



Character Appraisal
January 2018

North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas

Foreword

The Conservation Area Appraisal should be read in junction with the following documents or their successors:

North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas Management Plan (2018);

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012);

National Planning Practice Guidance;

Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy (2016) including saved policies from the Knowsley Unitary Development Plan (2006);

Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The omission of mention of any building, site or feature should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

This document has been written and prepared by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

Planning Services,
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council,
Yorkon Building,
Archway Road,
Huyton, Knowsley
Merseyside L36 9FB

Telephone: 0151 443 2380

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas

North Park Road and South Park Road exist as two separate conservation areas located in Kirkby, in the Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley. Kirkby is easily accessible, being a short walk away from Kirkby Railway Station and close to the M57 and the A580, the Liverpool–East Lancashire Road. The two conservation areas have a similar suburban character featuring residential houses from the 1860s onwards, with mature trees lining the roads. The properties in both conservation areas range from Victorian villas to modern 20th century flats; these are generally set within well sized gardens with defined boundary treatments. Several of the older villas are listed at Grade II. Both North Park Road Conservation Area and South Park Road Conservation Area were designated on 21st March 1991.

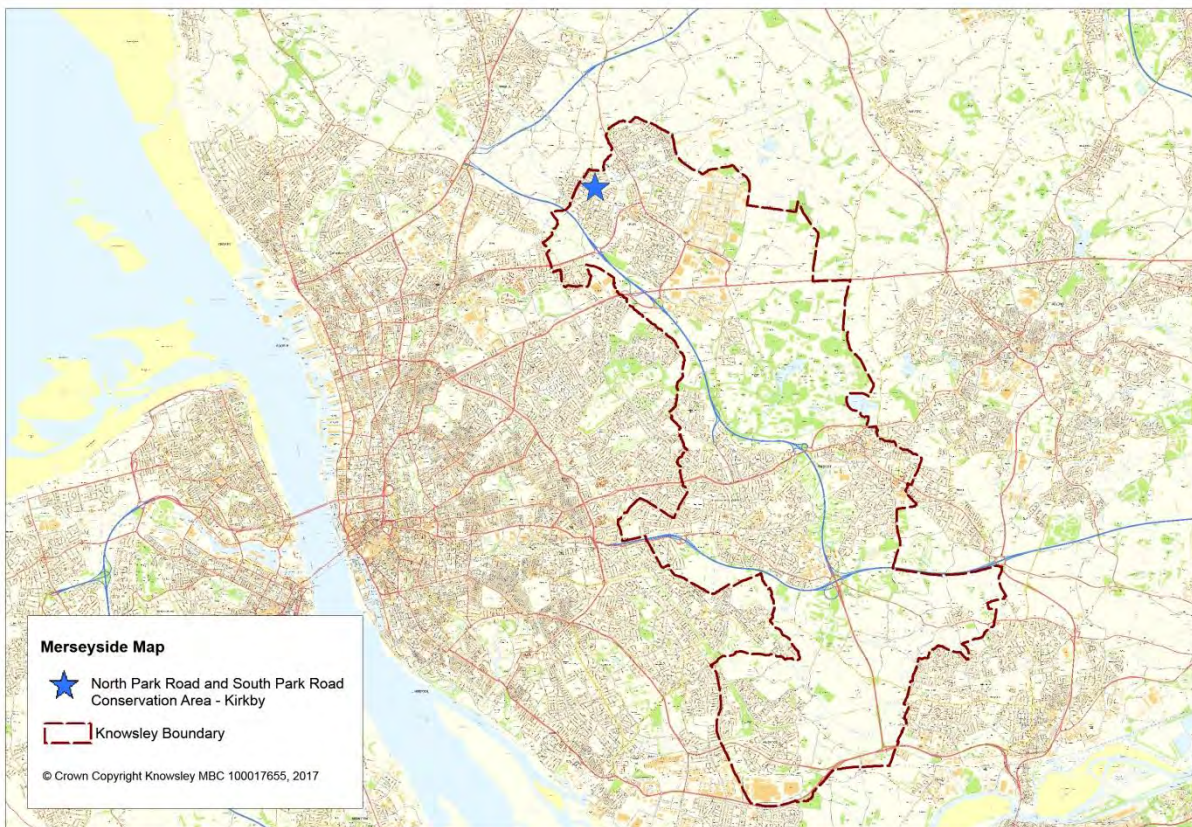


Figure 1 – Map showing the location of North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas in the Liverpool City Region context, indicated by the blue star.

1.2 Planning Policy Context

Conservation areas are designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The overall definition of a Conservation Area is stated within the same Act as, “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 makes it the duty of any Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas. Additionally, Section 72 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 the appearance of that area.

National government policy regarding conservation areas is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) (NPPF) supported by National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Knowsley Council has also set out its local policy through the Local Plan Core Strategy (2016), particularly Policy CS20: Managing the Borough’s Historic Environment and DQ5: Development in Conservation Areas which is a saved policy within the Unitary Development Plan (2006).

In recognition of the statutory requirement stated within the Act and the policies of the NPPF, this appraisal identifies and assesses the special architectural and historic interest of the North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas, in line with Historic England’s Advice Note 1: ‘Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’.

2 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

2.1 Location and Setting

Traditionally part of Lancashire, Kirkby is an urban settlement located in the County of Merseyside, in the Borough of Knowsley. Kirkby is located approximately eight miles from Liverpool City Centre and lies within a mile of the M57. It has a railway station with good links to Liverpool and Manchester. The River Alt flows through the extreme south west of the town, with the Kirkby Brook tributary passing through the centre.

The Conservation Areas are centred on the Kirkby Park residential area that was built to the North of Kirkby railway station concurrently with the introduction of the railway line, which is located North West of Kirkby Town Centre. North Park Road Conservation Area runs from the junction of Glover's Brow/ Mill Lane to Park Road. South Park Road Conservation Area runs from Glover's Brow to the junction of Sefton Close. The conservation areas run parallel to each other but are separated by the 1950s Park Estate development, connected only by Glovers Brow which runs perpendicular to the eastern entrances of the North Park Road and South Park Road conservation areas. The tree lined streets are characterised by several high status Victorian villas and early 20th century semi-detached houses.

Today the conservation areas are surrounded by post-war housing estates built to accommodate the planned relocation of people from Liverpool. Prior to this dramatic change, the surroundings of Kirkby Park were rural, with scattered farmsteads and isolated plantations. Some of the land had been reclaimed from flat peaty areas known as mosses and, indeed, Kirkby Moss and Simonswood Moss survive to this day, slightly to the east of the built up area. The countryside to the north of the conservation areas is designated as Green Belt extending along the M57 corridor North towards Melling and Simonswood. This designation has helped to preserve the landscape setting north of Kirkby, however this is not discernible from within the conservation areas.

North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas lie at the convergence of a number of routes and the area can be accessed from several roads: Glovers Brow from the North and South; Kirkby Row from the South and Mill Lane from the east. The close proximity of the railway is an important component of the setting to the conservation areas due to the area's development evolving with the introduction and growth of the railway.

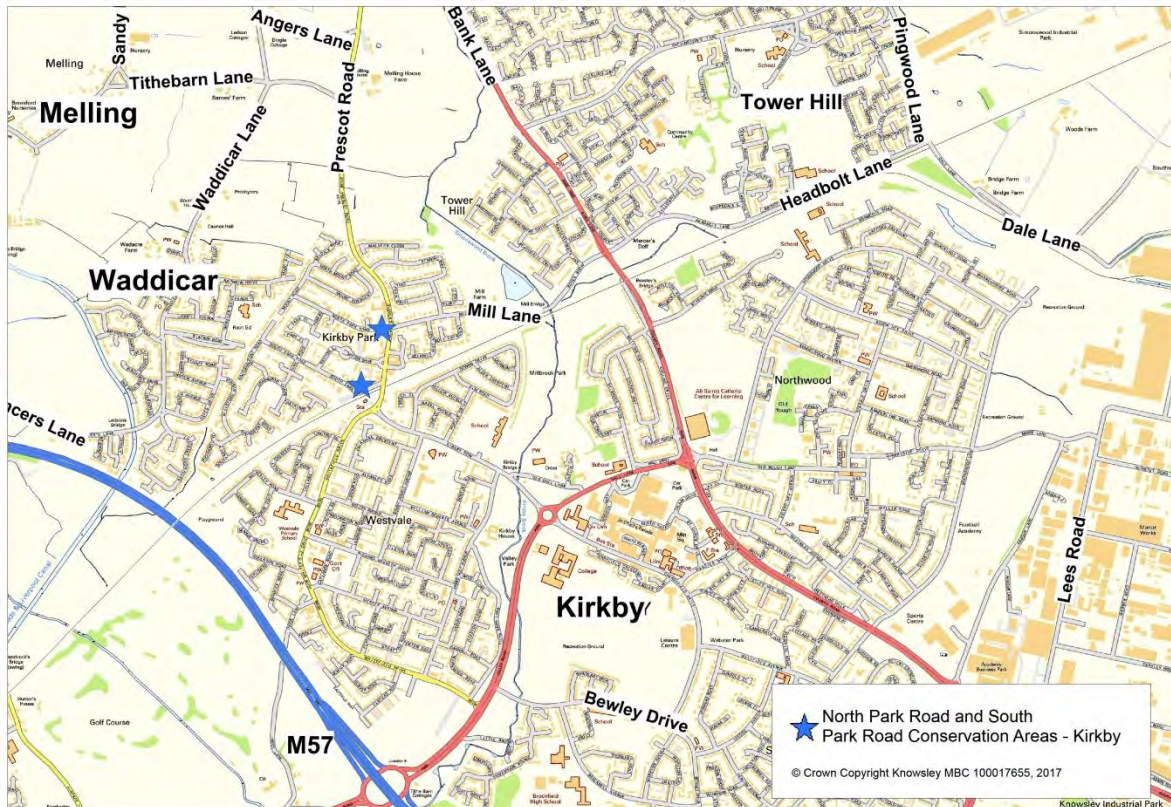


Figure 2 – Location of North Park Road and South Park Road in a wider area context.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Kirkby lies upon a raised area of land elevated some 100-125 feet above sea level. To the east the land rises further on the approach to the foothills of the Pennines. North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas occupy relatively flat areas of the town with little undulation evident in the townscape.

