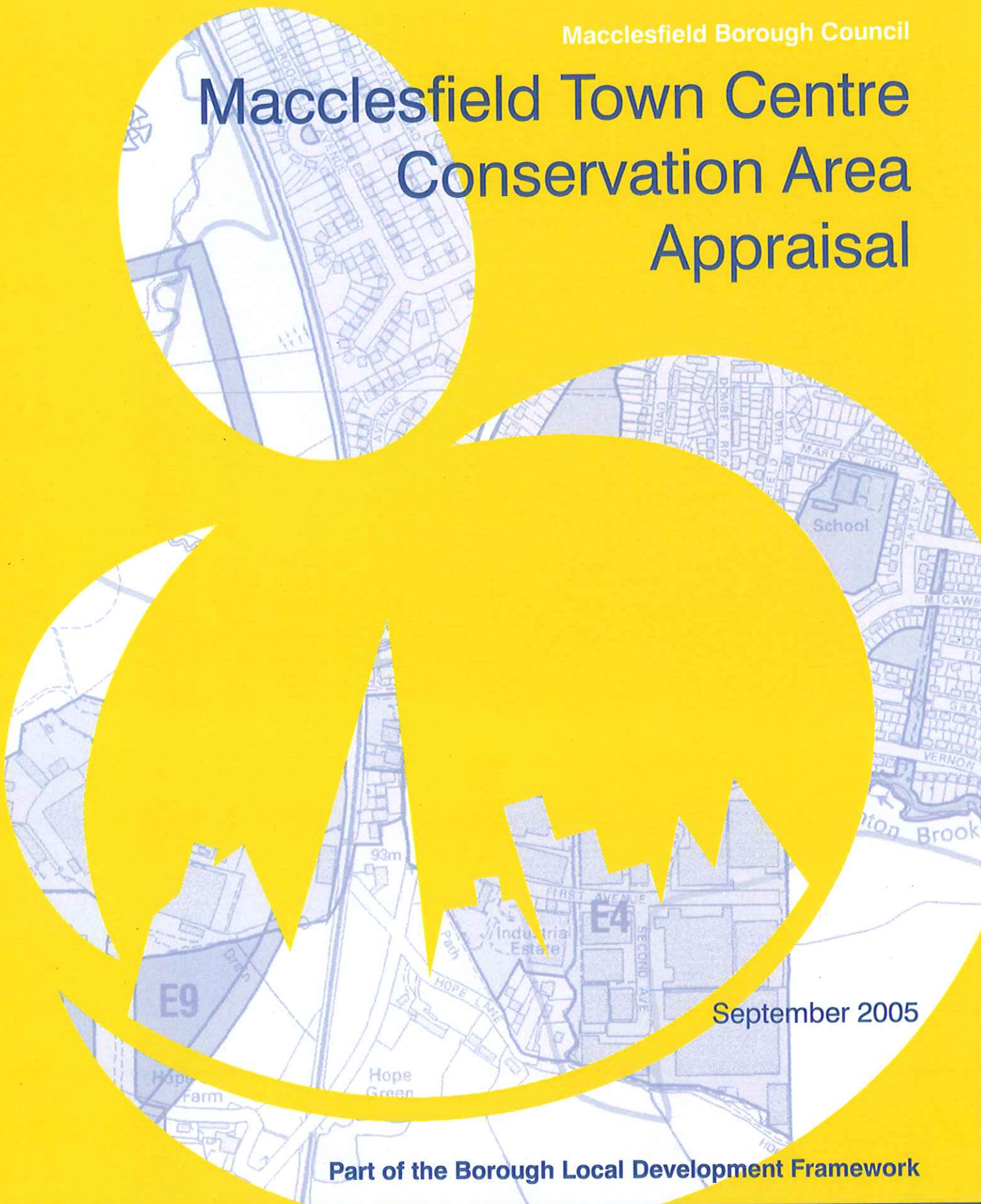


Macclesfield Borough Council

Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal



September 2005

Part of the Borough Local Development Framework



**MACCLESFIELD TOWN CENTRE
CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

Macclesfield Borough Council

May 2005

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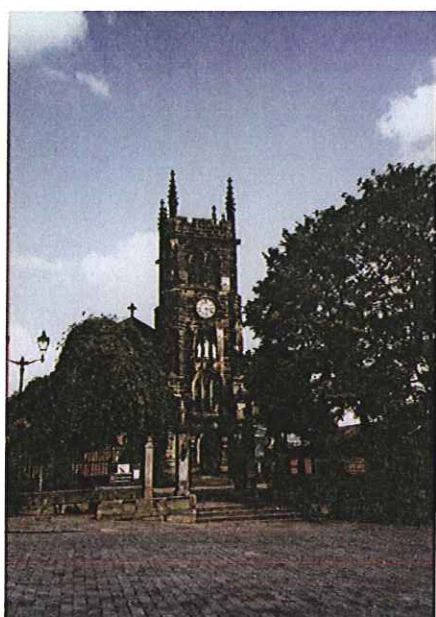
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Macclesfield is the largest town in north Cheshire and developed principally in the late 18th and 19th century as a silk mill town. However, the Town Centre Conservation Area covers the core of a much earlier medieval settlement, including a 13th century church (St Michael's) and a market place. Whilst the character of this part of Macclesfield is predominantly Georgian, some earlier buildings remain, such as the 17th century stone cottages in Chester Road, but often they have been refaced and now lie hidden behind brick facades.

The conservation area is notable for its hilly location, overlooking the River Bollin, which provides some particularly good views to the Pennine hills to the east. The town itself is based on the Market Place and three principal streets: Chestergate, Jordangate, and Church Street, each of which has a distinctive character. The most important buildings are St Michael's Church and the early 19th century Town Hall, built in a rather severe Greek Revival style. As the majority of the silk mills were located further to the south, there are few reminders of the industry in this part of Macclesfield apart from an early 19th century mill complex off King Edward Street and the remains of some silk weavers' cottages in Short Street, off Waters Green.

Modern development has impinged on the immediate area around these historic streets, which have regrettably lost most of their early boundaries and back gardens. However, the street frontages are more complete with impressive and continuous groups of listed buildings in all three main streets.

This appraisal seeks to define what is special about the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area, and to provide information about its historic development and architectural worth. Additionally, a number of issues are identified and proposals put forward which seek the future preservation and enhancement of the area. Chapter 8 of this appraisal also includes detailed advice on all new development (including extensions to existing buildings), which will be of interest to property owners and their agents.



St Michael's Church, Market Place

1 INTRODUCTION

Statutory background

- 1.1 The designation of areas (rather than individual buildings) of special architectural or historic interest was first set out in the Civic Amenities Act 1967, and since then over 9,000 conservation areas have been designated in England and Wales. More recent legislation has expanded on these early principles, and Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 obliges local planning authorities to determine which parts of their areas are of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas. Section 72 of the same Act also specifies that it is the general duty of local planning authorities, in the exercise of their planning functions, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of these conservation areas.
