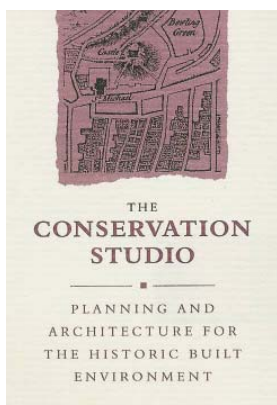


SLYNE

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

DECEMBER 2009





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Yates' map of 1786

CONSERVATION AREAS

Conservation Areas are defined as:

'Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'

Section 69 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

There are about 9,300 conservation areas in England and Wales. The designations include the historic centres of most cities, towns and villages.

The effects of designation are:

- Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of buildings, with a few minor exceptions;
- Formal notice must be given to the local authority for six weeks before any work is undertaken to lop, top or fell any trees larger than a minimal size. This allows the Council to consider whether the tree should be preserved.
- Permitted development rights are more restricted with an Article 4 Direction;
- Local authorities must pay special attention to the preservation of the character of the conservation area when considering any planning proposals that might affect it;
- Extra publicity must be given to planning applications affecting conservation areas. This is usually achieved through advertisements in the local newspaper.

For further information on the law and policy relating to conservation areas, please contact the Conservation Team at Lancaster City Council - see Appendix 2.

Consultation and adoption

The first draft was posted on the Council's website: www.lancaster.gov.uk/CAAs with hard copies made available to view at Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls.

Public consultation ran for 28 days following an initial launch at the Slyne Memorial Hall on Thursday 5th February 2009.

Following final amendment, the appraisal was considered by the Planning Policy Cabinet Liaison Group on 30th July 2009 and it received Management Team approval on 13th November 2009.

Final approval was given by Individual Cabinet Member Decision on the 20th November 2009 with an implementation date (following call-in period) of 4th December 2009.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Slyne Conservation Area consists essentially of a single street, which represents the historic core of the larger parish of Slyne with Hest.
- 1.2 Slyne lies on the northern boundary of the parish (which stretches south to Lancaster) and is the location of the Manor House, as well as several other historic buildings. These line both sides of the Slyne Road (now the A6), some 4km (2.5 miles) north of Lancaster, located on the crest of Hest Bank, a hill overlooking Morecambe Bay, which lies to the west.
- 1.3 The Slyne Conservation Area was first designated in 1981 by Lancashire County Council under the provisions that are now contained in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This defines a conservation area as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.
- 1.4 In response to government guidance on best practice, this appraisal defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Slyne conservation area. These features are also marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map that accompanies this written commentary. While the descriptions go into some detail, it should not be assumed that the omission of any characteristic, such as a building, view or open space, from this appraisal means that it is not of interest.



The Manor House



- 1.5 Section 72 of the same Act specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 1.6 This document provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Slyne Conservation Area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the policies of the adopted development plan.

Summary of special interest

- 1.7 The special interest that justifies the designation of Slyne Conservation Area can be summarised as follows:

- Small historic settlement of mainly 17th- to 19th-century dwellings;
- With 7 designated heritage assets (listed buildings and scheduled monuments);
- With several buildings of architectural and historical interest, including the architecturally distinctive manor house of 1681, a public house of 1727, a hotel of c1830, and the village stocks and pinfold;
- Together representing the built heritage of a settlement with agricultural origins but also catering to travellers passing between Lancaster and Bolton, Kendal and Carlisle;
- Enhanced by the open pasture and woodland that forms the backdrop to most of the properties in the conservation area;
- Enjoying panoramic views westwards across Morecambe Bay to the Barrow-in-Furness peninsula.

2.0 LOCATION AND SETTING

Location

- 2.1 Slyne is along the busy A6 trunk road, between Lancaster, which lies some 4km (2.5 miles) to the south, and Bolton-le Sands, the next settlement of any size, located 1km (0.63 miles) to the north. It forms the oldest part of the larger parish of Slyne with Hest, which lies between Lancaster and Bolton-le Sands, and includes a stretch of coastline that gives access to Morecambe Bay and to routes across the sands of the Lune estuary to the Barrow-in-Furness peninsula. The parish also includes a length of the Lancaster Canal, connecting Lancaster and Kendal, with its numerous listed structures, but this passes to the west of the conservation area and lies outside its boundary, principally following the 15m contour through the flat alluvial landscape between the Slyne Road and the coast.



