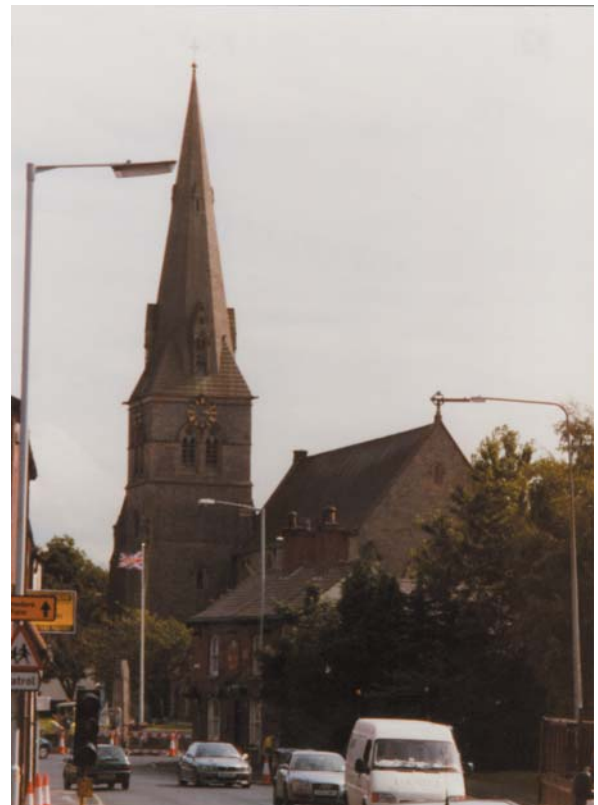




*Market Buildings Nos. 78-88 (even) Market Street: A robust parade of late nineteenth century shops marred by replacement shop fronts.*

Early twentieth century shops in the area are more modest in scale and detail. Nos.1-9 Bridge Street are dated 1907. This short parade retains original shop fronts and simply detailed two storey elevations of red brick. The eaves have a corbelled brick detail without the decorative moulded brick found later in the previous century.

Churches and chapels are a dominant feature of the area. The Church of St Peter (1866) has a commanding position on the crossroads of Wigan Road and Market Street at the southern end of the area. The broached spire is a landmark feature from the Wigan Road, Atherton Road and down Market Street. St Peters is faced in coursed rock-faced Gritstone with Bathstone dressings in an Early English style, and has the character of a conventional parish church. At the opposite end of Market Street, St John's Church (1900-1) is unconventional and distinctive being aligned on a north-south axis. The elegant polygonal steeple rises from a two storey porch which addresses the road junction. The upper stages are faced in



*St. Peter's Church dominates the junction of Market Street and Wigan Road.*

red sandstone. The main body of the church is faced in cream gritstone, with red sandstone used for window dressings and banding. The Roman Catholic Church of St Benedict is set on the east side and towards the southern end of Market Street. In contrast with the preceding churches, it is plain and comprises a lofty principal range with pent-roofed aisles in the manner of a medieval tythe barn. It shares the palette of facing materials employed at St Johns, the polychrome stonework and stone windows with tracery creating a distinctive style.



*The Church of St Benedict has distinctive elevations of buff gritstone bonded by red sandstone designed by Joseph Hansom (1869).*

The earliest surviving churches in the area are modest. The Presbyterian Church is largely concealed from view down Presbyterian Fold. Despite its dated porch (1700), which relates to the first chapel on the present site, the existing building appears to be c1840 with simple stuccoed elevations and modest Neoclassical detailing in the form of stylized metopes and triglyphs. Also on the western side of Market Street, the modest former Strict Ebenezer Baptist chapel of 1852 is also elevated in a pared-down classical style with a quatrefoil set within the pediment. The former St Paul's chapel (1912) is

the latest church in the area. It serves to close views down Chapel Street. The chapel has a strong Edwardian character, faced in hard red brick with buff faience banding, windows and dressings. The tower is squat with plain faience pinnacles.



*The Last Orders public house retains Doric doorcases and a heavily moulded brick eaves cornice.*

Public houses are distributed along the principal arterial roads and as a general rule occupy corner plots. They are restricted to two storeys in height but vary in scale and character. The Bird I'Th Hand is prominently sited on the south-west side of the Wigan Road/Market Street crossroads. It has an organic character composed of several ranges of variable scale but conventional simple mid-late nineteenth century and early twentieth century appearance with brick elevations beneath a slate roof. On the east side of Market Street, the Prince of Wales has a mid-nineteenth century character with simple rendered elevations of a domestic scale. The slate roof is hipped and low pitched. Slightly later in date (c1875), the 'Last Orders' on the west side of Market Street is prominently set on the corner of Pennington Street. It has a long street frontage of two tall storeys. The elevations are faced in painted brick with an elaborately moulded brick cornice beneath a low pitched slate roof. The long sash openings and Doric doorcases are distinctive. On the west side of Market Street, 'Bonny Lasses' is more modest example of an unaltered later Victorian public house, retaining fine period

joinery, unpainted red brickwork and stone lintels, sills and stringcourses. The latest public house in the area is the distinctive Hindley Arms, occupying the southern corner of Albert Street. It is designed in an austere Elizabethan revival style with buff faience mullioned windows set in red brick beneath a flat roof hidden by a parapet.