Much of Kirkby consists of stratified pebble beds dating from the Triassic period known as Bunter Sandstone, and this was used as building material in a number of the town's early buildings such as St Chad's Church, situated a short walk from the conservation areas.

Up until the 1870s, the land to East of Glover's Brow just outside the conservation area was the site of an early 19th century stone quarry, known as 'Dearbolt or Deerbough Delf'. The quarry is no doubt the source of stone from which some of the buildings in the conservation area were built, adding to the buildings local character.

3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

3.1 Historical Development

The name 'Kirkby' derived from the Norse meaning 'Church and Settlement'; however the settlement of Kirkby is believed to have originated prior to the Norse who are believed to have arrived via Ireland around 900 A.D. An early surviving artefact of the period is a red sandstone Norman font which is now located inside St Chad's Church, located in the nearby Old Hall Lane Conservation Area.

In the Domesday Survey of 1086, Kirkby was mentioned as '*Cherchebi*', one of the six manors held by Uctred; the others being Roby, Knowsley, Crosby, Maghull, and Aughton. In the 11th Century, the area now known as South Lancashire was identified as the land between the Ribble and the Mersey. This land was divided into six Hundreds or Wapentakes, Kirkby being part of the Derbei Wapentake, or West Derby Hundred. It is believed that this Hundred originally contained around thirty settlements with a total population of around 2,000 people.

Kirkby has for most of its history been primarily rural with dispersed settlement until the 12th century. The importance of farming and agricultural employment is evidenced in historic records as the number of farms and land for agricultural uses is high in comparison with other local areas. At its peak medieval Kirkby had 36 farms and 19 cottages (Cowell, R., 1982).

Over the centuries, the ownership of land around the Kirkby settlement passed through the hands of many families and it was not until the Molyneux family purchased the manor lands in their entirety in the 16th century that any stability occurred. The family were staunch Catholics who retained their religious beliefs despite the pressures of the English Reformation. Their patronage of Kirkby was lost though in 1747 as a result of the head of the Molyneux family taking up holy orders in the Catholic Church. Conversion to the Church of England came with the marriage of Charles William Molyneux in 1768 and a few years later in 1771, he was created Earl of Sefton.

Kirkby remained a small rural, agricultural parish until the mid-19th century with small gatherings of buildings sparsely scattered across the countryside, with poor access in and out of the settlement. This development pattern is locally distinctive and still exists in neighbouring parishes like Simonswood, Bickerstaffe and Lathom. The introduction of the Liverpool, Bolton and Bury Railway in 1848 brought new travel opportunities to the people of the area. Fashionable residential properties were developed near to the new station on an expanse of land known as Kirkby Park. This had a boundary stretching from Glover's Brow to modern day Mount Road. Streets such as North Park Road and South Park Road

began to appear to house the middle classes, many of whom were Liverpool businessmen, who were looking to move out of increasingly unpleasant urban areas, while still being easily able to reach their businesses in town.

Land surrounding the then cul-de-sacs of North Park Road and South Park Road were allocated for housing in the early 1940s with the creation of several new residential streets including Sefton Close, Park Close and Sefton Drive. The mass building of housing was influenced by the influx of workers needed for the Royal Ordnance Filling Factory. This munitions factory was an enormous complex, which consisted of over 1000 buildings and 18 miles of road networks.

The Earl of Sefton continued to own almost all of Kirkby until 1947, when the majority of land was sold to the Liverpool Corporation for industrial development. Despite a slow initial response, industrialists gradually moved into the Munitions factory buildings, which had closed in 1946, whilst others built new factories and Kirkby Industrial Estate was born. It steadily expanded through the 1950's and 1960's to become one of the largest in the country. At its peak in 1971, the estate employed over 26,000 people. Alongside expansion of the industrial estate came large scale housing developments by Liverpool City Council, which were intended to relieve problems in Liverpool such as overcrowding and unsanitary dwellings. Consequently Kirkby, with the new developments in the areas of Southdene, Westvale and Northwood, lost their old image of a rural farming community and became new suburban settlements.

Greater local control over the area's future came with the creation of Kirkby Urban District Council in 1958. Further re-organisation in 1974 brought Kirkby into the newly created Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley.

3.2 Archaeology

There is significant evidence to suggest ancient Bronze Age settlement in the area of Kirkby. A 1995 excavation of the vicarage aimed at locating the early medieval chapel of St Chad revealed a Bronze Age site which included evidence of a structure, charcoal, small quantities of Bronze Age pottery and stone tools. Archaeologists have previously found a Bronze socketed axe, to the east of nearby Kirkby Row, and an undated spearhead was found in the churchyard in the late nineteenth century. A pollen analysis undertaken suggested that in the early medieval period the area was densely wooded.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Layout and Patterns of Development

Originally Kirkby was agricultural in character with numerous farms and fields scattered across the landscape. This aspect of the area's historic character is no longer evident in the layout and no built features within the conservation areas offer any hint of this stage of the area's development. Mid-19th century maps depict a loose arrangement of settlement along Kirkby Row and Glover's Brow, centering on Kirkby station as the area began to develop as a suburb. North Park Road and South Park Road were developed as cul-de-sacs that branched west from Glover's Brow. Properties were built fronting onto the roads, in well-spaced regular plots, with properties built to infill vacant plots throughout the early 20th century. This arrangement remains evident within the conservation areas, although a few of the earlier buildings have been replaced with modern flats and housing.

The buildings in the conservation areas are of differing scales, predominately of semi-detached houses with some large villas remaining. The earlier Victorian villas at nos. 16 (Lytham House) and 38 & 40 North Park Road are of very generous proportions and set within larger plots than their neighbours. Glover's Brow features a row of four semi-detached Victorian houses; Pemberton Villa and Homer Lea are positioned tightly against the pavement facing onto the main road, while its neighbours Stanley Villa and Inglehurst are set further back. In comparison the road here seems rather close to the front elevations of these properties but this has always been the arrangement, and may reflect a comparatively less 'planned' origin. Waverley House and Nos 14 & 16 South Park Road are arguably the most dominant properties in the area, as they sit in extensive plots and vertically tower over adjacent properties due to their substantial proportions. These higher status buildings add considerably to the character of the area and serve as important reminders of the grander and looser character the first phase of development presented.

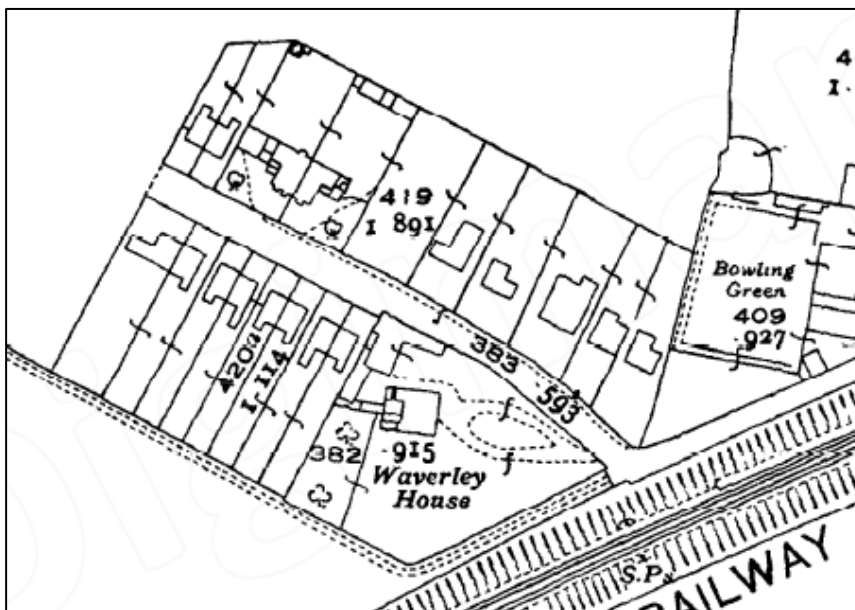


Figure 3 - Extract from the 1939 Ordnance Survey Map, showing the extensive plot size of Waverley House, relative to the semi-detached properties in the South Park Road Conservation Area.