The Malt House, Main Road



Boundary

- 2.2 The boundary of the Slyne Conservation Area has been drawn in such a way as to include all of the town's historic buildings and their associated landscapes but to exclude buildings that are of more recent (ie later 20th-century) date. As a result, the boundary mainly follows the back property boundaries of the historic dwellings, pubs and hotels that line the eastern and western sides of the main street.

Topography and landscape setting

- 2.3 The Slyne Road broadly follows the line of a terrace at 40m above sea level, and it is on this terrace that the Slyne conservation area is located, on a ridge (Hest Bank) that falls away to the west and rises to the east. That terrace is clearly visible as a cliff-like step in the fields to the east of the conservation area and along the A6 to the north of the conservation area, where Slyne Hall Heights, for example, is prominently located. As well as this east to west incline, the main street also climbs from north and south to the highest point on the ridge, which is marked by the Slyne Lodge Hotel.

Geology

- 2.4 The underlying geology of this part of Lancashire comprises boulder clay and glacial till, with marine alluvium in the flatlands to the south, north and west of Slyne. Slyne does, however, lie close to abundant sources of hard building stone, including sandstones and carboniferous limestones, and it is from these that the buildings and boundary walls are constructed.



Varied geology in boundary wall



Archaeological potential in the north-east of the conservation area

Archaeology

- 2.5 There are no designated archaeological assets within the Slyne Conservation Area, though the lack of scheduled sites is no guide to the degree of survival of archaeological remains below ground.
- 2.6 There are two plots within the conservation area that clearly have the buried remains of dwellings and boundary walls, probably of post-medieval date. These consist of:
- the plot on the north-eastern boundary of the conservation area where an area of rough woodland covers low walling and rubble from what looks like a dwelling and / or an agricultural building;
 - the plot to the south of the Christadelphian Hall, on the eastern side of the A6, where another area of brambles and rough woodland covers low walling and rubble from what also could be a former dwelling and / or an agricultural building.
- 2.7 No dwellings are visible on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey for these two plots, both of which are shown as orchards, so it is possible that the remains are those of apple lofts or storage buildings.





- 2.8 In addition, the area to the east of this second plot, which forms the eastern boundary of the conservation area at this point, shows signs of terracing and stretches of grass-covered bank, which might be little more than collapsed fieldwalls, but which also might be part of an historic garden or designed landscape. The first edition of the ordnance survey shows this plot as an elongated rectangle called Ashton Bank, even more densely planted with trees than now, and it is possible that this was planted as a shelter belt (this is unlikely given that it is on the leeward side of prevailing westerly winds) or as an eye catcher, intended to be seen on the crown of the hill from the lower coastal parts of the parish.
- 2.9 Should any of these plots or landscapes be subject to development proposals, it is recommended that further research be undertaken to ascertain the likely nature of the remains, and their significance, including archaeological excavation if necessary.

3.0 THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

- 3.1 The Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names defines Slyne as being of Old English (Anglo-Saxon) derivation, from *slinu*, meaning 'slope', which is an apt description of the gently sloping ground on which the settlement is located.
- 3.2 According to the Victoria County History for Lancashire, Slyne formed part of the extensive landholdings of Earl Tostig, brother of King Harold, just before the Conquest. The Domesday Book records Sline as consisting of six plough-lands in 1086 (one plough-land was the amount of land that could be managed by one plough team – perhaps the size of a small farmstead of 100 acres or so today). From this time on, it forms part of the demesne of the honour of Lancaster, consisting roughly of the northern part of the present county of Lancashire, north of the Ribble. Administered from Lancaster Castle, the demesne was let to a series of tenants through successive centuries.
- 3.3 The settlement's mixed agricultural economy is indicated not only by the continuity of agriculture within the conservation area, at Ashton House Farm, but also by the large number of agricultural buildings. These include fine barns to the rear of the manor (now converted to dwellings), alongside the Keys Hotel, and alongside the Maltings at No. 130, Main Road. The pinfold, for pounding stray livestock, also survives as a listed building at the southern edge of the conservation area.



