



CONSERVATION AREA

(STAFFS.C.C. 53)

WESTON
UNDER
LIZARD



STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SALOP COUNTY COUNCIL

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971

CONSERVATION AREA

(STAFFS.C.C.53)

WESTON UNDER LIZARD



PURPOSE OF DESIGNATION

The rapid changes now taking place in town and village, whilst giving practical benefits, also threaten many beautiful and historic areas with destruction or despoliation. Such areas, often unique in character due to rich variation in types of buildings, trees and open spaces, form an important part of the national heritage.

In the past, individual buildings of architectural or historic interest have been protected by legislation, whereas attractive groups of buildings, often of little individual value, and areas of character, beauty or historic importance have been mainly unprotected.

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, remedies the deficiency by enabling local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas those "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance."

Potential conservation areas exist in many towns and villages, varying in size from complete centres to groups of buildings. Although often centred on historic buildings, they may include features of archaeological importance, historic street patterns, village greens or areas of particular character.

The county has been strongly influenced by the effects of the Industrial Revolution and consequent growth of industry and population. The pressures resulting from this growth cause considerable problems in terms of visual environment, nevertheless many areas and settlements of good traditional character still remain in the towns, villages and country estates. Their preservation cannot be considered in isolation, without taking into account the natural growth and future needs of people, commerce and industry.

Conservation is the means by which existing character can be preserved and enhanced with due regard for other demands. Designation of the Conservation Area followed by detailed design proposals will form the basis for positive action, but ultimate success will depend on active public interest and support.

CONSERVATION AREA · WESTON-UNDER-LIZARD

The Conservation Area for Weston-under-Lizard embraces Weston Hall, the landscaped park and the estate village of Weston-under-Lizard. The area forms a part of the Earl of Bradford's estate which has, by conscientious management, been preserved and restored as a notable example of the great English estate.

Weston-under-Lizard is within easy access of the West Midlands conurbation, and both Weston Hall and the landscaped park are open to the public during the summer. The physical setting of the area is the rich agricultural lands of the Staffordshire-Shropshire border, where well-maintained woodlands and tree-stands provide the dominant elements. The estate village retains its character despite the disruption caused by the heavy volumes of through traffic.

Weston Hall and Park

Weston Hall is placed by the Department of the Environment in the highest grade of buildings of architectural and historic interest, (Grade I). The core of the present structure together with the church was built by Sir Thomas and Lady Wilbraham after 1671, the house occupying the site of a mediaeval manor house and the church retaining sections of the original mediaeval structure. Inevitably the house and estate, the home of successive generations of Wilbrahams, Newports and Bridgemans, has undergone change: a kitchen and office quarters have been added, a complete farm introduced and the main entrance to the house moved from the south front to the east wing.

The house is built of red brick with contrasting white stone dressings and consists of three 3-storey ranges, enclosing an open court on the north side. A balustraded parapet of light stone surrounds the flat roof from which rise a number of massive chimneys. Though the building is not a classic example of early Renaissance architecture, the overall visual impression is one where the severity sometimes associated with grand designs is replaced by a charm and

