



CONSERVATION AREA HISTORIES:
BARROW ON TRENT
DISTRICT OF SOUTH DERBYSHIRE



Barrow Hall. The south front. By courtesy of the Magic Attic, Swadlincote.

The place-name Barrow is believed to come from an old English word meaning “at the grove.” Today, a grove simply means a small wood or group of trees, but anciently groves were places of religious importance, akin to stone circles or “henges”. A grove might be a circle of trees or a space within a wood. The Roman historian Tacitus (c.55-117AD) wrote of the religious groves of the British, “dedicated to superstition and barbarous rites”. Is it possible that there is some relationship between the name “Barrow” and the buried archaeological remains of a henge monument (which confusingly happens to contain a burial mound or barrow) near the river between Barrow and Twyford at SK33332833?

The parish of Barrow is low lying. South of the village most of the land was meadow and pasture. Most of the arable land lay on higher ground to the north. The three open fields lay north of the present Trent and Mersey Canal, called Deepdale Field, Middle Field and Lowe Field, which lay adjacent to Swarkestone Lowes. There were also some smaller areas of arable elsewhere, including “Ditch Furlong” **(1, 1)** and “Fearnelowe”. Fearnelowe **(2)** was on the south side of Twyford Road, but the name has been re-used for a modern housing development some distance away, called Fernello Close **(3)**. The village lies along the historic division between the meadow/pasture and arable land, daringly close to the River Trent.

The conservation area lies in two main parts, east and west of the site of the demolished Barrow Hall **(4)**, and linked together only by a roadway. The outbuildings of the former Hall, now converted to residential use and known as “Barrow House”, form a small detached portion of the conservation area **(5)**. They include a handsome two-storey building surmounted by a turret with a clock, bell and weathervane.

Domesday Book records two estates or “manors” at Barrow. The principal one, with a church and priest, belonged to the King as an outlying part of

a Royal Estate based at Melbourne. Then, when Henry I created the Bishopric of Carlisle in 1133, the Rectories of Melbourne and Chellaston and the Manor of Barrow were given to the Bishop as part of the endowment of the new Bishopric. The successive Bishops of Carlisle were therefore Lords of the Manor of Barrow until 1704, when the Bishop granted the freehold of his estate at Melbourne, Chellaston and Barrow to the Rt. Hon Thomas Coke of Melbourne Hall, the sitting tenant. The Coke family had held the estate on lease from the Bishop since 1629. The field name “Mill Croft” **(29)** suggests that the small pool to the north **(30)** marks the site of a water mill, perhaps the manorial mill, although the present appearance of the site does not look convincing. The ground to the north and east of the supposed mill site was formerly an open area known as “The Green” **(31, 31)**.

In the early 17th century, the Bishop’s manor of Barrow was split up among a small number of “copyhold” tenants and their subtenants. Chief among them was Richard Sale, Rector of Weston on Trent (1545-1625). His family was long established in South Derbyshire, taking its surname from the place-name Seyle, now Netherseal and Overseal. Richard Sale’s copyhold estate in Barrow was formed by his purchase of two estates, one bought from Thomas Gilbarte Esq. of Locko around 1602 and the other from William Knight. Richard Sale’s son William (1591-1665) took up residence in Barrow and soon acquired a third copyhold estate, which had belonged to Mr. William More.



A 19th century view of Barrow Manor, possibly by Richard Keene of Derby, photographer. By courtesy of Maxwell Craven.

The Sales’ principal house in Barrow, later known as the Manor House **(6)**, presumably stood on one of the three copyhold estates they bought. The present building on the site is late 18th century, but the upper storey is a modern rebuilding following the loss of the original upper storey in 1954. The building is, therefore, unlisted. The “Manor House” label is probably misleading. Daniel Dalrymple, a Sale relative who owned the house and lived there, bought the Manor of Barrow from the Melbourne Hall estate around 1800. He could, therefore, legitimately claim that his house then became the Manor House by virtue of his purchase, but its true origins appear to be as an ordinary village farmstead that acquired an elevated status as the Sale estate grew and prospered. We do not actually know when the house first came to be called the Manor House.

The second Domesday estate or manor at Barrow belonged to Henry

Ferrers, Earl of Derby, and was smaller than the manor of Barrow belonging to Melbourne. During the reign of Henry II (1154-1189) this estate was given by the Bakepuize family to the Priory of St. John of Jerusalem, otherwise known as the Knights Hospitaller. The Hospitallers organisation was founded in the 11th century as a monastic brotherhood caring for the needs of pilgrims and crusaders to the Holy Land. Their English estates lasted until the Reformation when they were confiscated by King Henry VIII, along with the possessions of other religious houses.



