Cabinet – 2 September 2004

Report of the Environment Director

Part I - Item No. 5 (a)

Electoral Division affected:
Heysham
Lancaster City
Lancaster East
Lancaster Rural Central
Lancaster Rural North
Lancaster Rural South
Morecambe East
Morecambe West
Skerton

Completion of Heysham to M6 Link (Western and Northern Routes) Determination of the Route
(Appendix A refers)

Contact for further information:
E Taylor, (01772) xxxx, Environment Directorate (Highway Consultancy)

Executive Summary

On 6 December 2001 the Cabinet considered a full report regarding the choice of route for the Heysham to M6 Link and recommended the former Cabinet Executive Committee that:

- "In view of the environmental issues which need to be addressed in relation to the green (Western) route, the County Council should undertake environmental impact studies of both the green (Western) and orange (Northern) routes" ,and

- "If it proves impossible to proceed with the green (Western) route, the County Council should then pursue the orange (Northern) route."

The full text of the recommendation which was adopted by the Executive Committee is set out in the Report.

Environmental impact studies of both routes have been undertaken by ADAS Consulting Ltd. The attached Appendix A contains a document titled "Comparison of Schemes" which includes in its Appendix 2A a report by ADAS titled "Ecological Justification of Western & Northern Routes as Alternatives for the Completion of the Heysham to M6 Link".

Lancashire County Council

This report details the assessment of the impacts of the two routes. The ADAS report concludes that "Selection of the Western Route may not accord with the UK's obligations under EU law, given the potential impacts on European Protected Species (Bats and Great Crested Newts) and the risk of potential impacts on the candidate Special Area of Conservation/ Special Protected Area and Lune Estuary Ramsar site and SSSI. The availability of a satisfactory alternative route, which is not predicted to result in significant impact on European Protected Species or habitats, suggests that in ecological terms the Western Route would not be an appropriate option to select".

Following receipt of the ADAS Report an Opinion has been sought from Leading Counsel in relation to the problems identified by ADAS, particularly those associated with the Western Route and whether, in view of those problems, a decision to opt for the Western Route is legally sustainable.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is asked to determine the route for the completion of the M6 - Heysham Link.

Background

On 6 December 2001, the Cabinet recommended the former Cabinet Executive Committee to adopt the following resolution in respect of the Western (Green) Route and the Northern (Orange) Route:

"That Lancashire County Council notes that in the recent consultation exercise concerning traffic issues in the Lancaster District there was overwhelming public support for a new Heysham/M6 road link. It further notes that whilst a majority favoured the green route (Western Bypass), a substantial number also supported the orange route (Northern Link).

That Lancashire County Council is committed to sustainable economic development. It recognises the serious impact of traffic congestion on the lives and health of people in the Lancaster District and the need to take action to ease the situation. Such action must include a new direct road link from the M6 to the Heysham peninsula reinforced by appropriate additional traffic management measures. This will form an important link in the Northern European Access corridor".

The Cabinet's recommendations were therefore as follows:

i) The Heysham/M6 link should remain the County's top priority scheme for road construction in Lancashire.

ii) In view of the environmental issues which need to be addressed in relation to the green route, the County Council should undertake environmental impact studies of both the green and orange routes.

iii) If it proves impossible to proceed with the green route, the County Council should then pursue the orange route.

iv) Meanwhile, the County Council will continue to invest in such traffic management measures and additional public transport options as will help to improve the situation in the interim.

These recommendations were adopted by the Executive Committee on 6 December 2001 and subsequently reported to the Full Council on 13 December 2001.

ADAS Consulting Ltd were commissioned to investigate, identify and assess the biodiversity issues associated with the two routes and compare and contrast the nature conservation and ecological impacts of each route, especially those which may make either route difficult to justify, particularly at a public inquiry.

Appendix A attached contains a document titled “Comparison of Schemes” incorporating a summary, route descriptions, tables, appendices, supporting information etc, which details the effect of both schemes in respect of:

- Scheme Details, Land and Property
- Nature Conservation and Ecological Impacts of Schemes
- Forecast Changes to Traffic in Association with Schemes
- Estimates of Costs, Benefits and Safety
- Economic Development

Based on the ADAS report titled “Ecological Justification of Western & Northern Routes as Alternatives for the Completion of the Heysham to M6 Link”, which is contained in Appendix A, advice has been taken from Frances Patterson QC on the difficulties identified by ADAS in relation to each route. In particular, Leading Counsel was asked to advise on the effect of these issues as they relate to the Western Route in terms of the likelihood of the decision being called in by the Secretary of State; the County Council’s position as regards the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 and other environmental legislation; and the extent to which a decision to choose the Western Route would be vulnerable to legal challenge. Leading Counsel was also then asked to identify and advise on any issues relevant to a decision to choose the Northern Route which may impact upon such a decision or affect the prospects of the Scheme being approved.

Leading Counsel has confirmed the legal basis for the concerns highlighted by ADAS and her advice may be summarised as follows:

1) ADAS’ assessment is that it is not possible to state that the impacts of the Western Route on European Protected Areas will be insignificant and with that uncertainty the application of the precautionary principle would therefore be against its construction.

2) The effect of the 1994 Regulations is that projects which affect European Protected Areas may only proceed where the project will not adversely affect the integrity of the site unless there are no satisfactory alternatives and the project must be carried out for imperative reasons of over-riding public interest. In this

case it cannot be said that the integrity of the sites will not be affected and as the Northern Route provides a viable alternative, there can be no over-riding public interest in promoting the Western Route.

3) Even if there were no satisfactory alternative to the Western Route, the County Council would have to consult English Nature and have regard to any representations they make. The County Council could only then agree to the project after having ascertained that it would not affect the integrity of the site. That cannot be concluded in the light of the response from English Nature during the 2001 consultation exercise and the ADAS Report.

4) In any event the Secretary of State may give directions prohibiting the project "indefinitely or for whatever period specified in the Direction ".

5) Similar considerations apply to the Ramsar Site (although there is no sanction for non-compliance) and the SSSI.

6) Both the European Protected Species identified in the ADAS Report (bats and Great Crested Newts) require licences from DEFRA for their removal but these only apply in certain circumstances set out in the 1994 Regulations and there is no real prospect of these being satisfied.

7) A Call In Inquiry is inevitable and the prospects of success are between only 0 – 10%.

In view of these considerations, Leading Counsel's conclusion is to regard a choice of the Western Route, "not only as extraordinary but one that was perverse on the part of the County Council" and that such a decision would be "lacking in logic and one that no reasonable planning authority properly directing itself could come to".

