



Idle

CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

NOVEMBER 2002

Acknowledgements

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1. Objectives of the Assessment

A conservation area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). They are cohesive areas with a discernible character: unique environments, which are defined by the interaction of buildings and spaces within their confines. As such, they constitute irreplaceable components of our local, regional and national heritage.

Conservation areas are designated by the Council, which has a statutory duty to review its historic districts from time to time, in order to ascertain whether further conservation area designations are deemed to be appropriate. Designation confers a general control over the demolition of buildings, strengthens controls over minor development and makes special provision of the protection of trees. It also means that in the exercise of planning functions, attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. The objective of these measures is to maintain or improve the environmental quality and interest of the area and safeguard its local distinctiveness and sense of place, within a framework of controlled and positive management of change.

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, in conjunction with West Yorkshire Archaeological Service, has prepared this assessment of Idle Conservation Area (November 2002) in order to fulfil its statutory duties under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 (2) of this act places a duty on the Council to review its conservation areas from time to time, and section 71, to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. The objectives of the document are to:

- ♦ Clearly define and record the special interest of Idle Conservation Area;
- ♦ Reassess the current boundary of the conservation area, in order to ensure that it reflects the area of special interest and is readable on the ground;
- ♦ Increase public awareness of the aims and objectives of conservation area designation and stimulate their involvement in the protection of the character of Idle; and
- ♦ Assess the action that may be necessary to safeguard and enhance the special interest of the place.

A draft conservation area assessment for Idle was placed on deposit for consultation in April 2002. At the same time, a summary of the draft, comments form and map showing the proposed conservation area boundary was posted to each address within and local to the conservation area along with an invitation to the public workshop held at Idle Baptist Church on August 10th 2002. The feedback and input obtained at the workshop and by post, telephone and e-mail underpinned the re-drafting of this document and led to a reassessment of the proposals for the conservation area and its boundary.

It is, however, not intended to be comprehensive in its content and failure to mention any particular building, feature or space should not be assumed to imply that they are of no interest.

The assessment should be read in conjunction with the Bradford *Unitary Development Plan* and national planning policy guidance, particularly *Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15): Planning and the Historic Environment*. These documents provide more detailed information on local and national policy relating to conservation areas.

2. Introduction

The historic village of Idle is located to the north of Bradford and to the east of Shipley. Having been subsumed into the confines of the city, it has now given its name to the electoral ward of Idle, which covers ground to the east of the district, bordering neighbouring Leeds. The population of the ward stood at 14 052 at the time of the 1991 census, the vast majority of which (98.1%) are white, with a small ethnic minority. It is a moderately affluent part of the district and many of the properties (68%) are owner occupied.

Idle Conservation Area was originally designated in July 1978 to cover the historic village core. Its boundary was modified as a part of the revision of conservation area statements in a report to the Town and Country Planning (Policies and Plans) Sub-Committee in February 1993. It is presently one of the fifty-six conservation areas within the confines of Bradford Metropolitan District, and one of two in Idle itself. The Green - Idle, Conservation Area was designated in 1990. Although the two interact to form the overall image of Idle as a place, the Idlecroft Road and its associated modern road junction form a clear physical separation between them and each has its own distinctive identity, reflecting the different age, style and layout of development in the two conservation areas.



View into Rawson Square from the Town Lane

3. The Historic and Architectural Interest of Idle Conservation Area

Summary Table of the Historic and Architectural Interest of Idle Conservation Area

<p>HISTORICAL INTEREST</p>	<p>The structure of the conservation area stands as evidence of the development of the village and records various stages in its history. Sociological, cultural, industrial, economic and religious changes are documented. Important components of the conservation that contribute to this include: the type and style of buildings themselves; the pattern of building; the road layout, which records past thoroughfares through the region; and the spaces that relate to certain uses, such as the graveyards, yards and Town Gate itself. The historical interest of Idle is, however, essentially local.</p>
<p>RARITY VALUE OF THE AREA AND THE BUILDINGS THEMSELVES</p>	<p>Many of the buildings of the area date from a period prior to the massive redevelopment of the region that occurred during the later years of the nineteenth century. They are consequently have a rarity value, which necessarily makes them precious.</p>
<p>ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST</p>	<p>Vernacular architecture dominates the conservation area. This is important to the identity of the region, is illustrative of past living and working conditions and records past craftsmanship. This type of architecture has become under threat as a result of the use of universal materials and designs. Many of these buildings within the conservation area are considered to be worthy of listed building status in their own right, recognising their individual historic and architectural interest. However, as a group they provide a more complete image of a past building tradition that is being eroded.</p> <p>The most important building in the conservation area is without doubt the Grade II* 'Chapel of Ease', situated at Town Gate, where the main roads of the settlement converge.</p> <p>The Victorian buildings of the Conservation Area complement the earlier structures in scale, colour, texture and style. They also testify to the progression of architectural tastes and the evolution of Idle from a farming village to an industrial based settlement.</p> <p>Good quality examples of twentieth century architecture enrich the conservation area.</p>
<p>AESTHETIC APPEAL</p>	<p>The warmth of the stone and the interaction of the small scale form of the buildings and spaces is particularly attractive.</p>

Idle Conservation Area covers the historic core of the settlement of Idle and contains many of its oldest buildings. Its structure stands as evidence of past living and working patterns in the area and alludes back to a bygone age, when this part of Bradford was essentially a collection of small, rural villages. Idle became part of the suburbs of Bradford when the city was extended in 1898, along with Eccleshill, Bierley, Thornton and Tong. The previous countryside village character of the area has largely been lost in the course of the massive redevelopment that has resulted, and where it survives, as in Idle, it should be treasured, not only for its historical and architectural interest, but also for its quality, its contribution to the sense of place of the district and, not least, its aesthetic appeal.

The built fabric of the conservation area dates predominantly from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a period that saw the redevelopment of many of the settlements of the region, in response to technical and sociological changes. However, the village existed long before this and the stages of its development can be traced through its current form. Idle is thought to have originated as an Anglo-Saxon settlement, although little evidence of this era in its history has survived. Nevertheless, the discovery of prehistoric flints on the alluvium deposits of the River Aire, to the north-west of Idle, and coins and brooches dating from the first and second centuries AD at Catstones Quarry, to the north of Idle, testify to early activity in the region. A quernstone, possibly Roman in date, was also found in one of the gardens near Westfield Lane. There have been a number of conjectures as to the derivation of the name *Idle* itself. At one time it was suggested that it had its origins in the word "Idlawe" or "Ide's Hill" – Ida being a supposed Anglo-Saxon settler, however it is now widely accepted that it relates to the Old English term *idel*, meaning an empty place or an uncultivated area, which Idle was reported to have been up until the later medieval period.

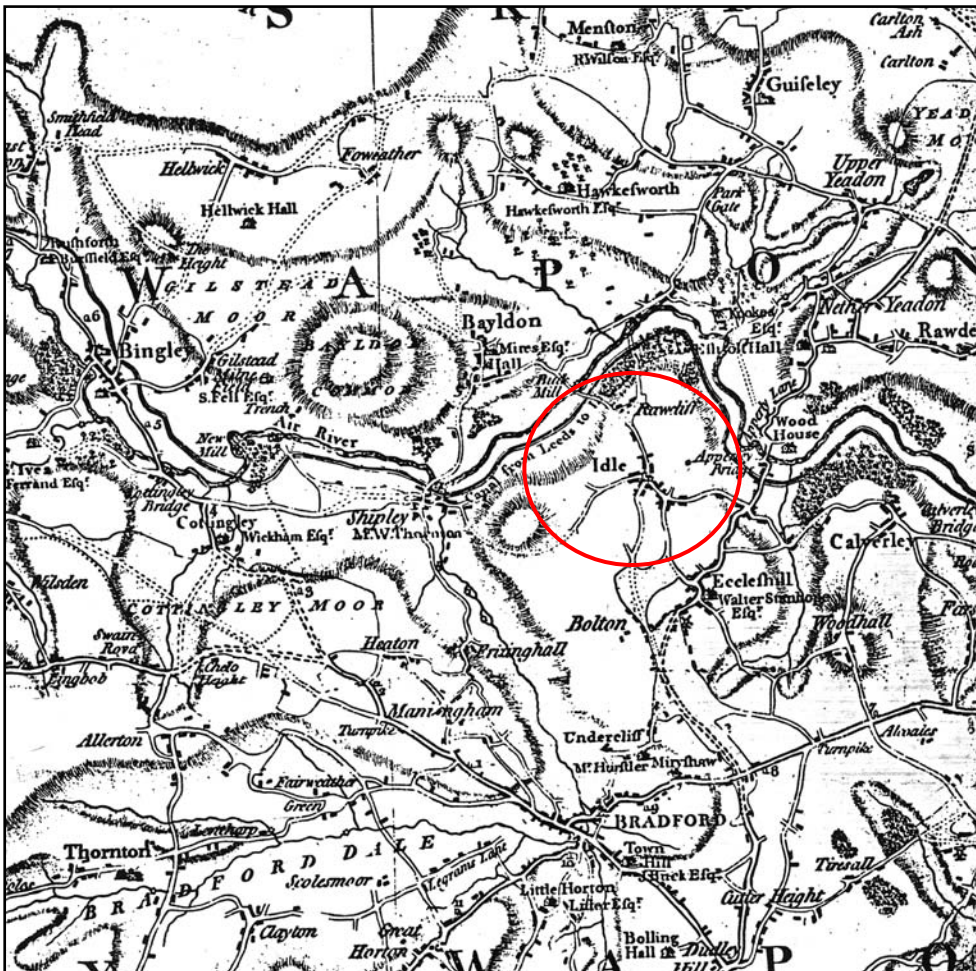
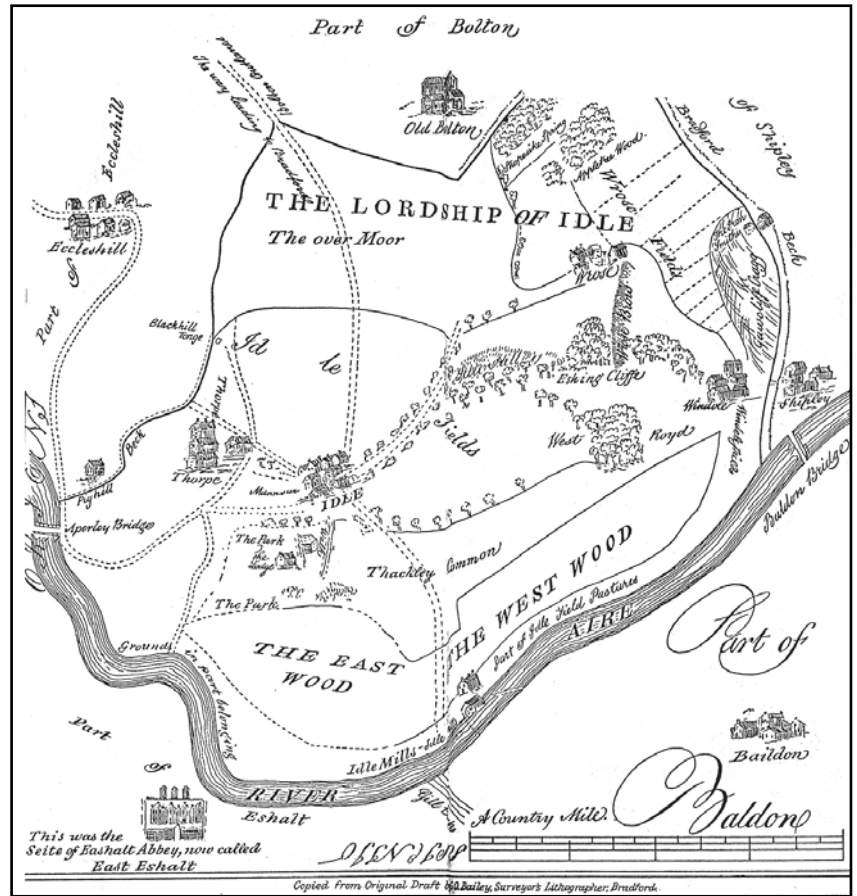
A survey of the Manor of Idle carried out by the Earl of Cumberland in 1583-84 provides a fairly clear picture of the workings of the Lordship of Idle (which comprised Idle, Thorpe, Wrose and Windhill) in the closing decades of the sixteenth century. Idle was the heart of the manor and clearly a relatively important settlement within its immediate vicinity. The map (see following page) that forms an integral part of the survey documents the form of the settlement at that time. From this it is clear that one of the conservation area's most historically significant features is its street pattern,

which has essentially remained very much unchanged since the medieval period. The map testifies to the existence of five routes that converged in the heart of the village. High Street itself formed part of the route between Bradford and Baildon and was documented as *Idlegate* in 1295. Town Lane leads out to the north of the village and at one time led down an ancient stone-causeway path to Buck Mill, which is now a ruin on the River Aire. Highfield Lane led to Bradford and the other routes, according to Jeffery's later map of 1775, led to Shipley, Eccleshill and Calverley. These five routes have survived and are currently known as High Street, Highfield Road, Town Lane, Westfield Lane and Greenfield Lane. Despite having undergone quite major restructuring over the years, they provide physical evidence of past thoroughfares through the region.

