



# Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area

Conservation Area Appraisal  
Consultation Draft  
June 2016



# Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area Conservation Area Appraisal Consulation Draft: June 2016

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Designation of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area

- 1.1.1 The Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area was designated by the Trafford Council on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1976. There are no records of any extension or alterations to the boundary. A map of the Conservation Area boundary is given on p.2.
- 1.1.2 The Conservation Area is not on the Heritage At Risk Register for north-west England.

### 1.2. Definition of a Conservation Area

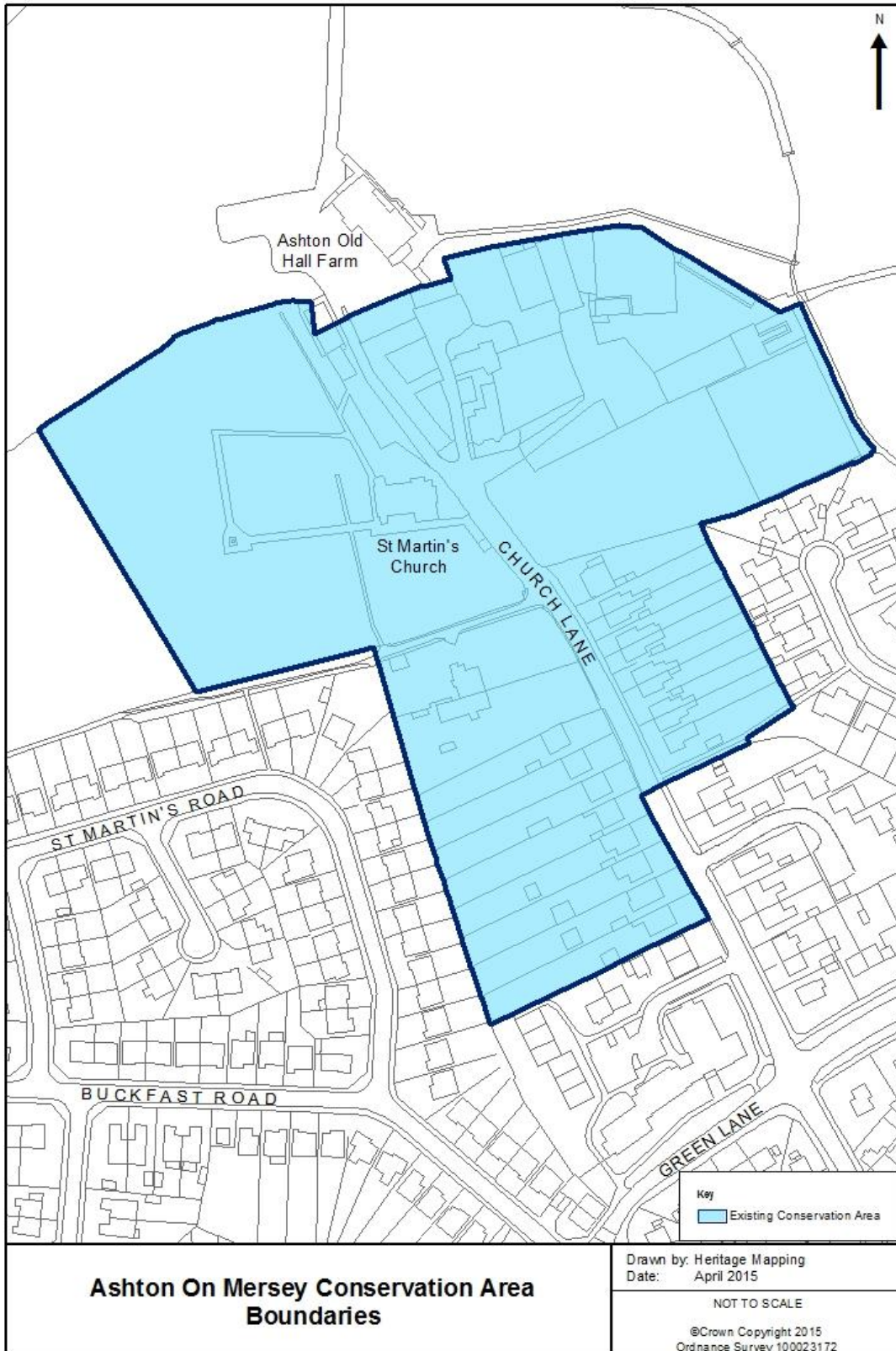
- 1.2.1 A conservation area is an area *'of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'*<sup>1</sup> Designation takes place primarily by local planning authorities under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Local planning authorities also have a duty from time to time to review the extent of designation and to designate further areas if appropriate.<sup>2</sup> Section 71 of the Act imposes a duty on the local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Proposals should be publicised and incorporate public comment.
- 1.2.2 Conservation area designation recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole. It is not just the contribution of individual buildings and monuments, but also that of features such as topography, layout of roads, pathways, street furniture, open spaces, and hard and soft landscaping which assist in defining the character and appearance of an area. Conservation areas identify the familiar and cherished local scene that creates a sense of place, community, distinctiveness and environment.
- 1.2.3 The extent to which a building positively shapes the character of a conservation area depends not just on their street elevations, but also on their integrity as historic structures and the impact they have in three dimensions, perhaps in an interesting roofscape, or skyline. Back elevations can be important, as can side views from alleys and yards.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Section 69 (1) (a) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<sup>2</sup> Section 69 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<sup>3</sup> Historic England, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (2011), para 2.2.21



Map 1: Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area Boundary

### 1.3. Value of a Conservation Area Appraisal

- 1.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stresses the need for local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Local planning authorities are required to define and record the special characteristics of heritage assets within their area. This appraisal fulfils the statutory duty placed on the local planning authority '*to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.*'<sup>4</sup>
- 1.3.2 Conservation areas may be affected by direct physical change or by changes in their setting or in the uses of buildings or areas within it. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which applications can be considered.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.3.3 The purpose of the Appraisal is, in accordance with the methodology recommended by Historic England, to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area.<sup>6</sup> This appraisal has been used to prepare a draft management plan which sets out suggested actions to maintain and enhance the special character of the area. These documents will support the active management of the Conservation Area through the development control process, including support for appeals.
- 1.3.4 The undertaking of an appraisal will lead to a better understanding of the development of the Conservation Area, in terms of its local distinctiveness, setting and condition, which together contribute to the place it is today. This will enable the basis for positive management of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area.
- 1.3.5 An adopted conservation area appraisal is a material consideration to appeal decisions and also relevant to decisions made by the Secretary of State when considering urgent works to preserve an unlisted building in a conservation area. An appraisal can inform those considering investment in the area, help guide the form and content of new development and result in an educational and informative document for the local community.<sup>7</sup>
- 1.3.6 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO) sets out permitted development rights for certain minor forms of development - i.e. development that may be legitimately undertaken without the need for planning permission. An appraisal can assess whether or not permitted development rights are having an adverse impact on the special interest of a conservation area and whether or not the use of an Article 4 direction is appropriate.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 71(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<sup>5</sup> Historic England, *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*. (2006) para 2.8

<sup>6</sup> Historic England, *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*. (2005)

<sup>7</sup> Historic England, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (2011) paras 1.7 & 1.9

- 1.3.7 This Appraisal will provide a character assessment of the present Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area and those areas under consideration for extension. The document will seek to identify those factors resulting in adverse harm to the special interest of the Conservation Area, identify whether cumulative change can be addressed through Article 4 directions and assess if statutory action is required to safeguard buildings at risk. A review of existing boundaries has also been undertaken to determine if areas should be included or removed from the designation. This discussion is found in Section 6 and the proposed extensions are also shown on map 1 (page 2). Consequentially the document will provide background evidence for assessing the acceptability of development proposals.
- 1.3.8 Further guidance and proposals will be detailed in the corresponding Ashton On Mersey Management Plan which should be considered in conjunction with this Appraisal.

#### **1.4. Scope of the Appraisal**

- 1.4.1 This document is not intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. Omission of any specific building, structure, site, landscape, space, feature or aspect located in or adjoining to the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area should not be taken to imply that it does not hold significance and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the designated heritage asset.
- 1.4.2 As an area evolves evidence may emerge which provides a greater understanding of a heritage asset(s) and the contribution made to the special interest of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area. Such information should be considered in conjunction with the Appraisal during the course of decision making by the local planning authority.
- 1.4.3 The positive characteristics as defined by this document should be the starting point for further discussion with the local planning authority where alterations are being considered to or will affect a heritage asset(s). Each site will be judged on its own merits and there are bound to be variations in the quality of individual developments. It will not be acceptable merely to emulate the least successful or highest density of these or to use such sites as an excuse for making matters worse. Instead regard should be paid to those elements which make the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area significant. Ultimately special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.<sup>8</sup>
- 1.4.4 This draft Conservation Area Appraisal has been produced by Trafford Council following the submission of an initial draft by Purcell.

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<sup>8</sup> Section 7(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990



## 2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### 2.1. National and Local Planning Policies

2.1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework provide the legislative and national policy framework for conservation area appraisals and management plans.

2.1.2 The NPPF (paragraph 126) states:

*'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account;*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;*
- *and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'*<sup>9</sup>

2.1.3 The NPPF (Annex 2) defines a heritage asset as: *'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'* The guidance also states that a designated heritage asset is one that is classed as: *'A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park or Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated as such under the relevant legislation.'*<sup>10</sup> A non-designated heritage asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance that is not protected under legislative framework.

2.1.1 The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013 introduced measures to enable owners and local planning authorities to enter into non statutory Heritage Partnership Agreements to help them manage listed buildings more effectively. They will also remove the requirement for Conservation Area Consent, while retaining the offence of demolishing an unlisted building in a conservation area without permission.

2.1.2 The measures will reduce burdens by granting listed building consent automatically for certain categories of work or buildings through a system of national and local class

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<sup>9</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*. (2012) para. 126

<sup>10</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*. (2012) Annex 2



consents. They will also increase certainty and reduce the numbers of unnecessary *consent applications by creating a certificate of lawfulness of proposed works to listed buildings.*

- 2.1.3 This document must be considered alongside the Council's policies concerning development and the use of land as set out in the Trafford Core Strategy formally adopted on 25th January 2012. Of particular relevance are:

Policy R1 – *Historic Environment relating to designated and non-designated heritage assets;*

Policy R3 – *Green Infrastructure;*

Policy R4 – *Green Belt, Countryside and Other Protected Open Land;*

Policy R5 – *Open Space Sport and Recreation;*

Policy R6 – *Culture and Tourism;* and

Policy L7 – *Design.*

- 2.1.4 A number of policies and proposals of the Revised Unitary Development Plan adopted in 2006 are currently 'saved', such as ENV21 Conservation Areas, ENV22 Conservation Area Designation and ENV 17 Landscape Character, until they are replaced by the Land Allocations Development Plan Document.

## **2.2. Conservation Area Policy Guidance**

- 2.2.1 This appraisal has taken into consideration methodologies and advice outlined by Historic England in the following publications:

- Measuring and Assessing Change in Conservation Areas 2005
- Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals 2006
- Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas 2006
- Understanding Place: An Introduction 2010
- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments in a Planning and Development Context 2010
- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice 2010
- Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2011
- Understanding Place: Character and Context in Local Planning 2011
- Streets for All: North West 2006
- Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance 2008

- 2.2.2 The Historic England document *Conservation Principles*, published in 2008, provides policies and guidance for identifying significance. Four heritage values are assigned through which a site or place can be interpreted; evidential, historical, communal and aesthetic.

- 2.2.3 Further guidance has been issued by Historic England in the suite of documents *Understanding Place* with a view to setting out approaches to undertake assessments of historic areas allowing a greater understanding of the character of a place and its capacity for change. In particular *Understanding Place - Historic Area Assessments: Principles and*

*Practice stresses the importance in 'identifying and understanding particular qualities, and what these add to our lives, is central to our engagement with our history and culture'. As referenced in Understanding Place - Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice, Power of Place published by Historic England, 'stressed the positive impact of local and 'ordinary' heritage – what might be termed the buildings and spaces in between 'monuments' – on the quality of people's lives and its central role in constructing local identity'.*

- 2.2.4 In addition, consultation of the Historic Environment Record maintained by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) has been undertaken and also an assessment of the Trafford Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project 2008.
- 2.2.5 The proposals set out by this appraisal shall undergo a period of public consultation and will be submitted for consideration at a public meeting in the area to which they relate.<sup>11</sup> The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting or during the period of consultation.<sup>12</sup>

### **2.3. Control Measures Brought About By Designation**

- 2.3.1 In determining applications for development in conservation areas, local planning authorities must pay special attention *'to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'*.<sup>13</sup> This requirement, as set out in legislation, is also reflected in national and local policy.
- 2.3.2 In order to protect and enhance conservation areas any changes that take place must do so in a way that encourages positive conservation and management. Statutory control measures are designed to prevent development that may have a negative or cumulative effect on the character and appearance of an area and include the following:
- Planning permission is usually required to totally or substantially demolish buildings or structures including walls, gate piers, gates, chimneys, fence or railings within a conservation area.
  - The extent of 'permitted' development is reduced for commercial and residential properties restricting such things as cladding, extensions to the side of the original dwelling or the installation of satellite dishes. Further control measures such as Article 4 directions may be placed On an area. These may be served to further restrict permitted development rights, for example, elements or alterations such as windows, doors, chimneys, boundary walls and gate posts and restrict certain types of extensions.
  - Trees with a stem diameter of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5 metres from soil level, enjoy a measure of protection if they stand in a designated conservation area. The Council requires six weeks written notice of any proposed felling or pruning of such trees, other than the removal of dead wood and the felling of dead and/or dangerous trees, which do not require notification. In the case of the removal of undesirable trees to allow superior trees to flourish, known as 'selective thinning',

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<sup>11</sup> Section 71 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<sup>12</sup> Section 71 (3) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

<sup>13</sup> Section 72 (1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

the requirement is relaxed to allow the removal of trees of stem diameter up to 100mm to be removed without giving the Council prior notice.

- Should the notified tree work be unacceptable to the Council, the latter will make a Tree Preservation Order during the six week notification period, thus ensuring continuity of protection. Local Authorities cannot insist On a replacement for a tree lawfully felled within a conservation area, unless the tree is also protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Certain categories of advertisement which have deemed consent under the Advertisement Regulations are restricted in areas of special control.

### **3. THE SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

#### **3.1. History**

- 3.1.1 Since the Saxon period, Ashton On Mersey has been an important defensive and agricultural site on the south bank of the River Mersey. The centre of the settlement was further south than the current Conservation Area boundary but a cluster of substantial buildings remain around the church, hall and farmstead.
- 3.1.2 With the coming of the railways and the Bridgewater Canal, the village continued to move further south-east away from the historic settlement, expanding through its role in the market garden industries of Trafford. The construction of suburban villas along Church Lane marked the beginning of rapid late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century residential development in Ashton On Mersey. This saw encroachment on the historic settlement from suburban development but it remained comparably less altered than areas to the south and east.
- 3.1.3 Major change occurred in the 1990s when the historic model farmstead was split in two, for conversion to residential properties and to become an equestrian centre. The new club house and community hall were also constructed but overall the Conservation Area has retained its rural character.

#### **3.2. Architectural Value**

- 3.2.1 The Conservation Area is a compact historic core and as such a variety of different architectural styles and phases of development are represented across a small number of buildings.
- 3.2.2 The early-19<sup>th</sup> century model farmstead includes vernacular agricultural barns and sheds and a substantial farmhouse. Conversion to residential use has added a domestic character to these structures while the active agricultural structures to the east of the equestrian centre are purely utilitarian.
- 3.2.3 Many of the buildings within the Conservation Area have elements of Arts and Crafts design of the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods, such as the church tower (1887) and the suburban villas (1898-1910). Georgian architecture is also represented in Ashton New Hall and the original church of 1714.

### **3.3. Streetscape and Open Spaces**

- 3.3.1 The Conservation Area is residential in character to the south of Church Lane and the streetscape reflects this, with mature hedges and houses set back within front gardens. To the north the street is traditionally paved in stone setts and opens out into the historic settlement centre around the church, farm and fields.
- 3.3.2 The churchyard is a significant green space within the Conservation Area and is thought to have originated as a Saxon burial ground. To the east is an open field that has retained its historic plan form. The preservation of open space in this area may be due to its proximity to the River Mersey to the west and north, which helps to retain its historic rural landscape setting.

### **3.4. Views and Landmarks**

- 3.4.1 Key views within the Conservation Area are along Church Lane towards the church, which open out into wide views that encompass landmarks such as the historic farmhouse, agricultural range, lychgate and church.
- 3.4.2 Wide vistas across the churchyard to the west and continuing along the narrow Church Lane to the north are also significant.

### **3.5. Communal Value**

- 3.5.1 The Conservation Area is a small settlement within Greater Manchester that has survived in its historic form, while almost everything to the south and east has been lost due to rapid development in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3.5.2 The Conservation Area has associations with some notable local figures such as Joshua Allen and the Carrington, Trafford and Massey families.
- 3.5.3 St Martin's church and church hall are important community facilities and the relationship of the area with the surrounding river and countryside is valuable.

### **3.6. Significance Statement**

- 3.6.1 Ashton On Mersey is significant for its survival as an historic settlement with a long history of occupation and for retaining its pre-Second World War footprint. A church has been recorded here since 850, followed by a medieval mill and farmstead. The cluster of church, farm, hall and rectory continued into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, marking Ashton On Mersey out as a wealthy settlement.
- 3.6.2 The early-19<sup>th</sup> century model farmstead is an important example of this building type, with its farmhouse and agricultural buildings situated within an enclosed courtyard during the period of 'high farming' in England. The historic plan form has a high level of survival that illustrates innovative new farming ideas and the local reliance on agriculture.

- 3.6.3 The church of St Martin is Grade II\* listed and has 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric. It is significant for its connection to the wider Arts and Crafts architecture seen across Trafford, particularly its unusual tower and the matching lychgate. The suburban villas along Church Lane are also significant as early examples of this building type in Ashton On Mersey and follow the narrative seen elsewhere within Trafford.
- 3.6.4 There has been a significant change in character within the Conservation Area since the 1990s, with the sale of the farmstead for residential and equestrian use, and the construction of the club house and community hall to the north in a non-traditional style. The historic plan form and fabric of the settlement can still be read but care will need to be taken in the future to ensure this is retained and future development respects the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area.



## 4. ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

This section of the Appraisal comprises a detailed analysis of the special interest of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area with regard to its location and setting, historic development and archaeology, architectural quality and built form, open space, parks, gardens and trees.

### 4.1. Location & Setting

- 4.1.1 Ashton On Mersey is an area on the north-western extremity of Sale in the Metropolitan Borough of Trafford. It is five miles south-west of Manchester City Centre and was historically part of Cheshire. Ashton On Mersey has a population of approximately 6,500.
- 4.1.2 The Conservation Area of Ashton On Mersey encompasses the historic core of the village centred on the church, hall and farmstead and is situated on the far northern edge of the urban area. To the south, a high street with shops and amenities has grown up along the B5166, which is surrounded on all sides by suburban residential streets. Directly to the north is the Ashton On Mersey golf course, surrounded by open fields and bound by the River Mersey to the north, while Stromford Brook runs along the north-east edge of the Conservation Area. The A6144 runs north-west above the Conservation Area and the M60 runs along the north-east. Two large sewage processing plants have been built in the near vicinity, one to the east and one to the west.
- 4.1.3 There are no other conservation areas within the vicinity of Ashton On Mersey. The northern part of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area (i.e. the area around the farm) falls within Green Belt designation under Policy R4. The suburban streets to the south are not within the Green Belt.

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### Topography and Geology

- 4.1.4 As seen across Greater Manchester, the underlying geology is made-up of Permian sandstones, red Triassic sandstones and mudstones, with thick pockets of sand and gravel.<sup>14</sup>
- 4.1.5 The area around Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area is generally flat, at about 20m above sea level.

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<sup>14</sup> Historic England, *Strategic Stone Study – A Building Stone Atlas of Greater Manchester, Introduction*. (London: Historic England, 2011)

## **4.2. General Description, Character and Plan Form**

- 4.2.1 The Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area forms the northern outer edge of the ward of Ashton On Mersey; between the built-up area to the south and the River Mersey. The Conservation Area can be divided into two distinct parts; the historic settlement core centred on the church, hall and model farmstead, and the suburban infill to the south.
- 4.2.2 The character of the Conservation Area is rural but enclosed, and feels distinct from the residential areas to the south. Church Lane terminates just before the River Mersey to the north, giving it an enclosed feel with a no through-route. Due to the presence of the river, golf course, Green Belt and Mersey Valley corridor this element of the settlement has not expanded outwards and has not been engulfed in Outer Manchester suburbia.
- 4.2.3 The historic settlement of Ashton On Mersey was centred on a triangle of roads to the south of the church, which has been lost within modern development. The Rectory was also lost to residential housing but the church, hall and farmstead to the north have remained, in a clustered plan form, illustrative of the agricultural and later market garden industry of this area of Trafford. The farmstead within the Conservation Area is likely to have earlier origins but is now a good example of an early-19<sup>th</sup> century model farm. The church has largely 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric but the burial site has Saxon origins.
- 4.2.4 The Edwardian villas to the south of the Conservation Area are significant as they represent the first phase of suburbia to be developed in the area, as earlier housing towards the centre of the village was largely terraced (although villas were being built further towards Sale). Growth spread rapidly in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century and by the 1960s the rural village of Ashton On Mersey had largely disappeared, save for the small cluster of buildings around St Martin's church.
- 4.2.5 Although significant changes occurred within the settlement in the 1990s, the Conservation Area retains a characteristic of rural simplicity, with large open green spaces within its boundaries, which look over wider views of the Mersey valley and open countryside. Church Lane is enclosed by mature hedges and trees to the south, with residential properties set back from the road. In the centre it opens out around the church and farmstead, to narrow again as it makes its way north along its historic route to the river.

### 4.3. Historic Development of Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area

- 4.3.1 The history of the Conservation Area is set out below. For more detail on the history of Sale and the surrounding area, please refer to appendix C.
- 4.3.2 Ashton On Mersey has a long history of settlement. A church is known to have been on the present site since 850 and there is also evidence that the churchyard was a Saxon burial site.<sup>15</sup> Further, a number of archaeological finds may perhaps indicate that the site has even earlier origins, with Roman coins being found in Ashton On Mersey itself and Roman coins and pottery, as well as substantial roads, also being present in the immediately surrounding area. The importance of this area may derive from its strategic position on the south bank of the River Mersey.
- 4.3.3 The settlement has been recorded variously as Ashton On Mersey, Ashton, Asshe-ton, Assheton on Mercybonke, Mersybonke and Asshton in medieval manuscripts, but there is little material evidence of either earlier or later medieval settlements.<sup>16</sup> This is particularly apparent in the parish church of St Martin's, which retains almost no medieval fabric, except perhaps an early-14<sup>th</sup> century studded batten door which appears to be reused in the 18<sup>th</sup> century church.<sup>17</sup> Just to the north of the Conservation Area, there was also a 16<sup>th</sup> century bridge called Crossford Bridge but this appears to have been demolished in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> There is archaeological evidence that near the site of this bridge there was also an early water mill.<sup>19</sup>
- 4.3.4 A moiety of the manor was held for generations by the Carrington family, who do not appear to have held other lands locally, the wider area being dominated by the Massey and Trafford families, and later by the Booth family.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the Booths also came to inherit this moiety through marriage. A second moiety of the manor was held by the Hondford family and then by the Breretons, passing to the Viscounts Allen, who appear to have been Irish peers and politicians, and then to the Earls of Stamford and Warrington.<sup>21</sup> The church which now stands was erected in 1714 for the second Viscount, Joshua Allen.<sup>22</sup>
- 4.3.5 St Martin's Church is visible in the first map of the area, the Burdett map of 1777 (for maps see map progression below). This map also gives some sense of the outline of the earlier settlement, with the church set to the north of the principal triangle of roads to the south. It is also evident that a shift eastward is occurring in this period, which can perhaps be attributed to the construction of the Bridgewater Canal in the 1760s by the Duke of Bridgewater. This is just visible to the east, cutting through Sale Moor.

<sup>15</sup> Church of St Martin, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1101537> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>16</sup> *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds: Volume 6* (1915), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64511> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>17</sup> Church of St Martin, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1101537> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>18</sup> Crossford Bridge, [http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=75002&resourceID=2](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=75002&resourceID=2) (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>19</sup> N. Nayling, *Historic England, A possible mill on the River Mersey, Ashton Upon Mersey: tree-ring analysis of timbers, 2009-10*

<sup>20</sup> *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1848), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=50765> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>21</sup> *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1848), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=50765> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>22</sup> Church of St Martin, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1101537> (accessed 22 October 2014)

- 4.3.6 The Bridgewater Canal brought significant connectivity from the surrounding rural areas into the developing industrial city of Manchester, introducing market gardening as an important new industry in the surrounding, predominantly agricultural areas. The produce was transported along the canal into Manchester by day for sale at market, with the canal boats returning in the evening with the city's night soil, which provided an important source of fertiliser.
- 4.3.7 The most notable building from this period which still stands within the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area is Ashton New Hall, which dates to 1804.<sup>23</sup> Now two houses, Ashton New Hall was originally built as one dwelling. While it has not been possible to establish who Ashton New Hall was originally built for, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it is recorded as the residence of the curate of St Martin's Church, Reverend John Hunter, and later for a Sarah Hunter, described as a widow and therefore possibly the wife of the former curate.<sup>24</sup> This helps to give a sense of the character of the Ashton On Mersey area as principally a middle class one in this period.
- 4.3.8 19<sup>th</sup> century maps of the Conservation Area indicate that the settlement had fully moved to the south and the east by this date, with only a farmstead, the church, Ashton New Hall and the rectory making up this northern element of the settlement. The farm to the north of the Conservation Area was originally associated with Ashton Old Hall, but became Newhall Farm from the early-19<sup>th</sup> century.



*The Old Rectory (demolished) was located south-east of the current Conservation Area.*

<sup>23</sup> Ashton New Hall, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1101537> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>24</sup> Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser - Saturday 02 August 1856, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000206/18560802/017/0008?browse=true>; Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser - Saturday 02 January 1886, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000206/18860102/310/0008>

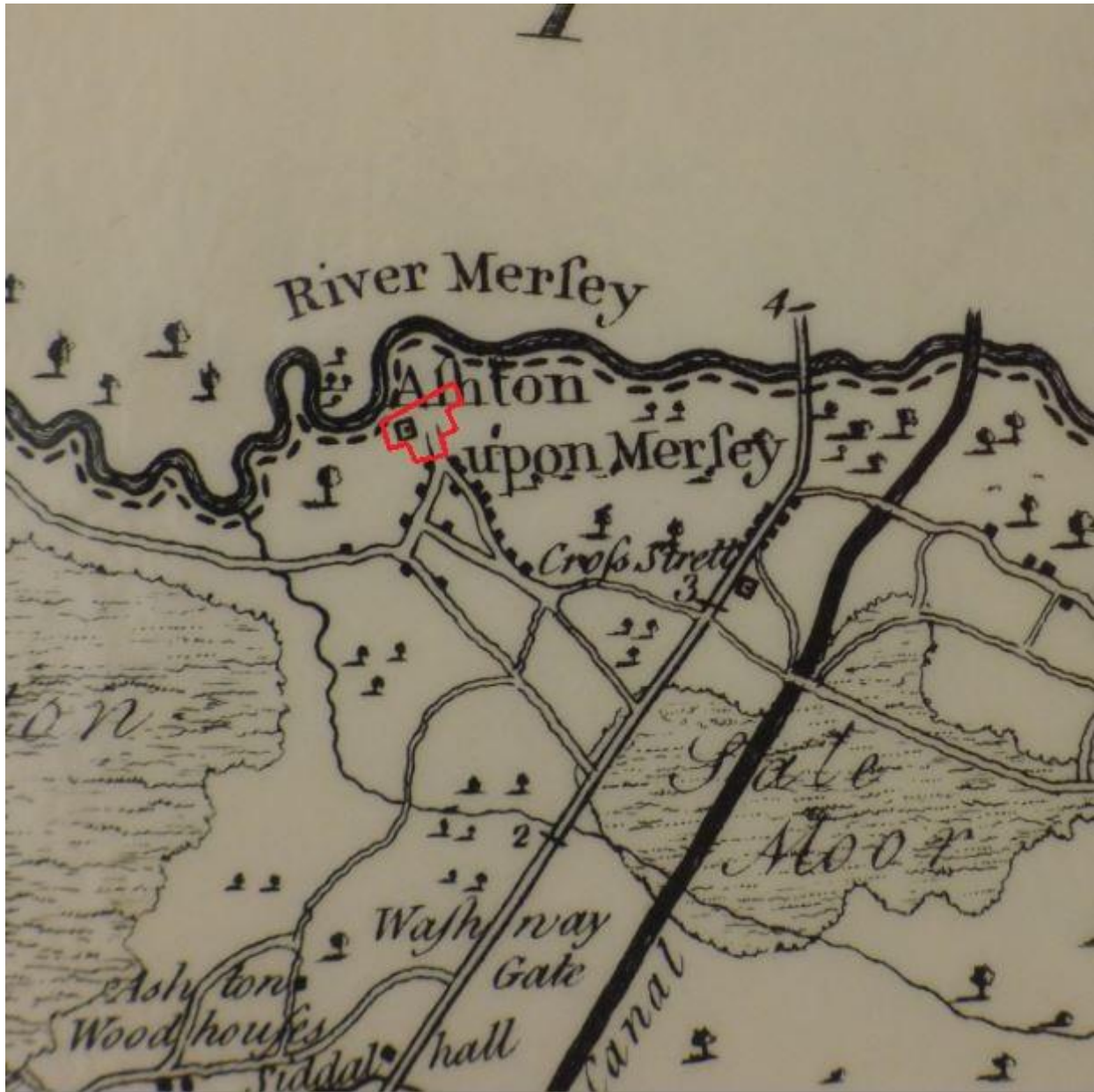
- 4.3.9 The market gardening industry of this area served to protect its rural character for a considerable period, up until the construction of the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham railway line through the Sale area in the 1840s. Although this railway line did not pass directly through Ashton On Mersey, a station was built in Sale to the east. This new amenity swiftly led to the residential development of Sale and subsequently to the development of the Ashton On Mersey area too. The speed of development was perhaps facilitated by the purchase of Stamford lands in Sale by the prominent financier and banker, Samuel Brooks. Brooks was the second son of William Brooks, who was a founding member of Cunliffe Brooks, an important Manchester-based company which initially manufactured calico before developing a side-line as a private banking business.<sup>25</sup>
- 4.3.10 Brooks is an important historic figure, most notably for this influential role as a financier and manufacturer but also for his involvement in the sale of local land for development in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Importantly, Brooks was also responsible for the erection of the baptistery and tower at St Martin's Church in the 1880s.<sup>26</sup> However, it is notable that the fast pace of development did not encroach within the boundary of the Conservation Area until the 1910 edition OS map.
- 4.3.11 The arrival of the railway marked a key turning point in the history of the area. It slowly brought about a fundamental character shift away from an agricultural community centred on the market gardening industry and towards a spreading area of residential suburban housing serving the city of Manchester. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed the small and distinct area of Ashton On Mersey became subsumed into the Sale area, as is evident in the 1929 edition OS map. The 1900s were a turning point for the settlement encompassed within the Conservation Area, as suburban villas were built along both sides of Church Lane between 1898 and 1910, filling the gaps between the rectory and the church.
- 4.3.12 It is notable that the area which is now designated as a Conservation Area stands broadly in its pre-Second World War footprint and remains comparably less altered than areas to the south and east. This is perhaps due to the proximity of this land to the River Mersey to the west and north, which helps to retain its historic rural landscape setting.
- 4.3.13 The golf course at Ashton On Mersey was established in 1897, with a wooden club house just north of the church, which was rebuilt in the 1990s. In the same period Ashton Hall Farm was divided into two portions; the historic farmstead converted to residential use and the active farm was repurposed as an equestrian centre.

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<sup>25</sup> <http://archiveshub.ac.uk/data/gb386-a/36> (accessed 22 October 2014)

<sup>26</sup> Church of St Martin, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1067893> (accessed 22 October 2014)

#### 4.4. Map Progression



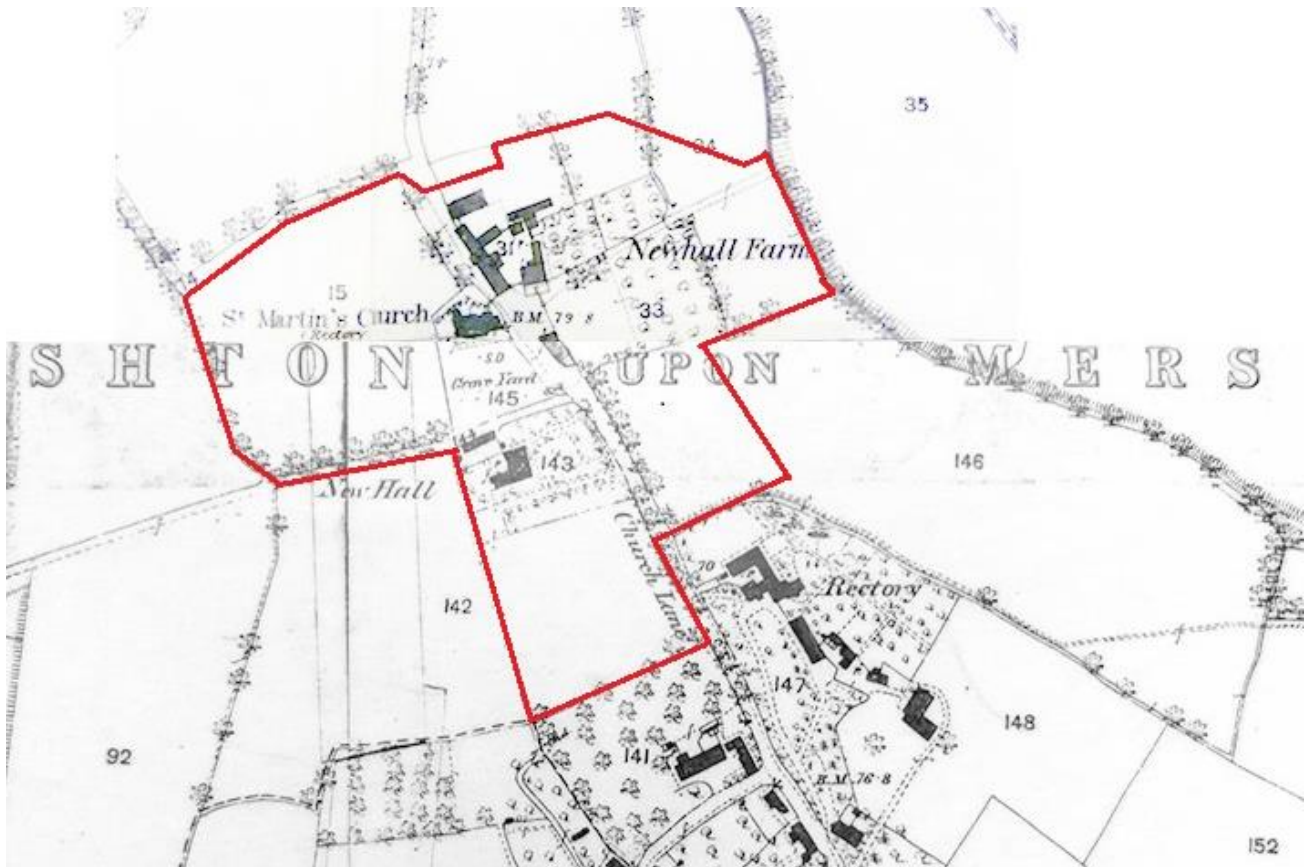
Map 2 Ashton On Mersey in the 1777 Burdett map





Map 3 Tithe map 1836 to 1851

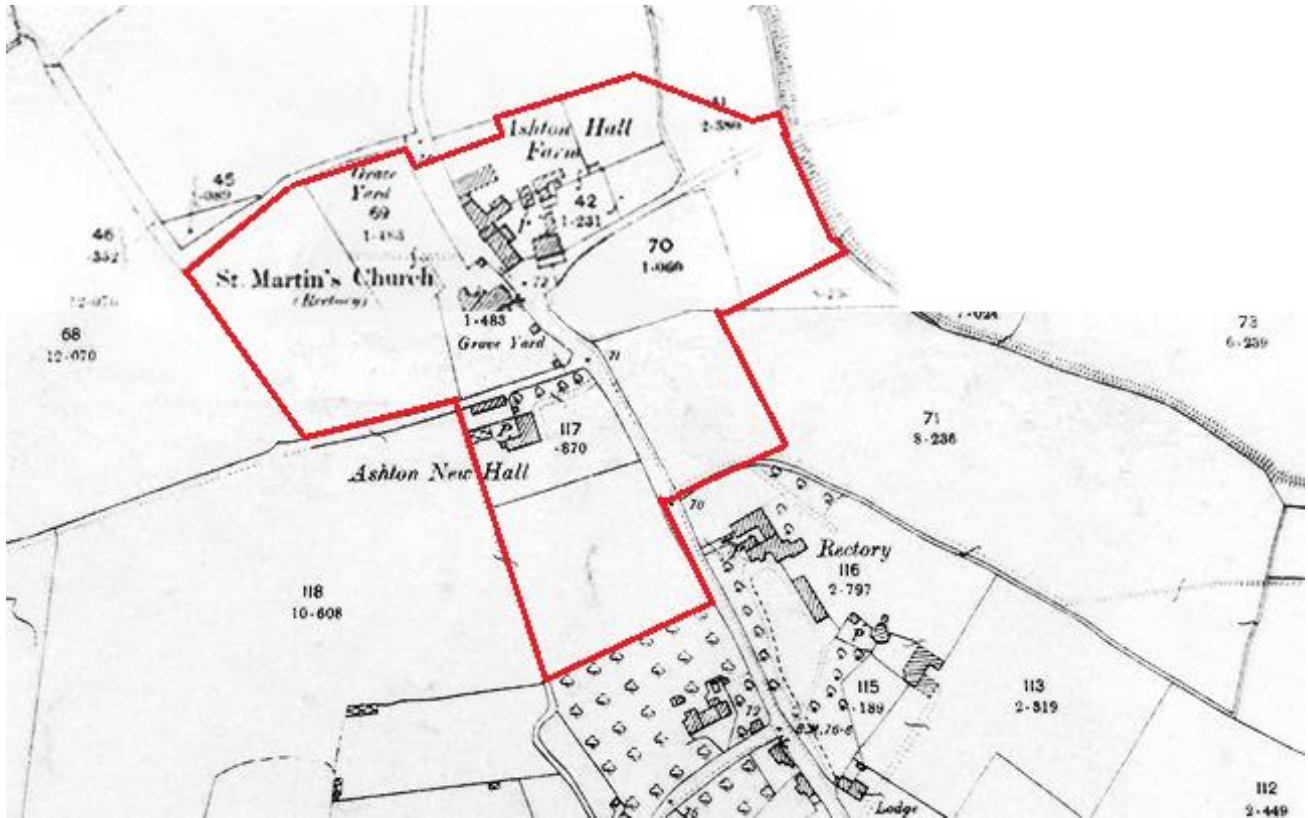




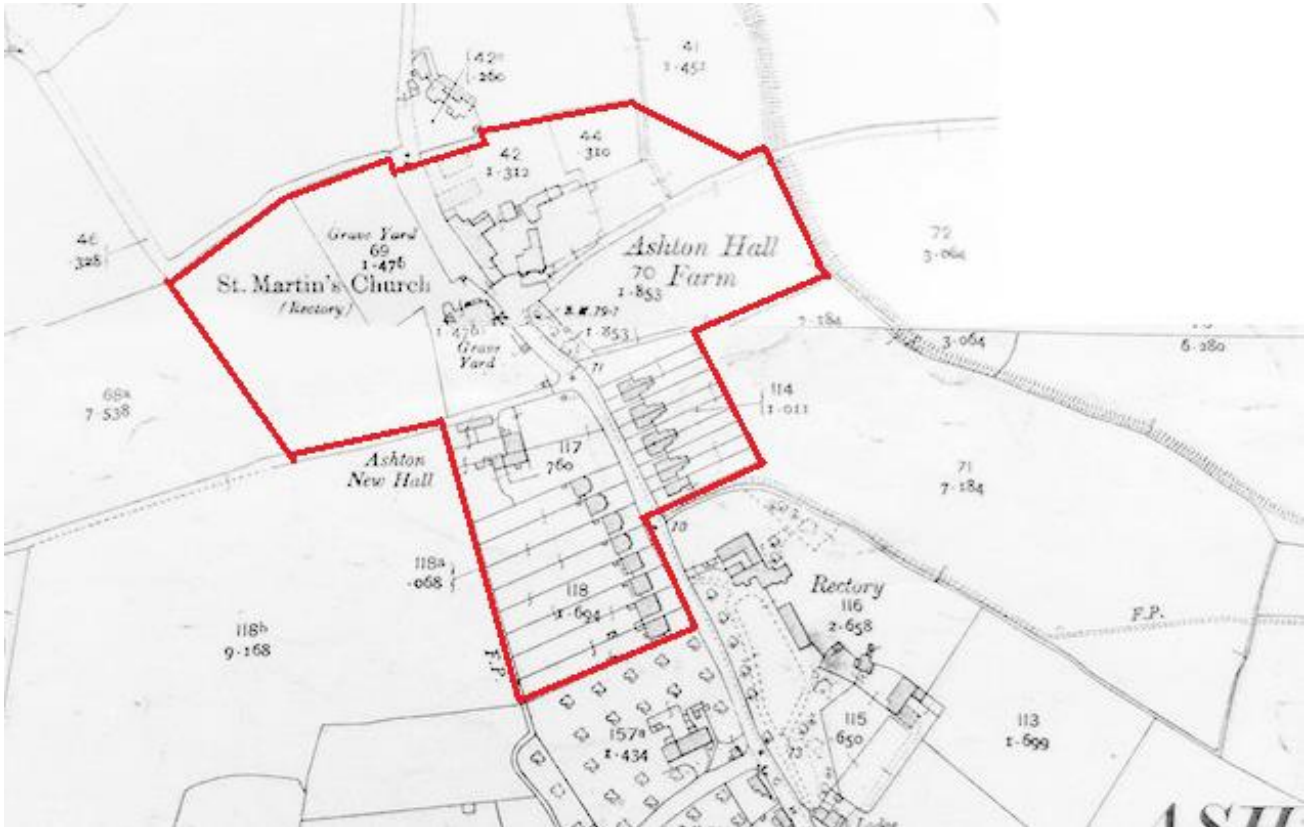
Map 4 1876 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to Prosecution or civil proceedings. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)



Map 5 1882 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from 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. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)

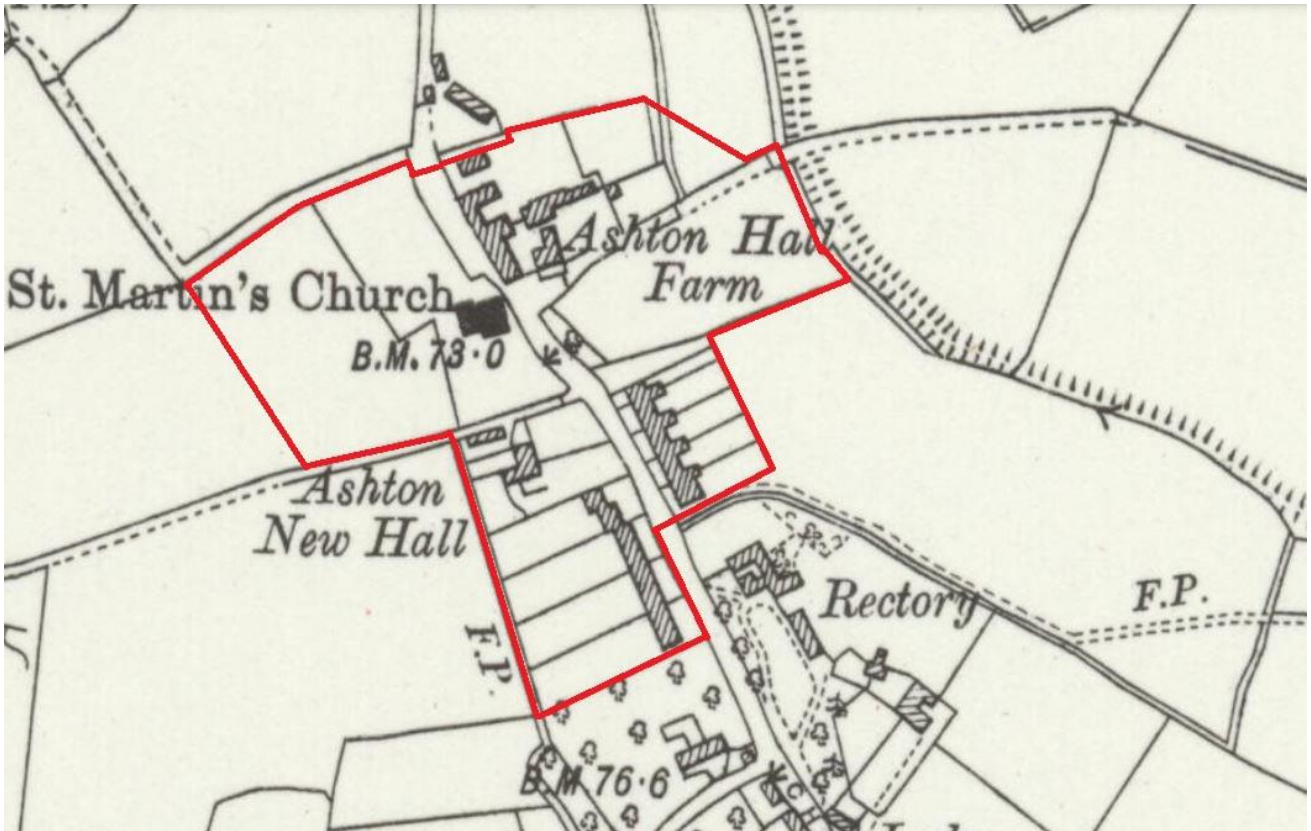


Map 6 1898 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to Prosecution or civil proceedings. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)

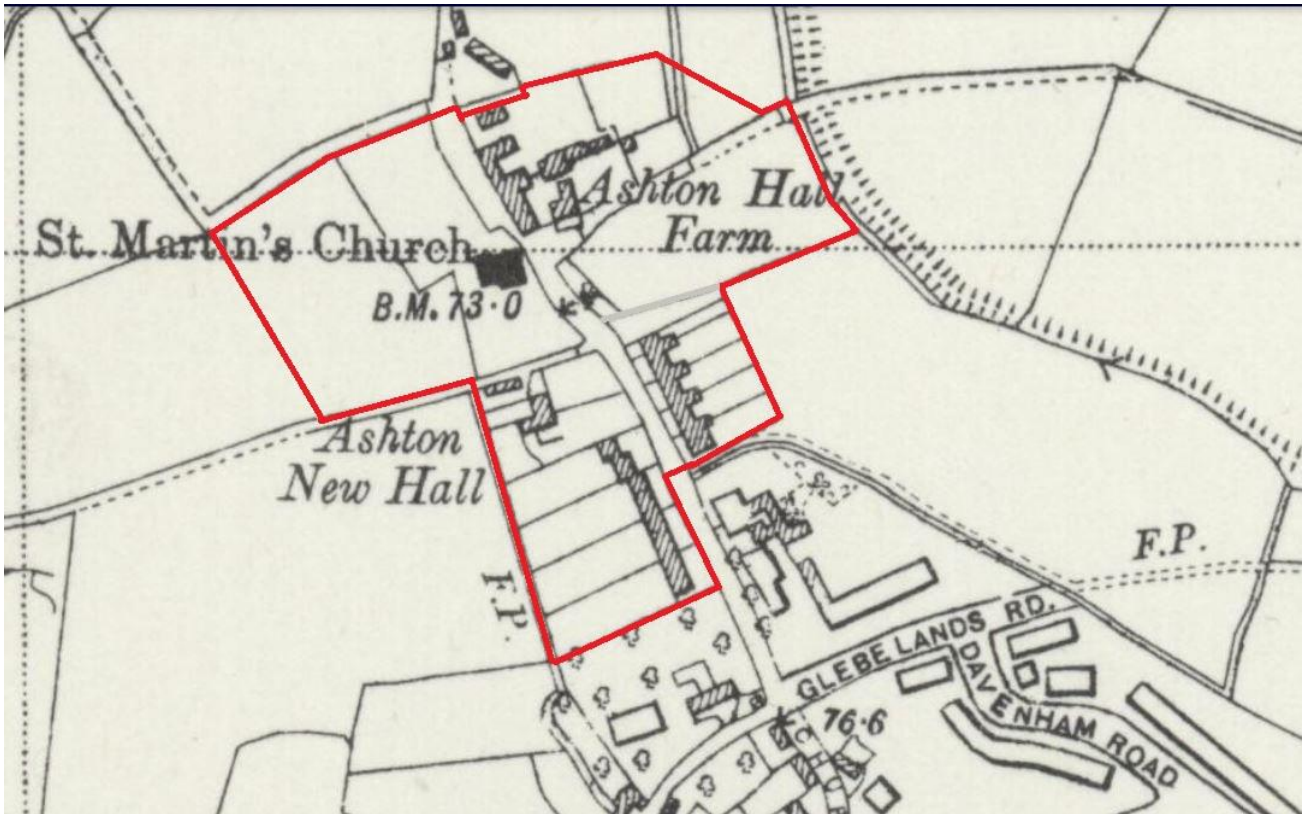


Map 7 1910 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to Prosecution or civil proceedings. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)

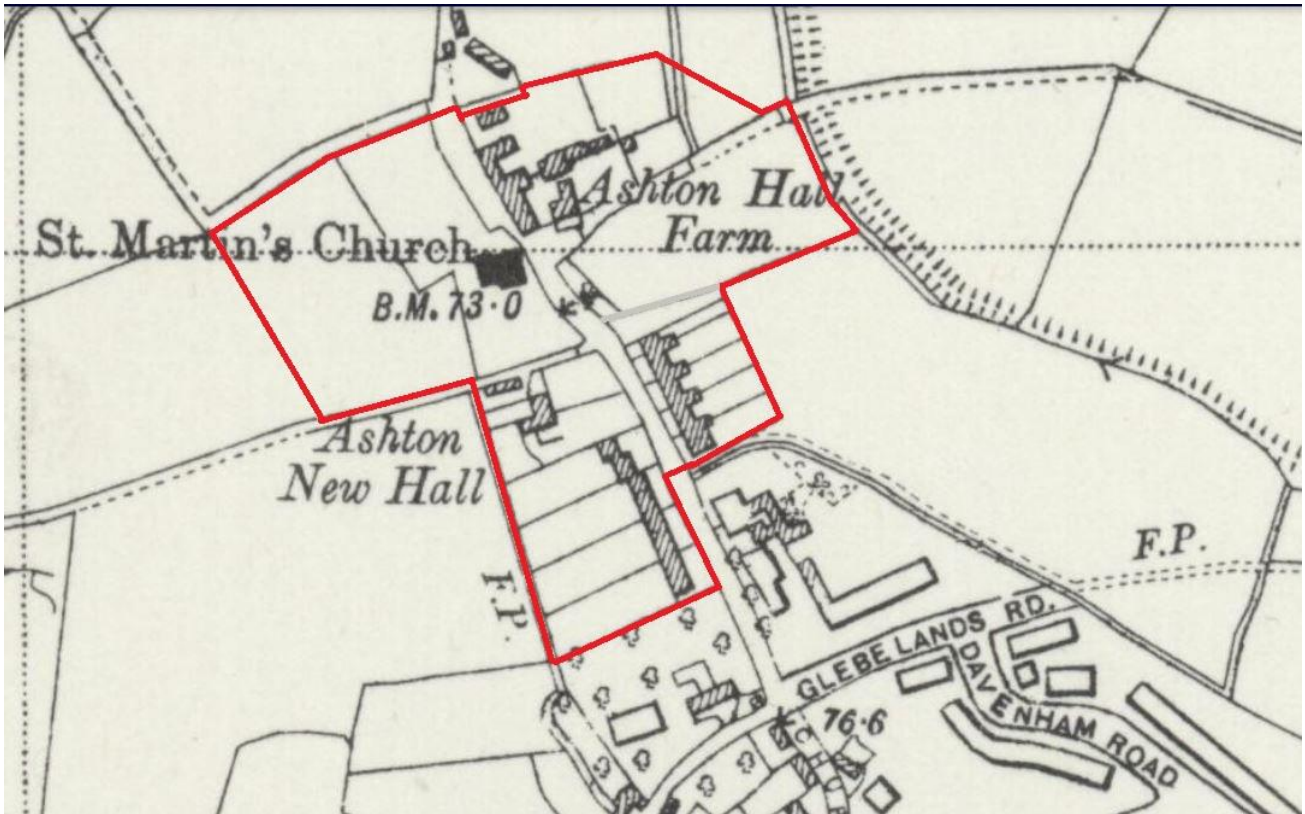




Map 8 1929 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to Prosecution or civil proceedings. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)



Map 9 1947 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from 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. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)



*Map 10 1967 – 1967 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from 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. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)*



## 4.5. Building Development Phases

- 4.5.1 St Martin's Church represents the oldest extant building within the Conservation Area, set within a Saxon burial ground, which occupies a defensive location on the south bank of the River Mersey. There was a wooden church on this site from 1304, which was replaced in stone in 1714.
- 4.5.2 By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, following construction of the Bridgewater Canal, the settlement had begun to move to the south and to the east of the church. Much of the original 18<sup>th</sup> century fabric of the church remains, for example the east and west windows. The church was originally a simple single cell church with north and south aisles and a timber bell cote.



*St. Martin's Church before the tower was built in 1887 (TL8903, Trafford Lifetimes)*



*Image of the church in 1887 following construction of the tower*



*St. Martin's Church in 1905 (TL8875, Trafford Lifetimes)*



*St. Martin's Church in 1976 (TL8869, Trafford Lifetimes)*

- 4.5.3 The Tithe map of 1836 to 1851 shows the basic layout of the settlement as it exists today, with the principle buildings of Ashton Hall Farm to the north depicted, the church to the west, Ashton New Hall below that and the Rectory further south along Church Lane. The large field below the farm is marked as an orchard. There is some evidence of strip farming to the north of the church but generally the fields are large and open.

- 4.5.4 The earliest OS map edition of 1876 also shows Ashton New Hall and the farm associated with the Old Hall to the north has been renamed Newhall Farm. It is not clear where the site of the old hall was. The F-plan farm buildings surviving today are shown on the map, as is the farmhouse to the south. The New Hall is L-shaped and exhibits the same plan form as is seen today. A substantial range to the rear is possibly stabling. Along Church Lane to the south are large open spaces, beyond which is the Rectory and the centre of the village of Ashton On Mersey including public houses and cottages.
- 4.5.5 The 1876 OS map edition shows St Martin's churchyard was much smaller and only covered the area immediately around the church to the north and to the boundary of Ashton New Hall to the south. By the 1898 OS map the boundary has extended to its current northern extent.
- 4.5.6 The 1898 OS map shows additional agricultural structures have been built at Ashton Hall Farm. The dashed line around the northern range of the F-plan barns indicates it may be in a derelict condition. Apart from the addition of the church tower and a glasshouse in the grounds of the New Hall, no other development is noted within the Conservation Area.
- 4.5.7 The 1910 OS map shows the golf course club house has been constructed and an additional range to the north of Ashton Hall Farm is either in a derelict condition or is under construction. In the 12 years since the last OS map edition, a suburban residential development on the east and west of Church Lane between the New Hall and the Rectory has been built. Date stones on the detached and semi-detached villas indicate that these were speculatively built developments and are dated to between 1898 on the west side and between 1906-1907 on the east.
- 4.5.8 Very little change occurred between 1910 and 1955, with both the 1929 and 1947 editions of the OS map showing only some residential development to the south of the Rectory. The 1955 OS map shows additional structures associated with the golf course to the north and that two northern ranges of Ashton Hall Farm are possibly derelict. No further farm buildings to the east have yet been added. The churchyard has now been extended westward to its modern extent. The main addition is an infill building at the northern end of the row of suburban dwellings, built as a new rectory to serve the church; the Old Rectory having been demolished. The 1967 OS map shows the extent of encroachment from the suburban dwellings to the south.
- 4.5.9 The Conservation Area changed significantly in the 1990s in several ways. Between 1980 and 1990 additional agricultural buildings were constructed at Ashton Hall Farm and by 2000 a new Church Hall, seating 100 people, was built at the northern end of Church Lane. The golf course club house burnt down in 1990 and a substantial new building has been constructed by 1991. The historic agricultural buildings at Ashton Hall Farm were converted into residential use in 1996 and renamed The Old Mill. Finally, the working parts of the farm to the east became the Ashton Hall Equestrian Centre and additional structures were constructed to support this use in the early-21<sup>st</sup> century.



*Entrance to Ashton Old Hall Farm (into the modern Mill development), 1980 (TL4599, Trafford Lifetimes)*



*View of Ashton Old Hall Farm, 1985 (TL4603, Trafford Lifetimes)*

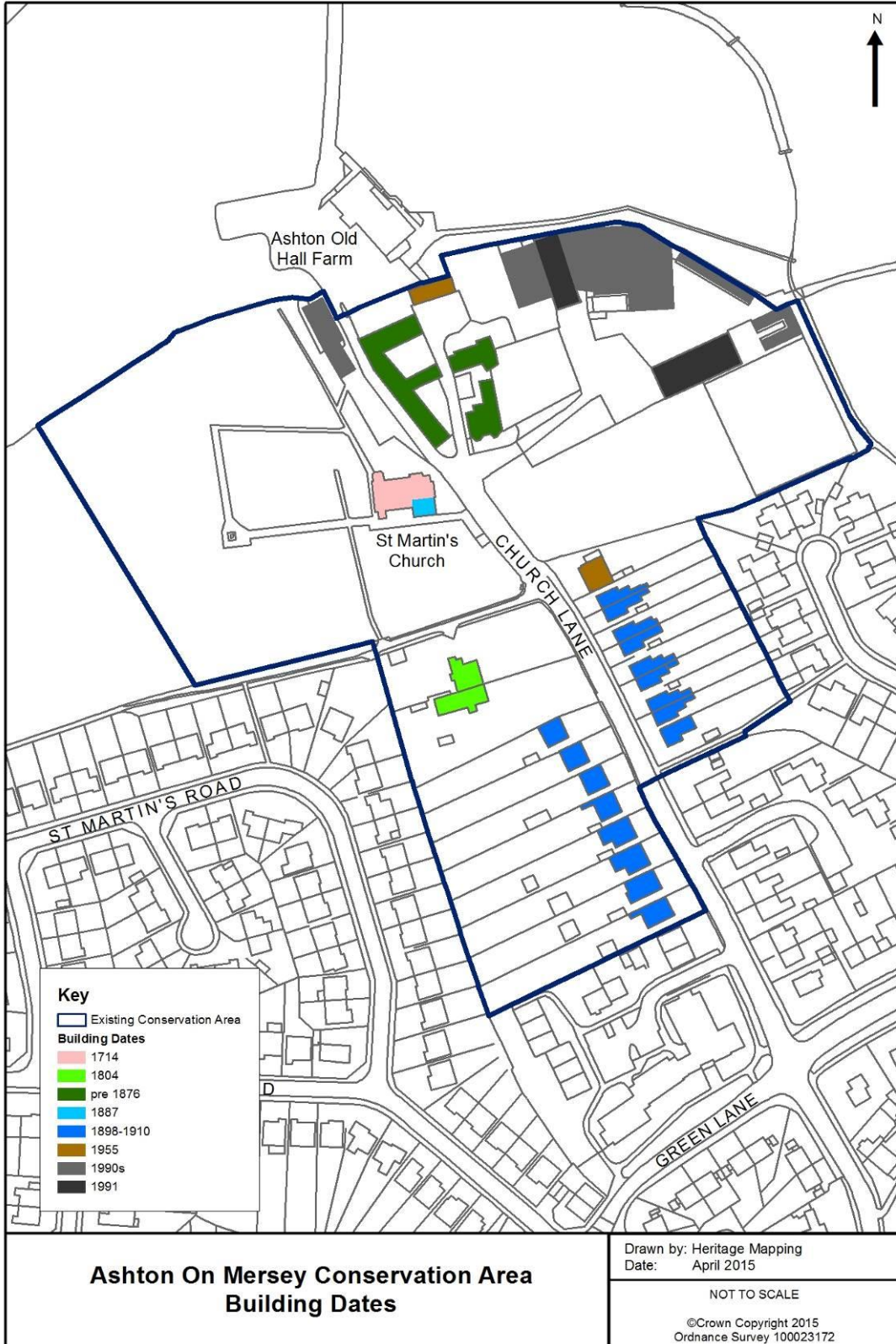


*Ashton Old Hall Farm, photographed in the 1980s from the side of the farm next to St. Martin's Church (TL4601, Trafford Lifetimes)*



*Ashton Old Hall Farm, photographed in the 1980s from the side of the farm next to St. Martin's Church (TL4600, Trafford Lifetimes)*





Map 11: Building Dates Plan

## 4.6. Archaeology

### Previous Archaeological Work

- 4.6.1 There are no known archaeological investigations that have been carried out within the boundary of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area. However, archaeological investigations were carried out by Historic England in 2009 regarding the site of a possible water mill on the banks of the River Mersey, directly north of the Conservation Area at the crossing of the A6144. Timbers were dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> century but the results were inconclusive at the time.<sup>27</sup>

### Sites of Archaeological Interest/Visible Archaeological Remains

- 4.6.2 Several sites of archaeological interest in Ashton On Mersey have been identified within the Greater Manchester Heritage Environment Record (GMHER); these are Ashton Hall Farm and the village core. The only other records for Ashton On Mersey identified within the HER are the listed buildings (see Appendix A for further information).
- 4.6.3 The GMHER states that Ashton village core has the potential for earthworks and cropmarks on the land around the church and mentions that an early initial settlement is likely to be near the stream to the east at 'Ash-tree farm'.
- 4.6.4 The Archaeological Data Service holds no records for sites within Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area.<sup>28</sup>
- 4.6.5 There are no visible archaeological remains within the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area.



*Historic centre of the settlement centred on the church and farmstead*

<sup>27</sup> N. Nayling, Historic England, A possible mill on the River Mersey, Ashton Upon Mersey: tree-ring analysis of timbers, 2009-10

<sup>28</sup> <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/browser.jsf>, accessed 07/01/2015

### **Potential for Underground Remains**

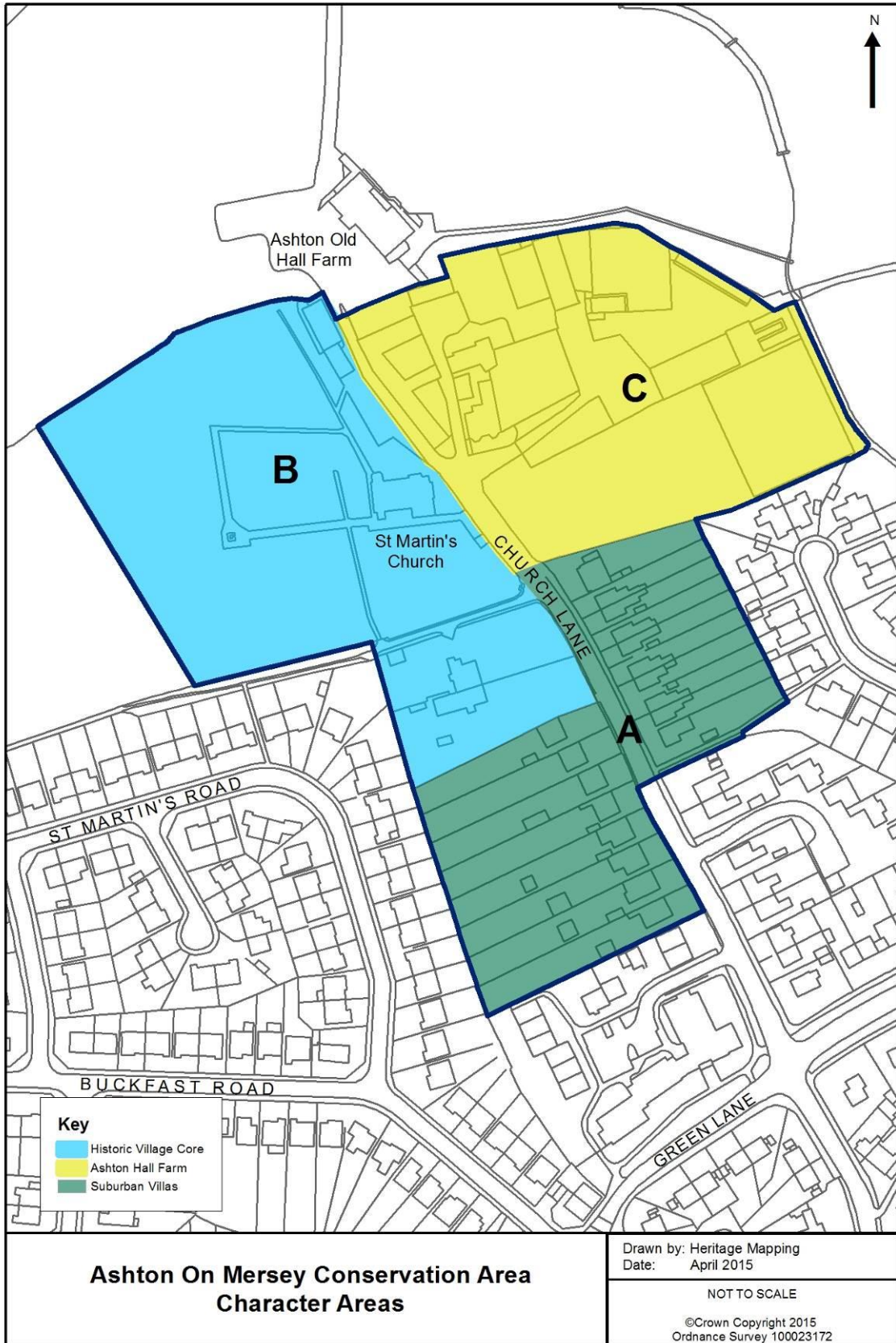
- 4.6.6 Ashton On Mersey has a long history as a settlement, which will increase the likelihood of below-ground deposits relating to the earlier structures on the site and evidence of earlier agricultural human activity. The limited development since its early settlement, current Green Belt protection and low density modern development will contribute to the possibility of archaeological finds. The creation of the golf course to the north will have had some impact on visible earthworks. The churchyard will contain significant buried remains.

## **4.7. Architectural Quality & Built Form**

### **Identification of Character Zones**

- 4.7.1 The Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area comprises of three distinct character zones:
- A: Suburban Villas
  - B: Historic Village Core
  - C: Ashton Hall Farm





Map 12: Character Zones

## **Character Zone A: Suburban Villas**

### **Present & Former Uses**

- 4.7.2 This character zone encompasses two rows of early residential dwellings on the east and west side of Church Lane that were built between 1898 and 1910 on the land between the St Martin's church to the north and the Rectory to the south.
- 4.7.3 Historically the land has been in agricultural use, associated with Ashton Hall Farm, as part of two large open fields to the east and west of Church Lane. Following construction of the houses, the character zone has remained in residential use.

### **The Buildings**

- 4.7.4 The buildings range in date from 1898 to 1910, with an additional house built as a rectory in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century at the north of the character zone to replace the Old Rectory, which was demolished to make way for further suburban housing.
- 4.7.5 The earliest buildings are Nos. 105 to 119 Church Lane on the west side, built from south to north. Nos. 105 and 107 are dated to 1898 and are simple rectangular buildings with the gable end facing the street. No. 105 has four casement windows on this gable looking out over a small front garden and a driveway to the south. The gable end is in buff header bricks with red brick quoins, string courses and window arches, with stone cills. A date stone reads 'AD Sandy Bank 1898'. The south elevation of the house has been rendered while to the rear is a long narrow garden with a small garage or shed. No. 107 is of a similar design but with red bricks to the front gable end and white detailing. The side elevations have not been rendered and are in brown brick with a white string course.
- 4.7.6 To the north of this Nos. 109 and 111 are built as a single phase in the same design; of three bays with a central door, set back behind a low brick wall, hedges and a paved front garden. No. 109 is in red brick with stone lintels and a white brick string course while No. 111 has buff header bricks with red brick quoins, string courses and window arches, with stone cills and slate roofs. The original window frames have been replaced with plastic UPVC replacements.
- 4.7.7 North of this are four houses (Nos. 113 to 119) of the same phase, each stepped back further from the road as they progress north in order to retain the open views surrounding Ashton New Hall. The houses are of three bays with a central door, constructed in red brick with segmental window openings. On the ground floor two large bay windows project outwards, creating a tiled, central porch with lattice timberwork. Nos. 113 and 115 are slightly earlier and have retained their original timber framed sash windows. Nos. 117 and 119 are built in a more orange brick and have additional detailing of stone lintels and cills, and decorative blue and white tiles. No. 117 has replacement UPVC windows while No. 119 had until recently retained its decorative diamond and lozenge leaded glazing, which has now been replaced with clear glazing. All houses have long narrow gardens to the rear and small front gardens with mature planting.
- 4.7.8 Nos. 96 to 114 Church Lane are largely semi-detached properties on the east side of the street, of which only the northern and southern-most are detached. No. 96 is the earliest

building on this side and has a date stone reading 'Ashlands 1906'. This detached dwelling is built in red brick with the gable end fronting the street, with four windows, of which one is a large bay. It is set back from the road behind a small garden with recent planting and a narrow garden to the rear. The house has modern stained glass on the ground floor.

- 4.7.9 To the north are four pairs of semi-detached houses built in 1907. Nos. 98 to 104 (two pairs) are of the same design, in red brick with white details at eaves level, segmental arches and large bay windows on the ground floor. Almost all windows are UPVC plastic replacements, some with modern stained glass and leaded glazing. Nos. 106 to 112 are also matching pairs, the only difference being that the projection above the bay windows continues over the central doors to create a porch. Almost all windows are UPVC plastic replacements.
- 4.7.10 At the northern end is No. 114, which is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century addition to the street, dating between 1947 and 1955. This building continues the theme of contrasting brickwork, seen along the street, but the projecting central gable and deep veranda is not entirely in keeping with the character and appearance of the other houses within the Conservation Area. This house was built to replace the Old Rectory although it is no longer associated with the church. It is set back from the road within a large gravelled front yard.



*Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century addition to the Conservation Area*



*Larch Villas, 1907*





*Ash Villas, 1907*



*Ashlands, 1906*



*Sandy Bank, 1898*



*Villa on the west side of Church Lane*



*Villa at the northernmost end of the character zone on the west side of Church Lane*

## Public Realm

- 4.7.11 The southern end of Church Lane is characterised by a unmarked tarmacked road with a tarmacked pavement on the east side. Low brick boundary walls in an interesting herringbone-type pattern can be seen, some of which are modern replacements. There are several large trees lining the street that are within the public spaces.
- 4.7.12 Further north, the road surface changes to a traditional stone sett. The pavement to the east remains tarmacked but there are some stone kerb stones remaining.
- 4.7.13 There is a mix of lighting used within the Character Zone, with both modern and traditional gas-lamp style lamp posts being used.



*Boundary treatments along Church Lane*



*Boundary treatments along Church Lane*



*Boundary treatments along Church Lane*



*Stocks at the corner of the churchyard on Church Lane*

### **Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees**

- 4.7.14 This Character Zone has no public open spaces but tall, mature trees lining the pavement and dense planting on the west side within front gardens gives a secluded, leafy feel to the area. The gardens to the east are less densely planted but still retain green front gardens and hedges. The majority of the open space is not visible from the street and is to the rear of the properties, characterised by long narrow gardens.



*Villas at the north end of the character zone on the west side of Church Lane*

### **Development Opportunities**

- 4.7.15 There are no opportunities for development within this character zone as the detached and semi-detached properties are built relatively close together, with minimal gaps between dwellings.

## Character Zone B: Historic Village Core

### Present & Former Uses

- 4.7.16 Character zone B encompasses the two most historic structures within the settlement; Ashton New Hall to the south and St Martin's church to the north. It also includes the listed lychgate, historic stocks within the churchyard boundary wall, the war memorial, public footpath and St Martin's Community Hall.
- 4.7.17 The fabric of St Martin's church date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century but a church on this site has been recorded from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It remains in active use as a Church of England place of worship, surrounded by extensive burial grounds that are still in use. Ashton New Hall dates to 1804 and remains in residential use. St Martin's Community Hall was built in the 1990s and is associated with the church and is used for various community activities.

### The Buildings

- 4.7.18 The church is Grade II\* listed and first recorded on the site in 1304, with a successor to this completed in 1714. The oldest fabric dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, including the mullioned windows with arched lights, the east and west windows and the double-hammerbeam roof structure. The church was restored in 1855 by Richard Tattershall and the tower with its gabled '*fancy half-timber top*' is dated to 1887 by F.H. Oldham and George Truefitt.<sup>29</sup> The tower was recently restored in 2012. The church is described in more detail in section 5.3 and in the list description in Appendix A.
- 4.7.19 The lychgate is Grade II listed and is contemporary with the church tower, dating to 1887. It leads into the churchyard from Church Lane. Pevsner describes it as '*like a pavilion with its pyramidal roof*'.<sup>30</sup> The lychgate has entrances on two sides with round timber arches. On two sides is timber-framing, painted black and white. The structure has iron gates and a tiled pyramidal roof.
- 4.7.20 Situated close to the south elevation of the church is a listed (Grade II) 18<sup>th</sup> century sundial with a baluster-type stem with acanthus decoration. To the west of the church in the centre of the churchyard is a war memorial, commemorating both World Wars. It is not listed and takes the form of a large stone cross set upon a double plinth, surrounded by curb stones and gravel. Built into a niche in the south-eastern corner of the churchyard wall are some early-19<sup>th</sup> century stocks, which date to c.1836. They were restored and re-established in this location by the Sale Civic Society in 1992.
- 4.7.21 On the north-eastern boundary of the churchyard is St Martin's Community Hall. This comprises a two storey range and a lower single storey range further north, constructed in modern red bricks in stretcher bond, with small segmental arched windows and timber frames. The slate roof drops down on the front elevation to create a porch area. The Hall is not in keeping with the historic and architectural character of the buildings around it.

<sup>29</sup> Pevsner, Lancashire: Manchester and the South East, 2004

<sup>30</sup> Pevsner, Lancashire: Manchester and the South East, 2004



4.7.22 Ashton New Hall is Grade II listed and is late Georgian, of 1804. The house is L-shaped with a service range to the rear and was split into two separate residential dwellings from as early as 1929. The front elevation is of five large bays and two storeys with a central doorway with broke pediments on columns. The building is constructed in Flemish bond in red brick, with flat arched windows. To the rear are several outbuildings although the original stable range to the north has been demolished.



*Ashton New Hall*



*The rear of Ashton New Hall*



*The tower and east end of the church*





*View of the church, south elevation*



*War memorial within the churchyard*



*1990s church hall*

## Public Realm

- 4.7.23 The boundary of the character zone runs along the western edge of Church Lane, which is described in Character Zone C. A public footpath runs between Ashton New Hall and the churchyard, which proceeds west along the northern edge of the urban boundary of Ashton On Mersey. This is largely an unsurfaced track, surrounded by high brick walls on the south side and mature hedges on the north.
- 4.7.24 Within the churchyard are several paths that run around the church and towards the footpath and war memorial. These are surfaced in block paving or gravel, while a path running south from the church is laid in 'flatstone' gravemarkers. A cobbled surface leads from the lychgate to the east end of the church.
- 4.7.25 To the north is St Martin's Community Hall, which has associated parking on block paving and stone setts, and some gravel surfaces that require maintenance.



*Footpath between Ashton New Hall and the churchyard*



*Road surfacing within the character zone*

### **Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees**

- 4.7.26 The churchyard is the largest open space within the Conservation Area and extends west from the church, with open fields beyond. The churchyard is bounded by a low brick wall where it meets Church Lane; the ground of the churchyard is at a higher level to the road below. The churchyard falls away in the north-east corner where the new Community Hall has been constructed. Within the churchyard are many historic gravemarkers, generally in the form of standing stones and crosses.
- 4.7.27 Within the churchyard are several large mature trees and the south and west boundaries contain mature hedges and trees. The area of ground to the south of the church is relatively free from gravemarkers. A strip of land to the west, within the churchyard is managed as a nature strip. The churchyard is well-maintained.
- 4.7.28 Ashton New Hall is set within extensive gardens to the front of the property, which is accessed by a sweeping tarmacked drive to the north and south. The front boundary of the property is heavily planted, creating a dense hedge that blocks views into the property from Church Lane. Suburban development on St Martin's Road to the west has encroached upon the garden, reducing the open space. High walls and mature trees block views from the Hall to the church.



*Churchyard looking west*

### **Development Opportunities**

- 4.7.29 There are no opportunities for development within this character zone.

## Character Zone C: Ashton Hall Farm

### Present & Former Uses

- 4.7.30 This Character Zone encompasses the historic entity of Ashton Old Hall Farm. This farmstead possibly has medieval origins but was well-established by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as a new model farm. The site follows the plan form of a farmhouse and various large agricultural barns centred around an enclosed courtyard. It was originally associated with Ashton Old Hall but by 1876 was renamed Newhall Farm. The farm has historically been in agricultural use alongside the associated residential farmhouse.
- 4.7.31 The farmstead was still in agricultural use in the 1980s and was known as Ashton Old Hall Farm. In the mid-1990s the agricultural buildings were converted into residential use as part of a substantial development known as The Old Mill. These buildings remain in residential use today.
- 4.7.32 To the west, the modern agricultural buildings remain in use as part of an equestrian centre.

### The Buildings

- 4.7.33 This Character Zone encompasses a large area to the north-west of the Conservation Area comprising a residential development on the site of the historic Ashton Hall Farm, the modern equestrian centre to the west and the large field to the south.
- 4.7.34 The most prominent building on the site is the historic farmhouse. This retains its historic plan form as seen in the 1830s-50s Tithe map and 1876 OS map, although the two substantial bay windows are likely to be late-19<sup>th</sup> century additions. The house is three bay, with two double-height bay windows projections, with a slate roof and a slate-hung side wall. Constructed in Flemish bond brick, the house has stone lintels and stone quoins. The windows are all plastic modern replacements and the front elevation appears to have been rebuilt since the 1980s (see historic photographs in section 4.3). The historic front boundary wall and iron railings have been replaced. To the west of the farmhouse is a large private garden with mature planting.
- 4.7.35 The historic agricultural buildings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century model farm are mainly to the west of the site, north of the farmhouse. As the farm developed, more structures were built further north and east, enclosed within a large courtyard. Not until the 1990s did the agricultural buildings extend outwards to the west, with the establishment of the equestrian centre.
- 4.7.36 The Old Mill is a residential development of converted agricultural structures and barns associated with the historic Ashton Hall Farm.<sup>31</sup> The main F-plan range runs along the edge of Church Lane to the west of the farmhouse. There is also a garage range and a central detached barn range, all enclosed within the courtyard. The buildings are characterised by simple, long brick ranges under pitched slate roofs, with a significant number of inserted windows and doors associated with the new domestic use and the

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<sup>31</sup> It is not immediately clear why the development was named The Old Mill. Stromford Brook runs to the north-east but is some distance from the farmstead. There is also likely to have been a medieval water mill on the banks of the River Mersey to the north, but this has little connection to the 19<sup>th</sup> century structures.

offshoot ranges at right angles reflect the planned use of the barns for different purposes. Its simple rustic form within a rural setting can still be read to an extent.

- 4.7.37 The west elevation of the long F-plan range runs under a single pitched slate roof and is constructed in brick. A straight line joint to the north indicates a second phase of development. The range has front doors and newly inserted windows, all under segmental arches in modern orange brick. A new timber loading bay-type projection has been added, as have several round windows on the second floor. Comparisons of this range with 1980s photographs of the original agricultural buildings show how much these have changed following conversion. None of the current window openings appear to correspond with historic openings. Buttressing and loading doors have also been lost. The change is substantial and much of the original agricultural character has been significantly altered following rebuilding and alteration.
- 4.7.38 The north range that projects at right angles to the western range has also been significantly altered, with historic door and window openings removed and replaced with different openings in a much more domestic character. A balcony at first floor level on the north elevation is residential in character and further new loading gables and round windows have been inserted.
- 4.7.39 Inside The Old Mill courtyard the F-plan range now has round windows at first floor level and newly inserted window and door openings, along with projecting timber and slate porches. The character is very domestic.
- 4.7.40 The central range projecting at right angles is also converted from a historic range. Originally this had few openings, which has largely been respected; a single window has been replaced by a small roundel. The attractive agricultural character of the roof, with huge slate tiles, has been retained.
- 4.7.41 An historic central barn range has also been converted into residential use, in the same style as the ranges described above. For example, a large barn opening on the ground floor has been replaced with a pair of French doors. Historically this range extended further to the east but has been reduced in size. To the rear of the development is a covered garage structure. This is possibly a modern rebuild of a structure of a similar size shown on the 1955 OS map.
- 4.7.42 To the west of the Character Zone is the equestrian centre, which comprises a large yard area surrounded by modern agricultural structures and stabling. All these structures are late-20<sup>th</sup> century; the two long ranges are shown on the 1991 OS map while the other larger structures have been added since then. These are agricultural structures on a large scale, some are lightweight timber or metal-framed constructions and others are of brick.





*West elevation of the Mill development along Church Lane*



*View south along Church Lane from the Mill development*



*The rebuilt north end of the Mill development*



*The southern end of the Mill development*



*Ashton Hall Farmhouse*



*View of the northern range of the Mill development*



*The farm to the east of the character zone*

## Public Realm

- 4.7.43 This Character Zone encompasses the northern end of Church Lane, which is paved in stone setts of various dates; those at the northern end being older. There are also areas of stone cobbles. The road surfaces are rural in character but very dirty in wet weather and the surface disintegrates into hard packed earth towards the equestrian centre. Large potholes and damage to the setts is common. The surfaces within The Old Mill development are tarmacked and more residential in character. The courtyard is tarmacked and block paved, with small strips of lawn, gravelled areas and neat, low hedges.



*Paving at the north end of Church Lane*



*Paving east of Church Lane in front of the farm*



*View into the Mill development*



### Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 4.7.44 To the south of the farm and east of the church are two fields in use relating to the equestrian centre. The field to the south that is included within the Conservation Area is partly pasture and partly in use as a paddock; it is the largest open space within the Character Zone. Views open out eastwards towards the open fields beyond.
- 4.7.45 The residential development of The Old Mall has compact areas of young tree planting and neat hedges, and some private gardens. The largest garden is associated with the historic farmhouse. There is some mature tree planting around the boundary of this at the entrance to the equestrian centre.
- 4.7.46 The Character Zone is bounded to the north by the Ashton On Mersey golf course and to the east by open fields.



*View across the orchard*



*View north towards the River Mersey and the golf course*

## Development Opportunities

4.7.47 There are no opportunities for development.

## 4.8. Landmarks & Key Views

4.8.1 There are four buildings within the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area that are considered to be landmark buildings; St Martin's church, the lychgate, Ashton Hall Farmhouse and the west F-plan range of The Old Mill development. The farmhouse and historic F-plan range of Ashton Hall Farm are highly visible when travelling north along Church Lane and are a good example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century model farm. They are representative of the rural character of the historic settlement. St Martin's church and associated lychgate are also highly visible from this central area, and are raised above the level of the road, making them even more prominent.

4.8.2 Views west across the churchyard towards the open fields beyond are significant. The flat landscape is bound by a mature hedge to the west but during the winter months wide views out across the fields are visible. Views across to the church from the footpath are also significant, as are views within the centre of the settlement, looking west towards the church and to the east across the open field.

4.8.3 Views along Church Lane to the north and the south within Character Zone A are significant and have a leafy suburban feel. Further north, the road opens out with green spaces on either side to form the central space of the settlement. From here, views towards the golf course club house offer glimpses of the rural character beyond while views into the enclosed courtyard of the farmstead are more confined.



*Villas along the east of Church Lane*



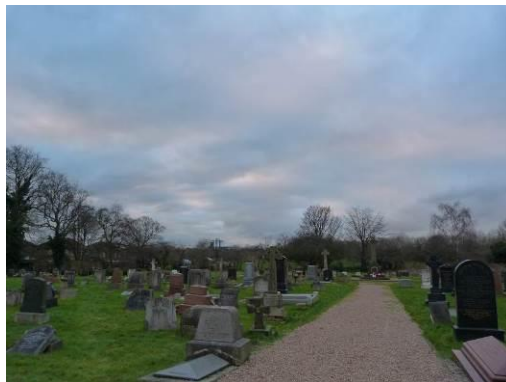
*View south along Church Lane*



*View north along Church Lane*



*View east towards the farm*



*View across the churchyard to the west*



*View of the church, south elevation*

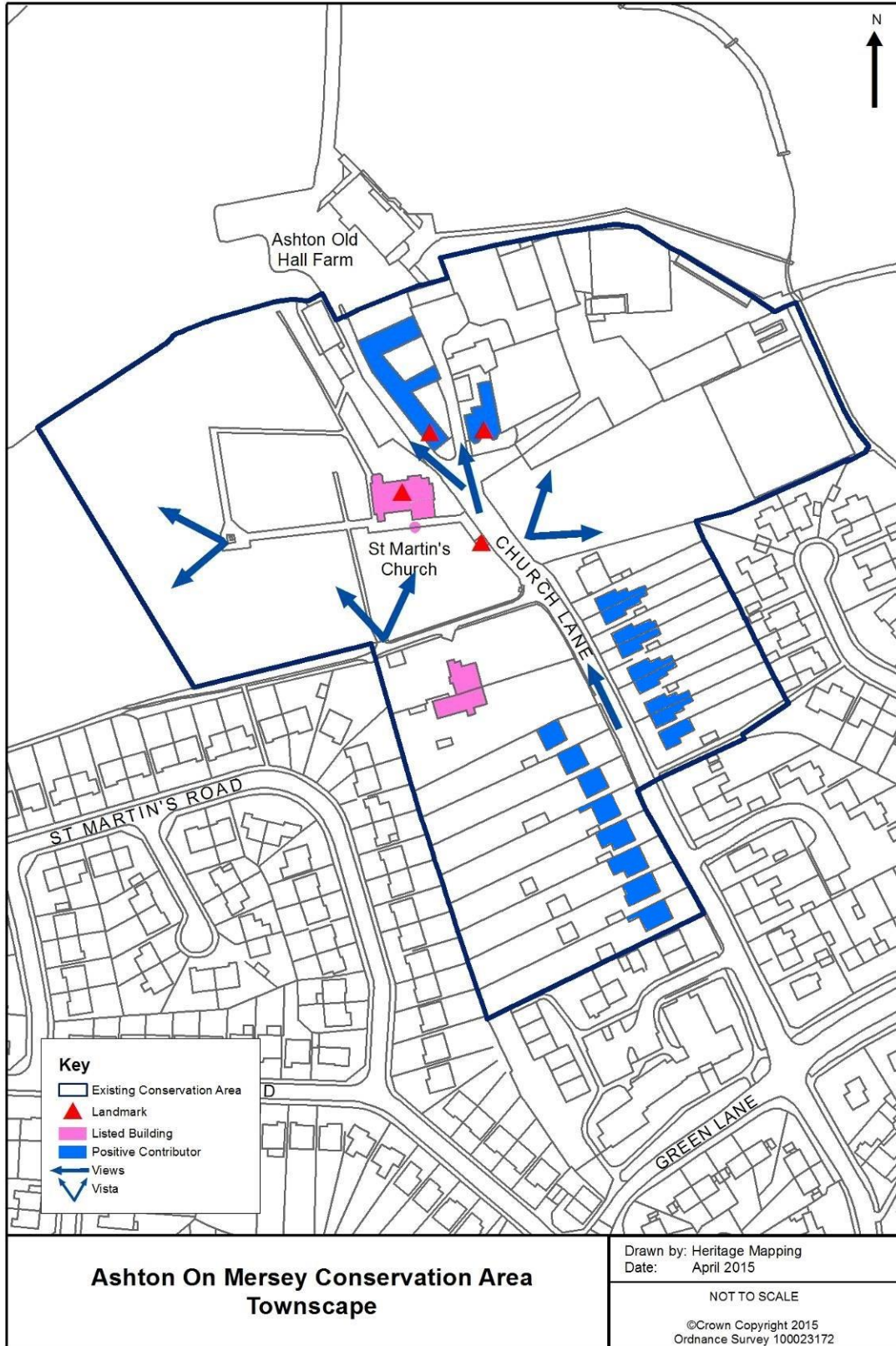
## 4.9. Local Details

- 4.9.1 The use of local stone for the construction of St Martin's church is distinctive. The 18<sup>th</sup> century main body of the church and the 19<sup>th</sup> century additions are built in two different sandstones.
- 4.9.2 The use of timber-framing on the church and lychgate is typical of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Arts and Crafts movement but is not seen elsewhere within the Conservation Area. Other Arts and Crafts motifs are seen on the houses along Church Lane such as terracotta and glazed decorative tiles, decorative joinery and leaded or stained glass. However, a characteristic of the area is the simple designs of the houses and the minimal use of decorative features compared to other suburban villas in the Trafford area.
- 4.9.3 Common local details include the use of just header or stretchers bond, prominent gable ends, brick herringbone boundary walls, stone setts and kerb stones, and slate roofs or wall coverings.



*Detail on the south porch of the church*





Map 13: Townscape Analysis

## 5. AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

### 5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1 A basic audit has been undertaken of heritage assets within the Conservation Area. These include listed buildings and those which make a positive contribution, which are referred to as Positive Contributors. The standing properties have in most cases been assessed from the street scene to determine their current condition. Please note that the heritage asset description is principally to aid identification and is not intended to provide a comprehensive or exclusive record of all the features of significance. The amount of information varies greatly and absence of any feature external or internal does not, therefore, indicate that it is not of interest. Any evidence relating to a heritage asset, which may present itself since the time of survey will also be taken into account during the course of a planning application.
- 5.1.2 This assessment has been undertaken using the criteria of the Historic England at Risk Register condition assessment: very bad, poor, fair and good.<sup>32</sup>

### 5.2. Listed Buildings

- 5.2.1 Listed buildings are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for their special architectural or historic interest. Listing gives them protection as alterations, additions or demolitions are controlled by listed building consent, which is required by local planning authorities when change is proposed. Listing ranges from Grade I (the highest level of protection) through to II\* and II.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/imported-docs/f-j/key-to-entries-on-the-register.pdf>, accessed 07/01/2015



## Church of St Michael



**Date:** 1714, 1887

**Condition:** Good

**Grade:** II\*

Pevsner described St Martin's church as '*a strange composition and very powerful*'. The earliest fabric of the church dates to 1714 when it was rebuilt for Joshua Allen. The baptistery was added in 1874 by W.H. Brakspear and the tower was added in 1887 by George Truefitt for Sir Williams Cunliffe Brooks as part of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee celebrations.

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The church has a wide nave with a south porch, north baptistery, west gallery, chancel, vestry and organ chamber. Many of the 18<sup>th</sup> century features that have survived are late-17<sup>th</sup> century in style, for example, the hammerbeam roof and the 3-light chamfered mullion windows with semi-circular heads. The tower is of ashlar with timber-framing, graduated slate and clay tiles and dates to 1887 (along with the south porch and lychgate). The tower also has a large clock and elaborate weather-vane. It was restored in 2012, having previously been on the Historic England at Risk Register. Internally the church has a 16<sup>th</sup> century octagonal font and an 18<sup>th</sup> century baluster-type font. The church retains a studded batten door that may date from the former 14<sup>th</sup> century church. The interior of the church has featured on television shows such as Coronation Street and Shameless.

### Lychgate at St Martin's Church



**Date:** 1887

**Condition:** Good

**Grade:** II

Lychgate of 1887 by George Truefitt for Sir Williams Cunliffe Brooks as part of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee celebrations. The structure is set on a brick plinth with timber-framing and a clay tile roof. It has a square plan form with a dog-leg passage. Two sides have large semi-circular timber arches, two of which are vertically studded. All have pierced roundel bands just below eaves. The roof is pyramidal. Cast iron gates.

### Sundial at St Martin's Church



**Date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century

**Condition:** Fair

**Grade:** II

The sundial is situated to the south of the church and is thought to be early-19<sup>th</sup> century. The sundial has a copper dial and gnomon, and baluster-type shaft with enriched band on a circular base with nosings.

**125 & 127 Church Lane (Ashton New Hall)**



**Date:** c.1804

**Condition:** Fair

**Grade:** II

Ashton New Hall is thought to date to 1804 and is now divided into two residential dwellings. The house is of two storeys and five bays in a double-pile plan with porches added to the left and right gables. The central door is an 8-panel door with 3/4 columns, an open pediment and fanlight with radial bars. The windows have 12-pane sashes. The interior retains some plasterwork, cornices, ceilings and window shutters.

### 5.3. Positive Contributors

- 5.3.1 The term positive contributor identifies a non-designated heritage asset which makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. These buildings, structures and sites are classed as heritage assets as they are identified by the local authority as having a degree of significance, meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest.<sup>33</sup> A single building, group or landmark can be classed as a positive contributor. Identification within the appraisal focuses primarily on a building or structure and does not necessarily take in account the positive contribution made also by landscaping, spaciousness and other historic structures within the curtilage or setting of positive contributors. These characteristics amongst others must also be taken into account during the decision making process. Where a building, structure or site is not identified in the appraisal as a positive contributor, this does not necessarily mean the building detracts from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Further enhancement may be required or investigation into the potential significance of the building, structure or site.
- 5.3.2 These elements have been assessed with reference to Historic England criteria set out in their document *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*, paragraph 2.2.21.<sup>34</sup> The criteria are listed in appendix D.
- 5.3.3 The suburban villas along Church Lane have been assessed for inclusion as positive contributors to the Conservation Area. No single villa stands out as a particularly good example of the building type and the group as a whole has been subject to alteration that has somewhat reduced their value. Therefore none have been specifically included in this section.

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<sup>33</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*. (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012).

<sup>34</sup> Historic England, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (London: Historic England, 2011) para 2.2.21

## Ashton Hall Farmhouse



**Date:** Pre-1876

**Condition:** Good

The farmhouse associated with Ashton Hall Farm pre-dates the first edition 1876 OS map but is not explicitly marked on the 1777 map of Ashton On Mersey. It is first seen in the 1830s-50s Tithe map, with a similar plan form to the extant buildings today. The farmhouse is a key landmark within the Conservation Area and is a positive contributor as one of the significant historic structures within the settlement that illustrates its rural and agricultural character. The slate-hung west wall is an interesting local feature and its relationship with the historic agricultural ranges is of value. It also positively contributes to the setting of the listed church to the west and through its historical associations with the listed Ashton New Hall. It represents a significant element in the traditional hall, church and farmstead arrangement that is exhibited within the Conservation Area.



## Ashton Hall Farm buildings



**Date:** Pre-1876

**Condition:** Good

The farm buildings were described in 1994 before conversion to residential use:

*'4 irregularly-shaped buildings almost opposite St Martin's Church. OS 1938 25", named as "Ashton Hall Farm". Buildings immediately adjacent to Church Lane have been altered, either foreshortened or extended. 2 additional buildings appear on OS 1938 map slightly NW of farm. R-hand of these is marked "Club-House" on modern OS 1:10,000. Brick & slate F-shaped building on corner site close to church. 2-storeys, ridge roof, no chimneys. Outbuilding. Stable block, barn, 6- bays. Blocked door & window. 2<sup>nd</sup> barn: diamond vents.'*<sup>35</sup>

The F-plan range of agricultural buildings to the west of the farm is first seen in the 1830s-50s Tithe map. It is significant as an early-19<sup>th</sup> century model farm and key historic structure within the settlement that illustrates its rural and agricultural character. It is also significant for its relationship to the original farmhouse of Ashton Hall Farm and its visual association with the listed church. The agricultural buildings were converted to residential use in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century, which has considerably altered the character of the buildings through the addition of domestic features such as windows, doors, porches and gardens. While conversion has probably saved the buildings from long-term decline, some of their historic character has been lost. Nevertheless, historic use can still be read from their plan form and some surviving features and the ranges represent a positive contribution to the character and appearance to the Conservation Area.

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<sup>35</sup> Greater Manchester Heritage Environment Record



## 6. ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION

### 6.1. General Condition

- 6.1.1 The majority of buildings within the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area are well maintained and in good order. There are some isolated issues of delaminating stonework, and areas of boundary walls and cobbling which are in poor order.

### 6.2. Intrusion and Negative Factors

#### Individual Properties

- 6.2.1 Properties to the south of Church Lane are generally in a good condition, the main concerns being the condition of the boundary walls, the maintenance of driveways, the loss of front gardens to parking and the replacement of original windows with UPVC plastic frames. Many of the principle ground floor bay windows have survived, particularly on the western side of the street, but many have been replaced. Original glazing, some with leaded lights, has been replaced with modern alternatives, such as modern stained glass or leaded glazing. The cills have sometimes been painted, which is now peeling. There is delamination to some date stones and one truncated chimney. There is cementitious ribbon pointing to No. 115.
- 6.2.2 The church is generally in a good condition and the churchyard is well-maintained. However, there is delaminating masonry in multiple locations, including to the tower. The Baptistry has moved away from the main building but appears stable now. There is heavy moss build up below the east and west windows. There are multiple slipped, damaged and missing ties to the south porch roof. The top of the tower has recently been refurbished and is in good order. The timber lychgate at the entrance to the churchyard appears sound, though there is heavy moss build up to the roof.



*Delaminated sandstone to church tower*

- 6.2.3 Minor intrusions to the church, such as the glazed aluminium projection above the vestry door, are not in keeping with the high-quality of the architecture around it. The use of polycarbonate protective sheeting to the windows on the east elevation of the church is inappropriate. Although this offers a level of protection from damage it has a detrimental impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 6.2.4 The stocks were restored in 1992 but are now in a poor condition with the railings needing painting and the area behind requiring clearing of debris.
- 6.2.5 The remarkably domestic character of The Old Mill development within the farmyard is at odds with the historic agricultural character of Ashton Hall Farm.
- 6.2.6 Ashton Old Hall Farm has been heavily modernised, with two full height bay windows added, all casements replaced in UPVC and the gable wall clad with slates. Two chimney stacks have been rendered and this is starting to fail. There is one original chimney pot left. Stone quoins to front elevation are delaminating in some locations. Various outbuildings have been converted to residential use, with some sympathetic new builds and extensions. These are all well maintained.



*Delaminated stone quoin to Old Hall Farmhouse*

- 6.2.7 The Equestrian Centre to the east consists of a number of single storey agricultural buildings, though access not permitted to inspect their condition.



*Inappropriate detailing on the church*

## Open Spaces and Areas

- 6.2.8 Church Lane is surfaced in a variety of different materials, the main ones being tarmac to the south and stone setts to the north. The tarmac is unmarked and in a fair condition; however, driveways are often in need of maintenance. The stone setts to the north are centred around the historic core of the settlement and are in a poor condition with localised dips with ponding occurring and build up of dirt on surfaces.



*Uneven and partially covered stone sett surface*

- 6.2.9 Boundary treatments to the south of Church Lane vary (brick, stone walls, timber fences and hedges) and are also in need of maintenance and repair. Front gardens are raised above the level of the road and low boundary walls in herringbone pattern brick are loose and require consolidation. Some copings are missing. Inappropriate paving slabs have been used as retaining walls and coping stones in places.
- 6.2.10 There is heavy moss build up and vegetation to the stone wall at the front of the Old Hall and graffiti to the brickwork boundary wall at the side.
- 6.2.11 The church boundary wall is partially pointed in cement. There are areas of spalled brickwork and heavy moss build up.

## Intrusive Development

- 6.2.12 St Martin's Community Hall to the north of Church Lane is a modern addition to the Conservation Area. While its position along Church Lane is in keeping with the plan form of the area, the quality of architecture and the materials used is inappropriate. The building takes no design cues from its surroundings and jars with the historic paving and surrounding buildings, including the listed church.
- 6.2.13 Late-20<sup>th</sup> century sheltered housing on the southern edge of the Church Lane is outside the Conservation Area but is within its setting. These residential buildings are not in keeping with the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and do not relate successfully to their surroundings.
- 6.2.14 The modern building to the west of the farm is not of suitable quality for a Conservation Area. The buildings located within the equestrian centre also appeared to be of unsuitable quality where visible.

- 6.2.15 At the northern end of Church Lane is the Ashton On Mersey golf course and Club House, both of which are outside the Conservation Area boundary. While the golf course itself is historic, the club house replaces the earlier timber structure that was destroyed by fire in the 1990s. The replacement structure is a large brick pitched roof structure with end gables. There is a large glass entrance porch on the principle elevation. The scale and design of the club house is somewhat at odds with its position within the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area.



*Modern development outside the Conservation Area*



*1990s Club House*

### **6.3. Problems, Pressures and Capacity for Change**

- 6.3.1 Planning applications relating to the Conservation Area are generally householder applications, such as extensions to existing properties. The most substantial recent application related to a first floor addition to the garages within The Old Mill development, which was refused on appeal.
- 6.3.2 The majority of alterations that have occurred to residential dwellings are window replacements, which are often in inappropriate materials such as UPVC. The houses retain some original features of interest, such as decorative tiles, leaded glazing and joinery; there is a concern that the loss of these will erode the character of the Conservation Area. Replacement of front gardens with driveways and parking is also a concern at the lower end of Church Lane.

- 6.3.3 Several applications relating to the golf course include an application to externally extend the existing lounge area of the club house and to extend the golf course further into surrounding paddock. The equestrian centre has also applied for permission to demolish and rebuild various stable blocks.
- 6.3.4 The Conservation Area is compact and there is little opportunity for development within it.
- 6.3.5 The principle opportunity for enhancement within the Conservation Area arises from the need to repair the traditional road surfaces in the centre of the settlement and to the north of Church Lane. The stone setts and cobbles are in a poor condition and would benefit from a cohesive maintenance scheme.



## 7. IDENTIFYING THE BOUNDARY

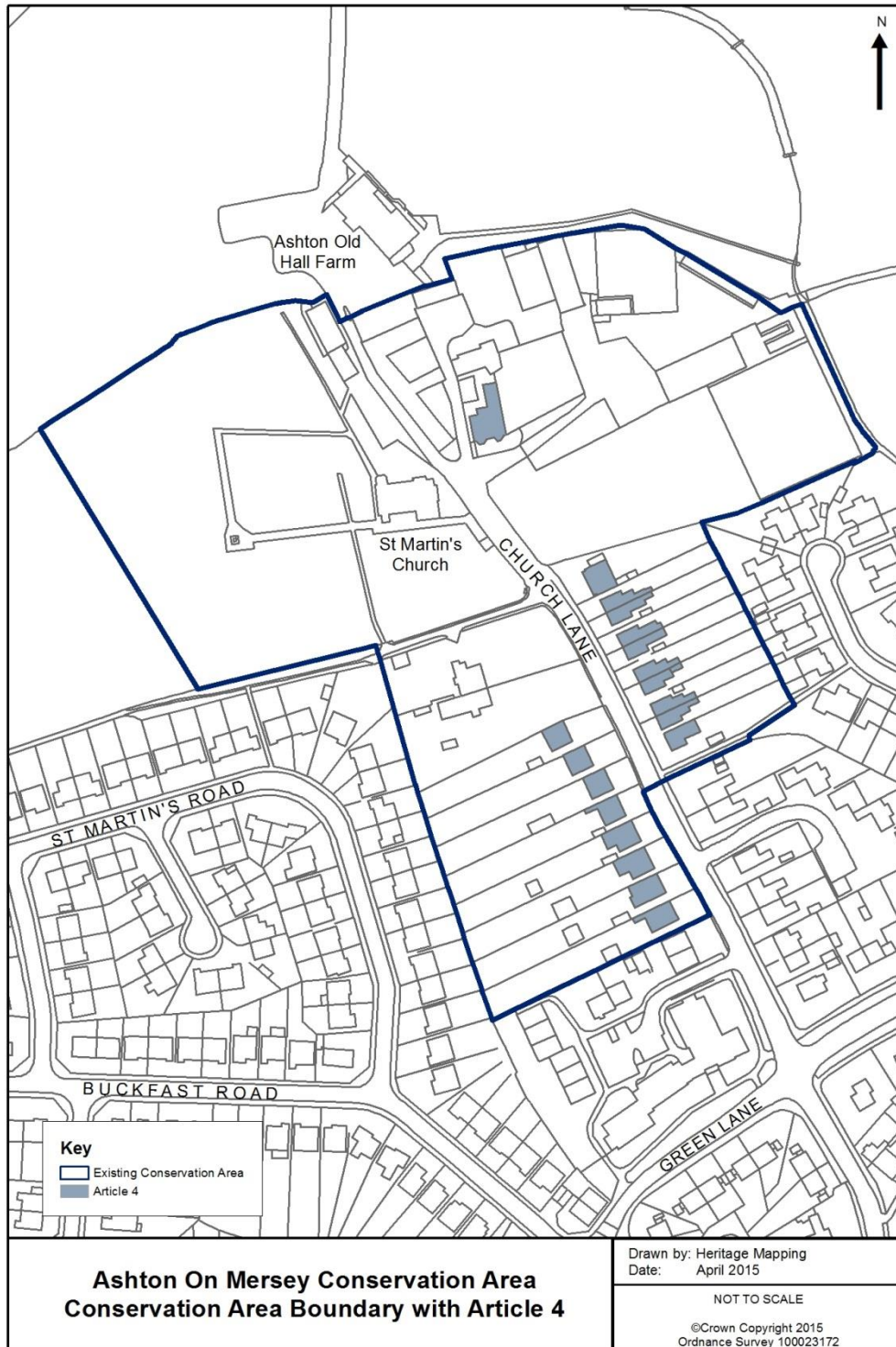
- 7.1.1 The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, the NPPF and best practice guidance produced by Historic England all state that the boundaries of existing conservation areas should be reviewed from time to time. Parts which are no longer of special interest should be excluded. Where drawn too tightly, the conservation area should be extended to include more recent phases or plots associated with buildings of historic interest.
- 7.1.2 It is now recognised that conservation area boundaries need to be seen within a wider context of urban development. Designated areas should provide protection to buildings that were perhaps not previously considered to be of architectural merit and to the spaces between buildings, such as streets and neutral areas. It is also the case that further information can come to light about the historic importance of buildings and spaces.
- 7.1.3 Taking this into account, the boundary of the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area has been assessed for any potential revisions. The current boundary of the Conservation Area has been drawn to encompass the early settlement core, centred on the historic church, farmstead and hall. The historic plan form has been eroded considerably to the south as the suburban housing of Ashton On Mersey developed over the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To the north the Conservation Area is bound by the modern golf course landscaping. To the east and west are open fields, which are protected by Green Belt designation. There is some argument to include the golf course club house within the boundary as an historic site; however, the structures are entirely new and do not fit into the narrative of the historic settlement core. On this basis, there are no proposed boundary alterations to be suggested.

## 8. A PLAN FOR FURTHER ACTION

8.1.1 Below is a list of the key issues within the area which need to be addressed and action points for improvement. These will be expanded on with management policies in the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area Management Plan.

- Intrusive additions and alterations to heritage assets can impact on significance and ultimately will result in a cumulative effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Alterations include replacement windows and doors of inappropriate design and material, rainwater goods, rooflights, dormers, erection of boundary treatment, wiring and ventilation. The replacement of traditional materials such as slate or clay tiles, leadwork, cast iron rainwater goods, masonry and joinery and replacement with composite materials can diminish the quality and distinctiveness which heritage assets provide.
- Work with local estate agents to ensure that they are aware of the Conservation Area designation and that they pass this on to purchasers of property within the area.
- An Article 4 direction is recommended as an appropriate way to address issues with loss of traditional features. In the Ashton on Mersey Conservation Area this would cover windows, doors, fanlights and boundary walls for the buildings listed below and shown on map 14 (page 68). Further detail will be provided in the forthcoming Management Plan.
  - 105-119 Church Lane
  - 96-114 Church Lane
  - Ashton Hall Farmhouse
- The War Memorial in the churchyard could be a candidate for listing. Its history and significance should be explored further in order to determine whether it should be formally put forward to Historic England.
- Additional first floors or large extensions to The Old Mill residential development would have a negative impact on the rustic simplicity of the converted agricultural buildings and its historic plan form, and should be avoided.
- Work with householders along Church Lane to retain or reinstate traditional boundary treatments and work towards a more coherent strategy. Consider ways of tackling the conversion of front gardens to parking and driveways, such as an Article 4 Direction.
- Carry out a repair and maintenance scheme to the northern element of the paving on Church Lane to ensure the traditional stone setts and cobbles retained and the character of the settlement is not eroded.
- There is little scope for development within this compact Conservation Area. Any proposed new development or alterations should be of a high-quality design and reflect the special characteristics of the different character zones.
- Avoid further extensions of the golf course and uses relating to the equestrian centre from encroaching into the setting of the Conservation Area to the north and east.
- Work with St Martin's church to replace the polycarbonate window sheeting on the east windows with something more appropriate such as window grilles or protective glazing.
- The green spaces and mature trees along Church Lane should be retained in order to maintain the leafy character of the area.

- Work with local landowners to ensure the open spaces such as the churchyard and adjacent field remain well-maintained.



**Map 14: Conservation Area Boundary Extensions and Exclusions, including potential Article 4 Directions**

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## Appendix A: Listed Building Descriptions

**Name: Church of St Martin**

**List entry Number:** 1067893

**Grade:** II\*

**Date first listed:** 1966

Church. 1714 for Joshua Allen with baptistery of 1874 by W.H. Brakspear and tower of 1887 by George Truefitt for Sir Williams Cunliffe Brooks. Ashlar and timber framing with graduated slate and clay tile roofs. Wide nave with west gallery, south porch, north baptistery and chancel with adjoining tower and vestry to south, organ chamber to north. 4-bay nave with porch (largely of 1887) in bay 1 in the same style as the tower top. The other bays have 3-light chamfered mullion windows with semi-circular heads in a C17 manner. The bold square tower has a projecting plinth, 3 casement windows at low level, datestone and a timber-framed clock stage, most of the panels being open. It has a clock face, gables on each side with moulded barge boards and is crowned by an elaborate weather-vane. The east and west windows are of 4 and 5 lights with intersecting tracery. The octagonal baptistery with pyramidal roof is in a more conventional post-Puginian Victorian Gothic style. There is a series of headstones attached to the south wall dating from 1644. Interior: chancel panelled with box pew ends. Double hammer beam roof with convex curved wind braces, probably of 1714. C16 octagonal front wrongly inscribed 1304, on C20 shaft. C18 baluster-type font. Studded batten door from former church (probably 1304). There has been a church on the site since 850 AD and the site was a Saxon burial ground. R. Richards, Old Cheshire Churches, 1973.

Listing NGR: SJ7723892993

National Grid Reference: SJ 77238 92993

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

**Name: Sundial at St. Martin's Church**

**List entry Number:** 1356527

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 1985

Sundial. Early C19. Stone with copper dial and gnomon. Baluster type shaft with enriched band on a circular base with nosings.

Listing NGR: SJ7724592981

National Grid Reference: SJ 77245 92981

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>



**Name: Lychgate at St. Martin's Church**

**List entry Number:** 1101520

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 1985

Lychgate. 1887. George Truefitt for Sir Williams Cunliffe Brooks. Brick plinth, timber framed with clay tile roof. Square plan with dogleg passage. 2 sides have large semi-circular timber arches, 2 are vertically studded. All have pierced roundel bands just below eaves. The roof is pyramidal. Cast iron gates.

Listing NGR: SJ7726692976

National Grid Reference: SJ 77266 92976

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

**Name: 125 & 127, Church Lane (Ashton New Hall)**

**List entry Number:** 1101537

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 1966

House, now 2 houses. 1804. Flemish bond brick, slate roof. 2 storeys, 5 bays, double-pile plan with porches added to left and right gables. Stone plinth, modillion eaves cornice, gable stacks. Central 8-panel door with 3/4 columns, open pediment and fanlight with radial bars. The 12-pane sash windows (9 in total) have stone sills and cambered brick arches. There is an arched stair window to left gable. The interior retains some plasterwork cornices, ceilings and window shutters.

Listing NGR: SJ7726092919

National Grid Reference: SJ 77260 92919

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

## **Appendix B: Contacts**

### **Trafford Council Contacts**

General development control enquiries concerning the Ashton On Mersey Conservation Area should be referred to Development Control. Telephone: 0161 912 3149

Enquiries relating to trees within the Conservation Area should be addressed to the Local Planning Authority's Arboricultural Officer. Telephone: 0161 912 3199

Enquiries relating to accessing Historic Environment Records, archaeological planning advice, and charges, where appropriate, should be addressed to the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, University of Salford, Centre for Applied Archaeology, Joule House, Salford M5 4WT [gmaas@salford.ac.uk](mailto:gmaas@salford.ac.uk)

### **National Organisations**

#### **Historic England (formerly English Heritage)**

North West Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Canada House, 3 Chepstow Street, Manchester, M1 5FW  
Telephone: 0161 242 1416. <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/>. email: [northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

#### **Victorian Society**

The Victorian Society  
1 Priory Gardens Bedford Park London W4 1TT  
Telephone: 020 8994 1019 [www.victorian-society.org.uk](http://www.victorian-society.org.uk) email: [admin@victorian-society.org.uk](mailto:admin@victorian-society.org.uk)

#### **Georgian Group**

6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5DX  
Telephone: 087 1750 2936 [www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk) email: [info@georgiangroup.org.uk](mailto:info@georgiangroup.org.uk)

#### **Twentieth Century Society**

70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ  
Telephone: 020 7250 3857 [www.c20society.org.uk](http://www.c20society.org.uk) email: [coordinator@c20society.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@c20society.org.uk)

#### **Institute of Historic Building Conservation**

Jubilee House, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire SP3 6HA  
Telephone: 01747 873133 [www.ihbc.org.uk](http://www.ihbc.org.uk) email: [admin@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:admin@ihbc.org.uk)

## Appendix C: Historical Development of Sale

Although there is little archaeological evidence of Roman or Anglo-Saxon settlements in Sale, the Roman road (modern day Watling Street) ran through the area, importantly linking the Roman forts at Chester and Manchester. There have also been discoveries of Roman coins and pottery in the surrounding area, which have also suggested that the area has a long history of human use, if not of settlement.

The Anglo-Saxon derivation of the town's name from Sealh meaning Willow suggests that the area continued to have been important after the departure of the Romans, perhaps because of the continued importance of Roman infrastructure in the area.<sup>36</sup> Although there is no further material evidence of an Anglo-Saxon settlement, the settlement in this early period in nearby Ashton On Mersey certainly supports this as a possibility.

The first real evidence of settlement in Sale was in the medieval period, Sale being the place of origin of the de Massey family, a family with long associations with the wider area following the grant of lands to Hamo de Massey, including Sale, during in the great redistribution of land after the Norman invasion of 1066. From the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards Sale was therefore the seat of a branch of the Massey family, who lived at Sale Old Hall, located on the east side of modern Sale along the south bank of the River Mersey.

Nothing survives of the medieval fabric of Sale Old Hall estate today and indeed the only feature to survive at all from the estate is the dovecote. This dates to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century and which was partially built over during the construction of the motorway in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>37</sup> In addition, William Massey built Sale New Hall in 1688 just to the south of the site of the Old Hall but for most of its life it was inhabited as a farmstead.

In the post-medieval period, the manor of Sale passed to the Booth family, who also acquired the barony of Dunham Massey, as well as holding other lands in the area. The association of the Booth family with Sale is of considerable significance. Successive Booths were of national prominence, producing a number of important ecclesiastical figures in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, and active political figures in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>38</sup> Reflecting this power, the family held several titles, including that of Baron Delamer, Earl of Warrington and Earl of Stamford, the last two of which were later amalgamated into the single title of Earl of Stamford and Warrington.

In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century their estates passed to the Grey family via the marriage of the last Booth heir, Mary Booth. Much of Sale was therefore owned by the Earls of Stamford, the Greys, in the later-18<sup>th</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Duke of Bridgewater's canal cut through Sale in 1765, importantly establishing a significant new transport link between Sale and Manchester. The new canal was responsible for stimulating some development in Sale but, as is evident from the 1806 enclosure map, it did not lead to radical

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<sup>36</sup> Stephen Dickens, *Sale Through Time*

<sup>37</sup> <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1356529> (accessed 4 November 2014)

<sup>38</sup> Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, vol. 53 (1938), pp. 32-82

change. Rather, because the new connection to the burgeoning city of Manchester stimulated an industry in market gardening, the Bridgewater Canal may instead have served to preserve Sale's historic agricultural character into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



The 1806 enclosure map of Sale (Trafford Local Studies Centre, 770)

Something of the nature of Sale in this period is captured by Samuel Lewis in his *Topographical Dictionary of England* (1848):

*“A large portion of it was waste and uninclosed within the present century, when the landowners entered into an arrangement for its inclosure, which was, perhaps, hastened by the growing importance of Manchester. The soil is sandy, and good; and more than the usual proportion of land in Cheshire is cultivated for produce to supply the Manchester market.”*<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> A *Topographical Dictionary of England*, 1848, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=51252> (accessed: 22 October 2014)

This was to slowly change, however, with the construction of the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham railway in the area in the 1840s. These changes are perhaps best evidenced through comparing a series of 19<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> century maps. Sale's mid-19<sup>th</sup> -century Tithe map shows the wider area as being predominantly fields. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, the encroachment of residential development into Sale is evident (see for example 1898 OS map).



Sale depicted in the 1840s Tithe Map

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the distinct local character of Sale was still being emphasised, as described in *Cheshire: By the Camera, the Pencil and the Pen*:

*“Divided from the county Palatine of Lancaster by the swift-flowing Mersey, and buttressed by a wide expanse of water meadows, from which the most notorious of jerry builders would turn away, Sale is not likely to become so closely linked with Manchester in bonds of brick and mortar as its cross-river neighbour Streford.”<sup>40</sup>*

<sup>40</sup> *Cheshire: By the Camera, the Pencil and the Pen* (undated, but pre-1920)



Further, although in the post-war period Sale was eventually subsumed into the expansive conurbation of Manchester, its topography continues to restrict development to the north and west of Sale in particular.

## Appendix D: Selection Criteria for Positive Contributors

Historic England's guidance *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011) in paragraph 2.2.21 uses the following questions to assess if an element should be considered as a positive contributor:

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape e.g. a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?