



Donald Insall Associates
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Meols Drive Conservation Area

Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

For Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council



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Preface

The built heritage of Hoylake and West Kirby are precious resources that, together with the stunning coastal landscapes, attract in tourists and visitors to support the local economy. The settlements are unique in being laid out around the famous Royal Liverpool golf course which exemplifies the leisure boom of the late Victorian era. The resulting pattern of development is not only of international importance but a huge sources of civic and community pride.

It has been more than twenty years since the initial Appraisals of the Hoylake and West Kirby Conservation Areas and these new draft Appraisals are vital in understanding how the precious built heritage of our communities has fared since those original Appraisals and how threats to their special interest can be addressed. This work enables us to see clearly where there has been an erosion of the special interest of the areas and provides a basis for planning policies and management initiatives to tackle the issues that have been identified. These include the need to protect the wealth of historic buildings beyond the current boundaries of the Conservation Areas, which currently do not benefit from any heritage designations.

The new Appraisals provide a level of detail we have never had before, with a building-by-building analysis that will provide a firm evidence base for understanding what makes our places unique and a benchmark to evaluate proposed changes. They also include for the first time a broader townscape analysis so that we have a proper understanding of how the places are experienced and what opportunities there are for better design through new public realm and development. We are also delighted that for the first time there are Management Plans being prepared that build upon the Appraisals and set out opportunities to improve the character, quality and significance of the Conservation Areas.

We welcome this work as a shared understanding of the expanded Conservation Areas and a new impetus to work on ways to preserve and enhance them.

Executive Summary

Meols Drive, connecting the urban areas of Hoylake and West Kirby, developed from the late 19th and early 20th centuries as an affluent suburban area. It brings together a built form of fine residential dwellings, predominantly designed with individualistic Arts and Crafts aesthetics, set into spacious and mature plots and an exceptional landscape character defined by the Royal Liverpool Golf Course and the coastline at the tip of the Wirral Peninsula.

Despite retaining much of this spatial and architectural character, the area is victim to a cumulative loss of detail, including windows, roofing and boundary walls as well as significant development pressure, the latter through the loss and replacement, or conversion, of earlier dwellings, resulting in the intensification of historically spacious plots. These changes fundamentally impact not only the design and detail of the built form but the very pattern of the area, which is derived from its historic purpose of providing relief from the dense urban and industrialised environments of Birkenhead and Liverpool.

The objective of this document is to identify those elements of the conservation area that contribute to its significance, and which still reflect the original design principles, and then to highlight the opportunities for this special character to be reinforced and reinstated. It will provide the guidance necessary to promote heritage-led development, thereby ensuring that all proposals for change are underpinned by an understanding of what is significant about the conservation area.

To achieve this the document comprises two elements:

- **The Appraisal**, which provides an understanding of the significance of the conservation area, its character and appearance, and the threats and opportunities that it faces;
- **The Management Plan**, which provides principles and recommendations; introduces basic design guidance that seeks to manage change in a sensitive manner and raise the quality of the urban environment.

Associated with this document is a Gazetteer that provides further detail on individual buildings, including key features, areas of loss or alteration, and significance as part of the conservation area. This document is fundamental to the conservation area's management and must be consulted along with this Appraisal and Management Plan.

1 Introduction

2 Significance

3 Historic Development

4 Character Assessment

5 Setting

6 Issues and Opportunities

7 Boundary Revisions

8 Management Plan

1 Introduction

1.1 Location

This Appraisal and Management Plan covers the **Meols Drive Conservation Area**, which is situated to the northwest corner of the Wirral peninsula [Plate 1.1]. The area connects the small urban centres of Hoylake (to the north, facing the Irish Sea), and West Kirby (to the south overlooking the Dee Estuary). These historic commuter settlements were developed to serve Liverpool and Birkenhead, mimicking the wider development pattern of west Wirral, which is predominantly rural in character with a small string of coastal settlements connected by rail. The area dates principally to the late 19th and early 20th centuries and brings together residential streets around the urban spine of Meols Drive, the Royal Liverpool Golf course, and the coastline to form an affluent historic suburban townscape of exceptional architectural and landscape character. This is enhanced by the area's position within a wider setting incorporating both the urban centres to its north and south, open countryside to the east, largely flat though rising and culminating at Caldy Hill to the southeast, and the coastline to its west and north, with panoramic views across the Irish Sea to Hibre Islands and the Welsh Coast.

1.2 Policy Context

Conservation areas are '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*', recognised for their distinctive townscape including their buildings, streets, and public realm. They are designated heritage assets and any proposals for change or development must assess the effect that development might have on the '*character and appearance*' of the area. The Meols Drive Conservation Area was first designated in 2004, with an Appraisal produced by Donald Insall Associates at that time.

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local authorities to review the character and boundaries of its conservation areas periodically. In this context, the present document has been commissioned by Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC), in collaboration with local resident groups, to provide an updated appraisal of the area and a robust plan for its constructive longer-term management.

Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that '*when considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest*'. The Appraisal has carefully considered whether there are any further opportunities to extend the boundary of the conservation area since its designation. It also highlights buildings and spaces that are considered to make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and those which detract.

The report has been developed in the context of significant changes in policy currently being brought forward within the emerging Wirral Local Plan 2021-2037, an update to the Hoylake Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2020, and preparation of supporting documents for Hoylake including a masterplan and design code. These documents will include key policy drivers underpinned by strategic aims (such as securing the effective use of land) and outline area-specific development priorities that have the potential to draw key benefits that could facilitate the area's longer-term growth if undertaken in a manner consistent with its conservation. This document coincides with a gazetteer that provides analysis of individual buildings, including their character and significance, that has helped shape understanding of the area's character and identified priorities for its management.

Meols Drive Boundaries



1.1 Conservation Area Boundaries

1.3 Aims

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides WMBC with up-to-date evidence for the Meols Drive Conservation Area, and will:

- Help people understand the significance of the conservation area;
- Suggest opportunities to enhance the area's character and appearance;
- Stimulate local interest in the protection and considered development of the area for present and future generations;
- Help address the challenges facing the area;
- Encourage the conservation, repair, reuse and management of the area's historic features;
- Aid residents and developers in their planning of both small alterations and larger scale developments;
- Provide officers with area specific guidance to help in their appraisal and determination of planning applications;
- Promote high-quality design in development proposals.
- Provide WMBC with an up to date, evidence-based appraisal and management plan for the designated conservation area of Meols Drive.

1.4 Interactive Format

This document has been designed to serve as a practical guide for the present and future care of the conservation area. The digital version features interactive navigable elements that enhance its range and ease of uses. These include:

- Front cover links, which navigate directly to the Appraisal and Management Plan sections as required;
- A contents page with headings that directly link to the different sections within the Appraisal and Management Plan;
- Navigable headings at page corners, including one which returns users to the contents page.



2 Significance



2 Significance

2.1 Special Interest, Character, and Appearance

The Meols Drive Conservation Area draws its principal interest as an affluent residential suburb developed between the late 19th and early 20th centuries (c.1890s-1930s), providing the middle classes with a healthy escape from the commercial centres of Birkenhead and Liverpool. This special interest is formed from the dynamic relationship between its primary constituent elements, which include:

- The suburban residential built form and street pattern of Meols Drive and adjoining streets, with a range of large properties and plots influenced by Vernacular Revival and Arts and Crafts architectural styles.
- Institutional and commercial building clusters at the gateways to adjoining urban areas, of architectural interest in themselves and providing critical legibility to the transition between urban and suburban areas.
- The Royal Liverpool Golf Course, of historic interest to the development of the area and the game more widely, and a key landscape feature.

The coastline to the north and west, including part of Red Rocks Nature Reserve, a critical landscape backdrop.

This special interest is legible in the area's character and appearance, which include:

- **Design variety:** the area's buildings are individual and bespoke in their design execution. This is most evident with the larger set pieces on Meols Drive

but continues onto the smaller streets with subtle variety and nuances in design.

- **Visual cohesion:** whilst eclectic in their execution, the area has an overarching influence from the Vernacular Revival and Arts and Crafts movements, which leads to repeated detailing, articulation, and materiality, reinforced by a shared domestic scale and siting along the street pattern.
- **Spatial quality:** as an affluent historic suburb, this area has a green quality that is a key characteristic. This is evident at plot, street and area level and includes, for example, its coastal and rural backdrop, the relationship between built and landscaped form across the streetscape, the siting of buildings, and gaps between buildings. It also extends to the integrity of mature landscaping to the public realm and to the private front and rear gardens as appreciable over low boundary walls.
- **Spatial hierarchy:** the historic pattern of growth has resulted in larger-scale detached properties and plots along Meols Drive, many historically with a lower direct visual relationship with the street due to their front gardens and mature landscaping, and more modest detached, semi-detached, and terraced dwellings to the adjoining streets, which have a greater presence to their street frontage. This results in a legible street hierarchy reflecting the area's primary 19th and early 20th century phases of growth.
- **Land uses:** the distribution of uses across the area reinforces its suburban and affluent character, with residential uses focused along Meols Drive and adjoining streets and more public uses clustered at the key gateways with the surrounding urban areas of Hoylake and West Kirby.



2.2 Setting

Setting contributes significantly to the conservation area. It is vital both in articulating the area's historic growth and in creating its contemporary character and appearance. Setting contributes to the conservation area by:

- Placing it within the Wirral peninsula's wider historic pattern of development.
- Emphasising its distinct residential character, which is in contrast to the adjoining urban centres.
- Reinforcing key drivers of its growth as an affluent suburb, such as its proximity to the coast.

These elements are manifest in:

- **The development pattern:** specifically, the meeting between the residential spine of Meols Drive and the urban areas of West Kirby and Hoylake, and the continuation into residential streets of the King's Gap Conservation Area, which reinforce its residential character. The Royal Liverpool Golf Course also defines this development pattern and forms a key landscape feature that provides a dramatic setting and views to much of the residential development.
- **The landscape backdrop:** provided by the coast to the north and west, with wider views to the Welsh hills, and the former municipal golf course and other sports facilities, which create open landscape to the east. This articulates its growth as an affluent suburban area in proximity to the clean air of the coast and countryside. These spaces, designated as Green Belt, ensure the continued separation of the settlements.

2.3 Issues

Whilst remaining a unique townscape of high architectural and landscaped quality, the area has been threatened by intense development pressure, particularly adjoining the golf course and coast. This has led to the loss or significant alteration of earlier dwellings and the intensification of plots with either new-build housing or ill-considered conversions that have begun to erode the architectural and spatial qualities of the area; the generous size of the family homes that comprise the majority of the conservation area puts them at substantial continued risk of subdivision or replacement with apartment blocks.

Across the area, furthermore, there has been a major ad hoc loss of traditional detailing such as timber windows, clay or slate roofing material, chimneypots, and, most notably, of brick and stone boundary walls (often replaced with close board fencing).



2.1 Hoylake Rail Station



2.2 Christian Science Church, The King's Gap

3 Historic Development



Golf Club.

Noylake.

1 Introduction

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3 Historic Development

3.1 Early History

Up until c.1700 the area now known as Hoylake was principally used as an embarkation point, with William III boarding his ship from there to Ireland, travelling down the road now known as Kings Gap. From the 18th century its use as an anchorage began to decline as the River Dee became difficult to navigate and Liverpool grew and prospered. A number of small scattered fishing and farming communities existed within the area, including the townships of Hoose and Little Meols.

3.2 A 'Resort'

Hoylake's second fame came as a health resort as the medical profession began to advise of the health benefits of sea bathing. In 1792, landowner Sir John Stanley built the Royal Hotel to accommodate these visitors. The area's recreational use was further reinforced by the laying out of a racecourse which existed from 1840-1876 on open land south of the present location of Stanley Road **[Plate 3.1]**. Towards the end of this period the first 9-hole golf course was established, situated next to the racecourse. With the ending of horseracing, the golf course quickly expanded with the first Amateur Championship being played in 1885.



3.1 1871 Map

3.3 The Advent of the Railway

Perhaps the greatest event critical to Hoylake's future growth was the passing of an act in 1863 that brought about the extension of a railway from Birkenhead to the new terminus in Hoylake. The further extension to West Kirby was opened in 1878. In 1888 connection was made to the new railway under the Mersey to Liverpool, linking the area with one of the country's most important ports and commercial centres. These rail links were the impetus for the rapid expansion of both Hoylake and West Kirby as late Victorian suburbs, Hoylake growing to absorb the two nearby 'townships' of Hoose and Little Meols.

3.4 A Late Victorian and Early 20th Century Suburb

Following the advent of the railway the population of Hoylake and West Kirby grew from 3,722 in 1881 to 14,009 in 1911. During this period the area gained much of the character for which it is now known. Meols Drive, which began to be developed with housing in the 1890s, linked the two townships. Generally, the first development consisted of large villas backing onto the golf course with slightly smaller detached, semi-detached, or terraced houses built on the eastern side of Meols Drive towards Hoylake Station **[Plates 3.2-3.3]**.

To support this population and the area's growing reputation as a health resort, public and service buildings were also erected. These included a children's convalescent home (now West Kirby School), the now

demolished Leas School, St Andrews Church, and Hoylake Chapel, as well as council offices (later the Town Hall), shops, banks, and fire station **[Plate 3.4]**. Some of this work was prompted by the West Kirby and Hoylake Urban District, formed in 1894, and for which the council offices were constructed. Houses continued to be built into the early 20th century. The area very quickly became a fashionable suburb, with the latest styles of housing for wealthy people wishing to escape the bustling and polluted urban areas of Liverpool and Birkenhead in favour of a healthier lifestyle and quality of life **[Plates 2.5-2.6]**.

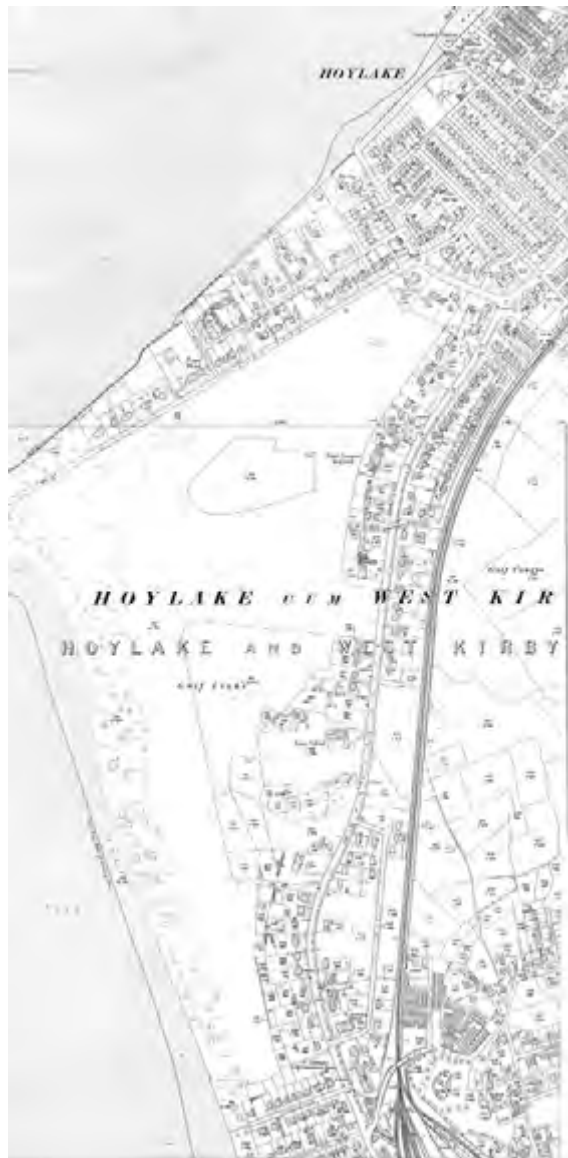
In its building styles, the late Victorian villas were characterised by the 'Cheshire style' of timber framing, red brick, and terracotta often used by John Douglas, a prominent local architect who designed many of Chester's most famous buildings. The firm Douglas and Minshull may have designed some of the houses on Meols Drive as their work can be seen in both Hoylake Chapel and St Andrews Church. During the years between 1900 and 1910 there was then a gradual move towards an Arts and Crafts aesthetic. Many of the houses of this period are reminiscent of houses seen in the Garden Cities and suburbs of Letchworth and Hampstead laid out a few years previously, inspired by the ideal of returning to methods of traditional craftsmanship.