*The Leyland Free Library and Museum (1887) is imposing and commemorates John Leyland (1832-1883) an important benefactor of the town.*

Public buildings in the town are a reflection of the civic pride of the town at the height of its prosperity in the late nineteenth century. The Leyland Free Library and Museum (1885) is a key landmark of the area with its distinctive square brick corner tower with its squat pyramidal slate spire. Designed by Thomas Worthington in a Free-Elizabethan style with red brick elevations divided into bays by polygonal pilasters, each topped by faience finials. On the Market Street frontage are three, two storey buff faience canted bays which retain their original leaded lights. The imposing arcaded gritstone porch is presided over by a pair of Griffin retainers carrying armorial shields. On the Wigan Road, the former two offices of the Hindley Urban District Council (1903) are an important gateway feature on the western

approach to the area. The two storey plus basement elevations are designed in a Queen Anne Revival style with red brick elevations and buff faience dressings. The original lightwell railings, heavy dentil cornice, banding and exaggerated keystone enrich the area.

The Conservative Club, no.135 Market Street (1897) is a solid red brick late Victorian club and assembly hall of two tall storeys beneath a gabled slate roof. The central door has a heavy surround of paired pilasters with balcony projecting over, carried on acanthus consoles. The coped gables have kneelers with ball finials which add interest at roof level.



*The Conservative Club, No.135 Market Street has a grandiose doorcase and imposing scale.*

The inter-war former Palace Picture Theatre, nos.47-55 (odd) Market Street is now much altered by the bricking-up and rendering over of the central faience oriel, diocletian windows and removal of the central entablature with its heavily moulded cornice. The loss of the original canopy and the replacement of shop fronts with galvanised roller shutters also rob the building of much of its original presence. Nevertheless, it remains a significantly scaled building of

two tall storeys with a strong composition. The appearance could be significantly enhanced by the reinstatement of original openings and detailing.

Houses are scarce within the area and located on the periphery. In particular, along Church Street and Peter Street, surrounding St Peter's Church are flat fronted red brick, short terraces of c1900. These are set on the back edge of the pavement and behind shallow front garden enclosures. These houses are simple with ornamentation restricted to moulded brick eaves corbels. The original box sash windows have regrettably been replaced although the repetition of the original openings gives the terraces a strong rhythm. The removal of the stone mullions which previously divided the engaged ground floor sashes has disrupted the proportions of the ground floor openings. Borsdane Terrace on Atherton Road is a composed terrace of c1910 contained between gabled 'book-ends'. The upper floors were originally faced in roughcast with a corbelled brick eaves detail. The Westmoreland slate

roofing is laid to diminishing courses. The terrace is set behind shallow front gardens bounded by paneled dwarf brick walls formerly with terracotta pier caps. The canted bays at ground floor level are set beneath a continuous slate roofed pentice. The ground floor bays originally had attractive leaded frieze lights with roses in the manner of the Glasgow School (no.21 retains this attractive feature). The end of terrace houses have herringbone half-timbering and timber oriels set obliquely on each corner. The first floor windows have been comprehensively replaced.

#### 4.5 Building plots, types and prevalent building form

The conservation area has for the most part a dense urban grain with the majority of road frontage being continuously developed as terraces or rows of individual buildings. This is a reflection of the historic pattern of development with the construction of short terraces of identical properties occurring in the later nineteenth century. During the mid nineteenth century



*Borsdane Terrace, Atherton Road is carefully composed with attractive detailing which is being eroded by alterations.*

many plots were developed individually, thereby creating a more varied streetscape. Plot sizes and widths are variable. Development along Market Street (originally Mill Street) occurred sporadically from the late eighteenth century and gained pace significantly in the later nineteenth century. The generally earlier phasing of the eastern street frontage is associated with greater variability in plot size. The later Victorian speculative terraced developments are associated with uniformly narrow plots. These characterise the northern half of the western street frontage.

Inevitably, places of worship and public buildings occupy the largest plots within the most prominent sites in the area as a reflection of their social status.

