

# INCE

## CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



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## Section 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Designation of Ince Conservation Area

Ince Conservation Area was designated as a Conservation Area by Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council on 28/12/1969. A Character Appraisal was prepared in 2004 and adopted on 14/9/04. The boundaries were reviewed at this time and amended to include Kinsey's Lane and two farmsteads northwest of the settlement. Ince Conservation Area, which is washed over by Green Belt, lies within the civil parish of Ince, now within the unitary planning authority of Cheshire West and Chester. The Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and, as part of this process, commissioned a review and updating of the appraisal.



### 1.2 Definition of a Conservation Area

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.<sup>1</sup> Designation takes place primarily by local planning authorities under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Local planning authorities also have a duty from time to time to review the extent of designation and to designate further areas if appropriate.<sup>2</sup> Section 71 of the Act imposes a duty on the local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Proposals should be publicised and incorporate public comment.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 69 (1) (a) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Section 69 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conservation area designation recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole. It is not just the contribution of individual buildings and monuments, but also the contribution of features such as topography, layout of roads, pathways and property boundary treatments, street furniture, open spaces and hard and soft landscaping which assist in defining the character and appearance of an area. Conservation areas identify the familiar and cherished local scene that creates a sense of place, community, distinctiveness and environment.

### **1.3 Content of Ince Conservation Area Appraisal**

A Conservation Area Appraisal serves more than one audience and this affects both content and presentation. Its primary purpose is to support both the Parish Council and the local planning authority in developing appropriate policies for the management of the Conservation Area in order “to preserve or enhance its special interest”. Consequently, it opens with a summary of the relevant legislation and planning framework. Readers who are more interested in Ince itself could go straight to Section 3 which aims to answer the question, what makes Ince special? Section 4 then provides a much more detailed description of Ince – its location, historical development, its buildings and predominant architectural styles, its landscape and character. This also provides the local authorities with a detailed picture of what they are seeking to preserve or enhance, where there may be points to address and whether it might be appropriate to alter the boundaries of the Conservation Area. The content results from an extended period of collaboration between the analysts and members of the local community.

### **1.4 Value of Conservation Area Appraisals**

The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the need for local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Local planning authorities are required to define and record the special characteristics of heritage assets within their area. This appraisal fulfills the statutory duty placed on the local planning authority ‘to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.’<sup>3</sup>

Conservation areas may be affected by direct physical change or by changes in their setting. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which applications can be considered. The appraisal is the vehicle for understanding both the significance of an area and the effect of those impacts bearing negatively on its significance. It will form part of the local planning authority’s Historic Environment Record and will be part of the evidence base for the local plan and a material consideration in planning decisions.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of the Appraisal is, in accordance with the methodology recommended by Historic England,<sup>5</sup> to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Ince Conservation Area, including the landscape character, views and setting. The methodology also includes a review of the boundaries and identification of any issues which may be putting the special interest at risk. This Appraisal might then contribute to the preparation of a Management Plan which would set out suggested actions to preserve or enhance the special character of the area. Such a document would support the active management of the Conservation Area through the development control process, including support for appeals.

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<sup>3</sup> Section 71 (1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Historic England, *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, Advice Note 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (London: Historic England, 2019) 5, para 10.

The undertaking of an appraisal will lead to a better understanding of the development of the conservation area, in terms of its local distinctiveness, setting and condition, which together contribute to the place it is today. This will enable the basis for positive management of the conservation area.

An adopted conservation area appraisal is a material consideration to prepare, evaluate and appeal decisions on planning applications and is also relevant to decisions made by the Secretary of State when considering urgent works to preserve an unlisted building in a conservation area. An appraisal can inform those considering investment in the area, help guide the form and content of new development<sup>6</sup> and result in an educational and informative document for the local community.<sup>7</sup>

The Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GPDO) sets out permitted development rights for certain minor forms of development - i.e. development that may be legitimately undertaken without the need for planning permission. An appraisal can assess whether permitted development rights are having an adverse impact on the special interest of a conservation area and whether or not the use of an Article 4 direction is appropriate.

This Appraisal will provide a character assessment of the present Ince Conservation Area and adjacent areas. The document will seek: to identify those factors resulting in adverse harm to the special interest of the conservation area; to identify whether cumulative change is an issue and whether it might be addressed through Article 4 directions; and to assess if statutory action is required to safeguard significant buildings at risk. A review of existing boundaries has also been undertaken to determine if areas should be included or removed from the designation; this discussion is found in Section 5. Consequentially the document will provide background evidence for accessing the acceptability of development proposals.

## **1.5 Scope of the Appraisal**

This document is not intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. Omission of any specific building, structure, site, landscape, space, feature or aspect located in or adjoining to the Ince Conservation Area should not be taken to imply that it does not hold significance and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the designated heritage asset.

As an area evolves evidence may emerge which provides a greater understanding of a heritage asset(s) and the contribution made to the special interest of the Ince Conservation Area. Such information should be considered in conjunction with the appraisal during the course of decision making by the local planning authority.

The positive characteristics as defined by this document should be the starting point for further discussion with the local planning authority where alterations are being considered to or will affect a heritage asset(s).

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 5 para 12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 8 para 18.

## Section 2 The Planning Policy Context

### 2.1 Planning Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework provide the legislative and national policy framework for Conservation Area appraisals and management plans. The NPPF (paragraph 190) states:<sup>8</sup>

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.

This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

NPPF (Annex 2) defines a heritage asset as: 'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).' The guidance also states that a designated heritage asset is one that is classed as 'A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park or Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.'<sup>9</sup> A non-designated heritage asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance that is not protected under legislative framework.

Ince Parish Council has Civil Parish status within the Cheshire West and Chester unitary authority area; the local authority is Cheshire West Council, which replaced Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council in 2009. Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part One (Strategic Policies) was adopted on 29/1/15; Part Two (Land Allocations and Detailed Policies) was adopted by the Council on 18/7/2019. Strategic Objective S03 states, 'In rural areas, support farming, agriculture and diversification of the rural economy whilst ensuring development is of an appropriate scale and character.' This is amplified in Spatial Strategy STRAT8 on the Rural Area, STRAT9 on Green Belt and the Countryside and ENV5 on the Historic Environment.

### 2.2 Conservation Area Policy Guidance

This appraisal was undertaken consulting guidance provided by Historic England in the subsequent documents;

- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments, 2017
- Streets for All, 2018
- Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets
- Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment, 2018
- Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, Advice Note 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2019

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<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (July 2021) para 190.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (July 2021) Annex 2.

The Historic England document Statements of Heritage Significance, published in 2019, provides policies and guidance for identifying significance. Three heritage values are assigned through which a site or place can be interpreted; archaeological interest, architectural and artistic interest, and historic interest.

Further guidance has been issued by Historic England in the suite of documents Understanding Place with a view to setting out approaches to undertake assessments of historic areas allowing a greater understanding of the character of a place and its capacity for change. In particular 'Understanding Place - Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice stresses the importance in 'identifying and understanding particular qualities, and what these add to our lives, is central to our engagement with our history and culture.' As referenced in Understanding Place - Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice, Power of Place published by Historic England, 'stressed the positive impact of local and 'ordinary' heritage – what might be termed the buildings and spaces in between 'monuments' – on the quality of people's lives and its central role in constructing local identity.'

In addition, consultation of the Historic Environment Record for Ince, maintained by the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service (CAPAS).

The proposals set out by this appraisal shall undergo a period of public consultation and will be submitted for consideration at a public meeting in the area to which they relate.<sup>10</sup> The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting<sup>11</sup> or during the period of consultation.

### **2.3 Control Measures Brought About by Designation**

In determining applications for development in conservation areas, local planning authorities must pay special attention 'to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'<sup>12</sup> This requirement, as set out in legislation, is also reflected in national and local policy.

In order to protect and enhance conservation areas any changes that take place must do so in a way that encourages positive conservation and management. Statutory control measures are designed to prevent development that may have a negative or cumulative effect on the character and appearance of an area and include the following;

- Planning permission is required to totally or substantially demolish buildings or structures within a conservation area.
- The extent of 'permitted' development is reduced, such as cladding, extensions to the side of the original dwelling, dormer windows or the installation of satellite dishes. Further control measures such as Article 4 directions may be placed upon an area (the introduction of such controls is the subject of consultation with owners to establish support). These may be served to protect elements such as windows, doors, chimneys boundary walls and gate posts and restrict certain types of extensions.
- Any works to prune or fell any protected trees requires the written consent of the Local Planning Authority. In the case of all other trees or shrubs over 75mm in trunk diameter, six weeks written notice is required to allow consideration for protection. Should a tree be felled, a replacement is usually required.
- Restrictions apply regarding the type and size of advertisements that can be erected without advertisement consent.

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<sup>10</sup> Section 71 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

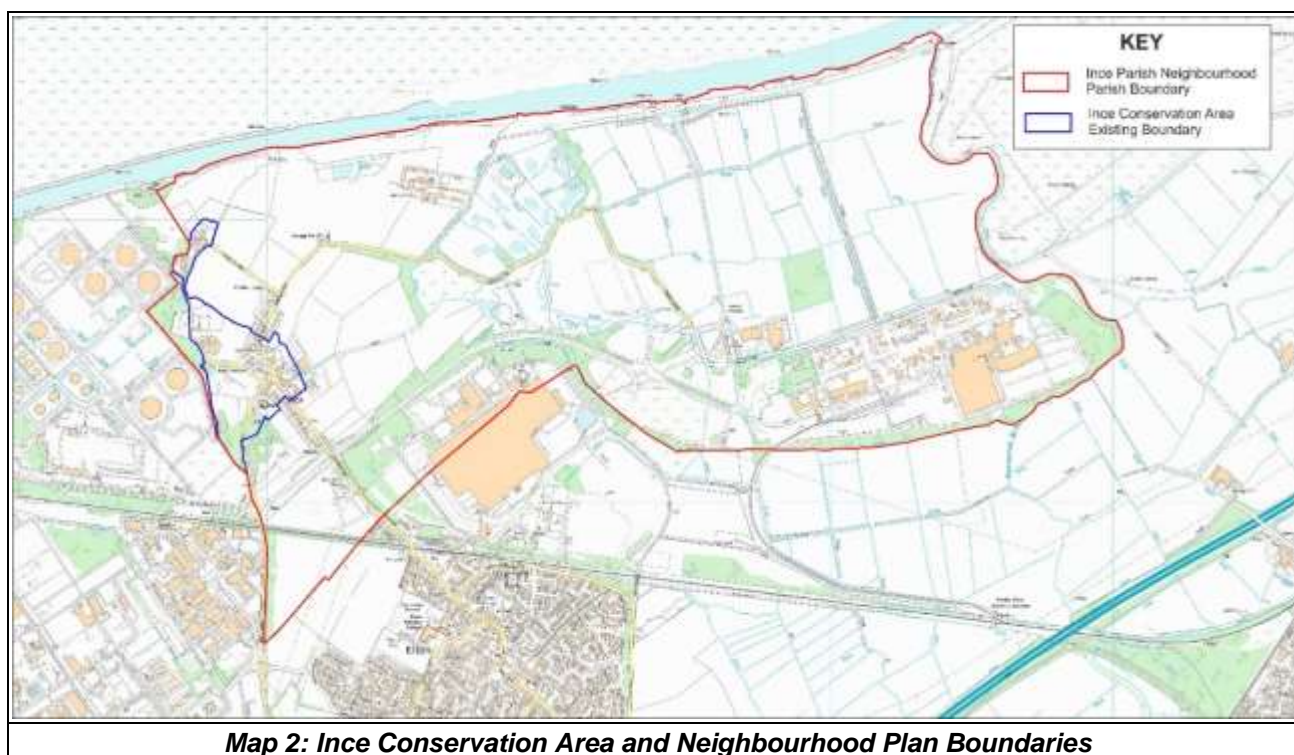
<sup>11</sup> Section 71 (3) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>12</sup> Section 72 (1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



## 2.4 Ince Neighbourhood Plan

Following the Parish Council's decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in 2018, a community meeting was held in 2019 to establish support and invite participation in the Steering Group and associated sub-groups (including Heritage, Green Spaces and Wildlife). With the support of Cheshire West, reports and proposals are in development, of this Conservation Area Appraisal is one. Although its analysis and proposals relate to the Conservation Area itself, inevitably much can be applied to the wider Neighbourhood Plan area and the heritage assets of the wider area have been reviewed by the author, for input into the Neighbourhood Plan Heritage Audit. Similarly, there is overlap in the areas of green spaces, public spaces and footpaths, as well as views, which are covered both in the Conservation Area Appraisal and in separate documents prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan.





## Section 3 Summary of Special Interest

Ince Conservation Area appears today as a small but active agricultural village retaining many historic buildings and attracting recreational users on foot, horseback and bicycles for its landscape and biodiversity. Surrounded by fields and marshes, its setting is inseparable from the views and open space of the Mersey, notwithstanding the encroachment of industry and development. Yet Ince has been a place of recurring historic significance and transformation throughout its long history, with structures and buildings testifying to each chapter: Roman maritime defence; medieval monastic institutions; Georgian promotion of transport, fishing, recreational activities and links with Liverpool; the 19<sup>th</sup> century transformation of the village by the Park-Yates family and estate as well as by the Manchester Ship Canal; and the 20<sup>th</sup> century impact of the decline of landed estates, of war, technology and changing agricultural practices. The special interest of Ince derives as much from the diversity of its history and architecture, as from its estuarial landscape and views.

The special interest of the Conservation Area derives from the following elements:

- **The layers of historical development expressed in the buildings and structures of Ince, which reflect distinct and important chapters. Each contributes to Ince's special interest in a different way, rather than the character being primarily derived from one period.** A rare Roman fortlet, a Scheduled Ancient Monument recently identified and excavated lies just to the north of the Conservation Area. The medieval importance of Ince, shown in the imposing buildings of the monastic grange and bishop's residence, was abruptly curtailed by the Reformation and dissolution of the monasteries. However, its subsequent character as a modest rural farming and fishing community was altered at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with its new role as a bathing resort and enhanced ferry route, reflected in the layout and architecture of The Square. The expansion of Ince Hall and Park later in the century, effectively gave Ince the character of an estate village, with village and estate lives closely connected. Today the gates, lodges and walls still testify to its former presence. The construction of the Manchester Ship Canal caused a short-term abrupt change which has left only a memorial in terms of the built environment of the Conservation Area, but a permanent alteration to the setting. The 20<sup>th</sup> century sale and demolition of Ince Hall, and replacement with industrial plant ended the identity of estate village, returning the character to that of a rural farming community, with a parallel but separate industrial neighbour.
- **Its historical association with a number of institutions and people, including St. Werburgh's Abbey/Chester Cathedral, the Park-Yates family and the Manchester Ship Canal.** As an ecclesiastical holding for some 600 years, Ince Manor illustrates the role and development of monastic granges as well as providing well-preserved physical evidence, acknowledged by the Grade 1 listing of the buildings which are also a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The Park-Yates family transformed Ince during the 19<sup>th</sup> century firstly through the embankment of the river, construction of a new pier, bathing and hotel accommodation and The Square and draining of the marshes and secondly through the construction of Ince Hall and Park which became a major source of employment and the family's involvement in and support of village institutions, including the rebuilding of the church and much of the finance for the school. The Manchester Ship Canal's construction temporarily caused Ince's population to swell from 300 to 3,000 and the victims of its most serious accident are buried in the churchyard; it also contributed to the decline of fishing which had been a staple occupation for centuries.
- **The historic character and landscape setting of the settlement, combining both the Mersey estuary and surrounding fields and marshland, which embody the historic roots of the farming and fishing community.** The Conservation Area is characterised both by its historic farms and ongoing farming activities and by its views across and links to the river, including ferries, fishing, bathing and the ship canal. While the landscape has been altered through the industrial elements of the refinery, these are screened and subordinate to the green setting and the sense of space and open sky. Today links to the Mersey and canal traffic are reduced but recreational use and appreciation of the coastal fringe and its views are important. This character of an agricultural community has been under threat in recent decades both through the sale of land and its use, actually or potentially, for purposes other than agriculture, as well as the closure and consolidation of working farms. Of the 10 business in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, now only 2 remain.
- **The well-preserved vernacular architecture, the prevalence and widespread use of the local sandstone, as well as the designed buildings of architectural and historic interest.** The sandstone bedrock is visible in many locations throughout the Conservation Area and constitutes

the primary building material for the medieval and post-medieval buildings and walls. Both its colour and the large weathered coursed stones characterise the monastic remains and church, the vernacular farm buildings and cottages. Although the later 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are mainly brick and include the polite Georgian architecture of The Square, their colour is similar, contributing to the homogenous character. Ince contains an unusually large number of listed buildings and structures.

- **The undulating open spaces both at the heart of the Conservation Area and on its fringe, which contribute to the setting of the buildings and frame views into and out of the Conservation Area; the green fringe emphasise its separate and distinct identity.** The Churchyard is not just the setting for the church but provides an important view to the south across the historic glebe land towards Helsby and the sandstone ridge. Both from The Square and also north along Marsh Lane there are views towards Runcorn with its iconic bridges. In contrast, from the north along Marsh Lane and Kinsey's Lane and from the south along Station Road the uphill views into the Conservation Area are framed and enhanced by the fields which encircle the settlement.
- **Open space, both public open space and green spaces, within and on the edge of the Conservation Area is both a characteristic of Ince and an important asset.** The public open spaces, which differ in character and function, all contribute to community life. In place of a village green, The Square, spacious with hard landscaping, constitutes the visual heart of Ince Conservation Area, marked by the historic lamp post (currently being restored). The churchyard, adjacent to the former school (now Village Hall), contains the early bier house and memorials; it is connected by footpaths and overlooks the village. The Parish Field to the southeast of the churchyard, with its play area and football pitch, connecting to the wooded walking area of the former reservoir, was formerly the glebe land belonging to the vicarage which was located on Station Road. On the boundaries of Ince there are fields which are integral to the settlement and some of these green spaces serve to keep Ince separate from the neighbouring settlement of Elton.
- **Farming continues to constitute the core economic activity.** While some historic farm buildings have been converted to other uses, there are still two working farms in Ince with their associated buildings still in use and supplemented with necessary later buildings. The loss of character through gentrification and suburban boundary treatments is limited.
- **The variety of housing, illustrating the settlement's development over time.** While the former manor house and farmsteads are substantial in scale, befitting successful farmers and gentry, the settlement also included a substantial number of smaller dwellings for labourers and fishermen. These have been subject to rebuilding and relocation, yet this consistent provision of working class housing contributes to the character of Ince village and community. Although there are examples of restoration and conversion of older buildings, Ince has retained the character of a mixed community, unlike many Cheshire villages which have become gentrified through significant numbers of incomers and commuters.
- **While boundary treatments on and close to The Square are more formal, with stone walls enclosing a small lawn, elsewhere boundaries are predominantly rural with stone walls of low and medium height sometimes incorporating bedrock, in various styles.** The listed boundary walls of Ince Manor were of large sandstone blocks and these appear elsewhere, including along lanes bordering fields and marking the former lane to the earlier wharf. The stone park boundary of Ince Hall with rounded coping stones is of coursed cut stone and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century churchyard walls are more formal still. In The Square the high sandstone retaining wall on the southwest side accentuates the topography and emphasises the vernacular materials. Houses, including post-war structures, have stone walls to the street although side boundaries may be fences or hedges.
- **Ince is the focal point of an important recreational resource for the wider area, popular with walkers, birdwatchers, cyclists, riders and photographers.** Its network of public footpaths and tracks facilitate these activities but changes of ownership and use of land within the surrounding area threaten this. Several public footpaths have been identified as no longer present or they appear interrupted by development, resulting in the loss of historic connectivity.

A definition of the special interest of the Conservation Area is set out in section 4 of the character appraisal.

## Section 4 Assessing Special Interest

### 4.1 Location, General Character and Uses

#### Location

Ince is located on the southern shore of the Mersey Estuary, midway between Ellesmere Port to the west and Helsby to the east, eight miles to the north of Chester. Ince lies 2 miles northwest of Junction 14 on the M56 motorway; the village of Elton lies to the immediate southeast and Stanlow oil refinery to the southwest. To the north of Ince and the Conservation Area the Manchester Ship Canal is a defining east-west feature on the edge of the estuary. To the west, beyond the lands of the former Ince Park now Stanlow, the River Gowy flows into the Mersey. To the south of Ince the Ellesmere Port to Warrington railway line, with a joint station for Ince and Elton, both provided the historic separation of the settlements to the south as well as limiting north-south connections.

The Conservation Area lies within Ince Neighbourhood Area, a Civil Parish within the borough of Cheshire West and Chester. This was created in 2009, following the abolition of Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough.

