

ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal

Produced by
Middleton Heritage and Conservation Group

Supported by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council and English Heritage

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January 2008

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1. INTRODUCTION



Saint Leonard's Church, Middleton

1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation area as an ‘*area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which, it is desirable to preserve or enhance*’. The purpose of this document is to appraise the elements of the special interest, character and appearance of the Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area, including its archaeology, historic associations, architecture and environment. The appraisal provides a basis for development control, improvement initiatives and the future management of the area. An appraisal also can have educational and research uses.

1.2 The Middleton area is too large for the appraisal to be full and comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature, space, positive or negative characteristic, should not be taken to imply that it is of no importance, interest or relevancy.

1.3 There is a natural topographical hierarchy within the conservation area where the medieval church of Saint Leonard is raised on a scarp to the east of an ancient main road, appropriately named “Long Street” (see fig 2). The area contains a medieval topography complemented by a surprisingly rich architectural history. In particular, there is a significant grouping of Arts and Crafts buildings by the renowned architect Edgar Wood, who was born and lived in the town.

1.4 In the early 1970s, the historic town centre was artificially split into two, with the primary commercial focus located to the south (outside the conservation area) and the cultural and historic focus to the north (within the conservation area). The division was created by the imposition of a large traffic island on the traditional Market Place and the re-siting of the market to the south.

1.5 This influenced the 1978 conservation area boundary which uncomfortably terminates at the island. In fact there are several other arbitrary terminations to the north, south, east and west. Recently, an important chapel was demolished because the boundary, irrationally, went around it but did not include it. It stood at the top of the Twenty Four Steps, a local landmark made famous by an L. S. Lowry painting. Consequently, a classic image of Middleton was lost. Therefore, in addition to the assessment of the present conservation area, four extensions are proposed to create a sensible and inclusive boundary. These are:

- *Extension 1 – Rochdale Road to Hollins Lane;*
- *Extension 2 – Grammar School to Lodge Mill;*
- *Extension 3 – Long Street to Middleton Gardens; and*
- *Extension 4 – Durnford Street.*

1.6 The proposed development of a Tesco supermarket complex just outside the conservation area has created a healthy debate as to the town's environment, role and function in the twenty-first century. Consultants have created a Masterplan for the future and structural problems such as the traffic island dividing the town are to be addressed. The appraisal forms part of the Masterplan.



Fig 1. Middleton lies north of Manchester and south of Rochdale, as indicated by the pink icon.



Fig 2. Aerial view of the conservation area with the boundary in yellow. Saint Leonard's Parish Church is highlighted, as is the main Long Street/ Rochdale Road axis.



Fig.3 Saint Leonard's Parish Church, Middleton, from the old graveyard.



Fig 4. Map of Conservation Area with key street names

2. ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST



Jubilee Park

In the late 1960's, Nikolaus Pevsner wrote, *“Middleton has not the gloom of so many South Lancashire towns of its size. It benefits from its position close to the hills, but it has also the advantage of a large medieval church on a hill and of a number of buildings by one of England’s most original architects (Edgar Wood) of the interesting period of 1900”*. (Pevsner, N. 1967, pg 346)

2.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

2.1.1 Middleton lies between the city of Manchester, six miles to the south, and the town of Rochdale, four miles to the north (Grid Reference SD8706). Oldham and Bury lie to the east and west respectively. Geologically, Middleton is enclosed by the Millstone Grit of the Pennines to the east and the Sandstone Coal Measures of the West Pennine Moors to the north.

2.1.2 This location, in the middle of larger settlements, has greatly influenced Middleton's development from a small pastoral township of around twenty houses to the present post-industrial town rooted in the textile industry. Thus textile manufacturers and chemical companies are now complemented by service industries. Middleton has a substantial population of approximately 70,000 people. Despite these great changes, something of the pre-industrial era survives in the buildings and layout of the conservation area.

2.1.3 The Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area covers approximately sixteen hectares in the northern part of the town centre. This was the focus of pre-industrial Middleton before later developments shifted the centre southwards. The main thoroughfare is Long Street, stretching from the Assheton Arms at Market Place and moving north to King Street where it continues as Rochdale Road (see fig 5). Travelling along this thoroughfare through the centre of the conservation area provides an enriching visual experience. There are pleasantly eclectic shop frontages in the south with prominent buildings such as Long Street Methodist Church and School. Later the road opens up at the timber framed Old Boars Head public house, Library and Local Studies centre and Jubilee Park. Further north, the scene closes down again and houses predominate.

2.1.4 To the west of this axis are important areas of largely residential streetscape and a substantial plot of open wooded land occupied by the late medieval Rectory (enclosed in a Victorian shell). Several buildings by Edgar Wood also occupy this side. Land to the east of Long Street includes the principal open space, Jubilee Park, which rises to meet the timber clad tower of the medieval Parish Church of Saint Leonard and the adjacent Old Burial Ground. From this hilltop position the whole of Middleton and beyond can be surveyed (see fig 6).

2.1.5 The conservation area is therefore aligned around the north-south axis of Long Street and the physical character is dominated by the Parish Church. Surprisingly, the atmosphere has more the flavour of a suburban location than an industrial town, due to the large open spaces, abundance of trees and the presence of many suburban style buildings (see fig 7). Nevertheless, the spaces are ancient with historical links to the pre-industrial Middleton township. The conservation area retains a clear medieval footprint.



Fig 5. Long Street looking south towards the Library and the Old Parish School.

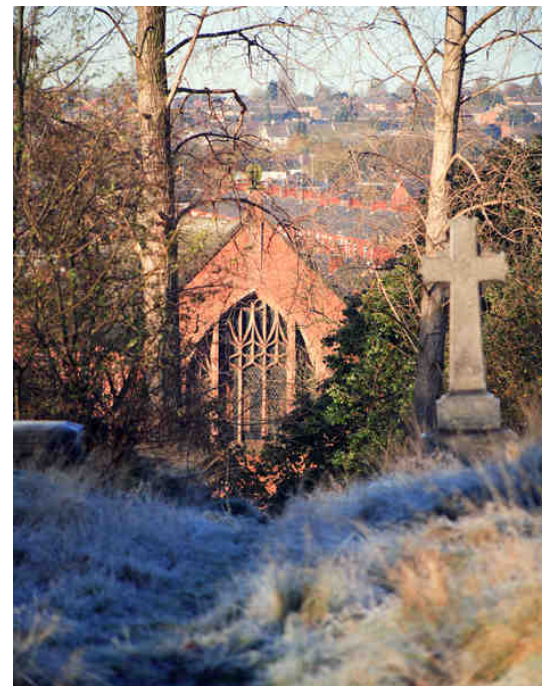


Fig 6. ‘From this hilltop position the whole of Middleton and beyond can be surveyed’. Here the vista opens up westwards towards Edgar Wood’s Long Street Methodist Church.



Fig 7. ‘Surprisingly, the atmosphere has more the flavour of a suburban location than an industrial town due to the large open spaces’. Jubilee Park and Library

2.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

2.2.1 From an agricultural background Middleton's population grew extensively over 100 years as a result of first, Georgian period cottage industry (cotton, wool and silk) and secondly, Victorian large scale factory development (cotton and silk) . Middleton, today, has a mixture of retail and manufacturing concerns.

2.2.2 Middleton is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, but "Middleton" is a Saxon place name: 'Middle' relating to a middle hill or location and 'ton' meaning settlement. There is also evidence of settlement in Neolithic times. A polished stone axe and Bronze Age stone axe were found in the Irk valley close by. An aerial photograph of 1956 shows a potential settlement location with various rectangular and circular ground features. Early names also exist such as "Barrowfields" in the north of the conservation area.

2.2.3 There is no clear evidence of Roman settlement, although Long Street is thought to be on the line of a Roman road linking Chester to York. On Hugh Oldham's map of 1767, the road is in its current position with the Old Boar's Head Inn aligned to it.

2.2.4 Middleton was visited by the monks carrying the body of Saint Cuthbert in the late ninth century when fleeing Viking intrusions into Northumberland. A document published in 1910 (by the Surtees Society) notes that *'after wandering into Yorkshire they came to Middleton, near Manchester, thence returning northwards they remained at Over Kellet.'* (Surtees Society, 1910) The link with Saint Cuthbert and Durham is intriguing in the light of the dedication of a chapel in Saint Leonard's Church to The Virgin and Saint Cuthbert.

2.2.5 Documentary evidence of Middleton exists in a twelfth century deed recording a grant by Roger de Middleton. Evidence of a flourishing settlement in the twelfth century and thirteenth centuries can be seen in the remains of a Romanesque arch (see fig 8) inside the Church and an early Gothic doorway and window to the south elevation.

2.2.6 Of the immediate post-medieval period, Adrian Tindall notes: *'Middleton was the other (as well as Rochdale) main centre of growth in the early modern period. Both towns were centres of the woollen trade, and the agriculture of the area had moved from arable to pastoral, and from cattle to sheep-raising'* (Tindall, A. 1985, pg 118). He also notes the increase in the value of education and the establishment of the Middleton Grammar School by Bishop Langley in 1412, which survives today in the School House of 1597. A hearth return of 1666 showed 113 hearths in the township with approximately 18 hearths belonging to Lady Anne Assheton.



Fig 8. Scalloped capitals and billet work to the C12th Romanesque arch at Saint Leonard's.



Fig 9. This C19th photo still shows a rural Middleton. Here the Birch Road (across Glebe Land) leads onto the houses at Long Street.



Fig 10. Long Street in the last half of the C19th with Glebe land taken up by Jubilee Park in the foreground, the Parish School on the left and Old Boar's Head on the right.

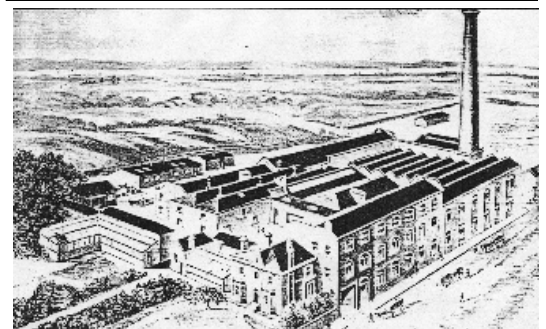


Fig 11. Many of the larger factories in Middleton developed to the south of the town as in this Mill at Parkfield (est C 1800).

2.2.7 It was during the latter half of the eighteenth century that textile manufacturing began to take root as a cottage industry. Yet the form of the area remained largely unchanged and rural J. Aiken writing in 1795 about Middleton 20 years earlier, said it was a township with a manor house, mill, inns for travellers and about ‘*twenty houses in the village.*’ (VCH). However, over that period the number of houses had dramatically increased to around 200 (see Maps 1 and 2)

2.2.8 When estate owners, principally the Suffield's, started speculative development in the 1770's, the area began to take on a more urban form. The granting of a Market Charter in 1791 accelerated the encroachment of speculative plots on Glebe Land to the west of Long Street. Yet the encroachment of properties remained on a relatively small scale and Middleton retained an open and rural aspect with Glebe Land extending as far as the eye could see. The 1767 (Map 1) map shows the area retaining the medieval footprint of church, manor house and mill. The Estate Map of 1795 (Map 2), however, shows development to the bottom of New Lane and on Long Street.

2.2.9 Middleton's industrialization evolved from the handloom weaver's workshop, which was adapted to work in either cotton or silk. The practice of weaving originated in the local farms and cottages (largely for woollen goods). As small cotton factories sprang up around the south of the town, speculative plots were purpose built to bring production closer to the main factories, which still operated under the ‘putting out’ system. This was the process whereby factory spun yarn was handed out to local weavers.

2.2.10 One of the first water powered cotton spinning mills was built at the bottom of Wood Street by John Jackson, which later became infamous under the ownership of Daniel Burton during the Luddite riots of 1812. The introduction of the mill seems to have been the catalyst for the development of this part of town during the early C19th. The introduction of the cotton power loom in the early C19th led to great hardship, much disturbance and ultimately the rapid decline of the cotton hand-loom weavers. Brookside Mill (located in our proposed extension) is a rare example of a cotton power-weaving shed and Lodge Mill, a relatively early spinning factory.

2.2.11 Throughout the C19th there was a symbiotic relationship between the weaving of silk and cotton, with either taking pre-eminence depending on the economic conditions of the day. Because of this, it is likely that many workshops were adapted to take into account both the weaving of silk or cotton. Two surviving buildings reflect each process in their design. First, at Sadler Street there are basement workshops which were suited to the damp conditions of cotton production. Secondly at Long Street there is a second story workshop, with eaves lights, which was better suited to the dryer conditions of silk production.



Fig 12. Irregular fenestration to eaves is a characteristic of an C18th workshop, here in Spring Gardens.



Fig 13. Continuous lights to the eaves reveal the original use of this building (probably silk weaving) on Long Street. The windows to the centre are known as ‘Yorkshire Lights’.



Fig 14. Dutch Baroque style on Mellalieu Street named after Heugenot silk weaving immigrants.

2.2.12 The strength of the silk industry in Middleton is notable. Silk throwing and weaving was a late development in England where access to the knowledge, materials and processes to produce silk garments was limited. The suppression of the Huguenot's in France (with a large silk weaving community) and their subsequent acceptance in England encouraged the introduction of silk weaving. The Mellalieu of Middleton were Huguenot's and are thought to have greatly influenced the industry in the town. The family is remembered in Mellalieu Street in the conservation area.

2.2.13 The silk weaving community maintained production at home rather than in the larger factories used by the cotton industry. It prolonged a traditional way of life in opposition to the marked changes of the factory system. This was possible with silk, because it only became centralised and mechanised at a much later date, as illustrated in the late date of the two (relatively small) Silk Mills north of New Lane.

2.2.14 The 1848 six inch Ordnance Survey map, (see Map 4) illustrates Middleton at the end of the Georgian period. It shows large numbers of ordered plots containing either a single cottage with a garden or a terraced row of houses. The surviving buildings suggest these were mostly weaver's cottages.

2.2.15 The town had developed in two main areas, Wood Street, to the south-west and a grid of terraced houses and possibly small factories on land named "Well Barrowfield" on Hugh Oldham's 1762 map. This area is now known as Spring Gardens and in 1842 it was reported that the '*silk trade is making considerable progress here, and Messrs Oakes and Aubrey have lately established an extensive manufacture of that fabric....in Spring Gardens.*' (Tindall A. 1985). Two silk mills survive in this area, one in the conservation area and one adjacent. By the 1840's industrialization has taken hold so that it was estimated that silk weaving occupied approximately 2,000 people. The continuing increase in population led to the building of Providence Congregational Chapel in 1859 by which time the cotton industry was fully mechanized, and the typical Victorian terraced houses for mill workers were beginning to be constructed.

2.2.16 On the Ordnance Survey map of 1893 (see Map 5) the effect of the Victorian industrial revolution can be seen. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the continued growth of residential development, particularly along the Long Street/Rochdale Road axis in the conservation area. The built form moved away from the terraced to the detached or semi-detached house. The conservation area's third place of worship was built in 1901, Long Street Methodist Church and School, an Edgar Wood masterpiece. The period saw the erection of many other Edgar Wood designs. By this time, extremely large cotton mills of the "Oldham" type and associated terraces were being constructed south of the Conservation Area such as the listed Warwick Mill.



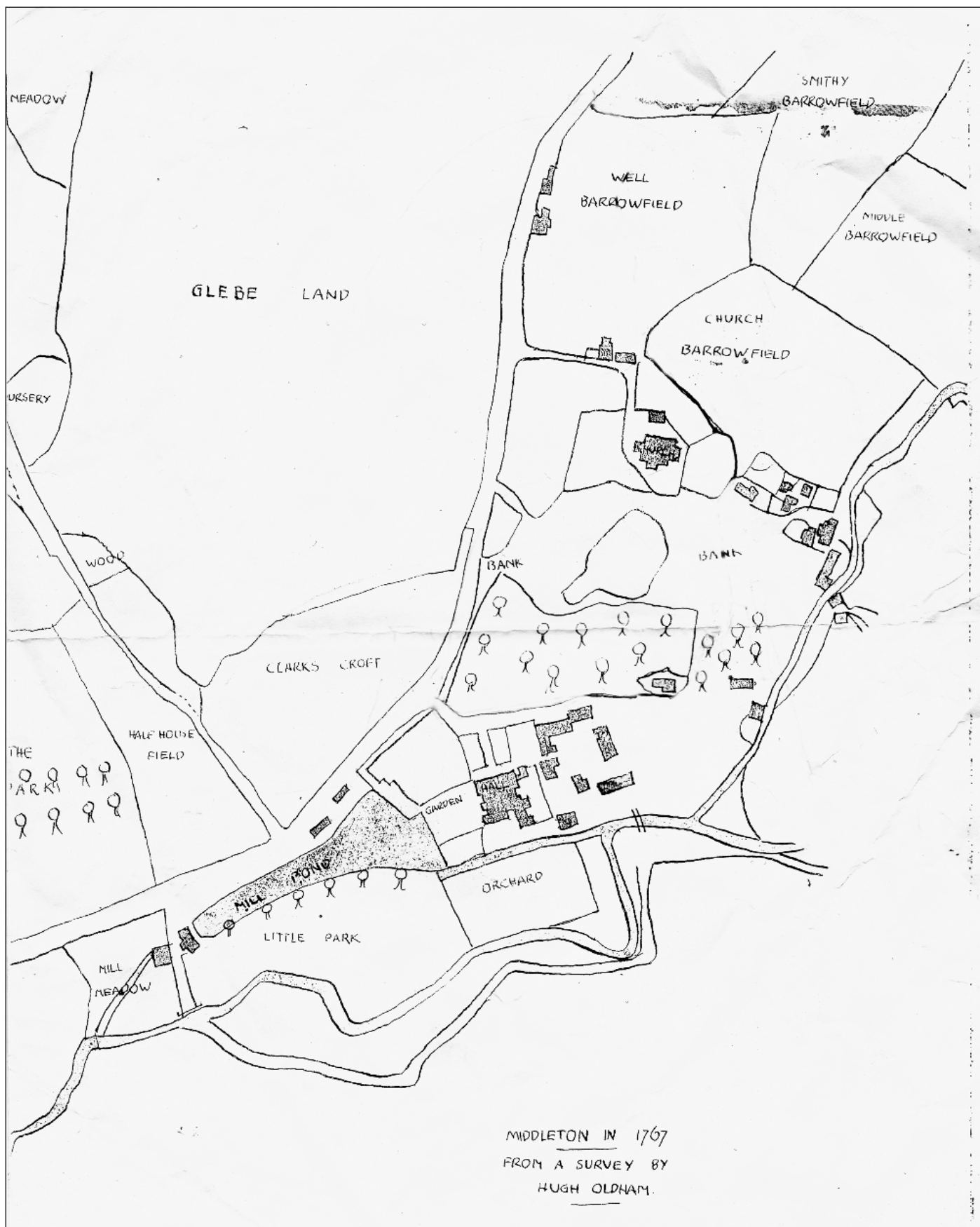
Fig. 15 Spring Gardens has many buildings which were originally involved in the textile industry.



Fig 16. 'The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the continued growth of residential development, particularly along the Long Street/ Rochdale Road axis in the conservation area'.