Within the area there are the following principal building types:

**(i) Shops:** The most frequently encountered building type. There is some evidence to support the assumption that some shops were created by the conversion of mid nineteenth century housing, although most were purpose built as generally two storey terraces of identical units, dating from the final quarter of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century;

**(ii) Public houses:** A frequently encountered building type in the area. Public houses in the area are exclusively of two storeys in height and often occupying prominent corner plots. Examples survive from the late eighteenth century but generally the majority date from the later nineteenth century.

**(iii) Community Facilities:** Within the area there are a good range of surviving public buildings including a public library, numerous churches and Sunday schools, former local government offices and a former late nineteenth century Board School. These are the most significantly scaled buildings in the area, but still restricted to a maximum of two tall storeys in height with taller tower or spire features to announce their presence within the wider townscape. They generally occupy prominent corner plots, as a reflection of their social status;

**(iv) Housing:** Generally in terraced form and predominantly late nineteenth and early twentieth century with simple detailing. The least numerous building type in the area.

#### 4.6 Materials, local details and architectural styles

Facing brickwork is the unifying feature of Hindley's townscape. Red brick is usually found with moulded brick and less commonly terracotta detailing. This often uses historicist motifs such as nail head, guilloche, acanthus leaf and egg and dart. In the later nineteenth and early twentieth century buff faience and terracotta is often twinned with hard red brick to create a distinctive style.

Render is more rarely found as a facing material in the area. It is generally associated with buildings from the early and mid nineteenth century with moulded stucco details adopting neoclassical and renaissance forms.



*The Presbyterian New School (1877) has brick detailing typical of late nineteenth century development in Hindley.*

The moulded brick eaves corbel is the most commonly occurring detail throughout the area. It appears in the third quarter of the nineteenth century but disappears from use around 1900 to be substituted by corbelled plain brick eaves and brick cogging. A simple architectural style characterises the majority of the retail frontages. Shop fronts occupy the full width of the ground floor with accommodation above served by pairs of sash windows. These may have a flat stone lintel of local gritstone or voussoired brick arches. Roofs are mostly low pitched and slate clad without attic accommodation. There are occasional examples of dormers breaking the eaves, which are a feature of several late nineteenth century terraces of two and a half storeys. These reflect the apogée of the town's economic wealth.



*The elegant spire of St. John's Methodist Church provides an important focal point at the northern end of Market Street.*

The principal churches are designed in Gothic derived styles and are faced in coursed rock-faced stone. Local red sandstone in conjunction with creamy gritstone is used to create polychrome effects. Public buildings and higher status buildings such as banks are associated with revivalist eclectic styles including Free-

Elizabethan, Queen Anne Revival and Edwardian Freestyle. These are associated with red brick facing contrasting with buff faience and terracotta.

#### 4.7 Listed buildings

A listed building is one that is included on the Government's Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. These buildings are protected by law and consent is required from Wigan Borough Council before any works of alteration, extension or demolition can be carried out. Listed buildings are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map.

#### 4.8 Buildings of Townscape Merit

Many unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal map as being "Buildings of Townscape Merit".



*Bonny Lass public house is a good example of an unaltered late nineteenth century building and a significant 'Building of Townscape Merit'.*

Buildings identified as having "townscape merit" will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building

materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impracticable, they are excluded.

Listed Buildings together with Buildings of Townscape Merit help create the conservation area's distinctive and interesting historic townscape. As recommended in Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, the general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

#### 4.9 Historic shopfronts



*No.22 Bridge Street. A surviving late Victorian shopfront with high quality joinery*

Within the conservation area are a number of fine period shopfronts dating from the later nineteenth century and early twentieth century. These give the retail frontage a distinctive character and engender a sense of quality. These are important surviving period features which must be preserved. A statutory duty exists to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of all conservation areas. To achieve this aim, where there is evidence of the historic detail of a shop front, whether in the form of documentary evidence or surviving fragmentary features, the accurate repair and reinstatement of the shopfront will be sought.

#### 4.10 Focal points, views and vistas

The principal churches (St Peter's and St John's) with their fine spires create important and distinguished focal points at either end of Market Street. The spire of St Peter's also serves as an important focal point facilitated by the straightness of the Wigan Road along the western approach into the area. The stout pyramidal spire of the Free Library tower provides an intermediate focal point in views north from the south west end of Market Street and also along Cross Street, in views into the conservation area.



*St. John's Church has a significant presence on Bridge Street.*

The straightness of the southern end of Market Street between Frederick Street and Lowe Mill Lane creates important long views down this section of the street. To the north of the junction with Lowe Mill Lane, the alignment of the street changes, creating shorter views between the junction with Ladies Lane. To the east, the serpentine form of Bridge Street restricts views into the area creating a contrast with the straighter form of the principal street.

