



Market Place, Atherton

Conservation Area Appraisal

Approved April 2008

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1. Introduction

The Market Place Conservation Area in Atherton was originally designated 20 December 1987. The boundary covers an area of 1.72ha and it has been characterised as a Historic Town Centre. There are currently two listed buildings situated within the Conservation Area boundary.

1.1 Purpose of this appraisal

Conservation Areas Appraisals are a method by which Local Authorities can evaluate the important architectural and historic features within an area and provide a basis for character assessment and the production of a management plan. Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. A conservation area is defined as “*an area of special architectural or historical interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. Under Section 71 of the same Act, local authorities are required to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any conservation areas under their jurisdiction. Section 72 specifies that when making any decisions on development applications within a conservation area, special attention will be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. This document has been produced in response to these statutory requirements and in accordance with English Heritage guidance published in “*Conservation Area Appraisals: Defining the special architectural or historic interest of Conservation Areas*” (1997), “*Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*” (2005) as well as Government guidance relating to the management of historic buildings and areas set out in “*Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*” (PPG15).

Conservation Area Appraisals are a way of defining the special interest of the area, identifying any issues which may threaten the special qualities of that area and providing guidelines in order to prevent damage to and achieve enhancement within that area. This document should provide a basis on which planning applications for development within the conservation area can be assessed to ensure high quality development which is not detrimental to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

1.2 Community Involvement

In accordance with Regulation 24 (4) and Regulation 36 of the Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, Wigan Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement on the 12th July 2006. This Statement sets out the councils policies for involving the community in the preparation of the Local Development Framework, Conservation Area Appraisals and in the wider planning application process. It provides certain transparency and advice as to how and when communities and other stakeholders can become involved in the planning process. In line with this policy when undertaking this assessment of the Market Place conservation area the local community and interested stakeholders were asked to contribute their thoughts, opinions and suggestions regarding the current conservation area.

1.3 The Planning Policy Context

This document should be read in context along side the wider development framework produced by Wigan Council:

Wigan Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

Adopted in April 2006 this document contains planning policies and proposals for the use and development of land for the period 2006-2016. Under Plan Policy EV4 the council will conserve the historic built environment using the following methods:

- (1) Not permitting proposals which would harm the character or appearance of listed buildings of their settings, or proposals which fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- (2) Protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of ancient monuments, sites, buildings and structures of archaeological interest and historic landscapes;
- (3) Exercising its normal development control powers to encourage the protection and enhancement of buildings of local interest;
- (4) Encouraging the occupation of old buildings and permitting new uses which are compatible with their character and settings;
- (5) Carrying out environmental improvement schemes in conservation areas;
- (6) Designating new conservation areas and reviewing the boundaries of existing ones where the quality and interest of the area is of special architectural or historical interest due to:
 - The historic layout of properties, boundaries and thoroughfares;
 - The particular mix of uses;
 - The use of characteristic materials;
 - The appropriate scaling and detailing of buildings;
 - The quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces;
 - The quality of vistas along streets and between buildings; *or*
 - The extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of space between buildings(See Appendix 2(a) for expanded policy for Conservation).

Current planning policy also provides planning authorities with additional permitted development controls within conservation areas. Article 4 directions are often applied within conservation areas to give extra protection to their character and appearance. These effectively remove permitted development rights within the conservation area, meaning that planning consent is required for the majority of alterations including; the installation of satellite dishes, cladding, UPVC windows/doors and dormer windows. The demolition in whole or in part of any building within a conservation area requires Conservation Area Consent and there are also additional controls over the removal or works to trees within a conservation area.

2. Summary of Special Interest

2.1 Key Characteristics

Atherton's character and appearance has changed dramatically over time from a primarily rural settlement with thriving cottage industries, to a centre for coal and textile manufacture during the industrial revolution, to today's commuter town serving the larger cities of Wigan, Bolton and Manchester.

The existing conservation area is focussed around the medieval town centre which contains the three arterial route-ways through the town; Church Street which formed the main route to Bolton to the North-East, Tyldesley Road leading to Tyldesley and Manchester to the South-West and finally Market Street leading to Wigan and St Helens to the West.

Atherton itself is predominantly residential in nature with the majority of development occurring during the rapid expansion of the 19th century Industrial Revolution. The existing conservation area encompasses Atherton's historic town centre which now forms the main shopping area along Market Street.

There are several key features found within Atherton and many of these features appear within the Market Place conservation area, for example:

- Dominance of red brick building material;
- Medieval street pattern within historic town centre;
- Dominance of key buildings within the townscape;
- Scale of the buildings - the majority being 2 storeys and single width; *and*
- Important node - junction of Church Street, Market Street and Tyldesley Road at Market Place.