Leading Counsel confirms that the Northern Route has significantly less problems and does not appear to be in breach of the legislative requirements relating to conservation issues. Whilst the prospect of it being called in or an Inquiry taking place cannot be ruled out, the prospects for success are in her view "radically different".

Consultations

Details of the consultation exercise carried out in 2001 and responses received are are set out in the report of the Environment Director to the Highways and Transportation Executive Committee meeting on the 6th December 2001, which is referred to in the List of Background papers below.

Advice

A summary of the advice received from Leading Counsel is set out in the body of the Report.

Technical advice from the Environment Director is contained in Appendix A.

Alternative options to be considered

N/A

Implications: e.g. Financial, Legal, Personnel, Human Rights, Crime and Disorder or Other

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial: The report at Appendix A contains Estimates of Costs, Benefits and Safety (see page 4 of the Comparison of Schemes document).

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
Report of the Environment Director - Completion of the Heysham to M6 Link	6 December 2001	Ray Worthington, Ext xxxx
Minutes of Highways & Transportation Cabinet Meeting	6 December 2001	Helen Ormerod, Ext xxxx
Minutes of Highways & Transportation Executive Committee Meeting	6 December 2001	Helen Ormerod, Ext xxxx
Minutes of Council Meeting	13 December 2001	Helen Ormerod, Ext xxxx

National Infrastructure Directorate
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 SPN

Darren Stalker

8th May, 2012

Scheme Reference Number: TR010008

Registration Identification Number:

FAO Peter Robottom

Dear Sir,

Heysham to M6 Link Road – Written Representation / Questions to the Examiner

Having had sight of the written representation presented by Michael Jacob on behalf of the Halton Residents Group (Ref), I confirm that I agree fully with all of the points and questions contained within that report. However, in addition, I would like the following points to be considered by the Examiner;

1. **Halton Conservation Area**

   In December 2009 Lancaster City Council produced a detailed appraisal of the Halton Conservation Area (available for download at http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/conservation/conservation-area-appraisals/ and also attached).

   Will the Examiner seek explanation from Lancaster City Council and Lancashire County Council on how the increase in traffic through the Halton Conservation Area as a result of the 'Halton Link' to the proposed new 'Shefferlands' roundabout complies with the relevant legislation relating to designated Conservation Areas, in particular the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and the duties and responsibilities placed on local authorities when considering any planning proposals that might affect a designated Conservation Area.

   Section 69 defines a Conservation Area as;

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

Noise and light attenuation measures – proposed new bridge over River Lune

The proposed new bridge over the River Lune is within 300m of my property.

The Lune valley through Halton already suffers from substantial noise pollution from the M6 motorway traffic, which may be the subject of future debate relating to noise attenuation measures. However, the presence of noise from the existing M6 motorway bridge should in no way relieve Lancashire County Council of its obligations relating to construction of a new road, and the acoustic properties of the existing M6 motorway bridge may well serve to amplify traffic noise from vehicles crossing the proposed new bridge, especially HGV's, in addition to an estimated further increase of 2.5 dB(A) due to the Facade level effect, as sound reflects off the surface of any properties affected, including my own (Refer Appendix 12A page 12.36 ES 6.1 Volume 1 Environmental Statement Part A – Report).

Figure 5.3.34, ES Part B Figs (05 Proposed Scheme) shows the proposed new bridge over the River Lune on an incline from south to north, with the existing M6 bridge in the background. Figure 5.3.07 and 5.3.08 shows the proposed new Torrisholme Road bridge.

2.5m acoustic barriers have been included in the design of the bridge crossing Torrisholme Road (Refer 12.6.8 ES 6.1 Volume 1 Environmental Statement Part A – Report) yet there are no proposals to install similar acoustic barriers along the new bridge section over the River Lune or along the entry and exit slip roads.

Will the Examiner therefore seek to clarify why no similar noise attenuation measures have been included in the design of the proposed new bridge over the River Lune and also investigate whether the proposals as they currently stand are compliant with all UK and EU legislation, guides and standards relating to new road construction and noise mitigation measures.

As the stated aim of the proposed link road is primarily to open up access to and from the M6 from the Heysham peninsula, and mainly HGV traffic to and from Heysham Port, Industrial Areas and the potential construction of at least one new Nuclear Power Station it is worth noting Section 5 of Volume 7 of the Highways Agency Design Manual for Roads and Bridges:

5.1 Noise from road traffic has become, over the last few years, a very contentious environmental issue. Where traffic speeds are lower than 50 km/hr, traffic noise is mainly attributable to engine, transmission and exhaust noise, **especially from lorries** [emphasis added].

Figure 5.3.33 shows an elevated view of the proposed new River Lune bridge, complete with lighting columns along the full length. Can the Examiner investigate why Lancashire County Council has not considered light pollution from these lighting columns along the River Lune and the adjacent properties, and similarly confirm if the design as it stands is in accordance with current legislation, guides and standards.

2. Route Selection

I refer to the following statement from Lancashire County Council and published on LCC website regarding selection of the Northern Route over the Western Route;

"Investigations were carried out to the same extent on both the Western Route and Northern Routes. These identified that the Western Route would have impacts on European Protected Areas and Species. These potential impacts would be in breach of European Directives. The effect of the European Directive is that projects which affect European Protected Areas may only proceed where the project will not adversely affect the integrity of the site unless there are no satisfactory alternatives and the project must be carried out for imperative reasons of over-riding public interest. In this case it cannot be said that the integrity of the sites will not be affected and as the Northern Route provides a viable alternative, there can be no over-riding public interest in promoting the Western Route.

In view of these considerations, Leading Counsel's conclusion was to regard a choice of the Western Route, "not only as extraordinary but one that was perverse on the part of the County Council" and that such a decision would be "lacking in logic and one that no reasonable planning authority properly directing itself could come to"."

Evidence provided by John Wilding on behalf of Halton Residents Group clearly supports the presence of Otters along the River Lune where the proposed new bridge is located.

The Environmental Statement contained within the Application Documents contains incorrect, misleading, and often contradictory information, especially in relation to Otters;

Clause 9.5.79 states;

"Otters were detected during the ecological surveys. The level of use is difficult to determine, but other evidence confirms that they use the River Lune on a regular basis and there is a confirmed holt further upstream near Caton. Although Otters are an internationally protected species, and may occasionally frequent the route corridor, it is considered that any populations in the area are at a relatively low level that any impacts arising due to road kill, habitat loss or disturbance will be a significant slight to moderate adverse impact."

Table 30 at Clause 9.5.80 of the Environmental Statement states that there will be an adverse impact during operation of the road resulting in Road Kill, but inexplicably considers this to be 'Reversible'.

