

WHITWORTH SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS PLAN

ADOPTED FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PURPOSES FROM 1ST SEPTEMBER 2011



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Whitworth Square Conservation Area was designated in August 1974 by Rossendale Borough Council. The Council is required by law to periodically review its conservation areas and to consult local residents and business owners with any proposals for change. The production of up-to-date Character Appraisals also assists the Council in making decisions on planning applications within or on the edges of the conservation area.

This Whitworth Square Conservation Area Character Appraisal with its attendant Management Proposals Plan has been produced for Council by The Conservation Studio. The survey and background research were undertaken between June 2010 and July 2010, and included a walkabout which was attended by local stakeholders on 13 July 2010.

Following the initial drafting of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan, a full public consultation exercise was undertaken, ending on 14 March 2011. After this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available from the Borough Council) and amendments to the text and mapping were made as appropriate.

These documents identify the character and positive qualities of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area, highlight key issues, and put forward proposals for its management in future years. The general format of these documents follows guidance produced by English Heritage on the effective management of conservation areas.

As part of the exercise, the existing Conservation Area boundary was also reviewed and following public consultation two changes have been recommended as set out in Section 2 of the Management Proposals Plan.

The Whitworth Square Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted by the Borough Council as a material consideration for development control purposes with effect from 1st September 2011 and the Recommended Actions in the Management Proposals Plan, including the Conservation Area boundary revisions, were agreed to be implemented incrementally as resources allow.

PART 1 – WHITWORTH SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Whitworth Square Conservation Area

The Whitworth Square Conservation Area was designated by Rossendale Borough Council in August 1974. Whitworth Square is a small rural hamlet situated off the busy A671 between Bacup and Rochdale, which follows the line of the River Spodden as it flows southwards. Whilst the surrounding valley was used for cotton milling from the 19th century onwards, Whitworth Square has earlier origins, with the first St Bartholomew's Church dating back to 1529, when it was built as a Chapel-of-Ease to St Chad's Church in Rochdale. A dispersed settlement seems to have grown up around a number of farmsteads, of which one, with an adjoining barn, remains in the Conservation Area. This is now called No. 11 Taylor Road and the house retains a datestone of 1692 and the barn a similar datestone of 1691. Whitworth Square's greatest claim to fame, however, is as the location of a unique group of doctors, primarily the Taylor family, who dispensed advice and treatments from buildings in the hamlet for over 100 years, starting in the mid-18th century.



St Bartholomew's Church

Today Whitworth Square is notable for its attractive hillside location providing long distance views over the river valley and rolling hills to the west, and for the group of mainly historic buildings which surround a small sandstone setted square, which forms the centrepiece of the village. This is dominated by the Red Lion Public House, the only non-residential building in the Conservation Area apart from the church, Horsecroft Farm with its adjoining stable yard (which appears to be in use as an equestrian centre), and another public house, the Dog and Partridge, which lies on the main road (Market Street) at the entrance to the Conservation Area. There are six listed buildings, including the church (dating to 1846 but partially rebuilt in 1984 after a fire), as well as number of unlisted but 'positive' historic houses or cottages, seen principally to either side of Church Street and along the northern side of Taylor Street. Calf Hey Head is an unlisted house of c1800 which retains rows of uniformly sized windows, typical of the type used for handloom weaving and it is now recommended that it should be included within a revised Conservation Area boundary.

Issues facing the Conservation Area include the control of minor alterations to the unlisted historic houses; the provision of a variety of improvements to the street scene, including

street lighting and street furniture; the poor condition of some of the monuments in the churchyard; visible satellite dishes, presumably erected without planning permission; and possible additions to the existing visitor interpretation plaques. Two changes to the Conservation Area boundary are now recommended – the addition of Calf Hey Head and the removal of one modern building on the edge of the Conservation Area in Whitworth Rake.

1.2 The control of conservation areas

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 historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within “*Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment*” (PPS5).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten its special qualities (in the form of the ‘Character Appraisal’);
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and also achieve the enhancement of the conservation area (in the form of the ‘Management Proposals Plan’).

1.3 Community involvement

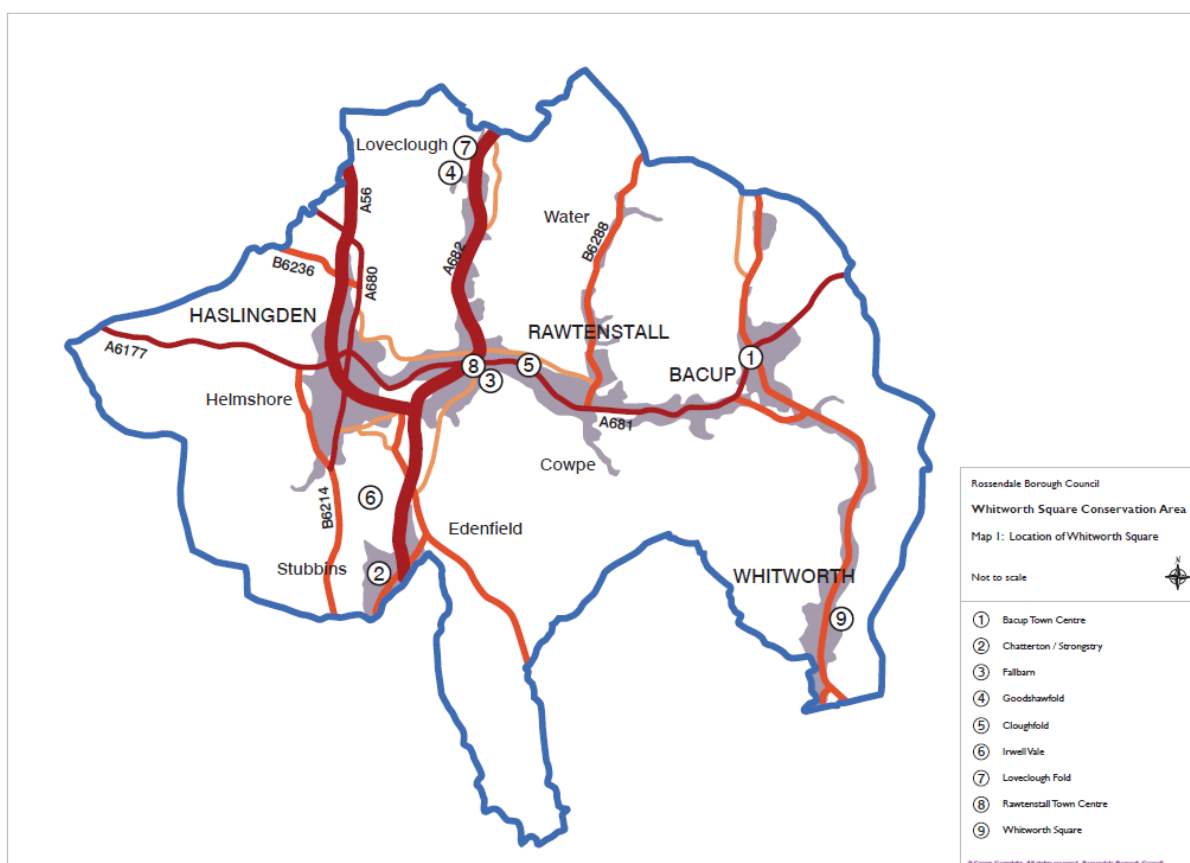
This document has been produced for Rossendale Borough Council after consultation with the local community, including a walkabout with over a dozen local stakeholders on 13 July 2010. Following the initial drafting of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan, a full public consultation exercise was undertaken, ending on 14 March 2011. After this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available from the Borough Council) and amendments to the text and mapping were made as appropriate. As part of the process, the existing Conservation Area boundary was also reviewed and following public consultation two changes have been recommended as set out in Section 2 of the Management Proposals Plan.

The Whitworth Square Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted by the Borough Council as a material consideration for development control purposes with effect from 1st September 2011 and the Recommended Actions in the Management Proposals Plan, including the Conservation Area boundary revisions, were agreed to be implemented incrementally as resources allow.

2 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

2.1 Location

Whitworth Square is located between Bacup, which lies about four miles to the north-west, and Rochdale, which lies a slightly smaller distance to the south. The A671, which forms the short western boundary of the Conservation Area, connects these larger towns, following the line of the River Spodden as it flows southwards towards Rochdale, where it joins the River Roch just to the west of Rochdale.