- 1.2 Policies that aim to achieve this are set out in each Council's Local Plan and in government guidance including most importantly Planning Advisory Note (PPG) 15, Planning and the Historic Environment.

Planning background

- 1.3 All local authorities have an approved Local Plan which sets out each Council's policies and which is used extensively for development control purposes. These plans are almost permanently under review, as central government guidance changes rapidly and local economic and social conditions require adjustments to the Council's policies. The relevant document for the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area is the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan adopted in January 2004.
- 1.4 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has now been approved and this requires the replacement of the Local Plan by a Local Development Framework. Local Development Frameworks will comprise a folder of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. This document will be a Supplementary Planning Document and will be a "material consideration" when application for new development in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area are received by the Borough Council. The document has been the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal.
- 1.5 Macclesfield Borough Council has 46 conservation areas and almost 1,900 listed buildings. Policies that seek their preservation and enhancement are set out in the Local Plan in the Built Environment section of Chapter 3 Environment, and the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area is specifically described, with its chief characteristics noted, in Chapter 10.
- 1.6 The advice on the control of conservation areas, including new development, provided in the Local Plan is inevitably quite general. In Chapter 8 of this appraisal can be found more detailed policy guidance that will be of interest to owners of buildings and sites within the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area.



View of Conservation Area from Waters Green

The Purpose And Format of the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal

1.7 This appraisal provides proposals for the preservation or enhancement of the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Area Appraisals have three purposes:

1. To identify the particular characteristics of the conservation area that justify its designation as a conservation area and which should be preserved or enhanced.
2. To provide guidance:
 - to owners on how they can preserve or enhance their buildings (including advice on changes for which no planning application is required)
 - on the Council's likely response to applications for planning permission.
3. To identify works of improvement, enhancement or other initiatives that could be taken on by the Council or other agencies.

