

**Codsall
Conservation Areas**

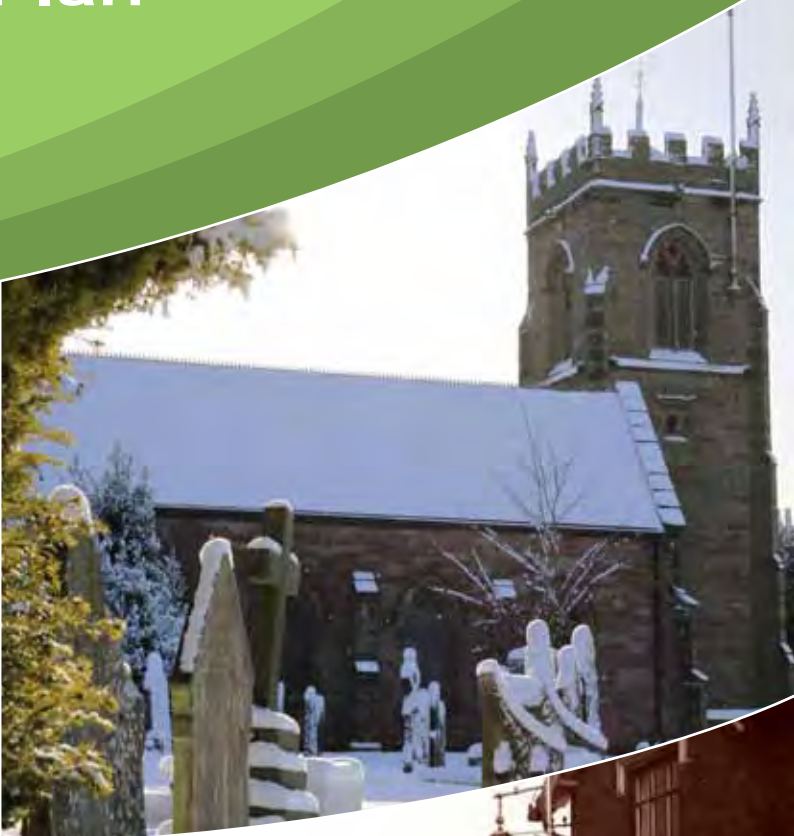
Key

-  Canal Conservation Area
-  Conservation Area
-  Development Boundary
-  Conservation Area Buffer Zone (December 2013)


Scale 1:7,500

Codsall & Oaken

Conservation Area Management Plan



South Staffordshire Council

Revised with minor
amendments 30 April 2014



Preface

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

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

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

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

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

Publication of this Management Plan and Character Appraisal of the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area represents another important step forward for the Council in its commitment to: *'Make South Staffordshire a place ... with prosperous villages, thriving communities and a high quality environment'*.

"I commend it to you wholeheartedly".

Councillor Brian Edwards – Leader, South Staffordshire Council



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Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area Management Plan

Preface	ii
CONTENTS	1
1. Introduction	2
1.1 Format & derivation	2
1.2 Purpose & legislative context	2
1.3 Local Plan Core Strategy	2
1.4 Sustainability	2
1.5 Consultation	3
1.6 Monitoring	3
2. Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area - Generic actions	4
2.1 Policy	4
2.2 Other guidance	4
2.3 Development Control process	4
2.4 Enforcement strategy	5
2.5 Street management	5
2.6 Promotion & awareness	6
2.7 Historic Environment Champions/Parish Councils	6
2.8 Education/community involvement	6
2.9 Production of further guidance/leaflets	6
3. Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area - Specific actions	7
3.1 Conservation Area boundary review	7
3.2 Site & building enhancements	8
3.3 Setting, views, gateways & buffer zones	8
3.4 Shop fronts	9
3.5 Advertising control	9
3.6 Amenity space	9
3.7 Traffic signs	9
3.8 Quality of paved surface & street lights	10
3.9 Trees & landscape	10
3.10 Statutory & local list	10
3.11 Highways/traffic/pedestrians	11
3.12 Grants – assessment of existing & potential for new schemes	11
3.13 Buildings at Risk/Urgent Works Notices	11
4. Monitoring	12
Appendix 1 Conservation Area Appraisal	11
Appendix 2 Local Plan policies	37
Appendix 3 Bibliography	36
Appendix 4 Townscape Appraisal Map	after page 38
Appendix 5 Locally Listed Buildings Map	after page 38
Appendix 6 Map showing the results of the Conservation Studio's brief survey of Oaken	after page 38
Appendix 7 Townscape Appraisal Map showing an indicative boundary of the proposed Oaken Conservation Area	after page 38
Appendix 8 Maps showing the northern and southern portions of the proposed conjoined Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area	after page 38

1. Introduction

1.1 Format & derivation

1.1.1 This Management Plan sets out a mid-to long-term strategy in the form of a series of recommendations and guidelines for the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area. It has been informed by an accompanying Character Appraisal document for the Conservation Area, which identified its special character and concluded by outlining some of the issues that it faces. This is presented as Appendix 1.

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

1.2 Purpose & legislative context

1.2.1 This Management Plan sets out guidelines by which the special character of Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area can be preserved and enhanced. They will provide a basis for preparing new policies to achieve this..

1.2.2 The preparation of management plans for its conservation areas is one of the Council's statutory obligations under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.2 of the Character Appraisal [see Appendix 1].

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

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

1.3 Local Plan Core Strategy

1.3.1 Current planning policies for South Staffordshire, including those governing development and management of change in conservation areas, is laid out in the South Staffordshire Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted on 11 December 2012. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.3 of the Character Appraisal [see Appendix 1].

1.3.2 The Core Strategy contains broad policies for steering and shaping development. It also sets out more detailed day-to-day development policies. The overall strategy will manage change that is necessary to meet the needs of current and future generations.

1.3.3 The Management Plan and Character Appraisal document will sit alongside the conservation policies contained within the new Local Plan and will be complementary to its aims of preserving and enhancing the South Staffordshire's conservation areas.

1.4 Sustainability

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

1.5 Consultation

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

1.5.2 The findings of the Character Appraisal and proposals contained within the Management Plan were exhibited at Codsall Village Hall on the afternoon of Tuesday 15th July 2008, at which 39 people attended. An open public meeting where the proposals contained within the Management Plan were described and discussed followed this.

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

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

1.6 Monitoring

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

2. Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area - Generic actions

2.1 Policy

2.1.1 It is the Council's duty to preserve and enhance its conservation areas and policies in its Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 11 December 2012) fulfil this duty. Relevant policies for conservation areas are covered in Policy EQ3. Other policies including Green Belt, Historic Landscape Area, Ancient Woodland and others is detailed in Section 2.3 of the Character Appraisal (see Appendix 1).

2.1.2 The fundamental principles of good management of conservation areas are to be found in these policies, which have been embodied within the Local Plan Core Strategy. They can be related to the following generic management proposals for all of the District's conservation areas, which have been informed by the appraisal documents (see 8.1 Issues).

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

- Through the development control process (Policy EQ3)
- Controlling new shop fronts and signage (Policy EQ3);
- Addressing traffic issues (in cooperation with Staffordshire County Council);
- Control of boundaries (gates, fencing, walls) and building details (through consideration of designating Article 4 Directions to control minor works;
- Improving the quality of the public realm through new schemes and funding;
- Encouraging owners of historic buildings to carry out required repair or improvement through education or possible grant schemes;
- Creating a full Local List of important historic buildings;
- Regularly (every five years) carrying out a new appraisal of each conservation area, if necessary, and updating management proposals: monitoring change (Section 4);
- Regularly (every five years) assessing the need for boundary changes and new conservation area designations, and carrying out the changes should they be required.

- Regularly (every five years) carry out a survey to assess the condition of listed buildings

2.2 Other guidance

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

2.2.2 These principles have also been carried forward into the District-wide *Village Design Guide*, which was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 15 September 2009 and sits within the emerging LDF.

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

2.3 Development Control process

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

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

2.3.3 Applications concerning land or properties within or close to a conservation area are referred to the Conservation Team of South Staffordshire Council. Within the usual period of time for consideration of a planning application, a conservation specialist from the team will advise the planning officer assigned to the application whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area concerned. The specialist will,

therefore, advise on whether the application should be supported or refused on conservation grounds.

2.3.4 As an important figure in this process, the conservation specialist will be trained in the field of historic building conservation and/or planning, either through formal qualifications, long-term experience in the field, or both. The Skills Base Best Value Performance Indicator BVPI 205 measures the suitability of persons for this and other specialist roles and South Staffordshire Council is committed to meeting these criteria for such specialist roles.

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

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

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

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

2.4 Enforcement strategy

2.4.1 In some cases the development control process is not fully adhered to and planning permission is not always sought or implemented correctly. In these cases it is important that

enforcement action is swift and effective. This will reinforce the message that the development control process is fair and that it must be followed in all cases.

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

2.5 Street management

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

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

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

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

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

2.6 Promotion & awareness

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

2.7 Historic Environment Champions/Parish Councils

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

2.7.2 Parish Councils and other local bodies are also useful contributors to the process and are consulted for their opinion of planning applications in their localities. The wealth of knowledge contained within Parish Councils

is a valuable resource when identifying local character and strong ties with the conservation section are encouraged.

2.8 Education/community involvement

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

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

2.9 Production of further guidance/leaflets

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

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

3. Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area – Specific actions

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

3.1 Conservation Area boundary review

3.1.1 After the completion of a thorough survey of the Codsall Conservation Area, a character appraisal was written. This concluded that boundary revisions would be required to ensure that the designation accurately reflects the special character of Codsall.

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

- Verge and walling on the west side of Church Lane, south of the Cemetery and as far south as the bend opposite Manor Court;
- West side of Drury Lane, properties from No.10a-17;
- Car Park north of The Square and land west of The Crown PH and east of No.31 Wolverhampton Road, following the southern contour of Baker's Way and the northern contour of Wolverhampton Road;
- East side of Station Road south after No.33 including the station site and No.73 and the Electricity Sub-Station on the east side of the road, opposite No.69;
- Selective properties and their boundaries on the east side of Oaken Lanes, comprising Nos. 1-2, 17-21, 27-39 but excluding Nos. 33a&b.

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

- The area to the south of Bakers Way;
- Church Lane: Nos. 5 and 7, Norcott;
- Drury Lane (east side);
- Car Park to Co-operative supermarket;
- Codsall Gardens;
- Belvide Gardens (part).

3.1.4 The recommendation to remove these sites from the Conservation Area is based on

conclusions of a survey, which can be found in Section 7 of the Character Appraisal [see Appendix 1]. Most of the individual properties within the areas proposed for deletion do not have any specific architectural or historic special interest and do not make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

3.1.5 Separately, Oaken was appraised with a view to the creation of a separate Conservation Area, or one conjoined with Codsall. Following this it was decided to create a conjoined Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area, with the modified northern and southern sections of the Codsall Conservation Area, plus a new one in Oaken, all linked by buffer zones. [Details of the Oaken Conservation Area can be found in Section 9]

Buffer Zones

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

- Land west of Gunstone Lane north of Ingle Nook and south of the Electricity Sub-Station;
- Land east of Gunstone Lane, north of Stoneleigh and south of Newhouse Farm;
- The properties and plots of Nos.1-7 Drury Lane, the buildings and grounds of St Nicholas' C of E First School and the vacant land in Walton Gardens due south of the school, the line of Vaughan Gardens leading to and including the triangle of open land northeast of Baker's Way, plus the junction of Wolverhampton Road and Baler's Way and south to include the Playing Field off Wheel Avenue;
- The properties and plots on the east side of Church Road, south of the entrance drive to St Nicholas' C of E First School as far as Baker's Way, excluding Nos.28-32 Walton Gardens but including Nos.24-26 Walton Gardens, to link up with the triangle of open land referred to above;
- The properties and plots on the west side of Church Road south of the Hall and including No.4 Wheeler Close down to No.10

3.1.7 These proposed changes are shown on Townscape Appraisal Maps, which are included in the appendices

3.1.8 ACTION: *The Council will recognise the importance of the affect of buffer zone land on the character of the Conservation Area.*

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

3.2 Site & building enhancements

3.2.1 While there are a number of positive buildings in Codsall, both listed and unlisted, this is offset by some inappropriate new development, which has been introduced into the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area, or which was already in situ when the designation was first made. However, South Staffordshire Council has, through the use of the planning system, largely succeeded in keeping the historic character intact despite the introduction of some buildings along the main routes.

3.2.2 Late 20th century development has mainly been inserted in the lanes and fields that abut the main streets. They are mostly single or two-storey residential houses, although there are also some modern community buildings such as the Codsall Forget Me Not Club. Modern buildings or groups of buildings that would benefit from enhancement or redevelopment are: -

- Codsall Parish Council Offices;
- Codsall Forget Me Not Club;
- Nos. 16 to 22 Station Road;
- Nos. 1 to 8 The Square.

3.2.3 The architecture of some other modern buildings does not reflect the historic character of Codsall: -

- Codsall Gardens (all of);
- No. 10 Wolverhampton Road;
- Nos. 9 to 15 Church Road (Lloyds Pharmacy);
- Damson Rest, Church Lane;
- Nos. 46, 51 and 53 and the Vicarage in Church Road;
- No.3 Sandy Lane and Cuffaboot;
- Inglenook, Gunstone Lane;
- Norcott, Mill Lane;
- Drury Lane (all of).

