

Talbot Street/Lichfield Street, Rugeley Conservation Area Appraisal 2019



Conservation Area Appraisal Talbot Street/Lichfield Street, Rugeley

1. Introduction

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

An Appraisal was first produced for Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area in 2005 and this document updates its predecessor making use of much of the information contained therein. The updates comprise some rearrangement of layout to accord with the house style developed subsequently, updates to the planning policy context following national and local policy changes, and references reflecting recent development and changes of use in the Conservation Area.

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

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

Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area was designated in July 2002. There are two listed buildings in the area, both Grade II, 32 Talbot Street and the Church of St. Joseph and Etheldreda, and many other buildings of historic and visual interest. Descriptions of the Listed Buildings can be found in Appendix 1. Other buildings of interest are noted within the Appraisal. The boundary of the Area is shown on plan 1.

Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area covers one of the older, mainly residential areas around the town centre of Rugeley. Horsefair forms the main route into the town from Lichfield to the south, and the buildings along its north-east side fall within the Conservation Area. This is a prominent, mainly commercial frontage, contrasting with the core of the Conservation Area with its quieter, predominantly residential roads, extending around the southern edge of the town centre. It is the main historic residential area of Rugeley, largely built during the 19th Century. It comprises a range of housing from traditional workers’ terraces and elegant villas to inter-war and modern detached, semi-detached and town houses. Amongst the houses, which date from the early 19th Century to the present day, are churches and community buildings, giving the area a distinctive identity locally. Mature tree

and hedge planting around the area enhances the street scene. The area is bounded to the south-east by the railway embankment, and lies 200 metres south-east of Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area.

Since the previous Appraisal there has been some new sympathetic infill development, some of the coach houses have been rebuilt or refurbished, the Conservation Area boundary has been extended to include a former public house (now a vet's surgery) the former school has being converted to residential use and a public realm enhancement scheme has taken place along Horsefair in 2014-15. Since the last Appraisal too a number of properties have been refurbished or converted sympathetically and the trees have matured so the overall appearance of the Conservation Area has been enhanced. Old brick boundary walls are still vulnerable, however, and there has been a further scattering of modern additions such as rooflights and upvc windows.

Summary of special interest

- Its historic development of well built houses with buildings and groups of individual interest
- Its historic community buildings – schools, churches, public house and cinema
- Its 'planned' street pattern forming a grid with parallel back lanes
- Its townscape of diverse building types and detailing
- Its tightly built up urban frontage to Horsefair
- Its substantial brick arched railway bridges and abutments on Horsefair and Arch Street

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

2. Planning Policy Context¹

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

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

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



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

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) supported by Historic England has undertaken an Extensive Urban Survey of Rugeley as one of a series of 23 medieval Staffordshire towns. The report, which forms part of the evidence base for this document, aims to characterise the historic development of the town through reference to historic sources, cartographic material and archaeological evidence. The town is subdivided into Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCA's) with a statement of archaeological, historic, aesthetic and communal value for each one, supported by more detailed descriptions and mapping. Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area falls mainly in HUCA 12 with parts in HUCA's 2, 6 and 14. These extracts are contained in Appendix 2. Developers are advised to consult this document and the SCC Historic Environment team at an early stage when considering schemes within the Conservation Area.

Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) was adopted in 2014 and contains local planning policy including CP15 seeking to safeguard all aspects of the District's historic environment. Policies CP12 and 14 seek to enhance biodiversity and landscape character. Policy CP3 seeks high standards of design of buildings and spaces, conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment as a stimulus to high quality design, and successful integration with trees, hedges and landscape features to green the built environment. It includes the Rugeley Town Centre Area Action Plan which sets out a development framework for Rugeley town centre area including urban design principles and guidance for opportunity sites. A Design Supplementary Planning Document adopted 2016 supports Policy CP3.

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

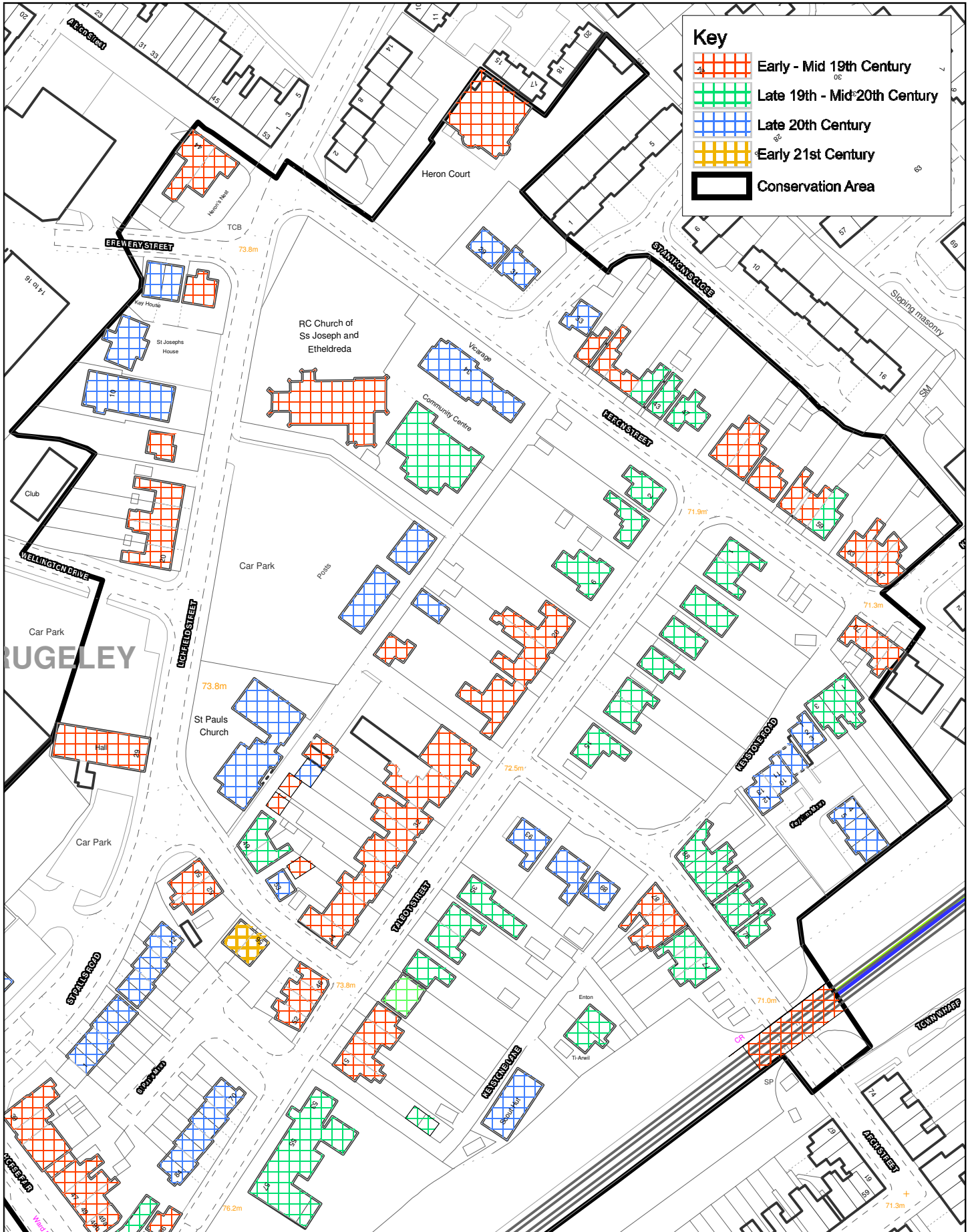
3. Development History

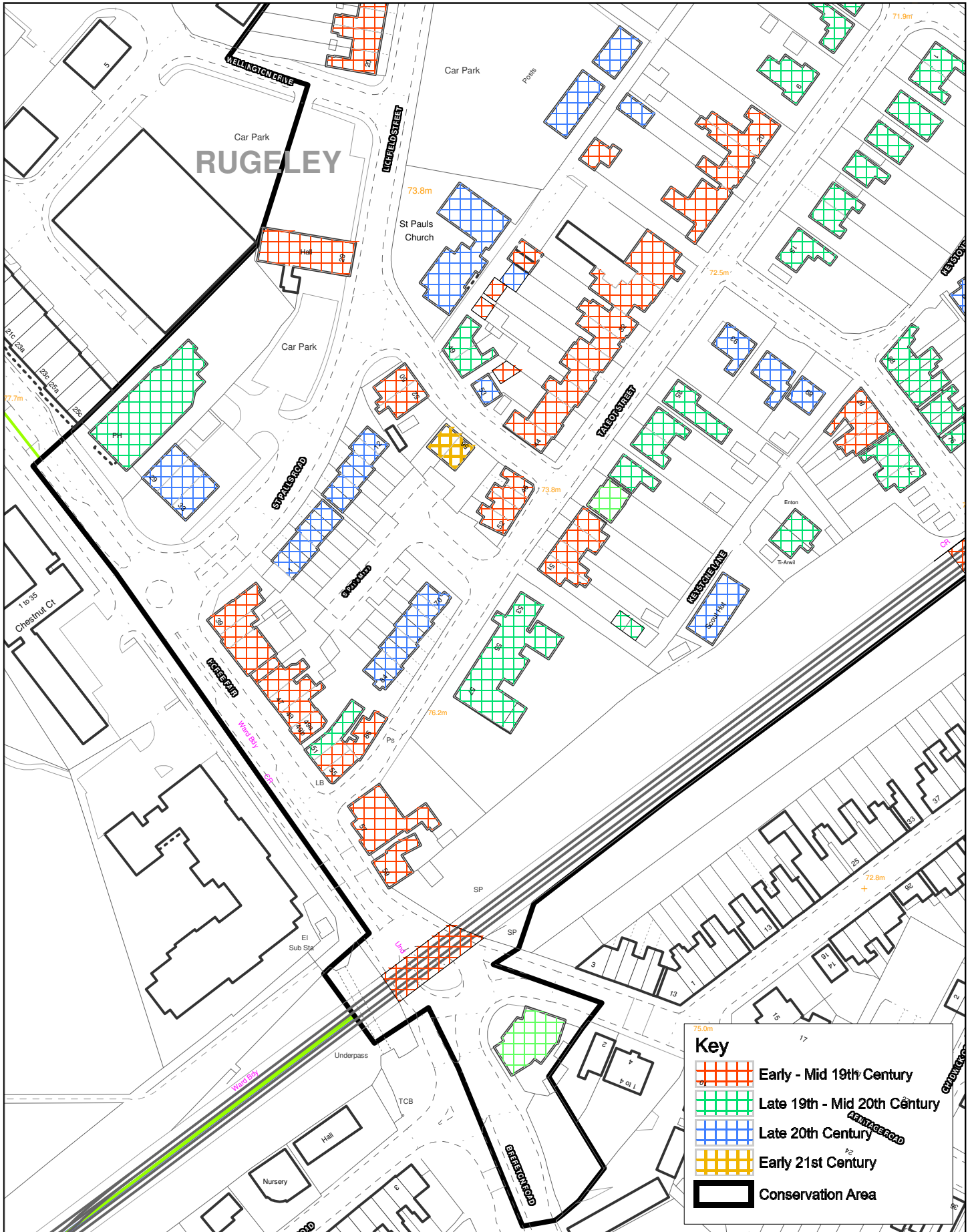
Rugeley stands on the south bank of the River Trent on ground gently rising from the valley to the forest and heath of Cannock Chase to the west. The Rising Brook flows down from the Chase to the Trent through the centre of the town.

