

Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment

SHOLVER Final Report

March 2008



Lathams

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	METHODOLOGY	5
3	PLANNING & REGENERATION CONTEXT.....	13
4	THE SHOLVER AREA.....	20
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY	60

APPENDICES

- A Project Brief
- B Consultation Report (See Separate Cover)

MAPS (SEPARATE)

- 01 Historic Framework
- 02 Historic Development
- 03 Heritage Value

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1 INTRODUCTION



1.01 BACKGROUND

Lathams: Urban Design in association with the Christopher Garrard Consultancy, Richard K. Morriss & Associates, and CgMS have been commissioned to undertake a series of heritage assessments of the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR) area, one of nine Partnership areas where the housing market has been identified by the Government as weak or dysfunctional. The aim of the Partnerships is to enable the delivery of a high quality, sustainable urban environment which address the problem of concentrations of poor and outmoded housing. An extensive series of actions that will reverse decline and reinvigorate the housing market are planned. This will involve strategic interventions in a number of areas, including the Sholver area of Oldham.

Recognising and building on the heritage value within the existing communities is acknowledged by the HMR Partnership — Oldham and Rochdale Partners in Action — to be a key component of the overall strategy for renewal. The Partnership therefore supports the need to produce heritage assessments which can be used to inform spatial planning and development decisions. To this end a select list of suitably qualified consultants was invited to submit tenders to carry out intensive assessments of five intervention areas — including Sholver — within the context of a previously completed extensive assessment of the Oldham HMR area as a whole.

Tenders were invited in May 2007, with follow-up interviews and the award of the commission in June 2007. A project steering group comprising representatives of the Partnership, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC), Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC), Rochdale Development Agency (RDA) and English Heritage (EH) first met with the Lathams' team on 20th June 2007, at which time a project plan and an outline reporting structure were agreed.

The project developed through a cycle of research, fieldwork and lead officer meetings, and public consultation events. A first draft of the report was presented and discussed with the steering group at a meeting on 5th October 2007. Following this, the report was circulated to a wider group of Council officers and the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU). Formal comments led to its revision and the issue of a draft for final comment in December 2007. The whole assessment process built upon previous assessments carried out by Lathams across the Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder.

1.02 BRIEF

The brief for the project was based on a model brief developed by EH for the assessment of the historic significance of areas of housing renewal (EH, 2005). A copy is provided as Appendix A. This set out the key objectives of the commission, namely to:

- 1) Identify the nature and extent of the heritage asset within each of the neighbourhoods to be assessed.
- 2) Demonstrate how this is reflected in present day character.

- 3) Identify those areas where the heritage asset retains its integrity and those where loss has occurred.
- 4) Establish the significance of the heritage asset and the extent to which this varies across each of the improvement areas.
- 5) Place this significance within the broader heritage context of Oldham.
- 6) Discuss the findings with those organisations, public bodies and community groups who are directly involved in the Pathfinder and associated initiatives.
- 7) Make recommendations on how the significance of the heritage asset and its component parts can be successfully integrated within the programme of housing renewal.
- 8) Identify the need for further assessment and recording of the heritage asset in advance of and during any future redevelopment.

The aim was to define the heritage value of the five other intervention areas — including Sholver — so as to inform the regeneration of neighbourhoods, streets and buildings, even if clearance has already been agreed in principle. It was not the remit of the assessment to place heritage issues in the context of the wider concerns of the Pathfinder programme. Rather, the remit was to provide information that can be integrated with social, economic, environmental and other factors to assist the Partnership to make informed decisions concerning appropriate levels of intervention in the built environment.

It was however required that, due to the timing in relation to the housing renewal process, each report should include a heritage impact assessment of any emerging programme of renewal. This would include possible options for the minimisation of the negative effects of redevelopment on areas or buildings that have been identified as being of significance. General observation and comment would — where appropriate — be made on ways in which the significance of the area could be integrated with the future programme of housing market renewal.

1.03 SCOPE, NATURE & STRUCTURE

The report begins (Section 2) by setting out the methodology that has been employed in developing the heritage assessment. It explains how the extensive assessment of Oldham provides the context for the intensive assessment of individual neighbourhoods. The nature and scope of the intensive research and fieldwork is summarised, and the assessment process and criteria explained, with specific reference to the situation in Sholver.

Section 3 provides a summary of the planning and regeneration context within which the assessment has been undertaken. The chapter concludes that an important aspect of all local regeneration initiatives is the preservation and enhancement of the existing heritage. This will ensure that links with the past must be maintained and tied-in to new proposals.

Section 4 deals with the Sholver area, the analysis of which stems from a detailed description of its historic development, with specific emphasis on the process of change during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This leads to an understanding of how this development is manifest in the area as it appears today, as evident in attributes such as views, urban morphology, architectural design, building materials and technology. From this stems the identification of which parts are of significance, and thence an assessment of the impact of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Sholver, as currently represented by a Draft Preferred Option for Change. Recommendations as to how conflicts between the demands of heritage and the pressures of development may be reconciled are presented, along with an assessment of the need for further research.

The report ends (Section 5) with an extensive bibliography, which provides information on all sources consulted in the process of developing the assessment.

Appendices provide copies of the project brief (A) and a report on the public consultation process (B).

Where necessary, the report should be read in conjunction with Sections 4 and 5 of the final Oldham heritage assessment report dated September 2006.

2 METHODOLOGY



2.01 INTRODUCTION

The extensive assessment of the Oldham HMR area provides the context for the intensive assessment of the Sholver area. It is only through understanding the characteristics of the heritage of Oldham as a whole that the value of buildings, streets and spaces within the bounds in specific areas can be fully understood, to which end a three stage approach was employed:

- Research
- Fieldwork
- Assessment process

The stages of research, fieldwork and assessment were also employed in the detailed study and analysis of the Sholver area. However, the intensive assessment process took a more iterative approach with research informing fieldwork and vice versa, as well as the testing and revision of initial conclusions via discussion with members of the steering group and a process of public consultation.

2.02 MEANING OF HERITAGE & HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Throughout this assessment, the terms ‘heritage’ and ‘historic environment’ are used in the context of the meaning given in the English Heritage second stage consultation document *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, published in February 2007:

- **Heritage:** All inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility, with cultural heritage being defined as “Inherited assets which people identify and value as a reflection and expression of their evolving knowledge, beliefs, traditions, and of their understanding of the beliefs and traditions of others”.
- **Historic environment:** All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible or buried, and deliberately planted or managed flora.

These definitions recognise that heritage and the historic environment are about a lot more than old buildings or those which represent creative originality, fine architecture or craftsmanship. They are about places that have a distinct and perceived identity, as well as values concerning the worth or importance ascribed to qualities of places old and new, now and in the future. Values relate to ways in which people derive sensory and intellectual stimulation, the meaning of place and collective experience or memory, the potential of place to yield evidence of past human activity, and the ways in which the present can be connected through a place to past people, events and aspects of life.

2.03 RESEARCH

Desk-based research into the historic development of the Sholver area was carried out, use being made of a variety of sources that were readily available in Oldham Local Studies Library and Lancashire Record Office, supplemented by published books, reports and other secondary sources. Primary information included:

- Primary records held in the Oldham Local Studies Library (OLSL) and archives including pre-Ordnance Survey mapping, trade directories, local authority records and photographic archives.
- Detailed information held by the Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record (MSMR).
- Information held by the National Monument Record (NMR).

A key component — and necessary precursor to fieldwork — was an extensive map regression exercise. All 25 inch to the mile (1:2500) County Series and the National Grid first edition OS maps of each area were obtained in GIS format and examined in detail. The outcome was the mapping of each and every building in and around the study area in terms of its approximate date of construction. Older maps dating from the early nineteenth century were used to understand the level of development in the 1840s, as encapsulated on the first edition of the 6 inch OS map which was surveyed in 1843. Comparison with contemporary mapping also enabled a full picture of the extent of the loss of heritage in the post war period to be gained. This was particularly important in understanding where modern development had replaced older development as opposed to making use of previously undeveloped land.

2.04 FIELDWORK

The assessment process involved two main stages of fieldwork.

An initial stage of fieldwork was carried out in parallel to the early stages of the desk based research, prior to the completion of the map regression exercise. The purpose was to gain an overview of the character and attributes of the Sholver area as it stands today. Two people explored the area, photographing it on a street-by-street basis and noting in broad terms attributes such as building form, landmark buildings, views, trees and greenery.

Following an initial review of the outcome of the first stage of fieldwork in the context of what had been learned from the desk based research, and — most importantly — the completion of the intensive map regression exercise, the second stage of fieldwork was instigated.

Two individuals who had not been party to the first stage of fieldwork revisited the Sholver area, noting in detail those attributes which were of architectural, historic or townscape interest. From this exercise — and the associated archaeological appraisal — stemmed a series of initial conclusions as to the significance of each of the area. These findings and their implications were presented to the project steering group

and, following comment and discussion, used as a basis for a public exhibition and consultation exercise (refer 2.08 below).

2.05 ARCHAEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

The archaeological aspect of the report is intended to form an introduction to the historic character of the Sholver area. It is not an exhaustive study of every corner of the area but a short survey intended to bring out the patterns which have shaped the modern landscape. It is also an attempt to introduce some of the processes from the past which have shaped the development of the Sholver area, and its surrounding landscapes and neighbourhoods. This is not a history of dates and events but a narrative description of the emerging human landscape of the Sholver area.

Sections 4 and 5 of the extensive Oldham Heritage Assessment of 2006 provide the context for the appraisal. They begin by concentrating on periods long forgotten, although analysed and discussed in specialist literature. The underlying philosophy is that the periods from the end of the last ice age some 13,000 years ago have contributed to structure the landscape, and whilst much of the early evidence of past activity has been swept away, present day place names and in some areas the vegetation, indicate the potential survival of evidence from past times.

The text draws heavily on standard works and surveys, in particular the Victoria County History of Lancashire, recent histories of Oldham including map evidence from the 17th century onwards and in particular the work of local historians and archaeologists on the recent research frameworks project (Brennand 2006, Brennand 2007). As an introduction the text is intended to provide access through the bibliography or cross references to more detailed study to allow the communities of the HMR neighbourhoods — including Sholver — to make their own connections to present day circumstances.

This introduction is also intended to provide a baseline study of the patterns of landscape development in the Sholver area, to stimulate debate and to inform conservation and planning decisions. It provides an historical context for the survey of standing buildings, going some way to situating them in a deeper historic context than simply that of architecture or contemporary historic association, as well as addressing what constitutes an historic sense of place in what — on first glance — seems an unremitting modern (i.e. post 1800) environment.

2.06 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Underlying the identification of significance is a considered assessment process, the aim of which is to as far as possible apply reason and objectivity to the understanding of the historic value of each of the intensive study areas.

The starting point for the assessment process was the recognition that, in heritage terms, significance is a clear statement of the values that make a building or place important. In other words, why it is considered to be of architectural, historic or group (townscape) interest and hence potentially warrant retention. Such an assessment of significance is an essential precursor to the evaluation of the impact of any proposals

for change within the bounds of any of the HMR neighbourhoods, including the Sholver area of Oldham.

Individual buildings, features, streets, places and areas are assessed in terms of conformity with the following criteria:

- 1) Evidence of first build, layout or inception dating from before 1840–50 and surviving in anything like its original form or state.
- 2) Intrinsic architectural, historic or associative interest of comparative merit at the level of an individual building or place, or which in more general terms serves to define the historic character and identity of the study area.
- 3) Identifiable historic relationships between housing, mills, factories (works), parks and other significant buildings, structures or spaces which are of heritage or landmark value in terms of the urban landscape.
- 4) The way in which generally simple and unremarkable buildings (or groups of buildings) relate to each other and the wider urban landscape, thereby creating townscapes of heritage value in the context of the study area.

Satisfaction of any one of these criteria leads to a presumption of significance, subject to the completeness of execution and extent of survival of any individual building, groups of buildings, terraces or streets in the context of the Oldham HMR area as a whole. This is notwithstanding the fact that there are many instances in which these criteria interrelate and overlap, and hence the necessity for each instance of significance to be explained in a way that would ensure that any conflicts between heritage and development could be understood, analysed and resolved.

2.07 CATEGORISATION OF ELEMENTS

In order to ensure that the heritage assessments can be practically used as a tool to inform individual developments, and the formulation and implementation of the spatial planning of HMR neighbourhoods, a system which describes and differentiates all elements of the urban landscape in terms of their heritage value has been devised:

- **Protected:** buildings or features (including curtilage structures) which enjoy statutory or local listing, or which positively contribute to the special architectural or historic interest — as manifest in character and appearance — of a designated conservation area; there is a strong presumption in favour of retention and the protection (or enhancement) of their setting.
- **High value:** buildings or features which are possible candidates for statutory or local listing, and where retention is presumed.

- **Clear value:** buildings or features of clear architectural or historic interest (but not at this time candidates for special designation) and where — notwithstanding any overriding social or economic issues — there should be a presumption in favour of retention. This is unless it can be demonstrated that redevelopment would result in a net increase in heritage value as a result of the enhancement or recovery of significance, as manifest in the character, appearance or setting of nearby buildings, or the area as a whole.
- **Townscape value:** buildings which, although of little architectural or historic interest in themselves, combine with others in a way which creates the character of historic streets and spaces or the setting of protected, high or clear value buildings via attributes which could — if retention is not possible — be recreated by sensitive redevelopment, taking account of the relationship between existing buildings, streets, topography and other elements of the urban landscape.
- **Indeterminate value:** buildings which may contribute positively to townscape character or heritage value and may therefore be of clear significance but which require further investigation in respect of their value, extent of survival or — where appropriate — practicality of retention.
- **Little known value:** all pre–First World War buildings which are not significant or of group–townscape value as well as those later buildings of slight interest which, although retention is desirable, could be redeveloped without loss of heritage value, subject to the quality of any replacement.
- **No value:** buildings, features or spaces where redevelopment or demolition can be assumed to be acceptable in terms of heritage value.
- **Negative value:** buildings, features or spaces which have an adverse impact on any aspect of the significance or heritage or townscape value of the area and where re–development or removal is positively encouraged.

Spaces of positive heritage interest were also identified along with spaces which have a negative impact on the value of the heritage or the townscape of the area. The lines of significant transport routes are also identified, along with historically important boundaries which should in some way be respected in the pattern and design of future development. Any element not designated as positive or negative can be taken as neutral:

- **Positive spaces:** areas between buildings or features which by virtue of their shape, layout, attributes, past usage, etc. should be retained or reflected in any future proposal for development or redevelopment (specific instances are discussed where appropriate).
- **Negative spaces:** spaces which detract from heritage value, either in terms of their impact on the setting of buildings or structures which are listed or of clear heritage merit, or in terms of the image and identity of the wider area as a whole. The redevelopment of these spaces should be encouraged.

- **Old roads or tracks:** surviving lines of roads or tracks which existed c.1840–1850 (as shown on first edition OS or tithe maps), and which — in spatial terms — are of primary importance to the distinctive character of the area as a whole and where retention is recommended.
- **Newer roads and tracks:** surviving lines of roads which date from c.1850 to c.1919 (or later, if significant in the context of the area generally) and which — in spatial terms — are of primary importance to the distinctive character of the specific neighbourhoods or localities; retention within the framework of any future development is recommended.
- **Water:** canals, drains, reservoirs and other water features of heritage value, including indicative lines of lost features of known value e.g. canal branches, with individual elements of clear heritage value highlighted.
- **Railways:** surviving lines of railway systems and associated infrastructure with any individual elements of clear heritage value highlighted.
- **Boundaries:** surviving boundary lines which can still be read in the urban landscape and which lend character to the area, and which it is recommended should be in some way retained or reflected in any redevelopment.

Key views within and beyond the area which form a part of its character, and which should be considered in the planning and design of any new or replacement development have also been identified.

This categorisation of historic value is represented graphically on **Map 03** which should be read in the context of the detailed summaries of each identified instance of significance (refer sub-section 4.11).

2.08 CONSULTATION & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A methodology for consultation and community involvement was agreed with the client steering group at an early stage in the project. Exhibition material showing the draft analyses and assessments were presented at a series of events, with that for Sholver taking place on 18th August 2007.

