

MILL LANE CONSERVATION AREA



CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

October 2005

Current Position

This character appraisal was approved and adopted by the Council's Cabinet meeting on 20th September and the Council's Planning Committee meeting on the 13th October 2005. This followed a period of consultation on the draft appraisal and consideration of comments and suggestions from interested parties.

The boundary of the conservation area was extended to include the properties around the station to the north of the area and 6-8 Alder Lane. The level of planning control has now been increased by an Article 4(2) Direction for all residential properties within the conservation area. The Direction came into force on 24th October 2005 and the Council must decide whether to confirm the Direction within 6 months, following any representations. The Council's Cabinet will consider any views put forward before a final decision is made to apply the Article 4(2) Direction.

28th February 2006

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October 2005

Preface

This appraisal is part of a programme of appraisals of all the current and proposed conservation areas in West Lancashire.

The District Council has an obligation under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to review, from time to time, its conservation area designations and consider any new areas, and under Section 71 of this Act, to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

When West Lancashire's existing conservation areas were designated in the 1970's and 1980's it was generally recognised that these areas were of a special character which warranted preservation and enhancement. However, very little was actually written down as to which features were important in this respect. English Heritage now recommend the carrying out of appraisals which will allow a full assessment of the characteristics of existing and proposed conservation areas. This will enable the Council to decide whether the conservation area still has sufficient character to warrant its designation or whether the area needs extending in any way.

The appraisals will also highlight the implications for the future preservation and enhancement of a conservation area.

The policies on conservation areas contained within the West Lancashire Local Plan form the basis for determining planning applications for development in these areas. This appraisal should be read in conjunction with these policies and will form a material consideration in the consideration of planning applications and planning appeals.

The appraisals will also provide a basis for: reviewing conservation area boundaries; guiding future local authority action in preparing enhancement schemes and in guiding the actions of others; and, where appropriate, increasing planning controls.

It is intended that these issues will be considered in full consultation with local residents and landowners, local interest groups, the Parish Council, the Conservation Areas Advisory Panel and Lancashire County Council.

Finally, this document will hopefully raise awareness of the special qualities of the Conservation Area so that as the area continues to evolve, it does so in a sympathetic way and the essential character of the area is maintained for future generations.

What is a Conservation Area?

A conservation area is an area of "special architectural or historic interest", the character of which is considered worthy of protection and improvement. It is the combination of the buildings, street patterns, open spaces, vistas, landmarks and other features which give a conservation area its distinctive character. This character should be the focus of efforts towards preservation and enhancement.

Under Planning Legislation the local authority has wider powers than usual to control development which might damage the area's character. The controls which exist in conservation areas are contained at the end of this document.

It is important that there is a consensus on the quality and importance of a particular conservation area in order to assist in its maintenance and enhancement. To be successful, conservation policy must be a partnership between West Lancashire District Council and the many interests involved in the conservation area's future.

Introduction

The Mill Lane Conservation Area was designated by West Lancashire District Council in 1975 and was last reviewed, in part, in 1985. The conservation area covers a portion of the village of Parbold to the south of the railway line, totalling just over 6 hectares, and is defined by development on either side of Mill Lane, which forms the main village street, and Bradshaw Lane to the south of the A5209. The area forms one of the historic cores of Parbold, comprising houses and small-scale industrial buildings of the nineteenth century, with some modern development filling the spaces between. This forms the southern end of the modern extent of the village of Parbold.