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

There were mills and forges along the Rising Brook from the Middle Ages, and the industrialisation of the Rugeley area continued to modern times. The development of the town was concentrated along the north-east, south-west axis of the Stafford-Lichfield Road, of which Horsefair is one component. A rental survey of 1570 showed Horsefair (then called 'Newbold Ende') with numerous plots along it. An account in 1856 stated "in the Horsefair the houses on both sides are large, comfortable and country-looking, the trees that line the road give it a country air". A pair of 16th Century timber framed cottages survive on Horsefair just beyond the Conservation Area boundary, an indication of its earlier character. The road was the venue for the annual horsefair, dating from the Middle Ages, which became more popular during the 18th Century, with several hundred horses being brought for sale from all parts of this country and Ireland. They were tethered along Horsefair, and at its peak in the 1860's more than 1000 horses were sold. Most of the buildings fronting Horsefair today appear to date from the 19th Century, though some may have an earlier core. 'The Station' public house began life as the 'Queens Head' in the 19th Century, then became 'The Station' when the railway was built in the 1850's, completed 1859 (the old station was on both sides of the bridge). It was later renamed 'The Tree' in recognition of a mature tree which once stood at the corner of Horsefair and Talbot Street but was felled in a storm in 1920. It reverted to 'The Station' before changing to a restaurant and more recently a beauty salon.

The remainder of the Conservation Area appears to have remained largely undeveloped until the early 19th Century when Rugeley expanded from a busy market town to a busy industrial town, one of the main industries being coal mining. Albion Street was extended east from the Market Square across the southern end of Forge Pool with Heron's Nest Street (now Heron Street), and Talbot Street was laid out at right angles to link to the east end of Horsefair, with parallel back lanes on either side. The 1840 Tithe Map shows these roads but very little development had taken place at that date. Nos. 26, 49 and 51 Talbot Street appear to be the earliest houses, however, other plots were sold off for development soon afterwards. The former Wesleyan Methodist Church (now the Church Hall) on Lichfield Street was erected in 1839 and extended in 1870 and 1877. Plans 2 and 3 show the development of the Conservation Area.





Between 1849-51 the Roman Catholic Church of Saints Joseph and Etheldreda was constructed, with the spire added in 1868. It was designed by Charles Hansom (brother of the designer of the Hansom cab). Other people with connections with the catholic community developed nearby. Heron's Nest was built in 1850 for the doctor to the catholic community, with his surgery attached at 44 Albion Street, and Heron Court was built in 1851 for Captain Whitgreave, a principal benefactor of the church. Heron Court was attached on its west side to the congregational church which was demolished in the 1970's. During the 20th Century Heron Court was occupied by St. Anthony's convent, and is now Rugeley Billiards Club.

The railway was constructed in 1859, to carry Cannock's coal to the Trent Valley, and connected Rugeley with Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham. A twin brick arch bridge spans Horsefair, and Arch Street was laid out with a high arched bridge over. These remain significant visual features of the Conservation Area today.

As the town grew during the 19th Century national schools for boys, girls and infants were built in the area when a system of elementary education was established in Britain. These included the Prince of Wales Boys School in Lichfield Street in 1846 (on the site of St. Paul's Church) and The Girls Primary School in Talbot Street in 1892 (now converted to dwellings). The main building of the Lichfield Street school was completed in 1844 and by 1846 it was extended to take mixed infants and to add a teacher's house. The Talbot Street school opened in 1892 for mixed infants to have a school of their own, but became a girls only school in 1913 and a junior girls' school from 1939. Infants again occupied the school from January 1960 until the building closed in 1971, when most children were moved to the present Chancel Infants' School in Wolseley Road. The Talbot Street School is Rugeley's only surviving 19th Century school building and is currently undergoing conversion to residential use after periods as offices and vacancy.

By the 1880's development extended along most of the north-west frontage and part of the south-east frontage of Talbot Street, parts of Lichfield Street and part of the north-east side of Heron Street. Talbot Street had been named by the time of the 1884 OS map, perhaps after the Earl Talbot, the 19th Century owner of Brereton Colliery, and the family name of the Earls of Shrewsbury. The Talbot Arms Hotel in the town centre was renamed The Shrewsbury Arms Hotel (now The Shrew) after the Earls Talbot obtained the additional title of Earls of Shrewsbury from 1856. A Talbot is a white hound which symbolises the family and appears on the family crest. Building appears to have proceeded slowly, with plots in Talbot Street and between the school and church in Lichfield Street (now the car park) occupied by allotment gardens until at least 1917. In the early 20th Century the Keystone Works on Keystone Road was the clothing factory of George Key, who invented the 'Donkey Jacket' for workers on the 'donkey engines' draining the workings of the Manchester Ship Canal. This site was redeveloped for housing in the 1990's. Housing development between the wars infilled the allotments on Talbot Street, and in 1934 the Plaza Picture House was built, subsequently converted to a public house in 1997.

In the 1970's Horsefair was widened and the 19th Century shops on its south-west side were demolished and redeveloped as the Health Centre. The stone boundary wall in front of 22-28 Horsefair and Chestnut Court dates from the 18th Century and is listed for its historic and architectural interest, though is just outside the Conservation Area boundary. It formed a garden wall to 'The Chestnuts', the house which stood on this site. Also in the 1970's St. Paul's Road was created to link Horsefair to Lichfield Street, carrying traffic around the eastern side of the town.

Horsefair today is a busy thoroughfare, however Talbot Street is blocked to traffic near the Horsefair end, and together with the side streets remains a quiet area between the town and the railway, retaining something of its original atmosphere, a well-built, spaciouly laid out part of town. Recent residential development on Lichfield Street is in keeping with its setting.

The County Historic Environment Record indicates areas of potential importance in increasing knowledge of the history of the town. Archaeology may exist anywhere within the boundaries of historic towns, and has the potential to help understand origins, development and growth. Around Horsefair and the Lichfield Street/Albion Street junction there may be archaeological deposits as a result of their long development history and therefore any development proposal involving the disturbance of ground within the Conservation Area may need to be accompanied by an archaeological assessment as part of a Heritage Statement to accompany the planning application.

4. Townscape Character Appraisal

Location and Landscape Setting

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

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

Ground levels fall away from Horsefair towards the north east, then level out. The Conservation Area covers the south-eastern edge of the town centre as far as the high railway embankment which forms a substantial landform and physical barrier, as well as providing a green backdrop to the Conservation Area.

Spatial Analysis

The townscape of Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area is largely defined by its regular street pattern laid out by 1840. The core of the area, Talbot Street itself, runs in a straight line north-east from Horsefair, with parallel back lanes on either side for much of its length and another lane at a right angle forming a grid pattern. Development of the grid, over time, has maintained the regularity of building line along the Talbot Street frontage and around the junction with Heron Street. This layout is reminiscent of formal 18th Century town plans and the early 19th Century beginnings of suburban development when people chose to escape from the close conditions of towns, which had grown up in an unplanned way over time, into greener more open surroundings. Within this regular layout there is a diversity of building types and detailing which make a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Important features are shown on Plans 4 and 5.

The Conservation Area boundary was extended in 2010 to include the former 'Britannia' public house on the south side of the Horsefair railway bridge. It provides the Conservation Area with a further landmark community building at this prominent road junction which has now been converted to a vet's surgery.

The central stretch of Talbot Street has the greatest sense of enclosure with the properties either terraces or closely built and closest to the road, with well hedged/walled/fenced gardens. The listed building, no. 32, is awaiting reinstatement of a frontage iron railing which formed its historic boundary.

This strong sense of enclosure is felt again in Arch Street where terraced houses abut the pavement leading up to the railway bridge abutments. At the north end of Talbot Street the properties mostly stand on slightly wider plots. Elsewhere in the Conservation Area density varies with short terraces, both modern and historic, fronting roads opposite gardens, open spaces or community buildings on larger plots, where there is only a partial sense of containment.

Character Analysis

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

Buildings in the Conservation Area comprise a range of architectural styles dating from the early 19th Century to the late 20th. Dwellings are mainly 2 storey, some 2½-3 storey, and there are variations in roofline as buildings follow the contours of the land rising from the mainly level north-eastern part up towards Horsefair. Most of the older buildings make up short terraces or detached 'landmark' buildings whilst the newer buildings comprise a wider variety of forms. Roofs are hipped and pitched, with gable features adding variety to the roofscape. Victorian domestic architecture was more extensive in quantity than any previous period and also more varied in character. Houses not only reflected the social position of the occupant but also suggested the social position they aspired to, so the simpler houses often show architectural features copied from the houses of the social classes above.

Apart from the Horsefair frontage the Conservation Area is largely residential but with a significant number of other uses and building types, notably churches and a former school. Plot sites for dwellings are on the whole quite generous.

Buildings on Horsefair today are substantial 2 or 2½ storey red brick structures built under blue slate roofs, on irregular plots which have developed over time along the main road frontage. These buildings retain some interesting old shop fronts, including 51-55 Horsefair, and at the corner of Talbot Street is an old GR (George VI) wall postbox. Horsefair Mews retains the old carriage entrance together with its blue brick stable paving. Nos. 39-49 have broad eaves, a stone string course and window/door detailing with sash windows, making an attractive group on this prominent frontage. Commercial uses with some residential occupy this frontage, however, on the edge of the town centre pedestrian flow is low and the atmosphere has been dominated by the traffic flow on what was a dual carriageway. Rugeley Eastern Bypass (now the A51) was opened in 2007 reducing the traffic flow on Horsefair and allowing a public realm enhancement scheme to be implemented in 2014 which replaced traffic lights with roundabouts and created new parking space. This is improving customer access to Horsefair businesses and has enhanced the streetscape of the Conservation Area.

The brick built railway bridges on Horse Fair form a substantial and distinctive edifice at the entrance to the town centre and would benefit from careful cleaning and repointing. The Conservation Area was extended beyond the bridges to include the former Britannia Inn in 2010 following threat of its demolition. Built in 1937 of dark red brick with dressings in white around all openings and corners in good solid 'public house' style of the time with a symmetrical concave frontage and hipped tiled roof it provides a landmark feature on a prominent road junction (see Fig 1). The building has now been converted to a veterinary practice.