Table 39 predicts Otters will be killed during operation of the road, although classifies the impact significance of constructing a road that it is acknowledges will kill a European Protected Species as "moderate".

Clause 9.4.140 states;

"Update Otter surveys were done in 2009 with **negative evidence of their presence**[emphasis added]. However, the Environment Agency and local residents have considerable evidence of the presence of Otters and there is a continued presumption that they are moving within the area likely to be affected and will be accommodated in the mitigation strategy. Again, there was no evidence of holts or resting areas near the crossing point on the Lune. "

No licence has been submitted as part of the Application Documents relating to Otters.

The Shadow European Protected Species Licence for Bats submitted within the Application Documentation states that demolition of Bat roosts is scheduled for late 2012. However, it also states that alternative roosting will not be provided until 2013.

Given the emphasis placed on environmental impacts by Lancashire County Council when considering the choice of route and final route selection, and in particular impacts on European Protect Species, will the Examiner seek clarification from Lancashire County Council why it has selected a route that it is clear will have a severe detrimental effect on at least two European Protected Species, and why it has mislead the public by issuing statements promoting selection of the Northern Route that suggest otherwise. Would the choice of route been the same had a more complete and accurate report been produced at that time?

I also attach the report of the Environment Director 'Completion of Heysham to M6 Link Cabinet - amended report 21', which makes clear the decision making process regarding route selection, and the legal advice received by Lancashire County Council that informed that decision.

It is also clear that this legal advice relied upon the same incomplete and confusing ADAS Report used in part in the Environmental Statement. Again, would this advice have been the same had a more complete and accurate survey and report been commissioned for both routes?

In their response dated 22nd December, 2011 to a letter from Halton residents raising concerns about the proposed road, Lancashire County Council admitted that congestion between Lancaster and Morecambe would still be a problem, and stated that this has never been the objective of the scheme. Will the Examiner ask Lancashire County Council to explain;

a. Why this has not been widely publicised by Lancashire County Council
b. How this will be overcome without construction of further roads
c. Would this problem remain if the Western Route was constructed

3. Economic Impact Report

Will the Examiner seek explanation from Lancashire County Council regarding the validity of the Economic Impact Report, particularly with regard to the original report dated 01/07/2005 which forecast growth in traffic from Heysham Port of "16% to 17% within the next 18 months and could potentially double within 5 years" i.e. 2010.

Can Lancashire County Council explain why a number of journey times have reduced since the 2005 report was produced, even without the proposed link road, and why journey times with the proposed link road have increased?

For example;

Table 5.3 Comparison of Do Minimum and Scheme Journey Times (AM Peak)

2005 EIR Report

Origin – Destination	**Do Min 2010**	**Scheme 2010**	**Difference**
White Lund - Lancaster Business Park (J34)	**16.0 mins**	6.4 mins	-9.6 minutes

2010 EIR Report

Origin – Destination	**Do Min 2014**	**Scheme 2014**	**Difference**
White Lund - Lancaster Business Park (J34)	**13.06 mins**	7.88 mins	-5.18 minutes

Can Lancashire County Council also explain the following;

2010 EIR Table 5.3 Comparison of Do Minimum and Scheme Journey Times (AM Peak)

Origin – Destination	**Do Min 2014**
Lancaster Business Park (J34) to Morecambe	13.76 minutes
Lancaster Business Park (J34) to White Lund	13.47 minutes

Difference of 0.29 minutes i.e. 17.4 seconds to travel the additional distance to Morecambe does not seem credible?

Huge significance has been placed on the Economic Impact Report by Lancashire County Council. Subject to validation of the figures contained within the latest EIR, will the Examiner request from Lancashire County Council a 'simplified' report that allows the Examiner to compare the Economic Impact of the Northern and Western Route side by side.

Summary

In conclusion, it appears that Lancashire County Council, having committed itself to promoting a link between the M6 and Heysham, abandoned the only logical and effective solution and have opted for a route that will bring minimal savings to journey times at best (Refer Economic Impact Report), and whilst possibly generating some economic benefit, will not bring about the overall benefits of the previously preferred Western Route, on the back of legal advice that relies upon a survey that is incorrect or incomplete.

Had the ADAS survey in 2001 correctly identified the negative impact on European Protected Species on the Northern Route, the Western Route could have been selected on the basis that according to the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 "*projects which affect European Protected Areas may only proceed where the project will not adversely affect the integrity of the site unless there are no satisfactory alternatives and the project must be carried out for imperative reasons of over-riding public interest*".

Clearly, had the 2001 ADAS survey correctly identified the negative impact of the Northern Route on European Protected Species, this route could not have been considered a 'satisfactory alternative'.

It is also worth noting that Morecambe Town Council does not support the Northern Route. Similarly, and although the Northern Route is supported by the incumbent MP for Morecambe (recently relocated from Leigh), the previous MP, Geraldine Smith, who grew up and lived in Morecambe did not support the Northern Route.

I was born in Morecambe, and lived and worked in and around Morecambe and Lancaster for 38 years before spending a brief period living elsewhere, returning to live in the area again in 2010. I therefore consider that I have excellent firsthand knowledge of the traffic problems in the area, unlike many of those in authority that support the scheme. During that time, Lancashire County Council has implemented many changes to the road system between Morecambe and Lancaster that have contributed significantly to the present congestion problems. It now seeks to resolve these problems by constructing a road that is wholly inadequate for its stated purpose.

In consideration of all the above points, I urge the Examiner to reject the Northern Route, or at the very least, instruct Lancashire County Council to conduct a re-examination of its application based on full and correct survey information, and properly consider alternative solutions that would deliver the social and economic benefits the area needs and deserves.

I would also like to register my interest in attending any Issue Specific or Open Floor Hearings, subject to consideration of answers given by Interested Parties to the Examiners initial questions, and in particular relating to alternative options / route selection, traffic flows and environmental / ecological issues.

Yours sincerely,

Darren Stalker

Enclosures:

- Lancaster City Council Appraisal of the Halton Conservation Area December 2009
- Environment Director 'Completion of Heysham to M6 Link Cabinet - amended report 21'

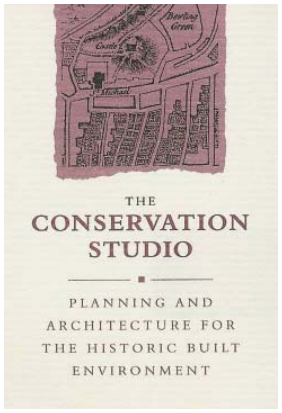
LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

HALTON

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

DECEMBER 2009



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CONTENTS

APPENDICES

Yates' map of 1786

CONSERVATION AREAS

Conservation Areas are defined as:

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

Section 69 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

There are about 9,300 conservation areas in England and Wales. The designations include the historic centres of most cities, towns and villages.

