



**Tamworth Borough Council
Dosthill Draft Conservation
Area Management Plan
March 2017**

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Background

What is a management plan and why are we preparing it?

- 1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on all local planning authorities to determine which parts of their area are of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Such areas can then be designated as conservation areas. The Act also states that local planning authorities should formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement.
- 1.2 Tamworth has seven conservation areas, which were designated between 1976 and 1999. In 2007-2008 the Council undertook a programme of conservation area appraisals to define the special interest of the conservation areas, to ensure that the boundaries remained relevant and defensible and to identify potential areas for future attention. A number of recommendations from the appraisals have been implemented, including boundary amendments, addition of buildings to the local list and a number of Article 4 Directions.
- 1.3 Incremental changes over time can alter the character of a conservation area and the appraisals should be reviewed on a regular basis to identify opportunities and threats. The management plan provides the opportunity to review the appraisals and to set out a medium to long term management strategy to guide future change in a positive way that respects the historic environment. It is important to note that this management plan does not entirely supersede the Dosthill Conservation Area Appraisal 2008, and should be read in conjunction with this document.
- 1.4 The preparation of the management plan has been guided by the Historic England document ‘Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’ 2016. This section sets out the purpose of the management plan and the issues it will cover, the consultation strategy and review of relevant Local Plan policies and evidence.
- 1.5 The management plan will consider the following issues:
 - changes to the conservation area
 - positive and negative features
 - actions to secure the repair and full use of buildings
 - priority schemes
 - archaeology
 - green space management
 - new development
 - resources
 - monitoring
- 1.6 It is anticipated that the management plan will last for a period of five years. Although the plan contains details of proposals and initiatives it is acknowledged that some will have a longer timeframe. The management plan is not a statutory document and does not form part of the development plan, however, it will be a material consideration in decision making.

What did we do to involve people?

- 1.7 The Council is required by the 1990 Act to consult the local community on any management proposals for the conservation area. The Council’s Statement of Community Involvement specifically covers the preparation of local plans and planning applications and although the management plan is not a statutory document, the intention was that the Council will broadly follow the procedure for the preparation of a supplementary planning document, which will involve a public consultation event.
- 1.8 During November 2016 – January 2017, the Council undertook an 8 week consultation period in order to publicise the draft management plans and to invite views from the community, local heritage groups and statutory consultees. The consultation event was publicised by the following methods:-
- Emails and letters to interested parties on the Planning Policy Mailing list;
 - Emails to Statutory consultees and neighbouring authorities;
 - Letters and emails to local heritage groups;
 - Copies of conservation area appraisals and questionnaires which were made available to each of the Tamworth Borough Libraries;
 - Flyers posted on Local parish Church notice boards;
 - Details of the consultation and letters posted on the Council Website, including on the Council Launch Page;
 - Use of Council’s social media platforms to publicise the consultation.
- 1.9 Details of the feedback received during the consultation period and how the Council has responded to those views are detailed in a separate spreadsheet which is published on the Conservation Area Review pages of the website.

Tamworth Local Plan 2006-2031

- 1.10 The new Local Plan covers the period 2006-2031. The Vision for the Local Plan builds on the identified issues and challenges and sets the spatial direction for Tamworth. The relevant parts of the Vision for heritage are the vibrant town centre and distinctive identity related to the town’s history and heritage assets. The Local Plan then goes on to set spatial priorities to deliver the vision and in the context of the Dosthill Conservation Area, the following are considered relevant:

SP3	Working in partnership with economic stakeholders to create a diverse local economy, including regeneration of employment areas and provide appropriate education and training that will provide local job opportunities that will reduce the need for residents to travel outside of the Borough.
SP5	To provide a range of affordable, adaptable and high quality housing that meets the needs of Tamworth residents.
SP7	To encourage active and healthier lifestyles by providing a network of high quality, accessible green and blue linkages and open spaces and formal indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that meet identified needs and link neighbourhoods to each other and the wider countryside.
SP9	To protect and enhance heritage assets by ensuring that proposals for change respect the historic character of the Borough including street layout, surviving historic buildings, street furniture, archaeology and open spaces.
SP10	To create safe, high quality places that deliver sustainable

neighbourhoods and reflect Tamworth’s small scale and domestic character using a blend of traditional and innovative design techniques.