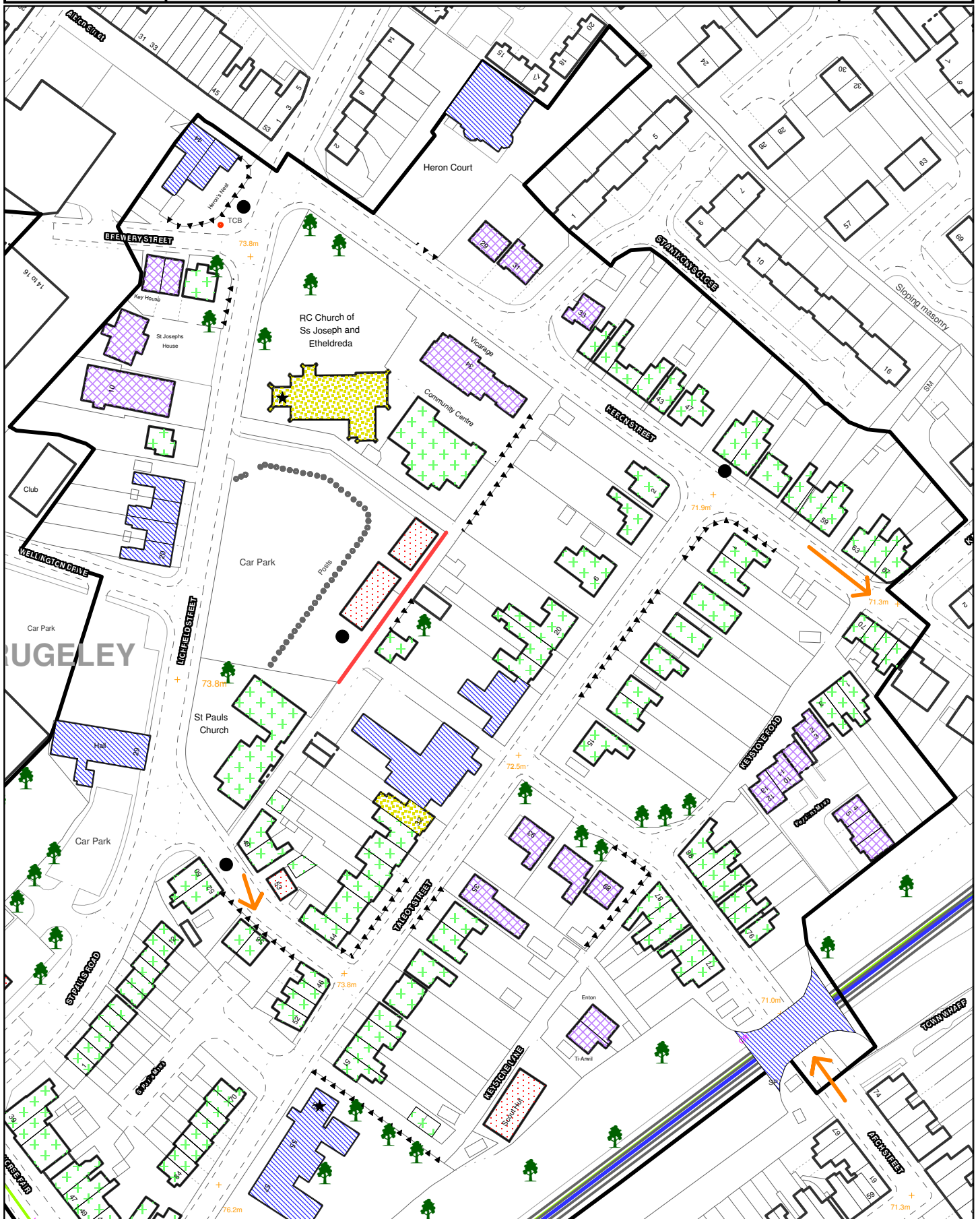
Fig. 1 Horse Fair railway bridges and former Britannia Inn



Plan 4: Townscape Appraisal - North Section

Key	
	Buildings making a Positive Contribution
	Buildings making a Negative Contribution
	Buildings having a Neutral Impact
	Listed Buildings
	Unlisted Buildings of Particular Interest
	Conservation Area

	Boundaries making a Positive Contribution
	Boundaries making a Negative Contribution
	Significant Trees & Tree Groups
	View
	Visual Stop
	Sky Line Feature



Key

	Buildings making a Positive Contribution
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	Listed Buildings
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	Conservation Area

	Boundaries making a Positive Contribution
	Boundaries making a Negative Contribution
	Significant Trees & Tree Groups
	View
	Visual Stop
	Sky Line Feature



At the top of Talbot Street the elevation of no. 86 Talbot Street/55 Horsefair shows the remains of an interesting progression of built development and alterations with evidence of stone quoins, old timber door cases etc. The frontage appears to have been extended towards Horsefair in the mid 19th Century according to old maps and the elevation still retains clear evidence of this.

Some of the earliest buildings on Talbot Street are the terraced 2 and 3 storey villas and town houses along the north-west frontage. Nos. 30-40 are shown in Fig. 2. No. 32 (with cream stucco) is listed as of architectural or historic interest, and the group nos. 26-32 (evens) of which it forms part make a



Fig.2 Villas and townhouses at 30-40 and 26 Talbot Street

significant positive contribution to its setting. The main two storey house at no. 26 has a single storey element to either side with battlemented parapet walls. It has sash windows and classical detailing to window and door heads, the timber door surround being particularly attractive. Nos. 28-30 comprise a pair of three storey houses, with a two storey recessed element to either side. Wide stone surrounds emphasise the sash windows and the doorway to no. 30 retains original stone detailing while no. 28 has a decorative porch addition. The remainder of the frontage as far as the junction with Lichfield Street forms a fine group of townhouses, with their elegant sash windows, hipped roofs and arched windows and doors. The building line is indented and roof lines, with their substantial chimney stacks, vary in height, giving variety to the regular layout. No. 32, which is a Listed Building, stands forward of its neighbours, increasing its impact. It has a cream stucco render front elevation with a rusticated ground floor storey (the face lined to represent ashlar masonry to suggest solidity and enhance its visual impact) and moulded cornice on paired consoles at second floor level, a refined architectural statement. The design of these buildings is typical of the Italian villa style, with low pitched roofs and broad eaves.

A horizontal string course feature running between the storeys and the bold eaves line gives a sense of perspective to views along the frontage, but generally the proportions and pattern of detailing gives a vertical visual emphasis. Nos. 34-40 form a group of four houses matching in their design and detailing. The pair at nos. 42-44 vary the theme with a different vocabulary of detailing including ornate carved timber bargeboards above

gable features and treatment of door and window heads. A similar approach is evident at nos. 49-51 Lichfield Street.

Some of these properties retain the original 1½ storey coach houses at the rear, accessed off the back lanes, which contribute greatly to the overall historic and architectural character of the area. Fig. 3 shows some of the coach houses at the rear of Talbot Street, most of which have been refurbished or reinstated in recent years, rescuing them from their previous somewhat dilapidated condition to provide useful extra domestic accommodation. They are built of the same materials as the houses, with painted boarded doors and circular windows. The remains of former coach houses are also evident in some more modern garages and outbuildings.



Fig.3 Coach houses rear of Talbot Street properties

The Conservation Area is also characterised by a range of institutional buildings which grew up to serve the expanding population in the area during the 19th Century. These buildings are of a scale and materials which fit within the street scene despite their larger size. The former Talbot Street School maintains the building line and characteristic front boundary wall and railings enclosing the street, with attractive detailing to create visual interest to window heads, eaves and roof, particularly the delicate bell tower at the northern end, providing an eye-catching feature. The original tall windows gave light to the schoolrooms. On the rear wall a painted panel – a quote from Kipling – survived until recently from the time of its use as a school.

The site has recently been converted to residential use necessitating some alterations including replacement windows and insertion of first floor accommodation, however its new use retains its essential character whilst giving it a new lease of life and providing much needed housing. It provides an example of how change needs to be managed carefully so that conservation area designation provides a positive opportunity to preserve and enhance the area in an appropriate way with 'conservation-led regeneration' and new uses, rather than preventing change altogether (See Fig. 4)



Fig. 4 The former Talbot Street School, before and during conversion to residential use.

The former Wesleyan Methodist Church uses brick detailing and patterning (polychromatic brickwork in red, blue and buff, typical of the 19th Century Gothic Revival) and attractive window design to break up its large elevations and add visual interest. This treatment of the main façade is typical of such chapels; architectural treatment was focussed on the main elevation, often with arched windows, the gable treated as a pediment (survivals of classical architecture) and the name and date of the building often boldly inscribed. Although these buildings are large they do not dominate the street scene.

The Catholic Church, in white sandstone ashlar, with its splendid spire, stands in its landscaped green churchyard and is also a Listed Building. The church is an integral element of the local scene and the architecture and social history of the development of the area. Its scale and materials contrast with its surroundings and provide a focal point. In the 19th Century there was a revival of Catholicism when congregations grew large enough to warrant a Catholic church, hence the increase in number of churches from that time. The extensive surfaced car parking area south of the church however seems to detract from the setting of the building and contributes to its somewhat isolated appearance in townscape terms. The large car park in front of Heron Court has a similar effect. Heron Court, a significant 2-3 storey building in its own right, though in need of refurbishment, and Heron's Nest, display attractive features, such as stone mullioned and transomed windows and stone quoins. The high wall around the garden of Heron's Nest follows the curve of the back of pavement around the road junction, with its impressive gateway feature catching the eye in views along Lichfield Street and Heron Street. Heron Court (see Fig. 5) was recently the subject of a Feasibility Study funded by Rugeley Partnership Scheme to explore options for a future use which would help fund its restoration. Residential use was found to be the most viable option, together with some new built development, and it is hoped that an interested developer will come forward with an inspirational scheme.

The railway embankment, now well wooded with its two fine red brick bridges (one twin arch, the other a high single arch) forms the south-eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. Its height, level with adjacent rooftops, and bulk provide a strong physical and visual stop to development, and the bridge

arches frame views in and out of the area. The Arch Street bridge in particular forms an impressive and dominant edifice in red and blue brick, above the adjacent street scene, as shown in Fig. 6.

The remainder of the 19th Century housing comprises short terraces and pairs of well built, well detailed two storey houses. Good examples are Alma Terrace on Lichfield Street, some properties on the north-east side of Heron Street and the south-west corner of the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street junction. The characteristic set back from the road frontage behind low boundary walls or walls and railings is maintained in most cases.



Fig. 5 Heron Court

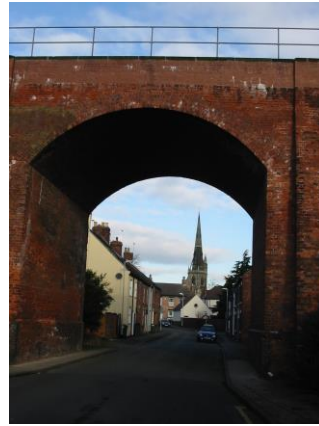


Fig. 6 View through Arch Street bridge

Alma Terrace is a particularly good example of intact detailing, with retention of original windows, roofing materials, rear outbuildings and substantial chimney stacks. It forms a pleasing composition in the streetscene and alterations have in the main been carried out sympathetically. Fig. 7 shows the front elevation of 16 Lichfield Street and Alma Terrace.



Fig. 7 16 Lichfield Street and Alma Terrace

A variety of detailing exists on other 19th Century properties in the area, including ornate carved door and window heads (e.g. 72 Heron Street shown in Fig. 8) king and queen figureheads (above the doorways of 74-76 Heron Street), modest but attractive door cases and fanlights (e.g. 26 Talbot Street

shown in Fig. 9, 44 Albion Street and 72 Heron Street), decorative ridge tiles to roofs (e.g. Herons Nest, Heron Court and the Talbot Street School), a variety of chimney pots and the use of false windows to continue the symmetry of elevations (e.g. 44 Albion Street and 46 Talbot Street).



Fig.8 72 Heron Street



Fig.9 26 Talbot Street

Lichfield Street, and its recent continuation St. Paul's Road, has a less cohesive street scene than the other roads in the Conservation Area with more scattered development and open spaces between. Houses between the former Wesleyan Methodist Church and 50 Lichfield Street were demolished to allow the St. Paul's Road link, however, the remaining well built houses nos. 50/52 and the high brick garden wall to no. 52 survive to follow the curve of the road around to join Talbot Street, modified to accommodate a pair of new houses in 2012, as shown in Fig. 10.



Fig.10 Adj to 52 Lichfield Street (before and after development)

The Plaza on Horsefair is an interesting example of 1930's cinema architecture, retaining its decorated canopy and coloured leaded light windows in its conversion to a public house. However, the adjacent modern block on the corner of St. Paul's Road and the cluttered frontage to both, including a mixture of surfacing, bollards and planters, do little to benefit its setting.