The response to the draft assessment was generally positive, with considerable interest shown in individual buildings and sites by a number of visitors to the exhibition, a number of whom shared memories, information and photographs. A full report on the consultation process and its outcome is included as Appendix B.

2.09 LIMITATIONS

It must be understood at the outset that the process of researching and understanding the value of any heritage asset is an ongoing task, and that there rarely comes a point when decisions and views can ever be truly considered final. There is always the possibility of more information which might turn up and change perceptions and understanding, especially as regards the detailed history and development of individual

buildings. The most important are identified under the heading of Further Research Strategy which comes at the end of the assessment of the Sholver area (subsection 4.08D). This is an important point to stress, as only the most limited access has been gained to the interiors of any building within or around the bounds of the study area.

Nor has the investigation of archival sources in respect of any one building been exhausted. Examples of information that could in the future be pursued include:

- title deeds, leases and other property-specific information,
- electoral roles and rate books,
- records relating to the Finance Act 1910 and the extensive building-by-building survey records held in the National Archives at Kew,
- further archival plans and associated information held by Oldham MBC in respect of development and building control matters dating back to the advent of bye-laws in the 1860s,
- photographic and other visual evidence that may reside in the hands of private individuals, and
- the testimony of people who have lived and worked in the area for many years, or may have pursued individual lines of research out of personal interest.

In this context it is hoped that the heritage assessment will encourage others to investigate further and where appropriate, add to or modify its findings.

3 PLANNING & REGENERATION CONTEXT



3.01 INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Communities Plan, published on 5th February 2003, provides the Government framework for a major programme of action that aims to tackle run down communities across England. One of the key areas forming the basis for the action programme is the tackling of low housing demand and dysfunctional housing markets. Nine Housing Market Renewal pathfinder areas have been identified by the government to address these issues. Oldham, in partnership with Rochdale, has been identified as one of the nine Pathfinder authorities.

Through the combination of demolition, refurbishment and new building, the intention is to replace outdated, unpopular housing with modern sustainable accommodation and improvements in local services in order to create a better living environment. The Market Renewal Programme and other initiatives such as Neighbourhood Renewal and New Deal for Communities will work over a 10 to 15 year timeframe to deliver clean, safe, healthy and attractive environments in which people can take pride.

National and local planning policy and guidance works in accordance with the objectives of the Sustainable Communities Plan in order to achieve regeneration of urban areas with the aim of providing better living conditions in which communities can grow.

3.02 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Planning matters in England are controlled and regulated by law through Acts of Parliament, primarily the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, the *Planning and Compensation Act 1991* and the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*. The Acts are supported by a variety of Orders, Regulations, Guidance and Circulars, some of which amend the primary legislation. A new Planning Reform Bill was announced by the Government in November 2007.

The *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* is designed to enable a more flexible and responsive planning system for England and Wales, introducing a simpler and more flexible plan-making system at regional and local levels. Under the new system — which has yet to be fully implemented — each Government Office region will have a regional spatial strategy (RSS) and each local planning authority a Local Development Framework (LDF). These will eventually replace existing regional planning guidance and local development plans. Planning controls in the Sholver area are administered by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC — the local planning authority), which falls within the North West governmental region.

3.03 NATIONAL POLICY, GUIDANCE & RELEVANT REPORTS

In respect of the heritage assessment being undertaken, the key national policy, guidance and relevant reports are:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Feb. 2005).

- PPG15: Planning & the Historic Environment (Sep. 1994 r. 2001, 2005 & 2007).
- PPG16: Archaeology & Planning (Nov. 1990).
- Heritage Protection for the 21st Century (Mar. 2007).
- Housing Market Renewal (Nov. 2007).

A PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS1 states that the protection and enhancement of the historic environment is a commitment that the Government endeavours to deliver, especially as “the condition of our surroundings has a direct impact on the quality of life” (para.18). Therefore, the planning policies and planning decisions of planning authorities should be based on “up-to-date information on the environmental characteristics of the area” (para. 19).

In order to deliver sustainable development, PPS1 states that planning authorities should promote regeneration of urban areas in order to provide a better quality of housing, improve facilities and help create opportunities for the people living in the communities. Through improvements in these areas a better living environment is achievable, which can have positive effects on the well being of the community.

B PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment

The historic environment is seen as an irreplaceable record, which forms the character and individuality of different settlements and adds a great deal to improving our quality of life. Therefore the protection of all aspects of the historic environment is seen as a key policy objective of the Government, which can help encourage inward investment, as “environmental quality is increasingly a key factor in many commercial decisions” (para. 1.5).

There is a considerable range of historic features that require preservation, including the architectural set pieces such as churches, civic buildings, and grand houses, and the less obvious historic features including the spaces between buildings, which are often inseparable for the built form. “For example, the pattern of roads and open spaces and the views they create within historic townscapes may be as valuable as the buildings” (para. 6.2).

C PPG16: Archaeology & Planning

PPG 16 deals with archaeological remains on land and how they should be recorded and preserved once discovered. Archaeological remains play a vital role in educating people about our past, whilst also helping to develop our sense of identity.

It is not possible to save all aspects of our past, however, where nationally important remains are discovered (whether scheduled or not), and would be affected by proposed development, PPG 16 states that there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation. Where development proposals will affect archaeological remains worthy of retention, early discussions (preferably pre-application stage) between the developer and planning officers can help ensure sympathetic designs are used, for example foundations that avoid disturbing the remains. The preservation of

archaeological remains in situ (in their existing position) will always be the preferred option.

When detailed planning applications are put forward in areas where archaeological remains are thought to exist, developers should also consult the local Historic Environment Record (HER) to gain further information. Following this, survey work can be carried out (both desk based and field work) to determine the exact importance of the archaeological remains, and the preservation procedures required.

D Heritage Protection for the 21st Century

This Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) White Paper was presented to parliament and will form the basis of a new legislation announced by the Government in November 2007 (the draft Heritage Bill has yet to be published), which will in turn necessitate the revision of PPG15. The White Paper reinforces the view that heritage value is not just about buildings being listed or unlisted, and that there are many structures which although not statutorily listed or within conservation areas, still have a major role to play in defining the heritage of local communities. It promotes local listing, encouraging all local planning authorities to prepare lists and include associated policies in their Local Development Frameworks. Local listing is therefore an issue which in the near future will have to be addressed by Oldham MBC.

E Housing Market Renewal

This report was prepared by the National Audit Office (NAO) for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and published in November 2007. It examines whether the HMR programme is on course to meet its objective with specific reference to delivery, and its impact on local housing markets and communities. A key principle which is stressed by the report is the need to ensure that proposals and plans for intervention are based on — among other things — a consideration of the heritage value of the structures and spaces that make up the physical environment of the area concerned.

3.04 REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE & STRATEGY

A Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RSS13) Mar. 2003

In order to bring about urban renaissance of the cities and towns of the North West, the North West Metropolitan Area (NWMA) has given priority to the development and comprehensive regeneration of large areas of the region, as stated under Policy UR1 of the RSS. Oldham is designated as a Regeneration Priority Area. Policy UR6 also states that a comprehensive approach to housing renewal, clearance and urban regeneration is needed, especially in areas such as Oldham.

The RSS also states (p.15) that “In the past, the tendency of the North West has been to trade environmental degradation for economic prosperity, leading to numerous, critical environmental problems which detract from the Region’s image and longer-term prospects.” It is a key objective of the RSS (p.16) to “secure a better image for the

Region” and “to ensure active management of the Region’s environmental and cultural assets”, with policy ER3 emphasising the need for an holistic approach to conservation. The heritage of the mill towns in Greater Manchester is specifically noted, with policy ER4 making clear the potential of conservation-led regeneration in such areas “to contribute to the physical, economic, educational and cultural life of the North West” (p.102) and the importance of focused investment in regional image-building.

RSS13 was originally published as Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) though subsequently adopted at the RSS for the North West, pending eventual replacement by the North West Plan.

B The North West Plan: Draft Submitted RSS for North West England Jan. 2006

A draft replacement RSS for the North West region was submitted to the Government in January 2006 and published for public consultation in March 2006. An independent Panel of Inspectors was subsequently appointed to conduct an Examination in Public of selected issues arising out of the draft RSS. Their report — which is not subject to public consultation — was published for information in May 2007. The Secretary of State has not, at the time of writing, published the Proposed Changes which will be taken forward to public consultation and the expected publication of the final North West Plan in Spring 2008.

Like the current RSS13, the draft replacement RSS makes regeneration and the creation of sustainable communities a main priority, in which good quality housing has a major part to play. Policy L2 states the importance for local authorities to have a firm understanding of the local housing markets in order to “support housing market restructuring and renewal” (p.30). Policy L3 goes on to point out that certain areas should be identified for comprehensive regeneration through clearance, renewal, refurbishment or a mix of these, depending on local circumstance. The Panel does not recommend any changes to these policies.

Policy MCR4 specifically identifies the HMR Pathfinder in Oldham and Rochdale “as an opportunity for wide ranging change in the economic and housing roles of these areas, the renewal of communities and the investment in new infrastructure” (p.72), words which are retained in a rewrite of the policy recommended by the Panel.

Heritage issues are dealt with by Policy EM1 of the draft RSS, the nature and content of which are reported by the Panel as having been the subject of much debate between a large group of parties including English Heritage and Natural England. The Panel has therefore recommended that this policy be rewritten and substantially expanded, reflecting an integrated approach to the protection of the Region’s environmental assets, including the historic environment:

- Plans and strategies should be founded on a sound understanding of issues such as distinctiveness and significance, with priority given to “conserving and enhancing areas, sites, features ... of international, national, regional and local ... historic environment importance” (p.184 of the Panel report).

- Where schemes affect the historic environment “developers and/or local authorities should first seek to avoid loss of damage to the assets, then seek to mitigate any unavoidable damage” (p.184).

Part C of the recommended revision to the draft policy deals specifically with the historic environment. It reinforces the need for conservation and protection, and supports conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest, with specific reference to the Pennine textile mill town heritage of Greater Manchester (p.186).

C Growth Strategy, Moving Forward: The Northern Way Sep. 2004

The Northern Way is an ambitious economic strategy driven by the three northern Regional Development Agencies and their partners, aimed at bridging the £29 million output gap between the north and the rest of the country. A key component of this strategy is to create a vibrant economy with an excellent quality of life. Oldham falls within the Manchester City Region part of the strategy, in which one of the key objectives is to create sustainable housing markets, including within the Oldham area. Affordable housing is recognised as crucial to the economic prosperity of the north of England, to which end the strategy supports housing-led regeneration and the aim of providing a choice of good quality houses in successful, secure and sustainable communities.

3.05 LOCAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Oldham MBC, as the local planning authority, has the power to make decisions about whether to allow proposals to build on land or change its use. The *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* requires that all planning applications should be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Under the terms of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*, the development plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy combined with the development plan documents which taken as a whole make up the adopted Local Development Framework (LDF).

A Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out the content and programme for the LDF had been published by Oldham MBC, the most recent version of which was adopted in March 2007. The LDF will in time replace the current development plan, which in addition to RSS13 comprises the Oldham Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in July 2006. This latter document identifies the sites where it is proposed to permit housing, employment and shopping, and includes policies to guide decisions relating to any proposed development which requires planning permission. The policies contained in the UDP have been ‘saved’ until 2009 or until they are replaced by one of the new development plan documents, meaning that planning decisions will for the time being continue to be guided by the UDP.

The UDP reflects in detail the policies contained in RSS13, as well as the policies and guidance of the Government, including those dealing with housing and heritage, a key aim being to bring about regeneration of urban areas in the Borough whilst preserving and enhancing the built and natural environment.

3.06 OTHER REGENERATION INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMES

A Sholver Neighbourhood Plan

Development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Sholver is ongoing, having by mid-2007 reached the stage of a series of draft Preferred Options for Change, prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners in association with the local community. The Plan represents a concerted yet realistic attempt to:

- Improve the quality, range and choice of housing on the estate, in order to encourage people to live there,
- Enhance the quality of life for residents by investing in the environment.
- Tackle some of the social and housing management problems, including anti-social behaviour.

The currently preferred option for the Neighbourhood Plan is described and discussed in section 4.12A.

3.07 CONCLUSION

The policies contained in the adopted UDP for Oldham take account of national and regional planning guidance which highlights the importance of comprehensive regeneration schemes in the most deprived areas, the aim being to create sustainable communities and improved living environments. Policy and guidance also makes clear that an important aspect of such initiatives is preserving and enhancing the existing heritage in order that links with the past can be maintained, and where necessary integrated within proposed development. Hence this assessment.

4 THE SHOLVER AREA



4.01 INTRODUCTION

Sholver as it appears today is essentially a product of the last three decades of the 20th century, a period which saw its transformation from a remote upland hamlet surrounded by small farms and old mine workings to a large housing estate on the edge of Oldham. This is notwithstanding the village of Moorside, a roadside ribbon of former industrial and residential development which in the main dates from the second half of the nineteenth century. There are a number of distinct aspects to its character:

- Areas of medium to high density, low rise housing served by a regular grid of streets, albeit in a spacious setting and edged by roads which curve in relation to the topography and pockets of less structured housing.
- Smaller areas of more loosely-structured, lower density suburban housing fronting winding roads and short cul-de-sacs.
- Rows of uniform, brick and stone houses laid out in conformity with the requirements of Victorian and Edwardian bye-laws.
- Short parades of shops, pubs and community buildings fronting the wide, busy Ripponden Road as it heads out of Oldham, up onto the windswept moors of the high Pennines.

The emerging framework for change — set out in the Sholver Neighbourhood Plan (refer 3.06) — envisages home and environmental improvements, pockets of new development, redevelopment and infill, and improved routes which aim to create links and connections within and beyond the estate. Sholver is an area of Oldham where significant change is anticipated over the coming years.

Set out in this section of the report is a detailed assessment of the heritage value of the Sholver area which, drawing on the principles set out in the August 2005 English Heritage publication *Guidance on conservation area appraisals*, considers the significance of the area under the following headings:

- 4.02 Location and description.
- 4.03 Statutory designations.
- 4.04 Historic origins and development.
- 4.05 Archaeological potential.
- 4.06 Spatial qualities.
- 4.07 Character areas.
- 4.08 Materials and construction.
- 4.09 Greenery and green spaces.
- 4.10 Survival and condition.

All aspects of the analysis are drawn together in a unified overview and summarisation of significance (4.11). There follows a series of recommendations covering the relationship between the heritage assessment and the emerging framework for change, possible new listed buildings, archaeology and the need for further research (4.12). It therefore concluded (4.13) that — in heritage terms — the Neighbourhood Plan for Sholver has the capacity to be of positive benefit to an area which typifies the expansion of Oldham in response to the post-war demand for more and better housing, while at the same time serving to illustrate in microcosm the growth and decline of one aspect of the cotton industry.

4.02 LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The Sholver area lies some three kilometres northeast of the centre of Oldham, its eastern boundary stretching for just over a kilometre along the Ripponden Road (A672). Its northern boundary runs approximately west from the point where the A672 curves east past the workings of the former Besom Hill Brickworks before turning south then east to rejoin the road where it passes through the 19th century village of Moorside. The area embraces two large swathes of 1960s Council housing (much altered and with a significant proportion now in private ownership), occupying land which lies between 230 and 300 metres above sea level.

It is an exposed and airy location, often battered by wind and rain but with spectacular westward views across Oldham and Shaw to Rochdale and Greater Manchester beyond. There is a strong sense of connection with the wider landscape, even within and around the more enclosed settlement of Moorside with its fragmentary reminders of a Victorian — and to some extent earlier — industrial past.

The lines of a number of old tracks can still be traced on the ground, which with the nearby Hodge Clough, Pearly Bank and the outline of Sholver Green serving as reminders of the progress of history and the activities of a local community over many centuries.