LOCATION AND SETTING

Location and Landscape Setting

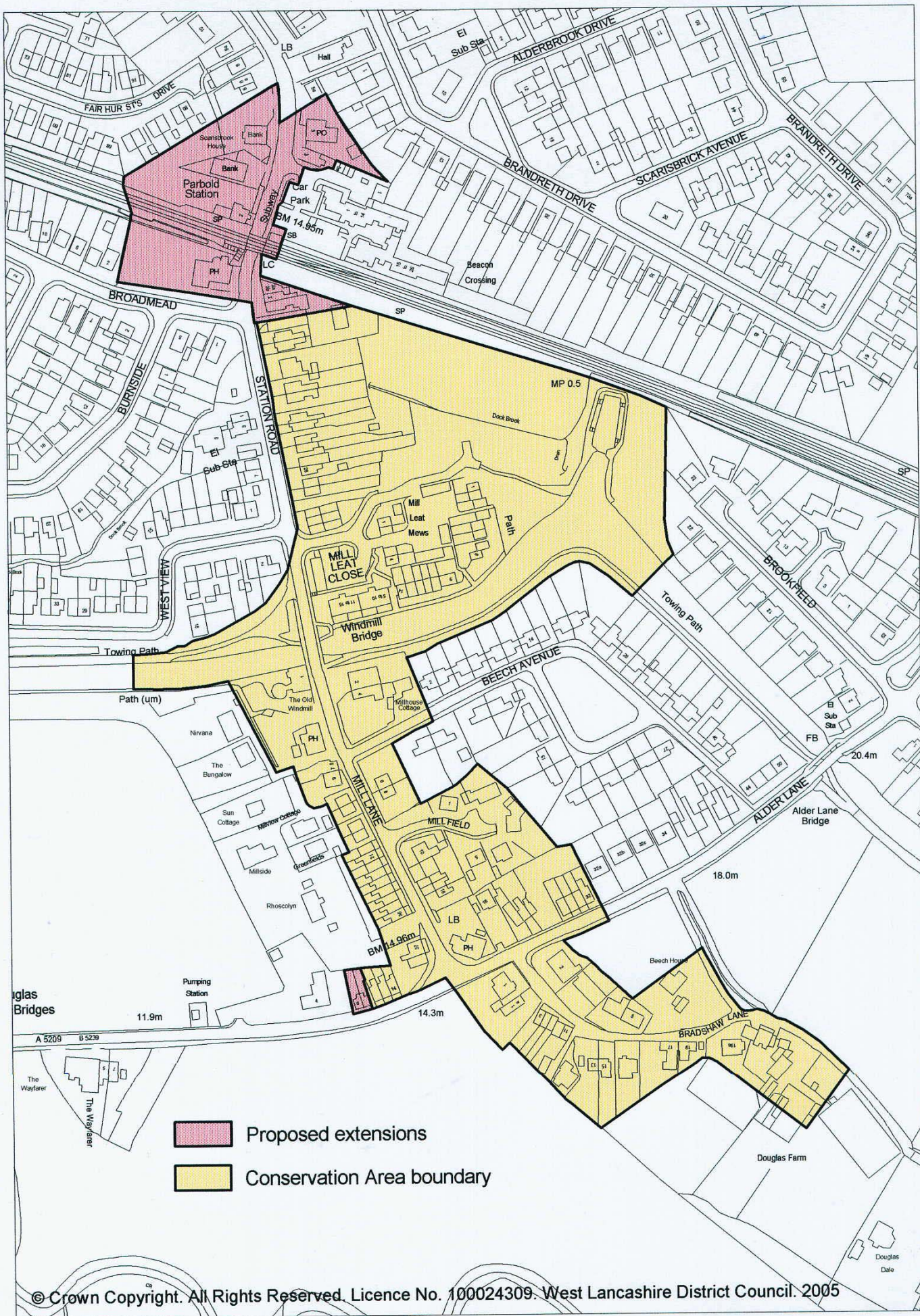
Parbold is situated on the lowest slopes of Parbold Hill, on the edge of the West Lancashire plain at NGR SD 491 109 (centred), just off the A5209 road to Ormskirk from Standish. It is situated around 8km from Ormskirk to the west and around 4.5km from Skelmersdale to the south. Lying at the base of the hill, the landscape in and to the west of Parbold is gently rolling, and slopes down to the River Douglas to the west and south. To the east of the village, however, land rises sharply to Parbold Hill at around 130m aOD. The countryside is a lowland area of mixed arable and pasture farming comprising mainly improved pasture with arable fields. The field pattern is large-scale, with loss of hedgerow and hedgerow trees. Woodland is sparse.

The underlying solid geology of the area consists of Upper Carboniferous Silesian Limestones. Parbold lies on the edge of the Lower Westphalian, mainly productive, coal measures. These are generally well-covered by thick glacial and post-glacial deposits, primarily comprised of thick tills but with extensive Shirdley Hill sand deposits and coarse-textured fluvio-glacial deposits overlying till. The coal measures and the presence of Harrock Hill Grit, a coarse hardwearing sandstone, provided the basis for coal mining and quarrying industries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Important Views

Views within the conservation area are limited because of the close development of houses within the historic core of the village. The main focal point is provided by the Leeds Liverpool Canal. The road bridge crossing the canal provides views both along the canal, and along Mill Street.

The conservation area is divided in two by the main road, the A5209. Beyond the road, the southern end of the conservation area encompasses Bradshaw Lane, a narrow rural road in a low-lying area. Views along this road are thus restricted, though there are views across the low-lying fields to the north.



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Origins

In the medieval period, Parbold appears originally to have formed part of the township of Wrightington, and was held by Robert de Lathom before 1242. The Lathom family held Parbold down to the end of the seventeenth century. Around 1680, the manor was sold to John Crisp, whose family sold it to William Dicconson of Wrightington in 1791. Other substantial land holders included the Knights Hospitallars and Burscough Priory. The name Parbold derives from Old English and means the dwelling where the pear trees grow. The settlement appears to have evolved as a number of small nucleations within the township, including Mill Lane and Bradshaw Lane, and thus covered much of the Mill Lane Conservation Area. Despite its early origins, there are no standing buildings which date to earlier than the eighteenth century.

Although Mill Lane was one of the early centres of settlement in Parbold, from the depiction of Parbold on Thomas Yates's map of Lancashire in 1786, this would have been no more than a hamlet, comprising four or five houses or farms. It appears to have been focused around the junction of Mill Lane with Alder Lane (now the A5092), in an area known as Stocks, the name deriving from the location of the village stocks there. This indicates that it was a traditional centre of settlement. Stocks Tavern lies on the east corner of the junction, with older cottages on the other side of the road. Yates's map also shows that there was at least one building on the far side of the main road, on Bradshaw Lane.

