

Church Street, Rugeley Conservation Area Appraisal 2019



Conservation Area Appraisal Church Street, Rugeley

1. Introduction

A Conservation Area is “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, places a duty on the local authority to designate Conservation Areas where appropriate. It also requires the local authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation or enhancement of these areas.

An Appraisal was first produced for Church Street Conservation Area in 2006 and this document updates its predecessor making use of much of the information contained therein. The updates comprise some rearrangement of layout to accord with the house style developed subsequently, updates to the planning policy context following national and local policy changes, and references reflecting recent development and changes of use in the Conservation Area.

This Appraisal seeks to provide a clear definition of the special architectural or historic interest that warranted designation of Church Street as a Conservation Area through a written appraisal of its character and appearance – what matters and why.

The Appraisal is intended as a guide upon which to base the form and style of future development in the area. It is supported by adopted policy in Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 CP15 seeking to protect and enhance the historic environment, policies CP12 and CP14 aiming to conserve biodiversity and landscape character and Policy CP3 seeking high standards of design.

Church Street Conservation Area was designated in January 1992. There are four listed buildings in the area, all Grade II, and many others of historic and visual interest. Descriptions of the Listed Buildings can be found in Appendix 1. Other buildings of interest are noted within the Appraisal. The boundary of the Area is shown on plan 1.

Church Street Conservation Area forms one of the older, mainly residential, areas around the town centre of Rugeley, a settlement first documented at the time of the Domesday survey, gaining its first market charter in 1259. During the 19th Century Rugeley developed from a busy market town into a busy industrial one and it was at this time that new streets, such as Church Street, were built up.

The overall impression of the Conservation Area is of a quiet, mainly residential area of largely Victorian buildings showing a variety of architectural detailing with some 20th Century infill development. A scattering of other uses throughout the

area – a residential home, the Rectory to St Augustine’s Church, a doctor’s surgery, school and community centre – complement the residential character. Mature tree and hedge planting enhances the street scene.

Since the previous Appraisal there has been some sympathetic new infill development and some of the uses in the area have changed – the ‘bed and breakfast’ became a children’s nursery and is currently being converted to flats, the office has become a house and the public house has changed to residential use in conjunction with further residential development of its former car park and garden to the rear and side. Since the last Appraisal too a number of properties have been refurbished or converted sympathetically and the trees have matured so the overall appearance of the Conservation Area has been enhanced.

Old brick boundary walls are still vulnerable, however, and there has been a further scattering of modern additions such as rooflights and upvc windows. Bin storage appears to be an issue at some properties leading to storage of wheelybins in front gardens, and whilst the difficulty is acknowledged it somewhat detracts from the appearance of the streetscene. The cleared Aelfgar school site with its temporary hoardings currently detracts from the appearance of the streetscene too and it is hoped that redevelopment in keeping with the adjacent Conservation Area will proceed without further delay.

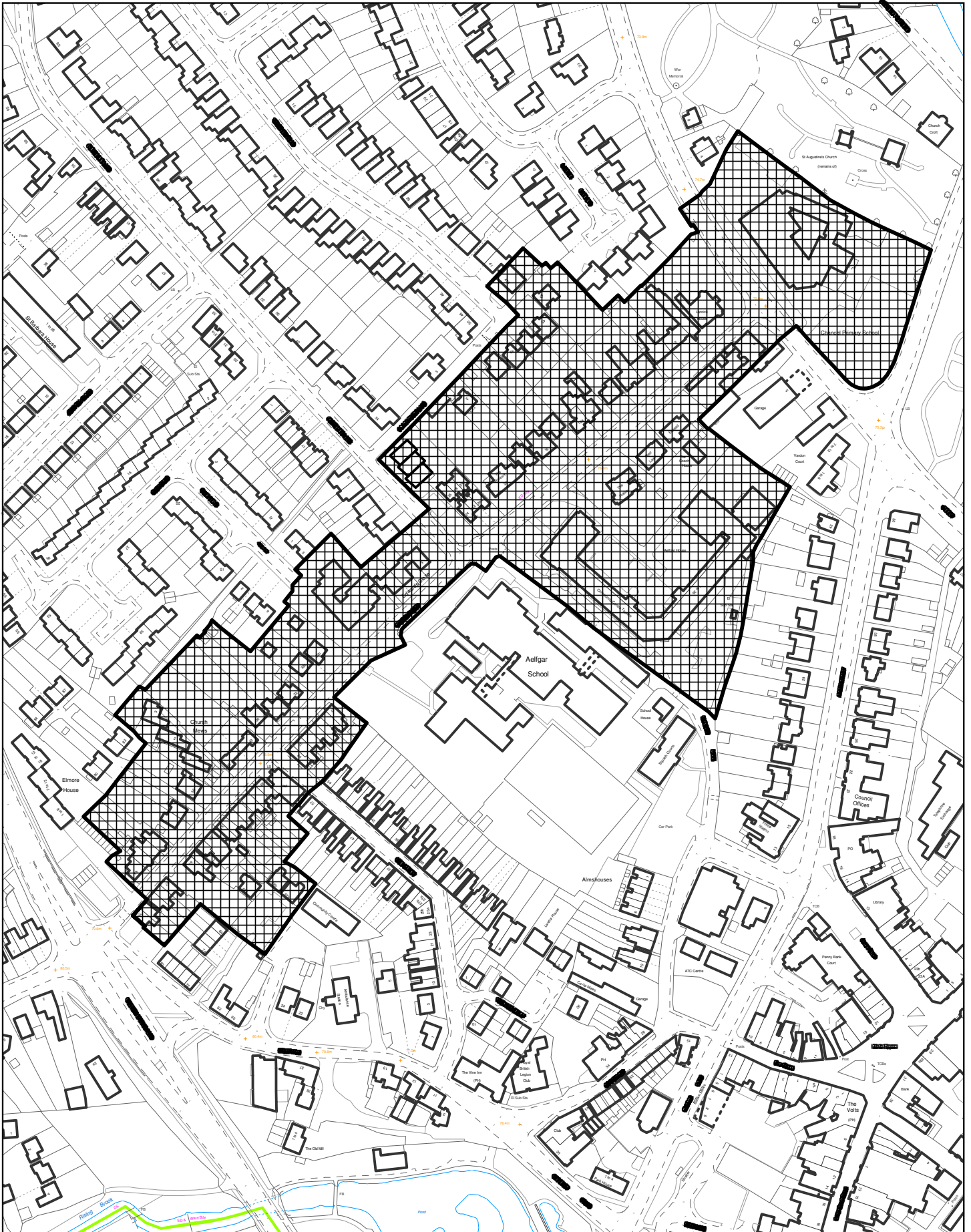
Summary of Special Interest

- Its long history as a thoroughfare bounding the south side of Chuchfield during the Middle Ages, with Taylors Lane leading to the town centre
- Its historic development of well-built houses with buildings and groups of individual interest
- Its townscape harmonised by mass, scale, height and materials with visual interest and diversity created by design detailing and frontage treatment
- Its significant tree specimens and groups punctuating the street scene

The survey work for this Appraisal update was carried out in 2018.



Plan 1: Conservation Area Boundary



2. Planning Policy Context¹

Government policy recognises the importance of effective protection for all aspects of the historic environment through legislation and policy guidance. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. The National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF) provides a full statement of Government policy for the historic environment, including the recognition of significance of a variety of heritage assets, and is supported by the Planning Practice Guidance.

The Government is responsible for compiling a List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest of national significance. There are three grades of Listed Buildings to give an indication of relative importance - Grade I, II* and II; 94% of listed buildings are Grade II.

The Local Planning Authority is responsible for designation of conservation areas where appropriate, and has a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas. The effect of designation is broadly to bring demolition of buildings and works to trees under planning control and to restrict 'permitted development' rights which permit certain minor works to take place.

Staffordshire County Council (SCC), supported by Historic England, has undertaken an Extensive Urban Survey of Rugeley in 2012 as one of a series of 23 medieval Staffordshire towns. Their report, which forms part of the evidence base for this document, aims to characterise the historic development of the town through reference to historic sources, cartographic material and archaeological evidence. The town is subdivided into Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCA's) with a statement of archaeological, historic, aesthetic and communal value for each one, supported by more detailed descriptions and mapping. Church Street Conservation Area falls in HUCA's 4, 10, 11, 13 and 20. These extracts are contained in Appendix 2. Developers are advised to consult this document and the SCC Historic Environment team at an early stage when considering schemes within the Conservation Area.

Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) was adopted in 2014 and contains local planning policy including CP15 seeking to safeguard all aspects of the District's historic environment. Policies CP12 and CP14 seek to enhance biodiversity and landscape character. Policy CP3 seeks high standards of design of buildings and spaces, conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment as a stimulus to high quality design, and successful integration with trees, hedges

¹ Planning policy context correct at date of adoption of this document but may be superseded by policy updates over time.

and landscape features to green the built environment. The Local Plan includes the Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan which sets out a development framework for the Rugeley town centre area including urban design principles and guidance for opportunity sites, one of which (RTC4 Aelfgar Centre) is adjacent to Church Street. A Design Supplementary Planning Document adopted in 2016 supports Policy CP3.

This Appraisal defines the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area and opportunities for its preservation and enhancement from which the Management Plan follows. It therefore contributes to fulfilling the Council's statutory duty in respect of conservation areas and supports delivery of Local Plan policy in respect of heritage assets. It has the status of a material planning consideration of considerable weight providing a basis for development management decisions.²

3. Development History

In the Middle Ages the principal occupation of the inhabitants of Rugeley was agriculture, carried out in three common fields – Churchfield, Upfield and Hodgeley – and in the meadows by the river. Churchfield was bounded on the south side by Church Lane, now Church Street, and stretched north along the Wolseley Road. Several of Rugeley's historic buildings stood in the area, such as Rugeley Grammar School dating from 1567, which stood on the site of the present Chancel Infants School next to the church, and the medieval tithebarn which until 1649 stood in Bow Street near the junction of Taylors Lane. In the mid 18th Century the common fields were enclosed. Taylors Lane remained the path leading from the town to Churchfield. Generally, the Church Street area appears to have remained largely undeveloped until the 19th Century, although this can only be confirmed by below ground observation.

During the 19th Century Rugeley developed from a busy market town to a busy industrial town, one of the main industries being coal mining. The canal existed from 1777, the railway from the 1850's, and the town was on a coaching route to London, Liverpool and Chester. The Church was extended and then replaced on the other side of the road with the new Church of St. Augustine's in 1823. An account of the town from about 1829 describes its neat appearance with well-built houses and recent new streets: "Church Street is building, and some of the houses are already completed in a very tasteful style... this little town is fast advancing into notice and its prosperity is considerably enhanced by its great thoroughfare situation and the advantages of inland navigation that it enjoys."