A number of industries existed in the area during the medieval period, some of which prevailed into the more immediate past and others that were superseded in the course of time. The Bradford Manor Court rolls reveal that tanning was carried out in Idle in 1384, but the site of the tannery is now unknown. *The Iron Smithies*, which were powered by a water mill situated to the south-west of Windhill on the east side of the beck, were also a major industry of the area during medieval times, along with quarrying. Stone and slate quarries were prolific in the region and continued to be a staple industry of the area into the nineteenth century, when Idle became famous for its stone and coal quarrying and stone from the region was used throughout England and transported abroad. Turn of the nineteenth / twentieth century maps of the area testify to the existence of quarries to the west of the settlement between Westfield Lane and Highfield Lane, which fell into a state of disuse at about this juncture. Farming, however, was the earliest activity of the settlement and at the time of the 1583-84 survey the inhabitants of Idle comprised twenty-one tenants and fourteen cottages. The majority of tenants lived in smallholdings or farmsteads consisting of a house, barn and outbuildings, with a croft or parcel of land to the rear. Although very little of the built structure of this period survives, it is safe to assume that the houses were constructed of timber framing with thatched roofs, as stone would have been too expensive to be utilised in the construction of these simple buildings. In fact some remnants of this form of construction have been uncovered within the realms of the conservation area. In the 1970s Town Well Fold, High Street was renovated and medieval timber framing was found embedded in the stone shell of what is now number 32 High Street (Grade II), which is dated 1664. Prior to

this, only the high-ranking buildings of the settlement would have been constructed in the more expensive stone, which effectively conferred their status.

Map of Idle Township, 1584.
Source: Watson 1950.

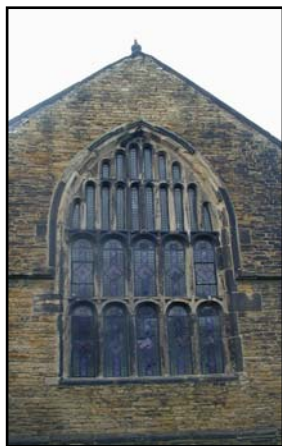


Jeffery's Map of 1775.
Idle is circled.



The Chapel of Ease (Grade II) – dating from 1630, this stone building is the most historically and architecturally significant structure in the conservation area*

The earliest stone building in the conservation area, and without doubt the most important, is the Grade II* listed 'chapel of ease' of Town Gate, which was constructed in 1630, replacing an earlier chapel that stood on the site. The chapel is one of the landmark buildings of the settlement, being situated on an island where the five thoroughfares meet, and along with the Manor House, which it is believed once stood just down High Street, would have formed the centre of the village. In the mid nineteenth century an elm tree and the village pump were situated adjacent to the chapel, emphasising its central position. It is a rare, fine quality, well-used structure, built of gritstone with a stone slate roof. Among its most interesting features are a small square stone bellcote, a moulded jamb doorway with ogee shaped head



Window with perpendicular tracery

and a large window with perpendicular tracery. The influence of the perpendicular style of architecture is apparent and the use of these details, although expressed in a relatively simple way, is again illustrative of the perceived importance of the building. This style developed from the English Court style and was dominant in English architecture between

1350 and 1550. It is peculiarly English and is particularly associated with, usually grander scale, ecclesiastical buildings. At the time this building was constructed, Idle formed part of the parish of Calverley and this was the only place of worship in the village. It was, however, not consecrated until 1692 and prior to this was also used by non-conformist congregations: a particularly unusual scenario. Quakers, a religion that developed during the seventeenth century English Civil War, was fairly prolific in the region and a disused Quaker burial ground exists on Westfield Lane. It is entered via a Grade II listed archway, dated 1690. Following the consecration of the 'chapel of ease', in 1717 an Independent Chapel was constructed on the site of what is currently Idle United Reform Church, which has subsequently undergone a number of rebuilds.

The area encompassed by Idle Conservation Area is architecturally unusual in that it accommodates a large number of buildings that have seventeenth century origins. Generally speaking, the older a building is, the more rare and precious it becomes and buildings of this date are particularly rare in this part of Britain, due to the substantial redevelopment that the area underwent as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution. The majority of the buildings from this era pertain, in one way or another, to agricultural activities. They consequently stand as evidence of the farming nature of the settlement at the time and the traditional building pattern in Idle. Most of these



structures underwent massive alteration, tantamount to rebuild at the end of the eighteenth / beginning of the nineteenth century. The face of Idle began to change during this era, largely as a result of the establishment of the Leeds to Liverpool Canal and the Bradford Canal in the 1770s, which flowed within the Township boundaries. These provided a means of transporting the products that were produced in Idle to much wider markets and consequently the textile and quarrying industries of the settlement thrived and the population increased. The intensification of commercial quarrying in the area made stone more widely available for building and it was this material that was utilised in the late eighteenth / nineteenth alteration to the buildings and in the construction of new buildings from this period until the twentieth century. Stone buildings with stone slate roofs became the dominant vernacular tradition. Vernacular architecture can be defined as architecture that is constructed to satisfy the simple demands of family life, is traditional in design and built of readily available local materials. Such buildings are peculiar to the area in which they are situated and inherent to its sense of place. Although it has been undervalued in the past, in recent decades, partly as a result of the perceived threat to the character of the countryside resulting from the universal use of materials, the recognition of this type of architecture has increased. The buildings stand as records of social, economic and cultural history of

the region in which they are situated and contribute greatly to our understanding of the past, as well as clearly documenting past local craftsmanship. In addition, being built of local materials, the structures have a certain affiliation with the landscape in which they are set and blend harmoniously with it, enhancing its innate attractiveness.

In Idle it is vernacular architecture that dominates the form of the conservation area and makes the greatest contribution to its ambience. Simple style, two storey gabled cottages and farmhouses, with plain painted stone window and door surrounds and mullioned windows, predominate. The windows and doors themselves however vary greatly, as the traditional ones have largely been lost. Stone chimney stacks are inherent to the design of these buildings and range from the smaller corniced variety to the larger external variety that protrude from the side elevations of properties, such as that on 30



Large stone chimney stack of 30 Westfield Lane (Grade II) – Late 18th century cottage.

Westfield Lane (Grade II). Some of the buildings retain their original barn door openings, a number of which have subsequently been glazed and others that have timber doors. These contribute greatly to the interest of individual buildings and in turn the character of the area. Sundials that date from the seventeenth century appear on the street elevation of certain buildings in the conservation area; these are a particularly unusual and attractive feature and add to the historic interest of the streets on which they appear. One is situated on a property on Westfield Lane and another on Highfield Lane. However, the interrelationship of the buildings that make up vernacular building groups can be just as interesting as these individual characteristics, especially those that relate to a previous farming use, as their arrangement offers some insight into past working patterns. The L-shaped plan of house and barns and the arrangement of buildings around folds are particularly evocative. Many of the early buildings of this type in the village are listed for their individual historic and architectural merit and a list description of each is included in *Appendix 1* to



*Sundial – 405
Highfield Road*

this report. However, there are a number of unlisted buildings of this style that are worthy of mention at this juncture. For example, 32 –34 Town Lane is a farmhouse with attached barn, which is situated in a prominent position on the main road and is clearly agricultural in origin. It is typical of the area and contributes greatly to the character of the place. The stone built barn is single aisled and has a central archway with well-cut voussoirs and Tudor-arched domestic-sized doorways set into its south gable. The row of early nineteenth century cottages 397-409 Highfield Lane are also not listed, but nevertheless contribute greatly to the line of the street and the character of the conservation area, complementing the style of the listed cottages in the vicinity. As the years progressed, the vernacular tradition was gradually eroded as a result of the adoption of more universal materials and designs: the use of local stone for construction has been the most enduring feature of the tradition.

The nineteenth century saw a further redevelopment and expansion of the settlement, as industry continued to prosper and new technology was developed. In the early decades of the century, development, much of which was spurred by the Enclosure Award of 1814 that allotted part of the former commons of the south to



L-shaped arrangement of 37-37 Westfield Lane (Grade II) – Late eighteenth century cottages with characteristic barn door opening (now glazed to allow residential use of the space).



Extract from the 'Map of the Township of Idle in the Parish of Calverley and West Riding of the County of York 1838'. Published by Idle and Thackley Heritage Group 1993.

eligible property owners, was small scale around the northern core and buildings were constructed along the line of old roads and field boundaries. White's Trade Directory of 1837 noted that Idle was by this time a populous clothing village with a long main street. The types of building that were constructed in the village during this era effectively record its industrial transformation, with workers cottages, rather than farm buildings and cottages becoming the chief building form. A number of scribbling and fulling mills, as well as a few worsted mills, are recorded to have been established in the area. A 'Map of the Township of Idle in the Parish of Calverley and West Riding of the County of York', dating from 1838, gives a

clear indication of how the settlement developed. There were by this time two distinct hearts to the village: the historic core described above and a second core to the south-east, which developed around an ancient cross roads, evident on the 1584 map. The original village core became known as "town" or "Top of Town" and the newer developed area to the south as either "Bottom of Town" or "The Green". Much of the industrial activity was centred on the southern core, which is covered by a separate conservation area designation. By 1838, the Shipley to Bramley Turnpike Road had been constructed to the east of Idle, which meant that the village could by that time be totally by-passed. However, one of the greatest changes to the conservation area itself during this period was the construction of Holy Trinity Church (Grade II), the foundation stone of which was laid in 1828 (a list description of the building is contained in *Appendix 1*). This was a great leap forward for the religious life of this small village, despite the fact that Idle remained part of the Parish of Calverley and did not become independent until 1878. The Independent Chapel on Westfield Road also evolved during this period. In 1803, a seminary for the education of students who were preparing for the ministry of the Independent denomination was established in the church, and by 1822 there were fifteen students studying there under the superintendence of Rev. W. Vint, minister of the Upper Chapel. Vints Buildings (28, 36 and 38 Westfield Road), which are thought to have been built to accommodate students of the seminary, are cottages which were constructed opposite the site in the early to mid-

Holy Trinity Church (Grade II) – Constructed 1828.



nineteenth century. These are not listed, yet make a considerable contribution to the image of this part of the village and have a discernable group value. The church itself underwent a number of rebuilds and the current chapel is a fairly modern structure dating from 1953, however it is surrounded by the U-shaped walls of the Sunday school, that date from the mid-nineteenth century. The Sunday school is Italianate in style and has arch-headed, sash-and-case windows with Keystones. It is of a definable architectural style and is illustrative of the shift away from the local vernacular style to more widespread design fashion. The entrance is located on its eastern gable, which is topped by an open bellcote. As this rises above the heights of the surrounding buildings, the bellcote is a significant feature of the skyline in this part of the village. Adjacent to this is a large nineteenth century house with a pyramidal roof, which previously functioned as the manse and consequently is an integral component of this group of ecclesiastical structures. The shape of this segment of the village has in fact been greatly

influenced by the existence of the chapel. The burial ground, which originated as a small piece of land within the confines of the building group on the south of the road, expanded over to the field adjacent to number 40 Westfield Lane in the closing years of the nineteenth century. At the turn of the nineteenth / twentieth century a new burial ground was laid out to the west of Crooked Lane. These spaces naturally have a direct relationship to the chapel itself and for this reason have been included in the conservation area. Like the Sunday School, the Oddfellows Arms, High Street (Grade II), at the south of the conservation area is also an early example of how external architectural influences combined with the vernacular tradition to influence the design of buildings in the village.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, development continued apace, mostly in the form of mills and back-to-back housing. Again, most of this was centred around 'The Green', to the south, and although parts of the High Street underwent redevelopment during this era, much of the earlier