Leeds Liverpool Canal and the development of Mill Lane

The area covered by the Mill Lane Conservation Area only began to develop following the opening of the Leeds Liverpool Canal in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. In particular, it provided transport for the stone and coal extracted from local quarries and mines. The canal runs east west on the south side of Parbold, then turns sharply south east of Mill Lane, marking a change in the route from the original plans. The 1770 parliamentary act showed the route continuing north to Mawdesley, but this was changed to take the canal through Wigan. The beginnings of the cut to Mawdesley was turned into a graving dock. Boat building became an established local industry as early as 1786, and the graving dock continued in use until 1943. Wharves were established along the canal next to Mill Lane. As well as stone quarrying and coal mining, the canal also allowed Parbold to develop as a centre for the transport of agricultural produce, with the establishment of stockyards and large-scale corn milling. By 1833, lime for land improvement was being brought in by canal, and burnt in a limekiln to the west of Mill Lane. This lime kiln was still extant, though ruined, in the 1990s, but no longer appears to survive.



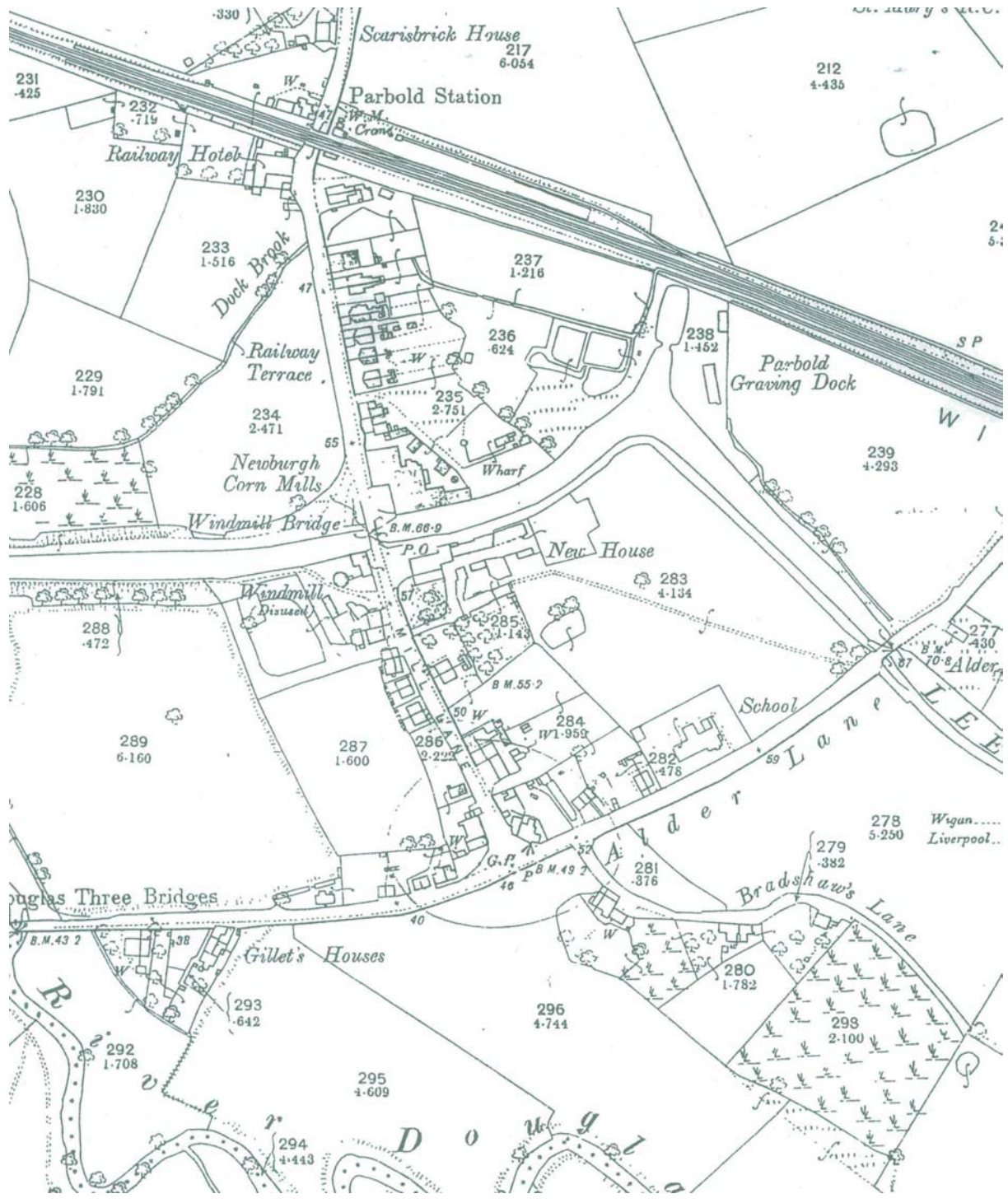
In 1794 a wind mill was established next to the canal, on the west side of Mill Lane. This replaced a water mill, which had originated as the manorial corn mill in the medieval period, and was located on the River Douglas, just to the south of the canal. The wind mill was known as Nathan's Mill, and had an adjacent warehouse. When it was put up for sale in 1817, it was described as being built of good stone, with two pairs of French stones and two pairs of grey stones. The windmill continued to work until the mid-nineteenth century, when it was owned by Hugh Ainscough. He replaced it with a steam-driven corn mill before 1860, where he ground large quantities of imported corn, particularly corn from the United States of America, imported through Liverpool. On the other side of Mill Lane is a canal-side warehouse, now used as a shop. Of two-storeys with an attic level, the lifting beam and three entrances can still be seen on the canal-side gable end wall of the building.

