page) shows the village in its wider setting with the contours and main topographical features.

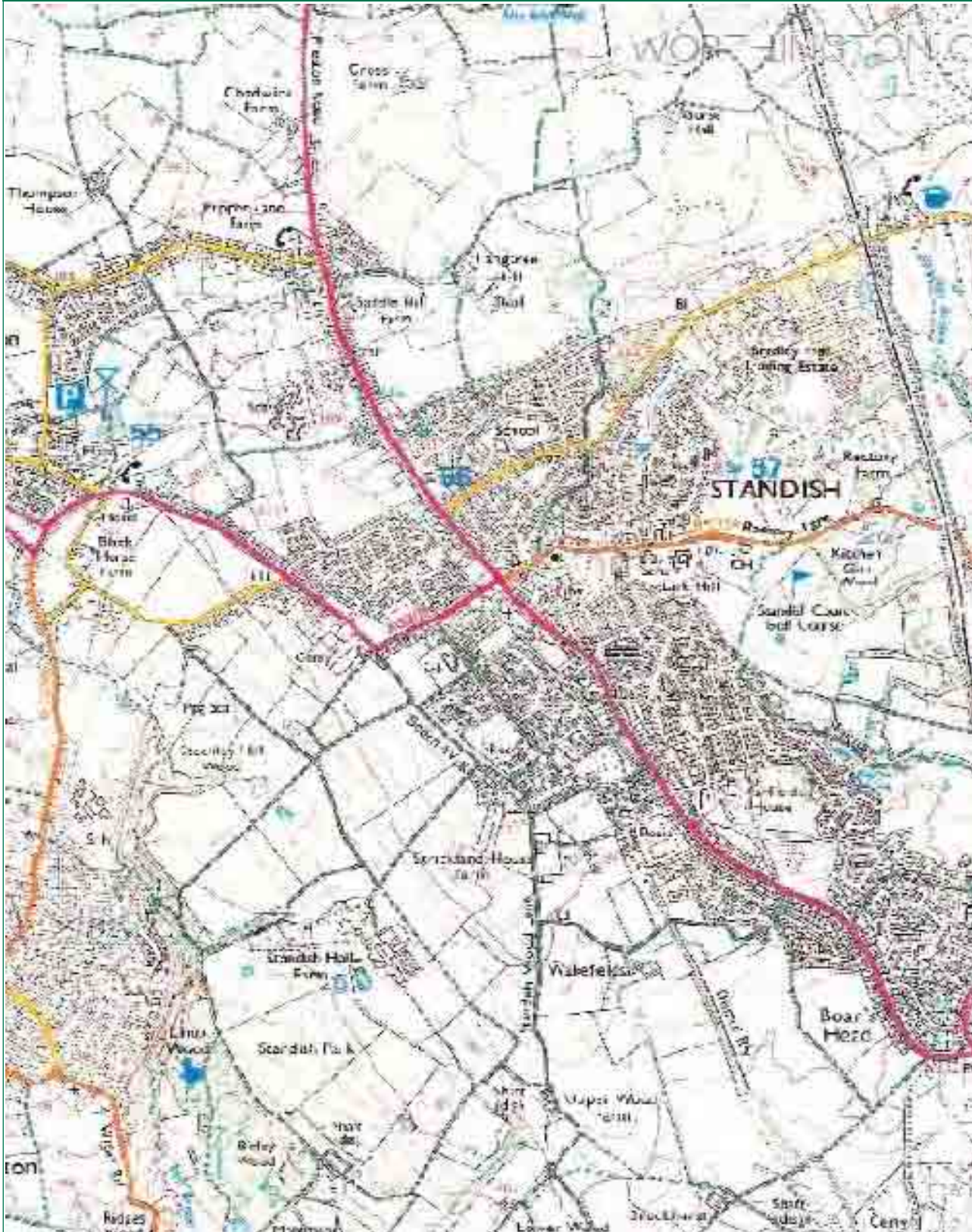
An outline of the geology and drainage of the area is given in Appendix 3.

Although prominently sited, the Church does not occupy the highest point in the village. At a point on School Lane 240m west of the cross roads, 115m AOD is reached. It is possible that the slightly lower position of the Church and village was chosen to afford some protection from the westerly winds on the ridge. The continuation of School Lane along the ridge was named Windy Harbour Lane on the 1845 OS. (It is now Almond Brook Road). The potentially exposed location is demonstrated by the Church spire being blown down in a severe storm in 1822.

The aerial photo (**Plan 3A** on the next page) clearly reveals that Standish is surrounded by open countryside to the west, north and east.

Plan 3 Landscape Setting

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



Plan 3A

Aerial photograph showing Standish in its Landscape Setting





2.3 Form and Character of the Settlement

Modern Standish exhibits characteristics of village, town and suburb. Historian JJ Bagley offered this overview of the character of Standish in his 1972 history of Lancashire:

“Standish....is no more than three miles north of Wigan. The two places are joined together by an unbroken sequence of pleasant suburban houses, particularly attractive in April and May when gardens are bright with flowering trees and spring flowers. But Standish is not a suburb of Wigan. It is an independent township with a life and history of its own. Until late in the 19th Century, its Church was the centre of a Parish, 8 miles by 6 (with an acreage of 9,432 according to Baines) and Standish was the natural market for the southern half of Leyland Hundred. In the small square by the Church, the stocks, medieval cross and old well are preserved to point out that despite its involvement in textiles and coal mining and however it may look to the motorist hurrying through, Standish is not a child of the industrial revolution”

Lancashire JJ Bagley, Batsford 1972.

Most local histories and commentaries describe Standish as a village; some refer to it as a ‘former colliery village’. (e.g. N.Webb, ‘Standish 800 Years of History’, Wigan Heritage Service 1993). Until 1974, Standish was an Urban District of Lancashire County but its origins as an

ancient township can be traced to the early 13thC by the first documentary reference to its Parish Church. It was until the early 20thC, the estate village associated with the Standish family of nearby Standish Hall.

Standish village retained a very compact urban form until the early 20thC but the old village has since become engulfed by suburban housing development.

Standish has developed in a roughly linear pattern along the axis of the Preston-Wigan Road. The southernmost extremity of Standish at Boars Head (taken from the ancient inn of that name), where the direct road to Chorley branches off, is linked to Wigan’s northern suburb of Thornhill by a neck of about 0.5 km of ribbon development. Residential and related development has expanded in depth on both sides of the A49.

Excluding outliers and ribbon development, the main built form of the village today extends some 3km along its north- south axis and some 1.5 km east -west at its widest.

The ribbon development of the inter war years regrettably just prevents Standish from being a truly freestanding settlement, but the tantalising glimpses of countryside that can be obtained from the A49 west of Boar’s Head and to the east towards the Douglas valley through gaps between houses, indicate a transition from Wigan’s suburbs to Standish. The feeling of separation is assisted by the west coast railway which is in a deep cutting, bridged at Boar’s Head.



2.4 Population and administration

In 1894 Standish had become an Urban District of Lancashire County, reflecting its evolution during the 19thC from an estate village to a predominantly mining and industrial settlement. In 1974 Standish was absorbed into the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan.

Before ward boundary changes in 2004, the bulk of the settlement was located within Aspull Standish Ward, with its north-western outliers being located within Langtree ward. Since 2004, the settlement has been located within Standish with Langtree ward of Wigan Borough Council. Its area is similar in extent to that of the old township except that it does not now include land east of the London-Glasgow railway line. The enlarged village is the principal settlement within the ward. The resident population of the new ward in 2001 (estimated to accord with the new boundaries) was 12,045 (about 4% of Wigan Borough's 301,417) and the total number of dwellings was 4,918.

A major residential redevelopment of the former Worthington Bleach Works, Worthington Park, 1.6 km east of the centre of Standish (in progress 2006), will contribute a further 190 units, comprising houses and apartments.

The estimated number of dwellings within the conservation area is 101, split equally between small terraced houses and apartments in Well Court and Bramley Court with the exception of a pair of

inter-war villas on Rectory Lane. The average household size for the ward is 2.5 persons but only 22% of the ward dwelling total comprises terraced houses or types of dwelling other than family houses. It therefore seems reasonable that dwelling occupancy in the conservation area would be well below the ward average. Assuming an occupancy rate of 2 persons per dwelling, the resident population would be at most about 200 persons.

Standish is a partner in the Standish, Aspull, Shevington, Township Forum. The forums are a mechanism for affording residents, businesses and community groups a means of becoming involved in local issues.

Topographical factors together with Standish's history as an independent local authority until relatively recently, reinforce the notion that Standish is not just a suburban annex of Wigan but a settlement in its own right.



2.5 Form and layout of the conservation area.

The configuration of the old village is more or less triangular with Church Street and High Street forming the two long sides, Market Street the base. The cross roads occupy its north west angle, the Parish Church its north- east angle, 160m east of the cross roads. A smaller triangle is formed by Market Street, Preston Road and Pole Street which joins Preston Road 50m north of the cross roads. Market Place opens off southwards from Market Street. Church Street and Cross Street converge onto Market Place respectively from the south and south west. Cross Street links High Street, 90m south of the cross roads. Church Street converges with High Street at an acute angled junction 350m south of the cross roads. The middle part of Church Street is however excluded from the conservation area. Rectory Lane, a continuation of Market Street, curves around the north side of the Church and cemetery.

The centre of Standish is designated as a Town Centre in Wigan's Unitary Development Plan but the conservation area includes residential, social, leisure and cultural uses. There are two Churches, a library, police station, clinic, Parish hall together with four public houses and two social clubs. It is estimated that there are some 158 buildings i.e. separate properties identifiable on the OS and about 247 address points. The difference is explained by the inclusion of multi-occupied premises. These include the modern Well Court and Bramley Court apartment

blocks which provide about 50 units. (The Conservation Area Boundary cuts through Bramley Court as it reflected earlier site boundaries).

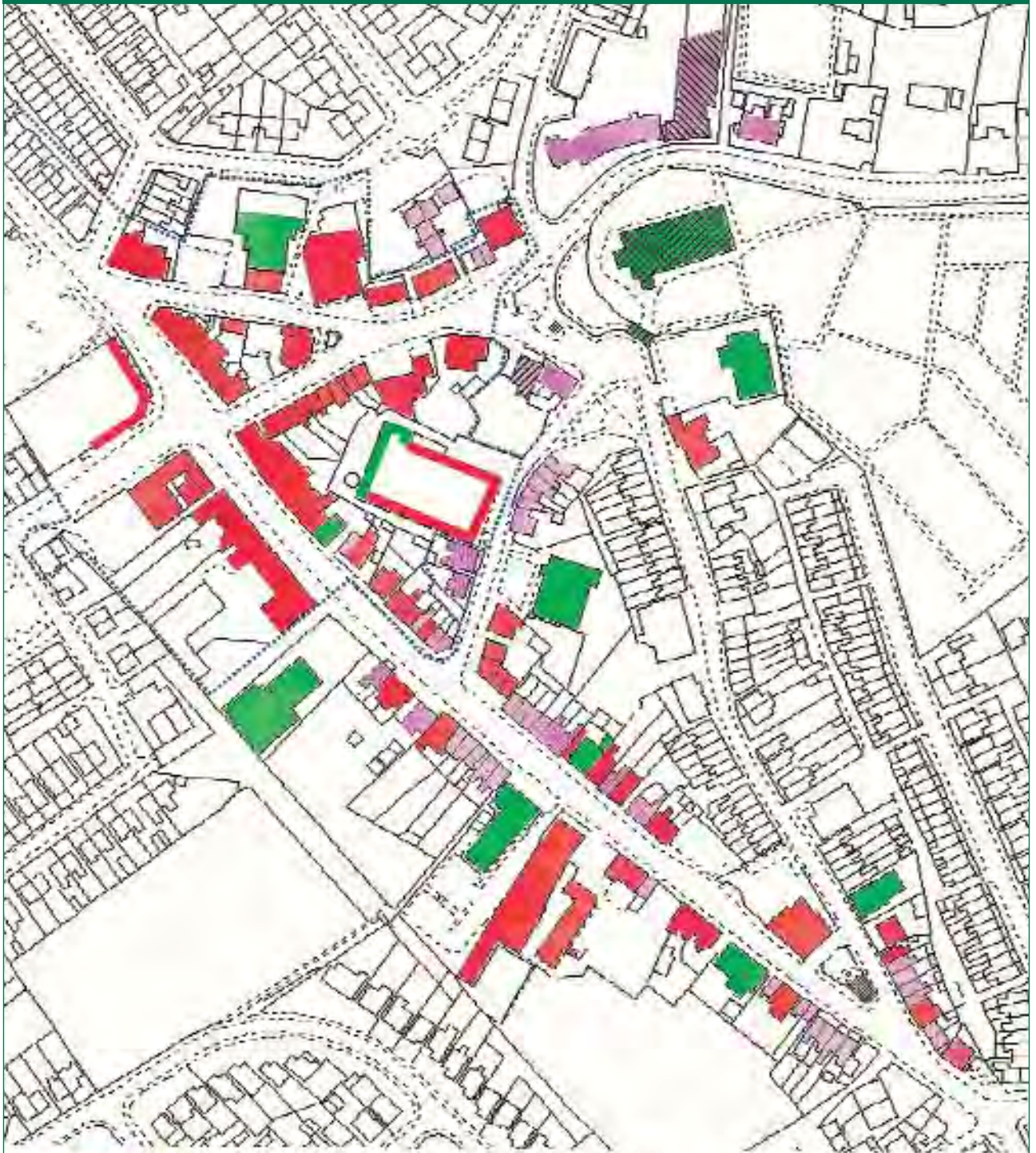
The Standish Business Centre located on Cross Street provides 23 lettable units; Environment House on Cross Street provides 5 units. A number of other premises are multi-occupied for example flats over shops.