3.2.4 Historic buildings which would benefit from certain enhancements include:

- No. 16 Wolverhampton Road
(The Conservative Club)

3.2.5 ACTION: *The Council will seek to ensure that further developments in the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area respect its historic character. Schemes whose design or scale is unsympathetic to the Conservation Area's character will be resisted, where appropriate.*

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

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

3.2.8 ACTION: *The Council will require new development in and around the area to respect Codsall's character in density and scale.*

3.3 Setting, views, gateways & buffer zones

3.3.1 The setting of a conservation area is very important. It has been established that development that affects views into and out of a conservation area can affect its special architectural or historic interest. Development that impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting and longer views into and from a conservation area can detract from its special character. The proposals therefore include the identification of areas of land around the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area as buffer zones [see 3.1.6 above].

3.3.2 Development in these zones can have an effect on the special interest of a conservation area and, as such, development proposals here will be assessed against the impact that they will have on the character of the Codsall Conservation Area. Important views are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map in the Character Appraisal [see Appendix 1].

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

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

3.3.5 ACTION: *The Council will require new development in and around the area to respect the character of Codsall & Oaken in terms of density and scale.*

3.4 Shop fronts

3.4.1 The Codsall Conservation Area contains a number of shops, although very few have historic shop fronts [see Section 7.3 of the Character Appraisal in Appendix 1]. In some cases, poorly designed shop fronts with little regard for the host building and the street scene spoil the historic character and appearance of a building or street. No.8 Wolverhampton Road should serve as an exemplar.

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

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

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

3.5 Advertisement control

3.5.1 All outdoor advertisements affect the appearance of the building or neighbourhood where they are displayed. The visual appearance of the Codsall Conservation Area suffers less from garish advertisements than many other conservation areas in South Staffordshire. However, it is important that any future additions, such as unauthorised banners, are carefully monitored.

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

3.6 Amenity Space

3.6.1 Codsall benefits from a large area of public open space within the Conservation Area and other smaller spaces, both public and private, which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is important that the high standards to which these areas are maintained are upheld.

3.6.2 ACTION: *The Council will continue to work with other agencies such as Codsall Parish Council and Staffordshire County Council to ensure that open spaces are well maintained and enhanced, as appropriate.*

3.7 Traffic signs

3.7.1 Signs and notices often spoil the visual attractiveness of the place. While traffic signs are obviously necessary, many are ill sited and there may be an over provision.

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

3.8 Quality of pavement surface & street lighting

3.8.1 Paving and surface materials throughout the area are generally modern, uncoordinated and sometimes poor quality. Access along the pavements is also often awkward due to their narrowness and some roads only have pavement on one side of the highway. The pavements fail to enhance or reinforce the historic identity of the Conservation Area.

3.8.2 Also, the Character Appraisal has identified the lack of a cohesive style of street lamp in the Conservation Area. In purely conservation terms it would be ideal if a traditional height and style of street lamp were introduced across the area. The present mix of styles neither enhances the Conservation Area nor engenders any sense of consistency of character within it.

3.8.3 Should the existing units be replaced in the future their replacements should be designed to blend in with the historic character of the Conservation Area better than the current examples. The potential introduction of overlarge standards with no effort to marry the design to the character of the area should be resisted. The height of lamp-standards is particularly critical because it can mean that the features visually compete with the roofline of the houses, as well as conflict with the crowns of trees, themselves vital features of the Conservation Area.

3.8.4 **ACTION:** *The council will seek to review design and materials of paving/streetscape throughout the area with a view to publication of a streetscape manual setting out principles for public space design. Proposed new areas of paving shall be appropriate to the historic environment in which they are set.*

3.8.5 **ACTION:** *The Council will continue to work with other agencies such as Codsall Parish Council and Staffordshire County Council to ensure that any new street lighting schemes will, as far as possible, enhance the character of the Conservation Area.*

3.9 Trees & landscape

3.9.1 All trees are protected within conservation areas by the requirement for landowners to notify the Council of their intention to lop or trim them. Tree Preservation Orders provide an additional protection for significant trees and groups of trees, where any proposed action requires consent from the local planning authority.

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

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

3.10 Statutory & local list

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

3.10.2 The Council's is in the process of compiling a list of Buildings of Special Local Interest; see Section 6.3 of the Character Appraisal [Appendix 1].

3.10.3 Within this, Section 6.3.3 lists a number of buildings identified as part of the survey work undertaken for the preparation of this Management Plan for consideration for inclusion on the Council's local list

3.10.4 **ACTION:** *The Council will compile a list of Buildings of Special Local Interest (i.e. a 'local list') and develop policies promoting their retention and improvement. This will include the properties identified in Section 6.3.3 of the Character Appraisal [see Appendix 1].*

4. Monitoring

3.11 Highways/Traffic/Pedestrians

3.11.1 The Council has no direct control over highways, which is under the remit of Staffordshire County Council. However, the public footpaths are owned and maintained by other organisations and individuals and the Council works with them to ensure that the special character and function is maintained.

3.11.2 **ACTION:** *The Council will also work with landowners and the County Council to ensure that public rights of way are maintained and enhanced.*

3.12 Grants – assessment of existing & potential for new schemes

3.12.1 There are currently no local or national grant schemes available to promote new projects in Codsall that could preserve or enhance the character of Codsall Conservation Area.

3.12.2 **ACTION:** *The Council will consider starting new grant schemes and working with other local and national bodies to create new grant schemes.*

3.13 Buildings at Risk/ Urgent Works Notices

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

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

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

4. Monitoring

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix 1

Codsall Conservation Area Appraisal

CONTENTS

1	Summary	13
1.1	Key characteristics	13
2	Introduction	14
2.1	The Codsall Conservation Area	14
2.2	The purpose of a conservation area character appraisal	14
2.3	The planning policy context	15
3	Location & landscape setting	16
3.1	Location & activities	16
3.2	Topography & geology	16
3.3	Relationship of the conservation area to its surroundings	17
4	Historic development & archaeology	18
4.1	Historic development	18
4.2	Archaeology	23
5	Spatial analysis	24
5.1	Plan form & layout	24
5.2	Landmarks, focal points & views	25
5.3	Open spaces, trees & landscape	27
5.4	Public realm	28
6	The buildings of the conservation area	31
6.1	Building types	31
6.2	Listed buildings	31
6.3	Locally listed buildings	31
6.4	Positive buildings	33
6.5	Negative buildings	34
6.6	Neutral buildings	35
6.7	Building materials & local details	35
7	Character analysis	37
7.2	Area 1: Codsall Church	37
7.3	Area 2: Codsall Square	37
7.4	Area 3: Codsall House	38
8	Issues	39
8.1	Key issues	39
8.2	Conservation Area boundary review	39
9	A new Oaken Conservation Area	40
9.1	Introduction	40
9.2	A brief history of Oaken	40
9.3	The Conservation Studio's recommendation	43
9.4	A Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area	44

1. Summary

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

- An historic rural village split into two distinct sections by a modern bypass, but still connected by a linear former country lane;
- A core of historic buildings around the Parish Church of St Nicholas on the high ground in the north, a former Norman church, which was comprehensively remodelled in the mid 19th century;
- A secondary historic core around Codsall Square including a 17th century timber framed cottage and a 19th century inn;
- A topography comprised of hilly and winding roads and tracks such as Sandy Lane, Church Lane and Gunstone Lane, which reinforce the rural character and afford breathtaking views;
- A number of historic buildings and structures, with eight listed examples in the Conservation Area, including an early medieval church, 17th century timber framed cottages and fine larger houses from the late 18th century;
- Focal points provided by the medieval Parish Church (Grade II* listed), The Bull Inn and Codsall House (Grade II listed) and grounds;
- The modern shopping and civic facilities around Codsall Square and in Station Road act as a hub of commercial and social activity;
- A strong use of the colour red in the buildings, which gives a rich rusty look to them; the sandstone Parish Church, the red brick elevations of secular buildings, e.g. the Old Schoolhouse and the sandstone walls;
- The distinctive look of many of the lanes determined by the sandstone boundary treatments around the houses featuring large irregularly cut rocks. Hedging or trees top some of the walls. Larger, grander houses, such as Brabourne, have tall brick walls or low walls with decorative railings, usually painted black;
- The long sandstone churchyard wall defines the corner of Church Road and Sandy Lane and part of Church Hill;
- A northern and western boundary defined by the fields leading across towards Codsall Wood and Brewood.
- The fine late 18th century Codsall House standing in the south, with some of its former grounds remaining as important public open space;
- The rural appearance of Station Road, with tall trees, sandstone walling and hedging lining the park to the south of Codsall House and a lane which leads gently downhill towards the station.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Codsall Conservation Area

2.1.1 Staffordshire County Council designated the Codsall Conservation Area in November 1973. It covers two distinct parts of Codsall: around the Parish Church and around Codsall Square and part of Station Road. The historic cores of both parts of Codsall are included in separate boundaries between which are the modern Bakers Way by-pass and some modern housing.

2.1.2 Codsall is a rural village with historic links to the Wrottesley Estate that became a dormitory settlement to the large town of Wolverhampton after the coming of the railways in the mid 19th century. Dispersed farm buildings around the early medieval church formed the core of the original village and the gaps between them have been infilled with large red brick houses and other residential houses since the 19th century.

2.1.3 In the 21st century many of the village lanes retain their historic layout and rural charm, although they are now almost continuously lined with buildings, including a considerable amount of modern infill development around Codsall Square, Station Road and Drury Lane. The village has many trees in key groups and these, along with the winding lanes, the open spaces between buildings and the extensive views over the surrounding countryside, have helped to retain Codsall's strong rural character.

2.2 The purpose of a conservation area Character Appraisal

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

2.2.2 Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a

decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

2.2.3 Planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment are set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. In addition, guidance to help practitioners is provided in the *Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide*.

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

2.2.5 This document therefore seeks to:

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

2.2.6 The Conservation Studio carried out survey work for this document in January 2008, when a full photographic record was also taken of the area and its buildings. Unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution, trees, water courses, historic shop fronts, views and areas and buildings for enhancement were noted amongst other matters and recorded on a Townscape Appraisal Map (see Appendix 4).

2.2.7 Additionally the existing boundary of the Conservation Area was carefully surveyed and proposals drawn up for a number of changes. The omission of any particular feature does not imply that it is of no significance.

2.3 The planning policy context

2.3.1 This document therefore provides a firm basis on which applications for future development within the Blymhill Conservation Area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework as set out in Staffordshire County Council's Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 and in the District's Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted on 11 December 2012.

2.3.2 In the Local Plan, Inset Plan 4 confirms that the following policies apply to the Brewood Conservation Area or to the land that surrounds it:

- Conservation Area Policies: EQ3
- Open Countryside: Policies OC1

These policies are detailed in Appendix 2

2.3.3 This appraisal was undertaken when the Council's former Local Plan (adopted December 1996) was still in force. On 11 December 2012 the Local Plan was superseded by the Local Plan Core Strategy, which contains corresponding policies for all of those contained within the former plan. These are described in Appendix 2. More information about the South Staffordshire Council's Core Strategy can be found on its website: www.sstaffs.gov.uk or from the Local Plans Team who can be contacted via: localplans@sstaffs.gov.uk.



3. Location & landscape setting

3.1 Location & activities

3.1.1 Codsall is located close to the border of Staffordshire and Shropshire, 4 miles northwest of the centre of Wolverhampton and 3 miles south of Brewood. Wrottesley Park lies two miles to the southwest of the village.

3.1.2 The village is in a mainly rural setting although major trunk roads run nearby. The modern infrastructure, along with extensive residential and commercial post-war development, has introduced a suburban character to many parts of Codsall. The main route of Bakers Way, a bypass that was created in the 1970s, passes through the middle of the settlement and connects with Codsall Wood in the northwest. The M54 and A41 skirt Codsall to the north and south, respectively.

3.1.3 While the central corridor that separates the two sections of the Conservation Area has a modern appearance and activity, the northern and southern tips of the designated area have successfully retained their quiet rural appearance. This is particularly the case to the north around the Parish Church where activity is fairly low-key with only the occasional passing motorist or dog walker.

3.1.4 To the south, the public open space abutting Codsall House and the section of Station Road that runs alongside it are quiet, although the area directly to the north is a bustling parade of shops, and public houses, which enjoy constant activity. The location close to the industrialised West Midlands has led to the growth of the village as a commuter settlement.

3.1.5 Activities in the village are mainly related to the everyday needs of the local population. There is a Parish Church, some specialist shops and a supermarket, two public houses, an Indian restaurant, a bank, a doctor's surgery, two small parish halls, a community club, and a primary school. There is also an open grassed area, which provides an important public amenity space.

3.2 Topography & geology

3.2.1 Codsall Parish Church stands on the tallest hill in the locality and the church tower provides an important landmark in the wider neighbourhood,



Images from Top to Bottom

- The creation of Baker's Way eased congestion in Codsall Square but bisected the village
- Codsall has thriving shopping parades, here in Station Road and in Wolverhampton Road
- The tower of the Church of St Nicholas is a prominent local landmark

the brick tower of a former windmill stands close by. The Conservation Area covers part of the southern hillside, which descends towards but does not include Codsall Railway Station.

3.2.2 There are also views to the east and west over the slopes descending down the hillsides in these directions and Sandy Lane has a fairly steep gradient as it leaves the Conservation Area. The southern hillside is gentler and at the junction of Bakers Way and Church Road it levels off. However, the descent downhill is restored as Station Road leads southwards out of the Conservation Area.