Accompanying the houses being built around 1910 was the West Kirby Grammar School for Girls on Graham Road in 1912. Most of the housing on Eddisbury Road came slightly later, predominantly built between the

First and Second World Wars. These were characterised by a return to greater symmetry, simplified detailing, and browner shades of building materials. The rebuilt Hoylake Station (c.1938) is, however, of distinctive character and is very contemporary for its period adopting the style of the 'modern movement'.



3.2 1899 Map



3.3 1909 Map



3.4 Children's Convalescent Home, now West Kirby School, in the early years following its construction



3.5 1927 Map



3.6 1935 Map

3.5 Later 20th Century Developments

After the Second World War no large-scale development took place in the area for some twenty years. The 1970s then saw the demolition of the Royal Hotel and its replacement with housing. Recent decades have also brought the loss of some of the large buildings on the west side of Meols Drive, adjoining the golf course, as their extensive grounds have become more valuable for higher density housing developments.

3.6 The Royal Liverpool Golf Course

The Royal Liverpool Golf Club is the second oldest in England (following the Royal North Devon, a few years its senior) with royal links established in 1871 and the present club house opened in 1894. The club was instrumental in establishing the game of golf in England and for many years shared equal status with St Andrews. The course is of international acclaim amongst golfers and attracts visitors from all over the world whilst the club remains one of the finest and most prestigious in the country. It has achieved world status by hosting, throughout its long history, the Open Championship (most recently in 2023) and the Amateur Championship, many times. The course is of particular interest in that it has kept various features from both the natural landscape and the earlier uses of the land. A continuous low mound around the practice ground marks the location of part of the old racetrack and many of the holes in the southern end on the course utilise the form of the sand dunes.

The phasing of the area's principal buildings is shown in the accompanying image **[Plate 3.7]**.

Meols Drive
Phasing



3.7 Phasing Plan

3.7 Now and Then

The following now and then images show the development of the Meols Drive Conservation Area over time. Many of the properties survive today, as visible on Drummond Road and at key set pieces including West Kirby School, the United Reformed Church and the golf club, although there have been key losses of detailing (such as chimneystacks on Drummond Road). However, whilst The Quadrant remains, the larger properties at the north end Meols Drive, as visible in the early 20th century postcard, have been replaced. This is symptomatic of the area, where many properties remain, but have been altered, and others have been lost through intense development pressure.

- **[Plates 3.8 and 3.9]** Royal Liverpool Golf Clubhouse
- **[Plates 3.10 and 3.11]** Children's Convalescent Home (West Kirby School)
- **[Plates 3.12 and 3.13]** Drummond Road
- **[Plates 3.14 and 3.15]** Market Street
- **[Plates 3.16 and 3.17]** West Kirby URC



3.8 The Clubhouse (then)



3.9 The Clubhouse (now)



3.10 Children's Convalescent Home, Meols Drive (Then)



3.11 Children's Convalescent Home (now West Kirby School)



3.12 Drummond Road (Then)



3.13 Drummond Road (Now)



3.14 Market Street view to Meols Drive (Then)



3.15 Market Street (Now)



3.16 West Kirby URC (Then)



3.17 West Kirby URC (Now)

4 Character Assessment



4 Character Assessment

4.1 Summary¹

The Meols Drive Conservation Area is residential and suburban at heart. It brings the large dwellings and spacious mature plots of Meols Drive together with the more modest adjoining streets, enhanced by a cluster of institutional buildings to the south and commercial and civic buildings to the north, developed to support the burgeoning suburb and providing transition to the surrounding urban areas of Hoylake and West Kirby. Its characteristics are further defined by the significant open landscape of the golf course and the coastline. The predominant architectural styles in the area are derived from Vernacular Revival and Arts and Crafts movements but the varied execution of design lends the area at once a sense of cohesion through materials, scale, and siting and an exciting, dynamic, architectural eclecticism. These forms are enhanced by the sense of spaciousness across the area, which is created by its landscaped backdrop, townscape gaps, and a common scale of generally two to two and a half storeys. Low boundary walls of stone or brick place emphasis on the mature landscaping within plots and enable filtered views to the architectural form behind, the effect further reinforced by street trees, which give the area a leafy verdant character.

¹ Section 7 of this appraisal identifies agreed boundary revisions.

4.2 Character Areas

The area is split into distinct, but fluid and interrelated, character areas **[Plate 4.2.1]**. At the centre is **Meols Drive and its surrounding residential streets (Stanley Road**, and the northern coastline, is discussed separately in light of its location). Coinciding with this central residential belt are **gateways to the urban centres of Hoylake to the north**, situated around The Quadrant and Market Street, and to **West Kirby to the south**, as Meols Drive meets Bridge Street; here there is a shift from residential to a mixture of institutional, commercial, and religious buildings that are not only critical pieces of townscape in their own right but also provide an important transition to the urban centres. Adjoining the residential core to the west is the **Royal Liverpool Golf Course and west coastline**, which are fundamental parts of the area's historic evolution and features of cultural importance and local distinctness in their own right. These natural and man-made landscapes also provide a contrasting environment that brings its own experiential qualities whilst bringing relief in the townscape within which its built form can be appreciated.

The analysis maps which correspond to each character area highlight the position of historic street furniture, public realm, key views, panoramas and the contribution of each building to the conservation area. Landmark buildings are marked in blue and are those which are noted to be especially prominent within the townscape, with their height, prominence within views, exceptional architectural quality and/or historic value ensuring that they form visual anchors within the conservation area.

Meols Drive
Character Areas



4.2.1 Character Areas Map

4.3 Character Area A: Meols Drive and Adjoining Streets²

At the heart of the area is the residential spine of Meols Drive **[Plate 4.3.1]**. Here, large, detached dwellings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries are set back within deep mature plots, illustrating the area's growth as an affluent suburb during this period. This is complemented by the adjoining streets which, whilst characteristically more modest, add to the area's sense of affluence, peaceful seclusion, and green character with their well-appointed dwellings.

4.3.1 Evolution

Meols Drive itself was extant by 1871 but with only isolated and sparse built form. This was primarily developed from the late 19th century with the earliest development to the north, close to the station, and other pockets to the south **[Plate 4.3.2]**. Development continued into the first decade of the 20th century, with further isolated development in the interwar period up until approximately 1935.

The development of Meols Drive was tied closely to that of the adjoining streets. Airlie and Drummond Road were laid out between 1871 and 1899, contemporary with the first major phase of development on Meols Drive. They were followed by Graham Road, laid between 1899 and 1909 with some initial development, later finished by 1926, and

² The boundaries of the character area have been altered here from those used in the 2004 appraisal. In recognition of its residential character, it includes residential built form included within the West Kirby gateway area on Graham Road in 2004.

Withington and Eddisbury Roads, which were laid out and developed between 1909 and 1926, with some additions up to 1935. Further south, the eastern half of Lingdale Road was laid out in the late 19th century, again contemporary with the earliest main phase of development on Meols Drive, with the rest laid out and developed by 1909.

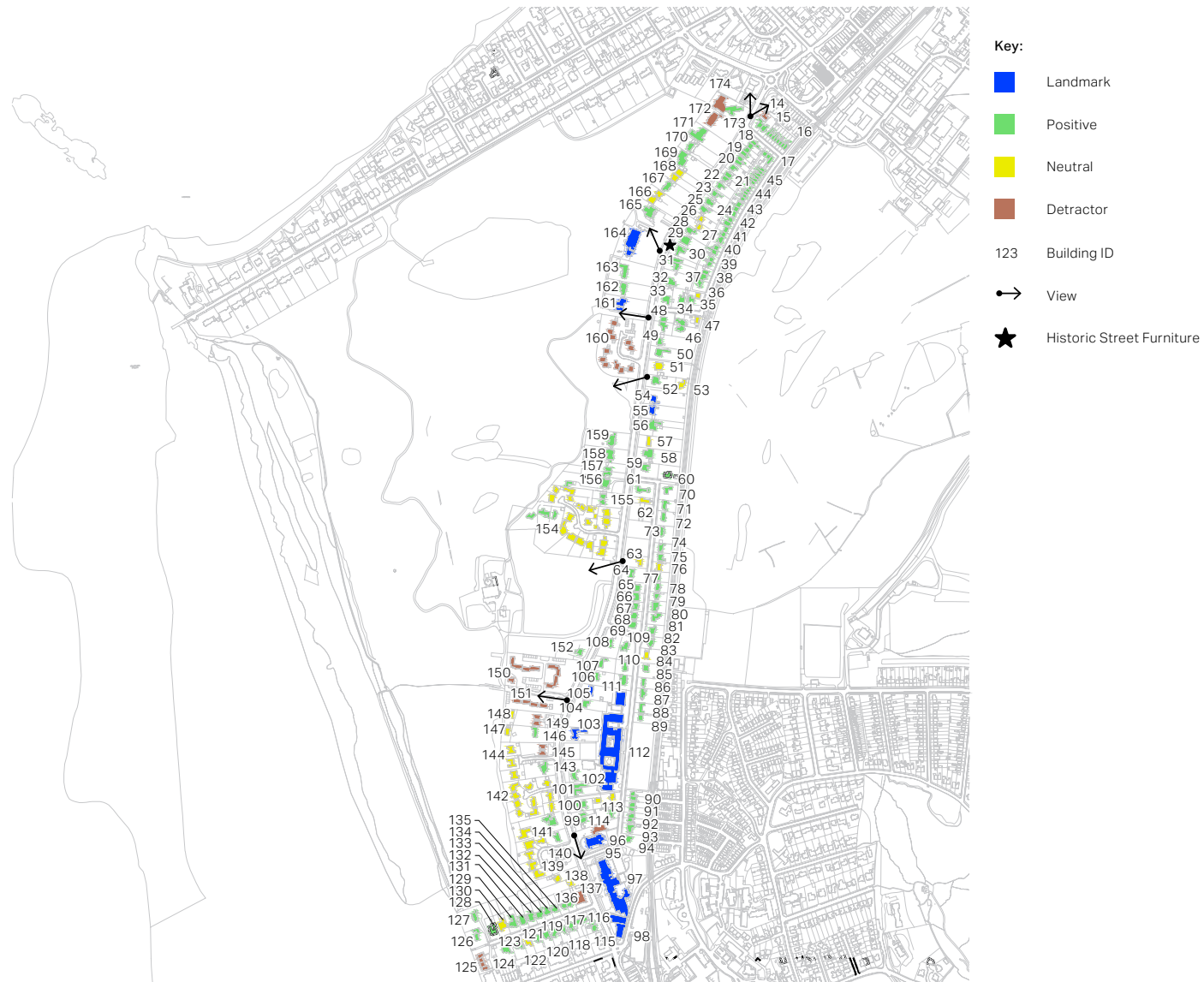
Whilst many of these earlier properties are retained, particularly to east side of Meols Drive and to the adjoining streets, there has been significant loss and redevelopment, concentrated to the southwest half of Meols Drive, adjoining the golf course. This includes the conversion or replacement of dwellings and the intensification of and amalgamation of formerly detached plots to create cul-de-sacs at Barn Hey, Leas Park, Pinfold Lane, Bramerton Court, West Lodge Drive and Roseacre.



4.3.2 Meols Drive, 1894, with the Conservative Club to the left, looking north

Meols Drive

Character Area A



4.3.1 Meols Drive and Adjoining Streets. Boundaries and Townscape Analysis

4.3.2 Meols Drive

Meols Drive is a very long, linear street, and consequently there is significant variety in character along its length.

North

The northern part of the street dates to the earliest major phase of development in the late 19th century and was historically denser to the east side of the street with larger plots to the west adjoining the golf course. Properties here have a greater visual presence in the street scene. Of particular prominence is the Royal Liverpool Golf Course clubhouse, an important local landmark **[Plate 4.3.3]**. This building's contribution to the legibility of the area's historic development as well as its continued architectural quality is paramount, and it is a non-designated heritage asset. Bound by a brick boundary wall with stone dressings to the piers, and next to a Victorian post-box, the building exhibits a mixture of Arts and Crafts and Queen Anne revival architectural detailing. It occupies a wide plot, signifying its distinctive use in the area, and the gaps between this and the adjoining buildings allow key views out to the golf course and streetscapes beyond. It also forms a group with the adjoining Conservative Club, an interesting Arts and Crafts building of red brick, render and timber framing studwork with a prominent corner turret, stone transom mullioned windows and tall brick chimneystacks.

Many of the historic properties remain to the west side of the street, with a mixture of red brick and render, although there has been significant loss of detailing (such as windows) and ad hoc ill-considered additions including side extensions and the accretion of elements such as fire escape stairs, reflective of their subdivision **[Plates 4.3.4-4.3.5]**.

There has, furthermore, been a particularly high level of alteration to the streetscape to the northwest side of the street. At the meeting point of the area with the Hoylake Gateway is a small, one-storey garden cottage, likely 19th century in date – this is a visually unique property in the area and was associated with a now lost larger dwelling. It has recently been integrated into a new residential care home development, a change beneficial to the building itself and its contribution to the streetscape. However, the care home itself, visible to the back of the plot, is architecturally bland and has introduced a significant amount of hard landscaping to the frontage **[Plate 4.3.7]**.

The adjoining plots to the west side of the street have seen similar development. 6 Meols Drive is a comparatively new apartment block. Whilst efforts have been made to utilise Arts and Crafts inspired detailing and form the property is out of scale and is visually dominant on the plot, with large areas of car parking and open landscape to the frontage **[Plate 4.3.8]**. The adjoining property, no.8, appears more historic and utilises an Arts and Crafts mixture of hung clay tiles and roughcast render, but again its comparatively recent conversion to apartments has introduced open car parking to the frontage,

undermining the maturity of the plot. The construction of houses at nos.16 and 16A has also amalgamated two plots, although these are better screened from the road.

Despite these changes, however, this part of the area retains a particular character that is derived from the generally consistent retention of red brick boundary walls, a generally consistent building line set deep within each plot, and the use of a common material palette **[Plate 4.3.9]**. This typically comprises a mixture of brick, roughcast render and clay tiles with key articulating features (such as tall chimneystacks) that maintain the overarching residential scale and character of the streetscape. Whilst differing in their architectural execution, these features draw properties together, with similar hues and design influences providing a considered coherency to the area.



4.3.3 *Royal Liverpool Golf Club Clubhouse from the golfcourse*



4.3.4 *Surviving historic property with high levels of hard landscaping and altered windows*



4.3.5 *Surviving historic property with substantial later extensions and side escape stairs*



4.3.6 *Surviving historic properties retaining their low brick boundary walls*



4.3.7 Modern care home (left) with 19th century coach house (right)



4.3.8 6 Meols Drive



4.3.9 Common palette of brick and render, with clay roof tiles, and the prominence of boundary walls

South

Moving further south to subsequent stages of development (early 20th century), the properties become less visible in the street scene and there is a significantly higher density of mature landscaping to front boundaries, plus street trees. There has been a particular concentration of losses to the southwest of the area, again adjoining the golf course, for modern cul-de-sacs, and there remains pressure for redevelopment. Generally, however, conversion or loss and replacement has tended to retain historic boundary walls (which show a mixture of brick and sandstone) and stone gate piers, many of which continue to bear the historic property names. This is critical to the continued legibility of the area's historic growth.

Historic properties generally survive to a higher degree to the east side of the street, although again there has been significant loss of detailing including windows and roof coverings, and, in many instances, the addition of hard landscaping to driveways. There are particularly fine examples of individual bespoke Arts and Crafts inspired designs here, including no.79, which uses a highly decorative plasterwork to its facade with a jasperware (Wedgewood) pattern **[Plate 4.3.10]**. It also includes nos.85-87, a prominent example of a vernacular Cheshire timber-framed style, and nos.51-53 a unique pair of chalet-style properties with prominent timber balconies **[Plates 4.3.11-4.3.12]**.