Further infill development took place in the 1920's and 30's, detached and semi-detached housing on well-sized plots. These houses are of characteristic 1930's design with hipped roofs, 2 storey curved tile hung bays and semi circular door heads. Development respects existing building lines, plot layout and scale, with a range of house designs. Use of materials similar in colour and type to the more historic development help these buildings to fit well in the streetscene. Infill development continued into the 1990's. This modern development varies in terms of the respect it pays to its surroundings, some examples more appropriate than others in terms of scale, design, materials, building line, boundary treatment and detailing. The more recent development, such as St. Paul's Mews, shows a greater sympathy for its surroundings than some of the earlier modern development of markedly different design and materials.

Building Materials

The main unifying feature throughout the Conservation Area is the local warm orange-red brick used for the 19th Century buildings and boundary walling. Staffordshire is well endowed with clay suitable for brick and tile making and local brickyards operated into the 20th Century. Flemish bond brickwork predominates with alternate 'headers' and 'stretchers' in each course. This is an economical yet ornamental bond. Some of the high garden walls and coach houses employ Old English bond, with a course of 'headers' and 'stretchers' alternating followed by three courses of stretchers. Although economical this bond is weak, and is typically used for minor buildings. The Plaza is an example of English Garden Wall bond, comprising three or five courses of 'stretchers' to one of 'headers', as is the 1920's and 1930's housing. The modern buildings often use Stretcher bond, widely used today for construction of cavity walls. The older buildings are roofed in blue slate or small red or blue clay tiles, and this original treatment is generally retained. Such traditional roofing materials give a texture and liveliness not found in artificial materials, and are to be valued.

Some buildings in the area are rendered or their brickwork painted white or cream, and 32 Talbot Street has a cream stucco finish to the front elevation. Some of the inter-war housing has tile hanging as a decorative feature to bay windows. Some buildings, such as nos. 34-40 Talbot Street, use bricks with a colour difference between the 'headers' and 'stretchers', giving a subtle patterned effect.

There is variety in the roofscape throughout the area with varied rooflines, gables and hips, the flat roofed Plaza, gable features and ridge tiles, decorative chimneys and pots. The bell tower of the former Talbot Street School and the spire of the Catholic Church also punctuate the skyline. Some properties have added rooflights in converting their roofspace but there is a general absence of dormer windows. The open views of the rear of many dwellings mean the addition of unsympathetically designed dormers could have a significant visual impact. Some cast iron rainwater goods remain, others have been replaced with metal or plastic.

Timber windows within the Conservation Area are largely painted in the traditional white, although some have been painted in a variety of greens or greys, or replaced in stained hardwood. Lighter coloured paintwork usually looks more in keeping with the traditional finish. Doors are painted a variety of colours and add an individual dimension to the streetscene.

Boundary walls

Boundaries within the Conservation Area have considerable historic interest. In several places there are old brick walls in the local brick. Typically these walls are about 1.8 metres high with blue brick saddleback copings. Some walls such as the fine wall at Heron's Nest with its Gothic gateway (See Fig.11), have sandstone copings and detailing. In Talbot Street and Heron Street there are suggestions that the original front boundary to the 19th Century houses was a low brick wall with sandstone copings topped by railings. This is typical of the period, together with the use of hedging. The original railings to the front of No. 32 Talbot Street are still in existence but have been removed for repair and are awaiting reinstatement. Nos. 38 and 44 Talbot Street have replacement railings in a similar style. Original gateposts also occur in several places providing rhythm to the street scene (See Fig.11). Retention of frontage boundary treatment and front gardens throughout the Area significantly enhances the appearance of the streetscene and contributes to the setting of the buildings.

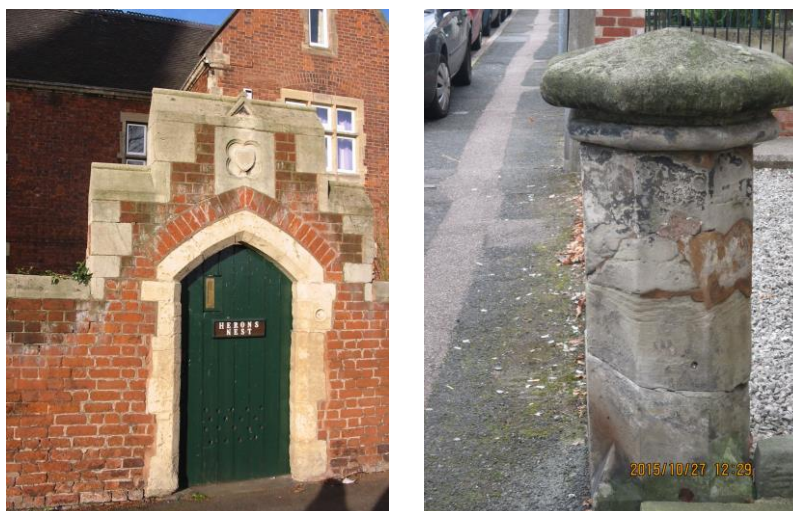


Fig.11 Gateway at Heron's Nest and Pillar/gatepost at 32 Talbot Street

Tree Cover

Hedging and trees give a maturity and softness to the street scene, having both visual and environmental value. Significant trees are found at the corner of Talbot Street and Arch Street in the garden of 93 Arch Street (copper beech), the group in the churchyard at the Catholic Church, the holly and yew trees adjacent to Key House, the holly trees and hedge, and mature lime and sycamore trees at the former Talbot Street School, the yew tree at the side of St. Paul's Church, the holly tree at the rear of 28 Talbot Street, the evergreen

trees at the rear of 15 Talbot Street (Lawsonian Cypress, Holly and Cedar Deodara) and the pollarded limes at the front of 91 Arch Street. In addition, the self-set sycamores around the car park/service area at the rear of the Plaza have a significant impact and although not particularly good specimens, should be perpetuated in any replacement planting around this site. The self-set scrub and emergent woodland on the railway embankment is also a significant feature, providing a green backdrop to views across the Conservation Area.

Mature hedges, generally privet, holly or hawthorne, enhance the street scene along plot frontages particularly in Talbot Street, and Alma Terrace is a good example of traditional backgardens bounded by privet hedges. At the rear of 6 Talbot Street is an old hawthorn hedge, such as may have been a field boundary, possibly around the allotment gardens which occupied the site previously. In contrast to the Church Street Conservation Area, in Talbot Street almost all of the front boundaries have been retained rather than giving over front gardens to car parking.

Public Realm

There is little evidence of historic ground surfaces apparent in the Conservation Area. Granite setts were at one time still visible where later surfacing had worn away on the back lane at the rear of 34 Talbot Street providing a clue as to previous more widespread use, however this has now been resurfaced in tarmac. Elsewhere surfaces generally comprise tarmac with concrete kerbs, with modern pavements at the south end of Talbot Street. Street furniture is unobtrusive, lamp columns are modern and a mixture of metal and concrete. There are several examples of old wall mounted street lamps such as the corner of Heron Street/Keystone Road, and early blue metal street signs on buildings at the corners of Heron Street, Keystone Road (see Fig. 12) and Arch Street. Recent local support for restoration and replacement of the original historic 'antler' light fitting on the Horse Fair bridge has achieved its objective, and a distinctive piece of Rugeley's character has reappeared (See Fig.13).



Fig. 12 Historic road sign



Fig. 13 Historic 'antler' light fitting

Setting and Views

Views within the Conservation Area are largely self-contained because of its relative flatness and the strong visual stop of the railway embankment. However, from the south end of Talbot Street the view looks up over the buildings to the wooded hills beyond the town. The power station cooling towers currently feature in views to the north-east, particularly from the end of Heron Street, and the power station's imminent demolition seems likely to impact both on Rugeley's skyline as well as its economy. The spire of the Catholic Church is a significant landmark at this end of Rugeley, and can be seen from many places in the Conservation Area, above roofs and through gaps between buildings and through the Arch Street railway arch. Of more restricted importance is the bell tower on the former Talbot Street School.

The long straight roads through the Conservation Area result in long views, at the end of which buildings provide a visual stop. Buildings making a positive contribution in this context include 49/51 Heron Street in views down Talbot Street, Heron's Nest in views down Heron Street and Lichfield Street, the former Wesleyan Methodist Church in views down Lichfield Street and 50/52 Lichfield Street in views down the back lane at the rear of 2-44 Talbot Street.

The Conservation Area is adjoined by modern commercial development on the edge of the town centre and modern housing to the north-east, as well as more historic housing on the south side of the railway embankment. The recent new care home development on the opposite side of Horsefair has sought to reflect adjacent Conservation Area character in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing, as well as incorporate new tree planting.

5. Loss/intrusion/Negative Features

The character and appearance of a Conservation Area can easily be eroded as a result of unsympathetic alterations and development and the decay or removal of characteristic features. Nearly all the modern development in and adjacent to the Conservation Area was built prior to designation, and most has a positive or neutral visual impact, apart from a few examples having a negative impact such as the temporary buildings sited on the car park in Lichfield Street between St. Paul's Church and the Catholic Church, the block of shop units at 29-33 Horsefair adjacent to the Plaza, and the former Scout Hut on Keystone Lane. Existing gaps between buildings appear to be historic and therefore any proposals to develop them will require careful assessment.

The cumulative impact of many minor alterations to individual properties can also have a negative impact – special architectural or historic interest is very vulnerable to the process of modernisation. Examples are replacement windows and doors in artificial materials and non-traditional designs. Fig. 114 shows a comparison of original and replacement windows. Such materials tend to be bland and lacking in the rich textures and colours of natural materials and the result can be loss of diversity and subtlety affecting appearance and character.



Fig. 14 Comparison of original and replacement UPVC windows; decay of a brick boundary wall

The recovering of roofs, removal of chimney stacks and other architectural details can have a similar impact. The Conservation Area is fortunate in retaining a high proportion of original roof coverings and windows, with the majority of buildings little altered. Painting of buildings or details in garish bright colours can also have an adverse visual impact out of character with surroundings. Many such minor works to dwellings are permitted to householders. Bearing in mind that these are the very features which help to create the distinctive character and appearance in the first place, their vulnerability is evident. The upgrading of property does not have to be at the expense of historic fabric and character.

Similarly decay of characteristic features of the area, such as some of the high brick boundary walls (see Fig. 14), makes them vulnerable to loss, which would detract from the character and appearance of the area. Also, some of the timber shopfronts on Horse Fair are showing signs of decay giving a neglected appearance to this very visible frontage. Maintenance and appropriate repair to halt the process of decay would be beneficial. In particular, Horsefair is a historically significant thoroughfare in Rugeley which retains sections of its attractive historic frontages. Whilst modern redevelopment has had an impact, the history, character and streetscene could be enhanced by sympathetic repair of the older buildings and sympathetic redevelopment of some of the modern ones, especially those noted as having a negative impact. Appropriate tree planting to enhance the streetscene would also be welcomed.

The double yellow lines throughout the area are very dominant in the street scene. The Council will give consideration to alternative less obtrusive ways to regulate on street parking.

6. Community Involvement

A report was taken to the Council's Cabinet seeking approval for consultation on this updated Appraisal document. Occupiers of all properties in the Conservation Area, local ward councillors, Rugeley Town Council, Brereton

and Ravenhill Parish Council, The Landor Society and technical consultees received publicity about the document, inviting comments. A copy was published on the Council's website, www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy. At the end of the consultation period representations received and proposed changes to the draft in the light of these representations were reported back to the Council's Cabinet. The Council then adopted the updated Appraisal together with a Management Plan SPD.

7. Conservation Area Boundaries

The boundaries of the Conservation Area generally follow rear boundaries of properties and enclose the adjacent part of the railway embankment. On Horsefair the boundary runs centrally along the road as the properties on the opposite side are modern. The boundary was extended in March 2010 to include the former Britannia public house, now No. 1 Vets, following a local request to cover this much loved historic building. No further changes to the boundaries are considered necessary at this time.