Ashton House Farm



Derby House

- 3.4 The first edition of the Ordnance Survey map shows a settlement that includes several orchards or walled gardens, and large areas of formal garden attached to such properties as Slyne House (now the site of the large Hillcroft Nursing Home) and Slyne Lodge (now Slyne Lodge Hotel). These large houses, and others, such as Derby House, Slyne Grange and The Keys Hotel, indicate that Slyne was the home of wealthy individuals in the 19th century, perhaps commuting to Lancaster or nearby towns or running businesses associated with the Lancaster Canal, which opened in 1797, or the railway, which opened in 1846.
- 3.5 In 1926, the townships of Slyne and Hest were combined to form today's civil parish, since when there has been much housing development – especially during and since the 1950s. This has seen the two settlements merge into one conurbation.
- 3.6 In the pre-railway era, Slyne was a staging post for travellers setting out to cross Morecambe Bay to reach places, such as Cartmel and Ulverston, to the south of the Lake District. Although perilous, the journey was considerably shorter than the alternative route inland via Levens Causeway, the lowest bridging point on the River Kent. In recent years, sea defence works of the 1990s have caused a shift in the sands and the departure point, the 1820s wharf at Hest Bank, has re-emerged.

4.0 THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Townscape analysis

- 4.1 Slyne is a simple linear settlement with properties that line both sides of the A6, mostly built up to the front of their plots, or set back only a short distance, so that the view on entering the conservation area is of a continuous line of buildings. This is especially so on the western side of the street, where there are several groups of terraced cottages with small front gardens and porches forming a definite urban grain.
- 4.2 Main Street is largely 18th and 19th century in appearance, with a mix of relatively plain and humble labourers' and artisans' cottages, but also a few grand landmark buildings, ranging from the fine Manor House and the neo-classical Slyne Lodge, to the Edwardian neo-Tudor Clachtoll (originally the Greene's Arms Public House) and the Christadelphian Hall.



Slyne Lodge



Focal points, views and vistas

4.3 These are shown on the Townscape Appraisal Map, and consist largely of views into and out of the conservation area from the edges of the village, or of views glimpsed between buildings of the pastoral landscape that forms the backdrop to the settlement.

- A – views out of Slyne across the flat marshy sheep-grazed fields that serve as a green buffer separating Slyne and Lancaster’s suburbs. Conversely, coming into Slyne from the south, there are views up to the prominently sited Keys Hotel;
- B – views from the pinfold across green fields with mature trees to Foley Farm in the plain below and to the winding Lancaster Canal;
- C – views glimpsed between the houses of Orchard Close of gently rising hills to the east of the conservation area;
- D – views across fields towards the trees and earthworks of Ashton Bank;
- E and F – long views across the Lancaster Sand and Morecambe bay to the hills of Barrow-in-Furness on the far side of the Lune estuary



The Keys Hotel is a landmark in views from the south

Current activities and uses

- 4.4 The Slyne Conservation Area has a mix of activities: as well as farming (at Ashton House Farm) there is a large and growing nursing home (Hillcroft) and two large hotels – the Keys and Slyne Lodge. The village is also the centre for religious worship at the Christadelphian Hall and at the Brethrens’ Meeting Room. The rest of Slyne is largely residential, with a number of barn conversions, modern houses in Orchard Close and former council housing as well as older historic properties.



Open spaces, landscape and trees

- 4.5 Slyne has numerous open spaces in between the dwellings and other properties, and the eastern side of the Main Road is more open in feel than the western side. This is partly because there are fields and undeveloped plots on this side of the street, including the one large field that occupies almost a third of the length of the conservation area that includes Ashton Bank, to the rears of the properties that run from The Willows to Ashton House Farm. Less visible from the public highway is its counterpart on the opposite side of the road, the large formal garden to Slyne Lodge Hotel, some of which has been converted to car parking, but which retains mature trees and commands views across to the estuary below.



Access to fields between Little Grange and Orchard Close



- 4.6 Hillcroft Nursing Home also sits in generous grounds, though part of the property is currently being developed for extension buildings, and though it does not lie within the conservation area boundary, the field to the southwest of the stocks and pinfold adds to the green open feel of this part of the conservation area. This, however, is somewhat counterbalanced by the large expanse of tarmac on the opposite side of the road, forming the car park to The Cross Keys.
- 4.7 Trees also form an important part of the character of the conservation area, both framing the northerly entrance to the village, as the backdrop to views through gaps on the eastern side of Main Road, and as softening the impact of the large area of undistinguished flat-roofed buildings of Hillcroft Nursing Home.