Of particular concern to the east of the street, however, is the high-level of close board fencing to the road boundary, typically set behind or on top of brick boundary walls but in some instances providing wholesale replacements. The tennis club, although a key open space, is wholly bounded by close board fencing, which continues to the adjacent rear boundaries of properties on Eddisbury Road, and to the grammar school (with views generally to its lower quality architectural additions over the playing field). The fencing along this stretch of road is particularly detrimental to the visual quality of the street scene **[Plate 3.4.13]**.



4.3.10 79 Meols Drive



4.3.11 85-87 Meols Drive



4.3.12 51 Meols Drive



4.3.13 Fencing to the tennis club



4.3.14 The gap between the clubhouse and the Conservative Club provides views to Stanley Road

Views

As a long linear streetscape, views along Meols Drive are generally characterised by:

Linear views further afield to the golf course, and townscape along Stanley Road in the distance, between the building line. The most important examples are views between the gaps to either side of the golf clubhouse, which both take in the landmark itself and provide visual links it to its historic associations. Wider views are possible where the boundary of the course meets Meols Drive, just south of Barn Hey and at the entrance gate to the golf course on the road, although the boundary fencing could be improved. The view down Pinfold Lane is marred by the modern built form but is nonetheless important in experientially linking the course and Meols Drive **[Plates 4.3.14-4.3.18]**.

Dynamic views of historic properties along the highway, with detail and form revealed and filtered through mature landscaping. The dynamic nature of moving through the street and the changes in landscaping to each property gradually reveals detailing such as roofs and chimneystacks, or key elements of the façade including balconies or other decoration **[Plates 4.3.19-4.3.24]**.

Linear views along the street to landmarks in the adjoining gateway areas that include the apsidal end of Hoylake Chapel and the spire of the Christian Science Church (Area B), as well as the tower and nave of St Andrews Church and the frontage of West Kirby School (Area C) **[Plates 3.4.25-3.4.26]**.



4.3.15 The public footpath north of Barn Hey provides views to Stanley Road



4.3.17 Views at golf course gate on Meols Drive open up to the golf course and the Welsh Hills beyond



4.3.16 Views along Pinfold Lane incorporate the golf course



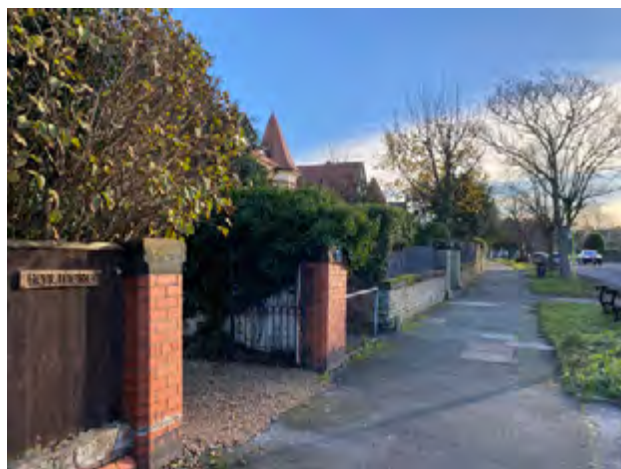
4.3.18 Views south of Barn Hey open to the a wide vista including the golf course and Stanley Road



4.3.19 Key detailing such as this timber balcony is revealed along the street



4.3.20 Key features such as chimneystacks bring the roofscape together



4.3.21 Moving along the street reveals key roofscape features, such as turrets and gables



4.3.22 Due to landscaping, often only the upper parts of buildings are visible along the street



4.3.23 Some buildings to the east side of the street filter views to built form beyond



4.3.24 Views to key facade detailing are often revealed along the street, hidden by soft landscaping



4.3.25 Views to the north include Hoylake Chapel (right) and Christian Science Church (Left)



4.3.26 Views to the south open up to St Andrew's Church

4.3.3 Historic Adjoining Streets

Running parallel to Meols Drive, primarily to the east, are a series of historic side streets. These are architecturally and spatially more modest than Meols Drive itself, with denser plots and smaller, yet mature, front gardens that provide an important legibility to the historic street pattern and hierarchy as it evolved from the later 19th century onwards.

Drummond Road, to the north, dates to the 19th century and was laid out at an early stage contemporaneous with Meols Drive itself, complementing the smaller-scale plots to its eastern side. Bordered by the railway line to the east and lined with trees that add a sense of seclusion, the road is built up with a mixture of semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Largely from the 19th century, these are faced in brick and render with a particular use of tall front-facing gables, porches with leaded lights, overhanging eaves, bargeboards, finials with decorative ridge tiles, and polychromatic brickwork. Roofs are generally pitched, with slate where the original materials survive. Airlie Road, connecting Meols Drive with Drummond Road, has a particularly fine red brick terrace with terracotta dressings. Situated outside the conservation area as first designated in 2004, Drummond Road has been subject to a higher level of change with the loss of boundary walls and, in places, the rendering or painting of previously exposed brickwork that has undermined or obscured historic detailing. As an enclosed street, there are limited views out of Drummond Road, and the emphasis is instead on the views along the road, which take in a characterful sweeping building line [Plates 4.3.27-4.3.32].



4.3.27 Polychromatic brickwork on Drummond Road



4.3.28 Red brick terrace, Drummond Road



4.3.29 Vertical detailing, Drummond Road



4.3.30 Late 19th century property, later rendered



4.3.31 Drummond Road streetscape



4.3.32 Historic surface materials, Drummond Road

Further south, Eddisbury, Morpeth, and Withington Roads form a loop to the east of Meols Drive. Eddisbury, the spine of the loop, largely dates to the early 20th century, laid out and built up between 1909 and 1926, with some additions made up to 1935. Its extreme ends are slightly earlier, having been laid out alongside parts of Meols Drive and Graham Road, and here there are distinct late 19th century properties including a fine Arts and Crafts dwelling adjoining Graham Road. The remainder of the road is predominantly formed of rendered interwar detached properties. Whilst the execution of detail varies there is a particular focus on the use of doors under rounded brick, roundel windows, and chimneystacks with very tall chimneypots, the latter a particularly distinctive feature (although many have been lost).

The road has a sense of seclusion with both sides built up, enhanced by mature street trees, but there are views back to Meols Drive over the tennis club. The club is an important open space both historically and for the legibility of the relationship between Eddisbury Road and Meols Drive that it provides, although with an architecturally bland clubhouse. Of particular concern along Eddisbury Road is the loss of boundary treatments and their replacement with close board fencing. Where historic boundaries are retained these are usually red brick with stone copings to the piers (often with rendering, presumably later), but there has been a high level of fencing added above. This has coincided with the gradual erosion of mature landscaping in order to create driveways. The southern tip of Eddisbury Road opens with a linear view south along Graham Road incorporating the spire of St Andrews and parts of the frontage to

the grammar school in the distance, enhanced by a backdrop of trees. Furthermore, the east-west Morpeth and Withington Roads also provide views back to Meols Drive. Views west on Withington Road align with the opening of Meols Drive over the golf course, although enclosed by trees. That to Morpeth Road provides views to historic dwellings at nos.64-67 Meols Drive, with detailing such as timber studwork, filtered through trees **[Plates 3.4.33-3.4.38]**.



4.3.33 Late 19th century Arts and Crafts dwelling, Eddisbury Road



4.3.34 Junction of Eddisbury and Graham Roads



4.3.34b *Junction of Eddisbury and Graham Roads*



4.3.35 *Interwar property with arched door detail, Eddisbury Road*



4.3.36 *Tennis club, Eddisbury Road*



4.3.37 *View back to Meols Drive from Withington Road*



4.3.38 *View to the back of Meols Drive from Eddisbury Road*

Adjoining Eddisbury Road to the south, Graham Road dates to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Of particular prominence is West Kirby Grammar School, dating to 1912, which is not only spatially dominant due to its scale but also architecturally impressive, built in brick with terracotta dressings, articulated with front-facing gables and having transom and mullioned windows with tracery and leaded lights, brick diapering, turrets with terracotta relief panels, and tall brick chimneystacks. It is sited close to the street but maintains an important setback, accentuated by a low brick wall with saddleback coping stones and stone piers. However, its modern extensions and accretions are of no merit. The playing field, to the east side of the street, provides important relief within the street scene.

The remainder of the street is comprised of detached and semi-detached dwellings, those to the east side dating to 1909-1926 and the west side earlier (between 1899-1909), with some interwar additions. To the northwest, there are particularly interesting detached dwellings, dating from between 1899-1909; these are rendered, with impressive chimneystacks, ground-floor bay windows and interesting window detailing including a Diocletian style pattern. To the southeast, there is a run of semi-detached dwellings utilizing dominant front-facing gables with mock timber studwork, tall chimneys and clay roofs. These were historically brick to the lower ground floor although all but one has been rendered. A recent redevelopment to the north of the street has significantly improved the visual appeal of a bland late-20th century building, introducing detailing such as larger glazing panels to a canted bay [Plates 4.3.39-4.3.46].



4.3.39 Interwar property, Graham Road



4.3.40 West Kirby Grammar School



4.3.41 Early 20th century property, Graham Road



4.3.42 Early 20th century property, Graham Road



4.3.44 Frontage on Graham Road, including the Grammar School



4.3.45 Early 20th century property, Graham Road



4.3.46 Early 20th century property, Graham Road

Much like Eddisbury Road, Graham Road feels peacefully secluded, which is enhanced by mature landscaping to front boundaries, although street trees are more intermittent. There are interesting views between properties to its southeastern end taking in the wider setting of the area that includes the Hoylake and West Kirby War Memorial, views over the grammar school playing field to the roofline of built form beyond. Along the street itself the spire of St Andrew's Church and the ornate detailing to the grammar school are visually prominent.

Adjoining the West Kirby Gateway, and forming the southern boundary of the conservation area, **Lingdale Road** dates from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As is characteristic of the side streets, it was historically denser than Meols Drive, with comparatively smaller detached and semi-detached properties. Along the street there is a particular use of brick, mainly red with some buff examples, and render, with both smooth and roughcast examples. Roofs are generally pitched, with some isolated hipped examples, with a mixture of slate and clay tile, although many are later replacements and there are some examples of concrete tiles. Tall brick chimneystacks articulate the roofline.

The east side of the street is earlier, with the 19th century properties largely surviving to the eastern half of the road with the exception of the prominent redevelopment to the corner of Meols Drive, where this is a large, detracting, apartment block. The historic properties make particular use of prominent gables with canted bay windows with a strong vertical emphasis, completed with bargeboards and some

examples of decorative finials and ridge tiles. The early 20th century properties, occupying the rest of the street, form a particularly strong group, their front and corner canted bays with large windows with glazing bars reminiscent of architect Charles Rennie Macintosh. These are combined with a repeated use of brick and render, clay roofing and brick chimneystacks to provide a holistic character. There are also examples of interesting pargetting detailing to gables, and dentil cornicework on bays.

One later 20th century dwelling (no.13A) sits at odds with the southern half of the street, diminutive in scale but broadly drawing on vernacular detailing with mock timber framing. A further property has recently been constructed at no.16A. Whilst its front elevation defers to the streetscape through its use of brick and render and sympathetic detailing (including a front-facing gable and bay window) its side elevation, visible from the street, is more visually complex and extends deep into to the plot. This property has also, furthermore, introduced taller boundary treatments. No.16 has also been extended to the rear and its boundary wall raised, presumably coinciding with its own conversion into apartments and the construction of no.16A. No.18 is particularly unique, with a decorated brick transom and mullioned windows inset with leaded casements. Of limited visibility from the road, but with greater influence over the coastline, are two detached interwar properties, which are rendered and have hipped roofs of clay and slate but are minimal in their detailing and are particularly affected by their replacement windows.

Importantly, the properties all retain boundary walls, predominantly in brick but with lines of stone wall closer to Meols Drive, inset with brick or stone piers, and in some instances enhanced by hedgerows and trees behind. There have, however, been isolated alterations to boundary walls, including select rendering, raising the height of what were traditionally low boundary walls, and adding large modern secure gates. This has typically occurred as part of subdivision and conversion to apartment use and creates a defensive aesthetic. There are also isolated additions of close board fencing, which is of low visual and material quality, set behind boundary walls, and this is also a particular issue along visible side boundaries. Many front drives retain some level of mature landscaping but some have a greater degree of hardstanding, usually modern tarmac or setts.

Spatially, Lingdale Road has an important function in linking Meols Drive to the coast, thereby framing views to the Welsh hills, although the public realm here is relatively poor. The connecting alley is flanked by a blank brick wall, with views to lower quality later dwellings **[Plates 4.3.47-4.3.54]**.



4.3.47 *Lingdale Road*



4.3.48 *18 Lingdale Road*



4.3.49 *Mixture of brick and roughcast render, with vertical detailing, Lingdale Road*



4.3.50 *Early 20th century property, Lingdale Road, with enlarged boundary wall*



4.3.51 Early 20th century property, Lingdale Road



4.3.52 Modern apartment block, Lingdale Road, showing the impact of a high boundary wall and gate



4.3.53 Connection from Lingdale Road to the coast



4.3.54 Properties to the west end of Lindgale Road have a greater impact on the coast than on the road

4.3.4 Modern Adjoining Streets

To the southwest section of Meols Drive, adjoining the golf course, there has been a higher level of erosion of the historic urban pattern, intensification of previously open plots, and creation of late 20th century cul-de-sacs. Whilst generally echoing the boundaries of historic plots, these developments have nonetheless created a significantly denser built form and unbalanced the critical relationship between buildings and mature landscaping. This is evident from both the golf course and Meols Drive where, despite the retention of historic boundary walls and piers, the built form and modern urban pattern is made visually prominent by the reduction in mature landscaping. **Pinfold Lane** is particularly detrimental. Although an important pedestrian link between Meols Drive and the golf course, with a public right of way through to the coast, it is built up with monolithic and bland apartment blocks, which have replaced two larger historic dwellings, with the lack of screening or mature landscaping making it unduly prominent from the golf course.

Roseacre, West Lodge Drive, Barn Hey, and Bramerton Court are more modest in their scale than Pinfold Lane, with detached dwellings (although there are intermittent apartments of greater scale), whilst additional mature landscaping introduced lessens, to a degree, their impact. Nonetheless, they are architecturally uninspired, with high visibility from the golf course and Meols Drive. Barn Hey sits adjacent to an important group of buildings around the golf clubhouse and flanks a public footpath from Meols Drive, with a substantial impact on the area's historic

legibility. Likewise, Rosesacre, Bramerton Court and West Lodge Drive, whilst individually modest, together occupy a significant area to the southeast end of the golf course and the southwest end of Meols Drive which, together with Pinfold Lane, creates a homogenous later 20th century urban block.

The cul-de-sac at **Leas Park** echoes the vernacular styling of the properties in the area, incorporating features including tall chimneystacks, gables, brick diapering and timber studwork. As individual properties they are well appointed, good-quality, and sensitive. However, they have nonetheless significantly intensified the plot of the former Leas School and, as such, eroded the area's historic pattern and undermined the spatial quality of Meols Drive **[Plates 4.3.54-4.3.57]**.



4.3.55 Leas Park



4.3.56 West Lodge Drive



4.3.57 Barn Hey

4.4 Character Area B: Hoylake Gateway

A critical piece of townscape, this area is a nodal point acting simultaneously as the arrival into the area at Hoylake Railway Station, the gateway to Hoylake town centre further north, and the transition point between the denser core of Hoylake and the residential areas to the south along Meols Drive. Historically the location for the area's civic buildings, its differing function is reflected in its architectural styles, density, enclosure, spatial pattern, all designed to reflect its more public-facing uses. Whilst heavily influenced by the highway network the area is ultimately defined by a strong composition of architectural set pieces set within a high-quality public realm **[Plate 4.4.1]**.