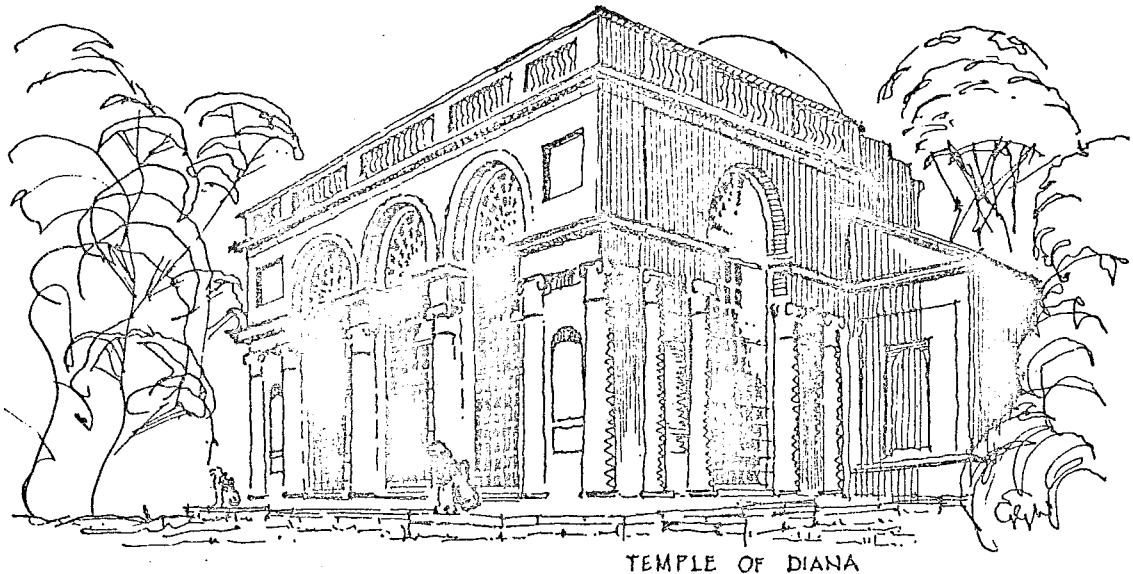


WESTON HALL.

individuality, the product of an evolutionary process of adaptation and modification.

The house is surrounded by a series of terraced gardens from which the parklands radiate east, south and west. The initiative for the beautification of the gardens and parklands may be attributed to Sir Henry Bridgeman (later the 1st Baron Bradford) in 1767. He commissioned 'Capability' Brown, the renowned landscape architect, to undertake the work, which the present generation has the advantage of seeing in its maturity. In design the park is an outstanding example of the pictorial landscape, characteristic of Brown's work, with the clever exploitation of the lie of the land, using woodlands to emphasise the heights and also to form enclosing belts. The development of the park, over time, has involved the creation of several large lakes, a comprehensive tree-planting scheme and ultimately the building of a tower on Tong Knoll at the south-eastern extremity in the county of Shropshire.

The picturesque form of the gardens and park provides the setting for two rare pieces of Georgian garden architecture, to the east of



TEMPLE OF DIANA

the house. Both structures, the Temple of Diana and the Roman Bridge, were designed by James Paine in 1770 and are also Grade I.

The Temple of Diana, set in the arcadian surroundings of the Temple Wood, is built in stone quarried in the park and contains behind lofty arched windows an orangery, tea room and a music room. The facade of the orangery, conditioned by a need for daylight, is a graceful composition with slender columns in the Ionic order.

The Roman Bridge, again built in local stone, spans the narrow eastern channel of Temple Pool and is flanked at either side by large monumental urns. The bridge in addition to being an attractive piece of architecture serves to create a subtle focal point for the tree-lined expanse of the pool.

Weston Hall, the gardens and the park are contained within a virtually continuous wall, mostly of stone and otherwise of red brick. The containment afforded by this barrier is emphasised by the numerous tree plantations that surround the grounds. The result is that the Hall is hidden from the view of the passer-by, the only indication of its existence being the heraldic gates and lodges sited at the entrances to the park and the wall itself.