Rear of the Sunday school to the Independent Chapel from Back Lane



Victorian Terraces on Walter Lane – constructed of local stone with stone slate roofs, stone chimneys and more ornate door surrounds

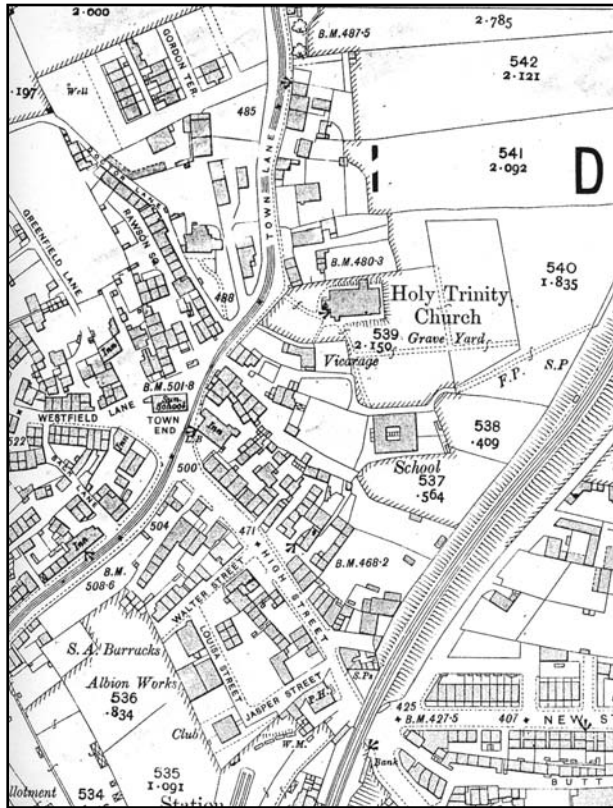
fabric survived. The earliest examples of this form of Victorian terraced housing in the conservation area can be found along Rawson Square, which had been developed by the time the survey for the 1851 Ordnance Survey Map was carried out, but there are also examples along Walter Street, Stansfield Place, Greenfield Lane and the High Street. The form of these buildings had clearly evolved away from the vernacular tradition, as a result of both technical changes and wider fashion influences. Slate became the preferred roofing material, as new communication networks provided for its cheap and easy transportation. Consequently, stone slate roofs have become increasingly rare, yet are significant to the character of this part of West Yorkshire and where they have survived should be cherished. The window and door surrounds of these later buildings are more ornate than their simpler predecessors and reflect changes in architectural tastes. Timber sash windows would have occupied the window openings, but in the majority of cases these have subsequently been replaced. Where they survive every effort should be made to retain them. The buildings however continued to be constructed of local stone, which means that the various ages of development within the conservation area blend harmoniously with one another, forming an aesthetically attractive whole. Due to the vast amount of building that occurred across the country during the second half of the nineteenth century, the built legacy from this time is extensive, consequently only the very best buildings of the age are listed for their individual historic and architectural merit: none of the buildings of this date within the conservation area have been deemed to warrant this status. Nevertheless, in the wider group context the buildings contribute greatly to the image, attractiveness and coherence of Idle and form an important part of the record of a significant period in the settlement's history. They also stand as evidence of the progression of

architectural styles and fashions and how these were applied to simpler buildings as well as the shift from home based work in cottages domestic houses and purpose-built commercial and industrial premises. A number of larger structures that are at variance with the simpler buildings of the conservation area also appeared in the settlement during this era, such as the Coniston Public House, a classically influenced style structure that stands at the end of Jasper Street and complements the listed Oddfellow Arms at the High Street end of the street.

The former Library and Town Offices building is a particularly impressive unlisted structure. Situated on a piece of high ground above the bend in Town Lane, it holds a domineering position and harmonises with the other larger buildings that are congregated in this part of the village. It was constructed in about 1890 and is Vernacular Revival in style, which was particularly fashionable at the time. Its features include chamfered mullion windows and blue-slate gabled roofs with red-tiled cresting to the ridges. The building once housed the Local Board, which was set up in 1864 to deal with the social problems that had been created by the rapid development of the settlement. The establishment of such an organisation is reflective of the underlying sociological changes that were occurring across the country at the time. These included the rise of a class of businessman that emerged as a result of the changes wrought by the industrial revolution to positions of eminence and a more democratic means of administering the ever-growing urban areas. The Local Board initiated great changes in Idle. One of its first acts was to organise gas lighting during the winter months and encourage the Great Northern Railway to extend its line through Eccleshill and Idle to Shipley. The

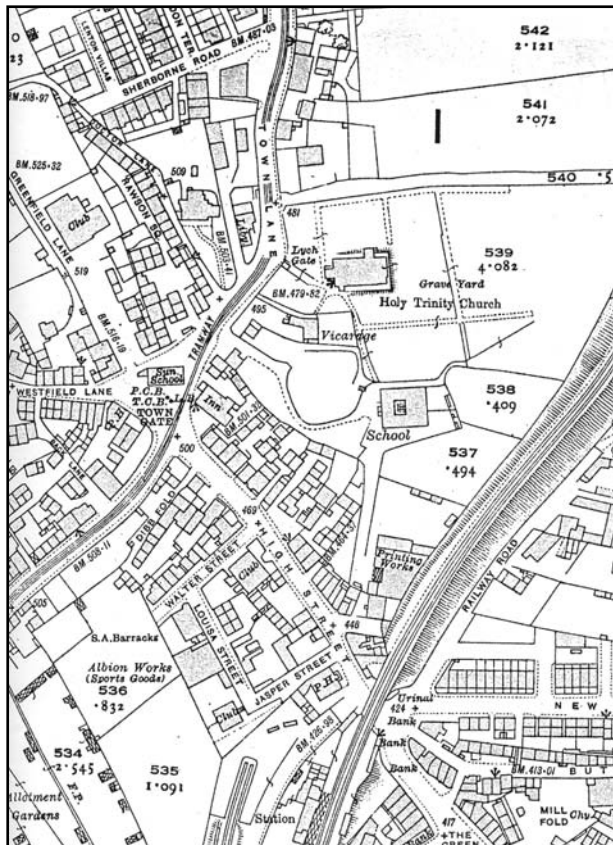


The former Library and Town Offices, 29 Town Lane. c.1890 Vernacular Revival style building.



Ordnance Survey Map 1908

railway opened for goods traffic in 1874 and for passenger services in 1875. This facilitated the transportation of goods and people into and out of Idle and served to increase the industrial capacity of the area. The railway line followed the route of what is now Idlecroft Road, to the south of Idle Conservation Area, and then ran to the west of the graveyard of the Holy Trinity Church. Consequently, the railway bridge over High Street became a feature of the settlement for nearly a century. The station, however, only remained functional for a relatively short period of time and was closed in 1931. The line remained operational until 1968 and was not dismantled, along with the bridge, until four years later. The introduction of trams into Idle in 1901 also had a marked and permanent impact on the shape of the settlement. As is evident from the 1908 Ordnance Survey Map, the tram ran down through the village via Town Lane and Highfield Road, almost parallel to the route of the railway. Its establishment necessitated a road-widening scheme and the demolition of a number of buildings, notably back-to-back cottages on the south side of Highfield Road. The tram system itself was, however, quickly superseded by the use of motorised buses and the last tram ran through the settlement on 21st March 1931.



Ordnance Survey Map 1934

The shape of Idle has naturally evolved since the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth century, but in a piecemeal and minor manner. Despite the loss of a number of structures, the majority during the 1970s slum clearances, Idle remains essentially a traditional rural mill village in character and it is this that makes it so special and worthy of conservation area status. A number of more modern additions to the conservation area have, however, served to enrich the area. The 1930s dental surgery on the corner of High Street and Highfield Road, for example, is a particularly fine example of a building of its age. It is an attractive structure constructed of necked masonry with large risers set into small coursed walling and has an obliquely angled gabled entrance. It retains many of its characteristic features, including metal framed windows that accommodate coloured and patterned glass. The medical centre situated to the east of this is also a fine example of architecture of its age. This was designed by VJQ Architects – David Quick and Vijay Taheem – and was opened on 1st April 1994 and extended to the south in 1997. It has an unusual multi-storey rotunda, faced in sandstone ashlar at the north end with an entrance to the first floor directly from the street. This is attached to a long partly timber-clad range of consulting rooms with mirrored glass windows under a steep mono-pitched roof. Set behind this is an identical range separated by a

glass-roofed atrium, which is akin to two rows of houses with a yard between. The building won a Commendation Award granted by the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) in 1995.



Idle Medical Centre, Highfield Road – an award winning modern building.

4. The Character and Appearance of Idle Conservation Area

Summary of the Elements of Idle Conservation Area that Contribute to its Distinct Character and Appearance

The predominant image of Idle Conservation Area is of a well-preserved Georgian and Victorian rural settlement, which has been overlaid with elements of a more recent industrial past. The feel of the place is generally of a charming, rural, leafy, quiet, hill town, however to the south and east the Victorian influence is clear. The development of this later period sits comfortably with the former structure of the village and helps to tell the story of its evolution from an agricultural settlement, to an industrial based settlement and through to its current domestic form.

DETAILS OF THE VERNACULAR STYLE OF BUILDINGS	Local stone buildings, stone slate roofs, plain stone door and window surrounds, prominent chimneystacks, barn door openings, two-storey, simplicity of form and shaped kneelers (where these exist).
TRADITIONAL ARRANGEMENT OF BUILDINGS	The arrangement of buildings is irregular. L-shaped building groups and unusual orientations of the buildings around folds and yards are typical of the area. The way that the built structure responds and accentuates the irregularity of the land, especially along High Street, is also significant to the sense of place. The roofline of the southern part of the village is particularly important to its image due to the slope of the land.
LANDMARK BUILDINGS	Landmark buildings interact with the vernacular style buildings to contribute to the sense of place. These include Holy Trinity Church, the bellcote of the Sunday School of Upper Chapel, the former library and town offices and the 'chapel of ease' and other good examples of their age and type.
MATERIALS	Local stone and stone slate are the predominant building materials used throughout the village. Slate replaced stone slate as the roof covering on late nineteenth century buildings, but the use of local stone creates a cohesive identity. The stone is also used for the boundary treatments and surfacing.
STONE WALLS	Stone walls constructed of the local stone are the predominant boundary treatment; these complement the colour and texture of the buildings and add to the sense of place of Idle.
STREET SURFACING	Many of the lanes are rough surfaced, often with green verges. Stone

	setts and flags have also been used in some areas, which are an historic surfacing that complements the texture of the built environment.
IRREGULARITY OF THE ROAD LAYOUT AND THE COURSE OF THE ROADS	The organic street pattern that radiates from the centre of the village. . The twists and turns in the roads are important to the views through the space and its charm and intrigue.
PERMEABILITY	The pattern of lanes and footpaths through the site and the patter of folds and yards create a permeability that is essential to the character of the conservation area.
SETTING	The visual links between the conservation area and the surrounding countryside. The open space of the burial grounds and cricket ground along Westfield Lane is especially important to the retention of this link. The topography of the ground.
LINK BETWEEN THIS CONSERVATION AREA AND THAT OF 'THE GREEN, IDLE' CONSERVATION AREA.	The link down High Street allows the conservation area to be seen in the context of the rest of the village and a fully appreciation of the development of Idle.
OPEN SPACES	The open, green areas of Holy Trinity Churchyard, the field to the rear of Malt Shovel Yard, the green on Westfield Lane and the gardens of 4-12 Back Lane. The openness of Town Gate and the intrigue of the folds and yards created by the building pattern of the area.
LEAFY IMAGE	Deciduous trees, particularly those concentrated around the heart of the village, down Town Lane, in Holy Trinity Churchyard and out along Westfield Lane.
CONGREGATION OF COMMUNITY AND COMMERCIAL USES AROUND THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE	Shops, public houses, religious activities, training centres, clubs etc. are all congregated around Town Gate and High Street has a distinctive commercial feel. This retains the vibrancy of the central character of this part of the village.
QUIETNESS OF BACK STREETS	The back streets are very quiet in comparison to the main thoroughfares.
DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE CHARACER OF TOWN LANE	Town Lane is more wider and contains larger more spaced out properties than most of the conservation area, it is consequently more Victorian in its image. This is accentuated by stone walls topped by iron railings.



View southwards from Town Gate – the topography gives Idle a hilltown character. Visual connections with surrounding moorland are opened up and the roofscape of High Street becomes a particularly important feature of the village.