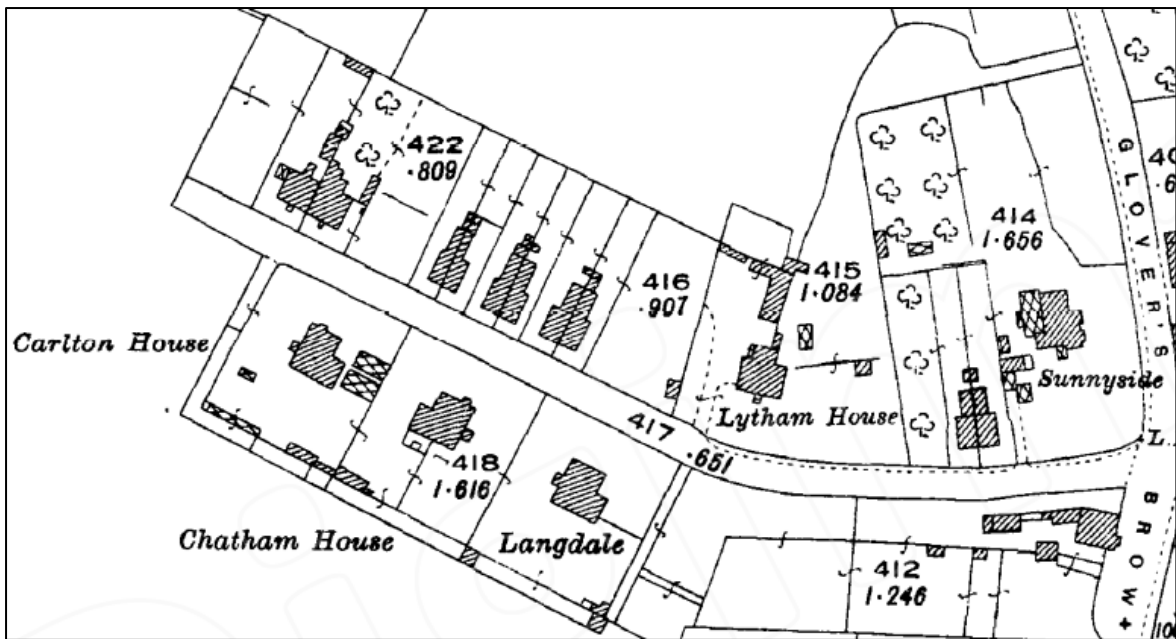


Figure 4 - Extract from the 1927 Ordnance Survey Map, showing the extensive plot sizes of Langdale, Chatham House, Carlton House, Lytham House and Sunnyside in the North Park Road Conservation Area.

Generally the earliest development is the most spacious, with development gradually becoming of lesser proportions with the progression of time. Maps from the early 20th Century depict a wave of development within both conservation areas with the building of a number of smaller semi-detached dwellings. A number of detached properties were also built opposite Waverley House in South Park Road spaced at regular intervals. These buildings are set back from the road with small gardens or hard standing to the front, and large gardens to the rear. Although the early 20th century development does not match the high status of the Victorian development as was originally intended for the area, the retention of deep plots and the measure of spaciousness means that the overall form of the 'Kirkby Park' as was envisaged by its founders, is preserved to some extent.

More recent infill development on gardens is less successful particularly where the spatial qualities of the former plots have been wholly undermined such as at Lytham House and Carlton House and therefore have been particularly harmful. The significant massing of these buildings and the less generously spaced and uncharacteristic layout of the plots and access roads breaks with the consistency of the historic form of development and as a result these appear as jarring elements within the conservation areas. The properties which positively contribute to the character of the conservation areas are set forward within their plots directly facing onto the road on a strong building line, spaced at regular intervals.

Both North Park Road and South Park Road are wide tree lined roads that run parallel to one another. North Park Road features a gentle curve in the road preventing views directly through the conservation area. A section of South Park Road between South Park Court and Waverley House is 'one way' westbound, which means that traffic must exit the conservation area via Sefton Drive to return onto Glover's Brow.



Figure 5 – An original brick boundary wall still exists at 14 & 16 South Park Road, with stone gate posts marking out the access to the properties. This boundary is a good example within the conservation area and is a significant component of the streetscape.

Property boundaries are formed through a mixture of hedgerows, low wooden panel fencing, palisade fencing, railings and low walls of varying ages and styles. These directly abut the pavement. A number of original walls and gateposts remain associated with some of the original villa buildings. Their position helps to define the planned and formal layout and nature of the conservation areas, however losses to boundary walls, e.g. for accesses and wider driveways, and the poorer quality and inappropriate designs of some of the more recent elements undermines the consistency and quality of both conservation areas.

Historic Ordnance Survey maps indicate the original Victorian properties variously had outbuildings such as stables and garden structures situated within their grounds, but it appears that only 4 North Park Road has retained a historic outbuilding, this can be clearly be seen from the Anchor-Millview Retirement Home.



Figure 6 – Outbuilding at 4 North Park Road, as visible from the Anchor-Millview Retirement Home.

4.2 Open Spaces, Trees and Landscaping

The planted character of the streets and private gardens contribute substantially to the character of both Conservation areas. The gardens differ in size relative to the scale of the principal property to which they relate and have been planted and laid out in a suburban style which fits in with the wider setting. The planned and formal design of the garden plots contributes to the suburban feel of the conservation areas. Where planting has been lost to parking, and particularly where large areas of hardstanding have been constructed on frontages, such as is associated with the modern flats, this detracts from the character of the streets. There are no public open spaces within the conservation areas; however the open views into gardens and their soft landscaped nature, play a major part in creating a sense of seclusion within the conservation areas.

In both North Park Road and South Park Road trees overhang streets from positions on the periphery of private gardens and/or on grassed verges that line the road. Cumulatively the trees help to create an attractive leafy corridor through the conservation areas. Within the public realm the grassed verges and street trees enhance the green and well-planted character of the conservation areas. It appears that similar verges and trees have unfortunately been removed in front of 25-31 South Park Road. Mature trees can also be found within the grounds of Waverley House, some of which overhang the public realm above a row of railings.



Figure 7- Looking east along North Park Road, showing the extensive tree cover and greenery that lines the road to give a sense of a leafy corridor through the North Park Road conservation area.

4.3 Focal Buildings and Views

There are a number of important focal buildings within the North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas, which naturally are the substantial villa properties which are prominent buildings on the streetscape. In North Park Road Conservation Area, the Carter's Arms stands at the corner of Glover's Brow. The Grade II listed property is one of the oldest public houses in Kirkby and would have once been an important part of community life. The building stands in a prominent position at the junction of Glover's Brow, North Park Road and Mill Lane. To the south of the public house stand four large semi-detached Victorian villas which make a significant contribution to the character of the locality. These buildings face onto Glover's Brow overlooking more modern houses and commercial premises situated on Station Mews. This creates a distinctive sense of juxtaposition between the old and the new and provides a highly visible link to the Victorian heritage in this part of town.

The grand scale of Lytham House (16 North Park Road) creates a further focal building, as it is of a grand scale. It is one of the original Victorian villas to be constructed here and its appearance is particularly grand, indicative of the polite style of architecture that would have once been prevalent in this part of Kirkby. At the western entrance to North Park Road Conservation Area 38 & 40 North Park Road is also a focal building comprising a symmetrical pair of well-preserved, generously proportioned semi-detached Victorian houses. They stand on the edge of the conservation area boundary and starkly contrast with the neighbouring post-war and modern infill housing. Alongside Lytham House (16 North Park Road) these properties would have been indicative of the type of wealthy residences that characterised this area of Kirkby in the town's formative years.



Figure 8 – The Carter’s Arms Public House is a focal building on Glover’s Brow located at the eastern entrance to North Park Road Conservation Area.

The most significant buildings in terms of townscape in South Park Road Conservation Area are Waverley House and 14 & 16 South Park Road. These are also the most substantial buildings within that conservation area due to their large size, Italianate influenced design, and the large plots in which they are positioned. Both buildings are significant and important features, which positively contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Views within the North Park Road conservation area are predominantly restricted to views along North Park Road itself. From the junction of Mill Lane the view of Carters Arms Public House serves as the first indication as to the historic origins of the area. The tall trees that line North Park Road, trees within the garden of Anchor-Millview Retirement home and mature trees to the rear of the Carter's Arms, attractively complement this view. The opposite view from within the eastern portion of North Park Road provides a similar outlook across the junction, with views towards The Smithy at the junction of Mill Lane. These buildings are Grade II listed and although they are not within the North Park Road Conservation Area, they significantly contribute to its setting by adding to the quality of views in and out of the conservation area, and create a sense of the 'village' origins of the area.

Views within South Park Road conservation area are predominantly restricted to views along South Park Road itself. On entering from Glover's Brow, the townscape opens up with views across the gardens of the imposing Waverley House through the row of railings which permit easy views through the site. The view from Sefton Close looking into the conservation area is dominated by the tower of 16 South Park Road. This stands tall over the adjacent property and the semi-detached residences standing opposite. In the distance the tower of Waverley House can be seen on the skyline. The tower is therefore a feature which adds greatly to views within and towards the conservation areas.