St. Wilfred's Church, Barrow. By courtesy of www.picturethepast.org.uk

The Hospitallers' estate at Barrow included the church, now dedicated to St. Wilfrid but previously to St. Helen, which had formerly belonged to the Melbourne-owned manor. The earliest fabric in the present church **(7)** is the north arcade of the nave, datable to the 13th century and attributed to the Hospitallers. It is generally accepted that the Knights Hospitallers ran their Barrow Estate from Arleston, where impressive stonework from mediaeval buildings is still visible. It was a small estate, administered by the Hospitallers as a "camera" (i.e. cell or outlying part) of their Preceptory at Yeaveley. In the 15th and 16th centuries the Bothe family of Arleston leased the Rectory of Barrow from the Hospitallers, paying a vicar to perform the religious duties. The Bothes were an interesting family which, within four generations, produced two Archbishops of York, a Bishop of Exeter and Archdeacons of Durham, York and Hereford.

The original vicarage house at Barrow disappeared long ago, but the surviving Glebe Terriers (i.e. surveys of vicarage property) prove its existence. The glebe terrier of 1612 suggests that it stood east of the church on a plot of land **(8)** that later became part of the Hall grounds and is now occupied by modern houses on Hall Park, backing onto Church Lane.

The Hospitallers' property in Barrow was confiscated in 1543 and granted to Lord Mountjoy. Six years later it was sold to Edward Pease and James Wilson of London, dealers in former church property. They in turn sold it on to Edward Beaumont around 1550. The Beaumonts sold the tithes to John Harpur of Swarkestone in 1599.

Edward Beaumont is credited with building the original Barrow Hall on part of the former Hospitallers' property, but this is assumption. Besides owning the former Hospitallers' estate, the Beaumonts soon purchased

other property in Barrow, and the Hall site could have been included in such a purchase. If the house were still standing, archaeological investigation of the building might reveal some clues to its history, but it was demolished in 1962 following fire damage a few years earlier. Its loss, tragic in itself, has been compounded by the suburban character of the housing estate known as “Hall Park” that now occupies the site.

The Hall is said to have been rebuilt in 1808, but the scanty evidence suggests that the earlier house was incorporated within the new building. Had the house been entirely new, one would expect it to have stood a little further east, where the view towards the river was unimpeded by the parish church. Instead, it occupied the exact site of the previous house, shown on the Enclosure Award plan of 1787-8. This plan suggests an H-shaped house with the legs of the H aligned north-south. The 1808 rebuilding at the Hall perhaps involved filling the hollows to make a rectangular shape, accompanied by complete remodelling of the exterior. The north side, with a central rounded bay housing a cantilevered and top-lit circular staircase, was convincing for 1808. The south side looked much more conservative. The house seems to have been coated in render, which would have conveniently masked the scars of alteration while being conveniently fashionable at the time.

The Grange (9), Grade II listed but outside the conservation area, is a stylish three-storey farmhouse that also belonged to the Beaumonts. In 1788 the owner was John Beaumont and the occupier was his brother Francis.

The historic framework of the village divides into three distinct parts, all of them encompassed in whole or in part by the conservation area boundary. They are as follows (A, B and C):

A. Plots on a slight rise above the flood plain, fronting south to a small tributary of the Trent, both east and west of Church Lane. These are the “backbone” of the village. The floodplain edge, rather than the main through road, forms the village frontage. A similar pattern of development can be seen at Swarkestone, Willington and (to a lesser extent) at Twyford.

Most of the significant properties of Barrow, including the former Hall, Manor House, Church and several substantial farmsteads, can be found in this part of the village. Two of the farmhouses, St. Wilfrid’s (10) and The Walnuts (11), are Grade II listed. In the late 19th century, the Walnuts was the home of George Turner, a 19th century local landscape painter of repute, said to have been related to the great J. M. W. Turner. George is described as a farmer and landscape painter in a directory of 1895 but it seems rather doubtful that he did much farming.

B. Properties on the north side of Twyford Road. The Enclosure Award plan of Barrow (1787-8) shows a very distinct group of about half a dozen properties here, smaller than those described above, comprising homesteads and crofts separated by a public lane (shown by broken line at 12 on the plan). The crofts extended northwards to the brook. The crofts were sliced through by the Twyford Road bypass in 1969, and the lane that separated them from the homesteads may be

“Cross Lane” that was deleted during the Enclosure.