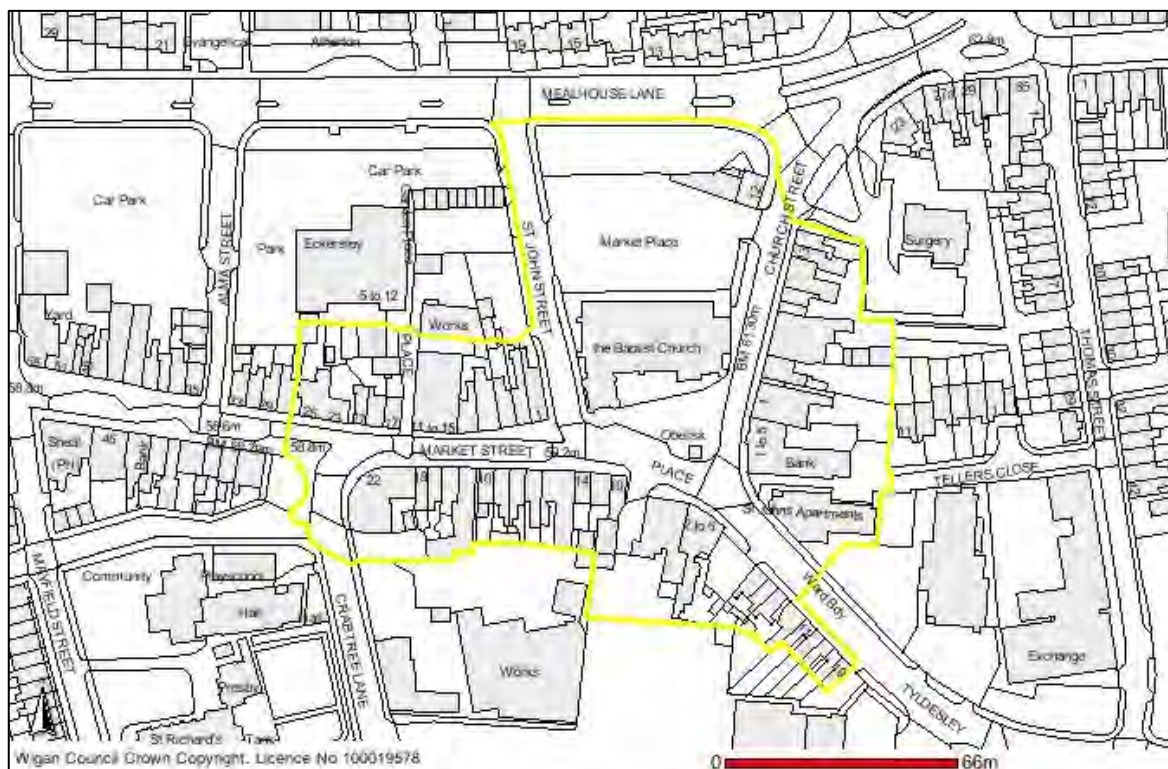
2.2 Justification for Designation

The Market Place conservation area is one of the smallest in the borough, covering just 1.72ha. The conservation area is characterised by commercial and retail use in the most part with residential use interspersed on some upper floors. The conservation area is focussed around the medieval town core, which contains low rise, low density linear development along the main route ways. The area includes two of the towns' historic landmarks: The Church of St John the Baptist and the Obelisk Monument, both of which are grade II listed and situated within the heart of the conservation area. The principle buildings within the conservation area date from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, several of which are historic Public Houses, such as the Red Lion Hotel c.1800 and the Last Orders Inn (formerly the Kings Head) c. early 20th century. Several vernacular building styles are also included within the conservation area, dating from mid-late 19th century at 3-7 Tyldesley Road and 10-14 Market Place, although No 10 has been modified sometime during the 20th century to provide corner access and windows replacing the original entrance on Market Street (evidence from historical photographs).

There are also several buildings within the conservation area which are significant in highlighting the economic development of the town, such as the NatWest Bank building at 1-5 Market Place and 2-6 Market Place; a 3-storey, grandiose building built in 1889 to house the William Deacon Bank.

2.3 Boundaries and extent of the conservation area

The current boundary of the Market Place conservation area is focussed around the medieval town centre. The boundary runs from the junction of Mealhouse Lane/Church Street incorporating the back lands of 1-15 Church Street to Market Place, taking in St John's Apartments and 3-7 Tyldesley Road. It then crosses over to include the land where 9-19 Tyldesley Road once stood, running along the back of these buildings, taking in Market Street and the associated back areas to 20-22 (The Jolly Nailor Inn), across the road to 23-25 Market Street (Mountain Dew Inn) and back up Market Street, incorporating the back areas of the retail units. Before turning up St Johns Street at the back of 1 Market Street to the junction with Mealhouse Lane and then back along to the junction with Church Street.



Map 1: Conservation Area boundary

This boundary is tightly fitted around the medieval centre of Atherton, as a result of surrounding development which is perhaps less sympathetic to the historic nature of this part of the town. The re-development of Dan Lane Mill into a supermarket, on the boundary of the conservation area, has limited any expansion of the boundary to the SE and 19th/ 20th century development elsewhere has greatly limited the potential for expanding the boundary in other directions. Due to the small size of the conservation area it has not been possible to identify any character sub-areas which are distinctive in their own right.

3. Historical Development

3.1 History

Roman Period

There is limited evidence of Roman occupation in Atherton, although the surrounding areas of Manchester, Liverpool and more recently Wigan do have significant Roman remains. There is strong archaeological evidence at nearby Gadbury and there have been excavations of Roman military roads in this area which are believed to have connected the Roman fort in Manchester with settlements in Wigan and Warrington.

Medieval Period

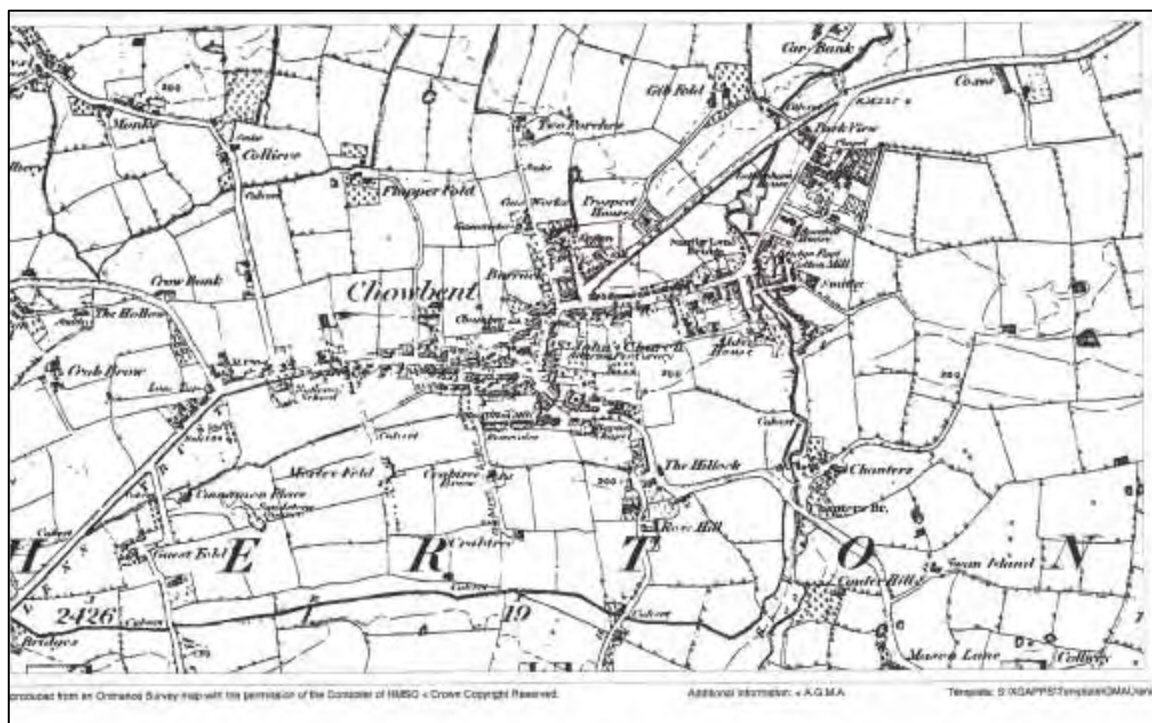
The Anglo-Saxon period saw Atherton begin to develop into a small rural settlement and it is from this time that the name Atherton is believed to have come into existence. Taken from the Anglo-Saxon 'adre' meaning stream and 'tun' meaning settlement to give; 'Settlement near the stream'. During the 9th century large areas of the United Kingdom were subject to Viking occupation although there is no direct evidence of any Viking settlement in Atherton, it is possible they passed through this area as there is archaeological evidence for Viking occupation in the nearby cities of Liverpool, Manchester, Preston and Bolton.

In the 14th century, Atherton was held by the Botelers (Butlers) of Warrington who in turn gifted land to the Atherton family; taking their name from the land they were given. It is also around this time that the alternative name of Chowbent came into being, believed to have derived from a tenant family called Chow. The main street pattern along which the conservation area focuses is believed to have been laid out during this time period. The town was also growing as an important trading centre with a weekly market being held along the area now known as Mealhouse Lane. The first written reference of a Market in Atherton was in 1693 and until recently there has been a market held every Friday near to St John's Church.

Atherton was also gaining a reputation for its rich coal deposits, nail making and its textile manufacture. The settlement was expanding from the traditional cottage based industry and was becoming more industrialised. Nail making and later nut and bolt manufacture, was a major business in Atherton for over 600 years and although it has now completely died out, the Jolly Nailor Inn on Market Street is a tribute to this once flourishing industry.

