

The image shows a two-story red brick house with a black door and a small porch. The door has a diamond-patterned glass insert and a white panel. To the left of the door is a large, weathered stone pillar covered in moss and ivy. The house is surrounded by greenery, including ivy on the wall and various plants in the garden. A newspaper is lying on the step in front of the door.

# Green Lane

Conservation Area Appraisal &  
Management Plan

Adopted November 2023

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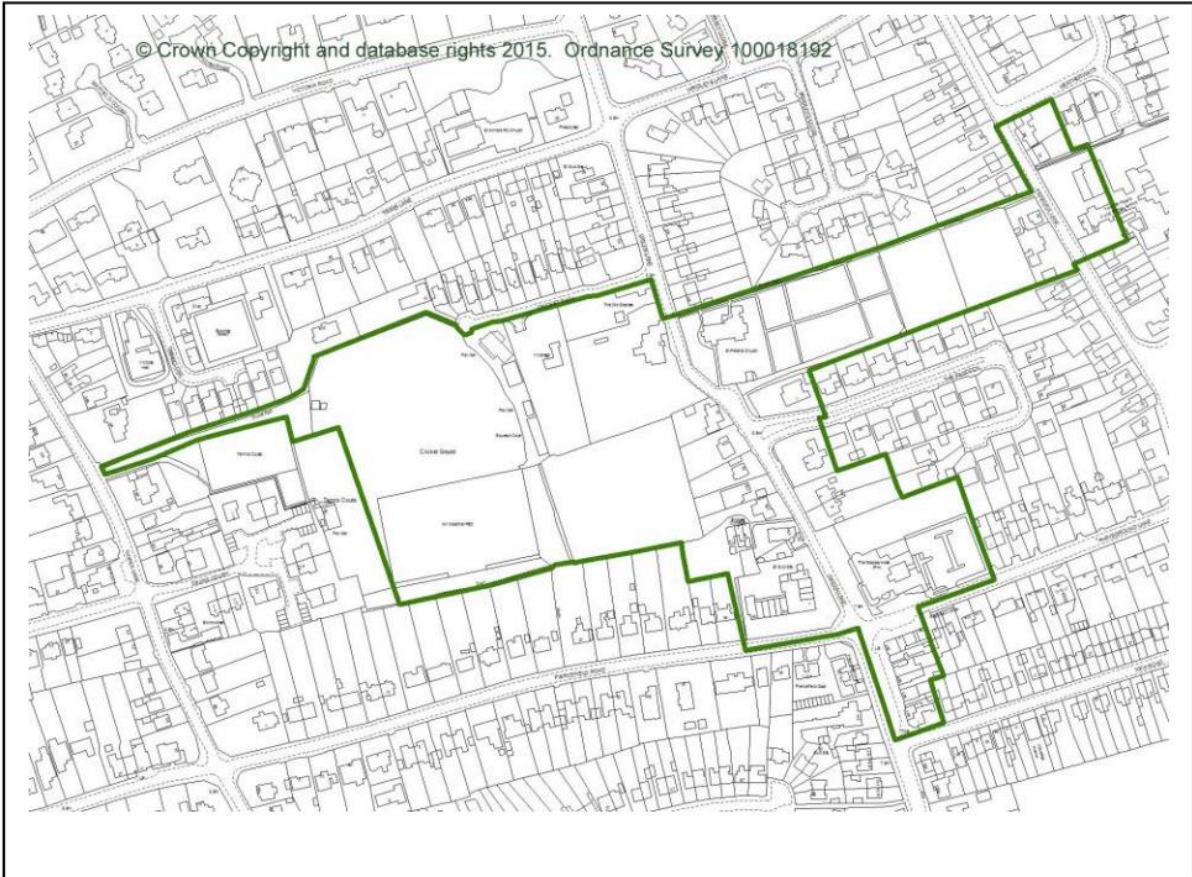
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*Plan 1 Showing Green Lane Conservation Area*

## **PREFACE**

### **Legislative Background**

Since the 1967 Civic Amenities Act local authorities have been empowered to designate Conservation Areas. Section 69(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 defines Conservation Areas as:-

*"Areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".*

Key elements in defining such 'special interest' could include the relationship between Conservation Areas and their setting, the visible impact of historic development, the interaction between people and place, the quality of architectural design, the greenspaces and planting within and the contribution of designated and non-designated heritage assets alike.

Conservation Areas are diverse. They may be large or small; residential or commercial; civic or industrial; old or relatively modern. They may represent social ideals or civic pride. They may be specifically designed or speculatively produced; modest or grand. They may contain listed buildings of architectural or historic interest or may simply have local historic association. However, common to all will be an identifiable environmental quality which should be protected from unsympathetic redevelopment or alteration.

Sefton Council has declared 25 Conservation Areas throughout the Borough reflecting the variety of building styles and environments within its borders.

### **Policy Framework**

The content of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England 'Advice Note 1'.

The principles within the NPPF and 'Advice Note 1' are further supported by Sefton Council's Heritage policies contained within its Local Plan.

This legislation and policy framework enables the authority to exercise greater control over development within Conservation Areas and, where appropriate, this may be supplemented by the use of 'Article 4 Directions' to remove permitted development rights. In this way, minor changes, which may be cumulatively detrimental, can be more closely controlled. The NPPF contains a large raft of policies which are relevant to Formby and its conservation area specifically that within Chapter 16, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

Historic England have also produced a suite of documents that expand on the NPPF and provide further advice on all different aspects of the historic environment, particularly "Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas" and "Conservation Area Appraisals" "Streets for All" and "Valuing Places".

Local Authorities have a duty to review, from time to time, their areas to ensure that places of special architectural or historic interest are being protected. The boundaries of existing Conservation Areas may be revised, new areas may be designated and those areas which have been eroded to the extent that their special character has been lost, may be de-designated.

## NPPF

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

## NPPG

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment#designated-heritage-assets>

## Historic England 'Advice Note 1'

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/heag-268-conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management/>

### **How status affects planning decisions**

Whilst the Council recognises that, for Conservation Areas to remain 'live' and responsive to a changing society, changes must and will occur, it nevertheless undertakes to ensure that all changes preserve or enhance the character and appearance of its Conservation Areas and do not result in any serious loss of character or features.

Planning legislation supports the local authority in this by increasing its powers of control over development. It does this in the following ways:

- Buildings and structures may not be demolished without Planning Permission.
- Trees of a minimum 75mm diameter trunk at 1.5 metres above ground) are protected and all work to them requires consent from the Council.
- New development is expected to reflect the quality of design and construction of the surrounding area and should make a positive contribution to the area's character.

Local planning authorities may, if necessary, exercise even greater control by removing the basic permitted development rights of householders.

Under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council has a legal obligation to ensure that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance" of the area when deciding planning applications.

### **Sefton Local Plan**

The Local Plan was adopted in April 2017 and supplements National policy and guidance. The Local Plan sets out how new development will be managed in the period from 2015 to 2030 and encourages sustainable development and economic growth, as well as the protection of the historic environment through its specific policies. These policies support regeneration and economic growth whilst Chapter 11 relates to Natural and Heritage Assets.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

The aim of SPD's is to provide clear guidance on how the Council will apply Local Plan policies relating to a specific area or specific issues.

The documents will set out principles and standards that development should adhere to, in order to safeguard good design and maintain the special character of the area. The documents will

also provide guidance in relation to particularly sensitive areas designated for their historic or architectural quality. The specific Supplementary Planning Documents are emerging but will be adopted to support the aims and objectives of the Management Plan. These will include a document relating to all aspects of shopfront design including consideration of security features alleviating the need for unsightly shutters and related boxes.

It will help to address negative factors highlighted within the Conservation Area Appraisal including issues and future management set out within this document.

### **Sefton 2030 vision**

The Sefton 2030 vision was adopted in 2016 and sets out a vision for the future of the borough and to understand and focus on what is important for the Borough and its communities. This will provide a foundation in order to stimulate growth, prosperity, set new expectation levels and to help focus on what is important for Sefton.

The Core Purpose relevant to the conservation area includes:

- Facilitate confident and resilient communities.
- Place-leadership and influence.
- Drivers for change and reform.
- Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity.
- Generate income for social reinvestment.
- Cleaner and Greener.

The document outlines how the Council will contribute to achieving those ambitions and core purposes set out in the Vision 2030.

### **Formby Neighbourhood Plan (NDP)**

The Formby and Little Altcar Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a new type of planning document and is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area and the opportunity for communities to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape its development and growth. This is set out in the 'Localism Act' which came into force in April 2011.

The NDP provides a vision for the future of the town and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision. These policies accord with higher level planning policy, as required by the Localism Act.

Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine their strategic policies. Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict.

Formby and Little Altcar Parish Councils Neighbourhood Plan was independently examined in summer 2019 and approved for referendum. Subsequently the local community voted to approve the document through the referendum held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

## **The need for a Conservation Area appraisal and Management Plan**

The first step to protecting the inherent qualities of a Conservation Area is having a thorough understanding of its character. This should then underpin local policies for the area's protection. Such a definition requires a thorough appraisal of the area to assess the contribution of each element (e.g. buildings, boundaries, trees, surfaces, etc.) to the area's overall character.

Whilst this appraisal aims to identify the essential elements which give this Conservation Area its character, it is not intended as a detailed evaluation of each building and feature. Therefore, any buildings, features and details may still have importance even though not specifically referred to in the document and any omissions do not indicate lack of merit or interest.

### **Public interest**

Conservation Area designation may result in implications for property owners through increased statutory controls which carefully manage development, however designation can also enhance economic and social wellbeing and provide a sense of continuity. The most effective conservation work can act as a catalyst for further regeneration and improvements to the public realm. Conservation Area Appraisals allow the public to offer comment on the observations and recommendations made within and the justification of designation as a whole.



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

The purpose of this Appraisal and Management Plan is to clarify the designation of the area around Green Lane, Formby as a Conservation Area. The designation as a Conservation Area provides the Local Planning Authority with additional powers to protect and enhance its special characteristics. It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to publish up to date proposals for the conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas.

The Management Plan naturally follows on from the Conservation Area Appraisal and identifies the essential elements of the Conservation Area in order to provide a thorough understanding of its character. The Management Plan is the key tool for outlining the way in which the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the conservation area and how it will be monitored.

Good management and maintenance is crucial to the long-term care of heritage sites, this means having the right skills and procedures in place to ensure that they are looked after in an appropriate manner. Poor management and maintenance put heritage at risk, and can lead to higher repair, restoration and refurbishment costs in the future.

The Conservation Area encompasses the majority of Formby's historic buildings and historic open spaces which give it distinctiveness and attractiveness, contributing to its sense of place. The way the Conservation Area is managed therefore is critical to the health of the town as a whole.

The purpose of the Management Plan is to set out specific management issues that need to be addressed by incorporating them into longer term maintenance plans and strategies.

### **1.2 Scope and Structure of the Study**

The scope of this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is based on the guidelines published by Historic England and represents a factual and objective analysis. In accordance with the guidelines, the following framework has been used as the basis for analysis:

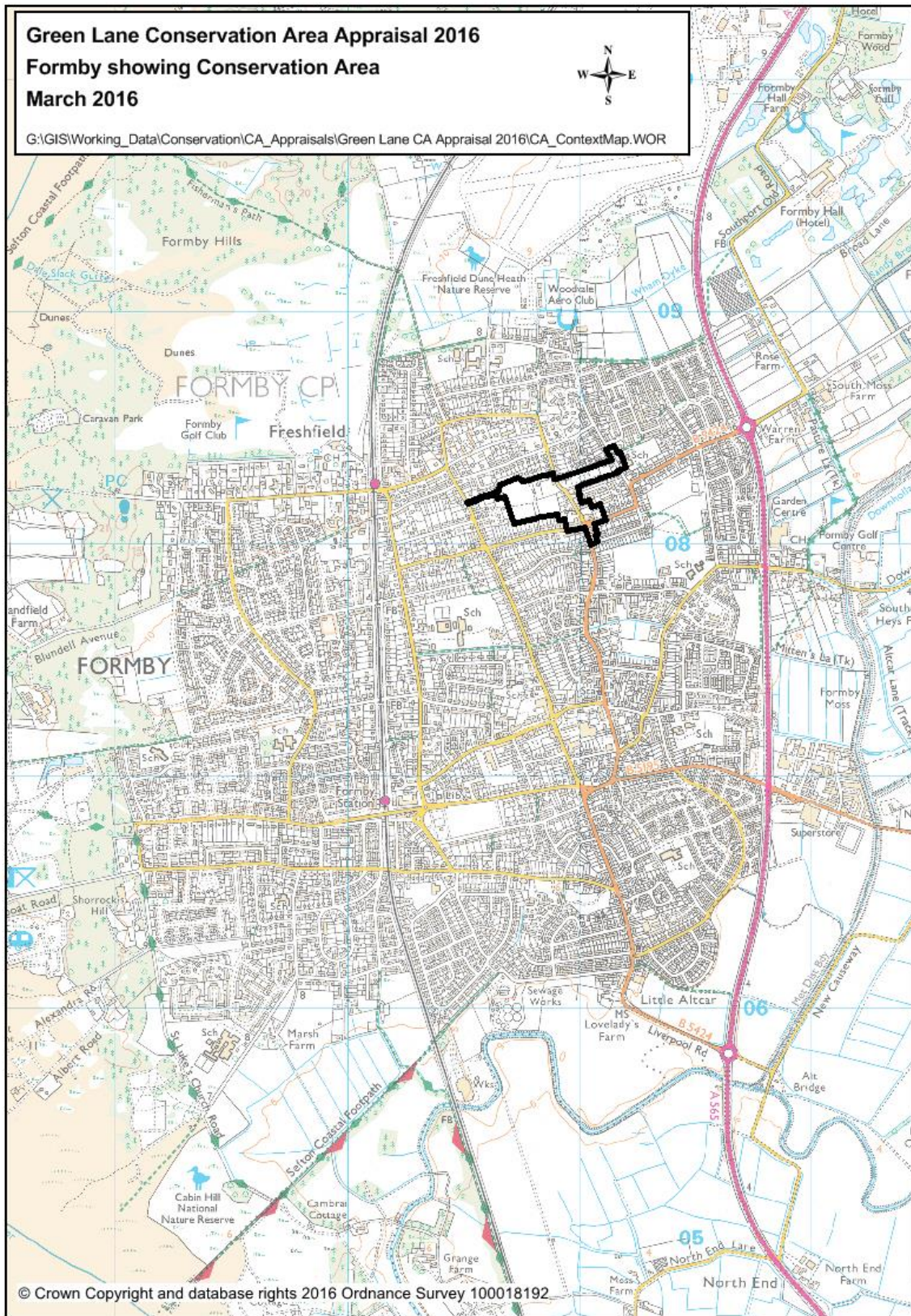
- Location and context
- Landscape setting and views
- Townscape and focal buildings
- Archaeological materials and details
- Character assessment
- Negative factors

The document has been structured to encompass these areas of study and concludes with a management plan and recommendations for potential amendments to the Conservation Area boundary.

The aim of this appraisal is to identify and examine those elements which individually and collectively define the essential character of the area. Whilst the appraisal provides a comprehensive analysis of the area, any descriptive omission of a building or feature does not imply that it has no special interest.

### **1.3 Survey**

Detailed surveys of Green Lane Conservation Area were undertaken in the first quarter of 2016, over the summer of 2019 and on the first quarter of 2023. These site visits provided the opportunity to gather photographic evidence, assess the condition of the area's listed buildings against their most up to date surveys and combine the research undertaken as part of a desk-based study.



*Plan 2 Showing location of Green Lane Conservation Area within Formby*

## **2.0 LOCATION AND CONTEXT**

### **2.1 Location**

The Conservation Area is situated around a kilometre to the north of Formby centre in the district of Freshfield; it takes on the form of an axis encompassing the southern half of Green Lane, stretching from Paradise Lane in the east to Gores Lane in the west.

### **2.2 Topography and Geology**

Green Lane is situated on former agricultural land, between 7 and 8 metres above sea level.

