

# Penkridge

## Conservation Area Management Plan



South Staffordshire Council

Adopted 11 November 2010

## **Preface**

South Staffordshire is a special place. Located cheek-by-jowl with the urban areas of the West Midlands conurbation and subject to constant pressure for development it still retains a strong rural character. Landscapes within the District change from one part to another, reflecting differences in the underlying geology and the location of villages within the landscape change too.

Our villages are a source of local pride and many are designated as conservation areas. Within these areas there are noticeable differences in many buildings in terms of their materials, designs and details. These variations, known as local distinctiveness, give individual character to different parts of the District.

Our first conservation areas were designated 40 years ago. The District was amongst the first in the country to do this and now has 19 conservation areas covering 16 of its villages and the entire lengths of the three canals which traverse it.

Designating a conservation area is not an end in itself. Local authorities need to develop policies which identify clearly what features of the area should be preserved or enhanced and set out how this can be done. Character Appraisals provide a clear assessment and definition of an area's interest and Management Plans set out the action needed to protect it. Within this the most important policy is a presumption against the loss of elements which have been identified in the character appraisal as making a positive contribution to the special interest for which the area was designated.

We make this presumption here in South Staffordshire and, together with our District-wide Village Design Guide, this Management Plan and Character Appraisal will provide all those involved in the development process with a clear statement of what we regard as special in our conservation areas and how we intend to preserve and enhance this.

Publication of this Management Plan and Character Appraisal of the Penkridge Conservation Area represents another important step forward for the Council in its commitment to the corporate aim: *'To be a Council which protects and enhances South Staffordshire's distinctive environment'*.

*"I commend it to you wholeheartedly".*

**Councillor David Billson – Deputy Leader, Strategic Services**



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# Penkrige Conservation Area Management Plan

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Format & derivation

1.1.1 This management proposal document sets out a mid- to long-term strategy in the form of a series of recommendations and guidelines for the Penkridge Conservation Area. It has been informed by an accompanying character appraisal document for the conservation area, which identified its special character and concluded by outlining some of the issues that it faces.

1.1.2 Proposals are split into generic and specific actions. The generic ones are tied in with general management principles, which are to be applied across all of South Staffordshire's 19 conservation areas. A new character appraisal document is being prepared for each of these conservation areas in order to inform these guidelines. The specific actions section is also informed by the findings of the character appraisal, but these are tailored to the specific nature of each individual conservation area.

## 1.2 Purpose & legislative context

1.2.1 These management proposals set out guidelines by which the special character of Penkridge Conservation Area can be preserved and enhanced. They will provide a basis for preparing new policies to achieve this.

1.2.2 The preparation of management proposals for its conservation areas is one of the Council's statutory obligations under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.2 of the character appraisal.

1.2.3 In addition to the statutory requirement to produce these proposals, The Audit Commission also monitors the management of historic assets by local authorities as part of the overarching Best Value scheme. Best Value performance indicator BVPI 219c was a measure of how many up-to-date (less than five years old) management proposals local authorities had for their conservation areas.

1.2.4 This indicator is a driver for best practice in conservation area management and states: *'Public support for conservation areas as places that give identity to people and places is well-established. This indicator will monitor how local authorities are managing their development.'* Although this indicator has now been deleted, the Council considers that up-to-date management proposals are an important planning tool and remains committed to their production.

## 1.3 Local Plan & emerging LDF

1.3.1 Current planning policies for South Staffordshire, including those governing development and management of change in conservation areas, are laid out in the *South Staffordshire Local Plan*, adopted in December 1996. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.3 of the character appraisal (see Appendix 1).

1.3.2 However, a new Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the Local Plan eventually. This is part of the new planning system introduced by the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

1.3.3 This management plan and character appraisal document (see Appendix 1) will sit as a Planning Document alongside the conservation policies contained within the new LDF and will be complementary to its aims of preserving and enhancing South Staffordshire's conservation areas.

## 1.4 Sustainability

1.4.1 The Council will adopt the above Management Plan and Character Appraisal as a Supplementary Planning Document. Their preparation adheres to the principles of sustainability as it underpins the new planning system. The thorough survey of the conservation area, the subsequent identification and in-depth analysis of special character and the partnership with the local community in the preparation of the documents all contribute to reaching the targets set for sustainability.

## 1.5 Consultation

1.5.1 In line with the increased emphasis on community engagement in the LDF, as well as the existing policies of South Staffordshire Council, the proposals contained in this document have undergone full public and stakeholder consultation before being adopted. Stakeholders have been consulted to inform the content of the documents and to contribute to the formation of the principles contained within them.

1.5.2 The findings of the Character Appraisal and proposals contained within the Management Plan were exhibited at the Haling Dene Centre on the afternoon of Monday 25th February 2008, at which 29 people attended. An open public meeting where the proposals contained within the Management Plan were described and discussed followed this.

1.5.3 A record was made of all pertinent comments and, wherever possible, these were accommodated within the final drafts of the Management Plan and Character Appraisal. Revised versions of both documents were made publicly available as downloadable pdfs on the Council's website and the final proposals featured as part of a day long exhibition held at the Council's offices on 7th October 2010.

1.5.4 South Staffordshire Council subscribes to the view expressed in the English Heritage document *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (August 2005) regarding management proposals that: *'involving the local community in their development is essential if the proposals are to succeed.'*

## 1.6 Monitoring

South Staffordshire Council will seek to review these documents every five years; taking into account Government policy and English Heritage guidance. The contents of this review are outlined in Section 4 of this document. The principles of monitoring are based around creating a 'virtuous circle' of monitoring, review and action.

## 2. Penkridge Conservation Area – Generic actions

### 2.1 Policy

2.1.1 It is the Council's duty to preserve and enhance its conservation areas and policies are included in the Local Plan (adopted December 1996) in order to fulfil this duty. Relevant policies for Conservation Areas are covered in Policies BE7, 9, 12 and 14-19. Other policies, including Green Belt and others are detailed in Section 2.3 of the character appraisal (see Appendix 1).

2.1.2 The fundamental principles of good management of conservation areas are to be found in these policies, which will be carried forward to the emerging LDF. They can be related to the following set of generic management plans for all of South Staffordshire's conservation areas, which have been informed by the appraisal documents (see 8.1 Issues):

2.1.3 Overarching aim: to maintain the urban character of village centres and the rural character on the periphery of conservation areas:

- Through the development control process (Policies BE7 & BE9);
- Controlling new shop fronts and signage (Policies BE14 to BE19);
- Addressing traffic issues (in co-operation with Staffordshire County Council);
- Control of boundaries (gates, fencing, walls) and building details through consideration of designating Article 4(2) Directions to control minor works;
- Improving the quality of the public realm through new schemes and funding;
- Encouraging owners of historic buildings to carry out required repair or improvement through education or possible grant schemes;
- Creating a full Local List of important historic buildings;
- Regularly (every five years) carrying out a new appraisal of each conservation area, if necessary, and updating management plans: monitoring change (see Section 4);
- Regularly (every five years) assessing the need for boundary changes and new designations of conservation areas, and carrying out the changes should they be required.
- Regularly (every five years) carry out a survey to assess the condition of listed buildings.

### 2.2 Other guidance

2.2.1 South Staffordshire Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on 'The Design of Shop fronts and signs in Conservation Areas'. This advises shop owners and guides planning decisions regarding changes to shop fronts. Its principles have been included within the District-wide Village Design Guide, which was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 15 September 2009 and sits within the emerging LDF.

2.2.2 English Heritage and other organisations can provide other guidance, such as specialist information regarding listed buildings, traditional construction methods and materials.

### 2.3 Development Control Process

2.3.1 The system of considering planning applications for their suitability and conformity with national and local policies is long established and is based on more stringent criteria in conservation areas.

2.3.2 While there are additional policies concerning conservation areas and other parts of the historic environment, it is essential that these policies be applied consistently in the development control process.

2.3.3 A Local Development Framework (LDF) is being prepared to help to shape a sustainable future for South Staffordshire. It will replace the existing Local Plan (adopted 1996) and set out the District's spatial planning strategy to 2026. The LDF will combine a number of statutory and non-statutory documents to set out planning policies and proposals to guide the District's development. The statutory ones are known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and, together with the West Midlands' Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), will form part of the Development Plan for South Staffordshire. For further information on the LDF please contact: The Development Plans Team on 01902 696317; email: [developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk).

2.3.4 As an important figure in this process, the conservation specialist will be trained in the field of historic building conservation and/or

planning, either through formal qualifications, long-term experience in the field, or both. The Skills Base Best Value Performance Indicator BVPI205 measures the suitability of persons for this and other specialist roles and South Staffordshire Council is committed to meeting these criteria for such specialist roles.

2.3.5 Consistency of approach to determining planning applications is at the centre of a fair system of controlling change, especially in conservation areas. Consistent decisions also lead to an improved public perception that the system is fair and, in turn, there is a greater public engagement with the process.

2.3.6 Design and development briefs should be promoted and encouraged as a matter of course on any substantial application in the conservation areas. Due to the significant lack of spare land available for development purposes, any new development is likely to have an impact on the appearance and character of the Conservation area.

2.3.7 Therefore, there is a clear case for a coherent written argument in favour of the benefits of the proposal at the time of application. This could take the form of a letter, but ideally would be a more thorough development brief and include mock-up photographs that give an impression of how the proposal would look.

2.3.8 **ACTION:** *The Council will consult a conservation specialist on all development control proposals affecting the character of conservation areas.*

## 2.4 Enforcement strategy

2.4.1 In some cases the development control process is not fully adhered to and planning permission is not always sought or implemented correctly. In these cases it is important that enforcement action is swift and effective. This will reinforce the message that the development control process is fair and that it must be followed in all cases.

2.4.2 Usually, enforcement action does not result in legal action, but is resolved through effective communication between the Council representatives and the relevant party.

## 2.5 Street management

2.5.1 The recent appraisal programme has noted that there is a certain amount of room for improvement in the public realm in most of the conservation areas in South Staffordshire. While responsibility for the highways and for *some* associated street furniture lies with the County Council, the maintenance of most of the public realm is the responsibility of South Staffordshire Council. (For a detailed analysis of the public realm in the Penkridge Conservation Area see Section 5.4 in Appendix 1).

2.5.2 One of the common themes throughout the conservation areas is a lack of continuity in the design and fabric of the public realm. While there is a presumption in favour of traditional materials in conservation areas, it is recognised that it is not always practical or financially viable to use traditional materials in large-scale projects.

2.5.3 However, it should always be required that consideration is given to the effect that any new introductions to the public realm will have on the character of a conservation area and reasonable efforts be made to preserve that character with minor modifications to design. For example, traditional colours such as letterbox red should be preferred to more modern shades. Also, consideration should be given to the scale of new features, particularly streetlights, and 'conservation' alternatives should be requested and considered when embarking on any large scale scheme of public realm replacement.

2.5.4 It is important that the conservation section is consulted early on regarding any proposals to affect material changes to conservation areas. It is often the case that they can bring previous experience to the process, as well as a through understanding of the needs of an area.



**2.5.5 ACTION:** *The Council will consult a conservation specialist on all street management schemes affecting the character of conservation areas.*

## 2.6 Promotion & awareness

**2.6.1** While it is often the conservation section that deals first hand with planning applications and other schemes in conservation areas, almost every department in the Council will deal with matters affecting them in some way. It is the responsibility of every employee to give regard to the special character of conservation areas and promote awareness of them to residents. An active Historic Environment Champion (see below) can be an effective way of encouraging understanding across Council departments.

## 2.7 Historic Environment Champions/Parish Councils

**2.7.1** The Historic Environment Champion is a senior member of the Council, usually an elected member, who is nominated to promote historic environment issues at the highest level of the organisation. The Champion can, therefore, play an important role in raising the profile of conservation in general and ensuring that key strategic decisions are taken with a full consideration of their potential effect on the historic environment. This role will be optimised if the champion has a through knowledge of the state of South Staffordshire's historic environment and regular liaison with the conservation section.

**2.7.2** Parish Councils and other local bodies are also useful contributors to the process and are consulted for their opinion of planning applications in their localities. The wealth of knowledge contained within Parish Councils is a valuable resource when identifying local character and strong ties with the Conservation Team are encouraged.

## 2.8 Education/community involvement

**2.8.1** An active engagement with the local community should be sustained after the

consultation over the appraisal and management proposal documents. The documents should be promoted in the community as useful aides in identifying and retaining what is important in their area. This, in turn, should promote a sense of ownership that will foster an improved level of understanding of the importance of preserving and enhancing special character.

**2.8.2 ACTION:** *The Council will seek stronger ties with local bodies and interest groups and promote the continued involvement of the local community in managing and enhancing the character of its conservation areas.*

## 2.9 Production of further guidance/leaflets

**2.9.1** A new shop front design and signage guide would help to improve the main shopping area's appearance and enshrine guidance within the emerging LDF. The principles included in the existing guide have been carried forward into the new District-wide Village Design Guide SPD, adopted on 15 September 2009 and sitting within the LDF.