During the reign of Henry VIII the promotion of education in England became a great focus and in the 1500s William Haigh established Atherton's first school, built on the corner of Market Place on the site where 2-6 and 8 Market Place now stand. The school remained in use until the mid 17th century when it closed due to insufficient student numbers. The original Parish Church was also constructed during this period; built in 1645 the small red brick chapel was the first of three churches to stand on the site of the modern Church.

Post-Medieval Period



Map 2: First Edition Ordnance Survey map of Atherton

It was during the Industrial Revolution that coal and cotton industries took hold across Lancashire, including Atherton. The 19th century saw a flourish of new mines being sunk, new mills opening and in 1828 the first railway was built through the town to transport both products and passengers to the nearby cities. The industrial revolution also brought about the active development of the towns' infrastructure with the construction of housing, shops and schools as well as the upgrading of Dan Lane into Tyldesley Road. The late 19th century saw the emergence of large areas of grid terrace development being erected to the north and east of the historic town centre. There are several buildings remaining from the late 1800s early 1900s within the boundary of the conservation area which are indicative of the growing wealth and prosperity of the town as a whole.

By this time many of the historic inns that had once surrounded Market Place had been demolished. These inns were the original venues for town meetings and where financial business was carried out by traders and merchants, for example the Bears Paw Public House, built 1866 on Church Street was the venue for the annual town meeting. With growing industrialisation in many towns inns were replaced by high status buildings housing new financial institutions. These were seen as being indicative to the growing wealth of the town and the nation as a whole. In Atherton the 19th century saw the emergence of several new Public Houses within the conservation area such as The Mountain Dew, The Jolly Nailor and The Kings Head, all of which still function as Public Houses. The Obelisk in Atherton was also constructed during this period, commissioned by Robert Vernon Atherton in the 1760s it marks the location of the former ancient fair and market. The obelisk was completely rebuilt in 1867 and underwent further renovation in 1960.

3.2 Archaeology

It is likely that there is very little archaeological potential within the Conservation Area due to extensive redevelopment along the medieval town core. It is likely that any archaeological remains would have been lost during 19th century and modern construction in the area.

4. Location and Landscape Setting

4.1 Geographical Location

Atherton is geographically located approximately 6 miles East of Wigan, 2 miles North-North-East of Leigh and 4 miles South-West of Bolton and is within easy travelling distance of the M6 and M61 motorways. The town is situated on the main through route from Bolton to Leigh and the Market Place conservation area is positioned along this route.

4.2 Topography and Landscape

As part of a Character Assessment it is important to take into consideration any topographical, geological or landscape features which may impact upon the character of the conservation area. The town lies on relatively flat, even land and is enclosed on three sides by the boroughs' current green belt. Atherton grew up on and around seven streams, hence the origins of its name, and as a result flooding can be an issue within certain areas. The Market Place conservation area is not situated close to any of these water ways and therefore flooding is not an issue which would impact on the areas character or appearance.

The land surrounding Atherton is rich in coal deposits and extensive remains of underground workings may have a future impact on the landscape of the town. The tower of the St Johns Parish Church has been subject to extensive repair work as a result of land movement caused by the coal workings and has been detached from the main body of the church in order to prevent further damage to the building.

5. Spatial Analysis

5.1 Key Views

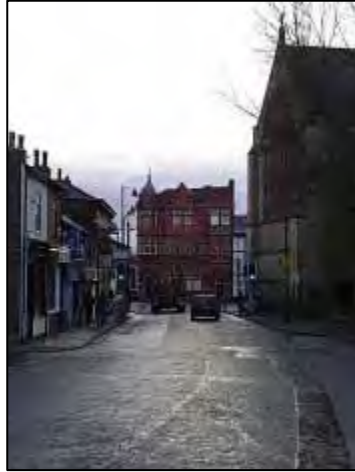
There are three key views within the Market Place conservation area (see map 4 on next page):

(1) Along Market Street towards the Parish Church and Market Place;

The view along Market Street is from the western boundary of the Conservation Area, looking back in towards its central point. It is dominated by the Church tower of St Johns in the distance, rising above the surrounding townscape it highlights the low density streetscape found within the conservation area.



Photograph 1: View looking up Market Street towards Market Place



Photograph 2: View looking from Church St towards Market Place



Photograph 3: View along Tyldeslu Rd towards Market Place

(2) Along Church Street towards 2-6 Market Place;

The view along Church Street terminates at the large turreted building at 26 Market Place. This building originally built in the late 1800s is a dominant feature within the townscape due to its scale and architectural detailing. This view again focuses on the original Market Place with the Parish Church taking up a large proportion of space to the right hand side.

(3) Along Tyldesley Road towards the Parish Church and Market Place.

The view along Tyldesley Road again looks in towards the centre of the conservation area and terminates at St John's Parish Church and the area of public space to the south. The Church tower is once again a dominant feature within the skyline. From this view point the obelisk monument forms a prominent feature within Market Place.

All of these views look in towards the centre of the conservation area and converge around the area of the Parish Church and the traditional Market Square. The road position, scale and type of building present around this area all contribute to this point becoming the central node of the conservation area. All of these attributes combined number of prominent buildings situated around Market Place contribute towards this being a naturally prominent area within the wider townscape.

5.2 Open Spaces, Focal Points, landscape and trees

The Market Place conservation area is lacking in areas of quality public space. There are three main areas which contain varying degrees of open space, focal points and landscaping; all of these are relatively small in size but worthy of note for both their positive and negative impacts on the character and appearance of the conservation area:

(1) Old Market Place outside the Parish Church;

The original market place is found at the centre of the conservation area and is situated immediately south of the current Parish Church. This area was and remains a central focal point within the townscape.

It was previously the junction of the three main routes through Atherton with the obelisk functioning as a traffic island between them. An earlier initiative, the Atherton Centre Plan, has resulted in a dramatic transformation of this space, with a large area of road being developed into pedestrianised space in front of the Church. This was an attempt to reduce unnecessary through traffic along Market Street and to reduce the impact of traffic pollution on the listed buildings. The area has been paved using small, square sets with a few benches placed to encourage public use of the space; the obelisk has also been incorporated into the paved area. These changes have had a positive impact on the character of the conservation area by reducing traffic and creating a safer, more pleasant shopping environment. However, the space is not being fully utilised by the local population and only when the church is in use or during community events does it function as a meeting place for people to gather in.



Photograph 5: *The current Market Place*

Photograph 4: *Market Place public space*



(2) Present market place behind the Parish Church;

The present market place first appears in its current location on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map of 1909 having moved from its original location, south of the Parish Church. During its early history Atherton was a small market town and prior to its rapid expansion and introduction of heavy industries in the 19th century the market place was an important space within the townscape. There has been an active market in Atherton for several hundred years and until a few years ago a market was still held every Friday in the town. This tradition has since died out and the market place is now in use only occasionally during the week and during local events and festivals. The remainder of the year the area is utilised by locals as a public car park providing easy access to the Church and shopping centre. There is potential for this space to be a vibrant economic area within the townscape but unfortunately it is underused and poorly maintained and the locked up market stalls constructed of corrugated metal, backing onto the north façade of the Parish Church do little to enhance the appearance of the conservation area.

