

HURST GREEN CONSERVATION AREA (proposed)



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CONTENTS

Introduction

Purpose of the appraisal
Summary of special interest

The planning policy context

Local planning policy

Location and setting

Location and context
General character and plan form

Landscape setting

Topography, geology, relationship to surroundings

Historic development and archaeology

Origins and historic development

Spatial analysis

Key views and vistas
Significant open spaces

Definition of the special interest of the conservation area

Activities/uses
Architectural and historic character
Listed buildings
Buildings of Townscape Merit
Green spaces, trees and other natural elements
Historic associations
Local details and features

Issues

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats

Recommendations

Proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area boundary
Monitoring and review

HURST GREEN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL (PROPOSED)

Introduction

This designation report for the proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area follows a similar format for the appraisals of the existing conservation areas in Ribble Valley area which are being prepared simultaneously (2005). This document therefore contains a detailed assessment of the special architectural and historic interest of Hurst Green, including its location, setting and a description of its historical development.

The area's buildings and spaces are noted and described, and marked on the Townscape Appraisal map along with listed buildings, buildings of townscape merit, significant trees and spaces, and important views into and out of the conservation area. There is a presumption that all of these features should be "preserved or enhanced", as required by the legislation. A number of issues are identified and recommendations made.



Nos. 2 – 6 Whalley Road (listed grade II)

Purpose of the appraisal

The Ribble Valley Local Plan 1998 contains a commitment to designating Hurst Green as a conservation area (para. 4.7.3 page 32). This appraisal seeks to record and analyse the various features which give the proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. This appraisal builds upon national policy, as set out in PPG15, and local policy, as set out in the Local Plan 1998, and provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area can be assessed.

Summary of special interest

The special interest that justifies designation of the proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area derives from the following features:

- Architectural and historic interest of the conservation area's buildings, including 11 listed buildings;
- Church of St John the Evangelist and environs, including the Old Vicarage;
- Shireburn Cottages (grade II*);
- Former bobbin making mills/industrial heritage beside Dean Brook;
- Rural setting partly within Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- Village green and War Memorial;
- Principal entrance to Stonyhurst College grounds;
- Adjacent to Stonyhurst College Historic Park (registered grade II*), part of which lies within proposed conservation area;
- Dean Brook;
- Trees especially those in Stonyhurst Park and the wooded east bank of Dean Brook;
- Views of surrounding countryside, particularly Pendle Hill;
- Prevalent use of local building stone;
- Historic associations with JRR Tolkien, author of *The Hobbit* and *Lord of The Rings* and Roger Fenton, Victorian photographer.



Shireburn Arms Hotel (listed grade II)

The planning policy context

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It is the quality and interest of an area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a conservation area.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

This document should be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15) – Planning and the Historic Environment. The layout and content follows guidance produced by English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the English Historic Towns Forum.



Shireburn Cottages, Avenue Road (grade II) relocated from Longridge Fell*

Local planning policy

Local planning policies for the preservation of scheduled monuments and conservation of historic parks and gardens, listed buildings and conservation areas are set out in the Ribble Valley Local Plan which was adopted in June 1998 (Policies ENV14, ENV15, ENV16, ENV17, ENV18, ENV19, ENV20, ENV21) and the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan 2001-2016 which was adopted on 31st March 2005 (Policies 20 and 21, supported by draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) entitled ‘Landscape and Heritage’).

Location and setting

Location and context

Hurst Green is a small village in undulating lowland farmland beside the B6243 between Longridge (8 km) and Clitheroe (5km). Part of the village, north of B6243, lies within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Hurst Green is the nearest settlement to Stonyhurst College, a grade I listed building whose landscaped gardens are listed grade II*.



Looking east along Whalley Road

General character and plan form

The village is a mix of old and new developments and the proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area contains a number of 20th century buildings. From the west, there are two approaches to Hurst Green: a minor road along Shire Lane and The Dene and the B6243, named Longridge Road and Whalley Road as it passes through the village. (B6243). The two routes result in two bridges in close proximity over Dean Brook.

The Village Green and War Memorial stand at junction of the B6243 and Avenue Road, the ‘spine’ of the village. Avenue Road, so named because it is the start of an avenue into and through the grounds of Stonyhurst College, becomes noticeably straight and wide as it approaches the narrow formal entrance to the College grounds.