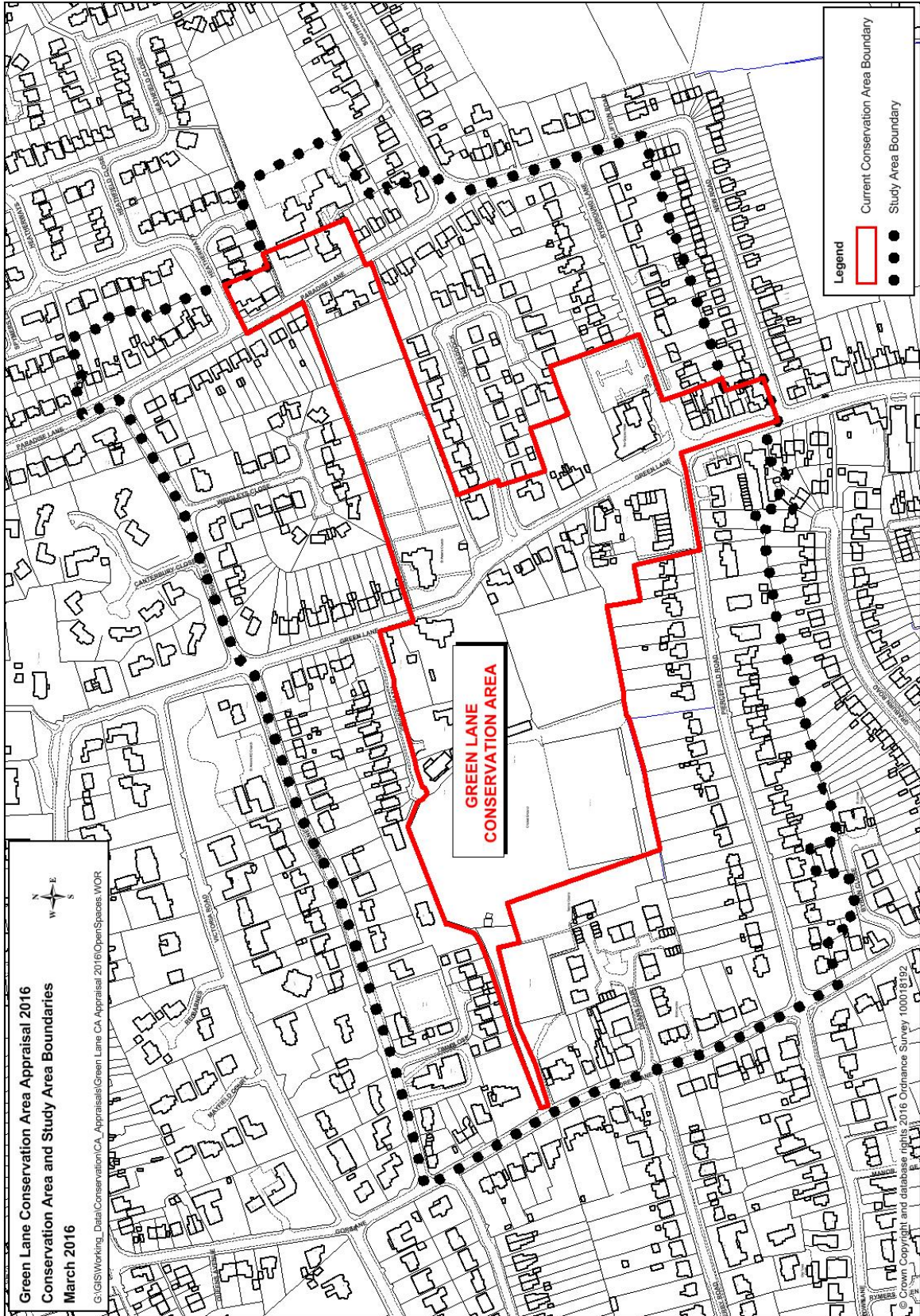
Like much of coastal Sefton, Green Lane sits above superficial deposits of blown sand formed up to 3 million years ago. The bedrock below is sedimentary of the Sidmouth Mudstone Formation.

### **2.3 Uses**

Green Lane Conservation Area has a large amount of open space including the prominent Formby Parish Church (better known as St Peter's Church), a graveyard, playing pitches and grounds, and several private gardens. Apart from the leisure and recreational uses associated with Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club, the Conservation Area also contains several houses, a school, public house and a number of retail units at the southern terminus of Green Lane.

### **2.4 Study Area Boundary**

Green Lane Conservation Area was designated by Sefton Council in October 1983 having been first put forward two years previous by The Formby Society. In 2001 the renamed Formby Civic Society proposed amendments to the boundary of the Conservation Area, however at the time with no adopted Character Statement or appraisal; the Council deemed this as inappropriate. Green Lane Conservation Area covers around 8.8ha of one of the longest settled parts of Formby; it contains four Grade II listed buildings including the Georgian/Gothic revival St. Peter's Church. The attractiveness of the area derives from the wide-ranging scale of buildings, their informal grouping and the variation of space between them. The boundary of Green Lane Conservation Area was carefully considered to incorporate buildings and structures of different ages and functions, historic pathways and open spaces and mature trees. It is this relationship between the built and natural environment, diverse architecture and historic interest which characterise the area, justifying its ongoing protection and conservation. The study area is detailed in Plan 3.



Plan 3 Boundary of Green Lane Conservation Area and Appraisal Study Area

### **3.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1 Early history and Origins**

The land constituting Green Lane Conservation Area has been settled since at least the late medieval period, although the oldest surviving buildings in the area date to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Throughout prehistoric times, as most of Lancashire was covered by dense forest, present-day Sefton would have been too inhospitable to permanently settle. Remnants of ancient trees have been found along the coast at Formby confirming the existence of the forest. Despite this, footprints dating to the Neolithic era have similarly been discovered at Formby Point indicating at least some human activity in the area.

No evidence of permanent Roman occupation has been discovered in Sefton, again with the thick wood and marshland that characterised the area acting as a hindrance for settlement. However, to the Vikings, arriving via the Isle of Man and Ireland during the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the forest and marshes were no deterrent, and the relatively unpopulated coast of Lancashire was rapidly settled.

The name Formby is of Norse origin, originally spelt ‘Fornebei’ meaning ‘village belonging to Forni’ – ‘Forni’ presumably a personal name. Fornebei was recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as under ownership of three manors; Halsall, Walton and Poynton. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Green Lane itself lay within the township of ‘Old Town’. The township has been referenced in various grants and leases of land in centuries previous including as Old Formeby in 1442, Olde Towne of Formbie in 1532 and Ould Towne Yarde in 1632.

Throughout time Formby has become intrinsically linked to the coast and sea, it was once considered ahead of Liverpool for the construction of a system of docks along the south west Lancashire coast. A lifeboat station sited at Formby between 1776 and 1918 is uncontested as the first such facility in the world. The extensive dune system and planted pinewood forest are now popular visitor attractions managed by the National Trust.

The area constituting present-day Formby was in fact nothing but a collection of dispersed hamlets and villages until the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest surviving building in Green Lane Conservation Area is May Cottage which has a date of 1620 inscribed on internal brickwork, elements of the nearby 62 Gores Lane could however predate this by around 100 years. Other surviving 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings include St. Peter’s Church, Church Cottage (21 Green Lane) and Church House which is thought to have been altered from a public house called the Formby Arms Inn. Yate’s Map of Lancashire, 1786, provides the first plan of the area and shows buildings standing on the west side of Green Lane and the Church as the only on the east side. However, it is difficult to ascertain which particular buildings were standing at the time. The 1845 Formby Tithing Map provides definitive evidence of the above mentioned buildings. Both cottages were leased from Thomas Weld Blundell Esq around this time.

As detailed in the following section, the arrival of the railway in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century prompted steady growth in Formby from there on after.



*Extract of the 1845 Formby Tithe Map showing early development on Green Lane*

### 3.2 Development

Green Lane Conservation Area and its wider setting were largely undeveloped until the arrival of the railway and the construction of Freshfield railway station in 1854. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the local population had climbed to around 5,600, increasing four-fold to 22,400 at the time of the 2011 Census. The population within Green Lane Conservation Area however remains relatively low with a number of dwellings.



*Freshfield Railway Station photographed in 1912, largely unrecognisable against its later 20<sup>th</sup> century replacement*

The clearest 19<sup>th</sup> century map of the area, dated 1893, shows significant development to the south of Green Lane towards Formby village and to the west towards the Liverpool, Crosby and Southport railway line, locally dubbed the 'Shrimp Line'. This is also the first map to refer to the area as Freshfield. This name stems from Thomas Fresh, Liverpool's first public health

officer who donated land to railway directors in order to construct a railway station close to his Formby home. This is located at 95 Freshfield Road and is adorned with a Blue Plaque that was erected by the Formby Civic Society in 2014 indicating it as the former residence of Fresh. In the context of Green Lane Conservation Area, it was during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that Piercefield Road was laid out and the landmark Grapes Hotel was completed.

The Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club was established in 1865 and subsequently laid out a cricket ground on land north of Piercefield Road. This had been expanded by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which involved a minor realignment of a public footpath which connects Gores Lane and Green Lane. The 1908 and 1927 Ordnance Survey maps of Freshfield show little development over the following decades. A year later however, the iconic Embassy Building was completed on the corner of Green Lane and Piercefield Road on previously vacant land.



*Photograph of the Green Lane/Church Road junction circa 1900. The Grapes Hotel can be seen to the far left*

Development pressures post-World War II lead to rapid development locally, which had already seen Freshfield and Formby village merge into one coalescent settlement. Plan 4 shows how the majority of buildings in the area were constructed post-War. Within the context of Green Lane Conservation Area new housing was constructed adjacent to its northern boundary along Timms Lane and to the east in a new housing development named The Paddock which is solely accessed by Green Lane. More recently Timms Lane and Victoria Road, further north, have become property 'hot spots' and a trend is emerging of homes being purchased with the intention to demolish and rebuild to individual specification.

### **3.3 Historic Uses and their influence**

Historically a predominantly agricultural landscape, Green Lane Conservation Area has retained much of its rural character through extensive open space and tree planting. The irregular street layout encompassing St. Peter's Church has been maintained and the residential core of Green Lane south of the church yard remains as such.

The cricket ground has been utilised for approximately 150 years, although other recreational components of the area such as the bowling green adjacent to the Grapes Hotel have been lost. General open space remains to the north of the Grapes Hotel and to the west of housing on Green Lane. The graveyard of St. Peter's Church has been gradually extended east towards



Paradise Lane. The original school buildings on Paradise Lane have sustained their community use.

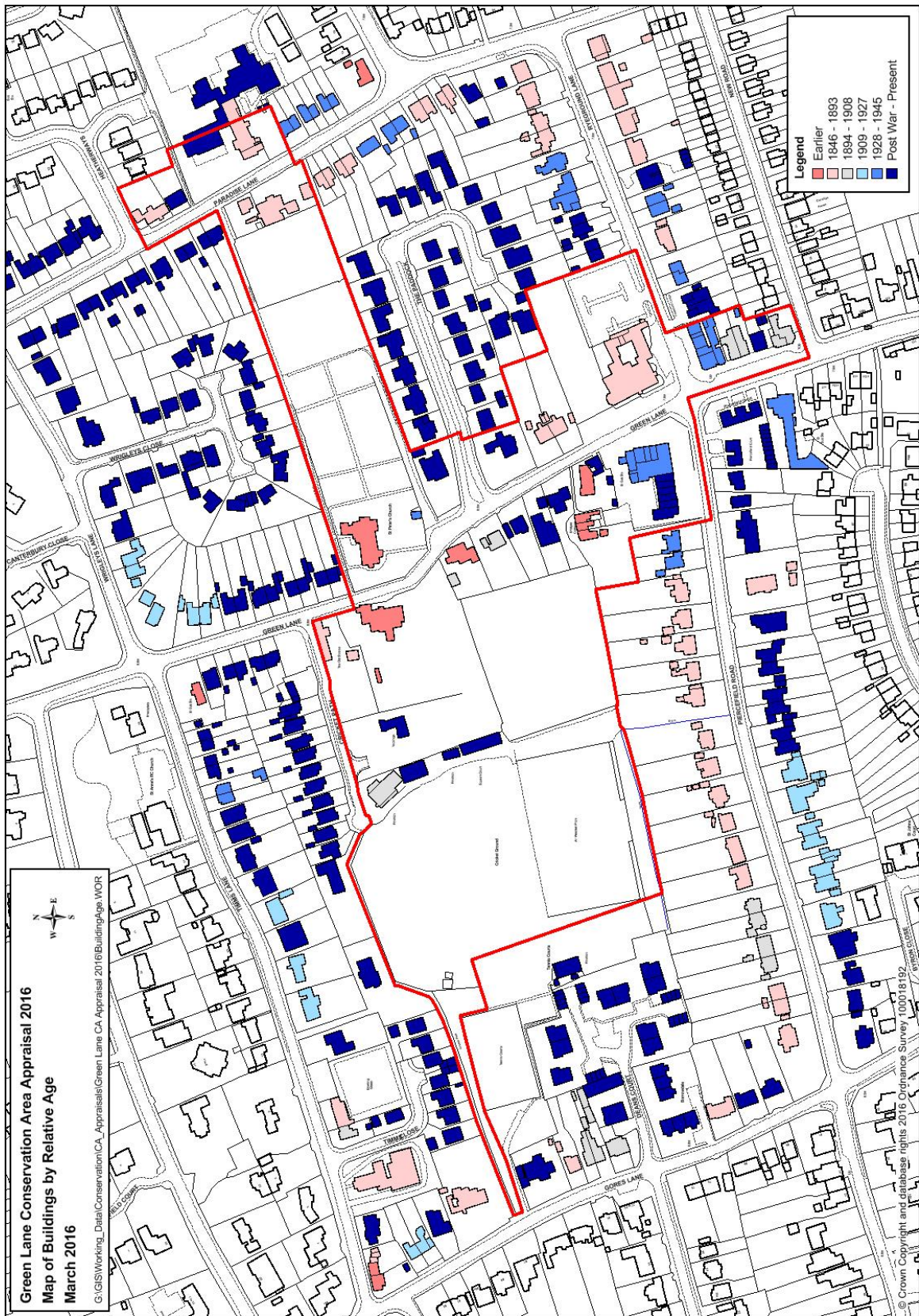
The most obvious change in land use has taken place where Green Lane meets Church Road. Although there is evidence of shops along this stretch of road for a number of years, they and the Embassy Building are relatively modern in comparison to the majority of Green Lane Conservation Area.

### **3.4 Archaeology**

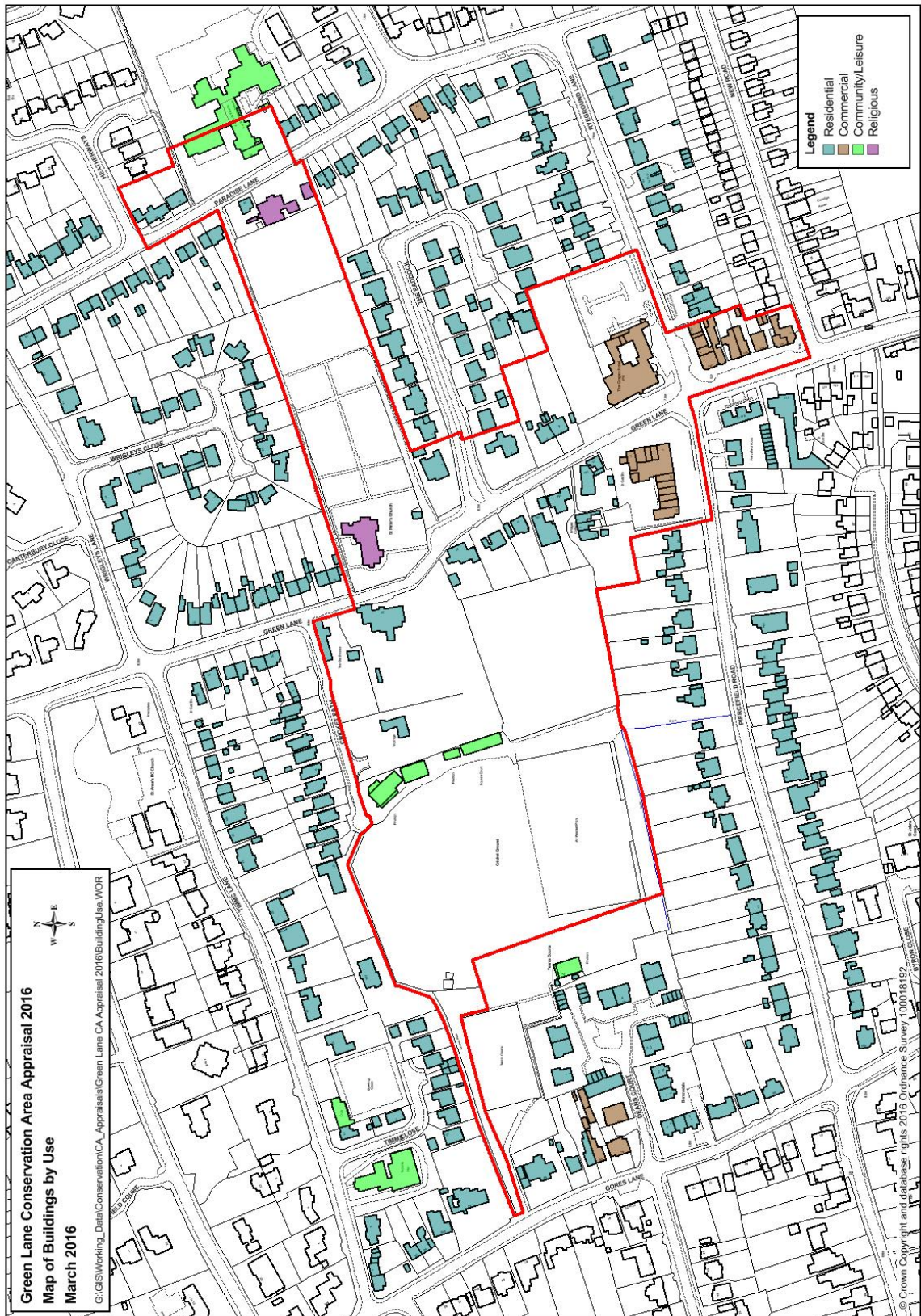
The Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) manages Sefton's Historic Environment Record (HER). Within the Green Lane Conservation Area there are nine entries in the HER.