#### 4.11 Open spaces and green areas

The conservation area is essentially defined by the linear form of street frontage development along Market Street. There are no significant public spaces in the area with the exception of the main road junctions, the landscaped area surrounding the former Council Offices, Wigan Road and the churchyard of St Peter which serve as a semi-public space. The road junctions at the north and southern ends of the area are important spaces but dominated by heavy traffic which detracts from their special qualities.



*A single ancient hawthorne is a rare street-tree at the southern end of Market Street.*

The grounds surrounding the former offices of the Urban District Council provide a small but welcome green retreat within the hard urban townscape which characterises the area. The mature lime, sycamore and ornamental cherry trees provide important shade and a modest area of lawn for informal recreation. The enclosed grounds surrounding the Church of St Peter contain important semi-mature trees which provide a gentle setting to the Church and wider street. In particular, the ash and ornamental cherry trees along the Liverpool Road frontage

and to the rear of the church along Peter Street lend the street a secluded intimacy.

Open spaces immediately adjoining the conservation area may also contribute considerably to the setting of the area. Rayner Park is one such green space which makes an important contribution to the character of the wider area.

#### 4.12 Public Realm

The central shopping area of Market Street is paved in small module concrete slabs laid on a grid with concrete kerbs. This serves to exaggerate the narrowness of the footway. Charcoal concrete setts are used to face street corners and areas subject to over-traffic, associated with forecourt servicing. In more peripheral areas, tarmac is used to surface the footway with concrete kerbs. Small areas of large concrete paving slabs also survive from the mid twentieth century. Short runs of broad granite kerbs survive in secondary side streets, such as King Street and Chapel Street.

There are no significant areas of surviving historic streetscape in the town, with the exception of a small area of granite cobbled roadway at the southern end of Morris Street.

Lighting columns all date from the later twentieth century and are utilitarian ‘hockey stick’ type with either concrete or steel columns. On Wigan Road and Market Streets these often dwarf in scale the modest two storey buildings they adjoin. The proliferation of late twentieth century street furniture, including concrete bollards and guard rails, detracts from the quality and historic character of the public realm.

### 5.0 Issues: Positives and Negatives

#### Positives

- Architectural quality of the area’s buildings;
- Cohesive townscape;
- Historic environment;
- Important local shopping centre;
- Closely knit townscape with few vacant sites;



- Intimate streets and fine landmark buildings;
- Period shop fronts and surviving independent retailers;
- Close proximity of residential streets to town centre.

**Negatives**

- Bridge Street and the extreme northern end of Market Street suffer from low retail vitality and many buildings are in a poor state of repair;
- A small number of vacant shops create a bad impression and spoil the appearance of the conservation area, especially when boarded up;
- Poor state of repair of a small number of historic buildings, most notably nos,3-37 (odd) Market Street and nos.2,4,19,21, 22,24,26,28,28a,30 Bridge Street
- Gap sites serve to fragment townscape and reinforce negative imagery;
- Contextually weak and uncoordinated floorscape and public realm;
- Loss of architectural details (e.g. windows, doors and other timber joinery)

- and loss of original building materials (e.g. slate, ashlar/terracotta detailing, front boundary railings) detracts from the area’s historic interest;
- Insensitive modern shop fronts, roller shutters and poor illuminated signage which are out of scale and/or character with host building. The excessive use of swan neck downlighters is particularly intrusive;
- Vacant properties and vacant upper floor space (especially along Market Street);
- Loss of historic identity in contextual land as a result of re-development of former mills;
- Heavy traffic and vibration along Market Street, Bridge Street and Wigan Road;
- Tall lighting columns are utilitarian and dwarf the adjoining street frontage buildings;
- Proliferation of modern street furniture including concrete bollards and guard rails;
- Loss of original historic floorscape including stone slab paving, granite cobbled carriageways and kerbs.



*The public realm at the northern end of Market Street is cluttered and unco-ordinated with low quality surface finishes.*

## 6.0 Recommendations

### 6.1 Loss of architectural detail & Enforcement

- loss of timber windows and doors
- alterations to window/door openings
- removal of redundant chimney stacks

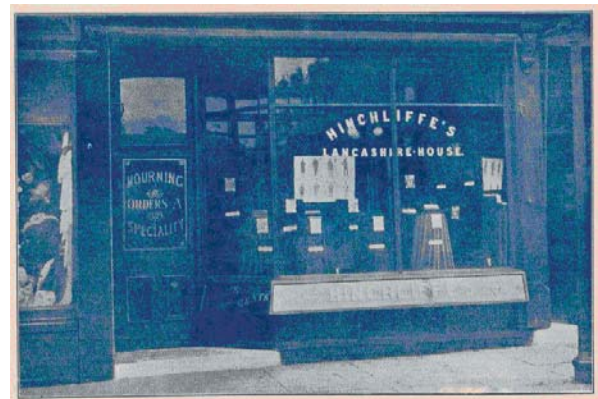
Certain minor works and alterations to unlisted buildings, in use as single family dwellings, can normally be carried out without planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called “Permitted Development” and falls into various classes which are listed in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. These minor alterations can cumulatively have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of a conservation area. Powers exist to the Council, known as Article 4 directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interests of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area. This should be considered to prevent the further erosion of historic character of residential properties.



