

LAND EAST OF WYCHE ROAD, BUNBURY (25/3509/PIP)

CHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY COMMENTS

This application for permission in principle to erect two houses relates to the School Field adjacent to the Chantry House. The Chester Archaeological Society objects to this proposed development on the grounds that, unless very carefully sited, these buildings would eliminate the historically significant intervisibility of the Chantry House and parish church.

In the early seventeenth century, the Chantry House was home to the master of the now-demolished Aldersey School that lay to the east of the house. There is evidence that John Bradshaw of Stockport, regicide and President of the first Council of State of the British Commonwealth, attended the school and lodged in the Chantry House. The curate of St Boniface's Church, Bunbury, Samuel Hinde, was a highly regarded Puritan, and his views were no doubt inculcated into the young Bradshaw and helped to shape his later Republican views. For a few years this small area of Bunbury – encompassing church, Chantry House and school – would have been John Bradshaw's entire world, and the school was so important to him that he remembered it in his will.

John Bradshaw is one of the most eminent people that Cheshire has ever produced, but his importance is often overlooked. With the end of the Commonwealth, Bradshaw's ideas went out of favour and anything associated with his life was neglected. His birthplace and family home in Marple, and the home he occupied when mayor of Congleton, have all been destroyed. The intervisibility of the Chantry House and church is a rare but clear reminder of Bunbury's importance as a centre of Puritanism in the early seventeenth century and preserving it would prevent further destruction of evidence for the life of one of Cheshire's most brave and determined thinkers.

Dr C Dudman

Outgoing Secretary

Chester Archaeological Society

20 May 2026