Boundaries

- 4.8 The boundaries within the Slyne Conservation Area are delightfully varied. Some are built of rounded rubble, while others are of roughly squared masonry, mixing limestone and sandstones of many hues of pink, grey and buff. Some have sunken mortar beds and seem almost to be of dry-stone construction, while others have visible mortar beds. Most are capped with sandstone coping stones of various shapes, though triangular copings are the most common.
- 4.9 Original gate posts where they survive are of sawn slabs of sandstone, terminating in a rounded or bell-shaped top. Alternatively, they may be built of squared masonry topped in one case by a stone cross but more usually by a classical pyramid or series of offset and chamfered slabs. At the Manor House, the gatepiers have large ball finials.

Public realm: floorscape, street lighting and street furniture

- 4.10 Slyne's public realm is strictly functional rather than decorative or historic. Pavements are of tarmac and street lights are very plain and of steel or concrete. Street furniture consists of the occasional bench, bus shelter and litter bin, again of functional design.
- 4.11 Grass verges defining the edges of lanes emphasise the rural character of the area. It is important that these soft edges are not 'suburbanised' with concrete kerbs.

5.0 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Materials, styles and detailing

- 5.1 The buildings of Slyne are constructed from local carboniferous limestones and sandstones of many and various colours, from cream and grey to pink, buff and yellow. In older buildings these colours are mixed to good effect. More recent buildings tend to be more monochrome, as in the case, for example, of the rather strident yellow of the Brethrens' Hall.



A mix of limestones and sandstones in the barn next to the Manor House



- 5.2 There is an observable hierarchy of building materials in Slyne, from random rubble to roughly squared stone to sawn ashlar. To some degree the hierarchy reflects social status, with rubble used for humbler dwellings and for farm buildings, and squared stone and ashlar for higher status dwellings. But this is not an invariable rule, and the highest status building in the conservation area, the Manor House, is built of rubble. To some extent, rubble also identifies older buildings, with squared and sawn stone becoming more normal in the eighteenth century for grander buildings and in the nineteenth for all but the most humble.
- 5.3 Rubble buildings are often rendered to give a smooth appearance or, in the case of the Manor House, slobbered (with the faces of the stones showing through the thin render coat).
- 5.4 The overall style of the buildings within the conservation area is relatively sober, with such flamboyance as there is being limited to door lintels, gateposts and the occasional roof finial. Four houses in Slyne sport date-stones, which were fashionable from the late 17th century, recording the initials of the house builders and the date of construction. The finest example is that on the Manor House with its shaped door head and its initials CGM, for Cornelius and Mary Greene, and its date, 1681. The others are RMA 1750 in the front elevation of the Malt House, CB 1723 over the door of Ashton House Farm, and SRM 1727 and PWM 1850 on the older street frontages of the Cross Keys Hotel.



The Manor House: fine detailing contrasts with the slobbered rubble walls

- 5.5 One exception to the generally sober tone stands out in the form of the Slyne Lodge Hotel, which occupies the crest of the ridge at the centre of the village and which has a Regency (1830) wing with tall ground floor windows and triangular pediments, shouldered window architraves and, in the south facing elevation, a large round window, now blank.
- 5.6 Several houses in Slyne have attached barns. Most (including those to the rear of the Manor House) have been converted to residential use, while retaining their characteristic high-arched openings for cart access and their tall arrow-slit lights.



Discreet barn conversion adjacent to Little Grange



Listed heritage assets

5.7 A listed heritage asset is a one that is included on the Government’s Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings and structures are protected by law, as are all structures within the curtilage of the main structure, and consent is required before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Listed heritage assets are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map. They are:

•	Slyne Manor House	Grade II*
•	The Manor House gate piers	Grade II
•	Slyne Lodge Hotel	Grade II
•	The Cross Keys Hotel and adjoining barn	Grade II
•	Slyne Grange	Grade II
•	Ashton Farm House	Grade II
•	The Pinfold, stocks and stone seat	Grade II
•	The Milestone	Grade II
•	No. 136 main Road (‘The Malt House’)	Grade II

Significant unlisted buildings

5.8 A number of unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal map as being “Positive Buildings”. These buildings vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Historic buildings are normally included under this heading unless they have been so heavily altered that the changes are irreversible and restoration would be impractical.

6.0 NEGATIVE FEATURES AND ISSUES

Loss of original windows and doors

- 6.1 Perhaps because Slyne suffers from heavy traffic, many house owners have replaced original timber windows with plastic alternatives in an attempt to keep out traffic noise and dust. A number of the historic buildings within the conservation area also display timber door and window joinery which has been stained and/or varnished in a bright orange or dark brown colour. There are also examples of the use of anachronistic styles, such as 'Georgian' style doors in 19th-century cottages. These non-traditional doors and windows severely erode the appearance and character of historic buildings, to the detriment of the special interest of the conservation area.