What is the significance of this group of properties? Do they represent a secondary phase in the evolution of the village layout? Are they the farmsteads of labourers or sub-tenants who worked part of the time for the larger farmers? Or do they represent a separately owned mediaeval estate within the village – of the Hospitallers, perhaps? Careful and detailed research might provide an answer, but at the moment we can only guess.

There are a few buildings in this area which are worthy of note. There are vestiges of a cruck-framed building at Walnut Farm **(13)**. Number 34 Twyford Road **(14)** is a cruck framed building, listed Grade II. (“Crowtrees” **(15)**, at the other end of the village by the River Trent, is cruck framed as well). On an adjoining site stands the old school **(16)**, built by public subscription in 1843 for £150 and run under the auspices of the National Schools Society. There is a later addition on the west side. The school was originally endowed in 1776 when Elizabeth Sale of Willington died, leaving £100 for the establishment of a school for girls in Barrow, and for other charitable purposes. The endowment was increased by another legacy in Thomas Davy’s will of November 1856. A new school on the other side of the road **(17)** was opened in 1998, keeping the Sale and Davy name, and the charities were diverted to make grants for the further education of its pupils.



An early view, undated, of the house now known as “Crowtrees” by the River Trent. By courtesy of Derby Evening Telegraph.

Between the old and new schools stands the War Memorial **(18)**, given by Mr. F. C. Arkwright of Willersley Hall, Matlock, to the village that sent most men to the First World War in proportion to its population.

C. Properties at the crossroads in the village centre. Prior to the enclosure of Barrow in 1787-8, the crossroads was a large and irregular area of open pastureland, known as the Town Leys. The space in front of the long terrace known as “The Row” is the last remnant of it. Prior to the enclosure, numerous houses had been built on the Town Leys, some with gardens and some without. The Enclosure Award shows that the cottages at the Nook **(19)** and the Row **(20)** belonged “to the inhabitants of Barrow” in 1788. Others may have started out as encroachments by paupers. The present houses at the Nook and The Row are said to date from 1778 – 1812.

The crossroads as we see it today was created at the Enclosure when the Town Leys was parcelled out and awarded to several private owners. It is

interesting to note that the pretty Gothick “Lodge Cottage” **(21)**, standing by the former main gate to Barrow Hall, seems to be the successor of a previous building on the site, which formerly stood in isolation on the Town Leys.



An undated photograph of the lodge to Barrow Hall. By courtesy of Derby Evening Telegraph.

Before the construction of the Twyford Road bypass **(22)** in 1969, through traffic from Swarkestone hit a T-junction north of the village, and proceeded through the village via Brookfield and Twyford Road. This indirect and seemingly illogical route was created during the enclosure of Barrow in 1787-8, when the present Swarkestone Road **(23)** was laid out. The road was so placed in order that an old common pastureland known as the Meer **(24, 24)**, between Swarkestone Road and Chapel Lane, might be partitioned as private property and added to the backs of the respective properties fronting Church Lane. Travellers from Swarkestone would previously have traversed the Meer, and the west end of Chapel Lane marks the original point of entry into the village.

The directness of Swarkestone Road was, therefore, clearly of secondary concern to improving the value of the farmsteads along Church Lane. For example, the enclosure of the Meer gave the Sale family the opportunity to create a small park **(25)** at the back of the Manor House in the 19th century. They planted trees (mostly gone now) around the perimeter, made a central drive and built twin lodges by the road. Chapel Lane was laid out in 1787-8 as a private road for use by owners of land adjoining it.

The name “Chapel Lane” comes from the handsome “Bethel” chapel of 1839 **(26)**, built as an Independent (later Congregational) chapel. Richard Sale of Barrow was the prime mover behind its construction and the provider of the site, having bought William Bancroft’s share of the Meer shortly before. It stands on a series of brick barrel vaults, which raise it above the level of the surrounding land. The chapel was taken over by the Methodists in 1914, initially on a lease followed by outright purchase in 1935. Before 1914, the Methodists worshipped in a barn in front of the house at Poplars Farm on Church Lane. The barn **(27)** was demolished in 1987.

In 1946 the Manor House with its immediate grounds was given to the Methodist Ministers’ Retirement Fund, the farm and lodges being sold



The barn at Poplars Farm, used as a Methodist chapel until 1914. By courtesy of Derby Evening Telegraph.

separately. The donor was Mrs. Mary Hoult, who had arranged the gift with her late husband Joseph. The Hoult had bought the Manor House from Mr. Richard Sale of Anglesey in 1914, and Mr. Hoult had been a key figure in the Methodists' acquisition of the Congregational chapel. In 1949-50, five blocks of flats in the Manor House grounds, known as Manor Court (28), were built as permanent homes for retired Methodist clergy. The Manor House itself was split into two large houses, and remained divided into two after the first floor was removed in 1954.