Geologically the underlying layers comprise Kinnerton Sandstone, Chester Pebble Beds and Wilmslow Sandstone. Soils comprise humic and alluvial gleys on the improved reclaimed coastal floodplain.<sup>13</sup> A more colourful description from the period of the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal, 'reclaimed bog over bluish clay, thoroughly saturated, and very subject to landslips. It would appear from the roots and trunks of the trees dug up, that at one time this part of district, now full of peat, had been a forest.'<sup>14</sup>

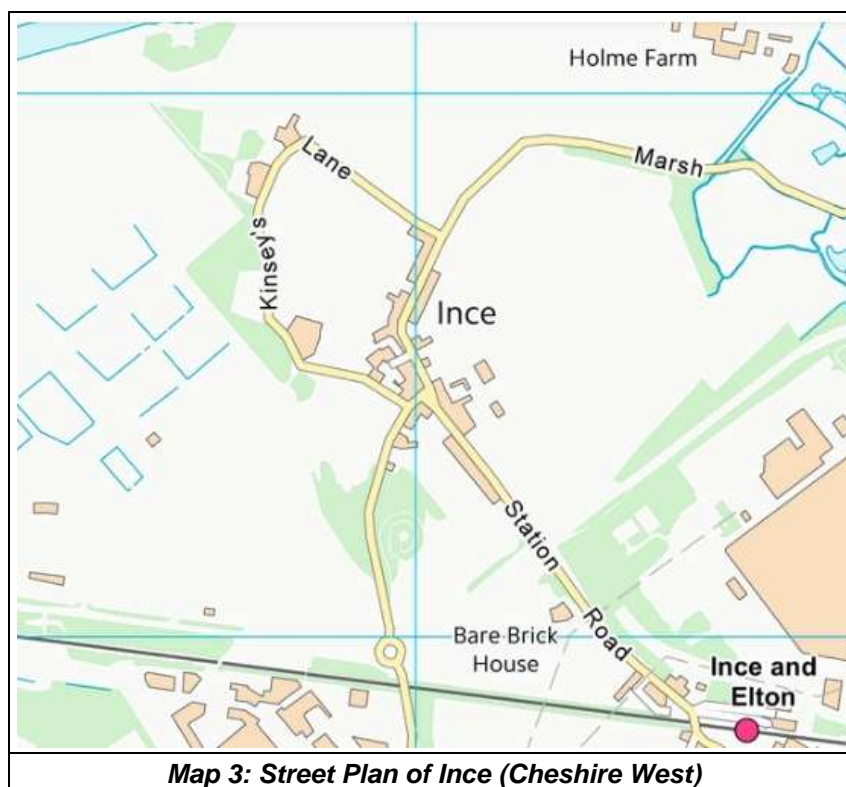
Ince Conservation Area constitutes the core of the historic village of Ince, which in turn has evolved through several distinct phases. From The Square in the centre the settlement is dispersed along Station Road to the southeast, Pool lane to the southwest, Kinsey's Lane to the northwest and north and Marsh Lane to the northeast. It is surrounded by and interspersed with farmland and, to the southwest, the area of the former underground reservoir and Church Field. To the south of the settlement, a new road running under Station Road has been built to provide access to the industrial development to the southwest of Ince. South of this, on the west side of Station Road, is a trapezoid area which has been taken out of Green Belt; the road and the area to the east of the road is still Green Belt and constitutes a narrow but significant band separating the settlement of Ince from that of Elton.

The Conservation Area is broadly triangular in form, with a bubble to the northwest. To the southeast it includes the buildings and part but not all of the yard of Lower Green Farm, the houses on Station Road to the immediate south of The Square and the church and churchyard but not the associated field to the south. To the northeast it includes The Square, the buildings associated with the Grange or Monastery, the pub and the buildings on Marsh Lane up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century housing, following a field boundary to intersect with Kinsey's Lane on the west. To the west the Conservation Area includes Wood Farm and Hall Farm to the north, Kinsey's Lane and Park Field, along the boundary with Stanlow refinery to intersect with Pool Lane.

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<sup>13</sup> West Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> F.G. Slater, *A Cheshire Parish* (Chester: 1919) 5.



### General Character and Uses

The initial impression of the general character of the settlement is that it is not homogenous. The buildings of the former medieval monastic grange dominate the northeast of the settlement, while The Square's Georgian architecture and spacious planned layout is almost urban. To the west the remnants of the park boundaries of Ince Hall, the churchyard walls and former school (now Village Hall) testify to the changes wrought during the Victorian period. To the northeast and southeast the settlement includes a variety of 20<sup>th</sup> century housing, including social housing. Yet vernacular farmsteads and cottages of various dates of rough sandstone, farmyards and roads with sandstone walls, appear through the settlement, a farming community; tractors and farm vehicles drive through the village many times each day; the village is surrounded by fields, which contribute to most of the views out of the Conservation Area. There are few amenities, but Ince's architecture and morphology denotes a mixed and established working rural community with ancient roots.

The topography and the planting also contribute to the character of the settlement, with the land rising south and west of The Square to the church and the open sloping churchyard around it. To the southwest of the Village Hall east of Pool Lane, the wooded area conceals the gently rising feature of the underground reservoir, now a popular recreational and dog walking area. To the north the dominant building of The Grange occupies a high point from which Marsh Lane descends and leads northwards out of the settlement, with views out to the estuary and the surrounding farmland. The combination of fields and the residual parkland trees largely screen the industrial installations of the oil refinery to the west. The settlement is characterised by its hedgerows, often associated with sandstone walls along the narrow lanes, with trees on Kinsey's Lane and Pool Lane to the west, and the more open but nonetheless green perspective to the east, where extensive belts of trees grow along some field boundaries.

While most of the buildings are in residential use, there are also many buildings associated with working farms, as well as St. James' Church, the neighbouring Village Hall and the Duke of Wellington public house. The Square provides an area of public space, with the parish noticeboard and bus stop, a paved central area, the location for an historic lamp post (currently being restored) and the annual Christmas Tree. South of the church and churchyard is Church Field, an area of recreational space with football posts and playground.

## Landscape Setting

Ince, a modern derivative of the Welsh 'ynys' meaning island or the land between two rivers, reflects the raised and isolated position of the settlement above the marshy banks of the River Mersey on a tongue of Kinnerton sandstone. This is visible in many locations throughout the area, both as bedrock and as a building material. The parish church occupies the highest land in the village, still less than 100' above sea level. The 2016 Cheshire West Landscape Assessment shows the area as an intersection between a number of landscapes: north of the Ship Canal the area Stanlow and Ince Banks (16a) the landscape is defined as Mudflats and Saltmarsh; south of this and to the west of the Conservation Area Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes (4a) is described as Drained Marshes; the farmland immediately surrounding Ince is named as Cheshire Plain West: Dunham to Tarvin Plain (9a), while Ince itself is somewhat misleadingly described as Urban Area.<sup>15</sup> While this might with justification be appropriate to Elton, Ince is completely surrounded by farmland and its landscape is dominated by the landscape of the drained marshes until, ascending to the higher points, views of the drained marshes and of the mudflats predominate.

## 4.2 The Historic Development of Ince

### 4.2.1 Chronological Development

#### Prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon Periods

It is uncertain when settlement commenced in Ince, however a Bronze Age socketed axe cast in bronze was found in 1897 to the north of the settlement during the excavation of the Manchester Ship Canal (HER 20). Additionally, to the east of the settlement a bronze spearhead was found, which is now in the Grosvenor Museum in Chester; the HER (1014) provides no information about when this was found but may be associated with draining works. At this period the coastline of the estuary was very different; the lowlands of Ince and the lower Gowry valley were open water and the sea probably reached as far as Stoak. A combination of silting up and reclamation has produced the saltmarshes and polderland.<sup>16</sup>

To the north of the settlement, on the high ground overlooking the river, evidence of a Roman fortlet was identified in 1994 from aerial photographs and subsequent excavation (DCH456). Probably associated with the Roman fort at Chester and dated to 80-100 AD, it would have accommodated a small detachment of soldiers but whether it was to overlook a river crossing point or an observation post or signal station is not known. Archaeological excavation identified a double-ditched enclosure of an area of 80 x 60m, with evidence of postholes for wooden buildings.

The Welsh or Celtic origins of the place name point to it being an identified place during or immediately after the Roman period as well as to the physical characteristics. Anglesey was originally known as Ynys Mon while Ince Blundell in Sefton was a settlement surrounded by marshy land. The HER contains no records for the area from this period. Chester remained an important centre in the kingdom of Mercia, evidenced by St Augustine being present at a Christian synod held in Chester in 603 or 604. The area was also characterised as a border zone between Mercia and Wales; Wat's Dyke and later Offa's Dyke to the west were built as a frontier and defence line by the Mercians. While attacks by Danes did not initially affect the wider area around Ince, Chester came under attack in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century and from the 10<sup>th</sup> century Danes expelled from Ireland began to settle in the Wirral. Around this time the Mercians responded by establishing defensive forts, including at Runcorn. The 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries were characterised by relatively peaceful coexistence between Mercians and Danes, despite occasional incursions, when farmers and fishermen worked for their livelihood. At this time land at Ince was endowed to St. Werburgh's Abbey at Chester.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> West Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment and Strategy, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> A. Crosby, A History of Cheshire (Chichester: Phillimore, 1996) 16.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 30-31.

The earliest structure in Ince is that of the monastic grange, associated with the abbey, now cathedral at Chester which is dedicated to St. Werburgh. She was a 7<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon princess who spent her life as a nun, becoming abbess of Ely. In 875 her remains were moved to the fortified town of Chester from Staffordshire in the face of Viking raids and installed in a shrine of the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul. In 958 King Edgar granted a charter and endowments to the collegiate church rededicated to St. Werburgh, including land at Ince; these provided for the upkeep of the church and community. Before 1057 Leofric of Mercia had rebuilt the church and associated institution.

### Medieval

At the time of the Domesday Survey Ince was one of 23 manors in the possession of the Canons of St. Werburgh's, rather than a secular manor, and lay within the Hundred of Ruloe. The township of Elton in contrast was one of possibly two such manors under the Earl of Chester. Judging by the pre and post Conquest valuation, Ince had been spared some of the ravages of the quelling of rebellion as it lost only half of its value, whereas Elton was laid waste. Ince is calculated to have had some 600 acres of arable land and a population of around 50; there is no reference to monks, a church or chapel. Thus, it is likely that the buildings of Ince Manor postdate Earl Hugh's foundation in 1093 of a Benedictine Abbey, in place of the earlier institution. This took over the existing holdings and received further extensive endowments. The Benedictines had a tradition of building granges, whereby a community of monks farmed to provide both supplies for the abbey and a surplus for sale. A grange would also have been equipped with a chapel and able to accommodate the abbot and his retinue should he visit.<sup>18</sup> In their function granges were similar to secular farms but the wealth and importance of the parent house could be reflected in their size, architectural layout and embellishment. Ince became one of three principle granges of St. Werburgh's Abbey and was visited by Edward I for the nights of August 10 and 11<sup>th</sup>, 1277 and again for a night in 1278, in connection with the founding of Vale Royal Abbey.

The medieval buildings of the monastic grange comprised the open hall to the east of the site, now overlooking Marsh Lane, and to the north, at a right angle to the Hall, the lodgings with four separate chambers. In the courtyard between these two buildings was a well to the southwest. To the west were the farm buildings of which a stone barn or stables remains. The manor was enclosed by a stone wall and beyond this a moat. To the north of the lodgings and the enclosing wall was a fishpond. These structures, together with the crenellations which were added at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, suggest that fear of attack was a serious concern. Across the road from the Grange is Smithy House Farm, whose cellar is believed to date from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and have been attached to the Grange by a tunnel; it contains a sandstone table and bath, possibly in connection with food preparation. The cruck beam section of the house dates from circa 1475.

The earliest structural element of St. James' Church is the 14<sup>th</sup> century East window. It replaced an earlier Norman building, of which nothing remains.<sup>19</sup> The location, which is the highest point in the village, would inevitably have been chosen for a significant building.

Ince was not the only ecclesiastical establishment in the immediate area. In the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Stanlow Abbey, a Cistercian abbey and monastic grange, was founded by John de Lace, Baron of Halton at Stanlow Point, just to the west of Ince and the River Gowy and now to the north of the Ship Canal. This also provides an indication that the Mersey shoreline lay further north. It must have been an exposed location as in 1178 a storm and flooding destroyed parts of the building including the tower and in 1287 a fire did further damage. Shortly after this most of the monks moved to Whalley Abbey at Clitheroe, leaving a community of only six monks at Stanlow.

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<sup>18</sup> F.G. Slater, *A Cheshire Parish* (Chester, 1919) 23-25.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 7.





**Map 4: Saxton's 1577 Map of Cheshire showing Ince and Stanlow (Stanley)**

The map shows no roads in the area and yet there were agreements between the monks of Stanlow and those of St. Werbergh's concerning both the (water) mills and fisheries between Stanlow and Ince and on the maintenance of a road thirty feet in width and the associated bridges, which indicates that there were roads from Chester to the area and then onwards to the Wirral (Birkenhead). However, it was for the use of monks and free men only. Another document from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century provides evidence of the encroachment of the sea on farmland at Ince.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, Ince appears to have been an important settlement in medieval times and possibly one of the abbot's residences, with both farming and fishing as economic activities. It must have continued to prosper during the 15<sup>th</sup> century with the construction of the new parish church and tower, which had an unusually long chancel, suggesting that it may have also been used by the monks. Unusually the chancel is on the same level as the nave. The tower was completed between 1485-93 under Simon Ripley, 23<sup>rd</sup> Abbot. The demesne lands of the grange were in the main farmed through tenancies by local labour, providing rents as well as resources to St. Werbergh's. The two abbeys must have provided steady employment, some education and regular contact with Chester. At this time the rectory or living of Ince was appropriated to the abbey almoner, who was responsible for both the distribution of alms and the education of children and there was an almonry at Ince. Whether there was any form of river crossing is not known, although in 1919 there is a reference to a ferry service dating back 'hundreds of years'.<sup>21</sup>

### Post Medieval

Following the Dissolution in 1539 St. Werbergh's became Chester Cathedral and the abbot its first dean; the Chester Diocese with its own bishop was also established at this time. The living or rectory of Ince was valued at £5 13s 4d and acquired for this price by Richard Cowley but the manor of Ince initially remained within the endowment of Chester Cathedral and school. Stanlow Abbey was acquired by Sir Richard Cotton, comptroller of the royal household. After the death of Henry VIII, Cotton also successfully challenged the endowment to the Cathedral and acquired Ince Manor which

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 113.



appears to have been initially occupied by the Fletcher family. Following Cotton's death in 1556, his son sold Ince Manor to Sir Hugh Cholmondeley who had acquired Vale Royal Abbey. Initially Cholmondeley was thwarted in taking over the manor at Ince. Robert Fletcher had married the widow of Thomas Grosvenor of Eaton, who continued to call herself Lady Maud Grosvenor after her marriage to Fletcher, and she wished to remain at Ince. Cholmondeley sought the help of a local magistrate, Sir Roland Stanley who in 1559 attacked Ince Manor with 60 armed men. Maud was prepared, defended strongly with a similar number and appears to have remained at Ince until her death in 1582, apparently surviving her husband and legally recognised as owner. Her will refers to a flock of sheep, indicating that sheep farming was still ongoing at Ince. Only then did the manor actually pass to the Cholmondleys.<sup>22</sup>

In 1554 the curate in charge of Ince was Henry Cowper. An assessment of the church, conducted by the new Bishop of Chester appointed in that year by Queen Mary, stated that the church and churchyard were in ruins, the altar had not been rebuilt and there were no pictures of the cross. Reinstatement and repair of all this was required immediately. However, 1558 Queen Mary died and Henry Cowper remained at Ince for a further nine years, suggesting he was astute at weathering the contemporary changes in authority and religious orientation. Church records contain the names of subsequent curates and also suggest that repairs were not made.

During the upheavals of the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century Ince was spared the effects of direct warfare but despite the proximity of the siege of Chester, little of significance occurred at Ince. Following the Restoration, the Hearth Tax of 1670 provides a snapshot of Ince. The returns report a total of 61 dwellings which is quite a sizeable community and the names of those with more than one chimney. Most dwellings had only one chimney and were not liable for tax, Mr Thomas Cholmondeley at Ince Manor had four chimneys and the priest and nine other householders each had two chimneys.<sup>23</sup> Stone buildings at Wood Farm, Yew Tree Farm and Hall Farm, as well as the building next to Village Green Farm date from this time. Shortly after this date the parish records begin and plaques and gravestones provide further information. Not only are the names of the curates known but they appear to have been resident in the parish rather than absentee clergy, as happened so often elsewhere in the diocese, indicating that the living and accommodation must have been generous. Curates included a Robert Bellis, born in 1669 on Thomas Cholmondeley's other manor in Great Barrow, to the south of Ince. In 1691 he was later not only awarded the living at Ince in but with an additional stipend from Cholmondeley of £20 per year and remained at St. James until his death in 1724.

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century

In 1722 Cholmondeley sold the manor of Ince to Sir George Wynne; he also left further support for the living, suggesting that his interest in the settlement was not merely as an investment. Wynne was wealthy, partly as a result of lead mining on landholdings in nearby Flintshire; he had other homes and was a member of parliament. It seems he gave little priority to Ince and this coincided with the curate, resident elsewhere, being represented by a Robert Harrison as sub-curate for some 46 years. After Wynne's death the manor passed through his daughter to her husband, Richard Hill Waring.

Parish records show an average of 14 baptisms a year during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, generally conducted within a fortnight of the birth, 3 marriages and 12 funerals. There seems to have been an outbreak of disease in the spring of 1727, with some 25 funerals conducted in two months. During the period 1754-1810 a printed form was used for the marriage register which collected more data; it showed that most marriages were between Ince residents and that the two dominant forms of employment were agriculture labour and fishing.<sup>24</sup>

Burdett's map from 1777 shows the road layout of Ince, including Station Road and Pool Lane on the south side, Kinsey's Lane and Marsh Lane on the north side and a road (of which only the beginning is now present) leading to the Boat House, presumably also where the fishing operated from; its

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 50-51.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 92-97.

landlord was Thomas Gamon in 1766 and John Hinde in 1783. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century there was a regular ferry service to Liverpool, with the vestry records referring to Ince being overburdened with 'Passengers and Travelling Persons'. In Liverpool there was also an Ince Boat House at the foot of the present Chapel Street. The map also depicts marshland close to the village and shows Stanley House, the 18<sup>th</sup> century remains of Stanlow Abbey.



**Map 5: Burdett's 1777 Map of Cheshire**

### 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw considerable change to the appearance of Ince and the surrounding area. In 1801 the population of Ince was 442, rising to 475 in 1841 and thereafter declining to under 300 by the end of the century. In 1805 Waring sold the estate to two gentlemen interested in the shooting of wildfowl on the estuary, Robert Peele and Edmund Yates. They owned a calico printing business in Blackburn and later Haworth, Peele and Yates developed mills in Bury and Tamworth. Peele and Yates paid about £80,000 but shortly afterwards Peele sold his share to Yates, who also served as High Sheriff of Cheshire in 1812. Seeking to establish Ince as a resort, he had by 1823 built a commodious inn and conveniences for bathers and invested in a new pier to the east of the former Boat House, enabling a daily ferry service to Liverpool. Marsh Lane was extended to the east of the village to the shore of the Mersey and embankments along the shore were built, such that a large extent of land could be reclaimed and converted to farming; two new farms, Holme Farm and Grimson Farm to the east, appear by 1819. The lighthouse also dates from 1823.

Greenwood's map of 1819 and Ormrod's description of the same year provides evidence of these changes and of the expansion in the number of buildings, which were 'a motley groupe of farms and fishermen's huts.' Yates also built Ince Hall on a small elevation adjacent to the bank of the estuary,<sup>25</sup> possibly on the site of the former Boat House which had been pulled down in 1814. Directories from the 19<sup>th</sup> century refer to it being built in 1849, but elsewhere there are references to this being a substantial extension. The spacious and formal appearance of The Square dates from this time with the construction in Georgian style of 1-3 on the east side, 7-9 on the north; the building on the southwest corner is also in Georgian style.

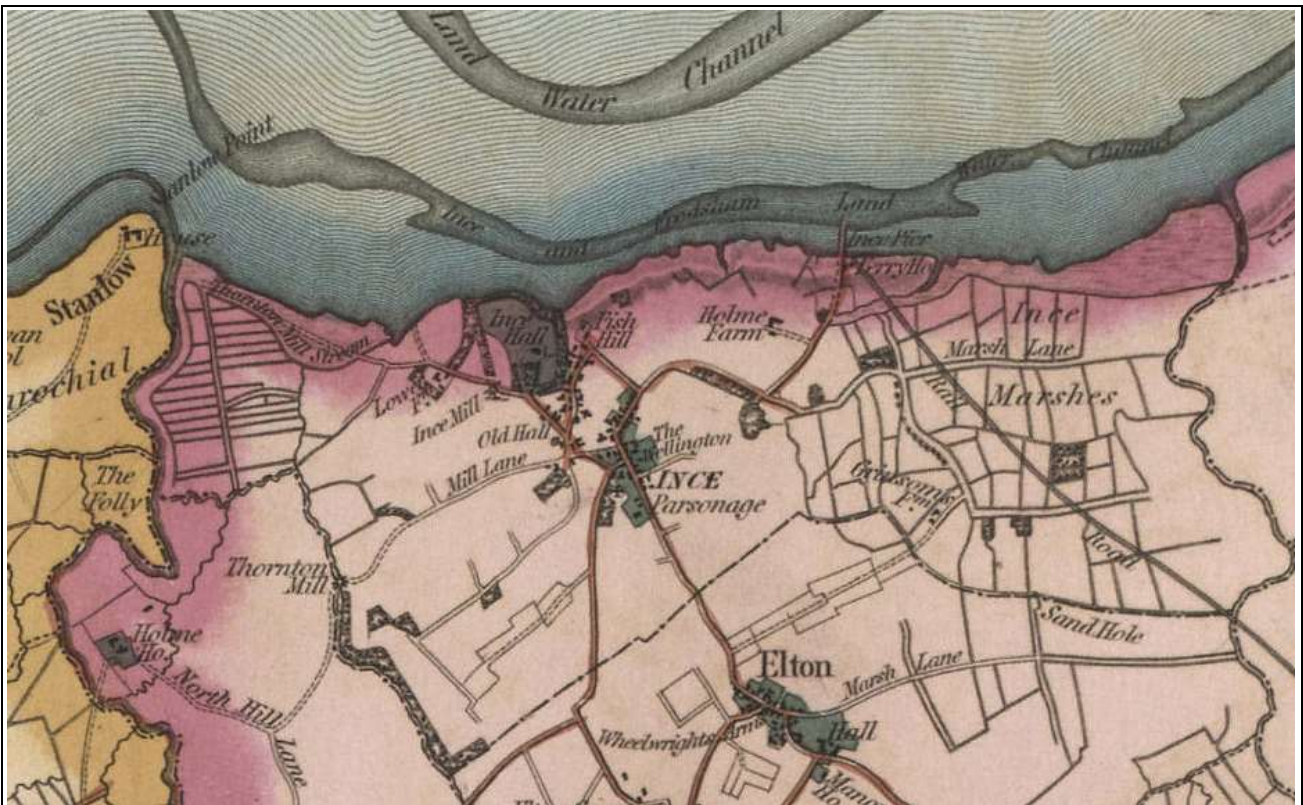
<sup>25</sup> J. Ormerod, *The History of the County Palatine and City of Chester*, Vol. II (London, 1819).