The effects of designation are:

- Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of buildings, with a few minor exceptions;
- Formal notice must be given to the local authority for six weeks before any work is undertaken to lop, top or fell any trees larger than a minimal size. This allows the Council to consider whether the tree should be preserved.
- Permitted development rights are more restricted with an Article 4 Direction;
- Local authorities must pay special attention to the preservation of the character of the conservation area when considering any planning proposals that might affect it;
- Extra publicity must be given to planning applications affecting conservation areas. This is usually achieved through advertisements in the local newspaper.

For futher information on the law and policy relating to conservation areas, please contact the Conservation Team at Lancaster City Council - see Appendix 2.

Consultation and adoption

The first draft was posted on the Council's website: *www.lancaster.gov.uk/CAAs* with hard copies made available to view at Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls.

Public consultation ran for 28 days following an initial launch at the Halton Youth and Community Centre on Wednesday 18th February 2009.

Following final amendment, the appraisal was considered by the Planning Policy Cabinet Liaison Group on 30th July 2009 and it received Management Team approval on 13th November 2009.

Final approval was given by Individual Cabinet Member Decision on the 20th November 2009 with an implementation date (following call-in period) of 4th December 2009.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Halton is a compact former agricultural and industrial settlement that is now primarily a residential community. It has seen several significant phases as a Saxon manor, a mediaeval agricultural settlement, an industrial village in the 18th and 19th centuries and, more recently, a provider of housing.

1.2 The earthworks of the castle still dominate at the centre of the village, with the nucleus of historic buildings around the much re-built church below. There is also the linear stretch of housing along High Road that includes important evidence of the agricultural economy. It is remarkable, however, that very little survives of the ironworks on Foundry Lane or of the large complex of textile mills that once occupied a half mile frontage to the River Lune.

1.3 The conservation area contains 20 listed buildings, which include high quality details, such as gatepiers, as well as significant buildings. The special historic and architectural interest of the conservation area is confirmed by the fact that almost all of the buildings along Church Brow and High Road are listed buildings or buildings of special character.

1.4 The Halton Conservation Area was first designated in 1981 by Lancashire County Council under provisions that are now contained in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This defines a conservation area as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

The Manor House, listed buiding

1.5 In response to government guidance on best practice, this appraisal defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Halton Conservation Area. These features are also marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map that accompanies this written commentary. While the descriptions go into some detail, it should not be assumed that the omission of any characteristic, such as a building, view or open space, from this appraisal means that it is not of interest.

1.6 Section 72 of the same Act 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.

1.7 This document provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Halton Conservation Area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the policies of the adopted local plan.

Summary of special interest

1.8 The special interest that justifies the designation of the Halton Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- Origins as an important Anglo-Saxon manor held by Earl Tostig, brother of King Harold;
- Earthworks of 11th century castle;
- Unplanned linear mediaeval layout along High Road and Church Brow parallel with the River Lune;
- Architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings, including 20 listed buildings;
- Major listed buildings include the Manor House, Clock House, Tower House and Townend Farm;
- Further buildings of interest include 17th century farmhouses and the Victorian St Wilfred's Hall;
- 16th century tower of St Wilfred's Church, otherwise rebuilt by E G Paley of Lancaster in 1876;
- Prevalent use of locally quarried building stone for buildings and boundary walls;
- Prosperous agricultural community in the 17th century;
- Significance of iron working in the 18th century;
- Also, major production of cotton and oilcloth in the 18th and 19th centuries;
- Influence of the railway after 1846;
- Landscape setting of the Lune valley with extensive rural views;
- Important treescape along the Lune and to the north of Castle Hill;
- Small details that help to define local identity, such as small areas of stone setts and cobbles, decorative datestones, stone gatepiers and the war memorial.

2.0 LOCATION AND SETTING

Location

2.1 Halton is located in north Lancashire, some 5km (3 miles) east of Lancaster, reached by way of Halton Road which follows the north bank of the River Lune and continues as High Road. Historically, this was the road from Lancaster to Kirby Lonsdale. It can also be reached from the A683 by Low Road which crosses the river by Penny Bridge at the Crook of Lune.

2.2 The village occupies steeply rising land on the north side of the Lune with the wooded valley of Cote Beck running northwards. It is also close to the M6 motorway which passes immediately to the west.

Boundary

2.3 The boundary of the Halton Conservation Area was drawn to include Castle Hill with St Wilfrid's Church to the south west, Foundry Lane and St Wilfrid's Hall to the north, and properties on High Road to the east. South of High Road, the boundary includes a significant belt of trees on rising land above the allotments, and then Low Road with the important buildings of Manor House and Townend Farm.

2.4 The southern boundary is the former railway line on the south bank of the River Lune from the M6 bridge up to Halton Weir.

View down Church Brow with Castle Hill to the right

2.5 The boundary has been reviewed as part of the appraisal and it is proposed that a small extension should be added on the south side of High Road to include the late 19th and early 20th century houses up to No.86.

2.6 Since the conservation area was designated, houses have been built at The Gardens on the north side of St Wilfred's Hall. The boundary now runs through these properties and it is proposed that it should be amended to follow their south side in order to address this anomaly.

2.7 The proposed boundary changes are illustrated in detail on the Townscape Appraisal Map that accompanies this written appraisal.

High Road

Topography and landscape setting

2.8 As the street names – Low Road and High Road – imply, Halton occupies a hillside as the land rises in terraces from the bank of the River Lune. This pattern is cut through by the cleft of Cote Beck running north of Castle Hill.

2.9 Historically, the village was not particularly orientated towards the river and only made use of it for industry. It was only in the 1930s that the houses built in the former gardens of Halton Hall addressed the picturesque qualities of the Lune.

2.10 Halton is just outside the boundary of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and this provides the background for dramatic views from the higher vantage points across the Lune valley. The surrounding landscape is largely lowland agriculture with a characteristic patchwork of small fields. It is an open landscape with little woodland, which makes the tree-lined Lune and Dale Wood to the west of Foundry Lane, all the more important.

2.11 Less welcome is the M6 motorway, which is a major feature that intrudes into the nearby landscape. To the north and east of the village core, there are also extensive areas of relatively modern housing.

Geology

2.12 The underlying solid geology of the area consists of carboniferous sandstone and Millstone grit, which provide the materials for buildings and boundary walls. They are overlain by the alluvium of the river valley and, on higher ground, by boulder clay and glacial till.