It has been ascertained that the historic and architectural interest of the place, which is expressed in the unique environment that has been created, makes the core of Idle worthy of conservation area status. To safeguard its special interest, designation aims to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the environment and embrace its spirit, rather than focusing on individual components. Many features contribute to this, things like: the

style, form, orientation, massing, height and scale of buildings; the way that the built structure interfaces with the spaces created; the width and orientation of streets; boundary treatments; the colour and texture of the materials used; the topography and setting of the area; the roofscape and streetscape; how the area interacts with the surrounding environment; the contribution of natural elements; and local detailing. However, less physical features, such as the current uses of buildings and spaces, their condition, the amount of activity in the area and intangible ingredients, such as sounds and smells, are all factors in creating the identity of Idle. Of course not all elements of the conservation area contribute in a positive way to its character and appearance, consequently it is important to identify what the prevailing character of the conservation area is and recognise which factors contribute to this and which detract from it. This information can then be utilised to form the basis of the framework for the future management of the area.

Idle Conservation Area retains a strong village identity, despite the fact that it has been swamped by the surrounding, predominantly residential twentieth century development. Its position on a hillside looking away from the city of Bradford has helped it to retain much of its rural dimension. Views southward from the centre of the settlement and the high ground of Highfield Road and Town Lane open up vistas of the rooftops of the surrounding buildings and out to the rolling hills of



Entrance into 'The Green, Idle' Conservation Area from Bradford Road – due to its elevated position the tower of Holy Trinity Church dominates the skyline.

the moorland. The clear visual link between the settlement and the countryside in which it is set is important to the image of Idle, as the colour and texture of the local stone used for buildings in the village harmonises with the character of the countryside, creating a terrific sense of place. The chimneys of surrounding industrial works that sit on the skyline are particularly evocative of this part of northern England and allow the village to be viewed in its wider regional context. The most rural and open aspect of the conservation area itself, however, is to the west, out along Westfield Lane. From here, the greenery of the Quaker burial ground, the village cricket field and views of open farmland and moorland to the north and west predominate.



View out to the north across the openness of the cricket ground – this emphasises the settlements countryside part of Idle's identity.

To the northeast of the conservation area, Booth Royd is a setted courtyard leading to a row of terraced properties built in the late 19th century, though No 1 Booth Royd is dated 1745 and is Grade II Listed. The terrace contains natural stone boundary walls with semi circular copings to small private garden areas. The space contains some garages at its entrance, which detract from its historic character, and many properties have lost their original door and window details. Booth Royd relates directly to Blenheim Place and complements the character of the buildings and spaces which make up Idle Conservation Area

The fact that the ancient heart of Idle is situated on this piece of rising ground also has implications for views into the village. From the south, especially when entering 'The Green, Idle' Conservation Area from Bradford Road, impressive views of the interrelationship of the two conservation areas are opened up. From this perspective, the tower of the Holy Trinity Church, the most important landmark structure of the settlement, presides dominantly over the smaller stone buildings. The visual connection between the two integral centres of the village is an important one, as it enables a greater appreciation of the development of Idle and its complementary components. High Street climbs steeply from 'The Green' at the base of the hill to Town Gate at the top, where the ground evens out, and forms the physical link between the two cores. It has a notable hill village atmosphere, which is accentuated by the way the buildings are fairly uniform in height and arranged in distinctive steps in response to the gradient of the land. The roofscape of the lower parts of the settlement is highly visible and is consequently an important characteristic. The interest of which is added to by the irregularity of the orientation of the buildings, the projecting chimney stacks and the chunky profile of the natural stone slate roofs juxtaposed with the flatter profile of the slate roofs. The natural stone slate roofs are particularly conducive to the rustic feel of the village.

The internal shape and form of the conservation area is also reminiscent of its rustic past. It has a clear village heart surrounded by piecemeal development that occurred along narrow lanes or field boundaries. The centre is formed at the meeting point of the main historic thoroughfares and is now a relatively large junction that gives an open aspect to this part of the village, reminiscent of an old meeting place. It is currently the busiest part of the conservation area in relation to vehicular movement, as it is where what are now the three main thoroughfares of Highfield Road, Town Lane and High Street converge. The old

'chapel of ease' remains the focal element of the space and the piece of ground in front of it was the subject of a landscaping initiative during the 1970s and 1980s, the design of which features stone-flags and trees set in stone setts. This is a fine example of how modern intervention can improve the quality of a conservation area, as the colour and texture of the materials used in the scheme are reflective of the predominating quality of the surrounding environment and serve to enhance its innate characteristics. The centre of the settlement now has a strong civic identity, being encircled by local amenities and meeting places – the church, public houses, medical surgeries and shops. High Street is the commercial core. Some of the structures in the vicinity have undergone successive changes of use, but in contrast to the prevailing residential nature of the rest of the conservation area, they continue to be more publicly focused. For example, the ornate building which once housed the town offices and library is now used as a training centre and the early 'chapel of ease' itself is currently a dance studio. The concentration of these uses means that the centrality of the location and the vibrancy of this part of the village are preserved.



The Lych Gate marks the principal entrance to the churchyard.

The elegant structure of Holy Trinity Church is especially important to the village identity of Idle. Churches have traditionally formed the focal point of villages and they are now intrinsically associated with this form of settlement. The

height of the church in relation to the other buildings of the locality confers some status on the structure and as its tower looms above the surrounding rooflines, it forms the focal point of many views through the area. The leafy churchyard has a parkland character that is created by the grassed landscape and scattered deciduous trees. Gravestones jut out of the grassland, giving it a rugged, rustic quality. This is the largest and most dominating of open spaces within the conservation area, the openness of which contributes to the rural dimension of the centre of the village. A stone wall surrounds the space and effectively ties the built and natural form together by defining the space in a way that complements the surrounding structures. The churchyard is entered by means of an attractive timber Lych Gate, which doubles as a war memorial. This leads to a much-frequented winding pathway that makes its way southwards to reach a gateway in the wall allowing access to the rear of High Street. Although the dismantled railway line is situated to the far west of the churchyard, it is effectively hidden from view by an abundance of foliage.



The churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, viewed through the black painted iron railings of Town Lane.

An organic street pattern, which comprises a mix of size and orientation of roads, lanes and footpaths, radiates from this central location. Due to the meandering nature of the majority of these, vistas through the site are limited. Only Town Lane, which is notably wider and straighter than the other paths through the area, offers any long vistas. This naturally has a direct impact on the character of the street, which is notably distinct from the rest of the conservation area. Town Lane has a relatively open aspect, is particularly leafy and has an unusual grandeur, which is reflective of the Victorian influence on the place. The width of the street itself contributes greatly to this character, but the sporadic pattern of building and the congregation of the grander buildings of the settlement along its length are also significant. A relatively high stone wall borders the west side of the lane and blocks views of the larger properties, which can only be accessed through gateways. This effectively draws the eye down the line of the road, which is terminated by the tower of Holy Trinity Church. Looking in the opposite direction, the large early twentieth century terraced buildings of Sherborne Road and Gordon Terrace continue the sense of grandeur and are important to the setting of the conservation area. Iron railings top the wall towards the village centre, accentuating the predominantly Victorian character of this street. The buildings on the east side, however, are generally older, yet their scale and position is distinct from the smaller cottages and farm buildings that are found throughout the village. The Grange is a particularly impressive structure, but is hidden behind a tree-lined stone wall and can only be accessed through a gateway adjoining the churchyard.



Vista into the heart of the conservation area from Town Lane – the road is notably wider and straighter than the majority in the conservation area and due to the irregularity of building form lacks uniform frontage. The significance of the townscape quality of Holy Trinity Church's tower is evident.



View into the village centre from Highfield Road, which presents the cottages in an attractive light.

The majority of routes through the conservation area have twists and turns that block lines of vision. This is not to say that the images created are not attractive, in fact quite the opposite; this is one of the charms of the place. The curvature of Highfield Road, for example, opens up perspectives of the frontages of the attractive listed cottages situated along the street. Along Westfield Lane the bend in the road exposes the eye-catching group of former farm buildings that provide a fitting first image of the settlement when entered from this direction. A sense of intrigue and isolation is created by this characteristic, which adds to the interest of exploring the settlement, effectively disassociates the place from surrounding development and has helped to preserve its isolated rural quality. Westfield Lane and its immediate surroundings are particularly atmospheric. The narrowness and relative quietness of this road and the visual link with the open countryside to the north and west, rather than with the development that encroaches on the conservation area from other directions, means that this part of the conservation area has been able to hold onto an out-of-the-way agricultural



View into the centre of the village from Westfield Lane – the image of an out-of-the-way agricultural lane

identity. Stone walls constructed of local stone line most of the roads and footpaths through the conservation area. These are both complementary in colour and texture to the built fabric of the settlement and fundamental to the countryside image of the place.

The narrower lanes and footpaths that lead off the main thoroughfares of the village serve to increase permeability through the heart of Idle. However, the specific character of each of these lanes is determined by the heights of the walls, the width of the lane, its surfacing and the way that buildings are situated along its length. Crooked Lane an ancient lane that leads out from between the burial grounds of Westfield Lane is particularly rural in its aspect; the grassy verge runs between shoulder height stone walls, lined with trees and bushes to the open countryside beyond. The path to the north of the boundary wall of the grounds of Holy Trinity Church has very similar characteristics to this and adds a rustic dimension to what is otherwise a more elegant part of the village. Greenfield Lane is a particularly significant way; it is an historic route that leads out of the centre of the conservation area. Although a modern housing development now abuts the lane further to the north, the domestic rear fences of which detract from its character, it continues to follow its old route and towards the village centre retains much of its quality. It still exhibits remnants of the ancient stone causeway-path (packhorse track). It is relatively open being flanked by low stone walls that form a boundary with the openness of the field to the rear of Malt Shovel Yard and the Conservative Club. The field is lined with trees, which contribute to the country feel of this predominantly muddy track. It has never been built upon and is consequently a rare reminder of the rural backdrop that at one time dominated Idle.



View into Town Lane from centre of village – the trees lining the street are a particularly important feature.



The grassy track of Crooked Lane links Westfield Lane to the open countryside.

The grass verge of Back Lane, the green space between Back Lane and Westfield Lane, the roughly surfaced turning space with small planted area in front of 23,25 and 27 Westfield Lane and the garden areas of 4-12 Back Lane also add to the overall village image of the conservation area. More formal setted and flagged surfaces can also be found within the conservation area; these are rare survivors of past surfacing methods and can be of historical interest in their own right. Aesthetically, the qualities of the stone used for these treatments complement the colour and texture of the surrounding buildings and can greatly add to the interest of a space. The height



The view down Walter Street to High Street Place – enriched by the texture of the stone setted and flagged surface

of the stone wall on the east of Doctor Lane and the barrage of building frontages to the west creates a secluded alley, making it distinct from most of the lanes in the vicinity. Its setted surface is an important part of its image. However most of the setted areas are located off High Street. The view down Walter Street to the collection of listed rendered cottages of High Street Place is greatly enhanced by the texture of the setted street and flagged footpaths. Rendering is used on a number of cottages of High Street; but stone facades are more characteristic of the region.

The pattern of building in the conservation area generally complements the irregularity of the street layout. Often the buildings do not follow the lines of streets, as would be expected of later constructions, but cluster around small yards or folds. Small, intriguing spaces that add visual depth and interest to the form of the village are created. This pattern of building is particularly rural and is now unusual and as such is a significant component of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The form and orientation of the buildings that surround these spaces accentuates their natural qualities. Most of the buildings are individual in design and the majority retain their farm like quality with barn openings and sweeping stone slate rooflines. Although most of the structures are fairly uniform two-storeys in height, their orientation differs greatly and consequently an intricacy of form is created, which is a major part of Idle's appeal. To truly appreciate these qualities an investigation of the yards and folds is often required. This form of building is largely concentrated to the north of the conservation area and on the east side of High Street. In other parts of the conservation area building has been concentrated along the line of the streets. The small terraced cottages that date from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century are often constructed in regularly spaced rows that either front directly onto the street or have small front garden areas. This building pattern accentuates the line of the streets and draws the eye along their facades. The earlier examples of these would have originally been constructed as farm workers cottages and more latterly as mill and factory workers cottages and pertain to both the agricultural and industrial history of the settlement. The area to the west of High Street is more industrial in nature that that of the country lanes to the north, as is expressed not only in the buildings but the more regular street layout. The east side of the street is however an effective fusion of the two ages of development. The juxtaposition is itself of interest, as it clearly charts the development of the settlement.



