

Mawdsley Street Conservation Area



Draft Conservation Area Appraisal

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Cover photograph: Former County Court, Mawdsley Street

MAWDSLEY STREET CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1.0 Introduction

Mawdsley Street Conservation Area is situated on the south-east side of Bolton town centre. The focus of the area is Nelson Square, an attractive public space with a statue of Samuel Crompton, a distinguished figure in the town's history. Mawdsley Street itself is a principal business street and one of the best preserved historic streets in the town. The properties lining this street include some of Bolton's finest historic buildings dating from the early 19th century. The conservation area also includes later 19th century buildings and 20th century development, around Nelson Square and along Bradshawgate.

The purpose of the conservation area appraisal is to reassess the designated Mawdsley Street Conservation Area, and to evaluate and record its special interest. As part of this review, extensions to the conservation area are proposed. This 2007 review of the Mawdsley Street Conservation Area has been undertaken by The Architectural History Practice, on behalf of Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council. The appraisal will have an important function in development control. It supplements the guidance within *Building Bolton* (2006), offering additional advice and providing a starting point for developing initiatives in the area.

2.0 Policy Background

A conservation area is an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance", as set out in Section 69 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Local authorities have a duty to designate such areas and to review them, and to use their planning powers to safeguard and enhance the special qualities of these areas within a framework of managing change with a positive approach. Designation automatically entails control over the demolition of unlisted buildings, strengthens controls over minor development and gives special protection to trees within the area. Policies in the Unitary Development Plan also guide the Council's decision-making within Conservation Areas.

The Mawdsley Street Conservation Area was originally designated in 1970. The conservation area was last reviewed by Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council in the late 1990s.

3.0 Summary of special interest

The conservation area is located in the south-west quadrant of the town's medieval streets, in the angle west of Bradshawgate and south of Deansgate; an area developed as part of the post-medieval expansion of the town to the south. It includes two contrasting areas; Nelson Square an important formal open space, and Mawdsley Street and parallel streets, an area of dense, narrow early 19th century streets. Mawdsley Street itself is a north-south street lined with fine late Georgian and Victorian former town houses and institutional buildings. To the north-east of Mawdsley Street is a tight grid of densely developed narrow lanes including the St Andrew's Court retail complex, around a former church. Narrow streets built-up with 19th century small-scale commercial premises open into Nelson Square.

Nelson Square, laid out in the 1820s, was named after the naval hero and is the only public space in the conservation area. The square opens onto Bradshawgate along its short east side, framed between two late 19th century commercial buildings. The square has benefited from the enhancement of the street surfaces, and now provides a high quality setting for the war memorial and the fine statue of Samuel Crompton, erected here in 1862. North, south and west of Nelson Square are 20th century developments, the block to the north includes the mid 20th century Pack Horse Hotel. To the west a 1970s office block has been built over the line of Chancery Lane, but the late 20th century mixed use development to the south has a more neutral impact on the character of the conservation area.

The architectural quality of the conservation area is particularly high along Mawdsley Street, a little altered street with good late Georgian and Victorian buildings. The earliest of these are built of hand-made red brick with plain elevations with sash windows. Later buildings are a mixture of stone and brick with more ornate, well-modelled elevations. Features such as doorways and cornices are important. The elevations generally have a vertical emphasis with tall windows and doors. The 3-storey scale unifies the street scene, although the architecture is varied. On other streets there is a greater mix of 19th, early 20th century and post-war development, faced in brick and stone, with some terracotta details. Roofs are generally Welsh slate with some unusual exceptions such as green pantiles on the Packhorse Hotel.

The conservation area occupies fairly level ground, which falls gently to the south and east. Views are tightly framed along the streets, particularly important along Mawdsley Street. More open views are possible around Nelson Square, and eastwards across to Wood Street. A gap-site on the north west side of Mawdsley Street has created a lack of enclosure on the edge of Cheapside Square. From Cheapside Square, now used for car parking there are glimpsed views of the tower of the Town Hall.

Bradshawgate is a busy street used by buses and commercial traffic. The other streets are less used by vehicular traffic, but on-street parking and the narrow pavements make pedestrian movements seem cramped. Parking intrudes into Cheapside Square. Good quality re-laid traditional road and footway materials are important to the character of Nelson Square, and good recent paving at the north end on Chancery Lane and Mawdsley Street has enhanced these streets. Original setts are a feature along Back Mawdsley Street and the south end of Chancery Lane.

The conservation appears generally well-maintained although surfaces in back lanes need attention, and these streets have become cluttered with services, parking and wheeled bins. The adaptation and change of use of historic buildings has been a pattern in the area, and one that will need to continue to ensure buildings are fully occupied and maintained and that the street scene remains vibrant.

4.0 Assessment of Special Interest:

4.1 Location and setting

Mawdsley Street conservation area includes part of central Bolton town centre, to the south east of Victoria Square. The conservation area lies on a plateau south of

Deansgate which slopes gently to the south. The River Croal to the north of Deansgate, defines the northern edge of the town centre, with St Peter's Way forming an edge to the east, and the railway to the south. Bolton developed at the junction of several small rivers, which are tributaries of the River Irwell. The underlying geology is Carboniferous Sandstone with coal measures, overlain by sands and gravels. The conservation area is roughly 300 metres above sea level, on land that generally slopes south towards the Manchester basin.

The conservation area is bounded by Bradshawgate to the east, Bolton's principal north-south medieval street. To the east of the latter is the Silverwell Conservation Area, an area of late 18th century streets. To the north the area is bounded by Exchange Street and the Crompton Place retail redevelopment, built in 1971 as the Arndale Centre. To the west is Newport Street, altered in the 1950s. To the south is Great Moor Street, which defines the southern side of the town centre; beyond this the land falls towards the railway line.

4.2 Historic Development and Archaeology

Early Bolton

Archaeological work in Bolton has shown that there were prehistoric settlements in the town centre area; a Bronze Age burial was found just a quarter of a mile to the south east of the Church. The church occupies a low promontory site bounded by the River Croal to the north and east which would have presented an attractive, defensible place to establish a community, on well-drained sands and gravels. The only evidence for Roman activity in Bolton comes from a fragment of Roman pottery found during 1990s archaeological excavations at the site of the former Boar's Head Inn, on the north side of Churchgate.

Although Bolton is not mentioned in Domesday, a settlement almost certainly existed by then, suggested by the Anglo-Saxon cross found during the construction of the present church. The place-name is Old English and means a dwelling or hamlet in an enclosure, first recorded in the 12th century. The town was also known as Bolton-le-Moors, referring to its location on the edge of open moorland. The principal medieval streets were Churchgate, Deansgate, Bradshawgate and Bank Street, which met at a cross roads marked by the market cross. Bradshawgate was originally a very narrow road leading south out of the town, but was widened at the beginning of the 20th Century when the west side was set back and lined with new buildings.

Churchgate and Deansgate were the centre of town life for several centuries. This was the site of a market, first granted a charter by Henry III in 1251. The market stretched for 150 metres along Churchgate and Deansgate, and by the early 19th Century, market stalls had encroached onto nearby streets. Land to the rear of properties fronting these streets was divided into long, narrow burgage plots. During most of the medieval period Bolton was principally a market town, dependent on the surrounding farmland. Textiles became increasingly important to the prosperity of the town, initially woollens and later cotton and linen; by the 1530s Leland noted that the market "standeth most by cottons and coarse yarn". In the 17th century the town was known for fustian manufacture, a mix of cotton and linen, which supported a growing merchant class. Counter-panes and bed-quilts were specialities and Bolton was renowned for the fine quality of its cotton.