**Map 6: Greenwood's 1819 Map of Cheshire**

The extent of the drainage works can be fully appreciated in Bryant's 1831 map, which also identifies the parsonage, the Wellington public house, Ince Hall and the Old Hall, which is not on the site of the Ince Manor or Grange (this may well be an error which is corrected in the 1873 OS map). While Ince Hall may have been built by 1819, in Italianate style, the full extent of the park had not yet been laid out. Nevertheless, housing to the west and east of Ince Hall which appears between 1777 and 1819 is replaced by planting in 1831. Monastery Row was built on Marsh Lane to provide alternative accommodation for the demolished fishermen's houses. The parsonage is also shown in 1831 on what is now Station Road. Finally, the map shows the line of a tramroad which linked the quarries at Helsby to the new pier. Elsewhere it is described as a glebe house set in 1.5 acres of glebe land; this is the origin of Church Field (now Parish Field).





**Map 7: Bryant's 1831 Map of Cheshire**

There is also reference to a free school endowed by Mr Yates.<sup>26</sup> This was a Parochial School for boys and girls, understood to be in White House Lodge near the bridge to Ince Hall on Kinsey's Lane (now both demolished). The Schoolroom became the main meeting room in the village, used by the local Vestry or church council.<sup>27</sup> While St. James' was the primary place of worship for the parish and a community focus, it was not the only place of worship. Opposite the smithy on Marsh Lane, a Miss Hinde lived and organized a Primitive Methodist meeting place, also known as Betty Hinde's Chapel.



**Former School House at White Lodge House**



**Bridge Carrying Drive to Ince Hall**

However, Yates died in 1835, with four sons pre-deceasing him; he was survived by two daughters, of whom the elder was blind. Ince Hall and the estate was inherited by his younger daughter, Elizabeth Jane, wife of William Waldegrave Park, a curate in Kent. They moved to Ince and in 1836

<sup>26</sup> Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical History of England*, (London: Lewis & Co.1831 and 1848).

<sup>27</sup> F.G. Slater, *A Cheshire Parish* (Chester, 1919) 100.

their son, Edmund Park-Yates was born and baptised at Ince church. In 1837 Mr Park took over the living from the previous incumbent until his death in 1842. He was succeeded in 1843 by Revd Evan Evans, a recognised Welsh poet and writer, as well as a composer of hymns, who had been ordained in 1826 and initially licensed to the Welsh Chaplaincy of St. Martins, Chester before becoming curate at Christleton and then Ince. He continued to write and publish while at Ince until his retirement and return to Wales in 1852. Today, he is considered the chief Welsh hymn writer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps similar to Charles Wesley.



***Ince Lighthouse (Cheshire Image Bank)***



***Monastery Row (Cheshire Image Bank)***

Like her father, Mrs Park-Yates appears to have been an able manager of the estate, including commissioning a large extension to the house in 1849, designed by Edmund Sharpe, the Lancaster based architect and architectural historian, for the sum of £7448. She may also have started the design and considerable expansion of the parkland, surrounded with stone walls and lodges. The primary lodge and gate was far to the south on Pool Lane. The expansion of Ince Hall and Park constituted another major change to the appearance and identity of Ince; the Estate was a major employer and oral history in the village illustrates the close relationship between residents and the estate, which offered access and facilities for community life from this time onwards.

As might be expected as a clergy widow, Mrs Park-Yates also took a keen interest in the local church. In 1844 she had already paid for new pews. Her sister paid for the organ in the same year. The Vestry acknowledged her 'kindness and benevolence to our Parish and great anxiety for the religious and moral improvement of the inhabitants and her care and expense in the education and training of the young'. When it was acknowledged that the condition of the building was in poor condition, she paid for the restoration of St. James' Church in 1854, which almost amounted to a rebuilding, at a cost of £3,400. It was reroofed but retained the original timber beams, the tower was raised in height and a third bell added; the churchyard was also enlarged. Such was the scale of the works that the church was subsequently reconsecrated.





***Ince Hall (Cheshire Image Bank)***



***The Vicarage (Cheshire Image Bank)***

Following her death in 1856, the estate passed to her son Edmund. Born in 1826 he had been educated at Eton and Oxford before going into the army, living until 1896. He was Master of the Cheshire Hunt from 1875 to 1895; on his death the Cheshire Hunt donated to commemorative windows in St. James' Church. The relative isolation of Ince was altered in the 1863 with the opening of the Hooton to Helsby line by the Birkenhead Joint Railway, with a station to the south of Ince serving both Ince and Elton. Inevitably this ultimately led to the closure of the ferry service. The last vessel, the Etna, had carried up to 13 passengers but also agricultural produce, including calves on Thursdays.

Mr Park-Yates was the major benefactor of the new National School which replaced the parochial school in 1869, built adjacent to the church on estate land to accommodate 100 children.



***Ince Village School***



***Village Shop***

In the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the construction and opening of the Manchester Ship Canal resulted in significant change to Ince. This project to break the Liverpool shipping monopoly and make Manchester an independent international port was a canal on a larger scale than any other attempted in Britain. Construction of the section crossing Ince commenced in 1888 and brought an enormous influx of workers, increasing the population from some 300 to 3,000. They were accommodated in a wooden village of huts including a mission room, reading room and dwellings. At either end the two rivers were carried under the canal in cast iron syphon pipes. In between the section required a combination of cutting into the rock up to 60 ft deep and the piling up of great embankments. In 1891 the worst accident of the project occurred when 10 men were killed and many

more injured; six are buried in Ince churchyard with a memorial to commemorate them. Tools from construction were found in the Bier House in the churchyard.

The consequence for Ince was the loss of its foreshore on the estuary, only reachable by a ferry across the canal, the loss of the bathing resort, quay and inn, as well as the lighthouse. The new canal also carried a very high tonnage as Manchester was to become the 4<sup>th</sup> largest port in Britain. It must also have significantly affected the outlook of Ince Hall and, although special rights for local fishermen were negotiated, been detrimental to this employment.



**Construction of Ship Canal (Cheshire Image Bank)**



**The Ship Canal with Former Magazine**

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Following the death of Captain Park-Yates in 1895, Mrs Park-Yates continued to live at Ince Hall until at least 1934. Directories for this period refer to her head gardener, gamekeeper and estate manager as well as over ten farmers. There was a village shop and post office as well as two other shops, a tailor, a shoemaker and a blacksmith. There is also a reference to the Cricket Club – the ground was in the field opposite the vicarage. During the 1920s the small village school was closed, merging with a larger school in Elton. The building was quickly repurposed as a village hall and given to the village in trust.

Meanwhile the Manchester Ship Canal was not only one of the busiest shipping routes but, as a connection to industrial hubs and markets, it attracted industry to the wider area. Increasing numbers of cars and engines of various kinds required new road surfaces and oil products. In the early 1920s Shell acquired land at Stanlow, initially for storage and distribution; by 1934 capacity had increased to 90 million gallons and photographs from 1940 show further expansion immediately adjacent to Ince Hall; they built a refinery as well as a major research centre virtually next door at Thornton. During the second world war the company moved their London operations to Ince Hall, building additional accommodation in the grounds.<sup>28</sup> Other defence installations marked the shore, the Mersey and the Port of Liverpool being one of the key convoy ports and the Ship Canal the key access to the defence industries of Manchester; a magazine was built on the far side of the canal and an Alan Williams gun turret near the area of the former fort. These were produced at Williams' Company, Rustproof Metal Windows, at nearby Saltney between 1939-40.

Following the death of Mrs Park-Yates, the estate passed to the Griffiths family, whose principal home was in Denbighshire. They sold it to Shell who demolished the hall and associated buildings in the 1960s and built an extension of refinery with more storage tanks. The land to the west of the Conservation Area is now occupied by industrial plant, although it is partly screened by a woodland fringe. The plant is now owned by Essar.

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<sup>28</sup> Cheshire County Council, *Wartime Cheshire 1939-1945* (Chester: 1985) 19.



In the wider village the post-war period was characterised by re-building of housing. Monastery Row had been built to provide alternative housing for fisherman at the time of Ince Hall's construction, the relocation of the wharf and demolition of nearby housing. In the 1960s it was demolished and replaced by purpose built social housing. The Vicarage, a Georgian building standing in its glebe land, which had marked the entrance to the settlement, was also demolished in the 1960s and replaced by more housing.

Around the same time the water reservoir to the south of the churchyard and Parish Field was built; it is grassed over and is not overgrown with trees. United Utilities now have a depot to the south of the village on the west of Station Road. To the southeast of the village, accessed by a new road, there is now a huge glass recycling plant on the site of an earlier power plant.



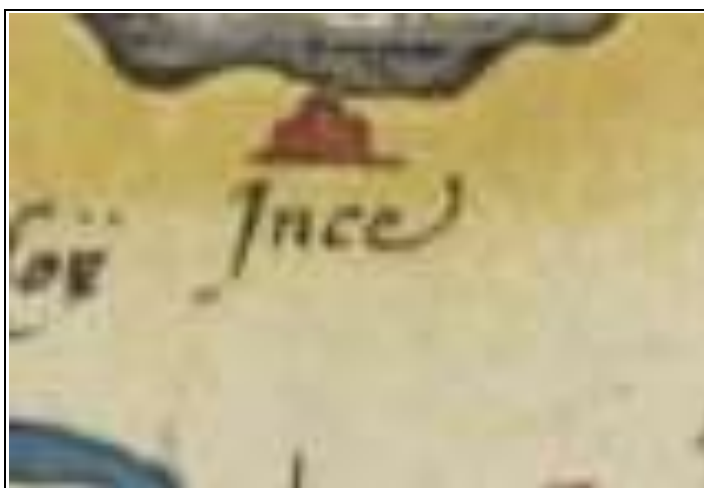
**Construction of Stanlow Refinery 1940**



**Remains of Former Gun Turret**

The former Cricket Field located opposite the Vicarage was an important community facility, suggested by the fact that the Secretary to the Cricket Club is named in Directories going back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is still an important community facility, thanks to the farmer and is used for village events such as sheep racing, a donkey derby and a VE-Day event, which was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The southern boundary of the field is marked by a line of mature trees, including oaks, which are covered by Tree Protection Orders.

#### 4.2.2 Maps Showing Sequential Development of the Area



**Map 8: Saxton's Map of Cheshire, 1577**



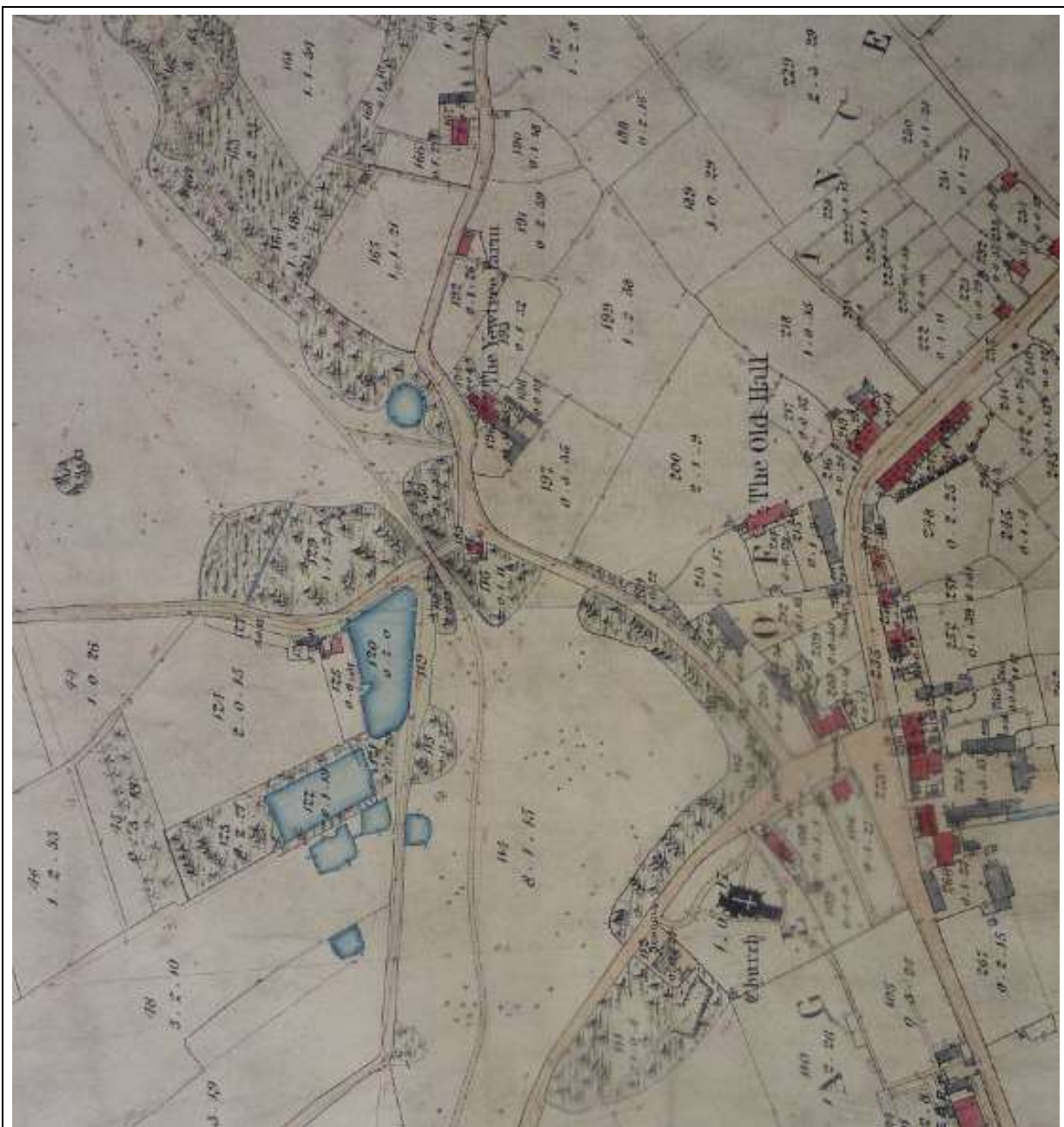
**Map 9: Burdett's Map of Cheshire, 1777**



Map 10: Greenwood's Map of Cheshire, 1819

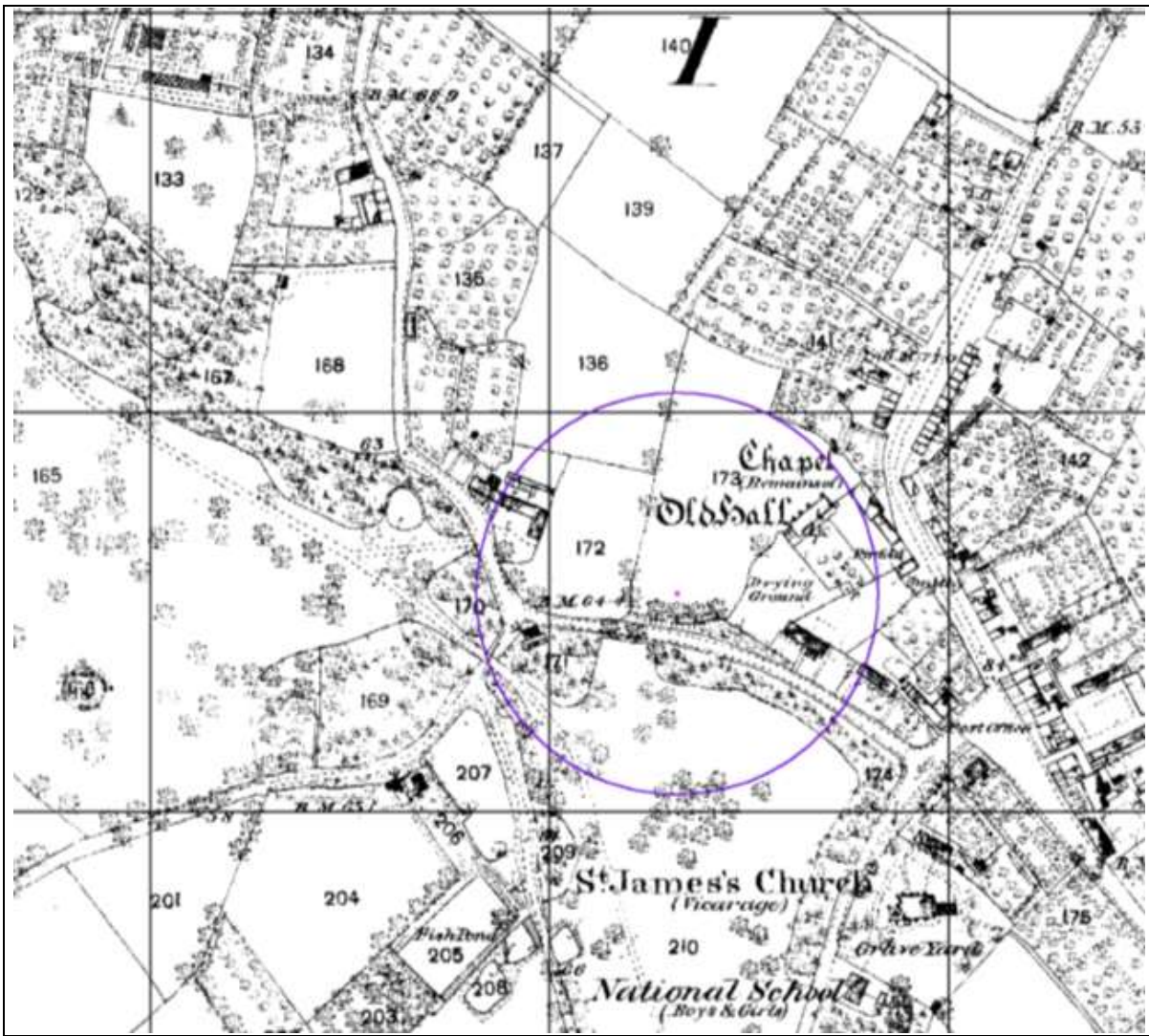


Map 11: Bryant's Map of Cheshire 1831

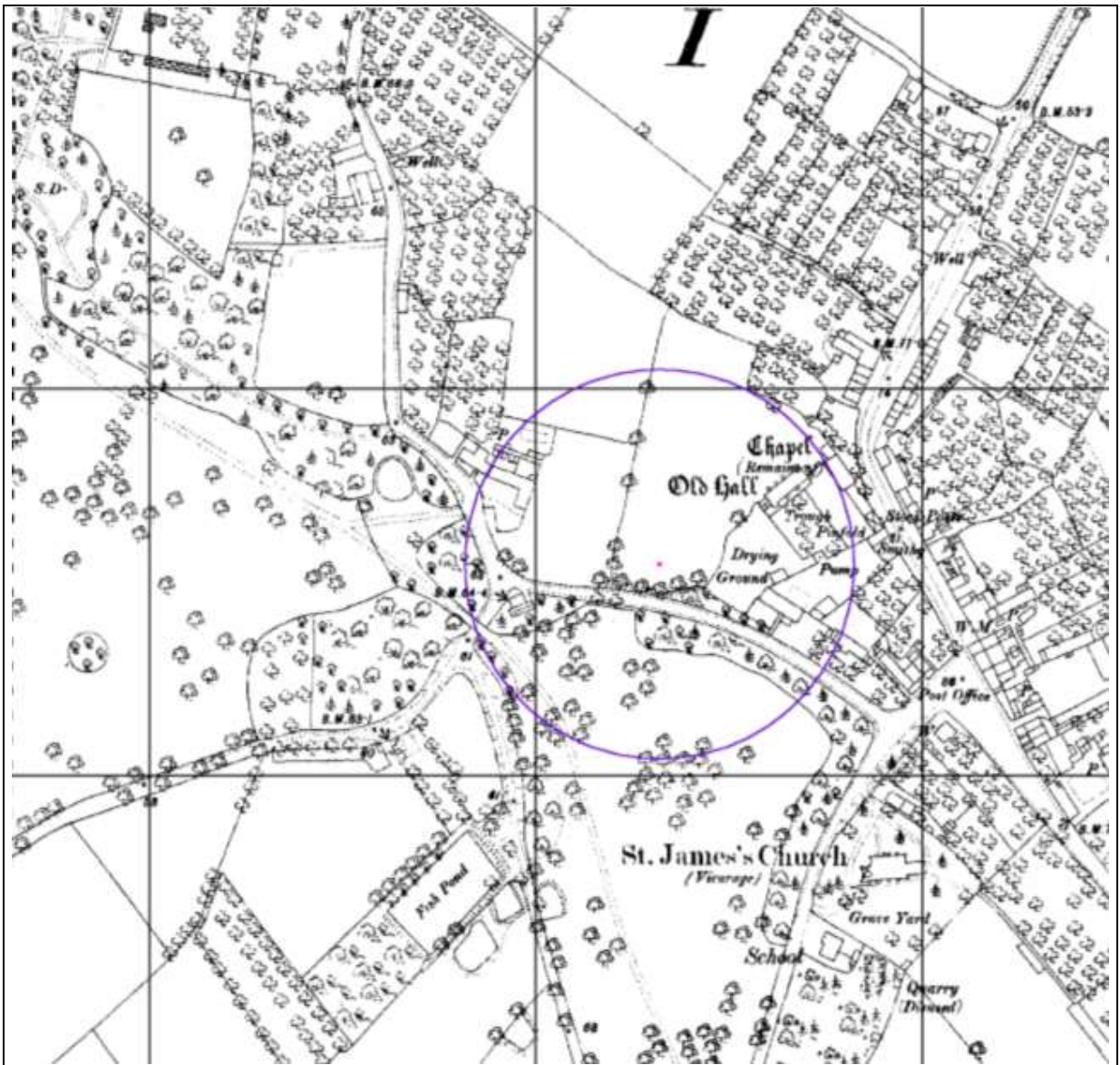


Map 12: Estate Map 1873 (Cheshire Archives)