(3) Planted area along Mealhouse Lane stopping at St Johns Street.

On the fringe of the conservation area along Mealhouse Lane, between Church Street and St Johns Street there is a small patch of land on which terraced houses previously stood. These were demolished some time ago and have since been replaced by an area of landscaped ground.

There are several mature trees and low maintenance shrubbery present, none of which are subject to any tree preservation orders, with a single public bench along one edge facing the main road. This space introduces an area of green into a predominantly urban context and also provides screening of the unattractive market place/car park from the residential properties opposite. This area has a positive impact on the appearance of the conservation area by providing relief from the urban form, however a single bench facing on to a busy main road, does not encourage public use of the area and there is the potential to make it a more active space within the townscape.



Photographs 6 & 7: Grassed area along Mealhouse Lane

Warburton Place is another small area within the conservation area which should be noted. This small lane provides access from the main shopping street to the car parks behind as well as providing access to the Pendle Witch Public house and several small properties which are out with the boundary of the conservation area. The Pendle Witch is a good quality building which looks to have been converted from an older building, possibly remnant from some kind of 'works' structures which once stood in this location. The area to the rear of the pub and the shops in front is a small area of vacant land which is currently in relatively poor condition, having been used for rear access and services it is poorly maintained and detracts from the quality of the public house next door (see later photograph of gap sites).

6. Definition of the special interest

6.1 Current Activities and uses(see map 5 on next page)

The predominant activity within the Market Place conservation area is retail based with sporadic residential use throughout. Many of the retail units have upper floors which are used for storage or are lying vacant. There are a few properties which seem to have residential properties on the upper floor. Several vacant properties are also present within the conservation area; these are generally in poor condition and detract from the conservation area and the townscape as a whole.

The Parish Church serves as a focal point of the townscape and combined with the old Market Place

would have once been a hub of activity within the town. As it stands today the Church, designed by renowned architects Paley and Austin in the Gothic revival style was completed in 1879. The church still has an active congregation and when in use, the centrality of this area and its historic role as a meeting place becomes apparent once again.

6.2 Architectural and Historic Character

The dominant architectural character of the conservation area is that of two storey, red brick terraces. As a result of the commercial emphasis within the area the red brick is mostly confined to the upper floors, having being painted, tiled over or subject to cladding at ground level.

An interesting architectural feature on several properties within the conservation area is the detailing found along the roof line, ranging from simple brick corbelling to intricate terracotta designs , the majority of properties with this detailing are located at the top of Market Street, close to the original Market Place. Another feature which occurs throughout the conservation area is brick detailing above several upper floor windows. Again these vary in detail with the simplest being of plain brick construction and others with stone key-stones and flanking stones on either side. The majority of the buildings contained within the conservation area date from the early 19th century to the mid 20th century, some of the oldest buildings within the conservation area are public houses. There are also several high status buildings surviving from Atherton's industrial expansion contained within the conservation area, for example 1-5 and 2-6 Market Place.



Photograph 8, 9 &10: Examples of Corbelling and window detailing

6.3 Building Materials and local details

The predominant building materials within Atherton are red brick with slate roofs, this building style is found borough wide and is not unique to Atherton. The properties within the conservation area are generally 2/3 storeys and the upper floor windows tend to have stone sills and lintels, some of these have been painted over and most remain in relatively good condition. Another local building tradition is the detailing found along the roof line and above windows, which can be seen on several buildings within the conservation area. This intricate detailing adds individual character to the buildings and

contributes positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

There are two buildings within the townscape which stand out dramatically from those around them, as a result of their unique building styles. The Church of St John's is constructed of Runcorn stone with ashlar dressing and a clay tile roof, which gives it a very distinctive appearance, the red colouring of the stone helps it to blend with the towns' predominant building material whilst maintaining the appearance of grandeur and status. The vacant retail unit at 3 Church Street also stands out for its varied building style. This mock Tudor building is constructed of a brick frame with a wooden/plaster façade to create the appearance of a Tudor style building and it is the only building of its kind within the conservation area and wider townscape.



Photograph 11: *Parish Church of St John the Baptist*



Photograph 12: *No 3 Church Street*

6.4 Buildings of Townscape Merit

There are two listed buildings within the Market Place conservation area:

- Church of St John the Baptist - Grade II listed, designated 15 July 1966; *and*
- Obelisk adjacent to Church of St John - Grade II listed, designated 15 July 1966.

These structures are in relatively good condition and their appearance has been enhanced by the successful traffic management in and around the town centre. The pedestrianisation of the area south of St Johns serves to enhance the character and setting of these listed buildings.

There are several non-designated buildings within the conservation area which are deemed to be buildings of significant townscape merit. These building impact positively on the both the character and appearance of the conservation area and may be possible candidates for future listing or inclusion on the Buildings of Local Interest List. There are many different types of buildings of local interest (BLINTS), but they generally incorporate structures which are good examples of historic buildings which have undergone little alteration, and where their style, detailing, materials and relationship with their surroundings has a positive impact on the conservation area or townscape in general.

- The NatWest Bank building at 1-5 Market Place, is a typical example of a 19th century financial institution. This building is built in a modest Neo-classical style with distinctive stone banding in contrast to the red brick, it is unique within the conservation area and is in very good condition. It is in a dominant position within the townscape, being situated at the top of Market Street opposite the Obelisk and it has a positive impact on the appearance of the conservation area as well as providing an insight into the economic development of the town.



Photograph 13: NatWest Bank



Photograph 14: 2-6 Market Place

- Number 2-6 Market Place was originally built to house the William Deacon Bank and is another good example of growing wealth and status in the 19th century. Completed in 1889 and opened in 1901 the building was designed by Bradshaw and Glass of Bolton in the Flemish Renaissance style. The building is a dominant feature within the townscape, contrasting with the surrounding buildings as a result of its scale and architectural style as well as forming a focal point when looking down Church Street. This building is in very good repair and has recently undergone extensive restoration to be brought back into active use. Its unusual architectural style and features make it a positive contribution to the townscape.

- The Last Orders Inn at 8 Market Place is one of several historic inns within the conservation area and was previously known as the Kings Head. This building is a well known local public house along with several others and has become synonymous with Atherton's town centre area. The façade has been modified sometime during the late 19th - 20th century to include the recessed bay windows and decorative motifs (evidence from historical photographs) and the black and white painted brick work creates a striking contrast from the surrounding red brick making a pleasant contribution to the character of the conservation area. During the works around the Market Place, this building underwent restoration works to make it more sympathetic to the surrounding townscape, but is again in need of maintenance and general repair.



Photograph 15: 8 Market Place

6.5 Historic Shop fronts and advertising

There are very few historic shop fronts surviving within Atherton's Market Place conservation area, with the majority having been altered to accommodate modern UPVC shop fronts and windows. These alterations along with the introduction of alarm systems, metal shuttering and inconsistent signage detract from the overall appearance of the conservation area. Solid metal shuttering is not ideal within any conservation area, but unfortunately it appears in abundance within this conservation area. As well as creating an unattractive streetscape when in use during the day, they create a 'dead' and uninviting streetscape at night, giving an impression of degeneration and crime, often encouraging graffiti. This type of shuttering greatly detracts from historical details that may be present and often covers up or damages any surviving features.