Gradually, a grid of streets developed south of Deansgate and Churchgate, with accelerated development from the late 18th century onwards, when Bolton grew prosperous from cotton manufacture and trading. The 1793 map of Bolton (Appendix 2) shows a street called New Acres, laid out parallel to property boundaries south of Deansgate, and on the line of the north end of Mawdsley Street. At that time, the town in this area did not extend much south of the present Exchange Street.

Two hundred years ago Mawdsley Street was a prosperous street lined with town houses. Many of these handsome brick buildings have survived little altered, although all are now in commercial rather than residential use. Mawdsley Street was apparently named after a cotton manufacturer, John Mawdsley, of Delph Mill.



Fig.1: Former town houses on Mawdsley Street retain original doors with pediments

Bolton and Mawdsley Street in the 19th century

The rapid expansion of the textile industry dominated Bolton for over 150 years from the late 18th century. Although the importance of Bolton's market for the trading of textiles had declined with the shift of the cotton trade to Manchester in the late 18th century, the town's prosperity grew due to large-scale manufacturing, particularly the spinning of fine yarn but also cotton weaving. Some steam-powered cotton mills were built in the town centre, including New Acres mill on the west side of Mawdsley Street, shown on the 1849 OS map (Appendix 2). The town is associated with some key figures in the development of the industry, notably Samuel Crompton who invented the spinning mule. The statue of him in Nelson Square was erected in 1862 after a major campaign and the opening ceremony was a significant public event in the town.

Bolton was important as a centre of the bleaching and finishing branch of the cotton industry, and also for engineering. Transport improved with the opening of the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal, begun in the 1790's and completed fifteen years later with a terminal at Church Wharf, east of St. Peters Church. The 1824 map of Bolton illustrates the town's growth since the end of the 18th century (Appendix 2). This clearly shows Mawdsley Street, with most, but not all the land fronting it built-up. Back Mawdsley Street, Chancery Lane and Nelson Square had also been laid out by 1824.

Nelson Square was completed in 1823 and for the next seventy years was a paved area used for some of this period as a 'pig market', marked on the 1847 OS map (Appendix 2). The statue of Samuel Crompton was unveiled in 1862, facing Bradshawgate. In 1893 the Corporation replaced the paving with formal gardens, and soon afterwards installed the underground toilets with their railings.



Fig.2: statue of Samuel Crompton in Nelson Square, erected 1862

On the south side of Nelson Square, until its recent demolition, stood the Richard Hough Engineering Works, one of the oldest firms in Bolton, established on this site before the square was laid out. The prominent Prudential House at the corner of Bradshawgate was erected in 1898. The northern side of the square was lined with houses in the early 19th century, used as small offices for professional people by the late 19th century (Fig.3). The Lever Arms Hotel occupied a site on the north-west corner of the square; today the Packhorse Hotel occupies the whole north frontage; the original inn was taken down and re-built in 1904, extended to the west in 1952.



Fig.3: Nelson Square in the late 19th century (Bolton Archives)

Infirmary Street was named after Bolton's first infirmary which was built facing the west side of Nelson Square in 1827. This replaced a small dispensary, first established in cottages in Mawdsley Street. The Nelson Square building was replaced with a new infirmary in 1883 on Chorley Street and subsequently the building was occupied by the Bolton School Board, later the Bolton Education Department. Infirmary Street was once laid with wooden blocks, to help deaden traffic noise for patients of the Infirmary.

Residential buildings in the area included densely developed workers' housing south of Nelson Square along Lottery Row, named after the process of allocating club housing. The 1847 OS map (Appendix 2) also shows a block of back-to-backs called Markland's Buildings along the east side of Back Mawdsley Street, to the south of the Acres Field cotton mill. These rows of one-up, one-down cottages, with a single-aspect faced narrow lanes or courts where the lack of sanitation, close proximity to industry and cramped dwellings created very poor living conditions.

Bolton's increasing prosperity was aided by the arrival of the railways in the 1840s, skirting the town centre south of Great Moor Street. By the second half of the 19th century, the area around Mawdsley Street was densely developed with a wide variety of buildings, shown on the 1893 OS map (Appendix 2); the courtyard housing had been cleared and the street's status had risen. Mawdsley Street was important for places of worship, civil, educational and cultural buildings and many of these survive. The most imposing of these buildings is the former County Court, a classical stone building built in 1869, on the north-west side of the street (see cover photo). This site was previously occupied by the Adelphi Theatre and concert hall, where Samuel Crompton was said to play violin in the orchestra. Adjacent and to the north the Bridgeman Buildings were built as offices in c.1865. At the south end of the street, on the west side of the junction with Great Moor Street, an independent chapel was built in 1870, with a Sunday school on the east corner of Mawdsley Street, the latter extended in 1897. The former Technical College was built in Italianate style in 1868-70; this was originally the Mechanics Institute and became the technical school in 1891. On the east side of the street, Numbers 25 and 27 were built as the Constitutional Club in c.1870, in gothic style, and across the street No.28 is a palazzo-style building of 1865, built as the Poor Law Offices (Fig.4).



Fig.4: No.28 Mawdsley Street, former Poor Law office building, built in 1865

The gothic-style stone former St. Andrew's Church was built in 1846, as a Presbyterian chapel; the red brick building to its south was built as a schoolroom in the late 19th

century. In the mid 19th Century the church was surrounded by town houses, but by the early 20th Century this had become a commercial area.



Fig.5: Former St Andrew's Church built in 1846 as a Presbyterian chapel and converted to retail use in the 1980s.

Mawdsley Street in the 20th century

Bradshawgate was an important commercial town centre street throughout the first half of the 20th Century, lined with shops, inns and offices, the west side was widened in the early 20th century. The north side of Great Moor Street was widened in 1926, to ease traffic flows. The independent chapel was demolished in 1963 although the former Sunday school remained. Buildings along Mawdsley Street were used largely for offices and institutional use, with few changes to the built environment except at its north end.

The most dramatic changes in the area took place on Nelson Square during the 20th century. The First World War memorial was erected in 1920, although the perimeter railings were removed during World War Two. The Pack Horse Hotel on the north side of the Square partly dates from 1904 and was extended in 1952, replacing a terrace of late Georgian buildings including the old Lever Arms Hotel, which formerly stood at the corner of the square and Bowker's Row. The former Infirmary buildings were demolished in 1972 and the site re-developed for offices. This 1974 5-storey building occupies a large site that takes in additional land to the rear, building over the line of Chancery Lane. This has blocked vistas north and south along Chancery Lane. The rear part of the site had formerly been occupied by Albany Chambers and it was there that a Mr Tillotson first printed a local newspaper which developed into the Bolton Evening News. The Scholes and Scholes shop and the Hough engineering buildings on the south side of the square were demolished in the late 1990s, and replaced with the present 2-storey leisure buildings soon afterwards.



Fig.6: Provincial House, built in 1974 on the site of the former infirmary

Since the mid 20th century the conservation area has experienced a shift from public, educational buildings and industrial uses to a mixture of leisure, retail and office activities, particularly financial, property and legal services. St Andrew's Church closed in 1979 and was converted to retail use in 1982, with new shops built adjacent. Most recently, the trend is for leisure uses with popular bars and clubs around Nelson Square and Bradshawgate. Retail units in the refurbished Bridgeman Buildings at the north end of Mawdsley Street complement the retail complex to the north, but the small retail units created in St Andrew's Court in the 1980s appear to be less viable and some are now vacant.