Plan 4 shows the principal land uses within the conservation area and the extent of the town centre as defined in the UDP.

The old village centre - and thus the conservation area - remains geographically more or less central to the modern settlement, a factor which has undoubtedly helped to sustain its role as the main service centre for the district.

Plan 4 Land Use

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



Commercial



Social/Cultural



Residential



Listed Building



Town Centre Boundary





THREE

Summary of the Special Qualities of Standish Conservation Area

This summary precedes the review of the historic development of the conservation area and the appraisal of its character and appearance which are set out respectively in sections 4 and 5.

Standish conservation area consists of two broadly distinctive parts:

-  The area of the original designation centred upon the Parish Church and ancient market place
-  The extension area centred upon High Street.

The special qualities of Standish Conservation Area can be summarised in the following terms:

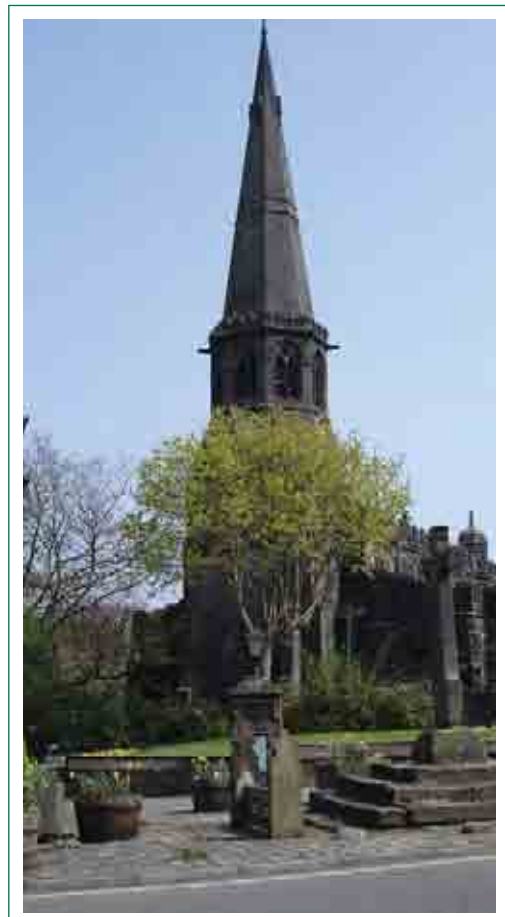
3.1 The area of the 1976 designation based upon Market Place.

This area comprises the pre -19thC village centre focussed upon the Parish Church of St.Wilfrid and the adjacent ancient market place. St.Wilfrid's served an extensive Lancashire parish of ten townships and in pre-reformation times was the manorial Church for the nearby Standish Hall, the village being part of the manorial estate.

The village is located on a hilltop site and developed around the angled intersection

of ancient north-south and east-west routes. The layout of the historic village can be traced on plans to at least the mid 18thC, though its origins are much earlier. The old north-south route through Standish is a road of regional importance and is believed to follow closely the alignment of a Roman road. St.Wilfrid's Church is first mentioned in a document of 1205. Rebuilt in the 16th C in the perpendicular style, St.Wilfrid's is one of Lancashire's finest parish Churches and is Grade I Listed.

The market, which was never granted charters, has long gone but the former market place contains a number of relics of its historical role, notably the ancient cross, stocks and village well and a former 17thC inn which survives in residential use (no.39, Market Place).





St. Wilfrid's Parish Church steeple is a local landmark which dominates the village core, whilst its extensive graveyard contains numerous mature trees which form a wooded background to the old village centre. The Church is complemented by the Grade II listed Memorial Gate, 1927 by Austin and Paley.

The development pattern is characterised by the sweeping curves linking two back to back splayed junctions which form an organic street layout which is effectively enclosed by the frontage buildings on the north and south west sides and by the Church on the north east side. The frontage buildings are for the most part of 19thC origin with some modern infilling. Market Street, Pole Street, Church Street, and Cross Street converge upon Market Place and are visually strongly related to it. The curvilinear layout reveals unfolding views with progression through the area.



Market Place, converging onto Market Street

The unusual angular road alignments with almost back to back splayed junctions and the related built form give this part of the conservation area a distinctive physical character.

Market Street and Rectory Lane are busy roads but Market Place Church Street and Cross Street are less heavily trafficked.

The special qualities of this part of the conservation area therefore derive from a combination of unusual physical layout in the form of the junctions and the relationship of buildings to the spaces thus formed, especially the Church and its wooded graveyard, and the area's associations with the pre-industrial era of Standish village.

3.2 The area of the 1988 extension based upon High Street.

This area is different in character from the original designation in that its physical layout is that of major highway. High Street almost certainly originates from the formation of the Wigan-Preston Turnpike road c. 1727. Turnpike roads were an early form of toll road controlled by gates or bars, the tolls being used to pay for the upkeep of the road. Turnpike Trusts were set up by private Acts of Parliament to construct and manage the roads. Turnpike roads were often built on entirely new alignments. The road through



Standish, the present A49, was one of the first turnpikes in Lancashire, a measure of the route's strategic importance to north-south communications.

The turnpike alignment formed a cross-roads with the east-west route, about 100m west of Market Place. The cross roads is offset so that frontages project into the line of sight particularly when viewed from Preston Road, School Lane and Market Street. The cross-roads is now the commercial focus of the village.



High Street is a wide, subtly curving carriageway fronted mainly by terraced houses of two storeys many of which have been adapted for business uses. The frontage properties date mainly from early to late 19th C.

The special character of High Street is derived from a combination of residential and commercial uses, in buildings of modest scale, sited on or close to the highway. The frontages are almost wholly built up providing a well defined linear space permitting long vistas. A number of gaps and alleys provide glimpses into back-land. Two groups of terraced cottages

are of particular interest, nos 37-47 which are stone built and of early 19th C period; nos. 24-34 are brick of mid late 19th C and feature decorative round arched doorways. This part of the conservation area contains a number of buildings of individual character such as the Police Station, Globe Inn, Wellington Place, the Methodist Church, no 52-54 High Street and nos. 18-20 Pole Street. These add variety and interest.



The conservation area extension is legibly defined by the projecting frontage of Pole Street to the north and by the Queen Victoria Jubilee Gardens located at the fork of High Street and Church Street at the southern approach to the village centre.



3.3 The conservation area as a whole

The centre of Standish today is a bustling local centre with a variety of retail and service businesses. Converted terraced dwellings have provided accommodation attractive to independent businesses which contribute to the vitality and diversity of the village centre in contrast with larger town centres which tend to be dominated by multiple stores. The buildings within the conservation area are for the most part of the Victorian era but despite some modern infilling, the pre-industrial era street pattern remains intact. Generally the stone cottages represent the early-mid 19thC stage of development.

Throughout the conservation area, the built form is unpretentious in style and domestic in scale. Ornamentation is sparse in contrast with the more flamboyant styles found for example in Wigan town centre. Materials include brick and stone but some buildings have been rendered or overpainted. Roofs are mainly slate except where replaced by modern materials. A pleasing feature is the consistency of pitches, typically of 26-30 degrees. Round arches to doors and passages are a distinctive local feature.

The High Street /Preston Road part of the conservation area representing the later designation is of different

character from the Market place area in that it consists of an almost straight highway with parallel frontages.

The two parts of the conservation area however represent stages in the evolution of the village centre from

its original focus around the Parish Church and Market Place to the area around the cross roads. The two areas are thus



complementary in historic interest and character.

The built form within the conservation area and its enveloping suburbs, generally restricts views outwards to the countryside but from School Lane there is a fine view of the Church against the background of Winter Hill on the Pennine escarpment. Westwards on School Lane St.Marie's R.C. Church, outside the conservation area, can be seen against a wooded background.





Plan 5 shows the basic development pattern of the conservation area. It is notable that the more recent buildings often occupy much larger footprints than those of earlier date. Significant trees, individually or in groups and green spaces are also indicated. (Reference to section 5.4).

Plan 6 shows elements of the street scene which contribute to or detract from the special qualities of the area, as described in the character assessment, sections 5,6,7.

Plan 7 illustrates an assessment of the quality of frontages from a conservation perspective. The majority of frontages are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. Of those commercial properties considered neutral or negative, a change of shopfront or fascia might represent a significant improvement. Dwellings which have been substantially 'modernised' resulting in the loss of original window proportions or architectural detail would be considered of negative conservation value.

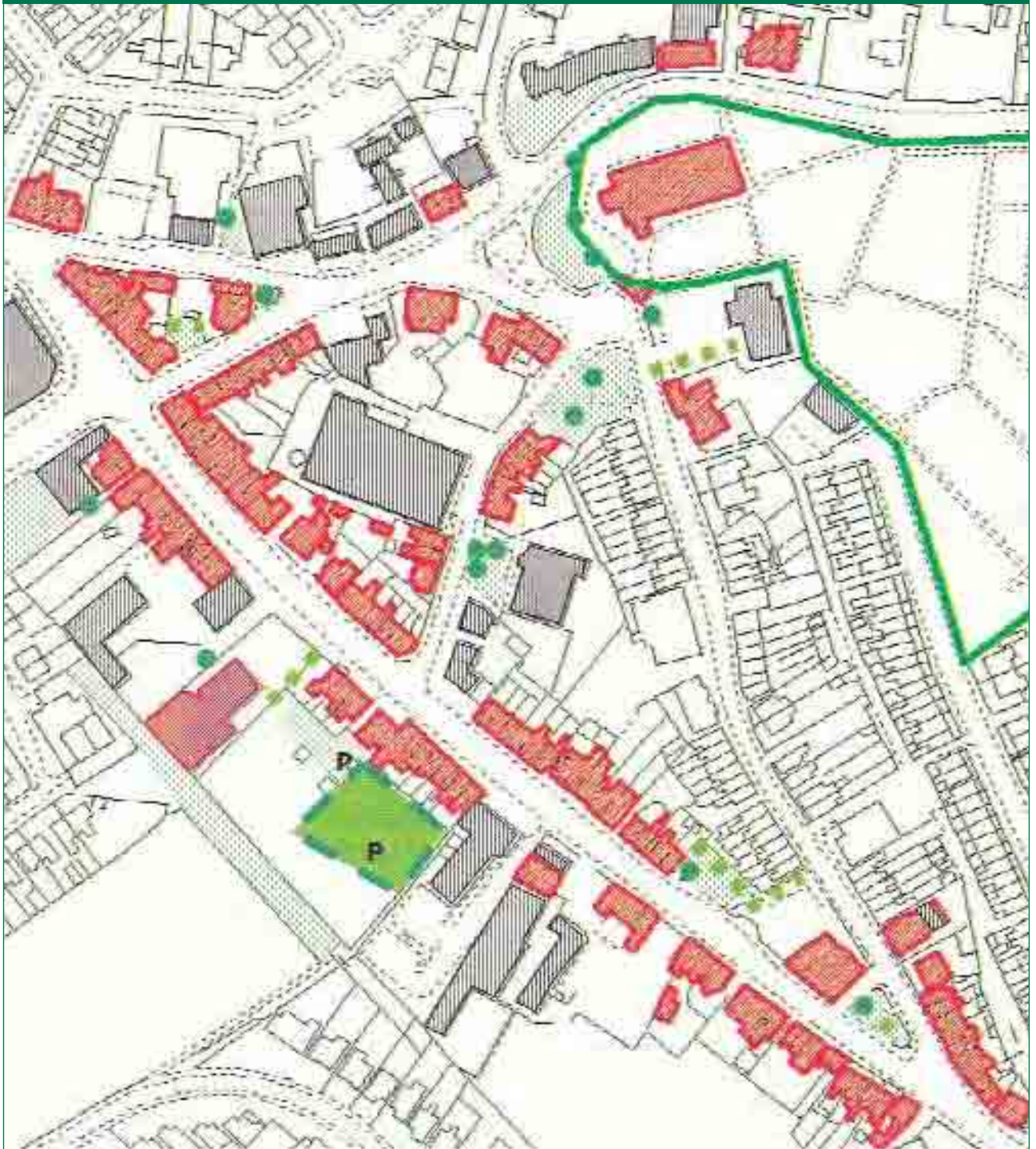
The character area appraisal, section 5, sets out a more detailed description and analysis of the buildings and the street scene within Standish Conservation Area.

3.4 Heritage Audit

Reference has been made to the Grade I Listed parish Church, (Wigan's only Grade I Listed building) and to the Memorial Gate, cross and stocks which are Grade II Listed. The cross is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Other List entries all Grade II, are the Jubilee Drinking fountain; no. 39 Market Place, south side, (former Eagle and Child Inn); St. Wilfrid's Church club, (former school), now private housing, Rectory Lane. A list of the various Heritage items is set out in Appendix 4.