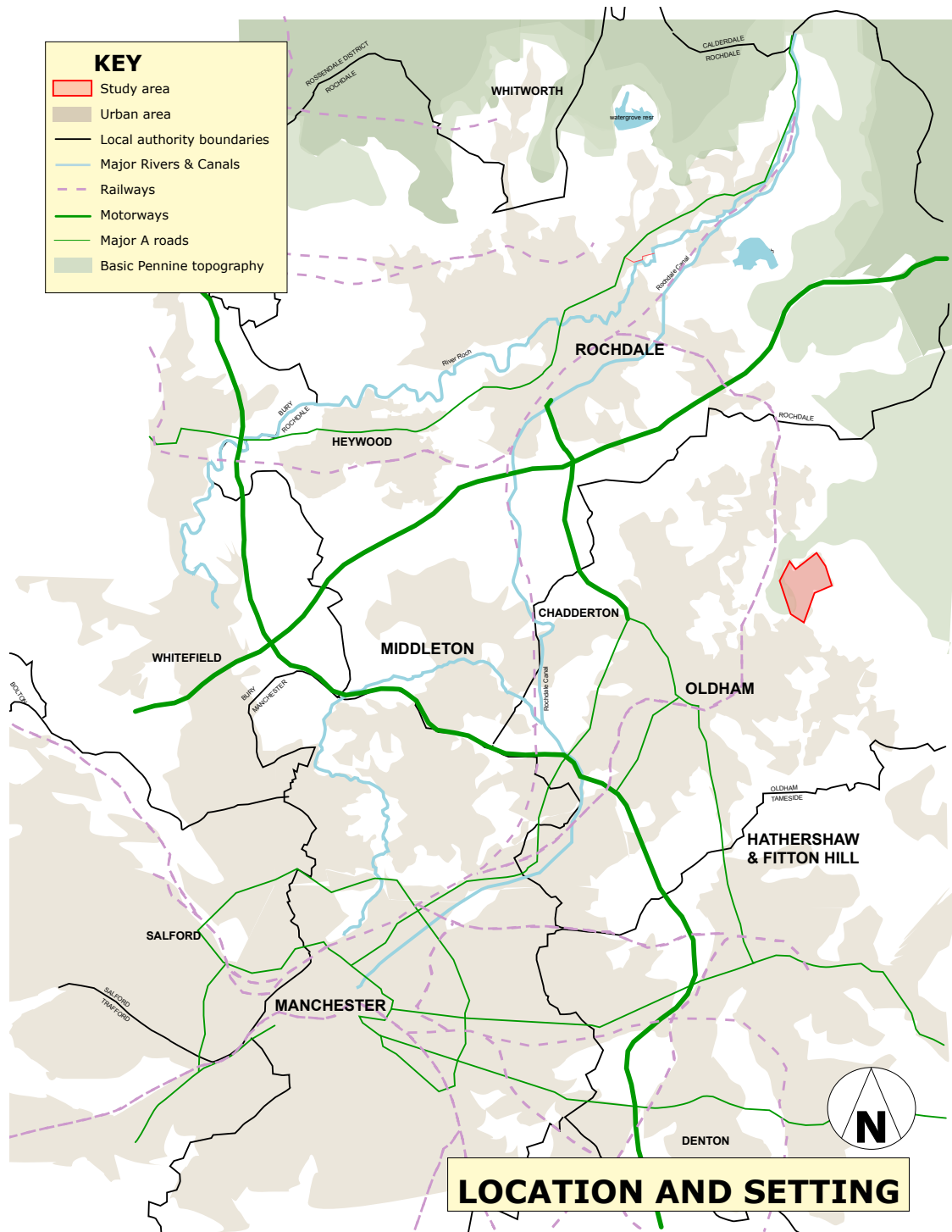


Figure 1: Location of Sholver in relation to Oldham Rochdale HMR area



Upper Sholver in its upland setting: looking south from Buckstones Road across Slack Farm (foreground) and Besom Hill Farm with the tower of Moorside church on the horizon

4.03 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

There is one listed building within the Sholver area, the Grade II Church of St Thomas on Northgate Lane, built to the design of the architect Henry Cockbain of Middleton and opened in 1872. Sholver Green is registered as a village green under Section 15 of the *Commons Act 2006*, meaning it is protected against development. There are no conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments or other heritage designations within or in proximity to the area.

4.04 HISTORIC ORIGINS & DEVELOPMENT

Sholver first emerges in the historic record as upland pasture possibly as early as the 11th century. The name Sholver, in Old Norse means Skialg, a nickname for 'crooked' and erg, a sheiling (summer shelter) for a shepherd or cow herd (Bateson, 1930). Sholver, together with Glodwick and Werneth, was one of the ancient divisions of Oldham township known from 1202. The village of Sholver was situated around Sholver Green, with hamlets at Sholver Moorside on the Ripponden Road, and Hodge Clough.

Little is known of Sholver during the medieval period. Situated in the ancient parochial chapelry of the parish of Prestwich cum Oldham it was part of the Salford Hundred. There is no mention of Oldham in the Domesday survey of 1086 carried out by William the Conqueror, and the first recorded inhabitant is Thorfin in 1246 (Bateson, 1930). In 1212 Sholver was held (tenanted) by Ralph Tagun and was part of the Neville estate, although it belonged to the King. In 1291 Roger de Pilkington had a grant of free warren (rabbit catching) in Sholver. By the reign of Henry III (r.1216–1272) there are charters relating to lands in Vernot (Werneth) and by the age of Edward II 1307–1327 Adam de Glothie (Glodwick) was a tenant of the King. A century later Roger de Ashton, owner of Werneth Hall, held 36 acres in Sholver, as tenant to Gilbery Hulme in 1420. 178 acres

of moorland in Sholver, Little Moor and Hopkin Moor were recorded in April 1540 by Robert Lytham who was responsible for surveying the common lands in Oldham.

The village and hamlets of Sholver may have originated in the medieval period and isolated farms such as Sholver Hey, Meg Well, Further Sholver Hey are also likely to date from before the 1600s. But the population was very small, with perhaps as few as 400 people in the whole of Oldham, with only 215 hearths recorded (Farrar, Brownbill 1911, 93).



Tower of the Grade II listed Church of St. Thomas (1872) as seen looking east from Sholver Green

Manufacturing based on textiles led gradually to an increase in population in Oldham together with larger markets for agriculture, and during the 17th century many of the farms in Sholver may have bought their freehold from the Prestwich family. German weavers brought to Manchester in the 13th century may have moved to Oldham as linen websters. Gradually the woollen trade increased so that by the 18th century Oldham was famous for its hat production and the population of the township had risen to 433 families: about 1750 people in 1714. By this time the hamlet of Sholver had been rebuilt in stone, as had many of the surrounding farms, using the profits from supplying wool to the hat trade.

Industrial development followed during the 18th century, but in Sholver the impact on rural life led to a reduction in population. Many smallholdings in Moorside were gradually absorbed by Sholver Farm as and when yeomen farmers left to try their luck in the town. James Butterworth (1771–1837) in his 1817 *History of Oldham* described Sholver as “a small village of great antiquity where the houses are chiefly built of stone, and have rustic appearance” in an area called the Dingle.

The post medieval landscape was also characterized by the development of quarries and coal pits (Osborn, 2003). The earliest beehive pits date from 1542. As early as 1791 there were three known collieries (coal pits) in Sholver, worked respectively by

William Rhodes of Besom Hill, Edmund Kershaw of Sholver and Gardside of Sholver. The landscape of Sholver is first captured on Yates 1786 map of Lancashire where the village is shown to the south east of Besom Hill and above Heyside. Dunn's 1829 map of Oldham shows that by then the landscape had been subdivided into small fields; the layout of Sholver village around a central green appears on the 1st edition of the six inch OS map (surveyed 1843), with several farms and coal pits also shown; all of the collieries were worked-out by the end of the nineteenth century.



Regular grid of streets in Upper Sholver: Coleridge Road



Suburban housing in Lower Sholver: Flaxman Rise

The first mills in the area were probably built in the early 1800s, not long after the establishment of the Ripponden to Oldham turnpike trust and the opening of what is now the Ripponden Road soon after. The earliest may have been Cowper's Mill built in 1790–91 (MSMR 6142) which belonged to Samuel Lees, later becoming 'Fronchies Old Mill', a name which may have originated with cottages to the east of the Ripponden Road which are now known as 'The Fronchies Row'. Cowper also kept an alehouse called the Coal Miners Arms adjacent the Mill, which by 1818 had been renamed the Colliers Arms and which in 1878 became the Moorside, the pub on the corner of Goldsworth and Ripponden Roads. Also associated with the turnpike were the Bulls Head Tavern, which can be traced back to 1827, and the Waggon & Horses which was licensed at the same time as the establishment of the Turnpike trust, and which at the time may have been called the Trough Inn (Magee, 1992).

Fronchies Mill was from 1842 rented by Thomas Mellodew from Royton, at which time the mill was renamed Moorside (subsequently rebuilt and extended). Mellodew — whose wealth was founded on patents for the weaving of cotton velveteen — was responsible for the expansion of the mill as well as the construction in 1850 of Parkfield Mill on land between Ripponden Road and Haven Lane. The need to house his workforce resulted in Mellodew also buying up much property in the area and financing the building of houses supplied with water from his own reservoir, which was sited above Moorside on land now occupied by the houses of Spinners Way. He also owned coal mines and — in partnership with John Clegg — the Besom Hill brick and tile works to the north; even the Waggon & Horses was at one time in Mellodew ownership.

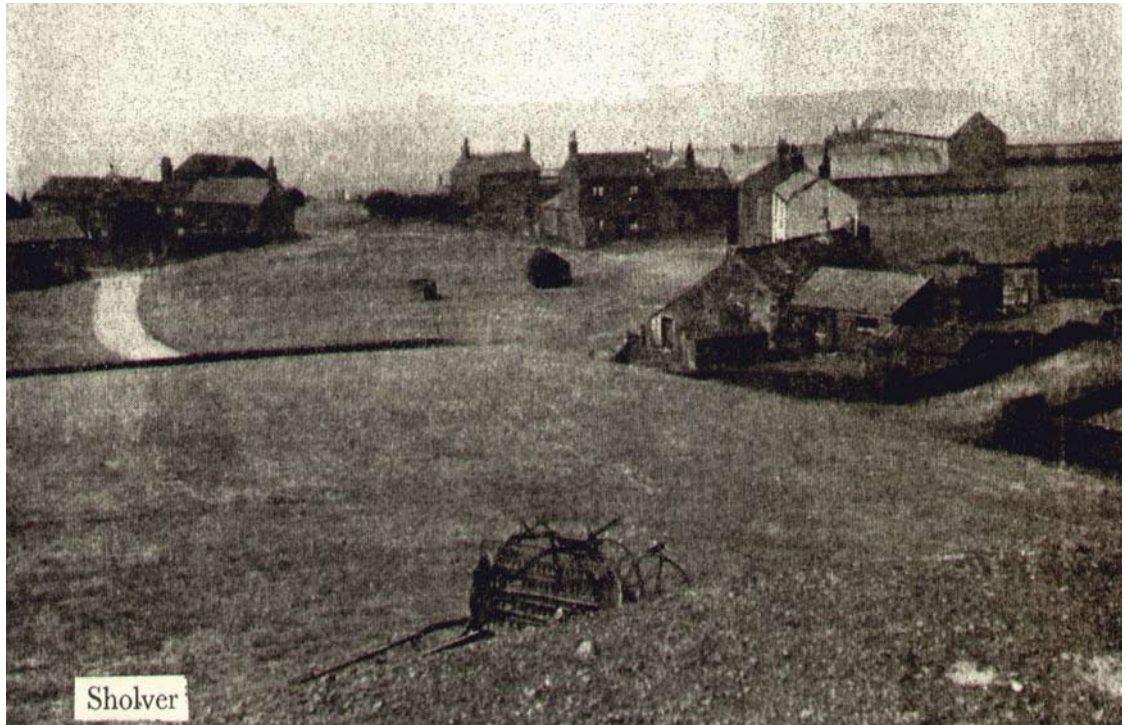


Bye-law housing in Moorside: Dickens Street



Shops on the busy Ripponden Road

Grafton and Dickens Streets were both laid out by Mellodew, with bye-law consent given for the erection of houses in 1875 (OLSL 4/8/2465). The houses fronting Ripponden Road (699–749) and Sholver Lane (1–27) were the first to be built, followed in the early 1880s by those on Grafton Street and the east side of Dickens Street, the west side following in 1884 (OLSL 4/8/6020). Housing on the opposite side of Ripponden Road (648–668) was built for Thomas Mellodew & Co. in 1911 to the design of architects Heywood & Ogden (OLSL 4/8/13931). 649–663 Ripponden Road were built in 1872 for the Oldham Equitable Cooperative Society (OLSL 4/8/1299).



Old hamlet of Sholver (date unknown)



Extract from the first edition of the six inch OS map showing the Sholver and Moorside area in 1843

Thomas Mellodew also paid for the construction of the Church of St Thomas, the foundation of which followed Moorside becoming an independent parish in 1870. It opened in 1872, with Mellodew's brother James paying for the organ and other fittings. The adjacent Parish Hall was enlarged in 1882–83 (OLSL 4/8/5246), having been built as a school in 1861. The new village also boasted a Co-Operative Store (number 623 Ripponden Road, extended in 1880; OLSL 4/8/7597), a Conservative Club (now the Village Inn, built 1893) and a Methodist Church of 1909, which replaced an earlier Chapel and school of 1868 (OLSL 4/8/13148). The creation of this new mill community led to Sholver Moorside — now just Moorside — becoming more important than the old Sholver Green, development on the Ripponden Road, having hitherto comprised no more than isolated cottages and wayside inns.

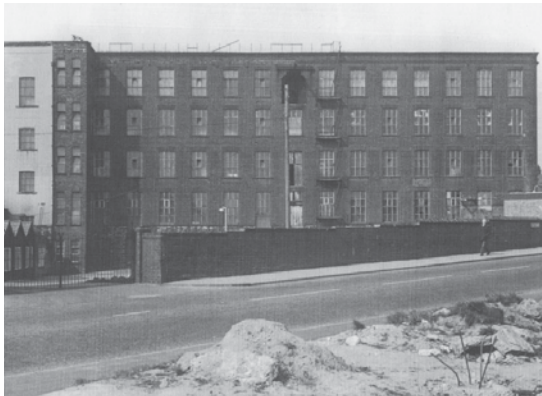
Mellodew himself lived at Moorside House, the grounds of which are now occupied by Our Lady's Roman Catholic Primary School; the stone boundary walls and gateway, and the outline of the garden survive. The turn of the 20th century saw the appearance of a number of modest suburban villas fronting Ripponden Road, some of which were occupied by members of the Mellodew family. Further housing began to appear in the 1920s and 30s.



Bulls Head Tavern, the origins of which can be traced back to 1827



Waggon and Horses, which dates from the early 19th century (much altered)



Thomas Mellodew's Moorside Mill (demolished) from Ripponden Road in 1974 (OLSL ref.06057)



Ripponden Road frontage (numbers 699 to 749) of Mellodew's Dickens Street–Grafton Street housing built 1875



648 to 668 Ripponden Road, built 1911 by Thomas Mellodew & Co.