Fig.7: the Bridgeman Buildings on Exchange Street, refurbished in 1990 for retail use.

4.3 Open Spaces

Nelson Square is the most important open space in the conservation area. The rectangular square was laid out in 1823 and is shown on the 1824 map of Bolton (Appendix 2). It was partly used as pig market until the 1890s when the space was laid out as a public garden (Fig.7). The formal landscaped space is surrounded by streets recently re-laid with stone setts. The central space is enclosed by low stone walls, which were originally topped with railings, and there are gate piers at the west end. The 1920 cenotaph forms the focus of the square, with the 1862 statue of Samuel Crompton to the

east facing Bradshawgate (Fig.2). Public toilets below the east part of the space have elaborate cast-iron railed enclosures to the steps, with cast-iron lamp columns.



Fig.8: Nelson Square from the west, c.1900 (Bolton Archives)

The only other open space in the conservation area is the cleared site immediately south of the former County Court building on Mawdsley Street. Occupied by a cotton mill in the mid 19th century; this site is currently used as a car park and would benefit from sensitive re-development to reinstate the street scene.

4.4 Views and vistas

The density of the streets means that long views into and out of the area are restricted, with the exception of the long vistas along Mawdsley Street which are particularly important to the south, with St Patrick's Church terminating the view; the spire was designed to be visible down this street. Views north along Mawdsley Street and Chancery Lane have been blocked by late 20th century development across the historic street lines. Views into and from Nelson Square are important, with long views possible along Infirmary Street across to Silverwell Street east of Nelson Square .



Fig.9: view east along Infirmary Street to Silverwell Street in the distance

4.5 Character and appearance

The area is characterised by the grid pattern of the streets, laid out at the end of the 18th century. The principal streets run north-south, reflecting earlier property boundaries; Mawdsley Street runs parallel to Bradshawgate, a street established in the medieval period, with a dense grid of narrower streets between. The plots are densely developed with properties built-up to the back edge of the footway, creating a tight urban grain. The narrow plot widths have created a strong vertical rhythm to street frontages, reflecting historic property ownership and seen most clearly along Mawdsley Street. This historic pattern has been disrupted where plots have been redeveloped in the 20th century, sometimes with buildings developed across whole blocks and across a historic street, in the case of the Provincial Buildings on the west side of Nelson Square. However, the late 20th century retail development of St Andrew's Court is small-scale and has a fine grain with intimate narrow spaces.

The scale of the conservation area is fairly homogenous with historic buildings tending to be no more than three storeys high, and 20th century development largely respecting this scale. The dominant building material is red brick, with higher status buildings such as the former St Andrew's Church and the former Court on Mawdsley Street being built in sandstone.



Fig.10: Mixed stone and brick buildings on Mawdsley Street, the former County Court is on the right. This northern part of the street is free of traffic

The character of the streets is affected by traffic flows and building uses. Some of the side streets have been pedestrianised, including the north end of Mawdsley Street where retail units line the street (Fig.10), and high quality paving and setts have been used on surfaces. In contrast, Bradshawgate is used as a bus route and has a heavy flow of vehicular traffic, with tarmac and concrete dominating the street scene. Pedestrian flows during the day are fairly light along the south end of Mawdsley Street and around Nelson Square due to the dominance of office and leisure activities in these areas. There is no residential property within the conservation area, in contrast to over a 100 years ago.

Off the north-west side of Mawdsley Street, along Cheapside Square, an unattractive gap-site breaks the continuity of the street frontage and is currently used for car parking. Back Mawdsley Street is a narrow lane laid with setts, the rear elevations of Mawdsley Street buildings are prominent along its east side. The south section of Chancery Lane has become a service lane for the properties fronting Mawdsley Street and Infirmary

Street, where parking and the siting of large wheeled bins are intrusive in views north along Chancery Lane (Fig.22). There are also some interesting views of the rear elevations of historic properties along Chancery Lane.

4.6 Character areas

In terms of townscape this compact Conservation Area can be subdivided into two areas, each with a distinct character:

- Mawdsley Street
- Nelson Square

Mawdsley Street

Mawdsley Street is straight and narrow with mainly three storey buildings built up to the back of the pavement along both sides. This creates a strong feeling of enclosure with buildings being the dominant element in the street scene. Mawdsley Street retains many fine historic buildings with good quality elevations; the earliest of these were built as houses in a simple Georgian style. The continuity of the frontage is interrupted only by the site adjacent to the former County Court which is currently used for parking. The view north along Mawdsley Street is closed by a blank wall to the rear of the Crompton Place shopping centre; retail use is restricted to this north end of the street. The view south is dominated by St. Patrick's Church on Low Moorgate. Rear elevations are also important along Back Mawdsley Street (Fig.11) and Chancery Lane.

The dense, tight form of the built development continues along Infirmary Street and Bowkers Row. Most of the buildings are in office use.

Along Bowkers Row and off the north-east side of Mawdsley Street, St. Andrew's Court is a mixture of historic buildings and late 20th century development grouped around a series of narrow passageways and enclosed spaces. The small retail units in the development are currently showing signs of poor viability, and the development does not appear to be thriving.



Fig.11: Prominent rear elevations on Back Mawdsley Street, with foreground car parking on Cheapside Square, just outside the conservation area boundary.

Nelson Square

Nelson Square forms the focal point of the Conservation Area. This formal public space is bounded by the busy Bradshawgate on its east side and on the other three sides by setted streets lined with substantial office or leisure and hotel properties, notably the Packhorse Hotel (Fig.12). Buildings are built up to the rear of the pavement and present continuous frontages, although the ground floor of the Provincial House offices are colonnaded. The Bradshawgate frontage to the square is framed by two tall red brick buildings in red dating from the 1890s and early 1900s. To the north is a 20th century retail development.

The landscaping of the square was enhanced in the early 2000s, with granite setts reinstated on the streets. The soft landscaping of trees and shrubs at the upper, western end provides an important green space. The square slopes gently from west to east. The space provides the setting for the war memorial and for the statue of Samuel Crompton. Around the perimeter of the garden is a low stone wall, with a good pair of gate piers on the west side; the railings were removed in the last War. The main view into the square is from Bradshawgate, although there are also views from the southern end of Bowkers Row, the eastern end of Infirmary Street and from Wood Street.



Fig.12: Nelson Square from Bradshawgate, with the Packhorse Hotel behind the Crompton statue.

4.7 The Qualities of Buildings

The area contains a varied mix of good quality 19th century architecture, with the earliest buildings being former town houses built in a plain late Georgian style. The mid 19th century buildings are classical or Italianate in style in brick and stone; the best of these are the County Court and the former Poor Law offices on Mawdsley Street. There are a few good gothic-style buildings on Mawdsley Street, including the former St Andrew's Church and Numbers 25 and 27, which have pointed arched windows and polychromatic brickwork. Good examples of buildings built in the 1890s or early 1900s include the

former Prudential Assurance offices on the corner of Nelson Square. The 1952 Packhorse Hotel is a good example of neo-Georgian architecture, but most of the post-war buildings in the conservation area are of lesser quality.

Listed Buildings

Eight buildings are listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest within the Conservation Area, all listed in Grade II:

2 Mawdsley Street, Bridgeman Buildings

Built in 1865 and refurbished for retail and office use in 1990, formerly known as Mawdsley House. The building is three storeys high, faced in dressed stone with a slate roof. The ground floor has rusticated pilasters between flat and arched openings (Fig.9).