Figure 9 – Views east out of the North Park Road Conservation Area look out towards the Grade II listed 1 & 3 Mill Lane and The Smithy, which contribute to the historic setting of the conservation area.

4.4 Public Realm

Although North Park Road and South Park Road are generally quiet suburban roads, access into the Park Estate to the west is limited but can be gained via North Park Road and South Park Road. Both North Park Road and South Park Road are accessed off Glover's Brow via a traffic lighted junction and a marked junction respectively. North Park Road has a two-way traffic flow and is wide enough to accommodate typical traffic flows. South Park Road has a one-way traffic flow westbound from South Park Court to Waverley House, opening up to a two-way traffic flow for the remainder of the road. Glover's Brow is the busiest road within the conservation area and is a two-way route linking Kirkby town centre to Melling Mount and Simonswood further north. The public realm elements of both conservation areas are limited to the roads and pavements, with some short sections of grassed verge.

Roads within the conservation areas are surfaced with tarmac, bounded with raised tarmac pavements to either side; the kerbstones appear relatively low to the ground. Vehicles can often be seen parked partly on the pavement in addition to the placing of refuse bins. At the crossroads of North Park Road, Glover's Brow and Mill Lane there is a metal guard rail that is not sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area, being of standard design and suggestive of a greater traffic flow typical of an urban environment.

Road markings in both the conservation areas are limited to the respective eastern entrances, with double yellow line markings reaching as far as 43 North Park Road in the North Park Road Conservation Area, and as far as 17 South Park Road in the South Park Road Conservation Area. The double yellow lines are of standard colour and proportions, which is not wholly sympathetic to the sensitive character of the area.



Figure 10 – A view east along North Park Road shows the low kerbed pavements and the simple unmarked tarmac road.

5 ARCHITECTURE, DETAILS AND MATERIALS

5.1 Building Age and Uses

The buildings within the conservation areas date from the Victorian era onward. It is mainly characterised by mid-late 19th century villas, early 20th century semi-detached houses and a number of more recent late 20th and early 21st century infills. The majority of the buildings are purpose-built residential properties. The exceptions to this are the Carter's Arms Public House, Glover's Brow and Waverley House which is Kirkby Conservative Club, used occasionally for private events.

The boundary excludes modern developments of different character which sit alongside the conservation area, such as the properties found in Anchor-Millview retirement home and Millerscroft in North Park Road which are located in the former sites of demolished Victorian villas.

5.2 Architecture

The oldest buildings within the conservation areas are built of styles typical to a suburban Victorian estate development. Italianate influences are particularly evident in the mid-late 19th century Villas, emphasising the original wealth and grandeur of the estate. There is no clear uniformity to the style of buildings in either conservation area; construction has taken place over a long period and the styles used are those which were fashionable at the time of construction.

There are remnants of pre-existing development around the conservation areas, such as old gate pillars and brick garden walls. These are highly beneficial in allowing people to 'read' the history of the area and its wider setting. These features are also significant to the appearance of individual buildings and contribute positively to the character of the conservation areas.



Figure 7 – The former Conservative Club on South Park Road known as Waverley House, dates to the 1800s and is a Grade II listed building. The site is in occasional use as Kirkby Conservative Club but has been subject to neglect, in addition to some earlier poor quality extensions that detract from the building.

North Park Road

In North Park Road Conservation Area buildings follow a number of architectural styles which can be grouped by their style and age. The early 20th century semi-detached dwellings are rather modest and simple in appearance, in-keeping with the suburban nature of this part of Kirkby. These properties offer a stark contrast to the earlier Victorian villas of North Park Road, of which a number have been demolished. These larger villas were built for the merchant classes, constructed on a grander scale, set in large gardens with imposing architectural features and stately facades.

Lytham House (16 North Park Road) remains as a good example of the earlier appearance of the original buildings of North Park Road. It is a double fronted Victorian residence built of brick, with decorative stucco applied to the ground elevation. Houses in large grounds of a similar grandeur previously lined the street; these can be seen on historic maps and were named Sunnyside, Langdale and Carlton House. These would have undoubtedly possessed an equally impressive appearance. In North Park Road near to the junction of Glover's Brow there appears to be a surviving portion of a historic sandstone wall, this could be associated with the former 'Sunnyside' that sat at the junction of Glover's Brow, and North Park Road. The house was originally sited within a large plot, which reached to Lytham House with a stone wall bounding the site.

Short rows of early 20th century semi-detached properties stand at 13-19 North Park Road built between 1927 and 1939. They are constructed of deep red brick, with slate roofs and have Edwardian style detailing, despite their relatively later date. The properties are smaller than the earlier simple Edwardian semi-detached houses at 22-32 North Park Road, but do benefit from relatively large plots which are a characteristic element of the conservation area. Most have been extended, though one fortunately retains its original garage with stepped parapet. Nos 22-32 North Park Road although simple in design displays decorative crested roof ridges and blue brick string courses.



Figure 8 – 30 & 32 North Park Road, built in the 1900s display a good example of the smaller scale late Victorian development, with stone headers and sills to the windows.

Some of the more recent properties built in North Park Road are situated in Lytham Court. This small cul-de-sac features four modern houses each with their own individual appearance. In Park Court and Glover's Court, retirement home complexes have been built sites previously occupied by Victorian houses. The design of the newer buildings and layout of plots fails to reflect the architectural appearance and plot characteristics of the conservation area

South Park Road

In South Park Road there are fewer buildings of grandeur, with the majority of buildings built in the 1920s and 1930s as small bungalows and small semi-detached houses. The scale of properties contrasts significantly from the large Victorian villa, Waverley House to the 1920s bungalows at 2, 4, 8 and 10 South Park Road.

Waverley House is a grand Italianate Victorian villa of brick with stone dressings and a slate roof. The property boasts a large 3 storey square tower on angle with rich architectural features that reflect the high-status of the original occupants. The villa is located within significantly sized gardens, bounded by mature trees and high metal railings. Built around the same time 14 and 16 South Park Road are a symmetrical pair of grand semi-detached houses, built in the late 19th century with richly detailed Italianate and gothic features. The properties are of brick in Flemish bond with stone dressings. Standing at 3 storeys high they offer an imposing presence, towering over the surrounding houses.

In the 1920s the area saw further development with a number of properties built in similar styles typical of that period, the development comprised of bungalows and a 2 storey detached property in pebble-dash, red brick with brick quoins.



Figure 9 – No 4 South Park Road, a single storey 1920s property, located opposite the much grander Victoria villa, Waverley House.

Located west of Waverley House are 17-31 South Park Road which were built between 1927-1936 and are noticeably different from buildings in the street being of a largely consistent design and positioned closer together with less space between them. The rear gardens are however elongated to match the depth of the plot at Waverley House, with small gardens to their fronts. Nos 17-27 are of red engineered brick to the front elevations with common brick to the sides and rear. The properties have pitched slate roofs and single storey square bay windows with lean-to roofs. Nos 29-31 and 18-20 North Park Road opposite, are of similar style with hipped roofs and are fronted with a mixture of red brick and pebbledash. No 29-31 have a two storey flat-topped bay window with brick arched porches and recessed doors. The properties retain their original front walls which are of good quality and add character at this the entrance to the conservation area. Later alterations to the semis that reduce the similarities, rhythm of development and visual relationships between them have been of detriment.

In front of both these sets of properties are grassed verges, that within South Park Road has trees planted within it. This additional landscaping helps to compensate for the lesser size of the gardens, albeit some sections have unfortunately been removed. This layout marks them out as the continuation of the earlier phase of suburban development, prior to the mid-20th century estates being developed in the surroundings of the conservation area.

5.3 Building Materials and Details

The materials evident within the conservation area signify the importance of the railway line and better transport links which came with industrial growth in the late 19th century. The opening of the nearby railway undoubtedly assisted with the procurement of the building materials used in the construction of the older properties in this part of Kirkby, signifying a departure from the use of local materials and vernacular styles.

Buildings within the conservation area are typically constructed of red brick with slate roofs, with variant levels of decorative detailing ranging from the Italianate decorated villas to the simple late Victorian semi-detached houses. Regardless of the building material and style implemented, lime mortar/ sand pointing would have been used. It is unfortunately the case that a number of buildings have been repointed in cement/sand pointing which is harmful from both a physical and aesthetic point of view.

Original stucco/render is relatively rare within the conservation areas but examples can be seen at 38-40 North Park Road, and Lytham House where render has been added later it is generally a jarring feature. Pebble dash is also rare within the conservation areas but is used on the upper storeys of 18-20 and 29-31 South Park Road, but this material is not considered as a defining feature of the conservation area. Stucco, as seen on the front elevations of 38 & 40 North Park Road indicates the ostentatious nature of housing during the formative years of Kirkby, when owners aimed to more cheaply replicate higher quality materials of more expensive properties. Earlier houses within the conservation areas tended

to be more elaborately decorated, such decoration and architectural detailing is proportional to their size and status.