3.2.3 The village and the surrounding countryside has rich soil suitable for farming and is fed by springs and brooks that rise through the red sandstone that underlies the area. This soft rock is used in the distinctive boundary walls in the area and on the Parish Church.

3.3 Relationship of the Conservation Area to its surroundings

3.3.1 The Codsall Conservation Area borders fields and pastures to the north and west, and modern residential development to the east and south. The surrounding countryside provides an important rural backdrop to the Conservation Area. There are extensive views across fields to Codsall Wood from Church Lane and the Parish Church and across farmland from Gunstone Lane.

3.3.2 Most post-war housing development has taken place in planned estates of short roads and cul-de-sacs to the east and south of the Conservation Area although many of the gaps within it and in the small belt of land around Bakers Way have been developed since the 1930s. The tightly built form to the south of Bakers Way is in contrast to the spacious open surroundings to the north of the Conservation Area.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Sandy Lane slopes away sharply as it leaves the Conservation Area
- The church's prominence affords extensive views of open countryside
- An example of Codsall's post-war housing

4. Historic development & archaeology

4.1 Historic development

4.1.1 Codsall (or 'Codshale') was mentioned in Domesday in 1086 and was then a small agricultural community adjoining the hamlet of Oaken. A church was established there by the 11th century and the early community grew around this place of worship, now the Parish Church of St Nicholas (which still incorporates some Norman structure).

4.1.2 The hilltop settlement developed throughout the medieval era and acquired a windmill, forge, village pound, bakery and inn. There was a manor house by the 14th century, which may have been 'Hall House' mentioned in the early 17th century standing on the current site of Codsall House.

4.1.3 Medieval Codsall and its surrounding land were under the ownership of Croxden Abbey until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1549, when it passed to the Wrottesley family. Eventually, Codsall spread to the junction of the Wolverhampton road where a coaching inn and a cluster of small shops and houses stood by the crossroads.

4.1.4 A new principal house, to replace the demolished manor house, was built as Codsall Hall (later Hall Farm) by the mid 18th century to the north of the crossroads. An early attraction for visitors to Codsall was a sulphurous well located in woods nearby, whose waters supposedly cured various ailments.

4.1.5 The village had grown to accommodate 589 people by 1801 but was still an agricultural community producing crops such as wheat, barley and oats. However, the village slowly expanded and a National School was built on the corner of Church Road and Church Lane in 1818. By the mid 19th century the opening of Codsall Station prompted a further southerly expansion.

4.1.6 The Shrewsbury & Birmingham Railway (later part of the Great Western Railway) was cut through the parish and Codsall Station opened on 12 November 1849. Much of the rock that was removed from the ground to make way for the new railway line was used to create Codsall's distinctive red sandstone boundary walls. Subsequently sandstone quarries were established and provided alternative employment in this agricultural area.



Images from Top to Bottom

- John Speed's map of Codsall & Oaken, 1610
- A depiction of Codsall Windmill from a stained glass window in St Nicholas' Church
- The Church of St Nicholas depicted in 1797, with the windmill to the right

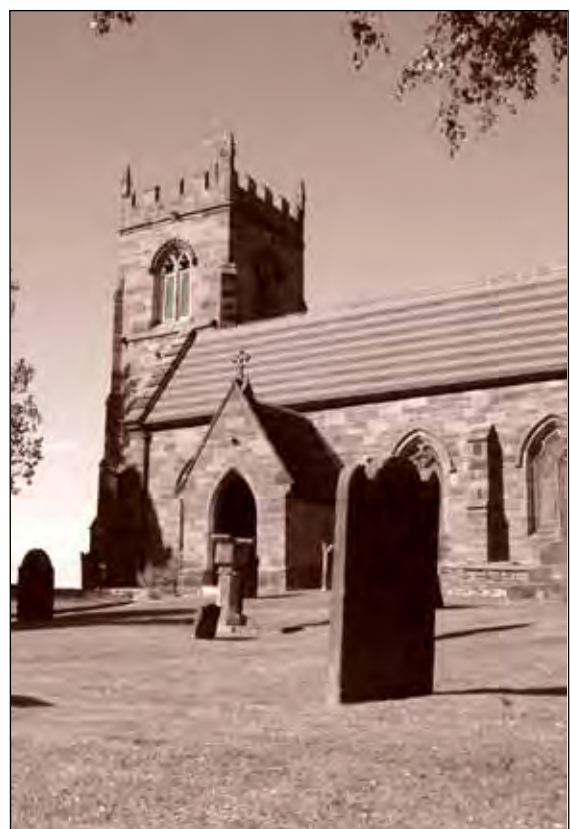
4.1.7 The station became the new focus for Codsall and there was a goods yard, a coal yard and cattle pens; houses were subsequently built along Station Road as the village rapidly became a popular location that was accessible by train for wealthy businessmen from Wolverhampton and the Black Country.

4.1.8 A further significant development in the village in 1849 was the opening of the rebuilt Parish Church. The Gothic reworking was created by Edward Banks, who also designed Codsall Railway Station (Grade II listed). The work to the church also made use of the abundant sandstone and has been a distinctive local feature on the hilltop ever since.

4.1.9 The 1880 Ordnance Survey map shows that many of the key historic buildings in Codsall were built by this time. The cluster of buildings around the church, including a school, are incorporated in a street pattern that was created in medieval times with two back lanes, Church Lane and Drury Lane running parallel to the main route of Church Road (then Church Street).

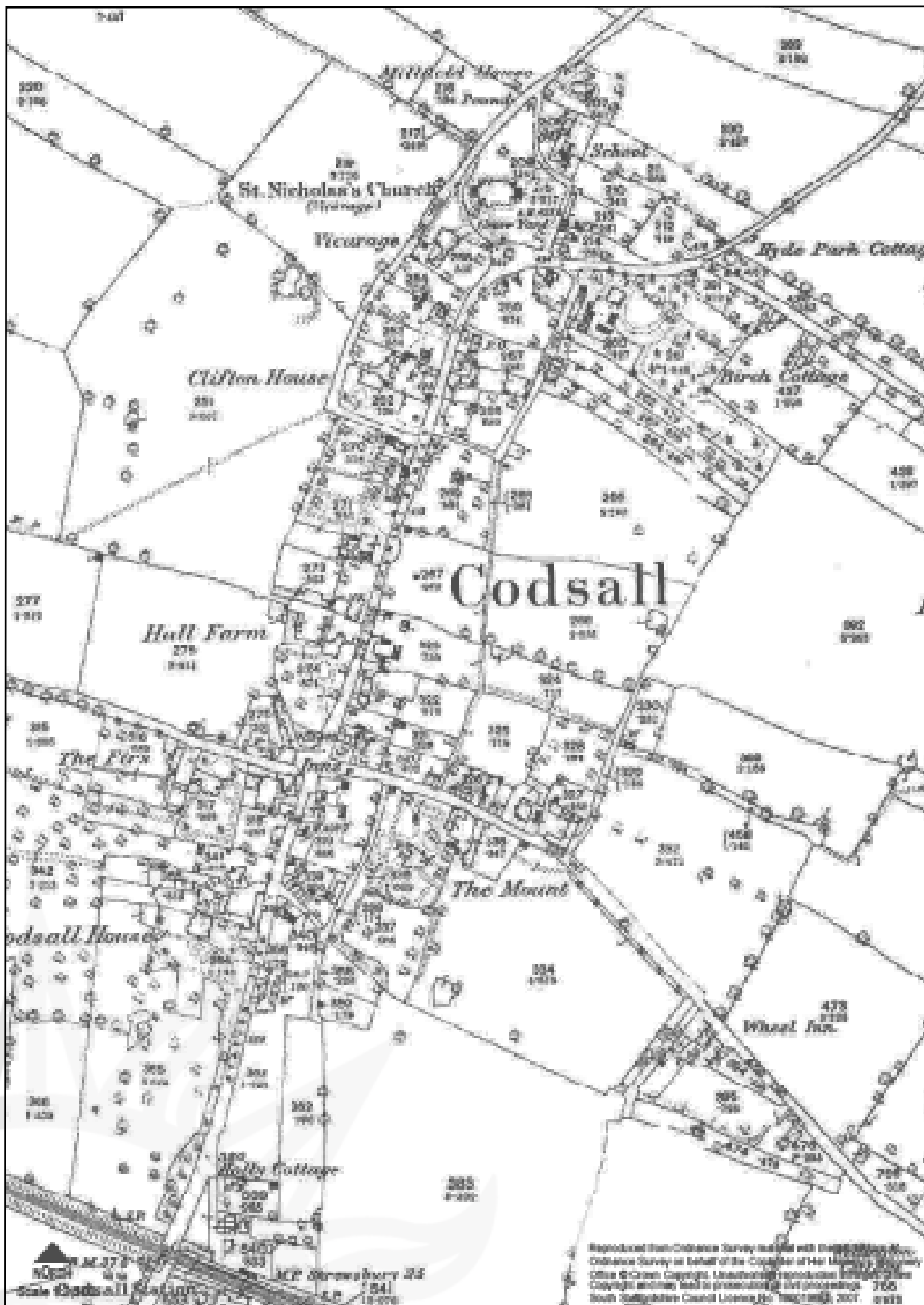
4.1.10 The 1880 Ordnance Survey map also shows that previous buildings along the east side of Church Road were set closer to the edge of the road than the current inter-war properties, and there were still many gap sites across the later Conservation Area. The distinct crossroads layout outside The Bull Inn was established and appears to have been the focal point of the village by this time with development not stretching all the way to the station.

4.1.11 An improved connection with the increasingly industrialised West Midlands saw many smallholdings flourish in the area and these were eventually expanded into a successful horticulture trade. Nurseries were established in and around Codsall from 1850 and by the early 20th century Baker's Nurseries moved to the site of Old Hall Farm between the church and the station. Baker's provided a major boost to the local economy and to Codsall's national profile. The nursery business was highly successful and was especially noted for its Russell lupins, and this success helped re-establish the crossroads with the Wolverhampton Road as the commercial hub of Codsall.



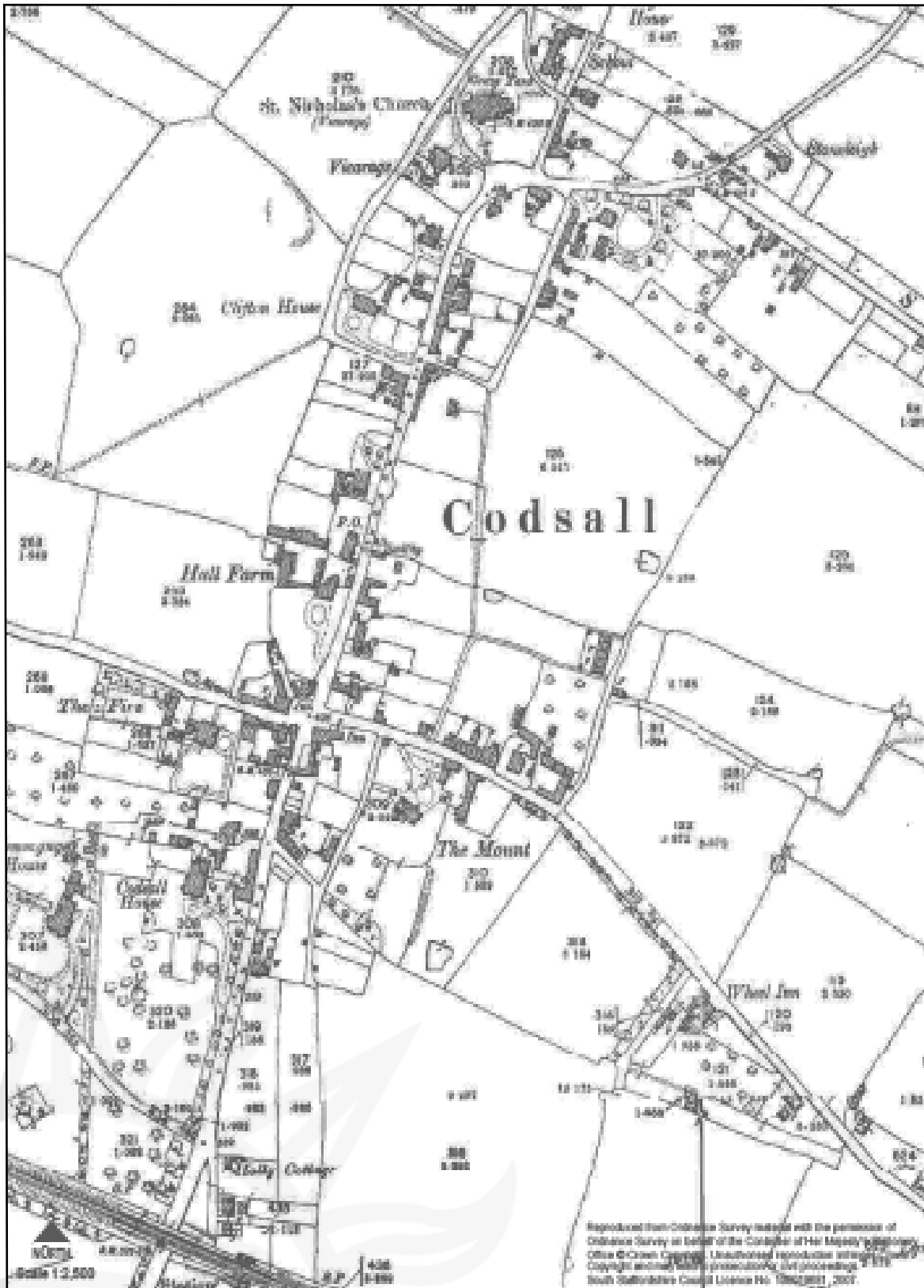
Images from Top to Bottom

- The opening of the Shrewsbury & Birmingham Railway - 12 November 1849
- Codsall Station in the 1880s, before the footbridge was added
- The rebuilt Church of St Nicholas



Image

- Codsall - Ordnance Survey Map 1880



Image

- Codsall - Ordnance Survey Map 1901

4.1.12 The 1901 map shows that very little of Codsall's built form had changed since 1880 except for a few additional small houses at various locations. The Post Office had moved from a location close to the church to a building next to Hall Farm.