Former County Court, Mawdsley Street

Now occupied by Harvey's bar, the former County Court was built between 1866 and 1869. It is two storeys high built of dressed stone with a slate roof and unusual twelve pane iron framed windows (see cover photo). The rear elevation is brick.

20 Mawdsley Street

This property was built around 1820, originally as a private house and is now used as offices. It is tall with three storeys, built of red brick with a stone plinth and a slate roof. It has twelve pane sash windows and a stone pedimented doorway.



Fig.13: Numbers 20 and 22 Mawdsley Street, built as late Georgian town houses

22 Mawdsley Street

Dating from around 1800 this property was originally a house and is now a shop and workshop. It is three storeys high, but lower than No.20, and also built of red brick with a slate roof. It has a pedimented door case and panelled door with a traceried fanlight.

24 & 26 Mawdsley Street

This office building dates from around 1870 and was built as a warehouse. The classical building is three storeys high, built of red brick with stone dressings and a slate roof. Their symmetrical frontage is Italianate in style with a central segmental archway leading to a rear courtyard.

28 Mawdsley Street

The 2-storey palazzo-style building was built in 1865 as the Poor Law Offices. It is red brick with stone plinth and carved details with a slate roof. The elaborate doorway has a semi-circular arched fanlight, polished granite columns and the date 1865 below the cornice.



Fig.14: Imposing entrance to the former Poor Law offices, built 1865 in a palazzo style

23 Mawdsley Street

This property dates from around 1820 and was built as a house and is now the Conservative Club. It is three storeys high with rendered brickwork and a slate roof. The segmental-arched doorway has an architrave with fluted columns. The building is now partly vacant and is “at risk” from a poor level of maintenance.

25 & 27 Mawdsley Street

These offices were originally built as The Constitutional Club in 1870, to the designs of architect George Woodhouse. The 2-storey building is in a Venetian Gothic style, faced in red brick with blue brick and stone dressings and a steeply pitched roof of graded slate. The only building to be set-back from the building-line on this street, the basement area is protected with wrought iron railings on a stone plinth with cast iron lamp columns either side of the steps to No.27. The rear elevation is important and is partly now a club.



Fig.15: Gothic-style railings and lamp column at Number 27 Mawdsley Street

37 Mawdsley Street

This former house, now used as offices dates from around 1800. It is three storeys high, built of brick with a slate roof and has an Ionic doorcase with columns and twelve pane sash windows.

28 Nelson Square

This was built as offices for the Prudential Assurance Company in 1889, designed by the Bolton architect R.B.Macholl (not Waterhouse as previously thought). The three storey building is faced in brick and terracotta, with a slate roof. The prominent corner has an oriel window and a turret overlooking Nelson Square and Bradshawgate.

Cenotaph, Nelson Square

The Cenotaph was erected in 1920, designed by Ormrod, Poweroy and Foy to commemorate the men of the Bolton Artillery who died in the First World War. The Portland stone stele has bronze inscription panels.

Statue of Samuel Crompton, Nelson Square

This statue was erected in 1862, created by the sculptor William Calder Marshall. Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the spinning mule died in 1827. The bronze seated figure of Crompton is set on a polished granite plinth with bronze panels of Crompton's home Hall i'th' Wood and the Spinning Jenny.

Railings, gates and walls to underground toilets, Nelson Square

The walls, railings and gates were erected around 1900 after the square was landscaped for a public open space by the Corporation. The stone piers are carved with the arms of the city and the iron railings with scroll work and urn finials contribute to the setting of the listed statue of Samuel Crompton.

Unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

Former St.Andrews Church, Bowkers Row (Fig.5)

This former church was built in 1846 as a Presbyterian chapel in a plain Early English gothic style. It is built of stone with a pitched slate roof with tall lancet windows and an open sided turret to Bowkers Row. Refurbished for retail use in the 1980s but currently vacant. Adjacent to the south is the red brick former Sunday school.

13 Mawdsley Street

Built in the late 19th Century this three storey commercial building is faced in red brick, and has a slate roof with projecting eaves on timber brackets. The elevation has gothic features including windows with pointed relieving arches and plain sash opening lights.

17 Mawdsley Street

The low, two-storey early 20th century office building is faced in hard red brick and has an elaborate stone doorway with an oriel window above.

Numbers 39 and 41 Mawdsley Street

A pair of early 19th 3-storey former century town houses with sash windows, now in office use. The brickwork is rendered (Fig.18).

30 Mawdsley Street

Now used partly as a gym, this tall building was constructed in 1868 as the Mechanics Institute; the 1891 date over the doorway relates to its later use as the Bolton Technical School. The three storey building is designed in an Italianate Gothic style, faced in red brick with polychrome details, a pitched slate roof on deep eaves with brackets. Some of the original sash windows with margin lights remain and there is a low boundary wall with iron railings; there may have been a tower on the north east corner.



Fig.16: the former Mechanics Institute built in 1868 and used as the technical School from 1891.

Gate Piers at West End of Nelson Square

19th century stone gate piers with decorative bowl finials, flanking the west entrance to the square. This feature, and the low stone walls enclosing the garden, was part of the design of the square in the late 19th century.

The Pack Horse Hotel, Nelson Square

The Pack Horse Hotel completed in 1952, was designed in a neo-Georgian style by J.Simpson for Magee Marshall, and Robert Edis of London. The three storey red brick building dominates the north side of the square, and has a hipped roof of green glazed pantiles. The 1904 gabled building on the prominent corner with Bradshawgate was formerly part of the Pack Horse Hotel and designed by W.H.Smith. It is now the Barracuda bar.



Fig.17: formerly part of the Pack Horse Hotel, the Barracuda bar is an important corner building, built in 1904

4.8 Building materials and features

Buildings in the conservation area are built of a wide range of materials, with buff-coloured sandstone being used for the higher status buildings such as the former County Court and former St Andrew's Church, and for details. Red brick was used for many 19th century buildings, with other fired clay materials such as terracotta in a variety of colours popular in the early 20th century. Pitched roofs are covered in Welsh slate, with a few rare examples of other materials such as green pantiles on the Packhorse Hotel building. There are a few isolated examples of render, but this is not characteristic of the conservation area.



Fig.18: A mixture of brick and render on the south east side of Mawdsley Street

As most properties are built to the rear of the pavement, boundary walls are unusual. The gardens in Nelson Square are enclosed by low stone walls, but the railings are missing. The ornate late 19th century railings around the steps to the underground toilets are a feature at the east side of the square. Iron railings and gates are important on some late 19th century properties, where basement areas are protected (Fig.15).

At roof level, gables and chimneys are important in the street scene, helping to enliven the street scene.

Buildings constructed in the second half of the 20th century have largely followed the historic use of materials, using brick as a facing material, with some non-characteristic roofs forms such as mansards or flat roofs.

4.9 Public realm: roads and pavements

Carriageways on Bradshawgate and the south part of Mawdsley Street are surfaced in tarmacadam. Historic street surfaces have been retained on several streets in the conservation area, along the south part of Chancery Lane and back Mawdsley Street where larger sandstone setts have been used. The streets around Nelson Square were enhanced with new grey granite setts as part of grant-aided work in the early 2000's. Gulley details and kerbs in stone are also important. Historic paving on footways has not survived in the area, but new paving in natural stone has enhanced the conservation area at the north end of Mawdsley Street (Fig.21). Bradshawgate has concrete paving for footways, with small sections of brick pavers and granite setts, with some retained wide granite kerbs.