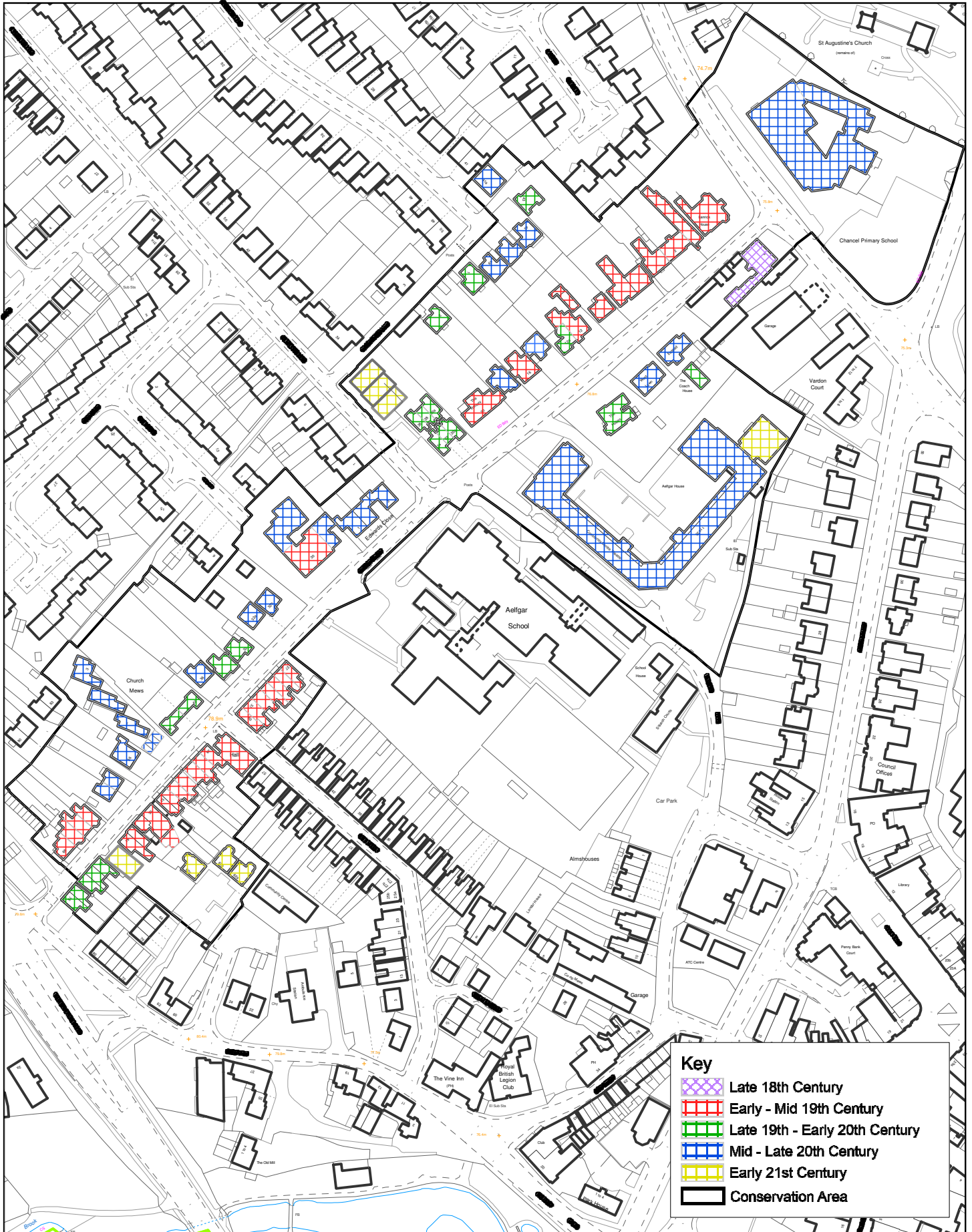
² Historic England Advice Note 1 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' 2016

Plan 2 shows the development history of the Conservation Area. 9 Wolseley Road is the oldest building and dates from the late 18th Century. The 1840 Tithe Map shows development along most of the northern frontage of Church Street between Wolseley Road and Fortescue Lane, and scattered around the Church Street/Sheepfair junction. The site of the former Aelfgar School is shown as a pasture named Taylors Croft. By the 1880's further development had taken place along both frontages of Church Street towards Sheepfair and Lion Street had been laid out. The Primitive Methodist Chapel dates from 1870. Almshouses existed in two locations, as well as a school adjacent to 30 Church Street. Early 20th Century maps refer to allotment gardens on some of the open land, and there was still extensive open space on both sides of Taylors Lane.

The mid-late 20th Century added much infill development around Church Street, including Aelfgar House and School and the Chancel Infants School. The site of the former Aelfgar School lies outside the Conservation Area but immediately adjacent to the boundary. Modern bungalows, such as Edwards Close, were built and new houses in Coach House Lane. Some of the old coach houses were removed, other new houses and bungalows were added on former gardens, and some buildings were altered or changed their use. The old street layout and plot boundaries have largely been retained, though some of the larger plots have been subdivided. The junction of Church Street and Sheepfair was affected by the laying out of Western Springs Road in the late 1950's, and terraced houses around the junction were demolished. Infill housing has been built adjacent to 30 Church Street and a traffic calming scheme has been implemented along Church Street to slow the light but steady flow of one-way traffic.

The County's Historic Environment Record indicates areas of potential importance in increasing knowledge of the history of the town. Archaeology may exist anywhere within the boundaries of historic towns and has the potential to help understand origins, development and growth, therefore any development proposals involving the disturbance of ground within the Conservation Area may need to be accompanied by an archaeological assessment as part of a Heritage Statement to accompany the planning application.

Plan 2: Development History



4. Townscape Character Appraisal

Location and Landscape Setting

Rugeley stands on the south bank of the River Trent on ground gently rising from the valley to the forest and heath of Cannock Chase to the west. The Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1958 and covers an area of approximately 6,900 hectares. Its primary purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, and this higher ground forms a green setting to the town. The Rising Brook flows down from the Chase to the Trent through Elmore Park and the centre of the town.

Rugeley lies roughly halfway between the County town of Stafford and the cathedral city of Lichfield, and historically most of its buildings have been concentrated along the northeast-southwest axis of the Stafford-Lichfield Road. The Trent and Mersey Canal, (itself a county-wide conservation area) runs along the eastern edge of the town, beyond which currently stands Rugeley power station with its landmark cooling towers, and further east run the River Trent and West Coast mainline railway. Waterways and routeways follow the contours between the Chase and the River, features which have determined the historic layout of the town.

Church Street runs on a south-west/north-east alignment to the north-west of Rugeley town centre, with Lion Street and Taylors Lane linking eastwards with the town centre and Fortescue Lane, leading to Coach House Lane, running off to the west. To the north-east the Conservation Area adjoins the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area, to the south-east Sheep Fair/Bow Street Conservation Area and 350 metres to the south-east lies Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area.

Spatial Analysis

Church Street exhibits features of a road laid out in the 19th Century, albeit on the line of a historic thoroughfare, with its relatively straight alignment and regular width and building lines of the houses along its frontages. It is marked on the 1840 Tithe Map. Its historic properties are predominantly substantial 2 storey, with a few 3 storey examples or 2 storey with rooms in the roofspace eg Lanrick House, 9 Wolseley Road, Copperdown and the corner of Lion Street.

At the south-west end of the street the smaller properties stand close to the road frontage giving an enclosed feel, then the central area opens out with tree planting contributing to the enclosure of the street space, with buildings such as Copperdown set in more spacious plots. Further north-east, plot sizes reduce slightly and buildings stand close together with a uniform set back from the street, assisted by tree planting, hedging and brick boundary walls for enclosure. Historic open spaces have partially been filled with development in the 20th

century, though some of this pays little respect to the Church Street frontage and building line.

The street has a 'human' scale related to the pedestrian. A coach house at the rear of 20 Church Street with recent planning permission for conversion to a dwelling, serves as a reminder that Coach House Lane historically provided access for the owner's pony and trap. Taylors Lane, by contrast, has retained its historic informality of alignment and variable width, forming a winding route between Church Street and Bow Street, still forming a useful pedestrian route to the town centre. Lion Street forms a junction with Church Street and leads back to Sheepfair, tightly enclosed with terraced housing 2 storeys high. Tithe Barn Road, named as a reminder of the medieval Tithe Barn which stood in the area until 1649, is a much more recent development leading into the area of 20th Century town expansion with its bungalows and modern estate houses, low frontages and regular planned plot layout.

Character Analysis

Townscape is the feature which distinguishes the special interest of a conservation area from the merits of individual buildings within it, including the interrelationship between buildings and spaces. It derives from appearance, history and historical associations, and its nature and quality may vary within the area. Examples are noted to illustrate features and are not intended to be comprehensive.

The townscape of Church Street Conservation Area is defined by its interesting mix of largely unaltered domestic architectural styles, representing one of the best such areas in Rugeley. Buildings range from traditional terraces at the south end to larger detached and semi-detached houses at the north end, with a variety of infill development throughout. Most of the properties face the road frontages, the terraces with little or no front gardens but the majority stand further back within enclosed gardens. Uniformity of building line and a general 2 storey height gives cohesion to the area, occasionally punctuated by larger 3 storey buildings. The diversity of architectural details throughout the area make a significant contribution to its appearance and character. Important features are shown on plans 3 and 4.

The northern frontage of Church Street between Fortescue Lane and Wolseley Road is occupied by a group of 19th Century buildings of particular interest. It includes three buildings listed as of architectural or historic interest, at 2, 4 and 20 Church Street, and a further one on the opposite corner at 9 Wolseley Road. Whilst most of this group are unlisted they contribute to the setting of the listed buildings, comprising elegant houses standing on well-sized plots enclosed by redbrick or sandstone walls and evergreen hedging. 9 Wolseley Road and Lanrick House face Wolseley Road, 3 storeys high, and high boundary walls enclose their gardens, maintaining the sense of containment along Church

Street. The remainder are 2 storey, facing Church Street, and appear to have had long rear gardens with coach houses and brick boundary walls, some of which survive along Coach House Lane. Some plots have been subdivided with modern houses built on rear gardens, either fronting Tithe Barn Road or Church Street.

These older buildings have a variety of decorative features – moulded timber doorcases, sliding sash windows, false windows, parapet walls and chimneys with attractive pots. Good examples are the doorcases at 9 Wolseley Road and 20 Church Street (see Figs. 1 and 2) and windows at 2, 4, 12, 16 and 20 Church Street and Lanrick House. No. 16 Church Street is a good example of an unaltered building and boundary treatment. The older buildings, including the substantial coach house rear of 20 Church Street, and brick walls on Coach House Lane also make an attractive enclave behind the main Church Street frontage. The opposite frontage of Church Street has good frontage boundary treatment with high brick walls which provide screening for two modern bungalows, or stone walls and hedging, and the Hollies is an attractive and little-altered building.