Nineteenth century development

The opening of the railway in 1855 gave a further impetus to the development, not only of the Mill Lane area, but for the whole of Parbold, even though it led to a decline in the use of the canal. Parbold became a commuter area for the middle-classes, and a recreation area for Manchester, peaking in the 1930s. This led to an influx of migrant workers and further development. Houses were built along Mill Lane, including a number of houses in short terraces, clearly intended for the lower middle-classes, as well as more obviously middle-class semi-detached houses, with ground- and first-floor bay windows, with gables above, and small front gardens. Development extended beyond Mill Lane, to the north of the railway line, where in the late nineteenth century Thomas Myers built around 30 houses, as well as the Railway Hotel and Beacon View on Bradshaw Lane. The Railway Hotel was in existence by 1872, when it was kept by Thomas Alty, a local coal merchant.



Plan of 1892 Parbold



LAND USES

The land and property within the conservation area is predominantly residential, in private ownership, though there is a significant commercial presence, particularly to the south of the canal. The canal and the A5209 (Alder Lane) divide the conservation area into three distinct areas, with the canal forming a fourth area. The buildings along Station Road are mostly residential, semi-detached houses, with a modern development of apartments and houses at the south end next to the canal. The area has an early suburban character, created by the brick-built semi-detached, late Victorian villas, with front gardens. These houses, probably part of the development by Thomas Myers, have datestones of 1883 and 1884. At least two of these houses at the northern end have been used as commercial premises, and at the time of writing, one was closed up and for sale. At the south end, next to the modern development, are three older cottages, perhaps relating to development following the opening of the canal. Adjacent to the canal is the development of apartments and houses, which were built on the site of Ainscough's steam corn mill. This has a modern residential character.

South of the canal, the conservation area continues to have a suburban character, but generally comprises more older buildings than the area to the north. The older residential buildings are mostly on the east side of Mill Lane, and concentrated at the south end, where the junction of Mill Lane with Alder Lane represents the original focal point of the hamlet. Stocks Tavern, on the corner of the junction commemorates the site of the village stocks in this area. There is a small modern development of detached houses to the rear of these older houses. The west side of Mill Lane was clearly developed in the late nineteenth century, and is dominated by a terrace and two blocks of semi-detached, brick-built houses.

To the south of Alder Lane, on Bradshaw Lane, houses are either detached or semi-detached, with one short row of five houses. This area has a more rural character, and includes a number of stone-built cottages dating to at least the early nineteenth century. Amongst these older houses, and some late nineteenth century houses, there is a significant degree of modern infill development.

The canal forms the focal point of the conservation area, creating a rural corridor between Station Road and Mill Lane. The former graving dock survives only as a canal feature, but is now surrounded by modern development. Along most of the length of the canal this modern development is screened by trees and bushes from the canal, except in the area of the former steam corn mill, where the apartments and houses front directly onto the canal side. The former industrial function of this area survives only in the brick- and stone-built wharf along the canal edge. On either side of Mill Lane, on the south bank of the canal, the character is a commercial one, with the original canal-side development of windmill and warehouses reused as modern businesses, including an art gallery.

The northern end of the conservation area terminates at the railway line, where it crosses Station Road. Parbold Station is still in operation, and a signal box and former station house still stand, along with the Railway Hotel.

BUILDING FEATURES

The Mill Lane conservation area is comprised predominantly nineteenth century development, with a significant number of buildings dating to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The older buildings are concentrated around the Stocks Tavern area and in Bradshaw Lane, defining a more rural character for the southern end of the conservation area from the more suburban north end. Although there are a number of older houses within the conservation area, there is only one building which has been recognised as being of special architectural or historic interest and has been provided statutory protection as listed, at grade II. Details are given below. Additional comments are given in italics.

Parbold Mill, Mill Lane

Windmill tower, now shop and art gallery. Dated to *c* 1800. Built of sandstone rubble in five storeys with battered walls and embattled parapet. *Known as Nathan's Mill, it was probably erected in 1794.*

Important Unlisted Buildings

In addition to the two listed buildings within the conservation area, there are other buildings of historic interest which add to the character of the area. These buildings have no statutory protection and are most at risk from harmful alterations, and in some cases have already been subject to substantial changes.

2-30 Station Road

A series of red-brick, semi-detached houses built in 1883 to 1884, probably by Thomas Myers, who was known to have built around 30 houses in Parbold. Clearly intended to be middle-class accommodation, they may have been built for the growing population of commuters to Manchester who settled in Parbold from the late nineteenth century. A number have had replacement windows.



32-36 Station Road

A row of three small cottages, brick-built and dating to before the mid-1840s when the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map was surveyed and published. Modern windows and doors.

2-4 Mill Lane

A former canal-side warehouse, and known as New House from at least 1848. It was in existence by 1837. A two-storey structure, built of coursed, squared, graduated sandstone, it

was built gable-end on to the canal, where three doorways with hoist above provided access for goods to the two storeys plus attic. The building is now partly in commercial use, and partly residential.

The Windmill public house

The Windmill public house was built following the opening of the canal and before 1837. It is a double-fronted, double-depth building, built of coursed, squared, graduated sandstone, painted white, with quoins painted black.

5-9 Mill Lane

A pair of attached cottages, number 5-7 now used as a shop. This is the older of the two buildings, and appears to have been in existence before 1786. It is stone-built, with evidence of water-shot construction, but is now partly rendered and whitewashed. Number 9 is also stone-built, of coursed, squared, graduated sandstone, and was in existence by 1837. Both have replacement windows.