View across the Lune Valley

Archaeology

2.13 The discovery of a Roman 'altar' in the area indicates early settlement, but Halton's historical significance is the Anglo-Saxon manor that led to the construction of the 11th century castle. The earthworks survive, although fortification was abandoned in the 12th century when local pre-eminence passed to Lancaster. The period is also represented by the Saxon remains of the Halton Cross, which survives in the present day churchyard. Both Castle Hill and the Halton Cross are scheduled ancient monuments.

2.14 Clearly, with evidence of continuous settlement in the area of the castle for some nine centuries, it is highly likely that there are further archaeological discoveries to be made. This is particularly true for the industrial development of the 18th and 19th centuries of which so little built evidence survives.

2.15 Many of the buildings within the conservation area are themselves of archaeological interest, and are likely to retain evidence of their age, use and construction that is only likely to be uncovered during building work.

Church of St Wilfrid

3.0 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

3.1 Before the Norman Conquest, Halton was a place of considerable importance. It was at the centre of a large manor held by Earl Tostig who was the brother of King Harold. In 1086, it was assessed in the Domesday survey as six ploughlands. A ploughland being the amount that could be managed by one ploughing team, the manor would have amounted to some 600 acres.

3.2 The evidence of this importance survives in the earthworks of the 11th century castle, which retains its motte and bailey form at the centre of the village. There is also a Saxon cross, dating from the 11th century, which stands in the churchyard where it was re-erected in 1891.

3.3 After the Conquest, pre-eminence passed to Lancaster, which was preferred by Count Roger of Poitou, the new Lord of the Honour of Lancaster. As the stone keep of Lancaster Castle was built in the mid-12th century, so the fortification of Halton Castle was abandoned.

Earthworks of the 11th century castle

3.4 St Wilfrid's Church is said to pre-date the Conquest, although the earliest records date from 1190. It was extensively repaired in the 14th century, rebuilt in 1792 and again in 1876 to designs by the Lancaster architects Paley and Austin. Of the earlier work, only the tower survives, perhaps from the 16th century.

3.5 While Halton has a long history, the Victoria County History describes it as 'uneventful'. Certainly, during the post-mediaeval period, the lords of the manor and the rectors were largely absent, leaving Halton to a quiet rural existence. This no doubt suited the Carus family who acquired the manor in the 17th century and were investigated as recusant Catholics.

3.6 Christopher Carus was regarded as a Jacobite in 1690 and when the Jacobite army reached Kirby Lonsdale in 1715, it is said that 'Esquire Carus and his two sons, Thomas and Christopher, all Papists, who lived at Halton Hall, joined them and gave information of the unprepared state of Lancaster.'

3.7 The 17th century was evidently not without prosperity. Townend Farmhouse (1672), Field Cottage (1679) and the Manor House (1695) are typical of substantial properties built during the period.

3.8 In 1748, the manor was acquired by William Bradshaw and it remained in the family for almost a century. The substantial Bradshaw mausoleum was built on the north side of the church in 1775, although the church was probably smaller then.

Bradshaw mausoleum

Mill workers' housing in Low Road

3.9 The rural character of Halton changed in the mid-18th century in response to the industrial revolution. In 1753, a blast furnace and foundry were established in what is now Foundry Lane. This later became a bobbin mill but now there is little evidence of industry in the wooded valley of the Cote Beck other than the names of properties, such as Furnace Cottage.

3.10 The Lune had already been used to power a corn mill, but in the late 18th century, a cotton mill was opened and this was the start of a large industrial complex that stretched along half a mile of the river bank. It was powered by a mill race that ran parallel with the river from Forge Weir to Halton Bridge driving large undershot waterwheels. By 1826 there were several mill buildings and twelve cottages.

3.11 The first edition of the Ordnance Survey shows a flour mill, a cotton factory and, importantly, a gasometer – The introduction of gas lighting enabled round-the-clock shift work.

3.12 In 1848, a railway was built along the south side of the Lune and the station and a large goods-shed that served Halton still survive. They were not directly connected to the village, however, until the construction of Halton Bridge in 1913.

3.14 The mills were one of the largest industrial developments in the Lune Valley. In 1817, they even attracted investment by Samuel Gregg, famous for his Quarry Bank cotton mills at Styal. The mills continued to develop, adding a brick chimney and boiler house for steam power, and lasted well into the 20th century. The complex survived the often precarious economics of the area by adapting to produce oilcloth, leathercloth and latterly coconut matting. Most of the buildings survived until the 1980s, but now there is very little evidence other than, again, the streetnames: Mill Lane and Forge Lane.

3.15 The effect of industrialisation on the village was the construction of houses in High Road and Low Road in addition to those that were built on the mill sites. An early example of the terraced form associated with industrial growth can be seen behind Nos.21-25 High Road. The population of Halton, which had been 776 in 1811, peaked at 1027 in 1821. After that a slow decline in manufacturing set in.

3.16 The 20th century saw the intensification of housing within the historic village. The 1930s villas built in the former gardens of Halton Hall were the first to exploit the picturesque qualities of the river while Riverside Close continued the colonisation of the river margins. Since the 1950s and '60s, larger housing developments have added considerably to the north and east of the village as travel to Lancaster became easier. Between 1951 and 1971, the population rose again by 150%.

Halton Bridge

4.0 THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Townscape analysis

4.1 The historic route through Halton follows the line of Church Brow and High Road. The centre is dominated by the presence of Castle Hill. Clustered below it, St Wilfrid's Church, the site of the former Halton Hall and the White Lion Hotel are the legacy of the early settlement.

4.2 Development was historically sporadic along the linear form to suit farming practice. The spaces between the farmhouses were gradually infilled with small groups and then terraces of houses. On High Road, the houses are all on the north side to start with, as the land falls away steeply to the south precluding development. The exception is the Old School, which makes the most of a landmark position. As High Road curves uphill, it becomes possible to build on both sides, first with the former Police Station and the congregational Chapel, and then with housing.

4.3 Low Road connects Halton to the Penny Bridge at the Crook of Lune, which was, historically, the first crossing point above Lancaster. It is punctuated particularly by the imposing Manor House and Townend Farm, which form a pinch point at the entrance to the village.

4.4 Buildings do not exceed two storeys and roof pitches tend to run parallel with the street frontages. However, actual building heights are varied and enliven the townscape.

4.5 Gaps in the built form are the result of farming practices that came right into the village or of the steep and undevelopable topography. This has resulted in a very informal appearance of buildings that often do not address the line of the street directly. By contrast, the terraces are more formal, generally set back behind small front gardens. The earlier rows on Low Road are built to the back of the pavement and this will be indicative of the industrial housing that no longer survives.