**2.9.2 ACTION:** *The Council will consider preparing and issuing additional design guidance and leaflets as and when appropriate. This may be in response to the continued review of conservation areas in South Staffordshire or other indicators.*



### 3. Penkrige Conservation Area – Specific actions

In addition to the general proposals, which are to preserve and enhance the conservation areas and to maintain a good knowledge base of them through monitoring and appraisal (as outlined in Section 2), the following actions relate specifically to Penkrige Conservation Area.

#### 3.1 Conservation Area boundary review

3.1.1 After the completion of a thorough survey of the Penkrige Conservation Area, a character appraisal was written. This concluded that a number of boundary revisions would improve the extent to which the designation accurately reflects the special character of Penkrige:

3.1.2 **ACTION:** *The following additions are proposed to the existing Penkrige Conservation Area boundary:*

- Stone Cross: Market Place, garage, Bridge Terrace, Penk Villas; Bridge House Hotel;
- Pinfold Lane: Smithfield Cottage;
- St Michael's Road: Rear garden of The Firs;
- Cannock Road: Gardens of Manor Cottage and Manor House;
- Clay Street: Penkrige Methodist Church and buildings to the north, Teddesley House, Pillaton House and Hatherton House, land to the south of The Railway Inn;
- New Road: south side, Bowcroft;
- Station Road: Penkrige Station.

3.1.3 **ACTION:** *The following deletions are proposed from the existing Penkrige Conservation Area boundary:*

- Stanford Close: Nos. 1, 2, 8, 9, 10;
- Mill Street: Nos. 1- 37 (consecutive);
- Francis Green Lane: Rear gardens of Croft House, The Poplars, and White Gables.
- New Road: Front gardens of Carmel and Tudela;
- Croydon Drive: Front garden of No.1;
- Station Road: Land around telephone exchange and Penkrige Station car park.

3.1.4 The recommendation to remove these sites from the Conservation Area is based on conclusions of a survey, which can be found in Section 7 of the character appraisal. Some of these sites are noted as negative features in

their particular character area, while others do not have any specific architectural or historic special interest. Other negative sites, as shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map in the Character Appraisal document (see pp. 26-27), are not recommended for exclusion from the conservation area. This is either due to their location well within the boundary or their role within the setting of the Conservation Area.

#### 3.1.5 **Buffer zones**

The identification of a number of 'Buffer Zones' would recognise the impact that development there could have on the Conservation Area:

- Fields south of River Penk and north and east of Riverside House;
- Fields to the south of River Penk and west of railway line;
- Land to the north of River Penk to Levedale Road;
- Grounds of Marshbook First School;
- Open land to the west of Penkrige Station.

3.1.6 Consider transferring the Area to the east of The Haling Dene Centre to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.

3.1.7 All these changes and new designations are shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map, which is included in the Character Appraisal document (see pp. 26-27).

3.1.8 **ACTION:** *To designate a new revised boundary and recognise the importance of the affect of buffer zone land on the character of the Conservation Area.*

3.1.9 **ACTION:** *To continue reviewing the District's conservation areas, including the three encompassing the canals, in order to ensure that each area is included within the most suitable conservation area boundary.*

#### 3.2 Site & building enhancements

3.2.1 While there are a good number of positive buildings in Penkrige, both listed and unlisted, this is offset by some inappropriate new development, including back land development, which has been introduced into the Penkrige Conservation Area. Late 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in and

behind Market Street, Clay Street, Stone Cross, Mill Street and Cannock Road are not built to a design sympathetic with the historic character of Penkridge:

- Stanford Close and the north side of Mill Street;
- Buildings in Haling Road.
- Modern housing development on Church Farm;
- The car showrooms and workshops abutting Stone Cross.
- Palisadings and Coop in Market Street;
- Shopping parades on the corner of Crown Bridge turning into Clay Street.

**3.2.2 ACTION:** *The Council will seek to ensure that further developments in the Penkridge Conservation Area respect its historic character. Schemes that are not sympathetic to the character of Penkridge Conservation Area will be resisted, where appropriate.*

**3.2.3 ACTION:** *The Council will encourage the redevelopment of sites or buildings which make a negative contribution, to ensure that the character or appearance of the Conservation Area is enhanced.*

**3.2.4 ACTION:** *The Council will continue to encourage good design and the use of traditional materials through such schemes as the South Staffordshire Council Conservation and Design Awards.*

### **3.3 Setting, views, gateways & buffer zones**

**3.3.1** The setting of the Conservation Area is very important. It has been established that development that affects views into and out of a conservation area can affect its special architectural or historic interest. Development that impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting and longer views into and from the Conservation Area can detract from its special character. The proposals therefore include the identification of areas of land around the Conservation Area as Buffer Zones.

**3.3.2** Development in these zones can have an effect on the special interest of the Conservation Area and as such development proposals here

will be assessed against the impact that they will have on the character of the Conservation Area. Important views are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map in the Character Appraisal (see pp. 26-27).

**3.3.3** Penkridge has areas of open land to the north and east of the settlement. Views into these areas from the conservation area are extensive and, while they contain no special architectural or historic interest, make an important contribution to Penkridge's rural setting. Any potential planning applications should be carefully considered in this respect.

**3.3.4 ACTION:** *The Council will seek to ensure that development within the Buffer Zones preserves or enhances the special interest of the Conservation Area and causes no harm to that special interest.*

**3.3.5 ACTION:** *The Council will also seek to ensure that these views remain protected from inappropriate forms of development and that due regard is paid to them in the formulation of public realm works or enhancement schemes.*

### **3.4 Shop fronts**

**3.4.1** The Penkridge Conservation Area contains a number of shops, many with historic shop fronts (see Section 6.7 of the Character Appraisal in Appendix 1). In some cases, poorly designed shop fronts with little regard for the host building and the street scene spoil the historic character and appearance of a building or street. The better quality shops in Market Street should serve as exemplars.

**3.4.2** With regard to a proposal for 'living over the shop', where a shared access exists, its removal will be resisted. If required, a new or additional access will be sought by negotiation.

**3.4.3** Occasionally, a simple modern shop front may be more appropriate than a reproduction 19<sup>th</sup> century design. However, these should still follow the basic principles governing the historic relationship between the fascia, glazing, pilasters and stall riser, as well as the use of colour, materials, and signage.

**3.4.4 ACTION:** *When considering the replacement of a shop front, owners should follow the advice contained in the District Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance entitled 'The Design of Shopfronts and signs in Conservation Areas.'*

**3.4.5 ACTION:** *When considering planning applications for new shop fronts, the Council will be mindful of Policy BE15 in the Local Plan (and any subsequent relevant policy in the emerging LDF).*

**3.4.6 ACTION:** *The principles included in the Council's adopted SPG entitled 'The Design of Shop fronts and signs in Conservation Areas' has been carried forward into the new District-wide Village Design Guide (adopted 15 September 2009), which sits as an SPD within the new LDF.*

### **3.5 Advertisement control**

**3.5.1** PPG 15 recognises that all outdoor advertisements affect the appearance of the building or neighbourhood where they are displayed. The visual appearance of the Penkridge Conservation Area suffers from some garish advertisements including banners and A-boards, which may not be authorized.

**3.5.2 ACTION:** *The Council will ensure that all proposed advertisements accord with policies BE14 to 19 of the Local Plan and the relevant policies that will be adopted in the emerging LDF.*

### **3.6 Amenity space**

**3.6.1** Penkridge benefits from a variety of areas of public open space all across and around the Conservation Area (see section 5.3 of the Character Appraisal in Appendix 1). The areas should be maintained and enhanced due to the contribution that they make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Also, an understanding of how these areas are used at different times of the day and week (particularly the Market Place and market car park) should inform any enhancement schemes.

**3.6.2 ACTION:** *The Council will seek to maintain and improve its open areas and pathways. It will also to work with other agencies to maintain and improve other areas, such as the canal towpath.*

### **3.7 Traffic signs & streetlights**

**3.7.1** Signs and notices often spoil the visual attractiveness of the place. While traffic signs are obviously necessary, many are ill sited and there may be an over provision. Also, the character appraisal has identified the lack of a cohesive style of street lamp in the Conservation Area. In conservation terms it would be ideal if a traditional height and style lamp were introduced across the area.

**3.7.2 ACTION:** *The Council will seek to compile an audit of all road signage and street furniture in the Conservation Area with a view to bringing about a simplified and better-coordinated approach in line with the principles set out in English Heritage's latest 'Streets For All' publication.*

### **3.8 Quality of pavement surface**

**3.8.1** Paving and surface materials throughout the area are generally modern, uncoordinated and poor quality. In almost all cases they fail to enhance or reinforce the historic identity of the Conservation Area.

**3.8.2 ACTION:** *The council will seek to review design and materials of paving/streetscape throughout the area with a view to publication of a streetscape manual setting out principles for public space design. In particular, existing areas of historic external paving shall be retained where possible and proposed new areas of paving shall be appropriate to the historic environment in which they are set*

### **3.9 Trees & landscape**

**3.9.1** All trees are protected within conservation areas by the requirement for landowners to notify the Council of their intention to lop or trim them. Tree Preservation Orders provide an additional protection for significant

trees and groups of trees, where any proposed action requires consent from the local planning authority.

**3.9.2** Within the Penkridge Conservation Area, important trees and green spaces are indicated on the Townscape Appraisal Map; it is expected that any development would respect their roles within the Conservation Area, and ensure that they would continue to preserve and enhance the special character of the Conservation Area.

**3.9.3 ACTION:** *The Council will seek to prepare a Tree Management Programme, identifying all mature trees within the Conservation Area (privately as well as publicly owned) and ensuring that priorities are agreed and funding set aside for the costs involved in remedial works or replacement.*

### **3.10 Statutory & local list**

**3.10.1** While many of Penkridge's historic buildings are included on the statutory list, some others do not fit the strict criteria for listing but are important in the local area.

**3.10.2 ACTION:** *The Council will compile a list of buildings and structures of local architectural or historic interest (i.e. a 'local list') and develop policies promoting their retention and improvement.*

### **3.11 Highways/Traffic/Pedestrians**

**3.11.1** The Council has no direct control over highways, which is under the remit of Staffordshire County Council. However, the A449, which runs through the centre of the Conservation Area, has a great impact on the character of Penkridge, particularly at times of busy traffic during the day (especially on market days). While little can be done in the short term to remove the large volume of traffic that passes through Penkridge, and adversely affects its character, any future public works to the carriageway outside the village should take full account of potential effect they will have within it. Pavement and crossings on the A449 must be kept maintained in order to facilitate its use by pedestrians.

**3.11.2** Other highways in the Conservation Area are narrower and have retained more historic character. These characteristics have resulted in a more controlled traffic flow, along with the introduction of speed tables on Cannock Road. Further traffic control measures should be resisted to deter further signage and modern painted additions to the road surface.

**3.11.3 ACTION:** *The Council will work in partnership with the County Council over new schemes which will improve the control of traffic flow and pedestrian access across the different shopping streets of Penkridge, particularly the A449. It will seek to ensure that new and existing road signage will preserve the special character of Penkridge Conservation Area.*

### **3.12 Grants – assessment of existing & potential for new schemes**

**3.12.1** There are currently no local or national grant schemes available to promote new schemes in Penkridge.

**3.12.2 ACTION:** *The Council will consider starting new schemes and working with other local and national bodies to create new schemes that could preserve or enhance the character of Penkridge Conservation Area.*

### **3.13 Buildings at Risk/ Urgent Works Notices**

**3.13.1** South Staffordshire Council has completed a survey of listed buildings and will publish a report on their condition. None of the sites included on English Heritage's HERITAGE AT RISK REGISTER for South Staffordshire lie within the Conservation Area.

**3.12.3** Generally it appears that all of buildings in the Conservation Area are in good condition, and it seems unlikely that there would be any need for Urgent Works Notices to be served in the short or medium term.

**3.12.3 ACTION:** *The Council will publish a Buildings-at-Risk Register for all listed buildings in the district and will develop policies to address the issues identified in the register.*



## 4. Monitoring

### 3.13 Article 4 Directions

3.13.1 The Council is able, through the imposition of an Article 4 Direction, to make restrictions on the permitted development rights of owners of unlisted single-family dwelling houses in the conservation area. Article 4 Directions are generally designated in order to protect particular building details such as windows, doors and chimneystacks in the interests of preserving the special character of a conservation area. An Article 4 Direction is therefore useful in strengthening controls over the unsympathetic alteration of unlisted buildings, which would cumulatively have an adverse affect on the character of the Conservation Area. It is worth noting that strict controls already exist over listed buildings and unlisted buildings in a variety of other uses (such as flats or shops) where Listed Building Consent or Planning Permission is already required for a variety of minor alterations.

3.13.2 The evidence of the character appraisal makes a good case for the consideration of designating an Article 4 Direction in PenkrIDGE, because there are a number of good quality unlisted buildings, often clustered around the listed buildings themselves. There are many remaining building details still to be protected on the dwelling houses in PenkrIDGE, such as windows, doors and boundary treatments.