View from Westfield Lane into the setted Woodholme Court with its farm like quality buildings. An example of the visual interest created by the irregular building pattern of the settlement.



4-12 Back Lane – irregularly placed cottages with gardens which contribute to the greenness of the area.



Greenfield Lane – a country way of historical significance the character of which is enhanced by the openness of the open space to the east.

As farming has long since died away as the main activity of the area, the majority of the buildings that would have originally served this function have been converted to serve residential uses. In fact the whole village has taken on a distinctly residential nature, conforming to its current location in the suburbs of Bradford. This has naturally had a terrific impact on the character of the place and although its structure remains essentially rural, the smell and noise that this activity would have created has long since been lost and the village has taken on a much more domestic air. The surrounding residential development serves to accentuate this aspect of the character of Idle.

5. Preservation and Enhancement

Conservation areas are complicated spaces in which many components come together to form a very definite character. However, with the progression of time alterations can occur that serve to undermine this distinctiveness or detract from the quality of the place. As has been ascertained, Idle Conservation Area has a very specific rural quality about it, which despite major changes in its immediate vicinity, it has managed to maintain to this day. In order to ensure that the value of the place is preserved, both as a heritage asset and an attractive environment in which to live and work, it is essential that the constituents that contribute to its special interest (identified in the previous sections of this report) are protected from unsympathetic alteration. In support of this aim, conservation area designation intrinsically brings with it a number of additional legislative controls, which are complemented by policies set out by the Council in its *Unitary Development Plan* (see *Appendix 2: Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas*). The intent of these measures is not to stifle change in the area, which is a natural part of the life of any settlement, but to ensure that change respects or enhances the context of the place and strengthens its distinctive character and appearance.

5.1 Preservation of the Character and Appearance of Idle Conservation Area

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council will make use of the powers afforded to it by national legislation and apply the policies set out in its *Unitary Development Plan* to control further change within the conservation area. Most importantly:

- There will be a strong presumption in favour of preserving both listed and unlisted properties and spaces that contribute to the special interest of the conservation area, as

well as elements of its setting that are intrinsic to its rural aspect.

- In making decisions on proposed new developments within the conservation area, or affecting its setting, special attention will be paid to the desirability of preserving its character and appearance.

These principles will form the basis of future control of the conservation area, however a number of specific factors which do not contribute to or threaten the character of Idle Conservation Area which have been identified through consultation in preparing this assessment. These are outlined in section 5.3 of this report along with proposals as to how these factors could be minimised. Although the Council will take the lead in producing strategies to protect what is special about Idle, a commitment by local residents and users to work towards the same objective is indispensable, as it is they who control many of the changes that occur, especially to individual properties and spaces.



Mid nineteenth century cottages of Rawson Square – the character of which it is desirable to preserve

5.2 Design Guidance

Additions, Alterations and New Build

The aim is to achieve the successful juxtaposition of old and new buildings within the conservation area. Any new development should take full account of the character and appearance of the place and use this as the starting point of the new design. This will ensure that the uniqueness of the village is maintained. This does not necessarily mean that development should replicate what is already there. It is imperative that there is a scope for the inclusion of architectural invention and initiative, provided that it echoes principles of good design and reflects the proportions, scale and massing of existing buildings. A recent publication by CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and English Heritage (2001), entitled *Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas* sets down some useful guidelines as to what constitutes good new design in conservation areas. Generally:

- New development should relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land and should be based on a careful evaluation of the site. This ensures that new development would respect the context provided by the village of Idle and could therefore be regarded as a progression rather than an intrusion.
- New buildings or extensions should sit happily in the pattern of existing developments and routes through and around it. In Idle the building pattern is fairly irregular and in some parts of the conservation area the buildings stand around yards or folds and in other areas terraces that follow the line of the road predominate. The pattern along Town Lane is however quiet distinct from the rest of the conservation area and should be respected.
- Important views and vistas within, across, into and out of the conservation area should be respected.
- The scale of neighbouring buildings should be respected. In Idle small scale two storey properties are the predominant building form and new development should not overshadow them.
- The materials and building techniques used should be as high quality as those used in the existing buildings. Stone for structures, some roofs and boundary walls unites the buildings and enclosures of Idle despite the differences in style, mass, age and function of the

buildings. This, coupled with the care and skill with which these structures were erected, sets the benchmark for new development in the conservation area.

- New buildings should not impinge on any significant open spaces, or necessitate the destruction of buildings that contribute to the character or appearance of the place.

A positive and imaginative response to infill development will be encouraged, especially those that make a particularly positive contribution to the public realm. Pastiche, the replication of historic features in an unimaginative way should be avoided.



Example of modern an interesting housing development that is sensitive to the local vernacular style of architecture that is reflected in the well chosen stone and cut mullioned windows. Pastiche is avoided by the imaginative use of modern-style glazed porches on stone columns and projecting bays, topped by timber windows under the eaves of the slate roofs that have varying rooflines. The chimneys reflect the traditional detail of the area.

The quality of shop front design is important to the image of High Street, which is one of the most visible streets of the conservation area. The following guidance is given as to what constitutes a well designed shop front in this context;

- Where possible the design should be based on historical evidence of the original details.
- They should be constructed of timber.
- The design should include timber or natural stone stallrisers; tiled stallrisers are inappropriate and should be removed.
- Traditional detailing that has survived should be retained.
- Existing door recesses, where traditional, should be retained.

Care should be taken with the incorporation of shop front security features. Shutters will

generally only be permitted inside the display window or in a traditional timber form.

5.3 Enhancement Proposals

Naturally there are some elements of the conservation area that are not conducive to the predominant countryside feel of the place and do not contribute to an understanding of its historical development. These may detract from its character and appearance or may simply not contribute to it in a positive way. The following are proposals as to how the quality and identity of the place could be strengthened by active co-operation of the Council, developers and the local community. The proposals have been identified and prioritised in light of the public consultation by post, telephone and e-mail over August and September 2002 and the workshop held on August 20th 2002 at Idle Baptist church which followed the deposit of the draft of this assessment. The proposals, in order of priority are as follows:

- **Retaining Original Features**

Very few of the old or original window, door and shop front details of the conservation area have survived; they have typically been replaced by modern alternatives made of artificial materials. Where they do still exist the original features of buildings can contribute greatly to the character of not only the building on which they are situated but also the wider area. As many buildings within the conservation area are listed, these features are protected under Listed Building Legislation (an application for Listed Building Consent must be made for any alteration to them that would affect their character). The degree of protection afforded to listed buildings means it is a criminal offence to undertake significant alterations, or the replacement of key features to a listed building without listed building consent. In exercising controls over these structures the Council will ensure that traditional features are retained. Due to the extent of the loss of these features on unlisted buildings, the establishment of an Article 4(2) direction, which would remove permitted development rights from unlisted dwellings in the conservation area is deemed to be inappropriate as unlisted buildings which retain their original features in Idle are a small minority. Consequently much of the responsibility for the retention of these features rests on local residents.

- **Protection of the character of Idle Conservation Area**

Much of the unique character of Idle is derived from the layout, form, mass, common materials, mixture of building styles and function of the buildings and the way they relate with open spaces and the historic street pattern. The distinctive arrangement of buildings in the area could be under threat if demolition and rebuild is permitted. The modern Idle Medical Centre, although it is a landmark building of an original, inventive design and uses natural materials, its construction occasioned the demolition of Dibb Fold – a terrace of workers' housing. Further extensive demolition of this sort would have the effect of undermining an important element of the character of the place. New development should take place on sites that have not been identified as contributing to the character of Idle. Design Guidance should be produced to ensure that the scale, style and positioning of new development (including new build and extensions to existing buildings) complements the existing structure of the conservation area and contributes to the quality of Idle. A starting point of the principles of appropriate design in the conservation area is given in this report (see section 5.2).

- **Commercial Activity**

The village character of Idle is reinforced by the busy focus provided by commercial activity in the centre of the conservation area. The Green to the south of the conservation area has established itself as the commercial centre of the village of Idle. Consequently there is a risk that commercial activity will move down the hill. While the use of buildings and the level of commercial activity is largely determined by market forces, in exercising planning powers there should be a strong presumption in favour of continued commercial use of the properties of High Street. It is also important that commercial premises are sympathetic to the conservation area in their appearance.

- **Improvements to the public realm**

The maintenance, repair and enhancement of the public realm are viewed by the community as an important element of the conservation area. In particular, York stone flagged and setted areas should be retained while highways should be made of sympathetic

materials of a suitable scale and proportion. Improvements to the public realm could include:

- Development of suitable lighting and street furniture designs for the conservation area – particularly around Town Gate where presently a street light intercepts the view of the frontage of the Grade II* ‘Chapel of Ease’ and uninteresting barriers are located.
- Planting to shield the view of the factory that is situated to the south-west of the conservation area. The factory building is not conducive to the character of the conservation area. As this area is relatively green abutting the churchyard, planting could be used in a creative way to soften the impact of the structure.
- Repaving of the High Street and the area around Town Gate in a traditional surfacing.
- Resurfacing of areas such as Caplin Close.
- Reassessment of the need for traffic signs and markings.

Policy BH12: Conservation Area Environment of the *Replacement Unitary Development Plan* provides the mechanism to improve the design of replacement street furniture and traffic management schemes and ensure that it enhances the image of Idle. Investigations should be made into possible sources of funding to assist in the implementation of such schemes.

- **Traffic Management**

While Idle was never designed with modern methods of transport in mind, the conservation area must adapt to accommodate the needs of motorists living, working or visiting the conservation area. In ensuring the safe and efficient flow of vehicular traffic and adequate and convenient parking facilities, it is essential to safeguard the character of Idle conservation area. Therefore the provision and siting of car parking, even on a domestic scale, should give consideration to the impact it has on the quality of open spaces in the conservation area and their interplay with the buildings. Motor traffic should be managed such that its impact on the conservation area is minimal in terms of congestion and the safety of pedestrians as well as in terms of the appearance of road surfaces, signage and other street furniture.

- **Advice on the repair and maintenance of historic properties**

Some inappropriate repairs and alterations have been made to the buildings of the conservation area which undermine the character of the buildings themselves and the overall image of the place. Drastic changes to a building are often a product of poor maintenance, for example the replacement of rotten timber window frames with those made of artificial materials such as uPVC or the replacement of a leaky stone roof with tiles. The proper maintenance of such features diminishes the need for major repair or replacement and extends the positive contribution they make to the conservation area. The production of guidance on the maintenance and repair of vernacular buildings in the district would increase public understanding. The Conservation Team will however be pleased to give advice.

- **Encouragement of the use of stone (and, where appropriate, railings) as a boundary treatment**

Timber and wire fencing has begun to appear as a boundary treatment within the conservation area, particularly along Highfield Lane. Policy BH11: Space about Buildings of the *Replacement Unitary Development Plan* states that “proposals maintaining traditional townscape within designated conservation areas will be favoured” and these walls are particularly important to the townscape of the village.

- **Reinstatement of traditional features of the buildings**

The reinstatement of traditional doors, windows and shop fronts, in properties would have a tremendously positive effect on the appearance of the conservation area. At present there is no grant money available to encourage this, but investigation into future sources of funding would assist in this objective. The local community could contribute greatly by carefully considering alterations they make to buildings.

- **Environmental Improvements**

There is a small number of open spaces which do not make a positive contribution to the character of Idle conservation area and would benefit from being upgraded. The area of ‘wasteland’ to the south of Holy Trinity Church and the area in front of the White Bear public house are two prominent

examples of pieces of land which would benefit from works to improve them. Formal landscaping is however not appropriate for this conservation area and any work should retain the rural feel of the place. However they also offer opportunities for development: both were formerly built upon and a good quality scheme could greatly improve the prospect of Town Gate.

- **Shopfront design and advertisements on buildings**

Some of the shop fronts of High Street are particularly poorly designed. Policy BH8: Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas of the *Replacement Unitary Development Plan* provides a mechanism for the improvement of their design when applications for their replacement are made. The production of shop front design guidance for the area would be beneficial in inciting good quality design. A starting point of the principles of good design is given in this report in section 5.2.