In the 1920s the settlement still retained its 19th century layout comprising individual buildings and short rows located haphazardly beside the aforementioned roads. Twentieth century infill, particularly from the 1930s and late 20th century, has given the village a more closely knit grain.

Landscape setting

Topography and relationship to surroundings

The village sits in an elevated position above the River Ribble about 100metres above sea level. Dean Brook, a tributary of the Ribble running south from slopes of Longridge Fell makes a deep, wooded cutting to the west of settlement.



Entrance to the grounds of Stonyhurst College

Historic development

Origins and historic development

Hurst is derived from the Old English *hyrst* meaning a wooded eminence. The O.S. map of 1847 shows that the brow of the hill, enclosed by an oval-shaped drystone stone wall north of Warren Farm, was wooded. This enclosure may be a managed rabbit warren, hence Warren Farm (not included in the proposed conservation area).

The settlement of Hurst Green has been closely associated with Stonyhurst since the 14th century when, in 1377, the Hurst Green Estate passed to the Shireburn family. Stonyhurst Hall was built in 1592 by Sir Richard Shireburn and was occupied as the family seat until 1794 when an ancestor gave the Hall and Estate to the Society of Jesus as a new home for their College. Stonyhurst College is now a boarding school of c 400 pupils. It is also a popular attraction receiving many paying visitors to the house and gardens.

Four bobbin mills are marked on the O.S. map of 1847. The bobbin industry evolved during the Industrial Revolution as the Lancashire textile mills required more and more cotton bobbins and reels for the spinning and weaving machines. The growth of this traditional industry was predominantly due to two factors: an abundance of raw material available for coppicing, and the numerous fast-flowing streams that could provide the power needed to drive the waterwheel.

The Church of St John the Evangelist was built in 1838. It has a castellated tower in keeping with the romantic leaning of the period. A ‘Grit Stone Quarry’ is indicated east of ‘Club House’ (today’s St Peter’s Club) on the O.S. of 1847 and the Bayley Arms was then known as the ‘Masons’ Arms’.

By the 1884 O.S. map, one bobbin mill (Aighton Mill) is marked as ‘disused’ and the mill pond of another has apparently been filled in. The decline in the British textile industry and the arrival of plastic meant the days of the wooden bobbin were numbered, although one mill in Hurst Green was still in operation during World War II.