1.11 The Local Plan contains policies that support heritage assets including conservation areas and listed buildings. It prioritises designated Conservation Areas for safeguarding and enhancing to better reveal their significance. The Local Plan also gives non-designated heritage assets, such as locally listed buildings, due acknowledgement when dealing with development that affects them.

1.12 Development of any scale must relate to the historic context. The following policies are considered to be relevant and the management plan will be in accordance with and complement these policies:

EC5 Culture and tourism

- Promote, protect and enhance Tamworth’s landscape and heritage
- Support appropriate re-use of historic buildings
- Promote existing tourism attractions and support additional tourism attractions linked to heritage
- Promote awareness and interest in heritage
- Improve physical links around and beyond the town centre

EN5 Design of new development

- Buildings and places to be high quality and well designed, particularly to support enhancement of the town centre and conservation areas
- Respect existing architectural and historic character but allow innovation where appropriate
- Take into account impact on significance of heritage assets
- Scale, form, massing, materials and design to conserve or enhance context
- Development to be legible and outward facing with active frontages
- Incorporate landscaping and open space

EN6 Protecting the historic environment

- Development affecting historic assets required to assess impact and clearly demonstrate how assets will be conserved and enhanced (heritage statement and statement of significance)
- Reference to Extensive Urban Survey to identify potential for archaeology (need for archaeological desk based assessment)
- Development to address issues in evidence base (detailed below)
- Support enhancement of negative features and “vulnerable” and “at risk” buildings
- Support public realm improvements and use of vacant and under used historic buildings

1.13 The Local Plan recognises the Character Appraisals and other evidence base, including the Extensive Urban Survey (2011)¹, Heritage at Risk Survey (2013); Historic England Heritage at Risk Survey 2016 and Heritage Impact Assessments (2014); development is required to address the issues identified in these, The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies the following proposals which are relevant to the Dosthill Conservation Area:

¹ See <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/planners-developers/HistoricEnvironment/Extensive-Urban-Survey/Tamworth-EUS-Report-Final.pdf>

- Improvements to the public realm at gateways, and along corridors
- Physical improvements to heritage at risk

1.14 A Design supplementary planning document (SPD) is being prepared to support the Local Plan which will provide further detailed guidance on design including specific issues for historic contexts.