6-8 Mill Lane

A pair of coursed, squared sandstone-built cottages, number 6 double-fronted, and number 8 single-fronted. They were built by the mid-nineteenth century. Both have UPVC replacement windows.

11-35 Mill Lane

Late-nineteenth century, brick-built houses, comprising two pairs of semi-detached and a terrace of nine houses, with rear scullery extensions. All have small front gardens and, as with the houses on Station Road, were clearly built to attract commuters.

10-18 Mill Lane

A row of five stone-built cottages, dating to the second half of the nineteenth century. They are of coursed, squared sandstone to the front, and of random rubble construction on the gable end. Some with replacement UPVC windows.

Mill Lane and Alder Lane

A group of coursed, squared sandstone-built cottages, dating to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, but marking the traditional centre of Parbold, and the site of the village stocks. It includes Stocks House, now the Stocks Tavern, a public house, but built on the corner of the junction

3-11 Bradshaw Lane

The oldest surviving houses along Bradshaw Lane, they are thought to have been in existence by 1786. They comprise a row of five, coursed, squared sandstone-built cottages, with the two easternmost cottages slightly offset. Although this area now appears to be distinct from Mill Lane, having a more rural character, this was originally part of the traditional centre of Parbold.



17-19 Bradshaw Lane

Pair of double-fronted, coursed, squared sandstone-built cottages, in existence by 1837. Number 17 has had replacement UPVC windows, whilst number 19 was undergoing renovation at the time of this appraisal.

Douglas Farm, Bradshaw Lane

Douglas Farm, at the south-eastern end of the conservation area, is a double-fronted house apparently in existence by 1786. The building has been heavily modernised, rendered and painted and has replacement windows and doors.

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, it is clear that this area of Parbold consisted of cottages and small-scale industry associated with the canal, scattered along Station Road, Mill Lane and Bradshaw Lane. It was only with the advent of the railway that development took place on any substantial scale, leading to infill ribbon development along these roads. Further development within the conservation area comprises some infilling behind the street frontages, or redevelopment, particularly along the north bank of the canal.

Other Important Features

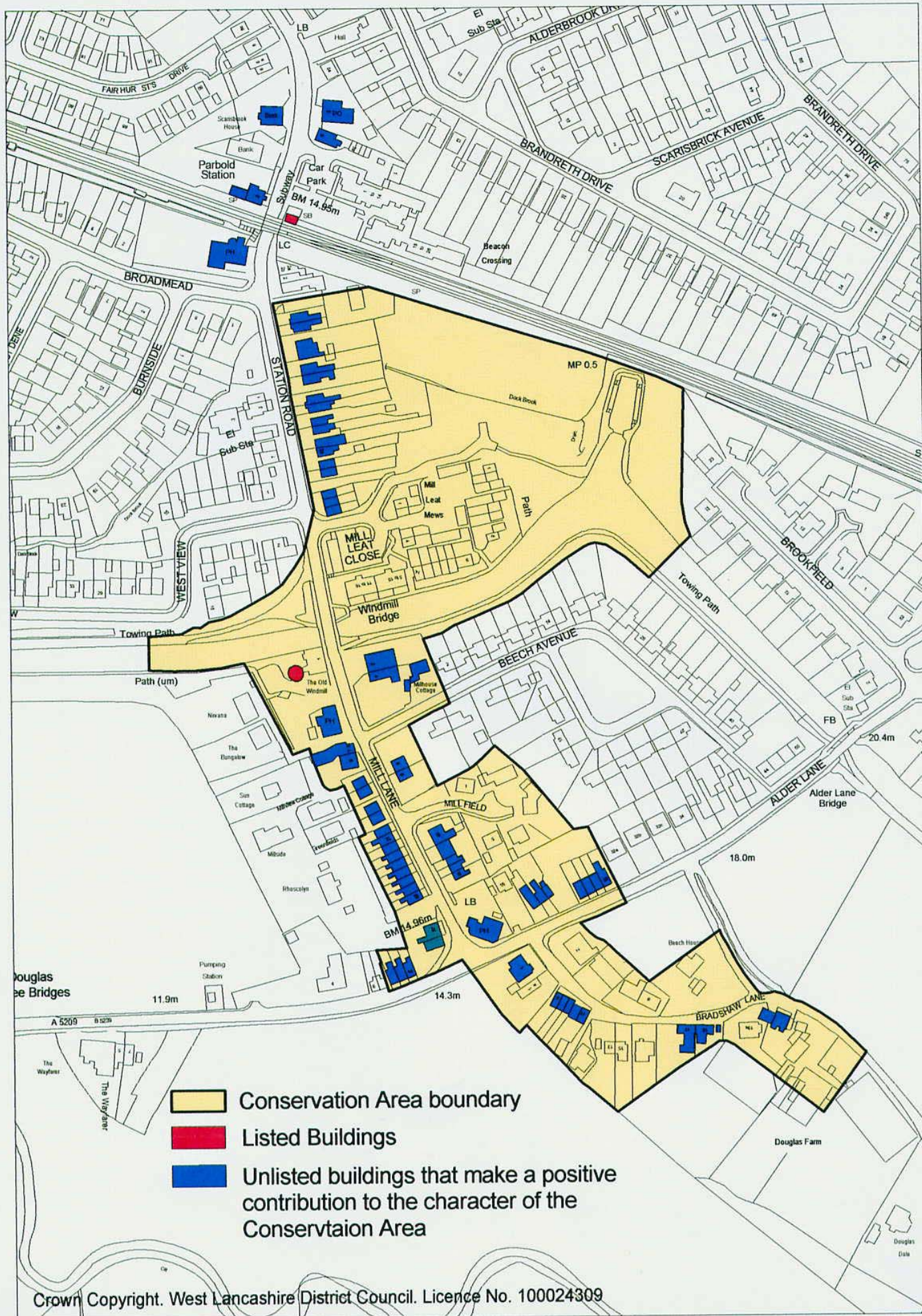
Parbold cabin signal box is a grade II listed building lying outside conservation area, on the north side of the railway line. It was built in 1877 on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Wigan to Southport line. Built of brick and timber with a hipped slate roof and rectangular in plan. It has external timber steps on the east side and a chimney on the north. It is a Saxby and Farmer Type 9 box. On the opposite side of Station Road, and also outside the conservation area, is Parbold Station. The station house is of two-storeys, stone-built, with a single-storey gabled porch to the front, with gables above the second floor windows.