Fig.19: traditional stone setts, granite kerbs and gully treatment on Back Mawdsley Street

As part of the Nelson Square improvements, new lighting was installed, using traditional patterns, together with traditional steel bollards. However, the number of poles for lighting and highway signs could be rationalised to reduce visual clutter (Fig.19). Only isolated examples of Victorian cast-iron lighting columns have survived in the area; one is on Exchange Street, but not in working order.



Fig.20: lamps and bollards in Nelson Square



Fig.21: Recent steel bollard and natural stone paving on Mawdsley Street.

5.0 Extent of intrusion and damage

5.1 Negative aspects

Although the conservation area has not been subject to widespread redevelopment, late 20th century office developments have had an impact on the townscape. The most intrusive of these is the 1970s Provincial House built over the line of Chancery Lane, blocking north-south views along this street and obscuring historic patterns of development. This impact is partly mitigated by the scale of the building which fits well. On the edge of the conservation area, the blank side elevation of the 1970s Crompton Place shopping development terminates views north along Mawdsley Street, Chancery Lane and Bowker's Row, resulting in a partly "dead" frontage on Exchange Street. The service and car park accesses to this complex also have a detrimental visual affect on Bradshawgate and Bowker's Row.



Fig.22: Looking north on Chancery Lane, the rear of Provincial House was built across the line of the street in the 1970s,.

The south part of Chancery Lane has become a service lane for properties fronting Mawdsley Street, Infirmary Street and Nelson Square. Bin storage and service installations, such as air conditioning units, have cluttered the elevations and are prominent in views along the street from the south. The east side of Chancery Lane has an undefined edge, with car parking off the street.

Car parking is restricted to on-street parking or gap sites in the area, with no formal car parks provided. The gap site on the west side of Mawdsley Street, on the corner of Cheapside Square, would benefit from redevelopment to reinstate the building line and to address the rendered gable of the former Court building.



Fig.23: the corner gap site south of the former County Court, on Cheapside Square

The street surfaces and lighting along Bradshawgate are now in need of upgrading, to complement the high quality paving schemes elsewhere in central Bolton. The mixture of concrete paving stones and setts are in poor condition.

5.2 Neutral areas

Some late 20th century infill development has had a neutral impact on the character of the conservation area. The mixed use development on the south side of Nelson Square is of a scale and form that complements the character of the conservation area, although the overall design quality is modest.

The St Andrew's Court retail development now appears to be suffering from reduced viability and this is leading to signs of neglect with some retail units vacant at the time of this appraisal, including the former church. The modest quality of this complex and its limited suitability for modern retail standards in terms of small floor areas and narrow circulation spaces suggest that its redevelopment may be required.

5.3 General condition

The condition of historic buildings within the conservation area is generally good, with most buildings appearing to be in active use and benefiting from regular maintenance. The only listed "Building at Risk" is No.23 Mawdsley Street which is now partly vacant, St Andrew's Church, an important unlisted building is currently vacant and in need of a new occupier. The adaptation and re-use of buildings is part of the evolution of the area, reflecting changing patterns of economic activity, a pattern that was first established when former town houses were used for offices from the late 19th century onwards.

The public realm is generally well maintained, and parts of the area are in excellent condition, benefiting from recently-laid high quality natural materials. The public realm along Bradshawgate is now in need of enhancement, due to the poorer condition and quality of materials used for footways.

Rear yard areas are often hidden from view, but car parking and the management of waste and wheeled bin storage is increasingly intrusive in side streets and views into rear yards.

5.4 Pressure for change

Changing retail standards may be resulting in the decline of 1980s retail developments such as St Andrew's Court. Current trends in retail are leading to pressure for larger floor areas, good access and high visibility. This poses challenges for densely developed, historic streets such those in the Mawdsley Street conservation area.

Changes to waste management standards are resulting in large wheeled bins which are hard to conceal unless accessible rear yards are available.

Rising standards in the office property market include pressure for larger floor areas and good access which is not often available in historic buildings. Careful adaptation can enable buildings to continue in established uses.

The 2007 ban on smoking in enclosed public places and workplaces is likely to generate a demand for smoking shelters and outdoor seating, which will require careful management to avoid intrusive new structures.

6.0 Community involvement.

A publicity leaflet which included a tear out questionnaire was distributed to businesses and properties within all the Town Centre Conservation Areas. In addition two half day drop in sessions were held at the library foyer in Le Mans Crescent on 22nd and 23rd January 2008 to provide advice and respond to comments. In total approximately 600 leaflets were distributed. A press release raising awareness of the drop in session was advertised in the Bolton Evening News and the Conservation Area Appraisals were made available to view online.

Respondents were asked if they agreed on the boundary extensions, whether they wished to see more areas protected and to score in terms of importance eight key recommendations set out in the Conservation Area Management Plan.

The response rate was low but raised no objections to the boundary extensions. The Civic Trust were one of the respondents and were generally supportive of all the Conservation Area boundary extensions. Some concern was raised regarding constraints that Conservation Area status afforded and that the extended areas could not be afforded adequate protection by the Authority given the investment pressure in some of these areas.

7.0 Suggested conservation area boundary changes

At present, the boundary of the conservation area excludes Great Moor Street, an important historic street which defines the south edge of the town centre. The east-west street is bounded on its south side by a good group of 19th century buildings, including a large former County School built in the 1890s and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, built in 1861, with adjoining presbytery, all listed Grade II.



Fig.24: St Patrick's Church, Great Moor Street, seen from the south-west



Fig.25: view of Great Moor Street from the south, with the church spire and former school clearly visible

The school and church buildings have a strong presence in the street scene due to their scale and imposing architecture. Views down Mawdsley Street to the south are closed by St Patrick's Church, with its short copper-clad spire. The church and former school buildings are landmarks visible from the south, where the ground drops towards the railway line. The school has good boundary walls and railings to the front, side and rear elevations, with separate entrances for boys and girls marked by carved gate posts. The former school is now converted in flats.



Fig.26: Former school on Great Moor Street



Fig.27: high quality entrance and boundary details at the former school



Fig.28: 1890s buildings on the north side of Great Moor Street, with the listed former Turkish Baths to the right



Fig.29: former late 19th century Sunday school on Great Moor Street

The north side of Great Moor Street includes a late 19th century red brick former chapel school, an 1890s commercial building and the former Turkish baths, built in the 1890s. The baths closed in 1980 and is a Grade II listed building. The Sunday school is currently threatened with demolition. This part of Great Moor Street, between the junction with Mawdsley Street and Bradshawgate, and south to Bollings Yard is considered to have special architectural and historic character.

Good groups of 3-storey Victorian commercial buildings line the west side of the Bradshawgate south of Nelson Square. Although modern shop fronts and signage have intruded at ground floor level, the upper floors and the roof line are little altered, with sash windows and good architectural details. These buildings were erected around 1890; Nelson House is dated 1889. The east side of the street south of Silverwell Yard is more fragmentary, with post-war buildings dominating the frontage and is not considered to have special historic or architectural character. South of the junction with Great Moor Street, there is a 3-storey late 19th century commercial building, known as Crompton House and now used as a restaurant. This suffered fire damage in the 1970s and its windows have been bricked-up.