Plan 5 Standish Conservation Area Pattern of Building Development

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



Modern Development:
Generally post World War II



Historic Development: Mainly
19th century and earlier



Cemetery - Mature woodland



Overgrown Garden Area



Amenity Landscape Area



Private Space



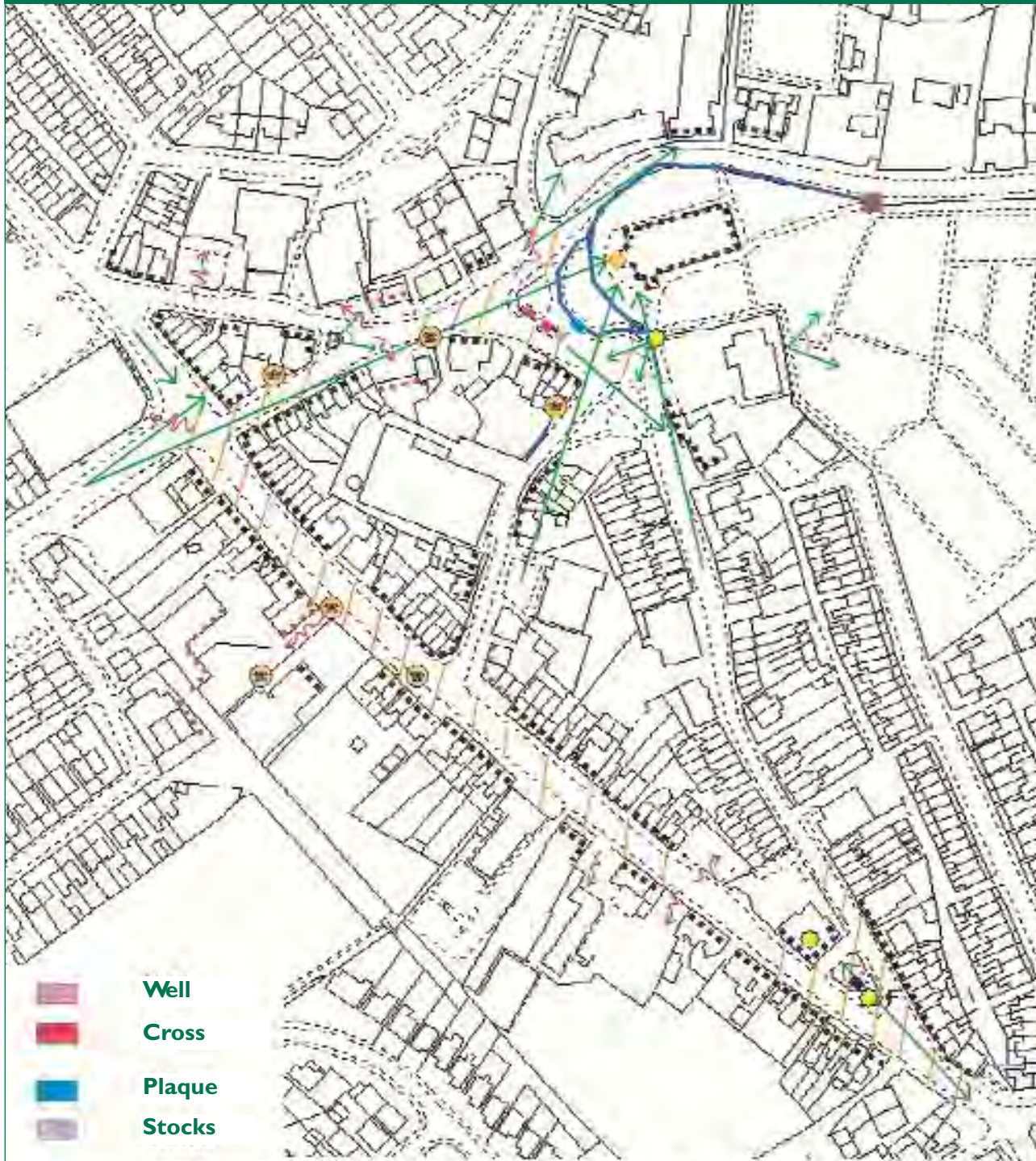
Important Public Realm Trees



Important Public Realm Hedges and Shrubbery

Plan 6 Standish Conservation Area Townscape Analysis

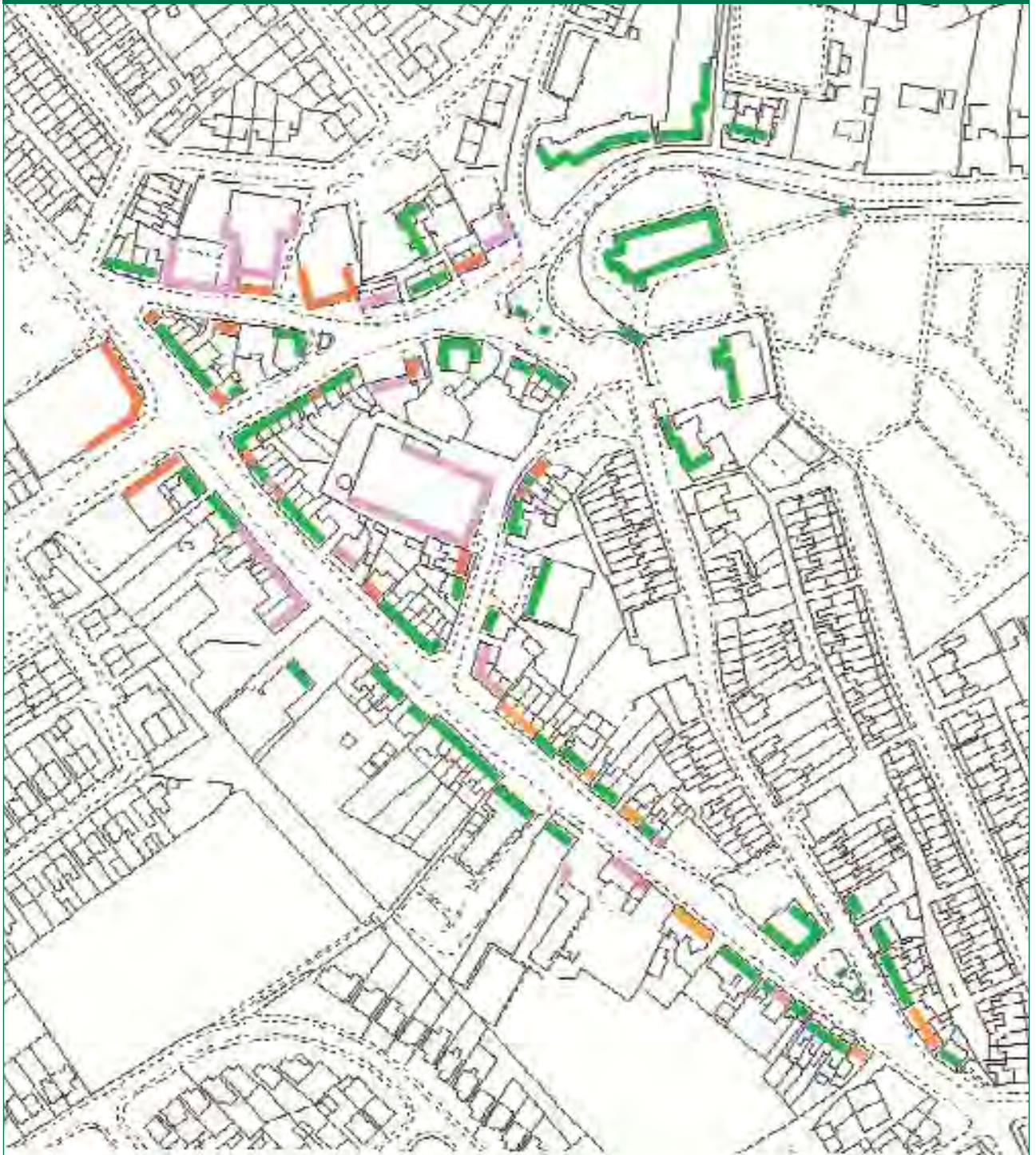
Based on the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Wigan MBC Local Authority Licence number: 100019578. 2006



- | | | | |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Well | | |
| | Cross | | |
| | Plaque | | |
| | Stocks | | |
| | Historic frontage/Building Line | | War memorial |
| | Landmark - Local | | Queen Victoria Fountain |
| | Important walls and boundaries | | Vistas |
| | Loss of enclosure/Space Leak | | Land mark Strategic |
| | Intrusive Feature/Frontage | | Views towards key features |
| | Good spatial enclosure | | Telephone poles |
| | Lychgate | | |

Plan 7 Assessment of Frontage Quality

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



Neutral



Negative



Positive



FOUR

Historical Background

4.1 Local Histories

The history of the Standish area has been well researched and documented by a number of scholars. Foremost amongst these is the meticulous, though rather academic history published in 1927 by Thomas Porteus, Vicar of Coppull. A copy is held by the Wigan Heritage Service at their Wigan History Shop. Later authors have drawn to some degree upon this work.

Other useful sources are "Standish 800 years of history", a booklet by Nicholas Webb, an archivist to Wigan Heritage Service published in 1993, in commemoration of a 1990 WHS exhibition "Standish As It Was". Copies of this booklet which contains a useful bibliography, could still be obtained from Wigan History Shop in Feb 2006.

'About Standish' by MD Smith, Wyre Publishing, 2003, is a comprehensive, illustrated local history, especially of interest for its description and illustrations of the Church and its memorials and its focus on local residents and institutions.

This appraisal is primarily concerned with the present reality of the conservation area and thus it is not its purpose to reiterate detailed historical accounts. Some reference to the area's local history is however necessary to understand the influences that have shaped the conservation area's physical development.

This section therefore offers an historical overview of the development of the village and focuses upon the evolution of the built form and street plan of the conservation area itself, drawing from various published sources including Ordnance Survey Maps.

Further historical references are given in Appendix 5

4.2 Origin and development of the Settlement.

Standish probably owes its origins and development to its location astride the route of one of Lancashire's strategic communications routes from Roman times until the modern era. The existence of a well may have been an influential factor in the establishment of a settlement on this hilltop site.

Historians and archaeologists have traced the Roman road northwards from Wigan via Bridgeman Terrace and then running west of the main railway where excavations in 1988/89 at Brimelow Farm south of Standish, revealed sections of typical Roman carriageway aligned in the direction of Standish. At Thornhill, near Boar's Head, a hoard of Roman coins was found in 1926. In 1700 a ploughman working in or near Standish unearthed a copper vessel containing 200 silver denarii dating from 90 AD to 240 AD along with two gold rings but the whereabouts of these finds are unknown.

Margary* believed the route merged with the modern road into Standish then ran between Church Street and Heaton Street towards the Parish Church. North of



Standish, he considered the course of the road to be well represented by an alignment of lanes, footpaths and hedgerows leading to Coppull. This alignment pointed very slightly to the east of the Parish Church which was “a fairly conspicuous landmark on this hill site.”

***Margary I. D. 'Roman Roads in Britain' 1957.**

It seems likely that Church Street was the original main route through the village, which would place the Church and market at its centre. This is suggested by local historian G. Crumpton in 'Standish and Its People', Standish Community Forum, 2000. This route would have been closer to the alignment of the Roman Road.

According to local historian Jane Fairhurst,* The Church was also positioned on an east - west highway known as the 'Hut Lone' or Out Lane. Opposite the Church was an inn, the Eagle and Child, said to have held a licence from at least 1703. On the sheltered south west side of the Church an agricultural market became established.

As the Church served an extensive Parish of ten townships, people from outlying hamlets would have to come to Standish for worship, baptisms, marriages and of course to bury their dead.

Jane Fairhurst considered that the arrangement of Church, market and inn represented a typical medieval pattern whereby man's needs, spiritual and temporal, could be catered for. She expresses her admiration for the eye for the landscape and topography shown by

our forefathers before the era of modern town planning!

***Standish Parish Church, Jane Fairhurst; Standish Local History Group 1972.**

Archaeological investigations of land at Rectory Lane in 2000 revealed evidence for settlement of the area in medieval times. (ref. Appendix 4).

The Church not only dominated the village physically but also a major landowner. The Glebe lands held by the Rector extended eastwards from the Church. Traces of a glebe boundary ditch were revealed during the 2000 investigations at Rectory Lane. Modern road names reflect the former ownership eg St. Wilfrid's Road, Churchlands Lane.

Porteus refers to a 14th C deed quoting a highway in Coppull leading to the Church and market. As Coppull was in Standish Parish this could be a reference to Standish Church and Market. As noted by Porteus, the market was never granted a charter. Perhaps this was because it was too close to Wigan which had held market Charters from 13th C. and who's burgesses could be expected to guard jealously their Market charter privileges. Another factor may have been the village's association with the Standish family whose fortunes reflected the religious turbulence of the post -medieval era. Standish was essentially an estate village. Porteus records numerous references to properties held on lease from the manorial estate.