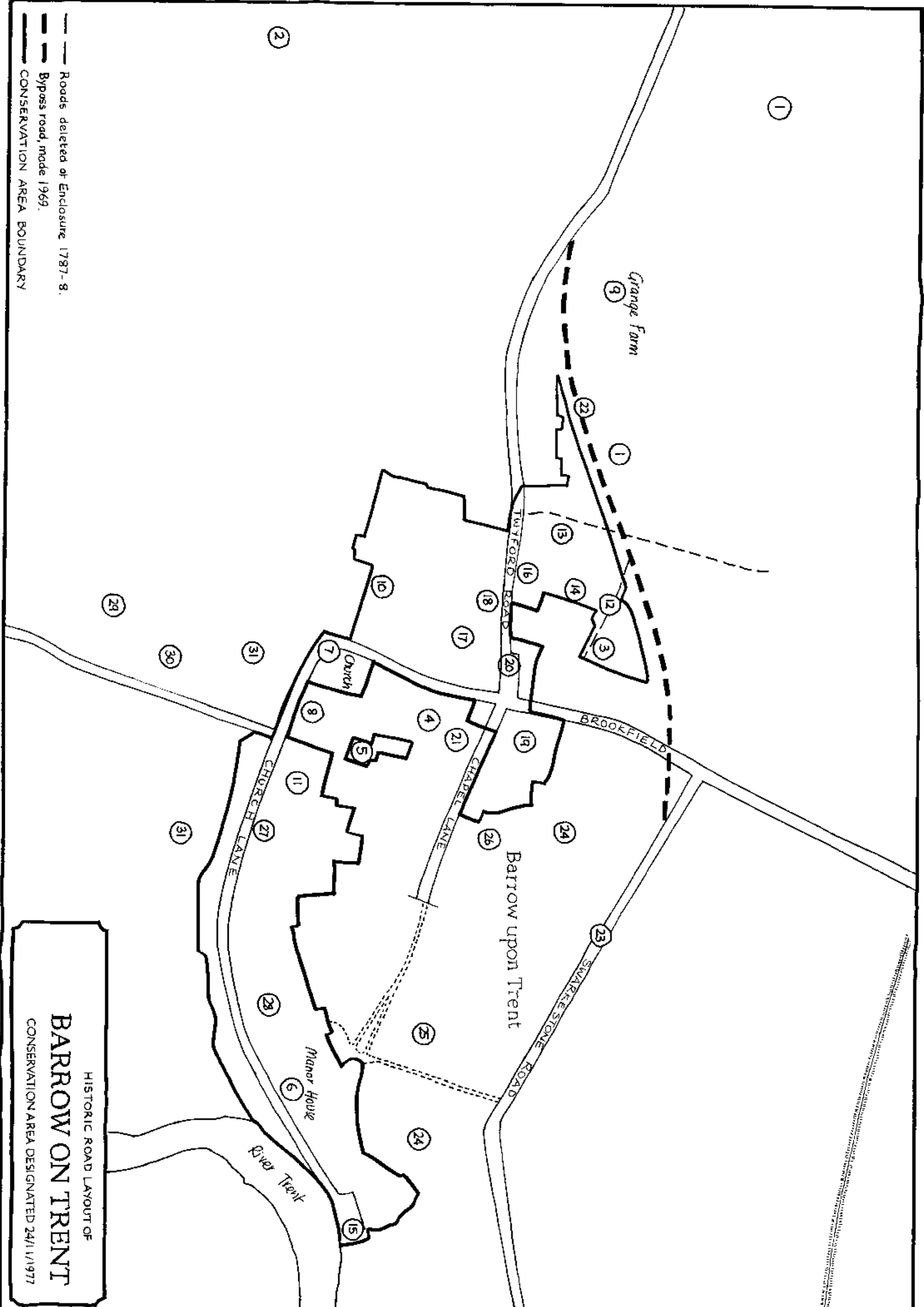
Philip Heath.



The crossroads at the village centre in Barrow, showing the open space by Long Row (right) that was formerly part of the "Town Leys". By courtesy of www.picturethepast.org.uk.

Designed and published by South Derbyshire District Council.
March 2005. Series editor: Philip Heath. The views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) concerned and do not necessarily reflect the views of the District Council.

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— Roads deleted of Enclosure 1787-8.
 - - - Bypass road, made 1969.
 — CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

HISTORIC ROAD LAYOUT OF
BARROW UPON TRENT
 CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATED 24/11/1977