Procedure

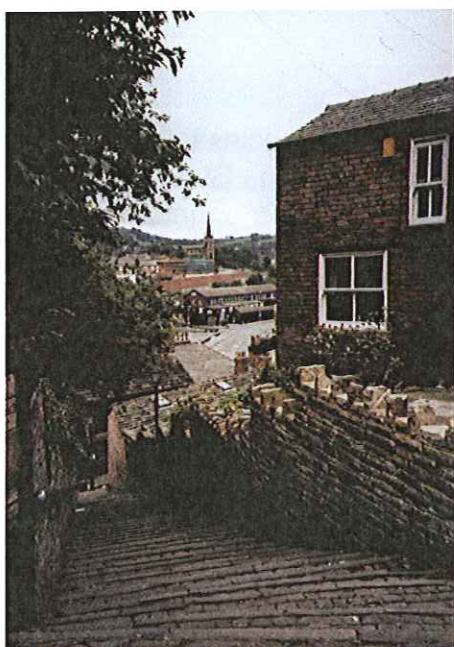
1.8 Once conservation areas are designated, councils are obliged under Section 71 of the 1990 Act to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement, and to consult the public on these proposals before publishing the final documents, which should take these consultations into account.

1.9 For the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area, this appraisal was subject to public consultation and the views of local amenity societies and residents were sought. The final document was formally adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on 11th May 2005.

2 LOCATION

Topography and setting

- 2.1 Macclesfield lies 36 miles east of Chester and 1 mile west of the Peak District National Park, of which the Pennine Hills form the most important feature. The flat Cheshire Plain lies to the west. The town is located at a nodal point on the road network, with the A523 running north to Stockport and south to Leek, the A537 west to Knutsford and east to Buxton.
- 2.2 The medieval settlement was originally sited on a naturally defensive hill overlooking the River Bollin, although the modern town has spread to encompass the river valley and beyond. This riverside location provides Macclesfield with a dramatic setting. The steeply sloping hill faces east towards the river, marking the edge of the earlier town, and still contains the medieval church, market place and other early buildings.

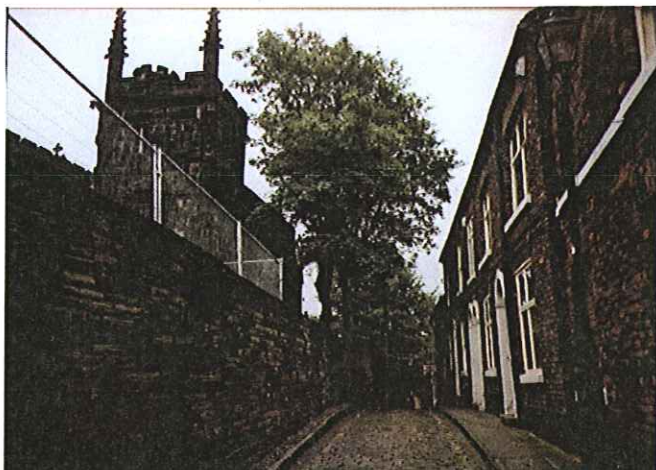


View down 108 steps

- 2.3 In the last two hundred years the town has developed beyond the medieval boundaries, principally to the north, west and south, although further growth is now restricted as most of the land around Macclesfield is designated as Green Belt. Macclesfield is therefore protected from development by countryside restraint policies, and the fact that much of the land is also designated as Land of Special County Value in the Local Plan.

Geology

- 2.3 The underlying geology comprises Bunter Pebble Beds, which is overlain by glacial sand and gravel and there is a spread of alluvium along the course of the River Bollin and its tributary the Dams Brook. The soils around the town are principally sands and brown earths, suitable for mixed arable and grassland. To the east, the Pennines provide a ready supply of sandstone, suitable as a building material for walling and roof slates.