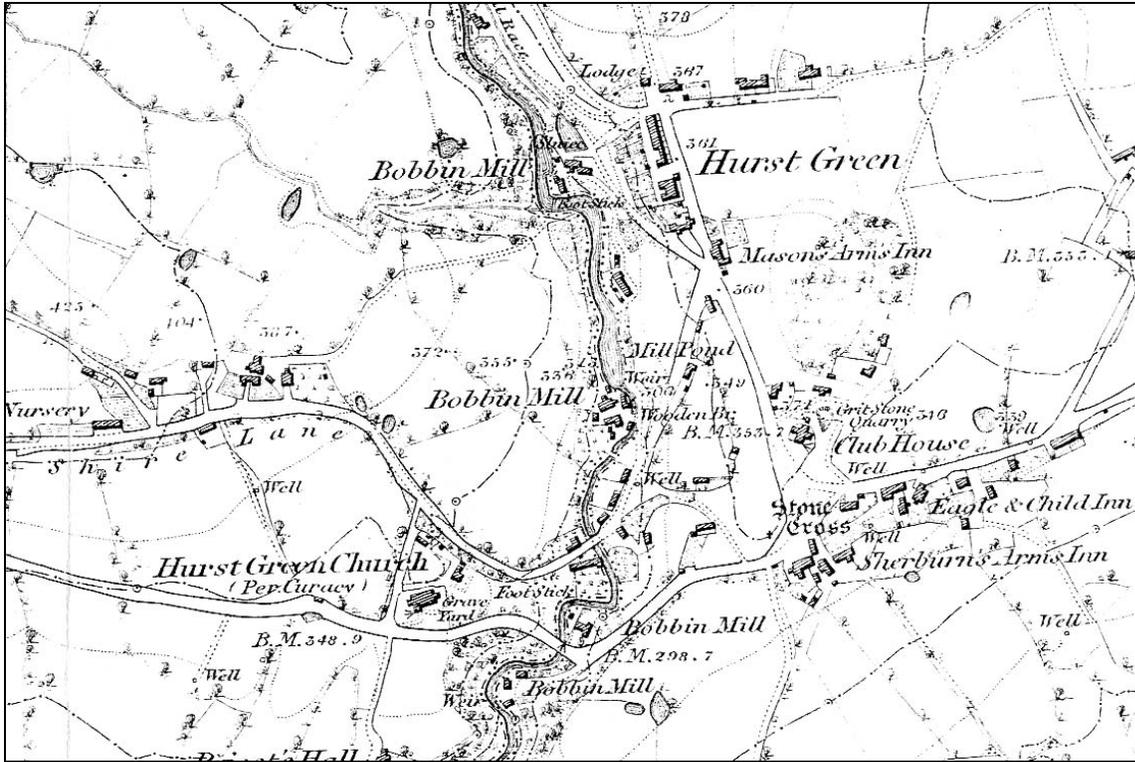


Nos 24 and 26 Whalley Road overshadowed by a large tree

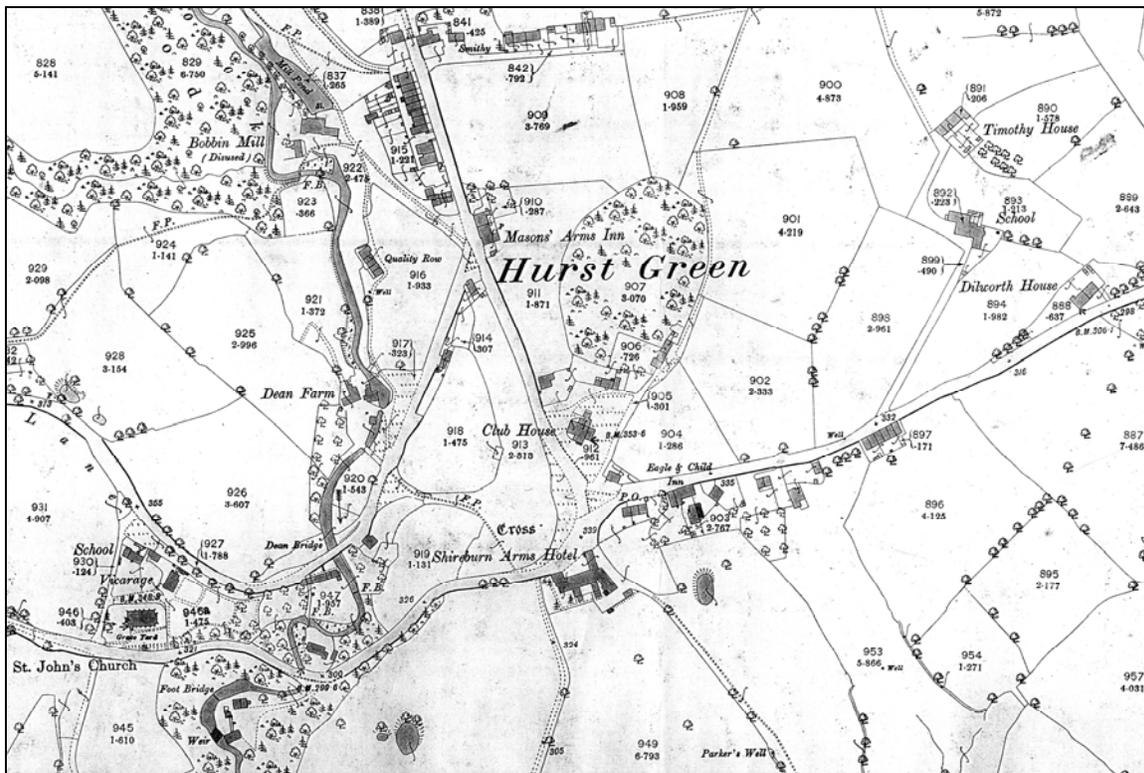
Roger Fenton was a prominent Victorian photographer. His photograph entitled ‘Mill at Hurst Green’, a rather unrealistically idyllic portrayal of industrial life, was exhibited in London in 1860. The mill belonged to Fenton’s family and was probably taken by him during a trip made in 1858, photographing parts of his family estate.

Shireburn Cottages moved to its present site from Kemple End on a slope of Longridge Fell in 1946. The almshouses were originally built by Sir Nicholas Shireburn in 1706.