*Peter Street. The replacement of timber box sash windows and doors and the removal of mullions from ground floor windows has destroyed the original unity of the terrace. The erection of concrete boundary walling and fences detracts from the streetscape*

Despite the need for planning permission to carry out most external works to commercial properties, there is evidence of significant unauthorised alterations. This includes the removal of windows from flats above shops and the installation of signage and roller shutters. The cumulative effect of such works is resulting

in a materially detrimental impact upon the townscape quality of the area. If left unchecked, such alterations can erode the special qualities which justified the original designation. It is recommended that an awareness campaign be carried out in the area to explain the need for planning permission for such works, to promote the Council’s Shopfront Design Guide and to secure community support for enforcement action.



*A former traditional shopfront in Market Street (Hinchcliffe's Lancashire House)*

### 6.2 Shopfront design, signage and illumination

The design of shop fronts is of paramount importance in the conservation area as a reflection of the dominance of retail uses. Many of the existing shop fronts are poorly designed in terms of their proportions, materials and the relationship of the shopfront to the composition of the façade or adjoining frontages. Illumination is essentially unnecessary given the levels of ambient lighting in Market Street. Swan neck downlighters are particularly intrusive in the streetscene and should be avoided. If justification exists for illumination, this should be restricted to low levels of illumination via trough lights or halo-back lighting, incorporated into the design of the fascia.

The Council has produced a Draft Shopfront Design Guide. (July 2005). This provides detailed design guidance for new shop fronts.

### 6.3 Boundary treatments: railings and walls

Whilst throughout much of the area development is set on the back edge of the pavement, within the later nineteenth and early twentieth century terraces on Peter Street/Atherton Road, shallow forecourts are defined by dwarf boundary walls. These serve to enrich the streetscene and are a key element of local distinctiveness. Every effort should be made to repair existing walling and secure their accurate reinstatement. The Council can encourage owners to undertake these works by the provision of guidance regarding materials and suppliers, together with grant assistance towards the cost (subject to resources). The use of Article 4(2) directions should be investigated to prevent the further loss of traditional boundary walling.

### 6.4 Floorscape and local distinctiveness

Period photography serves to confirm the quality and simplicity of the historic public realm. The majority of the conservation area has been resurfaced using artificial materials mainly consisting of concrete paving slabs laid in 'tram-lines', concrete setts, tarmac and concrete kerbs. Traditionally large sandstone slabs, granite kerbs and cobbles were used. The reinstatement of historic materials is desirable and all new work should use natural materials which were formerly used in the town to reintroduce a distinctive public realm of high quality. The existing lighting columns are overbearing and utilitarian.

### 6.5 Retail floor area & re-use of redundant shops

Demand remains buoyant for retail and allied uses in the centre of Market Street. There is evidence that there may be an over-provision of retail floor area on secondary frontages especially towards the northern end of Market Street and Bridge Street. High quality shop fronts are a particularly important feature of the conservation area. Where changes of use of shops in marginal locations are being considered it is essential that the retention of period shop fronts is secured as part of the re-use of the property.

### 6.6 Upper floor uses

It is apparent from street level that many of the upper floors above commercial ground floor premises are unused or under-used, as storage areas. This is particularly evident on Market Street and Bridge Street. Building disrepair is a direct consequence as these upper floor areas are simply forgotten or seen as unviable. It is important that these upper floor areas are brought back into use as offices, consulting rooms or residential flats. This will ensure that these areas are maintained. The re-use of these areas will also add to the vitality and sustainability of the area.

### 6.7 Traffic management

Heavy through traffic is an inevitable consequence of the area's location along principal roads. The traffic is part of the area's special character but inevitably detracts from its environmental quality and attractiveness as a shopping centre. Consideration should be given to passive traffic calming, such as widening the width of the pavement, to improve the public realm and the balance between vehicles and pedestrians. All prospective works should accord with the aims of 'Streets for All' produced by English Heritage.



*Insensitive solutions to traffic/pedestrian management can harm the appearance of the area*

### 6.8 Conservation area boundary review

No revisions to the existing boundaries were considered desirable. The existing conservation area boundary is an accurate reflection of the area of the town centre with surviving special architectural or historic character.