4.1.13 By the 1920s Codsall Square, which had been created close to the central crossroads, had mains electricity; a bus service to Wolverhampton had also become established. From this time Codsall became a dormitory settlement to Wolverhampton rather than just the desirable retreat of the management classes and large numbers of houses were built on newly laid roads in both the inter- and post-war years.

4.1.14 The creation of a new road that bypassed Codsall Square in the 1970s drastically altered the appearance of the village and completely removed the former Baker's Nurseries, which had closed in the late 1960s, from the street scene. This new wide highway established an emphatic division between the ancient medieval settlement in the north and the 18th and 19th century part of Codsall in the south. The different types of development in each area have emphasised this division, with the north remaining residential and the south growing ever more commercial.

4.1.14 In the 21st century there is little open space left in this former rural settlement, which has grown to accommodate over 10,000 people and has engulfed the surrounding hamlets of Bilbrook, Lane Green and Dam Mill. During recent times the parts of Codsall to the north and south of Baker's Way have lost their connection with each other as they have developed in different ways. However, some of the historic structures shown on the 1880 map remain and, along with the historic layout around the early medieval Parish Church, give the special interest of the Conservation Area.



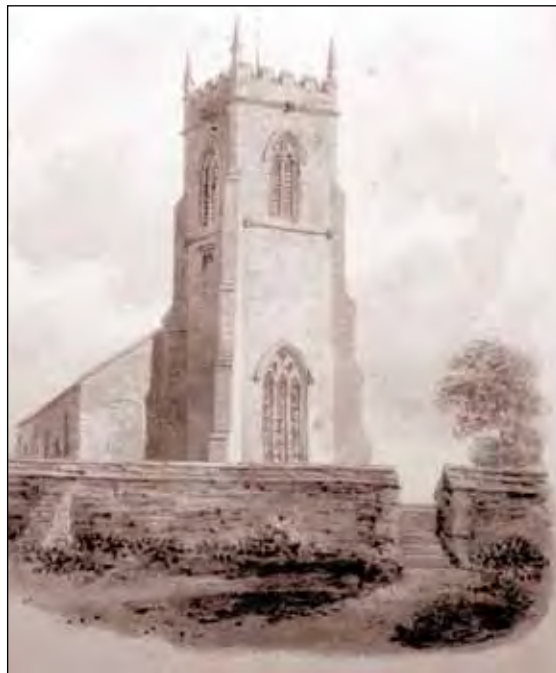
Images from Top to Bottom

- Codsall Square in the 1900s
- Church Road Codsall in 1961
- One of the Bakers Little Guides that Baker's Nurseries used to produce
- The Cottage Press in 1960 - one of the buildings demolished to create Baker's Way

4.2 Archaeology

4.2.1 There are 20 records on Staffordshire County Historic Environment Record for Codsall and its immediate surroundings. These include Mesolithic flints, evidence of the Saxon settlement, medieval earthworks and fishponds, a post-medieval windmill and the listed buildings in the area.

4.2.2 Archaeological evidence shows that there was other early medieval habitation in the area as shown by the moated site at nearby Wood Hall Farm.



Image

- A northwest view of the Church of St Nicholas sketched in 1844

5. Spatial analysis

5.1 Plan, form & layout

5.1.1 The most significant feature of the historic layout of Codsall is the junction of Church Road and Station Road with Wolverhampton Road, the former main road. However, this distinctive layout was disrupted by the insertion of Baker's Way to the north of the original junction in the 1970s.

5.1.2 Extending up the hill to the north is the linear route of Church Road and halfway along it are the back lanes of Church Lane and Drury Lane, which split off on either side before turning north and creating parallel routes next to Church Road. At the top of the hill the roads have interconnecting lanes, such as Church Hill, which snakes around the Parish Church and Church Road, bears eastwards by the small green in front of the church and becomes Sandy Lane. Church Lane becomes Mill Lane as it leads northwards past the graveyard and the former windmill through fields, and Sandy Lane connects with the top of Drury Lane before snaking eastwards out of the village and splitting to form the northerly country lane of Gunstone Lane.

5.1.3 To the south, the layout is more straightforward and instead of the winding country tracks and lanes, one main road heads southwards to the railway station and further residential parts of Codsall. Additional permeability through this part of the Conservation Area is provided by Wolverhampton Road, which connects with Bakers Way at either end, the entrance to Wilkes Road on the east side of Station Road and the entrance to the supermarket car park to the north of Codsall Parish Hall.

5.1.4 Buildings line many of the roads, although the west side of the southern end of Station Road is lined with sandstone walling covered in ivy and trees alongside the former grounds of Codsall House. The large public space beyond provides an important openness to the Conservation Area, although the wider views are inhibited by the modern development, which has taken place in the surrounding roads. Further north, also on the west side of the road, another open space breaks the building line and is occupied by a memorial to Sir Charles Wheeler as well as a variety of trees.



Images from Top to Bottom

- The junction of Church, Wolverhampton and Station roads was the historic heart of Codsall
- Codsall War Memorial and older buildings behind along the pre-railway road alignment
- Public open space below Codsall House adds openness to the Conservation Area

5.1.5 Around the Parish Church the churchyard and neighbouring cemetery provide further open areas to the street scene and flow into the open countryside that lies to the east. Eastwards along Sandy Lane, the houses are spread along the road and their often generous plots suit the rural appearance of the lanes. In Church Road the built form is tighter, especially in the area between the two parts of the Conservation Area. It mainly features houses orientated towards the road.



5.1.6 The built form around the crossroads of Station Road and Wolverhampton Road has a very strong presence, although The Crown Public House is set back from the northwest corner behind a forecourt. The historic building line, which is set at the back of the pavement, gives way to planting and commercial buildings in a post-war townscape setting that includes parking bays in front of the shops.

5.2 Landmarks, focal points & views

5.2.1 The landmark buildings, as identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map, provide focal points within the Conservation Area through their position as individual or corner buildings and their striking architecture. These are the Parish Church, The Bull Public House and The Crown Public House.



5.2.2 The Parish Church of St Nicholas is the most important landmark in Codsall, sitting at the highest point in the village overlooking the surrounding countryside to the north and west. The church is visible from most vantage points in the Conservation Area although the large mature trees in the churchyard obscure sightlines when standing close to it. The view of the church framed by the rising, winding country track of Church Lane and with the handsome 19th century vicarage in the foreground, is especially noteworthy.

5.2.3 The Bull Public House is a large red brick building that occupies the corner of Wolverhampton Road confidently and has fine 19th century detailing such as large brick



Images from Top to Bottom

- The churchyard links the street scene to the open countryside beyond
- Once known as Butlers, The Crown, sits back behind a forecourt
- The Bull PH sits at the corner of Wolverhampton Road (left) and Station Road (right)

chimneystacks and painted hood moulds over the windows. Its landmark status is also created by the large open space around it, which are used as a car park and a beer garden and by the long range of the brick built barn that extends southwards and adds to the impressive spread of the building.

5.2.4 The Crown Public House is another large inn and although it is set back from the crossroads remains a landmark due to its scale and bulk. The main building is timber-framed and has been extended to the side and rear at various times which has resulted in a wide frontage that faces up Wolverhampton Road. The impact of The Crown on the street scene is greater because of its rendered and painted façade, which stands out against the red brick exteriors of surrounding buildings.

5.2.5 The southern part of the Conservation Area is not characterised by landmark buildings or individual focal points, but instead it is notable for the views across the open space to Codsall House and along Station Road. Codsall House itself is a fine Grade II listed house, but is largely hidden from the Conservation Area by mature trees and, therefore, does not have the opportunity to have much impact on the surrounding area except in views from the south-west.

5.2.6 South of Codsall House and its grounds, beyond the Conservation Area, Station Road leads down to the war memorial and gardens and the listed road bridge, footbridge and station. This small area contains a number of positive buildings, suitable for inclusion on the local list.

5.2.7 The most significant views are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map (see Appendix 4).



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Crown Inn (formerly Butlers) has a wide frontage and its painted facade gives it impact
- Codsall House - Grade II listed
- Positive buildings adjacent to Codsall Station seen from the restored footbridge

5.3 Open spaces, trees & landscape

5.3.1 The Conservation Area is notable for the openness of the built form in the north and the denser placement of buildings in the south. However, the southern tip is dominated by the open space of the former grounds to Codsall House and this part of the Conservation Area is characterised by spaciouly placed detached housing interspersed with trees.

5.3.2 While the former grounds to Codsall House are the principal open space in the Conservation Area, there are other more modestly sized open areas, which are generally accessible to the public. From north to south they are:

- The churchyard and cemetery;
- The small green in front of the Parish Church;
- The memorial gardens to Sir Charles Wheeler;
- The gardens to Butlers (The Crown) and The Bull public houses;
- The car park behind the Station Road shops;
- The small area of gardens outside the parish hall in Station Road.

5.3.3 While the open areas around the church have a predominantly rural appearance with sometimes dense groups of mature trees and sandstone walling surrounded by winding country lanes, those to the south of Bakers Way have the appearance of suburban townscape with modern planters, younger trees, red brick walling or post and rail fencing and some non-native shrubbery. There are additional small strips of planting outside the shops in Station Road and The Square.

5.3.4 Trees make an important contribution to the character of parts of this Conservation Area and mature specimens line some of Station Road and Sandy Lane. There are also important groups of trees in the churchyard, in the garden of The Bull and in the open space south of Codsall House. Further trees are visible in the surrounding landscape, particularly in the views west from Church Lane playing fields and south from Gunstone Lane. These trees and the rolling rural landscape itself provide an important green backdrop to the Conservation Area. Some of the houses have hedging on their front and side boundaries, which introduces more greenery to the Conservation Area.



Images from Top to Bottom

- The small green in front of the Church in Church Road
- Planting outside the Parish Council offices (foreground) and shops in Station Road
- Gunstone Lane with trees in the distance

5.4 Public realm

5.4.1 The public realm – the pavements, footpaths, street surfaces, street lighting and signage – is mixed although it is mostly of modern construction.

5.4.2 In keeping with its historic rural character, some of the Conservation Area's roads and lanes have no pavements, notably Church Lane, Church Hill, Sandy Lane and Gunstone Lane. Church Road has some stretches of pavement on one or both sides, principally at the Bakers Way end. The pavement on the east side of Station Road outside the barn attached to The Bull Public House is very narrow and lined by a sturdy sandstone wall. There is no historic paving and where pavements do exist, the materials are modern such as tarmac or concrete paviours with concrete kerbs.

5.4.3 Most of the road surfaces are tarmac except for some areas of designated car parking within the roadway that are covered in concrete block work laid in herringbone patterns, such as those located outside the shopping parades in Station Road and The Square. The treatment has also been laid in the section of Church Road between Wolverhampton Road and Bakers Way, which is pedestrianised.

5.4.4 Some traditional style treatments remain alongside the modern examples. Outside The Crown the largely tarmac forecourt is lined by four rows of small square Staffordshire Blue style setts that abut the concrete paviours on the pavement in between the cast iron bollards that encircle the frontage. The section of pavement along Church Road between Drury Lane and the green outside the church (where the pavement ends) is lined with granite kerbing.

5.4.5 A pathway through the churchyard is created with fine shingle, although uneven paviours line the Garden of Rest to the south of the church. The main path to the south door is a mixture of poured concrete and red brick. The footpath through the cemetery on the other side of Church Lane is covered in gravel.

5.4.6 The style of street lamps and columns in Codsall is mixed. 1960s 'hockey-stick' style steel



Images from Top to Bottom

- Some of Codsall's lanes lack any pavements, such as Gunstone Lane here
- Block work road surface outside the shops in Station Road
- Granite kerbing in Church Road

lamp-standards are located in most of the southern section of the Conservation Area and are spaced along Wolverhampton Road and Station Road, along with more recent black painted standards with twin lamps outside two sets of shops. Slender steel stands with traditional style lanterns line the footpaths in the open space to the south of Codsall House.

5.4.7 In the northern section of the Conservation Area there are mainly slim steel standards with plain lanterns although some hockey stick style units have been placed in Church Hill.

5.4.8 There is no lighting in the churchyard, cemetery or Church Hill and a number of lamps are discreetly fixed to telegraph poles in Mill Lane and largely hidden from view by ivy. Drury Lane is mainly lit by two modern streetlights on its eastern side.

5.4.9 Most of the street signs in the Conservation Area are modern and fixed to the pavement on steel supports or fixed to boundary walls. One exception is the Sandy Lane sign, which is of traditional style and materials, metal with black lettering on a white background, and is fixed to the red brick wall by the entrance to Brabourne.

5.4.10 Additional signage includes the modern Public Footpath sign at the entrance to Gunstone Lane and the freestanding pub signs and advertisement for the butchers in Wolverhampton Road outside The Crown Public House and outside The Bull. There is also a banner attached to the wall that runs alongside the entrance to the car park to The Crown.

