

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND HERITAGE STATEMENT



Yates 1786
map of Lancashire
shows how Higher
Road
(High Street) looked
just before 'Club Row'
was built.

The evolution of Longridge and the building of 'Club Row': Lancashire County Council's (LCC) historic town survey of Longridge (LCC 2006) tells us how whilst there had been some level of trade in brooms and lime, the primary trade until the c18 had been agrarian. LCC further explain that the creation by one of the country's earliest building societies in 1793 of what is known locally as 'Club Row' would suggest the beginnings of a planned cottage industry in Longridge. According to the Longridge conservation area appraisal these simply detailed cottages form part of Longridge's architectural and historic character and are now seen as some of the most notable buildings within the Longridge conservation area. This row of twenty cottages are constructed of watershot sandstone, with slate roofs and brick chimney stacks, though in the case of number 44 the stack is built of stone. Each of these cottages appears to have been built with living accommodation to the ground and first floor and a basement loomshop designed for hand loom weaving which the historic town survey and Historic England list entry say were entered at lower ground level at the rear.

It is thought that these planned cottages may be the first row of weavers cottages built by a building club [or society] in the world. Documents held at Lancashire County Archives include an agreement dated 6 March 1793 made at the house of John Swarbrick in Dilworth to build a house with necessary and coal house for each of the subscribers. These subscribers were made up of yeomen, weavers, a carpenter, a clogger, stonemasons, a cotton spinner, a travelling dealer and a shop keeper. Each house or set of houses would be balloted for at time of letting and deeds made out at the expense of the society. Each member would have the liberty to enter their own house and put a tenant in at a rent fixed by the committee.

On 4 May 1793 these subscribers agreed to purchase a plot of land from John Seed of Whittingham and late of Dilworth measuring 120 yards by 30 yards. This plot was situated adjoining the highway from Longridge to Chipping, East of the dwelling house belonging to John Seed that was commonly known by the sign of the White

Bull and currently in the possession of John Swarbrick. The resultant cottages were by [at least] the 1840's known as numbers 1- 20 High Street, Longridge. As per the original plans for this row each property had a coal shed and a 'necessary' i.e. outside toilet.



This archive entry is © Longridge and District Local History Society.

This archive entry is courtesy of Ken Willan.

Built between 1794 and January 1804 (at a cost of £138.3s 6d per house) by the first building society in the country.

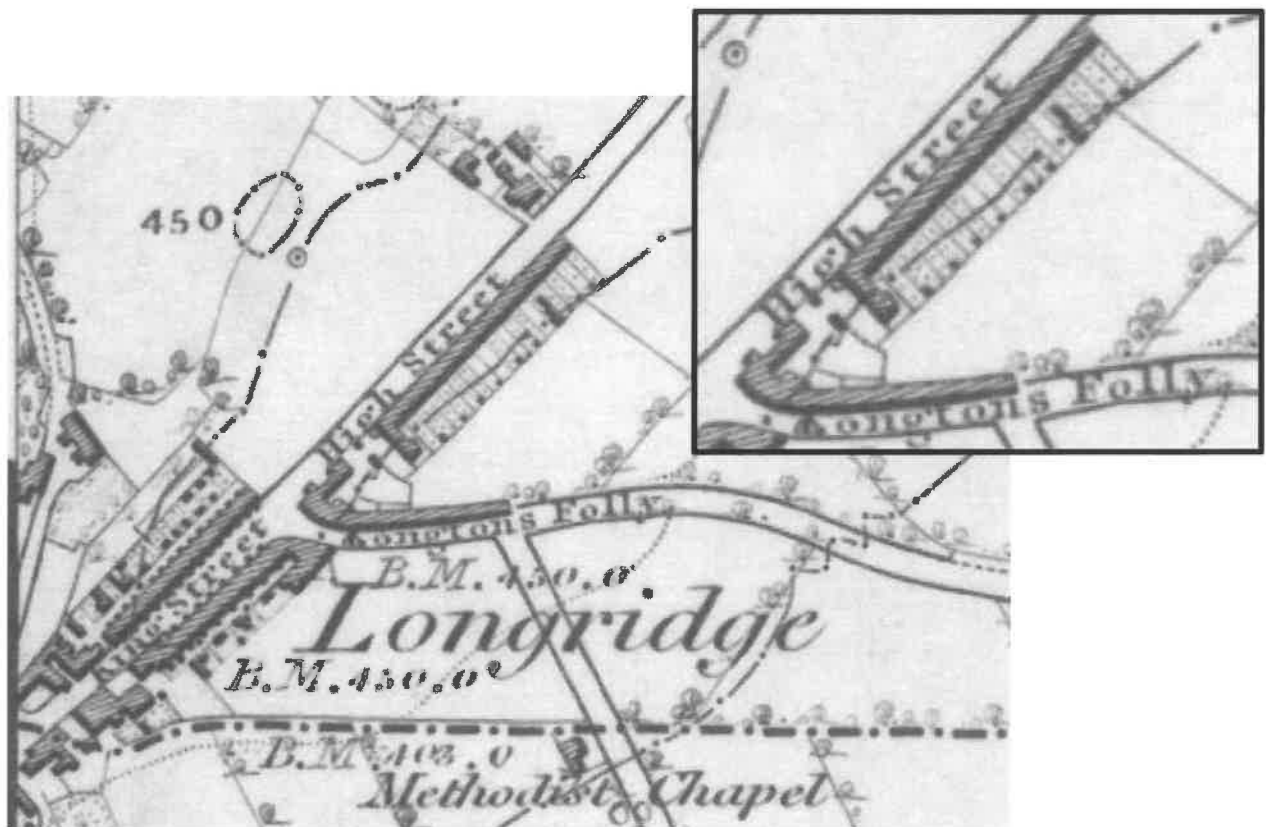
Available from: <http://townarchive.longridgestation.co.uk/archive/1372/>