Map 1 – Location of Whitworth Square

2.2 Landscape setting, topography and geology

Whitworth Square lies in the south Pennine Hills to the east of the valley of the River Flodden, in a slight valley which provides the route for a stream from the moorland above. Its route can just be traced in Whitworth Rake, where it is not much more than a ditch, to beneath the Conservation Area, where it is culverted, although a very short section appears briefly in the garden to the early 20th century vicarage. Within the Conservation Area, levels therefore drop from east to west, with the land falling gently along Whitworth Rake and Taylor Street. The Conservation Area is notable for the sense of enclosure provided by the hills which lie close by – Waingap Hill to the south-east and Hodge Hill to the north-east. These are characterised by open moorland, with even higher and more remote hills beyond – Bushy Hill beyond Waingap Hill, and Brown Wardle Hill beyond Hodge Hill. To the west, the land continues to fall across the A671 and down to the River Flodden, where a narrow band of more level land provided opportunities in the past to build large cotton mills. Beyond the land rises yet again to Whitworth Lower End Moor and eventually to Ding Quarry, a huge disused quarry in the middle of Hammer Hill and Hail Storm Hill. Large reservoirs, some of

which were originally built to provide water to the cotton mills, but which now provide drinking water to Rochdale and beyond, can be seen to the north of Whitworth (Cowm Reservoir) and to the south (Spring Mill reservoir). A large wind farm dominates views on the skyline beyond the built-up valley floor.



View over the Conservation Area

Glacial action has been very important in influencing the landscape in Rossendale, both in terms of scouring out the valleys to leave more resistant and higher areas untouched, and through the deposit of drift material. The variable nature of this glacial action and deposition significantly contributes towards a similar variety of soil types, which in turn are instrumental in determining the type of agriculture most suitable in different areas. The Pennine moorland is characterised by large boggy areas of grass, heather, and peat, where the high altitude prevents any useful farming apart from summer grazing. These uplands are underlain by Carboniferous rocks, mainly millstone grit, sandstones and coal measures, and the soils are acidic and strongly leached, requiring frequent liming to prevent surface mat formation. However, the sandstone deposits have provided an important source of stone for building and paving – much of London is paved in sandstone flags from Rossendale, and sandstone quarries are marked on historic maps close to Whitworth. A small quarry may also have existed on the west side of Whitworth Rake, where disturbed ground indicates past extraction of the stone.

2.3 Biodiversity

On the tops to the east of the Conservation Area, the open heather moorland environment provides examples of characteristic flora and fauna. Further down the hill slopes, closer to Whitworth Square, the hedges and groups of trees provide a more suitable environment for wildlife such as foxes, badgers, smaller mammals and a variety of wild birds. Trees in St Bartholomew's Churchyard, and the unmanaged grassland and scrub in the adjoining former quarry, provide some particular potential for wildlife habitats.

3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Archaeology

There are no known prehistoric or Romano-British sites in Whitworth Square, and no recorded settlement in the area before the late medieval period, although it is likely that small farmsteads may have existed.

3.2 Historical development

Whitworth lies in an area of poor quality Pennine moorland where agriculture was limited to the sheltered valleys, with some summer sheep grazing on the tops. Home spinning and weaving was common in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, with industrialised cotton-spinning and weaving developing along the river valley, mainly in the 19th and early 20th centuries. From the late medieval period onwards, drift mining for coal was also carried on a small scale basis for local needs.

In the 12th century, lands in the Whitworth valley were given to the Abbeys of Stanlawe, in Cheshire, and Salley, in Yorkshire. In 1296 the monks of Stanlawe moved to Whalley, bringing with them their landholdings in the Whitworth area, and further land in Whitworth was given to the monks by Hugh and Marie de Holt in 1299. Immediately after the Dissolution in 1536, Thomas Holt of Gristlehurst, near Heywood, purchased Whalley Abbey's former lands in Whitworth, and the neighbouring manor of Spotland, from the king. By this time, a chapel-of-ease had been built in Whitworth, paid for by local contributions, to remove the necessity of travelling to Rochdale every Sunday. This confirms the existence of a small number of farmsteads, dispersed along the sides of the river valley. Robert Holt, representing the inhabitants of Whitworth, persuaded some local landowners to give them enough land for the new building, which was located in the present churchyard. The first priest was called Thomas Holt, possibly a relative of Robert Holt, whose family name also occurs in other parts of Rossendale, suggesting that his landownership was extremely widespread. The new chapel served Whitworth as well as the neighbouring hamlets of Wardle and Healey.



St Bartholomew's Church

A further chapel was built in c1689-94, and yet another in 1775, but by the mid-19th century a new church was needed to cope with the expanding congregation, and in 1850 this was completed on a new site above the graveyard. In 1851 the old chapel was sold by auction and demolished, the apse being used as a front entrance to the adjoining church school, which had been built in 1821. More controversially, some of the windows were used in the Whitworth Arms Public House on Market Street. In 1984 a bad fire destroyed the eastern end of the church. The tower and part of the nave remained intact, and were integrated into a new much smaller building, designed by the Buttress Fuller Partnership, which was opened in 1987. The graveyard was closed for burials in 1976 and taken over by Rossendale Borough Council in 1980. Of note are the monuments to various members of the Taylor family.

The first school in Whitworth was built in 1724 on land between the Red Lion Inn and what is now Whitworth House. In 1821 a new school was built on land adjacent to Whitworth Rake, below the church, and this was the building which was extended in 1851. A new Infants School was built in 1882 in Lloyd Street, Whitworth, and by 1889 a new Senior School had been added on an adjoining site. The Infants School was rebuilt in 1923 but both buildings were finally demolished in 1993 when a new school was built in Hallfold. The old school next to the church was used as a Sunday School until 1952, when it too was demolished. The site is now vacant and somewhat neglected.

In the late 17th century, a new farmhouse and adjoining barn were built in Whitworth (now No. 11 Taylor Street), but the area remained a quiet rural backwater until the end of the 18th century when it became famous as the location for the Whitworth Doctors. The first of these was John Taylor (d1802), who set up his practice in 1764. He was the son of James Taylor, a farmer who also had a smithy, and he simply transferred the skills he had learnt about sick horses to sick people. His sons John (d1827) and Joseph (d1836) continued his work. Throughout this period, many hundreds of people came to Whitworth House (built in 1674) seeking relief from broken limbs, cancer and other serious ailments. Part of the treatment involved country walks around the village, including along the footpath behind the Red Lion, which became known as Cripples Walk. The doctors were also famous for their ointments and potions, many of them based on treatments which had been used successfully on horses. To provide accommodation for the patients, some of whom had travelled long distances to be treated, a number of houses close to Whitworth House were used as lodgings, including The Briars, built in 1763. The last Whitworth doctor was James Eastwood Taylor, who practised for 30 years until his death in 1876.