6. Changes to the Boundary of Idle Conservation Area

As part of this assessment, a re-evaluation of the conservation area boundary has been undertaken to ensure that it follows a logical line on the ground and incorporates all of the area that is deemed to be of special historical and architectural interest and that no areas are included that may undermine the value of the designation. The draft of this report included a proposed boundary for the conservation area which was distributed with a summary of the report and comments forms to addresses within and local to Idle and Idle Green conservation areas in late July 2002. The proposed boundary of the conservation area was one of the main points of discussion at the public workshop held at Idle Baptist Church and Community Centre on 20th August 2002. In light of the comments and suggestions received, the proposed boundary was reassessed. Another issue raised at the workshop was whether the conservation areas at Idle and Idle Green should be joined together. In addition to the changes outlined below, the boundary has been realigned in places so that it follows a logical course coinciding with property boundaries and public rights of way.

6.1 Joining Idle and Idle Green Conservation Areas

There was strong support for the merger of Idle's conservation areas despite their differences in age and character. Idle Green is much more built-up in character than Idle, though it represents the second focal point of the village and contains its Victorian commercial heart. The Conservation Area Assessment for Idle Green has been prepared at the same time as this assessment.

6.2 Additions to Idle Conservation Area

- **Urban Greenspace to the Northwest of the Conservation Area** - this consists of the land to the north of Westfield Lane (to the east of number 94) including the Quaker burial ground, the burial ground adjoining Crooked Lane, the Cricket Ground plus the greenspace between the Cricket Ground and Greenfield Lane. Although all of this land is protected in the Bradford UDP by designation as Urban Green Space (the cricket ground is also designated as Playing Fields) they provide Idle with its only link with the surrounding countryside and help to define its rural character. The Burial Ground forms a set piece with the nearby Idle United Reform Church, while the former Quaker Burial ground is part of the village's history as well as providing it with an attractive setting. The Cricket Ground and adjacent open spaces are part of the array of sympathetic land uses in the village.
- **Predominantly Residential Area to the North of the Conservation Area** This addition consists of housing at Lenton Villas, Gordon terrace, 1-5a Charterhouse Road, Blenheim Place, and buildings along Town Lane including the YMCA Youth Centre. This part of the village predominantly alludes to its early twentieth century development and effectively charts the early transformation of the compact village into the residential district that it has become. While it does not contribute to the prevalent countryside feel of the conservation area it nevertheless includes some structures of architectural merit and due to the fact that most of the buildings are constructed of local

stone continues the colour and texture of the conservation area. Some late Victorian buildings fall within this extension, including a former Methodist Church Sunday School dating from 1892 and number 65 Town Lane, a medium-sized nineteenth century villa has unusual glazing featuring octagons. However most of the buildings are early twentieth century (1900 – 1930) large terraced properties, situated along Sherbourne Road, Gordon Terrace and Lenton Villas. These exhibit some interesting Arts and Crafts features, typical of their age. Some fine examples of timber detailing and stained glass exist among them, but in many instances their coherence has been undermined by the loss of these features. A terrace of this style along Sherbourne Terrace was included in the designation after 1993 and until this re-assessment of the boundary the majority were excluded.

Further north along Town Lane a group of seventeenth and eighteenth century Grade II Listed properties at Blenheim Place are arranged in an L-shaped configuration and are clearly complementary to the image of Idle, and, prior to the expansion of the village, formed an isolated agricultural fold. Its character and the retention of original detailing means that Blenheim Place is

therefore worthy of inclusion in Idle Conservation Area.

- **Area to the south of Highfield Lane** The boundary has been reconfigured to include the innovatively designed Idle Medical Centre and its grounds and along the Highfield Lane as far as the group of back-to-back Victorian housing, the western elevation of which forms an important part of the view into the village from Highfield Lane. Although the former is a very recent addition to the village, its unique design and use of natural materials means it makes a positive contribution to the street scene.

6.3 Exclusion from Idle Conservation Area

- **Garage and Housing to the west of 355 Highfield Road** - these modern detached houses are not conducive to the rural character of the conservation area and do not contribute to its character and appearance. Consequently their inclusion undermines the value of the designation.



Gordon Terrace, a row of early twentieth century Arts and Crafts style housing, is one of several additions to Idle conservation area.

Glossary of Terms

Ashlar: Smooth dressed stone used for facing buildings.

Chamfer: Right angled edge or corner.

Cornice: Horizontal moulded projection crowning a building or structure.

Frieze: A continuous band of sculpture.

Jamb: Vertical sides of a door or window opening.

Keystone: Voussoir at the centre of an arch.

Kneelers: The sloping tabling that caps a gable.

Lancet: Narrow arch or window with a pointed head.

Lintel: A horizontal beam bridging an opening.

Mullion: The vertical division of a window.

Ogee: A double or S curve moulding.

Pediment: A form of gable, either segmental or triangular, over a window or door opening.

Quoin: Stone or block forming the angle of a building.

Saddlestone: The stones at the apex of the gable.

Transom: The horizontal division of a window.

Vernacular: A form of architecture particular to a certain area – essentially local.

Voussoir: Wedge shaped stones that form an arch.

Further Reading

Historical Resources

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Planning Policy

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (1998): *Bradford Unitary Development Plan*.

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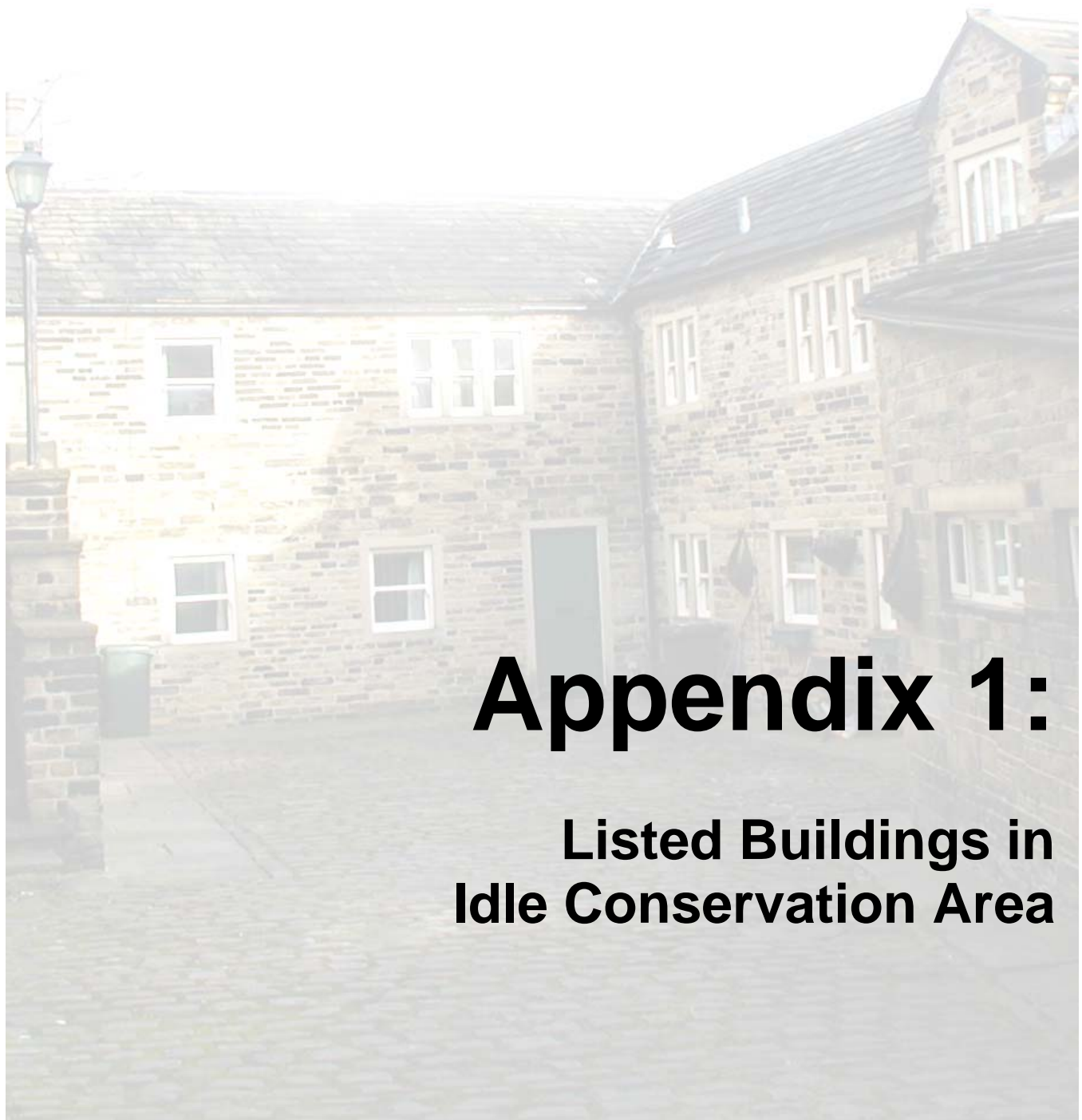
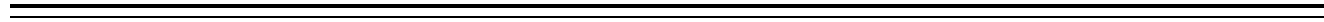
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Appendix 1:

Listed Buildings in Idle Conservation Area

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings in Idle

28, High Street (Town Well Cottages) (Well Fold) – Grade II

Circa 1800 probably alteration to earlier farm building. Pair of cottages now one flanking south-east entrance to Well Fold, a group of farm building of C17 origin. Two and three-storeys due to sloping site. Two-light square mullion windows with sash lights. Paired doorways. All with plain stone surrounds. The walls are rough-cast on stone. Rear wing adapted from old outbuilding. Stone slate roof.

28A High Street (Town Well Cottages) (Well Fold) – Grade II

Circa 1800 probably alteration to earlier farm building. Pair of cottages now one flanking south-east entrance to Well Fold, a group of farm building of C17 origin. Two and three-storeys due to sloping site. Two-light square mullion windows with sash lights. Paired doorways. All with plain stone surrounds. The walls are rough-cast on stone. Rear wing adapted from old outbuilding. Stone slate roof.

30 High Street (Town Well Cottages) (Well Fold) – Grade II

Circa 1800 probably alteration to earlier farm building. Pair of cottages now one flanking south-east entrance to Well Fold, a group of farm building of C17 origin. Two and three-storeys due to sloping site. Two-light square mullion windows with sash lights. Paired doorways. All with plain stone surrounds. The walls are rough-cast on stone. Rear wing adapted from old outbuilding. Stone slate roof.

Listed as 30, now 32 High Street (Well Fold) and adjoining barn to right – Grade II

This building closes north-east end of the fold. Two-storeys gritstone covered stone slate roof partly collapsed. Two-light chamfered mullion windows. Doorway has lintel dated 1664. The structure may well be or early C17 origin. Massive

chimney breast. Early C19 barn with segmented ashlar voussoir archway adjoined to right.

32, 34 and 36 High Street – Grade II

Early C17 or circa 1664. This block was probably the original farmhouse of the fold and it encloses the north-west side. Two-storeys, coursed gritstone. Stone slate roof. No. 34, giving onto fold yard, has 2-light, broad, chamfered mullioned windows, originally with 4 mullions. Doorway with chamfered ogee arched lintel. No. 36 has a rough-cast front facing the road with early C19 two-light mullioned portion, with saddlestone, prominent kneelers and ball finial to apex of the gable. First floor window, originally of 4 lights, retains central chamfered mullion. Two light square mullioned ground floor window. The north-west site is virtually blind, but has a large mullion transomed window through both storeys and at far end, above a blocked 2-light mullioned window, a former 4-light now 2-light square mullion window with drip mould.

46 and 48 High Street – Grade II

Early C19, refacing probably of earlier C18 structure. Two-storey house with later shops. Stone slate roofs. Sill courses. Coursed sandstone “brick”. Bracketed gutter cornice. No. 46 has trumpet rainwater head and 2 square mullioned first floor windows; small, projecting, mid C19 shop front with fretted frieze to cornice and blocking course. No. 48 has 2 first floor windows one with square mullion. Mid C19 pilastered shop window and plain doorcase. Carriageway to left, under flat arch, leaning to South Fold. The ceiling of carriageway has exposed large beam. Rear elevation tripartite square mullioned small pane glazing bar sash window.

4-7 (consec) Garth Fold, High Street – Grade II

Former coach house and cottages in fold, to nos. 46 and 48, ranged round partly cobbled yard. Late C18 and early C19. Two-storeys, sandstone “brick”, in L-Plan block. No. 6 pebble-dashed.