Focal points, views and vistas

4.6 These are shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map. The steep slope and strategic location of Halton afford wide ranging views across the landscape of the Lune Valley. This can be appreciated particularly from Foundry Lane above Castle Hill and from High Road.

4.7 The picturesque qualities of the river can be appreciated from Halton Bridge upstream from which is Halton Weir were a variety of water birds tend to congregate. From the south bank, there are good views to the Boat House and the riverside villas below Church Brow.

4.8 Within the village, the sinuous nature of the streets means that views tend to unfold particularly as Church Brow winds round St Wilfrid's Church and Castle Hill. However, views down High Road bring the church tower and the War Memorial into prominence.

4.9 The conservation area's most distinctive and representative views are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map. These are:

A – Views from Foundry Lane across the Lune Valley.

B – Views from High Road across the Lune Valley.

C – Views along the Lune from Halton Bridge.

D – Views of the village from the south bank of the river.

Current activities and uses

4.10 Halton has been significant as an administrative centre with its castle, as an agricultural centre and as a focus for industry, but these functions have ceased and the Halton Conservation Area is now largely residential.

4.11 Many buildings are no longer in their original use. The barn and stables to the former Halton Hall are now part of the Tower House, St Wilfred's Hall is a nursing home, the farm buildings at Townend farm are being converted for residential use, and the barn Houghton Court is now a Roman Catholic chapel.

4.12 The conservation area also includes St Wilfrid's Church and its extensive churchyard, the Congregational Chapel, two public houses, a butcher's shop and a garage.

The White Lion Hotel

High Road

4.13 On the south side of the river, the former railway line is now a pathway that is popular with walkers and cyclists exploring the Lune Valley.

4.14 Traffic is generally light, although there is a significant amount of through traffic that follows Foundry lane and Low Road in order to cut across to Penny Bridge. High Road is often lined with parked cars.

Significant open spaces, landscape and trees

4.15 The boundary of the conservation has been drawn to include the historic buildings of the village and areas of its industrial legacy. This includes the significant area of Castle Hill and the churchyard below.

4.16 Dale Wood in the valley created by Cote Beck to the west of Foundry Lane is an important woodland resource that masks the archaeology of the 18th century ironworking. This is reciprocated by the extensive grounds of St Wilfrid's Hall on the east side of Foundry Lane.

4.17 There are grassed open spaces on the south side of High Road, either side of the Old School. A further space including the walled paddock beside Townend Farm enables the 17th century farmhouse and surrounding barns to be appreciated.

4.18 There are important stands of trees on rising ground above the allotments along Low Road and along the south bank of the Lune. A line of beeches creates a skyline above Church Brow opposite the riverside villas, while a group of cedars line the north bank of the river on the other side of them. Significant trees or tree groups are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map. However, lack of a specific reference does not imply that a tree or group is not of value.

Boundaries

4.19 The area is notable for the variety of stone boundary walls. These range from rubble field walls to formal walls of cut and squared stone often necessary as retaining walls in the sloping landscape. The churchyard has particular examples.

4.20 There are also notable stone garden walls with stone gatepiers. The best of the gatepiers are sufficiently important to warrant statutory listing and, in the case of Halton Hall, they are all that remains of the earlier building, other than the east wing and elements of Manor Lodge.

4.21 The gatepiers to the churchyard and to the former Halton Hall still have their iron gates. The lychgate to the churchyard, while relatively recent, provides a suitably formal entrance.

Public realm: floorscape, street lighting and street furniture

4.22 In general, the streets of Halton are of tarmac, which is a natural successor to the vernacular metalled surfaces that would have preceded them. They are lined with pavements, also of tarmac, with granite or sandstone kerbs.

4.23 A major exception is outside the Manor House where a setted entrance and yard survive with wide granite kerbs and a pavement of river cobbles. While these surfaces may have been re-laid, they do give a flavour of materials and detailing that would have been more widespread in the past.

4.34 Street furniture is scarce as befits the functional nature of a rural settlement. Street lights, in the form of slender steel columns, are sparsely used. A short cast iron column with a Windsor lantern survives on a gatepier to the south of the church.

4.35 The main area of seating is in the Jubilee Garden adjacent to the War Memorial.

5.0 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Materials, styles and detailing

5.1 The ample supply of local sandstone means that it is the most prevalent building material, used almost exclusively for walling of buildings up to the 20th century and for boundary walls. Stonework ranges from the finely detailed ashlar of Nos.21-25 High Road, to more roughly dressed but still squared stones, and those of coursed or uncoursed rubble construction. The stone is normally left exposed but examples of a local tradition of 'slobbering' (i.e. the application of an uneven render to a rubblestone surface, nowadays often painted white) can be seen in, for instance Rectory Cottages.

5.2 Early roofs were probably of stone slabs, but these are less common now since the railway age brought plentiful slate from Wales. St Wilfrid's Church has a clay-tiled roof, which is characteristic of the work of Paley and Austin.

5.3 Buildings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries were built in the local vernacular tradition i.e. by local people using readily available materials and constructed with locally known practices of stone building and roofing. These buildings do not conform to a uniform architectural style, although features, such as mullioned windows with drip mouldings, gables with kneelers and copings, and ornate datestones, are common.

Ornate datestone

5.4 From the mid-18th century onwards, a degree of formality and classical detailing enters the village. Typical of this are the Clock House, the gatepiers to the former Halton Hall and the Bradshaw Mausoleum. The stone tradition continued in the 19th century with houses that have symmetrical frontages with doors in the middle bay. These were the homes of the new businessmen. The Victorians also revived historical styles, for instance with the return to mullioned windows at St Wilfrid's Hall and, indeed, the 14th century styling of the rebuilt church.

5.5 The industrialisation of the 19th century also saw the introduction of the terrace to house artisan workers. Earlier examples are Nos.45-55 High Road and 19-33 Low Road. Towards the end of the 19th century, terraces were enlivened with dormers and bay windows as at Nos.39-41 and Nos.22-54 High Road. The poorest houses were built back-to-back, but none of these survive.

5.6 Most buildings are plain with plain squared door and window surrounds. Earlier buildings may have chamfered stone mullions in their windows, or traces of their having been removed. Small paned side-hung casement windows would once have been common but many have been replaced. From the early 19th century most buildings have vertical sliding sashes and heavily moulded four-panelled doors.

5.7 A highly distinctive detail in Low Road are the cast iron rainwater downpipes with their decorative barley-sugar twist pattern. Were these a product of the local foundry?

