

Replacement Boundary Wall Scheme: Residential

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT WITH DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Greenacre : Victoria & Huyton Church Road Conservation Area.

Date 21st July 2022

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The applicant has purchased No. 22 Huyton Church Road (Greenacre) following a previous planning permission (granted) that sought permission to demolish the previous existing 1950's residential dormer bungalow and construct a new 4 bedroom detached family home. The building plot is situated along the northern perimeter of The Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area. The current building is now cited as a positive contribution to the street scene and is constructed from clay facing bricks under a slate tiled roof with upvc windows and doors. The orientation of the existing property is now west facing with the gable end being perpendicular to the road, There are no changes planned by the applicant to the existing driveway or vehicular access on Huyton Church Road although now seeks to address the concerns regarding the current unsightly boundary wall with concrete shuttering and timber infill panels. The site enjoys a leafy suburb setting with mature trees and is of quiet disposition, the site frontage is protected through a tree preservation order which has contributed to the buildings orientation. The town is located 6 miles from Liverpool and 30 miles to Manchester, it enjoys good transport links with the M62, M57 and M6 linking Warrington, St. Helens and Birmingham. Local rail and commuter travel are situated nearby to the application site and of walking distance.

Historic Context

Huyton Church Road Conservation Area is an attractive Victorian suburb situated on the easterly flank of Huyton Town Centre and north of the town's railway station. Church Road Avenue formed part of an ambitious 19th century master plan that included Victoria Road and Huyton Hey Road with wider connections to Blacklow Brow and The Orchard situated south of the railway divide. The master plan centred its vision for a new villa estate within a short walking distance of Stephenson's newly arrived Liverpool to Manchester Railway in 1830. Such locations came to prominence during the mid-19th Century as wealthy Liverpool merchants chose to re settle outside of the busy city centres and commute in by rail. The master plan offered an attractive opportunity for Victorian Men and Women to construct fashionable Villas within a prestigious address; the greenery and mature setting of such an ideal would have attracted the new middleclass and gentry alike during this heyday. The conservation area is primarily residential and benefits from a diverse mix of housing types, including Victoria Villas, Contemporary Housing, Pre & Post War Architecture and Apartments. The conservation enjoys a low density of housing with relatively good sized plots for the town, wide spaces can be noted between units and greenery is abundant. Traditionally the context of both avenues had been to construct using brick, cast iron and painted stucco walls. Boundary walls would high and secure and contain defined gateways with each property 'named'. The housing pattern in 2015 is heterogeneous although the original core buildings are of Italianate/Greek influence, generally square on plan and commanding high storey ratios of 2 and sometimes 3 levels. The eastern side of Huyton Church Road contains the largest collection of historic buildings with later contemporary infills. The views inside the conservation area are distinctive and impressive with a long avenues

street scene, well-proportioned roads and tall overhanging trees creating a sense of place for private and quiet enjoyment.

The Site

The application site is a short distance from Huyton Town Centre and borders onto large open playing fields of the local school/academy situated at the north end of this unique Victorian Avenue. The building plot at Greeacres is square on plan measuring 32m (NS) x 35m (EW) and is securely enclosed with established boundary walls and well tendered mature trees. Whilst the site is largely private and unseen from Huyton Church Road, it does suffer from close and overbearing structures approved by the local authority beyond the westerly boundary. This set of incongruous buildings is a now completed development of what is thought to be an abandoned care unit that was carrying a negative impact within the conservation area. No 22 Huyton Church Road formed part of the lower gardens to this stalled estate. (See Historic Map) a later departure during the mid-1950s suggests the land was subdivided and sold with the construction of new intermediate boundary wall that exists today. The current trees and general foliage would appear to have formed part of the original estate; it is plausible that the access onto Greenacres is a tradesman's entrance during this period for service vehicles and deliveries to the main house? The high boundary walls and greenery around the site is quite significant, it protects and shields the property from both neighbouring houses adequately maintaining a high level of privacy within and quietness.

Planning Context

The application site is situated within The Victoria Road & Huyton Church Road Conservation Area and therefore carries special merit for Architectural and Historic Interest. All applications to replace existing structures must be of sufficiently high quality that it proactively seeks to enhance The Character and Heritage Value of the Conservation Area within which it sits. Careful consideration must be paid to all surrounding property within the conservation area, ensuring they are protected through impact of the proposal including the setting of those buildings, boundary features and public amenity space that underpins the historic value of that location. The Architect has attended site and walked through the conservation area to understand the neighbourhood's grain & context, the architect has studied the neighbouring properties to ensure the new proposal does not impact upon that which exists. Careful consideration has been given the scale and design of the new boundary wall. Attached are historical regression maps showing the site before its sub division in 1891, 1927 and through to present day. The nearest Listed Building is Huyton Reform Church at the junction of Victoria and Seel Road, located approx. 130m south east of the proposal site.