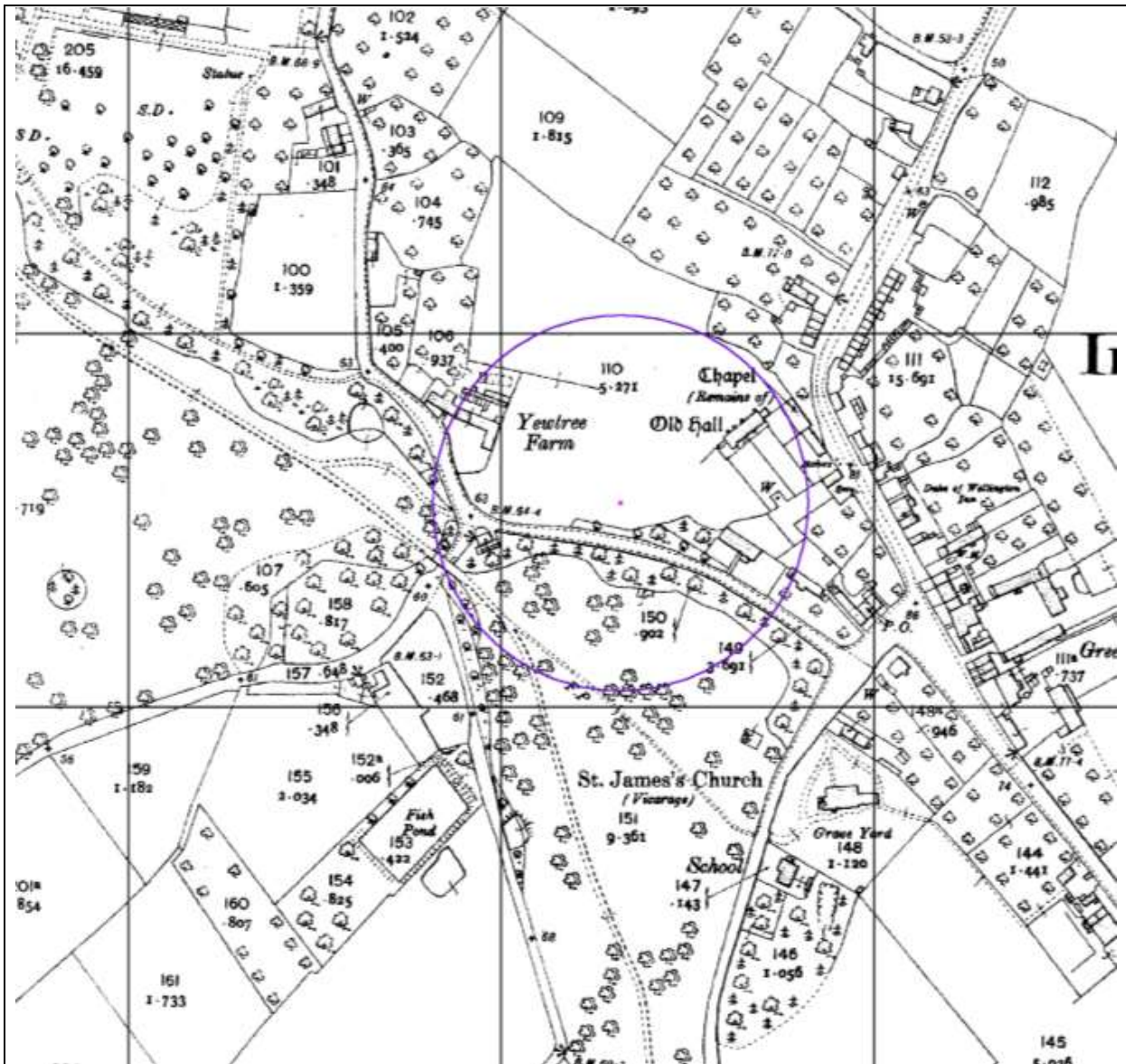




Map 13: 1873-1874 OS Map

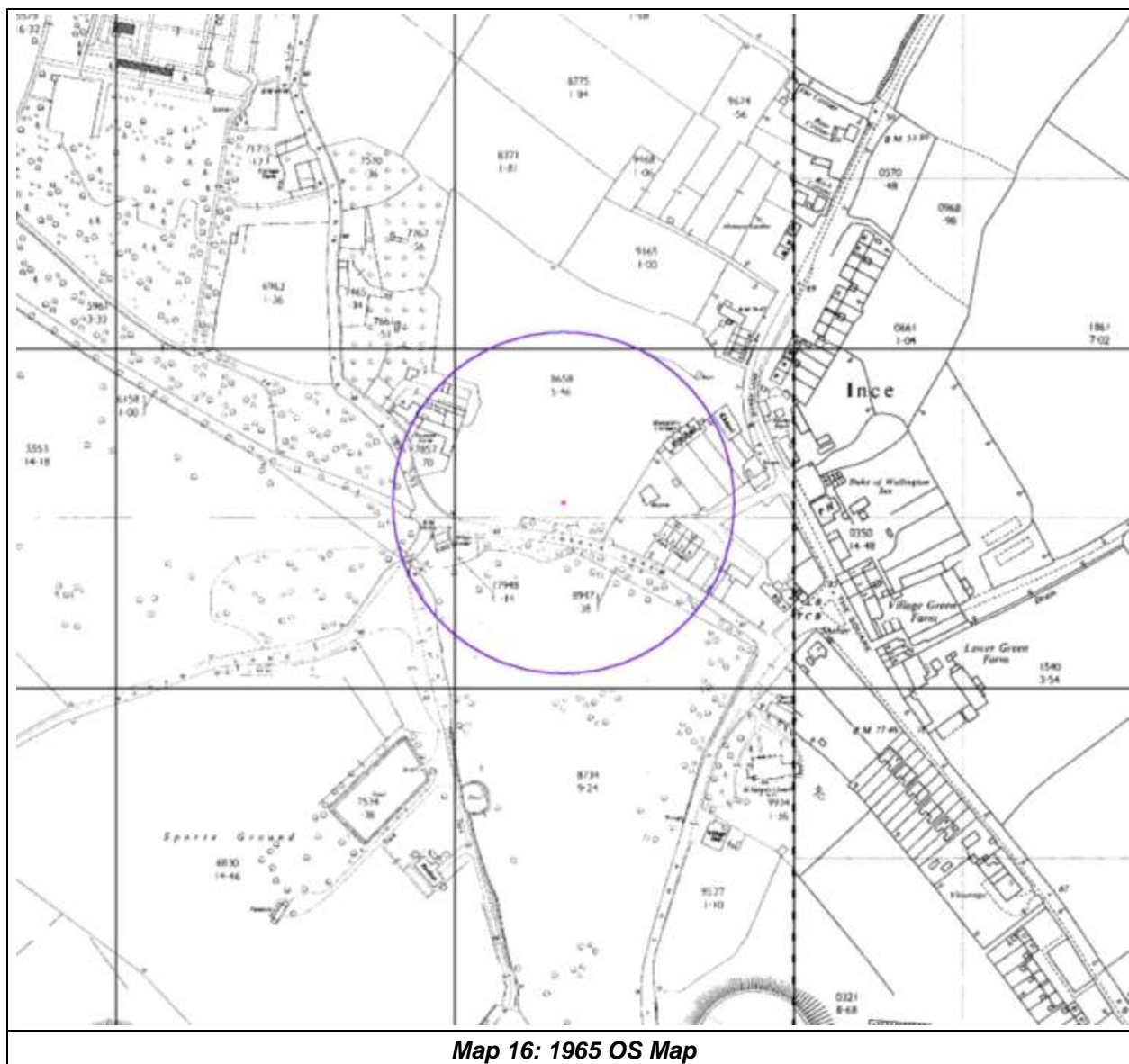


Map 14: 1896 OS Map



Map 15: 1910-1911 OS Map





Map 16: 1965 OS Map

### 4.2.3 Significance of the Archaeological Resource

Sites and extant buildings identified on the *Historic Environment Record* (HER) are described and located on a map at Appendix 1.

There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument within the Conservation Area and a second in its vicinity. Several surveys have been carried out in relation to Ince Manor, and archaeological work has been carried out in relation to the Roman Fortlet to the north of the Conservation Area. The quality and condition of below ground remains elsewhere in the Conservation Area have not yet been assessed. The HER also includes records of two Bronze Age artefacts, discovered in the course of other works, to the east of the Conservation Area.

The 2016 Cheshire West Landscape Assessment shows the area as an intersection between a number of landscapes: north of the Ship Canal the area Stanlow and Ince Banks (16a) the landscape is defined as Mudflats and Saltmarsh; south of this and to the west of the Conservation Area Frodsham, Helsby and Lordship Marshes (4a) is described as Drained Marshes; the farmland immediately surrounding Ince is named as Cheshire Plain West: Dunham to Tarvin Plain (9a), while Ince itself is somewhat misleadingly described as Urban Area.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> West Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment and Strategy, 2016.

### 4.3 Architectural Interest and Built Form

The earliest buildings of Ince and the Ince Conservation Area are on the highest points, dominating views to the north and south. The monastic grange, latterly Ince Manor, is characterised by roughly coursed sandstone, the imposing scale of the hall and the architectural detailing of the windows and doorways, and its stone boundary walls. The buildings, including the former barns, have been restored and converted to residential use. The church and tower underwent alterations in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, including the arch-braced collared roof to the Chancel and the Bier House, and a substantial rebuilding in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including the wall enclosing the churchyard. At various points around the settlement, there are sections of walls with sandstone blocks of similar appearance.



***Restored and Converted Grange and Monastery Cottages***



***Remnants of Medieval Boundary Walls***

There are several substantial farmsteads dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century with both farmhouses, shippens and cowhouses, pointing to the nature and location of agriculture prior to the draining of the marshes: Hall Farm, Wood Farm and Yew Tree Farm. One is still in agricultural use and other farm buildings have been added. These are all to the northwest of the village centre on Kinsey's Lane on the way to the former route to the foreshore. Only a few cottages remain from this period, including the altered outbuilding on The Square and possibly Badger's Cottage, although this has been altered. The sandstone rubble walls on Kinsey's Lane, including the walls marking the entrance to the former lane to the foreshore, just south of Hall Farm, are a characteristic of this period. Building names record the existence of a smithy; the site was Anvil Cottage, although little if anything remains of the original, much smaller building. The blacksmith lived at Smithy Farm opposite.



***Yew Tree Farmhouse***



***Walls of Former Road to Early Ferry***



There are a range of buildings from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century: the designed pedimented, Georgian terraces which form two sides of The Square, the Duke of Wellington pub beyond and Beech House. The small cottages and farmhouses on The Square, which also have the small formal enclosed gardens, also contribute to Edmund Yates' architectural development of Ince as a resort and ferry route, with a hotel and bathing station. Architectural evidence of this period of development includes the two Gothick stone lodges on junction of Marsh Lane and Kinsey's Lane (these both lie to the north of the Conservation Area boundary).

Just outside the current Conservation Area boundary on what is now Marsh Lane was the location of Monastery Row also known as Fisherman's Row, a substantial terrace of working-class housing, built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to replace housing in the area of Ince Hall. There was also a pump at the bottom of the road (which is still present). The terrace was replaced by social housing in the 1960s. The west side of the road opposite the terrace was also partly developed during the Victorian period. Its more recent development is post 1965. Farms also dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century agricultural development, resulting from the draining of the marshes by Edmund Yates, include Holme Farm to the northeast of the Conservation Area and Village Green Farm and Lower Green Farm in the Conservation Area; these all are still in agricultural use; with some modern agricultural buildings to support their ongoing activities.



*Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Proffit's Lodge*



*Lower Green Farmhouse*

Little architectural evidence remains of Ince Hall, despite its transformative role for the settlement. Driving along Pool Lane the wide curved entrance with gates and railings marks the entrance to the mile-long drive, even if the entrance lodge has been demolished and the area is overgrown. The stone rubble wall with its curved coping stones along Pool Lane and Kinsey's Lane marks the edge of the former park; to the north there is a second entrance, with the remains of the abutments of the former bridge carrying the drive to the hall. The influence of the Yates family on Victorian Ince is also seen in the rebuilt church and its walls on Pool Lane and the Village Hall (the former village school). Although the K6 telephone box is an interwar element, its position marks the location of the former post office and village shop on the Victorian Square, now converted to residential use.

The arrival of the railway did not impact on the architecture of Ince directly, as the station was located to the south of the settlement; however, the road entering Ince was renamed Station Road. The area to the south of the Conservation Area, framing the entrance, was once marked by the unusual three-storey building of the large Vicarage. However, the post-war period has seen this replaced by housing on the west side of the road on part of the former glebe land. The east side of the road remains undeveloped farmland belonging to Lower Green Farm, including the former village cricket pitch owned by Peele and rented by Cranks, partly enclosed by stone walls.



**Marsh Lane with Social Housing in place of Monastery Row**



**Housing on Station Road, on Site of Former Vicarage**

### Building Materials

The predominant building materials are of local Cheshire sandstone (red Triassic) for the earliest buildings. Many of the 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings are of soft red/brown brick, although sandstone was used as a walling material and also in some of the agricultural buildings and cottages. Some was quarried locally and there was a quarry next to the church. When the church was rebuilt the sandstone was however quarried at Manley. Roofing materials were a combination of thatch (sometimes concealed under corrugated iron) and Welsh slate. Windows were small casement windows.

The houses of the late Georgian period are of brown brick and grey Welsh slate on the roofs generally with sash windows; the garden walls are of stone. Lower Green Farmhouse is unusual with its small pane iron windows. Some of the windows to the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings on The Square have been altered, increasing the size of the openings and changing the style. During the Victorian period tooled stone is found, for example in the extension to the Duke of Wellington, the church walls and the Village Hall.

Post war construction is generally in brick, for example the new houses between 7 The Square and the church. Only a few buildings have been painted or rendered such as the Duke of Wellington and Smithy Farm; it is more common with more recent buildings such as Glendower, Anvil Cottage (the former Smithy and Scout Hut) and on Station Road and Marsh Lane.



**Squared Coursed Sandstone 17<sup>th</sup> Century with Brown Brick to Either Side**



**19<sup>th</sup> Century Tooled Churchyard Wall**

**Qualities of the Buildings: Height, Scale, Density and Style**

The buildings are all two-storey or less and only a few residential buildings are of substantial scale: the former hotel, which has been subdivided into three dwellings, along with its matching terrace, and 7 The Square, the old Manor House with its high hall and some of the farmhouses. Other buildings are modest in both height and size. While the farm buildings, Gothick lodges, Beech House and some of the cottages such as Smithy Farm and the Badger’s Cottage are detached and more dispersed, other older dwellings were designed as small terraces, such as Park Cottages (converted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and 4-6 The Square. The farm buildings are vernacular, although there are examples of architectural details such as the crowstep gable over the porch of Yew Tree Farmhouse, hoodmoulds over windows and the Tudor windows and crenellations of Ince Manor.

In contrast the early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings on The Square are Georgian in style and have been designed to provide a spacious layout to accommodate carriages. The scale of the project, although urban in design, is modest; the terraces are so short that they appear more as detached buildings and yet achieve a degree of formality and spacious enclosure, with the gardens and garden walls providing homogeneity. As the most important building, 1-3 The Square not only features the simple pediment but the central bay projects forward, with the grand panelled entrance door and decorative fanlight, set in an arch and a blocked window under the gable. Lying to the north, the Duke of Wellington has been painted on the exterior, but the divide between its original brick section and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century tooled stone bay is visible. Some of the windows of the buildings of this period have been altered in size and style; larger expanses of glass jar with the dominant style of sash windows and small panes, especially when this occurs within the same terrace. However most have retained the original door styles and refrained from adding porches.



***Beech House***



***The Former Hotel with Adjacent Terrace***

Although the two small lodges are of the same period and relate to the same project, being at a distance, they are distinctively designed in Gothick style, with characteristic pointed arched windows and porches. Ince Hall, from the 1840s and demolished in the 1960s, was Italianate in design and on a much larger scale than any other building.

In contrast the 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses, agricultural buildings and terraced cottages are functional buildings with little or no architectural detailing. The church was rebuilt in perpendicular style, retaining the earlier 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century windows; the late 15<sup>th</sup> century tower, raised by two courses during the 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding, is the highest structure in the settlement. The 1863 Gothick Revival style school building was originally L-shaped but has had a single storey extension added to the front. It features a large mullioned and transomed 3-light stone window to the front, now partly blocked in the upper section. The Village Hall was given to the village in trust during the last century but has now been passed on to the Parish Council, which has planned and is implementing an extensive programme of maintenance for the building and associated grounds.



The agricultural buildings constitute a substantial and important group of buildings; the historic buildings have been supplemented by 20<sup>th</sup> century structures which are generally sited to the rear of the older buildings thereby screened from street views. Furthermore, the majority are still in agricultural use, although there is some cross-ownership between the farms, and the vehicles are a major part of traffic through the village.

In parallel to the introduction of 20<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings, there has been some infill building within the village as well as ribbon development to the north of the Conservation Area on Marsh Lane and south on Station Road. Although of greater density and of less interest than the older buildings, much of it built in smaller terraced groups, often set back a significant distance from the road and at a high level, giving them an open rather than an enclosed character. The predominant building material is brick but this is often rendered or occasionally pebble-dashed.

### **Boundary Treatments and Field Walls**

Within the Conservation Area there is a discernible pattern with regard to the boundary treatment of houses. Where the bedrock is near the surface, this has generally left and incorporated into the walls. In the wider Conservation Area the more dispersed farms have medium-height stone walls, usually of sandstone rubble, but occasionally of brick (Yew Tree Farm) enclosing both farmhouse and farm buildings. Gresty's, now Badger Cottage, is built straight on to the road. Park Cottages have a less regular sandstone wall enclosing a small garden, with a hedge above it, while Smithy Farm has a low stone wall with a small hedge above it. From historic photographs, the combination of stone walls and hedges appears the traditional boundary treatment.

Near Ince Manor on Marsh Lane there are sections of high sandstone walls, some of which are listed for their clear association with the former medieval buildings. There are other sections of wall e.g. near the Duke of Wellington which are similar in height and stone size. Most later dwellings have drives, often unsurfaced or unfinished and they often lack gateposts, in particular those built as social housing.



***Boundary Wall at Hall Farm***



***Stone Wall with Bedrock and Open Drive***

Boundary walls on or near The Square are characterised by a more formal arrangement of low stone walls, often with flat coping stones, enclosing small areas of lawn, with small pedestrian cast iron gates, leaving the houses visible from the street. Occasionally (1-3 and Beech House) the walls have iron railings which emphasis the more urban character. The retaining wall of the garden of Beech House is in contrast a high wall of large sandstone blocks, incorporating bedrock, and currently suffering from root damage from the line of trees planted outside of the garden boundary. The wall immediately in front of the former post office and shop has been removed and to the side there is a hedge above the wall. The boundary wall openings on The Square have generally not been widened to create driveways; instead, these have been created to the side of or in between groups of buildings.



***Historic Boundary Treatment in The Square***



***Walls and Railings on The Square***

In contrast, many of the post war houses on or near The Square have not been designed to respect this enclosed character. Inevitably they are built with drives which are often wide and including additional areas of hard landscaping which detracts from the historic character. Due to the topography, their gardens and drives slope steeply upwards to the houses, so that the different materials and style is more visible.



***Modern Boundary and Drive on The Square***



***Stone Wall Incorporating Bedrock***

Just outside the Conservation Area (in sections on Station Road and Marsh Lane proposed as extensions), the long drives and boundary treatments are more diverse in appearance, particularly between houses, and hedges are less common. There are garages built directly on to the street on Station Road, just outside the boundary but opposite the listed Lower Green Farm. However, the street boundary of these houses is generally of coursed stone and also is seen to incorporate sections of bedrock. On Marsh Lane many houses, including the social housing, do not have any physical boundaries.



*20<sup>th</sup> Century Boundary Treatments*



*Post-war Housing and Garages on Station Road*

With regard to the field boundaries, these were generally also of local sandstone, particularly along the roads. There are stone walls enclosing the fields on Kinsey's Lane and on Station Road. Sections of the walls on Kinsey's Lane are in poor condition, being overgrown and suffering from root heave. Furthermore, from the late 1980s they have been subject to vandalism and theft of stones. The roadside walls which are associated with Ince Hall Park and the churchyard, are also of stone but the masonry and style is less vernacular.

