

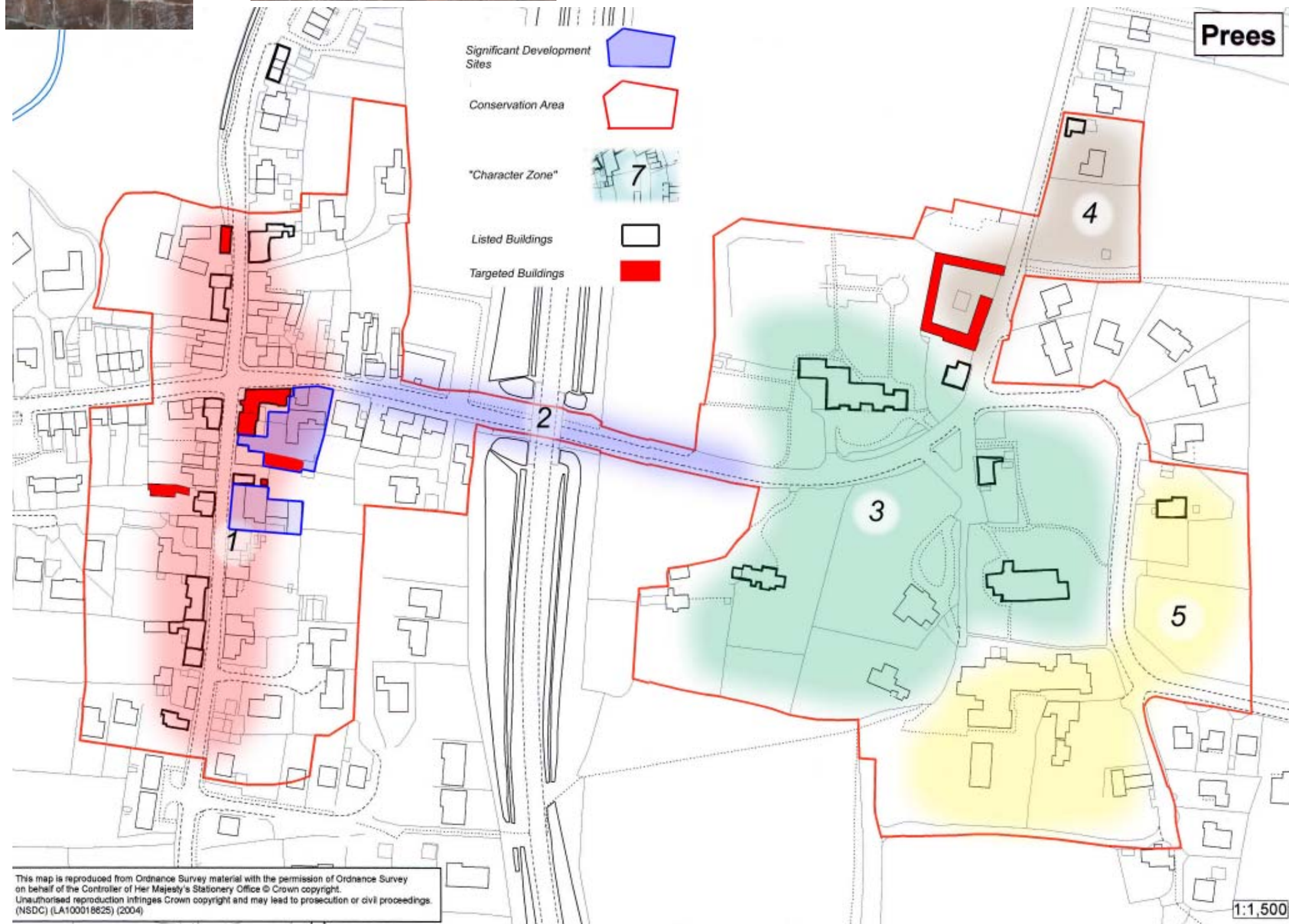
PREES CONSERVATION AREA - SUMMARY CHARACTER APPRAISAL



Population: 2,688 (including outlying villages nearby)

Origins and development of settlement

The village is divided into two almost symmetrical parts. The oldest part of the settlement lies to the E of the A49 and occupies an elevated site on the Roman road between Wroxeter and Chester. In 1754 the road between Shrewsbury and Chester (now A49) was built just W of Prees along with a large number of coaching inns to provide fresh horses. With the coming of this road Prees developed into an important commercial centre. The focus of the village shifted further W with the construction of the Crewe to Shrewsbury railway line in 1858. Prees station was built 1½ miles outside the village because the Sandford family would not allow the railway to cross their shooting grounds. This led to development W along Mill Street. The A49 by-pass, which bisects the village, has led to a significant reduction in traffic and improvement in the environmental quality of the W sector of the village.



Areas of distinctive character

Area 1: Whitchurch Road, Shrewsbury Street - Main street (formerly A49) flanked by variety of brick, rendered and timber frame buildings with slate and tile roofs. Predominantly 2-storey houses, some with inserted shopfronts. Density of development increases towards centre of village, good sense of place. Mix of commercial, residential and light industrial (motor repairs) contribute to urban character. Pressures for residential development on garage site will have impact on this area. Prees Square (listed II) in the village centre in very poor repair. Sensitive development of this and adjoining site required enhance character of conservation area. Good examples of unaltered vernacular buildings towards periphery. An Article 4 direction applies to this area.

Area 2: Church Street - Straight Road connecting lower (W) and upper (E) parts of village. Leading from the village centre initially flanked by 2 storey buildings its urban character very quickly falls away and it becomes a place of transition enclosed by high hedges and embankments, oversailed by trees and the road bridge. The by-pass embankment eclipses any view of the upper part of the village. After passing under the bridge the Church Street curves to reveal:

Area 3: Church and environs - Strongly rural character in complete contrast to Area 1. Scattered brick and timber-framed dwellings, some large and in spacious grounds including Prees Hall and Vicarage. Sandstone church and churchyard set back. Very green with large trees and grassy areas and war memorial. Atmosphere of quiet gentility.

Area 4: Moreton Street - Buildings associated with the Hall and Old Hall – redundant farm buildings, water tower etc. Strongly agricultural in character, although pressures for residential conversion of redundant farm buildings may impact on this area.

Area 5: Pinfold / Lacon Street - Large houses with spacious grounds and village school. An integral part of the 'old village' but less distinctive in character than Area 3 to which it provides a backdrop.

Traditional building materials

Predominantly orange/red brick, rendering, timberframe (black and white) and some sandstone ashlar. Clay tiles and slate roofs. Good survival of traditional timber windows, doors and shopfronts.