## 6.9 Gap and Opportunity Sites

The townscape analysis plan identifies gap sites and buildings which detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area. This is an explicit statement that the redevelopment of these sites, in accordance with the Key Design Principles set out within the Management Strategy, will be encouraged.

## 7.0 Opportunities for enhancement

The following list, drawn out of the list of negatives in Section 5, identifies where, and how, the qualities that provide the special interest of the conservation area can be reinforced:

- Bridge Street and the northern end of Market Street contain several vacant shops and display other signs of low retail vitality. Grant aid is needed to assist in the regeneration of the area;
- Review of design and materials of paving/ streetscape throughout the area with a view to publication of a streetscape manual setting out principles for public space design. English Heritage's 'Streets For All' publication sets out general principles for a co-ordinated approach that can help provide an environment that is safe, enjoyable and appropriate to its surroundings.
- Restoration of architectural detail which is essential to the design and character of key historic buildings (where there is firm historical evidence), especially shop fronts, timber windows and doors, terracotta detailing, chimney stacks and original roof covering.
- Vacant premises and vacant upper floors look unsightly and attract fly posting and graffiti. Quality residential conversions, making use of vacant upper floor space, would bring vacant upper floor space back into use and further enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Other uses, subject to current planning policy, may also be appropriate.
- Small and localised areas of historic floorscape are part of the area's special interest. This appraisal has identified the most important examples of these surfaces which should be protected and repaired as necessary, using traditional techniques and materials. Existing granite and sandstone kerbs must be retained in any scheme of improvement or repair.
- Promotion and encouragement of the structural and external repair, and routine maintenance, of all the conservation area's 'Buildings of Townscape Merit';
- A number of historic buildings, mainly on the fringe of the conservation area, are in a poor state of repair. Grant aid, possibly from the Borough Council or Townscape Heritage Initiative, may be needed to assist repair and restoration of properties where the cost of works is excessive.



*Period detailing is a crucial part of local distinctiveness*

## Part 2

### The Hindley Conservation Area Appraisal Management Strategy

#### 2.0 Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance regarding how change should be best managed to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the area. The conservation area designation is not intended to prevent change but instead to influence change to produce positive outcomes for the special character and appearance of the area.

Policies EV3A, Design and EV4, Conservation of the Wigan Revised Deposit Draft Replacement unitary Development (March 2004), provide strategic guidance to protect the character and appearance of conservation areas and to promote good design in all new development. **Policy EV4** states:

**The Council will conserve the historic built environment by:**

- A. NOT PERMITTING PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD HARM THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF LISTED BUILDINGS OR THEIR SETTINGS, NOR PROPOSALS WHICH FAIL TO PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF A CONSERVATION AREA;**
- B. PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS, SITES, BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES;**
- C. EXERCISING ITS NORMAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POWERS TO ENCOURAGE THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST;**
- D. ENCOURAGING THE**

**OCCUPATION OF OLD BUILDINGS AND PERMITTING NEW USES WHICH ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR CHARACTER AND SETTING;**

- E. CARRYING OUT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES IN CONSERVATION AREAS.**

The policies set out in this plan are in accordance with national guidance set out within PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, PPG3 Housing, Draft PPS6 Planning for Town Centres, PPS12 Local Development Frameworks, PPG13 Transport, PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, PPG16 Archaeology and Planning and PPG17 Planning for Open Space. The document draws upon the design objectives set out in By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards better practice (ODPM/CABE 2000).

#### 2.1 Protecting the area's built heritage

Policy EV4A Development and Design in Conservation Areas of the Wigan Revised Deposit Draft Replacement unitary Development (March 2004) states:

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 of 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 or, 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) The use of the following types of signs will not be permitted:-

(i) fascia and projecting box signs or tray structures with internal or external illumination;

(ii) signs which result in materials or features which are integral to the design of the building being obscured or materially altered;

(iii) signs which involve letters or sheet materials or other structures incorporating box structures;

(iv) projecting signs, unless they are limited to small, traditional thin-section hanging signs on ornate brackets at fascia level;

(v) freestanding illuminated signs;

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) Fascia 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 are 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) Rendering or cladding stone and brick buildings will not be permitted;

(j) 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.