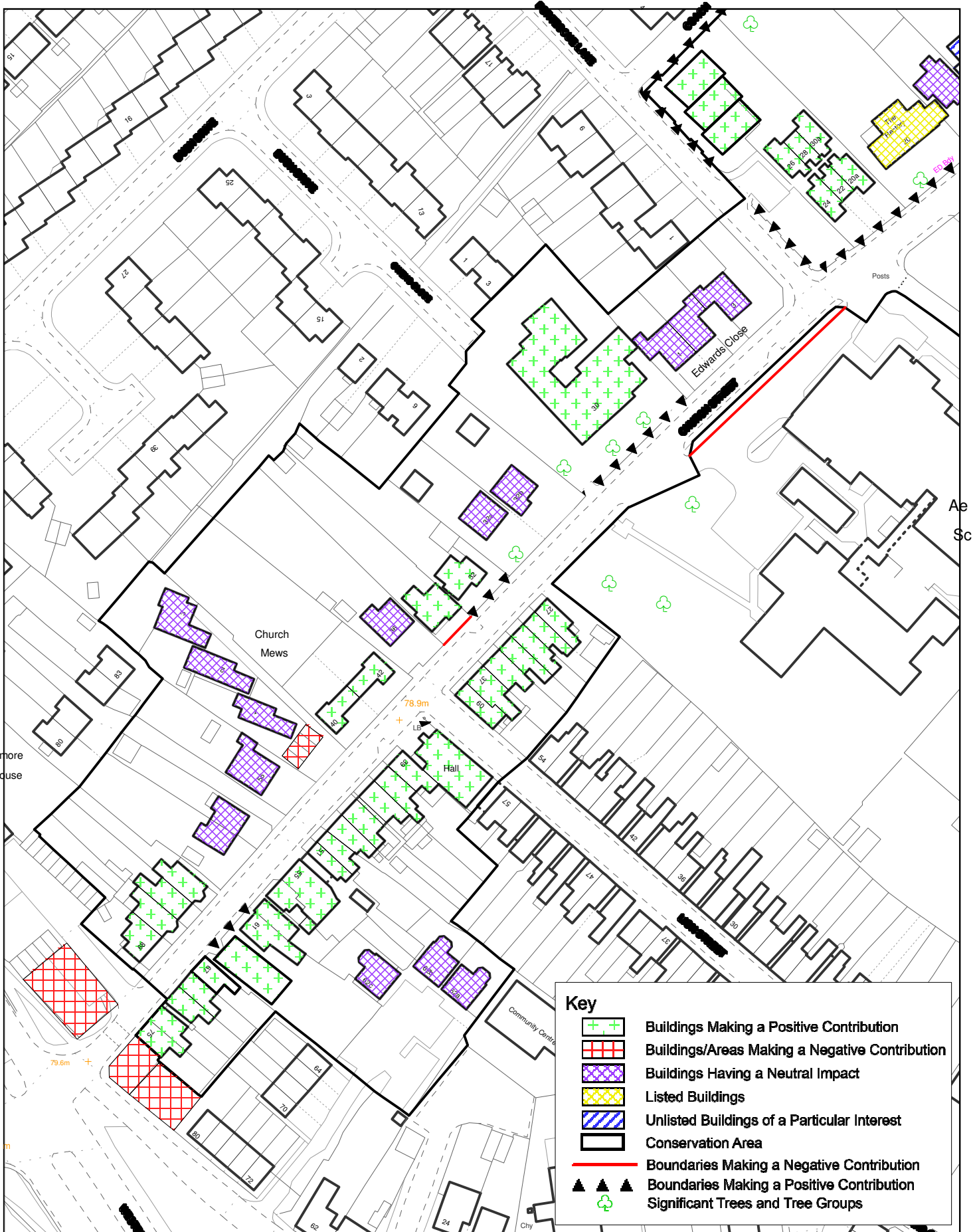


Doorcases Fig.1 9 Wolseley Road and Fig.2 20 Church Street

Part of the former garden of the almshouses at the junction of Church Street and Fortescue Lane has recently been developed with a small group of sheltered bungalows. They are of good contemporary design respecting their setting in scale and siting and are considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (Fig. 3). Their use of modern materials show how, with care, new development can complement a historic setting helping the Area evolve into the future.



Fig.3 New alms houses at junction of Church Street and Fortescue Lane



Key	
	Buildings Making a Positive Contribution
	Buildings/Areas Making a Negative Contribution
	Buildings Having a Neutral Impact
	Listed Buildings
	Unlisted Buildings of a Particular Interest
	Conservation Area
	Boundaries Making a Negative Contribution
	Boundaries Making a Positive Contribution
	Significant Trees and Tree Groups

The central part of the Conservation Area has a more open feel as a result of its more modern development layout and low or less substantial frontage boundary treatment. This area was developed post-war over previous open space and allotments, so was more open historically. Whilst excluded from the Conservation Area, the former Aelfgar School nevertheless had a significant impact upon it, and represented a poor contribution to its appearance as a result of design, scale and materials. Its railing fence in need of maintenance and large tarmac areas behind did nothing to improve the situation. The school has now been demolished and the site is currently awaiting redevelopment with potential for a proposal more in keeping with the Conservation Area. Copperdown or 30 Church Street opposite, though much extended and altered during its current use as a residential home, makes a major positive contribution to the central part of the Area with its characteristic design and detailing, high frontage red brick wall and fine gate and gateposts. The original street pattern of Taylors Lane is retained and continues to provide a useful pedestrian link between Church Street and the town centre.

At the southern end of the Conservation Area most of the development is at a higher density, characterised by short terraces, well detailed, with plots of good size. Most stand close to the back of pavement providing a strong sense of enclosure, with low walls enclosing small front gardens. It is evident that original boundary treatment would have been low brick walls with sandstone coping, topped by railings, the remains of which can still be seen. Although many of the terraced houses have replacement doors and windows, the group along the southern frontage of Church Street between Sheepfair and the Aelfgar site generally form an attractive group. They retain much of their detail – stone heads and cills to windows, semicircular door and window heads, fanlights, polychromatic brickwork patterning and string course details, dentilled eaves courses, carved bargeboards, datestones and memorial stones (in the Lion Street frontage of the Memorial Hall) and decorative roof coverings and ridge tiles. There are good examples of unaltered windows at 41 and 43 Church Street which are to be valued, but few examples of unaltered doors. 30, 32 and 34 Church Street and 60 Lion Street are all good examples of decorative roofscapes as shown in Figs. 4 and 5.



Fig.4 Decorative barge boards and finial at 60 Lion Street



Fig. 5 Decorative barge boards, tiling and finials at 32 Church Street

Within the terrace of properties near the south end of Church Street is the former Prince of Wales public house. This building has a largely unaltered front elevation, with engraved ground floor windows advertising Butler and Co., a local Wolverhampton brewery which has since disappeared. It went out of public house use in the last few years and has recently been converted to residential use in conjunction with further infill residential development to the rear and at the side as shown in Fig. 6. Care has been taken with both the conversion and new development to ensure sympathy with its conservation area context, retaining essential characteristic elements such as the engraved ground floor windows, timber doorcase etc. The new residential use is regenerating this end of the Conservation Area. At the end of the terrace at the junction with Lion Street is the former Chapel, now in use by Rugeley Physically Handicapped. This building fits well within the street scene, with its materials, scale and detailing reflecting adjacent buildings.



Fig.6 Conversion and new development at the former Prince of Wales

On the north side of Church Street opposite the chapel are the single storey Sarah Hopkins Almshouses, built in the 1930's but incorporating two stone plaques from earlier almshouses on a different site. There are other plaques with inscriptions within the Conservation Area which provide reminders of the historical associations of the area and help to reinforce its special character. Most notable are those to the Sneyd family around the boundary walls of the Sneyd almshouses at the junction of Fortescue Lane. Bequests were made in the past for the benefit of the poor of the parish, particularly by better known families, including the Sneyd family from Eaton Lodge and Sarah Hopkins. The old Rugeley Almshouse charities were amalgamated by the 1980's and the almshouses are now managed by a housing association.

Building Materials

The main unifying feature throughout the Conservation Area is the local warm orange-red brick used for the 18th and 19th Century buildings and boundary walling. Staffordshire is well endowed with clay suitable for brick and tile making and local brickyards operated into the 20th Century. Flemish bond brickwork predominates, with alternate 'headers' and 'stretchers' in each course. This is an economical yet ornamental bond. Whilst the modern infill development is often of a different form to the older buildings its scale and the use of toning brick colours helps to render it less visually obtrusive, and most is of a neutral impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area. The older buildings are roofed in blue slate or small red or blue clay tiles, and this original treatment is generally retained. Such traditional roofing materials give a texture and liveliness not found in artificial materials, and are to be valued.

There is variety in the roofscape throughout the area with varied rooflines, gables, hips and half-hips, pitched roofed dormers, decorative chimneys and pots. Some original cast iron rain water goods remain, such as at 37 Church Street, but many have been replaced with metal or plastic.

Timber windows within the Conservation Area are largely painted in the traditional white and light coloured paintwork usually looks more in keeping with the traditional finish. Doors are painted a variety of colours and add an individual dimension to the streetscene.

Boundary walls

Boundaries within the Conservation Area have considerable historic interest. In several places there are old brick walls in the local brick, and some in stonework. Typically these walls are about 1.8 metres high with blue brick saddleback copings. Retention of frontage boundary treatment and front gardens throughout the Area significantly enhances the appearance of the streetscene and contributes to the setting of the buildings.

Front garden boundaries include decorative gate posts and piers, wrought iron gates, railings, red brick walls with blue brick or sandstone copings and red sandstone walling. Good examples of boundary treatment exist at 16 Church Street (low brick wall with sandstone coping and holly hedge behind, piers with sandstone coping and wrought iron gate), see Fig. 7, The Hollies (sandstone wall and gate piers with holly hedge behind), 30 Church Street (high brick wall with sandstone coping, stone piers and wrought iron gate), see Fig. 8, and the rear of 20 Church Street (red brick wall with blue brick coping). At 8 Church Street is a wrought iron gate and gate piers as shown in Fig.9. There is a Victorian letterbox in the wall at the junction of Lion Street.



Fig.7 Front boundary at 16 Church Street



Fig. 8 Front wall, gateposts and gate at 30 Church Street



Fig. 9 Wrought iron gate and gate piers at 8 Church Street

Tree cover

Tree cover makes an important contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area, with mature planting at intervals between and in front of buildings. Significant tree groups are found in the grounds of the Chancel Infants School, Lanrick House (evergreen oaks) and Aelfgar School. Other important

individual trees include the lime in front of 20 Church Street and the beech behind it, two copper beeches in front of no. 30 (one replanted following removal due to disease several years ago) and the London Plane outside no. 32A. A mature yew at the side of No. 61 was removed without permission some years ago, despite policy protection, illustrating how vulnerable to loss significant trees can be with consequent impact on the street scene. It was replaced with a young yew but has since been reconsidered as part of the recent new development proposals which have secured a suitable replacement tree on land to the rear of the new dwelling.

The planting of tree specimens was typical of 19th Century development where it was fashionable for substantial houses to be set in a landscaped garden. Good examples in Church Street are Copperdown Fig.10 and Lanrick House Fig.11 where mature tree planting gives a fine mature landscape setting to the buildings making a major contribution to the character and appearance of the Area.



Mature tree planting Fig. 10 Copperdown and Fig.11 Lanrick House

The group of trees at Copperdown and in the grounds of the former Aelfgar School site in full leaf create a 'green heart' to this Conservation Area. These trees also give a sense of scale to the street scene and punctuate the views. Smaller trees within the almshouses at the corner of Fortescue Lane have grown to create a prominent visual feature in recent years, together with some significant individual conifers in nearby gardens. Conservation Area designation places protection over all trees, and some trees in Church Street which make a particular contribution, such as those adjacent to no. 30 and Lanrick House, have the additional protection of Tree Preservation Orders.

Mature hedging and shrub planting around garden boundaries also contributes to the street scene, adding greenery and softening the hard lines of buildings and walls. Hedges are characteristically of holly, its dense glossy green foliage is more attractive than the duller texture of coniferous hedging. There is an important visual relationship between the public space (the street) and private space (front and side gardens) visible from the street. The planting helps both to enclose the street scene and give privacy to dwellings.

The Public Realm

There are no historic ground surfaces apparent within the Conservation Area with surfaces comprising tarmac with concrete kerbs. Street furniture, including lamp columns, is modern but modest in size and appearance, and therefore unobtrusive.