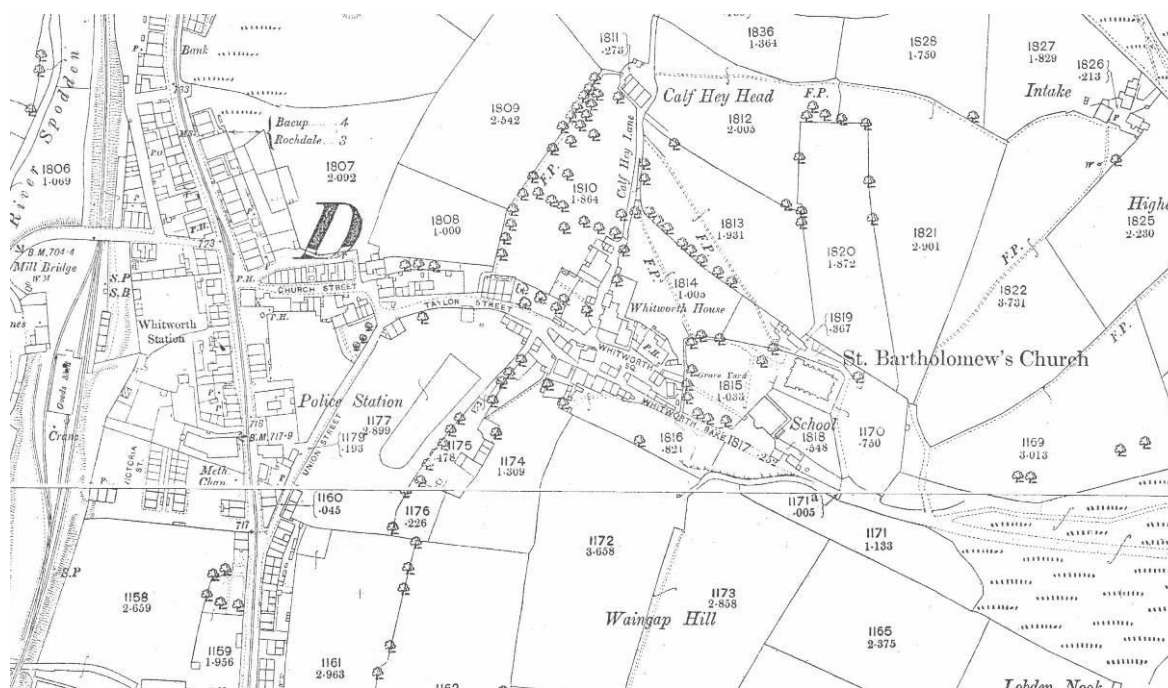


Whitworth House

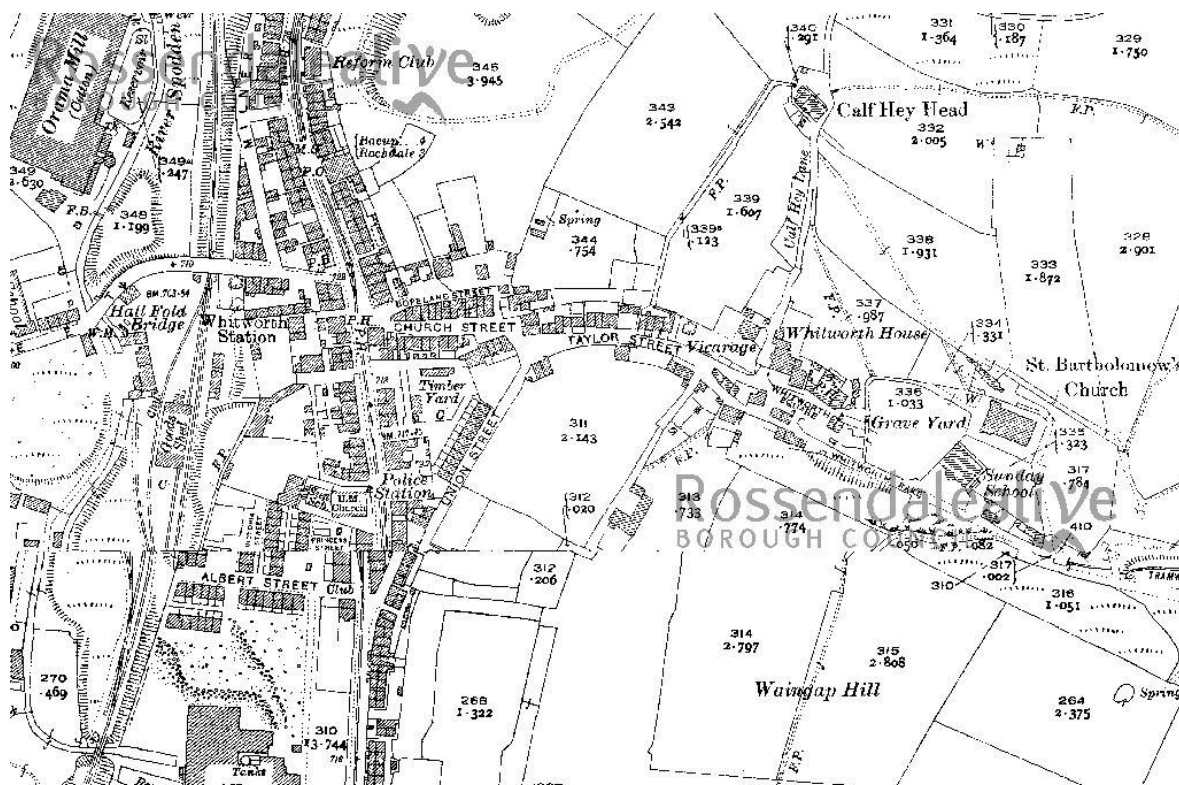
By the time of the 1851 map, a small hamlet had formed around the junction of Church Street and Market Street, and Union Road had been created, presumably to bypass the narrow constriction of buildings which then lay on either side of Church Street. Whitworth village then contained a Post Office, the New Inn, two cotton mills, a Methodist Chapel, and a scattering of houses mainly along the west side of market Street. To the north of Calf Hey Head was a large sandstone quarry (High Field Quarry) with a further quarry on the moorland to the north-east of the village. Calf Hey Lane appears to have been a much more important route than now, with the land continuing past the house towards Long Acres Farm. Of note is the convergence of several pathways from the moorland down Whitworth Rake into the valley below.



Historic map of 1851



Historic map of 1893



Historic map of 1919

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the area along the river continued to be used for cotton milling (the Orama and the Albert Mills are shown on the 1893 map) and stone quarrying continued as another important local industry. New terraced housing was added during this period in Church Street and Taylor Street to provide accommodation for the workers. A railway station was also added in Whitworth and is shown on the 1893 map. A new farm (Horsecroft Farm) was built between 1906 and 1919 on the edge of what is now the Conservation Area.

More recently, Whitworth has become a popular place to live in, and much new housing was added around the edges of the Conservation Area from the 1960s onwards. Under the Whitworth Square Conservation Area Partnership grant scheme in the early 2000s a number of buildings in the Conservation Area, and St Bartholomew's Churchyard, were improved with the assistance of grant aid.

3.3 Historic Environment Record (HER)

The HER for Whitworth Square records all of the listed buildings and just one unlisted building, The Briars, which can be dated to 1763 because the original deeds have survived. It is significant because it is said to have been built to provide lodgings for John Taylor's patients. Otherwise, there are no records of any archaeological features in the area.

3.4 Activities

Whitworth Square Conservation Area is a mainly residential area with just three commercial businesses: the Red Lion Inn, in the square itself; what appears to be an equestrian centre at Horsecroft Farm at the junction of Church Street with Taylor Street, and the Dog and Partridge Public House on the corner of Market Street and Church Street. There is one place of worship, St Bartholomew's Church. The area is popular with hill walkers and horse riders, who access the surrounding moorland along Whitworth Rake.

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

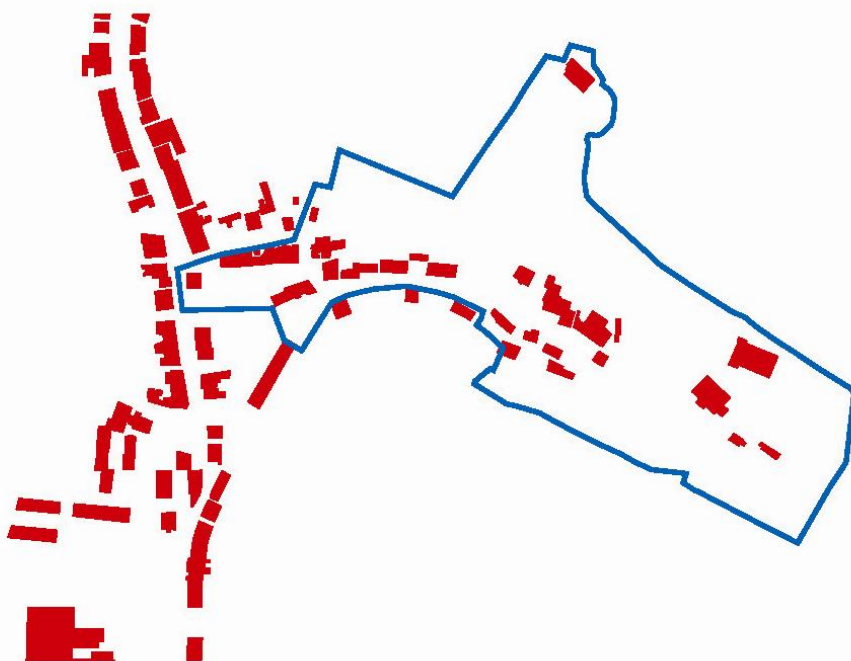
4.1 Layout and building pattern

The Conservation Area sits in a rural hillside setting and consists of just two streets leading to Whitworth Square, the church and churchyard beyond the Square, and Whitworth Rake, the historic route which connected the valley below Whitworth Square to moorland and on to Rochdale. The earliest known development within the Conservation Area appears to be the construction of a chapel in the present churchyard at the end of the 16th century. It is likely that this served a number of scattered farmsteads which lay on the edges of the moorland, of which No. 11 Taylor Street is a later survivor. Long Acres Farm, just to the north of the Conservation Area in Facit, is first recorded in 1626. There was almost certainly an historic road between Bacup and Rochdale, following the river valley, and a turnpike seems to have been built in c1700 which was later improved as new mills were added along the river. There were also much earlier packhorse routes over the moorland and one early route followed Whitworth Rake, Manstone Edge and Syke into Rochdale. This may have instigated the choice of the adjoining site for the new chapel in the 16th century. The line of Church Street/Taylor Street, and Whitworth Rake would therefore appear to be a long-established road and when Whitworth began to develop in the mid-18th century because of the influence of the Taylors, new buildings were added close to the church including the Red Lion Inn and Whitworth House.