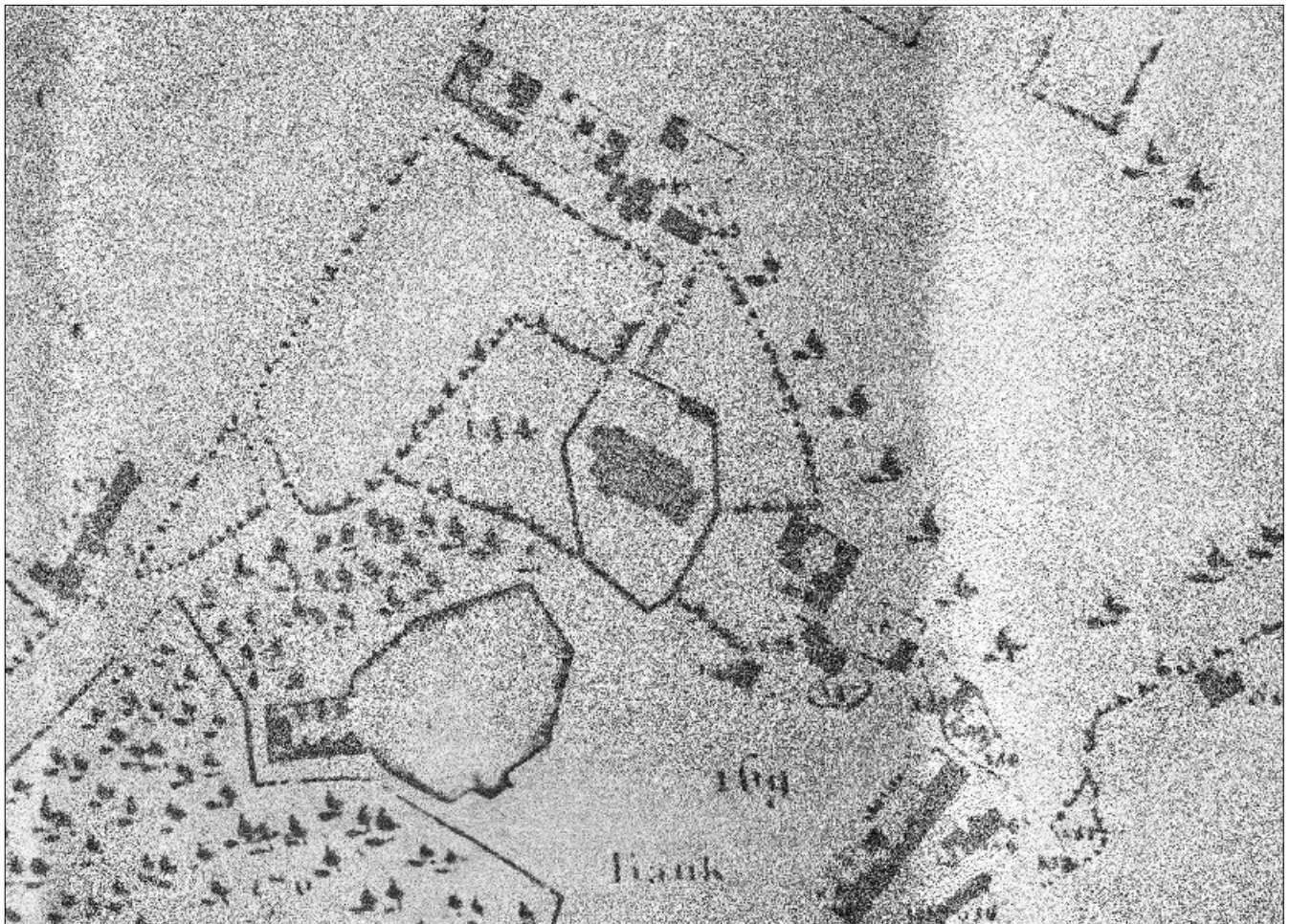


Fig 17. Long Street Methodist Church, 1901, Edgar Wood.

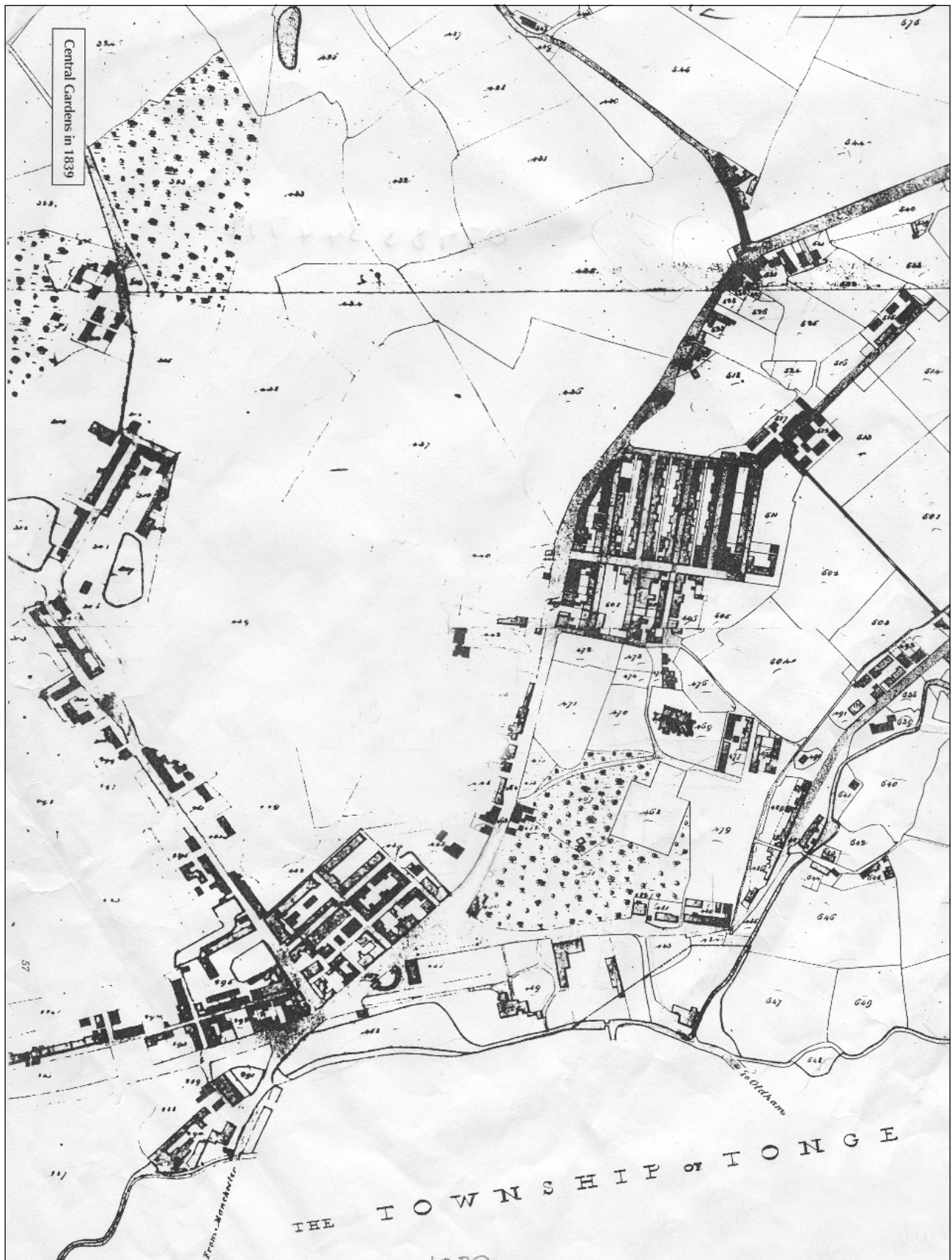


Map 1 - Here the Hugh Oldham Map of 1767 shows Middleton still retaining its medieval footprint, with the Church on the hill, the Manor House further south, and the corn mill beyond the mill pond.

Fig 18. Five Maps showing the Historical Development Of Middleton 1767 - 1893



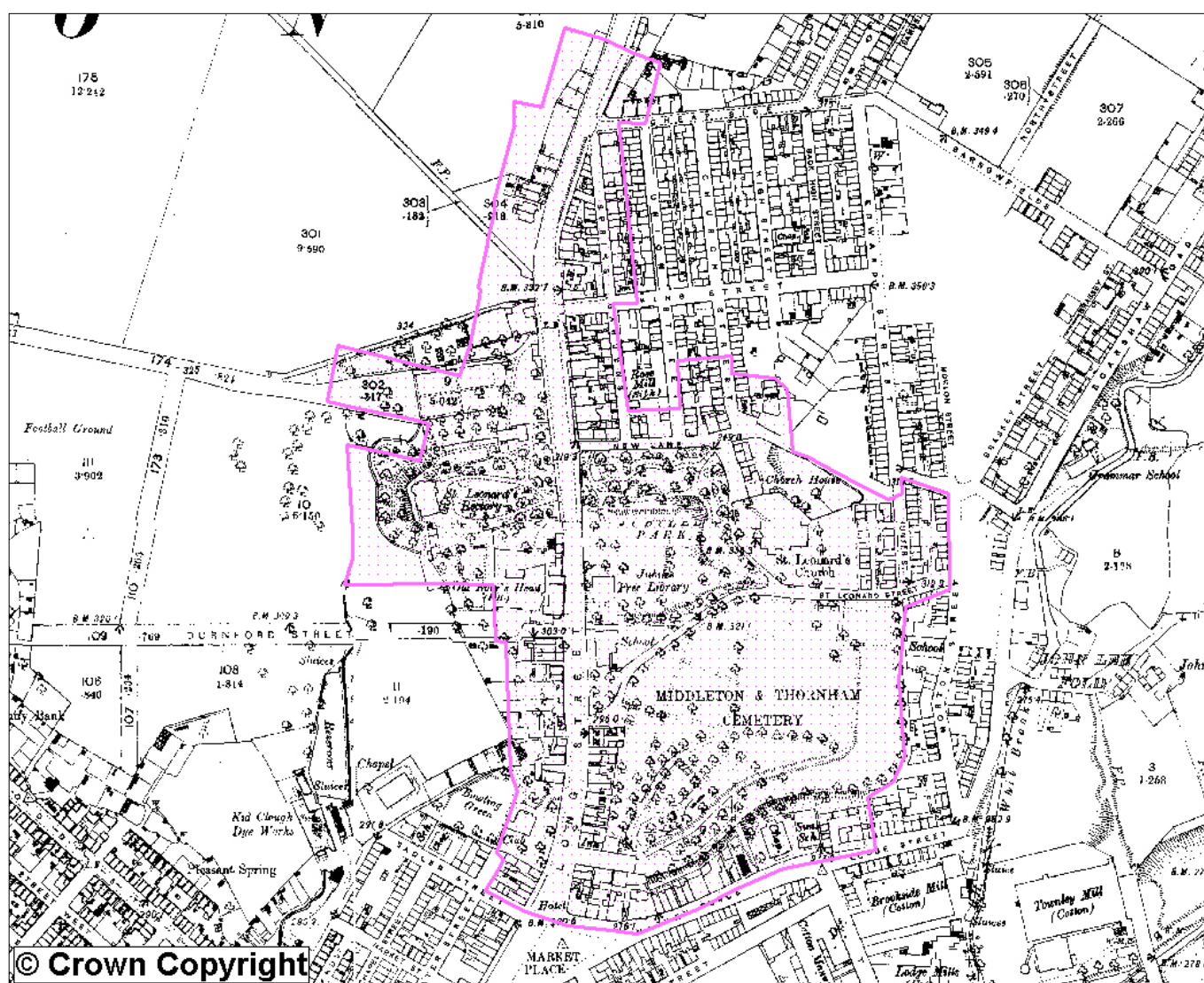
Map 2 - This is an Estate Map of 1795 and shows Middleton on the cusp of the Industrial Revolution with evidence of the speculative development by the Suffield's at the bottom of New Lane (top of map)



Map 3 - Here, in 1839, we can clearly see the effects of the Georgian Industrial Revolution, with speculative developments of handloom weavers houses to the north (in Barrowfields) and the south-west (along Wood Street). One of the first cotton mills to be built in Middleton (by John Jackson in c1800) is at the bottom of Wood Street adjacent to the large rectangular area which is a lodge. Lodge Mill is also visible to the bottom right of the map, along the road to Oldham.



Map 4 - The 1848 Ordnance Survey six inch map shows the continued urbanisation of Middleton into the early Victorian period, with the mill pond still surviving (seen at the bottom middle of the map).



Map 5 - This Ordnance Survey map shows the conservation area in 1893, towards the end of the Victorian period. Beyond this date developments in the Conservation Area were largely residential and took place along the Long Street axis and westwards on the Glebe land.

2.2.17 The first half of the twentieth century saw the introduction of both social housing and the private Garden Suburb of Alkington. Subsequently, the even larger Langley Manchester overspill estate was similarly built on garden city lines. However, development was limited in the conservation area and little change occurred to the built form after the Edwardian period.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

2.3.1 Several early boundaries are evident in the landscape. Market Place and Lodge Street at the southern most area of the conservation area follow the boundary of a wood (called 'The Warren' in the 1848 OS Map), which is recorded in Hugh Oldham's survey of Middleton in 1767 (see fig 24). Clarke Brow also follows the early southern field boundary to an area called Church Barrowfield in the 1767 survey. Jubilee Park developed within the tight boundaries of a field of Glebe Land connecting church to rectory. Church Brow skirts along the boundary of glebe land and is cut deeply into the side of the embankment, which rises steeply to form the graveyard.

2.3.2 Of the Old Burial Ground, maps of 1767 and 1795 show a bottle shaped enclosure. The 1795 map also shows a structure situated at the head of the bottle shape with the 'neck' being lined with trees. The Sites and Monuments Record notes the existence of an old building known as Scroops House here which was demolished in 1861. The 1848 Ordnance Survey six inch map suggests a double depth building with rear outbuildings. The 1795 map shows the boundary of a wooded Warren circumnavigating the bottle shaped enclosure. Added to this Clare Hartwell and Matthew Hyde note in the introduction to *Pevsner's Lancashire: Manchester And The South – East* that the circular shape of the graveyard surrounding the church could have Celtic origins. The significance of the topography of the Old Burial Ground area has not been explored. The Warren is noted in the Sites and Monuments Record as a 'rabbit warren of the medieval lords of Middleton'.

2.3.3 The curving boundary of Clarke's Croft eastwards from Wood Street to Long Street is followed by the segmental sweep of the Conservative Club's bowling green. A small oval shaped area of glebe land close to Church Brow retains its footprint in the boundaries occupied by the former Parish School and playground.

2.3.4 There are remains of ancient watercourses which contributed to the millpond to the south of Middleton Hall. Whit Brook to the east of the conservation area skirts past the Elizabethan Grammar School until it joins the Irk, which was largely culverted in the twentieth century. The Sites and Monuments Record notes the existence of a post-medieval well site (of about 1540) possibly within the grounds of the Rectory and the remains of the western arm of a moat.

2.3.5 The Sites and Monuments Record (no. 2433) notes 'what may be the shaft of a Saxon Cross found in 1909 incorporated into the wall above the window immediately east of the north door of Saint Leonard's church' (see fig 20). It also records the existence of a thirteenth century priest's door and the south porch, tower and south arcade of 1412. Evidence of Norman



Fig 19. Clarke Brow follows the boundary of an area known as Church Barrowfield.



Fig.20. The SMR notes 'what may be the shaft of a Saxon Cross found in 1909 incorporated into the wall.' The photograph above (stitched together from three originals) according to the SMR suggests the head of a figure with flowing hair, with a cross to the centre.

work can be found in the re-set Romanesque arch and a motif on a corbel or capital set into the north aisle wall. To the south aisle the remains of a wall foundation can be found in a box pew hidden beneath a boxed seat.

2.3.6 Carved stone heads (possibly Georgian or Victorian) from the corbel table of the church (and subsequently removed for a new roof) were found (and remain) in the grounds of the new Rectory (see fig. 22).

2.3.7 The Sites and Monuments Record also records part of the Old Boar's Head as dated 1572 and a stone in the cellar bearing the date of 1632. Late seventeenth century oak beams, floor boards and purlins have survived to the interior of the three storey Georgian houses at the bottom of New Lane, indicating that these single depth buildings were re-faced in the Georgian period.

2.3.8 With regard to industrial archaeology, silk was woven by hand on looms housed in cottages or 'garrets'. A typical garret was of three storeys and three bays with living accommodation to the ground and first floors and an open plan second floor containing three or four looms. A silk weavers cottage adjacent to Long Street Methodist Church has a similar plan. The building also has Yorkshire Lights to the front façade. That is a long window with a horizontal sliding sash and small window panes. There are several examples of three storey Georgian houses having a polite front elevation yet, to the rear, a wide window opening on the top floor indicating a loom shop.

2.3.9 The conservation area also contains a row Georgian cottages on Sadler Street with cellar loom shops. These were specifically designed for cotton weaving which required a damp atmosphere.

2.3.10 The factory at Spring Gardens, to the north of the conservation area, is a good example of a multi-phase silk mill. The fenestration in some of the later phases is almost the full height of the storey, which often indicates the use of the Jacquard Loom, which required extra height for its mechanism. The Jacquard Loom was an early C18th French innovation, which used punched cards to orchestrate the pattern of the cloth. The use of this in mills in Middleton indicates a willingness to keep up with the technology of the day and also shows how advanced the locality was in silk production. Other buildings in the immediate vicinity including the property on the narrow triangular piece of land between Spring Gardens and Long Street may have also have had silk throwing and/or weaving as its original function.



Fig 21. Romanesque style motif on a capital embedded into the wall at Saint Leonard's Parish Church.



Fig 22. Carved stone heads originally from the corbel table of Saint Leonard's Parish Church



Fig 23. Yorkshire Light at former silk weaving workshop on Long Street.



Fig 24. Overlay of Hugh Oldham's Map of 1767 on an aerial image of the Conservation Area

Hugh Oldham's 1767 map showing field boundaries overlaid onto a contemporary aerial view. Note the bottle shaped enclosure to the centre. Also part of the boundary survives to Clarke's Croft (bottom left) in the form of the Conservative Club bowling green. Oldham's reference to a 'bank' on the west and east elevations of the hill is also of interest. Further investigation of the topography of the landscape might help in increasing our understanding of the development of the site. The area which was marked as wooded in 1767 (known as the Warren) still retains a similar aspect.

2.4 CHARACTER OF SPACES WITHIN THE AREA

Market Place

2.4.1 The south-eastern boundary of the conservation area of Market Place and Lodge Street has an imposing mix of Victorian and Edwardian commercial properties which, from a distance, form an asymmetrical skyline of chimneys and gables against a rugged backdrop of the Old Burial Ground. Moving towards Lodge Street, the space opens up and is dominated by the now derelict Providence Congregational Chapel. It is bounded by a strikingly decorative iron fence. The only such survival of this period in the conservation area. The rear is again dominated by the rising scarp of the Old Burial Ground, which is the highest vantage point in the area. From the top, the views are very good, especially towards the east. On a clear day the distant hills of Bleaklow and Kinder Scout can be seen. Another view is to Tandle Hills, a meeting point in the nineteenth century for militant workers, including the Peterloo demonstrations of 1819, to which Middleton sent a significant contingent.