There are remnants of period details within the conservation area, with a few shops retaining original pilasters which would have flanked the original shop fronts. Unfortunately, modern infill development now detracts from these few surviving decorative features. The ground floor at 5 Market Place looks to have once been a historic shop front, with a large bay window at street level typical of retail units dating from the early 19th century. Number 14 Market Street is another example of a historic shop front, with wooden panelling, decorative glass, iron grilles and traditional hanging sign above the door.



Photograph 16 & 17:
Examples of surviving pilasters



Photograph 18 (below): Historic shop front at 5 Market Place



Photograph 19 (above): Historic shop at 12 Church Street



Photograph 20:
Historic shop front at 14 Market Street

Finally, 12 Church Street is a very good example of a surviving historic shop front. Originally the Co-op store, this building now houses a carpet sales business and fitness centre at the rear. This shop front and side entrance have changed very little since the 19th century, the main difference

being the enlarged signs now present which have incorporated glazed areas which were below the original sign facia.

Inappropriate advertising has a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of an area and there are several examples of this within the conservation area. Insensitive and inconsistent shop fronts are just one aspect of advertising which can have a negative visual impact, the use of billboards and disproportionate signs attached to buildings are others. In two separate locations within the conservation area are excessively large advertising billboards found along side historic buildings. These billboards are out of scale with their surroundings and detract from the architectural quality of the adjoining buildings.



Photographs 21 & 22 (above & Right): Examples of Inappropriate shop fronts



Photographs 23 & 24 (left & below): Examples of inappropriate billboards within the conservation area.

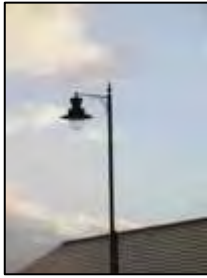


6.6 Public Realm: Floorscape, street lighting and street furniture

A mix of paving surfaces have been used within the Market Place area, ranging from high quality stone sets to poor quality, uneven concrete slabs and patchy tarmac. Inconsistency of paving materials and quality detracts from the overall appearance of the conservation area, portraying an uncared for and unkempt image. There are areas where new materials have been introduced making a positive contribution to the area i.e. along Market Street and in front of the Parish Church paving surfaces were replaced with new, high quality surfacing. However, the remaining streets within the conservation area remain patchy and poorly maintained .

A lack of consistency in the style of street lighting found within the conservation area creates a haphazard image. Around St Johns Church the street lights are black heritage style lighting which were installed during the regeneration programme. The new street lighting throughout the conservation area is out of scale with its surroundings and in many instances it is almost a full storey taller than the adjacent buildings. Examples of older style 'hockey stick' lights and concrete pillars can still be found within the conservation area, for example in St Johns Street and the current Market

Place, creating a sense that the work has not been completed.



Photographs 25-28: Examples of Street Lighting found within the conservation area

The over use of bollards, railings and other unnecessary signage creates a cluttered, untidy streetscape and can detract from an areas character. There are several points within the conservation area where this occurs and street furniture is present in abundance. English Heritage guidance, 'Streets for All' (2005) advises that "A successful public realm comprises a coherent network of streets and spaces, without the need for excessive signs, road markings and physical barriers". Market Place is an area where the overuse of street furniture creates a cluttered streetscape, with bollards, railings, traffic signs and lighting all competing for space. Outside the Mountain Dew pub is another example and in this case it is detracting from the architectural quality of the building and diminishing the impact of a positive feature within the townscape.



Photograph 29 (above): Showing the overuse of street furniture in Market Place



Photograph 30: Showing the detrimental effect overuse can cause to architecture.

There is a distinct lack of public seating within the conservation area, with only two benches outside St John's Church and one adjacent to the grassed area on Mealhouse Lane. These benches are of timber and iron construction and require constant maintenance as they deteriorate quickly, unfortunately these benches have not been maintained adequately and are currently in a fairly poor condition. Other aspects of public realm such as litter bins and planted pots look to be in fairly reasonable condition.

6.7 Historical Associations

Atherton's most famous resident was Professor Eric Laithwaite (1921-1997). Born in Atherton in June 1921, a keen scientist, Laithwaite was known for his 'offbeat' theories but it was the designing of the first magnetically levitating train the 'MagLev' that made him famous. Unfortunately it wasn't until

after his death that Prof Laithwaite's invention was developed and put into active use in China in 2003.

7. Issues

This appraisal has highlighted several issues within the Market Place conservation area which have both positive and negative impacts on its overall character and appearance.

7.1 Negative

- Poor quality street surfacing, the mismatching of materials and poor maintenance has a negative visual impact on the wider streetscape. Many streets in the area are surfaced using artificial, poor quality materials such as concrete slabs, kerbs and tarmac. This promotes a run down image and when combined with poor road surfacing can create the appearance of an unattractive and uncared for town centre.



Photographs 31-33: Examples of poor quality street surfacing within the Conservation Area

- Over use and uneven distribution of street furniture can lead to a feeling of chaos and detracts from the architectural quality of buildings within the conservation area. The inappropriate scale of street lighting and poor quality public realm items do little to enhance the areas appearance.
- Gap sites have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and can often encourage littering, vandalism and crime. These spaces are currently used for storage or car parking and are unattractive, unkempt and lacking in positive attributes.



Photographs 34-35 (above): Gap Sites

Photographs 36-37 (below): Vacant Properties



- Vacant properties again promote a negative image of the area, becoming rundown and visually unappealing features within the conservation area. They can also have a detrimental impact on future development and investment within an area as they portray an image of a stagnant economy. Vacant upper floors are also an issue however, due to the nature of development, access to upper floors is generally gained through the ground floor and as a result many upper floors are being utilised as storage areas for the businesses below.
- The abundant use of solid metal shutters on ground floor units creates a 'dead' and uninviting streetscape, especially in the evenings when the majority of units are closed for business. These shutters are unsightly and when used during the day, make it very difficult to tell which shops are occupied and which are vacant.
- Loss of historic fabric within the conservation area in the form of shop fronts, windows and signs has contributed to a relatively unattractive streetscape lacking in overall character. The replacing of timber frames with UPVC windows and metal shop fronts has slowly eroded the historical fabric of the town centre, leaving only a few scant remains in relatively poor condition.
- Poor maintenance of buildings is a common trend and there are many buildings in need of varying degrees of repair. Many upper floors and roofs have been neglected and issues such as faulty guttering, failing roof tiles and flashings, damaged brick work and rotting wood are a common sight within the conservation area.



Photograph 38: Faulty guttering



Photograph 29: Failing roof tiles



Photograph 40: Rotting wood

- Inappropriate infill development, i.e. 11-15 Market Street . This overbearing development shows no association with its surroundings and is in direct conflict with the adjacent small, low density terraced buildings. Developments such as this show complete disregard for the surrounding townscape and have a negative visual impact on the streetscape.
- Advertising in the form of shop signs, billboards and advertising attached to buildings detract from the architectural quality of these buildings. The integrity of 12 Church Street has been compromised as a result of unsympathetic advertising, both attached to the side of the building and placed next to it.