4.3 Standish in the 18th and 19th Centuries

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



Extract from the 1763 estate map

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

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

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

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

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



Standish –a colliery village

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

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

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

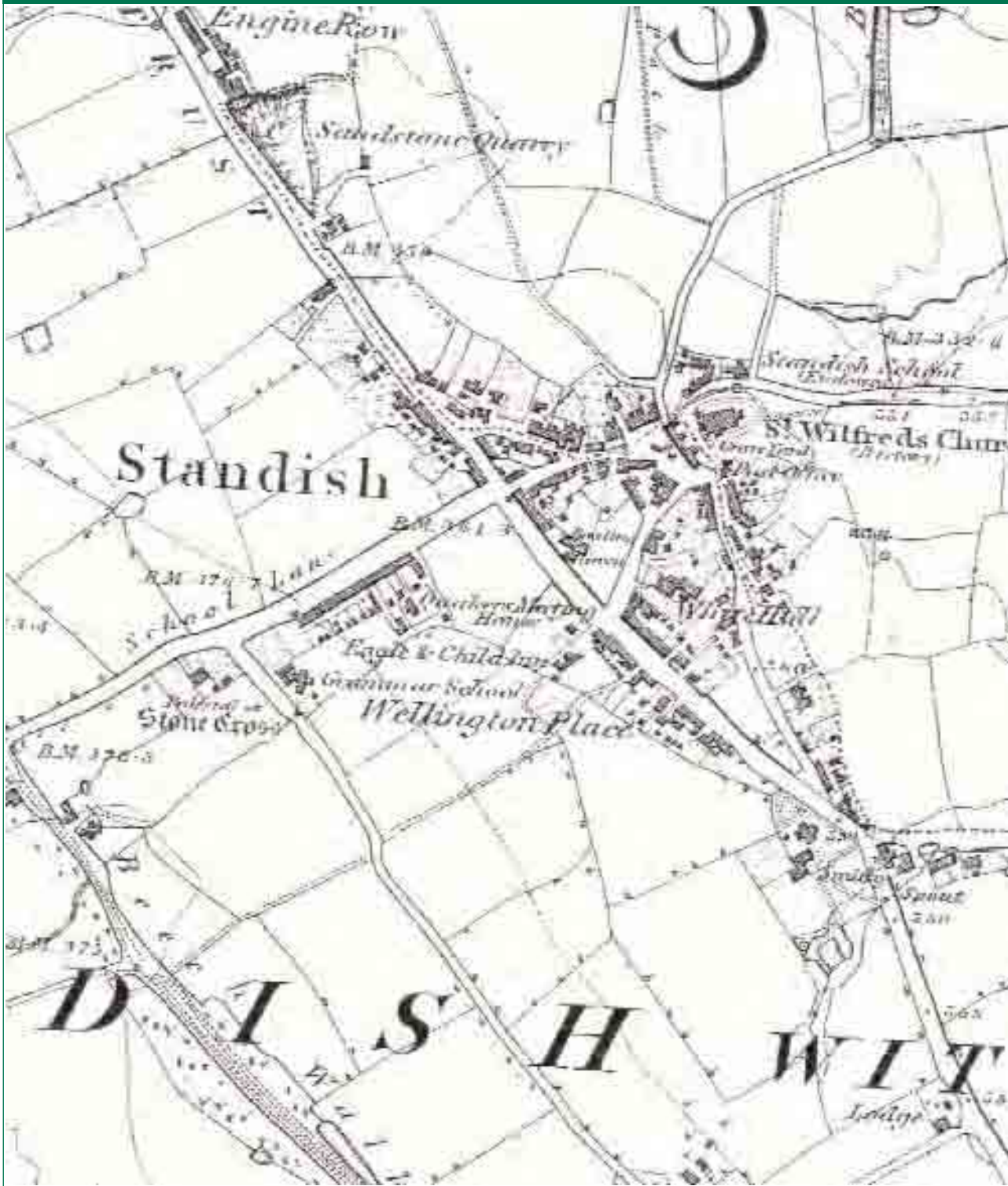
* Quoted in Standish Eighty Years of Change ,S.Aspinall 1981.

1845 OS (Plan 8)

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

Plan 8 Extract of 1845 Ordnance Survey

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





1892 OS (Plan 9)

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

4.4 20th Century developments

1909 OS (Plan 10)

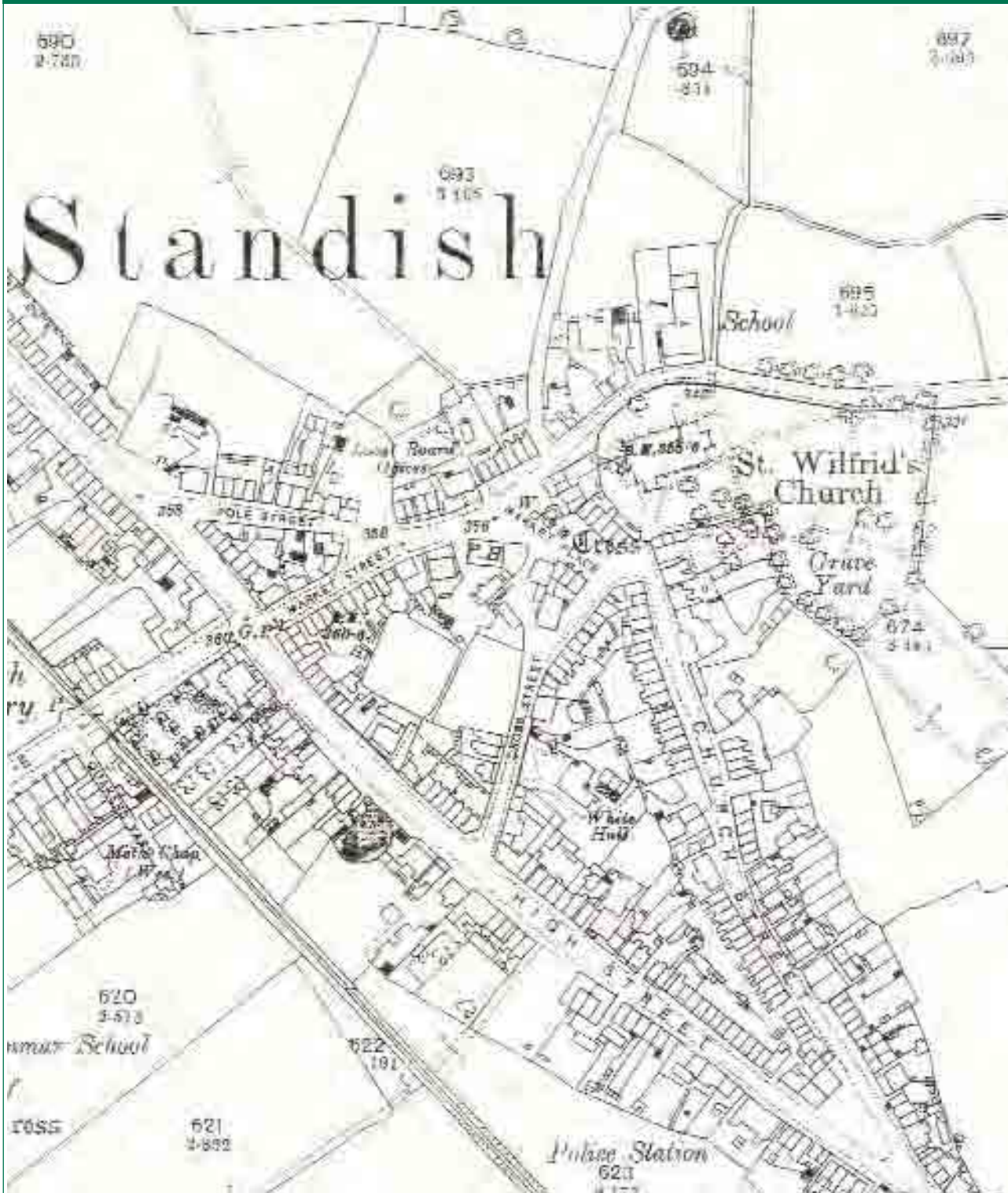
By the next edition OS revised 1908, the pattern of development within the core streets is little changed but new streets of terraced housing appear in the form of Heaton Street to the east of Church Street and Collingwood Street, north of Pole Street. A row of terraces is also shown on the north side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

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

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

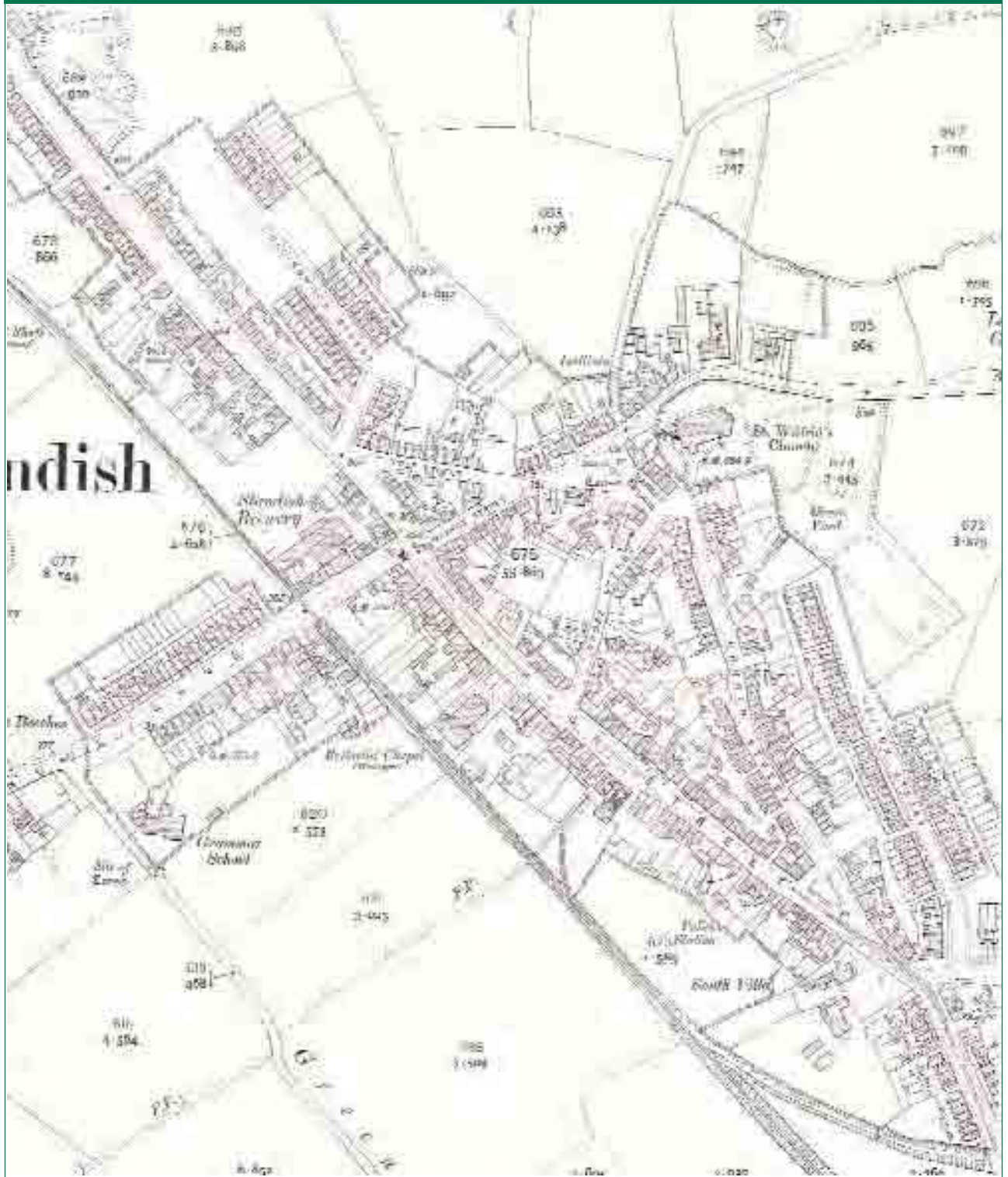
Plan 9 Extract of 1892 Ordnance Survey

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



Plan 10 Extract of 1909 Ordnance Survey

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





The 1938 map (Plan 11)