Today the village, with the useful facilities of parking, shop, pub and public convenience is a popular start for local walks including a ‘Tolkein Trail’.



O.S. 1847



O.S. 1884

Spatial analysis

Key views and vistas

There is a good vista northwards along Avenue Road of the two stone buildings beside the narrow entrance to Stonyhurst grounds against a backdrop of large trees. The elevated position of the village above the Ribble valley is illustrated in expansive views eastwards to Pendle Hill from the playing fields and rural southward views from St John's Church and Whalley Road.



St Joseph's Primary School

Significant open spaces

The conservation area is composed of individual buildings or short rows and gaps between buildings are a feature of the area. The most significant open space is The Green, in which stands a War Memorial. The Green is surrounded by buildings, including three listed buildings, but most are set well back from the road. On the west side of The Green is a wide grass verge and a memorial to the Boer War. The Green's lack of a sense of enclosure and the fact that the War Memorial and floral display are located in an 'island' at the junction of three roads detract from the area's potential to be a more human-scale public open space.

Other open space in the proposed conservation area includes the playing fields east of the village hall at the brow of the hill, extending further east to open countryside (not in proposed conservation area), and a secluded open space on steep slope to the west of nos 1 to 9 Avenue Road.

Definition of the special interest of the conservation area

Activities/uses

The area is predominantly residential. Historically, Hurst Green was a small agrarian community that, in the late 18th and early 19th century expanded to house workers in bobbin mills located on Dean Brook. Today the mills are closed and there is no similar source of local employment. There is a Post Office and shop with estate agent, three pubs (Shireburn Arms, Bayley Arms and Eagle and Child) and a small bus depot in Smithy Row.

The conservation area contains a village hall and adjacent playing fields and bowling green, a children's playground and a modern public convenience. St John's Church is the only place of worship in the conservation area. St Peter's Club, housed in a grade II listed building once known as The Guild Hall, is a social club.



Guild Hall, now St Peter's Club, Avenue Road (grade II)

Architectural and historic character

The proposed conservation area has a diverse architectural character comprising a mix of old and new building. Historic buildings are in the vernacular tradition and with the exception of Shireburn Cottages, there is little architectural pretension. Even St John's Church and St Peter's Club are modest buildings.

Building types include church and vicarage, three public houses, guildhall, former mill buildings, former farm buildings, workers' cottages, terraced housing and short rows.

Historic buildings are predominantly stone, mainly local sandstone; grey render at no. 12 Whalley Road and 21 Avenue Road is unusual.

Stone slates, a local tradition, are present on some buildings such as Shireburn Cottages, nos 2, 4, 6 Whalley Road and the former smithy in Smithy Row. Surprisingly, the recently

completed public conveniences have a roof of natural stone. Slate is prevalent on other historic buildings, e.g. 24-34 Whalley Road. Slate is laid in diminishing courses on the roof of the Shireburn Arms.

There are a total of 11 listed buildings in the proposed conservation area:

Nos 1 to 6 (Shireburn Cottages), Avenue Road (grade II*)

Almshouses built by the Shireburn family, 1706. Relocated from Longridge Fell and rebuilt in 1946 when a first floor was added to the wings and the number of doorways opening off the courtyard was reduced from ten to four. Squared, coursed sandstone with stone slate roof.

Church of St. John Evangelist II (grade II)

A rock-faced sandstone church with slate roof, completed in 1838. Comprises a nave and chancel under a continuous roof, a tower partly projecting from the west wall, and a south porch. Located on a knoll on western outskirts of village.

The Vicarage at the Church of St. John Evangelist (grade II)

Rendered rubble with sandstone dressings and slate roof, built c 1840. Facade has chamfered quoins, first floor sill band and cyma moulded stone cornice gutter. Windows sashed with glazing bars and plain stone surrounds.



War Memorial at the road junction in the middle of the village

Nos. 51 and 53 Avenue Road (grade II)

An early 19th century pair of cottages beside the entrance to the grounds of Stonyhurst. Slobbered sandstone rubble with roof of modern imitation stone slates. Windows sashed in plain stone surrounds with diagonal tooling. Ground floor window having '1821' incised on its lintel. Square stone gutter at eaves.