### 2.1.1 Conservation Area Consent

In accordance with the provisions of policies EV3A and EV4A of the Wigan Revised Deposit Draft Replacement unitary Development (March 2004):

- i) **The Council will encourage the demolition of buildings that detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area, as identified by the appraisal document.**
- ii) **The Council will expect satisfactory proposals for the redevelopment of any site before consent can be granted for demolition. In the absence of satisfactory redevelopment proposals, consent will not normally be granted.**
- iii) **Where the demolition or significant alteration of a building or structure has been granted, the council will seek to ensure that an accurate archive record is made prior to commencement. This will include measured survey drawings and/or photographs to be provided at the applicant's expense.**
- iv) **Consent will not be granted for the demolition of buildings or structures which have been identified within the townscape analysis section of the appraisal as making a positive contribution to townscape, including group value. These include: buildings on the statutory and local lists of buildings or structures of architectural or historic interest and buildings of 'townscape merit'.**
- v) **In accordance with guidance set out at paragraph 4.27 of PPG15, proposals to demolish buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area will be assessed against the same criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings (paragraphs 3.16-3.19, PPG15).**

### 2.1.2 Alterations

**The Council will seek to ensure that all alterations are sympathetic to the architectural character of the parent building, in terms of scale, proportion, materials and detailing, and to the character and appearance of the wider area.**

A statutory presumption exists against alterations which would harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. (s.72 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The buildings within the area serve to define its special character and it is essential to ensure that the character and appearance of the area is preserved or enhanced by development. Even small, seemingly insignificant alterations can cumulatively have a substantial impact. It is important that special consideration is paid to all alterations. Signage and security measures require careful design to ensure compatibility with the host building and appearance of the wider area.

The Council will seek to ensure that the statutory controls over alterations including enforcement action are appropriately used.

### 2.1.3 Changes of use

In accordance with the provisions of policy S1 of the Wigan Revised Deposit Draft Replacement unitary Development (March 2004):

**The Council will seek to maintain the retail uses within the area. In peripheral locations uses which would prejudice the character or appearance of the area will not be supported.**

The conservation area is currently characterised by retail uses. There appears to be low demand for retail floor area on secondary street frontages. There are opportunities to achieve the reuse of former shops in peripheral locations by encouraging complementary alternative uses including professional services and residential. The redevelopment of vacant sites should be prioritised. It is important that purpose built retail buildings on principal street frontages are retained in retail use to preserve the vitality of the commercial centre of the town. Applications

for changes of use should demonstrate how they have taken into account surrounding uses and the balance of uses in the wider area.



*A vacant shop in Bridge Street, dated 1907 with original shop front intact, awaiting re-use.*

#### 2.1.4 Statutory protection

**The Council will seek a review of the significant number of buildings of townscape merit with regard to the creation of a local list of buildings or structures of architectural or historic interest and request English Heritage to consider inclusion within the statutory list where appropriate.**

Many of the fine buildings or structures surviving from the nineteenth and more rarely eighteenth century warrant recognition of their significance by inclusion within local list of buildings or structures of architectural or historic interest. Many of these buildings are of considerable importance and may warrant statutory protection. These include the many places of worship, former Council Offices and mid nineteenth century retail frontages.

#### 2.1.5 Buildings ‘At Risk’

**The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the preservation of threatened buildings on the Register of ‘Buildings At Risk’.**

All historic buildings are a finite resource and cannot be replaced. The Council is provided with statutory powers to ensure that listed buildings are not allowed to deteriorate. These powers include Urgent Works and Repairs Notices and as a last resort, compulsory acquisition (sections 47, 48, 50 and 54, 1990 Act). Where a building has been allowed to fall into disrepair deliberately to justify its demolition, a direction for minimal compensation may be made to the Secretary of State. In such cases, compensation of as little as £1 may be payable to the owners.

The Council also has powers to secure the preservation of unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area by using Urgent Works notices in a similar way as applies to listed buildings (s.54). This applies where a building is important for maintaining the character and appearance of the area. The Council may carry out such works as a necessary in default and recover the costs incurred from the owners.

The Council has published guidance on the appropriate repair and maintenance of traditional buildings within Hindley and this is available on the Council’s website.



*No.21 Market Street ‘AT RISK’.*



## 2.2 Principles for new development

### 2.2.1 The Council will preferentially seek the redevelopment of vacant sites as a priority.

New development should complement the surrounding townscape by reflecting the scale, form, density and plan of neighbouring historic development. Important views within and through the area should be protected and maintained. Pedestrian links should be enhanced to encourage permeability and sustainability. Historic buildings are inherently sustainable and new development must seek to incorporate existing buildings which have been identified individually, or cumulatively as a group which contribute to townscape quality.

### 2.2.2 Archaeology

**Below ground archaeological remains are likely to survive across much of the conservation area. If in-situ preservation of the archaeological remains is not required and is not feasible, archaeological excavation to ensure preservation by record will need to pay particular attention to the relationship between below ground archaeological remains and the structures surviving above ground and will need to make special provision for retrieving evidence of past industries by appropriate sampling and analysis of organic materials and residues.**

- In addition to below-ground archaeological remains, the conservation area contains many surviving structures particularly those relating to industrial activities;
- The archaeological deposits may include organic materials and residues such as wood and leather, seeds, pollen, fragments of insects and industrial residues which provide information on the past environment and industries.