Many of the listings are elements of existing buildings lost over time through demolition and alterations, including at Church House, Church Cottage, May Cottage and Thimble Hall. Within the immediate vicinity of Green Lane Conservation Area there are several HER listings associated with former housing and agricultural buildings dating from post medieval times to the Victorian era.

As of 2019 there have been no archaeological discoveries within this part of Formby which predate the medieval era.



Plan 4 Showing relative ages of buildings



*Plan 5 Showing uses of buildings*

## 4.0 LANDSCAPE SETTING AND VIEWS

### 4.1 Setting and relationship with the surrounding area

As previously stated, the Conservation Area forms an axis centred on Green Lane itself. This is the principle vehicular route through the Conservation Area which actually only contains around 380m of road and is best appreciated on foot. Two historic east-west public footpaths are important contributors towards the designation; these include the late-19<sup>th</sup> century Church Path which runs between Green Lane and Paradise Lane following an original field line and the much older Cricket Path connecting Gores Lane to Green Lane. These provide quiet walking routes with interesting views across St. Peter's graveyard and the cricket pitch respectively.

The relatively open setting of the graveyard at St. Peter's Church has been substantially undermined by modern development to the north and south on Wrigleys Close and The Paddock respectively.



*Public footpaths mark the northern boundary of the Conservation Area clearly dividing open space and more recent development*



*Setting of St. Peter's Church's graveyard*

The northern point of entry to the Conservation Area on Green Lane is clearly defined by a visual separation at the junction with Cricket Path where 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings meet more recent development. The southern point of entry is less clear as a result of diverse grouping of buildings at the intersection of Green Lane/Church Road and Piercefield Road/Ryeground Lane. Scale and massing are at their grandest at this location, with buildings not only acting as a focal point of the Conservation Area, but as an easily distinguishable set of landmarks within Freshfield as a whole.

The southern boundary of the Conservation Area is bound by Piercefield Road which limits views into the area, although this street itself possesses some historical and architectural merit as one of Freshfield's earliest Victorian streets. Similar development is evident to the south and east of the Conservation Area along Ryeground Lane and Paradise Lane.



*View along Piercefield Road looking east showing Victorian development and significant tree coverage*



*There is strong cohesion between the Victorian villas which line the south side of Ryeground Lane*

The historic street layout within Green Lane Conservation Area has changed little over the past few centuries and numerous cottages with listed status can be found dispersed along these thoroughfares. Despite this often unsympathetic 20th century infill development in between these heritage assets has drastically altered the character of Freshfield and Formby. Green Lane is now the only extensive area that has maintained this character reasonably well in an otherwise heavily uniform and urbanised area.

#### **4.2 Character and Relationship of Spaces**

The Green Lane Conservation Area occupies relatively flat terrain in historically open landscape with scattered dwellings and farmsteads. Although the area is no longer in agricultural use, the Conservation Area has retained some of its rural and character.

Open space and trees dominate the area; they offer a relief from the urban grain that surrounds the Conservation Area. Open space is etched throughout Green Lane Conservation Area in various forms and remains one of the few constants within the much evolved area. Trees can be found along both footpaths, private gardens and lining streets.

There is no clear hierarchy of streets within the Conservation Area; however, the meandering nature of Green Lane itself differs notably from the likes of the linear Piercefield Road and Ryeground Lane, most obvious in terms of volumes of vehicular traffic. There is no obvious relationship between plot size and location within the Conservation Area.

It is possible to define particular character zones of the Conservation Area in regard to land/building use – as is detailed in chapter 7, however periods of development and architectural styles vary greatly within these. The overarching character and charm of Green Lane Conservation Area stems from this assortment. A walk through the area is quite literally a walk through time depicting a 400 year plus history of Freshfield within 8.8ha.

### 4.3 Views and Vistas within the Conservation Area

The enclosed nature of Green Lane Conservation Area means there are limited opportunities for defining views within.

The northern entrance to Green Lane is flanked by St. Peter's Church and Church House; however, a bend in the road around 70m ahead presents a boundary wall. East and west points of entry via the two narrow public footpaths are largely tree covered, concealing much of the Conservation Area ahead.

Principle views however exist across the Cricket Pitch, although this has been diminished by the installation of a fence separating the Cricket Path from the Pitch; and at the junction of Green Lane / Church Road and Piercefield Road / Ryeground Lane where uninterrupted open space is prevalent. These are pictured below.



*A view south across the Cricket Pitch from Cricket Path emphasises the prominence of open space and treeplanting in the Conservation Area but highlights the effect of the fence on this formerly open view*



*A view north from the south terminus of Green Lane. During autumn and winter months, St. Peter's Church can be easily seen ahead*



*A view west from the east terminus of Piercefield Road, showing the extent of the Embassy Building and significant tree coverage continuing beyond the Conservation Area*

## **4.4 Green Spaces and Planting**

### **4.4.1 Greenspaces**

Green Lane Conservation Area is noted for its abundance of open and green areas and includes two designated Local Green Spaces; Formby Hockey and Cricket Club, and The Paddock. These areas were designated through Policy ESD1 of the Formby and Little Altcar Neighbourhood Plan 2019 with the reasoning that they are “recreation ground(s) serving the local community.’ Development of these spaces must be managed in a manner consistent with Green Belt Policy.

The single largest expanse of open space within Green Lane Conservation Area exists at the first designated Local Green Space, Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club which incorporates a cricket pitch and an all-weather pitch. A number of tennis courts are located immediately to the west beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area. The second Local Green Space is a square plot of land known as ‘The Paddock’ which is located east of the Cricket Club and south of Church House and bound by properties on Green Lane and Piercefield Road. It has a self-sown boundary of sycamore with Church House gardens but is primarily an open field which is used by both the Formby Cricket Club and Formby Scouts for camping and other activities. The south-west corner of the field consists of mainly scrub and White Poplar trees which are slowly being strangled by ivy and lack attention. There are also two large dead elm trees adjacent the rear of the garden at Church Cottage. This plot originally belonged to Church House, having been used as a paddock (now reflected in its name), and was then conveyed to the Diocese of Liverpool in 1995 and retained by the Diocese when Church House passed back into private residential use. Other tree covered green spaces exist to the north of the Grapes Hotel and west of St. Peter’s Church Hall.

St. Peter’s Church yard and graveyard is an extensive area of open space that now incorporates a ‘Garden of Remembrance’ at its easternmost end. Although this land is under ownership of the Church of England, it is accessible year round via several points of entry along Church Path and on Green Lane.

Plan 6 shows the extent of both public and private open and greenspaces within Green Lane Conservation Area.



*The landscaped plot of land behind St. Peter’s Church Hall is accesible via the Garden of Remembrance*



*The linear plot of land to the north of the Grapes which has dense tree coverage and is only partially developed in the form of a beer garden*

#### **4.4.2 Planting**

Mature trees and shrubs exist throughout Green Lane Conservation Area. Many are protected through Conservation Area status rather than Tree Preservation Orders which are particularly common towards Timms Lane and Victoria Road.



There are significant clusters of trees located between Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club and Piercefield Road, adjacent to the Grapes Hotel, surrounding Church House, within St. Peter's Church yard and along both public footpaths. On inspection most of these trees are also covered with ivy and are in need of attention. Organised tree planting in these locations can be seen on the 1893 Ordnance Survey map. The trees within the Conservation Area are indigenous deciduous species of Beech, Oak, Poplar and Sycamore amongst others.

Mature trees can also be found in a number of private gardens. Several mature trees have been incorporated within the pavement on Cricket Path. This has resulted in buckling in places and an untidy appearance. This stretch of pavement however lies just beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area.

In general trees contribute significantly to the character of Green Lane Conservation Area; they soften the urban grain associated with modern development and help maintain the contextual rural setting of the area.



*Mature trees line the length of Church Path creating a sense of intimacy*

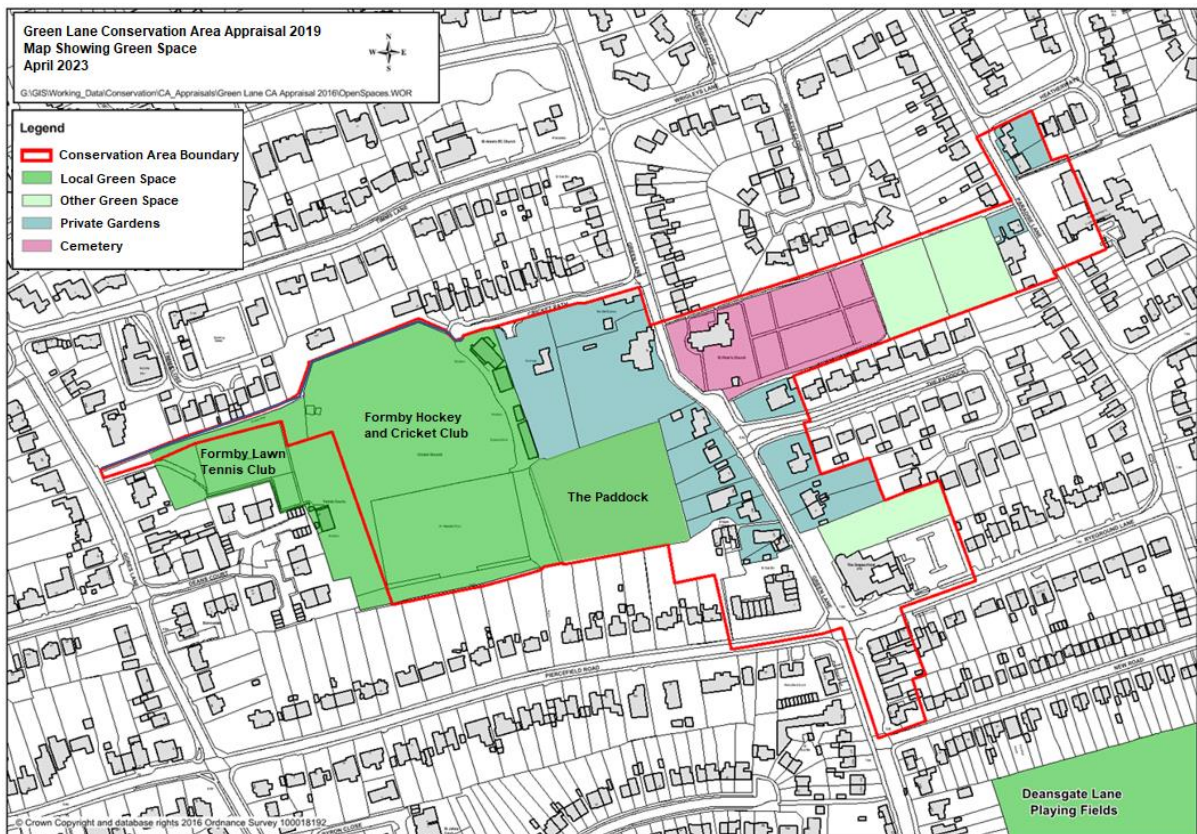


*Trees are prevalent throughout St. Peter's Church yard and provide privacy for worshippers*



*Compact tree planting has taken place along the driveway to Bridges Cottages in more recent years*

*Hard surfacing up to tree roots can create negative visual impact on Cricket Path directly adjacent to the Conservation Area*



**Plan 6** Showing open and greenspaces

## **5.0 TOWNSCAPE AND FOCAL BUILDINGS**

### **5.1 General Characteristics**

#### **5.1.1 Grain**

The grain and density of Green Lane Conservation Area is challenging to define when considering all the elements which contribute towards it. Residential plots on Green Lane itself are reasonable in size, often twice as long as their widths. Despite a historically open context, the curtilages surrounding the area's oldest buildings have largely remained unchanged, although it is estimated that Church House has lost over half of its original plot since it was transferred from Church ownership into private hands. Despite this it still retains one of largest residential plots in the area, along with the adjacent Vicarage.

The open wooded area south of the vicarage is one of particularly significant rural character abundant with wildlife, such as the red squirrel, a protected species in the UK included in Schedules 5 and 6 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as well as various birds and other animals and insects residing there. The land is also frequently utilised by scouts from across the north west for education and training activities, and the rural aspects of the area positively contribute to the overall character of the conservation area.

Plots surrounding non-residential uses are generous, again following original property lines, which in this instance were on a grander scale to begin with. This observation largely relates to St. Peter's Church, the Grapes Hotel and the Embassy Building.

More recent retail units located on the corner of Ryeground Lane and Church Road are constructed densely. This creates a greater sense of urbanisation, in contrast to much of the dispersed development throughout the remainder of the Conservation Area.

#### **5.1.2 Scale**

Scale varies considerably throughout Green Lane Conservation Area. It is representative of numerous periods of growth and influenced by prominence of location.

Buildings of the largest scale, namely the Grapes Hotel and Embassy Building, can be found at the junction of Green Lane/Church Road and Piercefield Road/Ryeground Lane. This area receives reasonable footfall justifying buildings being of a grander scale. St. Peter's Church is also of a grand scale, indicating its historical importance within the Formby area.

The remainder of buildings in the Conservation Area consist of one, one and a half, and two storeys. Generally residential properties have become larger in scale over time.

#### **5.1.3 Rhythm**

Rhythm can be determined by regular patterns of building size and types, and the sizes of spaces between them. As indicated in previous sections, there is little consistency amongst these elements and therefore little to no rhythm within the Conservation Area.

#### 5.1.4 Repetition and diversity

The range of building and land uses in Green Lane Conservation Area offers little opportunity to identify repetition. The cluster of residential properties on Green Lane spans several centuries and architectural styles. Houses on the west side of Green Lane are all detached; however, vary greatly in height, massing and general design.

The retail block on the corner of Ryeground Lane and Church Road is relatively consistent in design and repetition is evident in terms of advertisements, shop fronts and display windows.

On Paradise Lane the diversity of two original school buildings constructed around the same time directly opposite of each other (detailed in part 5.2) is another indicator of the Conservation Areas sporadic development character.

#### 5.1.5 Roofscape

The diversity in building age and design is evident in the ‘roofscape’ of the Conservation Area which varies from property to property, and there are few areas of cohesion. Prominent roofs exist on the Grapes Hotel and Embassy Building which is topped with a small tower, similar to one lost from the former.

One theme running throughout several buildings in the Conservation Area is gable ends on the principal frontages of several buildings including Church House, St. Peter’s Church Hall and 124 and 126 Church Road.

In terms of roof materials, slate tiling predominates throughout the Conservation Area, the thatched roof of 21 Green Lane/Church Cottage being the sole exception.



*The distinctive thatched roof of 21 Green Lane undergoing maintenance*

*The typical slate tiled roof of St. Peter's Church*

### 5.1.6 Condition

Buildings in the Conservation Area generally appear to be in good condition, as all are currently occupied, however some are in better condition than others. The extent to which they have been maintained is difficult to ascertain where internal access to private property is not possible.

Residential properties on Green Lane appear in good condition; however, some boundary treatments show significant signs of neglect. Buildings on Paradise Lane are also in good condition. Of the more notable buildings in Green Lane Conservation Area, the Grapes Hotel is now a busy public house that has been well preserved. Although significant alterations were made to the Embassy Building in 2009, the rear facing elevations show clear signs of neglect despite being structurally sound.

The four listed buildings within Green Lane Conservation Area were most recently surveyed in September 2014 by the Council. May Cottage and 21 Green Lane/Church Cottage were deemed to be in good condition. St. Peter's Church was deemed to be in fair condition as a result of some stone weathering. The listed sundial was also deemed to be in fair condition. The July 2019 site visits supports these findings.

Moss and growth of vegetation on the walls and roofs of some of the Conservation Area's oldest buildings could be having long term implications for their integrity and permeability.



*The north facing elevation of the Embassy Building looks into the Conservation Area and its poor condition is extremely detrimental to the character of the building and area as a whole*

*The brickwork of 15 Paradise Lane (former Formby School for Female Children) is amongst the best preserved in the Conservation Area*

### 5.1.7 Building Groups

Green Lane Conservation Area was defined as such to cover a wide range of land and building uses. The historic and contemporary layout presents a number of areas where buildings act collectively; these are detailed below and are similarly reflected in the character zones identified in chapter 7.

Ryeground House and the adjacent retail units on Church Road are of the same use and appearance acting as an extremely strong and cohesive building group. Elsewhere in the Conservation Area the scattered and varied character presents few opportunities for buildings to act collectively, although the west side of Green Lane between numbers 11 and 27 consists solely of residential use.

## **5.2 Focal Buildings and Features**

Within Green Lane Conservation Area there are a number of focal buildings and features which form distinctive landmarks, based on their perceived prominence these may be categorised as primary or secondary.