4.4.1 Buildings

The area includes two listed buildings, both Grade II. **Hoylake Railway Station** acts as the arrival point to the area and was opened in 1938 to the designs of W. K. Wallace (engineer to the London, Midland, and Scotland railway), influenced by Charles Holden's designs for London stations. A modest structure, it is nonetheless a significant building architecturally, utilising a sleek modernist form accentuated by its canopy and circular roof lantern **[Plate 4.4.2]**. **Hoylake Chapel**, on Station Road, dates to the early 20th century to the designs of Douglas and Minshull (its hall dating to the 1880s) and anchors the southeast corner of the junction with a powerful gothic-inspired form of red brick and stone, accentuated by its low stone boundary wall **[Plate 4.4.3]**.

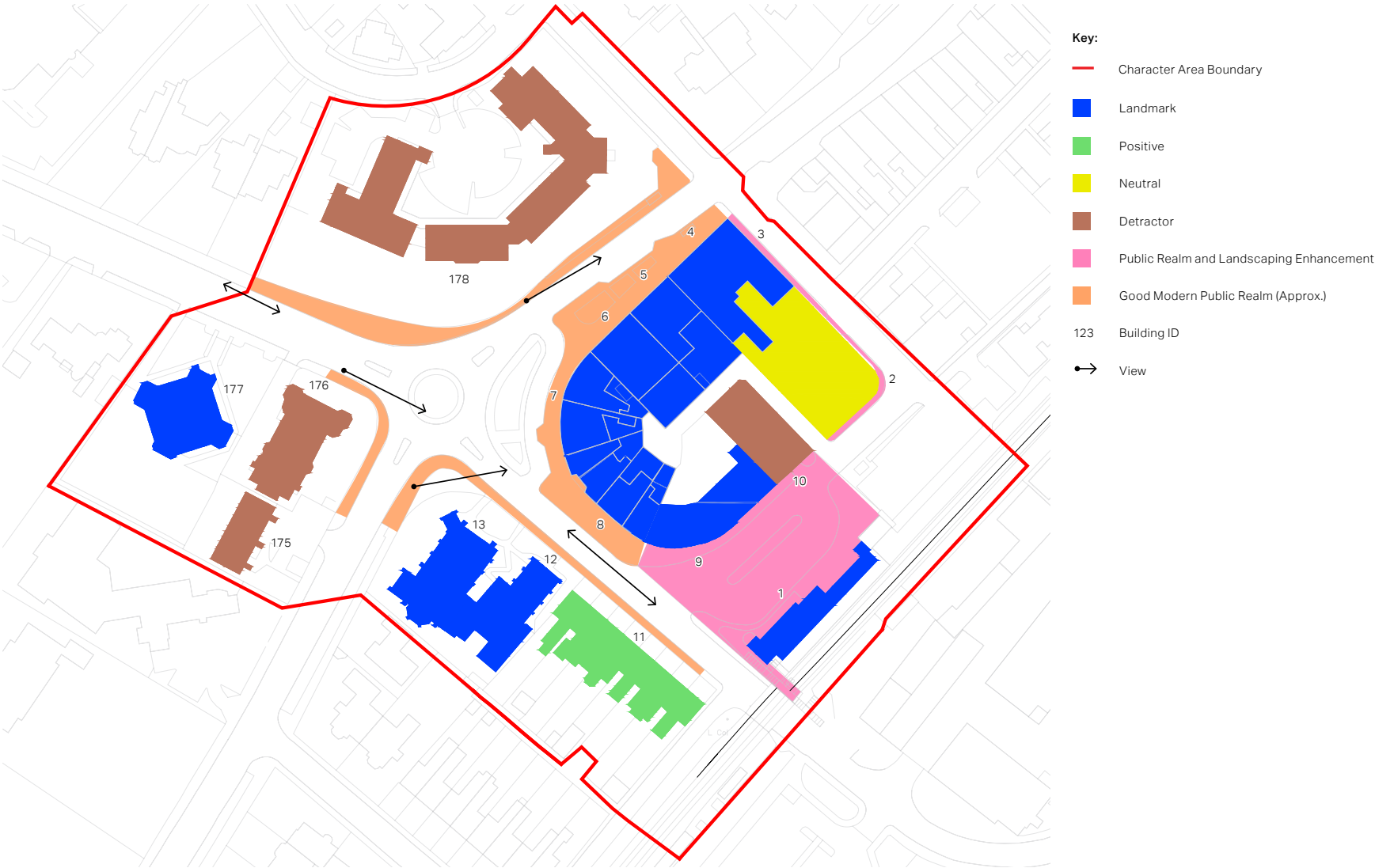


4.4.2 Hoylake Railway Station



4.4.3 Hoylake Chapel

Meols Drive
Character Area B



4.4.1, Hoylake Gateway Boundaries and Townscape Analysis

Of considerable influence in the area is **The Quadrant** (non-designated heritage asset), a series of late 19th and early 20th century commercial, public and civic buildings that stand together on a powerful curve in the street. The collection defines much of the area's overall form, utilising materials such as brick and stone, and with influences including the Edwardian Baroque, with highly articulating detailing that includes gables, gablets, and chimneystacks. Detailing is also retained at ground-floor with a mixture of stone frontages to commercial buildings, and original shopfronts to the retail units, although there has been some detrimental replacement. Signage is broadly sympathetic but there are some examples that are out of proportion. The row is, however, significantly undermined by the ad hoc loss of windows and their replacement with uPVC. The row also includes a slightly later addition, the interwar Post Office building, which incorporates characteristically heavy stone cornicework and is prominent when exiting the station. Designed by Charles P. Wilson of the Office of Works, its elegant architectural form strongly defines the corner of The Quadrant, with its curved form reflecting the station opposite (although it preceded this building) **[Plates 4.4.4-4.4.9]**.

The group culminates in the **former Town Hall and the site of the Fire Engine House (fire station)** on Albert Road. Although vacant these are currently under conversion for use as an arts centre that will significantly enhance their contribution to the local community and appreciation of the buildings. The former Town Hall (built as council offices) is particularly ornate, with terracotta detailing that includes its balcony, lettering, and Dutch gables. The site of the former early-20th century fire station sits at the junction of The Quadrant and Albert Road and is currently under redevelopment. The replacement building has positive elements including the use of brick, its provision of an active frontage and the reinforcement of the enclosure of The Quadrant but is out of scale **[Plates 4.4.10-4.4.12]**.



4.4.5 *Interwar addition to The Quadrant*



4.4.4 *The Quadrant along Station Road*



4.4.6 *The Quadrant at the junction of Station Road and Market Street*



4.4.7 *The Quadrant along Market Street*



4.4.8 *Example of window replacements along The Quadrant*



4.4.9 *Tile detailing at The Quadrant*



4.4.10 *The Town Hall, Market Street*



4.4.11 *Fire Engine House, Albert Road*



4.4.12 *Ongoing redevelopment of the Fire Station site, Fire Engine House also shown (right)*

Further to the west is the **Christian Science Church** (non-designated heritage asset). This is an interesting mid-20th century architectural composition, completed in 1966 to the designs of Gilbert B.A Williams and unique in the local area. Its spire is a key feature in the roofline and complements both the earlier public-facing civic built form at The Quadrant and the 19th century Hoylake Chapel, thereby adding a further layer to the appreciation of the area's evolution. It is set into a modest but mature landscaped plot, which adds much to the street scene **[Plate 4.4.13]**.

These landmarks are complemented by the terrace of late Victorian properties on **Station Road** which, through their polychromatic brickwork and domestic form, contrast positively with the sleek modernist station. Accentuated by its low brick boundary walls with saddleback coping stones and modest front gardens, the terrace also provides legibility to the area's residential uses. It is, however, undermined through the loss of window and door detailing, the use of concrete tile roofing and a loss of uniformity through the rendering of some properties and sections of wall **[Plate 4.4.14]**.

Modern buildings of generic character that are nonetheless of sufficient scale to dominate visually and spatially, or which break the street scene, are detrimental to the area, particularly on the nodal point of the junction. This includes a flat white rendered building adjoining the Post Office, which is bland, largely blank and inactive to its ground floor, breaking the continuity of The Quadrant. Similarly, **Bloomsbury and Lynton Courts**, leading from Meols Drive, are also large and generic in character, whilst introducing a greater level of car parking to their frontage, Bloomsbury Court is particularly detrimental due to its visual influence on the junction. This is further worsened by **Montrose Court** to the north, which is overly large and competes with The Quadrant, terminating views from the south, although some of its more immediate impact is mitigated by a good-quality, likely historic, brick boundary wall **[Plates 4.4.15-4.4.17]**.



4.4.14 Terrace of properties on Station Road



4.4.13 Christian Science Church, The King's Gap



4.4.15 Poor quality building on The Quadrant



4.4.16 Montrose Course (right) at the northwest corner of the junction of Meols Drive, The King's Gap, Station Road and Market Street



4.4.17 Bloomsbury Court (left), at the southeast corner of the junction, next to the Christian Science Church

4.4.2 Spaces

As a denser and more public-focused core, this area is more enclosed than the residential parts of Meols Drive to the south. It is also characterised in particular by the heavily trafficked roads. Positively, however, its uses and its importance as an entry point into the area give it a public-focused urban realm and it has benefitted substantially from a series of recent public realm works around The Quadrant, the junction island and parts of Market Street, Station Road, Meols Drive and the King's Gap. This focuses on the effective integration of hard and soft landscaping, including stone setts, and shared surfaces at The

Quadrant with a holistic approach to elements of street furniture and public art, with railings, bins, benches, and other elements brought together under a nautical-themed aesthetic. This does much to enliven what could otherwise be a bland highway network. It particularly enhances appreciation and enjoyment of The Quadrant, the setback from the roadway and the introduction of shared surfaces creating a significantly more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. These urban spaces are further enhanced by the soft landscaped settings in front of the Chapel and Christian Science Church, which provide important relief to the street scene **[Plates 4.4.16-4.4.20]**.



4.4.18 Public art on Station Road



4.4.19 Public realm works along Market Street



4.4.20 Public Realm works along Market Street

4.4.3 Views

Views in this area are focused on the close association of key landmark set pieces, with gradual and dynamic reveals on the streetscape. This includes:

- A reveal to The Quadrant at the junction from Meols Drive to The Quadrant **[Plate 4.4.21]**.
- Views to The Quadrant, the Railway Station and Hoylake Chapel from the junction of Meols Drive and King's Gap **[Plates 4.4.22-4.4.23]**.
- Views to and from the station along Station Road, incorporating The Quadrant and Hoylake Chapel **[Plates 4.4.24-4.4.25]**.
- Views of The Quadrant frontage along Market Street, with the Chapel revealed beyond [Plate 4.4.26].

Views out of the area (south to the adjoining character area, and north and west to outside the conservation area) primarily enable appreciation of the contrasting urban and residential contexts. This includes views south along Meols Drive and west into the King's Gap Conservation Area, where the reduction in density of built form, and increase in street trees, provides legibility to the residential context beyond. The quality of both, however are, undermined by more recent developments, although street trees are significant features whilst the view along the King's Gap includes the Christian Science Church and terminates in the Green Lodge Hotel. Views north along Market Street highlight the denser urban nature of Hoylake beyond,

with continuity provided by the high-quality surface materials and architectural detailing form north of the former Town Hall **[Plates 4.4.26-4.4.28]**.



4.4.21 *Reveal of The Quadrant at the northern part of Meols Drive*



4.4.22 *View of The Quadrant, Station, and Chapel from the junction of Meols Drive*



4.4.23 View of The Quadrant, Station, and Chapel from the King's Gap



4.4.24 View east on Station Road to the Railway Station



4.4.25 View west along Station Road with The Quadrant (right) and terraced housing (left)



4.4.26 Continuation of Market Street beyond the area boundaries



4.4.27 Views south along Market Street reveal the chapel, flanked by The Quadrant



4.4.28 View west to the King's Gap Conservation Area

4.5 Character Area C: West Kirby Gateway³

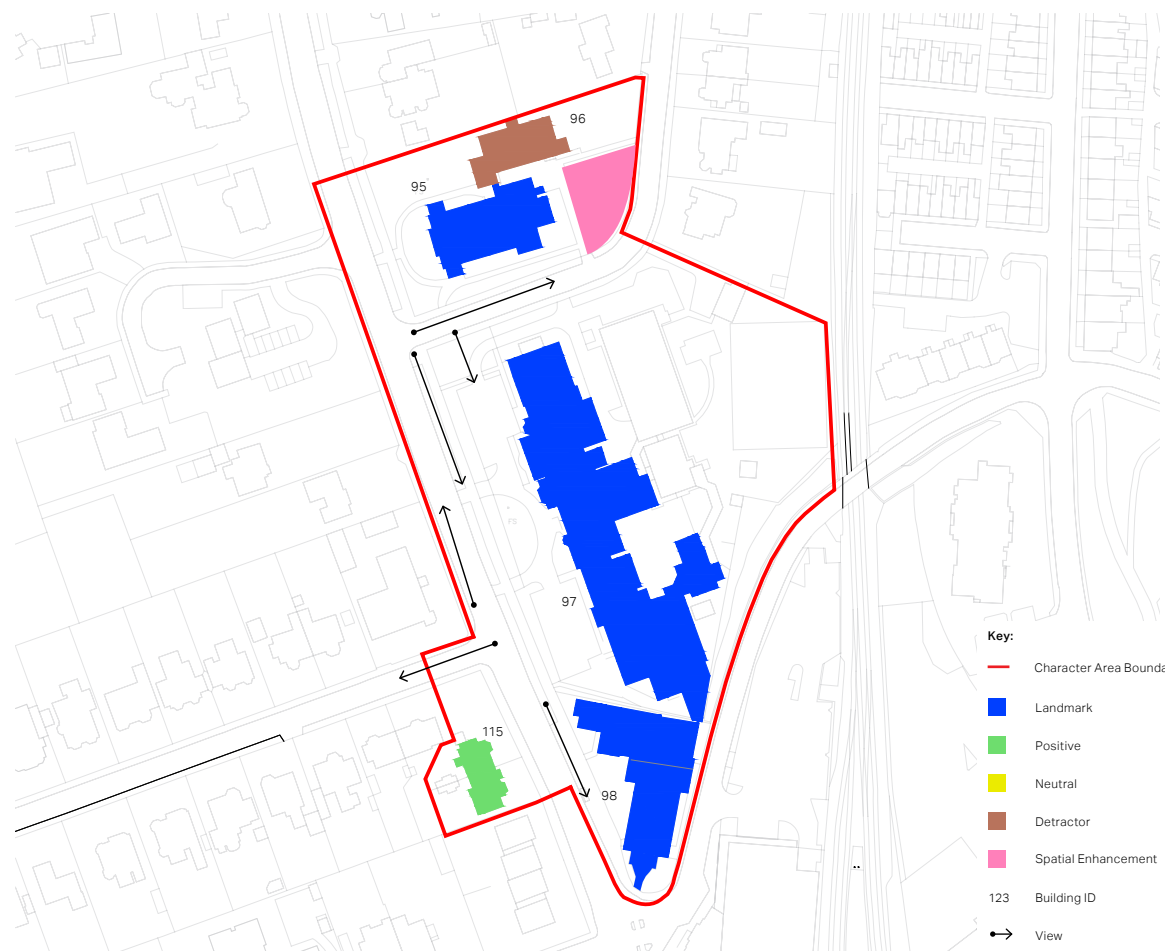
This area forms the southern gateway to the conservation area and marks its transition to West Kirby. Here the residential properties of Meols Drive and surrounding roads meet a set of larger-scale historic institutional buildings on the east side of the street that do much to ease the transition between the lower density residential suburbs to the denser core of West Kirby [Plate 4.5.1].

4.5.1 Buildings and Spaces

The entrance to the area is defined by the **West Kirby United Reformed Church** (non-designated heritage asset). The building dates to the late 19th century, has a deep reddish hue from its brick and ornate terracotta detailing and occupies a dominant position, its southern facade prominent at the junction of Meols Drive and Bridge Street. Flanked by two prominent pinnacles, it is an important visual marker of the area, enhanced by the modest landscaping and a low brick boundary wall (that incorporates terracotta capping, ornate to the piers), although the poor extension to the building's northwest edge detracts [Plate 4.5.2].