3.13.3 **ACTION:** *The Council will consider designating an Article 4 Direction in order to protect the building details of unlisted dwelling houses in PenkrIDGE.*

4.1 As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging LDF and government policy generally. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the Conservation Area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, and how successful this has been;
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publication of an updated edition of management plan.

4.2 On an annual basis the Council will monitor the status of its conservation area management plans with regard to their need to be reviewed.

4.3 It is possible that the local community, under the guidance of a heritage consultant or the Council, could carry out this review. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and would raise public consciousness of the issues, including the problems associated with enforcement.

4.4 This will monitor the changes that have occurred through the continuous processes of development and through individual changes of use. The purpose is to re-evaluate the special character of a conservation area to reach decisions about whether it still warrants designation, and to check that the boundaries are sufficiently clear in demarcating changes in character.

4.5 It is intended that a photographic record be made of each area at the time of the publication of the Appraisal or the time of its reissue following a review, so that changes are monitored.

# Appendix 1: Penkridge Conservation Area appraisal

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# 1. Summary

## 1.1 It is the conclusion of this Character Appraisal of the Penkridge Conservation Area that its key characteristics are:

- A large rural settlement spread around an historic shopping and market area, traditionally a village, although 20<sup>th</sup> century growth has left it verging on the size of a town. There is a mixture of urban and rural character;
- A village bisected by a busy main road, which separates the shopping area from the parish church and railway station;
- A commercial part of the village is boosted on market days (Wednesday and Saturday) in an otherwise unused open space;
- A village closely associated with two or more large country estates, where the Teddesley Estate in particular erected a number of 'locally distinctive' buildings with specific architectural features including:
  - Rows of fish scale tiles on roofs;
  - Characteristic chimneystacks;
  - Diamond shaped cast iron windows;
  - Stone lintels and cills;
  - Iron railings on boundary treatments.
- Winding roads rise and fall gently and are lined with plenty of mature trees, which reinforces the rural character;
- Contrasting appearances of the two commercial areas. The enterprises along the A449 have modern shop fronts and signage while Market Street, which is tucked behind the A449, is mainly traditional and still features many historic shop fronts;
- A relatively flat topography, which does not lead to far reaching views out of the Conservation Area, although the church is on slightly higher ground and towers over the settlement;
- Situated on the West Coast Main Line, a fact reinforced many times daily by the sight and sound of trains passing on the listed bridge and viaduct, elevated even higher than the main body of the tall parish church;
- A local geology, rich in sandstone, much evident in the materials used in many walls and building details, notably on Wyre Hall and the Old Deanery. The use of the colour red in the buildings and boundary treatments gives them a rich, rusty look;
- A number of historic buildings, many of which are timber framed and some of which date back to the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> centuries, others from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- Fine larger houses on its periphery, such as Haling Dene;
- A natural boundary formed by the River Penk, which runs to the north, and whose water meadows create a visible green corridor around the settlement;
- A brook running through it, and a canal running down the eastern edge, which reinforce the important role that watercourses play in determining the character of the area;
- The sedate pace of the canal on the eastern boundary, along with a mixed use: walking, fishing and boating;
- A main focal point around St Michael's Church, the majestic scale of which is emphasized by its location next to large open spaces on the outskirts of the settlement, consisting of the churchyard and the market site.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Penkridge Conservation Area

2.1.1 Staffordshire County Council designated the Penkridge Conservation Area in February 1970. It covers the historic core of Penkridge, stretching in each direction from Market Street and Market Place. It extends westwards to include St Michael's Church and surrounding residential buildings. To the north are commercial areas, which run up to the flood plain of the River Penk. Fields and water meadows lie in the northeast beyond the Conservation Area boundary at Horse Fair, the historic horse-trading area. The Haling Dene Centre (formerly Haling Grove), an early 19<sup>th</sup> centre house, and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, which lies beyond Haling Dene's grounds, dominate the eastern section of the village. The southern boundary includes The Railway Inn on Clay Street, a 17<sup>th</sup> century alehouse.

2.1.2 Penkridge has retained much of its market village character, although some of its historic buildings have been replaced or significantly altered, and many of the open spaces have been developed with modern housing. The A449, which runs through the village, separating the main commercial area from the parish church and train station, introduces a splash of urban character into this otherwise rural settlement. Market Street, Market Place and Crown Bridge have buildings of a modest scale with distinctive local details that cluster along each side and have a traditional appearance. The village lanes that extend away have a rural feel: they are narrow and winding and are lined with mature trees. There are some fine, large detached buildings, including a school and library set back from the road, as well as late 20<sup>th</sup> century houses.

### 2.2 The purpose of a conservation area character appraisal

2.2.1 Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as '*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'.

2.2.2 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

2.2.3 Planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment are set out in Planning Policy Statement No.5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5). In addition, guidance to help practitioners implement this policy is provided in the accompanying Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide.

2.2.4 In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Penkridge Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in Guidance on conservation area appraisals and Guidance on the management of conservation areas (both August 2005). This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Penkridge Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (in the form of a 'Character Appraisal').

2.2.5 The Conservation Studio carried out survey work for these documents in November 2006, when a full photographic record was also taken of the area and its buildings. Unlisted buildings, which make a positive contribution, trees, watercourses, historic shop fronts, views and areas, and buildings for enhancement were noted amongst other matters and recorded on a Townscape Appraisal Map. Additionally the existing boundary of the Conservation Area was carefully surveyed and proposals drawn up for a number of changes. The omission of any particular feature does not imply that it is of no significance.



## 2.3 The planning policy context

2.3.1 This document therefore provides a firm basis on which applications for future development within the Penkrigde Conservation Area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework as set out in the *Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands* (revised January 2008); Staffordshire County Council's *Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011* and South Staffordshire Council's *South Staffordshire Local Plan*, which was adopted in December 1996 and will remain in force until an LDF replaces it eventually.

2.3.2 In the Local Plan, Inset Plan 52 confirms that the following policies apply to the Penkrigde Conservation Area or to the land that surrounds it:

- Canal Conservation Area BE7, BE9, BE12 & BE14
- Conservation Area Policies BE7, BE9, BE12, BE14 – BE20
- Green Belt GB1, C1 – C4, C8 & C13
- Open Countryside OC1, C1 – C4, C8 & C13
- Policies H12, BE26 & BE28

These policies are detailed in Appendix 2.

2.3.3 A Local Development Framework (LDF) is being prepared to help to shape a sustainable future for South Staffordshire. It will replace the existing Local Plan (adopted 1996) and set out the District's spatial planning strategy to 2026. The LDF will combine a number of statutory and non-statutory documents to set out planning policies and proposals to guide the District's development. The statutory ones are known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and, together with the West Midlands' Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), will form part of the Development Plan for South Staffordshire. For further information on the LDF please contact: The Development Plans Team on 01902 696317; email: [developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk).

## 3. Location & landscape setting

### 3.1 Location & activities

3.1.1 Penkridge village straddles the A449 trunk road 10 miles north of Wolverhampton and 6 miles south of Stafford. The M6 motorway passes very close by to the east. Junctions 12 and 13 are close to Penkridge and if the motorway is closed or has lane restrictions, the A449 through the village carries very heavy volumes of traffic. This means that the motorway does not bring a large volume of traffic directly into the village. Local traffic from the town of Cannock nearby to the east is diverted away from the village centre via the Wolgarston Way/Boscomoor Lane towards Wolverhampton and Stafford. Further south, Watling Street (A5) steers traffic from Cannock to Wolverhampton and Telford away from the village.

3.1.2 Despite the considerable amount of late 20<sup>th</sup> century development within and around the Conservation Area, Penkridge has retained a village quality, which is reinforced by its rural setting and waterside location. However, the busy roads and rail route close by have introduced a busier suburban element to the character as a whole. The location close to the major urban centres of the West Midlands has seen the quaint rural character replaced by a busy commercial hub. The commercial side of Penkridge is evident in the garages and workshops that line Clay Street and Stone Cross, as well as in the shops on Market Street, and it is bolstered on market days when the village takes on a bustling character.

3.1.3 Further east, the village has a more firmly residential character and much infill development has taken place in the fields surrounding Penkridge. At the beginning of Cannock Road, a number of historic buildings cluster close to the Market Place, while further along towards the canal 20<sup>th</sup> century houses face the current parish centre, Haling Dene. This separate character area has a more sleepy appearance than the commercial core; the houses on the eastern side of Penkridge Bridge have had less alteration than others on Cannock Road. This part of the Conservation Area, while predominantly residential, relates more to its proximity to the canal than to the road or railway.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- A view along the A449 at Clay Street looking north
- The Star Public House
- Penkridge Station

The area has the feel of a small hamlet, there being no church to act as a focal point, the closest to this being the Haling Dene Centre, which is bounded by a high wall. On the canal itself fishermen, walkers and boaters provide a pleasing and traditional mix of uses. The canal brings visitors to Penkridge, especially during the summer months, and the tearooms and trinket shops in Market Street and Crown Bridge cater for these potential customers.

### 3.2 Topography & geology

3.2.1 The topography of Penkridge is relatively flat and low lying. The area to the west containing the parish church is on slightly higher land, but the other parts of the Conservation Area are notable for being flat and interwoven with watercourses. The area to the northeast, now covered with modern housing, is named The Marsh on 19<sup>th</sup> century maps, showing that this is naturally covered in marshland and floodplains. The steady flat gradient suited the construction of further waterways, such as a canal, which brought more effective trade and communication to the village.

3.2.2 The soil in the area is loam, with red sandstone subsoil in some places, gravel and clay in others. The geological formation is Keuper Sandstone, which is common to this part of South Staffordshire and has been used for building purposes in some cases. However, due to the softness of the material it is mainly used in boundary walls and on some facades rather than in the building of large structures.

### 3.3 Relationship of the Conservation Area to its surroundings

3.3.1 The Penkridge Conservation Area is partly bounded by man-made features: roads, the canal and railway. These modes of transport signify the village's good connections with neighbouring towns and cities and its role as a small commercial centre en route between them. However, the village was not historically so well connected, although stagecoaches did pass through it from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Instead, the most important external influence was the nearby Teddesley Estate. The Littleton family held Penkridge Manor, along with many neighbouring manors. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards they built (and modified)



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal
- The view from Stone Cross
- Children's play area off Bellbrook
- The riverside setting on the north side of Penkridge



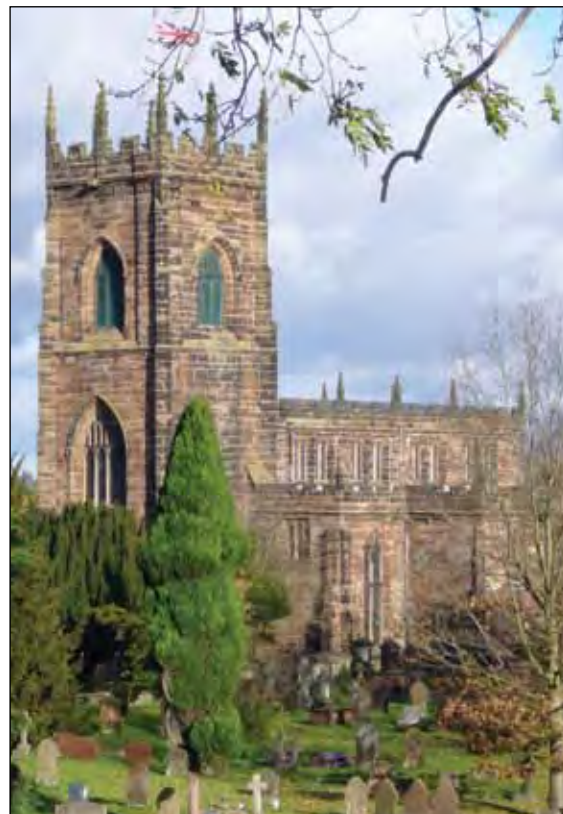
the majority of the buildings in the village. Many of their distinctive details, such as fish scale roof tiles, survive in the village to this day.

3.3.2 The village also has some important activities on its periphery, such as Rodbaston College to the south, which provides education related to the land-based and construction industries. There are also cottage industries close by, such as potteries and other traditional Staffordshire crafts.

3.3.3 Views out of Penkridge are filled with the abundant trees and fields that surround it. As a result, around the periphery there is a largely undisturbed rural setting. The plentiful pasture and water meadows that surround the village add to the Conservation Area's special character, despite lying outside its designated boundary.

3.3.4 The importance of the local natural habitat is recognised in the designation of 25 Sites of County Biological Importance in the Parish. Some of these designations are marshes and natural wetlands that border the Conservation Area and define the character of the wider area to a large degree. An important local feature, the Belvide Reservoir, is six miles to the southwest. The canal stretches for many miles north and south of the Conservation Area and the part that lies within the boundary is a representative snapshot of this picturesque waterway. The canal, its traffic, and the visitors it brings from outside the area, make a very important contribution to the character and economy of the area.