Local stone is used for walling and paving in Churchside

3 HISTORY

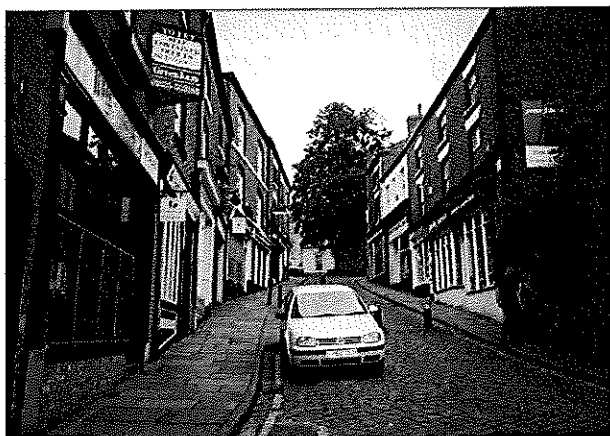
Archaeology

- 3.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area, although the Cheshire Historic Towns Survey confirms that the whole conservation area, which largely lies within the boundaries of the medieval settlement, has archaeological potential. In West Park, Macclesfield, are three standing Crosses of possibly 11th century date, which are Scheduled, although they are not in situ. A further standing Cross on the Prestbury Road, and a bowl barrow at Tytherington, are Scheduled.
- 3.2 Around the town Bronze Age burial mounds and further remains have been discovered, suggesting that the Macclesfield area was clearly of some importance in the Prehistoric period. There is no evidence of Roman activity in the town. Further details are included in the Cheshire Historic Towns Survey, prepared by Cheshire County Council between 1997 and 2001.

The development of Macclesfield

- 3.3 Before the shire of Cheshire was laid out in the late 9th to 10th centuries the Macclesfield area may have been included in the territory of the *Pecsaete* (Peak dwellers), which covered parts of Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire. By the 10th century it appears probable that there was a large royal estate centred on Macclesfield and by Domesday in 1086 Macclesfield was one of two large estates (the other being Adlington) belonging to the Earls of Mercia within the hundred of *Hamestan*. The survey records a hall and a mill but also that the value of the land was only 20 shillings, and that the area was waste, presumably because of the crushing of the rebellion against the Normans in 1070. Macclesfield remained in the hands of the Earls of Chester until the last earl died in 1237, after which it reverted to the crown along with the earldom. Thereafter, the Manor was held by the king until 1835 and rented out from time to time to various local families, including the Earls of Derby and the Savage's.

- 3.4 The borough of Macclesfield was created by Ranulph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester, in around 1220, and its economy was based on agriculture and associated trading in the Market Place. The original charter has been lost, but a new charter was granted by Edward 1 in 1261 and it can be assumed that this contains similar provisions. The land around the Market Place was divided up into approximately 120 plots, facing Jordangate, the Market Place, Mill Street and the newly created Chestergate. The new burgesses were given the right to form a merchant guild and were exempt from tolls in Cheshire. Each burgess was allocated an acre of land within the town fields to the west of the town. They also had the right to dig peat in the Danes Moss to the south-west of the town and to pasture sheep, horses and cattle on the common land to the east of the River Bollin.
- 3.5 Some time in the 13th century a medieval guildhall was also built, on the site of the present Town Hall, and this was replaced by a stone building above an arcade of three shops in the late 16th century. A new church, All Saints, was provided by Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward 1, in 1278, subsequently renamed as St Michael's. It acted as a chapel of ease to the larger church at Prestbury until 1835 when it became an independent parish.
- 3.6 A market hall was provided by the Black Prince in c1357 and this building survived until 1826 when the Market Place was cleared. At this time, it appears that the medieval Manor of Macclesfield was located slightly out of the settlement on the Congleton Road, in an area now known as Castle Fields, where there is some documentary evidence for a motte and bailey castle. However, nothing now remains.
- 3.7 In c1398 John de Macclesfield built a large and prestigious house on four adjacent burgage plots on the east side of Mill Street. By 1585 it was ruinous and the only remaining features, a porch and central turret, were demolished in 1933.
- 3.8 Throughout the Middle Ages Macclesfield continued to act as an important administrative and trading centre for the surrounding region. By the 16th century, the town had spread from the Market Place along the main streets and down Wallgate and Church Street to Waters Green. William Smith described Macclesfield at the end of the 16th century as being "*one of the fairest towns in Cheshire*".



Church Street

- 3.9 In 1684 Charles II granted a town charter that confirmed the existing privileges, and gave the town greater autonomy including the right to bring water into the borough from the common – an important right that was to encourage the development of industries. Quarrying of stone and coal were known from at least the 16th century, with a brick works being established in 1696 and a copper works in 1758. Additionally the burgesses were allowed to enclose strips of land. Many enclosures were for houses, but others were for small-scale industries such as silk works and dye houses. The commons were eventually divided up and enclosed in 1804, and by the 18th century the town's open fields had already been consolidated into separate farms. St Michael's Church was extensively rebuilt in 1739, although the tower and the chapels to the Legh and Savage families were retained. Further restoration took place between 1898 and 1901.
- 3.10 The Macclesfield Canal was built by William Crosley in 1831, connecting the Peak Forest Canal at Marple with the Trent and Mersey Canal at Talke in Staffordshire. However, it had only a brief period of success. Only a few years later, in 1845, the railway line from Macclesfield to Manchester and Birmingham was opened and soon after that, in 1849, a line to London and the Potteries. This entailed major alterations to the layout of the area around Waters Green and much of the course of the River Bollin was culverted. A new station for both lines was constructed in Hibel Road and a tunnel was cut under Beech Lane. In 1872 a third railway line was brought into the town and another new station, the Central Station, was opened in 1873.