8. Enhancement Opportunities/Recommendations for

A specific responsibility is placed upon Local Planning Authorities to take account of the character of a Conservation Area when exercising their duties. The local distinctiveness of particular areas is greatly to be valued and needs to be reinforced in order to maintain diversity, attractiveness and historic continuity. The main opportunities for enhancement of the Conservation Area are through the Development Management process. This appraisal seeks to indicate what it is desirable to preserve, and how, and to set out broad principles for enhancement.

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

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

Recommendations

1. Consideration of planning applications will be informed by the detailed description of character contained in this Appraisal, particularly the features of interest and the areas which would benefit from improvement. There will be a general presumption in favour of preserving buildings and features identified in this Appraisal as making a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

2. Development proposals affecting the Conservation Area must be advertised and account taken of representations in determining each case.
3. Future development should retain the domestic scale of the area and take account of its special interest as set out above. New development will need to acknowledge the relationship of buildings to spaces and reflect existing architectural detailing including colour, texture and range of materials. It should also respect existing trees and hedging and maintain views towards the Catholic Church spire. Any opportunities for redevelopment of sites highlighted as having a negative visual impact or allowing environmental improvements/removal of clutter along the Horsefair frontage, one of the main entrances to the town, would be welcomed.
4. Traditional materials should be used in all building repair works and both hard and soft landscape elements treated sensitively:
 - Where repair works fall within planning control the use of traditional materials for routine repairs will be required and elsewhere will be encouraged.
 - The repair/retention of coach houses, chimney stacks and pots, ridge tiles, traditional shopfronts and other architectural details will be encouraged. The use of traditional tiles or slates for re-roofing rather than artificial substitutes will be encouraged. Where necessary, window replacement should match the original design and glazing pattern and the use of traditional materials is encouraged. Replacement doors should be to an appropriate panelled design and fanlights or glazing above retained.
 - Where timber windows are repainted, colours should be carefully chosen; a light colour often works best and white has been used traditionally. Regular painting helps protect timber windows from the weather and although it needs regular attention the end result is far superior to a modern upvc replacement in maintaining the historic value of the property and the Conservation Area overall.
 - Modern additions such as rooflights, dormer windows and solar panels which fall within planning control will need to occupy unobtrusive locations and otherwise should be carefully positioned.
 - The repair of brick boundary walling (or its reinstatement where necessary in appropriate materials) and retention of railings or hedging will be encouraged, including to side and rear boundaries exposed to view, and the opening up of front gardens should be avoided. Old boundary walls are a characteristic feature locally and careful repointing in matching (usually lime) mortar will prolongue their life and enhance the historic and thus financial value of a property.

- The inclusion of appropriate trees within new development will be required, especially larger, long-lived and suitably sited species, eventually to replace the older trees.
 - Highway improvements should include a consistent approach to street furniture and reduction of clutter, consideration of alternative methods to control on-street parking and replacement of tarmac footpaths and concrete kerbs with more appropriate materials.
5. The Council will give consideration to the imposition of additional controls over minor development through an 'Article 4 Direction' in order to manage future changes to the many details which contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the Area. An 'Article 4 Direction' is a procedure available to the Council to remove all or part of the 'permitted development' rights, as set out in Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England)Order 2015 and the effect is that minor works to dwellings previously permitted without consent, such as small extensions, porches, replacement windows and doors, re-roofing, alterations to boundary walls, chimneys and other architectural details and the external painting of a building where the development fronts a highway would then require planning permission. The intention is not to unnecessarily restrict the individual freedom of residents but to enable the Council to have the opportunity of advising residents on the most appropriate design and materials.
 6. Opportunities to enhance the significance of the Horsefair frontage of the Conservation Area will be encouraged, with sympathetic repairs to historic buildings and sympathetic redevelopment of sites noted as having a negative impact, including appropriate tree planting. In addition the Council will give consideration to including the Horsefair frontage in an update of its Design SPD 2016 to encourage a more comprehensive enhancement of the edge and setting of two Conservation Areas – Rugeley Town Centre and Talbot Street/Lichfield Street – with guidance covering the whole corridor.
 7. The removal of the temporary buildings on the Lichfield Street car park together with some environmental improvements to the car park, such as tree planting to the frontage and improved boundary treatment to the rear along the back lane on Talbot Street would also enhance the Conservation Area and will be encouraged.
 8. The Council will give consideration to the use of Tree Preservation Orders to protect trees which make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

9. Useful information

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

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

- Rugeley Library Local Studies Section Clippings Files
- Joint Record Office, Lichfield (Rugeley Tithe Map1840)
- Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment record
- 'Looking Back on Rugeley' by Alec Neal, published by The Landor Society
- 'Talbot Street/Lichfield Street, Rugeley Conservation Area Appraisal' (adopted 2005) Cannock Chase Council
- SCC Extensive Urban Survey for Rugeley 2012 (available via CCDC website)

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

1. 32 Talbot Street

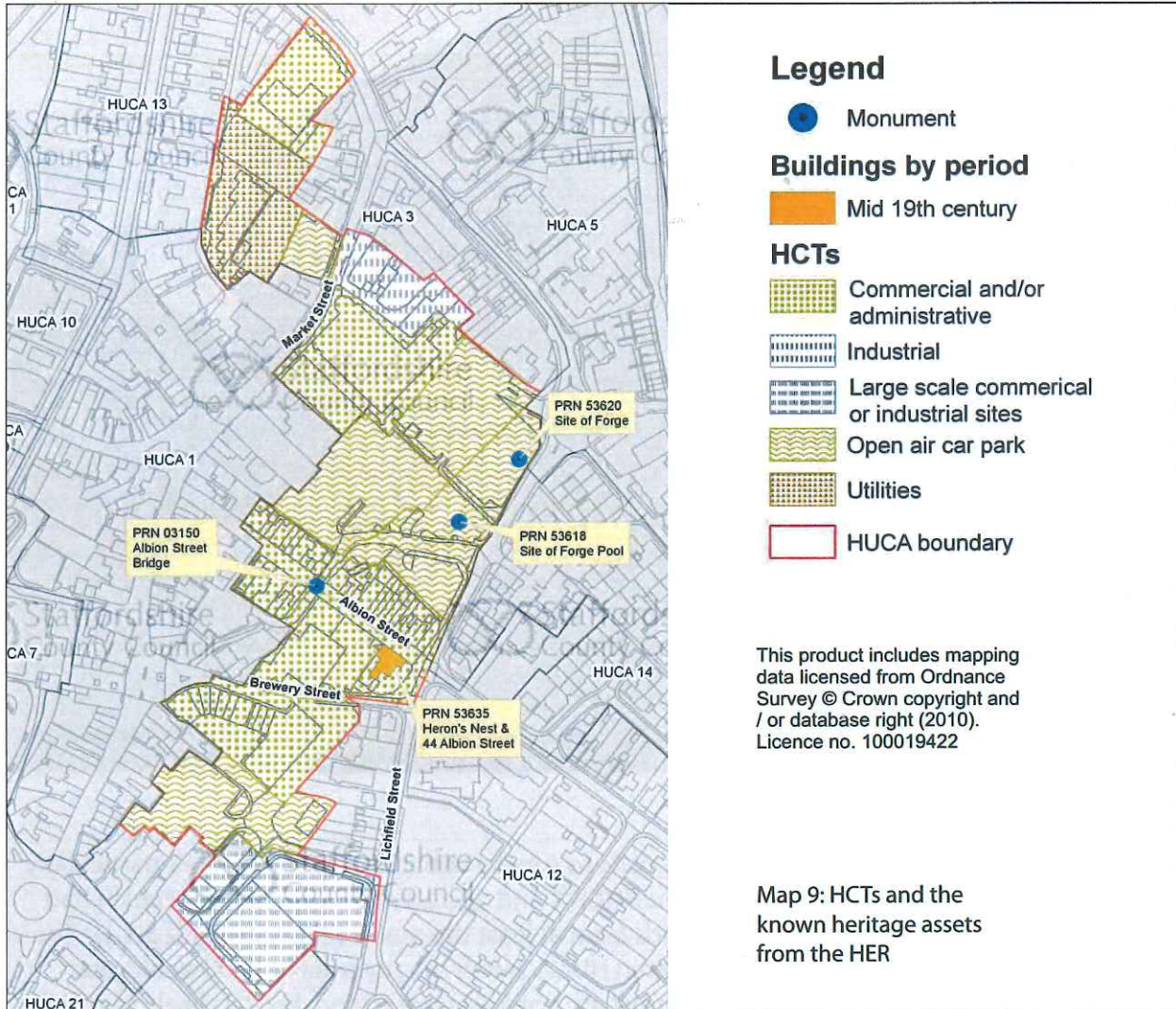
Grade II, Listed 1972. Early to mid C19. Stucco; 3 storeys, the lower rusticated; 3 sash windows (later fenestration) in moulded architraves, those to ground floor with semi-circular heads and in rusticated surrounds; band; moulded cornice at 2nd floor on paired consoles; moulded wood doorcase with semi-circular head and fanlight in rusticated surround and a similar doorway in recessed bay on right-hand side; bold eaves; tiles. Nos 26 to 32 (even) form a group. NGR: SK0463617797.

2. Church of Sts Joseph and Etheldreda

Grade II, Listed 1995. Roman Catholic church. 1849-50; by Charles Hansom. Sandstone ashlar. Plain tile roofs with stone coped gable-ends. PLAN: 6-bay nave with north and south aisles, chancel, Lady chapel on north side of chancel, vestry on south side of chancel, north and south porches and west tower. Decorated style. EXTERIOR: Nave has small 2-light clerestorey windows and low aisles with 2-light windows with weathered buttresses between; gabled north and south porch with moulded arch and statue niche. Taller Lady chapel on north side of chancel with larger 3-light windows. Large 5-light east window with foiled rose tracery. Large west tower with prominent diagonal buttresses, stair-turret with pinnacle, trefoil balustrade with small pinnacles and tall octagonal stone spire with lucarnes and thin flying buttresses; a weather-cock on spire. INTERIOR intact, but walls have been painted, over the original decoration; original roofs, painted chancel and Lady Chapel roofs are unaltered. 6-bay arcades with compound piers, moulded capitals and double-chamfered 2-centred arches; tall chancel arch. Original High Altar, Sedilia and Piscina; elaborate 1880 Lady Altar; 5-light east window with four lights by Hardman and centre by Wailes; a Hardman window of 1860 in the Lady Chapel and a good 1860 wrought-iron memorial screen. SOURCE: Buildings of England, page 228. NGR: SK0461517918.

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

HUCA 2: East of Rugeley town centre



4.2.1 Statement of heritage significance

The character area is dominated by HCTs of mostly mid to late 20th century date and includes two areas of car parking to the rear of the historic plots in HUCA 1 (map 9). However, the street pattern remains one of probable medieval origin (Brewery Street and Market Street). Albion Street was inserted into the townscape in the mid 19th century and its construction is probably the result of a period of economic prosperity (cf. 2.6.1.1 and 2.6.3.4). The majority of the buildings along this street are likely to have been built shortly after its construction although many have been unsympathetically altered during the 20th century (plate 10). Further along Albion Street to the east stands Heron Court/44 Albion Street, a pair of mid 19th century domestic properties which were constructed on a grander scale than those in the rest of the street (see plate 3). The property lies within the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area (155) and was identified as a building of particular interest in the Conservation Area Appraisal²⁴¹. It is closely associated with the Roman Catholic Church and Heron Court, which stand opposite in HUCA 12.