Slate is used for roofs regardless of the age or status of the building and is a unifying feature. Where alternatives such as a concrete tiles have been used, these detract from the coherence of the area and the individual architectural character of the older buildings in the locality. Chimney stacks and pots add interest and variety to the skyline to the conservation areas and add to the individuality of the properties. The chimneys of the four Victorian properties in Glover's Brow are particularly prominent on the skyline being robust in stature.

Timber windows and doors would have once been prevalent throughout the conservation areas but many of these have since been replaced with modern uPVC which are aesthetically harmful as their detail lack authenticity as the thickness of frames, their constructional and opening details and finishes of those used fail to replicate that of the timber originals. The size and positions of openings and the overall arrangement of glazing bars in a many replacement windows fail to reflect the original sash styles, which detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area. New window openings have been inserted into some buildings, though the incidence of this is fortunately limited. Changes have also been made to many of the front doors of properties in both conservation areas where timber originals have been replaced with a variety of modern uPVC designs which do not respect the architectural style or period of the buildings.

Many houses have lost their original brick garden walls. Where original walls remain they make a positive contribution to the appearance of the streetscape. Hedges complement the green planted character of the area and are also a positive element of the area. Despite the loss of historic boundary treatments some properties have at least retained their original stone gate pillars which are attractive features in themselves and complement the buildings they front. Boundaries are now mainly defined by a mix of brick walls, hedges, railings and fencing. The walled boundaries are considered as a key element of the conservation area, and further degradation of these elements would be additionally harmful.

5.4 Listed Buildings

There are several listed buildings in the conservation areas; these heritage assets are nationally important and add significantly to local interest.

14 & 16 (Ivylea) South Park Road (Grade II)

Dating from the late 19th century, these are a pair of semi-detached Victorian houses of three storeys, with flanking square towers over doorways. They are built of red brick laid in Flemish Bond with decorative brick and stone dressings around the openings. This detail is rare within the conservation areas and contributes positively to the conservation area.

Lytham House, 16 North Park Road (Grade II)

Lytham House was built in the late 1860's by Christopher Wade who named it after his birthplace. It is a detached Victorian two storey house built of brick and the ground floor stuccoed with horizontal grouting. It was one of the original buildings to be constructed in Kirkby Park and is one of only a small number which survive from that period.

38 & 40 North Park Road (Grade II)

A pair of late Victorian semi-detached houses, of two storeys with painted stucco, and slate roofs. The large symmetrical form of these buildings adds to the sense of the planned layout of the conservation area, and is exemplar of the imposing nature early houses here would have exhibited.

The Carters Arms, Glover's Brow (Grade II)

The 19th century two storey public house is of scored stucco with a slate roof hipped on the right. Despite having undergone a series of alterations, the building still retains its grand architectural style and remains as a local landmark within the area. This would have been the centre of village life before the influx of new residents in the 20th century.

Waverley House, South Park Road (Grade II)

Waverley House is one of the earliest buildings remaining in the conservation developed in the mid-late 19th century. It is a large and imposing Italianate Victorian villa set within its own grounds of brick with stone dressings and a slate roof. The villa evokes a sense of the wealth of the Liverpool businessmen who developed speculative villa suburbs along the Liverpool, Bolton and Bury railway line. The grand villa has a three-storey square tower of which is a landmark that adds visual interest to views within and outside of the conservation area.

5.5 Locally Listed Buildings

A present Knowsley Council does not have a Local List. However, the Council is in the process of collating a list of locally important buildings which are 'significant' to the local area and the Borough.

Potential inclusions for the local list include:

- Chatham House, North Park Road.

Inclusion on a local list does not give statutory protection and therefore development would not always require planning permission, however where applications are required close scrutiny will be given to any development that may affect the significance and/or setting of a locally listed building.

6 SUMMARY OF KEY CHARACTERISTICS

North Park Road and South Park Road conservation areas were developed in the mid-19th century as suburbs for the middle classes. However development was slow and as the town grew throughout the later 19th Century and the early 20th century new properties were constructed as some larger properties were lost. Today the conservation areas boast a mixture of architectural styles owing to the long period over which it developed. The layout and streetscape of the conservation areas has largely survived despite the town's growth and the development of the Park Estate which encloses the conservation areas to the west. The most notable features of the conservation areas are the surviving original villas, walled boundaries and mature tree cover. A number of plots fortunately retain their original size, with many properties enjoying unusually large and long rear gardens which add to the sense of status of the area. The key characteristics of the conservation areas can be summarised as:

- Both Conservation areas are mid-19th century suburbs developed concurrently with the coming of the railway;
- The most notable and positive features of the conservation areas are the grand Victorian villas, their notably large plots, and well-spaced layout;
- Mature trees and well planted gardens;
- Early 20th Century development is generally of good quality and adds to the architectural variety and promotes understanding of the historic development of the area;
- The sites that contribute positively to the conservation area often have large plot sizes, with many properties enjoying proportionately larger and longer than average gardens;
- Properties have a consistent building line and all face on to North Park Road, South Park Road or Glover's Brow, where this not occur e.g. the cul-de-sac infill, the character of the road is interrupted;
- The seven large Grade II listed buildings that date from the mid-late 19th century including the Victorian Villas, large semi-detached houses and a public house are focal buildings;
- Waverley House is a large and imposing Grade II Victorian Villa set within large grounds. Its distinctive square tower at the eastern gateway of South Park Road provides a striking landmark;
- The use of brick and slate;

- Low front boundaries are set directly on the back of the pavement, the few original brick and / or sandstone walls remaining are of particular interest.

7 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

7.1 Conservation Area Boundary Review

The North Park Road Conservation Area boundary as it currently stands would benefit from review in accordance with Historic England Advice Note 1 (2011) 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management'. The existing boundary designated in 1978, is now outdated, following changes as a result of infill development and changes to physical boundaries.

Consideration was given to extending the boundary to include Nos 1 & 3 Mill Lane (Grade II listed) as these contribute to attractive views out of the conservation area. However Glover's Brow forms a strong divide between these properties and conservation area boundary. A change to solely include these buildings would result in a contrived boundary being drawn across the junction. Given 1-3 Mill Lane are protected by listing, they are already suitably protected from harmful changes, and therefore this is not proposed.

Consideration was also given to combining the two conservation areas, given their similarities in origin and character. However, the housing between the sites is not of historic character and including this would dilute the architectural and historic qualities of the conservation area.

There are no suggested boundary amendments to the South Park Road Conservation Area as the existing boundaries remain appropriate.

Suggested Boundary Amendments

Proposed Additions

31 & 33 North Park Road

The current boundary extends only to include parts of curtilage to 33 North Park Road and 9-12 Glover's Court and does not include the full boundary of these properties, due to the creation of new boundaries caused by the partial demolition of the Convent for the Sacred Heart of Mary Convent and the new development at Millerscroft. It is recommended that the conservation area boundary be extended to the full property boundaries. This would be a coherent and logical approach consistent with Historic England Advice Note 1 (paragraph 66), which states that 'a unified approach is desirable to their management as well as *suggesting that in almost all situations the conservation area boundary runs around rather than through a space or plot*'.

Public Realm to the south of 38-40 North Park Road

To the south of 38-40 North Park Road the conservation area boundary excludes North Park Road itself making the boundary ill-defined by features on the ground. The extension of the conservation area is suggested to include the full extent of the road and surrounding pavement up to the property boundaries of 5 & 6 Millerscroft and aligned to the western boundary of 40 North Park Road. This approach would comply with paragraph 17 of the Historic England Advice Note 1 (2011) and paragraph 66 which states that conservation area boundaries *'will generally be defined by physical features'*.

Public Realm to the east of The Carter's Arms

To the east of The Carter's Arms the conservation area boundary extends partly out into the public pavement on the western side of Glover's Brow, but this boundary is ill-defined by features on the ground. The extension of the conservation area is suggested to include the full extent of the pavement up to the road. This approach would comply with current national guidance as outlined above.

7.2 Design of Development

Previous changes to historic buildings within the conservation area have not always been sympathetic to the character of the area. For example, more recent infill development and creation of hardstanding in the former gardens of the larger villas has harmed the spacious and green qualities of their gardens. Extensions and garage conversions should take into account the historic design of the host building and significant aspects of the layout of the plot, seeking to enhance this where possible.

The layout and positioning of some development fails to harmonise with the historic street pattern and plot sizes. The cul-de-sac form of Lytham Court is of an alien layout which detracts from the established historic layout. The open plan nature of the development and new road with large corner radii to the junction is additionally uncharacteristic. More recent blocks of flats such as Park Court and Glovers Court are of a massing which do not relate to the historic forms of development, or respond positively to established building lines; these also have significant and clearly visible areas of hardstanding for parking, detracting from the planted character of the area. New development should be designed to ensure that the layout and form of new development does not repeat these harmful aspects of existing development.

7.3 Alterations to Features

Not all changes to historic buildings have been sympathetic to the character of the conservation areas. For example, replacement uPVC windows and doors detract from the architectural character of the properties. Where replacement features include 'Wood effect' finishes and designs which noticeably differ from the originals the impacts are

especially harmful. Changes to buildings should take into account the historic design, age and character of the host building, seeking to enhance this where possible.