5.4.11 Around the north eastern pedestrian entrance to the former grounds to Codsall House is a cluster of Codsall Parish Council signage, related to activities in the neighbouring open space, fixed to the timber rail fence.

5.4.12 Highway signage is limited and usually denotes traffic restrictions such as the one-way system on the west end of Wolverhampton Road or the restriction on any traffic in Church Hill.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Codsall has a mix of historic, conventional and unusual streetlights
- This street name sign for Sandy Lane is one of the few not in the standard District style
- Cluster of signs near to the Parish Council Offices

5.4.13 Other features in the public realm include:

- CCTV cameras fixed to tall street lamp style standards with a street lantern style camera unit. Examples are located outside The Bull Public House and Codsall Parish Hall.
- The large sandstone plinth and Sir Charles Wheeler sculpture on the corner of Church Road and Bakers Way.
- Local notice boards and a train timetable are fixed to the wall of The Bull Public House garden, facing south down Station Road.

5.4.14 The remaining public realm includes: -

- Electricity cabinets, litter bins, bus shelters, telephone kiosks and benches, are all of modern design and mainly located close to the rows of shops.
- A modern litterbin and a cast iron bench in the former grounds of Codsall House, as well a bin for dog waste.
- Litterbins are blue units, either freestanding or attached to street lamps, and are standard across South Staffordshire District.
- Distinctive white painted iron railings or 'park fencing' around the former grounds to Codsall House.
- Planters constructed of decking timber on the smaller open spaces in the Conservation Area.
- Modern steel guard rails along the pavement outside the Station Road shops leading to a modern pelican crossing.
- Cast iron bollards line the northern entrance to the parking bays outside the Station Road shops and also line the semicircular frontage to Butlers.
- Steel bicycle stands outside Lloyds pharmacy in Church Road.
- A modern green steel unit to the south of No.7 Drury Lane.
- A number of cast iron markers for underground cable joint set in the pavement, notably outside No.57 Church Road
- A cast iron sewer vent pipe in Mill Lane.



Images from Top to Bottom

- 'The Lone Singer' by Sir Charles Wheeler on the corner of Church Road and Baker's Way
- Distinctive white painted railings around the former grounds to Codsall House
- Electricity cable joint marker in Church Road

6. The buildings of the Conservation Area

6.1 Building types

6.1.1 Most of the historic buildings in the Conservation Area are residential and take the form of small single or two storey cottages, large two storey detached houses, former farmhouses with outbuildings and a school. Modern residential houses are interspersed between the historic buildings.

6.1.2 Other building types include places of worship (the Parish Church of St Nicholas), a vicarage, inns, a former school, a village hall, a parish hall, a club and modern rows of shops.

6.2 Listed buildings

6.2.1 A listed building is one that is included on the government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by statute law, and consent is required from South Staffordshire Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Further information can be found in South Staffordshire Council's Core Strategy, adopted on 11 December 2012.

6.2.2 There are eight listed buildings or structures in the Codsall Conservation Area. They are all listed Grade II, apart from St Nicholas's Church which is Grade II*. The Old Cottage in Church Hill is a 17th century timber framed cottage and the Rajput Restaurant in Codsall Square is of a similar age and also timber framed. Codsall House is a large late 18th century red brick house.

6.2.3 Other types of listed buildings include two chest tombs and a stone cross in the parish churchyard.

6.3 Locally listed buildings

6.3.1 South Staffordshire Council is compiling a list of locally important buildings; ones which may not meet national criteria for listing but which are nonetheless important to the people of this district. Locally listed buildings will add to the local street scene, be built in a distinctive local style, or have a particular connection with a well-known local person or event. Buildings or structures on the



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Vicarage to the Church of St Nicholas
- The Parish Rooms. Church Road
- The Rajput Restaurant in Wolverhampton Road

forthcoming local list will not be given statutory protection similar to nationally listed buildings, but by being locally listed their importance will be recognised and taken into account during any future planning decisions affecting them.

6.3.2 Three grades of local listing will be used:

Grade A

Buildings close to the national criteria for listing. These buildings may be put forward for statutory listing when an opportunity presents itself, or when their future is imminently threatened.

Grade B

Buildings or structures with a particular local character or style that have a special significance to people through their contribution to their locality, or to the street or rural scene, and which warrant steps to be taken to ensure their retention.

Grade C

Buildings or structures with special local importance or a particular association with local events or people and which are thus important to the history and development of a village or area, and are therefore worthy of retention.

6.3.3 As a result of the extensive survey carried out for this Character Appraisal, the following buildings in Codrall are being proposed for inclusion on the Local List:

Grade B

- Church Hill: The Old School House, Cherry Tree Cottage;
- Church Lane: Manor Court;
- Church Road: Nos. 38 to 42 including outbuildings, Old Vicarage, No.65 including outbuildings;
- Gunstone Lane: Stoneleigh;
- Mill Lane: The Mill House;
- Sandy Lane: No. 5, No.7, Brabourne;
- Station Road: No.69; Electricity Sub-station No.643 next to No.44.
- Wolverhampton Road: The Bull Public House, The Crown Public House, Nos. 4-8, 15-19

Grade C

- Church Road: The Parish Rooms, The Wheeler Memorial; Station Road: No.49; Nos.63-67.



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Old School House, Church Hill
- The Mill House, Mill Lane
- Brabourne, Sandy Lane

6.3.4 **Please Note:** Curtilage structures of statutory listed buildings, protected by this designation, have not been considered for the Local List to avoid confusion over their current protection. The omission of any particular building does not imply that it is of no significance.

6.3.5 All of these have been identified as 'positive' buildings as part of this appraisal (see below). The Council may add further buildings to the Local List, in addition to those already suggested, once this appraisal has been formally adopted. This issue is considered in the Management Plan. These proposed Locally Listed Buildings are shown on the map presented as Appendix 4.

6.4 Positive buildings

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

6.4.2 The criteria used for selection of positive buildings are those set out in Appendix 2 of English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (2006). Where a building has been adversely affected by modern changes and restoration is either impractical or impossible, they are excluded.

6.4.3 The positive buildings are:

Public Houses:

- Wolverhampton Road: The Crown, The Bull.

Farmhouses and light industrial buildings:

- Mill Lane: The Mill House;
- Gunstone Lane: Stoneleigh.

Shops:

- Church Road: No.1;
- Wolverhampton Road: Nos. 2 to 8, No.13;
- Station Road: No.4.



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Bull is regarded as a positive building in the Conservation Area
- Nos.15-31 Wolverhampton Road
- Electricity sub-station in Station Road

Early houses or cottages:

- Sandy Lane: Nos. 5, 7 and 10 Grosvenor Cottage, Brabourne;
- Church Hill: Cherry Tree Cottage;
- Church Lane: Manor Court, Old Vicarage;
- Church Road: Nos. 26 to 31, No.65;
- Wolverhampton Road: Nos. 15, 17 & 19

Terraces and pairs of good quality 19th century houses:

- Church Hill: Highgate and Fairview
- Church Road: Nos. 38 to 42;
- Wolverhampton Road: Nos. 19 to 27.

Individual buildings:

- Church Hill: The Old School House;
- Church Road: Parish Rooms;
- 16 Wolverhampton Road: (Conservative Club).

6.5 Negative buildings

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

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

6.5.2 The criteria used for the selection of negative buildings or sites are derived from those set out in Appendix 2 of English Heritage's *Guidance on conservation area appraisals* (February 2006). This sets out a series of 10 questions regarding the characteristics of unlisted buildings in a conservation area. Whereas a positive answer to any one of these can provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, by deduction, a building or site which fails to score any positive answers to the same questions can be regarded as detracting

**Images from Top to Bottom**

- 4 Station Road, Codsall
- Cherry Tree Cottage, Church Hill
- Grosvenor Cottage, Sandy Lane, built in 1916

from the overall character and integrity of a conservation area and therefore to be having a negative impact upon it.

6.5.3 The negative buildings and sites identified in Codsall are: -

- Nos.5-7 Church Lane
- Nos.1-8 The Square
- Nos.18-24 Station Road
- Nos.1-5 Station Road

6.5.4 These are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map by cross-hatching.

6.6 Neutral buildings

6.6.1 In addition to listed, positive and negative buildings, the Conservation Area contains a large number of unlisted buildings that make neither a positive nor a negative contribution to its character – their effect is regarded as neutral.

6.6.2 These are not identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map in any special way.

6.7 Building materials & local details

6.7.1 While there are two buildings in the Conservation Area that are clearly constructed using timber frame methods, there may also be the vestigial remains of some timber-framed structures secreted within other buildings too. Known examples include numbers 15, 17 & 19 Wolverhampton Road, Flappers Tea Rooms which contains some timber framing from The Rajput Restaurant, and part of The Crown Public House (which represents a major extension/remodelling of a small timber framed building). Traditionally timber framed buildings had either wattle and daub or lime plaster infill panels, and The Old Cottage and Rajput Restaurant retain some of these materials, although they have also received some brick replacements, been rendered, or had other modifications made to their structures.

6.7.2 The majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area were constructed entirely of brick. Initially roofs were of handmade clay tiles until the mid-19th century when slate began to be brought in by rail from Wales. There are no completely stone buildings, apart from the church,



Images from Top to Bottom

- 29-31 Wolverhampton Road
- Flappers in Church Road
- Exposed timber-framing within The Crown Inn

as clearly the local sandstone was too soft for building purposes. However, sandstone is used for walling throughout the Conservation Area. Sandstone quarries were dug in the surrounding fields from the 19th century and their plentiful deposits resulted in the abundant use of the material for the distinctive walling in the Conservation Area and beyond.

6.7.3 19th century red/brown brick houses predominate and feature casement or vertical sliding sash windows, although many have been replaced with modern uPVC. During the mid 19th century, after the opening of the railway and the establishment of a market garden industry in the area, it seems that many of the shops and houses in Codsall were rebuilt using red brick. For example, the design and condition of the bricks of The Bull Public House would suggest that it was rebuilt at this time.

6.7.4 Boundaries are very mixed, with a variety of treatments including traditional brick walls with railings (The Parish Rooms, Church Road), sandstone (the churchyard and Codsall House) and low brick walling with hedging. There are also distinctive white painted iron railings around the former grounds to Codsall House. While many of these are historic structures, others have been inserted using new stone or modern brick.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Bricks at The Bull PH in Station Road
- Various boundary treatments at the junction of Church Hill (left) and Church Lane (right)

7. Character analysis

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

- Area 1: Codsall Church;
- Area 2: Codsall Square and;
- Area 3: Codsall House.

7.2 *Area 1: Codsall Church*

7.2.1 *Key positives:* -

- A hilltop location with views over Codsall;
- Rural qualities with former farm buildings, winding narrow lanes and few buildings;
- Open fields on the perimeter;
- St Nicholas's Church situated atop a hill;
- Picturesque graveyard with attractive sandstone walling and monuments;
- A few historic buildings, notably The Old Cottage.
- A linear historic route through an early hilltop settlement;
- Characterful small outbuildings associated with the vicarage, inns and farmhouses;
- Sandstone and brick boundary walls;
- The ample amount of amenity space;
- Groups of mature trees;

7.2.2 *Key negatives:* -

- The appearance of the negative buildings in the Conservation Area, as marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map, mostly late 20th century development in Drury Lane
- The introduction of modern materials, such as uPVC windows in the Parish Rooms, which erode the special character through incremental change in the appearance of buildings;
- Unattractive features such as the green unit in Drury Lane in High Street.

7.3 *Area 2: Codsall Square*

7.3.1 *Key Positives:* -

- A linear historic route through a historic crossroads;
- 19th century public houses enclosing the crossroads at Codsall Square;
- Useful shops providing a number of general and specialist services serving the local and wider communities;



Images from Top to Bottom

- Church Road - a historic linear route through the Conservation Area
- The Bull PH and The Crown PH which enclose the historic crossroads in Codsall
- Unattractive green unit in Drury Lane

- An historic shop front at No.8 Wolverhampton Road;
- Some public open spaces and planting.

7.3.2 Key Negatives: -

- The appearance of the negative buildings in the Conservation Area, as marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map, mostly late 20th century development in The Square and Station Road.
- Modern shop fronts inserted in 19th century buildings, e.g. No.1 Church Road (Nationwide Building Society)
- Modern shop signage along Station Road, Church Road and The Square, as well as banners and freestanding boards outside The Crown;
- A lack of continuity/quality in the public realm: streetlights, paving.



7.4 Area 3: Codsall House

7.4.1 Key Positives: -

- Hillside location with views down to the station and up the hill to the parish church;
- Rural qualities with country lanes and few buildings on the linear historic route;
- The historic Codsall House;
- The former grounds to Codsall House and its trees;
- A road lined with attractive sandstone walls and iron railings.



7.4.2 Key Negatives: -

- The appearance of the negative buildings in the Conservation Area, as marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map, mostly late 20th century development in Codsall Gardens.

Images from Top to Bottom

- Inserting modern shop fronts into 19th century shops has a negative effect
- The former grounds to Codsall House are now a public open space and a positive feature

8. Issues

8.1 Key issues

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

- maintenance of the rural character;
- improvement of traffic issues and the impact of Bakers Way on the settlement;
- control of boundaries (gates, fencing, walls) and building details;
- need to carry out public realm improvements (street lighting);
- use of modern materials and details on historic buildings;
- control of new shop fronts/ signage;
- need for full Local List assessment;
- need for a revision of the Conservation Area boundary;
- identification of Buffer Zones.