3,3,5 The fertile and easily crossed local terrain has meant that it has been well populated throughout history, although its high water table may have discouraged the foundation of a large settlement. The wider area was, however, suitable for a camp in Roman times, situated next to Watling Street to the south. Also the remains of the former Roman camp of Pennocrucium lie at Water Eaton, close to its namesake, Penkridge.



### Images from Top to Bottom

- St Michael's Church from Penkridge Station
- Visitor facilities in Crown Bridge
- The River Penk from Bull Bridge



## 4. Historic development & archaeology

### 4.1 Historic development

4.1.1 The earliest recording of a settlement in the Penkridge area is in a Royal Charter of 958 AD when King Edgar refers to the 'famous' place called 'Pencric'. It is thought to have been famous because King Eadred had established a royal free chapel there a number of years earlier. One earlier Saxon charter mentions the Pencersaetan tribe in the area. It is possible that the invading Anglo Saxons had adopted an anglicized version of Pennocrucium, which was a nearby camp left by the departing Romans. One explanation for the name is that is a simple latinisation of Penkridge, Old English *pennuc* 'a small pen' or *penn* 'a small enclosure, a fold' plus Old English *hrycg* 'ridge'. Crucium would have been pronounced with a ch sound, close to the dg of ridge. The 'penk' name is used for the neighbouring river and the valley in which the settlement lies.

4.4.2 From the earliest of times Penkridge was set apart from other settlements because of its church, the royal free chapel of St Michael was a collegiate church. A college of canons or prebendaries administered collegiate churches, only a few of which were built in each diocese. Colleges were local centres for ecclesiastical power run by a Dean who employed a large staff of clergy to minister to the neighbouring villages. The college lands and rights to levy local taxes in the form of tithes brought considerable wealth to the owner, the Dean and the prebendaries. Therefore, St Michael's College had a wide-ranging influence over the area and meant that Penkridge was a focal point in the locality until the Dissolution in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

4.4.3 King Edward held the manor of Penkridge, containing the College and its church, before the Norman Conquest. In The Domesday Book of 1086 the manor is recorded as having 9 clerks holding one hide of land there in demesne of the Crown. The importance of the College and its lands was recognised by King Stephen who gave it and Stafford College Church to the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1146 to secure much needed political support. Penkridge was, therefore, an important ecclesiastical centre at a time when the Church was a focal point of everyday life in England. The system of paying tithes, a tenth of the produce of the land, meant that the Church had



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- Speed's Map of Staffordshire, 1610, showing Penkridge
- The Church of St Michael & All Angels, Penkridge, from the south west
- The interior of the Church of St Michael & All Angels from the south aisle
- The Church of St Michael & All Angels, Penkridge, from the south east

relevance to the work and life of the villagers. This early administrative system produced the division of areas that is still surviving today: ten tithings made a parish; ten parishes formed a hundred and ten hundreds made a shire. The Parish of Penkridge is in the East Cuttlestone Hundred of the Shire of Stafford. The 'Cuttlestone' name can be found in a number of the house names around the church and is the name of one of the (listed) bridges over the River Penk to the south west of the centre.

4.4.4 In 1215, after a short period back in Crown ownership, King John granted the deanery (a much sought after position), the manor and Penkridge Fair to Henry of London, the Archbishop of Dublin, formerly Archdeacon of Stafford. Before his death in 1228, the Archbishop granted two thirds of the manor to his nephew Andrew le Blund. This became Penkridge Manor and the other third of land became the Deanery Manor, including the land surrounding St Michael's Church. The Old Deanery still stands next to the parish church although the present building is of later origin.

4.4.5 The Dean of the College had control of around 150 acres of land in Penkridge in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The land was generally leased out and generated wealth for the Church along with the tithes that were regularly paid. Tenant farmers would have lived and worked in the village that grew around the church and the neighbouring hamlets. From the 11<sup>th</sup> century there were also corn mills powered by the River Penk, which flows close to the village. The community grew and an annual fair was granted, followed by a weekly market in 1244.

4.4.6 The Dissolution of the Monasteries and Colleges saw the greatest change in land ownership across the country, and many individuals stood to gain from the new opportunities to buy land and property from the Crown. Shortly before the dissolution of St Michael's College in 1547, Edward Littleton bought the lease for much of the Dean's land, including the farm. However, in 1548, the King gave all the Deanery possessions to Robert Dudley, Earl of Warwick. The Littleton family retained the lease and by 1585 the site of the college, with lands and tithes, was granted to Edward Littleton's grandson, and was to remain in the family until 1919. While the original college buildings have gone (although it is possible that some structures



### Images from Top to Bottom

- An engraving showing Bull Bridge
- Stone Cross depicted in an engraving of 1836
- A photograph of Stone Cross from 1900 showing encroaching buildings on the left



may remain within later buildings) the enduring legacy of Penkridge College is the magnificent 13<sup>th</sup> century St Michael's Church, which remains to this day.

4.4.7 The neighbouring Penkridge Manor, which contains the majority of the modern village of Penkridge, was bought and sold many times during Medieval and Tudor times. Eventually it came under the ownership of Baron Brooke of Beauchamp's Court in 1621. In 1749 a succeeding Lord Brooke sold the manor to Edward Littleton of Teddesley Park. Littleton's ancestor had leased the land from Henry Unton in 1583, but this was the first time that the whole of Penkridge, as it is recognised today, came under Littleton ownership.

4.4.8 The Littleton ownership has left a considerable mark on the character of Penkridge. The family controlled the village for many centuries, defending fishing rights for the villagers, building the first school in 1695, and adding houses with a distinctive style and with quality materials. The Littletons had held land throughout the Parish since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but with their acquisition of Penkridge Manor, established themselves beyond their traditional seat of Pillaton Hall and their subsequent residence of Teddesley Hall.

4.4.9 The Littleton's tenure also saw the village go through a transformation as it slipped from predominance as the local ecclesiastical centre, to being on an equal footing with other rural communities in the area. Penkridge's influence was diminished relatively soon after the Dissolution, and by 1584 it was 'no market town'. However, its horse fairs had already become established by this time and by 1598 Penkridge was described as a 'small village famous for a horse fair.' By 1680, horse racing at Penkridge took place after the fair on Midsummer Day. September races became established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and were held on The Marsh, to the east of Horse Fair.

4.4.10 For many centuries the tenants and inhabitants of Penkridge farmed the land, but by the 17<sup>th</sup> century there was an iron foundry in Penkridge, and forges were established on the sites of former mills along the banks of the River Penk. The manufacture of iron was the village's chief industry until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- Littleton influence: The Alms Houses in New Road
- More Littleton influence: The former Savings Bank & Police Station in Bellbrook
- A Littleton reminder: The Littleton Arms
- Demolished buildings in Mill Street, seen in 1975

4.4.11 The layout and appearance of Penkridge changed, and all the fields were enclosed by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although common land remained for grazing livestock. The ability to trade their produce was improved greatly with the opening of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal in 1772. Penkridge had its own wharf by 1831, and within a few years boats were arriving several times a day to take goods around the country. Trade was very important to these small rural communities and Penkridge has successfully maintained markets and fairs throughout its history. Other wealthy families were attracted to Penkridge in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as the Croydon family, who built Rock House towards the end of that century, which lies just outside the Conservation Area. Sir Edward Littleton died in 1812 and was succeeded by his great nephew who took the Littleton name and became Lord Hatherton in 1835.

4.4.12 The Grand Junction Railway opened on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1837 and two daily trains between Stafford and Wolverhampton stopped at Penkridge. The railway viaduct at Levedale is a fine early work of Thomas Brassey, who had won the contract to build a ten-mile stretch of the line. The success of the project paved the way for him to become one of the most successful railway builders in the country. Improved trade and travel opportunities followed in the wake of the railway's opening, and a number of fine houses were built in the area around this time, mainly close to the station and around the church. Penkridge's character began to change with the loss of many farm buildings and such rural features as the pinfold (an enclosure where stray animals were confined), which gave Pinfold Lane its name. New, prosperous residents brought other technological advances to the area, and a gas works was built in 1872. However, the area was not without poverty, and the village housed the Parish workhouse, on Cannock Road opposite Reynard's Cottage. However, local people continued to utilise the natural resources in the area and stone from local quarries was used in the restoration of Lichfield Cathedral in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This followed a long tradition of using the land to earn a living: clay fields, marl pits and ponds to the south of the village were particularly bountiful.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- Penkridge wharf on the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal
- The Grand Junction Railway near Penkridge
- Penkridge Station - Grand Junction Railway
- Old station totem nameplate from the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (1923-1948)



4.4.13 Penkridge looks especially industrious on the 1880 Ordnance Survey (OS) map with smithies, a gas works, a hotel, a school, market places, and the railway line streaking across the western boundary. The other striking feature is the sense of civic duty or benevolent spirit that is hinted at by the almshouses and the Odd Fellows Hall, that suggests a proud, well established community with a charitable spirit. The 1880 OS map shows that many of the key buildings in Penkridge were already in existence by this time.

4.4.14 The influence of the Littletons continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with new schools and Reading Rooms in Market Square and Market Street. It was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the local council began to assume responsibility for the needs of the community, initially by building a new school in 1909 in Market Square/Bellbrook. Indeed the 5<sup>th</sup> Lord Hatherton did not sell his 1,520 acres in Penkridge until 1953.

4.4.15 The layout of the older core of the village, with its narrow streets, remained largely unchanged during the industrialisation and development of the village. However, the buildings were regularly updated, with the insertion of such new features as bay windows. Clay Street, a narrow road running through the village, was noted as a problem for passing traffic by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the widening and straightening of this road in the 1930s destroyed a number of older buildings, some ancient ones, and the busy traffic that the widened road brought through the centre resulted in a lasting division of the village. Its centre, between Crown Bridge and Pinfold Lane, was no longer a focal point but a through route. The Stone Cross that stood at the junction of the High Street and gave the road its name was lost, and the areas either side have since grown apart from each other. Maps of Penkridge up to 1917 show a triangular group of buildings on the land at the centre of Crown Bridge that now lies open. These have now been replaced with a roundabout, which is offset from the highway.

4.4.16 Penkridge was once an important power base, first in the Saxon kingdom of Mercia and then in Staffordshire. However, with the dissolution of the ecclesiastical College it had to reinvent itself. It did so by establishing itself as



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- A view north across the Penk towards Drayton in the 1880s
- The school house on Market Square
- An 1837 engraving of The White Hart showing the properties formerly on Crown Bridge (right)
- The cleared Crown Bridge area seen in 1979

a centre for trade in livestock, through the Horse Fair and its markets, although it never expanded to the extent of some other settlements in the Midlands. Its lack of natural resources in any large quantities, such as the coal of the nearby Black Country, could explain this. Even the early establishment of canal and rail infrastructure did not prompt significant growth in the village, but did help to lead it into relative prosperity. It has remained a rural settlement on the fringes of the commercial and industrial hubs of the West Midlands, and pleasure craft rather than trades' people are now mainly using its attractive waterways.

## 4.2 Archaeology

4.2.1 Bronze Age finds have been made in and around the village and the remains of a set of Roman camps and villas lie to the south clustered around Water Eaton and Watling Street. These sites are designated as Scheduled Monuments and include the important Roman settlement of Pennocrucium.

4.2.2 While there are no Scheduled Monuments within the Penkridge Conservation Area itself there is a considerable amount of archaeological information that has been gathered here. Staffordshire County Council's Historic Environment Record Monument List holds 68 records for Penkridge Conservation Area and the surrounding 500 metres. This includes records of minor finds, as well as evidence of important local archaeology including the original site for the 14<sup>th</sup> century cross at the village centre, burgage plots from early medieval times in Market Street, reference to the college buildings associated with the parish church and details regarding Penkridge's historic buildings and monuments.