7.4 Setting of Conservation Area

The connection to the railway is significant in regards to the historic development of the area and opportunities to promote the relationship between the conservation areas and the railway line should be maximised.

1 and 3 Mill Lane are grade II listed and set near the boundary of North Park Road Conservation area. They add to the attractiveness of views in the vicinity of this junction and their design is somewhat reminiscent of the areas 'village' origins.

The conservation areas are surrounded to the west and divided by mid-20th century estate housing developments, where repeated forms are prevalent and are wholly different in character to the conservation areas. These areas do not contribute to the conservation areas' settings.

7.5 Traffic and Pedestrian Movement

North Park Road and South Park Road are relatively quiet areas with low traffic flows. Glover's Brow is a busier road controlled by traffic lights and other traffic calming measures; however traffic does not appear to be unduly heavy during non-peak times. Generally, highways signs and line marking are minimal; this should be maintained and further simplifications undertaken where permissible. Permeability between the two conservation areas is poor, especially for pedestrians, with no clear route connecting the two. The pedestrian footpaths are wide enough to accommodate most uses, however at some times this is compromised by on pavement parking and inconsiderate location of refuse bins.

7.6 Vacancy and Condition

Some of the larger properties within the conservation areas would benefit from maintenance works.

Waverley House, South Park Road is of significant interest, however appears to be only partly used and is in worsening condition. It would benefit from conversion to a more intensive use to help avoid dereliction.

The plot of land between 10 & 12 South Park Road is vacant and overgrown. It appears never to have been developed since the area was laid out.

Localised sections of pavement would benefit from some repairs.

7.7 Enforcement Issues

Some properties have had some inappropriate alterations, such as the installation of inappropriate doors and windows. It would be beneficial to undertake a survey to check that existing features benefit from the appropriate permissions, and provide a baseline from which future changes to the conservation area can be monitored.

7.8 Article 4 Directions

The conservation areas do not currently have Article 4 Directions in place. The creation of an Article 4 Direction would enable the local planning authority to exercise planning control over a greater range of minor alterations to residential properties which could otherwise be carried out by a property owner without planning permission under their permitted development rights.

Alterations such as the installation of replacement doors and windows, re-roofing in modern materials, the removal of chimneys, creation of dormer windows, the addition of porches, the demolition of boundary walls etc., can all be controlled by Article 4 Directions. The conservation area is not currently under an Article 4 direction but this may be a step to be considered in the near future due to the noticeable impact that these minor changes have already had within the area. Given the significant loss to features which is evident already, adoption of these measures would have greater impact if there was demonstrable public support.

7.9 Opportunities for Enhancement

There are a number of opportunities to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Further details will be set out in the Conservation Area Management Plan for the North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas.

The key areas that would benefit from enhancement are:

- Reinstating the lost grass verges and trees along the roads as this would add to the planted and suburban character of the street;
- Some buildings and structures would benefit from suitable maintenance and repairs, e.g. localised repair and maintenance using appropriate materials;
- Waverley House and its grounds would benefit from works to improve its appearance and condition.
- Some properties would benefit from the reinstatement of traditional architectural details to buildings, e.g. replacing uPVC with traditional timber frame windows;
- The vacant site at 12 South Park Road would benefit from general tidying and upkeep; suitably designed development of a nature and scale which complements

and enhances the character of the conservation area would be supported, as this would complete the street scene.

- The provision of heritage interpretation materials detailing the significance of the area and its history;
- Some of the public footpaths in the area would benefit from repair and maintenance, where cracked and in poor condition;
- Provision of specific design guidance for additions and alterations;
- One building identified in this Conservation Areas Appraisal would benefit from being 'locally listed' and included on a local list. The building for consideration is:
 - Chatham House (North Park Road).

Further details will be set out in the Conservation Area Management Plan for the North Park Road and South Park Road Conservation Areas.

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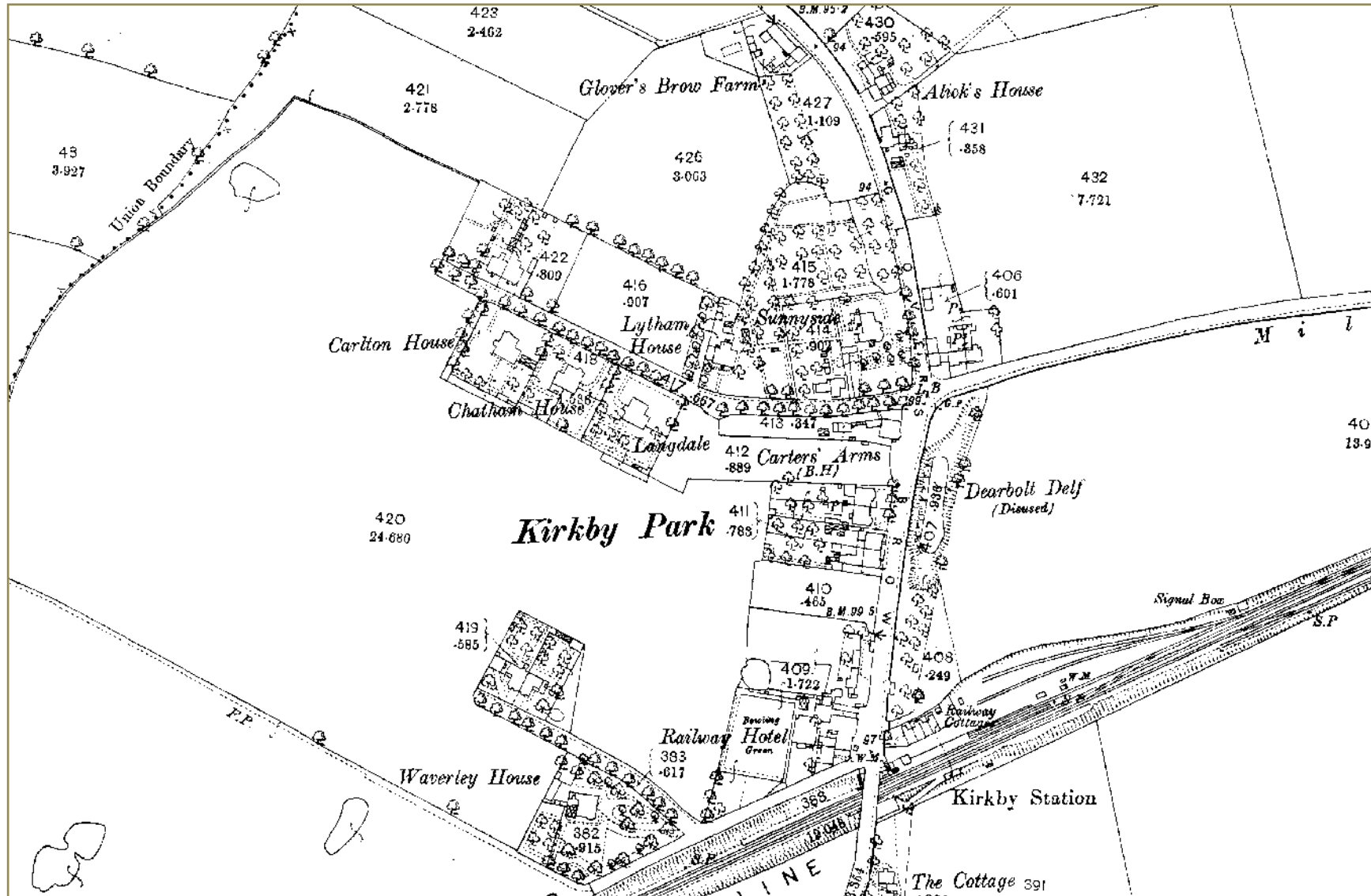
APPENDIX 1