Contribution of Application Site

The application site lies along the north edge divide of the conservation area which is demarcated by a public cinder footpath linking Victoria Road through to The Village, this public right of way adjoins the playing fields of the local academy school, formerly known as Huyton Hey / Seel Road Comprehensive.

The current site contains a high grade 2 storey dwelling house which was constructed during the past few year's. Site appraisal and historic mapping demonstrates that larger plots with more grandiose 2 Storey Villas would occupy the eastern line of the main avenue whilst the opposing line is became a collage of smaller units, mainly single storey housing occupying smaller more defined plots. The current property at 22 Huyton Church Road now does not fall short in architectural terms of the grandiose master plan partly implemented during the late 19th century.

Assessment of Significance

The significance of Huyton Church Road lies within the quality of its setting enjoying a well-proportioned avenue, mature overhanging trees creating a tranquil quiet ambience that underpins the area's quality and location. The core buildings that historically define the road are large detached

villas constructed as part of the original early 19th century master plan, primarily for families to occupy.

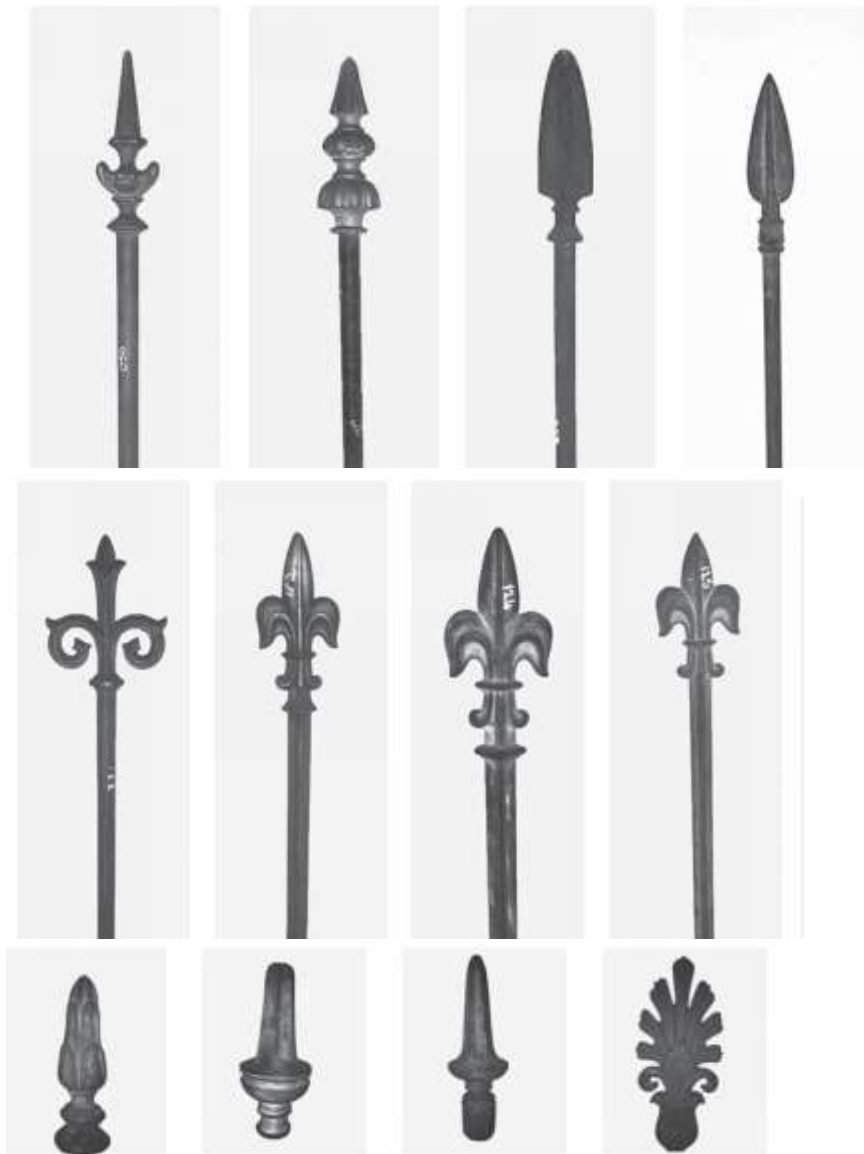
Whilst significance exists within the identified buildings of this historic building line, its true importance emanates from a mature setting and quality of street scene. Protection of this heritage asset is paramount and indeed its enhancement for future generations to enjoy.