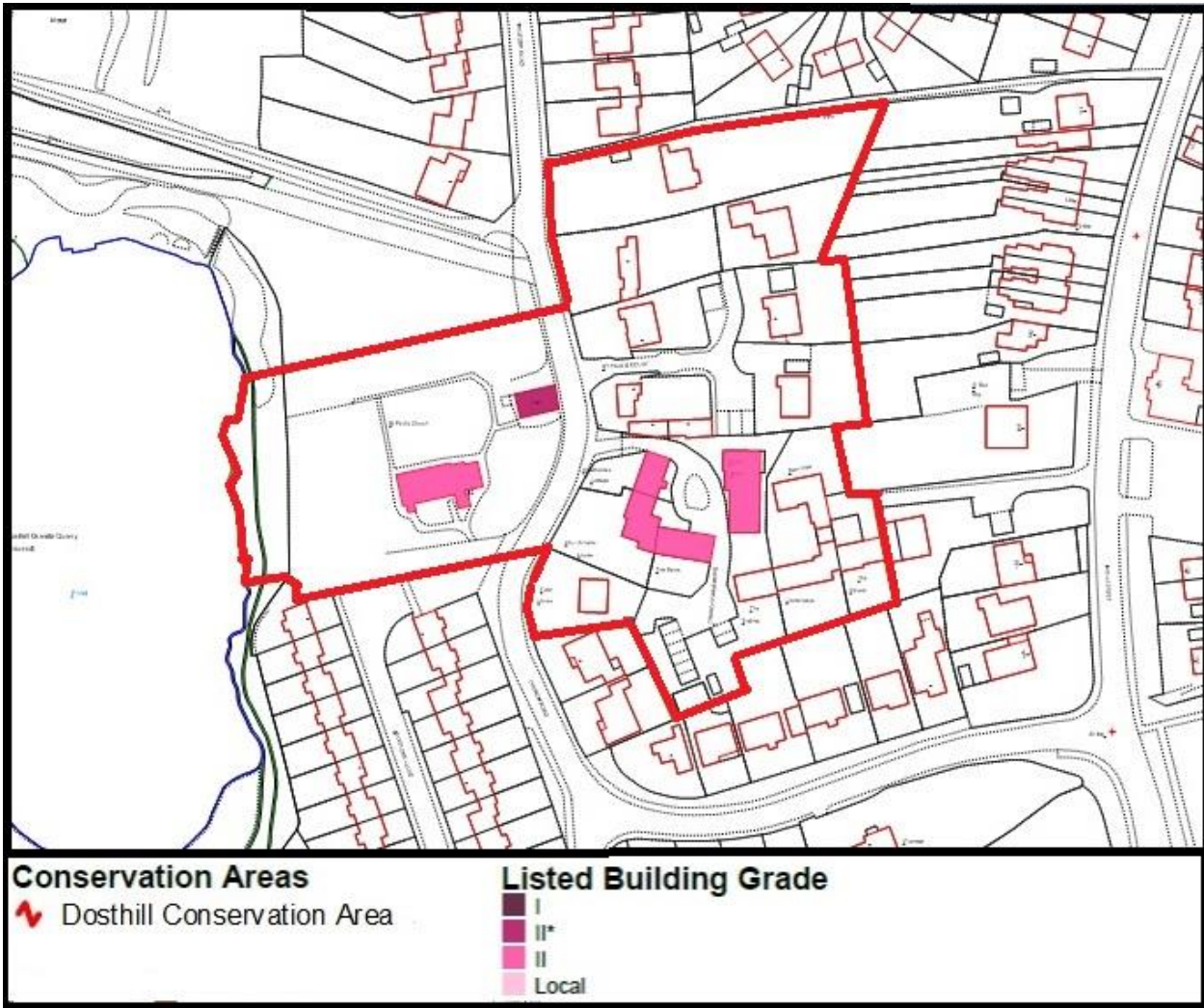
Review of Relevant Evidence

1.15 The Tamworth Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) considers the historic and archaeological character of the Borough. Tamworth's urban area was divided into 37 historic urban character areas (HUCAs). HUCA 37: Dosthill covers the Dosthill Conservation Area and is considered to be of medium to high overall heritage significance.

1.16 The Heritage at Risk Survey (2013) assessed Conservation Areas and Listed buildings with the aim of assigning a risk category for each building by combining occupancy with physical condition. Of the nine buildings, structures or designated areas in Tamworth classed as "at risk" or vulnerable", none are located in the Dosthill Conservation Area. The national Heritage At Risk survey carried out by Historic England annually does not identify any heritage assets at risk within the Conservation Area.

1.17 The map on Page 7 shows the heritage assets in the conservation area. Sites within or in the setting of the conservation area are very sensitive to change and there is an over-riding need for caution because development will inevitably impact on assets visually and there is high potential for below ground archaeology to be affected. An important point to emerge from the impact assessment was that development should not be regarded as negative as it offers the opportunity to improve the physical condition of assets, their setting and reinforce historic fabric.

Map showing conservation areas and heritage assets



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Figure 1: Dosthill Conservation Area

Section 2: Review of the Conservation Area

- 2.1 The Appraisal in 2008 divided the Conservation Area into three character zones: the Church and Church Street; St Paul's Court; and Churchyard Mews. It identified positive and negative buildings, structures and opportunities for change. Using the information in the appraisal and the photographic record as a baseline, the character zones were re-examined to identify which aspects have changed since 2008. Appendix 1 contains a summary of change, positive and negative features and opportunities for each of the zones.

Changes to the conservation area

- 2.2 There has been very limited change to the conservation area since 2008. Although the 2008 appraisal mentioned the quite utilitarian fence to the side of the Church and Chapel, no mention was made regarding the installation of a palisade fence to the rear of the church, which is very defensive and highly detrimental to the setting of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. The fence appears to be at least 10-15 years old, and it is doubtful that this has consent.



Figure 2: Palisade fencing along the rear boundary of the churchyard

- 2.3 The palisade fence continues along the boundary to the neighbouring site of the diving lake which is outside the Conservation Area, however negatively affects the setting of the Conservation Area. The painting of the fence in green and black and barbed wire to the top reinforces the defensive nature of the fence to the detriment of the setting of the Conservation Area.