Stone slate roofs. Plain doorways. No. 6 and 7 altered mid C19 with 2-light sashes. Earlier square mullioned windows to south-west over-looking Well Fold. Included for group value.

The New Inn, High Street – Grade II

An early C19 two-storey sandstone “brick” house with stone slate roof and flanking corniced chimneys. Moulded stone gutter-eaves cornice. Three-bay front with modern casement windows and door. The north gable end has a round headed attic window, with glazing bars intersecting in head, and tall round headed stair light. Important site at top of hill.

The Oddfellows Arms, High Street – Grade II

Dated 1840, Tall 2-storey rendered, painted stone building on rectangular plan. Slate roof largely concealed by parapet front. Quoin pilasters, plat band and plinth. Three-bay symmetrical elevation, tripartite sashes and outer bays. Glazing bars on first floor. Large Greek Doric porch with deep entablature and parapet balcony over. The south side of 3-bays has raised 3-storey parapeted central section concealing gable end (Note on file: Early photographs show the building as originally (up to 1920) having a 3-storey front – clear from photo not rendered or painted).

YMCA Youth and Community Centre (formerly listed as Sunday School), Town Gate – Grade II*

Built as a chapel of ease in 1630 but not consecrated until 1692 and prior to this date used by non-conformist congregations as well, an unusual case. On an island site the chapel is erected on a plain rectangular plan, built of coursed gritstone with plinth and flush quoins. Stone slate roof, coped gable ends with shaped kneelers surmounted by small ball finials. Small square stone bellcot to north-west gable with corbel support, blind arched panels to sides, small crow wing finial. The side windows of the chapel have a domestic character with chamfered mullioned-transomed round-headed lights. The south-east gable has a large window with simple Perpendicular tracery formed by diminishing rows of round-headed lights, a pattern very similar to the Old Bell Chapel at Thornton and Holy Trinity, Low Moor. On east side is a moulded jamb doorway with ogee shaped head dated 1630. The interior has been modernised.

Church of the Holy Trinity, Town Lane – Grade II

A Commissioners church of 1828 in an economical lancet Gothic. Architect John Oates. Simple rectangular body of sandstone “brick” with ashlar

dressings, west tower and short chancel. Thin buttresses with pinnacles at corners. Tall west tower has off set buttresses, clock stage and crow wing belfry, crenellated parapet with gabled capped pinnacles to corners. Plain hall interior with galleries on 3 sides supported by clustered cast iron columns. Plain panelled gallery fronts. Shallow ribs to flat ceiling. North vestry added late C19 with Perpendicular detailing.

The Grange, 24 Town Lane – Grade II

A 3 bay house dated 1632 on rear elevation but refaced and enlarged in 1734 (dated doorhead). Two-storeys, coursed gritstone and sandstone “brick” with flush small quoins. Stone slate roof saddlestones with kneelers. Small carved finials. C19 corniced chimneys. Symmetrical front with 4-light chamfered mullion and transom windows with drip moulds. Left hand of ground floor has mullioned transomed rectangular bay window with stone slated pent roof. Four centred arched doorway in squared head, drip moulded and stone panel above inscribed S over T A 1734. Four and 5 light mullion-transom windows with 2 gabled wings with finials. Plain circa 1734 mouldings to drawing room behind bay window, bolection moulding to fireplace. C18 lead rainwater head and downpipe to rear.

46, 48 and 50 Town Lane – Grade II

Circa 1800 three-storey range of 3 houses. Painted sandstone “brick”. Stone slate roofs. Large ledged stone chimney stack to no. 48. One window each floor of each front, wood casements to nos. 46 and 48. No. 50 retains square mullions, all in squared surrounds. Squared jamb doorways.

K6 Telephone Kiosk Town Lane – Grade II

Telephone kiosk. Type K6. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by Carron Company. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated replacement Elizabeth II crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door. (Note on file: commissioned in approx 1968, replacing box in front of old chapel).

1 – 11 Town Lane – Grade II

L-plan block of cottages in part of C17 origin but virtually rebuilt and extended late C18. Two-storeys, rendered sandstone “brick”. Stone slate roofs with corniced chimneys. Two and 3 light square mullion windows, squared surrounds. No. 11 has good C17 chamfered doorway with ogee design to lintel relating to Old Chapel type. Otherwise squared jamb doorways.

25, 27a and 27b Town Lane – Grade II

Substantial house set back in garden. Late C17 origin refronted circa 1750 with some C19 alterations. Two-storeys, gritstone to rear and sandstone "brick" with flush quoins. Ground floor sill band, platband between storeys. Stone slate roof with prominent kneelers to gable end, bracketed wood gutter, flanking corniced chimneys. Three bay symmetrical elevation, outer windows mid C19 tow light square mullioned with tooled square surrounds. The central first floor window has Gibbs surround. Doorway with rusticated jambs and lintel wit keystone. West gable end has Venetian window. The rear elevation retains 3 chamfered mullion windows. Set back single-storey late C19 east wing.

1, 3 and 5 Westfield Lane – Grade II

Late C18 cottage with some C19 alterations. Two-storeys, irregularly coursed gritstone. Stone slate roofs with corniced chimneys. Two light square mullion windows in squared surrounds, formerly of 4 lights. Shop front inserted to part of ground floor. Squared jamb doorways. Included for group value. An important corner site.

23, 25 and 27 Westfield Lane, with barn adjoining to east – Grade II

Built as back-to-back cottages adjacent to Back Lane Farm, Back Lane, and with barn extending range to east. Circa 1800. Two-storeys sandstone "brick" with stone slate roofs, corniced chimneys. Three light square mullioned windows in stone slate roofs, corniced chimneys. Three light square mullioned windows in squared surrounds to both fronts. Squared jamb doorways, those to Westfield Lane with gabled hoods. The barn to east has set back section on south front with 2 windows and squared jamb doorway. Front to Westfield Road has segmental voussoir with keystone.

37 and 39 Westfield Lane – Grade II

Pair of cottages of late C18 build with early C19 alterations. No. 39 is a small cottage projecting towards road with no. 37 a taller dwelling set back to sills with main front to south backing onto no. 39. The cottage is built of sandstone "brick", stone slate roof with corniced chimneys. Three light square mullion windows to first floor in squared surround. Single light window and squared jamb doorway on ground floor. No. 37 has ashlar south front with sill band, cornice and blocking course and would appear to be an enlargement and refronting of the early to mid C19. Three bays, revealed sashes with block sills. Plain squared jamb doorway to north.

6 and 10 Westfield Lane – Grade II

A former cottage row now 2 properties. Mid to late C18 altered circa 1800 and later. Two –storeys, roughcast gritstone. Stone slate roof with corniced chimneys. Intact windows are of 2 or 3 lights square mullioned with squared surrounds. Squared jamb doorways. Included for interest as part of an important small scale township group.

14 to 22 (even) Westfield Lane – Grade II

Includes no. 2 Greenfield Lane, Idle. Circa 1800 – 20 cottage row. Nos. 20 and 22 stepped higher and of slightly later build. Sandstone "brick" with stone slate roofs, corniced chimneys. Two light square mullion windows. Squared jamb doorways. Three light square mullion windows to rear elevations. Included for group value.

26 Westfield Lane and barn to east – Grade II

Late C17 former farmhouse with small former barn or outbuilding to east. Two-storeys coursed gritstone, 3 bay front with rear outshut. Stone slate roof. C19 corniced chimney to east. External stack with offsets to west end abutted by external flight of steps. First floor outer windows altered circa 1800 with square mullions, the centre retains original chamfered mullions. Weathered string over ground floor. Right hand window on this floor formerly of 5 lights, was 3 with chamfered mullions. Three light square mullion window to left. Four panel door with circa 1800 squared jambs. Rear outshut has mullion and transom window.

26A and 30 with adjoining barn – Grade II

Late C18 one and a half storey cottage with rear outshut and barn to east end, increasing in height with fall of ground. Irregular coursed sandstone "bricks", barn partly dry walled. Stone slate roof with corniced chimneys. Cottage has 2 light square mullion window and glazing bar sash window both in squared surrounds. Central 4 panel door with squared jambs. Heavy lintel to barn doorway.

34 Westfield Lane – Grade II

Set behind no. 30 on north-west side of yard. A circa 1800-20 two-storey 2 bay sandstone "brick" cottage with rendered front. Stone slate roof with corniced chimneys. Two and 3 light square mullion windows in squared surrounds. Central squared jamb doorway. Included for group value.

32 and 40 Westfield Lane – Grade II

Late C17 rectangular plan yeoman's house. Two-storeys, rendered gritstone with irregular 3 bay front. Stone slate roof with saddlestones and prominent kneelers. Weathered string over ground floor. Four light chamfered mullion windows to first

floor, similar 5 light on ground floor. Four centred arch doorway with chamfered jambs, large squared lintel, the string course stepped over. Low rear wing with mullion and transom window and round arched window on wet side. Interior modernised but retains exposed chamfered main beams on ground floor. Nos. 32 and 40 terminate the good small scale township group running along the north side of Westfield Road.

(File note: no. 32 forms smaller section to right of front door, access from right hand side. House is aisled – main post visible in no. 32 supporting tie beam, lateral beam with curved brace. Lateral beam has groove for partition. Good and panel door on wrought hinges to side of no. 32.)

363, 365 and 367 Highfield Road – Grade II

Dated 1761 a 2-storey 3-bay front, sandstone “brick” house. Rusticated quoins with moulded capping at eaves level. Stone slate roof with saddlestones and coped kneelers, flanking corniced chimneys, bracketed eaves. Central single light and flanking 2-light square mullion windows in squared surrounds. Plain squared jamb doorway. Date panel inscribed “I M over 1761”. Outshut to east. Subdivided as tenements.

369 and 371 Highfield Road – Grade II

No. 371 original C16 house with 369 a slightly later extension or subdivision as tenements. Sandstone “brick”, flush quoins and saddlestone to no. 371. Stone slate roofs, corniced chimneys, bracketed eaves. Three light square mullion windows to no. 369; the windows of no. 371 have modern wood casements, all in squared surrounds. Set back one window addition to no. 369. Plan doorways with squared jambs. Included for group value.

379 to 393 (odd) Highfield Road – Grade II

Early to mid C19 sandstone church cottage row. Stone slate roofs up to no. 387 the rest with quarry slates, bracketed eaves. Squared surround windows, no. 383 retains square mullions, rest altered. Included for group value.

41 (The White Bear Public House) Highfield Road – Grade II

Late C18 or early C19 with some later alteration. Two storeys, irregular coursed sandstone “brick” with stone slate roof, corniced chimneys. Two light, square mullion windows to south front.. Double pile gable end has late C19 sash windows

and pilastered doorway with projecting cornice on brackets. Included for group value.

1 Greenfield Lane (1, 3, 5 and outbuildings Woodholme Court) – Grade II

Probably built as a farmhouse circa 1800, subsequently altered to pair of cottages and then to industrial use. Two-storeys sandstone “brick” with stone slate roof, prominent kneelers to west gable end. Three irregular spaced windows to first floor: 2 light square mullion with glazing bar wood casements, squared surrounds. Two similar build and probably an adaptation of former barn, terminates in a former 2-storey sandstone “brick” circa 1800-20 cottage. Shaped kneeler to west gable end of stone slate roof. Two light square mullion windows and squared jamb doorway. Included for group value.