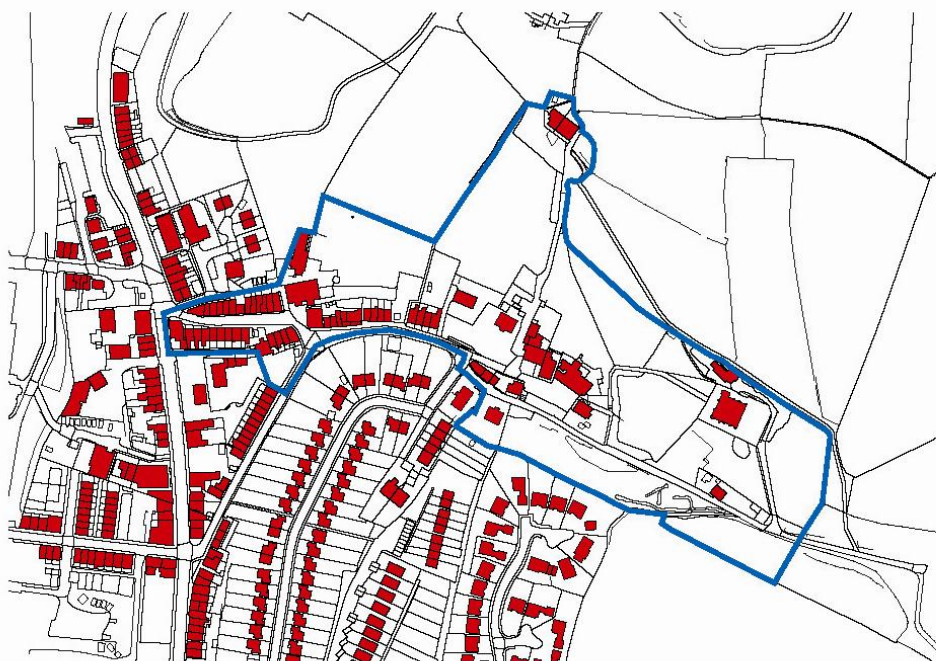


Whitworth Rake

The most important open space in the Conservation Area is therefore what is now called Whitworth Square, but this is a very informal space which merely represents the widening of Taylor Street as it rises up from Church Street and the main road. Certainly, there is no attempt to create a 'polite' square in the Georgian sense, although the recent repaving scheme has given it a greater formality than it previously would have had. Around this space are just four high quality historic buildings, only one of which (Whitworth House) is listed (this is now divided into two units). These are distributed around the space in no special way, not sharing a common building line or indeed a common orientation. The Square leads to the footpath up to the church, which is paved in traditional stone setts, and the slight widening provides an area for seating and some limited car parking. Overlooking this space is the public house, which forms a centrepiece to the settlement due to its commercial activities. Further east, the ground rises steeply to St Bartholomew's Church, although this is some distance away and is separated from the Square by the many mature trees and setted pathways of the churchyard. Of note is the elevated pathway, paved in local stone, contained by retaining walls made of local stone, and protected by traditional cast iron railings, which marks the western and northern edge of the churchyard. To the south, Whitworth Rake 'bypasses' the Square at a higher level, providing views down to the public house and also across the roofs to the hillside beyond.



Map data of 1919



Map data of 2010

Until the late 19th century, Whitworth Square would have been an isolated hamlet connected to the activity along the valley floor below by a narrow country lane. When cotton mills started being built between Bacup and Rochdale in the late 19th century, taking advantage of the supply of water power, houses were built in Whitworth to provide workers' accommodation, and the blocks in Taylor Street are dated 1896 and 1898. The houses in Church Street were probably slightly earlier, and provide well detailed and cohesive terraced groups, although one house (No. 34 Croft House) may date to the early 19th century or possibly even earlier. All of these sit on the back of the pavement with small gardens to the rear. The road zigzags around the junction of Church Street with Taylor Street, perhaps reflecting the importance of the farm group which once stood there. However, the farmhouse (No. 11 Taylor Street) and its barns are now in separate ownerships.

There has been a large amount of new housing built around the southern side of the Conservation Area but the houses have large gardens which help to soften their impact although the buildings are obtrusive on the skyline above Whitworth Rake. Fortunately, no development has been allowed to the east or north of the Conservation Area, so the rural setting to the historic hamlet has largely been preserved.

4.2 Open spaces and trees

Open spaces

The incremental and very informal development of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area from a small agricultural settlement in the 16th century to a relatively quiet rural backwater means that there are no planned open spaces apart from the churchyard. This is notable for its stone monuments and gravestones, mature trees, pathways covered in sandstone setts, cast iron railings, and hilly topography, which provides views over the hamlet and across to the distant hills. Repairs to the tombstones have been carried out in recent years although further work is now necessary. A record of the gravestones has been made but is not yet available for general use. The churchyard links visually with other green spaces, most notably the large hilly field to the back of the Red Lion Inn, which acts as an important backdrop to the buildings around Whitworth Square. St Bartholomew's vicarage is set back from the general building line with a large, attractive and visually open front garden. Around the northern and eastern boundaries of the Conservation Area, the land rises to moorland which cannot be appreciated from the hamlet due to the increase in levels, although there are much clearer views on reaching the summit along Whitworth Rake above the village.



One of the Taylor tombs in St Bartholomew's Churchyard

Trees:

Trees are particularly significant in a number of places, where they make a major contribution to the streetscape and, or, to the setting of historic buildings. Further mature trees follow the line of field boundaries and pathways. Species are mixed but the most important trees are largely deciduous, including oak and beech. In 2000, Rossendale Borough Council carried out some work to the trees in the churchyard.

The most significant trees are as follows:

- On the steep bank in the back gardens of the modern houses to the south of the junction of Church Street and Taylor Street

- In the front garden of Hillside and St Bartholomew's Vicarage, 20th century buildings which lie almost in the centre of the Conservation Area
- In the churchyard to St Bartholomew's Church, and behind the Old Parsonage, where they form a group



Trees in front of St Bartholomew's Vicarage

These trees are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map, but the omission of any particular tree does not mean that it is of no importance.

4.3 Focal points, focal buildings, views and vistas

Focal points and focal buildings:

There are no civic squares or other planned urban spaces in the Conservation Area, other than Whitworth Square (which is simply a slightly widened section of public road) and St. Bartholomew's Churchyard, which is notable for the gravestones and monuments, many of which have been relocated to enable easy mowing. The presence of the public house facing the Square does however provide a focal point within the Conservation Area which is enhanced by the sitting-out area in front of the inn, the adjoining very limited car parking provision, and the peaceful churchyard above.

The key focal buildings are:

- The Dog and Partridge Public House on the corner of Market Street and Church Street
- The listed barn at the eastern end of Church Street, which marks the corner into Taylor Street
- The Red Lion Inn

- The Briars
- St Bartholomew's Church (the most important focal building)



The listed barn on the corner of Church Street and Taylor Street

Whitworth House is the largest and most prestigious house in the Conservation Area but because it is set back from the road and partially hidden by mature trees, its visual impact on the street scene is relatively low.



Side elevation to Whitworth House, towards Calf Head Hey

Calf Hey Head, which currently sits outside the Conservation Area but is recommended for inclusion within a revised boundary, is also a key focal building.

Views and vistas

Whitworth Square's location above the valley of the River Spodden, with long views to the west over the built-up valley floor, is one of the Conservation Area's defining features. Views are particularly impressive from Cripple's Walk, above the Red Lion Inn, where they take in the buildings along the main road and the fields and moorland beyond. A large wind farm on the horizon beyond, with turning blades, is a notable feature.

Other views from Whitworth Rake towards the church and across Whitworth Square and up the hill towards Calf Hey Head are also important. Glimpses of the hillside beyond the rows of terraced houses in Taylor Street are similarly of merit, taking in the rows of sandstone slabs used as a boundary treatment, which mark the skyline.



View over Whitworth Square from Calf Hey Head

Generally, views to the north and east are confined by the rising topography and trees, and to the south by the steep bank beyond which is a modern housing estate – some of these buildings define the skyline, particularly to the south of Whitworth Rake.