Bayley Arms, Avenue Road (grade II)

Early 19th century public house formerly known as the Mason's Arms. Furrowed sandstone ashlar with slate roof. The central two-bay portion projects, with end stacks, furrowed quoins and a cyma-moulded stone cornice gutter. The windows are sashed with plain stone

surrounds, the central door also having a plain stone surround. Adjoining to the left is a former barn with a blocked doorway with plain stone surround, now a window, at the left.

Boer War Memorial on west side of the green (grade II)

Base of square plan with four steps, supporting a sandstone Celtic cross with interlace designs on two faces and vine scroll ornament on the sides. A brass plate reads: 'This Cross Commemorates the services of Frederick Sleight, first Earl Roberts, K.C.V.C. and his companions in arms, the Soldiers and Sailors of the Empire, who fought in South Africa 1899 - 1902'.

Guild Hall, now St Peter's Club, Avenue Road (grade II)

Guild Hall, now social club, c.1800. Sandstone rubble with slate roofs. Cruciform plan with central taller block of square plan with pyramidal roof. Quoins project with furrowed tooling. Against the gable of the south-west wing is an external stone stair with solid parapet, leading to a 1st floor door with plain stone surround.

Hurst Green Cross in private garden on west side of village green (grade II)

Sandstone cross and base, age uncertain, the cross possibly a 19th century restoration. Base of three steps square on plan. The cross is roughly punched with a head of trefoil shape.



*Hurst Green Cross in private garden on west side of village green
(grade II)*

No. 9 The Dene (Dene Cottage) (grade II)

Two storey cottage, probably c.1700. Sandstone rubble with modern tile roof. South wall has chamfered mullioned windows. The north wall, facing The Dene, has openings with plain reveals. The end stacks have brick caps.

Nos. 2, 4 and 6 Whalley Road (grade II)

A row of 3 cottages dating from the late 18th century. Squared sandstone with stone slate roof. Windows and doors have plain reveals. All the cottages are separated by straight joints, which suggest that No. 6 (at the left) is the earliest.

Shireburn Arms Hotel and former stable block adjoining to the east (grade II)

Hotel, probably mid 18th century. Sandstone rubble with slate roof. Windows sashed with rebated and chamfered surrounds. The former stable block, running northwards at the east end of the main building, has a stone slate roof.

Key unlisted buildings - Buildings of Townscape Merit

Marked on the Townscape Appraisal map for the proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area are a number of *unlisted* buildings which have been judged as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Of particular note are: nos 1 and 3 Smithy Row, a mid 19th century pair of cottages that, together with nos 51 and 53 Avenue Road, frame the principal vehicular entrance to the grounds of Stonyhurst College; Quality Row, a good example of an early 19th century row of stone-built vernacular millworkers' cottages with slate roof; nos 35-49 Avenue Road, an early 19th century terrace, typical of the locality, presumably built to house workers in the bobbin mills; the War Memorial in the centre of The Green consists of a triangular stone pillar, each side representing the three local parishes of Bailey, Chaigley and Aighton.



Well treed descent along Longridge Road to bridge over Dean Brook

Green spaces, trees and other natural elements

- Well tree'd steep east bank of Dean Brook;
- Backdrop of mature trees to Smithy Row;
- Curving tree-lined road leading over Dean Brook (B6243);
- Lush and leafy footpath winding along valley bottom accompanied by sound of the brook;
- Large roadside individual trees beside Whalley Road;
- Attractive floral display around War Memorial;
- Well tended private gardens;
- Churchyard of Church of St John the Evangelist being managed for the benefit of wildlife.

Historic associations

JRR Tolkien (1892-1973) was a professor of English at Oxford between 1945-1959. His sons were educated at Stonyhurst School. Whilst staying in the area Tolkien frequented the Shireburn Arms and may have based many of his literary locations around the Hurst Green area. Cromwell's Bridge features in the book as Brandywine Bridge and the Hodder, which is often stained brown with peat, is Brandywine river. The Tolkein Trail starts in Hurst Green.

Richard Fenton (1819-1869) was a key figure in the first generation of photographers. He is best known for his photographs of the Crimean War. In 1853 he was a founder of the London Photographic Society, which is now the Royal Photographic Society. In later life Fenton was official photographer to the royal family, but also took landscapes and still lifes. His photograph of one of Hurst Green's bobbin mills is a good example of early landscape photography.