### **Primary Buildings**

#### St. Peter's Church and graveyard

St. Peter's was consecrated on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1747 replacing an earlier chapel destroyed during a storm on a site now occupied by St. Luke's Church, west of Formby. Foundation bricks, the bell, Royal coat of arms of Queen Anne and a sundial were recovered from the original St. Luke's and placed in the new church. Several alterations to St. Peter's have taken place including the infilling of a porch at the base of the tower in 1830, addition of a chancel in 1873, erection of a half-glazed porch in 1884, replacement of the roof in 1900 and the later 20<sup>th</sup> century addition of a vestry. The oldest part of the church is in the typical Georgian style, while the later addition is Gothic revival in design. Famed architectural scholar Pevsner commented in his *Buildings of England* series that this variation in styles creates a "jarring contrast". The earliest burials within the graveyard of St. Peter's relate to the Sutton family and took place in 1746.

The church lies at the center of Green Lane Conservation Area and is a prominent local landmark due to its varied architectural features. Both St. Peter's and the sundial to the west of the church are Grade II Listed.



*Interior of St. Peter's looking towards gallery and the oldest part of the church*



*Grade II listed sundial located in St. Peter's church yard*



*Green Lane entrance to St. Peter's Church showing the original elements including the tower and octagonal bell stage*



*The rear of the church differs dramatically in terms of architectural design and scale*

### Grapes Hotel

The Grapes Hotel was constructed in 1880 for Edward Jones a wine and spirit merchant brewer. The building originally functioned as a hotel and assembly room and a bowling green was located to the east of the property until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The Grapes Hotel is noted for its internal courtyard, prominent porticos, dormers, mounting block, large and abundance of windows; including several floor to ceiling ground floor bay windows, and mansard roof reminiscent of Second Empire architecture. Several extensions have been added to the property which was recently renovated to a cost of half a million by pub chain Stonegate. Although the

Grapes Hotel lacks listed building status it is a dominant local heritage asset proudly marking the Green Lane entrance to the Conservation Area.



*The Grapes Hotel photographed in the 1900s*



*The Grapes Hotel photographed in 2009*



*The Grapes Hotel contains elements of French renaissance revival architecture and its prominent location and massing have made it a local landmark*



*Decorative elements of The Grapes Hotel have recently been restored. The rendering has been altered significantly although it remains aesthetically pleasing*

### Embassy Building

The Embassy Building was completed in 1928 and stands opposite from the Grapes Hotel on the corner of Green Lane and Piercefield Road. Originally built as a roller skating rink it was converted into a cinema four years later. It had a proscenium of around 8.5m increasing to over 12m upon technological improvements. Affectionately referred to as the 'Embo', the cinema closed in the late 1960s and the building became an ice skating rink. In recent times the Embassy Building has served primarily as a retail destination and a number of units have been added to the Piercefield Road frontage. Unsightly cladding was removed from the Embassy building in 2010 revealing its attractive Art Deco façade which contributes significantly to the diversity of Green Lane Conservation Area.





*The Embassy Building photographed in the 1930s showing the ground floor utilised by a garage and shops*



*The Embassy Building photographed in 2009 largely concealed by wooden panelling*



*The Green Lane frontage of the Embassy Building is noted for its large datestone (photo July 2019)*



*The prominent north east corner of the building is less uniform in terms of conservation work that has taken place*

## Secondary Buildings

### Church Cottage

Located at 21 Green Lane, this 18<sup>th</sup> century residence is Grade II listed and originally housed Irish labourers. It has undergone various alterations in its long history however is a recognisable building for its thatched roof and timber guttering with sloping open down spout.



*Church Cottage is a typical example of Formby's vernacular architecture during the 18<sup>th</sup> century*

### Church House

Located at 27 Green Lane directly opposite from St. Peter's Church, elements of Church House are thought to originate in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when the building served as a public house. A later edition to the building is indicated on a gable end datestone which reads '1864'. Most historic maps refer to the building as 'Church House' and it is known that during the late-20<sup>th</sup> century it served as a vicarage for St. Peter's. A more recent development to the west of Church House has now taken on this function. Church House is a well preserved non-designated heritage asset and contributes substantially to the Green Lane Conservation Area.



*Church House viewed from the church yard of St. Peter's*

### May Cottage and Thimble Hall

Located at 15a Green Lane May Cottage is the oldest building within Green Lane Conservation Area, presumed to date from the Jacobean era in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Grade II cottage is cruck framed constructed from oak, and the walls consist of brick and internal wattle. It was initially three separate residences. May Cottage is directly adjacent to Thimble Hall – 11 Green Lane, which although not too dissimilar in appearance is in fact a 1970s modernisation of Ivy Cottage, a former Grade II listed building dated 1682 which has since been largely subsumed. The northern ground floor bay of Thimble Hall is the only surviving element of Ivy Cottage. This group of buildings blend well to the historical residential context of Green Lane and their layout and orientation are unique and notable in the Conservation Area.



*Thimble Hall and May Cottage although of different eras easily complement one another and are reflect early design principles in Formby*

### St. Peter's Church Hall

The Church Hall on Paradise Lane was originally constructed in 1849 to house the Formby School for Female Children which as indicated on the building itself was established in 1832. The central and southern blocks of the school are now under ownership of the Church of England and are utilised heavily by the local community. The northernmost block is a private residence. The buildings occupy a prominent location in the east of Green Lane Conservation Area, sufficiently set back from the public highway and are noted for their steep angular gables and central chimneys.



*The main Church Hall building is recognisable for the dramatic gable on its principle Paradise Lane frontage*

### Trinity St. Peter's School (original building)

Directly opposite from the Church Hall at 14 Paradise Lane is St. Peter's Trinity School, the oldest part of which was constructed as St. Peter's Boys School in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The modern school remains affiliated with the Church of England although it is now co-educational. The unsympathetic north and east extensions to the school building further emphasise the original building's charm, character and distinctiveness.



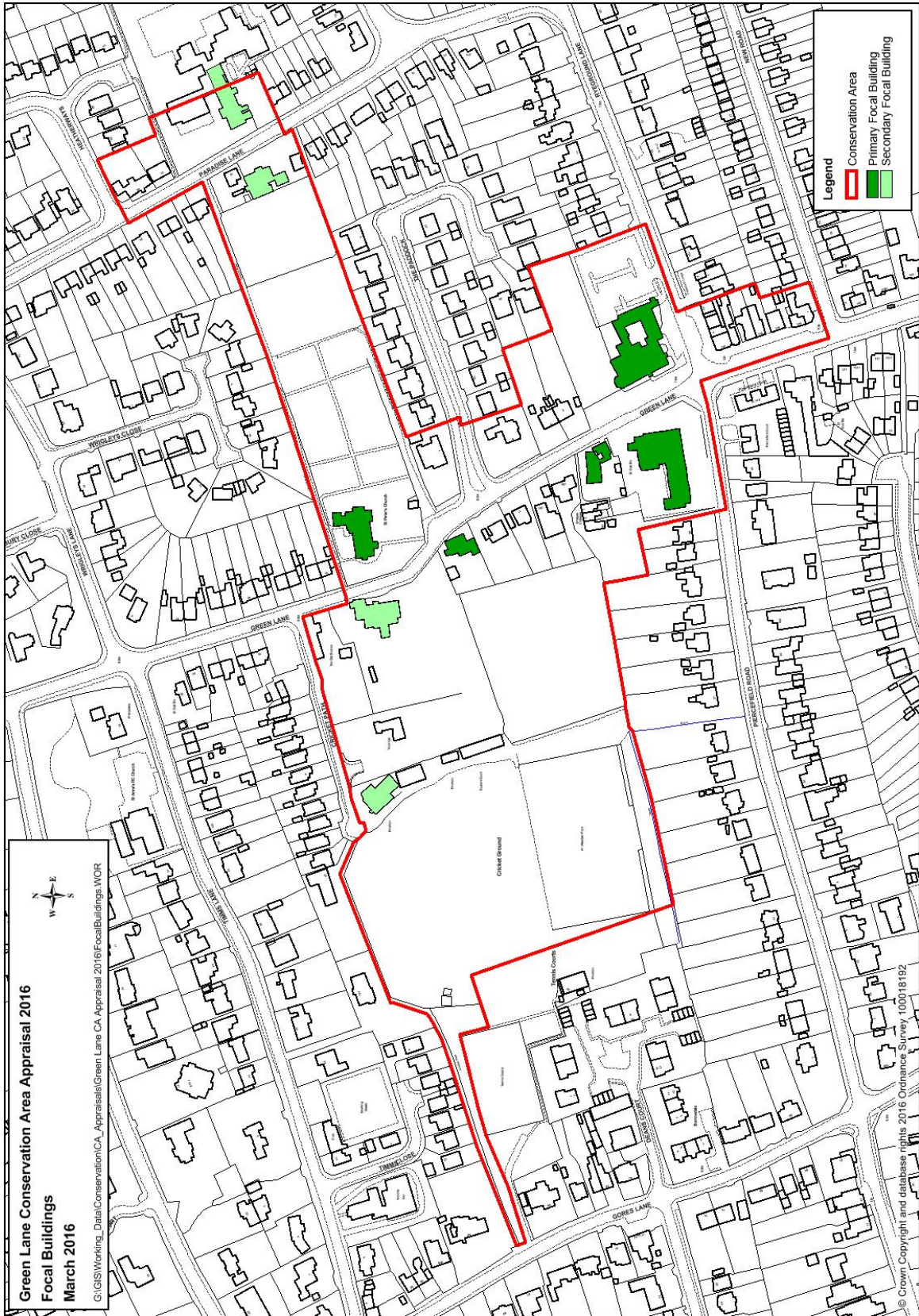
*14 Paradise Lane, the original St. Peter's Boys School is an attractive building contrasting between the opposite girls school of the same era*

### Pavilion at Cricket Ground

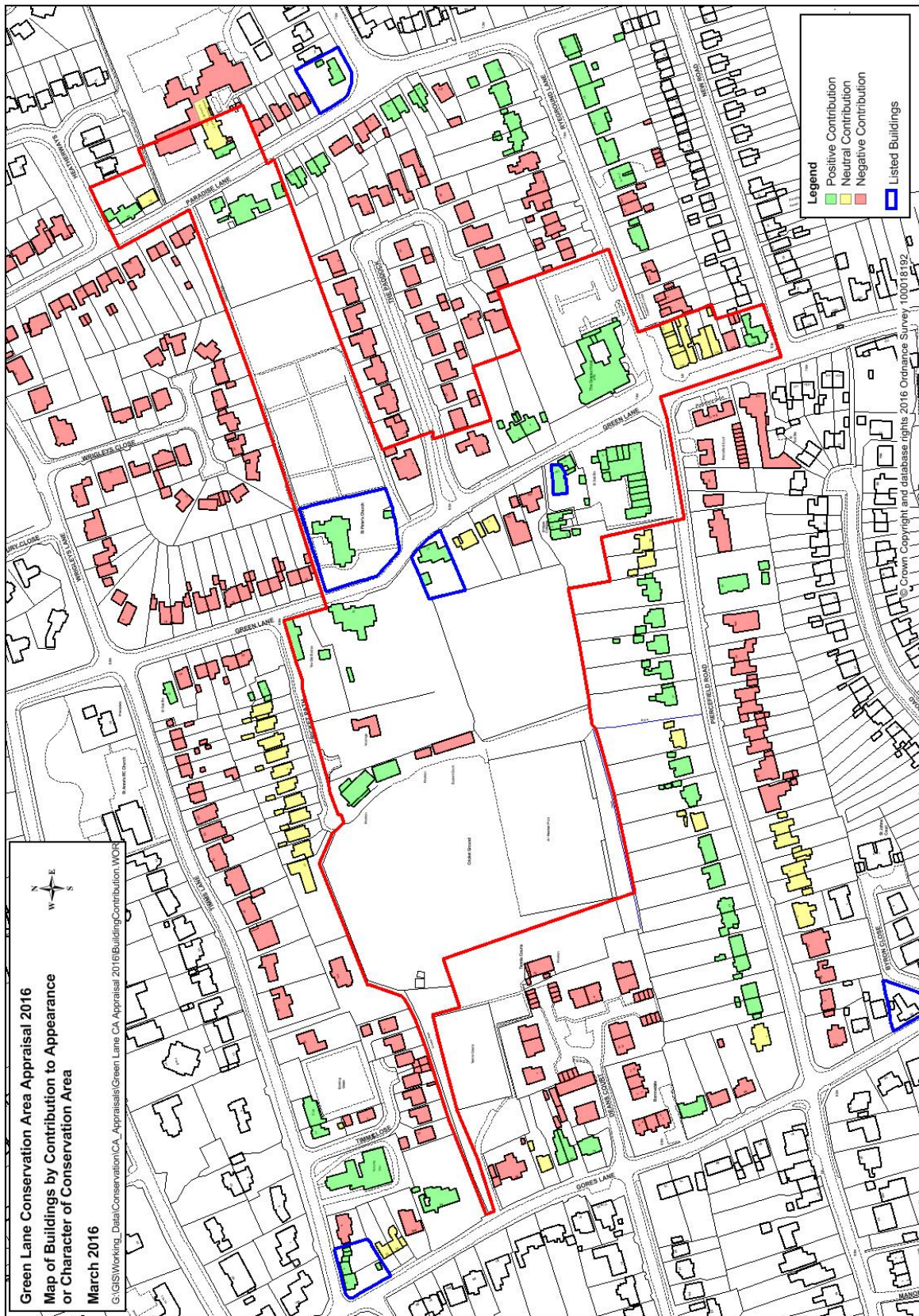
The pavilion at Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club is the oldest surviving leisure/recreational building in Green Lane Conservation Area. Generations of sporting individuals have frequented the building pre and post games on the adjacent pitch, and for this reason it continues to prevail as a local landmark.



*The Pavilion at Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club is emblematic of the areas sporting history*



Plan 7 Showing focal buildings



*Plan 8 Showing contributions of buildings*

### 5.3 Boundaries and Surfaces

#### 5.3.1 Boundaries

Green Lane Conservation Area contains an eclectic mix of built and natural boundaries. A combination of picket fencing and hedgerows form the original boundaries of many of the earliest houses on the east side of Green Lane. More recent development has sought to imitate this to varying levels of success, as modern gate piers on some properties are an unsympathetic addition.

The east side of Green Lane is less organised, with stone walls providing boundary treatment for 2 and 4 Green Lane. Adjacent to this are large hedges/foliage shielding properties either side of the junction with The Paddock. Although the hedges are effective in protecting the character of the Conservation by concealing poor quality post-war development, they in themselves are overgrown and neglected in appearance. It should be noted that these are in public ownership.



*Traditional boundary treatment at May Cottage in the form of a picket fence*

*The dishevelled non-native plant species which front the east side of Green Lane adjacent to the boundary of 1 The Paddock*

Well preserved brick walls form the boundary of many of the areas original non-residential buildings including St. Peter's Church, Church House and Church Hall.

Boundary treatment could also be considered along Church Path and Cricket Path. In both instances it is presumed these were largely open until development took place adjacent to them. Modern metal and wooden fence panels have had a negative impact on the user's ability to understand the routes within their historical context.





*The boundary wall to St. Peter's Church shows signs of weathering. However, is generally in good condition*



*The boundary treatment along Cricket Path varies considerably along its length on both sides*

Boundaries at the junction of Green Lane/Church Road and Piercefield Road/ Ryeground Lane are less obvious. Stone slabs topped with rounded steel railing run around the perimeter of the Grapes Hotel. The Embassy Building has lost its original piers which have been replaced by shallow walls and concrete bollards.

Historically, the Grapes Hotel also had a boundary wall delineating the adopted pavement. However, this has been removed allowing car parking adjacent to the principal front and side elevations.

### **5.3.2 Surfaces**

Surfaces throughout Green Lane Conservation Area are exclusively modern. Tarmac is used for both road surfaces and paving which are only differentiated by a stepped up kerb. These early 20<sup>th</sup> century surfaces are the direct successors to the dirt tracks which would have provided routes throughout the area previously. Despite this, some cobbled pedestrian surfaces were evident at the junction of Green Lane / Church Road and Piercefield Road / Ryeground Lane during the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Tarmac has also been utilised to surface Cricket and Church Path, while private driveways consist of a range of materials including concrete slabs and reproduction brick cobbles.



*Surfacing within the public realm is uniform throughout with tarmac used on both vehicular and pedestrian routes*



*A variety of materials have been used for the surfaces on privately owned land*

## 6.0 ARCHITECTURAL MATERIALS AND DETAILS

### 6.1 Prominent Styles

There is no prominent architectural style within Green Lane Conservation Area. Architectural features and detailing of buildings represent the most popular styles of their time. Most buildings in the Conservation Area are in very good condition and are therefore well preserved examples of a diverse range of styles. This diversity is a principle contributor towards the area's designation.

Rural vernacular architecture is evident in the design of Church and May Cottages and 14 Paradise Lane. Modern properties on Green Lane are predominantly Tudor revival which may be an attempt to imitate the rendering and general design principles of early house design.

St. Peter's Church displays typical Georgian-period features including rusticated quoins and coped gables. Some Victorian era buildings have incorporated elements of renaissance revival architecture including 2 and 4 Green Lane and the Grapes Hotel. The Embassy Building, like many other cultural buildings of its time is distinctly Art Deco.