Figure 3: Palisade fencing around the diving lake

- 2.4 Historic England has conducted an annual conservation area survey since 2009 which considers condition, vulnerability and expected changes. Based on the 2015 update the Dosthill Conservation Area is classed as being in fair condition, highly vulnerable, but not at risk overall. This is based on feedback from the Council that loss of historic detail, lack of maintenance and the condition of the public realm are all minor problems. It is important to continue to participate in the survey to monitor change and to ensure that the conservation area does not become at risk.

Archaeology

- 2.5 The Dosthill Conservation Area contains assets of considerable heritage significance. There is high potential for above and below ground archaeology to survive across the conservation area and although sporadic archaeological work over time has revealed evidence of archaeology which is recorded in the Historic Environment Record, the full extent of the resource is unknown. The Heritage Impact Assessment recommends that a desk based archaeological assessment is undertaken for all allocated sites, which is reflected in Policy EN6. This would also extend to any windfall sites that come forward within the conservation area.

Historic environment

- 2.6 Most of the buildings in the conservation area are in good structural condition and the main issue is regarding boundary treatments, the cumulative effects of which have eroded the character of the conservation area. The Dosthill Conservation Area does not contain any Article 4 directions, however much of the area is listed or within the curtilage of listed buildings, which enables assessment of any works to be sympathetic to the conservation area which has worked successfully.
- 2.7 As highlighted in the 2008 Appraisal, the redevelopment of sites such as the Churchyard Mews has fragmented the authenticity and interpretation of the farmstead as one complex with different applications of surface treatment, residential

paraphernalia such as decking, inappropriate positioned car ports, railings and hard landscaping.



Figure 4: Surface treatments and residential paraphernalia, Churchyard Mews

Assessment of Conservation Area Boundary

- 2.8 The previous appraisal raised concerns regarding the conservation area boundary as much of the conservation area is designated as listed buildings and their curtilage, meaning that protection measures already exist.
- 2.9 The conservation area boundaries were much reduced to the historic core, which the conservation now includes. It is considered that the Conservation Area boundary as current, fulfils the role of designation for a conservation area. As such, it is recommended that the Conservation Area boundary is retained in its current form.

Public realm

- 2.10 The quality of the street surfacing is fair throughout the conservation area with a variety of materials being used and patchy and uneven reinstatement, often in different materials, following work by statutory undertakers. The quality of the street lighting is also of a quality that is not wholly appropriate to a conservation area.
- 2.11 The main problem as previously identified is in relation to boundary treatment, particularly around the church. Along with the palisade fencing erected to the rear of the church, the very utilitarian boundary to the side boundary is not reflective of the character of the Conservation Area.



Figure 5: Utilitarian Railings along the side boundary of the churchyard

- 2.12 In much of the conservation area, particularly along Church Street, the boundaries are defined by hedges and stone which is a positive aspect of the conservation area



Figure 6: Boundary Treatment along Church Road

- 2.13 The St. Paul's Court development does not carry this through, however maintains soft and well vegetated landscaping which is a positive characteristic of the conservation area.



Figure 7: St. Paul's Court Development

Section 3: Managing the future of the conservation area

3.1 This section sets out proposals for managing the conservation area, including projects and initiatives which have arisen from the issues identified in the conservation area appraisal and review. It also sets out guidance for new development, although this will be provided in greater detail in the Design Supplementary Planning Document. Section 2 identified the following issues as being of particular concern for the Dosthill Conservation Area:

- Boundary treatments around the churchyard and adjacent lake
- Fragmented interpretation of the Churchyard Mews

Integrating new development

3.2 Although there are no allocated sites within the conservation area and there are limited opportunities for windfall development, there are opportunities for expansion and alterations to existing buildings which will be a challenge to integrate new development in a way that respects historic character and does not cause unacceptable harm. The sensitivity of the location will require a specific design solution to respond to the historic buildings and streetscape and potential below ground archaeological remains. Broad principles that would apply to all sites are:

- Specific design solution for each site to include careful use of materials and detailing;
- Development to reflect existing small scale domestic architecture;
- Maintain important views of listed buildings and open spaces;
- Strengthen frontage and linkages throughout the development where it has become fragmented;
- Foundations to take into account potential for below ground remains, to be informed by desk based archaeological assessment and fieldwork if necessary
- Take the opportunity to restore and enhance heritage assets

3.3 The Council will be preparing a Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide further detail to the Local Plan policies. The intention is to have guidance which will cover shop fronts, signage and advertisements and materials. Other relevant topics include new residential and commercial development.