Weston-under-Lizard Village

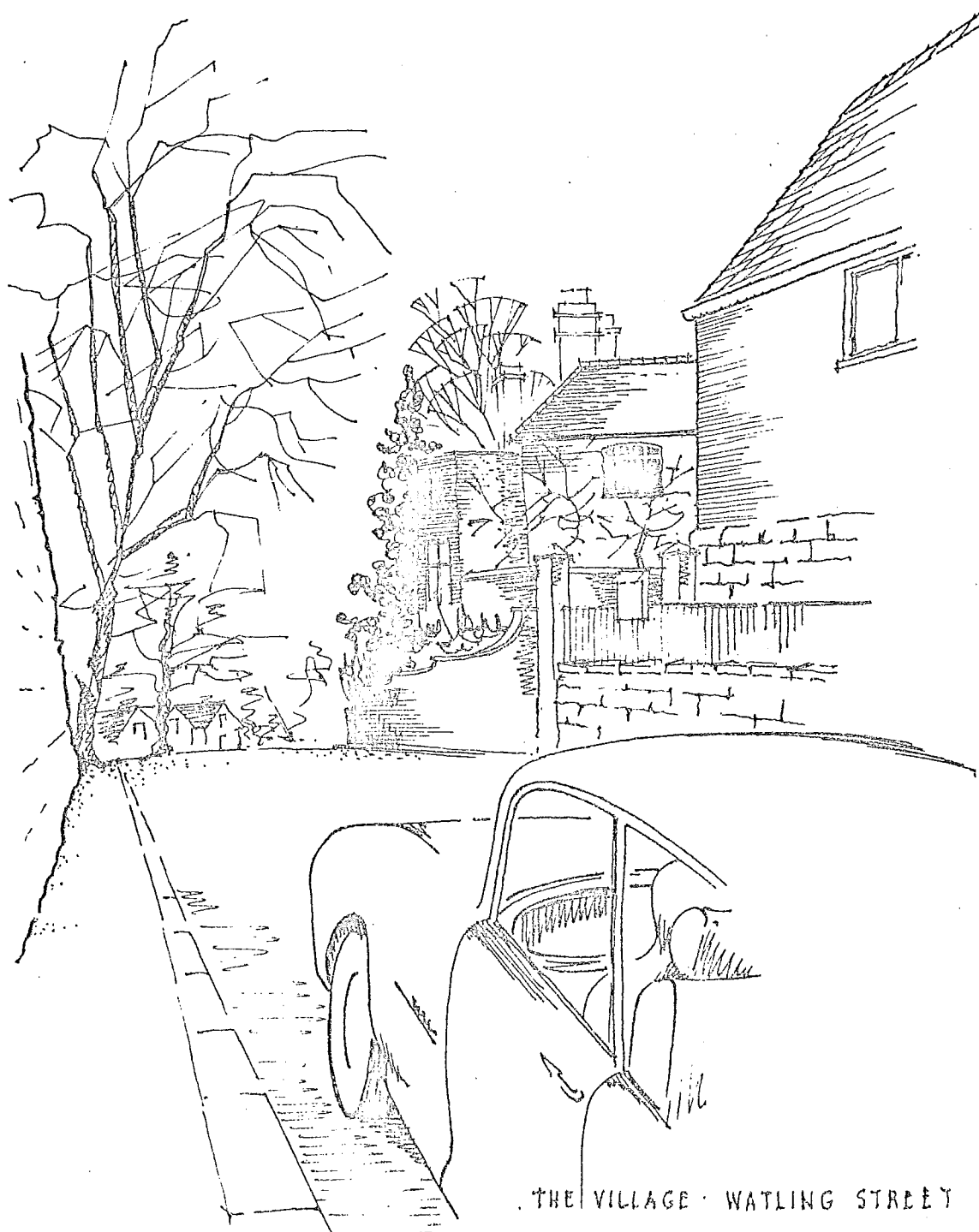
The estate village of Weston-under-Lizard lies to the north of Weston Hall separated only by the Town Pool and the kitchen garden. The settlement is linear in form with cottages located on either side of the A5 trunk road. The majority of the buildings are contained within a slight dip in the road with Weston Bank at the west end and the rise topped by Blymhill Lodge in the east. Due to this topographic feature all views are restricted and inward-looking.

The buildings within the village are predominantly red brick cottages with tiled roofs and are dispersed in small groups or singly along the length of the road. This element of dispersion is emphasised by the large number of trees, scattered throughout the settlement, and inter-penetrating between the building groups.

In a westerly direction along the A5 the effect is similar to that of passing through a tree corridor punctuated by buildings. This is emphasised by the 12 ft. high park wall on the south side of the road and by the wall and tree plantations that mask the Rectory from view on the north. On approaching what may be tentatively called the village centre, the small open area in front of the school, which contains a covered pump, affords a degree of visual contrast. On the incline to Weston Bank the small cottages to the north, and the cemetery with its lychgate and the almshouses to the south are again partially hidden behind a dense screen of trees. At the summit of Weston Bank the terraced red brick cottages, now the Bradford estate office, present the only fully visible frontage.

The village of Weston-under-Lizard has responded, over the years, to the increase in traffic along the A5 by the introduction of brick walls, substantial hedges and trees in order to reduce the disturbance. But what is basically wanted, if the character of Weston is to have full expression, is the complete removal of through traffic such as the construction of a by-pass might achieve.

The unity of the park within the containing wall, the comprehensive design and layout of the park and the co-ordinated management of the Earl of Bradford's estate, require that the area be treated as a single entity irrespective of administrative boundaries. To this end Staffordshire County Council and Shropshire County Council are co-ordinating their efforts to promote the preservation and enhancement of this Conservation Area.