³ The boundaries of the character area have been altered here from those used in the 2004 appraisal, with housing on Graham Road moved to Character Area A. The present document also places greater emphasis on institutional buildings and those with higher influence over the Meols Drive and West Kirby.

Meols Drive Character Area C



4.5.1 West Kirby Gateway, Boundaries and Townscape Analysis

Immediately to the north is **West Kirby School**. Built as a children's convalescent home in 1899, it occupies a large site with a wide footprint, set well back from the road behind a treeline. Despite alterations across its front façade, including later canopies, it retains much of its architectural character, visible over its low brick boundary wall in glimpses through the trees (which also screen its car park), its Jacobean-influenced architectural style formed primarily from a series of articulating front-facing gables and prevailing use of red brick. The later school buildings, many of which are large and of generic architectural quality, are generally screened by the main building to Meols Drive (and dense tree coverage on Bridge Street) but have more prominence on Graham Road [**Plate 4.5.3**].

To the northern edge is **St Andrew's Church** (Grade II), built between 1889-91 and 1907-9, initially by Douglas and Fordham. Whilst most of the church is a reddish stone the spire is particularly unusual, using hung slate. It sits in a pleasant modest plot, landscaped to the frontage on Meols Drive and to parts of Graham Road, flanked by a stone boundary wall. The car park to the rear, however, which turns the corner on Graham Road, is visually poor, this effect being exacerbated by the low architectural quality of the accompanying hall [**Plates 4.5.4-4.5.5**].

To the west side of the street, two residential properties have been included given their relationship to the road and, therefore, their impact on the gateway to the area. **108 Meols Drive** is a pair of semi-detached Late Victorian properties in red brick with dentil detailing, with roughcast rendered panels to a pair of prominent double height bay windows [**Plate**

4.5.6]. This is a subtle and positive complement to the United Reformed Church, although altered in places. Across Lingdale Road, however, is a larger and more architecturally generic apartment block, highly visible from the road despite some boundary hedging. Its visual impact is exacerbated by hard landscaped drives and detached garages although the site retains a good stone wall with a mixture of brick and stone piers (from an earlier building bearing the name Leylands).

The siting of built form is particularly important to the experience of the townscape in this area, and to the way in which this experience reinforces the transition between the higher and lower density urban and suburban areas. In particular, the United Reformed Church is prominent on the road but then transitions to the school, which, although a large building, is set back from the road, with trees in front. St Andrew's Church, furthermore, is sited on a plot more visually and spatially integrated with the surrounding houses. As such, by their positioning and use of mature landscaping these buildings in succession define the transition in the townscape.

4.5.2 Views

As a gateway to the area, that provide legibility to the evolving history and character of Hoylake are particularly important are views. These are marked by institutional buildings, followed by appreciation of the residential areas beyond, and include:

- Dynamic glimpses of the long school frontage along Meols Drive and Graham Road [**Plates 4.5.7-8**].
- Views to the tower of St Andrew's Church from Meols Drive [**Plate 4.5.9**].
- Views from Meols Drive down adjoining streets, most notably Graham Road (where an early 20th century development occupies the curved corner) and Lingdale Road (taking in the strong succession of semi-detached houses). These also continue north on Meols Drive to the residential houses (with properties set behind trees) [**Plates 4.5.10-4.5.11**].



4.5.2 West Kirby United Reformed Church at the junction of Meols Drive and Bridge Street



4.5.3 West Kirby School



4.5.4 St Andrew's Church



4.5.5 St Andrew's Church Hall



4.5.6 108 Meols Drive



4.5.7 Views to the school frontage are filtered through trees



4.5.7 Views to the school frontage are filtered through trees



4.5.9 The tower of St Andrew's is prominent on Meols Drive



4.5.10 Residential built form anchors the linear street along Graham Road



4.5.11 Views along Lingdale Road highlight the residential context beyond

4.6 Character Area D: Stanley Road and North Coastline

Stanley Road is a linear streetscape to the northwest corner of the conservation area, separated from the core of Meols Drive by the King's Gap Conservation Area and the open landscape of the golf course. As a piece of townscape it has a visual influence over the golf course and coast and includes a strip of large, detached properties of varied character and styling dating primarily from the early part of the 20th century. Wirral Point and the Red Rocks nursing home have a particularly crucial visual relationship to the coast [Plate 4.6.1].

4.6.1 Buildings

Situated on the north side of the road is **Hoylake Lighthouse**. This is a modern folly and the house itself is of no architectural merit,. Nevertheless, it is considered a landmark because of its role as a skyline feature, whilst it lends significant legibility to the convergence of the peninsula at Red Rocks from the coastline to the southwest and also from the golf course. Also of importance is **Red Rocks Nursing Home**, built in c.1910, a large Arts and Crafts House defined by prominent gables and by stone detailing around its windows. This is set in a large garden plot, surrounded by a stone boundary wall, that forms the tip of the triangular landmass at Red Rocks. This, combined with its larger scale, gives significant visual prominence in the area and along the coastline [Plates 4.6.2-.4.6.4].



4.6.2 Modern Hoylake Lighthouse



4.6.3 Red Rocks Nursing Home



4.6.4 Red Rocks Nursing Home and the modern Hoylake Lighthouse along Stanley Road

Meols Drive
Character Area D



4.6.1 Stanley Road and North Coastline, Boundaries and Townscape Analysis

The south side of the road is formed primarily of dwellings dating from between 1909 and 1926, with one mid-20th century addition. Whilst each is an individual architectural composition they draw from overarching Arts and Crafts influences and have common characteristics that include their scale, sitting on the plot, visual prominence from the road, articulating elements such as chimneystacks and gables, and significant spaciousness. There are views to the sky and landscaping through townscape gaps, enhanced by the undeveloped golf course behind. All have boundary treatments but there is a significant variation in material and level of survival with a mixture of brick, render, stone and close board fencing **[Plates 4.6.5-4.6.7]**.

The north side is more modern in character, mainly dating to post 1935, but even here most properties are well appointed and architecturally modest detached dwellings in brick and render. Although overlooking the golf course, elements such as non-original balconies have begun to add clutter to their simple form. Of importance, however, are several retained earlier dwellings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including nos.64, 68 and 70, which echo the detailing to the south side of the street. This includes two pairs of semi-detached dwellings from the 1870s-90s, which have a character particularly unique on the road, with gothic influences (although detailing has been lost in places and roof tiles and windows replaced with uPVC). Nos.48 and 50 have decorative drip moulds, although some cohesion has been lost through modern rendering overlaying some detailing, and a disparity has been introduced by the removal of a porch and the use of the top floor of the

bay windows for a balcony. The other pair, nos.52 and 54, have seen significant alteration, including the insertion of large picture windows to the gables, and rendering may again have obscured earlier detailing. Both pairs are enhanced by the retention of low stone boundary walls and front gardens. The intervening building, no.50A, is modern but draws on the vertical composition of both **[Plates 4.6.8-4.6.10]**.

Whilst there are many modern buildings in this area, of particular detriment are those that are overly large in their scale and mass and excessive in their homogeneity of detail to a degree that they are visually prominent on the road and in views from the golf course or coast. This includes **Invergarry Court**, a late 20th century red brick pair of apartment blocks that occupies a very wide section of the street. The gap between the two does, however, allow views out to the sea. The rear elevations of buildings from **Coronation Road** have also been subject to alteration and deterioration, although some earlier properties showing key early 20th century detailing have been retained. More modern properties on Coronation Road, and on the cul-de-sac of **The Royal** are modestly placed and tucked away from the main thoroughfare but are more prominent on the northern coastline **[Plate 4.6.11]**.

To the northern coastline, and despite properties generally being later 20th century, a sense of coherence is maintained by the overriding survival of plots for single family dwellings, the retention of rear gardens with only small-scale additions (although parking and garaging at Invergarry Court are poor), a shared building line, and the common domestic scale

of dwellings. To the east of the area, plots remain large and there is a distinct separation between properties, with the streetscape brought together by the visual and spatial prominence of the sweeping masonry seawall **[Plate 4.6.12]**. Only Coronation Road and The Royal have bought properties closer to the coastline, and their form is more dense than further east, but this impact is limited by the continued domestic scale, retention of some separation for rear gardens, common siting, and well-articulated roofline.



4.6.5 South side of Stanley Road



4.6.6 Early 20th century property, Stanley Road



4.6.7 Early 20th century property, Stanley Road



4.6.8 Late 19th century property, Stanley Road, with drip moulds



4.6.9 Late 19th century property, Stanley Road, with altered gables



4.6.10 Stretch of earlier properties along the north side of Stanley Road



4.6.11 Invergarry Court



4.6.12 Northern coastline and masonry sea wall

4.6.2 Views

As a linear streetscape, no building is overly prominent on Stanley Road, other than the modern Hoylake Lighthouse. The Red Rocks Nursing Home does, however, provide a strong architectural terminus to the street. This area is one of strategic views, including panoramas, that draw together principal elements of the conservation area and its setting. These include:

Evolving linear views east along Stanley Road to the coast and the Welsh Hills beyond, terminating in a panorama that opens up at the eastern tip of Stanley Road, including a sizeable portion of the coast [Plates 4.6.13-4.6.16].

Panoramic views south over the golf course, which bring together the built form on Stanley Road, the backs of Meols Drive and Lingdale Road and the continuation of buildings into the King's Gap, as well as the wider setting of Caldy Hill in the distance and the coastline with the Welsh Hills beyond. This is perhaps one of the most important views in the area, taking in its principal-built form and landscaped elements as well as its urban, rural and coastal settings in the immediate, middle and longer-range contexts [Plate 4.6.17].



4.6.13 Evolving linear view east, incorporating Modern Lighthouse and the Welsh Hills beyond



4.6.14 Evolving linear view west incorporating Red Rocks Nursing Home and the Welsh Hills



4.6.15 Views open up to a panorama at the western tip of Stanley Road



4.6.16 Linear view north along Stanley Road from the coast

4.7 Character Area E: Royal Liverpool Golf Course and West Coastline

Much of the western half of the conservation area is formed of the Royal Liverpool Golf Course and part of the coastline **[Plate 4.7.1]**.

Meols Drive Character Area E



4.7.1 Golf Course and West Coastline, Boundaries and Townscape Analysis

4.7.1 West Coastline

To the west of the area, adjoining the golf course, the conservation area boundary incorporates part of the beach and a coastal path that culminates to the north with **Red Rocks Nature Reserve**, an important landscape of dunes, reedbeds and marsh enhanced by timber walkways **[Plate 4.7.2]**. This area provides significant strategic views across the natural and built landscape of the conservation area and its importance to the landscape and its amenity value cannot be understated. Additional views that it provides include:

Long-range dynamic and evolving views north along the coastal path to Red Rocks and the modern Hoylake Lighthouse, which define the headland of Wirral Point **[Plate 4.7.3-4.7.4]**.

Panoramic views east across the golf course, which bring together the course itself, the built form of Meols Drive (incorporating landmarks such as the spire of St Andrew's Church and the golf clubhouse) and the area's broader setting further east, including the war memorial on Caldy Hill. This is a dynamic experience with the undulation of the landscape creating expansive vistas to its southern half, which gradually enclose as the path progresses north towards Stanley Road. Additional panoramic views are granted from the headland at Wirral Point across the coast towards West Kirby and north towards The King's Gap Conservation Area **[Plates 4.7.5-4.7.7]**.



4.7.2 Red Rocks Nature Reserve



4.7.3 Evolving views along the coastal path terminate in Stanley Road and Modern Lighthouse



4.7.4 Modern Lighthouse and Stanley Road define views far to the south along the coastal path



4.7.5 Views southeast over the golf course



4.7.6 Undulation in the golf course landscape gives a dynamism to the experience



4.7.7 Views northeast to Meols Drive before the dunes enclose visibility

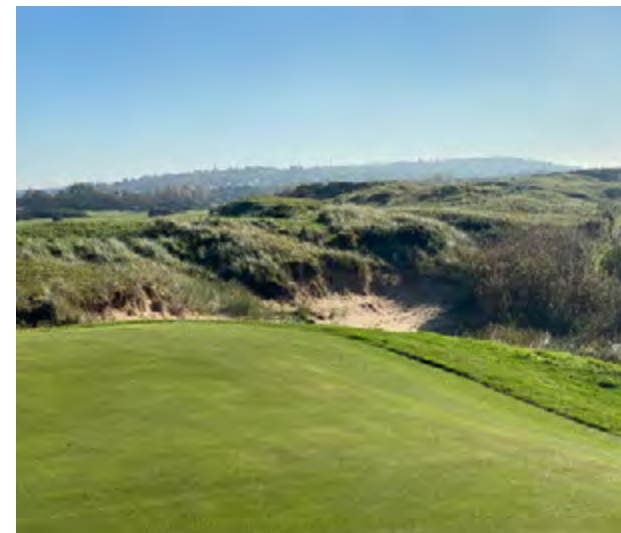
4.7.2 Royal Liverpool Golf Course

The course has a fundamental place in the historic development of the area and continues to have significant cultural importance as an amenity space, having public footpaths, acting as significant draw for the area, and functioning as the location for internationally significant sporting events, which critical to local culture and distinctiveness. Of particular importance to the conservation area is the course's landscape character on the one hand and the associated relationship with built form and the wider setting on the other.

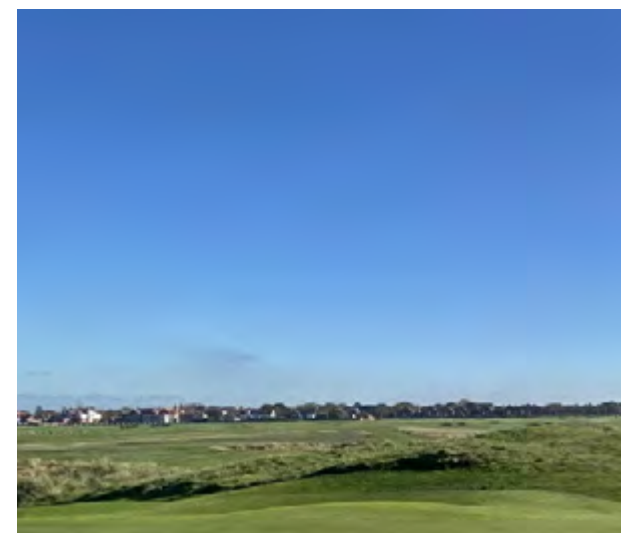
Its landscape is characterised by a mixture of flat land to the north, reflecting the site of the racecourse, and more undulating 'hillocks' along the coast, which reflect the adaptation of sand dunes. This undulation does much to create a sense of dynamism in the landscape **[Plate 4.7.8-4.7.10]**.

In terms of the relationship to built form, many properties are more visually prominent here than from Meols Drive. Views from east and northern parts of the course are expansive and highlight the sheer length of Meols Drive, anchored to the north by the clubhouse and to the south by the spire of St Andrew's Church. This further brings the townscape together in a way not possible on the streetscape itself. To the northern section of Meols Drive this is defined by the clubhouse itself, which is a significant local landmark, around which are a series of larger dwellings that, despite later redevelopment, use common materials, hues, and detailing (such as strong clay tiled roofs and chimneystacks) to provide a holistic characterful backdrop.

Further south, this townscape is characterised more by mature landscaping, with modern properties set into the treelines. The southern sections of Meols Drive have a higher degree of modern cul-de-sacs but these are largely bedded into the landscape, with domestic form and scale. The exceptions include Pinfold Lane, which is larger in scale and domineering in its flat roofline. Closer to the boundaries of properties to the west, this character and holistic streetscape begins to erode, with some positive elements emerging but also a high level of fragmentation. Stanley Road provides the defining northern edge to the course, its long linear and well-scaled streetscape anchored by the modern Hoylake Lighthouse **[Plates 4.7.11-4.7.14]**.