Clock House

5.8 Chimneys are a feature of the old buildings. The changing levels of Halton give plenty of opportunities to appreciate the lively roofscape of chimney stacks, pots and gables. A number of fine date stones exist in the village, some in distinctive 'Lune Valley' style, with a stepped or castellated outline.

5.9 In the 20th century building styles became more universal and, although the 1930s riverside villas are distinctive because of the location and layout, they use imported designs and the smooth rendered finish made popular by the International Modern style.

Listed heritage assets

5.10 A listed heritage asset is a one that is included on the Government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings and structures are protected by law, as are all structures within the curtilage of the main structure, and consent is required before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Listed heritage assets are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map. Most are late 17th to late 19th century in origin and many have date stones, as well as other features, such as doorcases, staircases, fireplaces, windows or roof trusses that are typical of their period. These are:

• Church of St Wilfrid, Church Brow	Grade II
• Sundial, SE of St Wilfrid's Church porch, Church Brow	Grade II
• Bradshaw Mausoleum, Halton Churchyard, Church Brow	Grade II
• Gatepiers to former Halton Hall, Church Brow	Grade II
• Archway to former Halton Hall, Church Brow	Grade II
• Clock House and flanking walls, Church Brow	Grade II
• The Boat House, Church Brow	Grade II
• Tower House, former stables and barn, Church Brow	Grade II
• Gatepiers and gates to churchyard, Church Street	Grade II
• No.1 Rectory Cottages, Foundry Lane	Grade II
• No.2 Rectory Cottages, Foundry Lane	Grade II
• Millers Farmhouse, 79 High Road	Grade II
• Field Cottage, 89 High Road	Grade II
• Barn 30m north of Pedders Farm, High Road	Grade II
• Lime Tree House, 111 High Road	Grade II

• Town End Farmhouse, Low Road	Grade II
• Farm building east of Town End Farmhouse, Low Road	Grade II
• Manor House, Low Road	Grade II*
• Gatepiers west of Manor House, Low Road	Grade II
• White Lion Hotel and coach house, Church Brow	Grade II
• Gatepiers to churchyard south of St Wilfrid's Church	Grade II

Significant unlisted buildings

5.11 A number of unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map as being of 'special character'. These are buildings which, although not statutorily listed, make a positive contribution to the area.

5.12 The 'special character' buildings vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provide the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Historic buildings are normally included under this heading unless they have been so heavily altered that the changes are irreversible and restoration would be impractical. Historic field boundaries are also generally regarded as positive.

5.13 Notable examples of buildings of special character are: St Wilfrid's Hall, the Congregational Chapel of 1898, the War Memorial, the Old School, the railway station platform and goods shed, and Halton Bridge (1913).

6.0 NEGATIVE FEATURES AND ISSUES

Loss of original windows and doors

6.1 Some house owners have replaced original timber windows with uPVC alternatives. A number of the historic buildings within the conservation area also display timber door and window joinery which has been finished with stains or varnishes rather than traditional paint. There are also examples of the use of anachronistic styles, such as 'Georgian' style doors in 19th-century cottages. These non-traditional doors and windows severely erode the appearance and character of historic buildings, to the detriment of the special interest of the conservation area.

Alterations to door and window openings

6.2 In some cases, door and window openings have been altered, for example to create large wide windows in place of taller narrow ones. There are also instances where buildings have been extended in a manner which does not reflect the traditional design of the area's buildings, or that uses non-traditional construction materials. All of these have the effect of detracting from the original character of the host buildings.

Modern alterations

Satellite dishes

Modern installations: satellite dishes, rooflights, and alarm boxes

6.3 There are a number of instances where accretions such as satellite dishes and alarm boxes have been made on the elevations or chimney stacks of the historic buildings or where drainage pipes have been inserted in prominent positions, or rooflights inserted into the principal roofslope.

Loss and alteration of traditional stone boundary walls

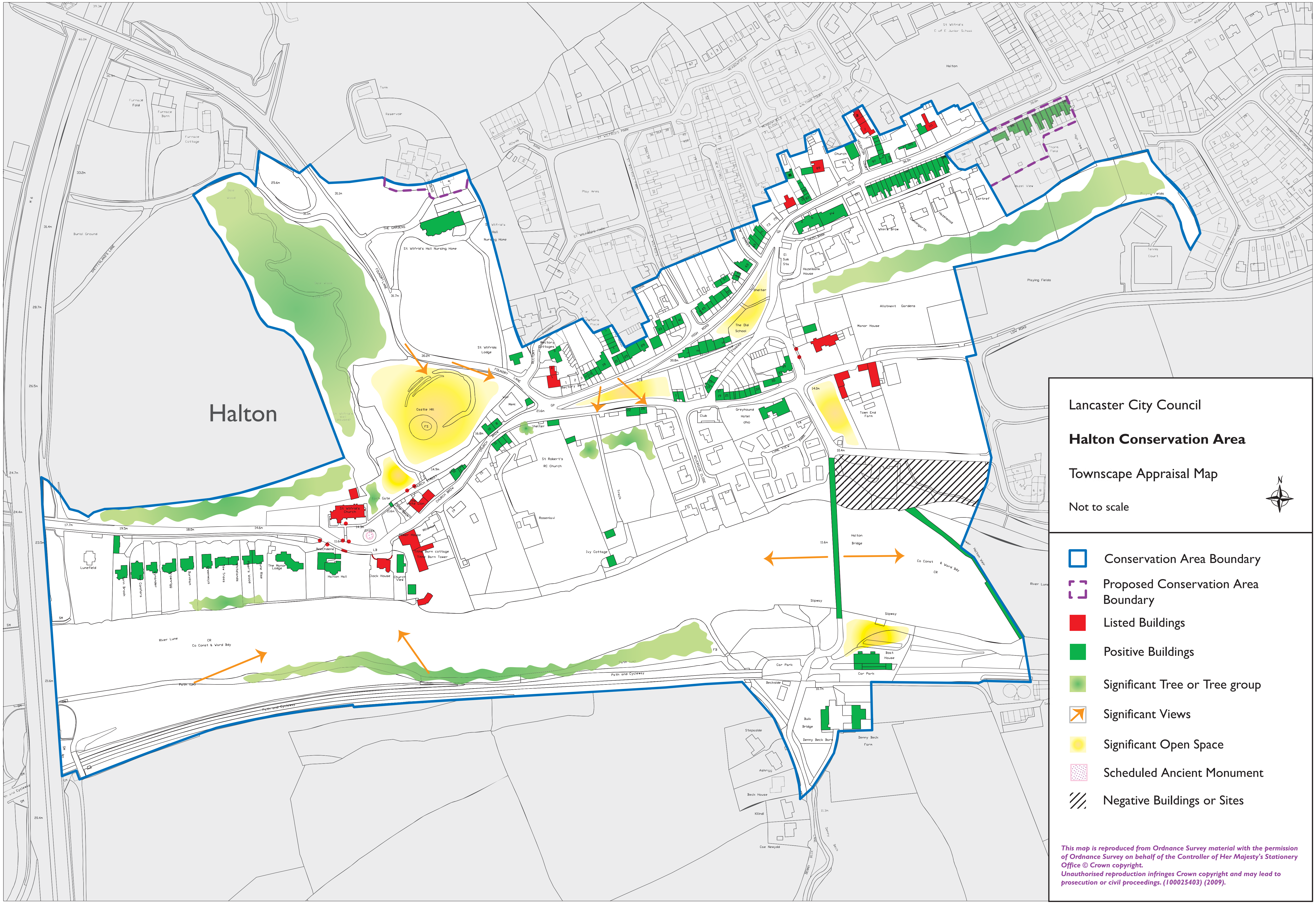
6.4 Stone boundary walls are an attractive feature of the conservation area and are generally well maintained throughout the settlement. There is an occasional loss of sections of walling through lack of maintenance and this loss detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Buildings at Risk