4.4 Boundaries

There is a little variety of boundaries in the Conservation Area, but most of the historic boundaries in the Conservation Area are built from blocks of the local sandstone, laid with lime mortar in equal courses, with simple stone copings, made from rectangular blocks of sandstone. A good example, about three feet high, is in front of Nos. 7-10 consec. Taylor Street, where the walls match the stonework on the adjoining houses. Large single pieces of sandstone are also used to create simple gate posts, usually with a pyramid top cut out of the stone.

Around the churchyard, the walling stone is dry laid, in unequal courses, with either a matching stone coping or a more substantial coping made of triangular pieces of dressed stone or rougher slips of stone laid on edge. Another distinctive local detail is the use of Haslingden sandstone flags, apparently of insufficient quality for paving, which can be seen in the front garden to Hillside and along the field boundary behind the houses on the north side of Taylor Street. These are a standard size for a paving flag, around four feet high by three feet wide.

There are also examples of cast iron railings in many locations, most notably around the churchyard, where some have been replaced under the recent grant scheme. These are simple cast iron uprights, with arrow spikes. Some of these are in very poor condition and some have an undercoat but no top coat of paint (presumably the grant aid did not cover all of the necessary work). In places, modern timber fencing has been inserted to provide some level of protection. The removal of this fencing and its replacement with matching cast iron railings (as well as the repair and repainting of the existing cast iron railings), is urgently required. Traditional cast iron railings, again simple uprights with a spear head, can also be seen next to The Briars, and again in rather poor condition. Spiked cast iron railings, similar to those around the churchyard, can also be seen around the front garden to Whitworth House.



Unpainted railings on edge of churchyard

Less appropriate boundaries include:

- The curved vertical timber boarded pedestrian and entrance gates to No. 35 Church Street (straight tops would have been more appropriate and less visually prominent)
- Low timber fencing outside No. 3 Taylor Street, on the edge of the Conservation Area boundary but highly visible in views along the street

In some places, such as outside Nos. 36-39 Church Street, the front boundaries have been removed altogether and car parking areas created.

4.5 Public realm

The public realm covers the spaces between the buildings including pavements, roads, street lighting, street furniture, and any other features of local significance. Most of them will be the responsibility of the Highways Town Council.

Street surfaces and pavements

Whilst modern tarmacadam is used for many of the pavements and street surfaces in the Conservation Area, Whitworth Square is fortunate in retaining some substantial areas of sandstone setts which must once have ubiquitous. Examples can be seen in the pathways around the churchyard, in Whitworth Square, and at the eastern end of Taylor Street, but these areas may have been repaved, possibly under the previous grant scheme. The small rectangular setts are slightly rounded and provided an attractive 'bumpy' surface which fits well with the traditional wide stone kerbing which also predominates in this part of the Conservation Area. Their use in Whitworth Square, along the driveway on the west side of Whitworth House, and along the eastern end of Taylor Street (after the junction with Whitworth Rake), suggests that these roads are not adopted by the Highways Authority. Of note is the use of a flexible black bitumastic material for some of the joints, which is better at resisting frost and snow damage than a hard cement joint. Some of the paving in Whitworth Square is made up from concrete panels with fake stone insets, presumably an economy measure – their replacement with traditional stone paving would be very welcome.



Cast iron grille in pavement in Church Street

Sandstone flags can also be seen on private land immediately in front of Nos. 11a-14a consec. Taylor Street. Further sandstone slabs are used for steps, as in the churchyard. Together, the use of local sandstone for the buildings, boundary walls and for some of the street surfaces, provides the Conservation Area with a strong sense of local distinctiveness.

In several locations, late 19th century highly decorative cast iron coal holes, robust cast iron pavement grilles, and terracotta pavement rainwater grilles are of special interest. Examples can be seen along the north side of Church Street and in Taylor Street.

Several local residents have complained about the poor maintenance of the road gutters and drains, with frequent blockage after heavy rainfall, when leaves and other debris are washed down the hill. Loose chippings along The Rake and in Church Street are a further problem.

Street lighting

Street lighting in the Conservation Area is discrete and in places, such as the eastern end of Whitworth Rake, non-existent. The Conservation Area retains some interesting street lights, in keeping with the streetscene. These include:

- Black metal lamps with glass lanterns with decorative frieze (Taylor Street)
- Taller black metal lamps with gold decoration and bulbous 'pancake' glass lanterns (Whitworth Square) – rather old fashioned now, these were re-assessed in 1975 when it was decided to retain them

- Modern concrete or steel columns with 'hockey stick' glass lanterns in Church Street, of no interest

Street furniture and other features

There is virtually no street furniture apart from some replica black and white cast aluminium street signs, which are unobtrusive. The Village Stocks in the churchyard are listed and date to the 18th century – they were restored relatively recently under the previous grant scheme.

Signage

Highways signage in a number of places is obtrusive and occasionally appears to be redundant. Various footpaths around the hamlet are marked, including the timber sign directing visitors to the pathway above the Red Lion Inn (Cripple's Walk) which forms part of the 'Doctors' Walk'. This is in poor condition. Whitworth Town Council has added some useful blue plaques to the listed buildings in the Conservation Area, providing some basic information about their history.

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 Building uses and dates

The majority of the historic buildings in the Conservation Area are in residential uses and date to the 18th or, more commonly, to the 19th century. A few date to the 17th century. Towards Whitworth Square, the historic buildings are mainly 18th century, higher status and more generously sized, although only two storeys high. The Red Lion Inn, although in a commercial use, also retains a domestic appearance and scale – it may date to the 17th century but has been heavily altered. Of the nine historic buildings around the Square, only Whitworth House is listed. Terraced houses in Church Street and Taylor Street date to the late 19th century and were built to house workers in the adjoining cotton mills.



Orchard Cottage, No. 11 Taylor Street (in centre)

Non-residential uses are limited, so there are few examples in the Conservation Area apart from the barns which once formed a group with Orchard Cottage, No. 11 Taylor Street, a listed former farmhouse. Both are dated to the late 17th century (date plaques) but the buildings behind the listed barn have clearly been altered and extended, and the datestone of 1685 probably reset. St Bartholomew's Church dates to the 1840s and is the largest and most imposing building in the Conservation Area, despite having been substantially rebuilt in the 1980s after a fire.

5.2 Listed buildings

There are six listed building entries in the Conservation Area, mainly dating to the late 18th or 19th centuries and all listed grade II.

St Bartholomew's Church, Whitworth Rake

The 1840s church was designed by Joseph Clarke in the Perpendicular style but was substantially rebuilt to a reduced footprint in the 1980s following a fire. The remaining historic sections are the tower and parts of the nave. The walls are of sandstone rubble and the roof is slated.



St Bartholomew's Church

Stocks in St Bartholomew's Churchyard, Whitworth Rake

The stocks are made from wood and probably date to the 18th century.



Stocks in St Bartholomew's Churchyard

The Old Parsonage, Whitworth Rake

The Old Parsonage is a complex building which appears to date to the early 18th century but which the owners consider may retain late 17th century fabric. It has also been somewhat extended and altered over the years. The walls are coursed sandstone rubble with corner quoins, and there is a concrete tiled roof.



The Old Parsonage, Whitworth Rake

Whitworth House, now Nos. 1 and 2 Whitworth Square

This building dates to the mid-18th century and was extended in the 19th century. It is now two separate buildings. It is built using coursed sandstone with corner quoins, and a slated roof. It was the home of John Taylor, the celebrated Whitworth doctor, from the mid-18th century until his death in 1802.

Orchard Cottage, No. 11 Taylor Street

This three-bay building is dated 1692 (datestone) and is faced in painted roughcast, probably over sandstone rubble. Some of the windows retain chamfered mullions although the actual opening lights are 19th century or later. The roof is covered in stone slates.



Orchard Cottage, No. 11 Taylor Street

Barn, Taylor Street

This is a relatively unaltered barn with a wide gable facing Taylor Street, on which a datestone 'IS 1691' is cut out of a large stone lintel. The building is constructed using roughly coursed sandstone rubble, with large corner quoins, and the gable end facing Taylor Street contains five ventilation slits and one owl hole. The roof is corrugated sheet. It is listed because of its association with No. 11 Taylor Street, also grade II.



Datestone 'IS 1691' on the listed barn in Taylor Street

5.3 Positive buildings

In addition to the listed buildings, a number of unlisted buildings have been identified on the Townscape Appraisal Map as being *positive* buildings of townscape merit. Buildings identified as being *positive* 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. In Whitworth Square, most of these buildings date to the mid to late 19th century, but some are earlier.