Photographs 41-42: Advertising along side and attached to 12 Church Street

7.2 Positive

- There are several examples of quality architecture within the boundaries of the conservation area. These exemplar buildings have a positive impact on the appearance of the conservation area and every effort should be made to ensure they are preserved accordingly.
- There are several landmark buildings within the townscape which are contained within the conservation area. These include buildings which are socially important within the town, such as St John's Church, buildings which highlight the economic development of the town and others which are simply regarded as part of the fabric of the town, i.e. The Red Lion Inn and the former Kings Head.
- The regeneration programme already undertaken in the town centre has successfully removed large volumes of traffic from the main shopping area creating a safer, more pleasant shopping environment.
- The grassy area along Mealhouse Lane provides a welcome break in the urban fabric and creates variation in the landscape. It also provides a visually pleasant screen for residents across from the current Market Place.
- The survival of several historic buildings within the conservation area makes a positive contribution to the character of this historic town centre. These buildings are in relatively good condition and measures should be taken to ensure their survival within the townscape.
- Recent upgrading of the area in front of St Johns Church, introduction of street furniture and quality paving surfaces creates a good sized public space and enhances the settings of the two listed buildings in this area.



Photographs 43-45: Upgraded public realm in Market Place & along Market Street

8. Recommendations

8.1 Article 4 Directions

The loss of architectural details such as timber windows on upper floors, historic features and altered window/door openings at ground level are prominent throughout the conservation area. The cumulative effect of these changes has had a detrimental effect on the appearance of the streetscape within the conservation area. Article 4 directions should be considered in order to prevent the further erosion of the historic character of the townscape.

There is evidence of unauthorised works having been carried out with the installation of metal shuttering and unsympathetic signage, however it is probable the vast majority of these losses occurred prior to conservation area designation.

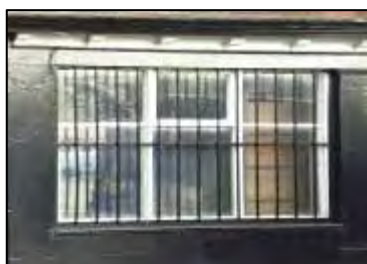
8.2 Opportunities for Enhancement

The following list is drawn from the negative issues highlighted in section 7. It identifies areas and methods by which the qualities providing the special interest of the conservation area can be enhanced and preserved.

- Historically Market Street was cobbled (evidence from historical photographs) and further investigation should be undertaken in regards to reinstatement. This would assist further in traffic management as well as restoring historic character to the area. The upgrading of street surfacing along St Johns Street, Church Street and Tyldesley Road should be promoted to create a uniformed, more attractive streetscape.
- Street furniture should be minimised where possible in order to prevent it detracting from the architectural quality of buildings. Where possible street furniture should be combined with existing pillars, posts or buildings, however the latter must be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the building concerned. The use of heritage style street furniture can create a bland, unimaginative streetscape and attempts should be made to encourage unique, high quality design to enhance the appearance of the area. Street lighting should be reduced in scale where possible and should be consistent in style throughout the conservation area. There is scope for high quality street furniture to be introduced in specific areas of the conservation area in the form of public benches, litterbins and public art, i.e. pedestrian area at St Johns church and grassy area on Mealhouse Lane.
- The gap sites located throughout the conservation are too small in size to accommodate any economically viable use and should be enhanced where possible by appropriate screening, resurfacing and general maintenance. Areas to the rear or side of existing public houses may have the potential for outdoor seating areas in light of the recent smoking ban? Other areas which are currently being utilised as car parks should undergo appropriate maintenance and the car parking area sited, thus giving a defined purpose to the space. The current Market Place has a negative visual impact on the conservation area, the installation of more sympathetic market stalls would help soften the appearance along with the removal of the corrugated iron crates. The installation of a distinct boundary may also help to create a more defined and functional space.
- The development and reuse of vacant buildings must be a priority within the conservation area. Vacant upper floors are an issue which will be hard to address as access to the properties is usually gained through the retail unit at street level. This makes it very difficult to find a viable use and many are being utilised as storage for the units below. Appropriate maintenance must be promoted to ensure these upper floors do not fall into disrepair. Several properties have lain vacant for some time and have been neglected as a result; these buildings

are now having a detrimental effect on the overall character and appearance of the area. In order to promote economic vitality and ensure their survival a sustainable reuse must be sought to bring these historic buildings back into everyday use.

- The use of metal shutters is deemed inappropriate within a conservation area. Alternatives such as internal or external decorative grilles should be promoted as a viable replacement and businesses should be encouraged, possibly through a grant scheme, to replace solid shuttering with more sympathetic alternatives. These alternative grilles provide adequate security and they serve to enhance the appearance of the townscape and present a more attractive image of the area.



Photograph 46 (left): Metal grilles on 5 Market Place



Photograph 47 (right): Decorative grilles on 14 Market Street

- The majority of historic shop fronts and associated curtilage have been lost over time and only a few remnants remain scattered throughout the conservation area. Where historic shop fronts remain, in full or in part, action must be taken to preserve the remaining features and reinstate the original historic fabric where appropriate. Shop front design is very important in creating a vibrant, attractive shopping centre and unfortunately in Atherton town centre there is an abundance of poorly designed, unsympathetic shop fronts. Any future shop front development should refer to the councils Shop Front Design Guide SPD published 2005 to ensure good practice and high quality design



Photograph 48: Good quality modern shop front design within conservation area.

- Poor maintenance of buildings has created a negative visual impact in much of the conservation area. A large number of buildings are suffering from neglect and do not contribute positively to the character of the area; failing guttering and roof slates, damaged brickwork/paint work and water damage are all present in varying degrees. The promotion of maintenance and repair should be undertaken within the conservation area to address this issue and prevent further destruction to the historic fabric of the town.
- Infill development found within the Market Place conservation area is generally of good quality however, some inappropriate infill development has occurred, i.e. 11-15 Market Street. In accordance with Planning Policy EV4A of the Unitary Development Plan: *“The council will ensure that any proposal for development within a conservation area will preserve or enhance*

and will not harm the character or appearance of that area". This along with the encouragement of high quality design of any future development within the conservation area should ensure it is appropriate and sympathetic to its surroundings.



Photograph 49: *Inappropriate infill development at 11-15 Market Street*

The removal of overbearing advertising billboards (see previous photographs) should be undertaken and the removal of large scale signs on buildings should be encouraged to further enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

8.2 Conservation Area Boundary Changes

Consideration has been given to extending the current conservation area boundary during this assessment; however this has been discounted for several reasons. The re-development of Dan Lane Mill to the SE of the conservation area and the demolition of associated housing along Tyldesley Road has resulted in the loss of historic fabric and character in this area. To the north and east of the conservation heavy redevelopment occurred during the 20th century with examples of 1970s architecture conflicting with the surrounding townscape. The remainder of Market Street has also been subject to unsympathetic re-development and infill during the 20th century which discounted extending the boundary to the west.