6.5 Building condition in the conservation area is generally good. However, the White Lion and adjacent coach house, listed grade II, are currently vacant and at risk of decay. The property above the White Lion, between Church Brow and Church Lane, is significantly dilapidated and the retaining wall (originally the frontage of workers' cottages) is at risk of collapse.

Development

6.6 Permission was granted on appeal for a 3/4 storey building on the former mill site adjacent to Halton Bridge. There may still be an opportunity to seek a more appropriate development on this key gateway site.


Lancaster City Council
Halton Conservation Area
Townscape Appraisal Map
Not to scale
N
Conservation Area Boundary
Proposed Conservation Area Boundary
Listed Buildings
Positive Buildings
Significant Tree or Tree group
Significant Views
Significant Open Space
Scheduled Ancient Monument
Negative Buildings or Sites
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Halton
M 6
Furnace Fold
Furnace Barn
Furnace Cottage
Burial Ground
Shefferland's Lane
Tank
Reservoir
The Gardens
St Wilfrid's Hall Nursing Home
Foundry Lane
St Wilfrids Lodge
Castle Hill
FS
Dale Wood
St Wilfrid's Park
Rowan Bank
Play Area
Meadowfield
Meadowfield Close
Waltham Court
New Street
Pine Close
Victoria Place
Paddock
Rectory Cottages
Rectory Barn
Rectory
Houghton Court
Church
High Road
Hazelbank
Hazelbank House
Whin's Brow
Conningarth
Hazelwood
Cartref
Hazel View
Thorn Field
High View
St Wilfrid's C of E Junior School
Playing Fields
Hall
Tennis Court
Thursgill Drive
Cleu Gha Avenue
Little Fell Avenue
Low Road
Allotment Gardens
Manor House
Town End Farm
The Old School
Shelter
The Stables
War Meml
Greyhound Hotel (PH)
Club
Lune View Park
Riverside Close
St Robert's RC Church
Rosenlavi
Ivy Cottage
Track
Church Brow
Church Street
The White Lion
Lych Gate
St Wilfrid's Church
Cross
Beechdene
Tower House
Millenium
Tithe Barn cottage
Tithe Barn Tower
Clock House
Church View
Halton Hall
The Manor Lodge
Lunefield
Tarn Brook
The Conifers
Wynander
Brownrigg
Burnham
Greenways
Yew Trees
Whitelands
Piper's Wood
Lune Rise
River Lune
Co Const & Ward Bdy
Path (um)
Path and Cycleway
Halton Bridge
Slipway
Boat House
Car Park
Beckside
Bulk Bridge
Denny Beck Barn
Denny Beck Farm
Stepaside
Ashrigg
Beck House
Kilindi
Cae Newydd
Denny Beck Lane
Denny Beck
Lower Halton Weir

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

Appraisal	Assessment of the special qualities of the area
Carboniferous	Geological term for part of the Palaeozoic era about 290-350 million years ago. This is the period that produced coal measures as well as limestone and sandstone
Conservation area	Defined in the Planning Acts as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' Conservation areas are designated by the local planning authority
Enhancement	Actions to improve the qualities of, for instance, a conservation area
Floorscape	Surface materials, such as paving or tarmac
Georgian	Historical and stylistic period relating to the reigns of King George I-IV (1714-1830)
Heritage assets	Products of history that have cultural value. They include historic buildings and structures, historic gardens, landscapes and townscapes
Listed buildings	Defined in the Planning Acts as 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest' that are included on a list published by the government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of English Heritage
Medieval	Historical period of the middle ages. In England, this is commonly taken to be from the Norman Conquest of 1066 to the Reformation of 1533
Millstone Grit	Geological term for a particularly hard, but coarse-grained, sandstone
Negative building	A building that detracts from the character of a conservation area to the extent that it would be preferable for it to be demolished or redeveloped. Negative issues can often be seen as opportunities
Nucleated village	Dense, tightly-defined settlement. The opposite of a dispersed settlement
Positive building	A building that makes a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area. Government policy includes a presumption that positive buildings will be retained. All listed buildings are considered to be positive. Further buildings which, although not listed, are considered to be positive are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map includes with each conservation area appraisal
Public realm	Areas to which the public has general access. These include the public highway, public footpaths and public open space
Rubblestone	Unfinished stone used for building. Squared rubblestone is laid in courses but still has a rough face
Saxon	Historical period between the end of Roman rule in 410 and the Norman Conquest in 1066
Slobbered	Uneven lime render applied to the rough surface of rubblestone walling
Topography	The arrangement of physical features in the local landscape
Townscape	The relationship of buildings and spaces in an urban landscape
Turnpike	Toll roads of the 18th and 19th centuries
Victorian	Historical and stylistic period relating to the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901)

APPENDIX 2: FURTHER INFORMATION

The Conservation Team at Lancaster City Council are always interested in receiving further information or updates in relation to conservation areas. They can also give advice on the repair and maintenance of historic buildings and on the management of conservation areas:

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Email: planningpolicy@lancaster.gov.uk

APPENDIX 3: REFERENCES

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Ed Farrer and Brownhill – *A History of the County of Lancaster: Vol 8* – Victoria County History 1914

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www.british-history.ac.uk

www.heritagegateway.org.uk

www.lancaster.gov.uk