The publication of PPS5 in the spring of 2010, which suggests that the significance of all 'heritage assets' needs to be recorded and assessed, has meant that further analysis of positive buildings is considered necessary, incorporating what in the past might have been considered to be 'neutral' or even 'negative' buildings. For Whitworth Square, these buildings have therefore been broken down into the following categories:

- Positive unlisted buildings of high quality
- Positive unlisted buildings of medium quality
- Modern positive buildings which fit into the townscape, or historic buildings which have been altered
- Modern buildings where sensitive redevelopment (in time) would be welcome

The identification of these 'positive' buildings follows advice provided within English Heritage's guidance, which advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a 'positive' contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Proposals to demolish such buildings will therefore be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. This implies therefore that all buildings marked blue on the Townscape Appraisal Map will be retained in the future unless a special case can be made for demolition.

The highest quality 'positive' buildings in the Conservation Area are marked blue with cross-hatching on the Map and are:

- Horsecroft Farm barn, Church Street
- Nos. 1-3 consec. Taylor Street

- The Briars
- Taylors Cottage and White Rose Cottage
- The Red Lion Inn
- Rakes Farm
- Calf Hey Head (currently outside the Conservation Area).



Nos. 1-3 Taylor Street

The medium quality 'positive' buildings (marked blue on the Map) are: the Dog and Partridge Public House on Market Street; the houses on either side of Church Street; the terraced houses on the north side of Taylor Street and No. 12 Whitworth Square.

5.4 Building styles, materials and colours

The historic buildings of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area are built almost exclusively from the local sandstone, which was quarried off Whitworth Rake and also around the settlement. The stone is usually cut into regularly sized rectangular blocks with a roughly tooled outer face, usually referred to as 'rock-faced' stonework. The joints, even on the more modest cottages, are relatively fine and traditionally were filled with small quantities of lime mortar. The Briars in Whitworth Square is the only example of 'watershot' stonework; where the smooth sandstone blocks are set at an angle, with angled mortar, both details designed to shed water more easily. However, the very poor quality modern repointing has virtually obliterated the evidence of this feature.



The Briars

Red brick, as shown at Horsecroft Farm and the cottages in adjoining Union Street (dating to 1912), seems to have been used after about 1910. Sandstone stone slates were used for roofing until the mid-19th century, when the railways were able to bring in cheap Welsh slate. Some of the buildings in the Conservation Area retain their stone slate roofs, namely No. 11 Taylor Street, the Red Lion Inn, No. 12 Whitworth Square, The Briars, and Nos. 33 – 39 consec. Church Street, together with Calf Hey Head, which is currently outside the Conservation Area. Otherwise, coursed Welsh slate is the more usual material.

The 19th century terraced houses in Church Street and Taylor Street are very simply detailed, with coursed stone elevations and plain stone lintels over the door and window openings. These openings originally contained timber sash windows but these have universally been replaced in uPVC or modern timber, sometimes stained. Similarly, all of the front doors have been replaced. Wooden or cast iron gutters are a special feature. Many also retain their original chimney stacks and decorative pots.

The more prestigious houses at the eastern end of Taylor Street and around Whitworth Square are earlier but only one is listed – Whitworth House. The overall style is very simple Georgian. Nos. 1-3 consec. Taylor Street form a short row of matching two storey terraced houses with some original six-over-six sash windows remaining – a rare survival. They probably date to the early to mid-19th century. Close by, The Briars is a detached house dating to 1763 with altered windows set in original openings lined by simple stone architraves, with a stone slate roof above. No. 12 Whitworth Square has also lost its original windows but retains its stone architraves so the openings have been retained. The shallow hipped roof is covered in stone slates and the whole may date to the mid-19th century. The Red Lion Inn is long, low two storey building with modern windows but it does retain its stone slate roof and the eastern end is still in use as a barn for animals. It apparently retains a date of 1674 internally, but its external appearance suggests an 18th or even 19th century

date of construction. Whitworth House is close to the Red Lion but is clearly a more prestigious building with its ashlar stone corner quoins, coursed sandstone block elevations, and shallow hipped slated roofs. It has been divided into two units (Nos. 1 and 2). The front door to No. 1 is five panelled and appears to be original (i.e. mid-18th century). Taylors Cottage and White Rose Cottage are attached to Whitworth House and are more modestly sized with well preserved coursed sandstone elevations and sash windows. The whole group, whilst of differing designs, provides a cohesive appearance which is further enhanced by the stone paving and stone boundary walls.



Rake Farm

Rake Farm in Whitworth Rake is another stone building which the owner dates to 1649, although it has been somewhat altered. It retains a row of stone mullioned windows to the ground floor end elevation facing down the road which may indicate the use of the building for handloom weaving. Similar details can be seen on Calf Hey Head (currently outside the Conservation Area), which the owner has dated to 1802. Both have stone slate roofs.

Some of the buildings in the Conservation Area may be eligible for statutory or local listing – this is further discussed in the Management Proposals.

6 SUMMARY OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEATURES

6.1 Key positive features

This Character Appraisal concludes that the most significant *positive* features of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area are:

- Historic agricultural hamlet in enclosed setting on hillside overlooking the valley of the River Spodden to the west and south, with long views to the rising land and the distant wind farms beyond
- The hamlet lies within the valley of a culverted watercourse which drops down from the moorland which lies immediately to the east
- Undulating topography with a backdrop of fields and woodland
- Tranquil character away from the busy main road (the A671) which connects Bacup to Rochdale
- Late 19th century terraced houses in Church Street lead to the more winding road which continues up the hill to Whitworth Square (Taylor Street) – this retains the feel of a country lane
- Nine 18th and early 19th century houses, some of them listed, cluster around the Square and the road leading up to the centre piece of the Conservation Area, the Red Lion Inn, an unlisted but historically important stone-built two storey building which faces the informal ‘Square’
- The oldest house is No. 11 Taylor Street, dated 1692, and its adjoining barn, dated 1691 – both are listed grade II
- Whitworth House (listed grade II) is a more substantial 18th century house which was lived in by John Taylor, the first of the ‘Whitworth doctors’ who arrived in the area in 1764 and first worked as a blacksmith
- The roofs to the buildings around the Square are visible from the rising land to the north and east
- Beyond the Square, the land continues to rise up Whitworth Rake to St Bartholomew’s Church (listed grade II), which sits in relative isolation at the top of the valley with a graveyard on one side and a large car park on the other
- The graveyard contains monuments and gravestones to many of the Taylor family
- The adjoining Old Parsonage dates to the 18th century and is also listed grade II
- There is just one building, Rake Farm, a modest unlisted but historic house, before the moorland is reached – this retains some ground floor continuous windows suggesting that it may have been used for handloom weaving. (Similar fenestration can be seen on Calf Hey Head, currently outside the Conservation Area boundary)
- Evidence for past stone quarrying off Whitworth Rake
- Traditional stone paving of sandstone flags and setts in many locations which contrasts with the trees and green fields around the hamlet
- Use of sandstone rubble, sandstone stone slates, and stone architraves for most of the historic buildings
- Other ‘positive’ features which contribute to local distinctiveness include sandstone flags used to create garden or field boundaries, and the survival of lengths of wrought iron spear-headed railings, cast iron cellar and coal hole grilles, and terracotta rainwater gulleys
- There has been some 20th century infilling (four houses or bungalows) but these are relatively inconspicuous
- Horsecroft Farm is set back behind the listed barn and is in use as an equestrian centre

6.2 Key negative features

This Character Appraisal concludes that the most significant *negative* features of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area are:

Spatial:

- Modern development on the skyline to the south of the Conservation Area is regrettable
- The continued care and careful management of the many fine trees in the Conservation Area
- The continued enhancement of the traditional sandstone paving, sandstone slab boundaries, and improvements to modern areas of paving
- Storm water drainage in Taylor Street is inadequate and the drains frequently block up causing flooding
- Street lighting and street furniture is in need of improvement
- Street clutter is dominant in places - some traffic signs are in need of replacement, relocation, or appear to be redundant
- Car parking obstructing pavements
- One street light and a 'No Entry' sign hide the 1691 date stone on the listed barn in Taylor Street
- Some loss of front gardens to car parking (mainly Church Street)
- Visitor interpretation plaques – further information would be helpful
- Some inappropriate boundary treatments
- There is little or no provision for refuse 'wheelie' bins, which proliferate in certain parts of the Conservation Area, particularly against the end gable of the listed barn in Taylor Street.