Church of St. John Evangelist II (grade II)

Local details and features

- Memorials to Boer War and World War;
- Public footpaths;
- Stone setts in front of Bayley Arms;
- Local stone walls - triangular coping in Smithy Row, round coping beside no. 1 Whalley Road and around St John's (for example);
- Iron kissing gate at start of footpath at end of Smithy Row;
- Front door surround of no. 24 Whalley Road;
- Old cross (reputedly medieval) cut into a stone in the stone wall north-east of Warren Farm;
- Fingerpost directional sign outside no. 1 Whalley Road;

- Lych gate at St John's Church.

Issues

This section provides a summary of the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) identified during the appraisal process

Strengths: The most important *positive* features of the Hurst Green Conservation Area are:

- Awards in Best Kept Village competitions;
- Popular start for local walks;
- Proximity to Stonyhurst College;



Cottages in The Dene

Weaknesses: The principal *negative* features of the Hurst Green Conservation Area are:

- Modern infill detracts from an otherwise historic character and appearance;
- Mix of old and new buildings without cohesive character and appearance;
- Loss of architectural detail e.g. no. 10 Longridge Road, loss of original roof tiles at 9 The Dene, loss of timber windows at 23-27 Avenue Road;
- Lack of enclosure to The Green which sits in the centre of a wide road junction;
- Parked cars detract from setting of The Green, War Memorial and floral display;
- Poor setting of St Peter's Club, set in a wide expanse of tarmac and mown grass;
- Loss of identity of former bobbin mill buildings;
- Plastic windows at St Peter's Club, listed grade II;

Opportunities within the Hurst Green Conservation Area

- A scheme of soft landscaping around St Peter’s Club would enhance the setting of the listed building and the conservation area;
- The Green might benefit from additional green space obtained by narrowing the tarmac road junction especially to the west where there is already a wide grass verge.



Walkers Castle from the north

Threats to the Hurst Green Conservation Area

- Continuing loss of original architectural details and use of inappropriate modern materials or details.

Many of the unlisted, and some of the listed, buildings in the conservation have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials or details. Common faults include:

- The replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC or aluminium e.g. nos 35-49 Avenue Road (various);
- The loss of original panelled front doors and their replacement with stained hardwood, uPVC or aluminium doors
- The replacement of stone slate or Welsh slate roofs with concrete tiles e.g.nos 51 and 53 Avenue Road and No. 9 The Dene (both are listed buildings);
- Poor quality windows on a listed building e.g. St Peter’s Club.

Recommendations

Hurst Green Conservation Area boundary

It is proposed that Hurst Green be designated a conservation area.

The proposed Hurst Green Conservation Area boundary is marked on the accompanying map. The boundary has been drawn to enclose most of the historic buildings of Hurst Green together with the steeply sloping east bank of Dean Brook which was once the location of local bobbin mills. The conservation area extends to the west to encompass the Church of St John the Evangelist and Old Vicarage.



Quality Row in the valley beside Dean Brook

Monitoring and review.

If approved, this appraisal document should be reviewed every five years in the light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- An evaluation of changes that have taken place in the conservation area, ideally by means of an updated photographic record;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, including opportunities for enhancement;
- A building condition survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising.

Bibliography

OS maps 1847, 1886, 1932
Village Odyssey N. Elliot

List of photographs

- Photograph 1* *Nos. 2 – 6 Whalley Road (listed grade II)*
- Photograph 2* *Shireburn Arms Hotel (listed grade II)*
Shireburn Cottages, Avenue Road (grade II) relocated from*
- Photograph 3* *Longridge Fell*
- Photograph 4* *Looking east along Whalley Road*
- Photograph 5* *Entrance to the grounds of Stoneyhurst College*
- Photograph 6* *Nos 24 and 26 Whalley Road overshadowed by a large tree*
- Photograph 7* *St Joseph’s Primary School*
- Photograph 8* *Guild Hall, now St Peter’s Club, Avenue Road (grade II)*
- Photograph 9* *War Memorial at the road junction in the middle of the village*
Hurst Green Cross in private garden on west side of village green
(grade II)
- Photograph 10* *Well treed descent along Longridge Road to bridge over Dean Brook*
- Photograph 11* *Church of St. John Evangelist II (grade II)*
- Photograph 12* *Cottages in The Dene*
- Photograph 13* *Walkers Castle from the north*
- Photograph 14* *Quality Row in the valley beside Dean Brook*