## 4.4 Heritage Assets

Appendix 1 provides an audit of heritage assets within the Conservation Area and the proposed boundary extensions. Map 19 (p. 59) shows the scheduled monuments and listed buildings, listed in the following table, while Map 20 (p 61) shows the locally important buildings and positive contributors listed overleaf. There are a number of listed structures within the Conservation Area, many of which are still in their original use, namely:

Structure	Grade	Age	Past/present use
<b>Ince Manor/Marsh Lane</b>			
Ince Manor Monastic Grange & Fishpond/Manor House with Old Hall & Monastery Cottages	Sch. Mon. Grade I	Medieval	Monastic Grange/restored and converted to residential
Farm Building abutting Manor House, Marsh Lane	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Barn, now part dwelling and part store
Stocks adjacent to Ince Manor	Grade II	unknown	Only the stones remain
Part of Boundary Wall between The Square and Manor House	Grade II	Medieval	Boundary wall
Park Cottages, Kinsey's Lane	Grade II	Medieval/early 19 <sup>th</sup> century	19 <sup>th</sup> conversion to cottages from earlier farm building
Part of Boundary Wall near Park Cottages, Kinsey's Lane	Grade II	Medieval	Boundary wall
<b>Kinsey's Lane</b>			
Proffit's Lodge	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Toll cottage for ferry/house
T-shaped Shippon, Hall Farm	Grade II	17 <sup>th</sup> century 1688 mark	Longhouse, converted to house
L-shaped Shippon, Hall Farm	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Barn/converted to house
Wood Farm Farmhouse	Grade II	17 <sup>th</sup> century	Farmhouse
Shippon, Wood Farm	Grade II	17 <sup>th</sup> century	2-storey shippon
Barn, Wood Farm	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Threshing barn
Yew Tree Farmhouse & attached Shippon	Grade II	House 17 <sup>th</sup> c. 19 <sup>th</sup> c. shippon	Farmhouse
<b>The Square</b>			
Coronation Lamp and Lantern	Grade II	1902	Commemorative monument
1,2 & 3 The Square	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Hotel/later houses
7, 8 & 9 The Square	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Georgian terrace, later shop
K6 Telephone Box	Grade II	1935	
Outbuilding attached to Village Green Farmhouse	Grade II	17 <sup>th</sup> century	Former 2-storey cottage, now outbuilding
<b>Station Road/The Square</b>			
Lower Green Farmhouse & Wall	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Farmhouse
Lower Green Farm Shippon	Grade II	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	Cowhouse
<b>Pool Lane</b>			
Church of St. James	Grade II*	Medieval, restored 1854	Church
Churchyard Walls, including 2 sets of Gateposts	Grade II	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	
Lamp Post near North Gate	Grade II	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> c.	

In addition to listed buildings, it is important to consider whether any of the buildings are of sufficient local importance and appropriate for listing as a non-designated heritage asset; this recognition does not impose any additional obligations on the owners or give the buildings any more protection than that of being within a Conservation Area. One definition of the criteria for a local list is: Nominations should represent the best of the non-statutory listed buildings in the borough, be substantially unaltered and retain the majority of original features. The nominated building is required to fulfil one



or more of the following to be considered for local listing: architectural or historic character, historical association, display evidence of local distinctiveness, group value or townscape value.<sup>30</sup> Cheshire West is currently reviewing the criteria and content of its Local List. It is suggested that the following structures, which are described in more detail in the appendix, might be included on the Local List:

- Entrance and gateway to Ince Hall, Pool Lane, the remains of the second entrance on Kinsey's Lane, the abutments which remain of the bridge to the drive and the park wall itself
- The Village Hall (the former village school), Pool Lane
- Early Mortuary Building and Manchester Ship Canal Accident Memorial Stone, St. James Churchyard
- Duke of Wellington Public House
- Smithy House Farm, Marsh Lane
- Water Pump on Marsh Lane
- Rose Cottage, Marsh Lane

Furthermore, a Conservation Area Appraisal should identify 'Individual buildings or groups that contribute positively to the special architectural interest or character or appearance of the area and those that are distinctive, rare or unique.' Criteria for identifying positive contributors include:

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces within a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape, e.g. a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic associations with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

Against these criteria, the following map and the audit of Heritage Assets in the appendix, identify a number of buildings within the Conservation Area as Positive Contributors. These are:

- Village Green Farmhouse
- Village Green Farm Barn
- 4, 5 & 6 The Square
- Beech House, The Square
- Badger Cottage, Kinsey's Lane
- Hall Farm Farmhouse

Other buildings, which are part of proposed boundary extensions, are also included in the audit of Heritage Assets and listed in relation to the individual proposal for each boundary extension.

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<sup>30</sup> Cheshire East, Local Development Framework Local List of Historic Buildings Supplementary Planning Document, July 2010, 3.

## 4.5 Spatial Analysis

### Character and Interrelationship of Spaces

Ince is washed over by Green Belt and is approached from the south, separated from Elton by the railway line and fields. Despite being fringed by industry to the west and southeast, Ince village is rural in character, not least because of the open setting to the north and east, with unbroken views across fields and marsh to the estuary. The approach along Station Road is a juxtaposition of open fields with hedges and a working farm to the east and modest 20<sup>th</sup> century housing and tree-fringed views of the top of the 15<sup>th</sup> century church tower to the west.

At the top of the incline the road opens into the formal, planned Georgian open space of The Square with its 1902 commemorative lamp post, enclosed by the matching Georgian terraces to the north and east and the high retaining sandstone wall and the Georgian house to the west. Yet this in the historic character is juxtaposed with the 20<sup>th</sup> century housing to the east and late 20<sup>th</sup> century urban paving to the central island.

To the north the road leaving The Square has had numerous names over the centuries, each communicating aspects of its changing character: Dolly Tub Road, New Row, Monastery Row, Fish Row and now Marsh Lane. It runs downhill past what may have been toll lodges to Holme Farm on drained former marshland and the 19<sup>th</sup> century ferry pier. Marsh Lane is also the location of the former medieval Grange/Ince Manor and it was where new housing for the displaced fishermen was built, which in turn has been replaced by social housing, with modern suburban housing on the opposite side of the road. From the high point of Ince Manor the views open out to the surrounding fields and beyond them, the estuary to the north. It is also a busy road, with large tractors and farm trucks passing regularly.



To the northwest of The Square the narrow rural Kinsey's Lane led to the pre-19<sup>th</sup> century ferry pier and connected the older farms and a few cottages. This part of the Conservation Area is characterised by the enclosure provided by the stone walls, the trees and hedges along the field boundaries and occasional glimpses of the farmland associated with the farms beyond on the east. Parts of the walls are very overgrown and in disrepair, especially around the abutments of the former bridge to Ince Hall and the northern entrance drive which passes the overgrown site of the former Head Gardener's cottage. To the east of Kinsey's Lane is the open space of the field between Yew Tree Farm and Ince Manor which is included in the Conservation Area; Wood Farm Field to the north, also enclosed by Kinsey's Lane, is not included. However Wood Field Farm has in the past served as the location of village activities, such as fetes, weddings and gatherings.

To the south is the tree-fringed Pool Lane, one of the two routes into Ince, which runs alongside Park Field to the west, the only remaining undeveloped part of the former Ince Hall Park, characterised by clumps of mature trees and open paddocks. To the west beyond this are the storage tanks and facilities of Stanlow Refinery, largely screened by the overgrown trees along the boundary. To the east of Pool Lane is the rising open ground of the churchyard with the church on the highest point, and the wooded area around the Village Hall.



*Kinsey's Lane*



*Park Field*

To the southwest, Station Road is the second access route, leading from Elton to The Square. On the rising ground west side there is a series of small groups of housing dating from the 1960s and 1970s, with views of the church above and beyond. On the east side are the open fields and farm buildings.

Unlike many Cheshire villages, Ince is neither gentrified nor a dormitory village for commuters. It is a working agricultural village with a cross-section of residential accommodation. It is perhaps fair to say that the predominant major landowners today, unlike those of the past, have a limited common interest with the village or in maintaining its special interest. They do however help to support and fund Parish Council projects.



*Pool Lane*



*Station Road*

### Streets and Traffic

Historically the roads around the village were cobbled. The stretch of Kinsey's Lane up to Wood Farm was not tarmacked until the 1960s. For a small rural settlement which is essentially a cul-de-sac, Ince suffers from an unusually high level of heavy traffic. Comprising both trucks and agricultural vehicles,



it was reported by several people that the speed limit was regularly ignored; on the outskirts it changes from 40 to 30 which may still be too high. This creates a justifiable safety concern as the roads are narrow. While the visibility on Station Road may be adequate, Marsh Lane is open but has a significant curve at the top. Kinsey's Lane is not only narrow but lacks pavements and parts of Pool Lane are the same. The problem was also apparent from damage to road signs. Where present, pavements are of tarmac with modern stone curbs.



*Pool Lane and Damaged Sign*



*The Square with Setts on Road*

### Public Realm, Open Spaces and Gardens

Public realm comprises the external places that are accessible to all and the physical built elements, such as benches, parking areas, noticeboards, lighting and so on that are part of them. They are the everyday spaces that we move through and sometimes linger within. Public realm is also associated with community, be it a place of gathering or community services like bus stops or post boxes.

The primary official public open space of Ince is The Square, which is more triangular than square in shape and the location of the bus stop with shelter, the parish noticeboard, the phone and post box and the village Christmas tree. The Commemorative Lamp was away for restoration. There are some planters on the central island, which has cast iron bollards to prevent parking, and 20<sup>th</sup> century block paving which contribute to its urban character but, together with the utilitarian metal lamp posts and telegraph poles, contrast with and detract from the Georgian character. Apparently, part of the area used to be covered in setts and historic photographs also show grass. The bus stop is located on the west side of The Square beneath the high sandstone retaining wall of Beech House. Along the top of the wall is a line of mature trees, whose roots are now causing some damage to the wall.



*Block Paving on Central Island of The Square*



*The Churchyard*

The second public open space of the Conservation Area comprises the open churchyard and the adjacent woodland surrounding the Village Hall, part of the original Park-Yates/Griffiths gift to the village. The churchyard is enclosed by its Victorian walls, is well maintained with paths and some wooden benches to appreciate the wonderful views to the east and south; there are proposals to restore the former mortuary building as a place for quiet reflection. To the rear of the Hall is a parking area which has been neglected but is under improvement; the wooded area to its south is somewhat overgrown and crossed by footpaths. These form part of an integrated recreational area which includes two areas which are not part of the Conservation Area: the small hill over the reservoir, which is partly wooded, partly overgrown and partly open grass in character, belongs to Cheshire West and Chester Council and is part of the Mersey Forest; the Parish Field lies immediately to the south of the churchyard, a well-maintained area includes a children’s playground and a football pitch on the large field also integrated to the other areas by footpaths.

Park Field is a triangular field within the Conservation Area, currently used for grazing, is one of the few undeveloped areas of the former Ince Hall Park and visible from Pool Lane to the west and Kinsey’s Lane to the north. Part of the Mile Long Drive to the Hall forms the western boundary of the field. The field includes a large number of mature trees in a variety of species.

There are no public gardens in Ince. Historically the community had a degree of access to the facilities of Ince Hall, which included beautifully landscaped gardens and tennis courts as well as a fishing lake but this was lost following the sale of the estate. To the immediate south of the buildings of Lower Green Farm is the former village cricket field, which was opposite the site of the Vicarage. On the south side of the field is a band of mature trees. To the southwest, immediately south of the churchyard is the rectangular Parish Field with a playground and football pitch, owned by the parish and linking to the adjacent rising open ground over the water reservoir.



**Green Belt and TPOs, Green Spaces, Public Footpaths and Biodiversity**

Ince Conservation Area is washed over by Green Belt as is some but not all the surrounding farmland and marsh area. The principal purpose of the Green Belt with regard to Ince is to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and preserve the setting and character of the settlement. A proposal to include Ince Marshes in the North Cheshire Green Belt was recently narrowly rejected and the area remains vulnerable to development either for the petrochemical industry or through change of use to other development.

As has been discussed in the previous section, the Conservation Area includes a number of green spaces and there are also important green spaces just outside of the current boundary which make a

valuable contribution to the setting, especially to the north and east. Local green spaces are also discussed in the separate report for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Positioned on the edge of the urban area of Ellesmere Port, Ince is a good area for walking, enjoying views of the estuary and observing the birdlife over the marshes. The Mersey Estuary Conservation Group come regularly to observe and count the species. FP44 leads from The Square through the farmyard of Village Green Farm but terminates where it meets the new road to the recycling plant rather than connecting to Elton. Outside the Conservation Area there are several well-used footpaths and bridleways, not all of them passable after heavy rain, but some have been lost, including their interconnectivity due to industrial development. These have been well used in the past by walkers, cyclists and horse riders alike and it would be beneficial to have them reinstated as far as is possible. To the northwest of the Conservation Area there are two public footpaths leading north from Marsh Lane to the 19<sup>th</sup> century ferry point, interrupted by the Ship Canal, but there is no public footpath along the canal. The National Cycle Route 5 includes a section from Elton through Ince and across the marshes to Frodsham. It is well-used by both cyclists, horse riders and walkers though it is in a poor state of repair due to inadequate maintenance.

A number of Tree Protection Orders are in place within and near the Conservation Area. These can protect individual trees and also groups of trees. Specifically:

- Park Field and all its trees, as well as four individual trees on Kinsey's Lane near Park Cottages,
- A bank of land with its trees forming the boundary of the former north park on Kinsey's Lane. To the north of this the wooded area south of Wood Farm is not protected apart from an ash tree and a sycamore tree,
- The band of mixed trees to either side of the gates to the churchyard, the sycamore in the churchyard and the trees to immediate the south of the Village Hall,
- The mature ash trees to the west of The Square above the retaining wall are not protected.



***Trees on The Square***



***Submerged Path at Goldfinch Meadows***

To the south of the Conservation Area the two mature trees (horse chestnut and sycamore) near to the site of the former Vicarage are protected, as are the trees to the south of the former cricket field. To the east of the Conservation Area Big Wood is protected but not Decoy Wood.

Although there are no designated SSSIs or Local Nature Reserves in or in the immediate vicinity of the Conservation Area, the area is part of a wildlife corridor with a wide range of habitats. Protos has established a small nature reserve on part of its land; Goldfinch Meadows can be visited, but the path of its visitor trail is frequently submerged, whereas Snipe Haven is not accessible.



## Setting and Views

The historical road layout is largely unchanged, with the key buildings. As has been discussed, particularly in relation to Marsh Lane, the buildings have changed more than once over time, altering the specifics more than the character of the views. The setting has also undergone significant periodic change, while largely preserving its essential rural estuarine qualities, with the early 19<sup>th</sup> century development of Ince and draining of much of the marshland, the reorientation of the village with the construction of Ince Hall and Park, the construction of the Ship Canal and latterly the development of Stanlow Oil Refinery and the industrial development to the southeast and the development and spreading of Elton and ribbon development along Station Road, significantly reducing the spatial separation of the two settlements.

Often there are particular views which are associated with the Conservation Area and views may be into or out of the Conservation Area as well as those within it. Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan includes analysis of important views in the wider area. The Conservation Area Appraisal offers an opportunity to identify those which are considered important and which contribute to the special interest and identity, and which therefore should be protected:

Important views into the Conservation Area:

- North along Station Road towards The Square and the church
- North from the bottom of Parish Field, towards the church and churchyard
- South from Kinsey's Lane towards the village centre
- South up Marsh Lane towards Ince Manor (and from further i.e. from Fens Wood)

Important views out of the Conservation Area:

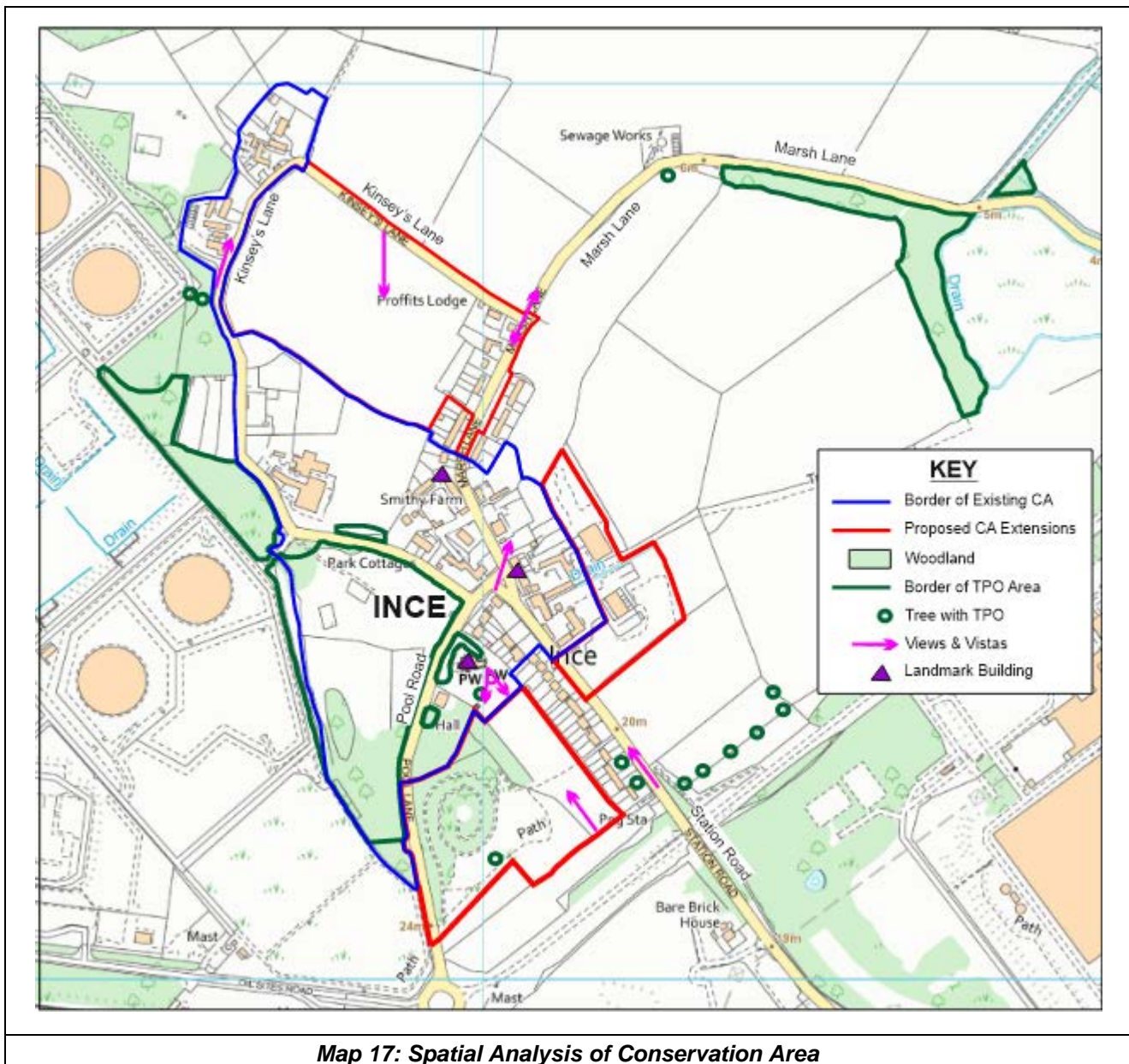
- North from The Square and Marsh Lane towards the estuary and Runcorn Bridge
- North from Kinsey's Lane across the North Hills, adjoining fields and the estuary
- Northeast from rear of Smithy Farm across fields towards the estuary
- West and South from the churchyard inland towards Helsby Hill

Important views within the Conservation Area:

- Northeast along Pool Lane towards The Square and 1-3 The Square

## Landmarks

Landmark status can be given to a building or plot of land that is acknowledged as having some sort of historic, cultural, artistic, or aesthetic value. Three landmark buildings have been identified: St. James Church, Ince Manor/Grange and 1-3 The Square.



### Character Areas

The 2004 Ince Conservation Area Character Appraisal identified six character zones, which has the potential to overcomplicate a small rural settlement. Furthermore, as has been discussed in the section on Character and Interrelationship of Spaces, almost all of the Conservation Area is characterised by the juxtaposition of elements which differ in character, making it difficult to make meaningful distinctions. Instead there should be a small Georgian Village Core Zone of The Square and the remaining Conservation Area.

The Georgian Village Core Zone is characterised by its formal open space of two-storey Georgian brick buildings with slate roofs on three sides, two of which are complimentary terraces with pediments. The space is given a distinctive enclosed appearance by the largely unbroken series of terraced cottages and farmhouses on the east side and the common boundary treatment of low stone walls enclosing regular shaped small gardens. Despite some alteration to window styles and sizes, the area has a homogenous character which is distinctive from the more vernacular character of the wider settlement.

The wider settlement is characterised by more dispersed buildings, either farmsteads, cottages or small terraces (sometimes converted from earlier agricultural buildings) built of sandstone or brick, sometimes with thatched roofs or formerly thatched, and stone walls along the lanes. The wider area

is also characterised by isolated individual buildings on a larger scale, or evidence of their former existence, namely Ince Manor and its associated structures and boundary walls, St. James Church, walled churchyard and mortuary building and the limited remains of Ince Park which have framed different historical periods and their impact on the settlement. In contrast to The Square, it is open in character with important views to the north, south and east.

## **4.6 Assessment of Condition**

### **General Condition**

Ince has been described as having been an 'exceptionally pretty village' but the change from a well-cared for estate village to one with absentee and industrial landowners and post-war infill building has left its mark, despite a strong and active local community. The general condition of the Conservation Area is good but there are areas and elements which appear a little neglected; left unaddressed this has the potential to result in structural deterioration and loss of special interest. There are no buildings at risk; generally the buildings are in good condition. The Conservation Area includes a large number of listed and historic working farm buildings and in a tough economic environment, their maintenance may be a challenge. Similarly, maintenance of overgrown stone walls to the former estate, to fields and, in some cases, properties appears to have been neglected, resulting in widespread damage from root growth to this characteristic features of the Conservation Area. Finally, alterations to public realm and streets have generally not been in keeping with the historic character and have diluted the identity; although there is much of interest and the area attracts recreational visitors, there is little in the way of interpretation.

### **Intrusion and Negative Factors**

There are no intrusive buildings within the Conservation Area. While there are modern farm buildings, these have been sited to the rear of the historic structures and are generally screened from view. Similarly, the tanks of the refinery just outside the Conservation Area are to some degree screened.

The volume of heavy traffic and its speed is a negative factor for the Conservation Area, both in terms of the wear on road and safety. There are notices as well as solar powered signs of the speed limit but it is reported and these are regularly ignored. There may be grounds to consider introduction of a 20 mph limit within the central area. The Square may formally have been a place for public gatherings but the level of traffic makes this unlikely.