4.7.8 *The landscape of the golf course provides significant dynamism*



4.7.9 *Landscape of the golf course from the east*



4.7.10 Views of the landscape include the area's wider setting across the sea



4.7.11 Views across the golf course bring together the length of Meols Drive



4.7.12 Views west over the golf course are anchored by Stanley Road



4.7.13 Stanley Road defines the northern edge of the golf course



4.7.14 Stanley Road remains visible to the middle of the golf course

The rears of properties along the golf course are often very prominent, and can be understood within the following clusters:

Cluster 1: Clubhouse and Meols Drive North: the clubhouse is a key landmark to the north of the area, spatially and architecturally distinct. From further west, this is a coherent townscape defined by a shared scale, domestic character and prevailing use of clay roof tiling and red brick, with some render, enhanced by the articulation provided by features including tall chimneystacks and prominent gables, which create an animated roofline. Closer-up, their fragmentation becomes clearer, particularly in intermittent boundary treatments, historic brick walling interspersed with poor modern brick walls and close board fencing erected hard up against the public footpath. There has also been intermittent extension and expansion of properties, with some poor-quality examples. Further south, the modern cul-de-sac at Barn Hey is visible and architecturally uninspired, but, owing to its domestic scale, is relatively sensitively accommodated, enhanced by a good amount of boundary landscaping [Plates 4.7.15-4.7.21].

Cluster 2: Leas Park and surrounding plots:

Leas Park is a modern cul-de-sac but generally well-screened by trees. The adjoining plots retain historic built form, sited to the middle of the plot, with important views filtered through the trees, behind historic stone walls. The course wraps around the side elevation of Mulbarton, taking in a prominent succession of gables [Plate 4.7.22].



4.7.15 Meols Drive along the northeast section of the course



4.7.16 Features such as vertical gables and chimneys are prominent



4.7.17 Northwest section of Meols Drive



4.7.18 Some boundary treatments are poor



4.7.19 There is a mixture of modern and historic boundary treatments



4.7.20 The clubhouse is a defining feature from the course



4.7.21 Barn Hey is architecturally bland but well scaled



4.7.22 Historic built form is visible over a stone boundary wall

Cluster 3: Pinfold Lane to Lingdale Road: Pinfold Lane is particularly detrimental to the area through the combination of its scale, absence of detail, overall monolithic form (which lacks the more nuanced form of single-family housing) and absence of landscaping. It is visually prominent on an important public access point into the course, as the footpath winds over the course to the coast. The remainder of the properties, south to Lingdale Road, are smaller in scale and generally single domestic dwellings, and, despite being relatively plain, generally bed into the landscape (although the apartment block at Roseacre is more prominent). Some ongoing development is also visible but its scale is comfortably accommodated. This is further softened by the generally well-kempt nature, and density, of boundary hedging on the course itself, although this is less evident to the south, where there are also sections of close board fencing, estate fencing and poor brick walls. There are some filtered views to the roofline, punctured by chimneystacks, of properties to the west of Meols Drive. To the south this incorporates important views to the spire of St Andrew's Church and the turret of West Kirby School, and wider views to the rural landscape to the east of the area **[Plate 4.7.23-4.7.28]**.



4.7.23 *Pinfold Lane*



4.7.24 *View towards RLGC clubhouse from Meols Drive*



4.7.25 Boundaries are soft landscaping but are in need of attention



4.7.26 Further south the landscaped boundaries are well kempt



4.7.27 Features such as turrets and historic chimneys are visible



4.7.28 St Andrew's Church crowns the townscape

Cluster 4: Lingdale Road (North): Lingdale Road provides the southern boundary of the course. The land undulates upwards here and there is a very close visual and spatial relationship between the course and the rears of housing to the north side of the road. As a result of landscaping only the western part of Lingdale is visible, from no.16 onwards, with the hipped interwar roof of no.20 particularly prominent due to its siting further back on the plot. Boundary treatments are generally poor, using close board fencing (in places with chicken wire) that is deteriorating and overgrown in places. Whilst the plots generally remain open there has been ad hoc encroachment of built form, including the construction of no.16 (which has a visually complex mixture of balconies and extensions to its rear) and the conversion of no.16A with a monolithic rear extension set far back on the plot. These accretions have started to impact the characteristic openness and sense of space **[Plates 4.7.29-4.7.30]**.



4.7.29 *Interesting roof form on Lingdale Road*



4.7.30 *Intensification of backplots*

Cluster 5: Stanley Road (South): to the northwest of the golf course the larger early 20th century properties on Stanley Road provide a key piece of townscape. Unfortunately, the boundary treatments are of limited quality, generally comprised of close board fencing, later brick walls, and areas of overgrown shrubbery. Critically, however, they are all relatively low, and so allow views to the important architectural forms beyond. Of prominence is Hillstone, a large red brick property with tall chimneystacks, red brick gables with stone dressings, and brick transom and mullioned windows. This is currently undergoing conversion to apartments. The adjoining property, no.15, is prominent but in poor condition. Of further visual importance is no.31, with its twin gables. These properties differ significantly in their architectural execution but, critically, maintain a common scale and sense of separation, the frontage accentuated by key detailing such as chimneystacks. Despite some extensions, the plots also generally maintain their open rear gardens. Some detail, however, has begun to be lost, with the replacement of roofing with artificial slate and a wide-ranging use of uPVC windows **[Plates 4.7.31-4.7.35]**.



4.7.31 Stanley Road provides definition to the north of the course



4.7.32 Properties are well scaled but boundaries need improving



4.7.33 Strong chimneys and gables define built form here



4.7.34 Detailing is prominent on the course



4.7.35 Relationship between built form and mature landscaping

5 Setting

1 Introduction

2 Significance

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5 Setting

The Meols Drive Conservation Area has a unique urban and landscape setting, being sited between the urban centres of Hoylake and West Kirby, and rural and urban areas to the east and southeast, and straddling the coast at the tip of the Wirral peninsula (which defines its west and northern edges). The contribution that setting makes to the conservation area is rooted in the expression of its historic evolution, its distinct architectural and urban pattern placing it within the context of the wider urban development of the area and reinforcing its special character as an affluent suburb **[Plate 5.1]**. This is evident in the following areas.



5.1.1 Continuation of Market Street north

5.1 Relationship to Urban Areas

5.1.1 Hoylake

At its northern edge, Market Street provides an important linear continuation of the conservation area north into the centre of Hoylake. Here, the commercial and public-facing buildings of the area, including The Quadrant and Hoylake Chapel, are prominent and the streetscape continues almost seamlessly into the commercial buildings further north. The architecture of the former Town Hall, for example, is directly echoed on the opposite corner by 2 Market Street, with the street then continuing with a smaller-scale historic parade of shops, linked by the modern public realm works, which bring a holistic streetscape together along the linear course of Market Street. Views back into the conservation area from the north focus in particular on the upper section of the former Town Hall, with its cupola and gables prominent, and a gradual reveal of the remainder of The Quadrant, which together group the important civic buildings of Meols Drive **[Plates 5.1.1-5.1.2]**.

5.1.2 West Kirby

To its southern edge, the conservation area merges subtly with the urban core of West Kirby, marked by the institutional buildings of the school and United Reform Church, which lead to an interesting parade of Arts and Crafts shops beyond to the east, with the dominant form of the cupola of the former Barclays Bank to the southwest. Views back into the conservation area from Grange Road include in the foreground the south end of the United Reform Church, which is a critical marker of the conservation area at its most southern tip. The residential nature of the area is legible through the prominence of trees and the filtered views to the spire of St Andrew's Church and the turret of West Kirby School, with a clear change in density from the urban core of West Kirby, and its shops, to the sparser suburban area situated beyond the United Reformed Church. This change in character is further reinforced by the dense landscaping to the school site on Bridge Road, which limits views over the area (although some of the later buildings to the school are visible) and contrasts with the denser parade of shops to Grange Road. A further visual separation between West Kirby and Meols Drive is marked by a thin strip of green belt between the two, which also creates a visual connection to the wider countryside setting **[Plates 5.1.3-5.1.5]**.



5.1.2 Views south into the area from Market Street



5.1.3 Views south from the area to West Kirby



5.1.4 Views north from West Kirby dynamically reveal the URC



5.1.5 Views north bring together towers of the URC, school and St Andrew's

5.1.3 The King's Gap

Meols Drive Conservation Area abuts the King's Gap Conservation Area along Stanley Road, Beach Road, The King's Gap and along the northern coastline. Both areas developed at relatively similar times, in the late 19th century, and with similarly large properties. As such, perception of each area is critical in underpinning the legibility of the area's residential growth during this period.

Along The King's Gap, the two conservation areas meet adjoining the Christian Science Church. This is a less developed streetscape and the overarching influence of street trees is significant, although there are important views to the gable end of 1 The King's Gap. Of particular importance are views back from the King's Gap to The Quadrant, over the junction, which provides significant legibility to the area **[Plates 5.1.6-5.1.9]**.

Along Meols Drive, the frontage of the King's Gap along Stanley Road is visible through the gaps in buildings, with parts of each conservation areas experienced as a holistic townscape **[Plate 5.1.10]**. On Stanley Road, the continuity of the road brings together important early 20th century architecture from both areas. The rears of large early 20th century properties to the south of the street are visible from the golf course, with 19th and early 20th century frontages to the north side of the street also visible, providing significant architectural quality to the streetscape **[Plates 5.1.11-5.1.16]**.



5.1.6 Views along the King's Gap including the Christian Science Church and 1 King's Gap



5.1.7 Views west along the King's Gap terminate in the Green Lodge



5.1.8 Views east from the King's Gap dynamically reveal The Quadrant



5.1.9 Views east from the King's Gap dynamically reveal The Quadrant



5.1.10 Gaps in the building line on Meols Drive provide views to Stanley Road



5.1.11 Stanley Road seamlessly continues from one area to the other, with an increase in landscaping



5.1.12 Properties along Stanley Road are prominent on the golf course



5.1.13 Properties along Stanley Road are prominent on the golf course



5.1.14 Properties along Stanley Road are prominent on the golf course



5.1.15 Some backs on Stanley Road are more prominent from the golf course



5.1.16 The backs of properties on Stanley Road are also filtered through treelines

5.2 Relationship to the Wider Landscape to the East

To the immediate east, a public footpath straddles the railway line and the municipal golf course (Wirral Circular Trail), and the roofscape of Drummond Road is visible, filtered through the treelines. The general retention of key elements such as chimneystacks, and the sense of openness, help to underpin the legibility of the area's affluent development. Further afield, the area is generally indistinguishable in the flat landscape. However, at the high points (including Grange Hill), Meols Drive in particular is

very discernible as part of the wider area's form as a result of the visual prominence of the golf course and its strong definition by the coast. In these longer-range views properties form part of a broader townscape with common scale, common hues (with the overarching use of clay tiles with some slate), and major articulating factors (such as chimneys and gabled roof forms) that underpin its residential heart. The area's silhouette is crowned by more visible landmarks including the spire of St Andrew's Church, the modern lighthouse and the frontage of the grammar school. The spatial quality of Stanley Road, culminating at the lighthouse, is particularly noticeable **[Plates 5.2.1-5.2.3]**.



5.2.1 The roofscape of Drummond Road is visible on the Wirral Circular Trail



5.2.2 The roofscape of Drummond Road is visible on the Wirral Circular Trail



5.2.3 Long range view from Grange Hill

5.3 Relationship to the Coast

The west and north of the area are defined by the coast. Here, the openness of the setting enables strategic and panoramic views over the area that bring together its built and landscaped elements. From the west, for example, the coast provides significant views over the golf course and built form on Meols Drive and Stanley Road, culminating at the headland with the Red Rocks, anchored by the lighthouse. To the north, this is defined generally by the modern built form along the north side of Stanley Road. This obscures views to the wider area, but the seawall is a significant feature and the properties generally retain a domestic scale and hint at the affluent suburb beyond. Similarly, views east along the coast continue to the Promenade at the King's Gap, bringing together critical parts of the area's early residential development **[Plates 5.3.1-5.3.5]**.



5.3.3 The sweep of built form along the north coastline



5.3.1 View west from the coastline path to the Welsh Hills



5.3.2 Red Rocks provides a critical setting to the area



5.3.4 Built form continues into the King's Gap Conservation Area



5.3.5 The lighthouse and Red Rocks define the coastline

6 Issues & Opportunities

6 Issues & Opportunities

The fundamental issues affect the conservation area remain as they did in 2004, the overriding concerns being:

- **Ad hoc loss of detailing** including windows and roofing materials, and **unsympathetic alterations** including the insertion of balconies, inappropriate rooflights and replacement boundary treatments. This is prevalent across the area, including along key spaces such as Meols Drive, the coast and golf course, where rear elevations and boundaries back onto these spaces and are often more prominent than to the road **[Plate 6.1]**
- **Significant development pressure**, particularly adjoining the golf course, leading to the loss of single dwellings and the intensification of plots. This is coupled with pressure to convert existing dwellings to apartments, leading to accretions to historic buildings (such as extensions and fire escapes) and undermining the relationship between soft and hard landscaping, with significant losses of landscaped gardens in favour of hardstanding **[Plates 6.2-6.6]**.



6.1 The terrace on Station Road highlights loss of detail to windows, roofs and boundary walls



6.2 Redevelopment to the northwest side of Meols Drive has intensified built form and car parking



6.3 Development pressure has intensified highly visible backplots



6.4 Conversion has included raising boundary walls, creating a defensive aesthetic



6.5 Poor means of enclosure on key spaces (e.g. golf course)



6.6 Poor means of enclosure on key spaces (e.g. Meols Drive)

Overall, therefore, there is a need to consider how best to enable the **retention and restoration of detailing**, to **curtail development where it is not appropriate or justified** and to **maximise the quality of development** when it is.

This will be explored in more detail in the accompanying Management Plan but could include:

- Use of **Article 4 Directions**, coinciding with a **Local Development Order** to streamline permissions for restricted works.
- Publication of **design guidance and coding** to provide clarity over how conversion and re-development can be done sensitively. This must include reference to maintaining landscaped quality where additional car parking is required.
- Recommendations for **national or local listing**, recognising particularly key landmarks (such as the golf clubhouse) or particularly important examples of the residential built form.

Beyond the residential core of the area, there are further opportunities to enhance public-facing areas through select projects at the two gateways, building on the significant spatial and environmental enhancements that have been brought through the recent public realm scheme at the Hoylake Gateway. These include:

- **Railway station / The Quadrant public realm:** extending the pedestrian-focused public realm to the station and undertaking an enhancement scheme to its forecourt, softening the impact of

open car parking. Further consideration could be given to improving street lighting and highways signage, which dominate due to their size. **[Plate 6.7].**

- **The Quadrant frontage:** public realm works could accompany a replacement of the white rendered building adjoining the Post Office, with the introduction of active ground-floor uses to extend activation bought by ongoing works at Albert Road, and enclosing views to the poorer rear elevations along The Quadrant. Further consideration could be given to improving signage, replacing later shopfronts, and reinstating appropriate windows **[Plate 6.8].**
- **St Andrew's Church:** the introduction of landscaping to the car park, with the replacement, or better screening of, the hall **[Plate 6.9].**



6.7 Opportunity to extend public realm to the Railway Station



6.8 Key detailing on The Quadrant, including signage encroaching on windows, needs addressing



6.9 St Andrew's car park would benefit from landscaping

7 Boundary Revisions

1 Introduction

2 Significance

3 Historic Development

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8 Management Plan

7 Boundary Revisions

It has been agreed that several areas be added into the designated boundaries **[Plate 7.1]**. These fall into two categories:

- Areas of residential built form along the adjoining side streets **contemporary with the primary phase of development on Meols Drive** (c.1890-1935), which contribute to the legibility of the historic development of the street pattern and of the overarching architectural influences in the area.
- Areas of later, modern, built form that have **significant visual or spatial influence over the conservation area**, where the future management of key issues such as boundary treatments are important to preserving and enhancing its character and appearance.