Plate 10: 19th century properties in Albion Street

There is the potential for archaeological deposits to survive within the character area particularly to the rear of the historic plots that lie within HUCA 1 and also along Brewery Street, which had probably existed as a lane into the open fields from at least the medieval period (cf. 2.5.1.1). The sites of a watermill and mill pond also lie within HUCA 2 with the potential for archaeological deposits to survive. The origins of the watermill are not fully understood, but it is likely to have been the site of a paper mill by the 17th century and possibly the site of a forge prior to that; it was operating as a forge by the late 18th century at least (cf. 2.5.2.3, 2.5.2.4 and 2.6.3.2)²⁴².

4.2.2 Built character

The 19th century buildings concentrate along Albion Street and comprise small two storied terraced properties built of red brick, although many have been rendered and had modern shop fronts and windows inserted (plate 10).

The remainder of the HUCA comprises late 20th century purpose built retail units. Some have been constructed on a large scale notably within HCT 'Large-scale industrial or commercial' on map 9. A flat roofed building, Phoenix House, stands on Market Street (HCT 'Industrial' on map 9), but to the rear there are older red brick industrial buildings, some of which may have at least 19th century origins. The telephone exchange is a further large flat-roofed building standing to the rear of Market Street to the north (HCT 'Utilities' on map 9).

²⁴³ English Heritage 2005; PPS 1: 18

²⁴⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government 2012. Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

4.2.3 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive which may contribute to an understanding of the town from the medieval period onwards. The deposits may be best preserved in those areas that are currently car parks, particularly the site of the watermill. The latter could contribute significantly to an understanding of the economy of the town from the medieval period onwards. There are a number of historic buildings dating to the 19th century which also contribute to an understanding of the development of the town at this period.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Historical value: Heritage assets are legible within the HUCA particularly along Albion Street, but some have been considerably altered. The street pattern is probably little changed from the medieval period, with the exception of Albion Street which was inserted into the townscape in the early 19th century.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: The majority of the HUCA results from piecemeal development and alteration in the 20th century, with the exception of Albion Street which is clearly a planned element within the townscape (as indicated by its straightness). The HUCA also contributes to the setting of HUCA 1 and links two Conservation Areas (Rugeley Town Centre (051) and Talbot Street/Lichfield Street (155). Consequently any enhancement and restoration of the surviving 19th century buildings would contribute significantly to the setting of the Conservation Areas and contribute to the sustainable regeneration of this part of the townscape for the benefit of the local community²⁴³.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Communal value: The HUCA lies on the edge of the commercial heart of the modern town and the heritage assets form part of the commercial activities.</p>	<p>Medium</p>

4.2.4 Recommendations

The assessment has identified heritage interests within the HUCA, which include unlisted historic buildings. These heritage assets contribute to the setting of the two adjacent Conservation Areas.

- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)²⁴⁴.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, particularly the 19th century properties along Albion Street, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape as well as the setting of the two Conservation Areas for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)²⁴⁵.

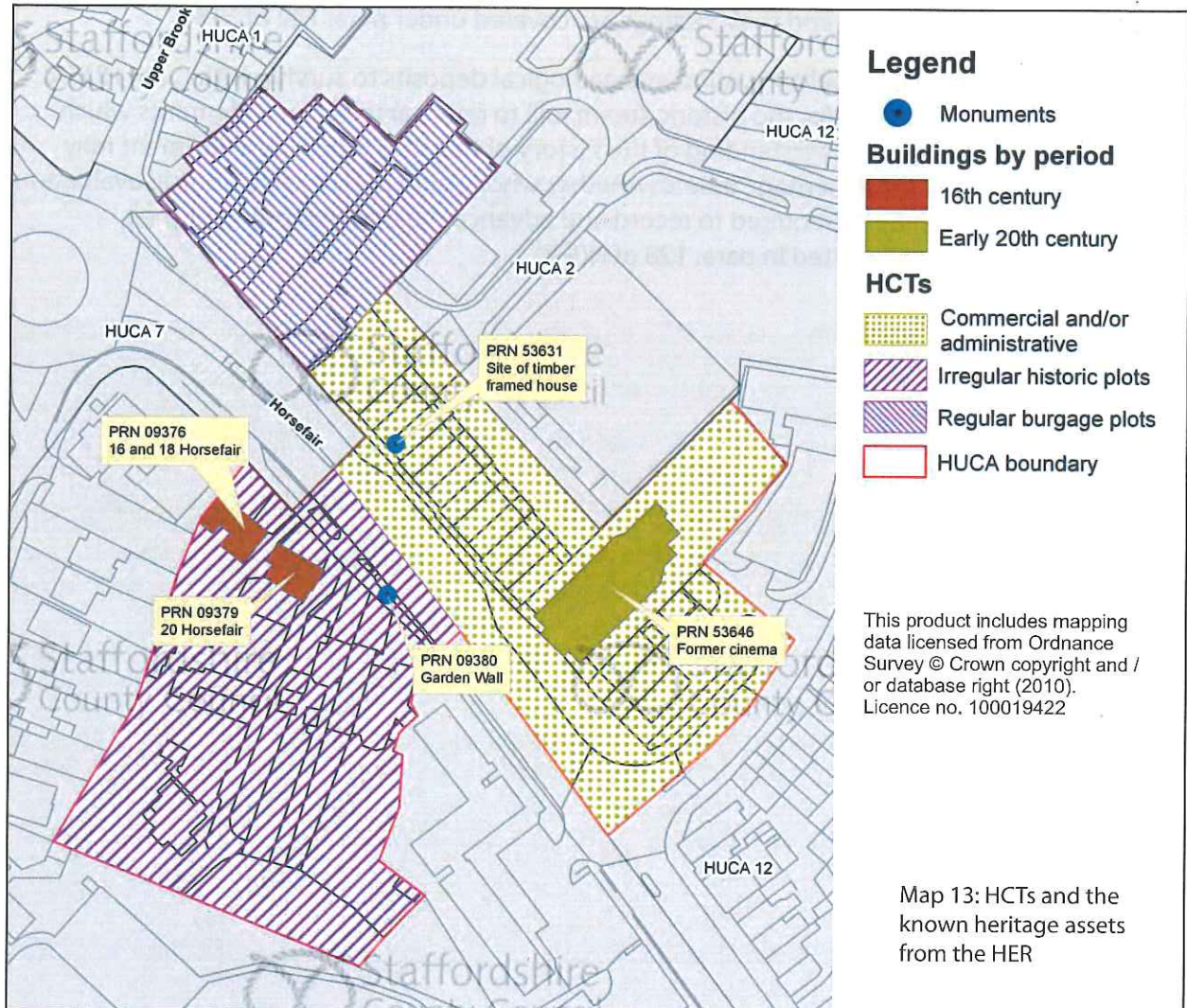
²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Staffordshire County Council, 2011. Web:
<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/HistoricEnvironment/BuiltEnvironment/ConservationintheHighwayGuidanceDocument2011.pdf>

- ◆ The heritage assets could make a positive contribution to economic regeneration of the town. In particular the promotion of the re-use of historic buildings to contribute to sustainable development is recommended (paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF). High quality design which is sympathetic to the historic built fabric is the key to retaining the local character of the area as identified in Bullet Point 4 of para. 17 (Core planning principles) of NPPF).
- ◆ The conservation of the historic character of the HUCA would include the retention of the historic street pattern.
- ◆ Any planned development or significant change adjacent to the two Conservation Areas should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF²⁴⁶.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF²⁴⁷.
- ◆ Any appropriate development within this HUCA should look to improve the historic character and sense of place within the nearby public realm. Where this concerns work within a Conservation Area this may be achieved through consultation with the East Staffordshire Planning Department. Outside of designated Conservation Areas the SCC Historic Environment Team should be consulted. Reference should also be made to the joint English Heritage and Department of Transport volume entitled 'Streets for All: West Midlands' and where appropriate to the SCC 'Conservation in the Highways' document²⁴⁸.

4.6 HUCA 6 – Horsefair



4.6.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

Horsefair itself has been integrated into the 20th century western by-pass around Rugeley (cf. HUCA 5 and 7). It has its origins in at least the medieval period and has constituted part of the main route to Lichfield from at least that time. Its longevity within the wider townscape is attested by the presence of two HCTs 'Regular burgage plots' and 'Irregular historic plots' (shown on map 13). The name of the street in the late 16th century was 'Newbold End' which suggests that it forms a later element within the townscape than the north-south axis where the market place is located (cf. HUCA 1; 2.4.6). It is unclear when the name Horsefair first came into usage, but it is possible given the width of the street on historic maps that it originated as the site of the medieval fair (cf. 2.4.3.1). The possible burgage plots lying to the north of the street suggest that the area's economic potential was realised through the planning of burgage plots by the lord of the manor during the medieval period (the Bishop of Lichfield). The current buildings comprising HCT 'Regular burgage plots' are largely three storied brick buildings of probable early to mid 19th

²⁷⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 53631

²⁷⁵ Cannock Chase District 2005: plan 5; Staffordshire HER: PRN 53646

²⁷⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRNs 09376 and 09379

century date. However, there remains the possibility that these properties may retain earlier fabric within their structure. The plots themselves are still visible on modern mapping although they are not obvious in the street scene.

These burgage plots had extended across the whole of the northern section of Horsefair lying within this HUCA until they were re-developed during the late 20th century. Until this period a timber framed building had stood within the HCT 'Commercial &/or administrative', which had provided a legible testimony to the history, on the northern side of the street²⁷⁴.



Plate 14: 16/18 Horsefair & 20 Horsefair

The eastern part of the HUCA, to the north of the street, forms part of the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area (155). The former cinema, which dates to 1934, was identified within the conservation area appraisal as "an unlisted building of particular interest"²⁷⁵.

There is little evidence of formal planning on the southern side of Horsefair (HCT 'Irregular historic plots' on map 13). However, it is clear from the two surviving Grade II timber framed buildings that this area had been developed by at least the early 16th century (plate 14)²⁷⁶. Adjacent to these properties stands a row of large houses which had been constructed upon a large plot. A boundary wall encloses the plot on its southern side adjacent to the street and this has been designated as a Grade II listed structure of probable 18th century date.