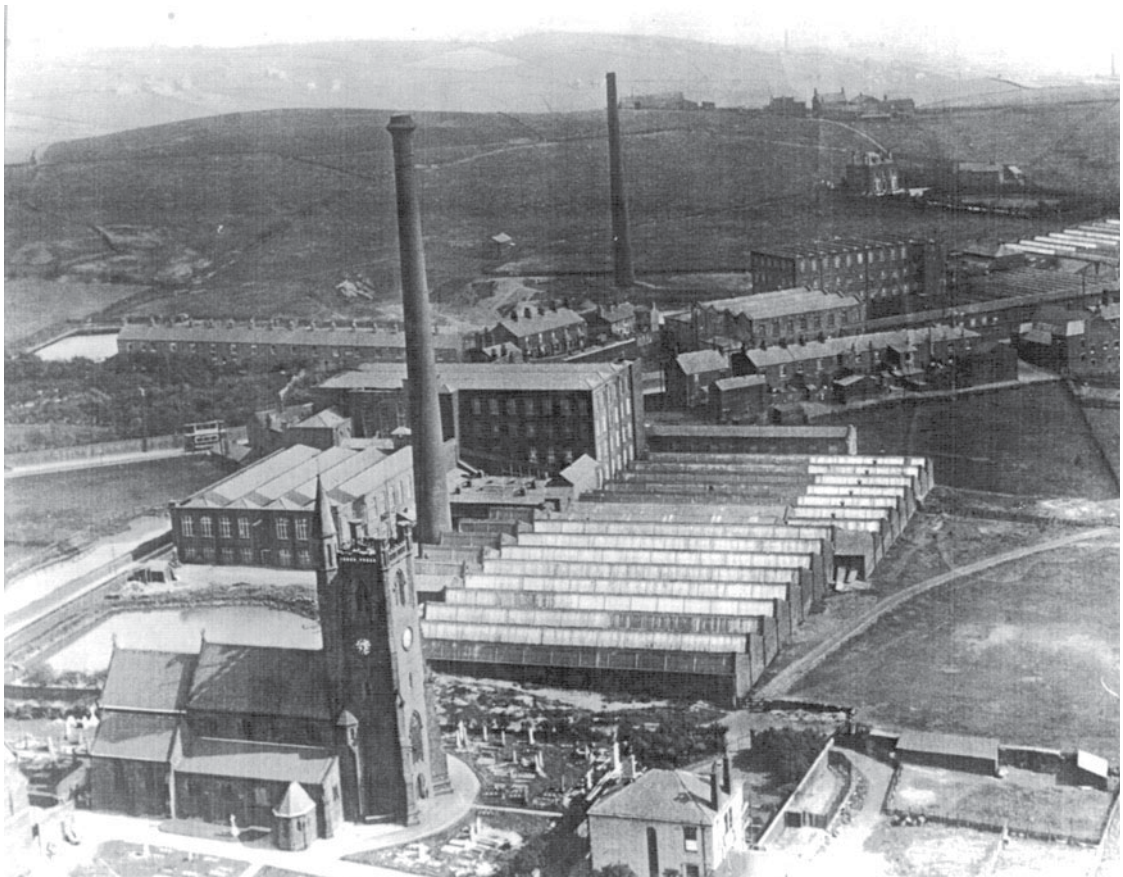
Church of St. Thomas from the junction of Shover Lane and Longfellow Crescent (OLSL ref.102657 — undated, though probably 1970s)



Moorside Conservative Club in 1974, built 1893 and now the Village Inn (OLSL ref.05979)



Methodist Church in 1974, built 1909 to replace an earlier chapel (OLSL ref.05975)



The industrial community of Moorside in 1930 with Church of St. Thomas and Moorside Mill in the foreground, and Parkfield Mill beyond (OLSL ref.14267)

The firm of Thomas Mellodew & Co ceased production in the mid-1950s, the demolition of Parkfield Mill following in 1969 and the older parts of Moorside Mill in 1983; the sites of both mills are now given over to housing. However, the greatest change in the history of Sholver followed the decision by Oldham Borough Council in the early 1960s to construct a massive estate of new houses and flats to rent, one of a number of

such edge-of-town estates built to house the population of large areas of town centre housing which had in the 1950s been designated as substandard and earmarked for clearance.



Suburban villas fronting Ripponden Road

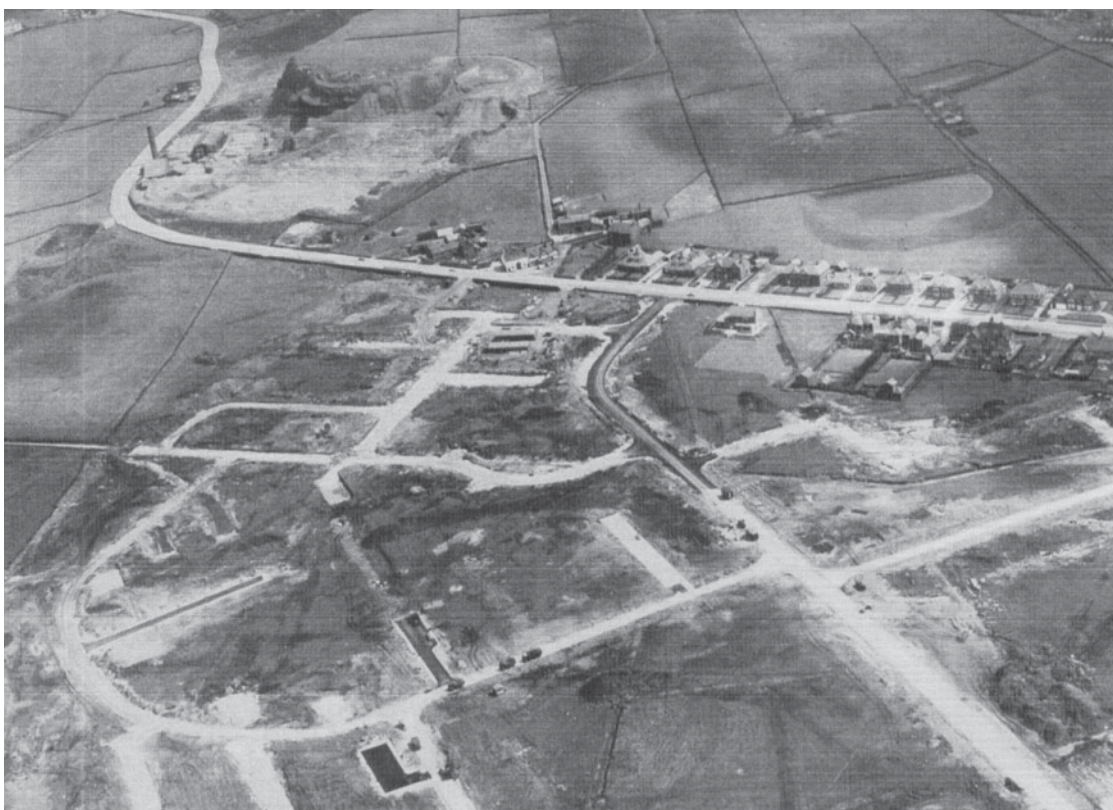
Building of the Sholver new housing began in May 1966 and was completed in 1971, the estate being built in two parts — Upper and Lower Sholver — separated by two six storey blocks of deck-access flats fronting Wilkes Street and Pearly Bank. The old village of Sholver was cleared, the only evidence of its existence being the survival of the old Pullet Inn (now the Northgate) and the open space of the old village green.

Controversy surrounded the Sholver estate from the early years of its existence, with technical and social problems leading to the eventual demolition in the mid 1980s of the deck-access flats, extensive programmes of refurbishment and estate improvement, and — over the last 10 to 15 years — the redevelopment of much of Lower Sholver. Schools, community facilities and most recently a health centre have also been built. Other recent developments include the formal designation of Sholver Green as a village green, and the creation in 2000 of the Millennium Green on Longfellow Crescent, a community-led initiative funded by the then Countryside Commission, the Millennium Commission and various other bodies.

Map 01 shows the historic pattern of communication and settlement overlain on successive editions of extracts from 25 inch County Series and 1:2500 post-war OS maps. **Map 02** shows the approximate dates of the construction of all buildings seen on the ground today, as well as a number of other features.



Moorside church and mill from the southeast in 1974 (OLSL ref.L01500)



Laying out of Upper Sholver (Coleridge Road, Swift Road, Wells Road and Verne Drive) in the 1960s with Besom Hill brickworks beyond (OLSL ref.06112)



Looking southwest down Coleridge Road from above junction with Wells Road in 1974 (OLSL ref.L01501)



Looking north along Wilkes Street in 1972 with recently-completed Pearly Bank flats in the distance (OLSL ref.06110)



Pearly Bank deck-access flats in 1974 (OLSL ref.13919)

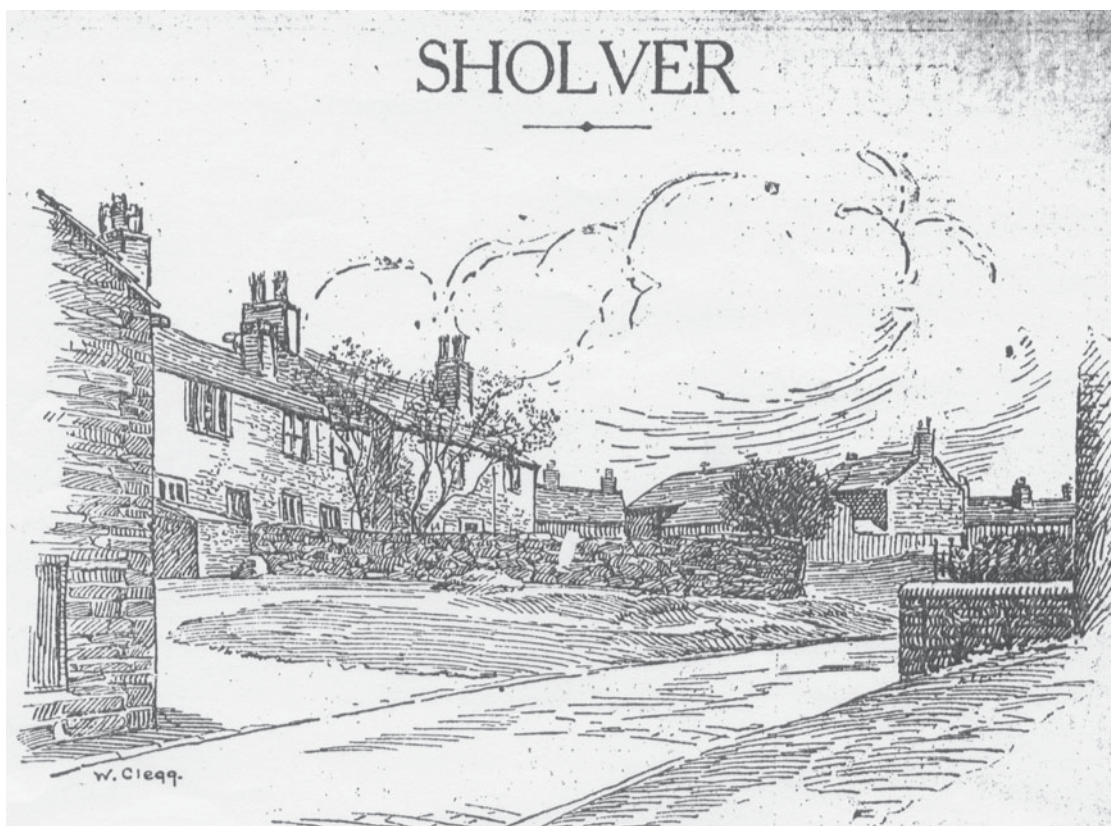


Site of the Pearly Bank flats in 2007 (demolished mid 1980s)

4.05 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Below ground archaeology is most likely to survive in the form of the old farm sites, specifically: Sholver Hey, Further Sholver Hey and Bent Yate whilst evidence of industrial archaeology is less likely in areas of former coal pits such as Northgate Colliery, and other unnamed pits off Sholver Lane. Should development take place in the vicinity of Sholver village there is the potential to determine the origins of the village and aspects of its original form. There is also the possibility of the recovery of industrial remains on the old mills sites, especially in gardens and those parts which have not been built-over.

There is only very slight potential for earlier archaeologies, due to extensive terracing and reworking during the 20th century.



Hamlet of Sholver as shown in the Oldham Chronicle of 12th March 1927 (demolished c. 1966)



Looking south along Hodge Clough Road towards Watersheddings

4.06 SPATIAL QUALITIES

The Sholver area can be described in terms of the following spatial characteristics and typology:

- Areas of relatively low density housing where short terraces, semi-detached houses and blocks of flats sit as objects within space, and where the street lines are most clearly defined by the lines of the front boundaries and kerbs. These areas take a number of forms including the detached and semi-detached houses with generous gardens which front the upper stretch of Ripponden Road, the long streets and cul-de-sacs of the Radburn-type layout of the 1960s Council estates, and the less structured curves and closes of more recent housing.
- Clusters of tightly-packed terraced housing arranged so as to define and address the line of the street, and where individual buildings are generally subservient to the whole, defining rather than defined by space. This is notwithstanding small scale landmark buildings such as corner shops and public houses.
- Pockets of open land which occupy the space between and adjacent areas of housing, and which provide the sites for large, standalone — and often public — buildings such as churches and schools of all dates.
- Small and often untidy pockets of land given over to industrial or commercial uses, such as the remnants of the former Moorside Mill site on Ripponden Road site, now occupied by a car lot and old garaging.
- Swathes and patches of green space which surround, penetrate, relieve or otherwise interrupt the built environment in all its forms.



View looking west from the Millennium Green on Longfellow Crescent



View looking west down Sholver Lane



Looking east from Hodge Clough Road across redeveloped site of Wilkes Street flats towards the tower of St. Thomas



Church of St. Thomas as seen from Longfellow Crescent to the north

Underlying these spatial types is the steeply-sloping topography, which often serves to distort the streetscape in a way which creates a number of distinctive views and vistas within and out of the area. Most notable are:

- Spectacular, long views looking west from the open spaces of the Village and Millennium greens, and down Sholver Lane.
- The view looking south along Wilkes Street and Hodge Clough Road towards the roofscape and terraces of Watersheddings.
- Looking north along Wilkes Street across the Sholver Estate to the Pennine escarpment beyond, with the characterful grouping of Hodge Clough Farm in the foreground.

- Glimpses of the distinctive tower of St Thomas, such as seen looking from gaps in the frontage of Ripponden Road.

There is also a variety of enclosed and semi-enclosed views which unfold while moving around the curving perimeter roads of the Council estates. However, the historic views of big mills in a predominantly rural landscape are now but a memory. Taking this combination of spatial characteristics, topography and views as a whole leads to the clear definition of three separate character zones within the Sholver area, the boundaries of which are shown on Figure 2.

1. Moorside, which includes all surviving remnants of the Mellodew village, buildings fronting Ripponden Road, the redeveloped site of Moorside Mill and a mixture of developed and undeveloped open land.
2. Upper Sholver, the most elevated part of the 1960s Council Housing development, bounded by the sweeping curves of Longfellow Crescent and Swift Road, and with a notable proportion of houses and flats which remain substantially as constructed.
3. Lower Sholver, the area of Council housing which occupies a relatively flat shelf that is clearly separated from Upper Sholver by the line of an old drain and the cleared sites of the Pearly Bank and Wilkes Street flats (the latter replaced with housing), and which has as its focus the old village green of Sholver; much of this area has been redeveloped.

It is the broad definition of these three areas which forms the basis for understanding in detail the character of the Sholver area, and the extent to which this is a product of architectural, historic or townscape interest.



Unfolding westward view Longfellow Crescent

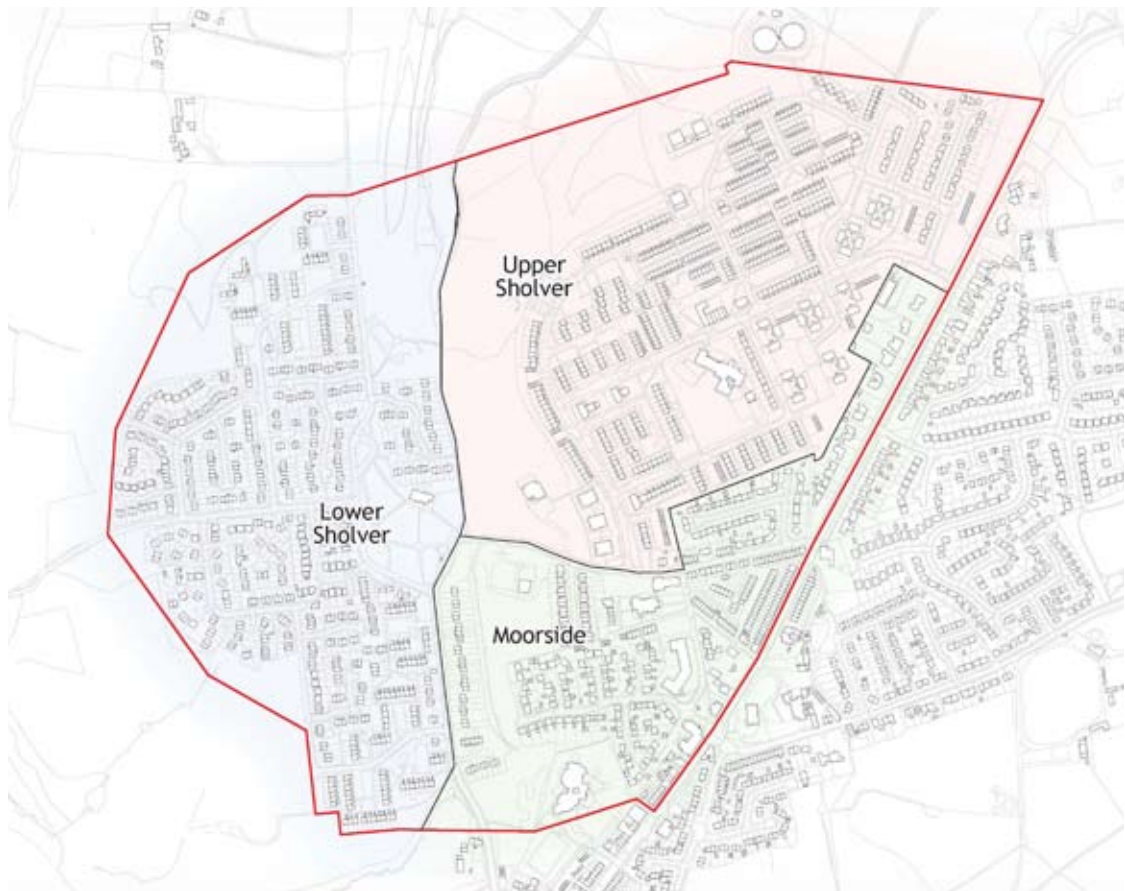


Figure 2. Character zones within the Sholver area.