Setting and Views

At the north end of Church Street is an attractive view of St. Augustine's Church Tower, linking the street with the Church. Otherwise views in and out of the Conservation Area are fairly well enclosed by buildings and trees, the main views through the area being along Church Street. The power station cooling towers are glimpsed from Church Street beyond the town centre but their imminent demolition will impact on skyline views. The top of the Town Hall Clock Tower and Roman Catholic Church spire are also visible over the roof tops, linking Church Street with its surroundings and assisting with orientation. The main visual impact on the setting of the Conservation Area is currently the cleared site of the former Aelfgar School and future redevelopment of this site presents a significant opportunity for enhancement.

Church Street, as a linear Conservation Area, is potentially significantly affected by development of land immediately adjoining its boundaries. In particular the former Aelfgar School was identified as having a negative impact due to its lack of sympathy with the rest of the Conservation Area, although the tree planting within the site makes a significant positive contribution. The site is identified in the adopted Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan 2014 as an 'opportunity site', and future development has potential to draw on the character of Church Street to guide design and provide an attractive frontage whilst retaining and supplementing significant trees. Recent new development nearby on Sheepfair, for example, has sought to reflect adjacent character in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing and provides an attractive addition.

5. Loss/Intrusion/Negative Features

The character and appearance of a Conservation Area can easily be eroded as a result of unsympathetic alterations and development and the decay or removal of characteristic features. Nearly all the modern development in and adjacent to the Conservation Area was built prior to designation, and most has a neutral visual impact. Modern development, though 'of its time' is not always sympathetic to character and appearance, but conversely copying 'historic' architecture may not be the best solution. Through careful design new buildings can respect, complement and enhance the architectural character of an area. Fine buildings

of any type, style and age can enhance the visual environment and contribute to a sense of community.

The cumulative impact of many minor alterations to individual properties can also have a negative impact – special architectural or historic interest is very vulnerable to the process of modernisation. Examples are replacement windows and doors in artificial materials and non-traditional designs. Such materials tend to be bland and lacking in the rich textures and colours of natural materials and the result can be loss of diversity and subtlety affecting appearance and character, see Fig. 12. The recovering of roofs, removal of chimney stacks, boundary walling and other architectural details can have a similar impact. Many such minor works to dwellings are permitted to householders. Bearing in mind that these are the very features which help to create the distinctive character and appearance in the first place, their vulnerability is evident. The upgrading of property does not have to be at the expense of historic fabric and character.



Fig. 12 comparison of original and replacement windows

Historic brick garden walls are particularly vulnerable as they slowly deteriorate over time and become unstable or gardens are opened up to make space for car parking. Maintenance and repair of old walls with traditional lime based mortar is generally desirable to prolong their life. Demolition of frontage walls over 1 metre high falls under conservation area control enabling repair or, as a last resort, rebuilding to be secured in a way which conserves the street scene and historic value of the property, yet often with adaptation possible to meet the owners needs. For example, the frontage brick wall at Copperdown was rebuilt a few years ago due to instability of the existing wall, retaining the access points desired by the owners yet maintaining the sense of enclosure of the street. In conjunction with this one of the copper beech trees in the front garden, which had to be felled due to disease, was replaced with a new specimen, maintaining the heritage value of the property and the link with the name of the house.

The loss of part or all of original boundary treatment and hard surfacing of front gardens to provide off-street parking has detracted from the appearance and

character in parts of the area. The movement to open frontages does result in loss of the sense of enclosure and boundaries between private and public space, as well as loss of historic walling fabric. Where walls, hedges, gateposts and planting have been retained as far as possible the detrimental effect of paving and parking can be minimised. Some of the old brick and stone walling is in poor repair and appropriate maintenance to halt the progress of decay would be beneficial, both to the historic value of the property and the streetscene.

Parking space is at a premium in Church Street - on street parking is limited, with additional pressure due to the nearby school - so it is acknowledged that some property owners wish to open up gardens to create parking space. Through careful design this need not detract from historic character, and enclosure and planting may be retained in part, with minimal loss of historic fabric and use of permeable paving (in accordance with current planning requirements to minimise rainwater run off).

The double yellow lines throughout the area are very dominant in the street scene. Alternative less obtrusive ways exist to regulate on-street parking and will be explored.

6. Community Involvement

A report was taken to the Council's Cabinet seeking approval for consultation on the Draft updated Appraisal document. Occupiers of all properties in the Conservation Area, local ward councillors, Rugeley Town Council, The Landor Society and technical consultees received publicity about the document, inviting comments. A copy was published on the Council's website www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy. At the end of the consultation period representations received and proposed changes to the draft in the light of those representations were reported back to the Council's Cabinet. The Council then adopted the updated Appraisal together with a Management Plan SPD.

7. Conservation Area Boundaries

The boundaries of the Conservation Area generally follow rear boundaries of properties fronting Church Street. The former Aelfgar School site is excluded as it is not of any historic or architectural interest and its trees are already protected by Tree Preservation Order. The boundary includes some of the recent new dwellings rear of the former Prince of Wales but follows property boundaries so no changes to the Conservation Area boundaries are considered necessary at this time.

8. Enhancement Opportunities/Recommendations for Management

A specific responsibility is placed upon Local Planning Authorities to take account of the character of a conservation area when exercising their duties. The local distinctiveness of particular areas is greatly to be valued and needs to be reinforced in order to maintain diversity, attractiveness and historic continuity. Unless or until financial support is available as grants for building repairs or environmental enhancements the main opportunities for enhancement of the Conservation Area are through the Development Management process. This Appraisal makes recommendations on what it is desirable to preserve, and how, and sets out broad principles for enhancement which may be further developed within a Management Plan for the Conservation Area.

The Council will undertake to work with property owners to seek satisfactory solutions of issues adversely affecting the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The intention is not to unduly restrict the individual freedom of residents but to enable the Council to have the opportunity of advising residents of the most appropriate design and materials.

The following recommendations will be taken forward into a Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for this Conservation Area.

Recommendations

- 1:** Consideration of planning applications will be informed by the description of character contained in this Appraisal, particularly the features of interest and the areas which would benefit from improvement. There will be a general presumption in favour of preserving buildings and features identified in the Appraisal as making a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In particular, the majesty of the larger dwellings in mature plots contributes to this special character and appearance.
- 2:** Development proposals affecting the Conservation Area must be advertised and account taken of representations in determining each case.
- 3:** Future development should retain the domestic scale of the area and take account of its special interest as set out above. New development will need to acknowledge the relationship of buildings to spaces and reflect existing architectural detailing including colour, texture and range of materials. It should also respect

existing trees and hedging and maintain views towards St. Augustine's Church. Any opportunities for redevelopment of sites highlighted as having a negative visual impact on the Conservation Area or its setting or to improve the southern approach to the Conservation Area from Western Springs Road, would be welcomed.

- 4: Traditional materials should be used in all building repair works and both hard and soft landscape elements treated sensitively:
- Where repair works fall within planning control the use of traditional materials and methods for routine repairs will be required, and elsewhere encouraged.
 - The repair/retention of boundary walls, original chimney stacks and pots, ridge tiles and other architectural details will be encouraged.
 - The use of traditional tiles or slates for re-roofing rather than artificial substitutes will be encouraged. Where necessary, window replacement should match the original design and glazing pattern and the use of traditional materials is encouraged. Timber doorcases should be retained and repaired.
 - Where timber windows are repainted, colours should be carefully chosen; a light colour often works best and white has been used traditionally. Regular painting helps protect timber windows from the weather and although it needs regular attention the end result is far superior to a modern upvc replacement in maintaining the historic value of the property and the Conservation Area overall.
 - Modern additions such as rooflights, dormer windows and solar panels which fall within planning control will need to occupy unobtrusive locations and otherwise should be carefully positioned.
 - The repair of brick and stone boundary walling (or its reinstatement where necessary in appropriate materials) and retention of railings or /hedging will be encouraged and the opening up of front gardens should be avoided. Old boundary walls are a characteristic feature locally and careful repointing in matching (usually lime) mortar will prolongue their life and enhance the historic and thus financial value of a property. Railings should be reinforced by a hedge, preferably holly, privet or beech.

- The inclusion of appropriate trees within new development will be required, especially larger, long-lived and suitably sited species, eventually to replace the older trees.
 - Highway improvements should include a consistent approach to street furniture, consideration of alternative methods to control on-street parking and replacement of tarmac footpaths and concrete kerbs with more appropriate materials.
- 5:** The Council will give consideration to the imposition of additional controls over minor development through an 'Article 4 Direction' in order to manage future changes to the many details which contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the Area. Such powers are available under Article 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order 1995, and the effect is that minor works to dwellings previously permitted without consent, such as small extensions, porches, replacement windows and doors, re-roofing, alterations to boundary walls, chimneys and other architectural details and the external painting of a building where the development fronts a highway would then require planning permission.
- 6:** The Council will give consideration to the use of Tree Preservation Orders to protect trees which make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7:** The redevelopment of the cleared Aelfgar site with buildings sympathetic to the Conservation Area will be encouraged, including retention of existing trees and recreation of a new built frontage to Church Street using a scale, mass and materials in keeping with its surroundings together with appropriate new planting.

9. Useful information

Further advice is available on the content of the Appraisal from the Planning Policy Team, Cannock Chase Council, Civic Centre, PO Box 28, Beecroft Road, Cannock, Staffs WS11 1BG.

The principal sources of historic and local information referred to are:

- Rugeley Library Local Studies Section Clippings Files
- Joint Record Office, Lichfield (Rugeley Tithe Map 1840)
- Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Record
- 'Looking Back on Rugeley' by Alec Neal, published by the Landor Society

- Cannock Chase Council Church Street, Rugeley Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2006)
- SCC Extensive Urban Survey for Rugeley 2010 (available via CCDC website)

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

1. 2 and 4 Church Street

Grade II Listed 1972. Early C19. Red brick. The unaltered right-hand half of a terrace range with a broad shallow gable rising to apex on left; 2 storeys and 2 storeys and attic; 4 sash windows plus 3 blocked (having imitation painted glazing bars) in lined reveals and with small cornice hoods; 2 moulded wood doorcases with rectangular fanlights of small rounded panes, each with a pedimented wood porch; bold lined eaves; slates. Passageway on left-hand side with panelled stucco pilasters and rusticated arched head. NGR: SK0435318487.