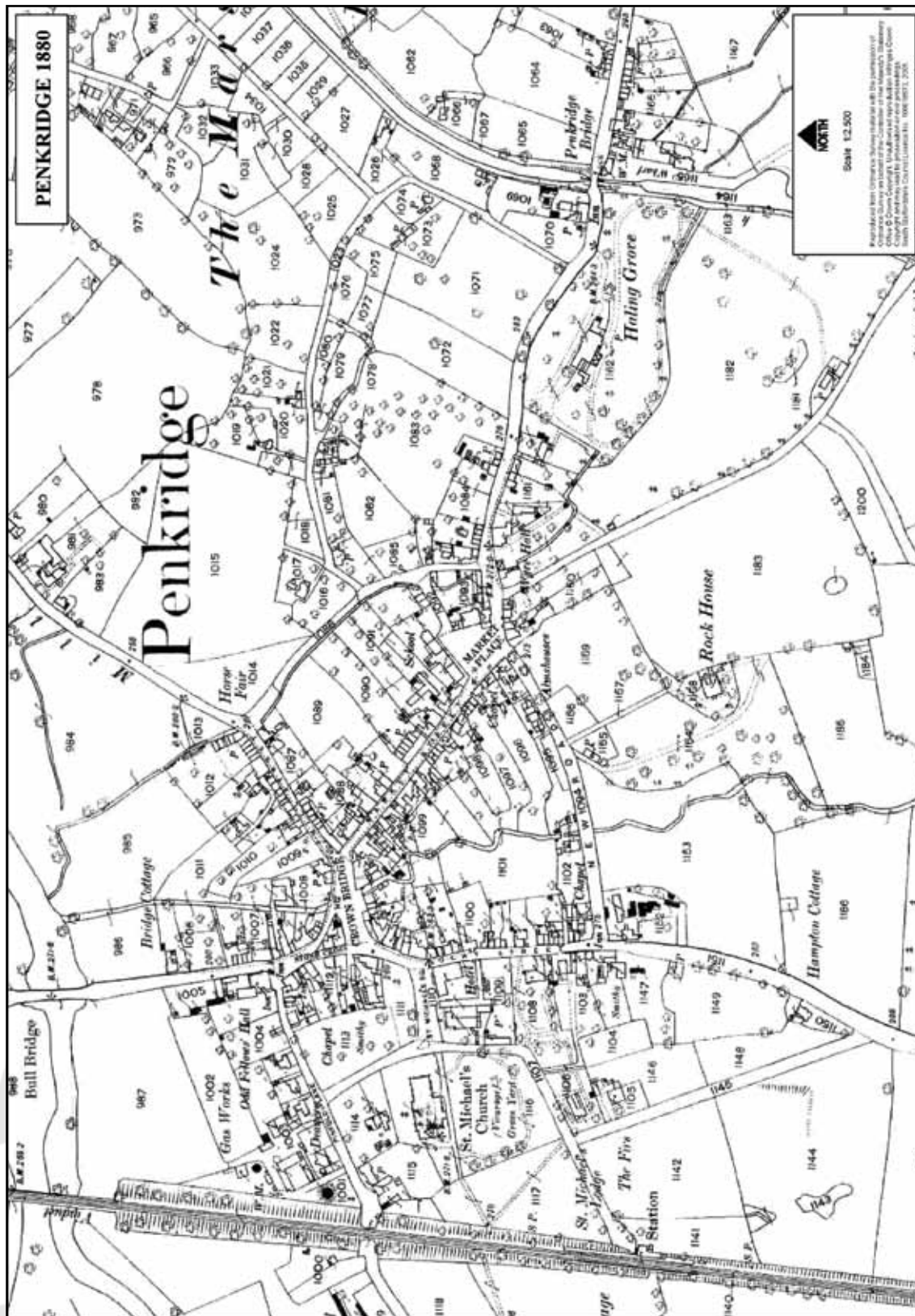
4.2.3 The diversity of the ages and types of monuments on the list indicates the rich quality of historic fabric, both above and below ground, in Penkridge. The records include details of medieval houses and inns, churchyard monuments, a canal, canal lock, lock keeper's cottage, bridges, warehouses and wharves, railway bridges, agricultural buildings and remnants of ridge and furrow field patterns. Also, included on the list are the lock-up and stocks, a roller mill and a millpond.



### Images from Top to Bottom

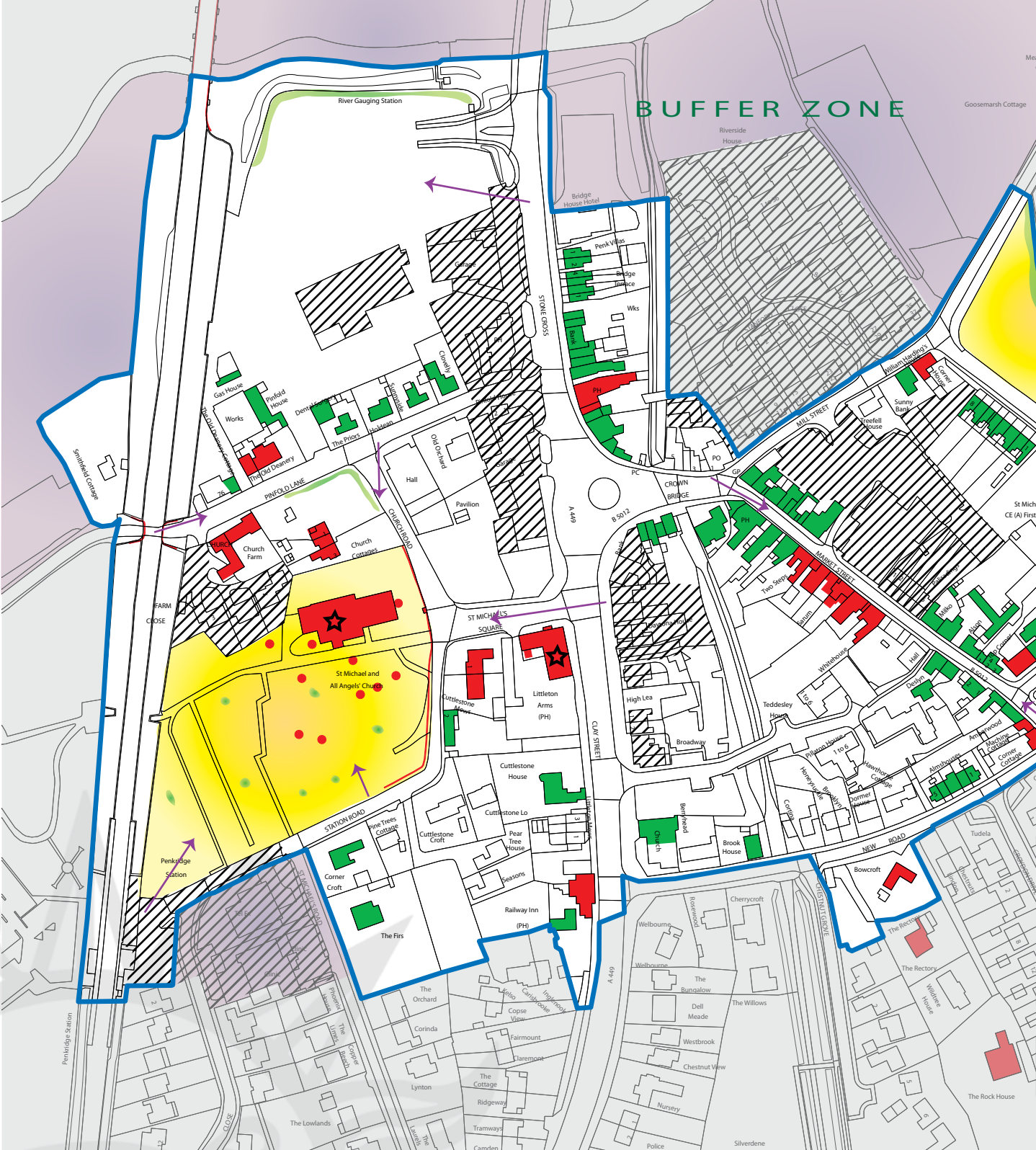
- Gailey Wharf and the Round House on the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal
- Memorials surrounding the Church of St Michael & All Angels
- The old village lock-up off Bellbrook





Image

- Penkridge - Ordnance Survey Map 1880















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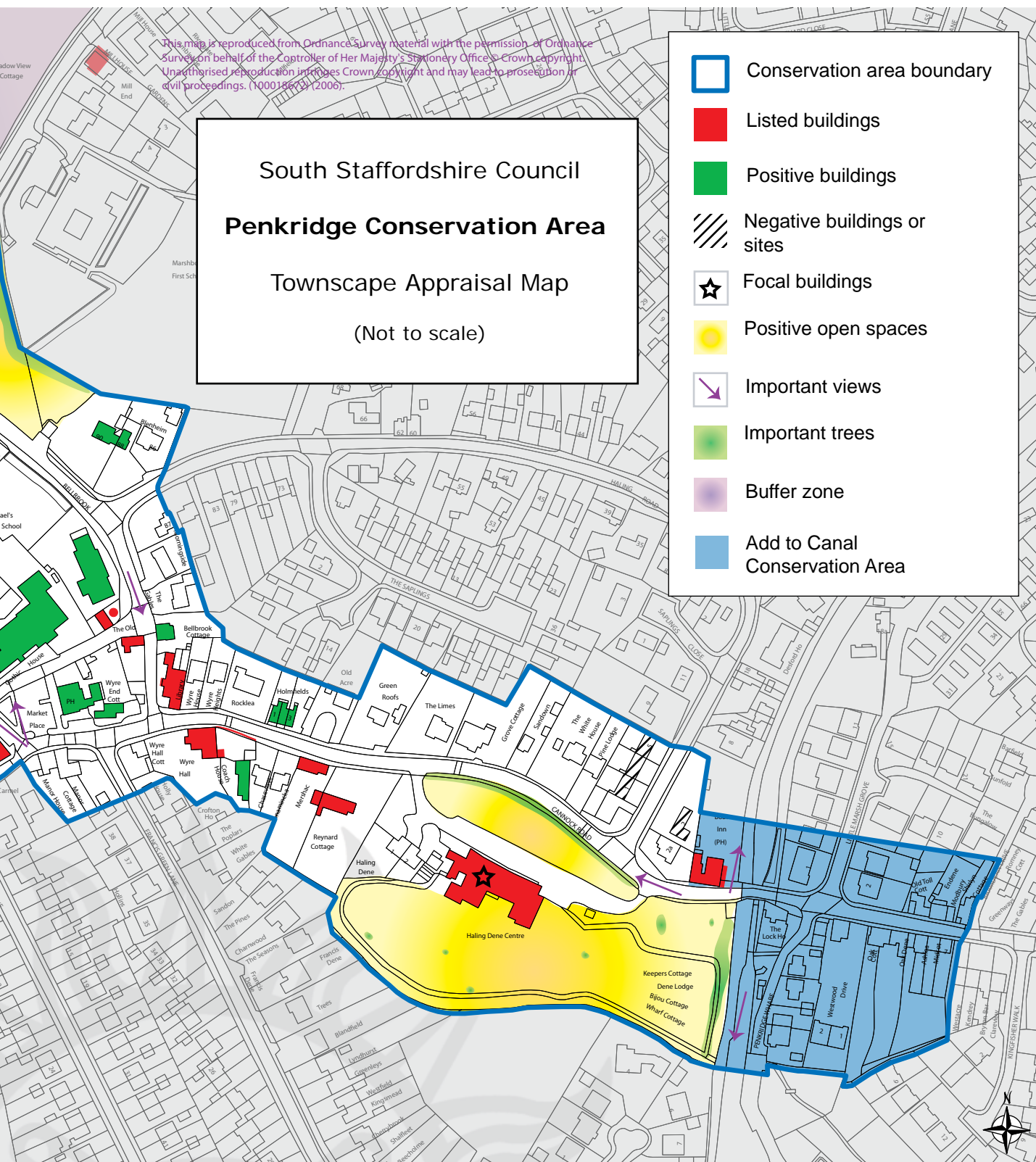
South Staffordshire Council