It was also reported that fly-tipping in or near the Conservation Area is a regular problem. While this is generally an offence which takes place on an opportunistic basis, in general it occurs more frequently where there are areas which appear overgrown, in poor condition or uncared for.

It was noted that some houses, even listed buildings had replaced doors and windows with frames of non-traditional materials, which also did not match the original style. Where they are part of a terrace, the impact is greater. Where doors and windows need replacing, timber-framed windows in the original style should be chosen.

Similarly, the introduction of contemporary fence panels and concrete posts is negative, as it is suburban rather than rural in character. As discussed in the section on boundary treatment, residents should be made aware that walls of local stone and hedges are a more appropriate treatment.

### **Neutral Areas**

These are areas within the Conservation Area which appear neglected or in poor condition; they have potential for enhancement but without attention may become a target for development or at the very least activities such as fly-tipping. This is the case with the area around the former Entrance Gates to Ince Hall Park. Also the small but highly visible overgrown area on Marsh Lane opposite Ince Manor, containing electrical plant is overgrown and ugly; it detracts from the important historical site

opposite as well as from the north entrance to the village. The area of private land enclosed by Ince Manor, Monastery Cottages and Park Cottages provides vehicular access and parking for these dwellings could be improved in such a way to enhance the setting of the important historic structures, which are currently obscured.

### **Development Opportunities**

The Conservation Area is washed over by Green Belt which should restrict opportunities for development, except for appropriate proposals for re-development of already developed sites. There are still fields within the Conservation Area as well as in the areas on the boundaries; these have been proposed as extensions (see below). Development of these areas would be highly detrimental to the rural character of Ince. Further infill development within the settlement is also undesirable, as is development on the boundary, especially on Station Road where over time development has been nibbling away at the visual green boundary between Ince and Elton, and to the north of Kinsey's Lane. The latter is well utilised agricultural land with beautiful views.

Underutilised or redundant farm buildings and associated areas of hardstanding may represent a future development opportunity. While it is always preferable for buildings to remain in their original use, where this is not possible Historic England provide extensive research and advice on appropriate conversion of historic farm buildings, while respecting their special interest and in keeping with the local character. Older buildings which contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area should be retained. 20<sup>th</sup> century structures do not per se contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area and arguably many infill and adjacent buildings from the 1960s and 1970s are not in keeping with the character; applications for their redevelopment may be an opportunity for buildings which are more contextual in terms of materials and design of buildings and boundaries.

### **Problems, Pressures and Capacity for Change**

Ince and its Conservation Area face a number of challenges which each constitute a risk to the special interest of the Conservation Area. These include:

- Piecemeal development along Station Road during the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century has reduced the separation of the settlement from neighbouring Elton. Development was not only residential but includes the sites associated with United Utilities and the large recycling plant and associated access road to the east and the land north and south of the bridge to the west.
- There is threat that the open area to the east be developed, thereby resulting in the loss of the open character of the setting as well as the rural views out of the Conservation Area across the Mersey estuary.
- Unlike many villages where property is owned by the residents, in Ince significant areas are owned by institutional and absentee bodies. For these, issues relating to the Conservation Area may be a minor matter and distinct from their main focus; however, this makes collaboration and negotiation difficult and impersonal for the Parish Council.
- Inappropriate boundary treatments and driveways. Particularly on the boundaries to the roads, introducing materials or styles which are not traditional within the rural area and are suburban rather than rural in character has a negative impact which is cumulative in effect. Traditional treatments for cottages and small houses are stone walls, sometimes with hedges above in the wider area and low stone walls, possibly with railings, in The Square. Farmsteads tend to be enclosed by stone walls of medium height, with gateposts marking the entrances. Driveways have inevitably been added with inadequate thought to the desirability of maintaining a sense of enclosure to the dwelling which is characteristic to Ince.
- Inappropriate public realm works which give priority to traffic and functionality over character and historic identity and the lack of interpretation. The design and choice of materials for The Square detracts from the Georgian origins and buildings as well as from its former function as a village green. The choice of streetlamps is similarly lacking in character.
- Speed and volume of heavy traffic. Ince is characterised by its original street pattern with narrow lanes and curves yet has to accommodate heavy traffic from trucks and tractors which do not observe the speed limits. On the one hand the traffic underpins the viability of the remaining farm businesses, on the other hand it impacts on both the character and safety.

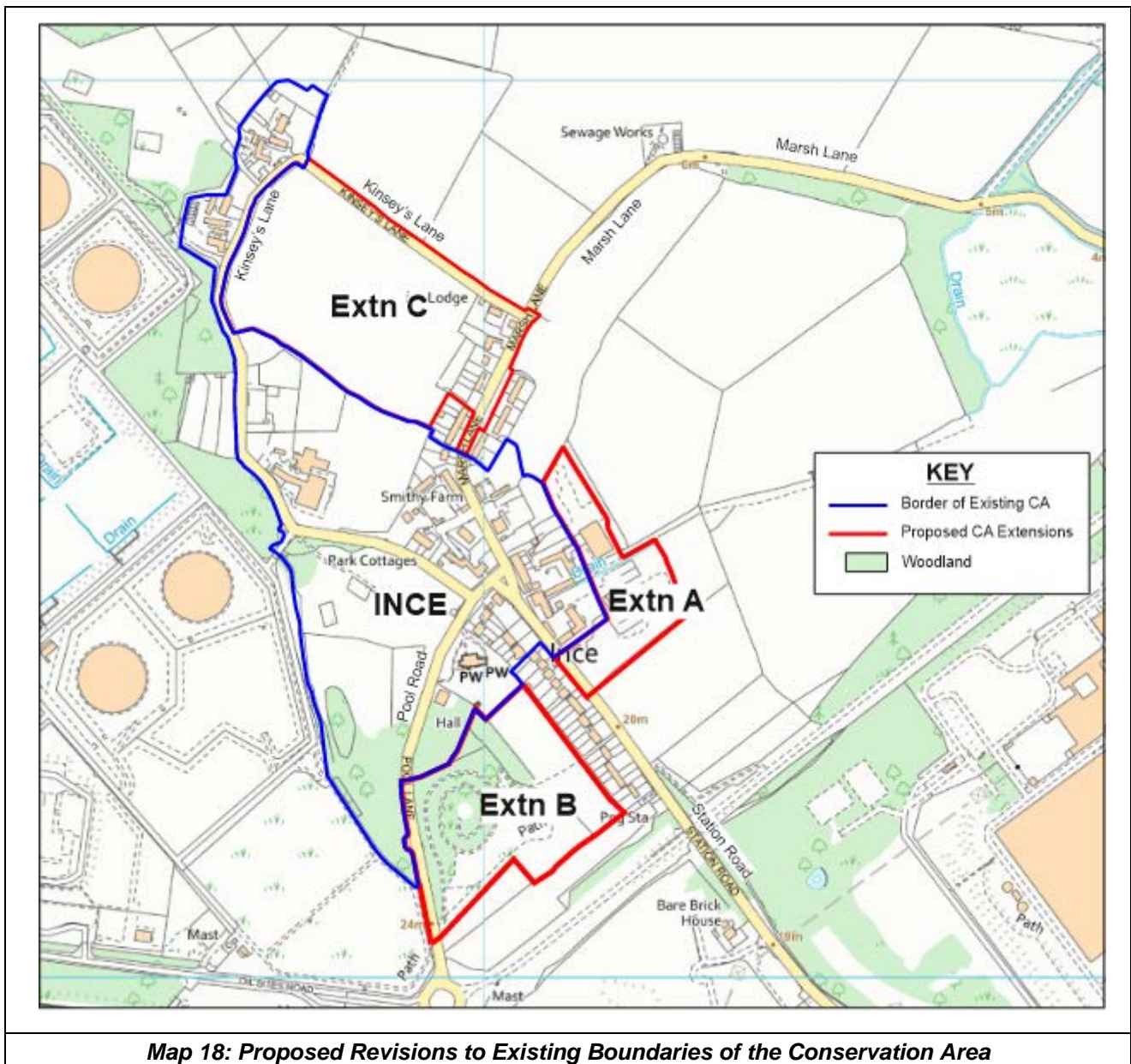


- Fly-tipping and vandalism/theft to stone walls started occurring in the early 1990s when Ince became better known due to car boot sales held just to the south of the village at Bare Brick House. The walls constitute part of character and special interest of the village and their maintenance is a challenge, which the Parish Council is keen to champion.

## Section 5 Suggested Boundary Changes

An important aspect of the process of conservation area appraisal is a review of the existing boundary, something that should occur on a regular basis. In the case of the Ince Conservation Area this last took place in 2004 when the farmsteads of Wood Farm and Hall Farm were added, together with the northern section of Kinsey's Lane. Thus it is an appropriate time to review the boundaries.

Following a detailed review of the history of Ince, extensive observation of how it is reflected in the buildings, structures, town and landscape, as well as extended discussions with members of the community, a few changes are proposed. It is of note that, in addition to their common historical development, they all share other characteristics, including important green spaces, the same building materials and architectural forms, the same range of types of building and uses and they include a number of buildings identifiable as positive contributors and those which were also present in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**A. Extension to the Southeast to Incorporate all of the Farmyards of Village Green and Lower Green Farms.**

It is unusual for a boundary to cut through a plot such as a farmyard, and this is the case with the current boundary in relation to the two farmyards, with the older buildings within and others outside of the boundary. The boundary has been extended here to take account of this anomaly. The boundary of the proposed farmyard extension to Lower Green Farm is a coursed stone wall, partly shaped with curved coping stones.



*Boundary Wall of Farmyard*

**B. Boundary Extension to the South to Include Properties on Station Road, Parish Field and the Reservoir**

Currently the southern boundary includes the churchyard and the land around the Village Hall but not the land to the south of this on the west side of Station Road. It is proposed to extend the boundary to the south to include the site of the Parish Field and the Reservoir, now part of Mersey Forest.

Rationale:

Historically the prominent 3-storey building of the Vicarage marked the southern entrance to Ince. Standing in extensive glebe lands, it was associated with a pair of buildings to the north and probably operated as a small farmstead. It is shown and named in Bryant's 1831 map, appears in later photographs of being Georgian in style. The land to the north and west appears as cultivated, possibly gardens or orchard. The Vicarage was demolished in the 1960s and replaced with a small development of staggered terraces. The housing to the north and south of the site was added a few years before this. The rectangular field to the west, formerly glebe land and now known as Parish Field is a recreational area with a playground and sports field and offers wonderful views towards the church. To the west of this is the circular grassed feature of the underground water reservoir built between 1954 and 1967. This is now a recreational area under the management of Mersey Forest and connects into both the Parish Field and the woodland associated with the Village Hall.



### C. Boundary Extension to the North along Marsh Lane to Kinsey's Lane and Kinsey's Lane

The boundary would be extended north from its current position along the south side of Marsh Lane to the intersection of Marsh Lane with Kinsey's Lane, and along the north side of Kinsey's Lane to join the existing Conservation Area boundary at Hall Farm. It would include the houses to the north of Marsh Lane but not include 21-31 Marsh Lane, running along the west boundary to these properties and the north boundary to 31 Marsh Lane to re-join Marsh Lane. It would bring the following houses, structures and areas into the Conservation Area:

- 33-37 Marsh Lane (odd numbers)
- Rock House, The Cottage and Rose Cottage (west side of Marsh Lane)
- Chez Nous and Proffit's Lodge on south side of Kinsey's Lane
- The Village Pump (proposed as NDHA)
- The area known as Wood Farm Field.

#### Rationale:

Marsh Lane's development was associated with the development of the new pier in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; it is believed that Grade II listed 'Gothick' Proffit's Lodge may have been a toll cottage and Rose Cottage is architecturally very similar and is proposed as a non-designated heritage asset. Marsh Lane is also associated with the construction of Ince Hall and the need to relocate and provide accommodation for the fishermen, resulting in the construction of a terrace on the east side complete with water pump. The terrace was replaced in turn by the current retirement housing (16-38 Marsh Lane, outside the Conservation Area). Rock House appears on the 1873 OS map, although it has been altered. There are important views into and out of the Conservation Area along the road.

Kinsey's Lane is part of the historic network of roads of Ince, illustrated by the sandstone walls still visible on both sides. From Kinsey's Lane, looking south there are good views to the former monastic grange.





*View South up Marsh Lane with Pump*



*View of Monastic Grange from Kinsey's Lane*



*Crowning of May Queen on Wood Farm Field*



*Sponsored Bike Ride on Wood Farm Field*

## Section 6      **Action Plan**

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal has identified a number of action points which will help focus priorities for the LPA and Parish Council as well as feed into policies for the Neighbourhood Plan. They also provide the basis for developing a Management Plan for the Conservation Area at a later date.

### **Action 1**

Amend the boundary of the Conservation Area as shown on the proposals map to include:

- All of the Farmyards of Village Green and Lower Green Farms. In some cases the boundaries bisect a plot, which does not follow current guidance as properties should be included with the historic setting;
- The Parish Field and the Reservoir;
- North along Marsh Lane to Kinsey's Lane and Kinsey's Lane (including wall and hedge on both sides), to include: 33-37 Marsh Lane (odd numbers); Rock House, The Cottage and Rose Cottage (west side of Marsh Lane); the Village Pump (proposed as NDHA); Chez Nous and Proffit's Lodge on south side of Kinsey's Lane; and the area known as Wood Farm Field.

### **Action 2**

Reclassify the village of Ince within the West Cheshire Landscape Characterisation Strategy as part of LCT9 Cheshire Plain West (which surrounds it) rather than as an urban area as current. Despite its proximity to Ellesmere Port and the industrial sites nearby, the settlement's rural character is closer to that of the many villages included within LCT9 and is integral with the surrounding land which is part of LCT9.

### **Action 3**

Preserve or enhance important views within, into and out of the Conservation Area including:

- North along Station Road towards The Square and the church
- North from the bottom of Parish Field, towards the church and churchyard
- South from Kinsey's Lane towards the village centre
- South up Marsh Lane towards Ince Manor (and from further i.e. from Fens Wood)
- North from The Square and Marsh Lane towards the estuary and Runcorn Bridge
- North from Kinsey's Lane across the North Hills, adjoining fields and the estuary
- West and South from the churchyard inland towards Helsby Hill
- Northeast along Pool Lane towards The Square and 1-3 The Square.

Other views, including those of the Conservation Area from a more distant position, are discussed in the Neighbourhood Plan documentation.

### **Action 4**

Any development should ensure that the footprint of new buildings and their scale fits into the agricultural nature of the settlement and respects the character of the area. Designs should recognize the characteristic materials, scale, architectural styles and boundary treatments described in this document.

This policy does not preclude a terrace or cluster of such structures. It seeks to ensure that the scale and grain of development is appropriate, in accordance with advice contained in paragraph 86 of the Historic England Advice Note Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management.

**Action 5**

Action may be considered under Section 215 of The Planning Act 1990, and/or sections 48, 54, and 76 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to secure the repair of listed and unlisted buildings within the Conservation Area, and to ensure that untidy lands and sites are addressed where appropriate, if this cannot be achieved by other means.

**Action 6**

Build awareness of the special interest and character of the Conservation Area, in order to encourage property owners, including those of social housing, to take this into account when considering any alterations such as replacing windows, resurfacing drives or altering boundary treatments. Fence panels and concrete posts tend to be suburban rather than rural in character and should be avoided; a green chain link fence within can be added to give supplementary security.

A publication, possibly digital, setting out the controls applying within a conservation area, the controls applying with an Article 4(2) Direction, if relevant, a brief description of the area's history and significance will be produced and disseminated. This publication will also include information on appropriate materials, scale, architectural style, appropriate window and door design, and boundary treatments.

**Action 7**

In addition to seeking external grant funding for restoration works to stone walls around the Conservation Area, the Parish Council and LPA will work with local landowners to develop a plan for the repair and ongoing maintenance of field and boundary walls.

**Action 8**

Preserve existing visually important trees and shrubbery and hedges which contribute to characteristic views. In conservation areas, notice is required for works to trees that have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm when measured at 1.5m from ground level (or more than 100mm if reducing the number of trees to benefit the growth of other trees). Additionally, many trees are protected by Tree Protection Orders, but not the row of trees on the west side of The Square. However over time root damage can damage stone walls and advice should be sought and shared to ensure the proper maintenance of trees, hedges and walls. Specifically, to consult Cheshire West Arboricultural Officer about a TPO for trees on west of The Square and guidance on hedge maintenance.

**Action 9**

An Article 4(2) Direction will be considered to bring within specific planning control certain classes of permitted development.

**Action 10**

When public realm and utility works (utility installations, surfaces, lighting, street furniture) are being considered, in particular with reference to The Square, the Local Planning Authority will ensure that the historic character is taken into consideration in relation to the choice of materials and designs.

**Action 11**

Review options for speed controls including a lower speed limit in the village, with the objective of achieving greater compliance and enhancing safety, recognising that the lanes are narrow and sometimes there is poor visibility.

**Action 12**

Address the limited public information and interpretation about the historic, architectural and natural special interest of Ince, to enhance awareness and appreciation among both the local population and visitors (walkers, cyclists, horse riders, bird watchers, etc.). This may involve a combination of information boards, leaflets and online resources, liaising with producers of books of local walks, etc. In consultation with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, work with the Local Planning Authority to reinstate lost footpaths and interconnectivity to and improve the condition of existing footpaths.

**Action 13**

Ensure that any and all building works, extensions and new services are offered for consultation to the development control archaeologist to identify those areas which hold likely archaeological deposits. Ensure any boundary alterations, extensions or excavations are offered for consultation by way of planning application. This will promote archaeological investigation and broaden the understanding of the archaeological deposits within Ince.

**Action 14**

A mechanism for monitoring change on a regular basis will be developed. Consider that the Parish Council undertakes a programme of photographic documentation of the Conservation Area that is conducted at regular intervals.

**Action 15**

An enforcement strategy to address unauthorized development will be developed.

Historic England guidance also recommends that the special character of conservation areas is protected and enhanced by enforcement of the controls applied. In March 1998 the Cabinet Office, in partnership with the Local Government Association, published the central and local government *Concordat on Good Enforcement*, a voluntary non-statutory code setting out best practice.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Cabinet Office and Local Government Association, *Enforcement Concordat* (London: Cabinet Office and Local Government Association, March 1998).



## Section 7      **Community Involvement**

The appraisal was commissioned by the Parish Council and in collaboration with its Neighbourhood Plan Group and Heritage sub-group. Despite the constraints of the pandemic, members of the Heritage Group collaborated closely and shared their deep knowledge of the history and development of Ince. They also introduced us to many members of the close-knit community while walking round the village, providing the opportunity to understand people's concern as and what was valued.

The Appraisal was published and made available for comment and consultation [date range]. During this period of engagement, there was the opportunity for to ask questions online about the document and its implications as well as to receive and review comments, prior to the preparation of the final document.

## Section 8 Sources and Contact Details

### Published and Unpublished Works

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### Legislation and Guidance

- Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)*.
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*. London: Department of the Environment and Department of National Heritage, 1994.
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning and the Historic Environment*. London: Department of the Environment and Department of National Heritage, 1990.
- Cabinet Office and Local Government Association, *Enforcement Concordat*. London: Cabinet Office and Local Government Association, March 1998.
- Historic England:
- Measuring and Assessing Change in Conservation Areas 2005
  - Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments, 2017

- Streets for All, 2018
- Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, 2019
- Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment, 2018
- Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, Advice Note 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2019

### **Maps and Plans**

Saxton's Map of Cheshire, 1577

Burdett's Map of Cheshire, 1777

Greenwood's Map of Cheshire, 1819

Bryant's Map of Cheshire, 1831

Map of Park-Yates Estate, 1873 (Cheshire Archives and Local Studies)

1873-1874 Ordnance Survey

1896 Ordnance Survey

1910-1911 Ordnance Survey

1965 Ordnance Survey

2020 Historic Environment Record Map (GIS data)

### **Archives and Libraries Consulted**

Cheshire Archives and Local Studies, Chester

**APPENDICES: SUPPORTING INFORMATION**



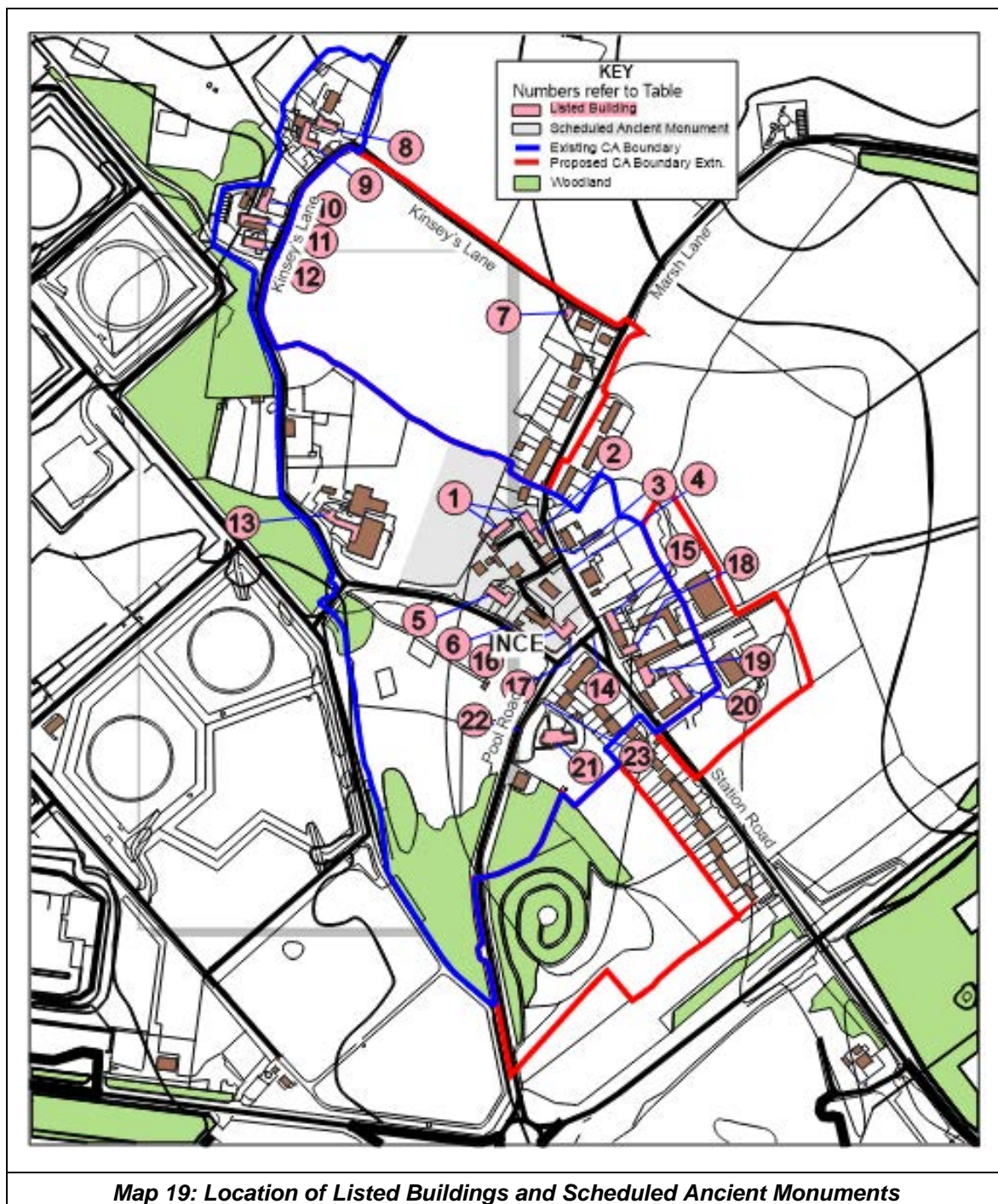
## Appendix 1: Audit of Heritage Assets

### Introduction

An audit has been undertaken of heritage assets within the Conservation Area and the areas considered for extension. These include Listed Buildings and Positive Contributors. These elements have been logged in tables and described. There is one Archaeological Sites and Monuments identified in the Historic Environment Record, .