Historic Map 1840



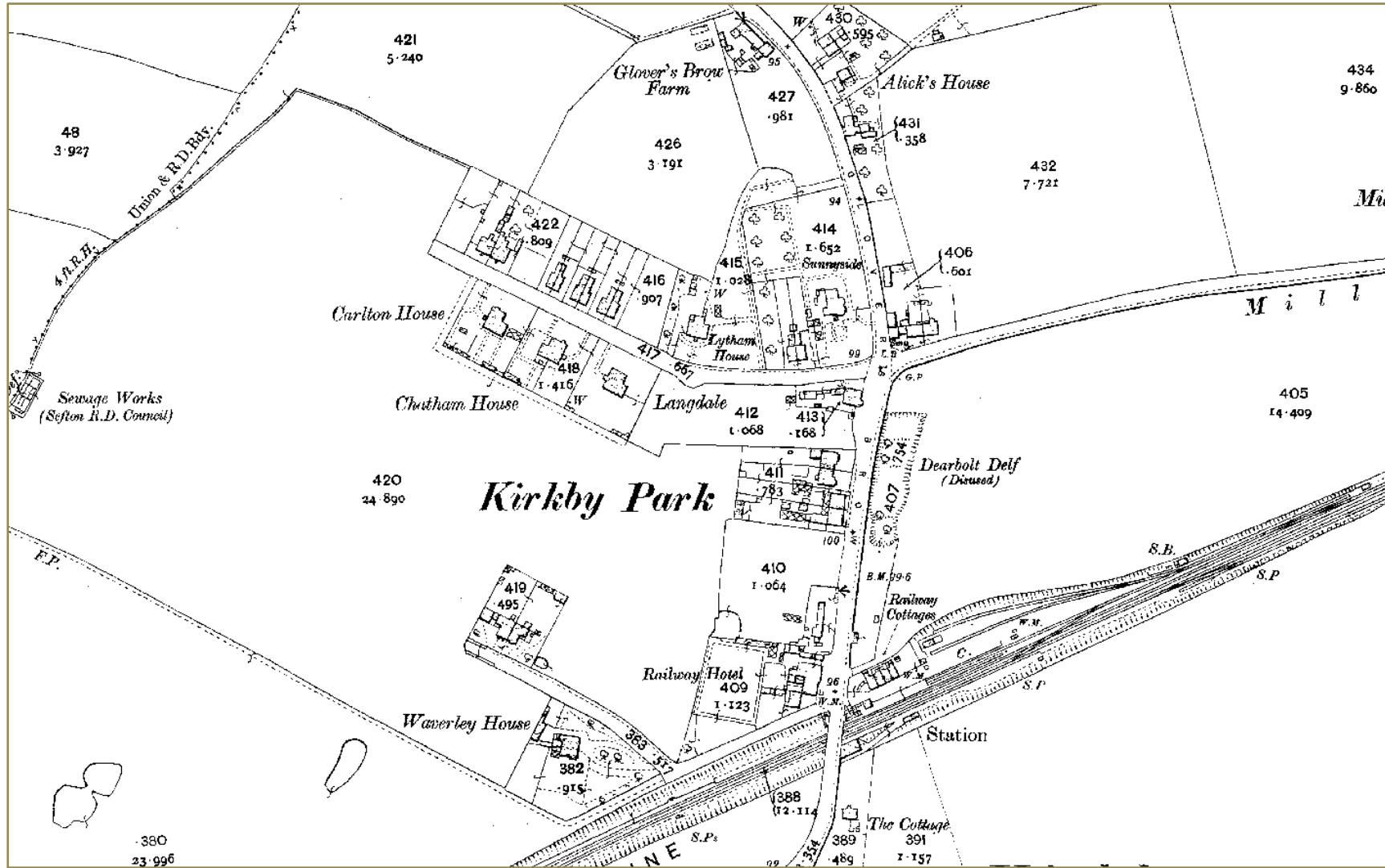
APPENDIX 2

Historic Map 1893



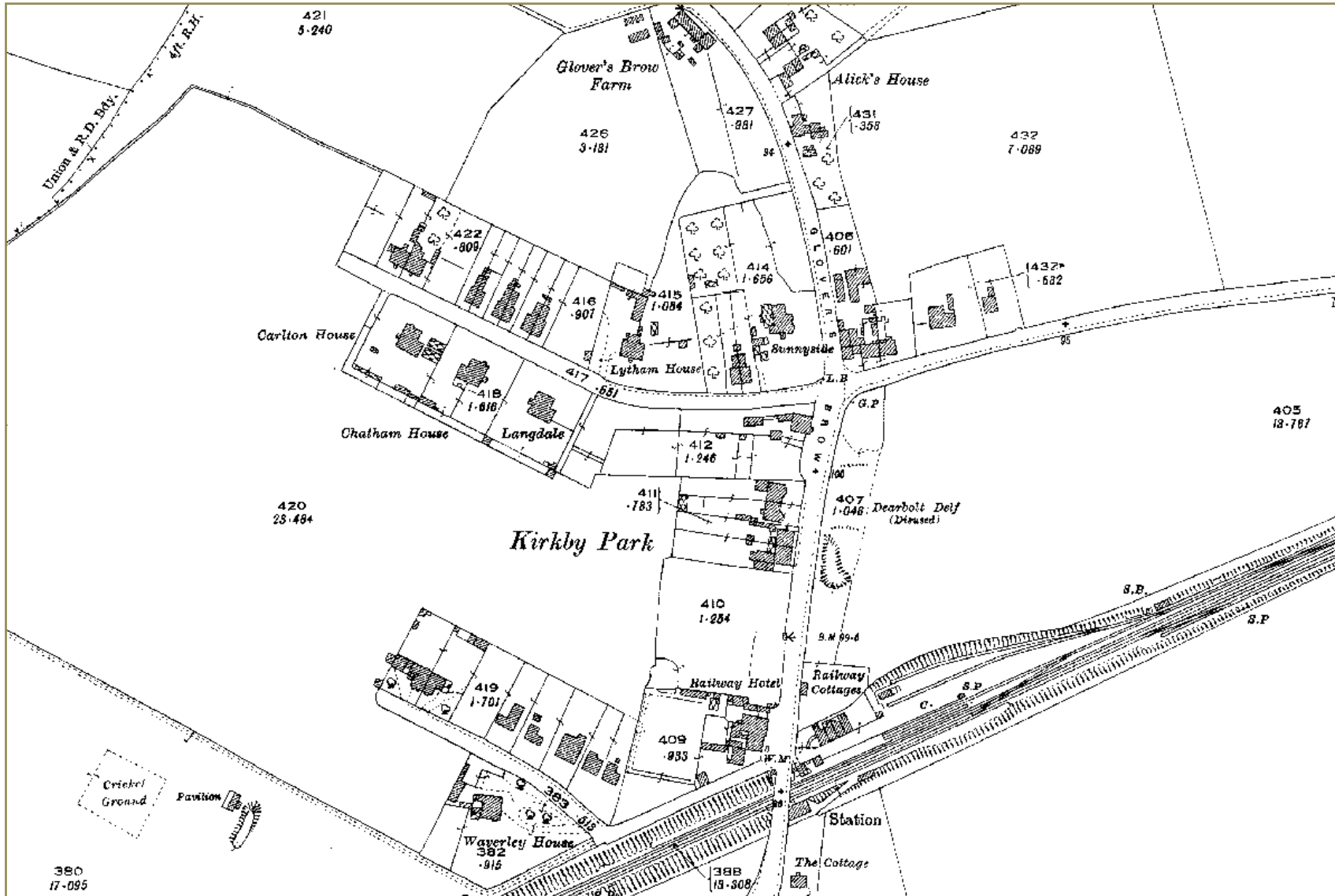
APPENDIX 3

Historic Map 1907



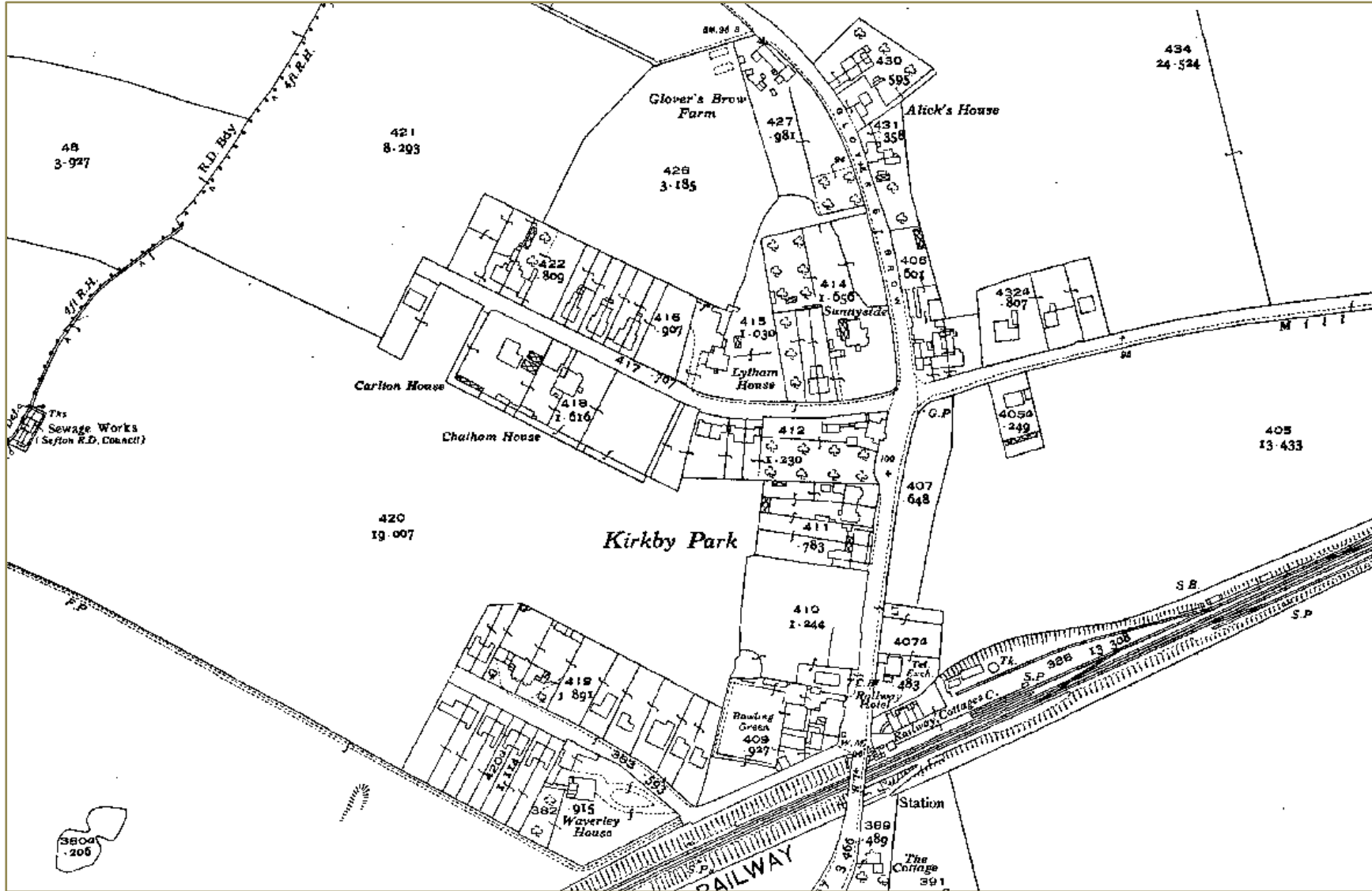
APPENDIX 4

Historic Map 1927



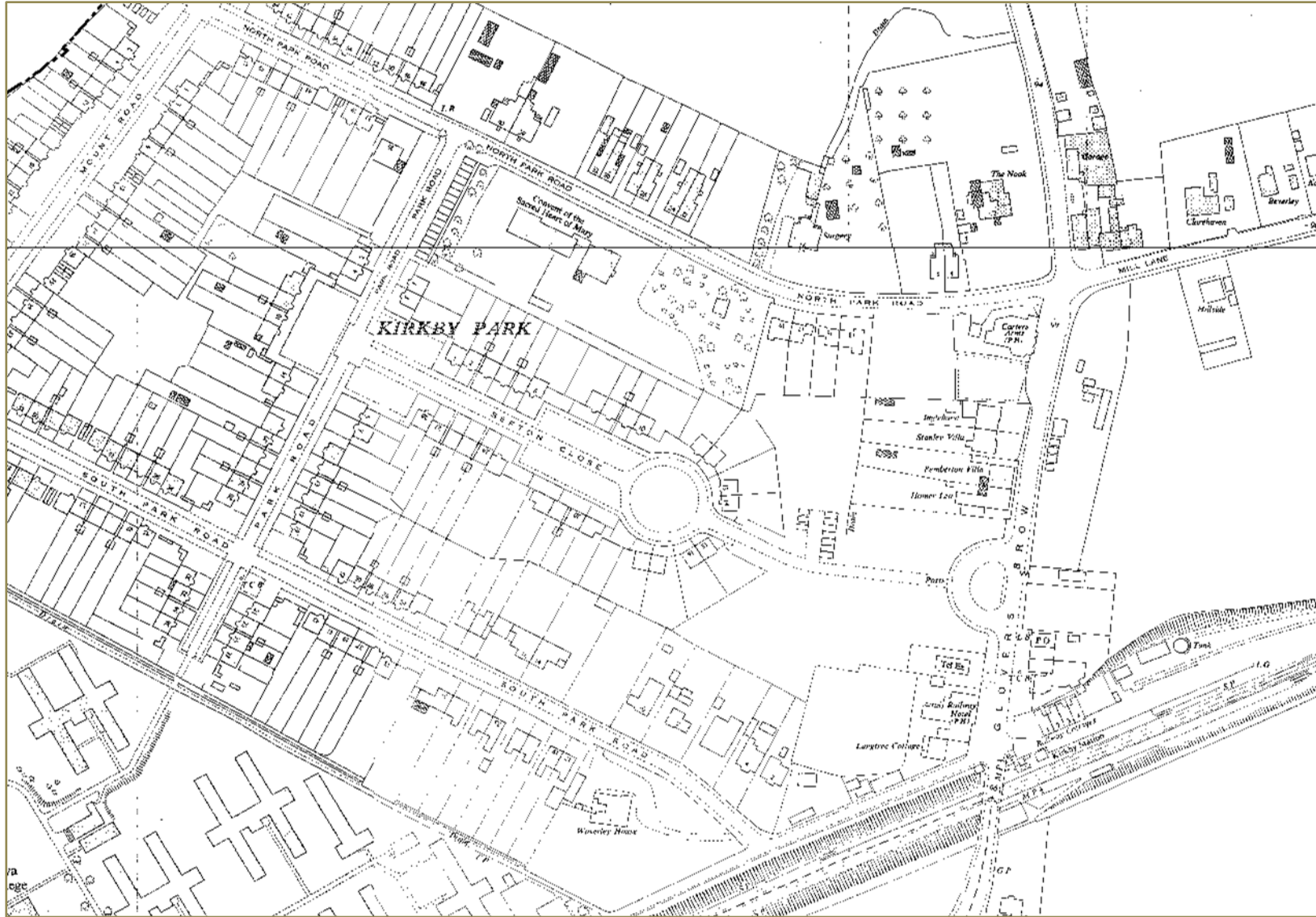
APPENDIX 5