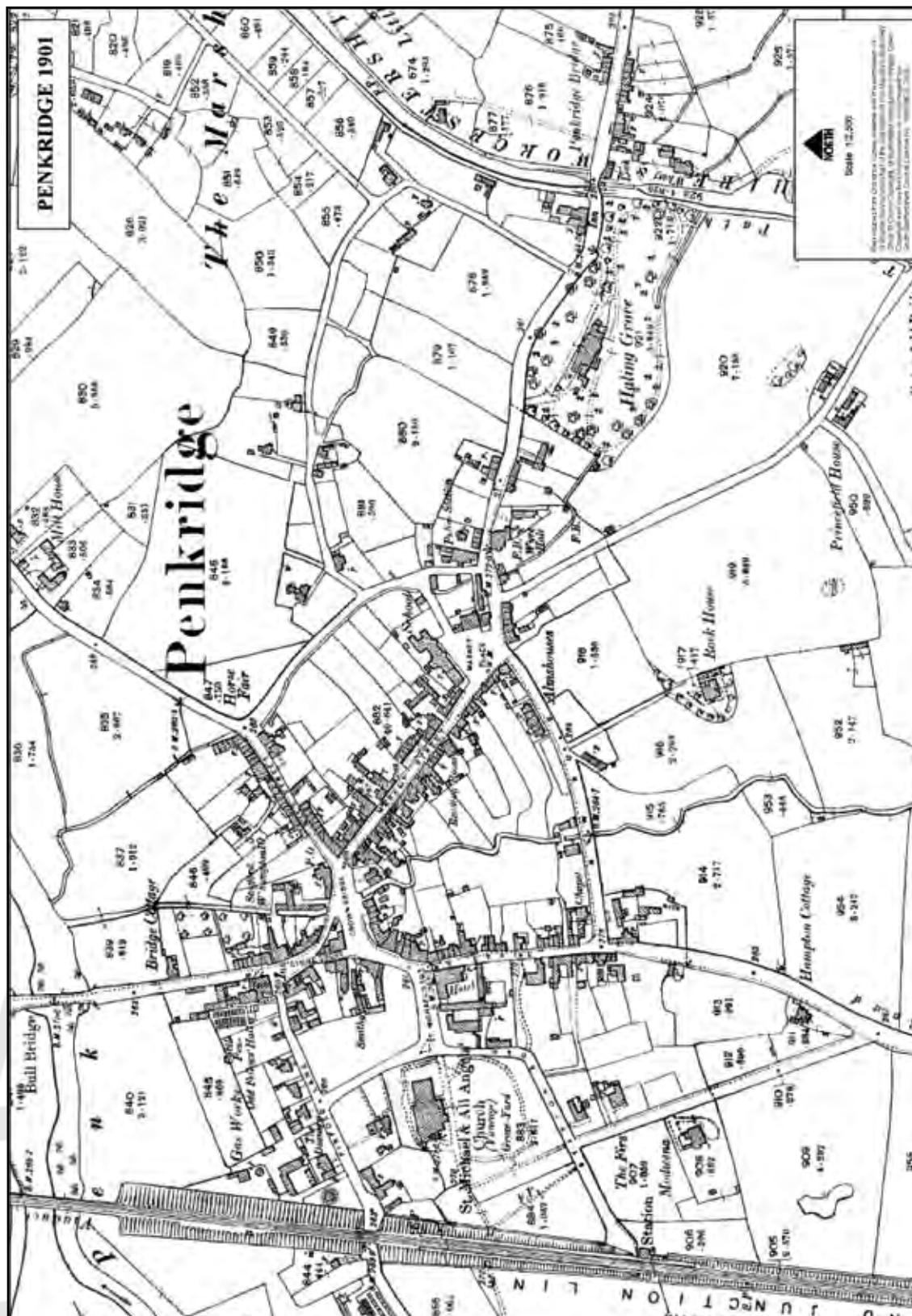
**Penkrige Conservation Area**

Townscape Appraisal Map

(Not to scale)

-  Conservation area boundary
-  Listed buildings
-  Positive buildings
-  Negative buildings or sites
-  Focal buildings
-  Positive open spaces
-  Important views
-  Important trees
-  Buffer zone
-  Add to Canal Conservation Area

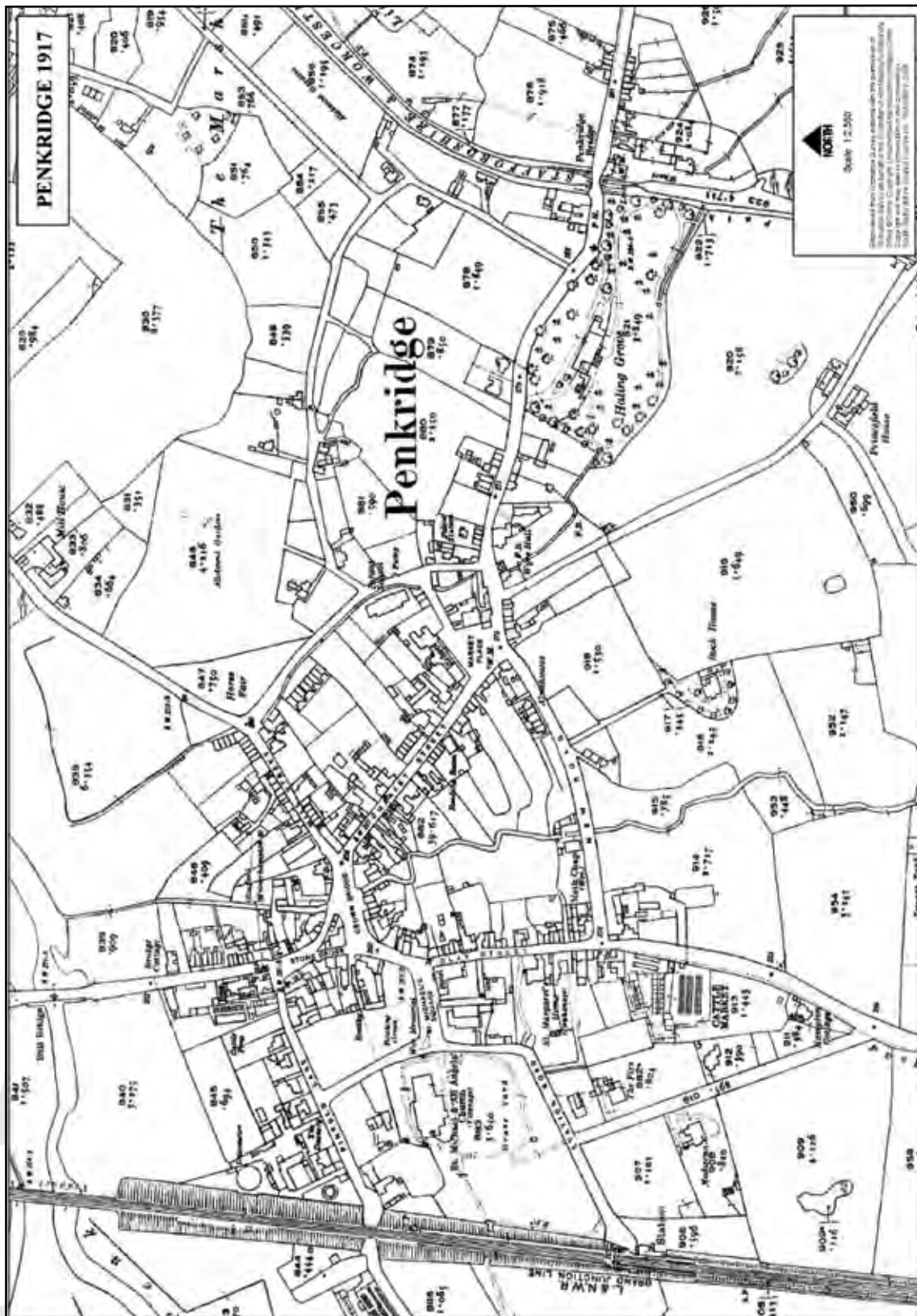




Image

- Penkridge - Ordnance Survey Map 1901





## Image

- Penkridge - Ordnance Survey Map 1917

## 5. Spatial analysis

### Plan, form & layout

5.1.1 The PenkrIDGE Conservation Area has retained its historic layout although the widening and straightening of Clay Street, to allow increased traffic on the A449, has eroded the traditional village form. This road, part of the main road linking Wolverhampton to the county town of Stafford, has had various names, including Hampton Way, Clay Street, High Street and Bucknals Bury. The widening has resulted in a marked east/west division in the appearance of the village. PenkrIDGE's commercial hub, of the Market Square, Market Street and Crown Bridge, lie to the east, while St Michael's Square, Church Road and Pinfold Lane form the western section around the church.

5.1.2 The OS Map of 1917 shows the winding course of the road, and an earlier map, from 1880, shows that the historic split of the Deanery and PenkrIDGE Manors has had a lasting effect on the layout of the roads and plots. Those in Deanery, to the west of Clay Street, are short country tracks encircling the church and farm buildings. Houses stand on irregular plots. To the east, the cluster of buildings around the wide Crown Bridge and Stone Cross evokes the tightly packed centre of a medieval township. The remnants of medieval burghage plots can still be made out, particularly on Market Street, but also faintly on Clay Street, running down to the brook that is a tributary of the River Penk to the north. Crown Bridge's width suggests that it may at one stage have been yet another location for a market in the village.

5.1.3 Meanwhile, the north/south road dividing the two has been an important highway for many centuries, and it was turnpiked in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. While the village may not have been a major staging point, there were coaching inns, whose carriageways still survive in two cases. The passage through Clay Street was renowned as being the narrowest between London and Liverpool, and this eventually led to the widening of the road in the 1930s.

5.1.4 In the 19<sup>th</sup> century other roads had been cut to accommodate the building of new houses for residents who were attracted to the village by its location on the new Grand Junction Railway. Church Road was established from a rural track and connected to Pinfold Lane in the north. It was



### Images from Top to Bottom

- Looking across Clay Street to Crown Bridge
- Pinfold Lane winds beneath the railway viaduct
- The Horse and Jockey, Market Street



extended south to form St Michael's Road (and St Michael's Close) and joined up with the end of Clay Street. New Road connected Clay Street to the old Market Place in the east, providing a more direct route for traffic, avoiding the narrow Market Street and the busy hub of Crown Bridge. These roads are straighter and slightly wider than the ancient byways that surround them and connect with them.

5.1.5 The historic burgage plot layout breaks up by the time the settlement disperses towards Cannock, by Wyre Hall, on the edge of the Market Place. The tightly packed village gives way to larger houses in roomier plots and surrounded by large grounds, with the road winding gently down to The Boat Inn and the canal bridge. The north side of Cannock Road is lined with 20<sup>th</sup> century houses that have been inserted on open land or replaced earlier buildings such as the parish workhouse. However, more burgage-style plots (long and thin) are to be found beyond the Lock House. Except for one building here, it seems that these were all built around the time of the canal in an attempt to create a new community centre away from the cluttered Crown Bridge. These houses would have provided homes for those who worked on the busy canal wharfs and warehouses. The buildings address the road in the traditional manner found in townships, while the neighbouring house, Shirlyn Cottage, has exposed timbers and faces away from the road in the manner of an early rural building.

5.1.6 The commercial buildings that line the Market Place, Market Street and Crown Bridge are positioned close to the road, giving the two and three storey structures a greater impression of height and a sense of urban streetscape in this rural market village. The buildings mainly have 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century cores, which were refronted in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the Teddesley Estate to give their current Georgian appearance. Less densely arranged buildings in roomier plots are to be found around each corner as the urban character is swiftly replaced with a more rural appearance. The change in built form can present some interesting clashes of character, such as at the northern end of Bellbrook, where the suburban style early 20<sup>th</sup> century terrace houses face the open expanse of Horse Fair. Penkridge's old commercial core still retains its congested appearance with such buildings as the old abattoir, which lies behind the disused butcher



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- New Road with almshouses on the left
- The Boat Inn and Cannock Road from the canal bridge
- View south along Market street

shop on Market Street. This building fills part of the burgage plot along with other outbuildings behind.

## 5.2 Landmarks, focal points & views

5.2.1 St Michael's Church is the principal landmark in the area and provides the focal point for the western part of Penkrige. There are many good views of its tower from around the village. The other significant structures on this side of the village are the railway bridges, whose arches span the river gracefully and provide a solid boundary to the churchyard. There are good views across the Market Place to the arches and across the river to the handsome villas that lie outside the Conservation Area looking down on the village below.

5.2.2 The central views are the sweeping broad ones along the A449. These broad tarmac vistas are generally full of the steady stream of traffic that travels through and have lost the intimate, traditional view along the once winding road. The principal historic buildings that remain are the coaching inns that have survived the reordering of the highway. The Railway Inn stands at the southern gateway and is a landmark building of modest scale, being only single storey with three well-proportioned dormers in the roof slope, and firmly set in the landscape that dips towards the village centre at this point. Further along, The Littleton Arms stands close to the highway and presents a sheer frontage to the road user, rising to three storeys. Finally, on the eastern side of the road, The White Hart presents the traditional jettied façade of black and white half timbering and pargeting above an authentic 17<sup>th</sup> century carriage arch. It rises to three storeys and is the most imposing sight on the highway at Penkrige.

5.2.3 To the east, the significant landmark is the Horse Fair, which now serves as a recreational space. There are far-reaching views across it into the fields beyond, water meadows that line the river Penk. This is some of the rare land that has not been drained and developed, such as The Marsh further east, which is now filled with modern housing. A landmark building is the Old Cottage in Bellbrook. Its distinctive lopsided timbers are authentically medieval and its position on the corner of two narrow streets increases its visual impact on this corner of the village.



### Images from Top to Bottom

- The northern end of Bellbrook
- St Michael's Church tower
- View of the viaduct



5.2.4 Haling Dene Centre is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century villa that is much extended and used as the parish council offices. It once formed the offices of Cannock Rural District Council prior to its amalgamation with Seisdon Rural District Council to form South Staffordshire District Council in April 1974. The building's broad façade and generous grounds give it a dominant presence in a village otherwise filled with smaller domestic buildings. However, its impact as a landmark is reduced by the abundance of trees that screen it from the Cannock Road. Further east the canal affords good views north and south and The Boat Inn pleasantly frames the scene on one side. Another historic building marks the eastern gateway to the Conservation Area. The black and white painted building stands brightly on the corner of Mill Street and has a date stone showing it to have been built in 1673. The most significant views are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp. 26-27).