Long Street

2.4.2 The Long Street axis provides a varied and atmospheric urban mix of the built form with the surrounding spaces. The line of shops to the southern most tip of Long Street provides an eclectic backdrop, with a vernacular feel enhanced by the multiple heights of the buildings and frontages. A linear funnel effect is created by the tight formation of properties rising up the hill. Beyond the shop fronts, the street opens out to reveal tantalising glimpses into the gated garden courtyard of Long Street Methodist Church. The courtyard, an enclosed Arts and Crafts garden, has something of a cloistered feel. Opposite, the ancient walkway of Church Brow is somewhat ‘aloof from the contemporary’ enhanced by the dynamic incline and the open views into Jubilee Park. The scene is anchored by the imposing Victorian Middleton Library and Local Studies centre. Moving northwards past the Old Boars Head (from which the Library took its cue), the area opens further into Jubilee Park on the right and the walled and wooded garden of the Rectory to the left. Moving south to north, there is a gradual opening out of the street and a hierarchical journey up Long Street, turning eastwards at Jubilee Park upwards past the Exedra to the culmination of the Church tower (see fig 27).

Jubilee Park

2.4.3 With the creation of Middleton Borough in 1886 the council wished to demonstrate its enhanced status for improving the amenities of Middleton. In 1887, to commemorate Queen Victoria’s Jubilee, a plot of land was purchased on the fields below the Parish Church. The plan was to provide a public area for recreation and to hold within its boundaries a free public library. According to a report prepared by the Derek Lovejoy Partnership, the site was purchased not only for recreation, but also for ‘*preserving the picturesque surrounds of the Parish Church.*’ (Lovejoy D, 1998).



Fig 25. Long Street looking north, from outside the Old Boar’s Head.



Fig 26. Jubilee Park from Long Street, looking east.



Fig 27. The Parish Church of Saint Leonard from the Exedra in Jubilee Park



Rochdale Road



Mellalieu Street



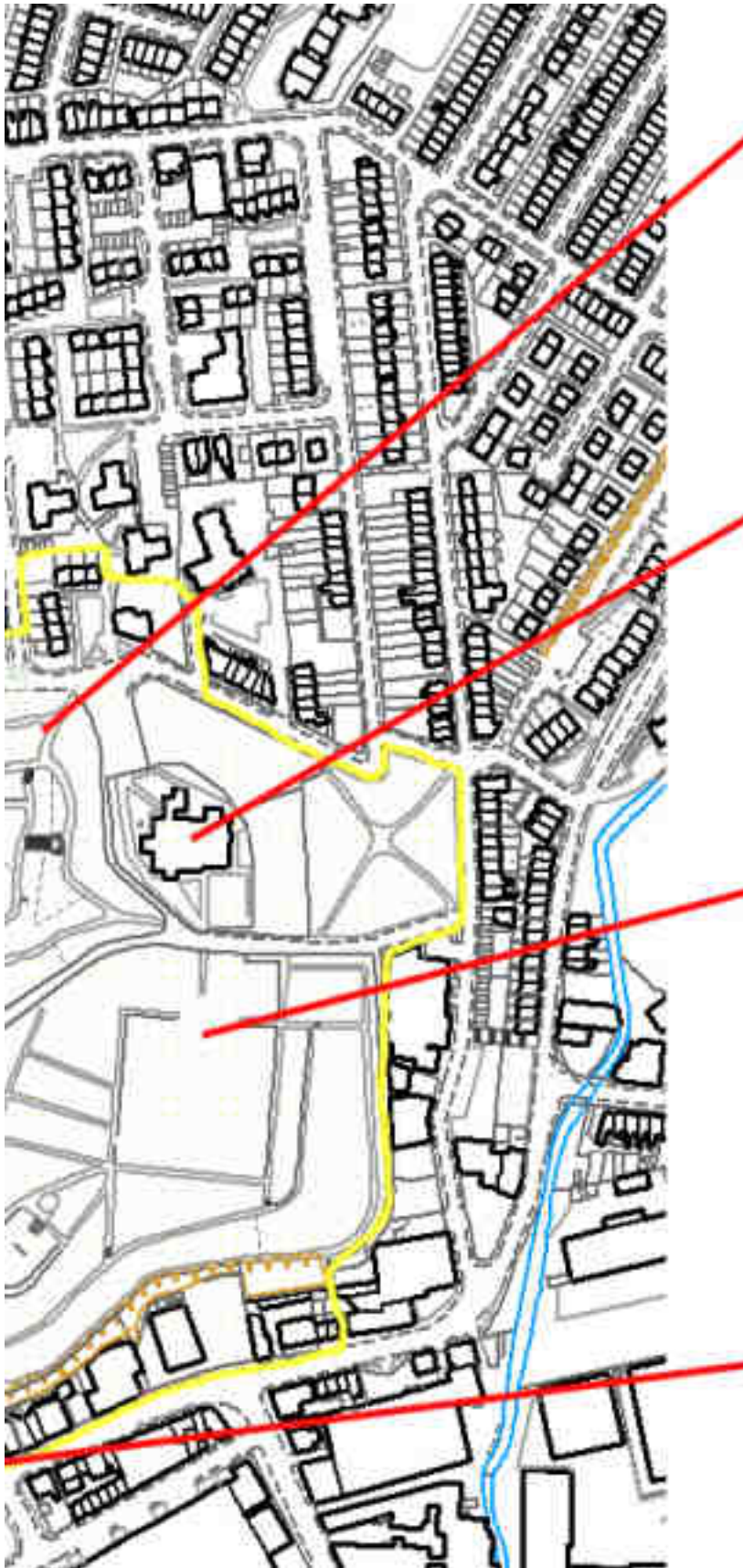
New Lane



Long Street



Fig 28. The Character Of Spaces Within Middleton



Jubilee Park



Parish Church



Old Burial Ground



Market Place



Fencegate and Redcroft
Rochdale Rd



36 Mellallieu Street



The Old Rectory



Old Boar's Head



Long Street Methodist
Church and School

GRADE I

GRADE II*

GRADE II

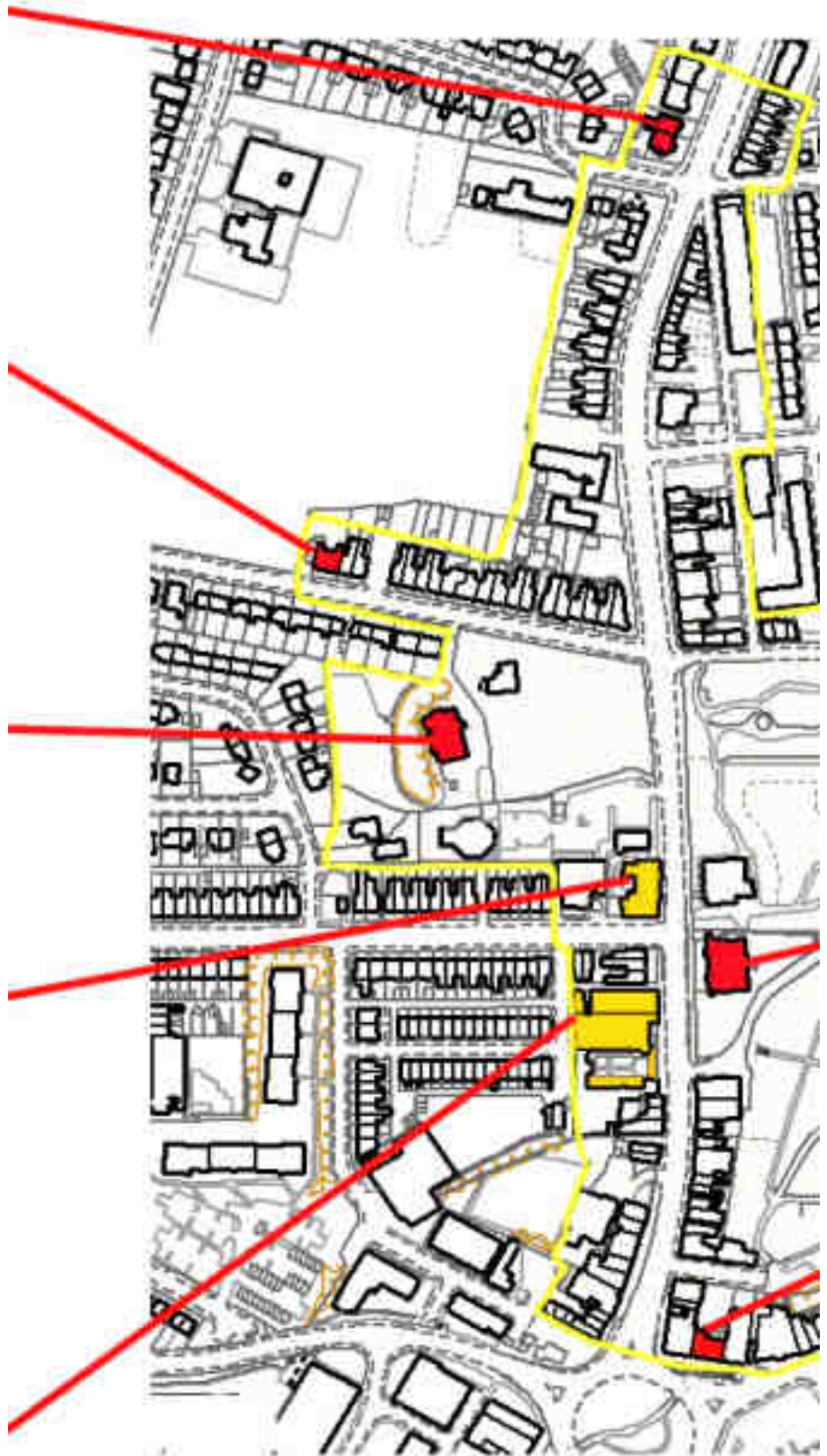
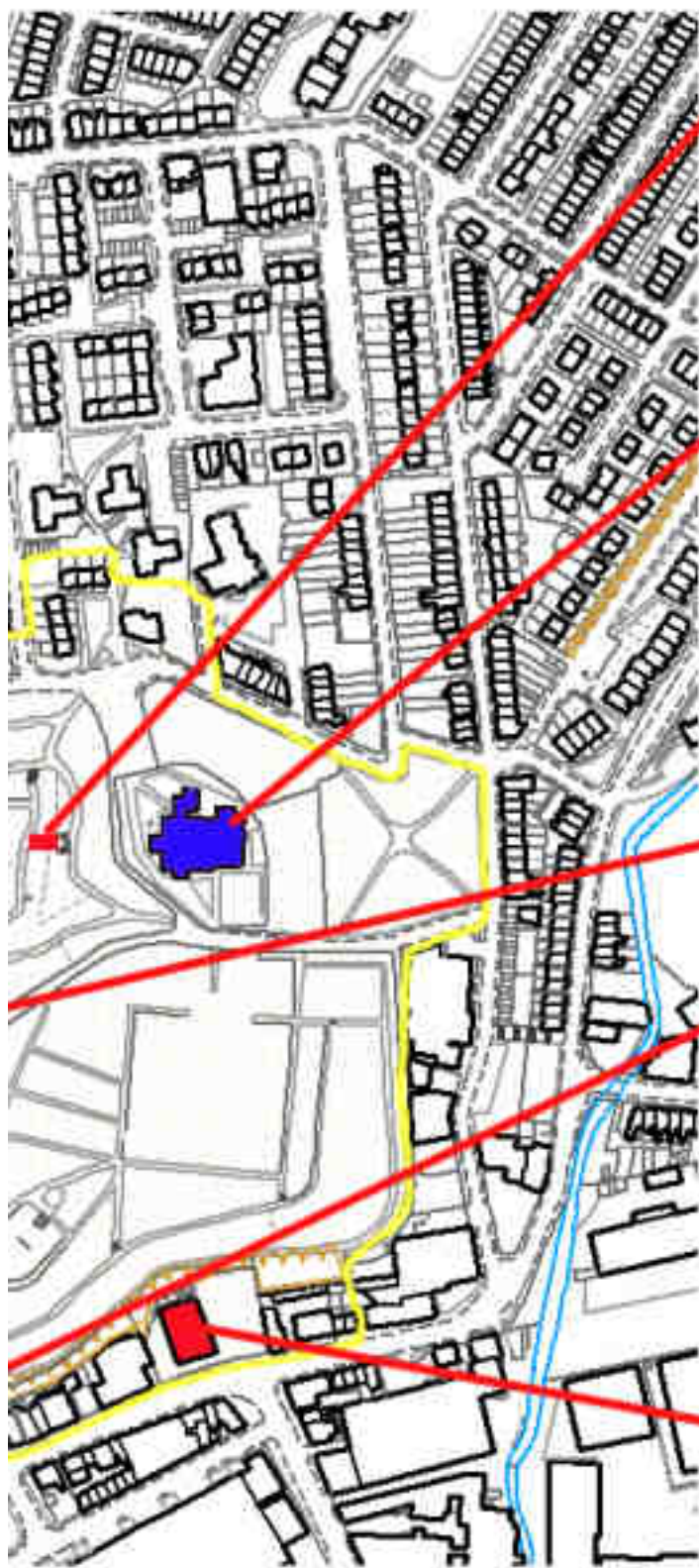


Fig 29. Listed Buildings in the Conservation Area



Staircase and Exedra
Jubilee Park



Saint Leonard's Parish Church



Former Parish School



Former Manchester
and Salford Bank



Providence Congregational Church

2.4.4 From its original conception, Jubilee Park therefore had an important visual and physical relationship with the Parish Church. The layout and form of the park remains intact and is a notable example of Victorian landscaping. Furthermore, the addition of the Staircase and Exedra by Edgar Wood strengthened the relationship between Park and Church, by creating a channelled vista towards the Church tower.

2.4.5 Although overgrown in places with self seeded specimens, trees make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area. There are approximately twenty different tree species in the park, the majority surrounding the Staircase and Exedra and the banking that leads to the northern boundary of New Lane.

The Parish Church of Saint Leonard

2.4.6 The Church is the focal point and dominant feature of the conservation area. It is respected and protected on its hillside location by a large buffer of open space to all sides, including the open and somewhat windswept Old Burial Ground. The key landmark whilst moving through the conservation area at every level is the Church's wooden bell tower. The church is listed Grade I and considered by many to be the finest medieval church in South Lancashire. It is the jewel in the crown.

New Lane

2.4.7 To the north of Jubilee Park, New Lane has a pleasant mix of Georgian and mid-Victorian properties which provide a soft red bricked backdrop and, with Saint Leonard's Square, allow a natural transition from the Church into the residential area.

Long Street (north of New Lane) and Rochdale Road

2.4.8 Further along Long Street, from the New Lane properties northwards, the pattern of building gradually becomes less dense and intersected with spaces consisting of garden areas, side lanes and parking spaces for commercial concerns. The mix of commercial and private properties is surprisingly consistent and complimentary. Wellen's Undertakers is a good example of this harmonious integration.

2.4.9 To the west, and opposite Spring Gardens, there is a delightful mix of residential properties (see fig 31). Red stock brick with slated roofs of similar heights provide a unifying composition to a group façade which has varied architectural styles. Vistas between the groupings show open spaces belonging to the local school which contributes to the suburban feel.

Buildings by Edgar Wood

2.4.10 This mix is continued beyond the Cleworth Road/Cheapside axis with larger residential properties including houses designed by Edgar Wood (see fig 32). The Edgar Wood designs cover his whole career and form one of the best single architect groupings in the country. They make a major contribution to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area.



Fig 30. New Lane, looking east.

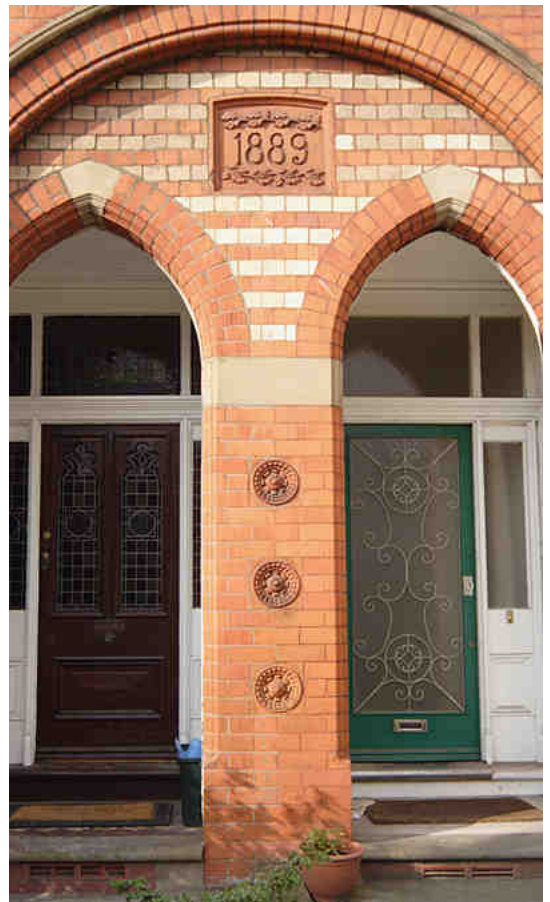


Fig 31. There is a delightful mix of residential properties along Rochdale Road. Here terraces with a Venetian Gothic style.



Fig 32. The mix is continued beyond Cleworth Road with larger residential properties including houses designed by Edgar Wood (Redcroft and Fencegate).

3. CHARACTER ANALYSIS



New Lane from Jubilee Park

3.1 PREVAILING OR FORMER USES

3.1.2 Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area has witnessed a general transition from pastoral farming (and a layout based upon the medieval feudal system), to a largely residential area with durable public amenities such as Jubilee Park. The park was formerly open fields and the immediate area adjacent to New Lane had been used as gardens and allotments for the people who owned the properties. The land was purchased in 1887 by the newly created Borough Council in order to convert the site into a public park beside the newly erected public library.

3.1.3 Spring Gardens to the north east is a site which has come under industrial influence and a factory still remains although it is currently has mixed use. The northernmost section of the factory is of Georgian origin and includes a modified house. This original silk weaving factory was established in 1806 (see fig 33).

3.1.4 Of the three churches in the conservation area, two are still functioning as places of worship. Providence Congregational Church is now unoccupied. The longest prevailing use is Saint Leonard's church which has been an ecclesiastical site for over 900 years. The church has grown organically throughout the period with several distinct phases being recognisable in its internal and external fabric. The latest major addition was a robust choir practice room by George Pace in the mid-twentieth century. The bluff adjacent to the Church witnessed at the end of the eighteenth century a transition from an occupied enclosure and Warren to a considerable Victorian parish graveyard (now known as the Old Burial Ground).

3.1.5 The Rectory grounds to the west and opposite, contain the medieval rectory (now a private house) and a new rectory, also by George Pace, so that the area still retains its original function and shape.

3.1.6 Another building with a long continuous use is the Old Boar's Head (see fig. 35), which has been serving as an inn since the sixteenth century. The Sessions Room, a fine Georgian extension to the public house, was used for the Courts for the northern part of the Salford Hundred and was later renowned for organised pugilistic events. The Ring o' Bells Public House, in Saint Leonard's Square, is a much altered building of historical interest. It was the meeting place for the Middleton Botanical Society founded in the mid nineteenth century. Some of the walls to the interior still have botanical decorations, drawings and references on the wallpaper.