*2 and 4 Green Lane are pleasant Victorian homes designed in a Italianate style which is prominent in many of Sefton's urban Conservation Areas*

*19 Green Lane is a typical 'black and white' mock Tudor home. The half hip roof resembles that of a barn in keeping with the areas rural context*

### 6.2 Leading Architects

As Green Lane Conservation Area has developed sporadically over time, no leading architects have significantly influenced the layout or general design of the area in a way that is clear in several of the Borough's other urban Conservation Areas. Little information is available as to the architects of the areas primary focal buildings including St. Peter's Church and the Grapes Hotel, although the Embassy Building is known to have been designed by a Major F.M. Roome.

### 6.3 Materials

Throughout the Conservation Area a varied palette of construction materials has been used. However, brick is the dominant material and is used in the majority of houses and non-residential properties alike.

Some buildings are stuccoed and painted such as 2 and 4 Green Lane, the Grapes Hotel and Embassy Building. Exposed rendering on the Conservation Area's older buildings is visually attractive, consisting of a variety of red and brown brick with some terracotta/stone buffering. May Cottage and 21 Green Lane are constructed of timber and wattle with whitewashed external walls. The walls of more recent properties on Green Lane and Ryeground House are roughcast which have similarly been painted in white and cream.

As detailed in part 5.1.5, roofs in the Conservation Area are predominantly slate tiled, regardless of age. However, again the one exception exists in the case of 21 Green Lane which is thatched.



*15 Paradise Lane  
(former Formby School  
for Female Children)  
variety of brick*



*The Old Stables variety  
of brick*



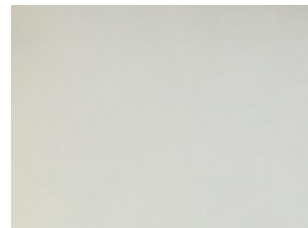
*St. Peter's Church, same  
brick with evidence of  
weathering*



*May Cottage whitewash*



*124 Church Road  
painted roughcast*



*The Grapes Hotel  
painted stucco*

## 6.4 Typical Features and Details

### Windows and window surrounds

A significant number of original timber framed windows can be found throughout the Conservation Area, including a range of casement and sliding sash windows. May Cottage, the area's oldest building, is noted for its incorporation of leadlights. Other buildings in the Conservation Area such as Church House, the Old Stables, 21 Green Lane, the current Church Hall and Embassy Building are also noted for multiple small panes within some windows, although this could be purely decorative in the latter two where technological improvements would have allowed for larger glazing panes.

Window surrounds and sills are generally basic in Green Lane Conservation Area. However, more prominent and decorative, curved arches exist on the Grapes Hotel and on St. Peter's Church.

Where properties have retained this original feature, they make a significant positive contribution to the overall character of the Conservation Area.



*Original casement windows incorporating leadlights with a diamond pattern. Small pane glazing in a similar form is common throughout the Conservation Area*

*Original horizontal sliding sash windows on the first floor of 21 Green Lane, the ground floor windows are also timber frame but appear to be from a later date*



*The original sash windows of the Grapes have been well preserved and the curved window surrounds are an attractive edition*

*St. Peter's Church is similarly noted for its curved windows and arches and small pane glazing*

### Doors and door surrounds

The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area have retained their original doors, and although the principal door on 21 Green Lane/ Church Cottage has been replaced it remains traditional in appearance. Several other doors on more recent development are less sympathetic to the area which is characterised by large panelled timber doors. Door surrounds themselves are generally basic.



*Door at the base of St. Peter's Church tower*



*Seldom used side door to May Cottage*



*Main door to 2 Green Lane*

### Porches and porticos

Two prominent porches exist in Green Lane Conservation Area and two elaborate porticos. St. Peter's Church and Church House possess similar timber/glazed projecting porches. As detailed in part 5.2, the Grapes Hotel has two ornate porticos which provide primary access into the building.



*Projecting porch at Church House*



*Projecting porch at south entrance to St. Peter's Church*

## Chimneys

Chimneys are a common feature throughout the Conservation Area and are a variety of heights. Although generally a more practical than decorative feature, there are a number of buildings with ornate centrally located chimneys which act as a focal point of the building and contribute to the area's skyline.



*The carved chimney stack and matching chimney pots atop St. Peter's Church Hall House*



*One of two chimney stacks atop 14 Paradise Lane which consists of an interesting mix of pots House*



*The chimney stack adjoining May Cottage is basic in design although a prominent feature of the building House*

## Eaves

Prominent projecting eaves exist on many of the Conservation Areas buildings placing emphasis on the roof above. In the case of St. Peter's Church and the Grapes Hotel, these are supported by decorative brackets, although most others simply form part of the functioning drainage system.

## Boundary walls and gate piers

Boundary treatment as detailed in part 5.3.1 vary significantly throughout the Conservation Area, with both built and natural treatments apparent. Picket fences line much of Green Lane, while brick and stone walls predominate throughout the remainder of the area.

Gate piers are common within the Conservation Area. However, few are of visual or historic interest. Exemptions are adjacent to Church House, St. Peter's church and the driveway to Bridges Cottages where more decorative stone piers can be found. Elsewhere gate piers are relatively featureless or lacking from boundary treatment altogether.



*Two sets of gate piers at the boundary of St. Peter's Church at Church Path are in reasonable condition however the gate and adjacent railings have been removed*



*The stone gate piers marking the Piercefield Road entrance to Bridges Cottages appear to be a much later addition than the buildings themselves*



## **7.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Character of the area**

The character of Green Lane Conservation Area is defined by large expanses of open space, various periods of development and the accompanying variety in style, scale and use. Parts of the area have preserved their contextual rural setting and the informal layout of buildings and their interrelationship with open spaces contribute significantly to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

Within the Conservation Area, there are at least five clear Character Zones where buildings and spaces act collectively, these are identified below and in Plan 9.

#### ‘Residential Zone’

Encompassing Church House, the Old Stables, St Peter’s Vicarage and stretching down to cover much of the centre of the Conservation Area, housing from various eras can be found here in an interesting and informal arrangement. Although scale and rhythm vary considerably within this zone, the grain and building uses are relatively constant and easily distinguish it as a residential neighbourhood.

This zone encompasses the oldest part of the Conservation Area differentiating it from the more recent ‘Recreation Zone’ and in particular ‘Retail Zone’ in terms of age and character.

#### ‘Recreation Zone’

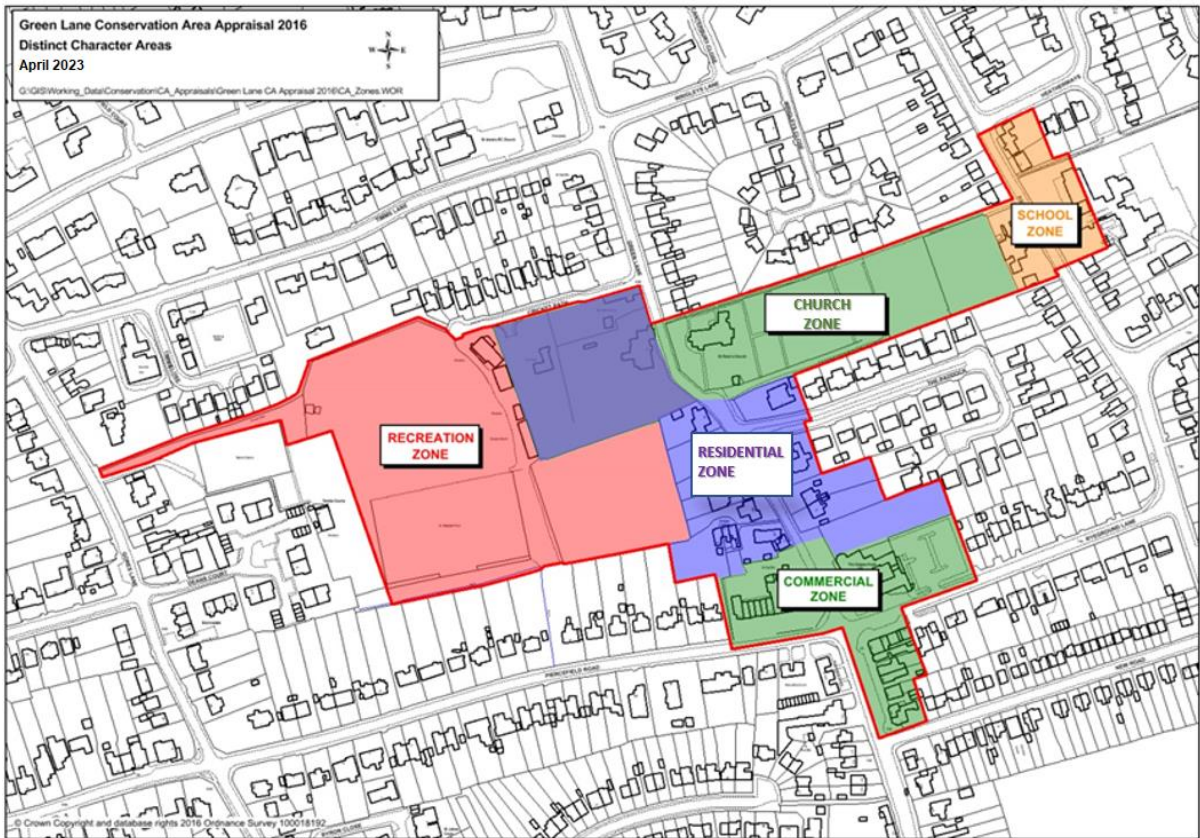
Encompassing the westernmost part of the Conservation Area this includes the Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club, as well as Cricket Path which has provided a route for pedestrians through the area for a number of centuries. This zone is largely open/green space and is an important recreational destination within Freshfield and Formby as a whole.

#### ‘Retail Zone’

Occupying the southernmost part of the Conservation Area; this zone contains the shopping units within the Embassy Buildings and Ryeground House/Church Road and the Grapes Hotel. The southernmost part of this zone is identified in part 5.1.7 as the only strong grouping of buildings in the Conservation Area. This zone consists of development from the Victorian era onwards, representing a period of significant growth. This contrasts significantly to other zones in the Conservation Area which are not only older, but considerably less ‘urban’ in nature.

#### ‘School Zone’

The easternmost part of the Conservation Area is occupied by the former Formby School for Female Children and St. Peter’s Boys School. Many of the buildings within this zone continue to be utilised for community/educational uses.



*Plan 9 Showing character zones*

## **8.0 NEGATIVE FACTORS**

### **8.1 Overview**

Green Lane Conservation Area is generally well preserved and contains a number of fine buildings of special architectural interest, representative of their era. The Conservation Area and its immediate surroundings tell the 400 year history of the development of Freshfield. The diversity within the built and natural environments contribute equally to the special character of the Conservation Area and justify its designation.

However, there are a number of issues which impact on the character of the area and can be identified broadly, as follows:

- Unsympathetic later 20<sup>th</sup> century development
- Alterations and loss of historic features and detailing
- Poor maintenance and repair

### **8.2 Unsympathetic later 20<sup>th</sup> century development**

Although some 20<sup>th</sup> century development has enhanced the character of the Conservation Area (namely the Embassy Building), some predominantly post-war developments have had a negative impact on the Conservation Area through way of design, use of materials and scale, amongst other elements. Instances where this has occurred include residential development on Green Lane, new buildings at Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club and the later extension to the Embassy Building.

15b and 15c Green Lane contribute negatively to the Conservation Area, their design and scale conflict with earlier development on Green Lane, with 15c being particularly utilitarian and plain in appearance. 17 and 19 Green Lane, also of later 20<sup>th</sup> century construction are more sympathetic to the vernacular architecture of the area. This stretch of Green Lane between May Cottage and 21 Green Lane/Church Cottage was undeveloped prior to the construction of the four dwellings, therefore loss through development pressure has not been an issue.

Construction of The Paddock has had a negative impact on the character of the area by enclosing a previously open space and replicating typical unimaginative 1960s bungalows across the country. 1 The Paddock and 6 Green Lane mark the entry to The Paddock and lie within the Conservation Area. However, given their modern design it would not be appropriate to argue for their inclusion in the designation.



*15c Green Lane, a bungalow of no architectural or historic interest*

*6 Green Lane, built around the same time as the adjacent estate at The Paddock*

As identified in part 5.2, the original Pavilion building adjacent to the Cricket Ground is a secondary focal building, it has played a significant role in the social history of Freshfield and its timber framed verandahs which provide seating for spectators are particularly notable. Some later 20<sup>th</sup> century development at Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club has however had a negative visual impact on the cricket ground and Conservation Area as a whole. A one storey shed-like building and two storey brick building are located to the south of the original pavilion and their basic block construction detracts from an otherwise attractive setting.



*Traditional pavilions at the Cricket Club and adjacent unattractive later 20<sup>th</sup> century building*

*The Embassy Building viewed from Piercefield Road showing an unsympathetic later addition of six retail units*

The post-war extension to the west elevation of the Embassy Building has attempted to incorporate similar construction materials, however its variation in scale to the original building is somewhat disjointed.

### 8.3 Alteration and loss of historic features and detailing

In general, historic features and detailing have been successfully preserved throughout the Conservation Area. However, in some cases inappropriate alterations have taken place which have had a detrimental effect on the appearance of buildings and the ability to understand their original function.

Although the original Ivy Cottage at 11 Green Lane was drastically modified during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to become what is now known as ‘Thimble Hall’, the alterations were sympathetic to the adjacent May Cottage. It should however be noted that Ivy Cottage was delisted as a result of these works, which took place prior to the designation of Green Lane Conservation Area.

The Embassy Building has undergone various alterations internally and externally to which point its former leisure uses are no longer evident. The words ‘Embassy Building’ which adorned the principal elevation have been painted over and the ‘Talkies’ canopy has been removed. Other forms of early 20<sup>th</sup> century signage on the building have also been lost to unsympathetic, often garish replacements. The petrol filling station and stone piers which occupied the forecourt adjacent to Green Lane have been removed which have weakened the character of the Embassy Building.



*Historic photograph of the Embassy Building, showing an abundance of features and detailing which have since been removed or lost*



*Although Ryeground House has replaced earlier Victorian shops the current style is complimentary of the Embassy Building. Some modern features and proliferation of signage are however unsympathetic to the areas character (photo July 2019)*

Ryeground House incorporates some elements of Art Deco, in turn complimenting the Embassy Building directly opposite. However, this building has replaced a more charming row of Victorian shops which incorporated bay windows and awnings. The modern awnings and some of the signage on Ryeground House are of poor-quality design and do not enhance the building in the way more traditional ones would.

One peculiar historic alteration is the infilling of the porch at the base of St. Peter’s Church tower which is thought to have taken place as early as 1830. It could be argued that the plain

plaster drum which has filled the void has had a negative impact on the grandeur of the church which is otherwise highly decorative.

#### 8.4 Poor maintenance and repair

Poor maintenance and repair works, as well as general neglect have slowly eroded the character and visual appeal of the Conservation Area in a number of locations under both private and public ownership and within both the built and natural environments.

Numerous elements of the public realm within the Green Lane Conservation Area are in a poor state. As detailed in part 4.4.2 roots of trees have buckled the pavement directly along Cricket Lane, while unkempt foliage on Green Lane and at the west entrance to Cricket Path have a negative impact on visual amenity. Road surfaces are largely in good condition; however, Cricket Path directly along the Conservation Area's boundary is littered with potholes. The quality of the pavement on Green Lane adjacent to the Embassy Building is also in poor condition, as kerb stones have sunk and the tarmac surface has degraded in places causing pools of surface water in wet weather. Where repairs to pavements have taken place, they differ in colour despite being of the same material. This creates an uneven patchwork of surfaces.



*The entrance to Cricket Path at Gores Lane is overgrown with foliage, creating an untidy appearance*



*The pavement on Green Lane adjacent to the Embassy Building and Grapes Hotel shows significant signs of wear and lack of maintenance (Photo October 2019)*

The most noticeable sign of neglect within the Conservation Area is the north/rear elevation of the Embassy Building which dominates the periphery of the Green Lane entrance to the area when viewed from the north. Exposed and untidy services, chipped paintwork, bricked up windows and recent windows inserted haphazardly all contribute towards the appearance of a cluttered and dilapidated façade resulting in a significant negative impact on the building and Conservation Area. Some of these issues are also evident in the northern most bay of the Green Lane elevation.



*The appearance and general condition of the north façade of the Embassy Building is at odds with the character of the area (photo July 2019)*



*Eastern elevation of the Embassy Building (July 2019)*

## **9.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **9.1 Summary of Risks and Issues**

#### **Development**

Post World War II development pressures have led to Freshfield and Formby merging into one coalescent settlement. Modern development includes Wrigleys Close and The Paddock.

Although outside the Conservation Area, Timms Lane and Victoria Road reflect a recent trend towards purchasing property, demolish and rebuild to owner specification.

#### **Street signage and markings**

A lack of strategic thinking has resulted in a proliferation of signage at a number of locations within the Conservation Area. Examples include duplication of ‘cul de sac’ signage at The Paddock and a variety of signs clumped together at the entrance to Church Path. The initial need for signage should be considered with a minimalist approach being adopted. If signage is determined to be necessary, its design and location should be considered having regard to other street signs in the immediate area and the overall appearance of the locality.