The Longridge Building society's articles reveal that these cottages could be tenanted out to incomers. This would further support the belief that some sort of expansion that included 'cottage industry' of both cotton weaving and nail making was already beginning in the upper town by the late eighteenth century. Census returns for the nineteenth and early twentieth century reveal that from at least 1841 to 1939 these cottages continued to provide homes for weavers, quarry men and quarry labourers.

The historic town survey says that some of the 'Club Row' cottages were demolished to make way for the town's new health centre. Whilst it has not been possible of the purpose of this document to confirm if this was the case, the current number 4 is architecturally different to the rest of the row and may be a later addition or alteration? This property does not appear on 19th century census returns, but looks to be present on maps, thus suggesting it was a business premises. Records held at

Lancashire archives reveal that after the first four cottages were built there was a disagreement between the building clubs members regarding a deviation from the original plan – those members who had yet to have their cottages built had decided that they wanted to improve the remaining properties and incorporate a shop into the scheme.

Maps reveal that there was a large structure to the rear of number 36 (previously number 16) and 19th century census returns reveal that by at least 1841 this appears to have been used as a separate dwelling or cottage. The census returns also record how at various times some of the cottages on this row were used as multiple occupancy dwellings (2x 2room dwellings). A further number of properties were addressed as 'Back High Street' and though the properties to which this applied appear to have varied over time, it does suggest that there were people dwelling in the cellar loomshops or outbuildings?