4.07 CHARACTER AREAS

A Moorside

The Moorside area comprises a mixture of retail and residential development which, combined with a number of pubs and landmark buildings, is typical of 19th century ribbon development in towns such as Oldham, albeit unusual in the way in which it sits in an isolated, upland rural environment. Houses and shops sit in direct relationship to the line of Ripponden Road, with Sholver Lane, Dickens Street, and Grafton Street forming a secondary layer of development. Gap sites and the stubs of roads (e.g. Owen Street) punctuate the streetscape, which is to a large extent dominated by the weight and speed of traffic heading to and from Oldham town.

Historically the area comprised little more than the inns and alehouse which served travellers on the turnpike and a scattering of dwellings, of which the old cottages at 12–18 Sholver Lane are a surviving example; the wide upper windows to 12 and 14 are indicative of early weaving floors.



Housing fronting Ripponden Road



Old cottages at 12 to 18 Sholver Lane



Window to weaving floor of 14 Sholver Lane



Terraced housing at 6 to 16 Grafton Street (early 1880s)

Later development is more intense, and would until relatively recently been characterised by a frontage of small-scale buildings with the large bulk of Moorside Mill towering behind. Although this major landmark is gone, there are areas which retain a sense of the historic townscape, most notably the:

- terraces of the Ripponden Road, Sholver Lane and Grafton Street triangle,
- the approach to St Thomas's Church and adjacent school via the line of Northgate Lane, an old road which formerly served a colliery, and
- the survival of the boundary wall, gates and garden of the former Moorside House.

The way in which older buildings define the approach from a high moorland environment down into the highly urbanised environment of Oldham is also of townscape value, especially when taken in the context of long views which unfold on the descent.

Architecturally, virtually all of the older development in the area comprises simple two storey terraces, the ground floors of some given over to shops and with elements such as door heads, lintels and eaves treatment being highly standardised. Later development such as Heywood and Ogdens' 648–668 Ripponden Road are even more austere,



Approach to St. Thomas's Church looking along Northgate Lane



Surviving boundary enclosing garden to the former Moorside House, home of Thomas Mellodew (now Our Lady's RC Primary School)

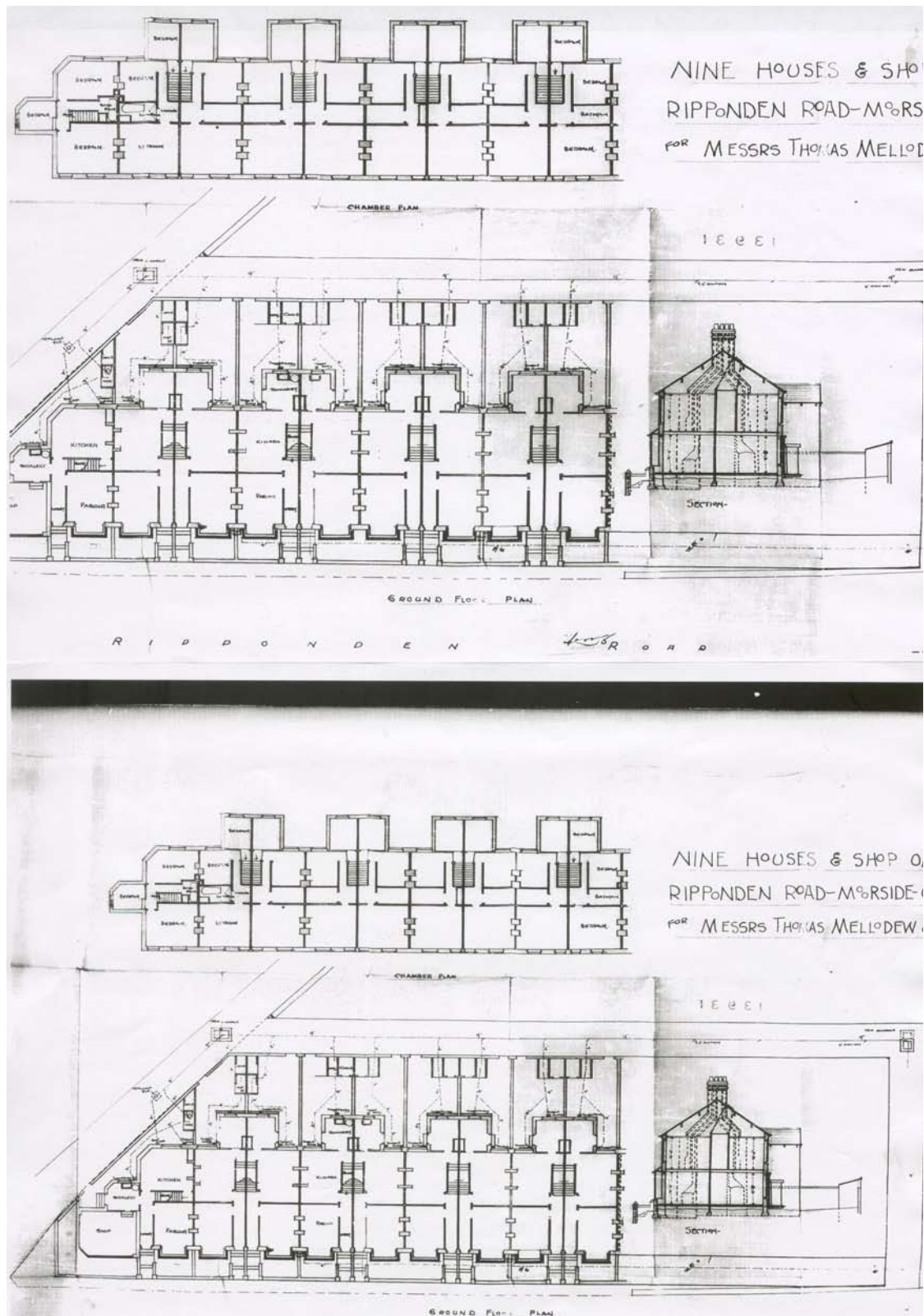
reflecting the extensive use of machine-made components and the no-nonsense approach to by-law housing which was most prevalent during the latter part of the 19th century and early part of the 20th century; the only relief comes in the way in which the terraces step or slope in response to the falling ground.

The only buildings which have any architectural pretension are the Church of St Thomas, the former Conservative Club and the Methodist Church:

- St Thomas's Church is a solid stone building built in a well-crafted, Victorian late Gothic revival style, with a prominent tower, turret and spirelet which serves as a landmark at the level of Oldham generally.
- The former Conservative Club (The Village Inn) comprises a two-storey façade of four bays set below a distinctive Dutch gable, the whole façade articulated by variations in the heights of the round-headed first floor windows, string courses, key stones, sills and other well-executed detail. Its height and bulk lend it scale, as befitting a minor public building and clearly distinguishing it from the modest, two-storey terraces adjacent.
- The Methodist Church (now the Heavenly Bodies Fitness Centre) has a symmetrical façade which is typical of the pattern of Methodist building circa 1900. Its three-bay central façade with single arched window above is framed by tapering brick buttresses which rise to curved copings, each side of which are the prominent semi-circular hood moulds, key stones and surrounds of the two entrance doors. The overall composition and architectural treatment of the building is vaguely reminiscent of contemporary chapels designed by Edgar Wood, as interpreted by the local architects Winder and Taylor.

All three buildings serve as good local landmarks.

There is little architectural show in any of the housing, save that number 623 Ripponden Road (the corner of Conduit Street) is notable for its sizable windows and generous proportions, indicative of what is believed to have been formerly a Cooperative store.



Heywood and Ogdens' 1911 plans for 654 to 668a Ripponden Road (OLSL ref.4/8/13931)



View looking south-southwest on the descent of Ripponden Road



Terrace sloping in response to falling ground (east side of Dickens Street, early 1880s)



Church of St. Thomas, opened 1872 (views from Glebe Lane)



Former Conservative Club, now the Village Inn (1893)



Methodist Church, now Heavenly Bodies Fitness Centre

The old pubs are in the main simple and utilitarian, solidly built of stone and typical of many high Pennine roadside inns, albeit that the Wagon and Horses has been rendered and over-clad in 'half timber'. However, their names, locations and association all attest to the longer history of the area, emphasising the importance of the turnpike road and as local landmarks provide historical points of reference which add identity to the ribbon of Moorside village.



Fragmentary survival of stone kerbs, paving and ironwork



Sholver Lane, a part of the setting for the listed Church of St. Thomas



Recent suburban development on Emerald Drive



Wilkes Street: Hodge Clough Infant and Nursery School

Despite the fragmentary survival of kerbs, paving stones and elements of ironwork (e.g. 699–749 Ripponden Road), the utilitarian nature of the older terraced housing means that its interest primarily stems from its association with Thomas Mellodew and the 19th century development of Sholver, the role it plays in providing the setting for the listed St Thomas Church, and the townscape qualities which arise from the Ripponden Road frontages and the local grouping of the terraces which make up the Dickens Street triangle.

There is little architectural or historic interest in the low density, suburban housing on the edge of the Moorside area and fronting the upper reaches of the Ripponden Road. Nor in the modern Holts Clough School and other structures, save that the dry stone retaining wall of the old drain running to the rear of the houses on Wilkes Street is an important memory of Sholver as it was prior to wholesale development in the 1960s.

B Upper Sholver

Predominantly residential in usage, Upper Sholver comprises mainly two-storey terraces of dark brick houses with shallow pitched roofs and sometimes projecting bin stores, all served by a grid of streets connected by the curved roads that skirt the contours.

Wide roads, grass verges and areas of greenery create a feeling of spaciousness which is heightened by the long views out, most noticeably from the head of the Millennium Green on Longfellow Crescent.



*Upper Sholver: typical housing with projecting bin stores
(Wells Road)*



*Spacious layout of Upper Sholver with views out beyond
(Gaskell Rise)*

High and medium density terraced housing gives way to clusters of three storey blocks of flats, which sit surrounded by areas of grass and tarmac, mainly in clusters of three and four. Although the layout and design of the area has some coherence, its overall character is dull and windswept; the inward-looking monotony of the housing is relieved only by the spectacular views. St Thomas's School and shops on Coleridge Road are the only focus.

The Millennium Green comprises the maintained garden on Longfellow Crescent along with an adjacent swathe of undeveloped land stretching north-south between Upper and Lower Sholver. Endowed in perpetuity to the Sholver Millennium Green Trust, it is one of 254 such spaces which exist in cities, towns and villages throughout England, the purchase and development of which were part-funded by the National Lottery (Millennium Fund) via the Countryside Agency, now Natural England. The full extent of the Green — evidence of which is provided by HM Land Registry data (refer Bibliography) — is shown on **Map 03**.



Three-storey blocks of flats in Upper Sholver (Swift Road)



Shops on Coleridge Road



Planned and maintained garden forming part of the Millennium Green

Creation of the Millennium Greens was one of 222 publicly-supported Millennium Projects. Their purpose was — quoting the government's Millennium Commission —to “celebrate our heritage while taking us forward into the future and creating a lasting legacy for the UK.” Designation was driven by community projects which had to satisfy a number of objectives, one of which was the inclusion of significant ‘natural’ areas where people can enjoy nature and wildlife at first hand. To ensure that these objectives continue to be met, local trusts (such as the one at Sholver) are supported by the Charities Commission, who must by law ensure that the commemorative purpose and community ownership of the Greens are not compromised.

Like all past national commemorative programmes (e.g. the Waterloo Churches, and the planting of trees to celebrate the Jubilees of Queen Victoria), the Millennium Greens are about defining the present in order to create the heritage of the future. In which context, the Sholver Millennium Green is of positive heritage interest at a local level, as

well as being of value due to it being a part of a national programme of celebrations at the turn of the Millennium.

C Lower Sholver

The area of Lower Sholver feels less exposed than Upper Sholver, though its only noticeable features are the stone retaining wall which marks the old drain running north–south and the undeveloped old village green. Pockets of two storey 1960s and 70s Council–built houses are interspersed with low density semi–detached houses, with more recent housing focussed on winding cul–de–sacs which fill out — and in some cases replace — the original 1960s street grid. Similarly to Upper Sholver, much of the housing is nondescript and inward–looking. There is little coherence to the area as a whole with neither the houses or the street layout providing any real sense of place. The only memorable features are the ghost of the green and the isolated survival of the Pullett Inn (Northgate), the only remnant of old Sholver and which as a building dates back to at least 1746 (Magee, 1994).



Lower Sholver: Council–built houses off Hodge Clough Road (Angelico Rise and Everdingen Walk)



Semi–detached houses on Lower Dingle



Looking across the Village (Sholver) Green to the Northgate which — as The Pullett Inn — dates back to at least 1746

4.08 MATERIALS & CONSTRUCTION

In terms of materials it is brick, stone and Welsh slate that dominate the older — ie Moorside — area of the Sholver area. The brickwork of earlier buildings is of a soft, red–brown colour indicative of the clays which overlie the coal measures in the Oldham area and hence almost certainly the product of Mellodew’s Besom Hill brickworks. Later building utilises the intensely red, machine–made Accrington bricks which typify the later development of many Lancashire towns, with stucco or — in the case of the Methodist Chapel — buff terracotta (faience) is used to relieve the monotony of the brickwork.



Locally–burnt brick and stonework to Moorside terraced housing



Machine–made red Accrington brick to 1884 terrace to west side of Dickens Street



Stone–built terraced housing at 1 to 27 Sholver



Rendered walls: 42 to 48 Sholver Lane

Stone was the primary building material and can be seen in some of the later 19th century terraces on Ripponden Road and Sholver Lane, the Church of St. Thomas, some of the old cottages and roadside pubs, and where used for boundaries, retaining walls and other elements of external works. Some stone buildings have in whole, or in part been rendered over.

The post-war buildings of the Sholver estate are in the main faced in brick with shallow pitched roofs covered with interlocking concrete tiles. Some of the blocks of flats have flat roofs (others have been over-roofed) whilst the walls of some areas of 1960s housing have a mineralised rendered finish. Walls are unrelieved by any form of enrichment other than on some recent developments where bands of coloured brick have been used. Timber or plastic windows are set flush (or almost flush) with the brickwork which often leaves the architecture appearing flat and thin. Tarmac and grass dominates the space between buildings.



Typical brickwork to 1960s housing in Upper Sholver (Coleridge Road)



Brickwork, concrete tiles and plastic windows on Oakley Drive



Lower Sholver: brickwork with mineralised render finish above



Eastern part of St Thomas churchyard from Northgate

4.09 GREENERY & GREEN SPACES

Other than private gardens, there is little planned greenery within the Mooside area. The churchyard and the garden of the former Moorside House are the only significant areas of planned greenery that can be said to have historic value, noting that the churchyard — which is bounded by trees— is an integral part of the setting of the listed building. Trees and greenery are otherwise incidental (e.g. the school playing fields), or in essence left over space, self-sown with juvenile woodland and scrub.