### 5.3 Open spaces, trees & landscape

5.3.1 The Conservation Area is notable for the tightness of the built form along Market Street and Crown Bridge, with no substantial open spaces between buildings. However, many open spaces still exist either on traditionally open areas, such as Horse Fair, or on plots where houses once stood, such as the roundabout on Crown Bridge. Both the old and new market places are open, although the latter is a large shingled surface that only provides a useful area on market days. The old market place was renovated in 2006/07, and has a more attractive appearance as a public amenity space. In the Deanery area there are larger gaps between buildings and there is the large expanse of the churchyard around the church. Some other open areas, on private land, have been infilled, such as the gardens of Church Farm in Pinfold Lane. Others have been retained, such as the bowling green and the public gardens, known as Penkridge Festival Gardens, next to it.

5.3.2 The wide A449 is a broad, open highway, although the pavements are comparatively narrow. On the eastern side, the buildings retain their traditional close proximity to the edge of the road. On the western side, the mixture of buildings - especially the public houses with their car parks or the garages with their forecourts -



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- The Littleton Arms
- The Old Cottage in Bellbrook
- Haling Dene Centre
- Horse Fair

the public gardens, the road junctions, and the new Market Place to the north, all combine to give a more open aspect to this side of the road. One large open space which retained some of the remaining burgage plots between Market Street and the Otherton Brook has just been redeveloped to accommodate three blocks of flats: Hatherton House, Teddesley House and Pillaton House. The names have historic associations with the village, and the complex is accessible from a free public car park off Clay Street. Further open areas, in the form of farmland and water meadows, surround Penkridge on all sides.

**5.3.3** Trees make a major contribution to the character of some parts of the Conservation Area, although many specimens are located outside the boundary along the banks of the River Penk and the railway embankments. These tall trees give a green backdrop to the views along the streets in the Conservation Area. Significant groups of trees also lie within the area, principally in the grounds of Haling Dene, in the churchyard, and round the church towards Pinfold Lane. The close proximity of the building line to the road in the Market Street area leaves little room for trees, and the lack of these on the A449 itself also contributes to its defiantly urban character in this rural location. The most significant specimens are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp.26-27).

## 5.4 Public realm

**5.4.1** The public realm - pavements, footpaths, street surfaces, street lighting and signage – are mainly modern in style and fabric. Few traditional details remain, although some features have been refurbished in a traditional manner.

### 5.4.2 *Paving*

The pavements are standard concrete slabs or tarmac, which do not enhance the setting of the Conservation Area, and the kerbs, which are not the traditional granite, are thin (150mm) and made of concrete. There are also some 300mm sections of kerb.

### 5.4.3 *Road treatments*

Some traffic-calming measures have been introduced into Penkridge, such as speed tables along Cannock Road. These control the speed



## Images from Top to Bottom

- Penkridge Festival Gardens
- Flats between Clay Street and Market Street
- Trees and hedges in Pinfold Lane
- A mixture of traditional and modern kerbing in Mill Street



of traffic, as does the historic layout of narrow, winding streets. The street pattern helps form chicanes (the effect is enhanced by the close proximity of buildings to the highway), which manage traffic as well as modern methods such as tables and humps, and reduce the need for signage and garish road markings.

#### 5.4.4 *Street lighting*

The majority of streetlights are in the 1960s 'hockey-stick' style. These do not complement the historic village character. Some in Market Place and Crown Bridge have been replaced with tall, black cast iron style standards capped by large spherical lanterns. Their considerable height and shape is not traditional. One unfortunate inclusion in the Market Place is the 'streetlamp' style CCTV sphere that hangs from another post. A number of these have been introduced around the district and the black casing does little to limit its impact on the character of the area.

5.4.5 In conservation terms it would be ideal if a traditional height and style lamp were introduced across the area. This would maintain the important relationship of scale between the streetlamps, the houses and the trees in the Conservation Area. As part of a local authority's duty to preserve and enhance the character of their conservation areas it should be recognised that these designated areas are special and may have different needs to other areas. The introduction of overlarge standards, with no effort to marry the design to the character of the area detracts from the character of the area. The height of standards is particularly critical because it can mean that the features visually compete with the roofline of the houses, as well as conflict with the crowns of trees, themselves vital features of a conservation area.

#### 5.4.6 *Street signs*

There are no traditional metal street signs remaining in the Conservation Area, if indeed there ever were any. All street name signs are plastic mounted on freestanding poles on the pavement. Other modern street signage, such as for advertising parking restrictions, is of small size, which reduces the impact on the Conservation Area.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- A speed table in Cannock Street / New Road
- CCTV sphere and streetlamp in Market Place
- Tall streetlights in Clay Street

#### 5.4.7 *Other features*

There are traditional looking horse troughs scattered around the Conservation Area, particularly in the Market Place and Crown Bridge. They serve as planters for colourful shrubs in the summer months. While this use is not traditional, they represent a concerted effort to improve the appearance of the area using natural materials in thoughtful ways. Even though their positions are unlikely to have any significance, their presence within the streetscape is a welcome reminder of Penkridge's history as a stop on an historic stagecoach route. Their small stature is also reminiscent of the listed stocks that stand outside the gaol on Bellbrook.

5.4.8 Telephone boxes are all modern in style and the post boxes are all 20<sup>th</sup> century. The remaining public realm: electricity cabinets, litterbins, bus shelters and benches are all of modern design. The rubbish bins are usually attached to lampposts and are manufactured in a vivid blue colour.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- Stone troughs in Crown Bridge
- Discrete signage in Bellbrook

## 6. The buildings of the Conservation Area

### 6.1 Building types

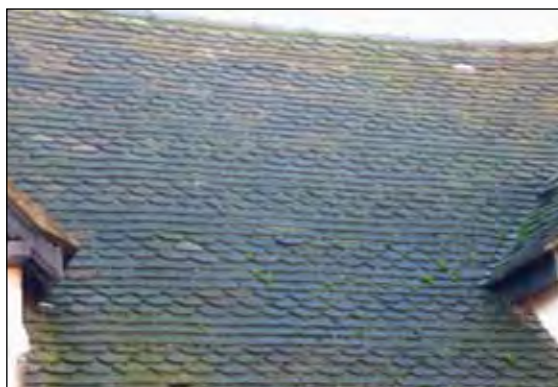
6.1.1 While there are many buildings dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries in Penkridge, Church Farm and the Old Deanery in Pinfold Lane and The Old Cottage in Bellbrook are the only medieval domestic buildings.

6.1.2 The highest concentration of historic buildings in the Penkridge Conservation Area is around St Michael's Church, the Anglo Saxon core of the settlement with the 13<sup>th</sup> century church being the oldest and most significant. It has been extended and modified significantly since first construction, although it retains a traditional design. As befits a collegiate church, it is a large, grand structure, and is surrounded by some ancient buildings, and other more modern ones.

6.1.3 In Market Street there is another cluster of listed buildings and their narrow plots set on this thin road underline the early origins of this part of the settlement. The buildings either side along Market Street share a similar form and height. Although they would have originally been residential dwellings, they are all now resolutely commercial and many have later shop fronts, with some well-detailed late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> examples (see 6.5 *Historic Shop fronts*). The properties on the Market Place are generally of a larger size and include a large public house that was a residential house, until it was converted in the 1830s, and a large 19<sup>th</sup> century schoolhouse. All around this area many buildings demonstrate typical architectural details of houses built by the Teddesley Estate:

- Rows of fish scale tiles on roofs;
- Distinctive chimneys;
- Diamond shaped cast iron windows;
- Stone lintels and cills;
- Iron railings on boundary treatments.

6.1.4 To the west of Market Place, heading out of the Conservation Area, historic cottages give way to some 19<sup>th</sup> century almshouses on New Road, beyond which modern houses line the road before the historic Brook House and Methodist Church lead back to Clay Street. East of the Market Place older cottages line Bellbrook before the village gives way to larger detached historic residences and modern houses on the north side of Cannock Road. Further



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- The Old Deanery
- Fishscale roof tiles
- Distinctive chimneys
- Detail in William Harding's House



north along Bellbrook, opposite the Horse Fair is an attractive row of early 20<sup>th</sup> century terraced houses and William Harding's House, an historic timber framed building. The area beyond Penkridge Bridge is a mixture of old and new, residential and commercial buildings.

6.1.5 St Michael's Church is the most significant building in terms of scale in the Conservation Area. After this is a range of smaller scale, but still large buildings, the inns and schools and some large residences. Interspersed between these are small-scale domestic and commercial buildings. Few late 20<sup>th</sup> century replacement buildings lie within the core of the area, the Co-op in Market Street being a notable and jarring example. The outlying parts to the north, east and south of the Conservation Area have modern estates inserted.

## 6.2 Listed buildings

6.2.1 A listed building is one that is included on the government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and Listed Building Consent is required from South Staffordshire Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Further information can be found in South Staffordshire Council's *South Staffordshire Local Plan*, adopted in December 1996.

6.2.2 There are 42 listed buildings or structures in the Penkridge Conservation Area (14 of these are ancillary structures surrounding the church). They are all listed Grade II apart from the Church of St Michael and All Angels, which is Grade I and The Old Deanery, which is Grade II\*. Most of the listed buildings were built as houses, although many of them have since been converted into shops with storage or residential accommodation above. In some of the buildings medieval structures remain, such as Church Farm and The Old Deanery in Pinfold Lane and Old Cottage in Bellbrook.

6.2.3 St Michael's Church is an impressive structure, its Grade I listing testament to its great national importance and antiquity. It stands overlooking the village from a commanding elevated position and its decorated Gothic style is due in part to the extensive additions made to its in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when a clerestory was added to the nave.



### Images from Top to Bottom

- The Co-op, Market Street
- St Michael's Church
- Church Farm, Pinfold Lane
- The Old Deanery

The large square tower is dressed with pinnacles and buttresses and these details along with the scale of the building is an imposing spectacle even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Ancillary features, such as the gates, wall, war memorial, tombs and tombstones, all play an important part in framing the setting of the church and have been listed in their own right.

6.2.4 Additional listed buildings are found around the church and are suitably subordinate in scale and importance. The Old Deanery is an intriguing mix of stone built and timber framed house dating from at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but possibly with earlier structure and may be a relic of the College buildings. On the opposite side of Pinfold Lane Church Cottages and Church Farm sit closer to the church.

6.2.5 The inns that once served the stagecoach traffic that passed through are listed: The Railway Inn, The Littleton Arms and The White Hart, along with The Boat Inn, which served the canal traffic. Some feature modern signage and external lighting: The White Hart features cumbersome floodlights at first floor level and a 'No Football Coaches' sign. Other public buildings are recognised on the statutory list, such as The Lock-up, stocks and bench on Bellbrook, the School House in Market Place and the former Police Station/Bank, which now serves as the library. Also of note is the railway bridge over Pinfold Lane with its rusticated arches. It was part of the Grand Junction Railway, the first trunk rail route in the world.

6.2.6 The listed commercial buildings on Market Street are a mixture of 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings that have been adapted through the years and have a characterful range of roof heights and façade.

6.2.7 Domestic houses form the rest of the listed buildings and these are dotted around the area. They range from the very large Haling Dene to the large Wyre Hall to the modest Old Cottage, the earliest secular buildings in the Conservation Area. There are other examples of early timber-framed buildings of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, where the framing is infilled with wattle and daub, brick infill panels or has been rendered over (e.g. Mershac on Cannock Road)



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- The White Hart
- The Railway Inn
- The Lock-up and stocks
- Wyre Hall



6.2.8 The church is built of stone, but otherwise the listed buildings are mainly built from timber (15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century) or brick, stucco or painted render (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries).

6.2.9 Most of these buildings were listed in the 1960s or at the listing resurvey in 1986.

### 6.3 Locally listed buildings

6.3.1 The Council is compiling a Local List for South Staffordshire, and is encouraging nominations from the public. The following have already been suggested for Penkridge:

#### ***In the Penkridge Conservation Area:***

- New Road: Almshouses,
- Cannock Road: Shirlyn Cottage, Oak Cottage, Nos. 1, Nos. 103 Holmfields;
- Market Place: Wyre End Cottage, The Star PH;
- Market Street: Top Corner, Alson, Abattoir, Milko and Cresswell Butchers, former Stars Newsagents, Cottage Flowers, Horse and Jockey PH, Amber wood to Dental Surgery, Michael Stokes, Hatherton Court (Emporium and Duet Fashions, formerly Bookwrite and Bekbuse Shoes), Coffee Shop and New Garden;
- Crown Bridge: Tedstone, George and Tedstone, Jaspers, optometrists and Penkridge Newsagents;
- Pinfold Lane: The Priors, Holdean, Sunnyside, Clovelly, Gas House, No.76, Smithfield Cottage;
- Station Road: Corner Croft, The Firs;
- Stone Cross: Lloyd's Bank;
- Haling Road: Nos. 88 and 90;
- Mill Street: Sunny Bank;
- Penkridge Station;
- Penkridge Lock and Bridge.

#### ***Not in the Penkridge Conservation Area:***

- New Road: Brook House;
- Clay Street: Methodist Church;
- Levedale Road: Riverdene.

6.3.2 Some of these have been identified as 'positive' buildings (see below) as part of this appraisal. It might well be that the Council adds further buildings to the Local List, in addition to those already suggested, once this appraisal has been formally adopted. This issue is considered in the Management Proposals.