3.1.7 The growth of weaving created an increase in purpose-built workshops of two distinct types. Firstly those with rows of windows to the eaves and secondly those with cellar workshops. Some of these Georgian properties still survive and contribute to the eclectic vernacular appearance of the area. Sadler Street (see fig. 36) has good examples of the cellar type of workshop. These properties are often occupied by commercial concerns although some are unoccupied. Georgian houses also survive at the bottom of New Lane.



Fig 33. Silk Weaving factory at Spring Gardens in the north of the conservation area.



Fig 34. Vestry by George Pace (mid C20th) at Saint Leonard's Parish Church.



Fig 35. Old Boar's Head and Session's Room (far right) Long Street.



Fig 36. Cellar workshops at Sadler Street.

3.2 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES OF THE BUILDINGS

3.2.1 Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area is blessed by a unique and varied cluster of significant buildings. There are few places in the north-west that can boast the Romanesque with the timber framed, the Neo-Classical with the Venetian Gothic and the Tudor with the Modern movement. There are few towns that can combine this with a remarkable pedigree of Arts and Crafts buildings by an architect of the stature of Edgar Wood.

The Parish Church of Saint Leonard

3.2.2 Within the Grade I listed Parish Church (fig 37) there are a number of styles represented including:-

- twelfth century Romanesque,
- thirteenth century Early English Gothic,
- fifteenth century Perpendicular Gothic,
- sixteenth century Tudor Gothic,
- twentieth century Arts and Crafts,
- twentieth century Modern Movement.

3.2.3 The church takes the provincial form of short squat tower with low elongated nave and chancel. It is built of heavy set sandstone blocks which firmly anchors it to the spot and provides the visual fulcrum to the whole of the conservation area. Remains of the Norman stonework can be seen in the tower arch which has been re-set to provide a pointed arch. It has scalloped capitals and curious rams heads carved on the bases. The Priests door dates from the thirteenth century. The impressive oak Rood screen is fifteenth century and has heraldic dado panels. The church was refurbished in the early fifteenth century by Cardinal Langley a native of Middleton who became Chancellor of England. It gained much of today's appearance in 1524 after it had significant additions by Sir Richard Assheton as a thanksgiving for the victory at the Battle of Flodden. The sixteenth century Flodden window (see fig. 38) is the oldest war memorial in England. It holds the names and faces of a contingent of archers who fought at the battle.

The Old Rectory

3.2.4 The Grade II listed moated timber-framed Rectory (see fig. 39) originally was an open hall and dates to the early sixteenth century. It was faced and partly rebuilt in brick in the mid nineteenth century and altered in 1965. Much of the timber framed structure survives encased in brick. Other than the surviving western arm of the moat, the principal features of interest are inside, where a considerable portion of the close studded timber framing survives on a brick plinth believed to be of c1520. A principal frame at the north of the original hall rises two storeys. One of the studs to the framing bears a carved colonnette and the the beams to the inserted floor bear heavily moulded beams, cross beams and joists. The entrance hall and dining room are panelled in sixteenth century linen fold paneling with a briar frieze.



Fig 37. Saint Leonard's Parish Church and South Porch.



Fig 38. The C16th Flodden Window in the Chancel of Saint Leonard's Parish Church.



Fig 39. The Grade II listed Old Rectory. Much of the original timber framed structure survives encased in brick.

Old Boars Head Public House

3.2.5 The Grade II* Listed Old Boars Head Public House is a substantial timber-framed building of the seventeenth century. It has a broad and squat form, influenced by the heavy set stone slates to the roof, and consequently provides a visual anchor at the corner of Durnford Street and Long Street. It has influenced other buildings in the vicinity including the Victorian public Library and Local Studies centre opposite which has been built in a Tudor Gothic style. The building was probably built as two houses and later converted to an inn. Original quatrefoil decorative timber panelling in the first bay survives. Inside, the timber framed structure is largely intact and consists of square panels, diagonal braces to the principle posts, and diagonally braced tie beam roof trusses with wind bracing between the trusses and purlins. There are also chamfered floor beams with ogee stops and a staircase with deep handrail on turned balusters. The newel has a bold acorn finial. The name of the pub originates from the crest of the Assheton family.

3.2.6 Perhaps one of the most underestimated Georgian buildings is that attached to the Old Boars Head public house. Called the Sessions Room, it boasts a provincial style 'Gibb's' or 'Venetian' window (see fig. 40). Here, is a northern example of a provincial interpretation of the mid-eighteenth century polite Neo-Classical style.

Parish School

3.2.7 The Grade II Listed former Parish School (now a nursery - see fig 41) was built in 1842 on Long Street as a consequence of the School Sites Act. It continues the Elizabethan architectural vocabulary of the Middletons Grammar School and, in the chimneys, Stubley Hall near Littleborough. It was initiated by Richard Durnford who became Bishop of Chichester. It maintains the scale of surrounding buildings and in terms of material complements the vernacular tradition of stone structures in the area. Set back and situated at a higher level than surrounding properties, the former school provides an imposing counter balance to the Arts and Crafts Long Street Methodist Church, which lies opposite.

Providence Congregational Chapel

3.2.8 Another Grade II listed building is the Providence Congregational Chapel (see fig 42) on Market Place. It was built between 1859 and 1860 in Flemish bond brickwork with polychromatic pattern to the pediment and ashlar dressings. It has a large duo-pitch slated roof. The gable is by far the most attractive feature with projecting plinth, first floor sill band, rusticated quoins and paired entrance. The pediment is adorned with a central oculus with mouchette tracery and arabesque surround. The interior has a sweeping panelled gallery supported on cast iron columns.

Long Street Methodist Church and School

3.2.9 Long Street Methodist Church (see fig 43) is Listed Grade II* and an Arts and Crafts masterpiece. It was built in 1901 in an expressive, Art Nouveau influenced style by Edgar Wood. It is a remarkable group comprised of a Church, School Buildings and Meeting Rooms all set around a gated courtyard and gar-



Fig 40. The Venetian Window at the Old Boar's Head.



Fig 41. Grade II listed Parish School built in 1842, Long Street.



Fig 42. Providence Congregational Chapel built between 1859 and 1860, Market Place.

den. The Long Street elevation steps back from the shop front-ages to provide extra width to the front paving, and a hierarchy appropriate for such a grouping. Here the cluttered streetscape pauses for breath as the red brick Gothic gable dominates all with its unique curvilinear tracery. The Church itself houses a most dramatic interior, comprising an aisled nave and chancel oversailed by a magnificent hammer beam and scissor braced roof trusses.

Other Edgar Wood designed buildings

3.2.10 The Arts and Crafts vocabulary is continued in other Edgar Wood domestic, public and commercial buildings in the conservation area. On Market Place there is the lyrical façade of the former Manchester and Salford Bank (Listed Grade II - see fig 44) in a buff coloured terracotta with a clay tile roof. The emphasis here, is on the vertical with the imposing ridge chimneys contributing to the grand scale of buildings along this elevation. The interior continues the exterior lyrical quality, and many features pre-figure the Art Nouveau movement.

3.2.11 In Jubilee Park is the monumental Staircase and Exedra (Listed Grade II). It is noted in the List Description as having *'The quality of materials, planning, design and craftsmanship..of the highest standard. The steps lead up to the church and are on the axis of the tower, adding dramatic effect to the view from Long Street to the church on top of the hill'* Attached to the north eastern elevation of the Parish Church is a flat roofed boiler house and chimney (also by Wood) of a similar quality.

3.2.12 To the northern most tip of the conservation area is another cluster of listed Edgar Wood buildings. These include No's 33 and 35, Rochdale Road (Redcroft and Fencegate - see fig 25) built in 1895. A striking characteristic of the front fenestration is the asymmetry and horizontal windows echoing the Georgian weavers houses. Pevsner stated that 'it is a consciously uneven pair so as to avoid all memories of the semi-detached.' Redcroft was the home of Edgar Wood until about 1916.

3.2.13 In the early twentieth century, Edgar Wood's partnership with J. H. Sellers led to an architectural style that was the precursor of the Modern Movement. One such house in the conservation area is 36 Mellallieu Street (Listed Grade II - see fig 45). It is noticeable for its modern flat roof and concrete construction combined with traditional materials and motifs. The house provides a neat closure to a row of three storey Victorian dwellings which are built in a spacious free style that complements the wooded open aspect of the Rectory grounds opposite. Another such house is Arkholme, 1 Towncroft Avenue, recently included in a small urgently made extension to the Conservation Area. It was subsequently Listed Grade II.

3.2.14 The English Heritage guide to appraisals notes that particular attention should be made to key buildings of the twentieth century as they are currently at their most vulnerable.



Fig 43. Grade II* listed Long Street Methodist Church and School, by Edgar Wood 1901, Long Street.



Fig 44. Grade II former Manchester and Salford Bank, Market Place, by Edgar Wood.



Fig 45. Door Detail to 36 Mellallieu Street, by Edgar Wood.

3.3 CONTRIBUTION OF KEY UNLISTED BUILDINGS

3.3.1 The conservation area has a strong profile of unlisted buildings evenly spread with a variety of periods represented.

3.3.2 The Georgian influence in terms of the built form has been largely with vernacular buildings. A small number of buildings designed for the cottage industry of weaving survive. They are irregular in form with varied plot widths and are identifiable by their fenestration, which is predominately placed directly underneath the eaves and often runs the full width of the building. This type of fenestration survives intact to the rear of properties on Long Street and Spring Gardens. Perhaps the best example of this vernacular style is situated on the south side of Long Street Methodist Church (no. 87 Long Street - see fig 46). It is of a smaller scale than other buildings in the area and has a rare type of fenestration known as Yorkshire Lights. It is the last example of this style to be found in the conservation area.

3.3.3 Combining with the greenery of Jubilee park opposite, 1 to 5 New Lane (see fig 44) lend a picturesque appearance to the street scene. They were built on the first plots of land leased by Lord Suffield. They lie at the southern end of a significant line of Georgian buildings on Long Street. The scale and style of these buildings are more in keeping with polite architecture but still retain a vernacular feel. No's 64, 66 and 68 have been rebuilt in the Georgian style in keeping with the surrounding terrace. The northern most house is also Georgian but has been re-faced in an Edwardian terracotta.

3.3.4 The Public Library and Local Studies centre (see fig 48) situated inside Jubilee Park has an axiomatic relationship firstly, with the physical plan of the park and secondly, the underpinning philosophy behind its construction. Recreation and free education were important elements behind the park's purpose, and the Library and Local Studies centre has continued this role since its inauguration. Built in a Tudor style with gabled and tiled roof, the building is a visual anchor to the park as a whole. With its timber-framed stylistic details, it provides a cross-reference to the historic Old Boar's Head opposite. The building has an important role in providing a draw for people to come to the conservation area.

3.3.5 Two public houses in the area have been subject to re-facing in past times which now hides earlier structures. The Ring O' Bells Public House is situated in Saint Leonard's Square and has been much altered. Stories exist of it being used as a meeting point during the English Civil War. A structure is certainly shown on Hugh Oldham's map of 1767. It was probably re-faced under the auspices of Lord Suffield in the 1800's. The other public house is the Hare and Hounds on Long Street. This now has a lively terracotta frontage but the rear shows a Georgian origin. The premises were first licensed in 1744. When the road was turnpiked in the 1770's, stage coaches running from Manchester to Rochdale called there.



Fig 46. No. 87 Long Street has a rare type of fenestration known as Yorkshire Lights.



Fig 47. 1-5 New Lane.



Fig 48. Public Library and Local Studies Centre.



Fig 49. Assheton Arms Hotel.

3.3.6 The Assheton Arms (1808 - see fig 49) at the southern-most point of Long Street forms a gateway to the conservation area. This public house has a long history of use as a coaching inn. The Defiance coach ran from here to Manchester six days a week. Evidence of such transport survives in the arched entrance on Long Street. Opposite is the Middleton Conservative Club of the Regency period (1830). It is of a polite classical style with red stock brick and stone Baroque trimmings. It was built as a large family residence.

3.3.7 Also at the bottom of Long Street, there is an eclectic but pleasing grouping of Victorian shop fronts (some may have Georgian origin). The mixed styles, traditional shop fronts and brick bonds of the grouping add to the variety and lively character of the area.

3.3.8 A more measured group of terraced houses exists opposite Spring Garden. Here the group is broken up by differing architectural styles. The doorway's are the most striking features which are of the Venetian Gothic style after the influence of John Ruskin (see fig 31).

3.3.9 The only purpose built industrial building in the conservation area is Spring Gardens Mill (see fig 33). This was originally built to spin silk in the first decade of the nineteenth century and was producing artificial silk medal ribbons up until the second world war. Of interest is the evolutionary development of the building clearly witnessed in the phasing of the additions along Spring Gardens. The northern end is the oldest part of the mill. Of Georgian brick to the Spring Gardens elevation, it is much lower in height than the rest of the factory. The Barrow-fields elevation has a stuccoed gable with a classically pedimented doorway.

3.3.10 Ten metres from Spring Gardens Mill is a monument to one of Middleton's most famous inhabitants, Samuel Bamford. He was a political reformer and social commentator who rose to fame through his memoirs and his subsequent involvement with the Peterloo Massacre of 1819 in Manchester. A memorial also stands to his memory in the Parish Old Burial Ground which is an important visual anchor to the graveyard area (fig 50).

3.3.11 Also of significance, but possibly the most invisible structure in the area, is the Old Burial Ground wall which circumnavigates most of the promontory and is over ½ mile long. Little is known of the origin of the wall or its positioning. Further investigation might reveal evidence of historic boundaries or earthworks.

3.3.12 There is also a significant grouping of late Victorian buildings on Mellalieu Street (fig 51). According to the local historian Margaret Smith, the Mellalieu's turned from their original skill of silk weaving with the collapse of the silk trade in 1861 and the Victorian Houses on the street were built as a speculative plot. The houses are imposing examples of late nineteenth century Victorian architecture of a free style, and were intended as spacious homes for the more affluent citizen.

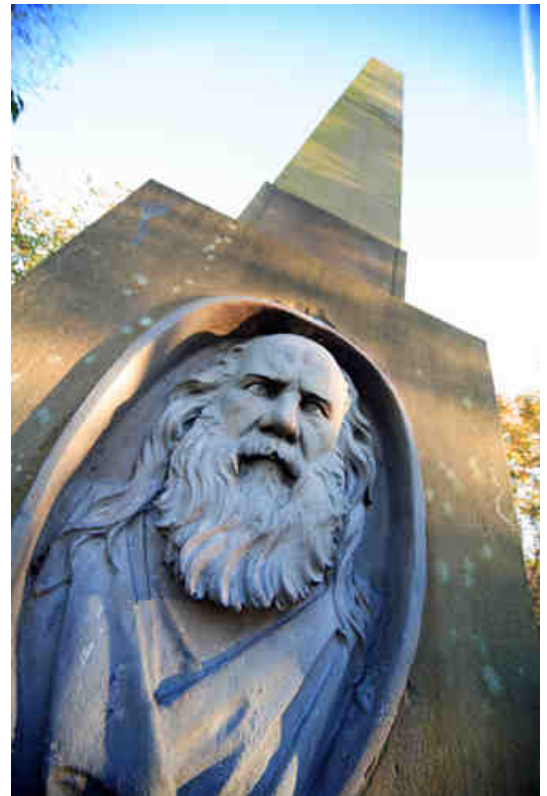


Fig 50. Samuel Bamford Memorial in the parish graveyard.



Fig 51. Mellalieu Street.



Fig 52. White House Hotel, 1893, Edgar Wood.

3.3.13 The next group of significant properties are those designed by Edgar Wood. At the very north of the area, adjacent Fencegate and Redcroft, is White House Hotel (Nos. 37-39 Rochdale Road - fig 52) built in 1893 as semi-detached residences. Across the road a terrace of houses (fig 48) built in 1898 bears the Edgar Wood mid-period style. These buildings have a significant 'group value.'

3.3.14 Of the modern period, we have the classically influenced former Middleton Building Society next to the Methodist Church at Long Street, and the New Rectory (1957 - see fig 54) on Mellalieu Street. The former inextricably linked to the nineteenth century with its Baroque credentials; the latter firmly grounded in the twentieth century, designed by an architect who evolved the tradition set out by Edgar Wood and the Arts and Crafts. George Pace was architect to innumerable dioceses and cathedrals. Professor A. Peter Fawcett notes of Pace '*Pace uniquely for architects of the period, successfully straddled that interface between tradition and modernism in a highly effective distillation of both*' (Pace P, 1990) Pace also designed the war memorial, light fittings, Assheton chapel flooring, and the new Vestry extension to the Parish Church.



Fig 53. Edgar Wood Terrace, Cheapside.



Fig 54. The New Rectory by George Pace.

3.4 LOCAL DETAILS

3.4.1 There are a number of architectural details peculiar to Middleton.

3.4.2 The timber Bell Tower on the Parish Church is a feature rarely seen in the north of England. It was constructed between 1709 and 1714 by Sir Ralph Assheton to house six new bells cast by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester. The Bell Tower has become the signature feature of the church enhancing its visibility and passing curiosity.

3.4.3 Church Brow, the steep lane that leads up to the Church from Long Street, is bounded by large millstone grit flagstones which curve around in front of the Church. This type of wall is a distinctive feature of parts of east Lancashire. They were known locally as ‘pigstone’ walls (fig 55) and can frequently be seen backed by a hawthorn or privet hedge.

3.4.4 Relatively little ironwork was produced in Middleton and much was lost during the second world war. The cast iron fence at Providence Methodist Church (fig 56) is therefore more significant. Its form harks back to Elizabethan strap work, which, itself, interpreted the classical style. The Parish Church gates have a series of wrought scrolls and leaves and other decorative pattern work. They create a reverential punctuation between the Church grounds and St Leonard’s Square.

3.4.5 Most of the road surfaces in the conservation area have been subject to recent overlaying. One exception can be found at Spring Gardens which has traditional setts (cobble) to its full length (fig 57).

3.4.6 Spring Gardens Mill has a northern bay containing a stucco gable and pedimented doorway. There are relatively few examples of stucco in the conservation area.

3.4.7 There are a number of ginnels (narrow passageways) in the area. Cankey’s Ginnel follows the eastern boundary of the burial ground. It cuts deeply into the slope and is believed to be an early feature. A ginnel paved with stone setts forms a right angle to Long Street opposite the Parish School.

3.4.8 There are many buildings in Middleton designed by Edgar Wood which span his whole career. This unusual collection of historic buildings requires conserving as a single entity. In the conservation area these range from early works, such as Nos. 37-39 Rochdale Road, through to his first building with a reinforced concrete roof, No. 36 Mellalieu Street. There is a fine terrace at Nos. 34-46 Rochdale Road and a house designed for himself, Redcroft. Two public buildings are the former Williams and Deacons bank on Market Place and Long Street Methodist Church. A common feature of the Arts and Crafts was to design holistically, including fixtures and fittings. Thus at Long Street Methodist Church he designed the wooden altar chairs and lectern, the metal railings and door fixtures, the stained glass and the stonework for the font and pulpit.

3.4.9 The Wood buildings are important examples of the Arts and Crafts movement which allow a rare opportunity to follow the development of a renowned architect at the turn of the nineteenth century.



Fig 55. Pigstone Boundaries at the top of Church Brow’



Fig 56. Cast Iron Fence at Providence Methodist Church.



Fig 57. Stone setts at Spring Gardens.



Fig 58. Letters on the exterior of Edgar Wood’s Long Street Methodist Church, 1901.