On the south side of the railway line, but also lying outside the conservation area, is the Railway Hotel, built by Thomas Myers, and in existence by 1872 when it was run by a local coal merchant. It is a double-fronted, double-depth building, rendered and painted. It has a side wing with a two storey, half-hexagonal bay. This lies just to the north of the Conservation Area.

The canal bridge carrying Mill Lane/Station Road over the Leeds Liverpool Canal. Here the towpath changes from the south side of the canal to the north. Although the original bridge was replaced in the 1970s, the eastern approaches to the bridge from the canal survive, and show that it was originally a 'change' bridge, that is it allowed horses towing the barges to cross to the towpath on the other bank without having to unhitch them.

The canal, including the former graving dock, forms a key feature and provides a green corridor through the conservation area. There is development along both banks of the canal within the conservation area, but in most areas, this is screened from the canal by trees and bushes. It is only on the north bank of the canal, to the east of Station Road, where residential development has been allowed to develop next to the canal. This is the area that was once occupied by the steam-powered Ainscough's mill, and was an area occupied by industrial development from the mid-nineteenth century. The wharves and docks which once lined the canal in Parbold have now gone, and the only remains of its industrial past are the windmill and the former warehouse.



PRESSURES AND DETRACTING FEATURES

The Council has a duty to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. The effect on the character or appearance of the area has to be considered in all development. Policies CA.1 to CA.6 in the West Lancashire Local Plan (and Policy EN4 of the Deposit Draft Replacement Local Plan) provide the basis on which the Council will consider all development in the conservation area.

However protecting the special character of the area cannot be carried out in isolation. A substantial amount of the changes, both to buildings and the surrounding land and natural features does not come under the control of the Local Authority. Minor changes, may appear small seen in isolation but the cumulative effect can, over time, harm the special character of the area. The long term future of the Mill Lane Conservation Area relies a great deal on the sustainable and sensitive approach of the residents who live in the area.

This part of Parbold has a high percentage of buildings, within its historic core, surviving from the nineteenth century, and some which date to the late eighteenth century. Although this is one of the oldest centres of settlement in Parbold, the relatively late date of the buildings probably indicates that from the eighteenth century, traditional timber-framed buildings were replaced with sandstone, and thatch with stone slates. These cottages tended to be of vernacular design though some, such as the pair of double-fronted houses in Bradshaw Lane, show some classical influences in style. Most of these older houses have been modernised and altered. In particular, the replacement of original sash and casement windows with UPVC. The main character of the conservation area, however, is derived from the late nineteenth century, brick-built terraces and semi-detached villas, which create a suburban feel. These too have been the subject of modernisation, and in general, there has been much diminution of the value of the historic fabric through over restoration and unsympathetic house improvements.

One of the primary pressures on the conservation area is infill development. In particular, there is the redevelopment of the former Ainscough's Mill, the development of Mill Field to the rear of Mill Lane, and piecemeal development along Bradshaw Lane. In Bradshaw Lane, the character remains rural, but is now dominated by twentieth century houses. The volume of traffic using the A5209 also serves as a detracting feature, as it is one of the principal routes across West Lancashire from the M6. It provides a barrier across the conservation area, cutting off Bradshaw Lane from the rest of Parbold.

CONCLUSIONS

A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. This appraisal clearly demonstrates that the Mill Lane Conservation Area contains both architectural and historic interest which continues to justify its conservation area status.

This appraisal provides an opportunity to highlight some of the important features and buildings in the Mill Lane Conservation Area, as well as promoting a better understanding of the issues which specifically relate to the area as a way of retaining the area’s special character or appearance.

Many individual properties are of significant value within the local context and have been highlighted as making a significant contribution to the special character of the area.

The Mill Lane area clearly contains features of both historical and architectural interest, which justifies its status as a conservation area. Although only one building, the former windmill, has statutory protection as a grade II listed buildings, many of the other buildings have historic significance for the post medieval development of Parbold, and are of at least local importance. In addition to the surviving stone-built houses which reflect Parbold’s existence as a rural settlement, and its development as a canal side settlement, the later brick-built houses reflect Parbold’s nineteenth century status as a small industrial and commuter village. The canal forms a distinct division across the conservation area, with the northern part more obviously influenced by development following the opening of the railway, and the southern part comprising more mixed housing, reflecting the influence of the canal, as well as later houses for commuters. The A5209, a busy main road, also forms a distinct dividing line, with the houses in Bradshaw Lane retaining a more rural character.