Assessment of Impact

The proposal sets out a new front boundary wall for a dwelling of high architectural quality & merit. The proposal sets out to achieve a positive contribution that will underpin the conservation area and certainly enhance the location for future generations.

Simple Cast iron style options are appropriate. The key would be using a decently proportioned 'reproduction' finial, and heavy looking sections. The sections of railing bars should be in the region of $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" dia. Top and bottom rails should also be thick set. Railing bars could be round or square section; hollow section bars should be avoided as solid bars offer a more traditional and substantial appearance. Any intermediate metal posts should be more substantially sized than the railings, with matching decorative details.

Examples of traditional finials include:



The most historically accurate way to add railings would be to have railings set directly into the coping e.g. this example taken from Pont Felin Hen, Llangollen - Conservation and new-build projects - Calibre Metalwork however this approach is not specifically required.



The railings should be powder coated or painted dark green, black, or an alternative traditional colour.

Brick should be laid in a Flemish or English Garden Wall bond. The bricks should have a red/brown tone with some variation that matches the bricks which characterise historic walls in the area; handmade bricks are a good option. There are a few original walls on Huyton Church Road and Victoria Road which should be used as a steer as to design and materials e.g. see below, these are relatively plain, though enhanced with a carved natural stone coping and decorative brick bond. Brick or stone could be used for the gate piers, though use of a substantially proportioned stone coping if brick is chosen is strongly advised.



(This example left uses a blue engineering special shaped brick in a traditional manner to add further interest)



With this application a tree survey, impact study and method statement carried out in accordance with BS 5837 by an appropriately qualified person will be submitted. The trees are protected being in a conservation area and the works should allow the healthy retention of the trees and not cause their loss or damage to health; the survey and reports should detail aspects of the trees, the impact of the works on them and the method(s) to be used to allow successful retention.

Summary

The impact of this application upon the Character and Significance of the Victoria Road & Huyton Church Road Conservation Area will be a positive. This will act to underpin the strength of the conservation and will enhance the area for the enjoyment of future generations.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Design & Appearance

The proposed design will be carefully observed current site conditions & context. As discussed above simple Cast iron style options are appropriate. The key would be using a decently proportioned 'reproduction' finial, and heavy looking sections. The sections of railing bars should be in the region of $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" dia. Top and bottom rails should also be thick set. Railing bars could be round or square section; hollow section bars should be avoided as solid bars offer a more traditional and substantial appearance. Any intermediate metal posts should be more substantially sized than the railings, with matching decorative details.

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The overall height of the wall is dictated by a certain degree to the existing levels of the site and our goal here is to achieve a sympathetic design that fits well within the conservation area and surrounding context but also enable the current owners to have a degree of safety and privacy also.