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

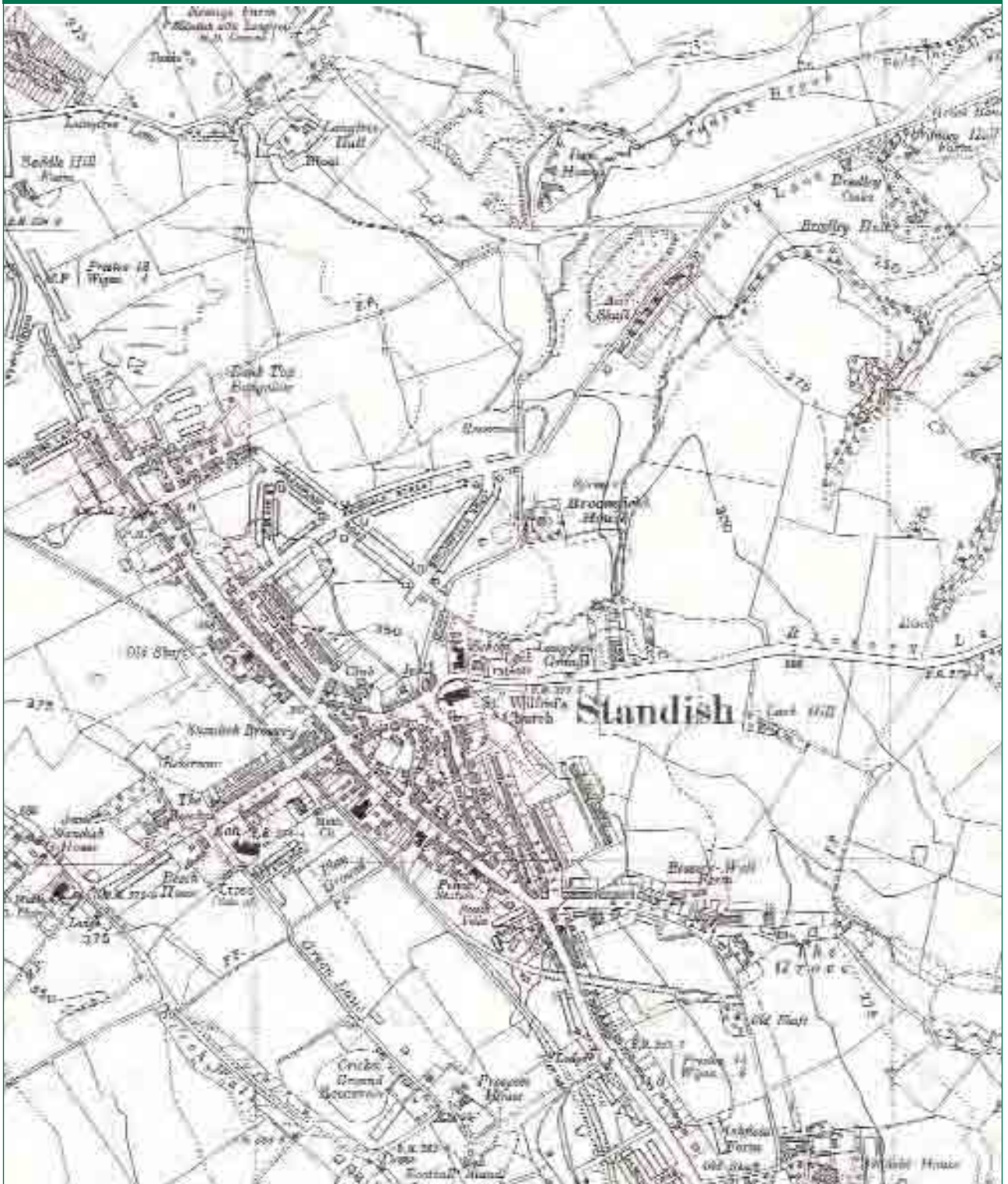
The 1965 OS (Plan 12)

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

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

Plan II Extract of 1938 Ordnance Survey

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



Plan 12 Extract of 1965 Ordnance Survey

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





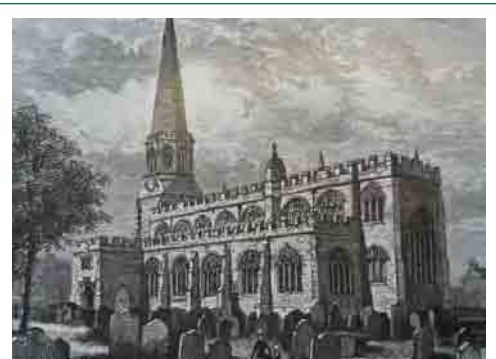
4.5 Summary of historical development

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

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

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

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



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



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



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

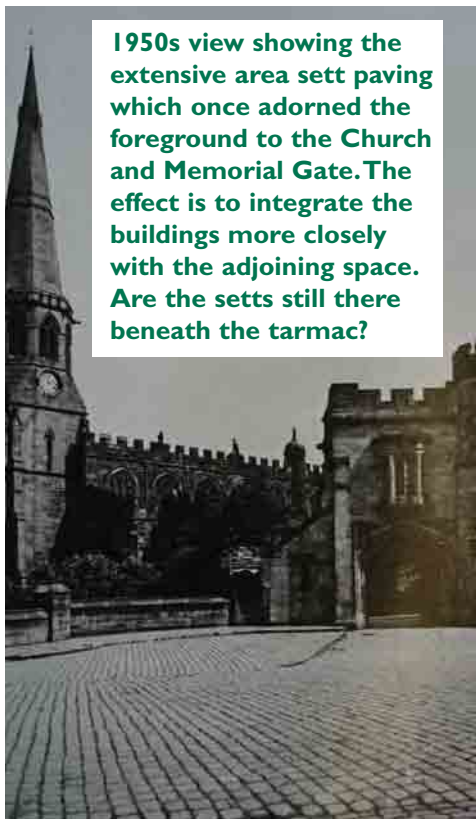
Cottages of similar form are shown in an 18thC painting of the Church reproduced in ‘Images of England, Standish and Shevington, N.Webb, 1999. They were certainly of late 18th or early 19th century style and probably incorporated weaving rooms. Had they survived into the modern era it is arguable that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



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



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



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



FOUR

Character Area Analysis

English Heritage suggest that the analysis of the character and appearance of some larger conservation areas can be facilitated by subdividing such areas into zones of similar or distinctive character for example reflecting differences in the style of buildings or in their spatial arrangement. Subdivisions will involve a degree of subjectivity and the ultimate purpose of the appraisal will be to evaluate the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole.

As noted in the 'summary of character,' Standish Conservation area lends itself to this form of analysis because it falls naturally into two distinctive sub- areas representing the original conservation area centred upon the Parish Church and the later extension focussed upon High Street. These areas demonstrate differences in form and layout and represent distinctive stages in the physical development of the historic village. This analysis therefore adopts the two character area approach but the appraisal will consider the relationship of the parts to the whole.

No appraisal can be fully comprehensive in detail. In the interests of succinctness, the appraisal must focus upon the most important factors which contribute to the area's special character and those which potentially detract from it. Local people may wish to draw attention to aspects not mentioned in this report.

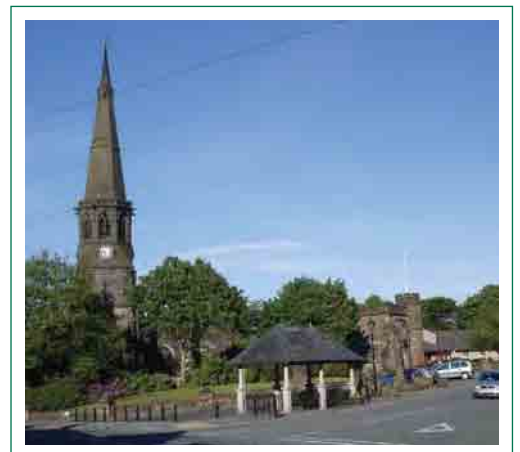
Character area 1 comprises the historic core of the village and includes the Parish Church and graveyard, Market Place, parts of Market Street, Pole Street, Cross Street and Rectory Lane.

Character Area 2 includes High Street, residual parts of Market Street, Pole Street and Cross Street and part of Church Street. The divisions of Market Street, Cross Street and Pole Street reflect the stronger visual connections with each sub area but inevitably such divisions are blurred rather than sharp and of course shift with movement through the areas.

For the purposes of this analysis, the character areas coincide with the initial and later designations as shown on Plan 1.

5.1 Character Area 1 Appraisal

The ancient village centre takes the form of a 'scissors' cross roads where the Market Street -Rectory Lane route is intersected at an oblique angle by Pole Street- Church Street. Market Place is in effect a widened area of highway within which are located the ancient cross, the village stocks and well enclosure.





The space is contained by built frontages on its northern and south western sides and by the Church on its eastern side. Once the heart of the village, Market Place is now a relatively quiet backwater but carries traffic south to High Street via Church Street because of the left turn prohibition from Market Street to High Street.



This building is clearly out of keeping with the scale and character of the village centre, its three storey height-emphasised by the adjacent single storey shop.



Market Place North Side

Visually, Market Place is enclosed on its northern edge by a row of buildings fronting onto Market Street. Except for the pair of heavily altered cottages, the frontage is modern. The flat roofed bank adds nothing of conservation value, but Chadwick House 1994, successfully blends with the unpretentious style and domestic scale of the village centre. (Below).



The organic layout of the intersection of the two ancient routes results in an informal arrangement of buildings in contrast to the more or less parallel frontages of High Street.

Adjoining Chadwick House to the west is a modern 3 storey block of shops consisting of glazing and cladding panels between brick party walls. Large Perspex fascias adorn the shopfronts.

It is a design which would not be acceptable in conservation terms today.

Chadwick House, nos. 16-18, dating from 1994, clearly represents a more sympathetic approach to design within the conservation area in regard to proportions, materials and shop fronts. The Village Lighting fascia (no.18), as at May 2006, is one of the better ones in the village.



Market Place East Side

St. Wilfrid's Parish Church

Denoting the heart of the ancient village, the west front of St. Wilfrid's Parish Church is within 30 m of Market Place, dominating the space whilst its octagonal tower and spire provides a landmark for an extensive area. The generous size of the Church reflects its role in catering for its very extensive ancient Parish consisting of ten townships.

The history of the Church and descriptions of its interior and memorials have been well documented. An illustrated account is provided in 'About Standish' by M.D.Smith.



The architectural and historic importance of St. Wilfrid's is recognised in its Grade I Listing.

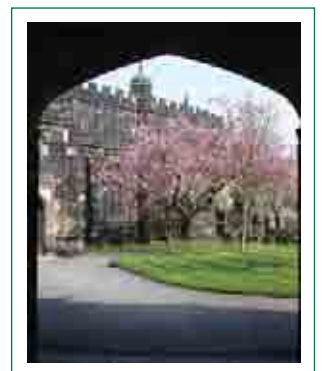
The Victoria County History of Lancashire described the Church as "built of local gritstone in even and regular courses, but at the eastern end of the north side and in some other parts there are fragments of yellow and red sandstone, probably remnants from the earlier building. The walls throughout have embattled parapets and the roofs which are of very flat pitch and therefore not seen are covered with lead."

"The nave and chancel are lofty with a continuous range of wide four light clearstorey windows with four centred heads", ... "All the tracery of the windows is modern, (from the renovations of the 1850s) of late Gothic character with apparently little attempt to carry out the original design. The jambs and pointed heads to the windows, however, are original."

Porteus considered the Church "remarkable for its height, spaciousness and beautiful proportions. The combination of late Gothic and Renaissance in the details is harmonious and the limited use of the latter style does not spoil the result. The Church has the quiet dignity and charm of a mediaeval building and is one of the most interesting parish churches in Lancashire."

A Church had existed on the site from at least 1205 when one Alexander de Standish was Rector. In 1544 the court of the Bishop of Chester made an order that the whole parish should assemble to decide on the repair and rebuilding of the old church as the King's Commissioners had found it to be in "grete ruyne and decay." Rebuilding did not however commence until 1582. Porteus considers the delays probably due to the political and religious unrest of the period but speculates that this may have been a second effort to secure the rebuilding.

The nave and chancel date from the reconstruction of 1582-4. Robert Charnock was in charge of the work,



Laurence Shipway the master mason. The rebuilding was funded by both bequests and the levying of a general rate on the parish yielding nearly £400 in 1582. The rebuilt nave was on the footprint of the medieval church but slightly wider. Some masonry belonging to the earlier building



is thought to have been retained or reused in the reconstruction. The original steeple thought to be of 14thC consisting of a tower surmounted by a spire was untouched in the 16thC rebuilding. The spire had been struck by lightning in 1814 and was finally blown down in a great storm in 1822. In 1867 it was dismantled and rebuilt to be more in proportion with the enlarged 16thC building.

Various other alterations have been made over the years, externally the most significant being the construction of a new east window in 1799 and the addition of a vestry extending the full width of the church in 1913, by Austin and Paley.

Pevsner considered St. Wilfrid's to be "the most important church of the Elizabethan age". He describes it as entirely perpendicular, except for the rather illiterate west steeple with its octagonal top stage, which dates from 1867.

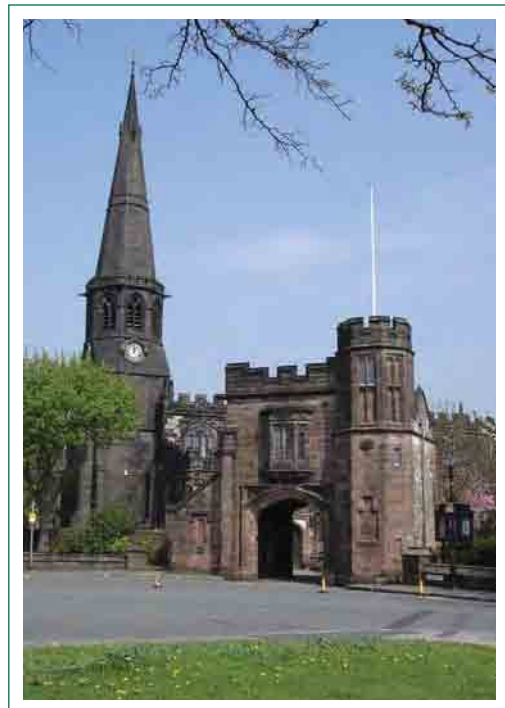
The stonework of the Church is now darkened but in places patches of the natural buff grey colour can be seen. The Church stands in a slightly elevated position within a walled graveyard which slopes away eastwards. The graveyard was extended in 1805 by grant of land by E.T. Standish and again in 1854 when the lych-gate to Rectory Lane was constructed.

It contains a number of monuments as well as a dense array of weathered headstones and numerous trees many of which are ancient gnarled specimens. Some gravestones date from the 17thC.



The churchyard offers a fine eastward prospect towards Winter Hill some 11km away.