8.2 Conservation Area boundary review

8.2.1 The following additions are proposed to the existing Codsall Conservation Area boundary:

- Verge and walling on the west side of Church Lane, south of the Cemetery and as far south as the bend opposite Manor Court;
- West side of Drury Lane, properties from No.10a-17;
- Car Park north of The Square and land west of The Crown PH and east of No.31 Wolverhampton Road, following the southern contour of Baker's Way and the northern contour of Wolverhampton Road;
- East side of Station Road south after No.33 including the station site and No.73 and the Electricity Sub-Station on the east side of the road, opposite No.69;
- Selective properties and their boundaries on the east side of Station Road between Kingsley Gardens and Oaken Court, comprising Nos. 19-21, 27-39 but excluding Nos. 33a&b.

8.2.2 The following deletions are proposed from the existing Codsall Conservation Area boundary:

- The area to the south of Bakers Way;
- Church Lane: Nos. 5 and 7, Norcott;
- Drury Lane (east side);

- Car Park to Co-operative supermarket;
- Codsall Gardens;
- Belvide Gardens (part).

8.3 Buffer Zones

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

- Land west of Gunstone Lane north of Ingle Nook and south of the Electricity Sub-Station;
- Land east of Gunstone Lane, north of Stoneleigh and south of Newhouse Farm;
- The properties and plots of Nos.1-7 Drury Lane, the buildings and grounds of St Nicholas' C of E First School and the vacant land in Walton Gardens due south of the school, the line of Vaughan Gardens leading to and including the triangle of open land northeast of Baker's Way, plus the junction of Wolverhampton Road and Baler's Way and south to include the Playing Field off Wheel Avenue;
- The properties and plots on the east side of Church Road, south of the entrance drive to St Nicholas' C of E First School as far as Baker's Way, excluding Nos.28-32 Walton Gardens but including Nos.24-26 Walton Gardens, to link up with the triangle of open land referred to above;
- The properties and plots on the west side of Church Road south of the Parish Hall and including No.4 Wheeler Close down to No.10

8.3.2 These are shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map [see Appendix 4].

8.4 Creation of a Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area

8.4.1 Furthermore, it is proposed to create an Oaken Conservation Area and to join this to the Codsall Conservation Area by means of a Buffer Zone, thereby creating a conjoined Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area. The details of this are described in Section 9.4.

9. A new Oaken conservation area

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 South Staffordshire Council commissioned the Conservation Studio to report on the potential of four hamlets for designation as conservation areas; these included Oaken, which was appraised whilst the reappraisal work was being undertaken on Codsall.

9.1.2 Council Conservation Officers had identified Oaken as containing some degree of architectural or historic interest.

9.1.3 The Conservation Studio reported back in April 2008 and gave an opinion on whether the settlement was suitable for designating as a conservation area, either as a designation in its own right or as an extension to the existing Codsall Conservation Area.

9.2 A brief history of Oaken

9.2.1 Oaken is a small hamlet that adjoins Codsall, the administrative centre of South Staffordshire. The settlement is located on a low hill and includes Oaken Lawns, the former landscaped gardens of Oaken Terrace that lead down to Codsall railway station and the 19th and 20th century housing that lines Oaken Lanes. Further north is the Codsall Conservation Area and on the next hilltop stands the parish church, which has historically served both settlements.

9.2.2 The hamlet is spread across the hillside with a variety of historic and modern properties. These buildings range from the grand red brick Dower House to small terraces of 19th century houses to modern developments on former farmyards.

9.2.3 Historically, Oaken was under two lordships, which is unusual for such a small settlement. One lord resided at The Dower House, the other at Oaken Terrace, which has been comprehensively rebuilt over the years and is now a large residential care home.

9.2.4 The name Oaken is of Old English origin and the main settlement lies on the spur overlooking Moat Brook. Before the conquest Brodor held Oaken.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Oaken Lane meanders through Oaken towards Strawmoor Lane
- Oaken - shown as 'Woken' on Speed's map of Staffordshire 1611
- Codsall and Oaken are linked by Oaken Lanes, seen here in 1900

9.2.5 When Codsall (or 'Codshale') was mentioned in Domesday in 1086 it was then a small agricultural community described as adjoining the hamlet of Oaken. Robert de Stafford held 5 hides at Oaken, with land also for 3 teams (1 in demesne) and 4 villeins and 4 boarders with 1½ teams. Woodland at Oaken was ½ a league long and 2 furlongs wide and the manor had a total value of 8s.

9.2.6 By the 12th century part of this came into the possession of Bertram de Verdun, Lord of Alton, who granted an estate at Oaken to Croxden Abbey, endowing the same in 1170. The Abbey eventually came to own the whole manor, retaining this until its dissolution in 1538. Croxden Abbey had also established a grange at Oaken by 1291, but by the early 16th century this was being leased.

9.2.7 In 1540 the Crown granted Oaken Manor to William Whorwood and thereafter it changed hands many times: -

- 1545 to Margaret Whorwood (widow of William)
- 1578 to Thomas and Margaret Throckmorton
- 1591 to Robert Chamberlayne
- 1607 to Richard Chamberlayne
- 1624 to John Chamberlayne
- 1628 to Sir Thomas Stukeley & Thomas Windham
- 1631 to Henry Fareley; William Smith; Robert Hayward and Richard Hickmans
- 1678 to Sir Walter Wrottesley
- 1725 to Sir John Wrottesley

9.2.8 Oaken had a watermill, on the Moat Brook, north of Springfield House. This is mentioned by 1230. Its ownership came into dispute in 1317, the upshot of which was that it was taken out of use, certainly by 1341 when its likely replacement – Dam Mill – is first mentioned.

9.2.9 The hamlet lay to the south and evidently stood round a green. Three families were recorded as living at Oaken Green in 1841. There was an inn – The Bull – on Holyhead Road south of Heath House in the 1730s.

9.2.10 The area east of Oaken hamlet was inhabited by the earlier 17th century when it was known as Oaken Lanes. Heath House on the east side of Heath House Lane probably existed then; it was certainly standing there in the later 18th



Images from Top to Bottom

- Oaken Lane in the 1920s
- A pen and ink sketch of Oaken Farm House dated 5 August 1820
- Another pen and ink sketch of Oaken Farm House, also date 5 August 1820

century. The present farmhouse on the site dates from the 19th century.

9.2.11 There was a Quaker Burial Ground at Oaken. The Quarterly Meeting of 4 July 1692 was informed that Richard Chandler had offered a burial place for the use of Friends and the meeting ordered Marmaduke Siddon and William Southwick to make further enquiries. Three meetings later the matter was resolved. As noted by Denis Stuart a Deed of Gift dated 4 September 1695 conveyed a parcel of land to Jonathan Frith of Birmingham, George Welch of Willenhall and Marmaduke Syddern (sic). The Deed locates the land as adjoining the dwelling house of Richard Chandless and the common street of Oaken.

9.2.12 The hamlet grew to house families in the service of the large houses and expanded considerably after the coming of the railways in the mid 19th century. It had 324 inhabitants by 1848.

9.2.13 Strawmoor Farm, west of the hamlet, apparently dates from the early 19th century, but may have a much earlier timber-framed core. There were a few houses to the south at the corner of Strawmoor Lane and Holyhead Road by 1850, one of which had been converted into the Foaming Jug inn by the early 1880s. Houses at the southern end of Strawmoor Lane date from years either side of World War II.

9.2.14 Oaken Lawn, west of Strawmoor Farm, was encroached upon by the later 17th century. By the later 18th century there were at least two cottages there and by 1850 there were six. The land further west was parkland – known as Oaken Park in the 17th century – and several families were recorded as living there. By the later 18th century there was also an Oaken Park Farm, which was the long-time home of the Cooper family.

9.2.15 William White's *Directory of Staffordshire* (1851) described Oaken thus: 'Oaken is an ancient hamlet and township with 324 inhabitants and 1203 acres of land, one mile S W of Codsall. It has two handsome mansions but most of the other dwellings are constructed of wood, plaster and thatch.' Eight private residents are named, along with 5 farmers.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Oaken Lane flooded in 1910
- Strawmoor Farm
- Oaken Park Farmhouse

9.2.16 By 1864 Oaken had its own Post Office and from 1895 it was supplied by the Wolverhampton Waterworks Co.

9.2.17 By 1900 Kelly's Directory lists 29 private residents in Oaken and 20 people or businesses under its Commercial heading, although most of these were at Kingswood Common or Oaken Park. The 1940 edition of the same directory lists 37 private residents, some of which were on Histon's Hill and 17 people or businesses under 'Commercial'. One of the private residents was Major Kenneth Hutchinson Smith, an architect who specialised in reworking parts of old timber framed buildings to form 'new' houses. Three of his works are in Oaken: -

- Tudor House, Histon's Hill, Oaken; (built using bits from Lymore Hall; Montgomery Castle; Bentley Hall, Darlaston; and an old inn at Dudley.
- Charles Field, Oaken Hutchinson Smith's own house
- The summerhouse at The Manor House, Oaken

9.3 The Conservation Studio's recommendation

9.3.1 The Conservation Studio's overall conclusion was that Oaken has special interest contained within its settlement boundary that is worthy of retention.

9.3.2 However, the quality and survival of historic buildings in Oaken is sporadic and there is not a strong sense of it being a self-contained area, making the determination of a satisfactory conservation area boundary difficult.

9.3.3 This said there is a good degree of special interest, notably at the Dower House and in the historic landscape of Oaken Lawns that sweeps down to Oaken Lanes.

9.3.4 The winding tree lined lanes contain small pockets of buildings that are found in clusters or individual dwellings. This dispersed layout does not help create a strong sense of cohesion or group value in the hamlet. There is a significant amount of late 20th century development in Oaken.

9.3.5 There are a number of attractive 19th century individual houses in Oaken, which it would



Images from Top to Bottom

- Tudor House, Histon's Hill
- Charles Field - the former home of the architect Major Kenneth Hutchinson Smith
- The Dower House, Hollybush Lane

be desirable to retain in conservation terms. The following key buildings were identified:

- The Dower House
- Manor House
- Oaken Manor
- Oaken Terrace

9.3.6 However, the best approach may be to consider adding the important unlisted buildings to a local list rather than designating Oaken a conservation area.

9.3.7 Its fragmented layout and the fact that there is a wide variety of building style and types, does not recommend Oaken for designation as a conservation area in its own right.

9.3.8 A more focussed sense of place and cohesion would be expected in a conservation area and Oaken lacks a central focus, such as a village hall, church or village green.

9.3.9 Although this fact does not preclude it from designation as a conservation area, it is one of the indicators to be considered in determining its suitability for this.

9.3.10 The results of the Conservation Studio's brief survey of Oaken are shown on the map presented as Appendix 6.

9.4 A Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area

9.4.1 Notwithstanding receipt of the above recommendation, South Staffordshire Council has undertaken further survey work and concluded that, despite its lack of a central focus, part of the hamlet is appropriate for designation as a conservation area.

9.4.2 In part this is based upon the fact that Oaken is notable for having a number of large houses, which include:

- **The Dower House** – has a complex history. Roger Hickman, the son of the Richard Hickman who was one of the four purchasers of the Manor in 1631, is recorded in 1666 as living in a house in Oaken assessed at five hearths which is identifiable as the later Oaken (or Dower) House. Roger Hickman died in 1672 and



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Terrace - now much extended as a nursing home
- Manor House, Oaken Lane
- The Dower House seen from the rising ground in Stafford Lane

his estate passed to his son Nathan, who was named as one of the two lords of Oaken in 1725. By 1752 John Hickman was named as Lord of the Manor and in 1754 he conveyed his two-third share of it to Nathaniel Barrett, who was a relative by marriage. Barrett was a person of some standing and by 1764 he was High Sheriff of Staffordshire but still living at Oaken. He was there in 1774 too, which is when the house was rebuilt into its present form. Nathaniel Barrett died childless in 1793 and the house passed to his niece and nephew. The former married Walter Mansell that year and the couple lived at Oaken House. Subsequently the house passed to the Wrottesley family and by 1817 it was the home of the dowager Lady Wrottesley – which is probably where the name 'The Dower House' comes from. A later dowager Lady Wrottesley was living at the house in the 1870s. Her son Charles inherited the house and was still living there in 1904. During the Great War Belgian refugees occupied the house. It was sold to Mrs R J L Maitland in 1956 and to its present owners in 2005.

- **Greenhills** – Standing west of Heath House, this was built in the later 1850s for Thomas Bolton, a Wolverhampton lawyer. Its stables, along Heath House Lane, are dated 1860.
- **The Hollies** – Standing northeast of Greenhills, The Hollies was built c.1870 for the Wolverhampton grocer, Henry Anslow.
- **Manor House** – Built opposite Oaken Manor, Manor House dates from the early 19th century, but has earlier origins.
- **Oaken Manor** – Situated at the top of Oaken Lane, Oaken Manor stands on the site of an earlier house but dates from the early 19th century. A date stone showing '1677' is set into a barn in the grounds and may relate to the earlier property.
- **Springfield House** – This was built c.1850 for William Woodall, a nail and iron merchant.
- **The Terrace** – Standing in its own grounds east of the hamlet, The Terrace was built in the early 19th century for Henry Wood, a Wolverhampton distiller. In 1849 his nephew sold the house to William Bailey, a manufacturing chemist from Wolverhampton, who was recorded as living there in 1851.