3.5 PREVELANT AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

3.5.1 The use of building materials often relates to period and hierarchy. The earliest vernacular buildings are of timber while the most significant are of stone. Thus the Old Boar's Head is timber framed and the Parish Church is a soft yellow sandstone quarried at nearby Royton. The pattern set by the Church influenced later examples of monumental form including the Staircase and Exedra and the Parish School of 1842. Similarly, the Old Boar's Head influenced the appearance of the Victorian Library and Local Studies centre.

3.5.2 In the 1770s, Lord Suffield gave instructions as to the materials to be used in the construction of buildings on his land: bricks with slate roofs. These became the most common materials in the great expansion of the town. Throughout the conservation area there is a multiplicity of brick bonds ranging from stretcher bond through to header bond. The bricks used in the Georgian houses on Long Street and New Lane have a hand made quality, which gives them a softer appearance than the later machine made bricks of Rochdale Road. In many Edgar Wood buildings, common brick was deliberately used to emulate hand made brick.

3.5.3 There are five types of roofing material: stone slate and Welsh blue slate predominate but there is also clay tile, concrete flat roof, and concrete tile. The older buildings have stone slate roofs laid in diminishing courses. With the appearance of canals and railways, Welsh blue slate became the most common roofing material, while concrete and clay are occasionally used for architectural effect.

3.5.4 The area there is a good mix of styles, colours and bonds used for emphasis or delineation of hierarchy. Nevertheless, the predominant mix of materials and colours has a soft 'natural' characteristic. For example, the browns and greys of the stone and slate roofs establish the character over the occasional red or orange tiled roof.

3.5.5 The Providence Congregational Church (fig 60) on Market Place has polychromatic brickwork. A chequerboard Flemish bond has been used to shops at the south-east corner of Long Street which provides a magnetic stop in the punctuation of the streetscape. Brick is also used as the enclosure to the grave yard. At Spring Gardens Mill there is a small amount of stucco work that imitates an ashlar façade to heighten the status of the building.

3.5.6 At Long Street Methodist Church there is a self-conscious use of materials. Edgar Wood used a header bond (see fig 61) to underpin his philosophy of craft and skill and to pay deference to the spiritual form of the structure. In this building there is an alien form of brick bonding in the buttress to the south elevation. Here Wood has used a form of brick tumbling, which is predominant in the East Riding and influenced by the Flemish form of construction.



Fig 59 Sandstone quarried from nearby Royton here at Saint Leonard's south porch.



Fig 60. Polychromatic brickwork at Providence Congregational Church.

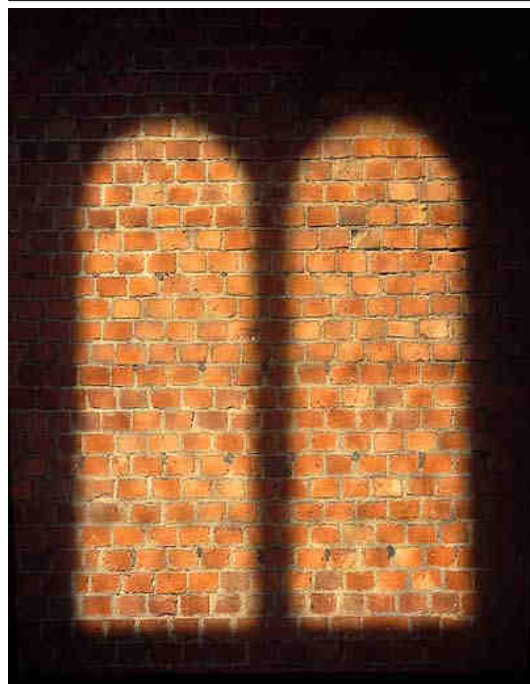


Fig 61 Header bond at Long Street Methodist Church.

3.5.7 At Redcroft and Fencegate, Wood brought together a wider range of materials including limestone, brick, smooth render and iron emphasising the eclecticism of the Arts and Crafts style. To the terrace of houses opposite, he used traditional harling (rendering with pea-grit).

3.5.8 Terracotta appears as an occasional decorative material in late Victorian and early Edwardian buildings such as 76 Long Street (see fig 62) which has amongst other decorative features a terracotta keystone with a musical motif. The Manchester and Salford Bank on Market Place was also built in a buff terracotta.

3.5.9 Most road surfaces are now tarmac with Spring Gardens being a notable exception. A recent paving scheme has laid soft looking concrete setts to Long Street and Rochdale Road (fig 63).



Fig 63. Recent paving scheme in the conservation area.



Fig 62. Terracotta keystone at 76 Long Street with musical motif.

3.6 GREENERY, WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACES

3.6.1 There is a natural synergy between the open spaces and the built form which helps promote a sense of hierarchy and provides an open aspect in a town surrounded by the remains of the industrial revolution. The attractive suburban character of Long Street is as much to do with the many mature trees as it is to do with the design of the buildings.

3.6.2 Jubilee Park is the largest cultivated presence in the area with a formal arrangement of garden beds, levels, terraces and features. The trees are mature especially to the eastern boundary forming a natural boundary to the west end of the parish church. The northern boundary has a more informal aspect encouraged by the shrubs and trees overflowing onto New Lane and combining with the small scale Georgian houses to form a pleasing picturesque scene.

3.6.3 Opposite the north west boundary is the enclosed wooded garden of the rectory which forms a large green impenetrable mass in the summer and later in the winter becomes much softer and porous. The existence of many wells and watercourses in this vicinity makes it a natural habitat for amphibians as well as smaller birds such as the goldfinch which prefer a wooded environment.

3.6.4 The Old Burial Ground (fig 66) takes on a different and wilder aspect. The area is overgrown and to some extent this has contributed to healthy biodiversity. Lichen and fungi are prevalent amongst the gravestones. The area cultivates many insects and a good bat population. The biodiversity is reliant upon the uncouth nature of the graveyard and this aspect should be assessed by nature conservationists in any future plans for the area.



Fig 64. Open spaces help create a sense of hierarchy. Here, south of Saint Leonard's Church.



Fig 65. Jubilee Park from Long Street.



Fig 66. Saint Leonard's Old Burial Ground.

3.7 BUILDINGS AT RISK AND NEGATIVE AREAS

Providence Chapel and Lodge Street

3.7.1 There are many factors which contribute to a building being placed at risk, but the most common is where a building over time lose its original function. This is the case for the Grade II Listed Providence Congregational Chapel (fig 67). Until 2003, the chapel was in poor yet intact condition. Of the interior the listing (1987) notes:

'Interior: virtually complete with the panelled gallery parapet sweeping round at each end supported on cast-iron columns. The box pews follow a similar curve in the gallery. Organ chamber in arched recess occupying north gallery behind a tall panelled pulpit approached by opposed steps with cast-iron railings. Many interesting features survive including the original hymn number board, the plaster ceiling and cornice, early C20 light fittings and leaded glass'

3.7.2 Much of this has been destroyed by fire or water ingress caused by the theft of slates to the roof. Dry rot has taken hold to much of the timberwork at the north end. It is surprising how quickly this building has deteriorated. The revival of the building could provide the spark for the regeneration of Market Place and Lodge Street itself, which makes a negative contribution to the conservation area and has a dilapidated aspect.

3.7.3 There is a curious grouping of small scale brick built industrial buildings which are possibly Georgian in origin and lie on a site which has a structure noted in Hugh Oldham's 1767 map of Middleton. They are in a poor state of repair and combined with the rest of the Lodge Street environment take on a Dickensian feel. Again along Market Place and Lodge Street there are a few businesses occupying the late Victorian shop buildings. The former Police Station is only partly occupied. The buildings and the immediate environment is in a poor state of repair.

Jubilee Park

3.7.4 Although Jubilee Park makes a positive contribution to the conservation area there are some aspects of its current state, which pose a threat to Edgar Wood's Staircase and Exedra. The overlying intention behind the design of the Staircase was to lead the eye towards the Church tower and create a sense and feeling of hierarchy. This reverence is reduced by the lack of measured control of trees and the introduction of humped platforms for visible displays of flowers which block out this view (fig 68). Subsequently, the exedra has a reduced role and its current condition, full of graffiti and broken glass, underlines this fact. Park fixtures and fittings are also looking worn and many have been vandalized.

Conservative Club

3.7.5 A similar isolating effect has been created with regards to the Conservative Club. The building remains in good condition but its surroundings have changed and the encroachment of the 1960's shop fronts and associated fencing to the front of Long Street detracts from the whole and clutters the streetscape. Sub-

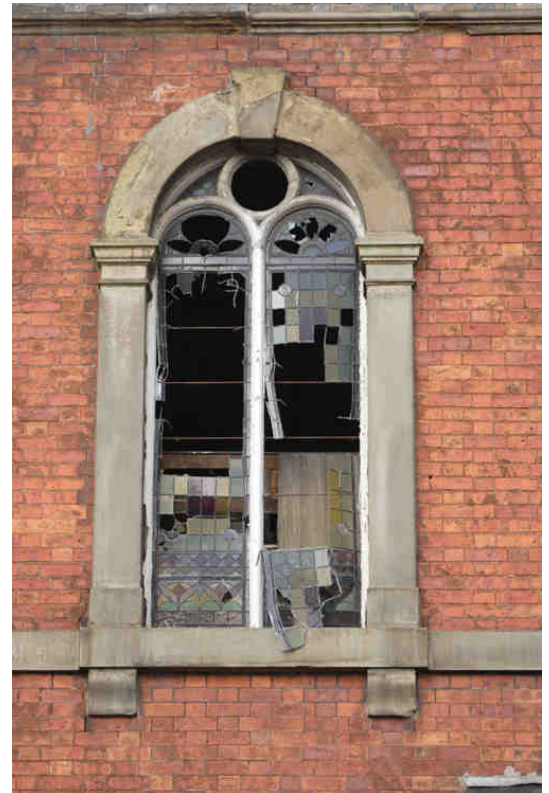


Fig 67. Providence Congregational Church.



Fig 68. Jubilee Park from Long Street.



Fig 69. Conservative Club, set back and isolated from the street scene.

sequently a historic and well proportioned building has become isolated from the street scene (fig 69).

Old Burial Ground

3.7.6 Stagnation of use has affected the largest open space of the conservation area – the old Burial Ground (fig 70). There are some worthy gravestones outlining the fads and fashions in architecture over the last 150 years. Many of them are in a poor and dangerous condition from lack of maintenance. The grid pattern of pathways so evident in the OS plan is barely visible due to overgrowth. There is a threat to one of Middleton's most isolated monuments: the Samuel Bamford Memorial. The memorial has been recently cleaned but is constantly subject to graffiti and vandalism. Without a systematic approach, the monument is set to deteriorate once again. A Regeneration Scheme prepared by the Derek Lovejoy Partnership in 1998 covering the Old Burial Ground and Jubilee Park estimated that £1.7m would be needed to restore the area.

3.7.7 The wall surrounding the Old Burial Ground is an important structure in terms of its length and positioning, yet it is almost invisible in its presence due to its cohesive form, colouring and brick construction. Only when one comes across a poor attempt to repair a section of the wall is one reminded of its presence by the imposition of different sized bricks, bright orange colours and inappropriate bonds. This is particularly so along the section of wall facing Lodge Street.

Sadler Street and Market Place

3.7.8 Part of the southern boundary of the conservation area skirts along Sadler Street where a grouping of Victorian buildings (no's 10 and 6) are in a poor condition. Their aspect has been isolated by the encroachment of twentieth century buildings and the negative atmosphere created by the oversized and inappropriately placed roundabout which cuts Long Street in half. With the imposition of the roundabout the cultural focus of the town was damaged. It lies on top of the triangular Market Place which was adjacent the gates of Middleton Hall. Until recently markets and fairs were held here, and a lively mix of commercial properties with various trades thrived. The properties along Sadler street have been cauterized from this scene and subsequently have lost their original commercial impetus. Adjacent, shops at no's 81, 85 and 87 Long Street, which are Georgian in origin are currently redundant and showing a weary frontage. The former Manchester and Salford Bank by Edgar Wood is also along the isolated boundary facing the roundabout. Key issues with regards to this building relate to its rare terracotta façade which has lost its original patina and is now suffering from wear and tear.

Long Street

3.7.9 One area of recent regeneration success is between New Lane and King Street. It has one final obstacle to overcome, that of No. 60 (fig 69) which has only the frontage surviving. The windows have been blocked up which creates a sense of permanence to its derelict state and affects the recent successes in regeneration in this area. Opposite, the removal of trees to the area occupied by No. 117 has removed a much needed soften-



Fig 70. Deteriorating fabric at the Old Graveyard.



Fig 71. Former weavers cottages on Sadler Street.



Fig 72. No. 60 Long Street. Blocked windows create a sense of permanence.

ing of the street in this area and revealed a stark area of hard standing. Edgar Wood's grade II* Long Street Methodist Church is also under threat with its long term use in doubt due to diminishing congregation and lack of capital for important urgent repairs required for the fabric. Buildings to the Church's immediate locality also detract due to their poor state of repair. A pair of Victorian buildings at 101 and 103 Long Street are substantial stock, but have been boarded up for some time and are suffering from regular acts of vandalism. The former Middleton Building Society has suffered from inappropriate installation of UPVC windows which are not concurrent with its imposing façade and the character of the locality adjacent to the Methodist Church.

Spring Gardens and White House Hotel

3.7.10 The Spring Gardens area to the north has a number of surviving Georgian structures including Spring Gardens Mill. Nevertheless, the area is affected by eclectic frontages and poorly maintained buildings and subsequently it looks tired and spent. Just north-west of this area lies the group of Edgar Wood buildings which raise the profile, but have suffered from inappropriate changes to the shop frontage. The general scene is affected by stark atmosphere of Spring Gardens. An Edgar Wood designed property known as the White House Hotel suffers from settlement and lack of use. Its future use is compromised by the derelict and overgrown garden and locale. Some of the properties on the peninsula between Spring Gardens and Rochdale Road are in a poor state of repair with some of the yards to the rear taking on a derelict appearance. The mill itself also contributes to the tired appearance of the area. Just to the rear of the mill a landscaped memorial to Samuel Bamford, on the spot of his birthplace has been vandalized and has an isolated and derelict feel.



Fig 73. The White House Hotel by Edgar Wood is suffering from lack of maintenance and subsidence.



Fig 74 Rear of building at Spring Gardens.



Fig 75 Properties at the bottom of Long Street leading onto the traffic island have been cauterized from the commercial heart of Middleton which is beyond the traffic island to the south.

3.8 NEUTRAL AREAS

3.8.1 There are some areas, which neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area. These areas include the Saint John's Ambulance headquarters on Long Street adjacent to the Old Boar's Head public House. The building is of a wooden clapboard construction, which is not a characteristic of the area, but it does not detract from its grade II listed neighbour, due to its own innate charm. Adjacent to the headquarters, is the Health Centre car park, which is softened by its enclosure by shrubs and trees from the Rectory area.

3.8.2 Closer to the Church a plain terrace of Victorian houses on New Lane and the modern flats at Saint Leonard's Square form the function of enclosing the northern boundary of the Church, but their plain appearance does not detract from the spatial characteristics which they contribute to. The bland appearance of the open space adjacent to Clarke Brow and opposite the Church is compensated for by creating a gap between the Church and the terraced housing adjacent to Clarke Brow



Fig 76. The open space adjacent to the Church looking across to the Ring 'O' Bells pub.



Fig 77 The unusual characteristic of wooden cladding at the Saint John's Ambulance Headquarters is offset by its vernacular charm and softened by the landscaping to the front.

4. PROPOSED EXTENSIONS



Proposed Extensions (from top left clockwise): Extension 1: Crown Inn, Extension 2: Old Grammar School, Extension 4: Durnford Street Terraced Houses, Extension 3: Middleton Gardens.

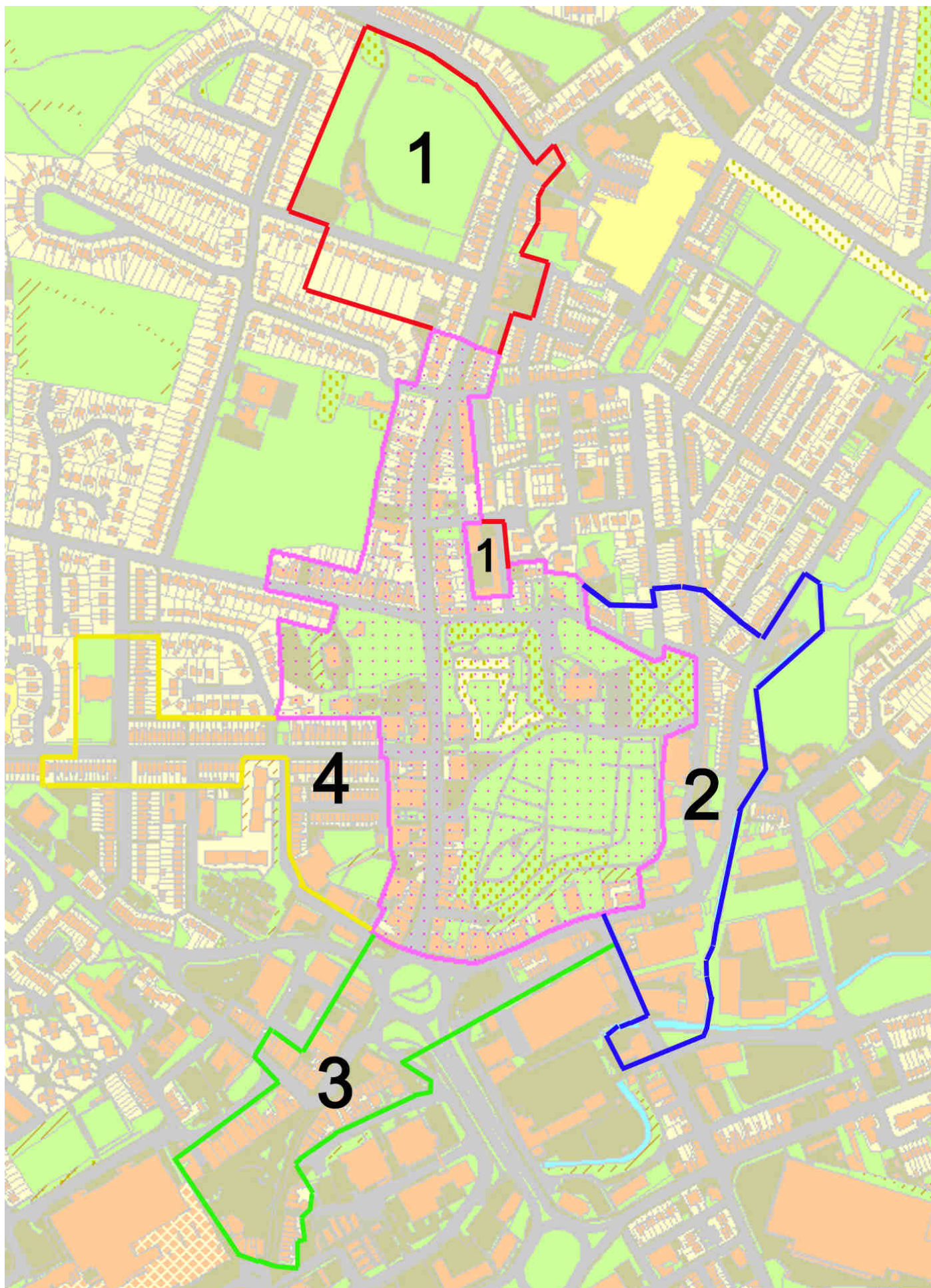


Fig 78. Map showing proposed extensions to the Conservation Area

4.1 EXTENSION 1—ROCHDALE ROAD TO HOLLINS LANE

4.1.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

This area is a natural extension along the axis of Long Street which turns into Rochdale Road to the north. The boundary extends part way up Hollins Lane (which follows the line of an ancient ‘hollow way’) to skirt the boundary of Middleton Cricket Club and then return to Rochdale Road via Towncroft Avenue which incorporates an important grouping of early twentieth century suburban houses including Arkholme (no. 1 Towncroft) built by Edgar Wood. Additionally, a short extension has been made behind Spring Gardens to include Rose Mill which was a former silk mill and remains intact.