Meols Drive Boundaries



7.1 Proposed Boundary Extensions

7.1 Character Area A

It is agreed to add the following into Character Area A given the similarities in age, street pattern and shared residential context and management issues [Plates 7.1.1-7.1.4]:

- **South side of Lingdale Road:** the north side of Lingdale Road is within the existing boundaries, having been included primarily due to its relationship with the golf course. However, Lingdale Road has architectural and historic interest in itself as a coherent streetscape retaining attractive detached dwellings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- **Graham Road and Eddisbury Road:** only the southern tip of Graham Road was included in the previously designated boundaries, reflecting its influence on the West Kirby gateway. However, this long streetscape, running parallel to Meols Drive, has a secluded and peaceful character with a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings dating from the early 20th century and set into mature landscaped plots, adjoining West Kirby School and the tennis club.
- **Drummond Road:** Drummond Road runs parallel to Meols Drive and has interest as a surviving street scene of semi-detached and terraced dwellings dating from the late 19th century, predating many of the area's domestic dwellings. Drummond Road is part of a coherent townscape block of late 19th century dwellings situated to the northern part of Meols Drive (almost all of which are included within the boundaries). Whilst there has been a higher level of alteration here to detailing, including boundary treatments, this has not wholly eroded its character.



7.1.1 Graham Road



7.1.2 Drummond Road



7.1.3 Lingdale Road



7.1.4 Eddisbury Road

7.2 Character Area B

Though Montrose Court is a modern, detracting, building it is considered to have a significant spatial and visual influence on the conservation area, defining the northwest corner of the gateway area at the junction. It is considered that the future management and development of the site would benefit from careful consideration in relation to the character and appearance of the conservation area, including careful management of its front boundary wall and landscape. **[Plate 7.2.1].**



7.2.1 Montrose Court

7.3 Character Area C

108 Meols Drive forms part of the townscape block to the south side of Lingdale Road and has an important visual impact on the West Kirby gateway, contrasting positively with the United Reform Church and grammar school as a pair of late 19th century semi-detached dwellings. **[Plate 7.3.1].**



7.3.1 108 Meols Drive

7.4 Character Area D

Here, it is agreed to add **Coronation Road, The Royal**, the **north side of Stanley Road** and the **east side of Beach Road**. The south side of Stanley Road was included in the designated boundaries of 2004, in part due to its influence over the golf course. There are, however, also some important survivals to the north side of the road, dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Whilst there has been a greater scale of loss to these earlier dwellings to the north side of the road, as well as to roads leading off the area, it has a significant spatial and visual influence on the coast, which is critical for appreciating the residential area from its setting. The modern folly lighthouse provides a key orientating feature to the headland, and a stretch of properties, including modern and historic dwellings, further east are visually prominent in views from the golf course in the short and longer-ranges. As such, given their major influence over key spaces, it is considered that the management of these buildings is essential for preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area. **[Plates 7.4.1-7.4.5].**



7.4.1 Historic property on Stanley Road



7.4.2 Key frontage overlooking the golf course



7.4.3 Modern properties on Stanley Road are well scaled and visually prominent from key spaces (e.g. golf course)



7.4.4 Modern properties on Coronation Road and the Royal have a critical impact on the coastline



7.4.5 Hoylake Lighthouse is modern but a critical feature providing legibility to the headland

7.5 New Conservation Area Boundary

[Plate 7.5]



7.5 *New Conservation Area Boundary*

8 Management Plan



8 Management Plan

Introduction

The Meols Drive Conservation Area was designated in 2004, retaining its original boundaries until they were extended in 2025 as part of the re-appraisal process **[Plate 8.1]**.

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' as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Section 69). When dealing with planning applications in conservation areas Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC) is required to ensure that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area' (Section 72). Also, WMBC has a duty 'from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas' (Section 71). This Management Plan is an example of the proposal envisaged in Section 71.



8.1 Meols Drive Conservation Area Boundaries

The 1990 Act (as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (2013)) prevents the demolition of buildings in conservation areas without planning permission and allows for the service of Urgent Works Notices for vacant buildings in a similar way to those for listed buildings. Development carried out without the required planning permission, or failure to comply with any approval conditions, amounts to unauthorised works. Unauthorised works can include building works, changes of use, advertisements, non-compliance with conditions on an existing planning permission or the unauthorised felling of protected trees. Breaches of planning control may be subject to enforcement action by the local planning authority, WMBC.

The sections of the 1990 Act form the foundation for WMBC to help manage the built environment in such a way as to retain the special qualities of conservation areas. There are, however, a wide range of other pieces of legislation, national guidance and local policy which assist in this task. They deal with other types of heritage assets, such as listed buildings, additional controls to supplement those included in the 1990 Act (often called Article 4 Directions), various types of repair and enforcement notices, and advice on how to assess the impact of development on the setting of an area or building and many other related topics.

Consequently, it is important that this document is not read in isolation from additional guidance and policy documents; key local documents are the [Hoylake Neighbourhood Masterplan](#) (June 2021), the [Wirral Unitary Development Plan](#) (adopted in 2000)

and the [Wirral Local Plan 2021 to 2037](#) (currently in submission draft form). Where applicable, links to the documents have been listed in the relevant sections below to provide additional guidance.

The following set of management aims and principles are based upon the understanding of the conservation area outlined in the Appraisal, most critically the challenges and opportunities for enhancement identified in Section 6. They seek to provide guidance to WMBC in determining planning applications for development and to building owners and developers when preparing development proposals.

It is essential that any Management Plan supports a modern community and considers both social and economic factors. In view of this, a stakeholder consultation process has been undertaken and has formed an important aspect in formulating the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, whilst a formal public consultation process is undertaken as part of the adoption process. Conservation areas are not frozen entities, and their contribution should be seen in the broader context of both Hoylake and the Borough of Wirral more broadly. Therefore, it is essential that these principles remain flexible and are reviewed and monitored on a regular basis to ensure that they remain relevant to the changing ambitions, issues and priorities of the people who live in, work in and visit Hoylake, as well as to the contribution that the conservation area makes to the broader context of the Wirral Peninsula.

The main aim of the following principles is the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area through 1. the protection and improvement of those existing buildings and townscape features that make a positive contribution and 2. the introduction of good quality, contemporary, design. There is also a presumption against demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution.

There will be some cases of overlap between this Management Plan and existing policy documents and guidance. It is not the remit of this document to address matters associated with the wider management of the community.

Each set of management principles is underpinned by a series of overarching strategic aims centred on the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area. The plan then concludes with a series of recommendations and it is the intention that these are brought forward through a collaborative approach between WMBC, the local community (including owners, local interest groups and developers, amongst other groups) and various funding streams, as and when opportunities for funding arise, in order to bring about really meaningful change, where input is required from everyone.

The understanding of the Meols Drive Conservation Area provided in the Appraisal shows that there are a number of key objectives for the area that, if implemented, would contribute to achieving the following key ambitions:

- Help people understand the significance of the conservation area;
- Suggest opportunities to enhance the area's character and appearance;
- Stimulate local interest in both the protection and enhancement through high-quality development of the conservation area for present and future generations;
- Help address the challenges facing the area;
- Encourage the conservation, repair, reuse and management of the area's historic features and public realm;
- Aid residents and developers in their planning of both small alterations and larger scale developments;
- Provide officers with area specific guidance to help in their appraisal and determination of planning applications;
- Engage with and encourage owners of properties within the conservation area to meet their responsibilities in respect of repair, reuse and sustainability;
- Promote high-quality design in development proposals;
- Provide WMBC with an up to date, evidence-based appraisal and management plan for the designated conservation area of Meols Drive.
- Contribute to the economic and social prosperity of Hoylake.

The following Principles and Recommendations therefore include opportunities for both long-term and short-term change.

Consultation

Consultation with the community and WMBC was carried out in March 2024 to establish an understanding of how and why the conservation area is valued by the community, what are regarded as issues and threats, and where opportunities for enhancement might exist. Four questions were asked of participants via Google Forms or printed versions of the form. 8 responses were recorded via Google Forms with an additional 15 responses recorded via printed form.

An additional public pop-up consultation session was held on 12th March 2024, where the public were encouraged to write on plans of the area and post it notes. 11 post it notes were added to the plans. Both the public pop-up and Google Form were advertised by Hoylake Vision and WMBC on their social media platforms and websites with a QR code and link provided.

This section summarises the responses, which have informed the Principles and Recommendations below.

The Value of the Conservation Area [Plate 8.2]

The Meols Drive Conservation Area is valued for its historic architecture and particularly its Victorian and Edwardian (c.1830-1919) buildings. The number and variety of these buildings is regarded as an important articulation of the historic significance of Liverpool as a trading port and respondents emphasised the area's strong sense of heritage and identity.

Residents also appreciate the historic character of the area's buildings, the use of traditional materials such as sandstone, the spacious roads, the open landscapes and the presence of public spaces (such as Queen's Park). The tree lined Meols Drive, The Quadrant and the Royal Liverpool Golf Course are highlighted as being of particular value within the conservation area.



8.2 What makes the conservation area special

Threats and Issues [Plate 8.3]

Inappropriate alterations, demolition and unsympathetic new development were repeatedly identified as the major threat to the special character of the area, alongside the hard landscaping of front gardens for parking. Over-development is a particular concern, with unsympathetic, poor-quality, design, cited as a major issue and as a cause of associated issues including traffic congestion, parking challenges and pressures on amenities such as schools. The associated loss of historic buildings is also regarded as a key issue.

In addition, incremental alterations such as the use of uPVC windows and concrete roof tiles were also highlighted as a threat to the character and visual quality of the conservation area.

Other issues highlighted included a perceived poor management and care of public spaces and of buildings such as the former Town Hall / Urban District Offices (part of The Quadrant and now in private ownership). Commercial activities are also regarded as a threat to the primarily residential character of the area, primarily in the operating hours of the nighttime economy.

There is also concern that the policies and guidance documents currently existing may not adequately address the need to preserve the area's character and heritage or meet the threats and challenges that are currently experienced.

Environmental issues including beach maintenance and issues around dog mess are also highlighted.



8.3 Threats and issues

Potential Extensions

Residents viewed potential extensions of the conservation area favourably, with several responses also proposing additional areas for review.

Drummond Road, Stanley Road, Coronation Road, Morpeth Road, Airlie Road, Lingdale Road and Graham Road were all suggested as potential extensions, based on their distinctive character and mainly intact Victorian and Edwardian suburban architecture. The corner of Riversdale and Grange Roads was also suggested for inclusion due to its visual importance at the gateway into West Kirby.

Following analysis of these areas it was agreed that Drummond Road, Stanley Road, Coronation Road, Morpeth Road, Airlie Road, Lingdale Road and Graham Road were all of high architectural quality and contemporary with the area's primary phase of development; they were considered to contribute to the legibility of the historic street pattern and architectural influences within the area.

The additional extensions, whilst broadly of some architectural and historic merit, were rejected because of their character diverging from that of the conservation area. Overlooking the southern gateway into the site, the buildings represent the start of the transition towards the settlement of West Kirby.

Needs and Opportunities

There is a strong consensus on the importance of preserving the conservation area's special character, the careful management of development and the need to ensure that any changes enhance rather than detract from this identity and appeal. There is a strong commitment to conserving the unique character and heritage of the conservation area, a keenness to capitalise on opportunities for its enhancement and an awareness of various challenges and threats.

There are several key areas of both concern and perceived opportunities:

1. The importance of preserving the conservation area's special character, which is also seen as contributing to its economic vitality.
2. A perceived need for improved public guidance on what makes the conservation area special, to give clarity and inform development.
3. A perceived need for stronger protection of this local identity and character, with calls to limit alterations to building exteriors whilst ensuring that any new development enhances the conservation area (rather than detracting).

4. The sense of a need for an updated management plan and associated guidance to inform decision making, and a desire for stronger planning controls (such as Article 4 Directions) and enforcement to prevent over-development and loss of character.
5. A desire for greater public involvement in the development process and better access to information around planning applications.
6. A desire to see sustainable design practices promoted in new development, whilst still preserving the area's character.
7. A concern that adequate parking should be provided for any new development.
8. Concern about environmental harm in, for example, the removal of trees during nesting season, the failure to restore green verges after works and a perceived general lack of maintenance of green spaces.

A Enhancement

A.1 Repair and Maintenance of Buildings

Aim: To ensure that buildings are appropriately maintained in order to prevent the negative impact that poor upkeep and maintenance can have on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Principle A.1a

It is essential that the buildings are subject to general maintenance by their owners on a regular basis. This should include the following:

- Re-painting of external joinery
- General minor repairs to windows, including replacement of glazing where necessary
- Repointing using appropriate mixes
- Removal of debris from gutters
- Removal of redundant fixtures and fittings
- Repairs, including repair of missing or slipped roof tiles to prevent water ingress
- Repairs to masonry render and paintwork where these are already present.

Principle A.1b

When undertaking repairs, materials should be used on a like-for-like basis and be appropriate to the building's architectural period. Salvage and existing materials should be used as far as possible.

Principle A.1c

Features and materials that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area should be retained, or reinstated where lost. These include, but are not limited to, clay roof tiles and Welsh slates, timber-framed windows and leaded glazing, decorative dressings in red brick, terracotta, tile and stone, "black and white" plasterwork (some with pargetting) and mock timber framing, bay windows and Dutch gables, overhanging eaves and decorative eaves details, bargeboards/ fascias and chimneystacks and chimneypots. The rich detailing and high-quality craftsmanship and materials of these features, or any replacements, should be maintained.

Principle A.1d

Render and paintwork should not be added to buildings or boundary walls where not present historically.

Further Guidance Links:

Historic England online guidance: Looking after Historic Buildings

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/>

Historic England, Maintaining and Repairing an Older Home

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/maintain-repair/>

A.2 Alterations to Existing Buildings

Aim: To ensure that, as a minimum, alterations to buildings preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, with opportunities taken to bring about an enhancement where possible.

Principle A.2a

The replacement of windows, doors, roofing materials and decorative details should conform to traditional designs and materials found within the conservation area and be appropriate to the character of the building. The diversity of the different character areas should be respected; features appropriate to a domestic building should not be introduced into a commercial building, or those of one period of dwellings incorporated into a house of an earlier or later character where this would be inappropriate to its style. All alterations should preserve the high design and material quality of the larger and earlier houses in particular.

Principle A.2b

When works to buildings are proposed it will be expected that detracting features such as satellite dishes, ducting, lighting and alarm boxes will be removed or more discreetly located. When installing these items the impact of such equipment on the appearance of buildings and the conservation area should be taken into consideration.

Principle A.2c

Extensions to buildings should have regard to the character and appearance of the principal building. They must be of an appropriate design, mass, scale, height, colour, material, layout and form to ensure that they are subservient to the original building and that this is not obscured or overdeveloped. Extensions should not alter the character of the building or plot.

Principle A.2d

Extensions to buildings should:

- Respect the height, scale and general form of the building
- Respect the architectural character, scale, massing and material palette of the conservation area
- Wherever possible, be confined to rear or secondary elevations and respect established building lines. Extensions to the front or street facing facades, including porches and fire escapes, will be discouraged
- Utilise traditional materials of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including clay tiles, brick, timber, stone and white-painted plasterwork
- Use contemporary materials when appropriate, where they are sympathetic to the building, ensuring that these are of the highest quality and are tried and tested for durability and long-term effects
- Be of a depth that is proportionate to the host building and respect any existing additions to adjoining buildings. However, not all existing extensions or alterations, which may be many years old, should be regarded as setting a precedent for future changes

- Retain a proportionate area of garden/outside amenity space and not alter the character of this, particularly where properties have large open garden settings.

Principle A.2e

Balconies and roof extensions/alterations should:

- Be sympathetic to the appearance of the existing building and, where appropriate, its neighbours; they should not disrupt the generally consistent rooflines
- Be subordinate to the host building, set within the pitched roofslope and retaining the cornice lines and eaves levels unaltered
- Ideally, be located on the rear roof pitches and not visually intrude into surrounding views
- Where rooflights or solar panels are proposed these should be confined to the rear or side elevations (aside from those that are street facing) and be set flush with the roofslope
- Typically not extend above the generally roof height of two to three storeys
- Reflect and enhance the existing skyline and roofscape, which is characterised by steeply pitched roofs, frequently punctuated with hips, dormer windows, gables, turrets and tall and highly decorative chimneys.

Principle A.2f

Where properties abut the northern coastline or the golf course equal consideration should be given to the impact of their rears on the visual amenity of the conservation area, which may be of greater visual prominence than the corresponding frontages. In such cases, the rears of these buildings should be treated as potentially being equivalent to their street facing frontages in the Principles both above and below. The enhancement of building rears, rear gardens and rear boundary treatments will be supported where currently detracting.

Principle A.2g

The conversion of existing dwelling houses to apartments through subdivision and/or extension requires careful consideration of the consequent changes to, among others, delivery access, parking, and external services, such as condensing units. Changes that have a detrimental impact on the conservation area will not be permitted.

A.3 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change

Aim: To contribute locally to the transition to a low-carbon future by shaping Hoylake in a way that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, reuses existing resources and supports renewable energy adaptations. This will contribute to carbon reductions whilst also increasing future resilience to extreme weather.

Principle A.3a

The thermal upgrade of houses is strongly encouraged through the use of double, triple or secondary glazing and internal wall cladding. External wall cladding is unlikely to be acceptable on historic dwellings within the conservation area. The use of double or triple glazing will be assessed on a case-by-case basis subject to the window profiles and, where appropriate, the retention or reinstatement of glazing bars.

Principle A.3b

Where solar panels or solar slates are proposed they should be located to the rear or side elevations (aside from those that are street facing) and be set flush with the roofslope. If this is not possible (to maximise solar gain), planning permission will be required to ensure a balanced approach to heritage conservation and climate change mitigation is taken.

Principle A.3c

Domestic roof-mounted wind turbines are unlikely to be acceptable due to the impact they will have on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Proposals will require planning permission to ensure a balanced approach to heritage conservation and climate change mitigation is taken.

Principle A.3d

Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) should be located to the rear or side elevations (aside from those that are street facing) in locations not visible from the street where possible. Thought should be given to the amenity of neighbours when siting ASHPs within domestic gardens. GSHPs may require archaeological mitigation.

Principle A.3e

Domestic electric car charging points should be located to the rear or side elevations where possible. Charging points will be acceptable on front elevations where existing private parking exists. The charging point should be mounted as close to the parking as possible.

Principle A.3f

Additional considerations may apply where the rears of properties are visible from the north coastline or the golf course.

Principle A.3g

Where existing downpipes, hoppers or rainwater goods are being replaced, pipes with a wider diameter or a more resilient design should be considered to mitigate the harmful effect of extreme weather and the potential for water ingress associated with this. New fittings should be replaced using traditional materials (typically cast-iron) where possible.

A.4 Boundary Treatments and Gardens

Aim: To prevent the cumulative harm brought about by the erosion of a landscaped character to front gardens and loss or inappropriate replacement of boundary treatments, as well as to enhance the conservation area through their reinstatement.

Principle A.4a

Front gardens should remain green spaces and any change in surfaces should be permeable and retain a landscaped character; non-permeable surfaces require planning permission. Where gardens have already been hard landscaped the full or partial reinstatement of soft landscaping will be actively supported; in addition, or where this is not possible, the replacement of inappropriate or poor-quality materials with more sympathetic surfaces will also be encouraged.

Principle A.4b

Historic materials should be retained in-situ to front paths, yards and entrance porches and reinstated where previously removed. Where modern materials are unsympathetic or poor quality their replacement will be encouraged.

Principle A.4c

Wide openings or the total removal of boundary treatments have a detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area and will be resisted.

Principle A.4d

The reinstatement of boundary treatments comprised of low stone/brick walls (with gate piers and stone copings) and hedging is encouraged; the introduction of close board fencing or non-traditional materials should be avoided. The replacement of close board fencing is actively encouraged, as is the avoidance or shortening or overly tall boundary treatments.

Principle A.4e

Trees and shrubbery located in private gardens should be retained and appropriately maintained to preserve their contribution to the verdant character of the conservation area. The existing Tree Protection Orders and the protection afforded by conservation area designation should be observed and, where appropriate, enforced.

Principle A.4f

Where attached or detached ancillary structures (such as garages) are constructed to the side of dwelling buildings these should be sympathetic in size, scale, character and materials and subordinate to the main building, and should retain an appropriate portion of amenity space.

A.5 Public and Commercial Frontages and Signage

Aim: To preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the human experience of the conservation area at ground-floor level, and to protect the visual amenity of The Quadrant as its commercial and civic focal point.

Principle A.5a

The frontages of commercial and public buildings must be in-keeping with the character and appearance of the host building and relate satisfactorily to the design of the upper parts of the façade. Original features such as fascias, cornices, fanlight windows and mullions should be retained or, where lost, reinstated, and shopfronts should not conceal historic stonework. All ground-floor windows and doors should be timber and appropriate in character and material to the individual building. UPVC windows and doors will not normally be accepted.

Principle A.5b New shopfronts and other commercial frontages within historic buildings must preserve those elements that contribute to the traditional character of the building (including, where appropriate, historic corbels, pilasters, transom lights, fascias and stallrisers), or seek to reinstate these where missing. Size, scale, elaborate or simple design and detailing, the use of correct materials, and colour schemes are all important in making shopfronts acceptable as parts of existing buildings and areas. Shopfronts should not be **introduced to commercial buildings where this is not part** of their historic character.

Principle A.5c

Signage must be sensitively designed and integrated into the shopfront and street scene. It must not dominate the building façade and should relate to its character, scale and architectural features. Internally illuminated box fascia and projecting signs will not be acceptable. Window vinyls will not be supported.

Principle A.5d

High-level signs will not be acceptable. Shop signs must be located at fascia level and follow the pattern within the street. The location of signage on non-retail buildings must also be carefully considered so as to not harm the appearance of the building.

Principle A.5e

Visual clutter should also be avoided to the street facing elevations and security lights and cameras should be appropriately sited to minimise their visual impact. When applications for works to public and commercial buildings are proposed it will be expected that detracting elements of signage and shopfronts will be removed. Ventilation ducts, air-conditioning units, security equipment and wiring should be relocated to more discreet locations and redundant services/wiring removed. Applications for future proposals must take into consideration the impact on the appearance of buildings and the conservation area.

Principle A.5f Solid external roller shutters will not be permitted unless the need for these can be robustly justified and enforcement action will be taken to secure their removal where it is expedient to do so; lattice grilles or internal roller shutters would be acceptable alternatives.

Principle A.5g

Street signage and permanent banner signs will not be approved and enforcement action may be taken where unauthorised.

Principle A.5h

To The Quadrant the upper floors are particularly prominent; properties should be well-maintained and, wherever possible, visual clutter should be avoided and windows be sympathetic to those at ground floor and the character of the building more generally.

B Development and Redevelopment

B.1 New Development

Aim: To preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and ensure that any future development respects the prevailing form and scale and enhances its positive characteristics.

Principle B.1a

Demolition or extensive redevelopment will not be permitted for Landmark and Positive buildings and will ordinarily only be permitted for Neutral buildings in exceptional circumstances.

Principle B.1b

The proposed demolition or extensive redevelopment of Detractor buildings will be supported where the alterations would bring about an enhancement of the conservation area.

Principle B.1c

The urban grains/patterns and historic densities of the primary, secondary and tertiary streets and the different character areas should be respected and the intensification or over-development of plots and the amalgamation of separate plots will be resisted. In residential character areas of the conservation area the established domestic scale and character of properties and the common siting within plots should be respected and maintained. The introduction of modern cul-de-sacs will not be supported.

Principle B.1d

There is a presumption against development in gardens, other than for the incidental enjoyment of the main dwelling (such as garages, sheds and garden structures).

Principle B.1e

Development must be high-quality and of an appropriate height, scale, massing, form, density, material and colour palette, layout, plot position, composition, detailed design and use, respect the prevailing architectural character and appearance (but avoid direct imitation), preserve the open, verdant, character of the area and complement the setting of heritage assets. New development should not compete with the historic for visual and spatial dominance.

Principle B.1f

Exemplary modern design is encouraged where it is well-designed, of an appropriate scale, using good quality appropriate materials and carefully considered to respond to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Principle B.1g

All development should have appropriate active frontages to the street at ground floor.

Principle B.1h

Well-considered design must be used to retain, wherever possible, positive aspects of built form, floorscape, landscape and mature planting. Development proposals must protect existing open spaces, walls, railings, materials and other elements that are an integral part of the conservation area.

Principle B.1i

New development within the commercial core should be sensitive to the nodal and gateway quality of the junction and should avoid competing with The Quadrant or having a detrimental impact on its setting.

Principle B.1j

All planning decisions should be informed by the Hoylake Design Guide & Codes and aligned with the Hoylake Neighbourhood Masterplan. Those relating to sites within the boundaries of the Hoylake Neighbourhood Plan Development Area should also align with the Hoylake Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

B.2 Views and Setting

Aim: To preserve and protect the established and valued views of the surrounding area that contribute to the historic context and setting of the conservation area, as well as local views within the conservation area itself.

Principle B.2a

Development within the setting of The Quadrant and other landmark buildings must preserve their significance and respect their important townscape roles.

Principle B.2b

Development within or outside of the conservation area that would harmfully intrude into the views identified in the Appraisal and cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area overall will not normally be permitted.

Principle B.2c

Development within the setting of the conservation area (but outside the boundary) must assess the impact of the proposals on heritage significance to avoid harm to key views or incremental loss of historic character.

Principle B.2d

Any future development within the setting of the conservation area must preserve (or better reveal) those elements of its setting that make a positive contribution to its overall character.

Recommendation Bi

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council should publicise and encourage engagement with the Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015 to 2020 (NDP) and its successor (currently in preparation) and the Hoylake Neighbourhood Masterplan.

Recommendation Bii

On the completion of consultation and review, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council should adopt the Hoylake Design Guide & Codes as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), promote its uptake to inform design and provide clarity over acceptable change, and ensure that it is used alongside the UDP and NDP to guide decision making on applications.

Further Guidance Links:

Hoylake Vision. A Neighbourhood Development Plan for Hoylake 2015 to 2020. Made by resolution of Wirral Council, 19th December 2016
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/hoylake-ndp-made-19-december-2016.pdf/download?inline>

Hoylake Neighbourhood Masterplan.
 Version of June 2021

https://hoylakevision.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/DR_10904_Hoylake_NDP_MASTERPLAN_15.06.21_Optimised.pdf

Hoylake Design Guide & Codes. Consultation Draft. March 2022

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/wbc045-hoylake-design-guides-codes-2022.pdf>

National Planning Policy Framework (updated 2019)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf

National Planning Practice Guidance (updated 2019)
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Historic England, updated 2017)
<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>

C Public Realm

C.1 Public Realm

Aim: To preserve those elements that contribute to the verdant and open character of the conservation area.

Principle C.1a

Grass verges should be retained and appropriately managed.

Principle C.1b

The existing groups of bus stops, dustbins and benches add to the amenity value of the area and should be retained and, ideally, enhanced visually.

Principle C.1c

The installation of any new street furniture (including bins, lighting columns and telecommunication cabinets) should take into account the impact of their location on the character and appearance of the conservation area, must be limited to that required and should not clutter the street. It must be of a suitable standard of design, accord with the patterns of items already in use, generally be sited so as to be visually unobtrusive, and have regard to the character and quality of the existing townscape.

Principle C.1d

Trees and other soft landscaping located in the public realm should be retained and appropriately maintained to preserve their contribution to the verdant character of the conservation area.

Principle C.1e

The group of high-quality benches and bins, public art, road, parking bay and pavement surfaces, and lawns, flower beds and trees situated adjacent to The Quadrant should be protected and maintained. Any interventions or repairs to the surfaces, including those by statutory undertakers, should be rectified in a timely manner, using matching like-for-like materials. The use of tarmac will not be acceptable.

Principle C.1f

Development on the Royal Liverpool Golf Course will not be permitted unless directly associated with the operation of the club.

Recommendation Ci

In The Quadrant and Railway Station area, the Council should also consider opportunities to improve the visual appearance of the street lighting, which is domineering in scale, and to rationalise highways signage

Recommendation Cii

Wirral Borough Council should consider extending the pedestrian-focused public realm at The Quadrant to run as far as the Railway Station, with an associated enhancement to the station forecourt.

Further Guidance Links:

Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places (Historic England, 2018)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/streets-for-all/>

D Management

D.1 Community Engagement

Aim: To give the conservation area a clear identity, engage the public and developers with its special character and identity, develop awareness and foster a sense of ownership amongst building owners and occupants, in order to ensure its long-term conservation and enhancement.

Principle D.1a

The full interactive Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be made available on Wirral Borough Council's website and in interactive format to encourage its use.

Principle D.1b

Wirral Borough Council will continue to engage with stakeholders to deepen their understanding of the significance of the conservation area and invite their input into how its character and appearance can be conserved.

D.2 Future Management

Aim: To ensure the long-term conservation of the area, make sure that the conservation area is correctly managed and, where possible, bring forward enhancements.

Principle D.2a

Owners are responsible for ensuring the appropriate consents are in place before undertaking any changes to their property (including, but not limited to, planning permission, listed building consent, advertisement consent and permission for works to trees).

Principle D.2b

Wirral Borough Council will investigate unauthorised development and may take necessary enforcement action to ensure compliance with national and local policy, including the management Principles set out above, where appropriate to do so.

Principle D.2c

A regular review of this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, should be undertaken, updating policy as required and ensuring that the plan remains a useful, relevant working document. A full review should be undertaken within four years of adoption and every four years thereafter.

Recommendation Di

Wirral Borough Council should work with the Hoylake Conservation Area Association, Hoylake Vision (the Hoylake Community Planning Forum) and other stakeholders to encourage community ownership of the conservation area and its management, using the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as a tool.

Recommendation Dii

Wirral Borough Council should consider introducing an Article 4(2) Direction to prevent the harmful impact of cumulative, small-scale change. The Council should also consider the use of Local Development Orders to streamline permissions for restricted works.

Recommendation Diii

Wirral Borough Council will adopt the extensions proposed within the Appraisal to give a clearer definition and boundary of the conservation area and provide protection to identified streets and buildings of special interest that currently lie beyond its limits.

Recommendation Div

Wirral Borough Council should publish design guidance and coding to provide clarity on acceptable conversion and re-development for multi-household occupancy. This must include reference to maintaining landscaped quality where additional car parking is required.

Recommendation Dv

Wirral Borough Council should consider making recommendations for national and local listing to include landmark buildings and important examples of the residential built form.

Further Guidance Links

Hoylake Vision. A Neighbourhood Development Plan for Hoylake 2015 to 2020. Made by resolution of Wirral Council, 19th December 2016

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/hoylake-ndp-made-19-december-2016.pdf/download?inline>

Hoylake Neighbourhood Masterplan.
Version of June 2021

https://hoylakevision.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/DR_10904_Hoylake_NDP_MASTERPLAN_15.06.21_Optimised.pdf

Hoylake Design Guide & Codes. Consultation Draft. March 2022

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/wbc045-hoylake-design-guides-codes-2022.pdf>

Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Including Minerals and Waste Policies). Written Statement. Adopted February 2000

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/1.-part-1.pdf/download?inline>

Wirral Local Plan 2021 – 2037. Submission Draft, May 2022

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/sd1-wirral-local-plan-2021-2037-submission-draft-may-2022-reg-19-publication-final-260422/download?inline>

National Planning Policy Framework (updated 2021)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740441/National_Planning_Policy_Framework_web_accessible_version.pdf

National Planning Practice Guidance (updated 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

Historic England online guidance: Looking after Historic Buildings

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/>

Vacant Historic Buildings: Guidelines of Managing Risks (Historic England, updated 2018)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/vacanthistoricbuildings/heag183-vacant-historic-buildings/>

Stopping the Rot: A Guide to Enforcement Action to Save Historic Buildings (Historic England, updated 2016)

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/stoppingtherot/heag046b-stopping-the-rot.pdf/>

Heritage Counts (Historic England, updated 2018)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/>

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Historic England, updated 2017)

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets.pdf/>

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/grants/our-grant-schemes/partnership-schemes-in-conservation-areas/>

Breathe New Life into an Old Place – Make It a Heritage Action Zone (Historic England)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/breathe-new-life-into-old-places-through-heritage-action-zones/>

National Lottery Grants for Heritage

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/national-lottery-grant-heritage>

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