Images from Top to Bottom

- Oaken Manor - a 19th century rebuild on the site of an earlier house
- A cart at Oaken Manor Farm in 1924
- A van promoting Oaken Manor Farm's Grade A Milk at the farm in the 1930s

9.4.3 South Staffordshire Council is compiling a Local List and is encouraging nominations from the public. To date, the following have been suggested for Oaken:

Grade A

- Oaken Lane: Oaken Manor, The Thatch, Charlesfield,
- The Farmhouse, The Terrace
- Oaken Drive: Springfield House

Grade B

- Oaken Lane: Manor House Barns & associated cottages, New house next to March Cottage, March Cottage, The Coach House,
- Meadow View/The Stables/The Cottage/The Granary, Stone Cottage
- Hollybush Lane: (off) Oaken Terrace Nursing Home,
- The Dower House outbuildings

Grade C

- Oaken Lane: 1-5, 6-7
- Middle Lane: K6 phone kiosk & letter box,
- Manor Fold – Meadow View, Nursery Farmhouse
- Oaken Drive: Springfield Lodge, Upper Lodge
- Shop Lane: 16-18
- Hollybush Lane: Hollybush Cottage

9.4.4 On the basis of the above evidence it was decided to create a conjoined Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area, comprising a newly designated Oaken Conservation Area linked to the two parts of the Codsall Conservation Area by a combination of Positive Open Spaces and Buffer Zones.

9.4.5 A Townscape Appraisal Map showing the boundary of the Oaken Conservation Area is presented as Appendix 7.

9.4.6 The following buffer zones are proposed to the Oaken Conservation Area:

- Fields to the north of the hamlet
- Fields to the east of the hamlet between Oaken and Shop lanes
- Fields to the south between Hollybush and Stafford lanes.

9.4.7 Maps showing the northern and southern portions of the conjoined Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area are presented as Appendices 8 & 9.



Images from Top to Bottom

- The Thatch, Oaken Lane
- The Farmhouse, Oaken Lane
- K6 telephone box in Oaken Lane, by its junction with Oaken Drive

Appendix 2: Policies in the Local Plan Core Strategy

Policies affecting Codsall:

- Listed Buildings; Conservation Areas; Demolition prior to redevelopment; Conservation Areas; Retention of shop fronts; Replacement of shop fronts; Security screens; Internally illuminated signs; New advertisements and Existing signs: Policy EQ3 Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets;
- New development – Design criteria: Policies CP4 Promoting High Quality Design and EQ11 Wider Design Considerations.

Policies affecting Oaken:

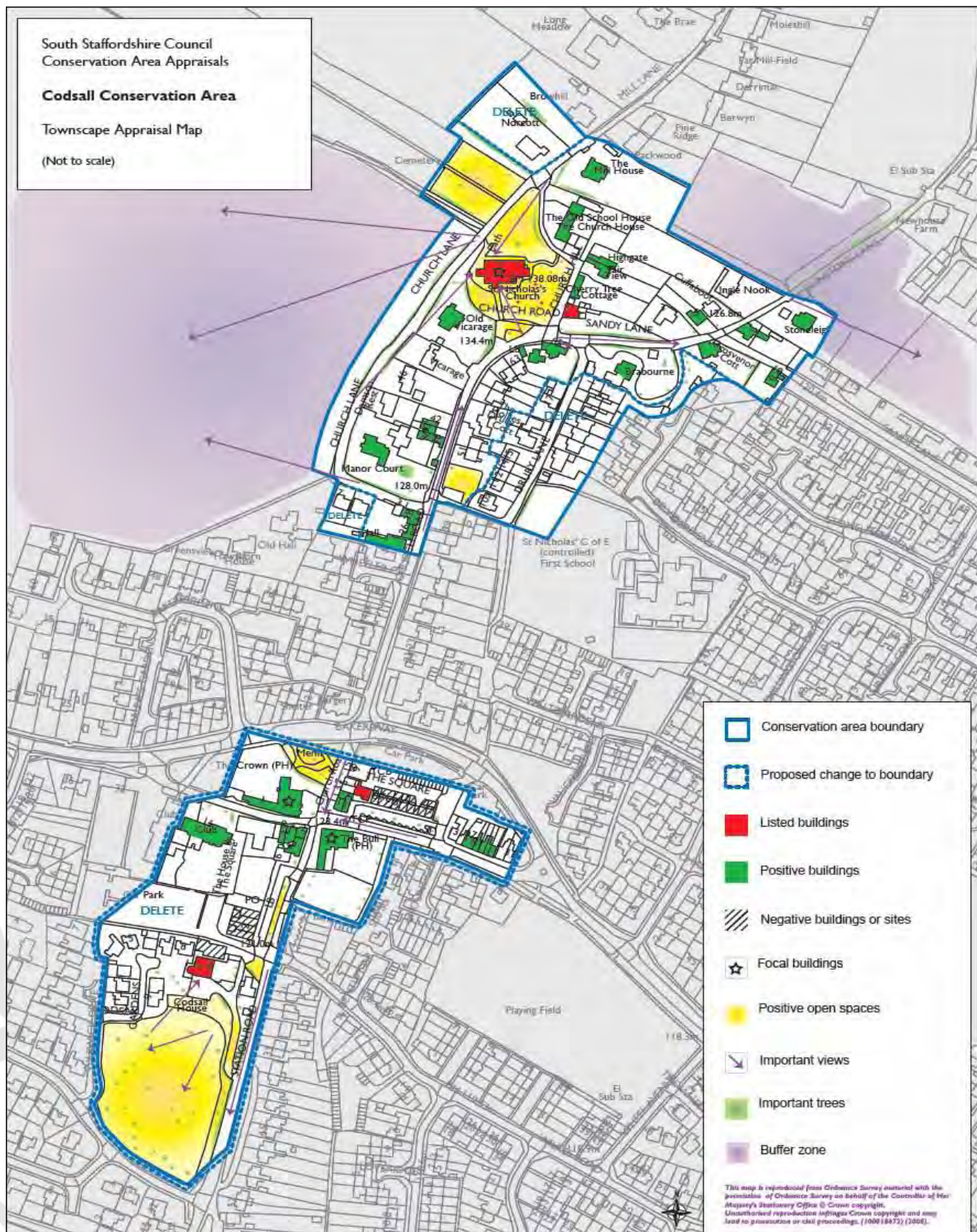
- Listed Buildings; Conservation Areas; Demolition prior to redevelopment; Conservation Areas; Retention of shop fronts; Replacement of shop fronts; Security screens; Internally illuminated signs; New advertisements and Existing signs: Policy EQ3 Conservation, Preservation and Protection of Heritage Assets;
- New development – Design criteria: Policies CP4 Promoting High Quality Design and EQ11 Wider Design Considerations.

Appendix 3: Bibliography

- Clifton-Taylor, A., *The Pattern of English Building*, London: Faber & Faber, 1972
- Collins, P., & Walker, C., *South Staffordshire 'Reviewed'*, Codsall:
South Staffordshire Council, 2004
- Midgely, L.M., *A History of the County of Stafford – Vol.V Cuttlestone Hundred [Eastern Division]*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959
- Pevsner, N., *The Buildings of England: Staffordshire*, London: Penguin, 1974

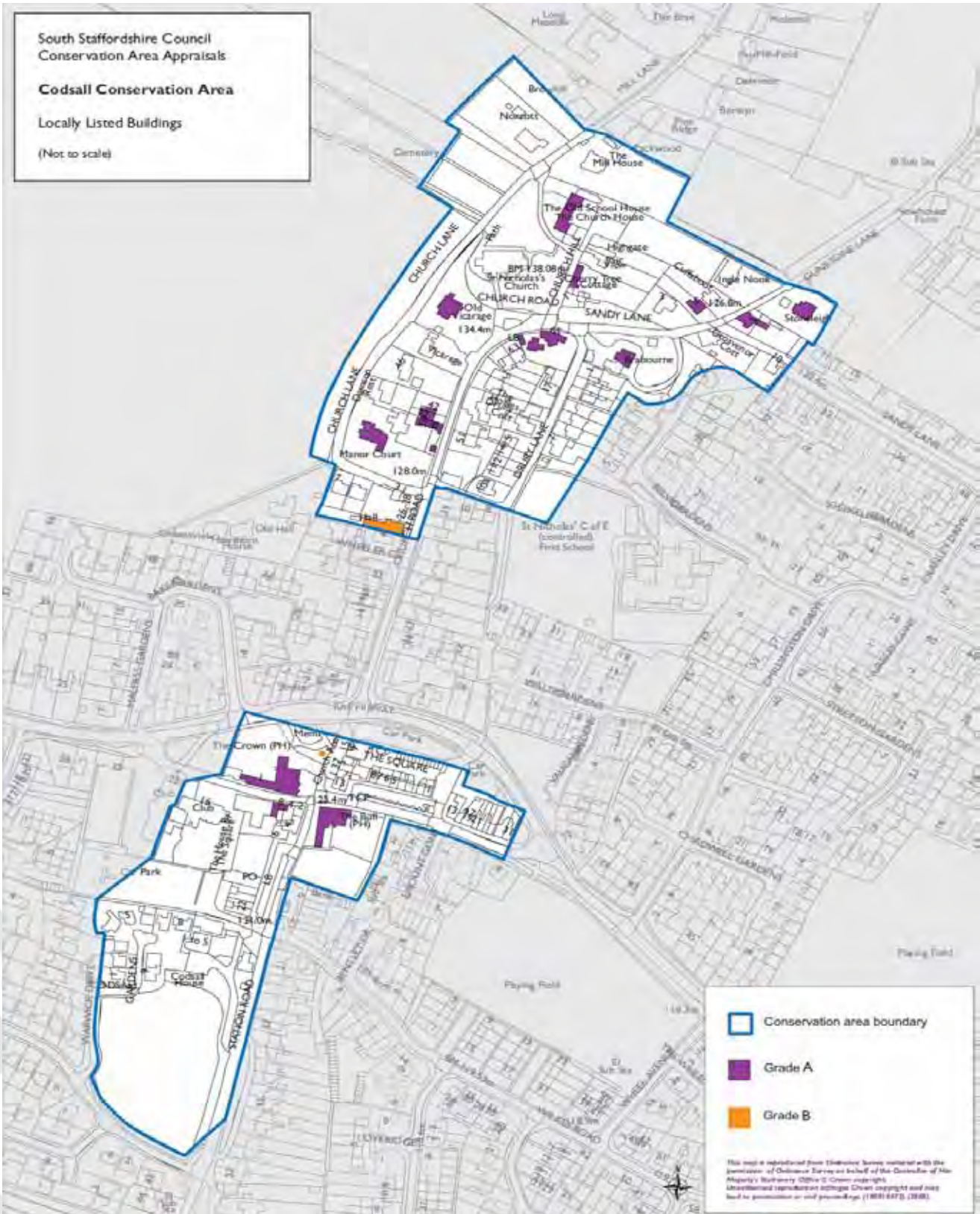
Appendix 4: Codsall Townscape Appraisal Map

(Note: The Conservation Area boundaries shown here reflect those adopted in November 1973. The suggested deletion of the southern part of the Conservation Area was not proceeded with)