The buildings:

- Some of the historic buildings are in poor condition
- Incremental alterations to the unlisted historic buildings, such as the loss of chimney stacks and pots, the use of modern rooflights, altered window and door openings, and the use of modern materials such as uPVC or stained hardwood;
- Visible satellite dishes, sometimes two on a building, presumably erected without planning permission
- Fourways, Whitworth Rake, is a modern house of no special interest which lies on the edge of the Conservation Area but makes no positive contribution to the special interest of the area. It is recommended that the Conservation Area boundary be revised to exclude the building.

Site specific:

- Many of the monuments in St Bartholomew's Churchyard are in poor condition and in need of repair or restoration, including the listed village stocks
- Some of the railings around the pathways and the churchyard are in need of redecorating and modern timber fencing needs to be replaced with traditional iron railings

The majority of these 'negative' features are considered further in a series of recommendations which are contained within the Management Proposals Plan for Whitworth Square.

PART 2 THE WHITWORTH SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the Management Proposals Plan

Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area which make the conservation area unique. Part 2 of this document, the *Management Proposals Plan*, builds upon the positive features and addresses the negative features which have been identified to provide a series of recommendations for improvement and change, most of which are the responsibility of Rossendale Borough Council or Lancashire County Council. The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2011). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals Plan should be subject to regular monitoring and reviews, as set out below.

The involvement and approval of the local community in the formulation and delivery of these documents helps to strengthen their status and will hopefully mean that the various actions identified in the Management Proposals Plan will have greater impact and longevity. For Whitworth Square, this has been achieved by early consultation with the community via a public walkabout on 13 July 2010. Following the initial drafting of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan, a full public consultation exercise was undertaken, ending on 14 March 2011. After this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available from the Borough Council) and amendments to the text and mapping were made as appropriate. As part of the process, the existing Conservation Area boundary was also reviewed and following public consultation two changes have been recommended as set out in the following section.

The Whitworth Square Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted by the Borough Council as a material consideration for development control purposes with effect from 1st September 2011 and the Recommended Actions in the Management Proposals Plan, including the Conservation Area boundary revisions, were agreed to be implemented incrementally as resources allow.

2 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW

2.1 Recommended changes to the Conservation Area boundary

As part of the survey work for the Character Appraisal, a full assessment of the existing Conservation Area boundary was carried out. The consultation draft Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan recommended a number of changes to the boundary as follows:

- Add Calf Hey Head, Calf Hey Lane, and the field to the east of the lane, to the Conservation Area.

Calf Hey Head is a stone-built pair of unlisted houses, built originally as three units. Nos. 1 and 2 are now in single ownership. Their owner has reported that the building dates to 1802 and stylistically this would appear likely. The back (north) elevation retains rows of windows which would suggest that it was used for handloom weaving at some stage. The building was also used to house patients who were visiting Whitworth for treatment.



Back elevation of Calf Hey Head

- Delete Fourways, Whitworth Rake, from the Conservation Area.

This is a modern house of no special interest which lies on the edge of the Conservation Area and makes no positive contribution to the special interest of the area.

No objections were received to these recommended boundary changes during the consultation stage.

3 RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The following recommendations are based on the key negative features identified as part of the Character Appraisal. Some of them may have to remain aspirational for the time being, but it is considered 'good practice' to identify possible actions which could be implemented in the future if the funding is available. Other recommendations rely upon the Borough Council providing sufficient staff resources to ensure that the proposed actions are carried forward. All of the recommendations rely upon a successful partnership between the Borough Council and the local community, assisted by Whitworth Town Council and the County Council as appropriate.

3.1 The control of unlisted houses

It has been noted that some of the unlisted 'positive' terraced or detached houses in the Conservation Area have been adversely affected by the alterations to the roofs, chimneys, windows and front doors. These changes are 'permitted development' which can be controlled by the Council through the imposition of an Article 4 Direction. Article 4 Directions are made under the *General Permitted Development Order 1995*, and can be served by a local planning authority to remove permitted development rights where there is a real threat to a particular residential building or area due to unsuitable alterations or additions. An Article 4 Direction is accompanied by a Schedule that specifies the various changes to family dwellings, which will now require planning permission. Usually, such Directions are used in conservation areas to protect unlisted houses in use as a family unit, rather than flats or bedsits where permitted development rights are already much fewer. It does not mean that development, such as changes to windows or doors, will necessarily be impossible. It does, however, mean that planning permission has to be sought and this allows for the merits of a proposal to be considered against the conservation interests.



Protect the roofs and chimneys of these unlisted houses in Taylor Street by an Article 4 Direction

Whilst an Article 4 Direction cannot be retrospective, the serving of one would incrementally improve the character and appearance of the conservation area. An Article 4 Direction can also be focused on groups of buildings, rather than the whole conservation area, such as unlisted buildings of particular local significance and all 'positive' buildings. Any Direction will require an up to date photographic survey to record the present condition of the buildings concerned, and written guidance will need to be provided to householders. Where resources allow, the provision of grants to help with the additional costs associated with traditional materials or the reinstatement of lost architectural features (such as the replacement of uPVC windows with windows to a traditional design) can be helpful.

Under an Article 4 Direction, planning permission can be required for the following, depending on the permitted development right removed:

House extensions

Planning permission will be required for the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house (including entrance porches) which fronts a highway, private road or open space (this lowers the limit of 'permitted development' already imposed by conservation area designation).

Painting of dwelling houses

Planning permission will be required for the painting of the exterior of a dwelling house.

Roofs

A planning application will be required for alterations to a roof slope which fronts a highway, private road or open space; including a change in the roof materials and the insertion of roof lights (new dormer windows already require planning permission under separate legislation).

Chimneys

The removal of a chimney or its partial demolition will require planning permission.

Replacement windows and doors

The replacement of existing windows and doors which front a highway, private road or open space will require planning consent – note that part L of the Building Regulations, including the requirement to install double glazing within new windows, can be relaxed in relation to historic buildings (which includes those in conservation areas and listed buildings).

The creation of car parking in front gardens and the removal or replacement of front boundaries

The creation of a parking space in a front garden, and or the removal of a front boundary, such as a low stone wall, will require planning permission.



Stone slate roofs in Church Street

An Article 4 Direction can be 'fine tuned' to suit the particular circumstances of a conservation area. In Whitworth Square, the greatest threat appears to be to the slate roofs and chimneys, given that most of the windows and front doors in the conservation area have already been altered. The painting of existing buildings, the addition of porches, and the conversion of front gardens to car parking are not considered to be particularly relevant. It is therefore suggested that the Council serves an Article 4 Direction to bring under planning control all alterations to the existing roofs including:

- Changing roof materials
- The insertion of a roof light
- Alternations to chimney stacks, including its full or partial demolition
- Changes to the rainwater goods

RECOMMENDED ACTION 1:

- The Borough Council will consider serving an Article 4 Direction on the Whitworth Square Conservation Area, to cover all of the unlisted dwelling houses which are marked in blue as 'positive' on the Townscape Appraisal Map, affecting works to the roofs, chimneys and rainwater goods only.

3.2 The control of satellite dishes

During the survey work for the Whitworth Square Character Appraisal, it was noted that a number of satellite dishes were visible which presumably had not been granted planning permission. Some properties have two satellite dishes, both of which would normally require planning permission. The rules governing satellite dishes in conservation areas are significantly tighter than outside such areas and were recently changed by a revision to the *General Permitted Development Order 1995*. This states that for all unlisted buildings in a conservation area, in whatever use and of whatever size, planning permission is required for all 'antennas' (which includes satellite dishes and any other equipment used to deliver electronic communications) which are located on a chimney, wall or roof slope which face onto, and are visible, from a road. In such cases, planning permission will usually be refused. The rules governing other locations on the building are extremely complex so it is always best to ask the local planning authority if planning permission is required before carrying out the work.



Satellite dishes in Whitworth Square

The installation of 'antennas' on listed buildings invariably requires Listed Building Consent and if the Borough Council considers that the installation would have an adverse effect on the special architectural or historic interest of the building, Consent will usually be refused.

Conventional TV aerials and their mountings and poles are not considered to be 'development' and therefore planning permission is not required.

(See also the DCLG pamphlet, *A Householders' Planning Guide to the Installation of Antennas* available on the DCLG website).

RECOMMENDED ACTION 2:

- Where satellite dishes have been erected without planning permission and negotiation has failed to achieve a satisfactory outcome the Borough Council will consider taking Enforcement Action against the owners of properties.