2. 20 Church Street

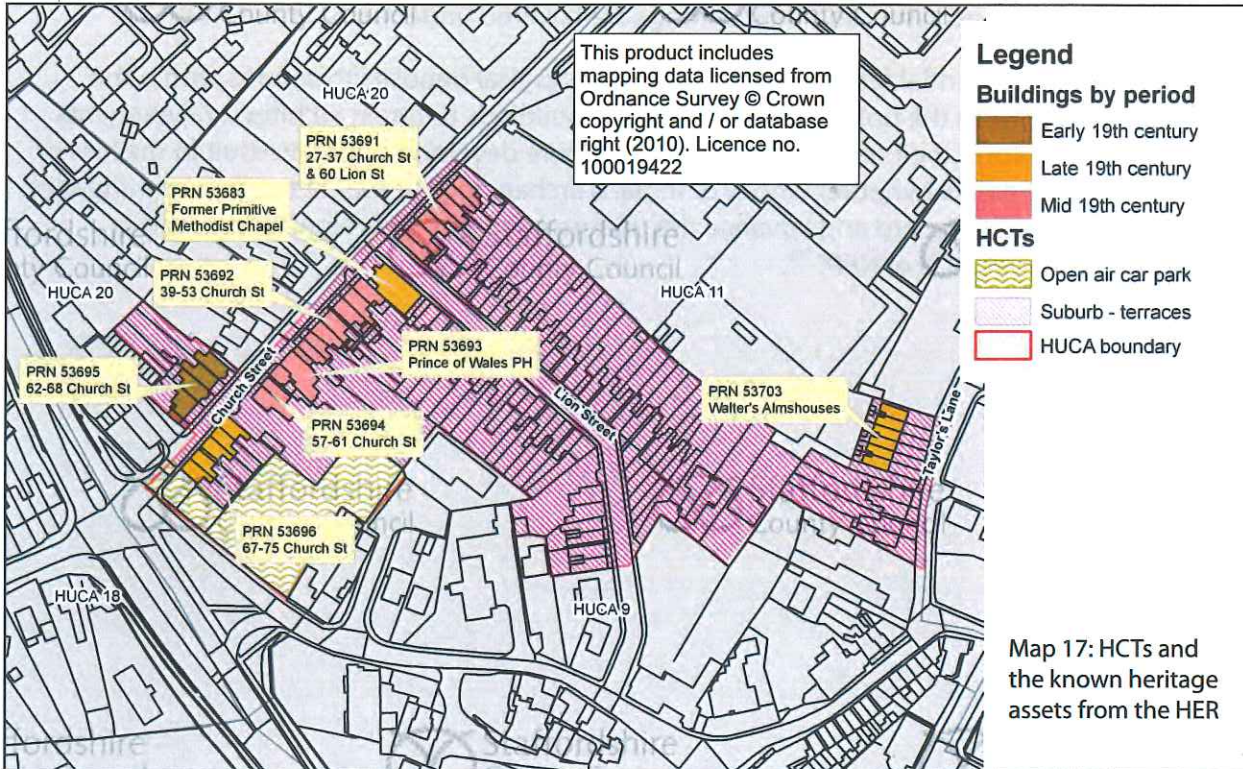
Grade II Listed 1972. Circa 1850. Red brick vicarage; 2 storeys; 4 sash windows in lined reveals with plain lintels. Front breaks forward under gable (1 window). Moulded stucco doorcase on right with cornice hood-on consoles and rectangular fanlight. Later single-storey wing on right-hand side has 1 sash window and castellated parapet. NGR: SK0425818407.

3. 9 Wolseley Road

Grade II (formerly listed as No 37) Listed 1951, amended 1972. Late C18. Red brick; 3 storeys; 5 sash windows; moulded wood doorcase with curved voluted pediment; bands; plain pilasters at sides; dentilled wood eaves; parapet. NGR: SK0439118474.

**Appendix 2 Extract from Staffordshire County Council Extensive Urban
Survey of Rugeley 2010**

4.10 HUCA 10 – Lion Street and south of Church Street



Map 17: HCTs and the known heritage assets from the HER

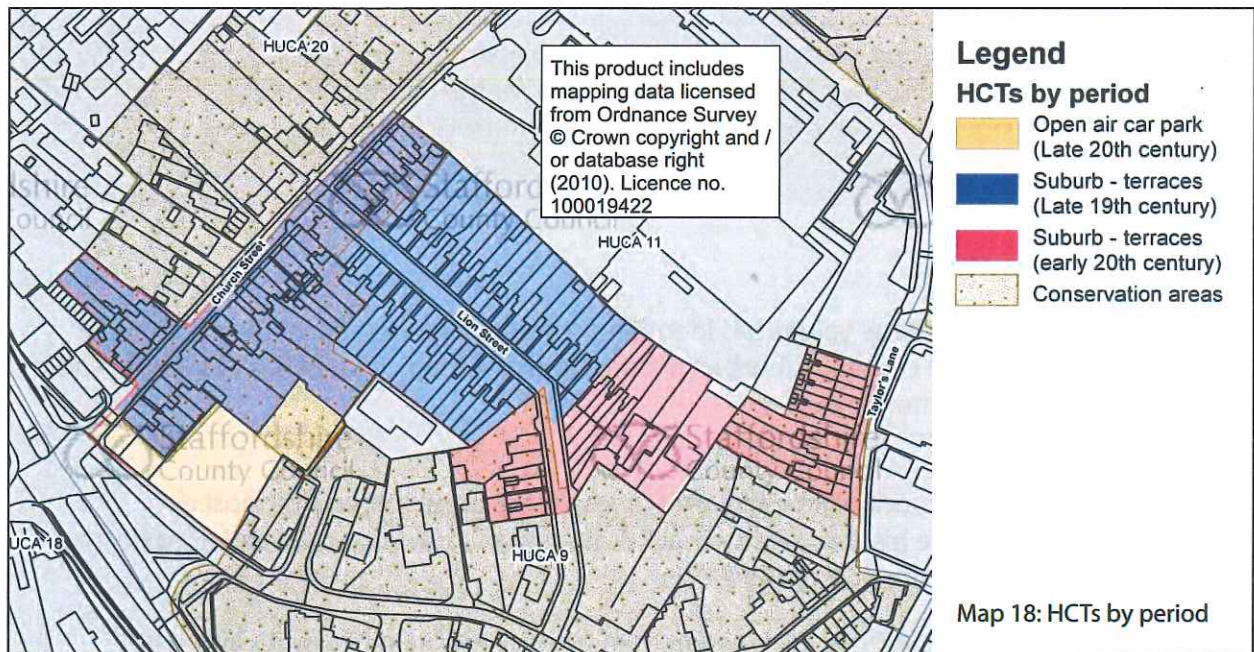
4.10.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

The character area is dominated by red brick 19th and early 20th century terraced properties (see maps 17 and 18 for split). There is a greater diversity of periods of origin for the terraces along Church Street (as shown on map 17), however, the properties along Lion Street mostly date to the late 19th century, with the exception of those to the far south east. Walter's Almshouses in Taylors Lane were constructed of red brick in 1890 (cf. 2.6.2.2 and plate 4).

Church Street itself may have existed by at least the late 16th century. A 'Church Way' is recorded in the 1570 survey although it is not clear precisely where this ran²⁹⁶. Two suggestions have been put forward. One interpretation of this survey has suggested that 'Church Way' may have originated as a lane into Churchfield along the line of Taylor's Lane²⁹⁷. Alternatively it has been suggested that Church Street itself may represent 'Church Way'; prior to the construction of the houses it had been known as Church Lane²⁹⁸. Both of these lanes certainly existed by the late 18th century; the latter appears to have led to several route ways which cross Cannock Chase.²⁹⁹

The properties in Church Street include a former Primitive Methodist Chapel and the Prince of Wales public house³⁰⁰. All of these properties have been identified within the Church Street Conservation Area (124) as making a positive contribution to the character of the townscape. The Sheep Fair/Bow Street Conservation Area (156) also falls within the HUCA (map 18).

The earlier history of the character area is largely unknown, but it is likely to have formed part of Churchfield during the medieval period (cf. 2.4.3.2 and map 3).



4.10.2 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: This area had probably been dominated by agricultural activities prior to the 19th century. It is unlikely, given the subsequent intensive development, that opportunities exist to record any potential archaeological deposits. However, the historic built environment has great potential to contribute to an understanding of the cultural and social history of the town from the early 19th century and into the early 20th century.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Historical value: Built heritage assets are the major components in describing the character of this HUCA. It has been noted that those properties lying within the Conservation Areas make positive contributions to Rugeley's townscape</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: Taylor's Lane, and possibly Church Street, pre-dates the development of the properties within the HUCA, although Lion Street was a planned insertion into the townscape during the mid to late 19th century. The development of properties within the character area has been carried out on a piecemeal basis typical of 19th century development, where individual builders would construct various properties along one street. The inclusion of parts of the HUCA into two Conservation Areas (Church Street (124) and Sheep Fair/Bow Street (156)) confirms the importance of the historic character of this part of Rugeley's townscape. The properties beyond its boundary provide a setting and consequently any changes within this area should seek the opportunity to enhance the existing character of the wider HUCA. Change within the Church Street Conservation Area should take account of the policies identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal document³⁰¹.</p>	<p>High</p>

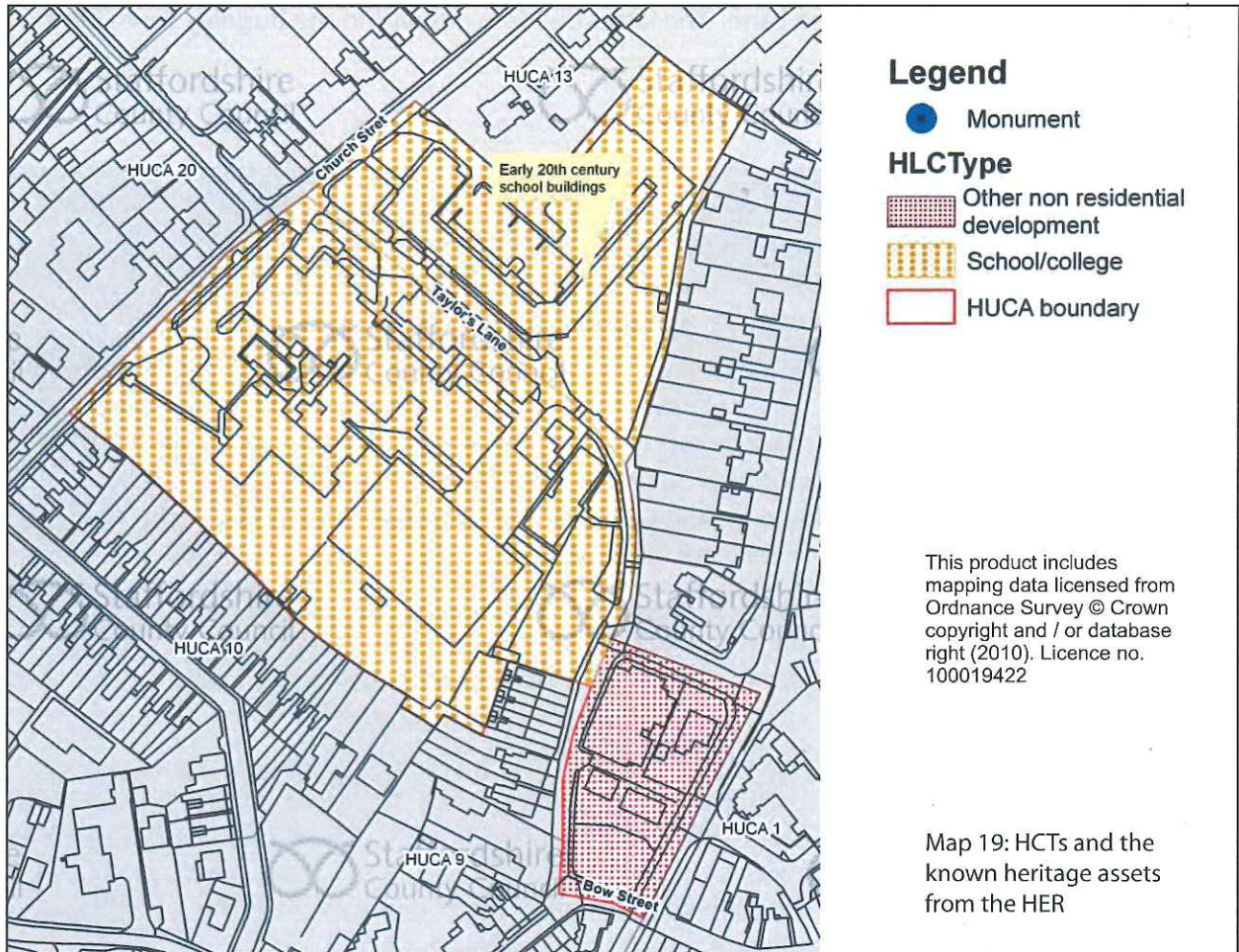
Communal value: The properties largely comprise private dwellings and although the public house does provide opportunities for the community to have a closer engagement with the heritage assets, on the whole opportunities are low.	Low
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4.10.3 Recommendations

The assessment of the heritage values has identified considerable historic interest within the HUCA relating to the 19th century suburban expansion of the town. The HUCA lies within and adjacent to two Conservation Areas.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)³⁰².
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Areas for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)³⁰³. The potential for Lion Street to be included into one or other of the Conservation Areas should also be explored as it forms part of the development of this part of Rugeley. Should this not comply with the relevant policies guiding the designation of Conservation Areas the conservation and enhancement of the street should still be considered of importance as it forms part of the setting of both Conservation Areas.
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area of the Conservation Areas should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance and the Church Street Conservation Area Appraisal document where relevant. The designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF³⁰⁴.

4.11 HUCA 11 – Taylor's Lane



4.11.1 Statement of heritage significance

Taylor's Lane existed by at least the late 18th century and it has been suggested that it was the "Church Way" recorded in the 1570 survey³⁰⁵. The earliest known settlement in the HUCA lay on the Bow Street frontage and probably represents the limit of the town by the late 18th century and earlier. The remainder of the character area had formed one of Rugeley's open fields during the medieval period, which underwent piecemeal enclosure during the post medieval period (cf. 2.4.3.2 and 2.5.2.2).

The character area as a whole is dominated by large-scale buildings whose original function was the provision of education. The buildings to the north of Taylor's Lane, which lie within the Church Street Conservation Area (124), were constructed as a brick built school in the early 20th century (see map 19) and are largely unaltered, although they are now used as a surgery, community centre, theatre and local council offices³⁰⁶. Aelfgar School to the south of Taylor's Lane, lying outside the Conservation Area, opened in 1939, as Taylors Lane Secondary School, to serve the local community³⁰⁷.

³⁰⁸ Ibid

³⁰⁹ Cannock Chase District 2000 and 2006

³¹⁰ Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

³¹¹ Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

The HCT 'Other non residential development' includes the early 20th century Territorial Army Centre, now used as the Victory Christian Centre³⁰⁸, as well as an earlier domestic property lying on the corner of Bow Street/Elmore Lane. The latter building lies within the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area (051).

4.11.2 Heritage values:

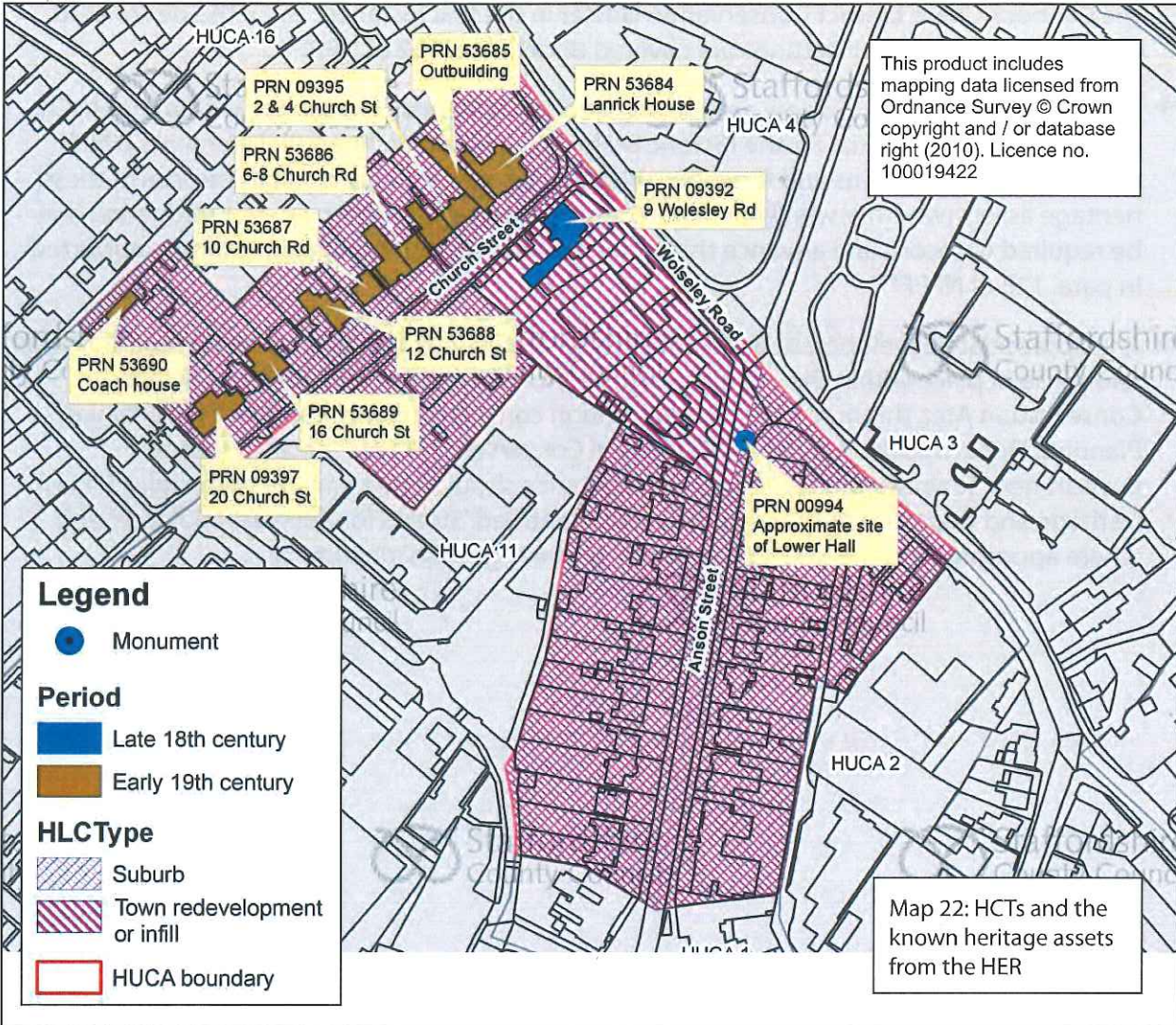
<p>Evidential value: The HUCA offers the opportunity to understand the activities at the limit of the town from the medieval period onwards through the investigation of below ground archaeological deposits. The early 20th century former school buildings contribute to an understanding of the history of education in the town.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Historical value: The legible heritage assets within the character area include the street pattern (Taylor's Lane and Bow Street) whose origins potentially date from the medieval period. The historic built environment comprises mostly large scale public buildings dating from the early 20th century.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: Parts of the character area lie within two Conservation Areas (Church Street (124) and Rugeley Town Centre (051)) and any change should take account of the policies identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal documents³⁰⁹. The properties beyond its boundary provide a setting and consequently any changes within this area should seek the opportunity to enhance the existing character of the wider HUCA.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Communal value: The former school now forms part of a community venue; the remaining buildings are largely not accessible to the general public.</p>	<p>Low</p>

4.11.3 Recommendations

The assessment has identified a moderate historic and archaeological interest within the HUCA. This includes the potential for surviving below ground archaeological deposits, the unlisted historic buildings and the surviving historic street pattern.

- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the unlisted early 20th century buildings would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)³¹⁰.
- ◆ There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF³¹¹.

4.13 HUCA 13 – North end of Church Street and Anson Street



4.13.1 Statement of heritage significance

The suburban development of the HUCA can be broadly dated to three periods originating in the early 19th century (cf. map 23). However, the earliest property within the HUCA is 9 Wolesley Road, a Grade II Listed building constructed in the late 18th century³²⁸. This house lies within the HCT 'Town re-development or infill' on map 22 which generally appears to have its origins in the early 19th century, but the definition of the HCT identifies the fact that this area was probably the site of earlier settlement. The documentary sources suggest that the medieval "Lower Hall", belonging originally to the Dean and Chapter at Lichfield and later to the Chetwynd family had stood in this vicinity (cf. 2.4.4 and 2.5.1.3)³²⁹. By the mid 18th century this property was being referred to as Rugeley Hall suggesting a quite prestigious complex (cf. 2.6.1.3).

Church Street itself may have existed by at least the late 16th century as a 'Church Way' is recorded in the 1570 survey, which may refer to this street³³⁰. One interpretation of this survey, however, has suggested that 'Church Way' may have originated as a lane into Churchfield along the line of Taylor's Lane³³¹. Development along Church Street dates to the early 19th century when large prestigious properties began to be constructed, with coach houses lying to the rear of the building plots accessed by Coach House Lane. The coach house to the rear of 20 Church Street survives within the HUCA³³².



Plate 18: 20-32 Anson Street (late 19th century).

Anson Street was inserted into the townscape during the late 19th century to link the town centre with Wolseley Road and the earliest houses, lying towards the town centre, date to this period. These properties are semi-detached with terracotta detailing on the facades (cf. plate 18). The remainder of the street had begun to be developed in the early 20th century (probably during the inter war period).

4.13.2 Built Character

The HUCA is dominated by two and three storied brick built detached and semi detached houses, which largely date to three periods of origin beginning in the early 19th century (map 23). The

³³¹ Cannock Chase District 2006

³³⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

importance of much of this HUCA to the character of the wider townscape has been identified in the designation of the Church Street Conservation Area (see maps 7 and 23 showing the coverage of the Conservation Area within the HUCA).

4.13.3 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: The range of historic buildings within the HUCA contributes to an understanding of the social and economic history of the town from the late 18th century onwards; representing suburban growth. There is the potential for archaeological deposits to survive associated with the site of "Lower Hall" although they may have been impacted by subsequent development.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Historical value: The historic built environment dominates the character of the HUCA, parts of which are covered by the Church Street Conservation Area. The character area also includes the Grade II listed dwelling at 9 Wolseley Road. The legibility of the differing periods of origins of the built environment within the suburbs of the HUCA enables the changes which have occurred over time to be read by the community.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: Anson Street is the result of deliberate planning and the straightness of its line is testimony to this. The historic environment contributes strongly to the aesthetics of the HUCA and this is complemented by the designation of the Conservation Area. The properties beyond its boundary provide a setting and consequently any changes within this area should seek the opportunity to enhance the existing character of the wider HUCA. Change within the conservation area should take account of the policies identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal document³³³.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Communal value: The heritage assets of the character area can be only engaged with at street level.</p>	<p>Medium</p>

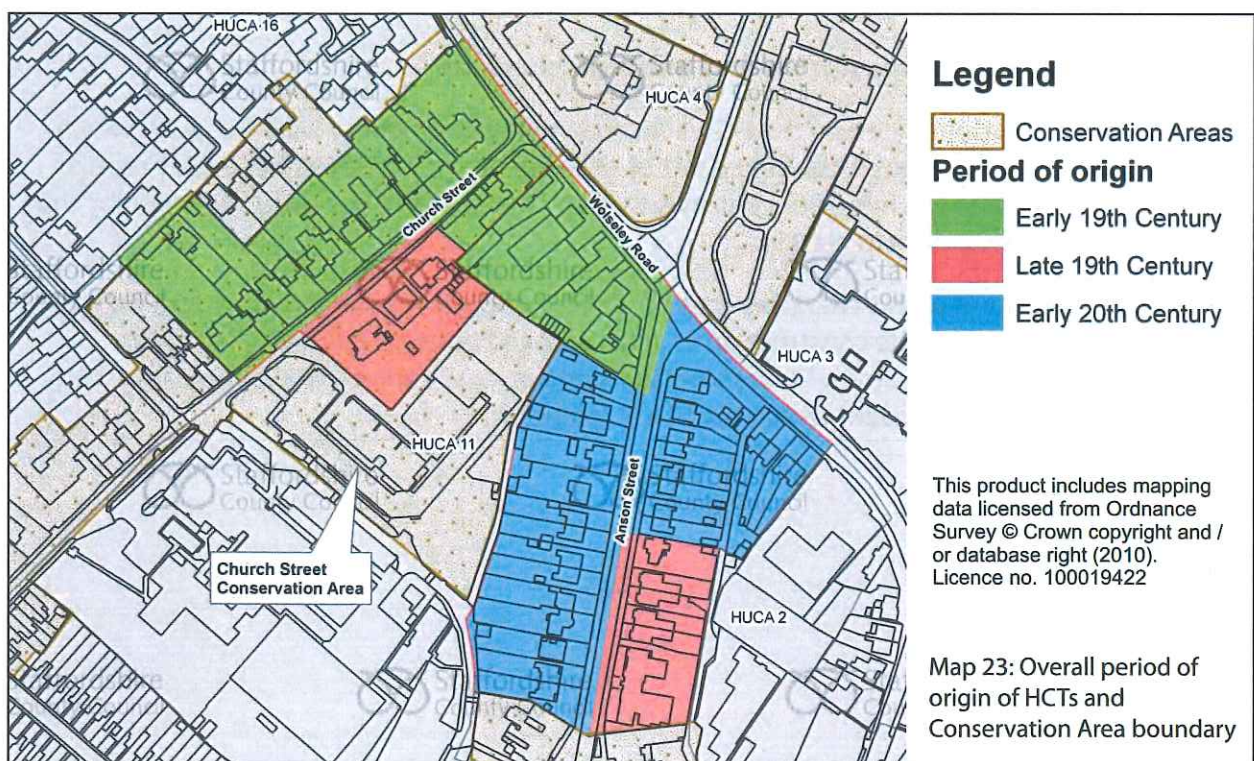
4.13.3 Recommendations

The assessment has identified considerable historic and archaeological interest within the HUCA relating in particular to the built environment, although there is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive. The HUCA lies within and adjacent to the Church Street Conservation Area.

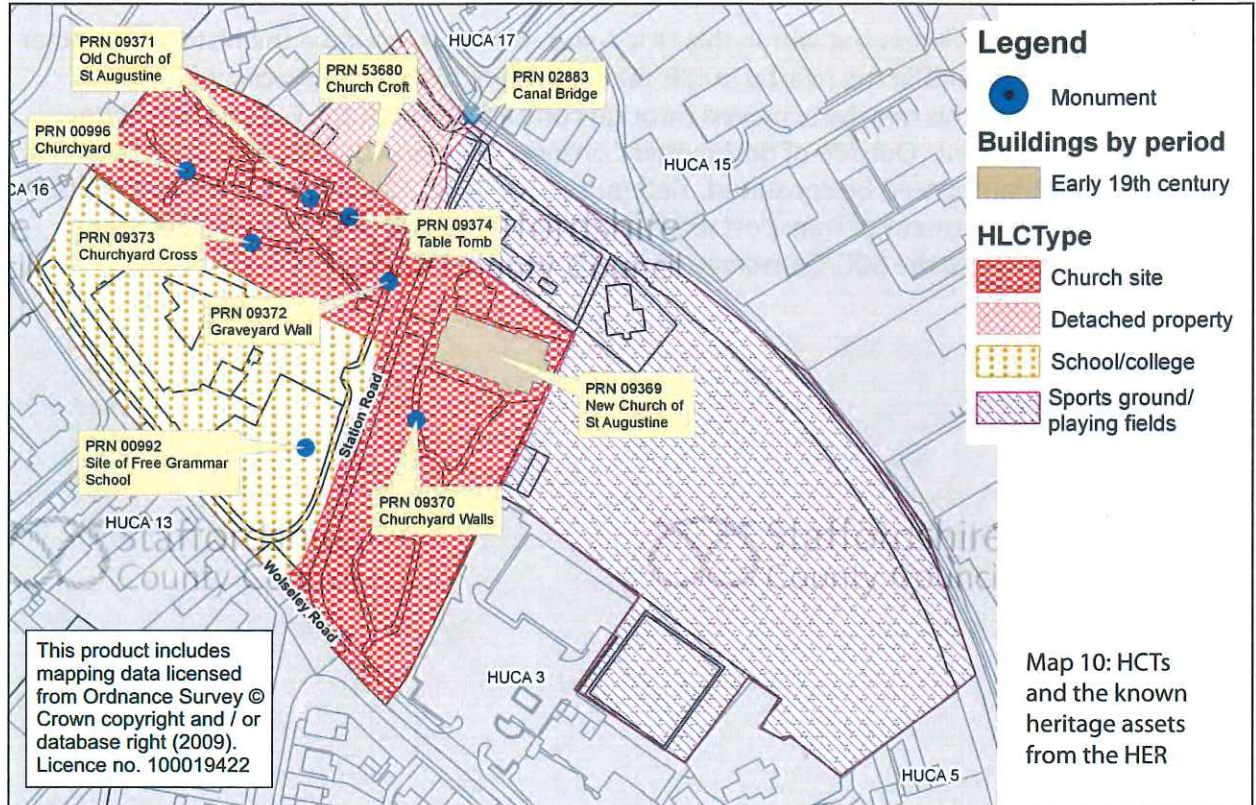
- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)³³⁴.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and

the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)³³⁵. Undesignated historic buildings of particular local interest should be considered for the local list.

- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area of the Conservation Area should consult the Church Street Conservation Area Appraisal document and the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All of the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF³³⁶. The historic buildings beyond the Conservation Area also contribute significantly to the local sense of place and provide part of the setting to both the Church Street and Rugeley Town Conservation Areas.
- ◆ There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF³³⁷.
- ◆ Any appropriate development within this HUCA should look to improve the historic character and sense of place within the nearby public realm. Where this concerns work within a Conservation Area this may be achieved through consultation with the East Staffordshire Planning Department. Outside of designated Conservation Areas the SCC Historic Environment Team should be consulted. Reference should also be made to the joint English Heritage and Department of Transport volume entitled 'Streets for All: West Midlands' and where appropriate to the SCC 'Conservation in the Highways' document³³⁸.



4.4 HUCA 4: Churches of St Augustine



4.4.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

The character area is dominated by the two stone built Grade II Listed churches of St Augustine on either side of Station Road²⁵⁵. Four further Grade II listed structures are located within the churchyards of both churches including the base of a church yard cross and the stone churchyard walls²⁵⁶. The designation of these buildings and structures acknowledges their national importance.

The tower and chancel survive at the old church and appear to be of 12th century in origin; this is corroborated by the documentary evidence (cf. 2.4.4 & plate 13). It currently unknown whether an earlier church existed in the area and consequently it is difficult to state with any confidence where the settlement, recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) may have been located. The fact that the church is isolated from the heart of the town (within HUCA 1) may suggest that the earliest settlement was to be located within this character area focused around the church and that the town itself was planned later, perhaps associated with the granting of the market charter in the mid 13th century. This could only be tested through archaeological investigation and consequently this potential should be accounted for in any development proposals.

²⁵⁷ The Landon Society pers. comm..

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00992; The Landon Society pers. comm..

²⁶⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 53680

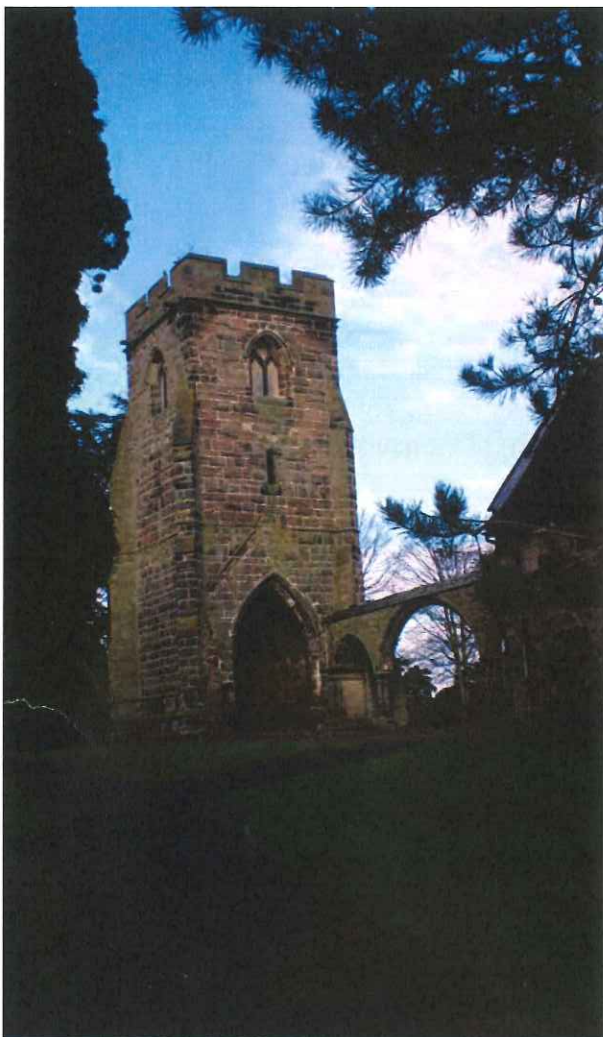


Plate 13: Remains of the old St Augustine's church

The site of the medieval vicarage may have been located within the area of the new St Augustine's (cf. 2.4.4).

The second St Augustine's church was constructed in 1823 on this new site away from its medieval predecessor (2.6.5.1 & plate 5).

A grammar school existed to the south of the old St Augustine's, which had originally been constructed in 1707, although it was rebuilt in 1820 with a master's house (cf. 2.6.2.1 and map 11)²⁵⁷. The extant school buildings were constructed of red brick with pitched tiled roofs in 1936 as part of the grammar school. They became an Infants' school in 1967 following the closure of the grammar school²⁵⁸. The earlier grammar school buildings had been demolished by the late 1950s, although the Head Master's House survived until the late 20th century²⁵⁹.

Church Croft to the north of St Augustine's old church is a large detached red brick house dating to circa 1800 and appears to have been constructed on an area of paddocks or closes²⁶⁰. It is believed to have been built by William Palmer's father and he is said to have been born there.

4.4.2 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: The historic buildings and structures contribute to an understanding of the spiritual life of past inhabitants of the town and their social aspirations. The churches are indicators of periods of economic prosperity. There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive which may answer questions regarding the location of the pre-town settlement at Rugeley; as well as the remains of the Grammar School and activity associated with the medieval church including the site of the vicarage.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Historical value: Heritage assets are highly visible within the character area with six Grade II Listed buildings and structures associated with the two religious sites. Church Croft to the north of St Augustine's old church dates to circa 1800 and is believed to be the birthplace of William Palmer, the Rugeley poisoner.</p>	<p>High</p>

²⁶¹ Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>
²⁶² Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>
²⁶³ Ibid.
²⁶⁴ Ibid.