Fig.30: Late 19th century commercial buildings on the west side of Bradshawgate

8.0 Guidelines for development

8.1 New Development.

Building Bolton (2006) provides guidelines for new development in the town centre. However, opportunities within the conservation area are limited and are most likely to be presented by small infill and gap sites, or sites where existing buildings have a negative impact on the character of the area. New development must reflect the character of existing buildings with respect to siting, scale, proportions, materials and detailing. Applications for Outline Planning Permission will not be considered unless supported by a masterplan and a high level of detail. Applications for full planning permission must include a Design and Access statement that explains the development's affect on the character and appearance of the conservation area, demonstrating that the scheme will be sensitive to its context, supported by visual images such as photomontages or perspective drawings. Good quality contemporary design, related to the historic context and character of the area will be encouraged.

Key factors to take into account are:

- consistent building heights, except where punctuated by corner features;
- the varied skyline,
- the texture of frontages and the balance of windows/recessed openings to solid wall;
- vertical rhythm and the proportion of elevations;
- articulation of building elevations;
- tightly-developed plots and buildings providing enclosure to streets.

8.2 Demolition

Consent will not usually be given to demolish buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, unless it can be demonstrated that the replacement development will bring over-riding community benefits and be of a high design quality. The criteria in PPG15 and UDP policy will be referred to.

8.3 Advertisement Control.

The Authority will apply high standards when considering applications for Advertisement Consent in the Conservation Area. Certain categories of advertisements are not permitted in Conservation Areas and discontinuance action will be taken against existing signs where they do not conform to the guidelines given in Planning Control Policy Note No.6 - "The Display of Signs and Advertisements".

8.4 Street surfacing and furniture

The Bolton Public Realm Implementation Framework (2007) provides guidance on design and standards for enhancement of the public realm. In addition, an audit of original stone flags, setts and kerbs in the conservation area should be undertaken, and significant examples retained and relaid where necessary.

New paving should be in reclaimed or new stone. Concrete flags incorporating an appropriate aggregate may be acceptable in some locations. Brick paving or black tarmac should not be used as these materials are not in keeping with the character of the area.

Historic street furniture such as cast-iron lamp standards should be retained and repaired, with appropriate light fittings.

New lighting, bins and bollards, highway signage and seating should be designed to complement the character of the street. The number of items should be minimized to reduce visual clutter and obstacles to disabled people. High quality contemporary designs may be acceptable, as well as more traditional designs.

8.5 Building Materials

Alterations should utilise traditional materials to match those used to construct the building. These include brick, stone, terracotta, slate, stone flags and clay tiles, reclaimed local stone, new stone or reconstituted stone.

Strap or ribbon pointing should be avoided since this not only harms the appearance of the building but can damage the stone or brick by preventing the evaporation of water.

External walls should not be painted, rendered or clad in modern materials.

External cleaning should only be carried out to remove corrosive dirt. Cleaning should be carried out by a specialist firm under close supervision.

Decorative features including plaques, mouldings and date stones should be retained.

8.6 Windows and doors.

Stone window cills, lintels, door surrounds and stone steps should be retained together with any original windows and doors.

Any doorways or windows no longer in use should be retained and not blocked up. Historic joinery should be maintained in good condition and not replaced with modern imitations.

Owners should be encouraged to use the following styles when replacing windows and doors:

- For Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century properties, vertical sliding sash windows with glazing bars and six-panelled doors.
- For late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century properties, vertical sliding sash windows and four-panelled doors.

Windows and doors should be made of timber and should be painted. Staining is not a traditional finish for timber and should not be used. U.P.V.C. windows and doors are not acceptable as they are not in keeping with the character of traditional buildings.

New windows and doors should be recessed to the original depth and should not be fitted flush with the face of the wall or project from it.

8.7 Chimneys and Roofs.

Chimney stacks should be retained. If rebuilding is necessary this should be in the same materials used to construct the remainder of the building, this may be brick or stone with clay pots. Where central heating flues are installed, these should be contained within the original chimney pot or a traditional replacement.

Roof repairs or replacements should be in natural slate, stone flags or red clay tiles to match the existing materials. Where ridge tiles need replacing these should be in stone or clay.

New rooflights may be acceptable but these should be flush fitting and should not be on prominent roof slopes.

8.8 Rainwater Goods.

Replacement rainwater goods should be in cast iron or moulded aluminium with a black coating. Plastic rainwater goods are not acceptable.

8.9 Boundary Walls, Gates and Railings

Brick and stone boundary walls, iron railings and gates should be retained and any repairs carried out using the same materials and methods of workmanship.

8.10 Shop fronts and Advertisements.

The installation of traditional-style painted timber shop fronts will be encouraged on historic buildings. This will include the use of stall risers, pilasters and cornices to frame the shop window. Hand painted fascia signs and hanging signs will also be encouraged. Contemporary shop front designs and signage of high quality will also be encouraged on appropriate buildings.

Advertisement consent will not be given for internally illuminated box signs. The use of external lights and concealed lighting will be encouraged, in conjunction with well-

designed signage. Temporary plastic signage is not appropriate in the conservation area.

Security shutters should preferably be fixed inside the shop windows and be of a perforated grille type to allow for a view of the window display. If external shutters are unavoidable, they should be incorporated into the overall design of the shop front with the shutter box concealed behind the fascia. The shutter system should be colour-coated to match the colour of the shop front and the shutters should be perforated.

Externally-fixed shutter boxes which project from the facade of the shop, galvanised finishes and solid shutters are not in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area and are not acceptable.

8.11 Minor Fixtures and Services.

Standard external fixtures including satellite dishes, meter boxes, burglar alarms, central heating flues and security cameras should be sited in unobtrusive positions wherever possible. They should be colour-coated to match the background materials i.e. walls or roofs. Air-conditioning units should only be located on hidden, rear elevations.

8.12 Wheeled Bins.

The layout of traditional properties can create difficulties for storing bins. Wherever possible they should be stored out of sight and not left out on the street or footway where they can create obstacles for people with disabilities. New development should incorporate well-designed, discreet bin storage.

8.13 Archaeology

Where there is the potential for archaeology to be discovered on development sites, appropriate recording or investigation should take place in advance of development, with the advice of Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

8.14 Interpretation

Historic Bolton is an interesting place in which to live, work and visit. Well-designed and carefully sited interpretation boards or plaques can enhance people's enjoyment and understanding, and raise awareness of conservation area management.

References:

Bolton Vision, *Building Bolton*, SPG, 2006

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English Heritage, *Street For All North West*, 2005

C.Hartwell, M.Hyde and N.Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Lancashire: Manchester and the South-East*, 2004

Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, *Bolton: Areas of Archaeological Interest*, 1982 (unpublished)

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Gordon Readyhough, *Bolton Town Centre, A Modern History*, 1998

APPENDIX 1

Unitary Development Plan

Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas represent a significant element of Bolton's architectural and historical heritage. The council will preserve and enhance these areas through the control of development and through positive schemes of enhancement. Development which is allowed should contribute positively to the quality of the environment. The Council is empowered to designate further Conservation Areas and will consider designating them as appropriate.

D7. The Council will permit development proposals that preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas. They should:

- (i) be of appropriate height, size, design, materials, roofscape and plot width;
- (ii) retain materials, features, trees and open spaces that contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- (iii) utilize appropriate materials for highway and footpath surfacing; and
- (iv) not adversely affect important views into, and across, a conservation area.

The desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas is prescribed by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Areas represent a significant element of Bolton's architectural and historical heritage and contribute to local distinctiveness. The Council will preserve or enhance these areas through the control of development and through positive schemes of enhancement. The number and extent of Conservation Areas in the Borough has been recently reviewed, with a total of 25 Conservation Areas within the plan area (Appendix 3). However, it is possible that further Conservation Areas might be proposed during the life of the plan or the boundaries of existing Conservation Areas reviewed. This policy outlines some of the elements which the Council will take into account when considering applications in Conservation Areas.

D8. The Council will permit development proposals - involving the demolition of an unlisted building or feature within a conservation area that contribute to its character or appearance - provided that the applicant can demonstrate that:

- (i) rehabilitation is impractical and there is no viable new use for the building; and
- (ii) redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community that would outweigh the loss resulting from demolition; and

- (iii) detailed proposals for the reuse of the site, including any replacement building or other structure, have been approved by the Council which incorporates agreements made to ensure that the replacement works will be carried out within a specified timescale.

Conservation area consent procedures for the demolition of most buildings within a conservation area are dealt with under Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Under the consent procedures, English Heritage must be notified of all proposals to demolish listed buildings, and allowed access to buildings that it wishes to record before demolition takes place. For unlisted buildings within a conservation area, in the case of a demolition proposal the Council will in specific instances condition any consent, requiring recording. There is a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings and features which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Applicants should refer the Conservation Area Character Assessments which identify buildings and features of particular interest and note.

Demolition of buildings in Conservation Areas may lead to the creation of 'gap sites', which can remain vacant for long periods before redevelopment takes place, damaging the appearance of the area. It is therefore important that consent should not be given for demolition unless it is clear that the site will be redeveloped in a way which will preserve or enhance the character of the area within a reasonable timescale. Before demolition, the Council will require an assessment to establish whether the building contains a protected species, such as bats (policy N9).

D9. The Council will require proposals for new or replacement shopfronts in Conservation Areas to:

- (i) respect the period and style of the building and relate to it as a whole;
- (ii) be of a high standard of design, and use appropriate materials;
- (iii) avoid the use of large expanses of undivided glass;
- (iv) include historically accurate detailing; where the proposal is of traditional character; and
- (v) retain any features of architectural or historic interest.

Shopfronts can play an important part in establishing the unique character of town centres. The Council will endeavour, through control of development and design advice, to improve the standard of shopfronts in the Conservation Areas in particular. Where the building involved is 'listed', the introduction of a new shopfront or changes to an existing one will almost always require Listed Building Consent. Because of the historic and architectural interest of these areas it will be essential that shopfronts should not conflict with the style or period of the building, weakening its character and its contribution to the area as a whole. Equally the quality of the design must be high: poorly proportioned shopfronts, for example, will detract from the visual quality of the area. Large expanses

of undivided glass are a feature of modern shopfronts, and conflict with the historic character of these areas, as well as reducing the interest of the building in order to let the displayed goods predominate. Applicants should refer to Planning Control Policy Note 4 – Shopfronts.

APPENDIX 2

Historic Maps

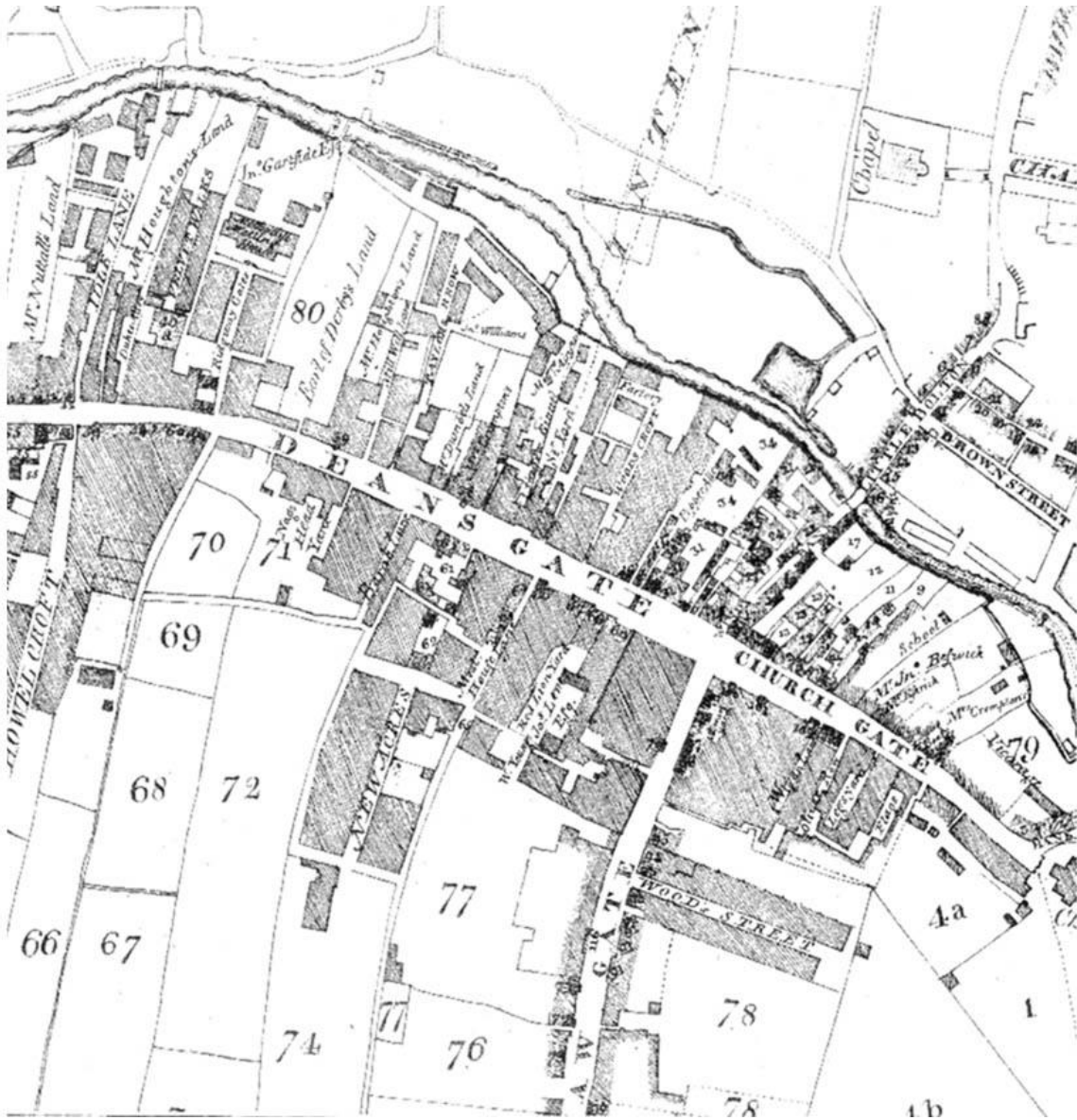


Fig.31: detail from 1793 map of Bolton, showing the Mawdsley Street area (Bolton Archives)