Large areas of grass are characteristic of the planning of Upper Sholver, reflecting the ethos of the post-war planning theory and practice, and creating a sense of spaciousness despite the high density nature of the housing itself. The Millennium Green is in part a planned garden, paved and railed, and designed to provide a dramatic, memorable viewpoint from which to look out over Oldham, the Pennines and the Manchester Plain. It is — for reasons set out in 4.07C above — of positive heritage interest. No memory of the rural past is preserved in any part of Upper or Lower Sholver, save in the form and openness of the old village green.



Large areas of grass create a sense of spaciousness in Upper Sholver (Goldsmith Avenue)



The sloping and wooded expanse of the Millennium Green from the Village Green

4.10 SURVIVAL & CONDITION

The greater proportion of late 19th and early 20th century housing within the Sholver area has survived relatively intact, which is in marked contrast to the almost total loss of the old hamlet of Sholver. Inter-war housing has generally endured, as have some older farm buildings on the periphery of the study area e.g. Hodge Clough.

As regards non-residential buildings, it is the two mills which are the most notable loss to the area, their bulk and massive scale having been a distinctive part of the Moorside landscape for over 100 years. Religious buildings and public houses have all survived, albeit with some name changes and alterations; there is no notable survival of older shop fronts. The former Conservative Club, Methodist Church and St Thomas's retain much of their original fabric. This is notwithstanding the fact that the greatest loss to the historic environment of the area has occurred over the last 20 years, a period which has seen the wholesale and almost total replacement of the original sash windows and doors to all pre-WW2 buildings. This has had a massive impact on the character of Moorside, and has appreciably eroded its historic and architectural interest. It is only on some non-residential buildings, e.g. the Northgate that the pattern of traditional joinery survives, albeit in the form of more recent replacements.

The original form and layout of the 1960s estate survives relatively intact in Upper Sholver, though not in Lower Sholver where large areas of housing have now been cleared and replaced with newer development, most notably the deck-access flats

which stood on Wilkes Street and Pearly Bank. This is notwithstanding that within the Sholver estate the most important historic survivals in Sholver are the old village green and the Northgate (Pullet Inn). **Maps 01C and 01D** show the extent to which older areas of building have been lost.

The extent of the survival of setted lanes and other forms of traditional paving is minimal, though it is suspected that streets such as Dickens Street were never fully surfaced. Front boundary walls were never really a feature of the Moorside area, though important walls survive bounding what was Moorside House and the churchyard, with fragmentary survivals of base walls, copings and ironwork evident to the older houses in the Dickens Street triangle.

On the basis of external observation, the greater part of the older housing stock seems to be in reasonable condition, other than poor maintenance evident to the rear of the properties on Ripponden Road. Newer housing is generally in good condition despite an overall lack of maintenance to some of the housing and flats in Upper Sholver. A considerable number of 1960s properties have been refurbished.

4.11 SIGNIFICANCE

Sholver is in the main characterised by the vast housing estate which was constructed in the 1960s, though as an area which is very much detached from the older settlement of Moorside. The sense of containment is intensified by the close connection between the estate and the surrounding countryside which, despite distant views of Oldham, Shaw and other urban areas, dominates the estate and its environs, increasing the overall sense of isolation and detachment.

With the exception of the old Pullet Inn, the village green, the Millennium Green, landmarks and focal points are concentrated on or near the Ripponden Road, the most noticeable being the Church of St Thomas; it is Moorside village which — in heritage terms — provides the Sholver area with much of its identity.

Taken as a whole the Sholver area illustrates three distinct and almost entirely disjointed phases of development:

- The ordering of the landscape by way of fields, tracks and other features which typify its rural and semi-industrial history.
- The development of a late 19th century village which, though to a large extent dependent on Oldham for trade and connections, was essentially a self-contained settlement.
- The expansion of Oldham in the post-war period, where an absence of undeveloped urban land led to the building of large Council estates on the extreme edges of the old town.

The special architectural, historic and townscape interest (significance) of the Sholver area is summarised graphically in **Map 03**. All buildings have been assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in Section 2.06 of this report, before categorisation

in accordance with Section 2.07, to which reference should be made for their definition and implications:

- Protected.
- High value.
- Clear value.
- Townscape value.
- Indeterminate value (not used).
- Little known value.
- No value.
- Negative value.

The lines of significant transport routes, significant road layouts, and spaces of positive heritage interest are also identified, along with key views which should in some way be respected in the pattern of future development.

Reference is made throughout the assessment of significance to high value and local listing. However, it is recognised that Oldham MBC does not currently have in place a local list or supporting planning policies; recommendations in respect of local listing are made in the context of the DCMS White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century* (refer also sections 2.07 and 3.03).

A Listed buildings

Buildings which enjoy statutory listing are by definition of significance (i.e. of special architectural or historic interest) at a national level, and thereby inherently of value at the level of the Sholver HMR area (refer 4.03). In summary, there is only one **protected** (listed) building, the 1872 Church of St. Thomas which is listed Grade II.

B Moorside village

The oldest buildings in Moorside are almost certainly the run of cottages 12–18 Sholver Lane, though the four houses are clearly of two builds despite a unifying effect of a later Welsh slate roof. 12 and 14 were clearly weaving cottages of a type which is still relatively common in rural Pennine locations but very rare in urbanised areas such as Sholver and later towns like Oldham — there are a number of surviving examples on the periphery of the earlier Rochdale e.g. in old villages such as Milnrow and Beursil. It is unclear if 16 and 18 were ever used for weaving, or whether each pair of cottages once formed a single dwelling. Such buildings are typical of the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries, and as such 12–18 Sholver Lane warrant serious consideration for statutory listing. Even if these buildings are not considered worthy by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) of statutory listing, these buildings are of high local interest and clear candidates for local listing.

Although now lacking the mills which were the reason for its existence, there are still a number of buildings within Moorside village which attest to its historic past and hence

which are of heritage value. The former Conservative Club and Methodist Church on Ripponden Road are good examples of late Victorian–Edwardian public buildings which, other than the loss of original windows — appear externally very much as built. They are both well composed and proportioned, skilfully detailed and well executed. Both serve as local landmarks on the Ripponden Road. While unlikely to be considered of high enough quality in the national context and hence qualify for statutory listing, they are certainly high value buildings which would warrant local listing.

The Bulls Head Tavern, Moorside and Waggon & Horses pubs are also buildings which due to their age and long historic association with the Oldham to Ripponden turnpike are candidates for local listing (all buildings are known to have undergone substantial alterations over the years and hence are unlikely to be accepted as of high enough value for statutory listing, despite dating from before 1840). All three establishments also serve as local landmarks, and as such are a part of the general character and grouping of Moorside village.

In terms of housing and retail buildings, it is the development comprising 669–749 Ripponden Road, 1–27 Sholver Lane, 6–16 and 24–34 Grafton Street, and Dickens Street (2–34 and 15–27) which is of most interest. Although architecturally modest and little different from terraced housing across the whole of Oldham, the association of these terraces with the development of Sholver by Thomas Mellodew, the fact that they are built from bricks from the nearby brickworks, and the way in which they work as a tight-knit urban group with a distinctive townscape value are key to the historic identity of Moorside and the setting of the listed St Thomas Church; likewise the former school on the corner of Northgate and Sholver Lanes. The later terrace numbered 648–668 Ripponden Road relates well to this group of terraces in terms of both townscape and association with Mellodew.

The terrace numbered 649–663 Ripponden Road is distinctive in that its primary walling material is stone as opposed to the more usual brick. It is also well built and like much of the terracing fronting Ripponden Road, an integral part of the townscape on the approach to Oldham. Add to which it is of historic interest in that it is an early surviving example of development by a cooperative society. The former Co–Op building at 623 Ripponden Road (corner of Conduit Street) is also of some landmark quality, as is the Moorside pub.

As another component in the setting of a listed building, the churchyard and its boundary walls are of positive heritage value. Similarly, the garden and walls of the former Moorside House, another element in the late 19th century creation of the village by Mellodew.

In Summary

- 12–18 Sholver Lane are of **high value** and a candidate for statutory listing due to their age and rarity; they are otherwise clearly worthy of local listing.
- The Village Inn (former Conservative Club, 1893) and the former Methodist Church (1909) are of **high value** and candidates for local listing due to their architectural and landmark (townscape) qualities, as well as their historic interest.

- The Bulls Head Tavern, Waggon & Horses and Moorside public houses are of **high value** and candidates for local listing due to their long association with the Oldham to Ripponden turnpike road (historic value) and landmark (townscape) qualities.
- The Parish Hall (former school) is of **clear value** due to its historic interest and townscape qualities, i.e. the role it plays in the setting of the listed Church of St. Thomas.
- The terraces numbered 648–668 and 669–749 Ripponden Road, 1–27 Sholver Lane, 6–16 & 24–34 Grafton Street, and 2–34 & 15–27 Dickens Street are of **clear value** due to their historic interest (association with Thomas Mellodew and family) and townscape qualities.
- 623 and 649–663 Ripponden Road are of **clear value** due to their architectural interest and townscape qualities (relationship to Ripponden Road and the clear value buildings opposite).
- The boundary wall and gates to the former Moorside House are of **clear value** due to their architectural and historic interest.
- 625–631 and 635–637 Ripponden Road are of **townscape value** in the way that they create the setting for the high value former Conservative Club and nearby former Methodist Chapel.

C Upper Sholver

There are no buildings of any heritage value in Upper Sholver. However, the surviving 1960s housing is of interest as a social document and should be photographically recorded prior to any clearance. The Millennium Green and its associated land is a space of **positive** heritage interest for the reasons set out in 4.07C above.

D Lower Sholver

The only building of value in Lower Sholver is the Northgate (formerly Pullet Inn), which is also the only survival of Old Sholver and hence of considerable historic interest. It is a **high value** building which dates from middle of the eighteenth century and hence is a candidate for local if not statutory listing, subject to the extent of survival of original fabric and its interior. The village green due to its history, survival and legal status, is a space of **positive** heritage interest.

E Topographical features

Beyond the level of individual buildings and their groupings, it is the surviving lines of key historic roads and features such as the line of the old drain running north–south between Upper and Lower Sholver that shape the significance of Sholver. These provide a framework for the character of the area, as do the modern sweep of Longfellow Crescent and the strong lines of Wilkes Street, Coleridge Road and Cop Road.

F Negative features

The garage and forecourt on Ripponden road are of **negative** heritage impact in that it detracts from the views of the Church of St. Thomas and hence the setting of a listed building. It also detracts from the townscape value of the frontages of buildings on Ripponden Road.

G Other Buildings and Spaces

All other buildings and spaces are of **little known** or **no** value.


Figure 3: Draft Neighbourhood Plan





 Demolition and New Development


 New Development


 Environmental Improvements
Infill Development and
Potential Remodelling


 Community Hub (may
include shops and
community facilities and new school)

 Open up Church Grounds to
create a landmark feature

 New and Improved Routes
Creating Links and Conn-
ections

 Existing Schools

 Greenbelt Boundary

 Home Improvements

Energy Efficient

Extend Properties Providing Larger
Family Homes/Kitchens/Improve Layout

Conversion of Existing Flats

Environmental Improvements

Existing Roads and Footpaths

Street Lighting

Boundaries

Additional Carparking Utilising Underused
Open Space Adjacent to Housing

New and Improved Open Spaces



Only Environmental
Improvements

4.12 RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of understanding the significance of the limited heritage of the Sholver area in relation to the HMR and associated programmes is primarily to enable an appreciation of how one might inform and enhance the other, and thereby help reinforce local distinctiveness and identity. This means evaluating the impact on the historic environment of the area of the draft Preferred Option for the Sholver Neighbourhood Plan prepared in association with the local community by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners.

A Draft Sholver Neighbourhood Plan and strategy for integration

The draft Sholver Neighbourhood Plan: Preferred Options for Change proposes a number of interventions and opportunities, most notably:

- Demolition and new development in the northern part of Upper Sholver and on the west side of Longfellow Crescent.
- New development wrapping around the north and western edge of Upper Sholver, fronting the upper reaches of the Ripponden Road and on the site of the former Pearly Bank flats.
- Infill development and potential remodelling of the north western part of Lower Sholver.
- Home and environmental improvements across those areas of Upper Sholver not earmarked for demolition, focusing on areas of most need.
- Environmental improvements — as required — across Lower Sholver and the Moorside village area.
- New and improved links and connections within the Sholver estate.
- The creation of a new community hub focused on Sholver Lane and the old Sholver village green.
- The opening up of the ground of the Church of St. Thomas in order to create a landmark feature.

It is in this context that the impact of the emerging framework for change on the heritage of the area needs to be assessed, with particular reference to the demolition of any existing buildings.

In broad terms, the draft Preferred Option does not conflict with the significance of the Sholver area. Significant road lines are retained, and all buildings of high or clear value are retained. It is therefore recommended that the assessment of heritage value as illustrated by **Map 03** is used to inform decisions on the location and nature of development, in line with the principles set out in Section 2.06 of this report, thereby avoiding localised conflict between heritage value and future change. This is not withstanding the need to ensure that:

- The form and openness of the Sholver village green is retained, and that proposals for the new community hub are prepared with the legal status of the green in mind.

- Recognition of the positive heritage interest and complex legal status of the Millennium Green when preparing any proposals for new buildings in proximity, noting that any significant change will require — via a scheme from the Charities Commission — a variation to the terms of the deed governing the behaviour of the charitable trust responsible for the long-term future of the Green, and for furthering the aim of its creation.
- That the opening up of the Church grounds do not result in the clearance of the churchyard, the loss of boundary walls, the demolition of the Parish Hall or the unnecessary felling of trees, as these are all elements of high value which taken together make up the immediate setting of the listed building. All of these actions would in any event — and like any other works to the church or its churchyard — require ‘faculty’ under the *Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1991* and the *Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000*, active places of Church of England worship being exempt from the need to obtain listed building consent.
- All proposals which may affect the setting of St Thomas’s Church as a Listed Building take full account of its setting in accordance with the requirements of the *Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*.

Decisions on the retention of buildings outside of the boundary of the intervention area are recognised as beyond the remit of the HMR programme, though it is recommended that Oldham MBC seeks retention of buildings such as the former Conservative Club, the Bulls Head Tavern and the former Methodist Chapel via the mechanism of the planning process.

As a matter of general principle, no building or structure (including those of negative value) should be demolished without having been comprehensively photographed, with hard and digital copies of all images deposited — along with drawings, reports and any other available information — with the Oldham Local Studies Library.

B Statutory and policy designations

It is recommended that 12–16 Sholver Lane and the Northgate public house (formerly the Pullett Inn) are investigated with a view to statutory listing, or at the very least local listing, albeit that Oldham MBC does not yet have such a regime or supporting policies in place (although not an HMR issue, it is recommended that the establishment of a local list is promoted and encouraged in anticipation of the forthcoming Heritage Bill). The following buildings should also be considered as candidates for local listing:

- The Village Inn (formerly The Conservative Club).
- The Moorside public house.
- The Bulls Head Tavern.
- The Waggon & Horses public house.
- The Methodist Chapel on Ripponden Road.

No recommendations are made in respect of the need for any new conservation areas or other heritage designations.

C Archaeology

Development of open areas as well as areas of known archaeological potential noted in 4.05 should be subject to assessment and evaluation under the terms of Planning Policy and Guidance note (PPG) 16 *Archaeology and planning*. The remains of the medieval and post medieval village of Sholver, including its hinterland is an important research objective in the north west, as is the investigation of isolated settlement, such study having the potential to contribute to the understanding of both the material culture of the period and the rural response to wider economic developments (Brennand 2007, 120).

Where appropriate recording of standing buildings as well as the below ground remains should be the subject of planning consent conditions. Even recording of the existing housing stock has the potential to contribute to 20th century domestic history.

D Future research strategy

In heritage terms, it is felt that there is little need for any further research at an area level, save that there should be a presumption in favour of at least a desk-based archaeological assessment of all redeveloped sites as and when they are disturbed by major development, with particular attention paid to any ground disturbance in the vicinity of Sholver village green. The need for future research should concentrate on gaining a greater understanding of specific buildings, either as a precursor to formal consideration for statutory listing or because their significance is vulnerable to erosion due to insensitive management or change. In this light, further research is needed in respect of:

- 12–16 Sholver Lane,
- The Northgate public house formerly the Pullett Inn,
- The Methodist Chapel on Ripponden Road

No work should be undertaken on any building of high or clear value without — as far as is practical — having researched its development and understood its significance, and on this basis prepared a conservation strategy for inclusion within any Design Statement submitted in support of any future planning application.