Management action 1: Guide new development

- Produce Design SPD to guide new development, including heritage contexts

Condition of historic buildings

3.4 Although the condition of most buildings in the conservation area is reasonable and there has been some investment, there are individual buildings and their settings that have been neglected or have been subjected to inappropriate changes.

3.5 There is also an issue regarding lack of knowledge with regards to the maintenance and works required to historic assets. Guidance showing appropriate levels of

maintenance and care of listed buildings can be beneficial to raising awareness and care for heritage assets.

- 3.6 The council will continue to undertake reviews and assessments of the Conservation Area and heritage assets within the Conservation Area to ensure that preventative measures can be employed to avoid buildings becoming ‘at risk.’ Where communications with owners has been ineffective, the Council will utilise its legal powers to ensure that necessary works are undertaken to safeguard the future of heritage assets.
- 3.7 The buildings listed in Appendix 3 are identified for enhancement. This will include general improvements to improving the condition of building and more specialised works including stonework reconstruction and railing reinstatement. The recommended works for each building are set out in Appendix 3.

Management action 2: Enhance the condition of historic buildings

- Engage with owners and tenants to encourage regular building maintenance, with a particular focus on priority buildings
- Promote the retention and reinstatement of original features including timber windows and front boundary walls and hedges
- Engage with owners to ensure occupancy and appropriate and viable use of vacant buildings
- Undertake a number of guidance notes that promote the preventative maintenance and proper care of historic assets.
- Review the buildings at risk survey on a regular basis (every 5 years)
- Where appropriate, the Council will utilise its legal powers to ensure necessary works are carried out to ensure the safeguarding of the heritage asset.

Local List

- 3.8 The heritage impact assessment highlighted the potential for additions to the local list, although the appraisal process in 2008 resulted in a fairly comprehensive review of the local list, however no additions were made to the Dosthill Conservation Area as the majority of the buildings are listed as of national importance. Along with the public consultation of the Conservation Area Appraisal reviews, the Council will be undertaking a review of the Local List. This will involve inviting nominations from local heritage groups and the general public against criteria set out by the Council. The final decision on local list additions will be subject to Cabinet approval.

Management action 3: Maintain and review Local List

- Review the Local List in consultation with the public

Safeguarding archaeology

- 3.9 Development within the conservation area could result in loss or fragmentation of surviving archaeological remains and for this reason, early discussion with the Country Council Historic Environment Team is recommended. The Local Plan requires a desk based archaeological assessment to accompany planning applications to identify the potential for archaeology and guide discussions about the scope and scale of any preservation and mitigation.

Management action 4: Safeguard archaeology

- Engage with the Staffordshire County Council Environmental Advice Team and Historic Environment Record at an early stage to enable the production of up to date desk based assessments
- Record any archaeological structures revealed through assessments and development on the Historic Environment Record and consider opportunities to interpret discoveries

Enhancing the public realm

- 3.10 Responsibility for provision and maintenance of the public realm is split between the Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council. Renewal of the public realm would enable the area to be redesigned with a unified character and identify. Works other than routine maintenance can be partly funded through Section 106 contributions but larger projects will require funding applications to various sources including the local enterprise partnerships and Heritage Lottery Fund. It will be necessary to work with the County Council to identify opportunities for funding as projects are identified and agreed.