4.1.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The area is dominated by the intersection between Hollins Lane and Rochdale Road. The map of 1839, shows an open aspect with a small grouping of buildings around the junction and along the east side of Rochdale Road. One of the earliest surviving buildings is that of the Crown Inn public house which is late Georgian. The White Hart public house at the bottom of Hollin’s lane has an eighteenth century date stone, but has been much rebuilt in the twentieth century. Development throughout the first half of the nineteenth century is piecemeal until the introduction of a cricket and football field (later to become Middleton Cricket Club) in the late nineteenth century reflecting the evolution of the late Victorian social model, intended to improve the health of the working population by the provision of leisure amenities. The early twentieth century witnessed the development of land to the south of the cricket club known as Towncroft Avenue. Along Towncroft Avenue throughout the first half of the twentieth century has been built a series of detached and semi-detached houses, which are of a significantly higher quality than other streets in the area in terms of plan form, design, and gardens.

4.1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The original route which takes the line of Hollin’s Lane has been described as a road with high banked sides similar in form to a ‘hollow road’. Raised banks are evident to the boundary of the Middleton Cricket Club along Hollins Lane. At the bottom of Hollin’s Lane there is potential for the existence of an earlier structure at no’s ? Rochdale Road. Here the façade has been upgraded over a period of time, the potential for an older interior is betrayed by their squat form with some asymmetrical details such as the fenestration. Adjacent, the White Hart public house has been much re-built but holds a datestone of ? Future investigation to the interior (especially the roof timbers) might reveal parts of the original structure. Most of the buildings on the eastern side of Rochdale Road lead back onto land which was once known as Barrowfields which has connotations of a Saxon Burial place. Original door, window details and roof



Fig 79. Original door, window details and roof coverings survive to the Crown Inn public house.



Fig 80 Yorkshire Lights at the rear of the Crown Inn Public House.

coverings survive to the Crown Inn public house and also to the Edgar Wood properties along the Rochdale Road and Towncroft Avenue. Also, original fenestration survives to Rose Mill at Spring Gardens. The fenestration is wide and takes up much of the height of the first floor. This may indicate that Jacquard looms were once used here.

4.1.4 CHARACTER OF SPACES WITHIN THE AREA

Area 1 extends the current axis of Long Street into Rochdale Road which is a characteristic street frontage populated by a mix of semi-detached and terraced houses dating from Victorian and Edwardian times. The only pause in the syntax of brick facades along the road is the white rendered façade of the Crown Inn public house and the stylistic exuberance of the no's 5? And 5? By Edgar Wood. The atmosphere takes on a different aspect along Towncroft Avenue where the vista opens up to include the grounds of Middleton Cricket Club(see fig 81). Opposite, the well proportioned and appointed detached and semi-detached houses with generous plots enhance the suburban feel and have a permeability created by generous sized front and rear gardens which have a mix of mature shrubs and trees.

4.1.5 PREVAILING OR FORMER USES

The intersection of two historic roads (between Rochdale Road and Hollins Lane) has meant that buildings with the role of meeting the travellers needs have developed within this area. The White Hart (much re-built) and the Crown Inn are significant buildings originating in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century which have retained much of their former use as roadside hostleries. The cricket and football amenity listed in the 1893 OS map has retained its use as Middleton Cricket Club. This open space has in its turn influenced the measured development of suburban houses along Towncroft Avenue.

4.1.6 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES OF THE BUILDINGS

Numbers 55 - 57 Rochdale Road (see fig 82) are grade II listed by the architect Edgar Wood and they have the architect's signature architectural feature in the raised bay and chamfered mullion windows. The roof is covered in traditional stone slates which contributes to the earthy and weighted composition and raises the architectural standing of the area.

4.1.7 CONTRIBUTION OF KEY UNLISTED BUILDINGS

There are two buildings within Extension 1 which are worthy of listing namely the Crown Inn public house (see fig 83) and Arkholme (now listed, fig 85). The Crown Inn has significance as group value. It is an excellent example of a coaching inn with associated accommodation, rear courtyard and ancillary buildings. The Crown Inn and linking accommodation spans 6 bays with the inn taking up three of the bays. The latter is differentiated from the buff brick of the residential block by a white rendered façade with



Fig 81. Middleton Cricket Club.



Fig 82. Grade II listed no's 51 And 53 Rochdale Road by Edgar Wood have some traditional building materials including stone slate roof.



Fig 83. The Crown Inn Public House and adjoining properties. The pub was first licensed in 1830.



Fig 84. White Hart Public House Rochdale Road.

stucco quoins. The attached residences, which were used to house employees of the local brewery, have some surviving cross paned sash windows to the front. Interestingly, the end terrace door décor has been adorned with a traditional classical surround with plain entablature. Set against the monolithic surrounds of the adjacent properties this combination is telling of the hierarchy of occupancy for which the properties were originally built. Records show that the Crown Inn was first licensed in 1830 and was later extended into one of the neighbouring terraces to increase its capacity. Closer inspection of the linking properties to the Crown Inn reveal's a series of Yorkshire Lights (including some original Georgian glass) indicating perhaps a probable use as a weavers loomshop.

Arkholme was built by Edgar Wood, probably in 1908. John Archer in the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society booklet 'Edgar Wood (1860-1935) A Manchester Art Nouveau Architect' (vol 73-4 1963-4) notes that "*The house is of moderate size and is notable for an exceptionally large window, framed in timber and load bearing*". He also notes that Arkholme was built for the photographer Charles Jackson, the brother of Wood's friend the artist Fred. W. Jackson. Arkholme is also complemented by a number of derivatives of this Arts and Crafts style along the full length of Towncroft Avenue. The building recently became vacant and the Council responded by extending the Conservation Area slightly to include it.

Further north on Rochdale Road, and outside the proposed extension, lies The Black Bull P.H. and three terraces of houses opposite believed to be early designs by Edgar Wood. If verified, there may be a case for extending the Conservation Area to include these or possibly have a small detached area. The Black Bull may also be worthy of listing.

Opposite the properties along Towncroft Avenue and within the grounds of the Cricket Club; adjacent to the current pavilion, is a small single storied brick building (with open urinals to the rear) which has been built in a hard working Accrington header bond (like that of Long Street Methodist Church), and has two curious stone projections to the front elevation much like the corbels of Long Street Methodist Church.

To the east of Spring Gardens is Rose Mill (see figs 87 and 88) which is a former silk mill. Of two storey squat form with and L shaped plan, the southern most façade has large windows to allow light into the building for the adequate operation of the looms. Further investigation of the building might throw more light upon the silk manufacturing processes which were taking place here. The surrounding locality of Barrowfields was a strong focal point for silk workshops.



Fig 85. Arkholme, Towncroft Avenue, built C 1908 by Edgar Wood.



Fig 86. Building adjacent to the cricket pavilion at Middleton Cricket Club.



Fig 87. Rose Mill, former silk mill.

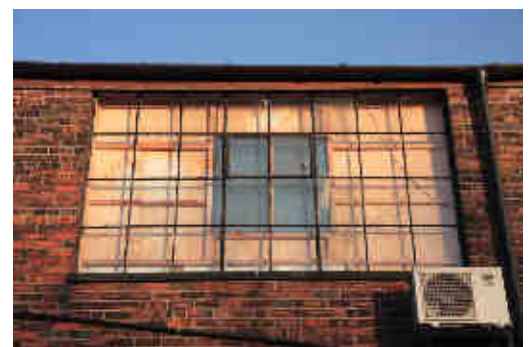


Fig 88. Large wide fenestration characteristic of a Silk Mill.

4.1.8 LOCAL DETAILS

A ginnel exists to the side of the residential buildings attached to the Crown Inn. Stone Slate is a feature at the Edgar Wood building's on Rochdale Road.

4.1.9 PREVALENT AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

As noted above traditional stone slated roofs survive in areas 1 and 2 namely the Edgar Wood semi-detached house on Rochdale Road.

4.1.10 GREENERY, WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACES

Middleton Cricket Club (see fig 89) in area 1 consists of the large circular tended cricket field and pitch with a line of mature trees intersecting the boundary between the club and Hollin's Lane. The areas to the west and south of the field are cushioned by open spaces used for parking and leisure activities including car boot sales. There is a suburban synergy between the large open space of the cricket club and the detached and semi-detached properties of Towncroft Avenue with their large plots to front and rear.

4.1.11 BUILDINGS AT RISK AND NEGATIVE AREAS

As already noted earlier, the Crown Inn Public House (see fig 90) has a group significance in that it is a rare collection of coaching inn with residential properties attached, courtyard and ancillary buildings. Part of the northern boundary also incorporates a ginnel. Whilst the property is in full use and there is no foreseeable risk to its future there has been some erosion of its character with the inappropriate refurbishment of the roof which has been covered over in a Hessian coating.

The Edgar Wood property at no 1 Towncroft Avenue (Arkholme) should be considered for listing taking into account the quality of the design, the increasing importance of Edgar Wood as an architect, and its anchor point location at the head of Towncroft Avenue. All original external features still survive whilst the condition of the interior is not known. Some of the window detailing is showing signs of wear and tear.

4.1.12 PROBLEMS PRESSURES AND THE CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Similar pressures apply to all of the proposed extensions to the conservation area including the erosion of key details to the built form.



Fig 89. The large circular tended field and grounds of the Middleton Cricket Club.



Fig 90. Properties adjacent to the Crown Inn public house with some original roofing material covered in Hessian and bitumen compound.

4.2 EXTENSION 2 – OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL TO LODGE MILL

4.2.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

The area wraps around the eastern side of the elevated Church yard and cemetery. It encompasses the Elizabethan Old Grammar School (1589) to the north and the Lodge Mill and Brookside Mill complex to the south. It follows the line of Whit Brook and includes Twenty Four Steps, a dramatic flight of steps made famous in a painting by L.S. Lowry.

4.2.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Whit Brook can be seen in the earliest maps of Middleton (e.g. Hugh Oldham's 1767 Map) skirting the sixteenth century Old Grammar School and feeding the River Irk and the medieval mill pond (now occupied by the Middleton Gardens Area). The recently restored Old Grammar School is listed Grade II* and one of the most important buildings of the town. It was built in Elizabethan times by the Nowell Brothers. The brothers were educated at the Parish Church in a school set up by Cardinal Langley, Bishop of Durham in 1412. One of the brothers, Alexander became the Dean of Saint Paul's, London and during the latter years of his life he received an endowment of £20 per year as patronage from Queen Elizabeth I towards the building of a new school in Middleton. In the nineteenth century, Edgar Wood was educated here.

The nineteenth century witnessed the dramatic growth of the cotton industry, primarily spinning. Lodge Mill and Brookside Mill are situated at the confluence of Whit Brook and the River Irk. Lodge Mill is a spinning mill while Brookside Mill is a more unusual (for these parts) a weaving shed. They make the best group of early cotton mills in the town and complement the nearby listed Edwardian Warwick Mill. Their inclusion in the conservation area would allow a fundamental phase of Middleton's history to be represented and a comparison with the buildings of the parallel silk industry to be made.

The Twenty Four Steps were built in 1851 when a new road was built between Market Place and Boarshaw to accommodate changes in level. Owing to the well known painting by L.S. Lowry, they are also referred to as the "Lowry Steps". Pictured at the top of the steps was a Methodist church which has now been demolished and a purpose of the conservation area would be the restoration of the picturesque qualities of the site.

4.2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The map survey of 1767 by Hugh Oldham shows the Whit Brook well populated with what are possibly small fulling mills each with its own looping tail race. In another C18th survey, a Hamer's House is noted "*where the ancient corn-mill stood*".

The Old Grammar School houses a sixteenth century through purlin roof and has good quality chamfered mullioned windows



Fig 91. The imposing Tudor entrance to the Old Grammar School.



Fig 92. The Engine Room to Lodge Mill.



Fig 93. Twenty Four Steps, made famous by L. S Lowry.

and other contemporary features.

There is a significant survival of original features to Lodge Mill and Brookside Mill, including much of the plan form, fenestration and iron column supports. An engine house, which may have been added to the mill at a later date, also survives. These buildings warrant an archaeological study.

4.2.4 CHARACTER OF SPACES WITHIN THE AREA

Boarshaw Road and Morton Street run north-south parallel to, and confined by, the Brook to the east and the steep slopes of the cemetery and church yard to the west. With the principal exception of the old school and the mills, most buildings are arranged towards these two roads which set the character and orientation of the area.

Boarshaw Road and north Morton Street, set a little higher, is characterized by terraced houses and other nineteenth century buildings creating linear views with the Brook always nearby. Boarshaw Road has important junctions with Clarke Brow, to the north, John Lee Fold, midway, and Morton Street and Market Street to the south. The last two are in need of townscape and environmental enhancement. The junction to Clarke Brow is defined to the west by nineteenth century and modern rows of houses overlooking the junction and the rear of the Old Grammar School.

While Boarshaw Road largely has a residential character, south Morton Street is characterized by an extension of the workshops and small industrial premises found on the northern side of Market Place. The historic buildings here have archaeological and townscape potential currently unrealized. The more modern buildings also have potential for enhancement.

Access to the Old Grammar School is intersected by Boarshaw Road. However, the building's rural feel has been maintained by the quality of its immediate surroundings. The school is set at a noticeably lower elevation, reducing noise from the road, in an enclosed space right up to the Brook, all of which contributes to the integrity of the building.

The area around Lodge and Brookside Mills has a robust industrial character yet the south elevation has a gentler, more pleasing, quality about it with the River Irk, bounded by a group of trees playing a significant part in this character. The area has the potential to play a gateway role into the town centre. Taken together, the two Mills, adjacent electricity offices and the nearby listed Providence Congregational Chapel, have a good spacial relationship that creates a robust anchor point to the south-eastern part of the conservation area.

4.2.5 PREVAILING OR FORMER USES

The Old Grammar School which was founded in 1586 remained a school up until the mid twentieth century, thereafter it had a mix of uses until it fell into disrepair in the 1980's. In the 1990's a trust was formed which enabled the full restoration of



Fig 94. Lodge Mill window detail with curious 'antefixae' to the copings.



Fig 95. Terrace houses at Morton Street (north)



Fig 96. From left to right—the former Electricity Offices, Providence Congregational Church and Lodge Mill form a potential gateway into Middleton.

the school as a cultural and heritage amenity.

Lodge and Brookside Mills were originally cotton spinning and weaving mills which gradually declined from the end of the nineteenth century onwards. The C20th has witnessed a degree of subdivision into separate commercial concerns, while still remaining partly involved in textile production.

Boarshaw Road and north Morton Street is a small housing area with ancillary uses and south Morton Street maintains its long-standing workshop uses.

4.2.6 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES OF THE BUILDINGS

Built in 1586 and described in its grade II* listing as the Grammar School and Schoolmasters House, this building is one of a small number of pre-Georgian buildings in the conservation area. Built of squared rubble with a traditional stone slate roof laid in diminishing courses. The interior's main hall is open to the roof except for the first floor chambers at each end. The school room is lit by chamfered mullioned windows. The roof structure is of typical northern construction with through purlins and wind braces supported on collar tie-beam roof trusses. The listing notes that the building is "*an important early example of a building type for which there was little architectural precedent*". Overshadowed by its neighbour is the Georgian style Masters House added between 1835 and 1839. Built of brick with four horizontally sliding sashes on two elevations it has an appealing functional simplicity of style and form.

4.2.7 CONTRIBUTION OF KEY UNLISTED BUILDINGS

'Twenty four steps' is a significant route linking the current conservation area with the proposed extension 2. The association with the artist, L. S. Lowry brings added interest. Of the steps he said "*You would think that Chapel [now demolished] would dominate the steps, but it doesn't you know. It's the other way around*" (Middleton Guardian, 22 Sep 2005).

Lodge Mill and Brookside Mill are good early examples of the two classic types cotton mill, spinning and weaving. The plan and form of Lodge Mill, including the use of multi-pitched roofs to span a single room, is typical of around 1840. A map of 1839 shows a building at this location. Many original features remain intact, including fenestration and curiously decorated copings. Brookside Mill is later and has the characteristic north light roof and shed design promoted by Fairburn. Much would be gained from further documentary and archaeological study of these buildings.

4.2.8 LOCAL DETAILS

The architectural style and form of the Old Grammar School has been echoed in many buildings of Middleton. In particular are some Edgar Wood designed properties and the 1840s Parish School. This recycling of architectural detail evident here and elsewhere helps to unite the wider conservation area of diverse



Fig 97. Industrial building at Morton Street (south).



Fig 98. Old Grammar School (left) and Schoolmasters House.



Fig 99. Lodge Mill beside the River Irk.



Fig 100. Lodge Mill window detail.

historical periods and materials. The remainder of the buildings in this extension have typical nineteenth century detailing on a domestic scale.

4.2.9 PREVALENT AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

The prevalent materials are brick (normally a smooth type) and Welsh slate for roofs. Traditional stone slated roofs survive in the Old Grammar School and on some earlier Georgian buildings.

4.2.10 GREENERY, WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACES

The Old Grammar School is situated in a tight plot at the bottom of a steep slope and isolated from the road by a large bank on its western elevation. Subsequently, its isolation from the road, the presence of Whit Brook (see fig 102), and the open aspect with allotments to the east, provides a separate environment in harmony with the character of the building. However, further shrub planting to the south of the School would enhance this separation from Boarshaw Road.

The Brook, with its wildlife and trees, is always close to Boarshaw Road.

4.2.11 BUILDINGS AT RISK and NEGATIVE AREAS

Lodge and Brookside Mills have suffered some of the the common problems of historic industrial structures during the twentieth century (see fig 103). The mills are suffering from lack of maintenance, particularly the roofs and guttering system. Early features that have survived for so long are now showing clear signs of wear and tear. Similar problems affect the industrial buildings on Market Street and south Norton Street. In all these cases, it is important to separate historically interesting structures that have the potential to enhance the area from ugly buildings that contribute little.

4.2.12 PROBLEMS, PRESSURES AND THE CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Similar pressures apply to all of the proposed extensions to the conservation area including the erosion of key details to the built form. However, the particular issues relating to this area lie in the south and can be seen as similar to those on Market Street. They are: first, problems of building decay and ugly replacement structures; secondly, the need for new uses that are compatible with the particular shape and form of the townscape; thirdly, location issues and the loss of purpose of this part of the town centre; and finally, a need for a better general environment containing more trees, as exemplified in the southern aspect of Lodge Mill. These broader problems are to addressed in the Town Centre Masterplan currently being drawn up by consultants and the Council.