Appendix 1 – Bibliography

- Ashcroft. T: (2003) Images of England, Atherton & Tyldesley
- Atherton Historical Society: Atherton: A Brief History
- Atherton Historical Society: Pictorial View of Atherton parts 1 & 2
- Atherton Parish Church 1645-1723-1810-1880-1980
- Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)
- Lunn. J: (1971) A History of Atherton
- McNeil. R & Nevell, M: (2000) Guide to Industrial Archaeology of Greater Manchester
- Pevsner. N & Pollard. R: (2006 Ed) Buildings of England: Lancashire, Liverpool & the South West
- Victoria History of the Counties of England, Vol 3 (1907, reprinted 1966)
- Wigan Council Unitary Development Plan (2006)
- Wigan Council SPD Shop Front Design Guide (2005)
- Wigan Council Statement of Community Involvement (2006)

Appendix 2 – Useful Information and Contact Details

(a) Unitary Development Plan Policies

EV4 CONSERVATION

The council will conserve the historic built environment by:-

- (1) Not permitting proposals which would harm the character or appearance of Listed Buildings or their settings, or proposals which fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- (2) Protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of ancient monuments, sites, buildings and structures of archaeological interest and historic landscapes;
- (3) Exercising its normal development control powers to encourage the protection and enhancement of buildings of local interest;
- (4) Encouraging the occupation of old buildings and permitting new uses which are compatible with their character and settings;
- (5) Carrying out environmental improvement schemes in conservation areas;
- (6) Designating new conservation area and reviewing the boundaries of existing ones where the quality and interest of the area is of special architectural or historic interest due to:
 - The historic layout of properties, boundaries and thoroughfares;
 - The particular mix of uses;
 - The use of characteristic materials;
 - The appropriate scaling and detailing of buildings;
 - The quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces;
 - The quality of vistas along streets and between buildings; *or*
 - The extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of space between buildings.

The conservation of the best of the built environment forms a major component in enhancing and protecting the heritage of the Borough. This is not only a matter of protecting and enhancing historic buildings themselves but also their setting. Such an approach can only be successful if new uses can be found for old buildings so as to provide funding for their preservation and restoration and be sensitive control over all aspects of design.

The use of reclaimed materials in restoring buildings will usually make economic sense as well as helping to minimise the use of primary minerals.

Further areas will also be considered for designation as Conservation Areas and the boundaries of the existing Conservation Areas will be reviewed by consideration against the broad criteria listed in clause (6) of the policy.

EV4A DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN IN CONSERVATION AREAS

In addition to other development and design policies which apply throughout the Borough, the following considerations will be applied within Conservation Areas and their settings:-

- (a) The Council will ensure that any proposal for development within a Conservation Area will preserve or enhance and will not harm the character or appearance of that area;
- (b) The demolition or inappropriate alteration of buildings which make a positive contribution to the historical, architectural or industrial archaeological character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted;
- (c) Consent for demolition will only be granted subject to the building not being demolished before a contract for carrying out the redevelopment of the site to a high standard to design is made for which planning permission has been granted or some other legally binding commitment has been made;
- (d) Proposals which include the demolition of significant features including porches, chimneys and boundary walls/railings or which remove or alter architectural features of value will not be permitted. The retention of, where features are missing, restoration or where inappropriate forms or features are present, the remodelling of the external character of buildings, particularly with regard to windows, roofs, materials and advertising will be required;
- (e) Signs should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting and will be permitted provided they meet the following criteria:-
 - (i) Facia signs should, particularly in terms of their size, proportions, degree of projection, positioning, materials, type of construction, colour and the style and size of lettering, be in keeping with the character of the shop front, fascia details and materials, the building as a whole and the area. If they are to be illuminated they should be externally illuminated using unobtrusive and discreet light fittings or take the form of individually illuminated and individually affixed letters;
 - (ii) The cumulative impact of advertisements should not detract from the character or appearance of the building or locality. Advertisement structures should not be superimposed on other advertisement structures;
 - (iii) Projecting or hanging signs should be of small size, thin section and if illuminated, should be discreetly externally illuminated and located at fascia level;
- (f) The Council will encourage the preservation and, where necessary, the sensitive relocation of attractive items of street furniture and will encourage the preservation and, where possible, the enhancement and extension of stone sett and flag surfaces. Where works undertaken to these and other special surfaces, such as paviers, temporary or permanent reinstatement should be in the original material;
- (g) The Council will encourage the removal of buildings detrimental to the character of Conservation Areas;
- (h) The rendering or cladding of stone and brick buildings will not be permitted;
- (i) Proposals which involve development, including relatively large-scale extensions, within the grounds/gardens of dwellings and other buildings such as churches where the grounds

contribute to the character of the Conservation Area will not be allowed.

These considerations are only applicable where planning permission or advertisement consent is required and do not purport to restrict permitted development rights.

There are currently 23 Conservation Areas in the Borough which represents a major part of its historical and architectural heritage. This policy details the main considerations that the Council will apply when assessing development proposals within them or within other Conservation Areas which may be designated in the future. Buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area include those with some defects such as inappropriate window frames, advertisements or shop fronts or which are in need of repair. Any development of such premises will be expected to include suitable repairs and the replacement of inappropriate features with more sympathetic ones.

Advertisements can have a dramatic impact on the appearance of Conservation Areas. Well designed signage can be both sensitive and visually interesting in relation to the character and appearance of such areas whilst being commercially effective. It is important however that signs are not too prominent or dominant and that they do not cover up high quality materials such as brickwork, stone, tiles or polished finishes which are integral to the building. Signs should also not cover up, obscure, detract from or damage architectural features of the building, or fascia area and their size, proportions and location should not alter the extent of glazing in the shop front or the proportions of the upper façade and fenestration pattern. Standardised solutions such as the use of illuminated boxes or box-like structures are unlikely to be acceptable. For certain building types such as public houses a location for hanging signs above the fascia level may be justifiable in relation to traditional practice in the area.

EV4B LISTED BUILDINGS

The Council will encourage the protection and where appropriate enhancement of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and their settings. In particular, it will:-

- (a) Not permit the demolition of Listed Buildings or significant parts of them unless a convincing case for demolition has been made out and the council is satisfied that all possible means of retaining the building have been exhausted;
- (b) Ensure the proposed internal and external alterations, extensions and other development proposals affecting Listed Buildings or their settings will not be permitted unless they are in keeping with the building's character;
- (c) Permit appropriate alternative uses for Listed Buildings which ensure their preservation and which would not adversely affect their architectural character or settings;
- (d) Secure proper preservation of occupied and unoccupied Listed Buildings to prevent their falling derelict where further deterioration would irreversibly affect their long-term futures;
- (e) Require the replacement of inappropriate features, materials or sections as part of any scheme involving the change of use of Listed Buildings.

This policy details the main considerations that the Council will apply when assessing development proposals to or affecting buildings included in the list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest in the Borough. It may be necessary to relax the strict interpretation of other policies of the Plan, for example Green Belt Policy, in order to ensure the survival of particularly important buildings or to ensure that extensions are in scale or character with a Listed Building.

EV4C BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES OF LOCAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST

The Council will encourage the protection and enhancement of buildings and structures of local architectural or historic interest and their settings. Development schemes including alterations, changes of use and advertisements will be expected wherever practicable, to respect their character and retain or restore their original or historic features, materials and form.