Management action 5: Enhance the public realm

- Work with Staffordshire County Council to identify opportunities for public realm improvements which could be included in the CIL 123 project list
- Undertake street clutter audit in line with Historic England guidance
- Work with statutory undertakers to agree an approach to highway reinstatement
- The Council will work with all the stakeholders to work towards achieving high quality and coherent style of public realm which will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Funding and resources

- 3.11 The Borough Council has a number of officers whose remit includes heritage and the town centre. The Council will work with partners and engage with businesses and building owners to enhance the conservation area. This may take the form of advice, identifying funding opportunities and promoting the town centre. Project teams could also be formed to co-ordinate and manage specific projects when needed.
- 3.12 The Council operates a modest conservation grant scheme which is used as match funding to support building owners and tenants undertaking structural repairs and restoration of original features. This is available to all statutorily and locally listed buildings throughout the Borough and historic unlisted buildings within conservation areas. It could be used to part fund the projects identified in the management plan, however, demand already exceeds availability and with competition from projects in other conservation areas, progress will be limited to a small number of projects every year. There is scope to review the way the grant scheme operates to target priority schemes in the conservation areas.
- 3.13 There is also the potential to include heritage projects as part of the project list to be funded as part of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions. Predominantly consisting of streetscape improvements the levy charged on new build housing, retail and commercial developments can assist with funding towards improvements. Any potential projects will be required to be added to the Regulation 123 list.

Management action 6: Resourcing Improvements

- Review operation of grant scheme to target priority schemes in the conservation areas arising from management plans
- Develop a list of streetscape improvement projects which can be added to the CIL Regulation 123 list.

Section 4: Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 The intention is to monitor changes to the conservation area to assess the effectiveness of the management plan. A dated photographic record is produced to show the changes to the conservation area since the appraisal was undertaken in 2008, using the original photos for comparison. A formal review will be carried out on a five yearly basis.
- 4.2 The Council will continue to participate in the Historic England annual conservation area survey and take appropriate advice and action if the conservation area is revealed as being at risk.
- 4.3 These monitoring actions will need to be set up alongside the Local Plan monitoring framework.

Management action 7: Monitor and review changes

- Produce a dated photographic record to monitor changes to the conservation area
- Continue to participate in the annual conservation area survey produced by Historic England
- Monitor changes in the conservation area and modify the management actions where necessary to secure positive change

Appendices

Appendix 1: Review of the conservation area by character zone

Character Zone 1 – Church Street and Church Environs	
Change since 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erection of palisade fencing to rear boundary
Positive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unified appearance of residential properties and boundary treatments along Church Street, soft landscaping and hedges reinforce historic character. Historic character is still mostly intact.
Negative features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor boundary treatments around the church which are detrimental to its setting. Poor 20th Century extension to medieval hall Poor boundary treatment around the diving lake which impact negatively on the setting of the conservation area.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove poor utilitarian boundary fence and palisade fence around church and replace with a more sympathetic and high quality boundary treatment such as a wall or non-climbing fence such as paladin fencing
Character Zone 2 – St.Paul’s Court	
Change since 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended Conservation Area boundary to reduce the amount of 20th Century housing to just concentrate on the St. Paul’s Court development.
Positive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New dwellings which are in keeping with the surrounding properties in terms of boundary treatments, materials and details of the dwellings appropriate. Soft landscaping which reinforces character of the conservation area.
Negative features	N/a
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to reinforce appropriate materials and treatments and the positive contribution the development makes to the conservation area
Character Zone 3 – Churchyard Mews	
Change since 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased surfacing and residential paraphernalia.
Positive features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large collection of historic buildings which maintains a strong historic linkage to the historic core of Dosthill. Attractive architectural features which are visible from the public realm
Negative features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragmentation of the linkages of the barns as one farmstead complex through surface treatments and decking etc. Poor installation of garages and carports which interferes with the character and appearance of the historic farm complex.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to the connectivity of the buildings which make up the barn complex through a consistent use of material palette which reinforces the historic character and authenticity.

Appendix 2: Heritage assets in the Dosthill Conservation Area

	Listed Buildings	Grade
1	Dosthill Sunday School And Parish Room, Church Road	II*
2	Church Farmhouse, Hawthorn Cottage, Church Road	II
3	Church of St. Paul, Church Road	II
4	Cruck Barn, Church Road	II