4.13 CONCLUSION

Although the Sholver estate is not without interest, the majority of buildings and features of heritage value lie within the Moorside part of the study area. These take in a number of modest 19th and early 20th century terraced houses, the old Conservative Club, the former Methodist Chapel and a number of public houses. There are also spaces, roadways and boundary features of significance; there is also one element — the garage and car lot of the Ripponden Road — which has a negative impact on the heritage value of the area. Impact assessment has confirmed that the understanding and identification of these various strands of heritage has the capacity to inform the future implementation of the draft Preferred Option for Change, which in general terms sits comfortably with the findings of this assessment. It is therefore concluded that — in heritage terms — the opportunities afforded by the draft Sholver Neighbourhood Plan and associated programmes have the capacity to be of positive benefit to the area.

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5.02 PRIMARY SOURCES

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5.03 MAPS

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Oldham Tithe Award Map 1840

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5.04 ORDNANCE SURVEY

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extracts from Lancashire sheets 89/15 and 97/13. Also an 1879 (first) edition in hard copy.

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5.05 HM LAND REGISTRY

Electronic download (12th December 2007) of Title Number GM842934 (details of ownership and restrictions on the land which makes-up Sholver Millennium Green).

APPENDIX A

INVITATION TO TENDER

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT – OLDHAM ROCHDALE HMR PATHFINDER

OLDHAM ROCHDALE HMR PATHFINDER
OLDHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

24TH APRIL 2007

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Developing mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities as part of housing market transformation is central to the aims and objectives of the Oldham Rochdale Pathfinder. Delivering high quality urban environments through new development whilst recognising and building on the heritage value within our communities is also a key component of our overall strategy.

Initially, the Pathfinder concentrated its interventions in four “Wave 1” neighbourhoods. To inform its decisions in these areas the pathfinder has already commissioned and published:

- An extensive heritage assessment of the entire Oldham and Rochdale Pathfinder area in order to establish an overview of the surviving heritage asset, its significance (heritage value) and level of survival (i.e. zones where it is wholly or in part complete and those where it has been eroded).
- An intensive heritage assessment of the “Wave 1” areas of Derker and Werneth/ Freehold areas in Oldham, and East Central Rochdale and Middleton (Langley) in Rochdale.

The four “Wave 1” neighbourhoods will remain a high priority for investment. However, the Pathfinder has also identified seven neighbourhoods (known collectively as “Other Intervention Areas”, or OIA’s) which will form an additional focus for investment. These neighbourhoods are:

Rochdale

Kirkholt
Inner Rochdale

Oldham

Sholver
Alt
Clarkwell
Primrose Bank
Hathershaw and Fitton Hill

An intensive heritage assessment of the Hathershaw and Fitton Hill O.I.A. has already been carried out. **The purpose of this commission is to carry out**

individual intensive heritage assessments of the six remaining Other Intervention Areas.

This brief provides the background to this commission and outlines the methodology by which the assessments will be expected to be carried out.

Tenders are being invited from a select list of consultants known to be capable of providing a robust evaluation of the heritage value of the Pathfinder area. We are looking to appoint an experienced team/consortia who will have clearly identified and referenced specialisms in heritage and conservation within a regeneration context, together with additional competencies in community and stakeholder consultation.

We look forward to receiving your submission.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR YOUR SUBMISSION IS 12 NOON ON FRIDAY 18TH MAY 2007

THE BUDGET CEILING FOR THIS COMMISSION IS £75,000 inclusive of all expenses.

2.0 CONTEXT

Housing Market Renewal

'Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future', published in February 2003 established the Government's policies for addressing weaknesses in the housing markets in the North and Midlands of England. The Government, originally through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), has established the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Initiative to help tackle neighbourhoods with the greatest concentrations of poor and outmoded housing, together with some of the highest indices of broader local deprivation issues. Nine Pathfinder Partnership areas have been identified, one of which, known as Oldham and Rochdale Partners in Action.

In Oldham, the Pathfinder covers an extensive part of the inner urban area of the Borough extending from Sholver in the north-east, on the edge of the Pennine moors to Failsworth in the south-west which lies in close proximity to Manchester. This densely developed area is characterised by extensive areas of surviving Victorian and Edwardian housing of a variety of types, but most notably workers housing, and several large inter war Council estates.

In Rochdale Borough, the Pathfinder is split between the borough's main two towns, Rochdale and Middleton. In Rochdale it covers the communities of East Central Rochdale, Wardleworth, Newbold, Sparthbottoms, Deeplish, Kirkholt - a large social housing estate - and also the Oldham Road corridor to the south of the town centre. In Middleton it covers East Middleton, and the former Council estates of Hollins and Langley.

Oldham and Rochdale Partners in Action views the HMR initiative as a unique opportunity to deliver the scale of market restructuring necessary to create thriving, inclusive and sustainable communities. To achieve this, the Pathfinder Partnership submitted its initial Prospectus to the ODPM in December 2003 and secured two years funding of £53.5 million in March 2004. These resources have allowed the implementation of strategies for the four “Wave 1” neighbourhoods involving an extensive series of actions, including the replacement of obsolete housing with modern sustainable accommodation through demolition and new building, or refurbishment, that will reverse decline and reinvigorate the local housing market.

In August 2005 the Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder submitted its Scheme Update to the ODPM. The Scheme Update presents the Pathfinder’s strategy for intervention over the period 2006/07 – 2007/08, and defines the strategic objectives (outlined in Appendix 1). The first three strategic objectives are the Pathfinder’s core objectives, which aim to address the structural problems in the housing market. A further three objectives reflect the fact that housing market renewal is ‘not just about housing’ and seek to address three significant issues that will impact on housing market performance.

Identifying and building upon the heritage value within existing communities is recognised by the Pathfinder as an important component of the overall strategy for renewal, hence the requirement for a heritage assessment to be carried out where HMR intervention is likely.

Planning Policy Context

It is essential that this commission is informed by, and is broadly consistent with, the current framework of national, regional and local planning policy. The key elements are as follows:

- National planning policy guidance, most notably PPS 1 (Delivering Sustainable Communities), PPS 3 (Housing), PPG 13 (Transport), PPG 15 (Planning & the Historic Environment); <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143104>
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RPG 13) - Government Office North West (GONW) (2003) http://www.nwra.gov.uk/downloads/documents/dec_06/nwra_1165414305_Final_Version_of_RPG13_-_March.pdf
- Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RSS) (2006) http://www.nwra.gov.uk/downloads/documents/dec_06/nwra_1165321319_Submitted_Draft_Regional_Spatial.pdf
- Moving Forward: The Northern Way (2004) <http://www.thenorthernway.co.uk/>
- Oldham Metropolitan Borough Unitary Development Plan, (adopted 2006) http://www.oldham.gov.uk/udp_2006_master_copy_full.pdf

- 'Oldham Beyond' Borough Masterplan (2004)
http://www.oldham.gov.uk/oldham_beyond_vision.pdf
- The Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 2006)
http://www.cartoplus.co.uk/rochdale/text/00_cont.htm
<http://www.cartoplus.co.uk/rochdale/rochdale.htm> (note - this is the link for the proposals map)
- Rochdale Borough Renaissance Masterplan (2005)
<http://www.investinrochdale.co.uk/upload/rochdale%20masterplan.pdf>

3.0 OLDHAM AND ROCHDALE – AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Oldham

The character of much of the HMR area in Oldham retains a strong influence of its origins as a 19th Century mill town that experienced particularly rapid growth between around 1840 and 1914. The typical industrial communities of mills surrounded by workers housing, shopping parades, schools, public houses, and municipal buildings survive extensively across the area albeit often much altered by subsequent phases of development. The Coppice area which developed as a predominantly middle class suburb is notable as is Oldham Garden Suburb, and Alexandra Park which is on the register of historic parks and gardens.

There are designated conservation areas at Oldham Town Centre, Alexandra Park, Garden Suburb, Failsworth Pole, Old Town Hall Chadderton and Victoria Street Chadderton.

Rochdale

The inner urban areas of East Central Rochdale, Wardleworth, Newbold and Deepdish have 19th Century origins, mainly developed as densely packed terrace housing before 1914, with accompanying industrial and commercial development. Sparthbottoms to the south and west of the town centre developed at the same time, but in a more dispersed pattern with housing tied to industries and utilities established in the Roche Valley. Poor environmental quality in these areas is to a large extent determined by the age of the building fabric although lack of open space in the original development is also a significant factor.

Kirkholt, to the south of the town, was built as a planned community with its own local services mainly to rehouse those displaced by clearance from inner Rochdale in the early 1950's. In this case environmental problems are as much a reflection of the relatively low density, street layout, and neighbourhood planning concepts adopted at the time, as the quality of buildings.

Two major areas of post war social housing lie to the north west of Middleton. The Hollins Estate was built in the 1950's as social housing on elevated site. The larger Langley Estate of just under 3000 dwellings, was built as an overspill estate by

Manchester City Council in the late 1950's to early 1960's, and remained in the City Council's control until passing to present Bowlee Housing Association.

4.0 OTHER INTERVENTION AREAS - LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

This commission involves six of the defined "Other Intervention Areas". All but one of the OIA's consists of an estate originally developed for social renting. The exception is Inner Rochdale which consists of a mix of industrial, retail and private residential uses. A brief description of each area is set out below:

Kirkholt, Rochdale

Kirkholt consists of a large mixed tenure estate of some 3,432 dwellings built in the 1940's and early 50's. The estate contains a mix of houses and flats of differing styles. A substantial number of the dwellings are social rented (some 2,000). The estate is located off Queensway, a major route giving access to the A627M, and hence the M60/M62, and Kingsway Business Park. However, although well located in terms of access to the motorway network, the estate is neither well connected to the surrounding urban area nor well connected internally with the numerous cul-de-sacs inhibiting movement.

An exercise is currently underway to develop a "Vision for Kirkholt". This is being led by officers from Rochdale Boroughwide Housing in conjunction with consultants Mouchel Parkman. Public consultation has recently been carried out on "Ideas for Change" – A draft vision for Kirkholt presented in the form of a spatial plan. Further consultation and engagement will be required as the Vision is refined and implemented.

Inner Rochdale

The Inner Rochdale area comprises mixed employment, housing and retail uses and is located some 500m south of Rochdale town centre. The area is bisected by the Rochdale canal and a railway line. Rochdale railway station is located within the area. Oldham Road is a major arterial route into Rochdale town centre from the south and passes through the area.

The housing in the area is dominated by terraces many of which grew up around the old industries that adjoined the canal and railway. There are a large number of employment uses and businesses throughout the area.

There are few formal open space facilities in the area. There are two schools - St. John's RC primary school and Deeplish primary school. Religious buildings include St. John's RC church and four mosques.

The shopping facilities in the area are dominated by central retail park off Oldham Road, which accommodates five large retail units. There are a number of local shopping facilities throughout the area.

There are a number of major development proposals within the area, many of which have the benefit of planning permission. These potential developments will have a significant impact on the function and character of the area.

Rochdale Development Agency (RDA) is currently developing an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the area. The AAP will form part of the statutory planning system. Formal preparation started in March 2007. The heritage assessment will form part of the evidence base for the plan.

Sholver and Alt , Oldham

Sholver and Alt, like Kirkholt, consist of high levels of social rented stock. The main area of Sholver lies in an elevated position off Ripponden Road to the north east of Oldham town centre, whereas Alt lies further eastwards towards Lees in an area of open land formed around Abbyhills Road. Both estates are somewhat isolated from the surrounding urban areas.

Sholver is the most extensive of the two estates and is separated into two halves – Top Sholver, which is mostly social rented stock, (with older terraced dwellings on the Ripponden Road frontage) and Bottom Sholver which is at a lower elevation and consists mainly private housing developed on land formerly occupied by social rented housing.

Top Sholver is in most need of investment and comprises around 690 council-built properties, of which around 19% have been sold. Lower Sholver includes 146 council-built houses interspersed among private homes built during the 1990's; around 18% have been sold under the right to buy.

Alt comprises around 530 council-built properties many developed around areas of open space.

Both social rented estates include areas of relatively monolithic house types and a combination of open areas and high density housing. Both areas consist of social rented stock positioned adjacent to, but disconnected from, relatively new private housing developed on land formerly occupied by social rented dwellings.

An exercise to identify options for change is currently underway for both estates under the auspices of the Alt and Sholver Partnership Board and led by officers from First Choice Homes Oldham (the Council's ALMO partner). An initial series of options for both estates has recently been published, with the selection of a preferred option programmed for May 2007. A process of refining these options through masterplanning work will be carried out over the remainder of the year, during which the selection of a preferred development partner will take place.

Primrose Bank and Clarkwell, Oldham

Parts of both the Clarkwell and Primrose Bank areas form part of the "Gateways to Oldham" PFI4 bid currently being progressed by Oldham Council. The project aims

to tackle decency and regeneration issues on estates owned, in part, by Oldham Council.

Primrose Bank is a mainly social rented estate situated on Ashton Road within walking distance of Oldham town centre. The main area of the estate was constructed in the 1960's and consists of a mix of deck access flats, maisonettes and houses. Adjacent to the main post war stock is an area of pre-war larger properties essentially forming a periphery to the estate. The total stock count within the PFI bid area at Primrose Bank is 387 properties.

Clarkwell estate was constructed in the 1960's and is located on the Rochdale Road gateway within walking distance of Oldham town centre. The estate consists solely of 1 and 3 bedroom flats and maisonettes. The total stock count within the PFI bid area at Clarkwell is 89 dwellings, plus a tenant's hall and a single retail unit. The wider Clarkwell area falling within the boundary of this commission includes a mix of terraced housing and terraced housing.

An "Outline Business Case" setting out the case for PFI4 funding and appraising options has now been submitted to the Government by officers from Oldham MBC. A decision on the success of the bid is imminent.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this process is to produce an intensive heritage assessment for each area and for that assessment to define the heritage value in a way that can inform the regeneration of each neighbourhood – its streets and associated buildings. Even where clearance has been agreed in principle, there may be historic buildings and spaces that should be considered for possible retention, whilst historical evidence can help in the design of new development and in the identification of areas of archaeological potential.

The key objectives of this commission are therefore to:

- To identify the nature and extent of the Heritage asset within each OIA forming this commission;
- To demonstrate how this is reflected in its present day character;
- To identify those areas where the heritage asset retains its integrity and those where loss has occurred;
- To establish the significance of the heritage asset and the extent to which this varies across the area of improvement;
- To place this significance within the broader heritage context of the towns;
- To discuss the findings with those organisations, public bodies and community groups who are directly involved in the Pathfinder initiative;
- To consider the implications of the significance of the heritage asset and its component parts for emerging proposals within each OIA and make recommendations on the successful integration of such assets; and
- To identify the need for further assessment and recording of the heritage asset in advance of and during any future redevelopment.

6.0 PROCESS

Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal (HMR) working together with Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC), and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) is commissioning a heritage assessment for each of the following six OIA's:

Rochdale

- Kirkholt
- Inner Rochdale

Oldham

- Sholver
- Alt
- Clarkwell
- Primrose Bank

The deadline for receipt of all draft assess assessments will be Friday 28th September 2007 **AT THE LATEST**, with final reports to be received by Wednesday 31st October 2007. The successful consultant will need to demonstrate that they possess sufficient resources to complete this commission within this timescale. It is expected that the six assessments will, at some point, need to be run concurrently. However, it is accepted that it may not be possible to start all at the same time. As a guide, therefore, any prioritisation should be as follows:

Tranche 1

Inner Rochdale
Sholver
Kirkholt

Tranch 2

Alt
Primrose Bank
Clarkwell

Within the overall budget, each of the six areas will require a different level of resource to complete the assessment. It is expected that Inner Rochdale will require the most intensive use of resources. **Tenders should separately detail expected costs for each neighbourhood.**

The successful consultant will be required to utilise the existing methodology developed through the various assessments detailed above. Central to this methodology is a system that describes and differentiates all elements of the urban landscape in terms of their heritage value, as follows:

Protected: buildings or features which are listed (including curtilage buildings), scheduled as ancient monuments or which lie within a designated conservation area, and where statutory protection creates a strong presumption in favour of retention and the protection (or enhancement) of their setting.