The Macclesfield Silk Industry

- 3.11 Macclesfield dominated the Cheshire silk throwing and hand weaving market in the 19th century. Prior to this there had been a button-making industry in the town from at least 1574, and this had gradually developed into the manufacture of silk buttons in the 17th century. There was some cotton spinning in the late 18th and 19th centuries but this was a minor industry, compared with the extensive success of the silk industry.
- 3.12 The first silk mill was built on the southern end of Mill Street in Park Green in 1743, and was powered by water supplied from the Dams Brook. Initially, the silk thread was sent to other locations for weaving, particularly to Spitalfields in London, but from the late 18th century silk weaving was increasingly carried out in Macclesfield itself. In 1814 there were around 30 mills in the town, and by 1824 there were over 70. This rapid development is reflected in the large increases in population over a similar period – from 8,743 in 1801 to 26,837 in 1871.
- 3.13 After 1870, very few new mills were built in the town until the 1920s when there was a short revival based on the current fashion for short, silk dresses and the use of artificial silk or rayon.

20th century development

- 3.14 In the 20th century, Macclesfield's population continued to expand from over 34,000 in 1901 to around 49,000 in 1991. Inter-war and Post-War housing has been added, principally to the north towards Prestbury, to the west towards

Knutsford, and to the south. The natural boundaries created by the rivers and the Pennine hills have prevented similar expansion to the east, where the proximity of Macclesfield Forest and the Peak District National Park has provided a wide range of leisure opportunities for the local and visiting population. Today, there are still several working mills in the town, and the silk industry has also left another important legacy with the survival of a large number of silk workers' houses, characterised by long rows of continuous windows which provided light for silk throwing and weaving.



*Silk Weavers' houses in Catherine Street,
just outside the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area*

4 THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE MACCLESFIELD TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

General description

- 4.1 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area is notable for its Georgian and Victorian buildings which line the three principal streets, Chestergate, Church Street and Jordangate; for its Market Place, overlooked by the Town Hall and St Michael's Church; for the steep, wooded hill which leads down to the River Bollin; and for the more open, industrial area around Waters Green.
- 4.2 Significantly, six of the buildings are listed grade II* and whilst the character of the main streets is undoubtedly 18th or 19th century, there are several 16th or 17th century timber-framed buildings which have later brick or rendered fronts. Modern development has impinged, particularly along Churchill Way and to the east of Jordangate, but fortunately the new buildings are largely set back from the more public viewpoints. The one exception to this is Sovereign Court in King Edward Street. The more western end of Chestergate is similarly rather fragmented by 20th century development.
- 4.3 There are only two buildings in the conservation area that provide a direct link to the silk trade: a former silk mill in Little Street, and nos. 2, 4 and 6 Short Street. The Little Street complex of buildings is surprisingly complete with a mill, dye-house, managers' and workers' housing. It was built in 1804 and was originally horse, then steam-powered. In 1909 the buildings were altered and new extensions added, when it was converted for the use of Wood and Son, victuallers. Nos. 2-6 Short Street lie just off Waters Green and may have been

built as weavers' cottages with a weaving garret which occupied the whole of the upper floor.



Former Silk Mill in Little Street

- 4.4 Most of the major silk mills in Macclesfield were located further south in Mill Lane, the continuation of Mill Street, where they were closer to the River Bollin, which supplied water power. The associated weavers' houses and cottages are also mainly found in the more southerly part of Macclesfield, although there are some (nos. 27-41 Catherine Street) on the western edge of the conservation area. On the eastern side of the River Bollin, facing the Silk Road, are the premises of Messrs Arighi Bianchi, listed grade II* for the cast iron and glass front wall, which may have once been a silk mill before it was converted into a furniture showroom in the later half of the nineteenth century. The builder of the pioneering front wall was Mr George Roylance, a local Master Builder, who lived in Brock Street.