Alterations to door and window openings

- 6.2 In some cases, the door and window openings have also been altered, for example to create large wide windows in place of taller narrow ones. Large porches have also been added and over-large dormers or roof lights in prominent roof slopes. There are also instances where buildings have been extended in a manner which does not reflect the traditional design of the area's buildings, or that uses non-traditional construction materials. All of these have the effect of detracting from the original character of the buildings, and has the effect of creating an overly busy street scene in place of the original simplicity, regularity and homogeneity.



All of these doors and windows are modern



Modern installations: satellite dishes, rooflights, and alarm boxes

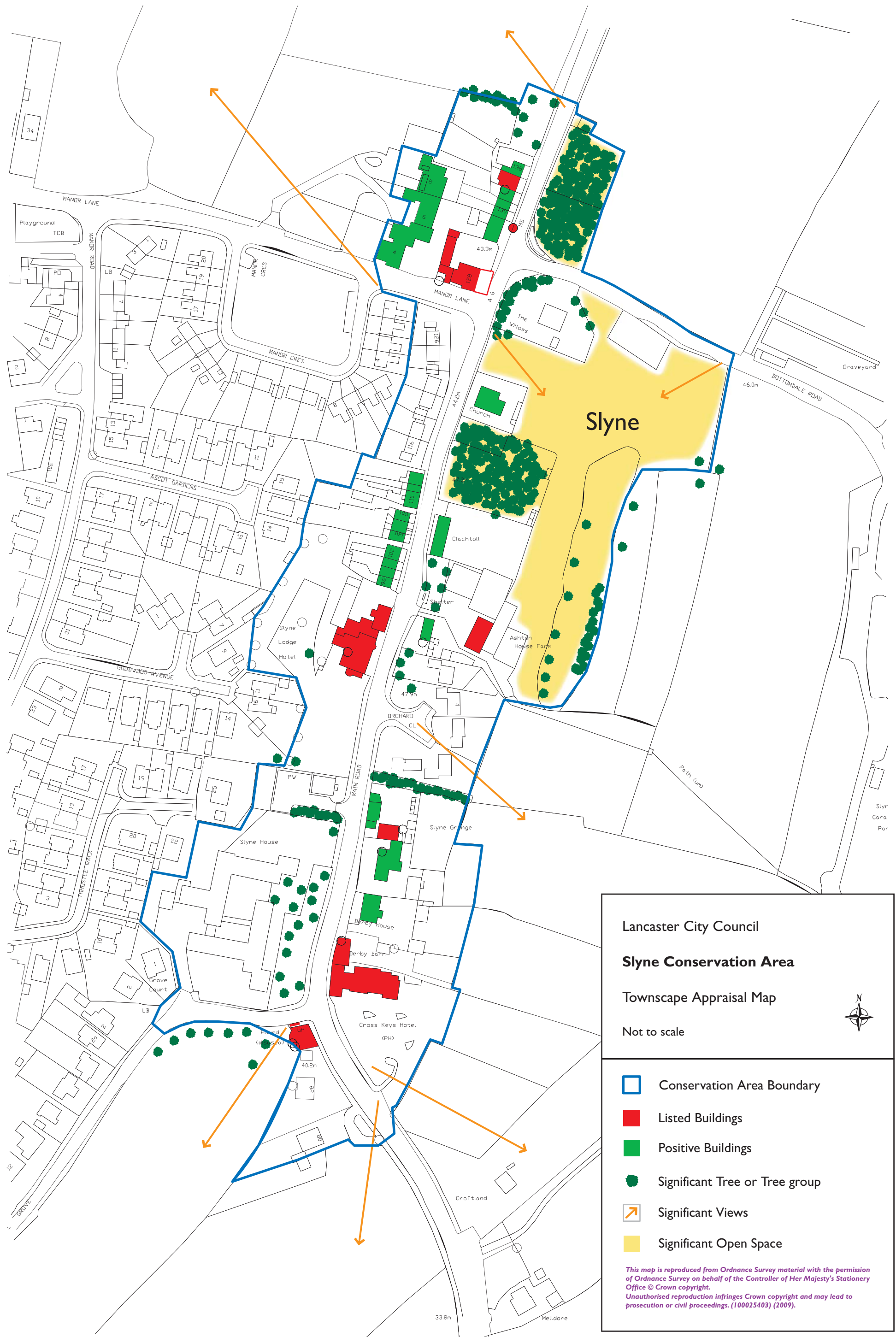
- 6.3 There are a number of instances where accretions such as satellite dishes, extractor vents and alarm boxes have been made on the elevations or chimney stacks of the historic buildings or where drainage pipes have been inserted in prominent positions or rooflights inserted into the principal roof slope. Such additions, along with large conservatories and non-traditional fencing, are highly visible and detract from the character of the historic environment.

