

Rochdale MBC - Planning and Regulation - Development Control Service
HERITAGE APPRAISAL MAPS
for Conservation Area Assessment

Heritage Appraisal Maps record the relative importance of elements of the townscape to a set scale. They complement a written assessment of the special architectural or historic interest, character and appearance.

Heritage Appraisal Maps:

1. are a succinct way of storing complex information on the relative importance of the various heritage assets of a Conservation Area;
2. are not a descriptive tool but an evaluative one;
3. can be used for the rapid area assessment as well as supplementing a mainstream written appraisal;
4. are simpler to understand and more accessible than large amounts of text;
5. prevent inconsistency or “drift” in evaluation over time;
6. have consistent categories for different heritage assets, buildings, spaces, views etc.;
7. are an easy-to-use tool to aid decision making; and,
8. help to set conservation area boundaries.

Ideally, every Conservation Area would have a *Heritage Appraisal Map* or GIS layer that records the value/contribution of each heritage asset in three broad areas of townscape.

Buildings, Structures, Features & Monuments

summarizing the contribution of each building and structure

Spaces, Gardens & Parks

summarizing the contribution of each open space

Trees, Views, Vistas, Gateways & Landmarks

recording value of key landscape features

All three areas use a standardized hierarchy of importance, from “national heritage asset” to something making a “negative contribution” and, combined, should cover the whole conservation area with colour-coded shading. With care, all the information can be displayed on one sheet.

Heritage Appraisal Map
Categories and Swiftmap GIS Colours and Symbols

KEY	<i>Buildings, Structures, Features & Monuments</i>	<i>Spaces, Gardens & Parks</i>	<i>Trees, Views, Vistas, Gateways & Landmarks</i>
National Heritage Asset			Not applicable
Local Interest Grade 1			Tree ● View ▶ Vista → Gateway G Landmark *
Local Interest Grade 2			Tree ● View ▶ Vista → Gateway G Landmark *
Substantial Contribution			Tree ● View ▶ Vista → Gateway G Landmark *
Slight Contribution			Tree ● View ▶ Vista → Gateway G Landmark *
Negative			Tree ● View ▶ Vista → Gateway G Landmark *

Heritage Appraisal Map

Definitions

National Heritage Asset - “*a national statutory designation*”. These are ultimately decided by central government or its agency English Heritage. There are currently three main examples in Rochdale Borough:

- *Listed Buildings (eg. Clegg Hall, near Milnrow) - there are three grades I, II* and II*
- *Scheduled Ancient Monuments (eg. Ellenroad Mill Engine, Newhey)*
- *Registered Parks or Gardens (eg. Queens Park, Heywood)*

Local Interest Grade 1 - “*of the highest local importance*”. Something that is one or more of the following:

1. *widely cherished for its historic, artistic or cultural value;*
2. *of defining or fundamental importance to the cultural heritage;*
3. *has outstanding individual merit; or,*
4. *is an outstanding example of its type.*

Grade 1 focusses on what is widely cherished, outstanding, defining or fundamental to the Borough’s heritage. Buildings will be added to the Rochdale MBC Local List as Grade 1.

Examples in Rochdale Borough:

- *Outstanding buildings such as Milnrow Library or Heywood Railway Warehouse*
- *Fundamental spaces such as Long Street, Middleton, The Esplanade/Town Hall Square, Rochdale, Wardle Fold, Littleborough Town Square*
- *Ancient or much-loved trees such as tree adjacent east end of St. Chad’s Church, Rochdale or Old Boar’s Head PH, Middleton*
- *Parks of importance such as Jubilee Park, Middleton or Hare Hill Park, Littleborough*
- *Tree groups such as Old Rectory Garden, Middleton or King’s Grove, Wardle*
- *Cherished landmarks such as Rochdale Town Hall or Rock Nook Mill, Littleborough*
- *Defining views such as Rock Nook, Littleborough from near Whitfield Farm or Rochdale Town Hall Square from St. Chad’s Steps.*

Local Interest Grade 2 - “*sufficiently important in its own right, regardless of context or setting*”. Something that is one or more of the following:

- *cherished (less widely than Grade 1) for its historic, artistic or cultural value;*
- *of importance to the cultural heritage;*
- *has individual merit; or,*
- *is a fine example of its type.*

Grade 2 focusses on the heritage that is cherished, important or possesses individuality or fine quality. Grade 2 may be more specialist or local in interest than Grade 1. Buildings will be added to the Rochdale MBC Local List as Grade 2.

Examples in Rochdale Borough:

- *A fine example of a building type such as Assheton Arms PH, Middleton or former Tannery (woollen mill), Wardle*
- *A cherished local building such as the former Suite Sixteen Studios, Kenyon Street, Rochdale or the former Town Hall, Milnrow*
- *A fine tree-lined space such as Moorgate Avenue, Rochdale*

Substantial Contribution - “a clear positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area”. A good quality building, street, tree, garden or vista but without individual architectural or aesthetic merit or historic importance. Substantial change is unlikely to enhance its contribution, though small incremental changes may add interest.

Buildings in this and the above two Local Interest categories are affected by paragraph 4.27 of PPG15 which states “ *The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Secretary of State expects that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings*”.

Slight Contribution - “while on balance positive, the contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is slight”. Examples might include a mutilated historic building, poor tree specimens that are nevertheless in a positive location or an unsympathetic modern building, which may contribute in a small way by enclosing a street scene.

Non-transforming change, such as the reinstatement of the mutilated architectural features, replanting or the replacement of the building is desirable. The category is important in defining the lower limits of contribution so that change of the wrong type is avoided. A building in this category will always be better than its demolition and a gap site. Similarly, a poor quality open space in this category would nevertheless be preferable to a building on the site.

Negative - “a fundamentally negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area that requires transforming change”. Examples might include an ugly gap site, a building or trees in the wrong place, a detracting landmark or a very ugly gateway.

Transforming change is required such that a building or group of trees in this category would be better removed altogether and replaced with an open site. Spaces in this category likewise should be built upon.

Notes

The categories record inherent and fundamental qualities rather than the general state of repair or maintenance. Hence a building normally graded as a *Substantial Contribution* would not be graded as *Slight Contribution* if it is poorly maintained. However, if the building was so severely mutilated that its inherent quality was permanently altered, there may be a case for this. The same applies to trees, spaces, views etc. and a judgement will need to be made in such instances on the severity and permanence of the detracting elements.

Spaces, trees, views, vistas, gateways & landmarks have no national statutory protection regime. A *vista* is a linear enclosed view while a *view* is generally wider and less focussed.

Where *historical interest or association* relates to a specific building or space, it will be recorded on the Heritage Appraisal Map but where it is more general, it will be recorded only in the written Conservation Area Appraisal Document.