2b



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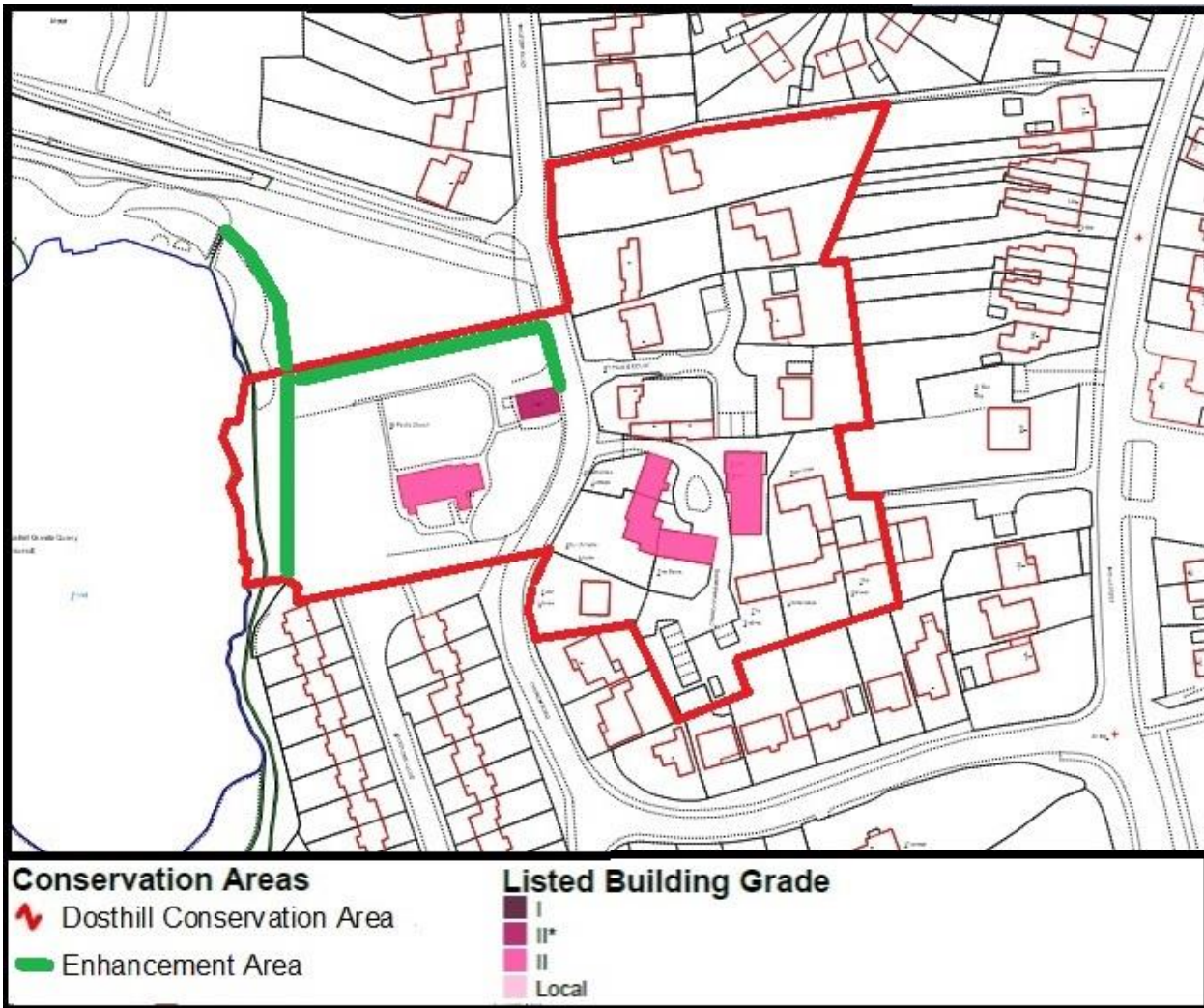
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Appendix 3: Recommended works for priority buildings

This section describes potential problems and recommendations for alleviating the identified problems. Some of the works to rectify problems may require planning and/or listed building consent, so please check with the Development Management Team or Conservation Officer at Tamworth Borough Council before undertaking any works described in this plan.

Map showing priority areas for enhancement



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St. Paul's Churchyard & adjacent diving lake			
Roof chimney		Windows	
Chimney		Doors	
Rainwater goods		Shopfront/signage	
Brick or stonework		Architectural details	
Other, what?		Walls, gates & railings	x
Works required: removal of inappropriate railings and reinstate with fence/wall which is more sympathetic to the Conservation Area and setting of the listed buildings			