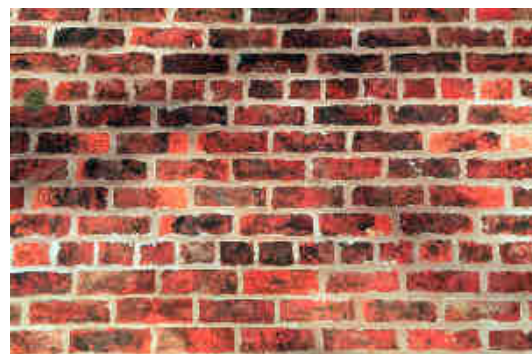


Fig 101. English Garden Wall bond



Fig 102. The ancient Whit Brook beside the Old Grammar School



Fig 103. Deterioration at Lodge Mill.



Fig 104. Former Electricity Department Offices.

4.3 EXTENSION 3 – LONG STREET TO MIDDLETON GARDENS

4.3.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

This extension would encompass part of the retail centre of Middleton including a key public space and a set of unique commercial buildings by the architect Edgar Wood. This area has become the commercial heart of Middleton having once been the original location of the medieval mill pond and mill.

4.3.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Up until the mid twentieth century the hub of the town of Middleton was at Market Place (see fig 105) which skirts the southern boundary of the current conservation area. Market Place originally extended from its current location to incorporate much of the area now dominated by the traffic island. South of the island, Long Street turns into Manchester Old Road which has a linear route now truncated by the Arndale Centre development of the 1970's. The Hugh Oldham map of 1767 shows the road skirted by Half House Field and an area known as The Park to the west. To the east the mill pond dominates. Georgian encroachment can be seen on the map of 1839 with new buildings taking up residence in Half House Field. The plan form of the properties is largely industrial including possibly weavers cottages formed around a central courtyard. The area has taken on the aspect of an industrial suburb in the map of 1849 with a Print and Dye works listed to the southern extremity. Today, the line of buildings along the western boundary of Middleton Gardens are what remains of the properties following the line of the original Manchester Old Road (see fig 106). Opposite and across the Gardens is a significant grouping of commercial properties by the architects Edgar Wood and James Henry Sellers built in 1908. The most recent development of the area includes the landscaping of Middleton Gardens as a leisure and exhibition amenity.

4.3.3 PREVALENT AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

Area 3 has seen much modern development which has enabled it to become the commercial focus of the town. The area lies over much of the original land taken up by the medieval hall, gardens, mill pond and mill. Early maps show how the mill pond has shaped the development of this area. The segmental form of the pond is present up until 1848. In the map of 1889 development can be seen shaped to the edge of the existing pond (it is not clear whether the pond has been infilled at this time). Today the buildings and plots occupying the land between Old Hall Street and Fountain Street take up the plan shape of the pond – the likelihood is that the backfilling of the pond released much needed development land in an area which was becoming increasingly crowded during the hiatus of the industrial revolution in Middleton.



Fig 105 Middleton Gardens in the 1960's before the traffic island was built. The building second from the right was by Edgar Wood. Photo courtesy of RMBC, copyright Lawrence Kay.



Fig 106 Middleton Gardens along the Manchester Old Road section. The building second from the right is believed to be by Edgar Wood.



Fig 107 Buildings along Long Street, east side.

4.3.4 CHARACTER OF SPACES WITHIN THE AREA

The dominant space in area 3 is Middleton Gardens (see fig 108) which is surrounded by an eclectic mix of buildings which have varying forms, materials and styles. Because it is enclosed as such it takes on a hub atmosphere with the central area being used as a public amenity. A line of trees in front of the buildings on the western boundary of the gardens helps provide a permeable enclosure which has fostered the use of outdoor seating and subsequently has a European feel.

4.3.5 PREVAILING OR FORMER USES

As already noted this area is situated south of the medieval Middleton Hall and originally held the mill pond and mill. Over time the immediate vicinity of the mill witnessed firstly the introduction of small garret style weavers cottages with central courtyards and subsequently the development of larger cotton factories including a Print and Dye Works. In the late nineteenth century development pressures lead to the infilling of the pond. At this point the junction between Manchester Old Road and Manchester New Road became a natural area for confluence. The development and truncation of Manchester Old Road to allow for the building of the Arndale Centre in the 1970's echoes the importance of this location as an area of confluence and the area now known as Middleton Gardens maintains a loose 'hub' characteristic.

4.3.6 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES OF THE BUILDINGS

Perhaps fittingly for the area that houses Middleton's commercial heart, we have an excellent example of the Edgar Wood and James Henry Sellers partnership and of an early twentieth century retail outlet facing Spring Gardens. The listing notes that *"the design is not only extraordinary in its use of the tiled panels but in the early use of a reinforced concrete flat roof"*. The building (see fig 109) consists of three shops built in 1908 of brick with glazed tile decoration. The tiled panels incorporate green chevron patterns. In the same year that the shops were built Wood and Sellers were commissioned to design a pavilion for the Franco-British Exhibition at Wembley by the Pilkington Lancashire Pottery. The resultant design bares striking similarities to the Middleton retail outlets including the glazed chevron pattern.

4.3.7 CONTRIBUTION OF KEY UNLISTED BUILDINGS

Other key buildings exist towards the western section of Middleton Gardens. The Dusty Miller public house (see fig 110) has grown organically over a period of 200 years. It has a largely Victorian façade of three bays with slated roof and pitched eaves dormers. Licenses can be traced back to 1816 , but at Middleton's annual Brewster sessions in 1873 it was claimed that the pub had had a publicans license for 95 years up to 1867. This takes the pub back to the early 1770's. It is unclear if any of the original fabric survives. The Britannia Inn is situated (see fig 111) on the same axis but further towards Wood Street. It



Fig 108. Middleton Gardens with public sculpture.



Fig 109. Edgar Wood commercial properties facing Middleton Gardens.



Fig 110. The Dusty Miller Public house was first licensed in the C18th

has a Georgian brick façade with diminishing fenestration over three storeys. A deed shows that the land was bought off Lord Suffield in the 1780's and a licence exists for the pub dated 1793. There are two buildings believed to be early works by Edgar Wood, Albion Buildings on Wood Street and a shop just around the corner on Long Street (see Fig. 106).

4.3.8 LOCAL DETAILS

In area three we have the notable use of reinforced concrete flat roof construction namely at 33-37 Middleton Gardens (see fig 112). Also the striking use of the chevron pattern to the tiled frontages is unique in its outlook and one can't help but relate this pattern to Edgar Wood's original drawing's and sketches of the re-set Romanesque arch with chevrons of the Parish Church.

4.3.9 PREVELANT AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

Brick in all its variety of bonds has been used in the majority of buildings with the additional use of glazed tiles to the façade of 33-37 Middleton Gardens, which has a concrete reinforced roof.

4.3.10 GREENERY, WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACES

Middleton Gardens is a large public amenity which forms a natural hub for the community with outlets into the Arndale Centre and Middleton Market. The central area has recently been redeveloped and is largely open with some recently planted shrubs and trees and is used for leisure and public occasions. The pleasingly eclectic line of properties along the Gardens western boundary is paralleled by a line of trees which offers a permeable boundary, which encourages relevant properties to use the space for open air activities in the summer.

4.3.11 BUILDINGS AT RISK AND NEGATIVE AREAS

Whilst recent landscaping and development to Middleton Gardens has gone some way to create an anchor point to the centre of the town the area still has a vast empty open aspect which may be considered as bland and uninviting. The atmosphere is not conducive to the hustle and bustle of a market town and a 'focal' or 'hub' characteristic is loosely attached. The area is lacking activities such as, for example, an open market which would complement the European atmosphere created by the properties along the western boundary of the Gardens. The Victorian Dusty Miller public house is also isolated from Middleton Gardens by a cul-de-sac skirted by paving.

4.3.12 PROBLEMS, PRESSURES AND THE CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Similar pressures apply to all of the proposed extensions to the conservation area including the erosion of key details to the built form. There is a danger for the large open space of Middleton Gardens in area 4 to become a bland crossover point to various retail outlets.



Fig 111. The Britannia Public House Georgian façade



Fig 112. Detail of Edgar Woods commercial shops.



Fig 113. The stark atmosphere on Long Street below the traffic island.

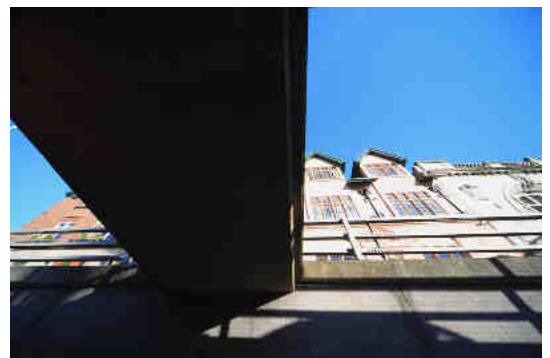
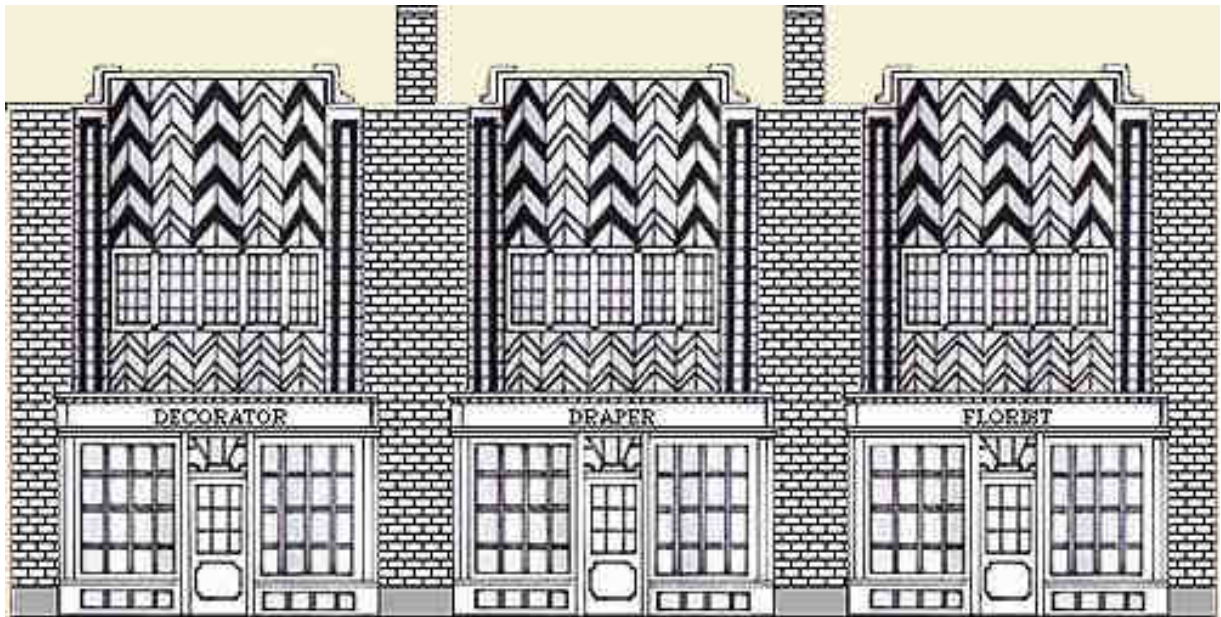


Fig 114. Market Place from the subway of the traffic island.



4.4 EXTENSION 4 – DURNFORD STREET

4.4.1 LOCATION AND SETTING

Moving the existing conservation area westward along the axis of Durnford Street, this extension includes a number of Victorian terraced houses with a traditional nineteenth century urban footprint including rear yards with access via alley ways. To the top of Durnford Street the extension allows for the inclusion of the surviving remains of Durnford Street School (the infant's area) designed by Edgar Wood and James Henry Sellers. The boundary returns to encapsulate a small section of land which incorporates part of the footprint of Clarkes Croft (part of the eighteenth century field pattern) including a large earthwork boundary.

4.4.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The land upon which this area now lies was originally Glebe Land and also a part of the field known as Clarke's Croft. Prior to the introduction of the Victorian street pattern the only development in this proposed extension was along the boundary of Clarke's Croft. The map of 1848 shows a regular series of plots skirting the boundary. Named after Bishop Durnford (the Middleton born philanthropist who became Bishop of Chichester and was patron to the Grade II listed Parish School at Long Street), Durnford Street is an excellent example of late nineteenth century Lancashire terraced housing built upon a street pattern intended to standardise living accommodation and improve sanitary conditions. At Grey Street the rear of the properties have through roads, back yards and outside toilets. The necessity for outside toilets and backyard space ended the traditional development of housing around an enclosed courtyard (like those noted in Area 3 above). The last development in this area took place in 1908 when the Durnford Street School (partially demolished) was built by Edgar Wood and James Henry Sellers, which was notable for its reinforced concrete construction.

4.4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The principal archaeological feature in area 4 is the surviving boundary to what is referred to as Clarke's Croft in the 1736 Hugh Oldham map. The OS map of 1848 shows a series of small plots leaning up against the curvilinear boundary. Today a large earthwork survives along part of the boundary including a retaining buttress dating from the eighteenth century (within the grounds of the current Long Street Methodist Church). Of the late Victorian Terraced housing the rear access street pattern with back yards and outhouses still remains intact with some survival of original outbuildings apparent.

4.4.4 CHARACTER OF SPACES WITHING THE AREA

The plan form of area 4 takes on a tight regimental pattern of linear frontages and rear yards accessed by alley ways. The repetition of the street pattern along Grey Street not only articulates the functional intent of such properties but is also representative of the Victorian need for social order and improved sanitary conditions. Street vistas are dominated by linearity and perspective.



Fig 115. Durnford Street takes on a regimental character.



Fig 116. Door details to Durnford Street.



Fig 117. Rear alley and utility space at the back of Grey Street.

4.4.5 PREVAILING OR FORMER USES

Signs of the original agricultural origins of this area have all but gone with the introduction of a tightly organised street pattern of terraced houses and back yards of the nineteenth century. To the top end of Durnford Street the surviving former infant school continues its role as an Adult Learning Centre? As noted earlier, a large bank of earth (possibly a surviving field boundary) with a squared rubble buttress (possibly eighteenth century or earlier) remains within the grounds of LSM and skirts the related car park following the original line of Clarke's Brow shown in the 1787 Hugh Oldham map.

4.4.6 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC QUALITIES OF THE BUILDINGS

Area 4 holds another building constructed under the auspices of Wood and Sellers in 1908 namely the Durnford Street School. Only a fragment of the building remains in the guise of the former infant block. The remainder of the building was demolished in 200? After being on English Heritage's Register of Buildings at Risk for a number of years.

4.4.7 CONTRIBUTION OF KEY UNLISTED BUILDINGS

As a group, the terraced houses which are situated along Durnford Street and Grey Street are important as buildings representative of social developments in housing (in the industrial north) in the late nineteenth century. Immediately south of the proposed extension boundary on Milton Street, lies the Edgar Wood designed former Independent Labour Club. The boundary should be modified to include this building.

4.4.8 LOCAL DETAILS

In Extension 4 we have the notable use of reinforced concrete flat roof construction at the Durnford Street school. The terraced plan form with back yard and alley is a typical characteristic of the area.

4.4.9 PREVALENT AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS

Area 4 has a predominance of Welsh Blue slates as roof covering. Red brick is the common denominator in terms of building materials.

4.4.10 GREENERY, WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACES

Whilst there are no defined open spaces in area 4 the location offers linear views of a traditional northern terraced street pattern, where the regimental repetition of features such as doors, windows and outhouses adds to a feeling of perspective and formality.

4.4.11 BUILDINGS AT RISK AND NEGATIVE AREAS

Some of the rear alleys to the terraced properties in this area are looking tired and overgrown. There has been a loss of original features to the rear yards such as external toilets and outhouses.

4.4.12 PROBLEMS PRESSURES AND THE CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

Similar pressures apply to all of the proposed extensions to the conservation area including the erosion of key details to the built form.



Fig 118. Wood and Sellar's former Infant School on Durnford Street.



Fig 119. Durnford Street looking east.

5. PROBLEMS, PRESSURES AND CAPACITY FOR CHANGE



Traffic island at the bottom of Long Street, looking towards the conservation area

5.1 Strategic Problems

5.1.1 The biggest long term problem facing the Conservation Area is isolation from the commercial and retail sector of the town, a consequence of the large traffic island at Market Place. This was constructed in the 1960s, with the removal of the outdoor markets, and has resulted in the migration of commercial shops and public amenities to the south of the town. Its removal goes some way to explain the poor condition of the streetscape and properties around this area. South of the island, the retail heart of Middleton is a contrast to the softer aspect of the heart of the conservation area. However, there are no visual or thematic cues to draw activity into the conservation area as the markets held there had once done.

5.1.2 There is a particular problem of permeability at this point. The traffic island is difficult to pass for the pedestrian whether via the subways or crossing the traffic. The garden at the centre does not work as an attractive place to pass through or linger. A sense of “threat” permeates. Consequently, the two parts of Long Street are effectively different places, either side of an impermeable barrier.

5.1.3 Many problems feed from this isolation, including lack of use, regular turnover of tenants and poor maintenance of the historic buildings on the street frontage. The effect is not just limited to the immediately adjacent areas. Other parts of the conservation area have also become focal points for vandalism, graffiti and theft as a consequence of being cut off from the town centre, including Jubilee Park, Twenty Four Steps, and the Church itself. The barrier has created a long term question of purpose and meaning for the conservation area. Despite its strengths, is not large enough from a commercial or civic perspective to stand alone. Gradually, over time, it is being drained of life and vitality by the logic and forces of centralizing around Middleton Gardens.

5.1.4 The most immediate threat comes with the possible removal of the Library and Local Studies centre from Jubilee Park. The Library acts as a cultural magnet to the conservation area. This would have a major negative impact at the heart of the Conservation Area. The Library and Local Studies are key cultural uses that should be retained.

5.1.5 The solution to the above problems lie with the broader town centre strategy being drawn up by Rochdale M.B.C.. Nevertheless, they are key problems of the conservation area. Future strategies for the conservation area will be greatly affected by how the Council responds to these overarching problems of separation, isolation from the centre and the retention of the town’s prime cultural use in the heart of its cultural area.

5.2 Under Use

5.2.1 The conservation area has a wealth of heritage and amenity capital, though underused as the commercial focus and general social values have changed. Under use has also been encouraged by a lack of investment. For example, in Jubilee Park the contribution to the setting and hierarchy of the Church has been lost among overgrown trees. Under use may encourage damaging alternative proposals. The 'original design intentions (circulation, formal views and informal vistas) remain relevant to today’s user’ (Lovejoy report). The Park could be placed under threat by further muddying the overall purpose of the design. There are many other examples of under use affecting commercial and non-commercial buildings and areas and much of this problem is tied up with the strategic problems.

5.3 The Lack of a Conservation Culture

5.3.1 There is a lack of knowledge or understanding of conservation issues. Many are unaware of the Conservation Area status and what it means. There is little sense of all pulling in the same direction. This is partly a lack of a strategic framework that provides a role and purpose as well as protection for the conservation area.