The stone boundary wall of the churchyard sweeps around the west front of the Church becoming a retaining wall to Rectory Lane. The lych-gate leads to a network of paths within the extensive graveyard. The most heavily wooded part of the Churchyard is the older part closer to the Church itself.



Close to the south - west corner of the Church facing Market Place, stands the impressive Peace Memorial Gate, Listed



Grade II. Completed in 1926 to the design of Austin and Paley, the memorial was funded by public subscription to commemorate the 73 Standish men who fell in the First World War.

The names of those killed in WW II were added in 1948.

The Memorial is in the form of a Tudor style arched gateway in sandstone surmounted by an embattled upper section containing a canted oriel window. It is flanked to the right by an octagonal turret.

The archway contains a number of bronze plaques commemorating the names of men from various mines in and around Standish.



Inscription on the Gate.

The stone of the Gate is of a slightly redder variety than the Church masonry.

St. Wilfrid's Parish Hall abuts onto the south wall of the church yard. A modern building, mainly single storey but with projecting 2 storey gabled portion above a hipped roofed entrance lobby. The roof is grey slate. It is a neat and unobtrusive building clad in art stone, the colours of which blend well with the Memorial Gate and the Church. Regrettably, it is set behind a car park.



Beyond on Church Street is the Lychgate Tavern; 3x two storey bays, the northernmost, gabled parallel to the road, a lower central section containing the main entrance and the southernmost a gabled wing at right angles to the road, the central and southernmost parts angled slightly away from the road. The whole is rendered with some applied timbering. The building is shown on the 1892 OS as a single unit but not captioned as a PH. On the 1845 OS a post office is shown in this location. Originally it was the Glebe Inn, part of the large estate belonging to the Rectors. By 1950 it had become the Black Horse Hotel. The 'owl and rat' Standish symbol appears on its front wall.

The varied profile of the Lychgate Tavern and its unpretentious style and domestic scale, ensure that this



inn makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the



conservation area, its white painted elevations contrasting sharply with the sombre masonry of the Church.

1930, paid for by James Ainscough a local businessman, benefactor and antiquarian who was mayor of Wigan in 1922.

During WWII the well was identified as an emergency water supply but in 1943 its relatively new canopy was demolished by an American service vehicle! The well was subsequently sealed.

The present canopy structure dates from a 1998 reinstatement following archaeological excavation of the well. The reinstatement of the well canopy has been accompanied by an information plaque explaining the historic interest of the area.

The Cross, Stocks and Well.

Market Place, as noted, contains a group of items of historic interest, notably the Cross, stocks and well.

The cross base and steps are thought to be medieval, the cross probably 18thC. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The cross and stocks are also listed Gd II.

The old stocks, having been at some time discarded were found in a field and were installed c.1900 within the well enclosure.

The well was probably once a source of drinking water for the hilltop village, superseded by the arrival of piped water in 1892. In a photograph of the early 1900s the well is shown guarded by railings and lit by an ornate gas lamp column on a stone base. The well in latter years had become used for washing fish, a stone slab being provided for this purpose. A canopy was installed over the well in

In the background are the incongruous flat roofed bank and the rather more imaginative Bramley Court Apartments named after a long serving Rector of Standish Church.



Standing between the Church and Market Place was once a row of terraced houses, shops and warehouses known locally as 'Spite Row'. The name derived from a local belief that they had been erected c.1800 by Catholics to spoil the view of the Parish Church. Today, this is thought unlikely. 'Spite Row', had however long been considered an eyesore and when all the buildings became vacant in 1929,



Mr.J.M.Ainscough seized the opportunity to purchase them for demolition.

The design for the reinstatement of the site was evidently assisted by the office of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. A semi- circular landscaped area was formed extending from the west wall of the churchyard and bounded by a low sandstone wall with splayed coping and intermediate piers.



Former 'Eagle and Child' Inn in centre background

One of the boundary wall piers contains a carved inscription of the Standish UDC and 'owl and rat' cartouche of the Standish family with a plaque commemorating the benefactor.



The design also provided for the reinstatement of the stocks to their original position at the base of the cross. Their proximity to the old manor court to the rear of the Eagle and Child Inn must have been convenient for those dispensing punishments!

The grouping of the well, cross, stocks and Memorial Gate, the whole dominated by the Church, creates a unique sense of place, its historic artefacts perpetuating links with Standish's pre- industrial identity and its social history.



Market Place south- west side

The space is effectively enclosed on the south side by nos 39-45 Market Place. No.39 was once the 'Eagle and Child' Inn of 17th C origin. Grade II Listed, it is a low two storey building; plaster probably over stone; twin gabled dormers. The stone slab roof has been asphalted over. The gable windows are modern top-light types. The inn lost its licence in 1916 and was a butcher's shop before conversion to a dwelling. It once had its own fields behind, Cross Hey and Cross Hey Meadow on which visitors' horses were pastured.



Numbers 41,43,45, are two storey red/ brown brick terraced houses, tall in proportion with steps up to the front doors. 43,45 in English garden wall bond; 41 rebuilt in stretcher bond. Flat stone



sills and lintels and what appears to be a stone eaves gutter. All windows are replacements. They are of early 19thC appearance, probably those which appear on the 1845 OS.

Despite re-windowing this group of buildings retain their historic character and effectively enclose the south side of Market Place, providing part of the setting for the cross stocks and well.

The Black Bull public house to the west of no 39, is late 19thC, once one of local Almond's Brewery houses, two storeys, hipped roof yellow painted brick. Its central door has a circular arch with 3 brick reveals. All windows replaced, but in wood, those on ground floor widened.



sills and lintels, stained wood window frames and projecting gable window features. Regrettably, it is surrounded at the rear by car parking.

A lane leads northwards along the side of the TSB bank. Now called Smalley Street it leads into modern housing estates but it is an ancient lane shown on the 1845 OS becoming Bradley Lane, leading to Bradley Hall about 1.2km to the north east of the village.

Beyond Smalley Street is the modern housing development of Bramley Court occupies a frontage of over 40m to Rectory lane. It is a three storey apartment block curved in plan, reflecting the highway alignment. The frontage is clad in light grey art stone with slate roof. Its principal features of interest are the pointed arched gables containing groups of full height windows with mock balconies. Other windows are small, mullioned, with art stone lintels and sills.



Rectory Lane

Rectory Lane is the eastward continuation of Market Street, bounded on its southern side by the Churchyard.

Well Court at the rear of Chadwick House, is a compact modern group of two storey apartments arranged around a small garden court; rustic brick with art stone

Adjoining Bramley Court on the frontage of Rectory Lane is an older building now renovated as apartments. This was the former Sunday School, erected by voluntary subscription in 1829. It is Grade II Listed.



The forerunner of the Sunday School was a local educational institution of some social interest, the Mistress Smalley's School of Pious Learning and Useful Industry. This was founded in the late 18thC by the niece of a former Rector for the education of poor girls. The emphasis was on practical matters e.g. spinning and sewing. This institution was later merged in the Church of England Elementary School for Girls and Infants, the nucleus of which was the 1829 Sunday School Building. In later years the building was used as a Church youth club before conversion as part of the neighbouring apartment development.



The former school is two storey in typical local gritstone cleaned to a light grey/buff colour. The Gothic style window shape is echoed by the gables of the modern development.

Rearward extensions of the development are of similar style but faced mainly in brick.

Bramley Court makes a dramatic impact upon the exit and approach to the village on Rectory Lane. Overall the concept is successful in achieving a distinctive if idiosyncratic form of

development which responds to the scale, materials and detail of the older building. It is set within neatly landscaped grounds bounded by railings supported by art stone piers. It provides a robust if austere back-ground when viewed from within the graveyard.

A footpath leads northwards along the eastern flank of the former school, leading to modern housing estates to the north of the village centre. This path once linked into Bradley Lane and may well follow the course of the Roman Road described by Margary as aligned towards the east end of the Parish Church. The eastern extremity of the conservation area on the north side of Rectory lane is denoted by a pair of pleasant but unremarkable semi detached red brick villas c. 1900, set above the road in mature gardens.



Pole Street (within Character Area 1)



Pole Street is one of the village's ancient roads with development shown clustered around it on the 1846 OS. Pole Street however now offers little of conservation merit. Its northern frontage is occupied by a car park beyond which is a modern social club. A modern two story betting



shop is next and then the Co-operative store, a single storey building which incorporates the Post Office. This building is awkwardly aligned to the road. A wedge of left over land between the betting shop and the Co-op store contains a large tree and a footpath to a car park and the housing estates on the north side of the village centre.

The south side is a nondescript service frontage of yard walls and old coach houses, but trees in a small amenity area off Market Street soften the scene.



ground floor bay windows flank the entrance, modernised but with moulding detail which suggests they are of long-standing. Adjoining no 8, 8a, is a single storey lean- to which must be the narrowest shop in Britain, its shop front barely wider than its door!



The corner buildings effectively contain the space around the road junction and offer a varied interplay of roof profiles.



Market Street South Side



Market Street, between Preston Road and Market Place.

Frontage development on Market Street had been established by the mid 19thC. The north side is occupied by the return frontage of no 2 Preston Road and a small amenity space which includes several trees, the site of a demolished building. The corner building no 6,8, is angled so that its main elevation faces onto the V of the junction with Pole Street. It is shown as two buildings on the 1892 OS but now appears to be a single occupation.

It is two storey in Flemish bond brick with slate roof of shallow pitch. Two



The first building from the cross roads is the return frontage of the Royal Bank of Scotland. This is described in Character Area 2 Appraisal. Early 20thC photographs, corroborated by the 1892 OS show a row of 7 terraced cottages extending eastwards from the cross roads. Development in this area is shown on the 1845 OS which most



probably represents the buildings which remain today. The frontage is now almost wholly commercial. Nos. 3,5,7, have recently been refurbished and a traditional form of wooden shopfront installed.

First floor windows have received new art stone sills and lintels and additional small windows inserted. Thick UPVC frames have however been used. Nos 9,11 are a pair of shops with widened first floor windows, one UPVC shopfront and one wooden. No 13, a charity shop a little shabby, the upper part painted timbering. Nos 15,17,19 are c.1930s. No 17 seems to be still residential. No.19 a building society retains 1930s style wooden mullioned windows. Adjoining is the wide forecourt of a tyre depot, a modern utilitarian structure but with a two storey office of domestic scale. The adjacent building is the Black Bull public house, Market Place.



Market Street is of varied quality in conservation terms. As elsewhere in the village, shopfronts and signage are key factors influencing the overall image of the conservation area. In this regard, the refurbishment of nos.3,5,7, being carried out with some sensitivity to the location is a welcome sign, moreover

demonstrating confidence in the vitality of the village as a commercial location. Uses such as the tyre depot are inherently difficult to accommodate with sensitivity within an historic environment. However such uses contribute to the commercial vitality of the centre and must be accepted as such.



Cross Street (north end)

The angle of the junction of Cross Street/ Church Street is occupied by a landscaped amenity space, the site of a number of small cottages. Their demolition has undoubtedly weakened the sense of enclosure in this area.

Nos 1,3, Cross Street appear on the 1977 OS but the first building is now no.5. This and no 6 are post 1845 pebbledashed cottages.



Nos 7,8,9 are red /brown brick cottages stone sill, lintels, round brick arches to doors. No 8 has widened UPVC; all other windows are replacements.

No 10 is a larger house central 4 panelled door with square fanlight, stone sills, lintels;



front is pebbledashed but side still exposed brick. Windows wood framed but not of original pattern; but two on side elevation are 4 paned sashes. A house in this position is shown on the 1845 OS.

Adjoining is the library described under Character Area 2.

Cross Street is one of the original streets forming the ancient village centre.

The north west side of Cross Street is occupied by garden walls, one section being an old stone wall. The scene is however dominated by the Standish Centre a large modern two storey building multi-occupied by small businesses and a social club. Its front elevation has an upper rendered portion. The ground floor has shopfront type windows.

The Standish Centre - seen (below) from the Memorial Gate – its utilitarian side elevation is prominent . It is clearly an important local businesses centre which contributes to the variety of employment opportunities in the area but the building would benefit from external refurbishment.



Despite some modern development and ‘modernisations’ of cottages, Cross Street manages to retain a certain charm due to its narrow winding alignment which offers unfolding views towards the Church. The library gardens provide a pleasing element of trees and greenery and views of the steeple.



5.2 Character Area 2 Appraisal:

Church Street (south end), High Street, Preston Road

High Street extends 350m from its ‘V’ junction with Church Street to the cross roads. It curves subtly, rising about 4 m from the junction to Cross Street, then falling by 1 m to the cross roads. The carriageway is 8-9m in width, slightly narrower at its southern end. The footways are generally 2-3 m in width. The frontages comprise mainly continuous rows of 2 storey buildings of modest domestic scale and are either directly at back of footway or set back in shallow forecourts most of which have been hard surfaced and merge with the footways. The east side frontage



is continuous 230m from the cross roads apart from Cross Street. On the west side there are a few gaps in the frontage though these are not obvious in long vistas.

The continuity of frontage and slightly curving alignment gives the road a sense of enclosure whilst the variations in building alignment and profile add further visual interest.