There is a whole range of buildings and structures in the Borough which form a significant part of the familiar and cherished local scene. Further extensions of the list of Buildings and Structures of Local Architectural or Historic Interest will be published as Supplementary Planning Guidance and incorporated into the Plan. The relative weight to be given to the content of an adopted development plan and of supplementary planning guidance is set out in PPG12. These buildings, whilst not currently justifying inclusion on the statutory list, do possess local historic or architectural merit, are a major part of the Borough's historic environment, its day to day history and are a rich source of local identity, memory and distinctiveness.

Although the Council does not have the same detailed control over proposals to these buildings and structures as it has over Listed Buildings, it will exercise its normal development control powers to preserve and enhance the buildings. However, sensitive and well-designed alterations or extensions will be permitted, particularly if they help to ensure a building's continued occupation.

The Council will also consider, in appropriate cases, exercising the powers available to it under Section 3 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to serve Building Preservation Notices in respect of buildings which are not listed, but which it considers to be of special architectural or historic interest and which are in danger of demolition or alteration in such a way as to affect their character.

EV4D HISTORIC PARKS, GARDENS AND CEMETERIES

Permission will not be given to any proposal which is likely to adversely affect the character or setting of any of the following Historic Parks, Gardens or Cemeteries:-

1. Haigh Hall grounds, Haighlands, Moat House and Haigh House Gardens, Haigh;
2. Standish Hall remnant parkland and Ashfield House Garden, Standish;
3. Kilhey Court grounds, Worthington;
4. Bispham Hall and Winstanley Hall Parks, Billinge;
5. Golborne Hall Park, Golborne;

6. Hindley Hall Park, Aspull;
7. Atherton Hall Park, Atherton;
8. Astley Hospital, (former) Astley Vicarage and The Meads, Tyldesley;
9. Hindley, Atherton, Ince, Tyldesley and Leigh Cemeteries;
10. Historic public parks at Mesnes Park, Wigan and Lilford Park and Firs Park, Leigh;
11. Other historic parks and gardens which may from time to time be identified.

These areas are those where a landscape of particular historic interest remains and where special protection is needed to ensure their survival. Such a designation would not necessarily preclude development but would certainly require that particular consideration be given to the amount and design of any development which may be allowed. Similarly, there may be some proposals which involve only the change in the use of the land without and building development but which could be unacceptable by virtue of their impact on the landscape. The Council will apply terms of this policy to other historic parks and gardens which may from time to time be identified only after these have been listed in supplementary planning guidance which has been adopted in accordance with the advice of PPG12. This supplementary planning guidance will be incorporated in the development plan at the next review. The relative weight to be given to the content of an adopted development plan and of supplementary planning guidance is set up in PPG12.

EV4E ARCHAEOLOGY, ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT

The Council will protect and enhance the character and appearance of these sites, buildings and structures of archaeological interest and Ancient Monuments. In particular, it will not allow development proposals which fail to:-

- (a) Enhance and preserve in situ scheduled or unscheduled Ancient Monuments of national importance and, in appropriate circumstances, significant unscheduled monuments of more importance or which fail to adequately protect the setting of such monuments;
- (b) Incorporate an approved scheme of archaeological investigation (including where appropriate, excavation, recording and salvage work prior to development with subsequent analysis and publication of results), if necessary, with funding by the developer, in cases where destruction or removal of any ancient monument or archaeological remains, known or believed likely to exist, is considered acceptable by the Council. Conditions may be imposed requiring such investigations as part of the planning permission.

Where fresh archaeological discoveries of significant importance are made during development, the Council will seek to ensure their preservation.

The importance of Ancient Monuments and archaeological sites means that proposals which may affect them will be carefully vetted to ensure that they do not damage such sites. In certain cases it may be possible for an applicant to demonstrate that particular archaeological sites and monuments will be satisfactorily preserved either *in situ* or by record (i.e. adequately investigated and the results

reported). Preservation by record is regarded as a less satisfactory option.

Despite Government advice, it is not considered appropriate to specify all the areas and sites to which this policy applies on the Proposals Map. The lack of information on many archaeological sites as well as the impracticality of plotting the multitude of sites on the Proposals Map rules out such an approach. However, the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for the Borough forms the basic source of up-to-date information to identify such sites and areas. It is kept within the Planning and Development Department and performs the function of Supplementary Planning Guidance. The relative weight to be given to the content of an adopted development plan, of supplementary planning guidance which has been prepared in the proper manner and to other material considerations is set out in PPG12. The advice and assistance of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit will be sought in assessing planning applications for development affecting ancient monuments and archaeological sites.

(b) Implications of Conservation Area Status

Conservation Area status is not intended to stifle new development nor preserve areas as museum pieces. Conservation Areas will be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands although the Council when taking development control decisions will take extra care to ensure that the special architectural and historic qualities are not eroded. The normal requirements for planning permission and building regulation approval apply with some additional restrictions:

1. Planning applications will be carefully considered by the Borough Council to ensure that they enhance or preserve the special character of the area.
2. The impact of any development outside the boundary of the Conservation Area, which might affect its setting and character, will also be carefully considered.
3. Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of most buildings or structures.
4. The Council must be given six weeks notice of any intention to undertake works to cut down, lop, prune or uproot any trees over a certain size in the Conservation Area.
5. In order to be able to consider the implications of development proposals, the Council will normally require proposals within the Conservation Area to be submitted in the form of a full, and not outline, application. In addition, works which elsewhere are classified as permitted development in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 may require planning consent. Developers are advised to check with the Borough Council at an early stage on the need for any required permissions. Unauthorised work can lead to prosecution and the Council may take enforcement action requiring the work to be 'undone'.

(c) Glossary of Terms

Permitted Development – Permission to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need for a planning application, as granted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development) Order.

Green Belt – A designation for land around certain cities and built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped.

Tree Preservation Order – A mechanism for securing the preservation of single or groups of trees of acknowledged amenity value. A tree subject to such an order may not normally be topped, lopped or felled without the consent of the local planning authority.

Ashlar – Dressed stonework of any type, where the blocks have squared sides, carefully squared corners and are laid in regular courses, usually with fine joints.

Cladding – A non load bearing or structural protective skin on a building, the purpose of which is to help keep the building wind and watertight.

Curtilage – An area of ground ancillary to a building and necessary to the function and/or enjoyment of that building.

Corbel – A projecting block supporting a parapet or beam. Corbelling, is building out by projecting over the block below.

Flashing – A protective sheet of metal, usually lead or copper which covers a joint or surface which may be exposed to rain penetration.

Harl – A form of roughcast widely used throughout Scotland and the north of England.

Lintel – A horizontal beam bridging an opening in a wall.

Pilaster – Flat version of a column, consisting of a slim rectangle projecting from a wall.

Sill – The horizontal beam at the base of a window or door frame, usually projecting to throw water away from the building.

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(d) Useful names and addresses

English Heritage

Customer
Services Department
PO Box 569
Swindon, SN2 2YP
T: 0870 333 1181
E: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Greater Manchester Archaeology Unit

University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester, M13 9PL
T: 0161 275 2314

Conservation Officer

Civic Buildings
New Market Street
Wigan, WN1 1RP
T: 01942 404 250
E: lorraine.king@wigan.gov.uk

Atherton Residents Association

E: committee@athertonresidentsassociation.co.uk

Atherton Heritage Society

T: 01942 884 893