Activity and uses

- 4.5 The activities in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area reflect the mixture of commercial and residential uses found commonly in any town centre, and although commercial uses predominate, there are many shops with residential flats above them, mainly in Chestergate and Church Street. Offices are concentrated particularly in Churchside, the Town Hall, Jordangate and King Edward Street. Totally residential uses can be found on the peripheries of the conservation area: at the northern end of Jordangate, on Brunswick Hill, in Catherine Street and Pierce Street.
- 4.6 The principal shopping streets are Chestergate, the Market Place, and along Mill Street, on the edge of the conservation area. Chestergate is dissected by the modern Churchill Way, which effectively divides the primary shopping area close to the Market Place from the more secondary to the west. A modern shopping mall, Chestergate Mall and Mill Street Mall, has been dove-tailed into a backland site, utilising older buildings in Chestergate to create the street frontage.



Entrance to Chestergate Mall, Chestergate

- 4.7 Car parking for the town centre is provided by two multi-storey car parks in Jordangate and Churchill Way, both just outside the conservation area, and by a large surface car park to the south of Great King Street, also outside the conservation area.
- 4.8 The town centre is always busy with shoppers and vehicles of all kinds although the pedestrianisation of the eastern end of Chestergate has provided a pleasant, car-free area for shoppers. Activity is also centred on the Town Hall, and the adjoining modern offices for the Borough Council. The local library has recently relocated to the former bank in Jordangate and this provides an important local facility. In Waters Green, activity is also promoted by the proximity of the railway station and the junction with the Silk Road, a major traffic route through Macclesfield.



Town Hall

Noise and quiet

- 4.9 Within the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area the principal activity is shopping, with office workers and a smaller number of local residents also being represented. Therefore, the area is much busier during the day, and after the shops close at the end of the afternoon, Chestergate and Market Place are strangely quiet. Other activities generate activity all through the day and night including the Police Station off Brunswick Street and the Post Office depot close by, which although just outside the conservation area, is accessed through it.

4.10 All of this busy activity contrasts with the relative peace of the narrow footpaths that cascade down Brunswick Hill to Gas Road and Waters Green. These pathways, called Step Hill and 108 Steps, connect the lower town to the Market Place and Churchyard through a peaceful, wooded area, well away from traffic and the hubbub of the main shopping streets.



Churchside

Townscape: morphology

4.11 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area comprises three very densely built-up streets, Chestergate, Market Place and Church Street. Here two or mainly three storey, terraced buildings lie to the back of the pavements, creating tightly defined urban spaces. Along Jordangate and King Edward Street the groups of historic buildings have been divided by modern development including some demolitions that have left gap sites. The best and most complete historic frontages are in Churchside, Church Street, the eastern end of Chestergate and the southern end of Jordangate. The triangular Market Place is the most important public open space, which leads to the churchyard and then to the wooded hillside beyond. Waters Green is a very open, rather neglected space, which would benefit from an enhancement scheme. Behind the historic buildings, the lines of the medieval burgage plots have largely been lost to modern development, although Riseley's Passage, which connects Chestergate to King Edward Street, may mark a much earlier boundary. The loss of these historic back gardens has meant that the conservation area boundary has been drawn very tightly around the surviving buildings.

4.12 The conservation area is notable for the following features:

- Survival of medieval street plan, particularly the Market Place, Chestergate, Jordangate, and King Edward Street (previously called Back Lane)
- Church Street (previously called Churchwallgate) – which drops steeply and bends down the hill towards Waters Green
- The narrow footpaths which lead from Churchside down to the River Bollin
- The Market Place - the central and most important public open space
- The Market Place is dominated by St Michael's Church and the Town Hall
- Large number of listed buildings, including nine which are grade II*
- Particularly notable buildings, all grade II* – Cumberland House, Jordangate House and the former Macclesfield Arms Hotel in Jordangate; King Edward Street Unitarian Chapel
- Buildings lie on the back of the pavements, in terrace form
- Buildings date to wide variety of ages, but 18th and 19th century predominate

- Varied architecture and materials, although stone, painted render and brick are the most usual
- Some timber-framed buildings survive but they have been refronted
- Most buildings in the conservation area are domestic in character, and are two or three storeys high



Former Macclesfield Arms Hotel, Jordangate (II)*

4.13 This tight urban form has been eroded by:

- Churchill Way, a 20th century “improvement”
- Modern development behind Jordangate, King Edward Street and to the south of Chestergate
- Gap sites and derelict buildings in Waters Green



Churchill Way bisects the Conservation Area

The effect of historical development on plan form

4.14 The development of Macclesfield appears to have started even before the time of the Norman Conquest and no doubt the naturally defensive position on a hill overlooking a river provided the ideal site for settlement. However, a planned new town was laid out on the summit of the hill in c1220 by Ranulph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester, who established a market and sold off approximately 120 plots of land to the local burgesses. These properties faced the Market Place, Mill Street, Chestergate and Jordangate and although the rear boundaries have largely been lost to mainly 20th century development, the narrow medieval plots are still reflected in the form of the buildings along these streets. Other streets of this period, Back Lane and Goose Lane, have become King Edward Street and Brunswick Street respectively. Around the Market Place were the important buildings – St Michael’s Church of 1278 and the Guild

Hall of 1261. A town ditch was dug to the west whose course can still be plotted in the line of Derby Street on the 1909 map.