4.6.2 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive which would contribute greatly to our understanding of the development of this HUCA within the wider townscape. This could include the origins of the burgage plots to the north of Horsefair as well as of the irregular historic plots to the south. The surviving historic buildings also contribute to an understanding of the economic and social history of the town.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Historical value: There are legible heritage assets within the character area in the form of historic buildings, which vary in date from the early 16th century through to the 1930s cinema. The former have both been identified as being of national importance and are designated as Grade II Listed buildings and the latter as an important building within the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: A small section of the HUCA lies within the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area (155) and this incorporates the former cinema. The remainder of the HUCA forms part of the setting to this conservation area and to the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area (051) which lies to the north west. Consequently any enhancement and restoration of the historic buildings, particularly on the north side of Horsefair, would contribute significantly to the setting of the Conservation Areas.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Communal value: Some of the historic buildings form part of the commercial activities within the HUCA, however, the remainder can only be appreciated from street level.</p>	<p>Medium</p>

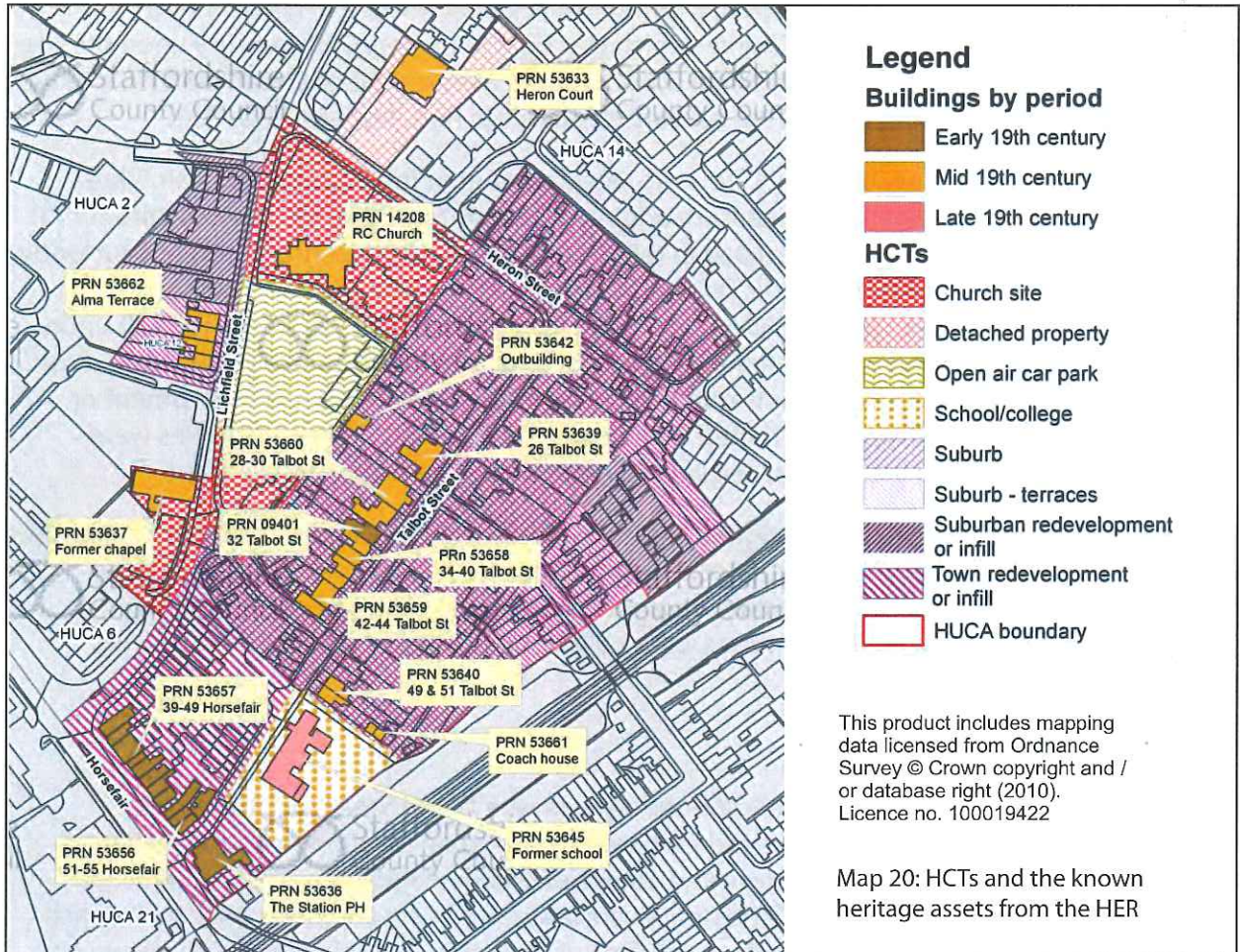
4.6.3 Recommendations

The assessment of the heritage values has identified considerable heritage interest within the HUCA relating to its potential medieval origins. The HUCA is largely incorporated into two Conservation Areas and includes three Grade II Listed buildings and structures. There is also the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive.

- ◆ A statement of significance may be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA depending upon the nature and scale of any proposals (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)²²⁷.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted (particularly the former cinema), would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)²²⁸.

- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the vicinity of the Conservation Areas should consult the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All of the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF²⁷⁹. Reference should be made to the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area Appraisal where it falls within the eastern portion of the HUCA.
- ◆ There is a high potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF²⁸⁰.

4.12 HUCA 12 – Lichfield Street and Talbot Street



4.12.1 Statement of heritage significance

The character area had formed one of Rugeley's open fields in the medieval period, known as Hodgeley (cf. 2.4.3.2 and map 20). The morphology of the later field system suggests that it was enclosed piecemeal during the post medieval period (cf. 2.5.2.2 and map 38 in Appendix 1). It is not known precisely when Lichfield Street was constructed, but it is marked upon mid 19th century historic maps. The morphology of both Heron Street and Talbot Street suggest 19th century origins and the fact that Lichfield Street leads into Talbot Street, may suggest the former is of a similar period. Horsefair lying to the south of the HUCA has at least medieval origins representing the main route to Lichfield (cf. 2.4.3.1, 2.4.6 and HUCA 6 for further information).

The significance of the character area to the wider Rugeley townscape has been acknowledged in the designation of the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area. Two Grade II Listed buildings are located within the character area; 32 Talbot Street and the Roman Catholic Church of St Joseph and St Etheldreda³¹². The latter is closely associated with the large brick built property opposite known as Heron Court which was constructed in 1851 by the co-founder of the church³¹³. From the early 20th century the property was utilised as a convent, which closed in

³¹⁴ The Landor Society pers. comm.
³¹⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 53637
³¹⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 53645
³¹⁷ Third edition 25" OS map (1918)
³¹⁸ Cannock Chase District 2005
³¹⁹ Cannock Chase District 2005
³²⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 14206 and 53645
³²¹ Cannock Chase Council 2005: plan 4

1963 (cf. 2.7.4.2)³¹⁴.

Two further churches lie within the HUCA; a former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel initially constructed in 1839³¹⁵ and St Paul's Church, which was built in the late 20th century upon the site of a 19th century school (map 20). A former school still survives on Talbot Street, built circa 1892, and is the only school dating to the 19th century to survive in Rugeley³¹⁶ (cf.2.6.2.1).

Map 20 indicates an area assigned HCT 'Town re-development or infill' along Horsefair. These properties appear to have early 19th century origins, although Yates' map of Staffordshire (1775) suggests that settlement may have existed in this area by the late 18th century. It is not currently clear whether settlement extended this far east along Horsefair in the medieval and post medieval periods. However, it is possible that these 19th century properties were re-built upon the site of earlier settlement or that elements of earlier structures may survive within the extant buildings. To the rear of the Horsefair frontage lies a further area of 'Town re-development or infill' which map 21 shows was constructed in the early 21st century. These properties were largely built upon the rear plots or gardens which existed by at least the 19th century.

The HUCA also contains two areas assigned HCT 'Suburban re-development or infill' (cf. maps 20 and 21) which both date to the late 20th century. The area to the west, comprising modern housing and fronting onto Lichfield Street, was constructed upon the site of 19th century properties. To the east the modern houses were built upon the site of an early 20th century clothing factory³¹⁷.

4.12.2 Built character

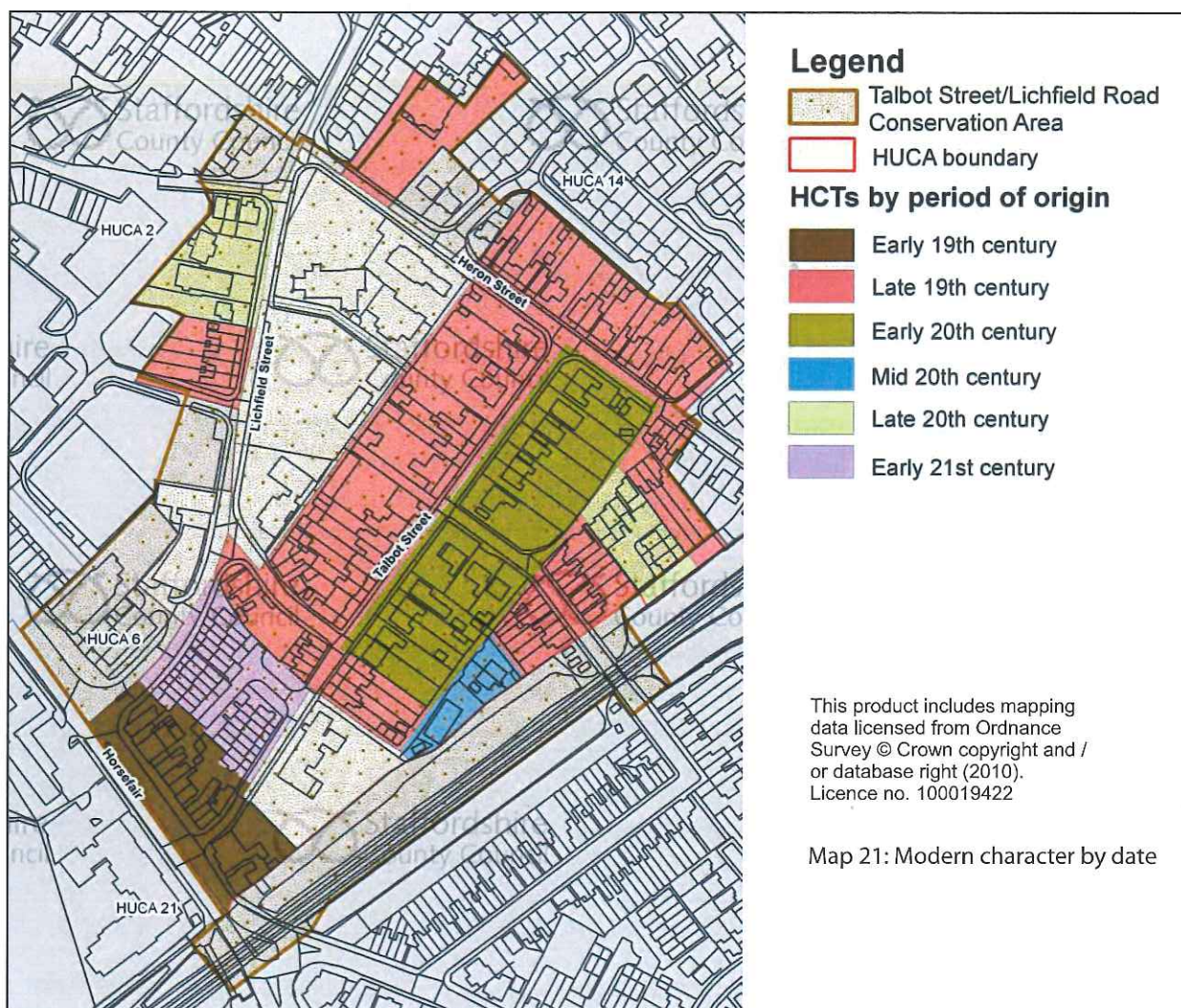
Map 21 reveals that the HUCA is largely contiguous with the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area. The character area is dominated by suburban development mostly dating from the late 19th and early 20th century and comprising large detached and semi detached brick built houses (map 21). Some of the houses are associated with surviving brick built coach houses which lie in the alleyways to the rear of the building plots³¹⁸. Within the HCTs shown on the modern character map there are individual properties of earlier date which have been highlighted within the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area appraisal³¹⁹. The housing is associated with a regular street pattern characteristic of 19th century suburban development.

Complimentary to the 19th century character are the non-residential buildings notably the Roman Catholic Church and the former school (map 20)³²⁰. The church steeple and the school bell tower have both been identified within the Conservation Area appraisal as important 'sky line' features within the wider townscape (plate 7 and 2.7.3.2)³²¹.

Three areas of late 20th and early 21st century re-development are also located within the HUCA as shown on both maps 20 and 21.