The conservation area does not include the area of the station, the Railway Hotel and the listed grade II signal box. These features are important aspects of Parbold’s late nineteenth century development.

MILL LANE CONSERVATION AREA PROPOSALS

It is the duty of the local planning authority to determine whether the existing boundary of the conservation area is still appropriate and whether any further parts should be designated as a conservation area or indeed deleted from it.

The local planning authority must also from time to time formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Any enhancement proposals formulated, under this section, will be submitted for further public consideration.

This appraisal document has raised several issues which should form part of any proposed action and be considered alongside policies for the area as set out in the West Lancashire Local Plan.

In common with other conservation area appraisals produced by the local authority, the following issues have been recognised for consideration in respect of Mill Lane Conservation Area:

- whether the existing conservation area boundary is appropriate
- whether it is necessary to sanction additional controls over development in the form of the imposition of an Article 4 (2) direction
- to look at further development in the conservation area
- to assess the need for environmental improvements in the conservation area

The Conservation Area Boundary

Following a full assessment of the area, it is recognised that the Mill Lane Conservation Area still retains a special character which is well defined and worthy of protection and designation as a conservation area.

As part of this review, the area to the immediate north of the current conservation area boundary was considered for inclusion in the conservation area. It comprises numbers 2 and 4 Station Road, the Railway Hotel, Parbold Station and signal box. Dating to the second half of the nineteenth century, the development of the railway was of considerable historical importance to both Parbold's industrial past, and to its development as a commuter settlement.

It is thus recommended that the boundary of the conservation area is changed to include the area up to and immediately to the north of the railway line to include 2-4 Station Road, the Railway Hotel, the railway station and signal box, the Royal Bank of Scotland building, Post Office and 3 The Common.



The area of modern development in Mill Leat

Close and Mill Leat Mews was considered for exclusion from the conservation area. It comprises a low-rise apartment block and a small development of terraced houses, mostly brick-built. This replaced a steam-powered corn mill and wharf. It is considered that to exclude this area would severely compromise the overall integrity of the conservation area, effectively separating the Station Road area from the canal and Mill Lane.

For the reason indicated above it is thus recommended that the boundary of the conservation area is not changed to exclude the Mill Leat Close and Mews development as this deletion would harm the integrity of the conservation area.

Dating to the second half of the nineteenth century, 6 and 8 Alder Lane are typical of the development of Parbold in this area and mark the edge of historic development within the core of the village along Alder Lane. Therefore these properties are of historical importance.

It is thus recommended that the boundary of the conservation area is changed to include 6 & 8 Alder Lane.

Article 4 Direction

There is currently no restriction on the ‘rights’ of property owners to carry out minor works to their properties within Mill Lane Conservation Area over and above those which normally exist in conservation areas. Owners can therefore undertake ‘permitted development’ alterations without the need to obtain planning permission.

An Article 4(2) Direction can be applied by the Council to an area to remove some of the ‘permitted development rights’ of owners where this would help preserve the special character and appearance of the conservation area. Only works to alter the fronts of domestic properties, which are viewed from a public highway or footpath would be covered and thereby require planning permission.

Some parts of Parbold are clearly vulnerable to incremental changes to properties and ‘home improvements’ to some of the cottages have resulted in the loss of traditional features resulting in an erosion in the character and appearance of the ‘streetscene’ over time. Problems are often exacerbated where properties are bought and sold and new residents are not fully aware of the importance of buildings or the area in general. A degree of minor uncontrolled change has therefore continued unabated over the last 30 years. An Article 4(2) Direction would cover domestic properties only and would be used to manage not stop changes to properties. Controls would be applied to works to:

- extend, enlarge or alter existing properties (this includes any form of extension or conservatory and works to alter or change windows/doors on the property)
- the erection of porches
- alterations to roofs
- the construction or laying down of hardstanding for vehicles
- the partial demolition of walls
- the erection of gates, fences or walls.

The Direction relates only to domestic properties and any minor work relating to business or non-residential properties should be considered against the normal test of whether they would materially affect the appearance of the building.

The loss of hedges is not controlled by this measure and relies on the sympathetic approach of owners.

After careful consideration the Council considers that the application of an Article 4(2) Direction within Mill Lane Conservation Area is an important 'tool' in restricting the permitted development rights of property owners and would result in the management of minor, uncontrolled development within the area to the benefit of the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is proposed that the Direction be applied to cover the whole of the conservation area boundary including the proposed new extension to the area.

Further Development in the Conservation Area

There has been pressure for new development in Parbold, most of which has been outside the conservation area. The conservation area covers a large part of Parbold village, which has been essentially fully developed, with very little open land being available except for an area between the railway line, houses on Station Road and the canal. The Bradshaw Lane area is surrounded by open countryside, which currently lies outside the settlement boundary and within the Green Belt. Whilst little pressure exists at present in the future there may be pressure for the sub-division of existing properties, which would increase housing density.

Open spaces within the historic core, and to the rear of properties, are a key feature of the rural character of the canal, and of the area around Bradshaw Lane. New development would have to be considered very carefully if it is not to compromise the character of the area.