3.3 The care and protection of trees

Within all conservation areas, anyone intending to carry out works to a tree greater than 75 mm diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground must give the Borough Council six weeks written notice before starting the work. 'Work' is defined as lopping, topping, or felling and includes heavy pruning of branches. This provision provides the Council with an opportunity of assessing the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, in which case a Tree Preservation Order may be served. This protects the tree from felling or inappropriate lopping. Fruit trees are no longer exempt, although slightly different constraints occur where the tree forms part of a commercially managed forest or orchard.



Trees in St Bartholomew's Churchyard

There are many mature trees of townscape importance in the Whitworth Square Conservation Area and the most significant of these are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map. Some of these are specifically protected by Tree Preservation Orders, and some, such as the trees in the churchyard, are the responsibility of the Borough Council, but the majority are in private ownership. Individual owners need to be encouraged to look after their trees, to remove any which are dangerous or diseased, and to plant replacement trees where the removal of an existing significant tree has become necessary. One such tree lies on the west side of Whitworth Rake, where its roots have been undermined by soil erosion – urgent action is required to safeguard this tree before it finally falls down.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 3:

- The Borough Council will continue to monitor the management of trees within the Conservation Area including those for which it has responsibility, and will consider the possible service of further Tree Preservation Orders where it is considered likely that the amenity value of significant trees is at risk.

3.4 The public realm

Street lighting

It has been noted that previous proposals in the early 2000s resulted in the existing street lights being retained, presumably due to a lack of funding. Whilst some of them, namely in Whitworth Square and Taylor Street, are of some interest, other street lights (namely in Church Street) would benefit from replacement with more traditional examples, possibly using reproduction 'Victorian' street lights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 4:

- Funding permitting, the Borough Council and the County Council will consider replacing the street lighting with suitable new lamp standards, more appropriate to the historic setting.

Traditional paving

It has been noted that areas of sandstone flags and setts remain in the Conservation Area and these will have to be carefully maintained and protected from damage. This will generally be the responsibility of the County Council.



Traditional paving in the churchyard



Concrete and traditional stone paving in Whitworth Square

If trenching is required, the statutory undertakers must reinstate the paving to its exact appearance upon completion of the work. In the long term, the installation of further areas of

traditional paving would be advantageous, including the replacement of the fake stone concrete paving in Whitworth Square. Funding permitting, the addition of further areas of traditional paving (stone setts and stone flags) would be advantageous.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 5:

- The County Council should ensure that all works which involve traditional paving in the Conservation Area will be carried out carefully, and any disturbance to the paving is made good to exactly match its original appearance. Further enhancement works will be carried out if funding is provided.

Traffic signs and street clutter

Local residents have complained about the effect of a variety of traffic signs and other pieces of street 'clutter', including refuse 'wheelie' bins, which detract from the general appearance of the streets. In addition, drainage of the road surfaces is poor, particularly in Taylor Street, resulting in flooding. The removal of redundant signs, the upgrading of existing street nameplates, and the removal of overhead telephone lines are all minor changes which would greatly enhance the Conservation Area. The removal of existing signage in front of the listed barn would be particularly advantageous. The enforcement of parking restrictions, to prevent cars parking on pavements, would also be welcome and would make the pavements safe for pedestrians.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 6:

- Subject to funding, the Borough and County Councils will work in partnership with the local community, including the Town Council, to carry out improvements to the street signs, road surfaces, pavements, and drainage in the Conservation Area.

3.5 Building condition

Between 2001 and 2005 much work was done to restore and improve the churchyard and adjoining sites under the Whitworth Square Conservation Area Partnership grant scheme. Works included the installation of new cast iron railings next to the retaining wall which looks over Whitworth Square; repairs to the monuments in the churchyard; repairs to the church and the Red Lion Inn; the installation of new steps next to Whitworth Cottage; and the resurfacing of Calf Hey Lane and Whitworth Square. Work to the trees in the churchyard was also undertaken by Rossendale Borough Council. Other work were specified in the Action Plan but were not carried out, namely:

- The provision of litter bins from Market Street to Whitworth Rake
- Improved car parking provision
- Traffic calming in Church Street
- Repairs to the steps by The Briars
- Provision of new signage to publicise the Conservation Area
- Repairs to the stone paving at Orchard Cottage, No. 11 Taylor Street

Whilst it is unlikely that a new grant scheme will be able to help complete the work which was specified above or indeed to tackle some of the obvious signs of building neglect which can be seen in some parts of the Conservation Area, at some stage in the future funding may become available. Meanwhile, the Borough Council must continue to monitor the condition of the listed buildings at least and ensure that the buildings are kept wind and weather-tight and not allowed to deteriorate.



High quality traditional paving links Whitworth Square to the churchyard

RECOMMENDED ACTION 7:

- The Borough Council will continue to monitor the condition of the buildings and monuments in the Conservation Area and will, when funding becomes available, work with the local community to improve and enhance these buildings and monuments.

3.6 Statutory list

The Statutory List for the Whitworth Square area was drawn up in the 1980s and has not been revised since. It therefore requires some updating, and English Heritage may be prepared to consider a small number of new listings if sufficient information is provided about the proposed listed building. This could be provided by local amenity groups such as the Whitworth Historical Society. Given the shortage of resources, this could focus initially on the Conservation Area but could move into areas beyond the designated boundaries in due course.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 8:

- The Borough Council will consider asking local amenity groups to provide a proposed list of buildings to be added to the statutory list.

3.7 Unlisted buildings of special but local interest

As recommended in PPS5, the preparation of a 'Local List' for the Borough should be a priority. The first action should be the drawing-up of a set of criteria, based on English Heritage guidance and local building types. All of the important 'positive' buildings in the Character Appraisal (section 5.3 *Positive Buildings*) should be included as a basic minimum.

Further features, such as the setted streets, alleys and paths, where they are original, could also be added.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 9:

- The Borough Council will work with community groups to produce a new 'Local List' of buildings in Whitworth Square.

3.8 Site specific actions

The following sites within the Conservation Area are considered to be in need of enhancement. Most of the actions will be the responsibility of the Borough Council, perhaps working in partnership with the County Council or Town Council, and the local community should be consulted first before any schemes for improvement are implemented. All proposals are dependent upon funding being made available although for some of them funding is less important than the availability of local effort.

3.8.1 St Bartholomew's Churchyard

The churchyard is now in the care of Rossendale Borough Council and a certain amount of work was undertaken under the previous grant scheme. However, railings remain unpainted or are in need of renewal, some gravestones have been vandalised, the village stocks require additional repair, and some of the trees need further work. Some of this could be undertaken by local people on a voluntary basis.



Further improvements to the churchyard would be welcome

3.8.2 Visitor interpretation plaques

These were provided some time ago by Whitworth Town Council. Further plaques could be added to explain the significance of the Whitworth Square in greater detail. Signage for the 'Whitworth Doctors' Trail' also needs to be upgraded or replaced.



Signage to the Doctors' Trail is in need of replacement

RECOMMENDED ACTION 10:

- The Borough Council will work in partnership with the Town Council and local groups to ensure that these sites in the Conservation Area are improved as and when funding becomes available.

4 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Local authorities are required by law to periodically review their conservation areas and the preparation of Character Appraisals and Management Proposals is part of this obligation. Indeed, in the past keeping Character Appraisals and Management Proposals Plans up to date has been a Key Performance Indicator in the Best Value assessment of local authorities, and as a result, a five year review cycle is now considered to be best practice.

Over the next five years the Borough Council should therefore be expected to regularly review the content of this document, to carefully monitor change within the Whitworth Square Conservation Area, and to involve the community in any proposals for enhancement (subject of course to the funding being available).

The Borough Council should therefore:

- Carry out periodic reviews of the effectiveness with which the service addresses pressures for change;
- Update the baseline photographic survey of the Whitworth Square Conservation Area on a three yearly basis;
- Review the Whitworth Square Conservation Area Character Appraisal on a five yearly basis;
- Review and update the Whitworth Square Conservation Area Management Proposals Plan on an annual basis.

5 CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries relating to conservation areas and historic buildings, please contact:

The Conservation Officer,
 Rossendale Borough Council,
 Development Control,
 One Stop Shop,
 Town Centre Offices,
 Lord Street,
 Whitworth Square,
 Rossendale,
 Lancashire BB4 7LZ.

Tel: 01706 238630

www.rossendale.gov.uk

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Whitworth Doctors' Trail, leaflet produced by the Whitworth Historical Society
Rochdale and The Vale of Whitworth William Robertson 1897 reprinted 1992 by George Kelsall

The Taylors of Lancashire (out of print)

A history of the parish and church of St Bartholomew, Whitworth, in the county of Lancashire
 Alan Schofield 2004

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 Townscape Appraisal Map

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