#### **Images from Top to Bottom**

- Almshouses, New Road
- The Abattoir
- Sunny Bank, Mill Street
- Riverdene, Levedale Road



## 6.4 Positive buildings

6.4.1 In addition to listed buildings, the Conservation Area contains a large number of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to its character and have townscape merit. These are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp. 26-27) as 'positive buildings' and in many cases they are also proposed for inclusion on the Local List. This follows advice provided in English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area character appraisals*, and in paragraph HE10.1 of PPS5, both of which stress the importance of identifying and protecting such buildings.

6.4.2 The criteria used for selection of positive buildings are those set out in Appendix 1 of English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (2006). Where a building has been adversely affected by modern changes and restoration is either impractical or indeed, not possible, they are excluded.

6.4.3 Of special note are:

### **Public houses:**

- The Horse and Jockey, Market Street.

### **Schools:**

- County School, Bellbrook.

### **Terraces of good quality 19<sup>th</sup> century houses:**

- Nos. 1-8 Bellbrook;
- Holmfields, Cannock Road;
- Bridge Terrace and Penk Villas, Stone Cross;
- Almshouses, New Road.

### **Early houses or cottages:**

- Brook House, New Road;
- Wyre End Cottage, Market Place;
- Sunny Bank, Mill Street;
- No. 90 Bell Brook.

### **Individual buildings:**

- Abattoir, Market Street.
- Holdean, Pinfold Lane.



### **Images from Top to Bottom**

- County School, Bellbrook
- Bridge Terrace
- Brook House, New Road

## 6.5 Negative buildings

6.5.1 The Conservation Area also contains a number of unlisted buildings that make no positive contribution to its character. Some of these are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see pp. 26-27) as 'negative buildings or sites'. This is in accordance with guidance within PPS5, which stresses the importance of dealing with such buildings through the planning process. Paragraph HE9.5 in the latter notes that:

Not all elements of a ... Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance.... Where an element does not positively contribute to its significance, local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of enhancing or better revealing the significance of the ... Conservation Area.

6.5.2 The criteria used for the selection of negative buildings or sites are derived from those set out in Appendix 1 of English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (February 2006). This sets out a series of 10 questions regarding the characteristics of unlisted buildings in a conservation area. Whereas a positive answer to any one of these can provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, by deduction, a building or site which fails to score any positive answers to the same questions can be regarded as detracting from the overall character and integrity of a conservation area and therefore to be having a negative impact upon it.

6.5.3 The negative buildings and sites identified in Penkridge are:

- Market Street: Co-op and car park, Nos. 1 to 6 Palisadings;
- Haling Road: Nos. 1 to 5 and No. 2;
- Clay Street: East side;
- Station Road: Station car park and telephone exchange;
- Pinfold Lane: Farm Close;
- Mill Street: North side;
- Stanford Close.



### Images from Top to Bottom

- Co-op car park
- Haling Road properties
- Station Road car park
- Stanford Close



## 6.6 Building materials & local details

6.6.1 The earlier buildings, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, are timber-framed with lime plaster infill panels. Subsequently, panels of brick were introduced and eventually buildings were constructed entirely of brick. Initially roofs were of handmade clay tiles until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when slate began to be brought in from Wales and Westmoreland. There are no completely stone buildings apart from the church, as clearly the local sandstone was too soft for building purposes apart from poorer quality buildings such as barns and storehouses. However, some sandstone is used for walling and for the details to Wyre Hall.

6.6.2 After the 18<sup>th</sup> century brown brick was more common, with little decoration apart from an occasional dentil eaves cornice. Windows were casement or sashes. During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, slightly better quality details became common, with sash windows, curved or flat stone or brick window heads, and panelled doors. Examples can be found on Pinfold Lane.

6.6.3 The dominant red brick and white-painted render or stucco provide colours in the built-up areas. Roofs are usually mid to dark brown flat clay tile, grey Welsh slate or green Westmoreland slate. Windows, doors and shopfronts are painted a variety of colours, usually not particularly obtrusive, except in cases where large modern signage has been introduced.

6.6.4 Boundaries are very mixed although many houses in the commercial core are so close to the road that none have ever existed. Pinfold Lane provides an exception and here there is a variety of walls and railings. The railings often have intricate detailing and intact examples can also be found outside properties such as the library and the adjoining houses on Cannock Road. Otherwise boundary treatments include the sandstone walling around the church and Haling Dene, which provides a characteristic red Staffordshire hue in the village.



### Images from Top to Bottom

- Window in Market Place
- Door hood on The Littleton Arms



## 6.7 Historic Shop fronts

6.7.1 Penkridge is notable for its surviving historic shop fronts, of which the following are the most complete or the most interesting:

### **Market Street:**

- Capelli;
- Impressions;
- Heather Stern;
- Emporium;
- Cottage Flowers;
- Top Gent Barbers,
- Katherine House Hospice Shop;
- Whitehouse Pharmacy;
- The Whitehouse Wool Shop;
- Trafalgar Properties;
- Le Studio;
- Hair Pin.

### **Stone Cross:**

- Lloyds Bank.



### **Images from Top to Bottom**

- Heather Stern mullion detail
- Market Street shopfronts
- Lloyd's Bank

## 7. Character Areas

There are three 'Character Areas' in the Penkridge Conservation Area, based on buildings, uses and landscape. These are:

- Penkridge Commercial Centre, covering:
  - Market Place;
  - Bellbrook;
  - Market Street;
  - Crown Bridge;
  - Mill Street;
  - Clay Street.
- The Deanery, covering:
  - St Michael's Church;
  - Church Road;
  - Pinfold Lane.
- Cannock Road and the Canal.

### 7.1 Area 1: Penkridge Commercial Centre

#### 7.1.1 *Key positives:*

- Winding, narrow roads that circle and interconnect with each other, opening out onto the broad Crown Bridge lined with a variety of mainly historic buildings;
- Varied roof lines and eaves heights, which provide visual interest in views along the street;
- Survival of medieval burgrave plots;
- Former carriage entrances which point to historic uses;
- A rich stock of historic buildings, many on the statutory list;
- Some historic buildings with exposed timber-framing which add interest to the buildings;
- Survival of some well-detailed historic shopfronts;
- Useful shops providing a number of general and specialist services for the local and wider community;
- Characteristic boundary treatments with ornate cast iron railings;
- Views up to St Michael's Church and, in places, towards the River Penk and railway arches across Market Place, and towards water meadows across Horse Fair.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- Market Street
- Mershac, Cannock Road
- St Michael's Church



### 7.1.2 Key negatives:

- Consistent motor traffic through the centre of the village;
- Modern shop signage, such as Barclays Bank and others on the corner of Clay Street, is often oversized and not in traditional shades of colour;
- The loss of many traditional shop fronts;
- Lack of continuity/quality in the public realm: street lights, paving;
- Wheelie bins which clutter features on buildings, such as porches;
- Introduction of modern materials, such as uPVC windows;
- Overlarge late 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in and behind Market Street have resulted in wide expanses of modern materials such as tarmac that do not enhance the character of an historic market village;
- Poor quality and poor design of some buildings:
  - Palisadings and Coop in Market Street;
  - Alterations to Manor Cottage, Market Place.

## 7.2 Area 2: The Deanery

### 7.2.1 Key positives:

- Grade I listed church, built of red sandstone is the focal point of the area. It sits in a large churchyard near the brow of the hill;
- Characterful historic buildings clustered around the church;
- Attractive green spaces (Festival Gardens, bowling green and churchyard) with trees, river and canal;
- Mature trees at key locations;
- Views past the existing Conservation Area boundary to the railway, bridges and river beyond;
- A sedate feel to the area afforded by relatively few vehicles passing along the roads, except on market days.

### 7.2.2 Key negatives:

- Cars parked on St Michael's Square clutter the vista up towards the church;
- Modern housing development on Church Farm;
- Use of modern materials and details on some of the unlisted positive buildings;
- 20<sup>th</sup> century developments: the car showrooms and workshops abutting Stone Cross.



### Images from Top to Bottom

- The canal
- Modern shopfronts in Crown Bridge
- Car parking in St Michael's Square



### 7.3 Area 3: Cannock Road and the Canal

#### 7.3.1 *Key positives:*

- A winding lane with rural qualities leading to a narrow canal bridge;
- Detached historic buildings set in spacious gardens;
- High quality 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings along Cannock Road;
- Small areas of sandstone walling;
- Colourful canal boats and towpath;
- Mature trees at key locations;
- The buildings and adjoining houses on the canal wharf;
- A variety of views along the canal, all of interest.

#### 7.3.2 *Key negatives*

##### *Spaces:*

- Much of the open land around the canal and north of Cannock Road, including The March, has been developed, diminishing the rural character of the village;
- Poor quality paving, including some tarmaced pavements;
- Wheelie bins which clutter the streetscape, particularly on collection day;
- Steel streetlamps;
- Intrusive telegraph poles and overhead wires in places;
- Loss of a sense of enclosure, with modern buildings set back from historic building lines, often with parking bays.

##### *Buildings:*

- Use of modern materials and details on many of the unlisted positive buildings, such as uPVC windows;
- Poor quality and poor design of some buildings: Stanford Close and the north side of Mill Street;
- Buildings in Haling Road.



#### Images from Top to Bottom

- Modern development on the corner of Cannock Road and Little Marsh Grove
- Front boundaries need protecting (Church Road)
- Historic shop front in Market Street

## 8. Issues

### 8.1 Key issues

8.1.1 From the identification of 'Key Negatives' in the preceding chapter, the following are considered to be the principal issues in the Penkridge Conservation Area:

- Maintenance of the rural character;
- Maintenance of urban character;
- Control of boundaries (gates, fencing, walls) and building details;
- Pressure for housing development and little open space in which to put it;
- Need to complete ongoing public realm improvements (street lighting) and carry out new replacements to other street furniture;
- Historic buildings in need of repair or improvement;
- Use of modern materials and details on historic buildings;
- Protection of historic shop fronts and control of new shop fronts/ signage;
- Need for full Local List assessment;
- Need for a revision of CA boundary;
- Traffic issues – busy and hard to cross roads;
- Car parking clutters the wider roads of St Michael's Square and Crown Bridge;
- Lack of amenity space for older children and adults;
- Buffer zones.

### 8.2 Conservation Area boundary review:

8.2.1 A number of boundary revisions would improve the extent to which the designation accurately reflects the special character of Penkridge:

#### **Additions:**

- Stone Cross: Market Place, garage, Bridge Terrace, Penk Villas; Bridge House Hotel;
- Pinfold Lane: Smithfield Cottage;
- St Michael's Road: Rear garden of The Firs;
- Cannock Road: Gardens of Manor Cottage and Manor House;
- Clay Street: Penkridge Methodist Church and buildings to the north, Teddesley House, Pillaton House and Hatherton House, land to the south of The Railway Inn;
- New Road: North side, Bowcroft;
- Station Road: Penkridge Station.

#### **Deletions:**

- Stanford Close: Nos. 1, 2, 8, 9, 10;
- Mill Street: Nos. 1- 37 (consecutive);
- Francis Green Lane: Rear gardens of Croft House, The Poplars, and White Gables.
- New Road: Front gardens of Carmel and Tudela;
- Croydon Drive: Front garden of No.1;
- Station Road: Land around telephone exchange and Penkridge Station car park.

Also, the identification of a number of 'Buffer Zones' would recognise the impact that development in these areas could have on the neighbouring designated conservation area:

#### **Buffer zones:**

- Fields south of River Penk and north and east of Riverside House;
- Fields to the south of River Penk and west of railway line;
- Land to the north of River Penk to Levedale Road;
- Grounds of Marshbook First School;
- Open land to the west of Penkridge Station.

## Appendix 2: Local Plan policies

<b>BE7</b>	Conservation Areas – Planning Applications
<b>BE9</b>	Conservation Areas – Demolition Prior to Redevelopment
<b>BE12</b>	Conservation Areas – Removal of Intrusive Features
<b>BE14</b>	Retention of Shop Fronts
<b>BE15</b>	Replacement of Shop Fronts
<b>BE16</b>	Security Screens
<b>BE17</b>	Internally Illuminated Signs
<b>BE18</b>	New Advertisements
<b>BE19</b>	Existing Signs
<b>BE20</b>	Reuse and Adaptation of Rural Buildings
<b>BE26</b>	New Development – Design Criteria
<b>BE28</b>	Protection of Ground Water Resources
<b>C1</b>	Reuse of Rural Buildings
<b>C2</b>	Use of Agricultural Land
<b>C3</b>	Development on Agricultural Land
<b>C4</b>	Dwellings in the Countryside
<b>C8</b>	Extensions
<b>C13</b>	Expansion of Businesses
<b>GB1</b>	Green Belt (General)
<b>H12</b>	Local Needs Assessment Criteria
<b>OC1</b>	Open Countryside – General



## Appendix 3: Bibliography

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# Notes





## Notes