#### **Road Markings**

A number of the streets within the Conservation Area are particularly narrow, a case in point being The Paddock. Standard sized double yellow lines have been painted down both sides of the roadway creating a very dominating visual appearance. Whilst it is acknowledged that standard practices and regulations apply, for historic areas, greater thought and sensitivity is required. Historic England in conjunction with the Department for Transport have formulated a document entitled ‘Streets for All’ which gives guidance to Local Authorities in dealing with statutory requirements whilst also being sensitive to historic areas.

Thinner primrose yellow double lines could be considered in future maintenance work, which would be particularly effective in areas such as the Cricket Path and the section of Green Lane outside the Church. However, a consistent approach and awareness to the marking-out of Conservation Areas is needed.

#### **Shopfronts**

Most buildings within the Conservation Area are maintained in a good state of repair. However, standing at the junction of Piercefield Road and Green Lane and observing the various shop frontages from that view point, it is noted that the Art Deco inspired Embassy Building has undergone various alterations at ground floor level which do not provide uniformity and detract from its original appearance. By 2019 the upper floors are in use as a gym whilst the ground floor remains split into several shop units.

Proposals for ‘like for like’ repairs to original or early window should be encouraged through discussions with the present owner.

The issue of shop front design is also highlighted in the view of 4-6a Ryeground Lane (Ryeground House) and 124-132 Church Road where the ‘run’ of shop fronts, whilst incorporating expensive chrome and glass in facias and frontages also presents additional boards at first floor and side elevation, in addition to air conditioning units and alarm boxes, all suggesting a view of clutter, confusion and lack of design related vision, completely at odds with a line of buildings on a key ‘gateway’ to the Conservation Area. These negative features



are reflected in the Appraisal and again, the longer term influence of a shop frontage Design SPD which encourages planned, co-ordinated design, would mitigate such issues.

### **Public realm**

A number of trees, some quite significant in size have distorted and buckled paving on Cricket Path and the Church Path. The tarmac pavement surface on Green Lane has suffered excavations by utilities services particularly in the area adjacent The Grapes. This has resulted in a patchwork surface. Road markings for a redundant taxi rank should be programmed for being painted out during routine maintenance.

The southern end of the Green Lane tarmac pavement and curb arrangement, most of which is 'dropped' is looking very tired due to general wear and tear and poorly undertaken repairs following utilities excavations. Replacement road and paving surfaces in a Conservation Area should be derived from a palette of materials (See Historic England '[Streets for All](#)') specific to the character of that particular area and laid in line with detail from a developed Public Realm Strategy.

### **Concrete bollards**

These have been fitted at a number of places within the Conservation Area. Bollards fitted at the junction of Cricket Path/Green Lane and Green Lane/Piercefield Rd. are ill fitted, occasionally damaged and generally detract from the local visual amenity. If bollards are needed, they should be replaced with plain black cast metal bollards. All bollards replaced in the Conservation Area must be of uniform design. (See Historic England '[Streets for All](#)') and fitted in line with detail from a developed Public Realm Strategy.

### **Street lighting**

Much of the locality is fitted with modern street lamps, the design and colour of which are unsympathetic to the Conservation Area. At the end of their life all street lamps in the Conservation Area should be replaced with one of appropriate uniform design. (See Historic England '[Streets for All](#)') and fitted in line with detail from a developed Public Realm Strategy.

### **Waste bins**

A number of designs of waste bin are present within the Conservation Area. A bin of appropriate design and colour to the Conservation Area should be adopted into a Public Realm Strategy with replacement bins of uniform design fitted as existing units end their serviceable life.

### **The Cricket Path**

In addition to the damage caused to pavement surfaces by tree roots as previously highlighted, Cricket Path also suffers from graffiti related vandalism. This was noted on privately owned waney lap fencing at the western end bordering the cricket field. However, this fencing is likely to be the responsibility of the club. Minor graffiti related vandalism has been noted at a small number of other locations in the area.

## **9.2 Opportunities for Enhancement**

To counteract the negative elements which are detracting from the character of Green Lane Conservation Area, a number of measures might be considered and introduced:

### Article 4 Directions

Inappropriate alterations to buildings in the Conservation Area mostly predate its designation and the aim of the Green Lane Conservation Area [guidance leaflet](#) is to inform property owners of their responsibility to conserve the special architectural and historic interest of the area. Monitoring of the Conservation Area should take place to determine whether and how many future inappropriate alterations have been made. It may then prove necessary to consider the use of Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights and provide greater control where necessary. However, this would only cover single domestic dwellings as other buildings do not have permitted development rights and are under planning control where changes may take place.

### Street furniture and signage

Some features of the public realm are not in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. Although their presence serves an important function, some street furniture is of modern unsympathetic design and inappropriately located.

Along Church Path, Cricket Path and Green Lane lampposts are of aluminium construction. Despite a handful having been painted green to blend with surrounding foliage, their poor quality design is at odds with the surrounding built environment. The appearance of the Conservation Area could be greatly improved with more traditional and decorative dark coloured cast iron or steel lampposts such as those that lined routes of the Conservation Area as late as the 1960s.

In regard to waste bin variety and design in the Conservation Area, a consistent approach should be taken, and more sympathetic and traditional designs should be used where possible.



*Modern unsympathetic lampposts on Cricket Path could be replaced. Most lampposts are also covered with 'anti-littering/dog mess' stickers and the removal of some may lessen their negative impact*

Signage in the public realm aids in navigation and can consist of street signs, traffic signs and other informative signs. The term signage can also be extended to cover advertisements under private ownership. There are countless signs dispersed throughout Green Lane Conservation

Area and those at St. Peter's Church and Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club contribute to the character of the area. The design of street name signs is also sympathetic to the Conservation Area and reflects the standard design throughout Formby. Despite this some are in poor condition, although a simple repaint could substantially improve this.

Modern metallic and luminous signage exists in two locations significantly detracting from the character of the Conservation Area. There are 'no stopping' signs on elevated poles at the entrance to Church Path on Green Lane and on Paradise Lane opposite from Trinity St. Peter's School. It is the size of the latter and combination with several other signs in the former that draw undue attention. Although necessary for traffic calming, resizing or relocating these signs could have a less significant impact on the character of the area.

Bollards and fencing are another necessary traffic calming measure implemented on Paradise Lane adjacent to Trinity St. Peter's School. However, their cold and modern appearance are unsympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area (although the bollards are located outside of the boundary). More traditional design and materials, such as cast iron, would contribute towards enhancing the overall character.



*The cluster of signs at the entrance to Church Path create an untidy appearance alongside the evident graffiti*

*Large dominating sign in front of St. Peter's Church Hall which could be relocated more sympathetically*

The variety of advertisements and shop signs contributes to the diversity of the Conservation Area. However, some are of poor quality design which detracts from the character. Replacements should be encouraged where possible and any new proposed advertisements carefully considered.

Boundaries and surfaces

As detailed in parts 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 certain elements of the boundaries and surfaces within the Conservation Area are in a poor and dilapidated state. Although beyond the boundary, the condition of part of Cricket Path has a detrimental effect on the setting of the Conservation Area. Repair work to both the road surface and pavement would be a welcome improvement to the area surrounding the Conservation Area.

The pavement and kerb stones adjacent to the Embassy Building on Green Lane are patchy in appearance and in poor condition. The presence of several service covers one after another is also detrimental to the appearance and character of the Conservation Area. Consolidation of these and repairs to the pavement would enhance the main thoroughfare into the Conservation Area. The reinstatement of cobbles where appropriate would also contribute toward enhancing the character of the area.

Several boundary treatments within the Conservation Area are poor quality and/or in poor condition. The boundary walls to 2 and 4 Green Lane require substantial maintenance to return them to a suitable condition, while the overgrown foliage adjacent to 6 Green Lane, 1 The Paddock and at the west entrance to Cricket Path could be pruned to significantly improve the appearance of boundary treatments in these specific locations.

Opportunities for enhancement also exist along Church Path and Cricket Path where a variety of metal and wooden fencing clashes. Most notably on Church Path modern metal fencing varies in design, height and colour. It also seems unnecessary as the remainder of Church Path adjacent to the graveyard is entirely open. Replacing fencing in this location with a shallower brick wall or wooden fence would create a greater sense of openness in line with the areas rural context and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.



*Several service covers located on the pavement at Green Lane could perhaps be incorporated to tidy the public realm*



*Fencing is often unnecessary, unmatching and of poor quality. Its removal or replacement should be considered (Photo July 2019)*

Reinstatement of boundary walls to the Grapes Hotel to establish a clear distinction between the private and public realms and improve its appearance is an aspiration and will be assessed if and when a proposal is put forward.

### Embassy Building

The condition of the Embassy Building has been referred to at various points within this appraisal.

### Community interest

The designation of Green Lane Conservation Area is a source of local pride and it is one of the Borough's best preserved such areas. The Formby Civic Society maintains a strong interest in the Conservation Area and has incorporated it within the Formby Heritage Trail. Any future heritage related events or projects in the area should seek to capitalise on the status of the

Conservation Area and its unique history and architectural interest. The Council will support such initiatives as they improve local awareness and encourage the long-term conservation of the area.

### **9.3 Monitoring Changes**

Whilst formal monitoring is the responsibility of SMBC, Formby has a very active Civic Society which has contributed to the ‘refreshing’ of the Conservation Area Appraisal and instigation of this Management Plan. The potential for their structured involvement in occasional ‘street audits’ of the Conservation Area would assist in updating future Appraisals as well as assisting the Council in monitoring neglect, dilapidation and inappropriate or unauthorised works to land and buildings within the Conservation Area.

The taking of date stamped photographs of all key streets, vistas and key locations is a key part of any street audit and would tie into the longer-term Management Plan.

#### **Economic development**

Plan 9 identifies the ‘Commercial/Retail Zone’ including various retail shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs which appear to have a quality offering of goods and services and with a very high occupancy rate.

#### **Open space/trees**

Plan 9 of the Conservation Area Appraisal recognises two such areas. The ‘Church Zone’ the open space of which is predominantly graveyard linked to St Peters Church. The ‘Recreation Zone’ to the west of the Conservation Area includes the Local Green Spaces of Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club and The Paddock. Whilst some of its buildings do not add positively to the character of the Area the open/green space and adjacent Cricket Path are critical features. Development of the Local Green Spaces must be managed in a manner consistent with Green Belt Policy.

#### **Public realm – responsibilities**

Sefton Councils Highways and Public Protection Department has functional responsibility for services including; Highways Maintenance, Strategic Transportation and Street Lighting. The Strategic Transportation Planning and Investment Team (STPI) has specific responsibility for highway design and repair and setting related budgets, including those in Conservation Areas.

#### **Proposed Surface Materials and Street furniture**

As part of a longer-term management programme for Conservation Areas, it would be good practice for the STPI to draw up a palette of proposed road and paving surface materials, street furniture and signage. It should be recognised that Conservation Areas have varying character and therefore materials and furniture may vary dependant on character of Specific Conservation Areas.

## 10.0 SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

### 10.1 Designated Boundary

The boundary of Green Lane Conservation Area has been specifically defined to cover a wide range of historic and contemporary land and building uses. The architectural diversity, relationship between the built and natural environment, social and cultural history and various periods of development all contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. The following chapter details local sites of special architectural and historic interest which currently lie outside of the Conservation Area and were studied as potentially inclusions to the Conservation Area.

Piercefield Road is one of the earliest Victorian roads within the vicinity of Green Lane Conservation Area, its east terminus lies within the current Conservation Area boundary. The street beyond this is purely residential with the north side including a number of well-preserved pre-20<sup>th</sup> century houses. These buildings are often decorative and highly attractive. However, original boundary treatments are near non-existent and many properties have undertaken unsympathetic alterations to original features. The buildings to the north of Piercefield Road contribute to the Conservation Area, however this is limited to appearance and not particularly character. The limited period of development and highly uniform design, scale, density and grain of these houses would not contribute to the diversity and piecemeal character of the Conservation Area, and it is not proposed to incorporate these properties within the boundary.



*31 Piercefield Road has retained its original boundary wall and pier gates as well as windows and other elements*

*25 Piercefield Road has been completely modernised and its original boundary wall replaced*

There are three listed buildings located close to Green Lane Conservation Area. These include 2 and 4 Timms Lane (also known as Corner Cottage and Lintion Cottage) which are located to the north west and are of early 18<sup>th</sup> century origin. 1 Southport Road to the south east also dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, while elements of 62 Gores Lane to the south west date to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Also worthy of note is the nearby 53 Gores Lane (White Cottage) which is also listed. Each of these assets contribute to the Conservation Area in terms of their special historic interest and rural vernacular architecture. However, they are separated from the boundary by unsympathetic

20<sup>th</sup> century infill development, preventing any potential to form a cohesive geographical area. Fortunately, listed status affords these historic assets statutory protection in their own right.



*Grade II listed 2 and 4 Timms Lane (also known as Corner Cottage and Lintion Cottage)      Grade II listed 1 Southport Road*

The west part of Ryeground Lane lies partially within Green Lane Conservation Area and although some architecturally interesting buildings exist at the opposite east part, the quantity of unsympathetic and poor quality design between the two prevents any cohesive connection being formed with the Conservation Area. The buildings in question are a set of attractive Victorian villas, which even in closer proximity to the Conservation Area may not warrant inclusion due to significant alterations and again their uniformity in contrast to the remainder of houses in the Conservation Area.



*24 Ryeground Lane, one of the five Victorian villas south of Ryeground Lane*

*16 Ryeground Lane has a negative impact on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area*

Some interesting buildings and several Victorian era streets can be found along the west boundary of the Conservation Area. However, for reasons mentioned above it is not proposed to incorporate them within Green Lane Conservation Area. Infill development along this part of Gores Lane has had a negative impact on the appearance and character of the area.

To summarise, much of the land adjacent to Green Lane Conservation Area is residential and was constructed relatively recently. Extensive areas of such uniform construction are not in keeping with the rural contextual character of the Conservation area nor do they contribute to the diversity in land or building use.

## **10.2 Considered Amendments**

Considered amendments to Green Lane Conservation Area are detailed within this section and Plan 10 and include the following:

- Extension along Gores Lane including number 94 (Long Yort)
- Extension towards Timms Lane including Victoria Hall, number 14 and Freshfield Bowling Club
- Inclusion of Cricket Path in its entirety
- Removal of 6 Green Lane and 1 The Paddock

### Gores Lane extension

Long Yort at 94 Gores Lane is a house which abuts the west entrance to Cricket Path. It is one of the earliest surviving properties along this stretch of the road and is the only pre-20<sup>th</sup> century building directly adjacent to Green Lane Conservation Area that retains most of its original features. Amongst these are sliding sash windows and a slate tiled roof. The house is stepped back quite substantially from the public highway contributing to the sense of openness which defines the Conservation Area. Its varied scale, irregular layout, well preserved brickwork, prominent chimneys and decorative porch all contribute towards enhancing the character of the setting of the Conservation Area.



Several mature trees within the curtilage of Long Yort are protected through Tree Preservation Orders, they contribute significantly to the natural characteristics of the settings of the Conservation Area.

The inclusion of this area was assessed; however, it was determined that the features identified in this appraisal weren't enough reason for it to be included within the Conservation Area. The current trees of the area, which are a positive contribution to the Conservation Areas setting, are currently protected by Tree Preservation Orders and no extra protection is required for them. For the reasons discussed, it was decided not to include this area within the Conservation Area boundary. However, to generate some kind of protection for Long Yort at 94 Gores Lane, it is suggested for it to be considered a Non-designated Heritage Asset as it is one of the earliest developments of the area and a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area.



*94 Gores Lane (Long Yort)*

### Timms Lane extension

Further north of Long Yort is Victoria Hall which was completed in 1885 in a typical Victorian Gothic revival style. Interesting architectural features include the half hip roof with front facing gable, large glazed porch providing the principle point of entry, buttresses and the variety in brickwork bonding and colour. Despite the original windows having been replaced their sizes and shapes are prominent contributions to each elevation.

Victoria Hall is however more noted for the role it has played in the social history of the area, and the community use it continues to serve to this day. Formby has strong military links and is home to a functioning Royal Air Force base. During the Second World War, Victoria Hall housed children evacuated during the Liverpool Blitz and later injured soldiers returned from conflict. Victoria Hall is also known to have functioned as a social space and canteen for local military personnel.

In more recent years Victoria Hall has been utilised by various community groups and the current tenant is Formby School of Dancing. The leisure and community element of Green Lane Conservation Area is strong, particularly within the north around Formby Cricket, Hockey and Squash Club and the buildings associated with St. Peter's Church. Victoria Hall is an asset, it is currently afforded no statutory protection.

A Tree Preservation Area covers the entire western boundary of Victoria Hall's curtilage and the mature trees within contribute significantly to the natural element of the Conservation Area.

Number 14 Timms Lane bridges the geographical gap between Victoria Hall and Freshfield Bowling Club; it is identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, as although the late 19<sup>th</sup> century building has been substantially altered through partial demolition in a similar manner to Thimble Hall the current building remains sympathetic in appearance. The property is known to have housed a coal merchant in the early 1900s named Barton James and Sons.