- 4.15 However, the 20th century has not been kind to this part of Macclesfield, as comprehensive redevelopment schemes have resulted in the demolition of many historic buildings and the removal of ancient streets. The conservation area is hemmed in to the north and south by Post-War shopping malls and new roads, and the piecemeal redevelopment of a number of sites, most notably off Jordangate and King Edward Street, has created large breaks in the historic street frontages.



Modern development in King Edward Street

Trees, landscape and open spaces

- 4.16 This is very much an urban conservation area with very few of the buildings retaining any private garden space apart from a few houses in Jordangate, a few more in Church Street and Churchside, and some terraced properties around the western edge of the conservation in Chestergate and Catherine Street. These are all to the rear of the properties and what gardens exist are modest in size and are not particularly visible from the principal streets in the conservation area. Some of the grander houses must once have had substantial walled gardens, but these have either been truncated and redeveloped or used as car parking for the offices in the main building. This provides few opportunities for trees or mature planting.
- 4.17 The best and only green space is provided by the wooded hill between the churchyard and the River Bollin. This slopes steeply and is largely inaccessible to the public, although it is possible to walk through the woods via the stepped footpaths which lead from Churchside. A small, rather neglected memorial garden to the east of the church, locally known as Sparrow Park, requires enhancement. The large car park for the Town Hall is another negative feature.



Sparrow Park off Churchside

4.18 Behind the Police Station, another rather neglected area does at least contain a number of mature trees which are individually protected by Tree Preservation Orders. These form an important group which stretches beyond the boundaries of the conservation area towards Hibel Road.

4.19 Waters Green is a significant open space, desperately in need of a comprehensive improvement scheme. It is currently blighted by informal car parking and busy traffic, detrimental to the setting of the shops along Church Street, many of which have been carefully restored.



Waters Green

4.20 Significant trees and tree groups are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map.

Views and focal points

4.21 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area is located on a hill with views across the valley of the River Bollin to the Pennine hills to the east, which can be glimpsed through the tree belt in a few locations. Other notable views to the fields beyond the town are provided by the vistas along the main roads, or through breaks in the building frontages.

4.22 *Particularly important views are:*

- Both up and down Church Street as it winds down to Waters Green
- From Waters Green up to St Michael's Church
- Along Jordangate looking north

4.23 *More enclosed views can also be found:*

- Along Chestergate looking west
- Down (or up!) Brunswick Hill, Step Hill and 108 Steps
- Up Back Wallgate



View up 108 Steps

4.24 Focal buildings include:

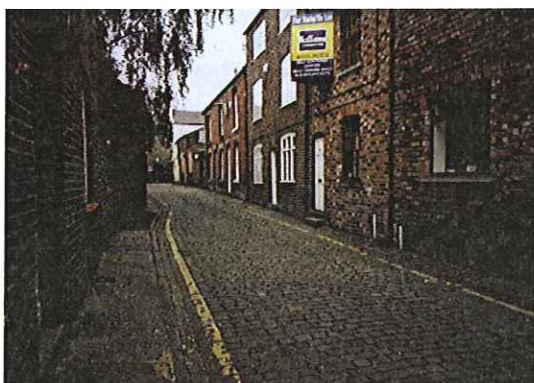
- St Michael's Church
- The Town Hall, Market Place
- The Library, Jordangate
- Jordangate House, Jordangate

These are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map.

Public realm audit

Paving:

4.25 Historically, much of the centre of Macclesfield was paved with areas of Kerridge sandstone, which was used for setts, kerbstones, gutters and paving slabs. Examples of such paving can be seen in: Back Wallgate, Church Street, Waters Green, the station forecourt, Churchside, 108 Steps, Step Hill, Brunswick Street, Brunswick Terrace, Brunswick Hill, Unicorn Way, and Little Street, although it is not clear how "historic" these examples are. Similar examples lie just outside the conservation area, in Pierce Street, Pinfold Street, and in the Church Street West area.