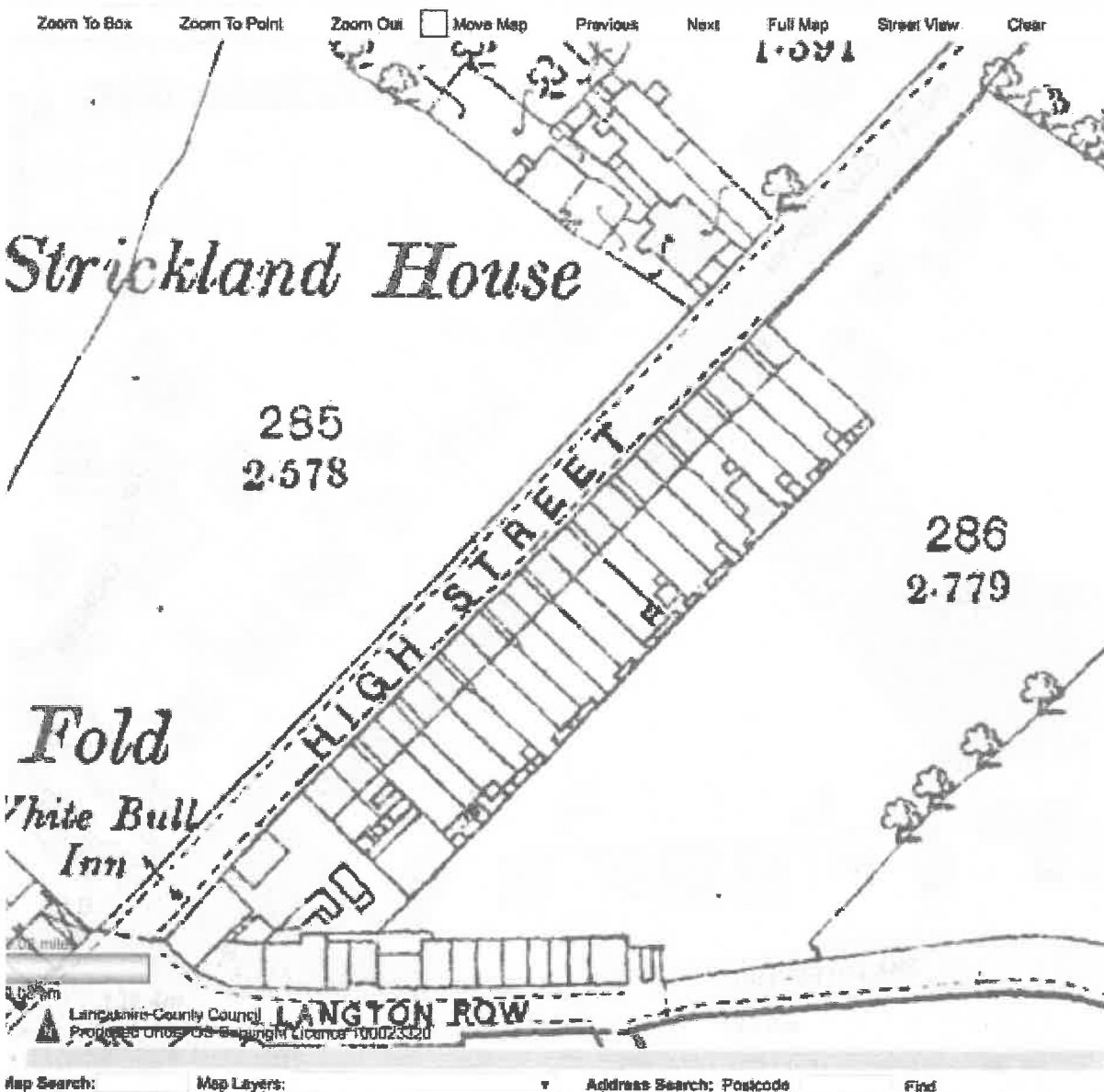


Ordnance Survey maps such as the one above surveyed in 1844 and the one on the following page surveyed in 1891 reveal that a variety of outbuildings existed at the back of these cottages.

MARIO

Maps & Related Information Online

1900s and 1900s maps of Lancashire



This cottage industry appears to have prospered in some small way until around 1825-30. The advent of the railway in 1840, lead to substantial growth in Longridge during the second half of the nineteenth century. This would have heralded a decline in the 'cottage industry' as people moved to work in the mills.



Number 44: Number 44 Higher Road is one of the gable ends of this row of heritage significant grade 2 listed cottages. The list entry for Historic England (formerly English Heritage) says:

Name: 6-44, HIGHER ROAD

List entry Number: 1308531

Listing NGR: SD6083037384

Grade: II

Date first listed: 27-Oct-1971 date of most recent amendment: 22-Nov-1983

SD 63 NW LONGRIDGE HIGHER ROAD

7/125 Nos 6 to 44 27.10.71 [formerly listed as Nos 4 to 44 (even)]

Row of houses, begun in 1793.

Squared coursed sandstone with slate roof and brick stacks, except that on the gable (left-hand) wall of No. 44.

2 storeys-with cellars entered at lower ground level to the rear.

Windows have plain reveals and projecting stone sills, with modern windows.

Each house is of one bay, with the doors of adjacent houses paired, with a third door, leading through a tunnel to the yard, between them.

The doorways have plain stone surrounds.

Some of the houses now have an extra window on the 1st floor over the door.

Nos. 6, 8 and 44 have stone gutter brackets.

A keyed joint between No. 24 and 26 indicates a break in construction.

Built by the Longridge Building Society, one of the earliest terminating building societies in the country, and used as an example by Price, Seymour J., Building Societies, their Origin and History, Cambridge, 1958, pp32-44.