Loss and alteration of traditional stone boundary walls

- 6.4 Stone boundary walls are an attractive feature of the conservation area and are generally well maintained throughout the settlement. There is an occasional loss of sections of walling through lack of maintenance and this loss detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Buildings at Risk and potential development sites

- 6.5 The section on the archaeology (2.5-2.9 above) has identified sites that might be sensitive to change. The one unconverted barn in Slyne, alongside the Malt House, is currently unused and might therefore be subject to conversion pressures at some future date, as might the buildings of Ashton House Farm, given the pressures on small farm incomes. In every case, the opportunity should be taken to ensure that any development is in keeping with the character of the conservation area and enhances that character rather than detracting from it.



Lancaster City Council
Slyne Conservation Area
 Townscape Appraisal Map
 Not to scale



- Conservation Area Boundary
 - Listed Buildings
 - Positive Buildings
 - Significant Tree or Tree group
 - ↗ Significant Views
 - Significant Open Space
- This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (100025403) (2009).

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

Appraisal	Assessment of the special qualities of the area
Carboniferous	Geological term for part of the Palaeozoic era about 290-350 million years ago. This is the period that produced coal measures as well as limestone and sandstone
Conservation area	Defined in the Planning Acts as ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.’ Conservation areas are designated by the local planning authority
Enhancement	Actions to improve the qualities of, for instance, a conservation area
Floorscape	Surface materials, such as paving or tarmac
Georgian	Historical and stylistic period relating to the reigns of King George I-IV (1714-1830)
Heritage assets	Products of history that have cultural value. They include historic buildings and structures, historic gardens, landscapes and townscapes
Listed buildings	Defined in the Planning Acts as ‘buildings of special architectural or historic interest’ that are included on a list published by the government’s Department of Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of English Heritage
Medieval	Historical period of the middle ages. In England, this is commonly taken to be from the Norman Conquest of 1066 to the Reformation of 1533
Millstone Grit	Geological term for a particularly hard, but coarse-grained, sandstone
Negative building	A building that detracts from the character of a conservation area to the extent that it would be preferable for it to be demolished or redeveloped. Negative issues can often be seen as opportunities
Nucleated village	Dense, tightly-defined settlement. The opposite of a dispersed settlement
Positive building	A building that makes a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area. Government policy includes a presumption that positive buildings will be retained. All listed buildings are considered to be positive. Further buildings which, although not listed, are considered to be positive are identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map includes with each conservation area appraisal
Public realm	Areas to which the public has general access. These include the public highway, public footpaths and public open space
Rubblestone	Unfinished stone used for building. Squared rubblestone is laid in courses but still has a rough face
Saxon	Historical period between the end of Roman rule in 410 and the Norman Conquest in 1066
Slobbered	Uneven lime render applied to the rough surface of rubblestone walling
Topography	The arrangement of physical features in the local landscape
Townscape	The relationship of buildings and spaces in an urban landscape
Turnpike	Toll roads of the 18th and 19th centuries
Victorian	Historical and stylistic period relating to the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901)

APPENDIX 2: FURTHER INFORMATION

The Conservation Team at Lancaster City Council are always interested in receiving further information or updates in relation to conservation areas. They can also give advice on the repair and maintenance of historic buildings and on the management of conservation areas:

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Lancaster
LA1 1QR

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APPENDIX 3: REFERENCES

Publications:

Ed Farrer and Brownhill – *A History of the County of Lancaster: Vol 8* – Victoria County History 1914

Pevsner, Nikolaus – *The Buildings of England* – Lancashire: North - 2009

Websites:

<http://mario.lancashire.gov.uk>

www.british-history.ac.uk

www.heritagegateway.org.uk

www.lancaster.gov.uk