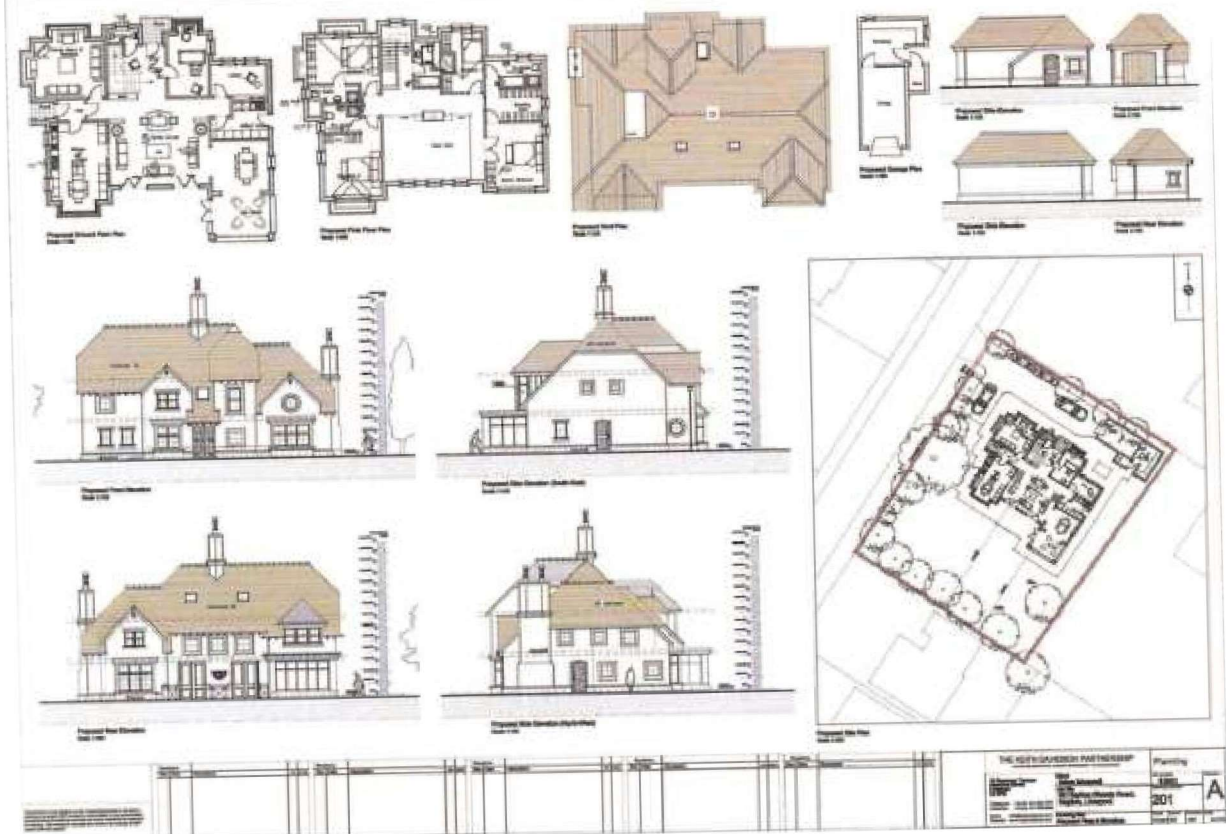


Existing front boundary



View of the avenue

Existing new dwelling scheme (now complete)