Freshfield Bowling Club was founded in 1894 and based itself in a former tin tabernacle church which was relocated from elsewhere in Formby. The clubhouse and the bowling club have become eponymously known as the 'Tin Tab'. The club has a particularly interesting social history, with membership open to men only, and women are only allowed inside the clubhouse on two occasions each year. Although usage of the bowling green has diminished over time, it remains an important recreational facility and compliments the existing long established sport and leisure uses in Green Lane Conservation Area. There is an abundance of foliage surrounding the bowling club including a number of palms; these groups are protected through Tree Preservation Orders.

Timms Close, a cul-de-sac of which proposed additions to the Conservation Area Boundary encompasses, is a poor quality later 20<sup>th</sup> century development. It fails to contribute towards the setting or appearance of Green Lane Conservation Area and replaces the Victoria Nursery which would have been more in keeping with the area's contextual rural character.

The inclusion of this area was assessed; however, it was determined that the three buildings do not carry enough weight for them to be included within the Conservation Area. Furthermore, the nearby poor-quality developments create a break with the Conservation Area's current boundary, which can be noticed in plan 10. If included, the Conservation Area boundary line will be uneven and irregular, diminishing the value of the current condensed Conservation Area. The current trees of the area which are a positive contribution to the Conservation Areas settings, are currently protected by Tree Preservation Orders and no extra protection is required for them. For the reasons discussed, it was decided not to include this area within the Conservation Area boundary. However, it is noted the social and historic value of Victoria Hall. It is suggested for it to be considered a Non-designated Heritage Asset for being an important asset of the area.



*Victoria Hall*



*14 Timms Lane*



*Freshfield Bowling Club*

### Cricket Path

The majority of Cricket Path which follows the original public footpath between Gores Lane and Green Lane lies within the Conservation Area. However, the section which accommodates vehicular traffic isn't. This is the principal route into the 'Recreation Zone' of the Conservation Area. However, as detailed in numerous parts of this appraisal is in extremely poor condition as a result of potholes and buckled pavements. This area also covers five Tree Preservation Orders.

It was decided not to include the vehicular traffic area into the Conservation Area boundary because its poor condition and maintenance which is a negative contribution to the settings of the Conservation Area. The trees on the area present Tree Preservation Order, extra protection is not required.

### 6 Green Lane and 1 The Paddock

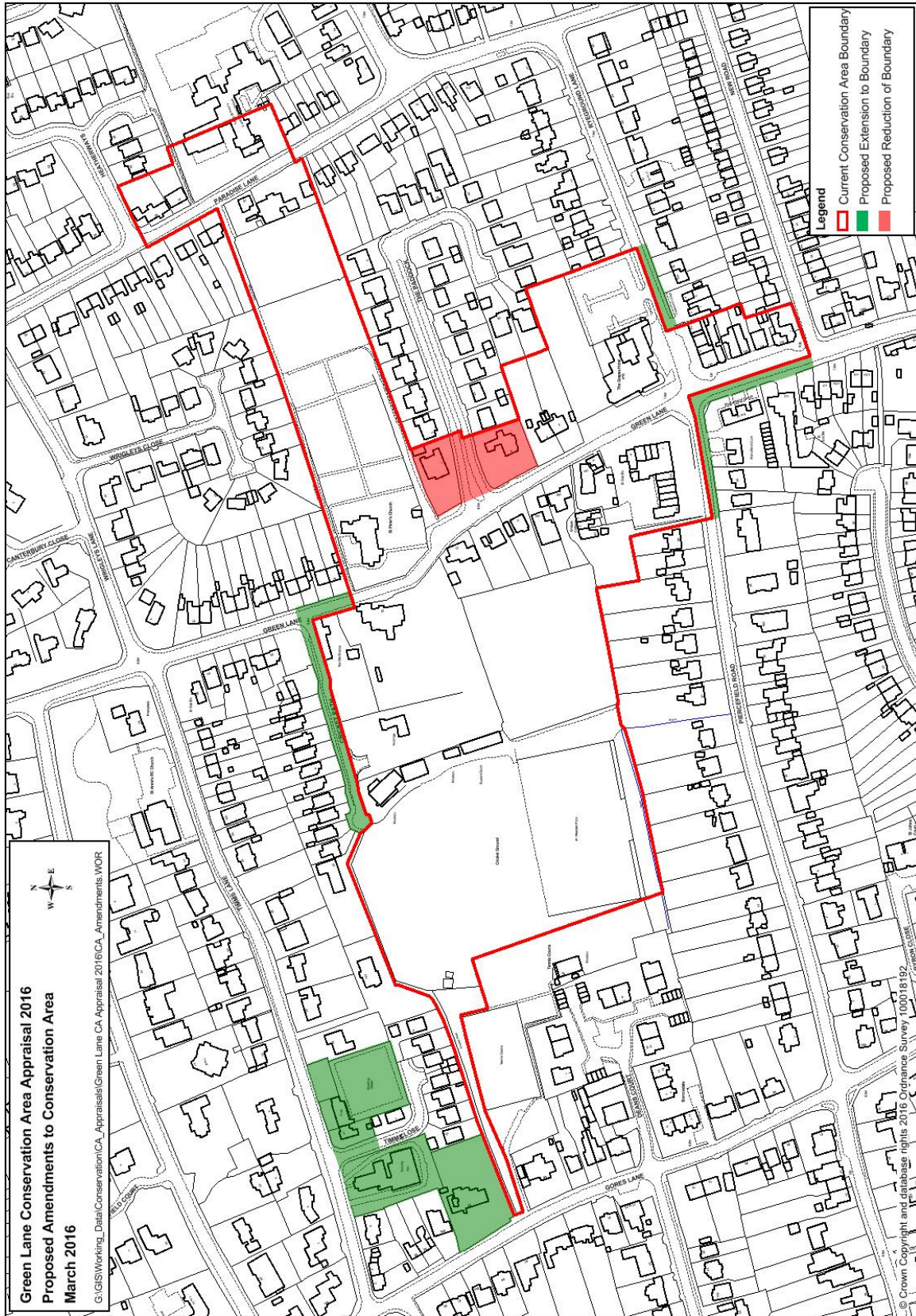
The above properties are discussed in part 8.2 of this appraisal, which establishes that their modern design makes it inappropriate for the Conservation Area by way of design, age and location on the periphery. This stretch of road is also included within the Conservation Area despite possessing no architectural or historic merit. The grass verge within the centre is narrow enough to not risk any further inappropriate development, and the policies of the Sefton Local Plan seek to not only protect Conservation Areas themselves but the wider setting.

After consideration, it was decided to keep 6 Green Lane and 1 The Paddock within the Conservation Area boundary. Their existing inclusion offers considerable additional weight in protecting the views of and wider setting of the Grade II listed St Peter's Church. Although the appraisal does note that neither are of particularly significant character or age, their inclusion does not prevent consented improvements at a later date and places a greater demand for quality design on potential future schemes which may come forward. Its inclusion also protects the trees of the area, which are a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

### General

The proposed extension of Ryeground Lane, Church Road and Piercefield Road that can be seen in plan 10 does not have enough weight or justification for it to be included within the Conservation Area. The changes would be minimal and are considered neutral.

**After proper consideration and for the reasons mentioned above, it was decided not to include the proposed amendments and retain the Conservation Area boundary as it is. Plan 10 shows the proposed amendments that were under consideration but weren't taken on board.**



*Plan 10 Proposed amendments that were considered for the Conservation Area boundary.*

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A Glossary**

#### **Art Deco**

The predominant decorative art style of the 1920s and 1930s, characterized by precise and boldly delineated geometric shapes and strong colours and used most notably in household objects and in architecture

#### **Chancel**

The part of a church near the altar, reserved for the clergy and choir, and typically separated from the nave by steps or a screen

#### **Cruck frame**

Either of a pair of curved timbers extending from ground level to the transverse beam or ridge of a roof and forming a structure frame in a medieval timber-framed house

#### **Gothic**

Of or in the style of architecture prevalent in western Europe in the 12th-16th centuries (and revived in the mid-18th to early 20th centuries), characterized by pointed arches, rib vaults, and flying buttresses, together with large windows and elaborate tracery. English Gothic architecture is divided into Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular

#### **Georgian architecture**

Relating to British architecture of the Georgian period (the reigns of the British Kings George I-IV, 1714–1830), characterized by restrained elegance and the use of neoclassical styles

#### **Leadlights**

A window consisting of a lattice of small panes held within strips of lead

#### **Mansard roof**

A roof which has four sloping sides, each of which becomes steeper halfway down

#### **Monastic grange**

A farming estate belonging to a monastery

#### **Mounting block**

A block of stone or low wooden steps from which a rider mounts a horse

#### **Portico**

A structure consisting of a roof supported by columns at regular intervals, typically attached as a porch to a building

#### **Proscenium**

The part of a theatre stage in front of the curtain

#### **Roughcast**

(Also known as pebbledash) Plaster of lime, cement, and gravel, used on outside walls

**Second Empire architecture**

(Architecture influenced by the styles of) The imperial government in France of Napoleon III, 1852–70.

**Stucco**

Fine plaster used for coating wall surfaces or moulding into architectural decorations:

**Tabernacle**

Any place or house of worship (often temporary or portable)

**Vestry**

A room or building attached to a church, used as an office and for changing into ceremonial vestments

**Wattle**

A material for making fences, walls, etc., consisting of rods or stakes interlaced with twigs or branches

**Whitewash**

A solution of lime and water or of whiting, size, and water, used for painting walls white

## Appendix B Bibliography, Illustration Sources and Acknowledgements

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CHURCH OF ST PETER

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MAY COTTAGE

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1075897>

SUNDIAL APPROXIMATELY 5.5 METRES SOUTH OF CHURCH OF ST PETER

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1343282>

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### Illustration Sources

Photographs have been supplied by Sefton Council Planning Services, Sefton Libraries and Formby Civic Society

### Acknowledgements

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Barbara and Reginald Yorke, Local Historians

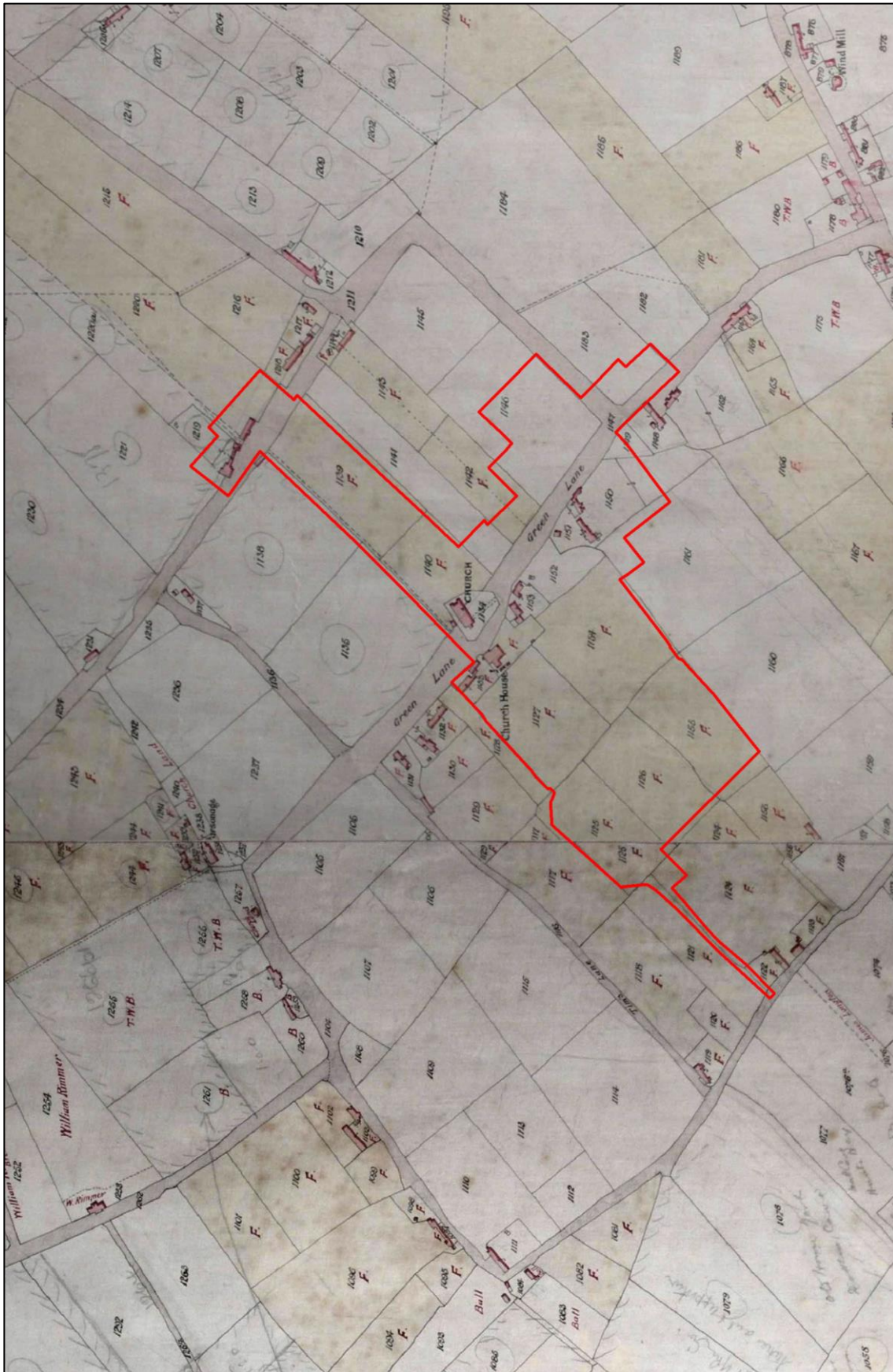
Peter Lucas, Local Historian

Dr Ben Croxford, Historic Environmental Record Officer, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