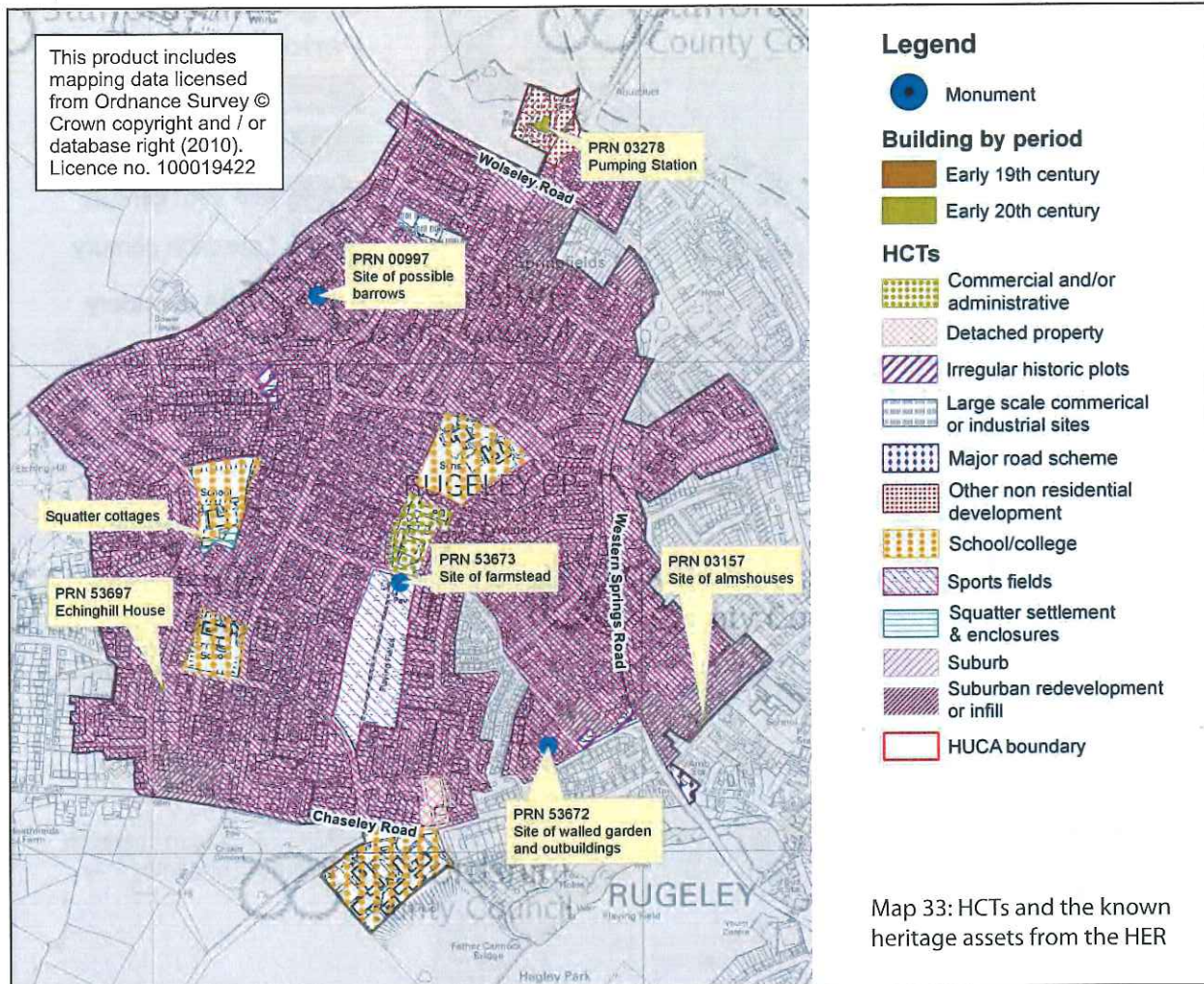
<p>Aesthetic value: The aesthetic importance of the character area to the townscape has been acknowledged in the inclusion of this area in the Trent & Mersey Conservation Area (083) including the playing field to the east (see map 11). There are elements of planning in the design and layout of the new St Augustine's Church.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Communal value: There is the potential for a high degree of community interaction with the heritage assets of the character area. The old church forms part of a public area and an interpretation board has been provided by the Cannock Chase Heritage Trail project to enhance the appreciation of the heritage. The new St Augustine's church is a public place of worship and the church yard is also accessible to the public. The site of the grammar school and Church Croft, however, are not accessible to the general public.</p>	<p>High</p>

4.4.3 Recommendations

The assessment of the heritage values has identified considerable heritage interest within the HUCA which includes a six Grade II Listed buildings and structures. The HUCA is also incorporated into the Trent & Mersey Conservation Area. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)²⁶¹.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)²⁶².
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area of the Conservation Area should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF²⁶³.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF.²⁶⁴

4.20 HUCA 20 – North western suburbs



4.20.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

This is the largest of the Rugeley character areas and represents the main suburban growth around the town of Rugeley which mostly occurred during the late 20th century (map 34). This growth is partly associated with the construction of Western Springs Road in the late 1950s, which allowed this area to be linked to the road network. The construction of this road was also important to the survival of the historic core of the town represented by HUCA 1 (cf. 2.7.5.1).

The earliest suburbs comprising short runs of houses along pre-existing roads which date to the early and mid 20th century (map 34). However, one of the earliest surviving domestic dwellings is Etchinghill House dating to at least the early 19th century³⁵⁶.

During the medieval period the character area had mostly comprised one of Rugeley's open fields except to the far west where the heathland of Cannock Chase impinged (cf. map 3). The enclosure of this landscape probably occurred piecemeal during the post medieval period through agreement between landowners. A farmstead had been established towards the centre

of the HUCA by at least the late 19th century³⁵⁷. The land near the junction of Chaseley Road and the Hagley Road appears to have belonged to the Hagley estate as a walled garden and associated outbuildings have been identified on historic maps. These are likely to have been built to serve Hagley Hall³⁵⁸.

The heathland that once existed to the far west of the HUCA, was also gradually enclosed a process which was largely complete by the turn of the 19th century (compare maps 40 and 42 in Appendix 1). This landscape was one of small squatter enclosures and scattered cottages two of which survive to the south of Etchingill primary school and are probably of at least early 19th century date (map 34).

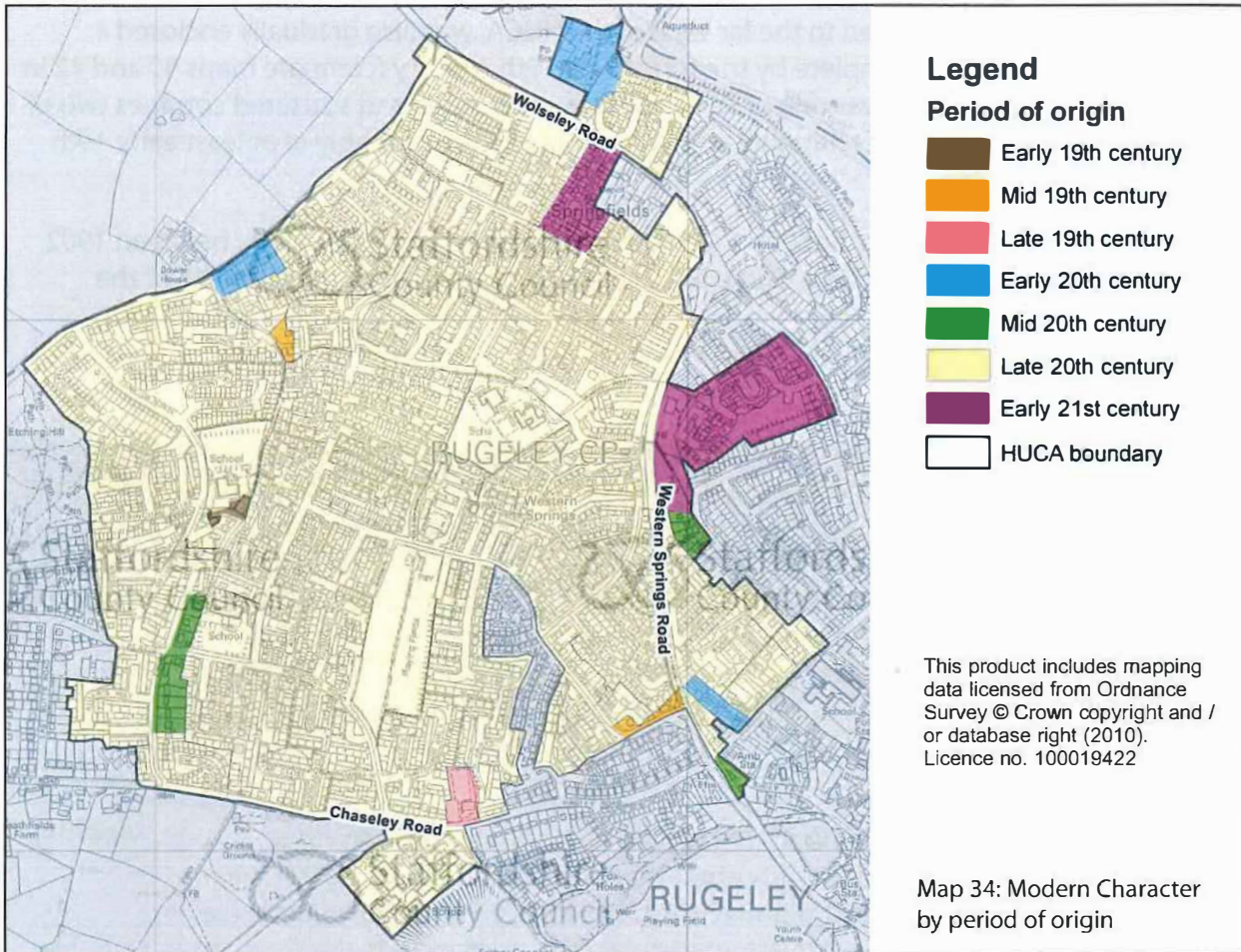
The surviving pumping station, built by the South Staffordshire Water Company between 1902 and 1907, has been designated as a Grade II* Listed building and lies to the far north of the HUCA³⁵⁹.

4.20.2 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: Several historic buildings survive from the period when this area was comprised of fields and squatter enclosures. The former squatter cottages in particular, although they may have been substantially altered to suit modern living, contribute to an understanding of the way in which the landscape had been utilised in the past. The Grade II* pumping house contributes to an understanding of how water was provided to households during the early 20th century, not just in Rugeley. It also represents one of a number of such buildings which survive across Staffordshire.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Historical value: There are a number of legible heritage assets, comprising historic buildings, pre-dating the suburban expansion within the character area which contribute to an understanding of the historic depth of the character area and its origins; the squatter cottages in particular. They also include the Grade II* Listed pumping station, which is of national importance. Several roads are likely to have their origins in the medieval period (Wolseley Road and Chaseley Road in particular) and their routes are legible in the townscape. Western Springs Road was conceived as an early by-pass to the town centre connecting the road from Stafford to Lichfield and facilitated the suburban development of the HUCA.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: The character of the area is the result of a series of large scale housing developments associated with various services the largest of which are represented by the schools. The historic buildings, particularly the Grade II* listed pumping house make positive contributions to the aesthetics of the character area, but otherwise from a heritage perspective the value is low.</p>	<p>Low</p>

Communal value: The HUCA comprises mostly private domestic dwellings of which the majority have their origins in the late 20th century.

Low



4.20.3 Recommendations

There is a moderate historic and archaeological interest within the HUCA relating to the built environment and the historic street pattern.

- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)³⁶⁰. Historic buildings of particular local interest should be considered for the local list.
- ◆ Where alterations or changes are proposed to historic buildings, whether Listed or not, within the Conservation Area the applicant should consult with the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All of the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF³⁶¹.