Existing Site Entrance





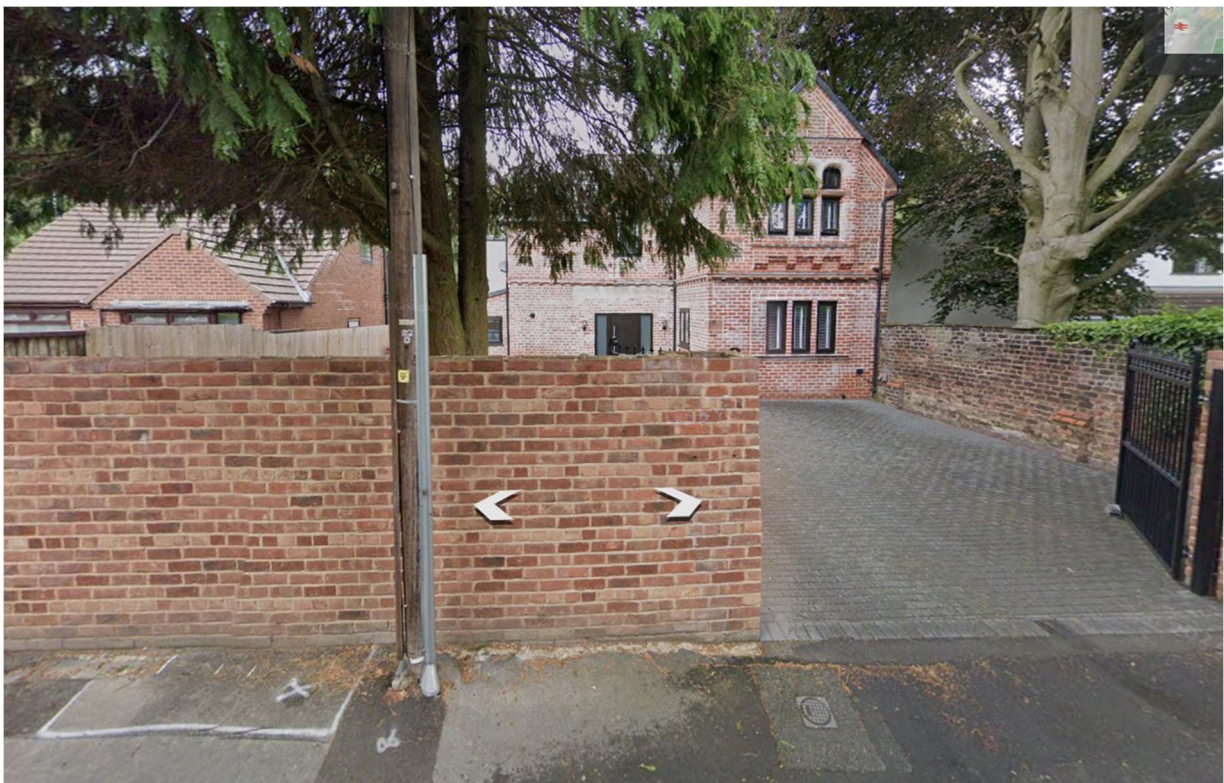
Neighbouring Property boundary wall



Example 1 (Huyton Church Road)



Example 2 (Huyton Church Road)



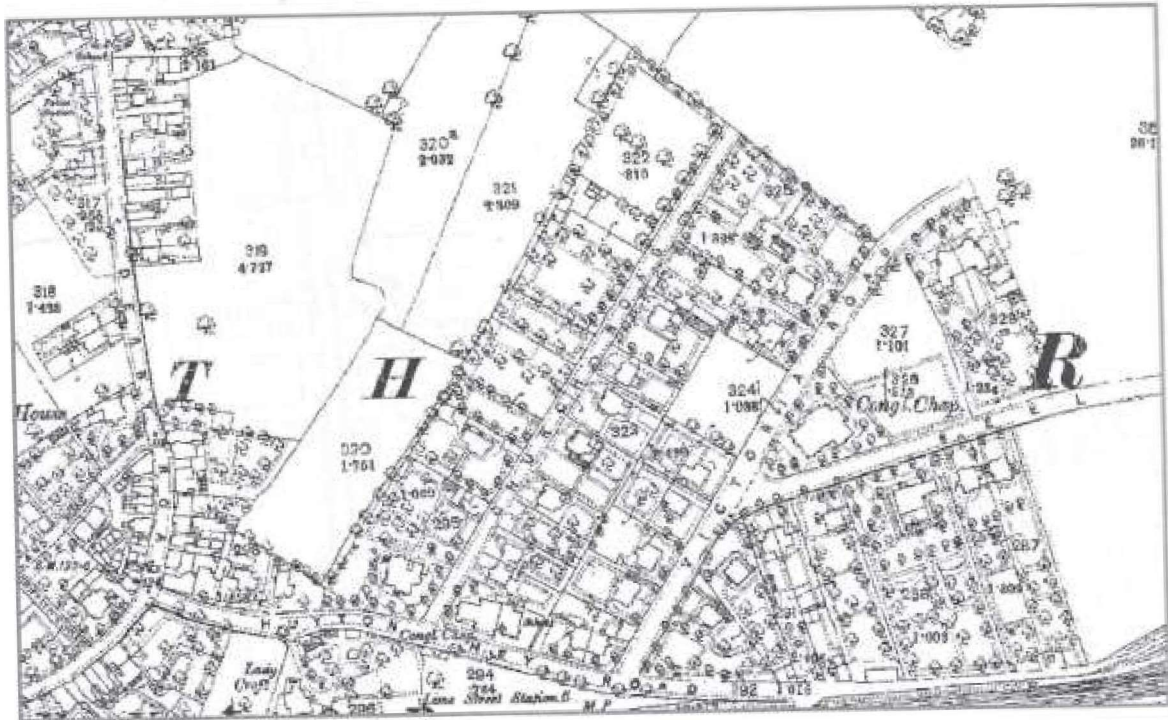
Example 3 (Huyton Church Road)