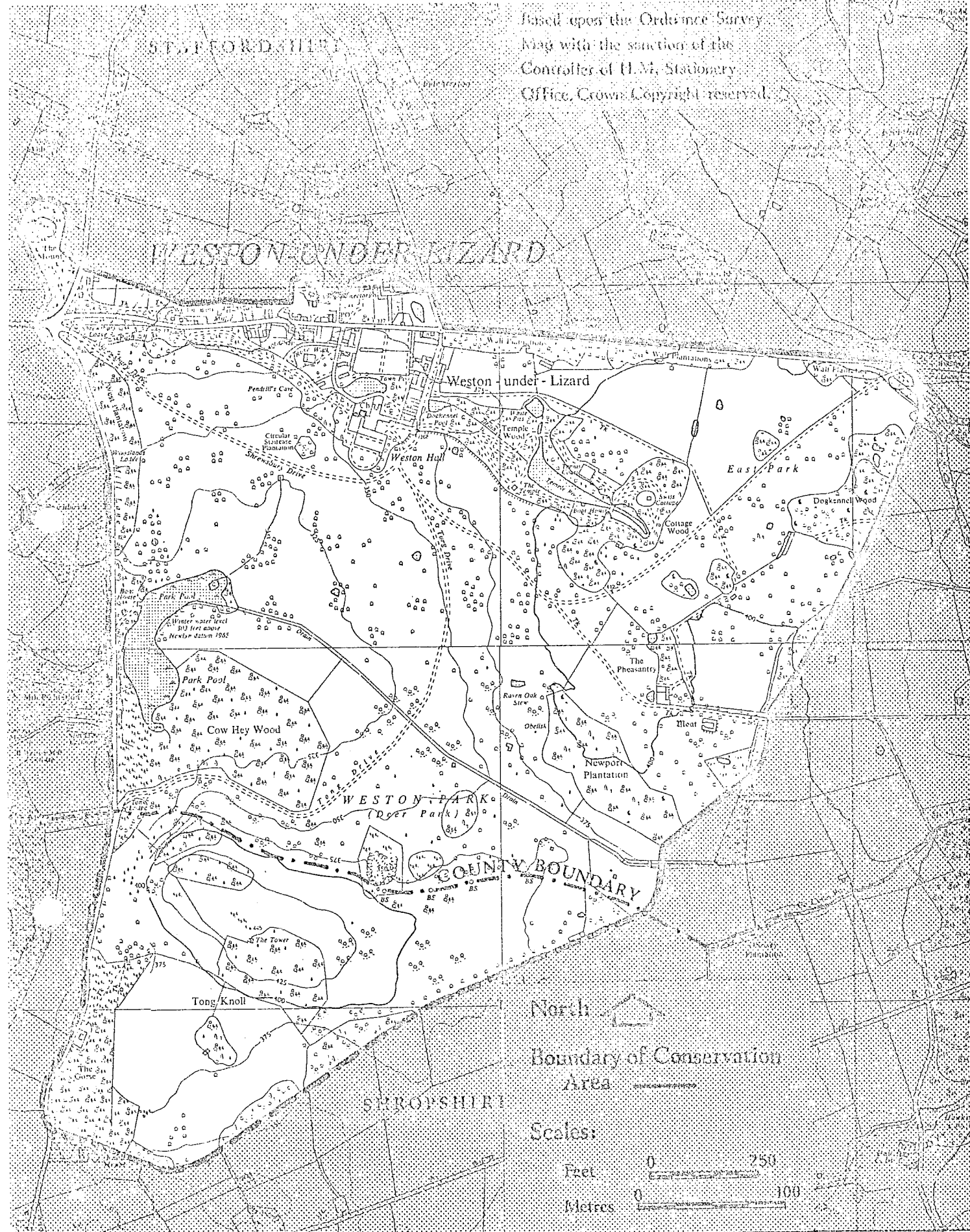


THE VILLAGE - WATLING STREET

STAFFORDSHIRE

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WESTON-UNDER-LIZARD



CONSERVATION AREA * WESTON-UNDER-LIZARD CCR/4/400/C



WESTON · under · LIZARD - WESTON PARK



Abstract

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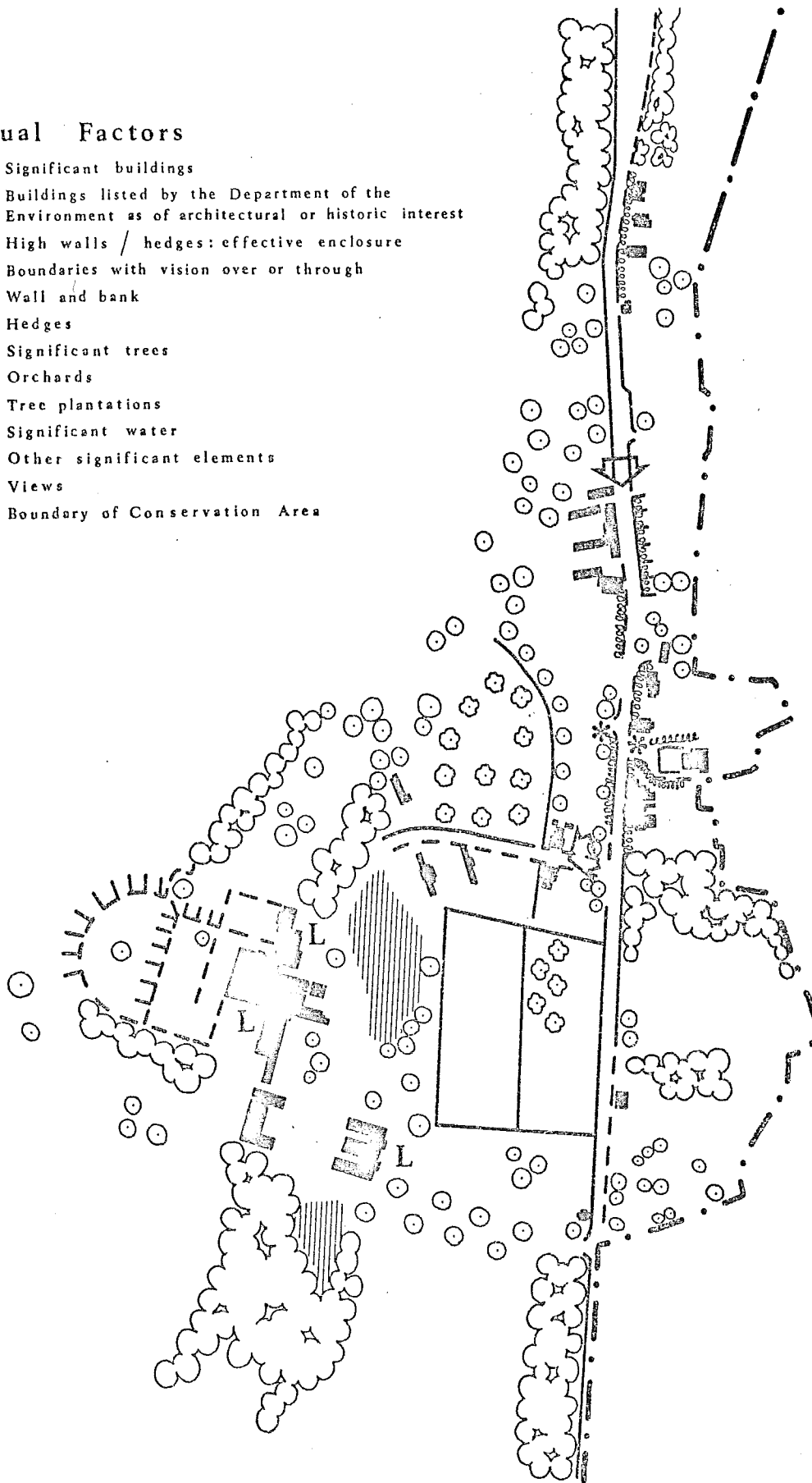


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WESTON - UNDER - LIZARD

Visual Factors

-  Significant buildings
-  Buildings listed by the Department of the Environment as of architectural or historic interest
-  High walls / hedges: effective enclosure
-  Boundaries with vision over or through
-  Wall and bank
-  Hedges
-  Significant trees
-  Orchards
-  Tree plantations
-  Significant water
-  Other significant elements
-  Views
-  Boundary of Conservation Area



VISUAL ANALYSIS

FUTURE ACTION

The Conservation Area has been carefully considered by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the District Council and local amenity bodies.

A specific responsibility is placed upon the Local Planning Authority and the Minister to take account of the character of the Conservation Area when exercising their planning duties and grant-giving powers. Development proposals affecting such areas may also be advertised and account taken of representations received in determining each case.

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, makes it clear however that designation of a conservation area is only a prelude to action for preserving and enhancing its character and appearance. The present document is concerned with the reasons for designation. It analyses and defines the basic qualities of the particular features and groups of buildings which it is considered make a significant contribution to the character of the Area. Further reports will set out detailed policies and plans for the Area including recommendations to developers on types of development, on design and on materials considered suitable. The policies may include requirements for detailed information on particular classes of applications, advertisement of applications and proposals for retention of important buildings.

It may be necessary to prepare detailed proposals for improving the appearance of the Area by action such as reduction of traffic congestion, screening of particular features and provision of alternative outlets for undesirable development.

It is hoped that improvement and enhancement of conservation areas will not be completely dependent upon long-term proposals, or restricted by the uncertainties of individual development. Much can be achieved in the immediate future by collective action in street re-decoration, removal of untidy signs and advertisements and planting of trees. Public participation is essential to attract local interest and to support voluntary action by amenity bodies in restoring and improving the beautiful parts of environment.