High Street-Church Street Junction

The southern end of the conservation area contains a number of features of interest. The road from Wigan via Boar's Head, opens out into a small triangular green, the Queen Victoria Jubilee Gardens, located at the forked junction of High Street and Church Street. The gardens are bounded by a low stone wall on which there were once railings. At the apex stands the Queen Victoria Jubilee drinking fountain, 1897, Grade II listed. The fountain consists of a square section stone column with chamfered corners. Marble basins are fed by lion head spouts. The tapered stonework top is surmounted by an ornate cast iron lamp standard with reproduction lantern.

Centrally placed within the gardens is Standish War Memorial erected 1920 and unusual in its inscription 1914-19 acknowledging that hostilities continued in other theatres after the 1918 Armistice. The names of the local men who fell in WW2 have been added. The memorial is a polished marble column on a stone plinth and surmounted by a marble urn,

the whole standing approximately 3m high. Floodlighting set into the paving has been provided as part of a recent refurbishment by a partnership of Standish Community Forum and the British Legion, supported by the Standish, Aspull, Shevington Township Forum.

Facing southwards onto the gardens and a prominent feature of the southern approach to the village is the Globe Inn; two storeys, roughcast render with hipped slate roof. 3 bays, principal door offset. Originally two inns built back to back. It is well presented, with decorative quoins, sills and lintels picked out in the render but probably masking the original details.



Flanking the green to the right are two large houses, respectively a surgery and Pharmacy and a row of 2 storey cottages. The larger houses are similar in style, double fronted with ground floor modernised bays. The surgery is in smooth red brick and dates from between 1908 and 1928. Its site was occupied in 1892 by three cottages which had been cleared by 1908. The pharmacy is pre 1892, rendered and has 4 paned sashes on first floor.



The War Memorial with Police Station in background.

Nos.65- 71A are stone cottages, probably those indicated on the 1846 OS. No.65 is a chip shop. 71 is a photographer's shop with

enlarged window openings 71,71A have elliptical arched doorways;. 73-75 are pebbledashed, of probably later date. All this group have modernised windows. In front of no 73 is an iron OS benchmark with a curious 20ft 0 ins legend which does not relate to any OS map reference. The spot height at the junction is 346 ft (106m) above sea level!

The southern extremity of the conservation area is marked by a substantial stone house, no 100 High Street, now a bridal wear shop. Two storey coursed rubble with stone quoins, sills and lintels but UPVC windows.

No.79 is a cottage retaining flat stone lintel; 79a, 81, are shops probably converted cottages with modernised shopfronts, somewhat shabby in presentation.



Though the buildings surrounding the Jubilee Gardens are in themselves unremarkable, the overall spatial grouping emphasised by the prominent south elevation of the Globe Inn, together with the fountain, lamp and War Memorial, combine to make this area a distinctive entry point to the old village centre. To the right the subtly curving Church Street leads up to the old village centred upon Market Place; to the left, High Street, the 1727 turnpike route, leads to the cross roads.



High Street West side S-N

Facing the green on the west side of High Street, the outermost property is a small detached shop, followed by a row of 4, two storey brick cottages,(nos. 87-93), displaying 'Park View 1889'. They have stone chamfered lintels, round brick arched doorways, terracotta corbelling detail at eaves. All have modernised windows.

The Police Station located opposite to the Globe Inn, is an appropriately robust late Victorian edifice of two storeys but substantial mass, in red brown brick; blue brick plinth course; stone cills and flat stone lintels and stone drip moulds to two massive doorways. The doors are raised and fielded, 6 panelled. At first floor above both doors are roundels with arms proclaiming 'Constabulary Station'. Windows have been replaced with UPVC versions.



On the north side of the Police Station, (below) is the 'Last Orders' pub. It seems to be a merger of two or possibly three separate buildings indicated on historic maps. Whatever interest it may have possessed has been greatly diminished by rendering and re-windowing. The next group comprising a shop and cottage has also been modernised with long fascia over the wide shopfront.



Next in sequence is Chadwick's Emporium. This is a large site consisting of an abattoir and retail food store. These are accommodated in new buildings set back from the road with on site parking. An old stone building occupies part of the frontage with the retail store extending rearwards. The stone building (centre left) is set back about 5 m from the highway and a Victorian style metal framed conservatory has been added which accommodates a restaurant. Previously this was an extended shopfront. The stone building has an inscription at first floor 'Wellington Place' 1817 and cartouche AGJ. The original part of Wellington Place is a coursed buff/grey sandstone first floor with quoin blocks in the same stone and moulded stone cornice.

The red brick food hall extension has a form of mansard roof which abuts awk-

wardly onto the rear of Wellington Place. Chadwick's Emporium, specialises in high quality butchery and other mainly locally sourced food products. The Emporium is clearly one of Standish's most important retail assets.



The 1892 and 1909 OS show Wellington Place split into two separate curtilages, but Porteus describes it as "in lease in 1838 to Jane Ainsley and tenanted by James Moss", suggesting it was originally a single dwelling. Wellington Place was evidently considered of sufficient importance to be annotated as such on the 1846 OS along with only one other village building, 'White Hall' in Cross Street.

Wellington Place is one of the oldest and most architecturally significant buildings dating from the early development of High Street but the modernisation and extensions have regrettably detracted from its historic value.

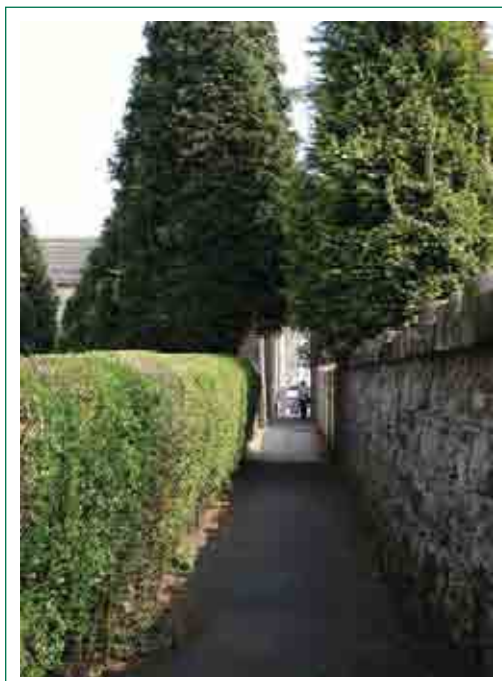
Next in sequence northwards is the Standish Clinic, 1990, a replacement of the old UDC offices, demolished 1989. It was largely the attempts to prevent the demolition of the former UDC building



that led the Council to approve the extension of the village conservation area to include High Street. It clearly failed in this objective. The clinic attempts to echo the style of building which it replaced. It blends reasonably well into the street scene in scale and form but lacks the robust detail of the old UDC building. Moreover the loss of the former council offices is another example of the erosion of Standish's local heritage.



Along the north-west boundary of the clinic a narrow footpath, Squire's Hey, leads towards Southlands Avenue, intersecting at 70 m from High Street, the path that follows the route of the abandoned mineral railway.



Squire's Hey takes the route of an ancient pathway shown on the 1845 OS linking the village with Beech Walk and the grounds of Standish Hall. The path emerges on High Street almost opposite Cross Street. The path may have been used as an ancient route between the manor house and the Parish Church. Located off High Street in this vicinity was Malt Kiln Farm. The path takes its name from one of the fields of this farm through which the footpath passed and which became a recreation ground c.1910.

Nos. 39-47 are a row of 5 cottages in coursed sandstone with low pitched slate roofs. 45,47 have elliptical arched doorways and stone jambs with inscribed ornament, the others feature round stone arched doorways and plain stone jambs ;nos. 39,43, retain 4 paned sashes (or authentic pattern replacements) at ground and first floor;



The cottages are one of High Street's most pleasing building groups and one of the earliest developments of High Street frontage, being almost certainly the group shown in that position on the 1845 OS.



On the 1892 OS, only 4 cottages are shown, no 39 being merged with no 37. On the 1909 OS, no. 37 is shown as a post office incorporating the adjoining stone cottage no 39. (The post office is nearer to the cross roads on the 1892 map).

On the 1928 OS the Post Office still occupies no. 37 but no 39 appears as a separate dwelling as today.

No. 37 is now a shop with garish plastic fascia, but 1st floor sashes remain.

No. 41 retains a radial fanlight.



No.35 is a larger than average 2 storey cottage set back slightly from the highway but heavily modernised and altered, though well presented. 29-33 comprise a cottage, no.29, and two shops both hairdressers, all rendered and painted white. The shops have tasteful sign written fascias. All windows are replacements.

The Wesleyan Methodist Chapel is an impressive red brick building with prominent east gable set back 20m from the road, with some trees visible in the grounds. The Methodists had been established in Standish from 1790 and by 1858 had purchased the former Quaker Meeting House located nearby

off School lane and commemorated today by the street named Quaker's Place. The Wesleyan Chapel was built on land of Malt Kiln Farm and was opened in 1897. The central porch has a round arched doorway beneath stained glass fanlight, flanked by symmetrical lobbies each containing 4 lancet windows. The principal feature of the east elevation is the massive rose window, its stained glass framed by terracotta tracery work and flanked by pairs of lancet windows.

It is a fine building which lifts the quality of High Street though its former front lawns have been replaced by a car park. The low brick boundary wall was once topped with decorative railings. The wall and gate piers remain but the railings have gone and the steel gates are modern replacements of the iron originals.



The setting of the Methodist Church is however impaired by the presence of a car repair yard and garage occupying back land on its north side and by the adjacent frontage building, which is a single storey structure with light coloured metal clad roof and bright red gable panels. Formerly a car showroom, it is currently occupied by two A3 (food and drink) uses, each



with rather colourful fascias and signage. Prominent signage and a telephone pole and overhead wires further detract from the scene.

From here to the cross roads, is a group of two storey cottage type premises, some in red/brown brick, others rendered all in commercial use. An arched entrance between no.11,13 provides access for vehicles to a rear yard.



An early 1900s photograph (Standish 800 Years of History), shows this group to include a row of bay fronted town houses with shallow front gardens, corroborated by the 1892 OS. Commercial uses had however become established, a post office being shown on the 1892 map in the location of the Nat West Bank. With the further incursion of commercial uses, the front gardens have become paved forecourts and the bay fronts have been replaced by shop fronts though one survives, modernised at no.9. Shop fronts are of variable quality and include internally illuminated fascia signs. External roller shutters are common, though the Nat West Bank and sports/gun shop have tasteful restrained fascias.

The HSBC bank is a building of robust character featuring twin square bays

flanking the central entrance. It has red brick and terracotta decoration and brick corbelling to eaves. The 1892 OS shows a building on the site which is probably the present building. Then it had extensive rear gardens.



The north end of the west side of High Street is occupied by the modern, narrow, single storey frontage of the Spar shop, in use as a café making a rather insignificant end to the row. The return elevation to School Lane is a series of single storey gables with shop windows and continuous fascia strip.



Preston Road East Side

The northern extremity of the conservation area is marked by an imposing pair of early 20thC shops in hard red brick with terra cotta detail including capitals to pilasters. At first floor there are arched display windows. The northern part, formerly the premises of O&G Rushton, a Wigan grocery business, has an elaborate gable which makes a prominent feature of the oblique angled junction of Preston Road and Pole Street.



The shop fronts are modern, one is an A3 use. Adjoining on Pole Street are another pair of shops, both A3 uses; hard red brick, plainer in detail; one has a half timbered type gable and was a house c 1900; the other unit was once Baron's Standish Boots Stores c.1900. Beyond is a car park, and opposite that is a pair of old coach houses used for garaging.

South of Pole Street, the frontage to Preston road comprises a row of 2 storey shops of domestic scale. Buildings were shown in this location on the 1845 OS but the alignment of Pole Street has altered from that period and it is unclear whether any of the present buildings are pre-1845. The frontage was however established in more or less its present form by 1892.

Nos 9-17, are a terrace of similar detail; red/ brown brick; stone sills and lintels and a stone sill band course. No 17, the prominent end unit, has been painted white. Brick corbelling to eaves ;

Nos 9-15, retain capitals to the pilasters but all windows are replacements, no 9 has a widened opening. Shop fronts are generally tasteful. No 7 is slightly taller, with a wide first floor window. No 1 is a

gabled shop, entirely half timbered effect above fascia.

At the junction with Market Street the cottage style shop unit an Estate Agents has been rendered, painted white and a modern blue tiled shopfront and fascia installed.



The layout of the junction itself is of interest because of its offset alignment. This is most noticeable when viewed from School Lane when the facades of Preston Road terminate the view eastwards. Similarly the bank at the south east corner of the junction juts forward of the building line of Preston Road. The offset is a distinctive feature which provides a sense of enclosure to the cross roads.



High Street East side N-S

The north end of High Street and corner of Market Street is occupied by Royal Bank of Scotland, no.2 High Street, formerly Williams Deacon's bank. Two storey painted brick. The first floor windows comprising 6 paned sashes above two paned sashes accord with turn of the century photographs.



A row of similar shops extend up to no.18. An early 1900s photograph shows nos. 10-18 to comprise a row of 5 cottages with round arched doors, stone sills and lintels. Nos 4-8 were probably also originally cottages but no 8 appears to be a shop early 1900s. Shop fronts and fascias vary in quality and materials. The bank and nos. 6,8,10 are of reasonably good quality. Nos. 4,16 were vacant June 06.



The consistent width of units, about 4m, perpetuates the domestic scale of the street frontage.



No 18 A,B C, are shops occupying a new building which features timbered gables. It remained a gap site up to the 1977 OS.

