

**Taken from "Rural Conservation Character Assessments" (1995): Received from CWaC –
Conservation and Design Office 19th December 2013**

ASHTON: designated April 1979

1 Description

- 1.1 The form of Ashton has changed through considerable expansion over the years with residential development taking place outside the conservation area around the southern part of the village. This provides an inappropriate setting for the village as a whole but has limited visual impact from within the conservation area.
- 1.2 Within the conservation area there is a dramatic contrast between the southern and northern parts of the village. The southern part is enclosed with quite dense development; the pattern becoming more open as you move away from the centre of the village.
- 1.3 The northern part is open with little development and is essentially linear in form following Church Road out of the village towards the Church. Church Road is quite open with grass verges and hedges on either side. There has been some recent housing development along here behind the property close to the church and it is considered that no further development should be allowed.
- 1.4 The village is entered abruptly from the south where there is a sharp bend to the left in the road. This is the centre of the historic village and a definite point of entry into Ashton. Leading from here are West End to the west and Kelsall Road to the east and these are the key historic streets within the village.
- 1.5 West End is a tightly enclosed space of dense development with many historic buildings combining to give a fine townscape. Kelsall Road is less enclosed though new development has helped in addressing the balance, tightening the space. In contrast Duck Lane and Pentre Lane are quite open with a strong sense of their rural setting providing a pleasant and quality character.
- 1.6 There has been a variety of infill within the conservation area in the last thirty years. This has been of a relatively small scale and appropriately sited. However it relates poorly to the existing plan form of the village focusing around new closes. More recent infill has been given careful consideration helping to strengthen the sense of enclosure and addressed the routes in an appropriate manner.
- 1.7 Ashton Hall is a Grade II* listed building from the early 17th century and provides a fine feature on entering/leaving the village from the east. The approach from the west past a row of houses from the earlier part of this century is less notable, though the hedges and verges on the other side provide a definite rural feel.
- 1.8 The dominant building material is brick with slate roofs and timber window frames but many properties are rendered, particularly in West End. The overall building style is vernacular with some agricultural buildings within the village. There have been numerous conversions of properties into residential use and on the whole these have been successful, safeguarding the future of the buildings and providing activity within the village.

2 Enhancement Objectives

- 2.1 The traffic barrier around Corner house should be made less obtrusive through painting or screening.
- 2.2 The City Council's intention to plant trees in Pentre Lane to screen infill development and enhance the rural character should be implemented.
- 2.3 There still remain infill sites within the main body of the village and sensitive small scale development would help enhance the character of the area. The new housing development by the church is considered inappropriately located and no further development should take place in this area.
- 2.4 The placing of telecommunication and electricity wires underground would improve the visual quality of the conservation area and should be undertaken should the opportunity arise.