5.4 Erosion of Detail

5.4.1 Added to this there is concern that over the years there has been a gradual ero-

sion of important elements of detail, which are a vital part of the conservation areas character. This has come about because of latest trends in manufacture and use of materials.

5.4.2 The encroachment of the upvc window and door is affecting the character of many historic properties and provides a bland streetscape. The tendency to render a poorly maintained brick wall as a remedial option is not only visually displeasing but harbouring potential problems of dampness for the future. Where render has not been used the tendency to rake out mortar joints mechanically is damaging stone and brick surfaces and the eventual character of the property with badly pointed walls.

5.4.3 The lack of maintenance to boundaries, especially the pigstone walls surrounding Jubilee Park is endangering a significant and rare local detail. Traditional roof surfaces have been subject to inappropriate refurbishments including the replacement of stone slates with concrete tiles and the overlaying of slates with bituminous felt. Also the introduction of colourful tiles flashed in to their historic neighbouring stone slates with bituminous banding is inappropriate and poor practice.

5.4.4 Listed below are a number of details, which are under threat within the conservation area:

- windows, doors and shop fronts,
- water goods, downspouts and gutters,
- wall renders and claddings,
- traditional roof coverings,
- historic gates, fences, walls and boundaries
- historic floor surfaces

5.5 Open Spaces

5.5.1 Some of the open spaces surrounding the Church are poorly landscaped and have a tired air. The Old Burial Ground to the south of the Church is overgrown and is poorly maintained. Saint Leonard's Square to the north has poor paving and large expanses of tarmac. Together with the barrier formed by overgrown trees to the west, the Old Burial Ground and square are contributing to a feeling of isolation around the Church, which encourages vandalism.

5.6 External Pressures

5.6.1 There are a number of external pressures noticeable in the conservation area. Recent trends in development, which include the conversion of buildings into apartments, can damage the internal footprint of an historic building. This has the effect of devaluing its contribution to the conservation area. Development pressures also have the potential to erode important characteristics and details unless carefully controlled.

5.6.2 Other pressures relate to the removal of garden frontages and the provision of hard standing for car parking. This is particularly a problem on Long Street, as commercial practices have grown. Added to this, is the tendency to replace historic shop frontages with inappropriate upvc windows and doors and large expanses of glass.

5.6.3 The area is blessed by two outstanding historic churches, the Parish Church and Long Street Methodist Church. Both have witnessed the gradual erosion of their congregations as the social trend away from religious worship increases. This is most evident at the Methodist Church and such occurrences threaten both the survival of the building (as with the Providence Congregational Church) and the community as a social focus is taken away.

5.7 Conclusion

5.7.1 Middleton has an undervalued and under performing heritage as a consequence of its dislocation from the lifeblood of the town centre. There has been a consequential migration of traditional activities and roles to outside the Conservation Area. However, Middleton has a uniquely vigorous campaigning contingent of civic and heritage groups. It also has as a tremendous asset in the medieval Parish Church. It currently holds on to a building with a key public role, namely the Library and Local

Studies centre. This fosters important and complementary activity and acts as a draw to people who perhaps would not otherwise go into the area.

5.8 Capacity for Change

5.8.1 What Middleton is lacking is a strategic masterplan to tackle the significant issues of isolation and demarcation between the two halves of the town centre. Consultants are currently drawing up such a masterplan. It should be a catalyst for change and should take into account the following considerations: -

- The long-term re-development of the traffic island as a public square to strengthen the links between the town centre, improve permeability and revive the prospects of fringe businesses.
- Improving the links between the two areas by extending the current conservation area south. This will help to introduce visual links within the streetscape and encourage a holistic approach to the two parts of Long Street which have essentially the same history and character.
- Utilising the Public Library and Local Studies centre as an essential resource (and an anchor to reduce migration from the Conservation Area) for learning and education, and establishing a long term feasibility plan to increase its focus as a Heritage Centre in addition to its present role.
- Establish a ten year conservation grants scheme to focus resources on the buildings at risk and those mutilated by poor alterations. A long term approach is required to gradually restore the historic fabric to a point where good planning control can continue the process on its own. Grants are needed because of the poor state of many businesses and the low incomes of most residents.
- Re-invigoration of the plans for Jubilee Park and the Old Burial Ground with an emphasis on conservation and sustainability.
- Explore pathways of re-use for key buildings in the conservation area including the use of heritage grants and trusts. The current initiative for utilising parts of the Long Street Methodist Church as an Edgar Wood Centre and/or a Methodist Archive should be actively supported.
- Cultivating a cultural quarter ethos and increased marketing of the conservation area. Some initial ideas are outlined below, but a strategic approach to marketing, re-branding and education should be drawn up.
- Researching the potential tourist capital of the Parish Church and the Edgar Wood story. The systematic appraisal and conservation of Edgar Wood designed buildings should be a priority.
- Providing support and funding for the further research of Middleton's Silk industry and the explaining of this history.
- Providing support and funding for further archaeological investigation around the church, Old Burial Ground and Clarke's Croft areas which might reveal historic earthworks and boundaries.
- Measures for developing a planning culture of conservation such as information and guidance on architectural details such as windows and doors, planning requirements etc.
- Introduction of signs and information boards to encourage permeability and improve knowledge and understanding about the conservation area with the introduction of a series of Heritage Information Maps and Leaflets. The provision of a map or trail outlining Edgar Wood properties which would also help educate the community about the value of such properties.

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Victoria County History

Maps and associated Records courtesy of Middleton Library Archive.

Picture Credits

Figs 9, 10 with thanks to Geoff Wellens

Fig 105 courtesy of RMBC Lawrence Kay collection

7. APPENDICES



Mellalieu Street

Buildings at Risk

Recommendations for Listing

Historical Associations

Edgar Wood

Richard Durnford

Samuel Bamford

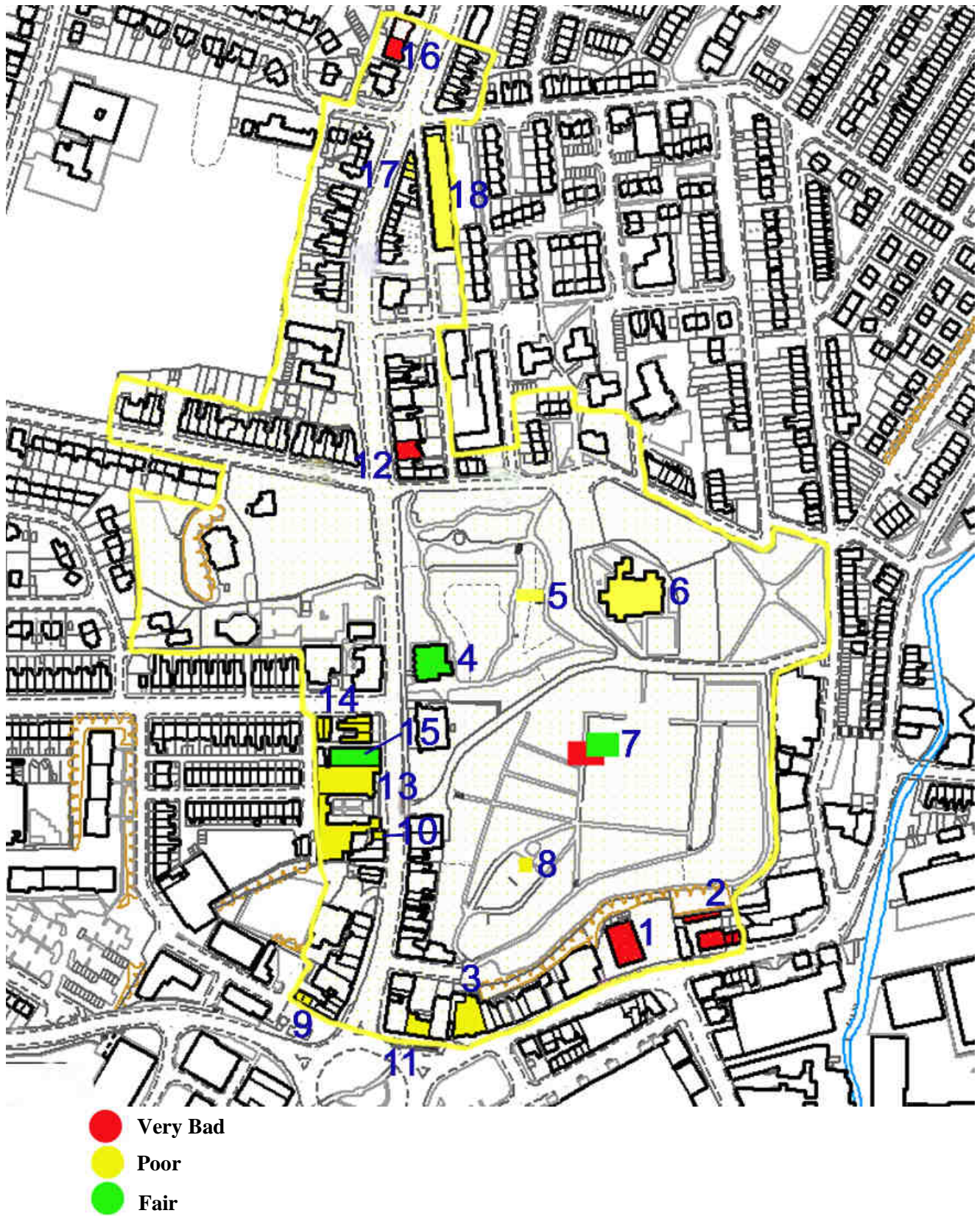
Richard Assheton

Thomas Langley

| No. | Building | Location | Listing | Status |
|-----|---|--|---------|------------------------|
| 1 | Providence Congregational Chapel (former) | Market Place | II | Very Bad, Vacant, A |
| 2 | Georgian Workshops (former) | Cankey's Ginnel, Market Place | na | Very Bad, Vacant A |
| 3 | Police Station (former) | Market Place | na | Poor, Part Occupied, C |
| 4 | Middleton Library | Jubilee Park | na | Fair, Occupied, E |
| 5 | Staircase and Exedra | Jubilee Park | II | Poor, C |
| 6 | Parish Church of Saint Leonard | New Lane | I | Poor, Occupied, D |
| 7 | Gravestones and Perimeter Wall | Old Burial Ground | na | Very Bad to Fair, C |
| 8 | Samuel Bamford Memorial | Old Burial Ground | na | Poor, C |
| 9 | 6 and 10 Sadler Street | Sadler Street | na | Poor, Part Occupied, C |
| 10 | Silk Weavers Shops (former) | 81,85,87 Long Street | na | Poor, Vacant, A |
| 11 | Manchester and Salford Bank (former) | Market Place | II | Poor, Part Occupied, C |
| 12 | 60 Long Street | Long Street | na | Very Bad, Vacant, A |
| 13 | Long Street Methodist Church and Schools | Long Street | II* | Poor, Occupied, C |
| 14 | 101 and 103 Long Street and 5 Durnford Street | Long Street/ Durnford Street | na | Poor, Vacant, A |
| 15 | Middleton Building Society (former) | Long Street | na | Fair, Vacant, E |
| 16 | White House Hotel (former) | 37 Rochdale Road (also affecting 39 Rochdale Road) | na | Very Bad, Vacant, A |
| 17 | 28, 30 and 32 Rochdale Road | Rochdale Road | na | Poor, Vacant, A |
| 18 | Spring Gardens Silk Mill (former) | Spring Gardens, 2 Cheap-side | na | Poor, Part Occupied, C |

| No | Building | Location | Listing | Status |
|----|---|--|---------|--|
| 1 | Lodge Mill | Townley Street | na | Poor, Part Occupied, C |
| 2 | Brookside Mill | Townley Street | na | Fair, Part Occupied, C |
| 3 | Various (former) workshops and cottages | Market Place, Old Hall Street, Lodge Street, Morton Street (south) | na | Poor to Fair, Part Occupied or Occupied, C |
| 4 | Horridges Shop (former) | Long Street | na | Poor, Vacant, A |
| 5 | 33, 35, 37 Manchester Road | Manchester Road | II | Fair, Occupied, C |

Buildings at Risk in the Conservation Area



Buildings At Risk

Buildings At Risk in Proposed Extensions

Criteria for Inclusion

Condition

Very bad means a building where there has been structural failure or where there are clear signs of structural instability; (where applicable) there has been loss of significant areas of the roof covering, leading to major deterioration of the interior; or where there has been a major fire or other disaster affecting most of the building.

Poor means a building or structure with deteriorating masonry and/or a leaking roof and/or defective rain-water goods, usually accompanied by rot outbreaks within and general deterioration of most elements of the

| Name | Location | Further Information |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 87 Long Street | Long Street | See page 35 |
| 1-5 New Lane | New Lane | See page 35 |
| Public Library | Long Street | See page 35 |
| Samuel Bamford Memorial | Old Graveyard | See page 36 |
| Bentwood and 2-10 Mellalieu Street | Mellalieu Street | See page 36 |
| White House Hotel | Rochdale Road | See pages 36/37 |
| Arkholme | Towncroft Avenue | See page 49 |
| Crown Inn and attached buildings | Rochdale Road | See page 49/50 |
| Britannia Inn | Manchester Old Road/ Middleton Gardens | See page 59 |

building fabric, including external joinery; or where there has been a fire or other disaster which has affected part of the building.

Fair means a building which is structurally sound, but in need of minor repair or showing signs of a lack of general maintenance.

Good means structurally sound, weathertight and with no significant repairs needed.

Occupancy

Occupancy noted (to the best of our knowledge) as *vacant*, *part-occupied*, *occupied*, mistakes are possible in assessing occupancy. For monuments, this category is not applicable.

Buildings capable of use are at risk if they are in:

- *very bad or poor condition*
- *fair condition and vacant, partially occupied or about to be vacated as a result of functional redundancy.*

Monuments incapable of use are at risk if they are in:

- *very bad or poor condition*
- *fair condition but lacking management arrangements to ensure their maintenance.*

Priority Category

Priority for action is graded as follows:

A Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed

B Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; solution agreed but not yet implemented







C Slow decay; no solution agreed

D Slow decay; solution agreed but not yet implemented

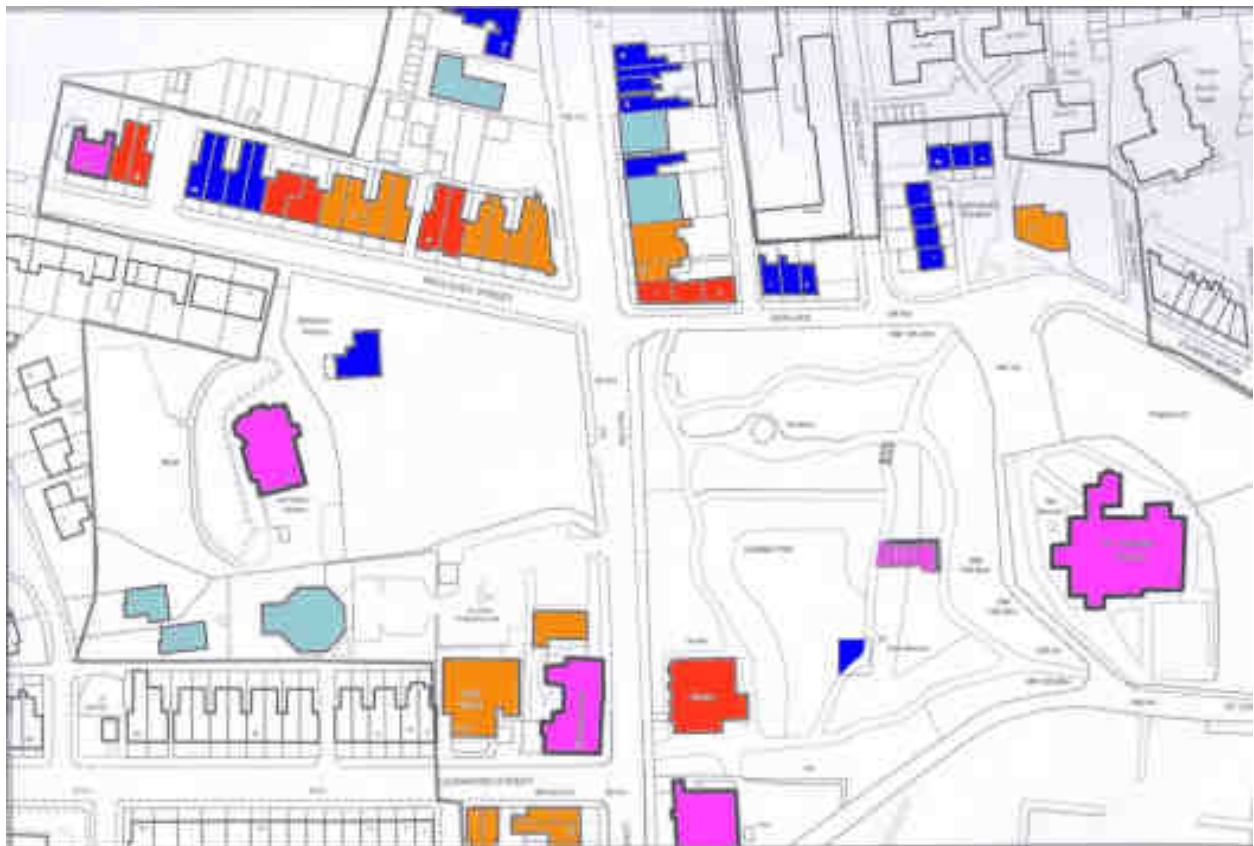
E Under repair or in fair to good repair, but no user identified; or under threat of vacancy with no obvious new user (applicable only to buildings capable of beneficial use)

F Repair scheme in progress and (where applicable) end use or user identified; functionally redundant buildings with new use agreed but not yet implemented.

8. Middleton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal Maps

| Buildings, Features, Structures & Monuments that..... | KEY |
|--|---|
| are Protected - <i>Listed Buildings</i> |  |
| are of Local Importance Grade 1 |  |
| are of Local Importance Grade 2 |  |
| make a Major Positive Contribution |  |
| make a Minor Positive Contribution |  |
| make a Negative Contribution |  |







Hierarchy of Meanings

- Protected** - means statutory designations.
- Local Importance Grade 1** - means “of the highest local importance”.
- Local Importance Grade 2** - means “of sufficient local importance in its own right, regardless of context or setting”.
- Major Positive Contribution** - means “a clear positive contribution made to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area”. Substantial change is unlikely to enhance this contribution.

----- PPG15 -----

- Minor Positive Contribution** - means “while positive, the contribution is slight” Positive change is to be encouraged which could involve either the enhancement of the existing building or its replacement.
- Negative Contribution** - means “there is a clear negative effect that requires positive change”.

Notes

- 1.The categories record inherent qualities not the state of repair or maintenance. Hence a building normally graded as Major Positive Contribution is not graded as Minor Positive 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 grading it to a lower category, depending on the circumstances. Such alterations however require planning permission whereas lack of maintenance does not.
- 1.The dashed line marked PPG15 above marks the division between those buildings that make a clear positive contribution to the Conservation Area (above the line) and those that do not (below the line). The former are protected 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*” (see PPG15 paragraphs 3.16-3.19 also).
- 1.When considering buildings, the traditional two-fold measure of historic and/or architectural interest is used. This is so that interest by virtue of historical association is assessed which may not be obvious from the appearance alone.