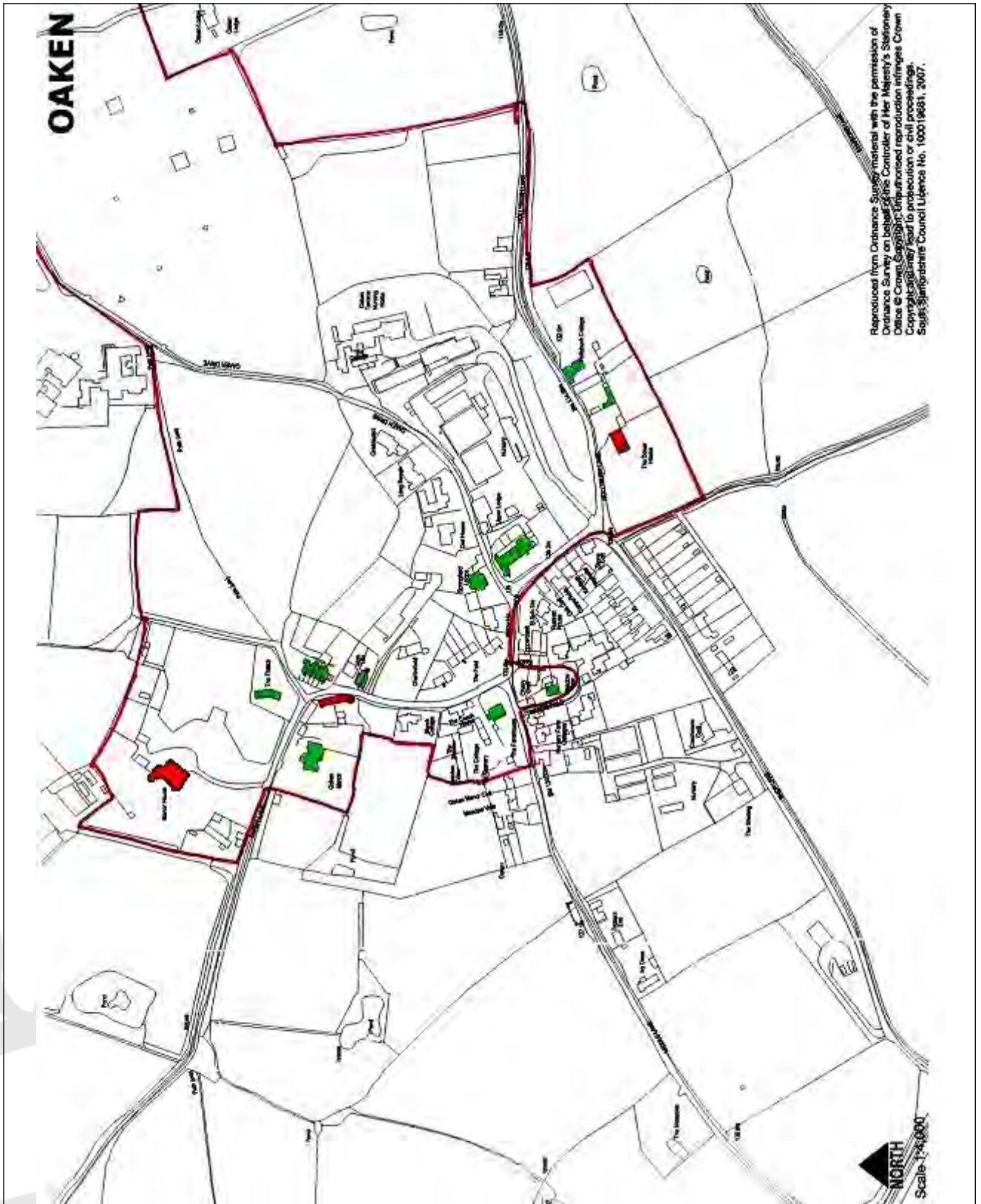


Appendix 5: Codsall Locally Listed Buildings

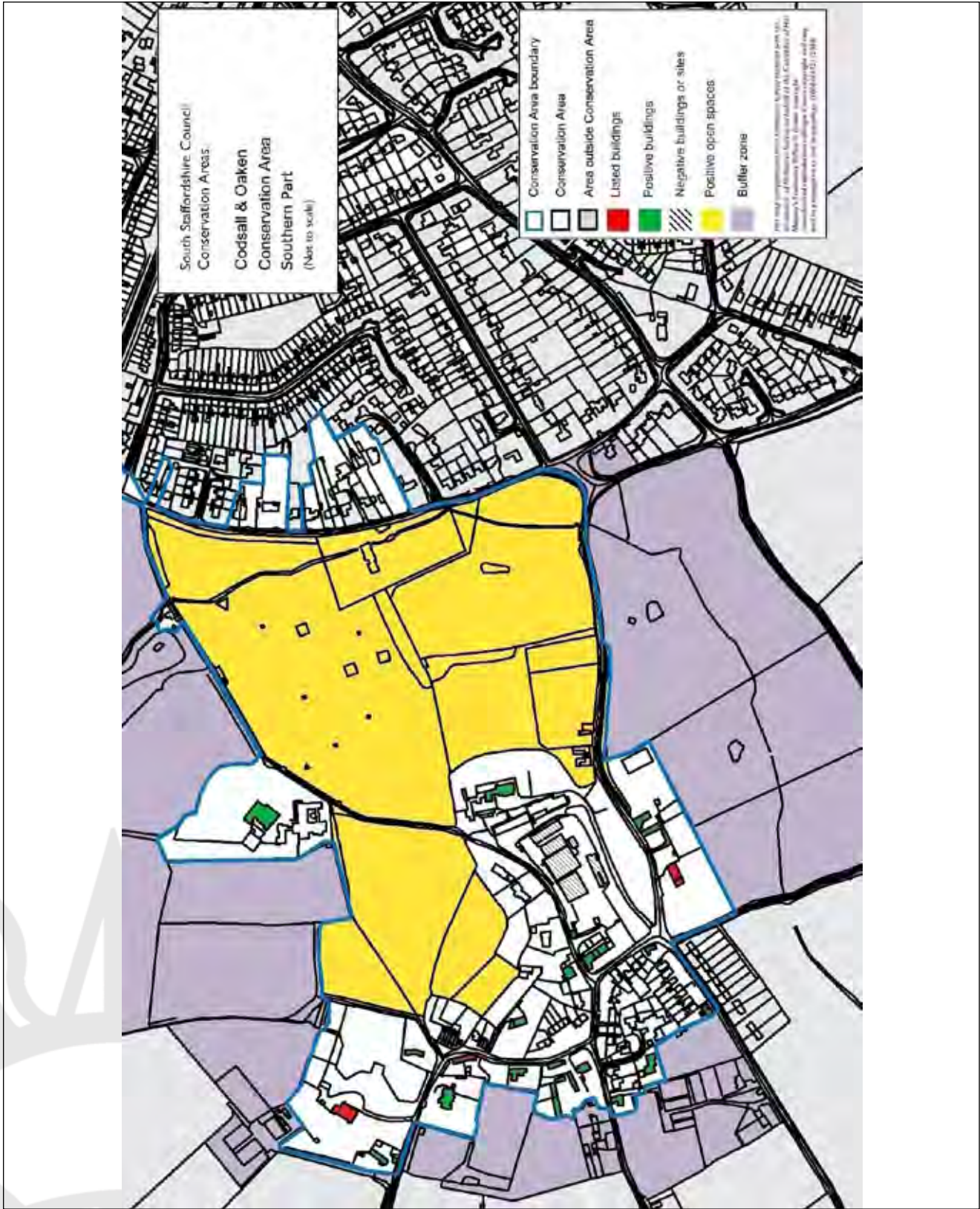
(Note: The Conservation Area boundaries shown here reflect those adopted in November 1973)



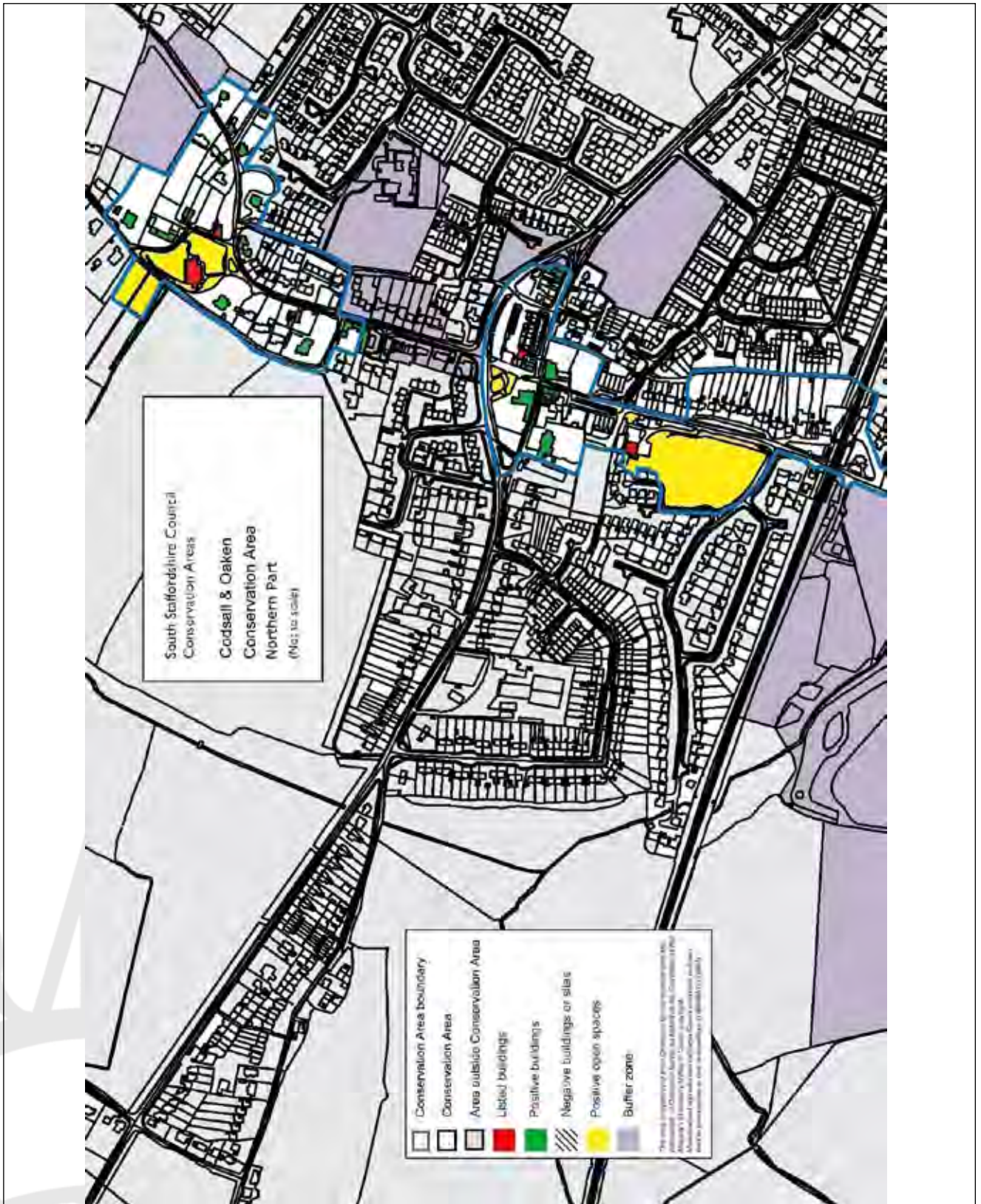
Appendix 6: Map showing the the Conservation Studio's brief survey of Oaken



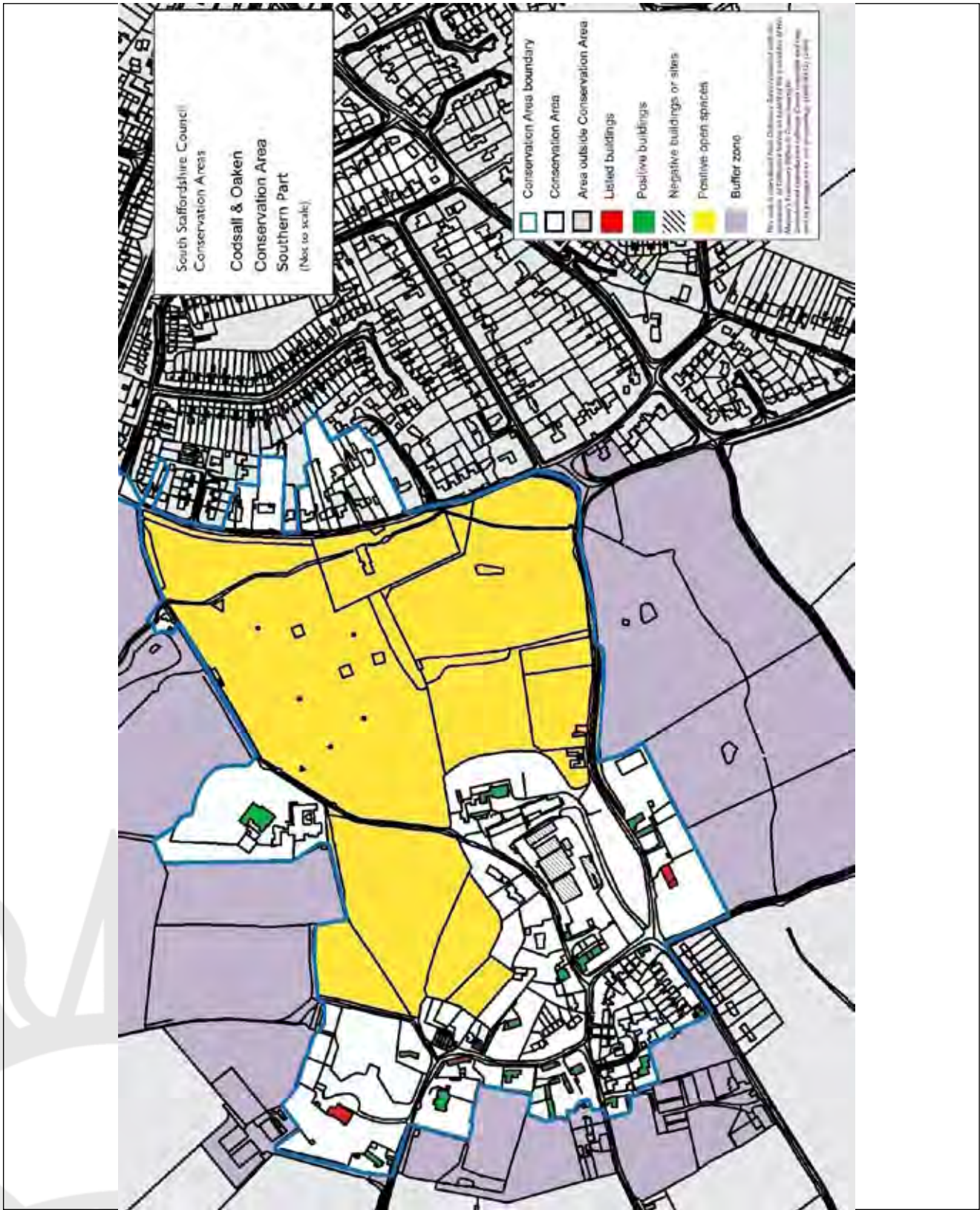
Appendix 7: Oaken Townscape Appraisal Map



Appendix 8: Northern portion of the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area



Appendix 9: Southern portion of the Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area





Codsall & Oaken Conservation Area Management Plan
Revised with minor amendments 30 April 2014



South Staffordshire Council