4.12.3 Heritage values:

<p>Evidential value: The range of historic buildings within the HUCA contributes to an understanding of the social and economic history of the town from the early 19th century onwards. There is the potential for below ground archaeological remains and the extant buildings to inform an understanding of the extent of the medieval and/or post medieval town along Horsefair.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Historical value: The historic built environment dominates the character of the HUCA and its extent is largely contiguous with Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area. The character area also includes two Grade II listed buildings one of which, the Roman Catholic church steeple, is predominant within the wider townscape. The legibility of the differing housing types and the other associated buildings which served the community during the 19th and early 20th century enables the history of the HUCA to be read from street level.</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: The regular street pattern is largely the result of deliberate planning, although development along the streets was largely piecemeal and is typical of 19th century suburban development (cf. maps 20 and 21). The historic environment contributes strongly to the aesthetics of the HUCA and this is complemented by the designation of the Conservation Area and the two Grade II Listed buildings which are nationally important buildings. Change within the conservation area should take account of the policies identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal document³²².</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: The majority of the heritage within the HUCA can only be appreciated at street level. However, St Joseph and St Etheldreda Roman Catholic Church is likely to be valued within the community for both its historic and spiritual contributions.</p>	<p>Medium</p>



4.12.3 Recommendations

The assessment has identified considerable historic and archaeological interest within the HUCA relating in particular to the built environment. The historic significance of this area of early suburban expansion has been identified through the creation of the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area.

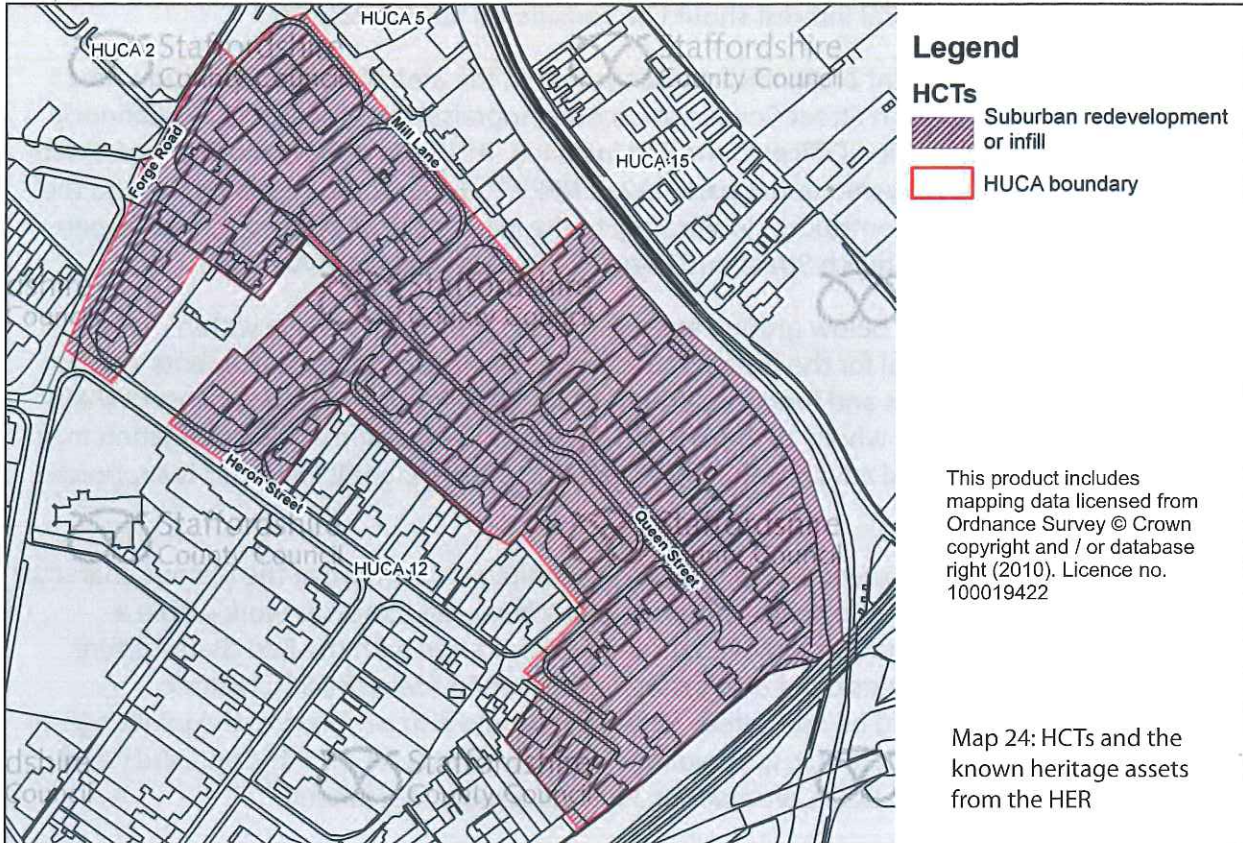
- ◆ A statement of significance will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development upon the historic environment as part of any planning application to be made within this HUCA (cf. para. 128 of NPPF)³²³.
- ◆ The sympathetic restoration or enhancement of the historic buildings, both Listed and unlisted, would strengthen the historic character and the quality of the wider townscape and the Conservation Area for the benefit of this and future generations (Bullet Point 10 of para 17 (Core planning principles) also paras. 126 and 131 of NPPF)³²⁴. The coach houses are of particular local historic interest. Undesignated historic buildings of particular local interest should be considered for the local list.

³²⁵ Ibid
³²⁶ Ibid

³²⁷ Staffordshire County Council. 2011. Web:
<http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/HistoricEnvironment/BuiltEnvironment/ConservationintheHighwayGuidanceDocument2011.pdf>

- ◆ Any planned development or significant change within the area of the Conservation Area should consult the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area Appraisal document and the Cannock Chase District Conservation Officer in the first instance. All of the designated heritage assets and their settings are covered under para. 132 of NPPF³²⁵.
- ◆ There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the HUCA. There is also the potential for the historic buildings to retain architectural elements which could inform their origins and function. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF³²⁶.
- ◆ Any appropriate development within this HUCA should look to improve the historic character and sense of place within the nearby public realm. Where this concerns work within a Conservation Area this may be achieved through consultation with the East Staffordshire Planning Department. Outside of designated Conservation Areas the SCC Historic Environment Team should be consulted. Reference should also be made to the joint English Heritage and Department of Transport volume entitled 'Streets for All: West Midlands' and where appropriate to the SCC 'Conservation in the Highways' document³²⁷.

4.14 HUCA 14 – Between Mill Lane and Heron Street³³⁹



4.14.1 Statement of heritage significance and built character

The character area is dominated by the HCT 'suburban redevelopment or infill' (map 24) which comprises domestic dwellings exhibiting a mix of scale and form. However, the overall regular street pattern, dating to the mid 19th century survives. Queen Street has been truncated by the 20th century redevelopment (plate 19).

The initial development of this character area occurred along the regular street pattern during the mid 19th century with the construction of small terraced houses. A foundry had been constructed in Heron's Nest Street by the early 20th century and earlier 19th century industrial sites may also have been present within the HUCA (plate 19).

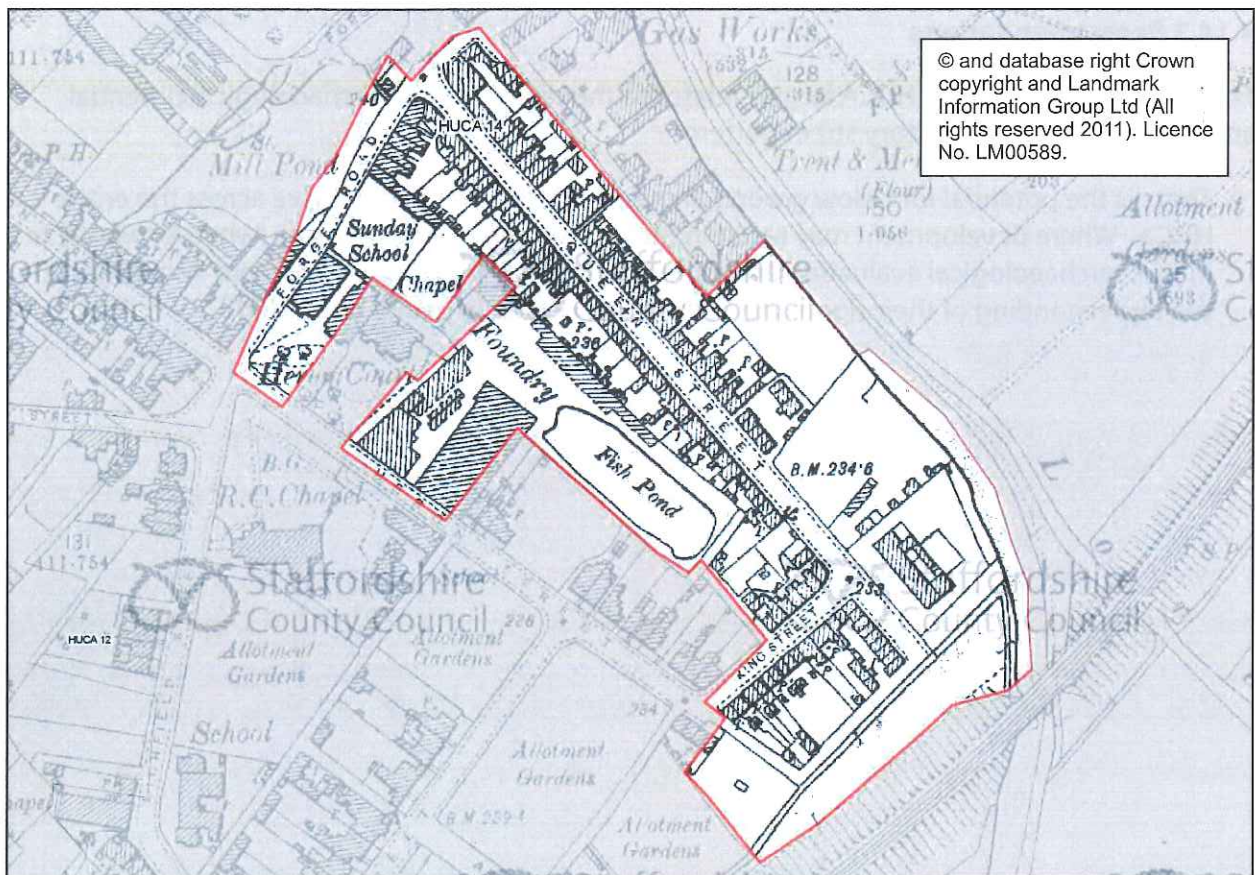


Plate 19: Second edition 25" OS map (1884)

4.14.2 Heritage values

<p>Evidential value: There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive relating to industrial activity dating from the late 19th century. However, the intensive re-development within the character area may have reduced their potential to survive across much of the HUCA.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Historical value: The vestigial of the historic street pattern is the only legible heritage asset surviving within the character area and this has been impacted by the 20th century redevelopment.</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Aesthetic value: There are elements of planning in the surviving portion of Queen's Street although its truncation and redevelopment has compromised its legibility and consequently its contribution to the historic aesthetics of the townscape.</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Communal value: The character area has few legible heritage assets.</p>	<p>Low</p>

4.14.3 Recommendations

The historic interest of the HUCA largely relates to the below ground archaeological potential and the legibility of the history street pattern.

- ◆ There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive across the entire HUCA. Where development may result in the loss of these heritage assets (whether wholly or in part) archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance the understanding of their significance; this is supported in para. 128 of NPPF³⁴⁰.