No 20 is a building slightly set back from the highway, occupied by Halifax BS and a separate residential unit. It is a 19thC building but altered and modernised beyond recognition.

A published photograph of 1905 shows the building set behind what appears to be a walled garden.

No.22 is occupied by the Nail Boutique, possibly built as a shop, modernised front but a tasteful fascia.



Nos 24-34 are a row of 6 late 19thC cottages some now in commercial use but retaining the original window openings. Red brown brick, slate roofs, plain eaves, stone sills and lintels. 24,26 have tiled sills to ground floor windows Their main feature of interest is the round arched door ways with decorative gauged brick voussoirs with relief patterning. These have all been painted. Regrettably all windows have been modernised. A cottage with splayed corner marks the junction with Cross Street. A pleasing group which complements the stone cottages located almost opposite.



Cross Street (Character Area 2)

Cross Street is a narrow lane, one way northwards.



On the north side no 14 is a pleasing detached cottage in rustic red/brown brick, garden wall bond. Painted stone sills and lintels; central arched doorway with decorative voussoirs similar to nos. 24-34 High Street. Nos. 12,13 are a pair of cottages of similar materials, well maintained but their authenticity marred by UPVC windows. This group of cottages retain low stone capped front walls to shallow gardens. The cottages post-date the 1845 OS but appear on the 1892 edition.



Doorway no.14 Cross Street

The library opposite is set back from the road in a pleasant landscaped green from which the Church steeple can be seen. The Library is a typical Lancashire CC design c.1960s glass fronted with felted roof.

It stands on the site of one of Standish's notable old houses. White Hall is annotated such on the 1846 OS, a large house in extensive gardens.

According to Porteus, White Hall was formerly the Brick House, held in lease with bowling green etc in lease from Mr. Standish in 1723. It was evidently once an inn occupied by a Thomas Taylor in 1666. It was known as White Hall in 1796 when it was occupied by Squire Fisher, great nephew of Miss Fisher of the White Hall in Shevington. *A photograph taken c.1940 shows Whitehall to be an imposing Georgian style mansion. An example of Standish's lost heritage.



Environmental House next to the Library is a modern 2-3 storey office building of modest scale. The upper floor part is set back above a ground floor shop which has a tiled lean to roof to the main building.

The southern corner with High Street is occupied by a plain c. 1960s 2 storey flat



roofed building occupied by 4 units, two of which are in A3 use and have roller shutters. The building is set back presumably to an old road improvement line. The flat roofed building would not be acceptable under current conservation area policy. (Compare with picture section 4.5).

Nos 40-46 are a row of 4 rendered slate roofed cottages of lower than usual profile. All have altered windows and some enlarged openings.



Nos. 48-50 are stone cottages with stone sills, lintels and door jambs. A central alley has a round stone arch. The group 40- 50 is almost certainly the group represented on the 1845 map. They are still in residential use.

These cottages and the stone cottages nod.37-47, and Wellington Place opposite, represent the earliest stages in the development of High Street.

No 52/54 is a Georgian style two storey town house probably early 19thC, present on the 1845 OS. Rendered and painted light green, 3 bays, central door with round arch, stone jambs and keystone; 12 paned sashes, probably not original. Set back

slightly from the highway edge. The building is now a veterinary practice.

No 52/54 also dates from the early period of High Street and is one of its most authentic historic buildings.



From here to Church Street the frontage was developed after 1845.

Nos 58-70 are cottages of no particular distinction. 58 is a shop; 60,64,66, remain residential. 64,66 have been re-clad in artificial stone; 60,62, 68,70 have been rendered.

5.3 The Public Realm

The 'public realm' may be considered to include roads, footpaths, landscaped areas and other spaces, i.e. the area to which the public have general access. It also includes elements of the street scene which contribute to the overall character and appearance of the area for example, street lighting, signage, walls, fences railings and surface treatment.

Market Place at the heart of the conservation area is predominantly tarmac surfaced carriageway with single yellow lines, double at junctions. Footways are also tarmac.



The area containing the well, cross and stocks is surfaced in a mixture of setts, cobbles and stone flags but between the well and the low stone wall in front of the Church is an area of left over road surface, evidently formerly car parking but now isolated by a footway extension and iron bollards.



This site would be improved by paving to blend in with the well area and perhaps some tree planting and seating.

As late as 1950, photographs show Market Place to be surfaced in setts and cobbles.

Reinstatement of sett paving would provide an historically authentic and arguably more pleasing setting for the Church and the associated historic features introducing textural interest in place of bland tarmacadam.

The small area of car parking close to the Memorial Gate is perhaps visually intrusive but a nonetheless useful facility. Its appearance, at least when not in use, would also be improved by sett paving.

The no- entry and one- way signs at Cross Street and Church Street are intrusive though undoubtedly necessary given the traffic management arrangements. A section of old stone boundary wall remains on the north side of Cross Street. There is no footway at this point. The south footway is narrow and protected by galvanised railings. Within the core of the conservation area the main street lighting is by a conservation type lantern on a tall black painted steel column but around Market Place a lower gas lamp type of column and lantern has been used. In Cross Street modern steel columns are used, taller than the adjacent cottages. Cross Street is further disfigured by the telephone poles and overhead wires. These items are present elsewhere within the conservation area.



The junction between Market Place and Market Street is an almost continuous curve on its south side involving an unprotected carriageway crossing for pedestrians of over 20m. Only a length of 30m of narrow road separates the equally sweeping junction of Pole Street and Market Street with a carriageway crossing on the north side over 25m wide.

The combination of these two sweeping junctions almost back to back creates



a pedestrian environment which is intimidating and potentially hazardous.

This situation is however being rectified by a highway scheme due for implementation in the near future. The scheme will realign the junctions to form straighter approaches and will narrow the pedestrian crossing points. A new zebra crossing and speed table will be installed in the narrow neck between the junctions. The equally wide and oblique entry to Pole Street from Preston Road will be treated in a similar manner.



Additional parking bays will be formed off Pole Street and an improved bus stand provided. Disabled kerbside parking bays will replace a disused taxi rank. Some footway resurfacing using stone effect flags will be carried out. Elsewhere footways will be resurfaced in tarmac due to funding restrictions. New street furniture is to be painted black. A number of trees will be planted adjacent to the footway in various locations. The scheme will represent a significant improvement in the comfort and safety and of the pedestrian environment. Although the new zebra crossing may be visually intrusive, the overall effect should be to improve the visual amenity of the village centre.

The public safety and amenity of the village centre will be transformed for the better by these measures.

High Street undoubtedly owes its existence to its role as a strategic traffic route dating from the turnpike era. This role remains today. Even if its strategic function has been eclipsed by the M6, its 'A' road classification demonstrates its continued importance. Modern traffic as elsewhere, however, now dominates the environment rather than sustaining it, by the sheer volume of cars and commercial vehicles and by the public infrastructure necessary to accommodate it. Passing trade can no longer be accommodated casually in kerbside parking, though in a number of instances shallow frontage areas are so used.

Standish High Street looking southwards; Note the mixture of 'conservation' and modern lighting columns and the incongruous flat roofed building, at odds with the consistent roof pitches of earlier buildings. (see photo Section 4).



Standish High Street may almost be regarded as essentially a road whose built frontage was originally incidental to its primary function as a thoroughfare.



Over the years, however, High Street has developed as an important service centre in its own right in many cases by the adaptation of houses for commercial uses.

There are inevitably tensions between preserving the character of historic frontages, maintaining a viable business environment and accommodating modern traffic.

In terms of the public realm, principal amongst these tensions are the lighting columns which are much taller than the buildings, the high positioned traffic signs and the inevitable traffic lights and pedestrian guard rails particularly at the cross roads. A further pedestrian crossing installation is positioned opposite the clinic, also equipped with galvanised guard rails.



The photos reveal a number of typical elements which detract from the quality of the public realm: galvanised railings, prominent road signage, tall lighting columns and overhead wires. Neither do the tarmac forecourt and roller shutters enhance the scene!

The junction guard rails are however to be painted black as part of the above mentioned improvement scheme.

The close relationship of buildings to frontage has been mentioned. Buildings are with few exceptions either at back of footway or set back only 2-3m. as 87-93 which have brick boundary walls to shallow front gardens. Footways are universally tarmac and where small set backs occur they are hard paved. The set back of the modern building in the picture above seems to serve little purpose other than to encourage parking on the footpath.



5.4 Aspects of The Public Realm - Trees and Greenery

The main areas of trees and greenery which contribute to the street scene are indicated on Plan 5.



The Churchyard provides the main concentration of trees within the Conservation area and these make a major contribution to its overall character, providing a wooded background to the Church itself, to views eastwards along Market Street and against the Parish Hall.

The small area between the inner and outer stone walls at the west front of the Church once occupied by 'Spite Row' is laid out as a lawn, backed by shrubs and trees which augment those in the Churchyard.

The site of demolished cottages at the corner of Cross Street and Church Street has been laid out as an amenity area with trees and spring bulbs.

A public art feature was installed on this site in June 2006.



The demolition of Spite Row and the cottages at the junction of Church Street Pole Street and Market Place will have opened out the space in comparison with the compact enclosed space shown on historic photos and maps. The landscaping of these areas is now part of the area's intrinsic character and appeal.

A tree adjacent the Coop store provides a welcome contrast to the urban street scene but vehicles and road markings remain prominent.



The trees growing within the small amenity space off Market Street are also noticeable from Pole Street.

The Jubilee Gardens and the landscaped amenity area north of the Globe Inn provide the only elements of public realm greenery in High Street.



Within the latter, a group of ornamental trees, when in leaf, screen the backs of houses on Church Street. A strategically placed tree almost succeeds in concealing an ugly flue pipe on the exposed end gable of no.70. Standard issue street furniture includes 'hockey stick' lighting columns, bus shelter and telephone kiosk.

This area was once occupied by a row of cottages demolished c.1960. It incorporates a footpath link to Church Street.

In the green stands a small coal tub with plaque 2003, commemorating the importance of mining in the district.



Beyond the immediate public realm within the conservation area other glimpses of distant tree canopies and greenery are possible, notably trees in the backland area to the west of High Street and along School Lane.

The library gardens Cross Street also provide a pleasant green space.

5.5 Gap sites and backland areas

There are few breaks in frontage on the east side of High Street but a gap between 20-22 reveals part of the Standish Centre.



More gaps exist on the west side permitting views into back-land areas. The 12m gap between the Last Orders pub and Chadwick's site opens up views of an extensive hard surfaced area including a proposed- but as yet unauthorised - car park extension. Though there is a hedge at the rear, the modern housing can be seen beyond. Some landscaping within this area especially near the frontage, would be beneficial.





The least satisfactory part of the entire conservation area is centred around the lane abutting onto the north side of the Methodist Church which leads to a back land car repair yard.

As well as opening up views of the end of the single storey frontage sheds it offers a prospect of a large electricity substation and the car repair depot whilst the scene is further marred by a telephone pole and overhead wires and by prominent commercial signage.



The lane itself is part unmade and potholed. An ugly vent adds to the clutter.

At least the hedge and tree help to soften the view!



The conservation area boundaries include an area of backland on the west side of High Street defined from Squire's Hey northwards by the route of the former mineral railway. The transition via the footpath from busy main road to quiet backland is abrupt.

The old railway is now heavily overgrown and bounded by naturally established hedgerows and trees. A public footpath runs parallel to the old railway passing a recreation ground and diverging at its northern end onto Quaker's Place around the large electricity substation. A plaque on no. 17/18 commemorates the former presence of the Friend's Meeting house in this location. However Quaker's Place lies outside the conservation area.



SIX

Summary of Negative Factors

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

6.1 The built form or private realm

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



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



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

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



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



6.2 The public realm negative factors

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



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

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



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

SEVEN

Summary of Positive Factors

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



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

EIGHT

Current Planning Issues

8.1 Policy issues

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

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



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

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

8.2 Infilling and other planning issues.

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

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

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

NINE

Issues for Conservation Management

Challenges and opportunities - Policy related issues.

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

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



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

9.1 In the private realm:

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

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

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

9.2 In the public realm:

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



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

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

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

TEN

Conservation Area Boundaries

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

Two potential extension areas have been considered provisionally.

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



10.1 School Lane Extension

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

Assessment of Conservation Merit

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

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

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

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



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





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

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

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



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

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

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

10.2 Church Street- centre section

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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

**A.McGreavey. Dip TP, MRTPI
Conservation Consultant to
Wigan Borough Council**

12/7/06



Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Description of Conservation Area Boundaries

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

APPENDIX 2

Relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies

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

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

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

Other UDP policies may be of relevance in specific circumstances.

APPENDIX 3

Geology and Drainage of the area.

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

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



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

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

The following notes are extracts from the above document.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

APPENDIX 4

Heritage Audit Listed Buildings:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

* Outside conservation area.

APPENDIX 5

Aspects of local History A5.1 Strategic Standish

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



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

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

'Standish 80 Years of Change' Aspinall.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

From "Lancashire" ,Bagley.

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

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



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

A 5.2 Manor and Village

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Webb, Standish 800 Years of History.

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

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

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

Webb op cit

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

Bagley ‘Lancashire’. Op cit.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

5.3 Population and Administration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Webb. op cit.

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

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

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

5.4 Mining, Industry, Communications

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Porteus T.C. History of Standish 1927

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

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

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

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

Smith M D op cit.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

A.McGreavey 6/7/06