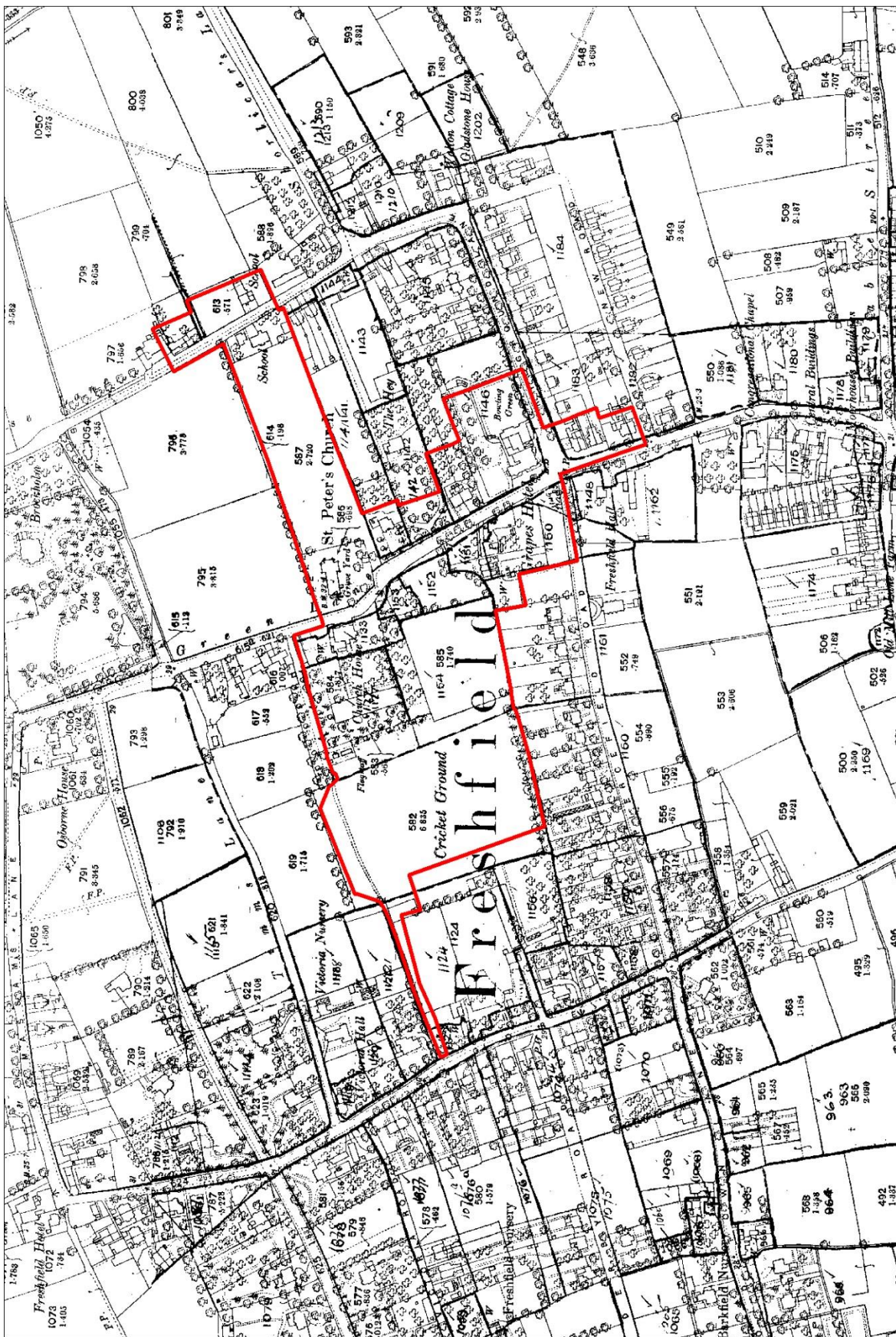


**Appendix C Historic Maps**

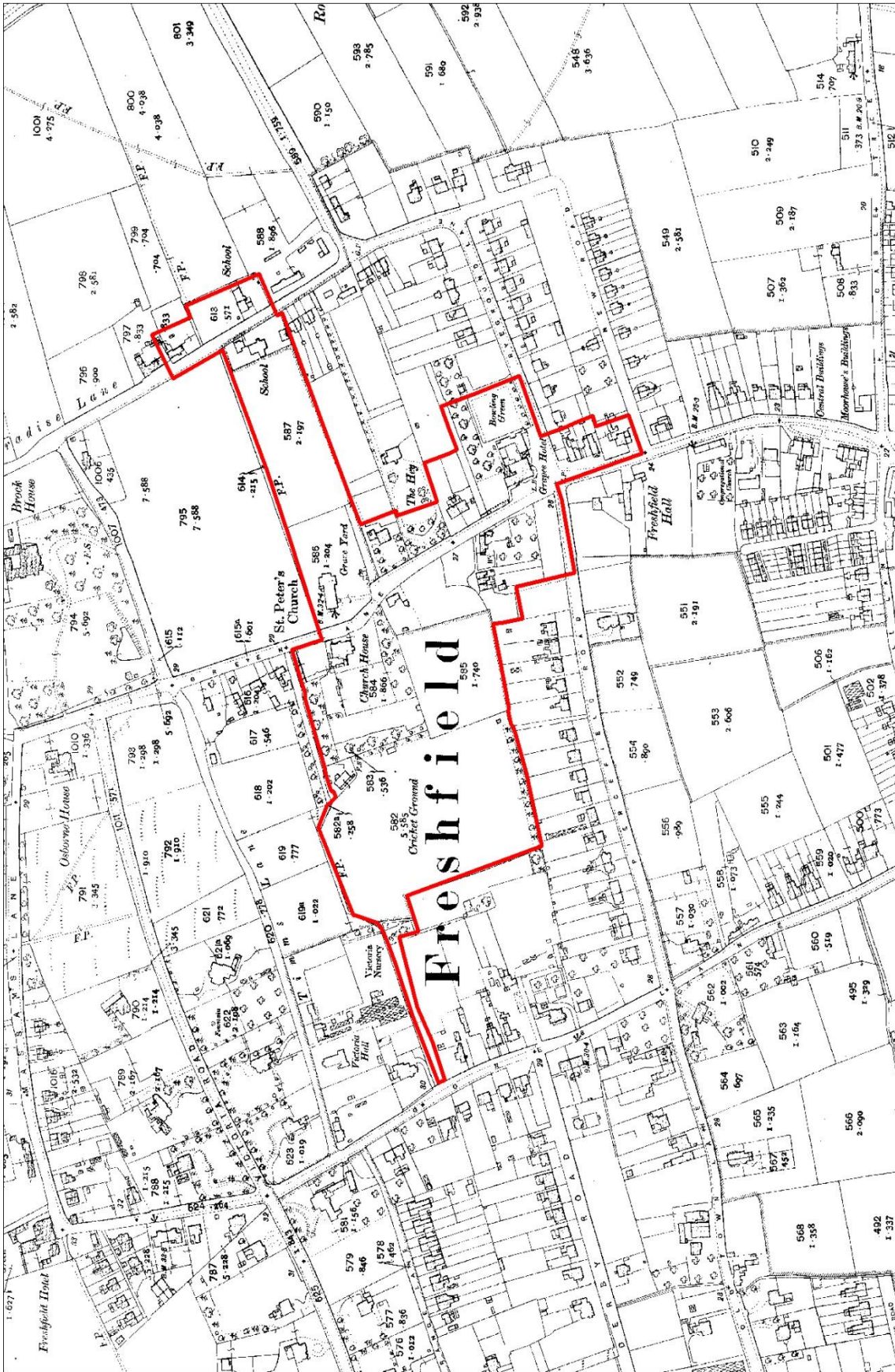
Tithe Map of Formby	1845
Ordnance Survey Map	1893
Ordnance Survey Map	1908
Ordnance Survey Map	1927



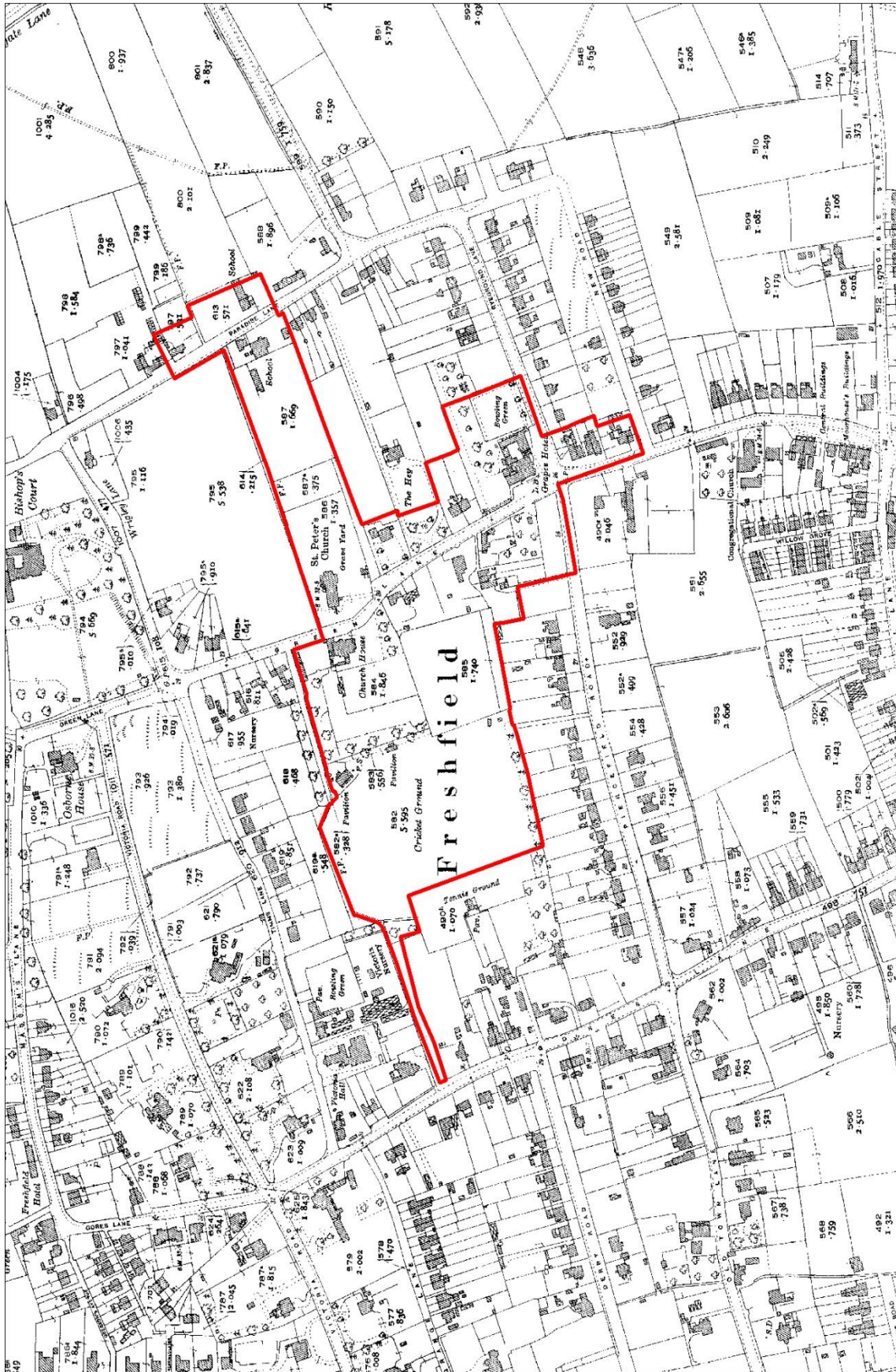
Section of the Tithe Map of Formby (1845)



Ordnance Survey Map (1893)



Ordnance Survey Map (1908)



Ordnance Survey Map (1927)

**APPENDIX D Schedule of Amendments**

<p><b>Pg.48-49, 7.1</b></p> <p>Para.3</p> <p>Para.4</p> <p>Pg. 49</p>	<p>A suggestion was made via public comment to change the zone area and name of one of the proposed ‘Character Zones’ to better reflect the nature of this area. It was felt that the proposed change was in fact appropriate and better described this zone, so part of the ‘Church Zone’ has been joined to the area that was previously known as ‘South Village Zone’ and has now been named ‘Residential Zone as this encompasses the majority of residential properties in the Green Lane Area. The other zones will remain the same.</p> <p>Name changed to ‘Residential Zone’. Text changed, added to and some deleted to properly describe the revised zone area and its character.</p> <p>Paragraph ‘South Village Zone’ deleted as it has been incorporated into the revised ‘Residential Zone.’</p> <p>Plan 9 revised with updated Character Zones.</p>
<p><b>Pg.27, 5.1.1</b></p> <p>Para.1</p> <p>Para.2</p>	<p>Further information was provided which showed that Church House had historically lost around 70% of its original plot and has not actually remained ‘unchanged’ as stated; this new information has been incorporated into the appraisal.</p> <p>Public comment request was made to remove reference to Church House as ‘non-residential use’ as it has been residential for at least the last hundred years.</p> <p>Further information was provided of the open land South of the Vicarage. This information was included in the appraisal.</p>
<p><b>Pg. 23-24, 4.4.1 Pg. 26</b></p> <p>Para.1</p> <p>Para.2</p>	<p>Amendments to update the fact that there are now two designated Local Green Spaces within the conservation area (the draft was written before they were designated via Formby and Little Altcar Neighbourhood Plan), explaining how and why they were designated and what it means in planning terms i.e development must be managed in line with Green Belt policy.</p> <p>The ‘heavily tree covered square plot of land’ described was identified by the owners of Church House via public comment as a parcel of land</p>

Pg.26	<p>which originally belonged to Church House and was used as a paddock. They also provided further information about the planting and tree coverage of this plot and its current usage by the Cricket Club and Scout group. This plot is known as ‘The Paddock’ and is a designated Local Green Space. This paragraph has been updated to include this additional information. Correction also made to refer to Formby Cricket and Hockey Club as a Local Green Space.</p> <p>Updated Plan 6 to reflect Local Green Spaces</p>
Pg. 25, 4.4.2 Para.2	Information updated re: tree planting in the area on recommendation via public comment to include a sentence that highlights that some trees are covered in ivy and in need of attention.
Pg.57, 9.2 Para.2	Removal of ‘recently distributed’
Pg.57, 9.2 Para.5	Paragraph describing different waste bin types and designs removed and a more simplified comment made recommending consistent approach and sympathetic and traditional designs where possible. Deletion of photograph of waste bin that is no longer in that location.
Pg.59, 9.2 Para.4	Amendment as recommended via public consultation to update the information to state that rebuilding Grapes Hotel boundary walls is an aspiration and will be assessed if and when an application is made.
Pg.29, 5.1.7 Para.2	Correction to ‘numbers 11 to 27.’
Pg.15, 3.2 Para.1	Correction to ‘a number of dwellings’ from ‘only a dozen dwellings’.
Pg.16, 3.2 Para.3	Changed ‘new estate’ to ‘new housing development.’
Pg.43, 6.4 Para.1	Correction to ‘small panes within some windows’ from ‘within each window’
Pg.63, 10.1 Para.6	Corrected as ‘11.2’ from 9.2
Pg.12, 2.3	Corrections to highlight that the CA has a large amount of open space with a prominent church as opposed to saying that the area is ‘dominated by open space’ and to correct that Formby Parish Church is ‘better known as St Peter’s Church (rather than the other way around)
Pg.15	Photographs from outside the conservation area removed
Pg.17, 3.4	Removed sentence about HER entries outside of the Conservation Area.
Pg.21, 4.1 Para.5	Changed ‘surrounding’ to ‘within’
Pg.21, 4.2 Para.1	Small corrections to state that the conservation area has retained some of its rural character although no longer in agricultural use, as opposed to retaining ‘all’ of its rural character.

<b>Pg.25, 4.4.2</b> Para.3	Removed reference to all trees on Green Lane having been lost.
<b>Pg.27, 5.1.2</b> Para.2	Changed ‘considerable to ‘reasonable.’
<b>Pg.28, 5.1.5</b> Para.2	Changed a sentence referring to a ‘common theme relating to several buildings to ‘one theme running throughout several buildings’
<b>Pg.55, 9.0</b> Para.5	Added additional sentence specifying that promise yellow road markings would be especially effective outside the Church and the Cricket Path, and spelling correction to ‘longer-term’
<b>Pg.60, 9.3</b> Para.4	Updated to reflect the amended Character Zones and to include the designation Local Green Space status of the Cricket and Hockey Club and the Paddock.
<b>Pg.22, 4.3</b> Para.3	Amended to include that there is now a fence along the Cricket Path separating it from the Cricket Pitch and therefore the open view is diminished. Updated photograph and caption showing the current fence and the effect it has on this view.

### Public Consultation Results

During the 6 week consultation period running from Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019 to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 regarding the Green Lane Conservation Area Appraisal, the Council received a total of 8 responses comprising 8 email responses.

Within this six week consultation period, a drop-in event session was held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at Old School Room, St Peters Church Hall, Paradise Lane, Formby inviting residents, local business and stakeholders to come and have their say on the two appraisals. A series of display boards highlighting the essential character and special interest of the Conservation Area provided a summary of the content of the appraisal, including pictorial and historical map information showing how the area had developed and evolved over time.

6 people attended the drop-in session.

A summary of the main points raised are as follows:

- Conservation Area proposed boundary amendments: There was one support for proposed boundary inclusions. However, the overall majority opinion was to keep the Conservation Area boundaries as they are. After proper consideration and for the reasons mentioned in section 10 of the appraisal, it was decided not to include the proposed amendments and retain the Conservation Area boundary as it is. Plan 10 of the appraisal shows the proposed amendments that were under consideration but weren’t taken on board.
- A suggestion was made via public comment to change the zone area and name of one of the proposed ‘Character Zones’ to better reflect the nature of this area. It was felt that the proposed change was in fact appropriate and better described this zone, so part of the ‘Church Zone’ has been joined to the area that was previously known as ‘South Village Zone’ and has now been named ‘Residential Zone as this encompasses the majority of residential properties in the Green Lane Area. The other zones will remain the same.
- The Embassy Building and on the corner of Piercefield Road and Green Lane is in a poor state of repair, particularly its windows, and its condition was a concern for several respondents. A couple of requests were made to single out the Embassy building for a comprehensive appraisal



and management plan. This building makes an important contribution to the Conservation Area and some respondents felt that it should be highlighted in the appraisal as a focal building which needs to be targeted for repair and enhancement. The Embassy building is addressed in the management plan, and although a more comprehensive management plan for this building could be considered in the future, for the purposes of this report it was felt it was best to leave the management plan as it is.

- The design and condition of the parade of shops adjacent to the Embassy Building on Piercefield Rd and other retail units in the vicinity are cause for concern for a number of respondents and additional requests were made for a comprehensive management plan to tackle both these retail units and the Embassy Building. The Embassy Building and Shopfronts are addressed in the management plan, and although a more comprehensive management plan for these specific issues could be considered in the future, for the purposes of this report it was felt it was best to leave the action plan as it is.
- One respondent requested that the management plan include a strategy to engage property and business owners to bring about positive change to this important area, particularly the area around the Embassy Building and adjacent units. Consideration was made to amend the management plan to include this strategy but for the purposes of this report it was felt that the management plan should remain as it is.
- The Civic Society made a request for an urgent assessment of signage and shop fronts in reference to the Sefton Supplementary Planning Guidance on Shop Fronts and Signage, and they feel that there are some very poor examples of signage in the conservation area. This will be looked at as a recommended action in the management plan.
- The Civic Society felt there was a need for a Civic and awareness raising exercise about the Conservation Area with a new leaflet to be distributed to residents and business to explain why the area is designated and their responsibilities within it. The Green Lane Conservation Area Advice Leaflet has already been produced for these purposes and is available on the Sefton Council website.
- The Civic Society requested a review of road markings and visual street clutter, referencing Historic England's 'Streets for All' and suggested whether it could be considered that double yellow lines be replaced as per the Historic England guidance. The management plan does address road markings but it will be also be requested for Highways to follow the 'Streets for All' guidance and a request will be made for the Civic Society to undertake a street audit.
- One respondent said they would support the use of an Article 4 direction and one respondent objected to the use of an Article 4 direction. An Article 4 direction would not be adopted as part of this plan.
- The area known as 'The Paddock' and its significance to the area needed to be better identified and explained. This area, along with Formby Cricket and Hockey Club, is now a Local Green Space and this has been amended in the appraisal.