Historic Map 1939

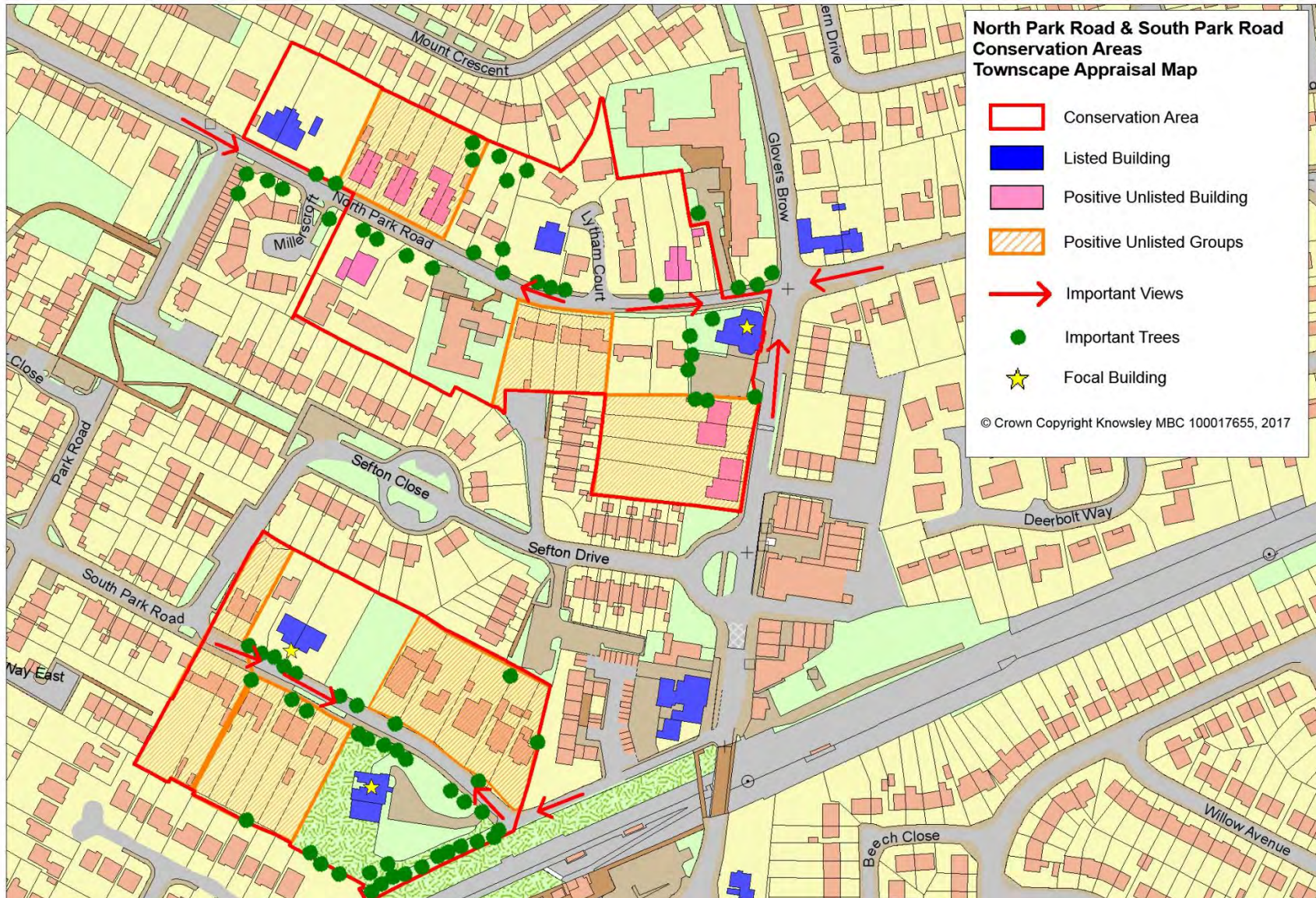


APPENDIX 6

Historic Map 1962



APPENDIX 7



APPENDIX 8



Planning Services
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Ground Floor Yorkon Building
Archway Road
Huyton
Knowsley
Merseyside
L36 9FB
Telephone: 0151 443 2380



Knowsley Council