Works to Trees in Conservation Areas

Most trees in Conservation Areas are subject to controls which exist to protect this special character. If a tree is not protected by a Preservation Order (TPO), but is within the conservation area, 6 weeks notice must be given in writing to the District Council of an intention to carry out works to trees (pruning or felling) or any root systems. This is often difficult to monitor on private land that covers such a large area. There are no existing Tree Preservation Orders in the conservation area.

The District's Tree Preservation Orders are currently being reviewed to highlight any changes to the existing Orders and to ensure adequate protection is afforded any important trees and woodland.

The Council is keen to promote good tree management within the conservation area and the Council's Arboricultural Officer offers advice to owners both indirectly through leaflets and directly with specialist advice.

Environmental Improvements in the Conservation Area

The Appraisal identifies several detracting features within the Conservation Area. Some of these

features, and the action required to remedy the situation, are set out below.

Detracting Features	Action Required	Implementation
The cumulative effect of minor alterations and extensions (inc. demolition to buildings, which affect the character and erode the special character and appearance of the area.	Better understanding of architectural designs and the wider conservation area and better control and enforcement where necessary,	The appraisal should become adopted by the Council as SPG and be used by Development Control.
Loss of the historic character.	Help and guidance to owners to help them make the best informed decisions relating to alterations.	Through advice from the Conservation Unit.
Loss of many traditional features to properties such as traditional styles of windows/doors.	Raising the awareness of the controls, which exist on listed buildings and in the conservation area.	Look at the current Article 4(2) Direction. Consider a grant scheme to promote the replacement of lost features.
Modern street lighting and highway street furniture.	Consider replacement with new columns/lanterns etc of an appropriate design.	Local authority partnership with LCC for replacement lights, subject to funding becoming available.
Untidy footpath surface treatments	Consider repair/replacement with appropriate materials	Through discussion and partnership with the Highway Authority (LCC).
Untidy appearance of the Stocks Tavern on the corner of Mill and Alder Lane.	Encourage the owners to adequately maintain the vacant building and its car park area. Encourage a new user.	Through discussions with owner.
Heavy Traffic on A5209 (Alder Lane)	Consider traffic calming/control measures	Through discussion and partnership with the Highway Authority (LCC).
Condition of canal side paths/car park/landscaping	Enhancement of public areas.	Encourage implementation via partnership scheme with British Waterways.
Poor condition/appearance of Graving Dock.	Produce enhancement scheme for sites reuse/ restoration and/or provision of visitor boards.	Encourage implementation via partnership scheme with British Waterways.
The poor / untidy appearance of the railings on the corner near to the Stocks Tavern	Consider repair/replacement with appropriate materials and design	Through discussion and partnership with the Highway Authority (LCC).

Summary

The Mill Lane Conservation Area is an area of architectural and historic interest, encompassing the traditional centre of Parbold, and representing a key area of industrial development from the early nineteenth century, provided by the canal and the railway.

The Appraisal has also identified two small areas, around the railway station and 6-8 Alder Lane, which should be added to the existing conservation area.

APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL EFFECTS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

By designating a conservation area the Council is confirming that it regards the area as a place where special care should be taken to maintain and improve its visual character. This means that change in a conservation area is subject to greater control than elsewhere, principally:

1. Special attention shall be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
2. Conservation Area Consent is required from the Council for the demolition (with some exceptions) of buildings and walls.
3. The Council must be given six weeks notice of any proposal to carry out any work to any tree within the area.
4. Permitted Development Rights (i.e. those building works which do not require planning permission) were removed in Mill Lane by the Council in 1977. The Article 4(1) Direction limits what work you can carry out, to your property, without first applying for planning permission. The restrictions relate to the following aspects of development within the conservation area:
 - the enlargement or extension of dwellings including the erection of detached buildings such as garages or stables within the curtilage of the property;
 - the cladding of the exterior with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles;
 - the erection of any new buildings such as garden sheds with a cubic content greater than 10 cubic metres;
 - the enlargement of the dwelling by adding to or altering its roof;
 - the erection of porches outside any external door of the property;
 - the construction or laying down of hardstanding for vehicles;
 - the provision of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure.

[The legislation relating to permitted Development Rights is complicated and could be subject to change. It is, therefore, advisable to check with the planning authority before carrying out any building works].

PRINCIPAL EFFECTS OF LISTED BUILDING CONTROL

The statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest is compiled by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and includes a wide variety of structures. Inclusion of a building on the list identifies that building as having special interest and brings any alterations to that building under planning control.

There is a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings because they represent a finite resource. Controls apply to the whole building, both internal and external and to all works which would affect a building's character. Works of basic maintenance are exempt from control - on a like for like basis, unless there is an element of alteration or rebuilding.

It is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised alterations to a listed building, so it is always best to consult with the Local Authority to determine whether consent for work to a building is required.

APPENDIX B

LANCASHIRE COUNTY SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORDS

The following features mentioned in the text are recorded as sites of archaeological interest on the Lancashire County Sites and Monuments Record:

Parbold Mill (PRN 822)
Signal Box (PRN 18636)
Railway Station (PRN 19184)
Graving dock (PRN 9442)

Proposals affecting the above sites may therefore meet with a comment from the Lancashire County Archaeology Service, but this will depend on the nature and extent of the proposals.