### Listed Buildings

A listed building is a building that has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. There are 23 listed buildings and structures within Ince Conservation Area, which are shown on the following maps.



<b>Listed Buildings</b>	
1	Ince Manor Monastic Grange (Old Hall and Monastery Cottages) – also a Scheduled Ancient Monument which includes the surrounding area
2	Farm Building abutting Manor House
3	Stocks, adjacent to Ince Manor
4	Part of Boundary Wall between The Square and the Manor House
5	Park Cottages, Kinsey's Lane
6	Boundary Wall between Park Cottages and Kinsey's Lane junction
7	Proffit's Lodge, Kinsey's Lane
8	T-shaped Shippon, Hall Farm
9	L-shaped Shippon, Hall Farm
10	Wood Farm Farmhouse
11	Shippon, Wood Farm
12	Shippon, Wood Farm
13	Yew Tree Farmhouse and attached Shippon
14	Coronation Lamp and Lantern
15	1, 2 & 3 The Square/Landmark building
16	8, 9 & 10 The Square (listed as 7, 8 & 9)/Landmark building
17	K6 Telephone Box
18	Outbuilding attached to Village Green Farmhouse
19	Lower Green Farmhouse and wall to front
20	Lower Green Farm Shippon
21	Church of St. James/Landmark building
22	Churchyard walls, including two pairs gateposts
23	Lamp post near north gate

## Potential Local List Structures and Positive Contributors

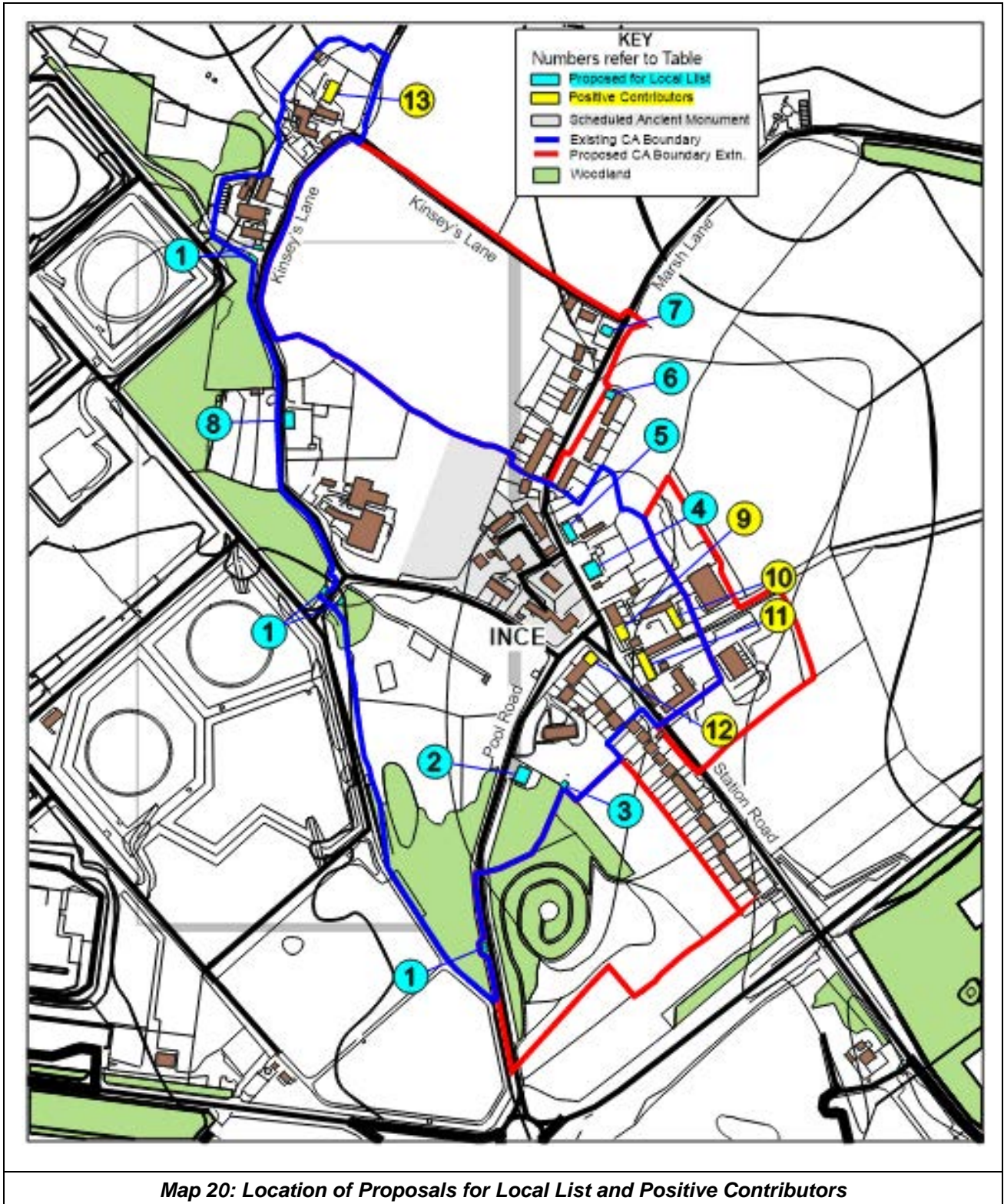
In addition to listed buildings, it is important to consider whether any of the buildings are of sufficient local importance and appropriate for listing as a non-designated heritage asset; this does not give them any more protection than that of being within a Conservation Area. One definition of the criteria for a local list is: Nominations should represent the best of the non-statutory listed buildings in the borough, be substantially unaltered and retain the majority of original features.

A positive contributor is a heritage asset that makes a positive contribution to the surrounding area but is neither a designated nor a non-designated heritage asset. They are classed as heritage assets as they are identified by the local authority as having a degree of significance, meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest.<sup>32</sup> They should be considered in addition to both listed buildings and buildings entered on the local list (non-designated heritage assets). A single building, group or landmark can be classed as a positive contributor.

<b>Potential Local List (1-8) and Positive Contributor (9-13) Buildings and Structures</b>			
1	Entrances to Ince Hall on Pool Lane and Kinsey's Lane, including former bridge abutments and park wall	8	Badger's Cottage
2	Village Hall, Pool Lane	9	Village Green Farmhouse
3	Mortuary building & Memorial	10	Barn at Village Green Farm
4	Duke of Wellington Pub	11	4-6 The Square
5	Smithy House Farm	12	Beech House
6	Water Pump, Marsh Lane	13	Hall Farm Farmhouse
7	Rose Cottage, Marsh Lane		

<sup>32</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (July 2021).





## Listed Buildings

**Name:** INCE MANOR MONASTIC GRANGE  
**Location:** Marsh Lane, Ince  
**Grade:** I (1138810) & Scheduled Ancient Monum.  
**Date first listed:**26/9/1963  
**Type and date:** Manor House (Old Hall and Monastery Cottages) of St. Webergh's Abbey. From 13<sup>th</sup> century, with several phases.  
**Summary:** Former monastic grange (abbott's residence, hall and dormitory, later manor house on two sides of courtyard. Associated with well in courtyard, boundary walls, fishpond and barn converted into Park Cottages. Modern pitched slate roof, walls of roughly worked coursed sandstone, north wall rebuilt after 19<sup>th</sup> century fire, mullioned and transomed windows post-Dissolution. Modern extension to north.



**Name:** FARM BUILDING ABUTTING MANOR HOUSE  
**Location:** Marsh Lane, Ince  
**Grade:** II (1138811)  
**Date first listed:**21/02/1983  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century agricultural building.  
**Summary:** 2-storey, 3-bay, brown brick, partly on stone plinth, slate roof with tile ridge. 3 doors, including cart door, pitching holes.



**Name:** STOCKS  
**Location:** Marsh Lane  
**Grade:** II (1329994)  
**Date first listed:**21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** No known date but stocks date from 14<sup>th</sup> century and were present up to 19<sup>th</sup> century.  
**Summary:** Pair of vertical stones embedded in ground, grooved on inner faces to receive timber stocks. No timberwork survives.





**Name:** PART OF BOUNDARY WALL BETWEEN THE SQUARE AND THE MANOR HOUSE

**Location:**

**Grade:** II (1130346)

**Date first listed:**21/2/1985

**Type and date:** Part of medieval boundary wall.

**Summary:** Squared coursed rubble sandstone wall with plain weathered plinth, broken by modern gateways.



**Name:** PARK COTTAGES

**Location:** Kinsey's Lane

**Grade:** II (1130341)

**Date first listed:**21/2/1983

**Type and date:** Terrace of 4 small cottages, 19<sup>th</sup> century conversion of possible medieval monastic grange barn.

**Summary:** Four 2-storey, 2-bay cottages of squared coursed sandstone with end gables in later brown brick. Grey Welsh slate roof with brick chimneys and sandstone ridge. Traces of slit windows, casement windows in inserted openings. Garden wall of sandstone rubble.



**Name:** PART OF BOUNDARY WALL NEAR PARK COTTAGES AND KINSEYS LANE

**Location:** Kinsey's Lane

**Grade:** II (1318905)

**Date first listed:**21/2/1983

**Type and date:** Part of medieval boundary wall.

**Summary:** Squared coursed sandstone rubble on plain weathered plinth.



**Name:** PROFFITS LODGE  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane  
**Grade:** II (1145881)  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century 'Gothick' Lodge (possibly ferry toll) cottage.  
**Summary:** Single storey with pyramid roof and central brick chimney. Projecting porch under hipped roof between two pointed arched windows.



**Name:** T-SHAPED SHIPPON, HALL FARM  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane  
**Grade:** II (1318873)  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** 17<sup>th</sup> century farm building, formerly longhouse.  
**Summary:** Squared, coursed rubble sandstone with grey Welsh slate roof, catslide projections to form 'T'. 1688 datestone over lintel plus 'VH' and moulded sandstone string course. After farmhouse built to north became a farm building; now converted to residential.



**Name:** L-SHAPED SHIPPON, HALL FARM  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane  
**Grade:** II (1330394)  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century shippon, converted to residential.  
**Summary:** 2-storey, of brown brick and squared coursed rubble walls. Diablo vents to hayloft and loading door under east gable.



**Name:** WOOD FARM FARMHOUSE  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane  
**Grade:** II (1130342)  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse  
**Summary:** Long, L-shaped 2-storey of brown brick with sandstone on crosswing, corrugated metal roof replacing earlier thatch. Casement windows and one sash window.



**Name:** SHIPPON, WOOD FARM  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane  
**Grade:** II 1318909  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** 17<sup>th</sup> century shippon  
**Summary:** 2-storey of brown brick with sandstone quoins and some patches of coursed rubble sandstone. Segmental arched doors to ground floor, ventilation slits to first floor and pitch hole.



**Name:** BARN, 100m SOUTH OF WOOD FARM FARMHOUSE  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane  
**Grade:** II (1130343)  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century threshing barn  
**Summary:** Squared coursed sandstone rubble with grey Welsh slate roof and coped stone gables. Full height arched door to threshing floor, pitching doors at first floor.





**Name:** YEW TREE FARMHOUSE & ATTACHED SHIPPON

**Location:** Kinsey's Lane

**Grade:** II (1330395)

**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983

**Type and date:** 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse with late Georgian attached L-shaped shippon.

**Summary:** Farmhouse of brown brick with grey Welsh slate roof. Projecting crow-stepped gabled porch. 2-storey shippon of brown brick with patches of squared sandstone, original doorways to cowshed and pitch holes to hayloft above.



**Name:** CORONATION LAMP AND LANTERN

**Location:** The Square, Ince

**Grade:** II (1138818)

**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983

**Type and date:** 1902 cast iron lamp post

**Summary:** Commemorative lamp for the Coronation of Edward VII with plaque, from the inhabitants of Ince and the neighbourhood. Fluted cast iron post with 6-sided lantern surmounted by decorative crown.



**Name:** 1, 2 & 3 THE SQUARE

**Location:** The Square, Ince

**Grade:** II (1335894)

**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983

**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century hotel, now houses

**Summary:** 5-bay, 2-storey in brown brick with stone detailing. Hipped roof in graded grey Welsh slate with simple pediment to front with round-headed arched window under gable. Central semi-circular arched doorway with fanlight, 16-pane sash windows. Rubble garden wall with flush copings.





**Name:** 7, 8, & 9 THE SQUARE

**Location:** The Square, Ince

**Grade:** II (1335917)

**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983

**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century terrace of 3 cottages, listed for group value

**Summary:** 2-storey, 4-bay of brown brick and graded grey Welsh slate pitched roof with central cross gable. Central cottage altered late C19 as village shop and post office. Doors and many windows replaced but some sash windows remain.



**Name:** K6 TELEPHONE BOX

**Location:** The Square, Ince

**Grade:** II (1138824)

**Date first listed:** 18/2/1989

**Type and date:** 1935 K6 Telephone Kiosk

**Summary:** Designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, of cast iron, square with domed roof and unperforated crowns to upper panels.



**Name:** OUTBUILDING ATTACHED TO VILLAGE GREEN FARMHOUSE

**Location:** The Square, Ince

**Grade:** II (1138819)

**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983

**Type and date:** 17<sup>th</sup> century former cottage, now outbuilding

**Summary:** Squared rubble sandstone, formerly two storey, now one. 3-light mullioned window and string course above.



**Name:** LOWER GREEN FARMHOUSE AND WALL TO FRONT GARDEN

**Location:** The Square/Station Road, Ince

**Grade:** II (1086967)

**Date first listed:**21/2/1983

**Type and date:** Late Georgian farmhouse

**Summary:** 2-storey, 3-bay in brown brick with grey Welsh slate roof. 30-pane iron windows, semi-circular fanlight over door. Garden wall of squared coursed sandstone rubble.



**Name:** LOWER GREEN FARM SHIPPON

**Location:** The Square/Station Road, Ince

**Grade:** II (1138820)

**Date first listed:**21/2/1983

**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century shippon

**Summary:** 2-storey 5-bay, ground floor of squared coursed rubble sandstone, first floor brown brick, roof grey Welsh slate. Rectangular doorways and windows at ground floor, 5 circular pitching holes with shaped sandstone cills at first floor (rebuilt). To rear coursed stone to eaves and narrow slits for ventilation.



**Name:** CHURCH OF ST JAMES

**Location:** Pool Lane, Ince

**Grade:** II\* (1138815)

**Date first listed:**26/9/1963

**Type and date:** 14<sup>th</sup> century church with alterations in 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century

**Summary:** Red sandstone with grey slate roof. 14<sup>th</sup> century 3-light east window and two 15<sup>th</sup> century square headed windows, tower added 1485-93, raised by two courses in 19<sup>th</sup> century when nave, side aisle and porch wholly rebuilt.



**Name:** CHURCHYARD WALLS, INCLUDING TWO SETS OF GATEPOSTS  
**Location:** Pool Lane, Ince  
**Grade:** II (1138813)  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** Late 19<sup>th</sup> century churchyard walls  
**Summary:** Squared, coursed, tooled sandstone with roll-moulded top. Gateposts have octagonal finials and cusped panels.

**Name:** LAMP POST NEAR NORTH GATE  
**Grade:** II 1138814()  
**Date first listed:** 21/2/1983  
**Type and date:** Late 19<sup>th</sup> century cast-iron lamp  
**Summary:** Octagonal moulded base and circular shaft, replacement lantern.



### Potential Local List Structures (Non-designated Heritage Assets)

In addition to listed buildings, it is important to consider whether any of the buildings are of sufficient local importance and appropriate for listing as a non-designated heritage asset; this does not give them any more protection than that of being within a Conservation Area. One definition of the criteria for a local list is: Nominations should represent the best of the non-statutory listed buildings in the borough, be substantially unaltered and retain the majority of original features. The nominated building is required to fulfil one or more of the following to be considered for local listing:

- architectural or historic character,
- historical association,
- display evidence of local distinctiveness,
- group value or
- townscape value.

The following are proposed for inclusion in the local list, according to the named criteria:

**Name:** Entrance and gateway to Ince Hall, the park wall, the remains of 2<sup>nd</sup> gateway on Kinsey's Lane and the abutments of the bridge for the drive.  
**Location:** Pool Lane and Kinsey's Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** mid-19<sup>th</sup> century hall entrance and associated structures  
**Criteria:** Historical evidence and association with Ince Hall  
**Summary:** The construction of Ince Hall and Park with its mile-long drive and several lodges redefined the settlement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both in terms of it's the new buildings, relocation of earlier housing, roads and access to the river but also in the provision of employment and facilities for the community. Following its sale and demolition, the gates, structures and park walls provide the only remaining evidence of its past significance.





**Name:** Village Hall (former National School)  
**Location:** Pool Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** 1869 village school  
**Criteria:** Historical evidence and association with Ince's long tradition of endowed education as well as with its historical association with the Yates family  
**Summary:** From medieval times there was limited provision of education by the monastic establishment. Details of education during the post-medieval period are not known but from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Edmund Yates endowed a Free School for girls and boys, the building was also used for meetings. In 1869 Captain Park-Yates provided the land adjacent to the church and some funding towards a school for 100 children. The school closed in the 1920s and the Yates family gifted the building to the village as a village hall.



**Name:** Bier House and Ship Canal Memorial  
**Location:** Churchyard, Ince  
**Type and date:** 17<sup>th</sup> century mortuary building and 19<sup>th</sup> century grave memorial  
**Criteria:** Historical evidence and the association with the construction of Manchester Ship Canal, a development which fundamentally altered the character of Ince  
**Summary:** Built of squared coursed sandstone, the building is believed to date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and housed the bodies on a bier prior to burial. During the development of the Ship Canal in 1891a construction accident resulted in the deaths of 10 men, 6 of whom were buried in the churchyard. 10 shovels were kept in the Bier House until recently and a memorial in the churchyard bears the names of all 10.



**Name:** Smithy House Farm  
**Location:** Marsh Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** Medieval cottage with 12<sup>th</sup> century cellar  
**Criteria:** Architectural and historic special interest  
**Summary:** The cellar contains a sandstone table and bath, possibly associated with food preparation and was believed to be connected to the grange by a tunnel. The cruck beam section of the house dates from ca. 1475, with additions and alterations from 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.





**Name:** Duke of Wellington  
**Location:** Marsh Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** pre-1831 inn  
**Criteria:** Historical evidence and association with the hostelry associated with the ferry trade  
**Summary:** Building in two phases.



**Name:** Water Pump  
**Location:** Marsh Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** pre-1831 inn  
**Criteria:** Historical evidence and association with Ince Hall  
**Summary:**



**Name:** Rose Cottage  
**Location:** Marsh Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** early 19<sup>th</sup> century Gothick lodge cottage, very similar to Proffit's Lodge  
**Criteria:** Architectural special interest and group value  
**Summary:** Rose Cottage is almost identical in architectural design to Proffit's Lodge, single storey with a pyramid roof and single central chimney, coursed squared sandstone and slate roof with sandstone ridge tiles and a projecting porch. To either side of this are later windows with small panes. On the side elevation there is pointed arched window.



## Positive Contributors

A positive contributor is a heritage asset that makes a positive contribution to the surrounding area but is neither a designated nor a non-designated heritage asset. They are classed as heritage assets as they are identified by the local authority as having a degree of significance, meriting consideration

in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest.<sup>33</sup> They should be considered in addition to both listed buildings and buildings entered on the local list (non-designated heritage assets). A single building, group or landmark can be classed as a positive contributor.

These elements have been assessed with reference to Historic England criteria set out in their document.<sup>34</sup> The guidance uses the following questions to assess if an element should be considered for positive contribution:

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape e.g. a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

Those buildings or areas which have been assessed according to these criteria in the Ince Lane Conservation Area and immediate vicinity are identified on the maps above, together with the listed buildings and proposed non-designated heritage assets.

**Name:** Village Green Farm

**Location:** The Square, Ince

**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse

**Criteria:** Contributes positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets as well as reflecting the traditional functional character of the area

**Summary:** The 2-storey, 3-bay farmhouse has been extended and the windows altered but its materials, age and architectural style, as well as its setting with a small garden enclosed by a low stone wall contribute to the character of The Square and the wider Conservation Area.



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<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. *National Planning Policy Framework*. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Feb 2019).

<sup>34</sup> Historic England, *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, Historic England Advice Note 1* (London: Historic England, 2019) 21.

**Name:** Village Green Farm Barn  
**Location:** Rear of The Square, Ince  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century shippon  
**Criteria:** Together with Village Green Farmhouse it illustrates the development of the settlement, as well as reflecting the traditional functional character of the area  
**Summary:** The 2-storey 4-bay brick shippon has a slate roof with stone ridge tiles and round pitching holes to the west and diamond vents to the east.



**Name:** 4-6 The Square  
**Location:** The Square, Ince  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century terrace of 3 cottages  
**Criteria:** Contributes positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets as well as reflecting the traditional functional character of the area  
**Summary:** The 2-storey terrace of 2-bay cottages is built in the same brown brick and slate roof as other buildings on The Square. The windows altered but the materials, age and architectural style, as well as its setting with a small garden enclosed by a low stone wall contribute to the character of The Square and the wider Conservation Area.



**Name:** Beech House  
**Location:** The Square, Ince  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century house  
**Criteria:** Contributes positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets as well as contributing to the quality of recognisable space of The Square  
**Summary:** Overlooking The Square, the house completes the enclosed space. The 2-storey 3-bay is built in the same brown brick and slate roof as other buildings on The Square. The pyramid roof with central chimney stack overhangs a front elevation with three 12-pane sash windows to the first floor and a projecting ground floor section with a lean-to roof. The materials, age and architectural style, as well as its setting with a small garden enclosed by a low stone wall contribute to the character of The Square and the wider Conservation Area.





**Name:** Badger Cottage  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** 18<sup>th</sup> century cottage, recently restored.  
**Criteria:** The vernacular materials and form are characteristic of the post-medieval development of the settlement.  
**Summary:** Stone cottage with thatched roof and single storey lean-to to north close to earliest farms of the settlement.

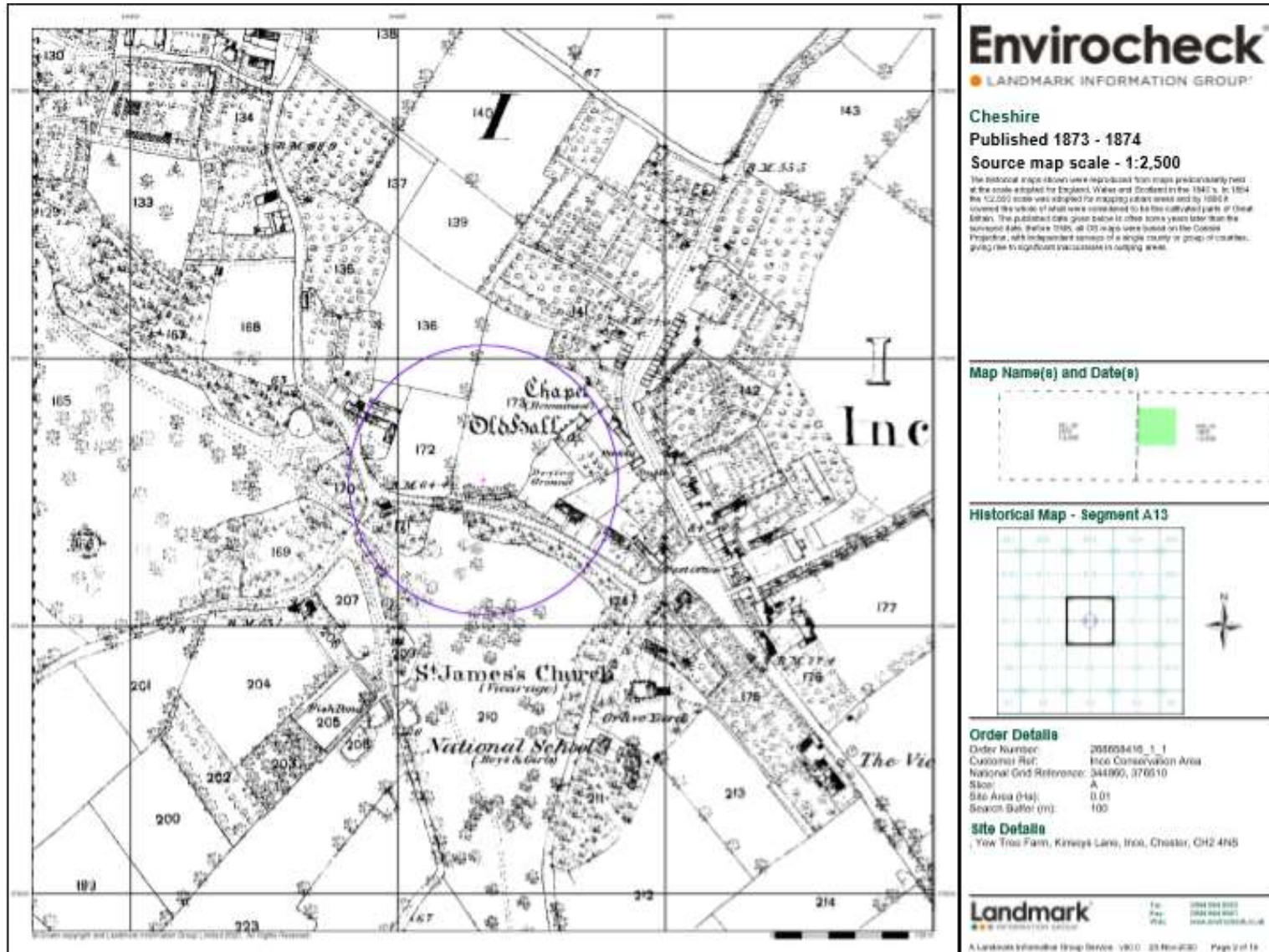


**Name:** Hall Farm Farmhouse  
**Location:** Kinsey's Lane, Ince  
**Type and date:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse  
**Criteria:** Contributes positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets as well as reflecting the evolution and traditional functional character of the area  
**Summary:** The 2-storey, 3-bay 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse provided new living accommodation separate from the former longhouse style farmhouse.

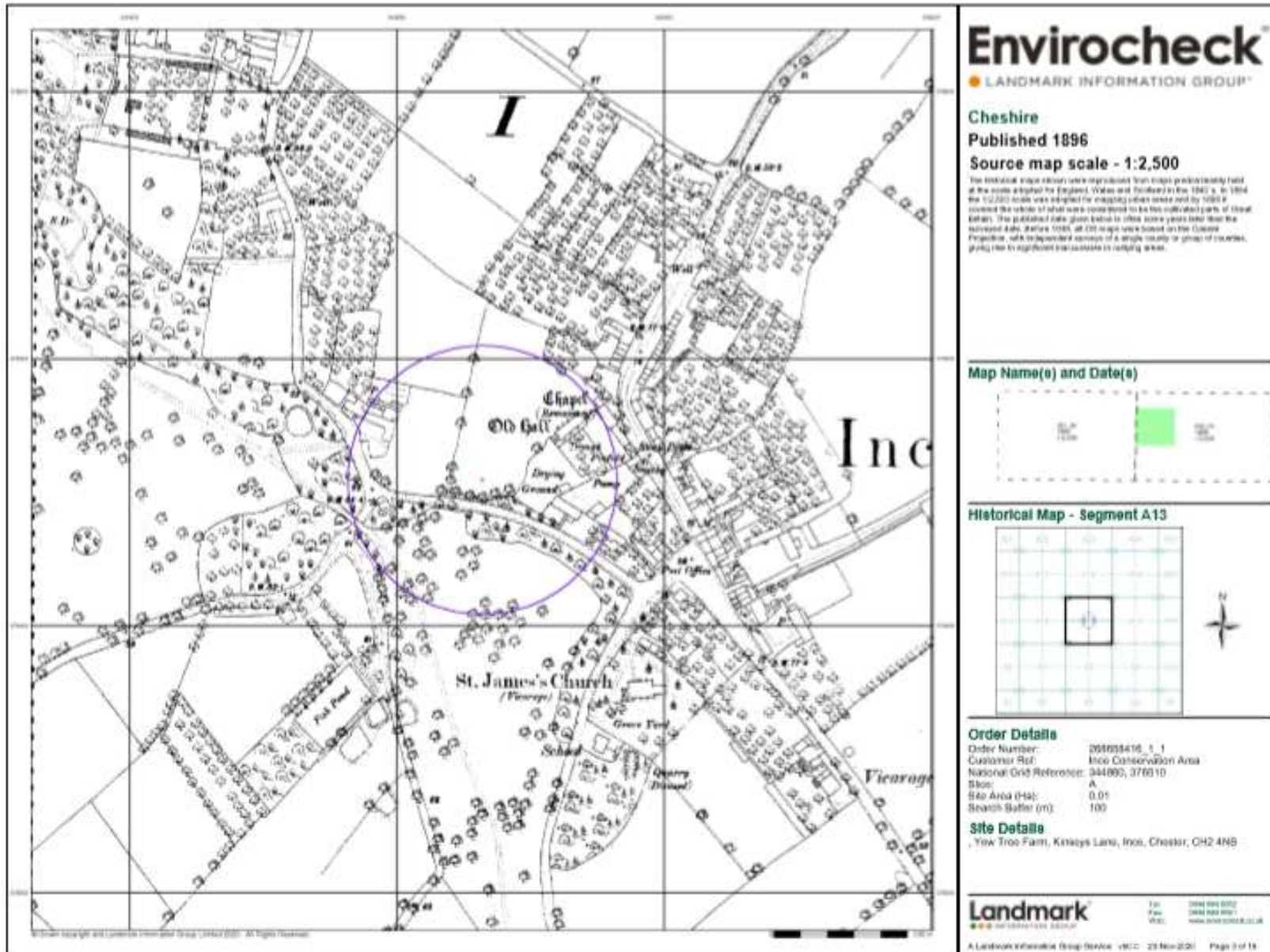




Appendix 2: Historic Mapping

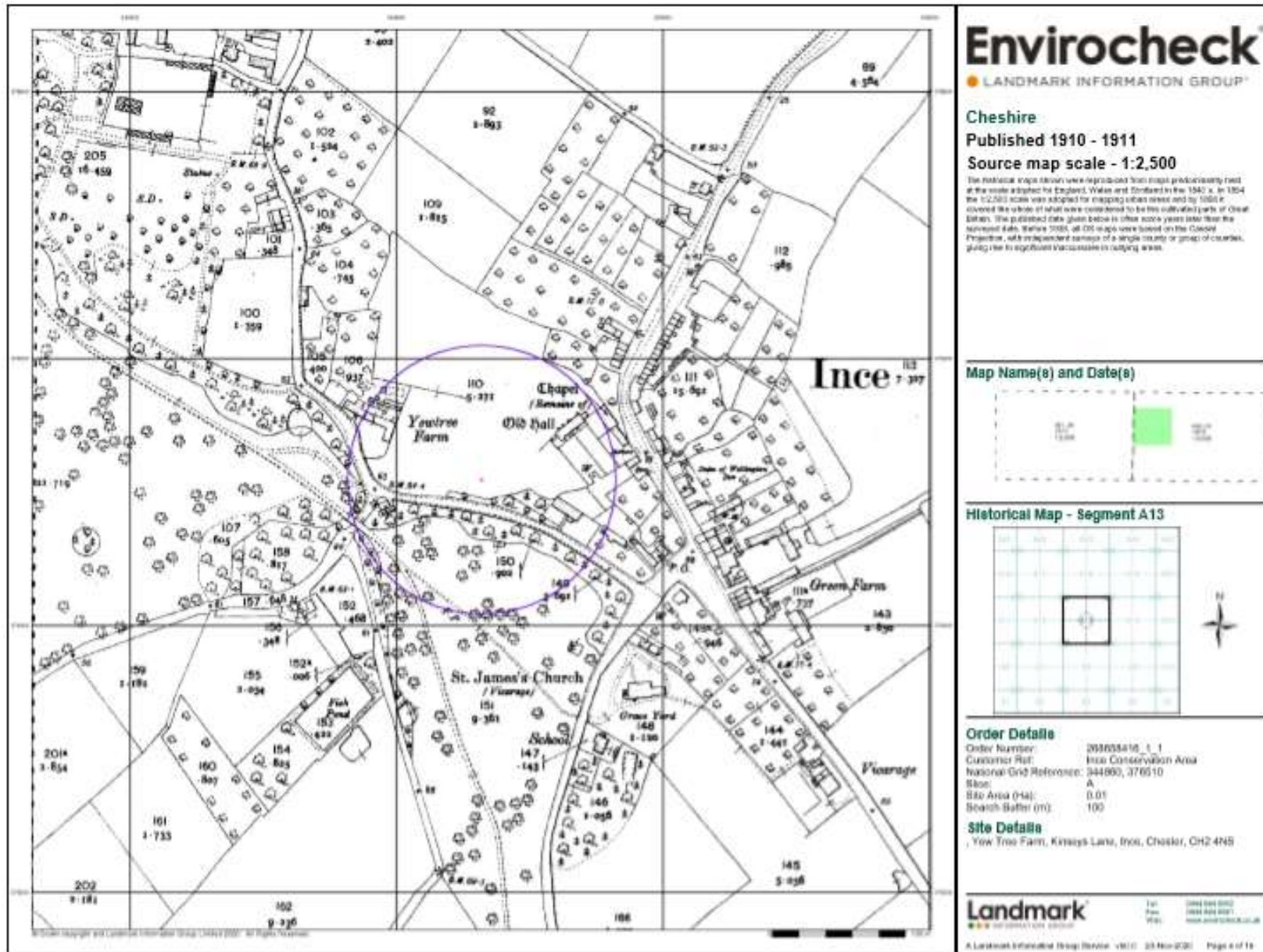


Ince: Conservation Area Appraisal

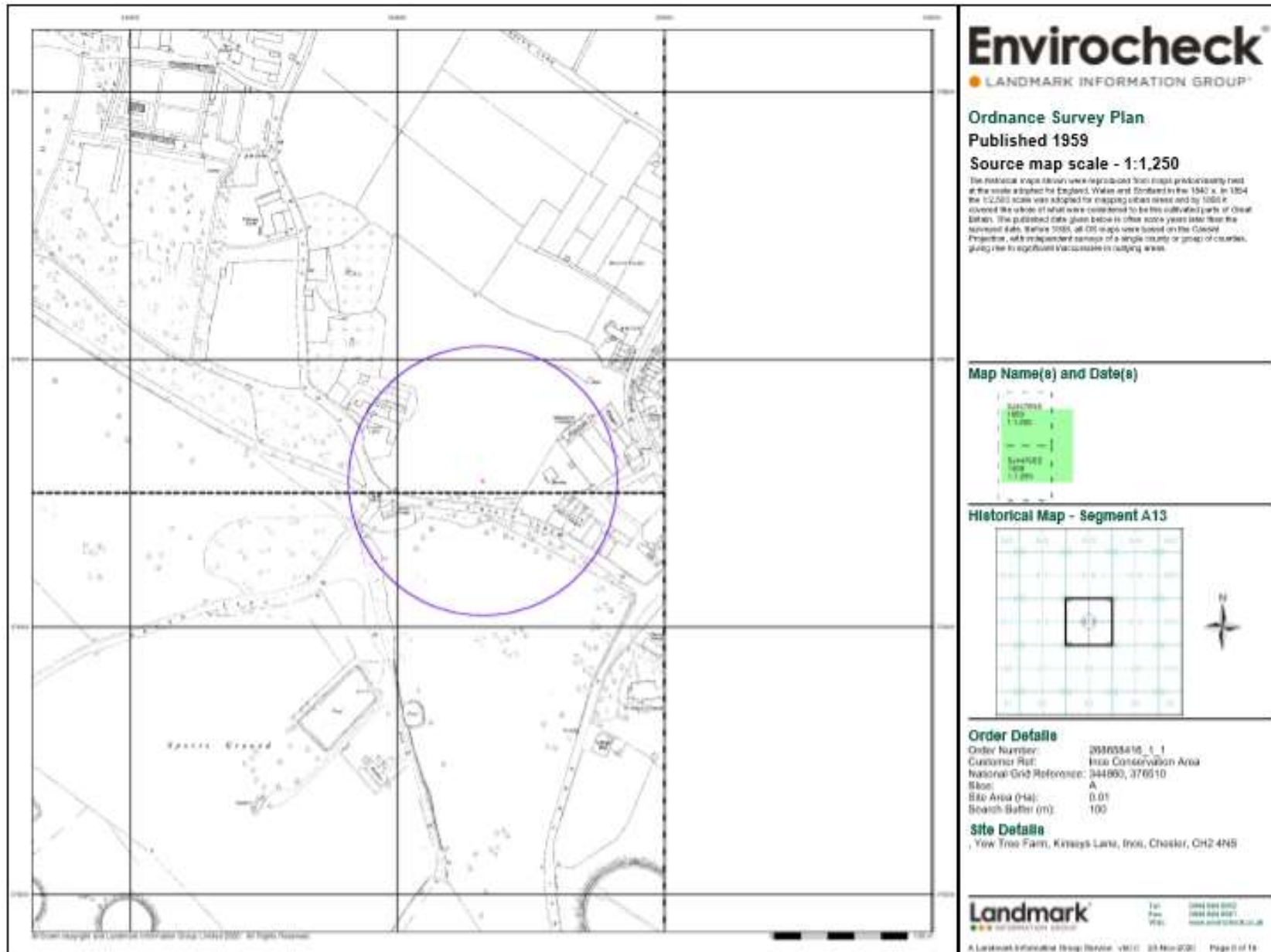




Ince: Conservation Area Appraisal

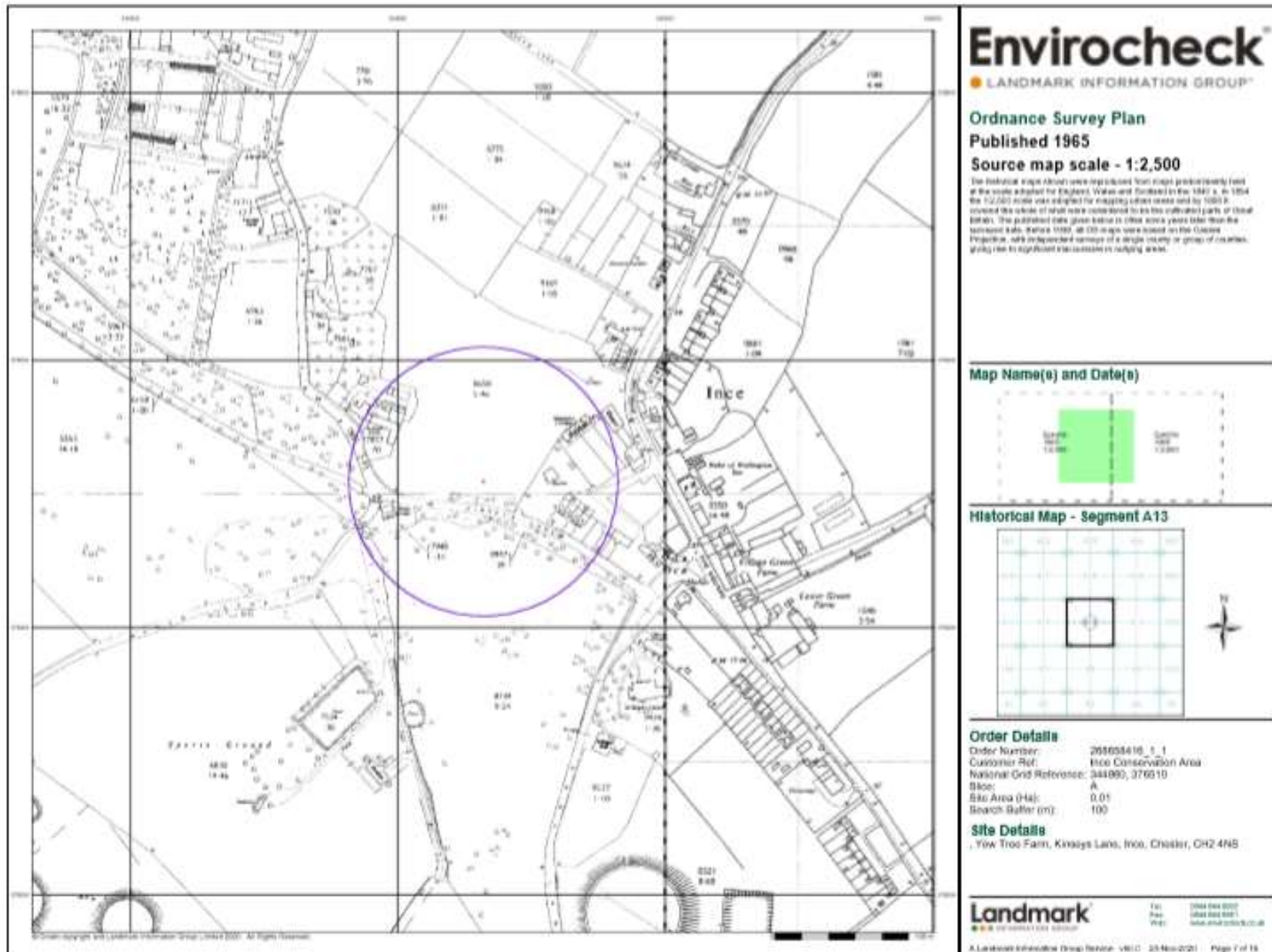


Ince: Conservation Area Appraisal





Ince: Conservation Area Appraisal



Ince: Conservation Area Appraisal