### 2.2.3 Development Briefs

**The Council will provide development briefs for significant development sites within the**

**area and encourages early dialogue with developers**

Within the area are significant sites awaiting redevelopment. These present a significant opportunity and challenge to create successful streets and reinforce local distinctiveness.

### 2.2.4 Temporary uses

**Appropriate temporary uses of redundant or unoccupied buildings will be encouraged**

The conservation area is facing a period of change associated with significant inward investment. Unoccupied buildings are prone to deterioration through lack of maintenance and vandalism. Temporary uses can be useful caretakers in the short term, providing security for vulnerable buildings. These uses should not require significant internal or external alterations, particularly those which would reduce the flexibility of the building in the future.

### 2.2.5 Key Design Principles

All new development should seek to:

- **Achieve continuity in street frontage building lines with development set on the back edge of the pavement;**
- **Maintain the historic pattern of development by respecting the grain associated with historic plots and the historic morphology of development in the immediate area;**
- **Respect the human scale, height and massing of historic development in the immediate streetscape and wider conservation area;**
- **Respect the roof lines of adjoining development and avoid the creation of statements or features at roof level to preserve the dominance and hierarchy of existing landmarks;**
- **Reflect the proportion of solid to void found in the elevations of traditional buildings and employ robust detailing,**

**avoiding fussy or gimmicky use of applied features/detailing**

- **Respect the historic hierarchy of development and detailing between principal and secondary street frontages and within plots between frontage and rear elevations;**
- **Conceal any parking or servicing areas behind built frontages of appropriate scale;**
- **Respond appropriately to prominent street corner sites by the use of splayed corner entrances;**
- **Reinforce local identity by the use of traditional materials used in the conservation area and new materials sympathetic to the local character of the conservation area;**
- **Create active frontages to supervise the public realm by careful consideration of internal building layout;**
- **Re-use traditional buildings which contribute to townscape quality;**
- **Accurately reinstate lost or damaged architectural features.**

### 2.2.6 Gateways, landmarks and focal points

**Existing gateways, landmarks and focal points will be protected and enhanced by complimentary development to improve their wider setting**

It is important that these significant structures are maintained and new development should be subordinate, in scale and presence to these defining structures. The existing hierarchy of landmarks will be maintained and focal points protected. The creation of new landmarks will be discouraged, unless it can be demonstrated that such structures are justified to re-establish a historic hierarchy or important lost feature.

### 2.3 Landscape design in the public realm

Within the Conservation Area, the hard streetscapes create an exclusively urban environment. This is unrelieved by public green spaces in the town centre.

- (i) **New landscaping proposals should seek to reinforce this distinctiveness by the reinstatement or repair of historic paving schemes and the sparing introduction of planting; only where this is historically appropriate. All schemes should be informed by documentary research on which the designer's decisions should be firmly founded.**

It is important that new work does not sweep away historic schemes, however fragmentary. Within the area, the surviving historic surfacing, for example in Morris Street and granite kerbs, elsewhere are very precious. Great care must be taken to ensure that these are retained and accurately repaired.

- (ii) **An honest and robust approach should be taken in the selection of new street furniture to avoid the creation of spurious 'heritage'.**

Any additions must be justified and restricted to essential items. The siting of new features in the public realm must be afforded careful consideration with regard to views, vistas and the setting of buildings; particularly those identified as making a positive contribution to townscape.

- (iii) **New street tree planting within the public realm must be kept to a minimum. Boulevard style street tree planting should be avoided**

The urban character of the streetscape within the area presents little opportunity for tree planting or soft landscaping except within private spaces. The introduction of exotic or ornamental planting, even of an informal character, is historically inappropriate within the town centre and serves to erode the special character of the street.

- (iv) **Developers may be required to make a financial contribution towards**

**the future maintenance of adjacent public areas under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).**

## 2.4 Monitoring and review

This document should be reviewed every five years in the light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area;
- A photographic record of the conservation area;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A building condition survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action.

## Appendices

### Sources of further information

Wigan Borough Council  
Civic Buildings  
New Market Street  
Wigan  
WN1 1RP Tel: 01942 244991 fax: 01942 404222

Bedford Park, London W4 1TT  
Tel: 020 8994 1019  
*For the "Care for Victorian Houses" leaflet, etc.*

English Heritage  
23 Savile Row  
London W1X 1AB  
General enquiries: 020 7973 3000  
*For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas*  
The Victorian Society  
1 Priory Gardens

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)  
37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY  
Tel: 020 7377 1644  
*For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets*