EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

PRESTON

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JULY 2006

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INTRODUCTION

Preston's Conservation Area originated in the designation by Holderness Borough Council in 1991.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines a conservation area as **"an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance"**. For the designation of Conservation Areas to be effective, it is important that rational and consistent judgements are made in determining their special qualities and local distinctiveness, as well as their value to the local community. Such judgements should be based on a thorough understanding of the area in its wider context, reached through a detailed appraisal of its character.

The 2006 re-survey has been undertaken in accordance with Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals issued by English Heritage in August 2005, in order to meet the aim of national government that Conservation Areas should be re-surveyed every five years.

DEFINITION OF PRESTON'S SPECIAL INTEREST

The character of the Preston Conservation Area is to be found in the close-knit back-of-pavement edge disposition of its properties throughout its central core. The importance of its Grade I Church at the high-point of the Area is central, (both literally and figuratively) to the cohesion of the village. Dwellings are predominantly two-storey - only the former Vicarage (three storeyed) rising above this. The landscape and street-scape of the Conservation Area is unashamedly hard.

a) TOPOGRAPHY AND ITS RELEVANCE

The historic core of the village of Preston, which is the focus of the Conservation Area, lies about 6 miles from Hull, though, due to its 19th and 20th century expansion, the edge of the city is now less than two miles distant. Whilst parts of the village are only around 20ft above sea level, its higher parts, which include the centre of the village, are at nearer 40ft.

The Preston Conservation Area lies within the 'Burstwick to Withernsea Farmland' Landscape Character Area, as identified in the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment (ERYC, 2005). The Landscape Character Assessment recognises that, in contrast to the large field systems closer to the coastline, examples of medieval field systems can be observed at Preston, Hedon and Bilton and several moated sites and deserted medieval villages are present. Wetland habitats are also present in this Character Area, especially dykes and ponds with fenland plants including greater water parsnip and greater spearwort. As with other parts of Holderness the hedgerows are dominated by hawthorn, with hazel, ash, blackthorn, elder, field maple and dogwood also present.

The western edge of the Preston Conservation Area is adjacent to the 'Hedon, Preston and Bilton Farmland' Character Area. The Landscape Character Assessment describes how the urban edge of Hull impacts on the character of this agricultural landscape because of its stark interface between development and the countryside. This landscape is low lying and generally well drained with little significant tree cover. The relative flatness of the surrounding area has implications on relatively distant development, because of the impact this can have on views into and out of the Conservation Area. The

importance of this is reflected in Policy Env24 of the Holderness District Wide Local Plan (Adopted 1999). Field systems tend to be medium to large in size and are generally regular in pattern with hedgerows and drainage ditches acting as boundaries. The open nature of this landscape provides good views to the west over the skyline of Hull and to the east, landmark buildings such as the churches at Hedon and Preston are important landscape features. The cooling towers at Salt End are also a very dominant and highly visible feature of the southern skyline.

To the north of the Preston Conservation Area is the 'Central Holderness Open Farmland' Character Area. This Landscape Character Area is made up of the area that surrounds the two parkland Character Areas of Rise and Burton Constable and includes other villages such as Leven, Routh, Long Riston, Great Hatfield, Withernwick, Skirlaugh, Ellerby, West Newton, Sproatley and Humbleton. The Landscape Character Assessment describes this landscape as being one that is dominated by the influence of agricultural intensification within the River Hull floodplain and that, as is typical of much of Holderness, significant areas of woodland are scarce. Those areas of semi-natural woodland that are present in this landscape are dominated by ash, oak, hazel, hawthorn, elm, field maple and rowan. Fragments of wet woodland are also features of the landscape and these are dominated by alder and willows species. The fragment of ancient woodland at Bail Wood, near Aldbrough, provides an indication of the type of woodland that would have been more widespread in this landscape area historically. The hedgerows in this landscape area are typical of Holderness and are dominated by hawthorn with hazel, ash, blackthorn, elder, field maple and dogwood also present.

It is reasonable to assume that the development of Preston, which began in pre-Conquest days, may well have been determined by the existence of this higher ground with its benefits of affording protection from flooding, and the agricultural and domestic advantages that dryer land afforded in the days before the development of drainage systems came about.
The boggy nature of the land to the south east of the parish was such that, until 1830 there was no main road direct from Hull to Hedon (and beyond) and so all traffic had to go via Preston. The commerce which this route generated was beneficial to the village's development.

Whilst the lower lands are covered with alluvium - deposited by the tides from the Humber, the higher levels are nearly always of boulder clay.

The Former Primitive Methodist Chapel ,School Road (1822)

b) DISPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Although on the (old) main route from Hull to southern Holderness, the village's development was initially in an east-west direction with an "East End" and "West End". This development separated the two large open fields called North Field and South Field. The remaining lands were enclosed in 1777.

Perhaps because of the increasing benefits which stemmed from the growth of through traffic, in the 18th century the pattern of development changed. The north-south lane, previously called Kirkholme Street, became the location for most new development. Parallel developments also took place along Rectory Road. At enclosure various roads were altered or blocked up.

In the 19th century, development spread to School and Staithes Roads (running, respectively East and West), and in the 20th century, south towards Hedon, along Station Road. This ribbon development became so popular that specific policies have needed to be framed to ensure a presumption against the visual merger of Preston with Hedon along Station Road.

The population information provided by Poulson in his History of Holderness published in 1841, advises that within the "Township" there were 161 inhabited and 7 uninhabited properties, housing 183 families, of which 103 were chiefly involved in agriculture with a further 50 in trades, manufactures and handicrafts, making a population of 843 people in all. (By comparison current figures for the Parish indicate a population of 2,640 and 1,278 houses).

Prior to the 20th century, most occupations were agricultural of agriculture-linked, but with the increased mobility of the past 150 years, diversification into less locally dependant business enterprises has occurred.

c) RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF OPEN SPACES

Within the designated Conservation Area, open spaces are relatively few. Indeed, as will be shown in a subsequent section, Preston Conservation Area's character and appearance is that of an almost continuously built-up façade.

The views northwards from Staithes Road toward Main Street and those looking northwards from Station Road are important in demonstrating the elevated nature of the core of the village. In more hilly terrains, such distinction would hardly be significant, but given the flatness of the Plain of Holderness, all variations in level are of heightened significance for their tendancy to emphasis the scale and nature of development.

Late 1980's development, School Road

d) THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Situated on Main Street is All Saints Church. Within its grounds there is a wide selection of mature trees which enhance the church and its surroundings, providing an important visual amenity for the village's otherwise hard landscape. The species within the Church grounds include Silver Birch, Sycamore, Beech and Horse Chestnut. There is also a Red Chestnut which, during the Spring, displays a magnificent flush of deep red blossom.

Located at the front and to the rear of a late 20th century development down School Road are two mature specimen trees which have been protected and incorporated into the overall design of the development. The tree in front of the development is a superb Weeping Ash which provides the main focal point for the whole street. A large mature Sycamore is situated at the rear of the development which provides another focal point for residents of the area. Many mature trees are lost due to new

development. Because of the action of the former Borough Council these trees were protected, and provide an important visual amenity for the village.
There are two visually important stands of trees situated in the north and south of the Conservation Area which contain mainly mature Sycamore trees. Rectory Lane also contains trees that are visually important for the area including Lime and Horse Chestnut.

e) TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

There has been one Tree Preservation Order made in Preston Conservation Area since 1996 (when the East Riding of Yorkshire Council came into being) on a Weeping Willow in the garden of No. 6 Station Road. An Ash tree to the north of Manor Road and a Sycamore to the east of Station Road (outside the Conservation Area) were specifically protected before that in the 1990's. Notwithstanding this, however, anyone wishing to prune or remove any tree within the Conservation Area must give six week's notice to the Council.

f) ARCHAEOLOGY

Recorded in the Domesday Book in AD 1086 as Prestune, meaning 'priest farm', land here was held by Drogo de Brevere, one of the William the Conqueror's henchmen. The present focus of settlement at Preston lies along Main Street (formerly Kirkeholme Street) in a north-south alignment. This represents a change in the orientation of the village after the 18th century, partly as a result of the turnpiking of the road, and the inclosure of 1777. Formerly, the settlement at Preston had a linear plan, extending east to west across the length of the township separating the former North and South fields.

There was a church at Preston by AD1086 and in 1115, it was among those given to Aumale Abbey. The present church of All Saints has features dating from the 13th century. A parsonage house is recorded from the early 17th century, the site of which may lie nearby.

Further details of these sites are to be found in the Sites and Monuments Record which is held by The Humber Archaeology Partnership.

g) HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND ASSOCIATIONS

The Domesday Book also reported Preston as having a priest and a church. There were 10 carucates (a carucate is the amount of land that can be ploughed by one team of oxen in a year) of land to be taxed and 2 oxgangs (approximately 70 acres). There seems also to have been a further area of land under cultivation, 2 miles wide and 2 miles long, which included 200 acres of meadow.

(Hedon is not mentioned in the survey, which tends to suggest Preston's greater significance at that time.)

The importance of Preston over the centuries is witnessed by the number of roads, which radiated from it - to Bilton, Sproatley, Lelley, Burstwick, Hedon and Salt End. There also appears to have been a secondary route to Hull via Marfleet, with a ferry, later replaced by a foot-bridge, over the Old Fleet. There was also, at one time a direct route towards Burton Pidsea, though this appears to have become disused in the 18th century.

The Bilton-Hedon road was turn-piked in 1745 and it was not until some 85 years later that a direct road between Hull and Hedon was built.

There has been no less than 5 non-conformist chapels in the village:-

Baptist - School Road 1828 - demolished
Wesleyan - Main Street 1812 - replaced 1898
Wesleyan - Station Road 1898
Primitive - School Road 1822 - rebuilt 1867
Primitive - Hull Road 1911 - demolished

There still exists, at the north end of Main Street, a Hall of the United Ancient Order of Druids, erected in 1876, now used for recreational purposes.

h) BUILDING STYLE, AGE AND MATERIALS

Most of the buildings within the Preston Conservation Area date from the 19th century, a time of considerable development, when the village changed from being predominantly agricultural to a more mixed economy.

Of 105 older residential properties in the Conservation Area, 100 are two storey, three are single storey, one is 1½ storeys and one is three storey. Just under 80 of the properties are of brick finish, the remainder being either rendered, painted, or occasionally rustic clad. The colour of brick is a deep brown-red colour, though there are examples of lighter colours being used on occasion. On Rectory Lane there is a row of cottages where a contrasting cream coloured brick has been used for decorative purposes, (similar to several streets in Hedon which date from the late 19th century).

With regard to traditional roofing materials, the properties in the Conservation Area are more often in clay pan-tiles than in slate, of which latter material there are only a few remaining.

Although many properties will have had horizontal sliding sashes, hardly any of these survive, with such traditional windows as remain being vertical sliding sashes, usually of the larger-paned Victorian style rather than small-paned Georgian.

Only one quarter of the properties retain anything like their traditional doors, which would have been painted softwood, either batten style, four or six panelled.

Care must be taken when drawing on examples found in the Conservation Area, which has suffered badly from unsympathetic infill development and owner-occupier DIY enthusiasm, more on which is referred to in subsequent paragraphs.

Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (1898)

i) BUILDINGS OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Listed Buildings (within the Conservation Area)

All Saints Church (from 13th century) (I)

Outside the Conservation Area (but within Preston Parish)

Abbey House Farmhouse (1820 - 1840) with mid 20th century additions (II)
Magdalen Housing and flanking walls (1815) (II)
Dovecote and Stables at Magdalen House (1815) (II)
Little Weghill Farmhouse (1777) (II)
Field House Farmhouse (18th century) (II)
Somerdon House Farmhouse (c. 1825) (II)
Milestone (some 50m north of Daytona on Wyton Road) (Late 18th/early 19th century)

Unlisted Buildings of interest

43 Main Street (1777-9) much altered, and now with disappointing windows
Preston Cottage (18th and early 19th century with later alterations)

80 Main Street
21 Main Street
Westbourne House, Staithes Road
27 Main Street

j) ASPECTS CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

Traffic is, without hesitation, the greatest blight to the Conservation Area in Preston. Not only because of its direct consequences, which are bad enough, but also due to the effect it has on the buildings, which continue to suffer daily from the onslaughts of pollution, not to mention physical damage.

It almost goes without saying that the village will never be able to begin to achieve the potential which its character and appearance offer, until the traffic problem is resolved.

The traffic may also have been most often the cause of householder "improvements" which have so overwhelmingly replaced the traditional architectural features, as owners have turned to modern materials and technology to reduce noise and air-borne pollution. In few, if any, of East Riding's Conservation Areas have features been so universally altered and replaced.

More often discarded than not have been the traditional roofing materials - 60% of the Conservation Area's older buildings have concrete tiles. Even more altered are the windows, by nearly 90% replaced. Front doors have 'escaped' only slightly more often with 75% replaced with unsympathetic modern equivalents, more often designed with suburban housing estates in mind than traditional 19th century village cottages.

Many aspects of the village's street furniture, though often necessary, detract from the street-scene, as do the festoons of overhead wires and poles erected at several points.

POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE PRESTON CONSERVATION AREA

1) LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE

The special character and appearance of the Conservation Area at Preston is to be found the closely integrated nature of its generally uniform scale of domestic properties, almost always of plain design.

With scarcely a garden in sight in its central area, this is a village with something of the character of a very small town, hard in its appearance and lacking the softening benefits which trees and other landscape features can provide. It is for this reason that the oasis of greenery in the churchyard has such a noticeable impact.

The aspect of Main Street viewed from Staithes Road is important, showing the elevated nature of the Main Street properties.

The centre-piece of the village, both figuratively and literally is the exceptional Grade I All Saints Church, part cobble and part ashlar, with its splendid perpendicular tower. Whilst Hedon's and Patrington's churches may have been dubbed the "King" and the "Queen" of Holderness, this must surely be eligible for the title "Crown Prince", being a distinguished landmark for miles around.

Whilst it may have been a quirk of history that the main route through Preston had to go round the church, this detour is almost symbolic as the building withstands the continual assaults of traffic sweeping past it.

2) BUILDINGS WHICH CREATE A FOCAL POINT

The Nags Head Public House, Main Street
26 Kirk Road
Number 86 Main Street
Number 81 Main Street
Number 66 Main Street
Number 50 Main Street
Number 46 Main Street

Number 43 Main Street
Number 41 Main Street
Number 39 Main Street
Number 37 Main Street
Number 35 Main Street
Number 33 Main Street
Number 31 Main Street
Number 29 Main Street
Number 27 Main Street
Number 2 Main Street
The Cock and Bell Public House, Main Street
All Saints Church, Main Street
The Gables
The terraces of cottages in Rectory Lane, which have (or used to have) brickwork in common
33 School Road
1 Station Road
Methodist Church, Station Road
2 Station Road
4 Station Road
8 Station Road
13 Station Road

These buildings are highlighted because of the additional visual importance they enjoy because of their location. Planning applications which relate to them will therefore be considered against the criterion that their design, and detailing should reflect the importance of their location.

3) THE SCALE OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

With such a high proportion of buildings within the Conservation Area being of two storeys (for further details see section h) it is probable that new development would be expected to reflect a similar height.

Most properties are modest in size - particularly in the centre of the village, and applications for new development would be required to acknowledge this.

Towards the edges of the Area, where larger curtilages are available, it may be appropriate for buildings to reflect a larger scale, though this would be more likely to be in terms of area, rather than height. Indeed where a sites's location is sensitive to the view of the elevated part of the Conservation Area, particular attention will need to be paid to ensure that this aspect is not adversely affected.

4) RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

Due to the large-scale house-holder alterations which have taken place over the years, it is extremely difficult to comment on the original relative proportions of clay pan-tile to slate roof coverings.

Most properties in the Holderness area seem to have been pan-tile rather than slate, except where they were in close proximity to the Hull-Withernsea and Hull-Hornsea lines, rail freight being the means by which the slate (mainly from Wales) reached this part of Yorkshire.

The presumption will therefore be in favour of clay-pantile roof coverings on new developments and for the replacement of existing roofing materials as they need replacing. Slate coverings will, however, be expected to be repaired or replaced with slate.

The use of deep brown-red bricks will be encouraged, as these seem best to reflect the traditional local brick which has been used. Where modern varieties, rather than re-claims, are introduced, these should have a hand-formed finish.

Gutters should be of timber or cast-iron, and steps should where possible be in a granolithic finish with weather-bars - all traditional features.

Problems of discerning what were the original window frames is similarly difficult, because of replacements which have not reflected their predecessors either in style or, in some cases, materials. They should be of soft-wood, either in redwood or hemlock (both of which have a longer-lasting capacity), and should be of the sliding sash variety. Doors, batten type or four or six panelled should be in similar materials.

Garages should have timber, side-hinged and batten-type doors, where site conditions permit. They should normally be of brick to match the "parent" property.

5) RECOMMENDED FEATURES

Ridge-mounted chimney stacks, corbelled, or with a string-course (in brick) surmounted by relatively tall (approximately 75cm tall) plain red or cream cylindrical pots, make a significant impact on overtly residential properties, though they would probably not be suitable on converted agricultural buildings.

Concrete sills and contrasting gauged-arches above windows, (either in brick or concrete) can make a significant contribution to architectural detailing.

The introduction of styles reflecting the Area's history will be supported.

Several properties in Main Street have brickwork including rows of "headers", called English Garden Bond. The application of this style, where practical, will be encouraged.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This Appraisal has been the subject of public consultation with the Preston Parish Council and members of the public. The comments received through this consultation process have been taken into account in this the final published version of this document.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The principal legislation covering Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which provides the framework for designation, review and appraisal of Conservation Areas. There are also provisions within the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Government policy and guidance is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) "Planning and the Historic Environment".

The planning policy affecting Conservation Areas within the East Riding is set at the Regional, Sub-regional and Local level. The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for Yorkshire and the Humber (adopted December 2004) deals with the historic environment in Policy N2. This is developed at a sub-regional level by the Joint Structure Plan (JSP) for Kingston Upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire (adopted June 2005) in Policy ENV6. At a local level policies relevant to Preston Conservation Area are contained currently in the Holderness District Wide Local Plan (HDWLP) (adopted April 1999), Policies Env24 through to Env26. Other policies in this Plan can also affect the Conservation Area, including those dealing with new residential and commercial development, Listed Buildings and Archaeology. Preston also has a Village Design Statement (VDS) which has been prepared to guide development decisions in the village.

The RSS will be reviewed soon and the JSP will be incorporated into the Local Development Framework, which this will supersede the current Local Plans in due course.

LOCAL GENERIC GUIDANCE

Holderness Borough Wide Local Plan policy Env 24 - Env 26.

Leaflet by East Riding of Yorkshire Council "What are Conservation Areas?"

www.eastriding.gov.uk/planning/index..html

USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

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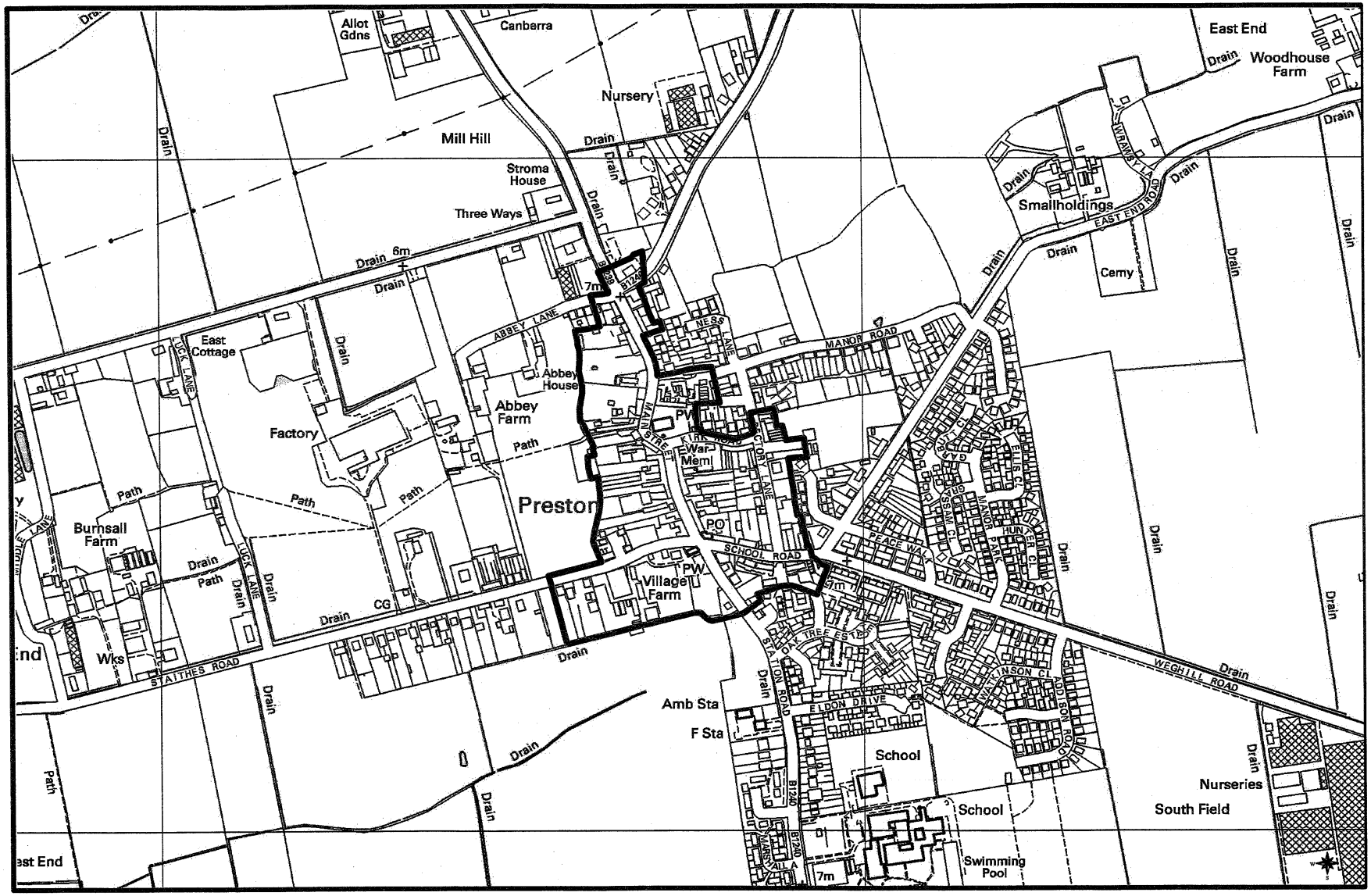

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