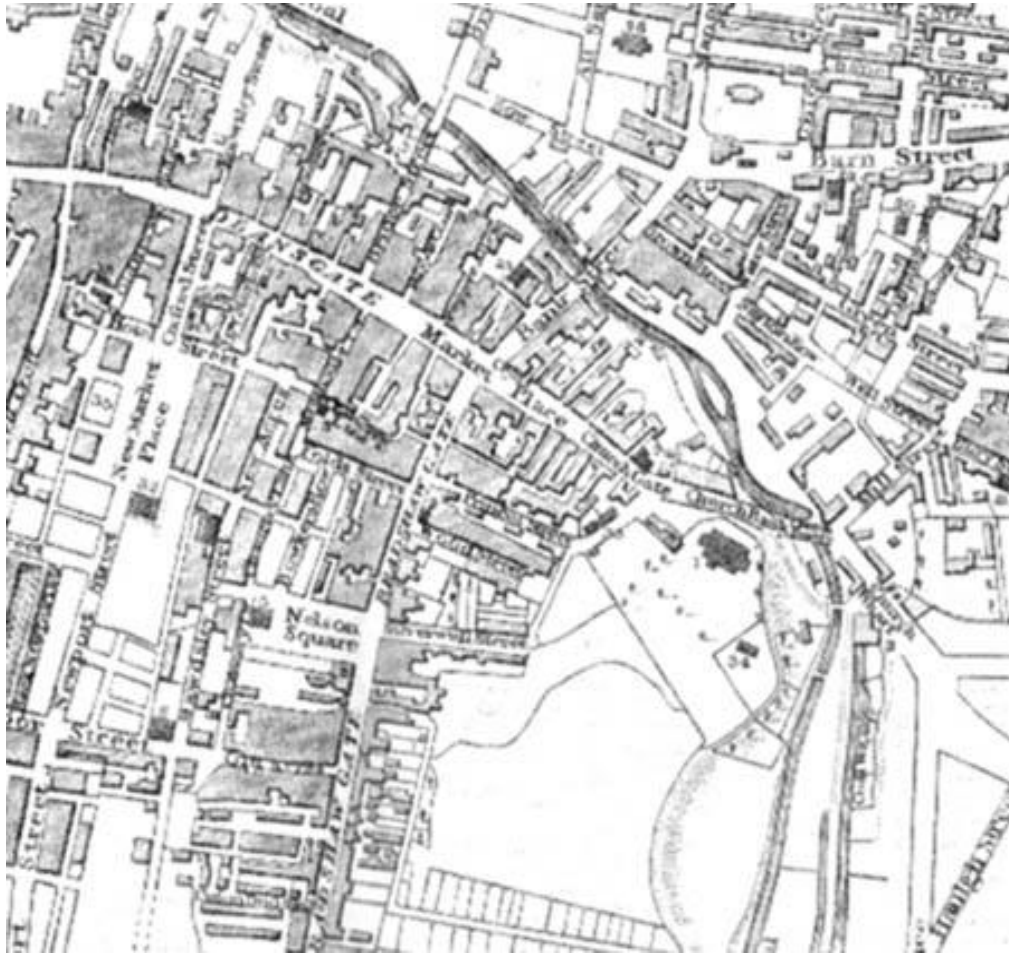


Fig.32: detail from 1824 map of Bolton showing the Mawdsley Street area (Bolton Archives)



Fig.33: detail from 1847 Ordnance Survey map showing the Mawdsley Street area (Bolton Archives)

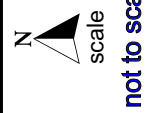


Fig.34: detail from 1893 Ordnance Survey map, showing the Mawdsley Street area (Bolton Archives)

Quality of Buildings

- Listed buildings
- Unlisted buildings of merit
- Building making a neutral impact
- Building making a negative impact
- Existing Conservation area boundary
- Proposed boundary alteration *

* Approved 2007
Map 1



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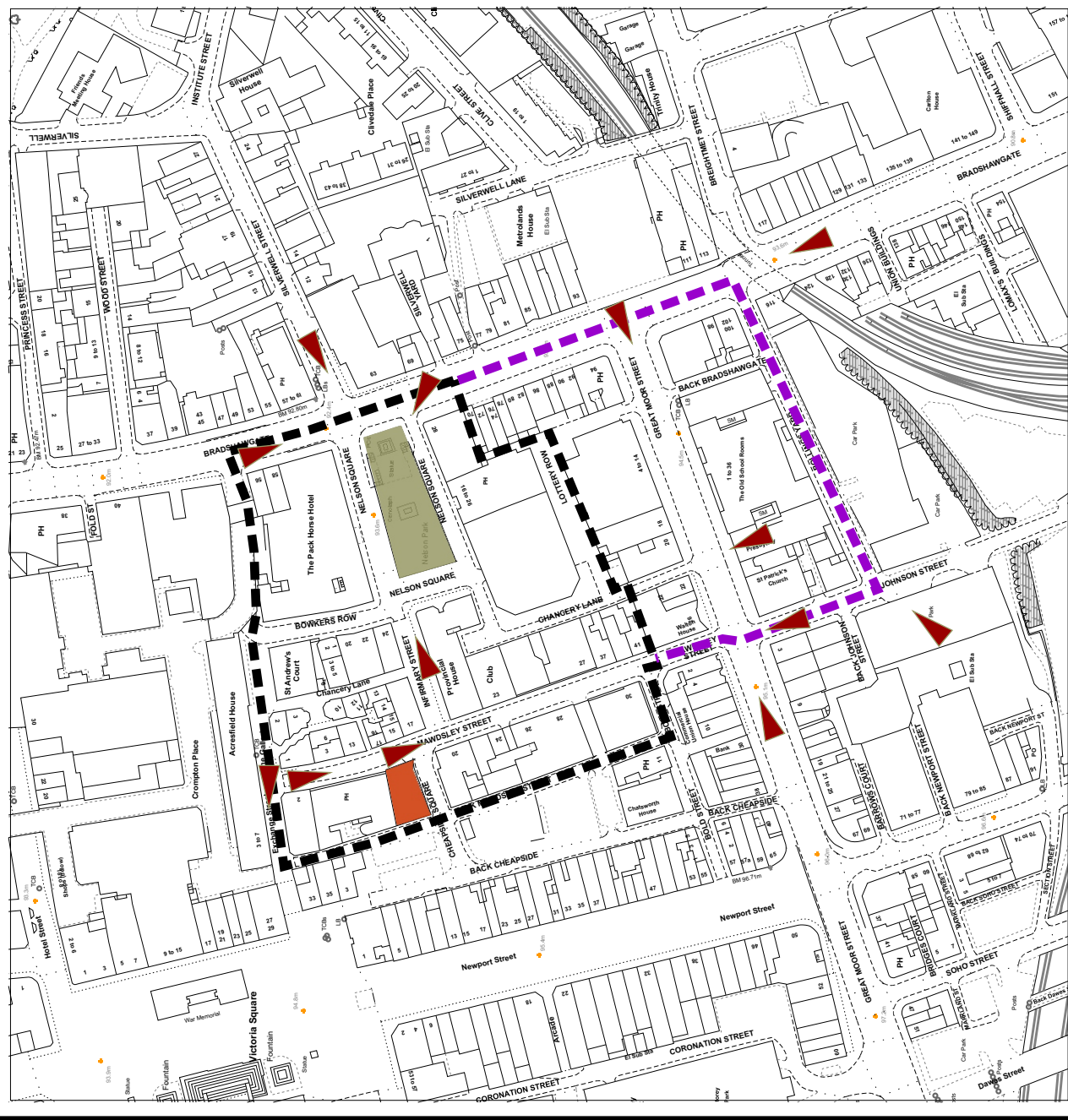


Mawdsley Street Conservation Area



Townscape Analysis

- ▲ Important view
- Potential development site
- Important open space
- Existing Conservation area boundary
- - - Proposed boundary alteration *



* Approved 2007
Map 2



Mawdsley Street Conservation Area

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scale

not to scale