2 Greenfield Lane 914 to 22 Westfield Lane – Grade II

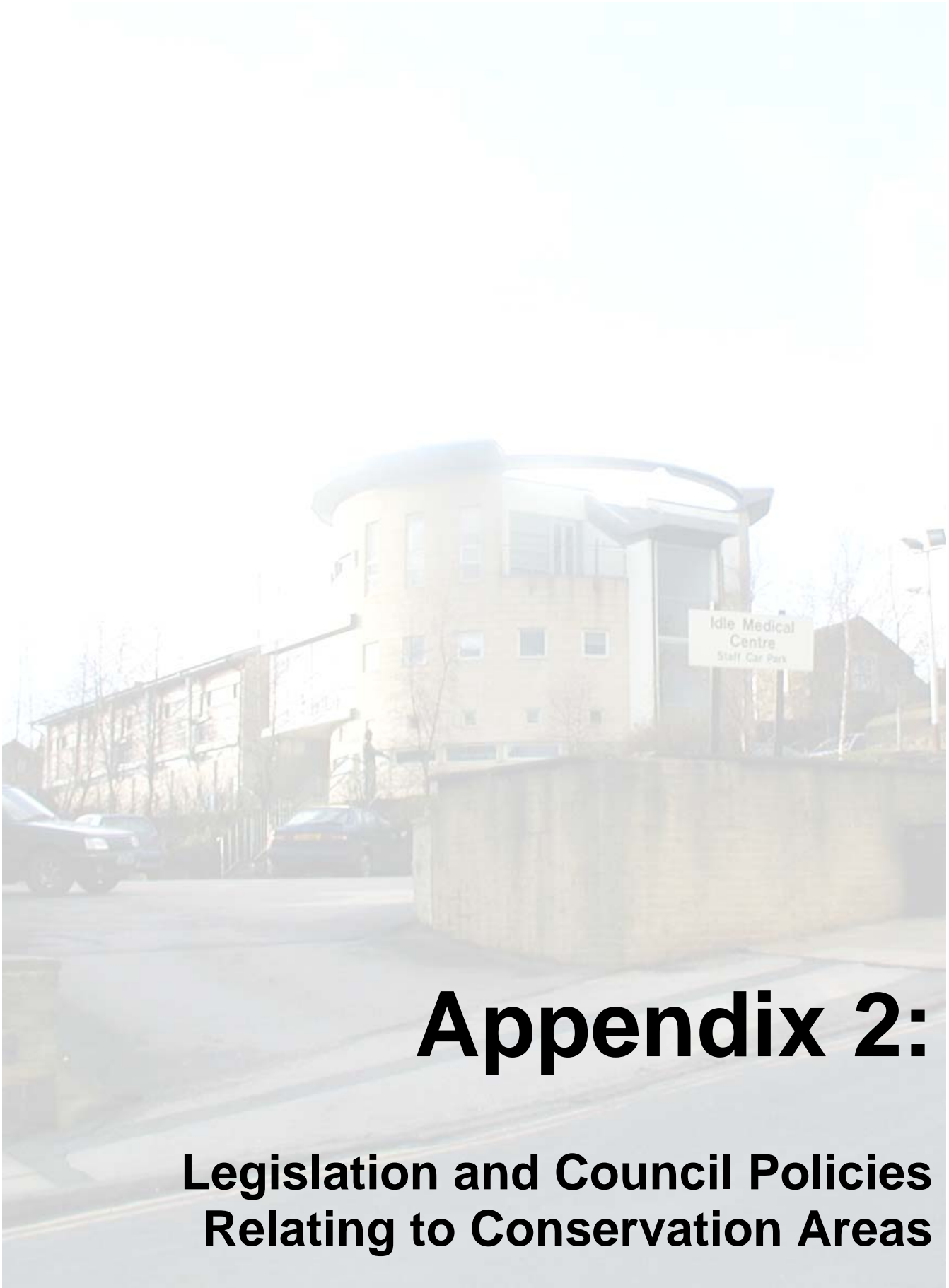
Includes no. 2 Greenfield Lane, Idle. Circa 1800-20 cottage row. Nos. 20 and 22 stepped higher and of slightly later build. Sandstone “brick” with stone slate roofs, corniced chimneys. Two light square mullion windows. Squared jamb doorways. Three light square mullion windows to rear elevations. Included for group value.

Back Lane Farmhouse with adjoining barn and stable (no. 10) – Grade II

Circa 1800-1810 farmhouse with some mid C19 alterations. Two-storey sandstone “brick”. Stone slate roof with corniced chimneys. Squared surround windows with C19 and modern glazing. Squared jamb doorway. Similar squared surround rear windows. Lower west wing, former barn and stables, with stone slate roof and mid C19 ventilator on ridge. Included for group value.

Blenheim Place, 71-77 (odd) – Grade II

L-plan block of cottages of C17 origin, probably a farmhouse subdivided into cottages circa 1800. Two-storeys, rendered sandstone. Stone slate roofs with corniced chimneys. Three and 4 light chamfered mullion windows with drip moulds. Circa 1800. Four light square mullion windows to first floor of no. 71 and to no. 77. Squared jamb doorways with 4 panel doors. No. 71 retains exposed chamfered ceiling beams. Interior otherwise modernised.



Appendix 2:

Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas

Appendix 2: Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas

This is a brief summary of the legislation and policies relating to conservation areas at the time of the issue of this report. These will be subject to constant review.

Legislation to Protect the Character and Appearance of Conservation Areas

Conservation area designation intrinsically brings with it a certain number of additional controls to protect the existing character of the area:

- Removal of certain permitted development rights including various types of cladding; the insertion of dormer windows into roof slopes; the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway; the installation of radio masts, antennae or radio equipment. Applications for planning permission for these alterations must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- Control over the demolition of buildings: applications for consent must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- The Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those which relate directly to historic buildings. It should also be a consideration for proposals that affect the setting of the conservation area.
- The local authority has powers (under Article 4 of the General Development Order) to control development which would normally be allowed without the need for permission, but which could lead to the deterioration of the character and appearance of the conservation area. (For further details of these controls see PPG15)

Listed buildings, which usually form an integral part of a conservation area, are afforded more stringent protection. The Local Planning Authority must give listed building consent before any work that would affect the character or interest of the building can be carried out, be they internal or external alterations. Tight control restricts the nature of any alteration to which consent will be given.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Policies Concerning Conservation Areas

Structure, local and unitary development plans are the main vehicle that local authorities have to establish policies that can be utilised to protect the historic environment. The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has recently (June 2001) published the first deposit of the 'Replacement Unitary Development Plan', which will ultimately, following a period of consultation and amendment, form the basis of decision making on planning applications in the district. The adopted **Unitary Development Plan** has only two policies relating to conservation areas:

Policy EN23

Development within conservation areas shown on the proposals map or subsequently designated, including extensions or alterations to existing buildings, should be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area by satisfying all the following criteria:

- 1) *Be built of materials which are sympathetic to the conservation area;*
- 2) *Incorporate appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping;*
- 3) *Be of a scale and massing appropriate to the immediate locality;*
- 4) *Must not result in the loss of open space which contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*

Development close to the conservation areas which is highly visible from within or has a significant impact on their setting should ensure that the scale, massing and materials are appropriate to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Policy EN24

Planning applications for the reuse or conversion of large historic buildings in conservation areas will be granted, provided that their important characteristic features are retained, proposals for the demolition of large historic buildings in conservation areas will not normally be permitted.

The first deposit of the **Replacement Unitary Development Plan** increases the number of policies pertaining to conservation areas, which are listed below. **These are likely to be subject to alteration in the course of the consultation process.** The intention of increasing the number of policies is to provide a more consistent and effective control to ensure the conservation of our local heritage.

Policy BH7: Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas

Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas will be expected to be of the highest standards of design and to respect the character and appearance of the conservation area. The council will actively support the use of new designs and materials for infill schemes as an alternative to traditional building methods where the applicant can demonstrate the highest standards of design and detailing whilst respecting the scale of development setting and historic value of the conservation area.

Policy BH8: Shop fronts in conservation areas

Within conservation areas proposals affecting existing shop fronts or proposals for new shop fronts must demonstrate a high standard of design and be sympathetic in scale, style and detail to the original building. Proposed external shutters sun blinds and canopies must be sympathetic in style, colour and materials to the buildings to which they are attached and their architectural style. Blinds will not normally be permitted on buildings without a shop front or fascia.

Policy BH9: Demolition within a conservation area

Within conservation areas, permission will not be granted for the demolition of buildings, walls or features which make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the area.

Policy BH10: Open spaces within or adjacent to conservation areas

Planning permission for the development of any open area of land or garden within or adjacent to a conservation area will not be granted if the land:

- 1) Makes a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.
- 2) Provides an attractive setting for the buildings within it.
- 3) Is important to the historical form and layout of the settlement.
- 4) Affords the opportunity for vistas in or out of the conservation area which are historically or visually significant.

- 5) Contains natural water features, tree and hedgerows which the development proposals propose to destroy.

Policy BH11: Space about buildings

Proposals maintaining traditional townscape within designated conservation areas will be favoured and consideration may be given to relaxing approved policies and standards if by doing so features of particular townscape merit under threat in the conservation area can be retained.

New developments seeking to integrate into an existing built form will be encouraged by relaxing approved policies and standards.

Policy BH12: Conservation area environment

The visual impact of traffic management schemes, parking, provision of street furniture, the reintroduction of historic features and the introduction of new features into a conservation area.

- 1) The design, materials and layout of traffic management and parking areas must minimise the adverse visual impact which may arise from such development.
- 2) New and replacement street furniture should be appropriate design and materials that preserve or enhance the character of the surrounding street scene.
- 3) Proposals for resiting an historic feature or for the introduction of a well designed new piece of public art or street furniture will be encouraged where it can be shown that enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area will result.

Policy BH13: Advertisements in conservation areas

Within conservation areas the council will require the design of advertisements to be of a high standard, therefore:

- 1) Consent will be granted only where the proposal is in scale and character with the building on which it is located and with surrounding buildings. In principle, all new shop fronts, fascias, signs and letters should be made of natural / sympathetic materials.
- 2) Within conservation areas internally illuminated box signs will not be permitted. Sensitively designed fascias or signs incorporating individually illuminated mounted letters on a suitable background may be acceptable in town centres where the scale, colour, design and intensity of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 3) Where unacceptable advertisements already exist in conservation areas, the council will

where appropriate take discontinuance action to secure their removal.

In addition to these there are separate policies relating to the **listed buildings** within the confines of the conservation area:

Adopted Unitary Development Plan

Policy EN20: Alterations to Listed Buildings

Planning permission for the alteration or extension of listed buildings will normally be granted provided all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- i. The essential character of the building is preserved;
- ii. Features of special interest are preserved;
- iii. Materials sympathetic to the listed building are used;
- iv. The development would be of appropriate scale and massing.

Policy EN21: Setting of Listed Buildings

Planning permission for development close to listed buildings will be granted provided it does not adversely affect the setting of listed buildings.

Policy EN22: Listed Agricultural Buildings

Planning permission for the conversion of listed agricultural buildings to residential use will not be granted unless the developer can clearly demonstrate that the character and essential features of the building will not be harmed.

First Deposit Replacement Unitary Development Plan

Policy BH1: Change of Use of Listed Buildings

Where possible the original use of a building should be retained or continued. Change of use will only be supported where the applicant can demonstrate that the original use is no longer viable and without an alternative use the building will be seriously at risk.

The Council will not grant planning permission for an alternative use unless it can be shown that:

- 1) The alternative use is compatible with and will preserve the character of the building and its setting.
- 2) No other reasonable alternative exists which would safeguard the character of the building in its setting.

Policy BH2: Demolition of a Listed Building

The demolition of a listed building will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Before permission is granted for the demolition of a listed

building, applicants will have to submit convincing evidence to show that:

- 1) Every possible effort has been made to repair and restore the building and to continue the present or past use;
- 2) It has been impossible to find a suitable viable alternative use for the buildings; and
- 3) That there is clear evidence that redevelopment would produce substantial planning benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from the building's demolition.

Policy BH3: Archaeology Recording of Listed Buildings

Where alterations or demolition of a listed building would result in the loss of features of special interest, a programme of recording agreed with the Local Planning Authority and where appropriate, archaeological investigation will be required before the commencement of development.

Policy BH4: Conversion and Alteration of Listed Buildings

The alteration, extension or substantial demolition of listed buildings will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- 1) Would not have any adverse effect upon the special architectural or historic interest of the building or its setting;
- 2) Is appropriate in terms of design, scale, detailing and materials;
- 3) Would minimise the loss of historic fabric of the building.

Policy BH5: Shop Front Policy For Listed Buildings

Proposals for the repair or alteration of existing shop fronts or installation of new shop fronts on a listed building should be a high standard of design and respect the character and appearance of the listed building. External roller shutters will not be granted consent on a listed building shop front unless there is clear evidence of an original shutter housing and the shutter is traditionally detailed and in timber and/or metal of a traditional section.

Policy BH6: Display of Advertisements on Listed Buildings

Consent for the display of advertisements on listed buildings or which would affect the setting of a listed building will be permitted only where:

- 1) The advertisement is appropriate in terms of its scale, design and materials and would not detract from the character or appearance of the buildings.
- 2) The advert is not an internally illuminated box.

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- 3) *If the proposed advertisement is to be externally illuminated, the design of the method of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the building.*
 - 4) *Plastic fascia signs whether or not illuminated will not be granted consent on a listed building.*