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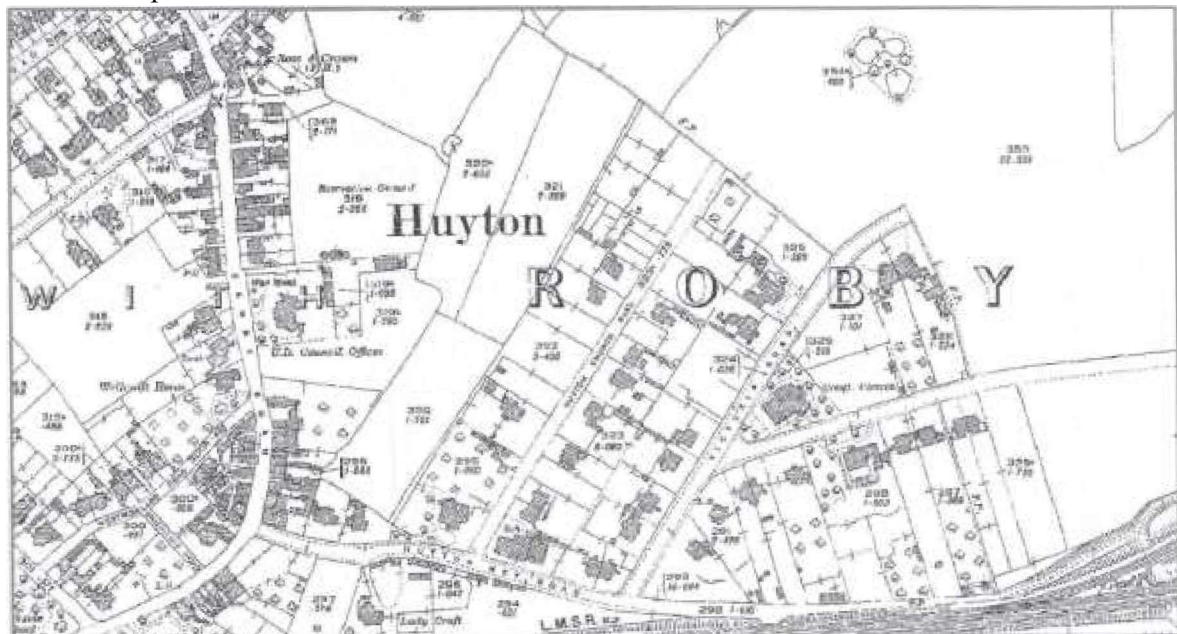
Appendix I

Historic map 1891



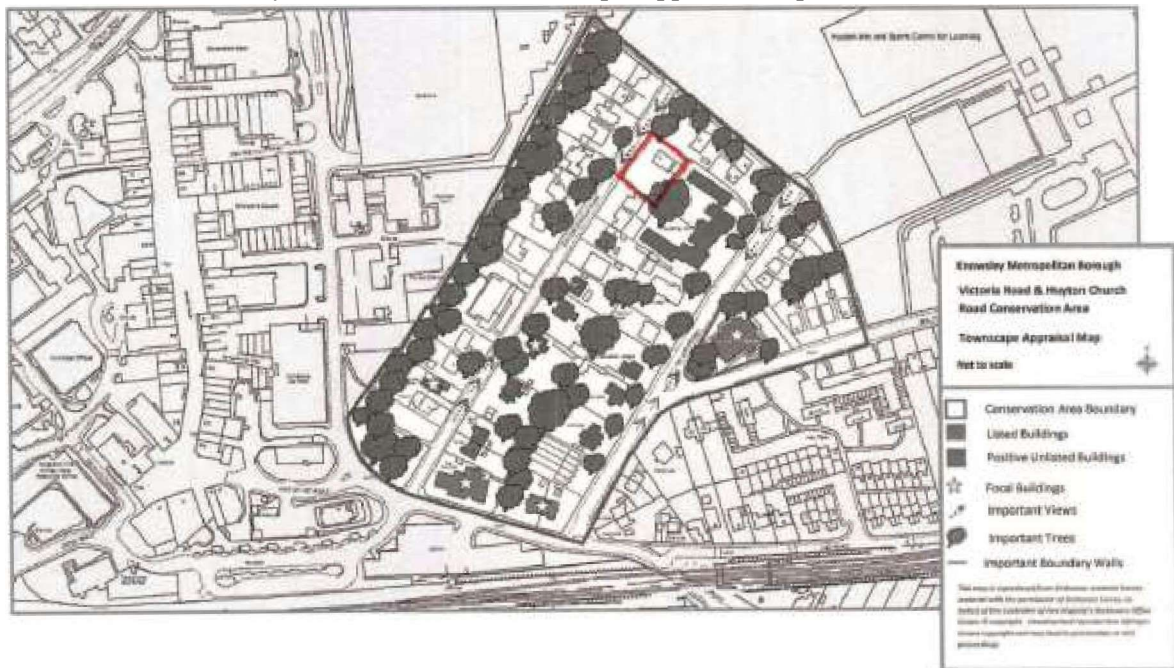
Appendix 2

Historic Map 1927



Appendix 3

Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Townscape Appraisal Map



Appendix 4

Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area Boundary Review