High value: buildings, features or spaces which are possible candidates for listing or which lie within areas recommended for Conservation Area designation (subject to formal appraisal), and where retention is presumed.

Clear value: buildings, features or spaces of clear architectural or historic interest (but not candidates for special designation or listing at this time) and which should be retained, unless it can be demonstrated that redevelopment would be of greater benefit to the character or setting of adjoining buildings or spaces or that there are overriding social or economic reasons which preclude retention.

Townscape value: buildings which, although of little architectural or historic interest in themselves, combine with others in a way which creates the character of historic streets and spaces via attributes which could — if wholesale retention is not possible — be recreated by sensitive redevelopment.

Indeterminate value: buildings, features and spaces which contribute positively to townscape character or heritage value and may therefore be of clear significance but which require further investigation in respect of their value, extent of survival or — where appropriate — practicality of retention.

Little known value: all pre–First World War buildings which are not significant or of group–townscape value as well as those later buildings of slight interest which, although retention is desirable, could be redeveloped without loss of heritage value, subject to the quality of any replacement.

No value: buildings, features or spaces where redevelopment or demolition can be assumed to be acceptable in terms of the heritage value.

Negative value: buildings, features or spaces which have an adverse impact on any aspect of the significance or heritage or townscape value of the area and where re–development or removal is positively encouraged.

In progressing this commission, the successful consultant will be expected to examine all the relevant sources of information that will inform the historical understanding of the improvement area. These are likely to include:

- Local Authority Historic Environment Record or Sites and Monuments Record;
- Local History Library. The key objective is to obtain a range of historic maps for the improvement area to understand its development over time. These are likely to include the Ordnance Survey map series (scale 1:10,560, 1:2,500, 1:1,056, 1:528 or 1:500, where available), tithe, estate, parish, town, board of health plans, etc.;
- *The Buildings of England* ('Pevsner') county guides, *Victoria County History*, commercial directories, local histories and other available sources;

- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Oldham Final Report;
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Rochdale - Final Report; and
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Executive Summary.

Consideration of the above will inform a ground survey. By drawing reference from the English Heritage characterisation methodology the consultant should identify the distinct character areas that make up each area.

Factors that need to be considered in determining the character areas include the historical origins and principal stages of development, areas of archaeological potential, urban morphology, the range of building types, the layout and scale of the buildings, architectural character, use of materials, design of spaces and the original social composition of the area as reflected in the status of its buildings. An assessment should also be made of the condition of each character area, its coherence, what has been lost and which elements remain vulnerable.

Where a programme of intervention is being promoted, an understanding of the key physical attributes together with the mapping of surviving architectural features including external fenestration, roof covering, doors, windows and boundary walls can be used to ensure the area's historic character is sympathetically maintained. Conversely, where clearance and redevelopment is being considered, the area may still retain heritage assets that can be successfully used as an anchor and focus for new development.

When undertaking an intensive survey it will often be necessary to walk every street within the character area although simple and repetitive structures can often be dealt with in a summary fashion. It is a requirement that walking surveys be carried out by people working as a pair to optimise the rigor and thoroughness of the survey and for health and safety reasons.

If the opportunity arises it may be possible to briefly examine the survival of interiors especially within public buildings, but a programme of systematic internal inspection is not envisaged.

By examining existing documentation and holding interviews with the organisations and public bodies who are directly involved in the programme of housing market renewal, the consultant should seek to establish the possible impact of the emerging strategy and development proposals on the surviving heritage asset. It is also important to understand what the local community values about their historic environment and why.

Those areas where industrial, commercial, civic, recreational or transport activity are prevalent should also be identified by type and date. All aspects of the landscape, no matter how modern, should be mapped and described.

A Geographical Information System (GIS) will provide a simple and cost effective method to present the findings of the study, to incorporate the results into the

decision-making process and (at an appropriate stage) to make them publicly available. Careful consideration will need to be given as to the way in which this is implemented, data sources, etc., in order that the maximum benefit is obtained. It is important that information provided through a GIS is compatible with systems in each of the commissioning bodies. Following appointment, the commissioning partners will wish to discuss the systems used, the data already available (current and historic mapping, and information held by the Local Authority Historic Environment Record/Sites and Monuments Record), as will their requirements for digital data exchange.

Community Consultation and Involvement

The overall objective of the consultation with residents, businesses and other local stakeholders is to ensure that local views fully inform the intensive assessment and that the final documentation contains a rich mix of views and opinions. The methodology used needs to reflect a transparent process with clear evidence to show how the final recommendations were arrived at.

The assessment process should embrace the following principles:

- Dialogue with residents/community groups that is honest and open with clarity about the purpose of the assessment and the parameters of influence
- All responses recorded and analysed accurately and professionally
- Demonstrable links between the consultation findings and the final recommendation. Where findings have not been able to influence decisions, explanations and reasons to be given.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of community engagement to be an integral part of the process

The minimum requirements of the consultation to include:

- Two stakeholder workshops in each OIA forming this commission;
- Appropriate engagement of main Community groups and/or stakeholders in each OIA forming this commission.

The successful consultant will be encouraged to take opportunities to integrate consultations on the heritage assessments with consultation activities associated with on-going masterplanning exercises.

Prospective consultants will need to demonstrate they have the capacity and expertise to effectively engage and consult with a wide range of groups and individuals.

7.0 OUTPUTS

A full report, as outlined below, will be required for each of the six OIA's forming this commission. The final reports must be clear and easy to read, well illustrated and bound as an A4 document (an unbound copy should also be provided). They

should aim to tell a story in non-technical language and without being overly long. Each full report should also be accompanied by a separate executive summary.

Each reports should contain:

- Author, organisation and date of issue
- Summary
- Introduction – outlining the reason for the project
- Location and description
- Planning and regeneration context
- Historical development – An overview of the history of the area derived from historical research and map evidence. The description should focus on those factors that have shaped the appearance of the modern day landscape rather than a lengthy account of the history of an area. Historical maps and illustrations together with a current map showing the key periods of growth should also be included
- Characterisation – A discussion of the historic character of the improvement area as reflected in the modern day landscape, the nature and extent of any designations including those identified by the local authority, the survival of the heritage asset, its condition, coherence and below-ground archaeological potential. Maps showing the character areas and zones of below ground archaeological potential must be included here.
- Character Areas – An analysis of each character area in accordance with the methodology outlined in the process section above and supported by annotated maps. The discussion should briefly consider historical origins and principal stages of development, areas of archaeological potential, urban morphology, the range of building types, architectural character, use of materials, the survival of historic surfaces, design of spaces, etc. Each section should conclude with an assessment of significance which identifies key attributes, current designations, the degree of completeness, coherence, condition, rates of attrition, sensitivity and capacity for change.
- Assessment of significance – An overall assessment of both the character areas and the improvement area as a whole. This should also be discussed in terms of the broader heritage context of the town or city and draw on the results of the stakeholder consultation set out in the process section above. If appropriate new and proposed revisions to existing conservation areas may be considered.
- Recommendations – An outline strategy on how the significance of the heritage asset and its component parts can be successfully integrated within the programme of housing market renewal. If the latter is already at an advanced stage the proposals should be accompanied by an impact assessment and possible options on how to minimise the possible negative effects of any redevelopment proposals.
- Future research strategy. Areas where further assessment is needed in advance of any future works should be clearly identified. This might include important buildings where an internal inspection should be undertaken to determine the survival of historic interiors and areas where an assessment of the below ground archaeological resource is required before redevelopment.

The section should conclude with an indicative research strategy which sets out the future recording priorities within the Pathfinder intervention areas.

- Bibliography.

The text must be supported by plans, interpretive maps and photographs showing general views and, where appropriate, individual buildings or features of interest.

Copies of the brief and the approved project design shall be included as appendices to the main report.

In addition to those directly involved in the project the report should also be sent to the Local Authority Historic Environment Record or Sites and Monuments Record, the English Heritage National Monuments Record and local community groups with an interest in the area.

Consultants will provide the following:

- 15 copies of the final Document (A4);
- 15 copies of the Executive Summary (A4);
- 15 copies of plans produced to support the masterplan (A3 & A1)
- A copy of all documentation on CD in relevant format such as PDF; and
- A copy of all plans, and any GIS datasets on a CD in a relevant format such as PDF and a professional software package format.

You are required to produce exhibition boards and large plans, and other documentation such as invitations, leaflets and feedback forms to assist in consultation and provide feedback papers on consultation events and stakeholder workshops. Account should be taken of the need to produce draft documents as this commission progresses.

Ownership and copyright of all the outputs defined above will be retained by the commissioning partners (Oldham & Rochdale Partners in Action, Rochdale MBC, and Oldham MBC). The design team/consortia will not have leave to reproduce or make reference to this documentation without prior approval.

8.0 SUBMISSION CRITERIA

This brief provides detailed information on the context for this commission. The information provided below will assist you in structuring your submission

Submissions must consist of the following:

1. A brief written statement (of no more than 4 sides of A4), providing:

- An outline of your teams experience,
- Your understanding of the key issues and context that informs the assessment work; and
- The qualities of your team would bring to the process;

- Your understanding of community engagement in relation to the heritage of local communities.

2. A completed pro-forma (electronic format as supplied), providing information on team structures, project management and costs:

3. Referees of three previous projects, including explanation of these projects and the role played (no more than 1 side of A4 per project outline).

Furthermore we ask you to submit one copy of a document of a recently completed commission so we can assess the quality of your final document production.

Six copies of the submission should be provided (one unbound).

The evaluation of submissions from the practice teams will be based on the following criteria:

- Previous experience - in similar projects where a successful outcome can be demonstrated through implementation with desired results (Weighting - 20%);
- Understanding of the issues - ability to understand and analyse the issues, and particularly to appreciate the Oldham/Rochdale context (Weighting 20%);
- Technical skills - required to carry out and complete the study (Weighting 20%);
- Community engagement/Consultative skills - to constructively communicate with the client, steering group, local agencies and engage with members of the local community (Weighting 20%);
- Methodology and Value for Money - which will optimise outcomes within the study context, timeframe and budget (Weighting 20%).

Following the closure of the invitation to tender period a short-list of practices will be invited to an interview with the selection panel.

9.0 PROJECT DESIGN & TIMETABLE

Project Design

All the work should be undertaken by a professional consultant with proven experience and qualifications in the assessment of historic urban landscapes. Details including the name, qualifications, and experience of the lead consultant and all other project personnel must be included within the project design together with details of anticipated outputs, working methods, programming, and liaison requirements. Prospective consultants should include previous examples of comparable work within the tender.

It should be remembered that a range of specialist skills are likely to be needed including historic buildings and landscape analysis, architectural history, archaeology and if appropriate, ecology. Evidence for these skills should be clearly demonstrated within the submission.

The preferred project design must be discussed and agreed with the client's project steering group before being implemented.

Timetable

The indicative timetable in relation to the selection of commissioned practice is as follows:

- Invitation to Tender brief sent to the short-listed practices by 27th April 2007
- Confirmation of intention to tender by 12:00 noon 4th May 2007 (please send your confirmation to Len Harris at len.harris@oldham.gov.uk)
- Invitation to Tender submissions should be received by 12.00 noon on 18th May 2007
- Short-list of practices invited to interview by 23rd May 2007
- Short-list of practices interviewed on 30th May 2007
- Appointment of successful practice by 6th June 2007
- Draft Heritage Assessments complete by end of September 2007 at the latest
- Final Heritage Assessments complete by end of October 2007 at the latest

10.0 REFERENCE MATERIAL

National Guidance/ Documents

Building Sustainable Communities: Actions for Housing Market Renewal (CABE, June 2003) www.cabe.org.uk/pdf/Housing%20Market%20REnewal.pdf

Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (ODPM, February 2003) http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_communities/documents/sectionhomepage/odpm_communities_page.hcsp

Low Demand Housing & the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2005) http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/Low_demand_Housing.pdf

Extensive and Intensive Assessment: A Model Brief for the Commissioning of work to assess historical significance in areas of Housing Renewal, (English Heritage: 2005)

http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/doc/low_demand_housing_brief.doc

Local Documents:

- 'Transformation and Cohesion': The Scheme Update for the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (August, 2005)
http://www.oldhamrochdalehmr.co.uk/scheme_update_2005.pdf
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Oldham Final Report;
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Rochdale - Final Report; and
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Executive Summary;
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Middleton; and
- Oldham Rochdale HMR Pathfinder Heritage Assessment – Hathershaw and Fitton Hill, Final Draft Report and Executive Summary

Please contact Len Harris (details below) if you require copies of documents relating to the existing heritage studies detailed above.

11.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

Practices are invited to submit any questions regarding this commission to the named person below and/or make arrangements to visit the area up until 11th May 2007. Responses to any questions will be distributed to all practices.

Contact Details

The key contacts for this commission are:

Main contact:

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Strategy Officer
Housing Market Renewal Core Team
T: 0161 770 8326
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E: len.harris@oldham.gov.uk

Other Intervention Areas - Lead Officers:

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Inner Rochdale

Gary Davies
Rochdale Development Agency
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F: 01706 868555
E: g.davies@investinrochdale.co.uk

Alt and Sholver

Kevin Clarke
First Choice Homes Oldham
T: 0161 770 4416
F: 0161 770 4606
E: fcho.kevin.clarke@oldham.gov.uk

Primrose Bank and Clarkwell

Lynn Phillips
PFI4 Core Team
Oldham MBC
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F: 0161 770 1164
E: lynn.phillips@oldham.gov.uk

Partnership Arrangements

This assessment is being progressed under a partnership arrangement involving the following organisations:

- Oldham and Rochdale Partners in Action;
- Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council; and
- Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

This Document has been produced by:

LEN HARRIS

NB: This brief is substantially based on a model brief prepared by English Heritage (See the attached notes “Extensive and Intensive Assessment : A Model Brief for the Commissioning of work to assess historical significance in areas of Housing Renewal”, English Heritage: 2005).

Appendix 1

Oldham Rochdale HMR – Strategic Objectives and Drivers, 2005

Driver	Strategic Objective
<p>Strong projected net household growth in the Pathfinder area particularly focussed in the South Asian heritage community.</p> <p>A predominance of small pavement terraced properties that do not meet the needs of larger households or the aspirations of newly forming households.</p> <p>Oversupply of socially rented flatted accommodation on estates of a monolithic nature, which is subject to high turnover rates.</p>	<p>1. Create a step change in housing diversity and choice by providing and facilitating new housing and securing a radically better mix of housing sizes and types.</p>
<p>Low property values and low incomes of Pathfinder residents has led to a lack of individual investment in properties which has in turn led to significant levels of unfitness across Pathfinder stock.</p> <p>Poor property condition also tends to create a poor environment.</p>	<p>2. Transform the quality of housing and neighbourhoods in the Pathfinder area and deliver long-term sustainability.</p>
<p>The growth in house values has not been matched by a growth in incomes so a growing number of residents have been unable to afford to enter home ownership. This has increased pressure for affordable options. The economic projections suggest a continuing need for affordable housing.</p> <p>The existing social rented stock is not in the right locations or of the right size for those who may now need it. Social renting as a tenure is less attractive to significant sections of the community so options need to include low cost home ownership.</p>	<p>3. Promote and provide a range of affordable housing options.</p>
<p>Over reliance on low value added manufacturing jobs and low skill levels are resulting in low wage levels, with a resulting lack of choice of homes and inability to maintain homes. Upskilling and economic restructuring need to go hand in hand with HMR.</p>	<p>4. Integrate with, influence and support the economic development of Oldham and Rochdale.</p>
<p>Strong growth projected in the South Asian heritage community but there is evidence of the housing choices of this group being constrained, as some</p>	<p>5. Promote community cohesion.</p>

<p>areas adjacent to areas of high overcrowding are avoided.</p> <p>High levels of deprivation in the Pathfinder which can create an environment in which resentments grow.</p>	
<p>People's choices about where to live are heavily influenced by factors beyond the physical housing, such as crime, fear of crime, harassment, anti-social behaviour, cleanliness/tidiness, and the perceived quality of local education.</p>	<p>6. Help to provide an excellent quality of life in the Pathfinder area – influencing our partners to focus on target areas as suggested by the Kwest research and to support the HMR change process.</p>