Historic paving in Little Street

4.26 The Market Place has been the subject of an exemplary enhancement scheme which has included a stone setted road, stone slabbed pavements, new street trees and seating, and new "heritage" cast iron finger posts, lamp posts, and bollards. Modern sculpture and planted flower tubs decorate the area. Kerb lines have been maintained although they are low as for most of the day this is a pedestrianised area. The most notable feature of this scheme is the almost stark simplicity of the setted roadway, which although lacking the undulations of the typical 19th century setts, results in a simple and robust surface which

provides an appropriate setting for the listed buildings which face onto it. By contrast, a narrow carriageway through to the rear of the Bull's Head Hotel, on the west side of the Market Place, still retains its early, rather bumpy, setted surface, where it is possible to see the difference between the original and the more modern material very clearly.



New paving in the Market Place

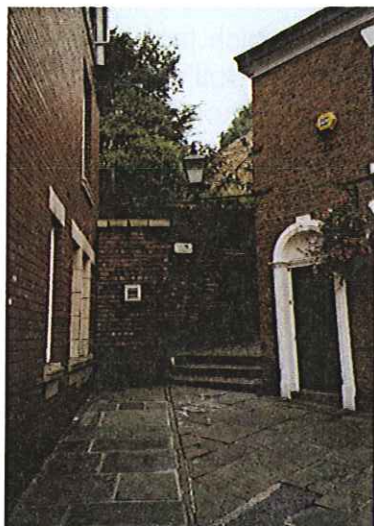
4.27 Less attractive are the modern materials found throughout the rest of the conservation area: black tarmacadam, and concrete paviors and slabs. Chestergate pedestrian area has been paved in red clay paviors, for which there is no historic precedent in the area. The lack of kerbs, and the wall-to-wall "fitted carpet" look which results, is another detrimental feature.



Red clay pavers in Chestergate

Lighting:

4.28 Street lighting is provided by a variety of modern concrete or steel fitments of little merit. In Waters Green there are some particularly unattractive double concrete lighting standards. There are some more acceptable wall mounted carriage lamps, in a 19th century "heritage" style, fixed directly to the buildings e.g. to no. 68 Waters Green.



68 Waters Green

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE MACCLESFIELD TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

Introduction

- 5.1 The buildings of the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area date mainly to the late 18th or 19th centuries so they therefore display the characteristic features of the late Georgian period: brick structures with shallow pitched slate roofs, sash windows, and multi-panelled front doors. Most of these buildings were built as town houses with shopfronts being added a little later. This maintains the domestic scale of development found in much of the conservation area. However, in other parts, notably around the Market Place and in Waters Green, the buildings were needed for different purposes and therefore use different materials and details. These include the hotels, public houses and industrial premises facing Waters Green, and the Town Hall, which with St Michael's Church, forms the centrepiece to the conservation area.



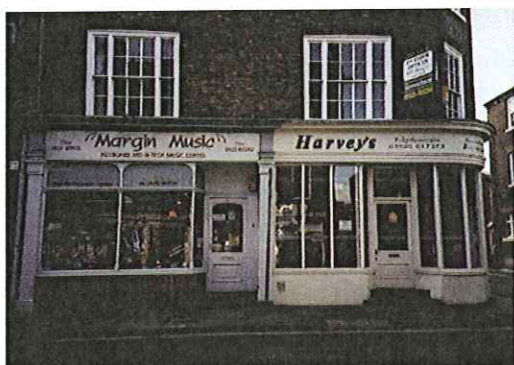
Queen's Hotel, Waters Green

Listed buildings

- 5.2 There are approximately 105 listed buildings or structures in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area, and most of them date to the 18th or early 19th centuries, sometimes refronting earlier structures. The majority were built as houses, with the occasional commercial property, such as a public house, hotel, silk mill or warehouse. Additionally, there are examples of religious and

community buildings – St Michael's Church, the Town Hall and King Edward Street Unitarian Chapel. The highest concentration of listed buildings is around the Market Place, in Church Street and Churchside, and in Jordangate. A further notable group is in Chestergate, on either side of the road.

- 5.2 Most of these buildings are built from brick, although pre-1700 structures are timber-framed or stone. Roofs are covered in Welsh slate or Kerridge stone slate, and, generally, these buildings are two or three storeys high. Many have ground floor shop windows, the best examples being in Church Street and on the west side of Market Place.



Nos 1 and 3 Market Place

- 5.4 The two most important listed buildings in the conservation area are St Michael's Church and the Town Hall, both listed grade II*. These are located on the east side of the Market Place and provide a focus to the centre of Macclesfield. St Michael's Church dates to the 13th century, although it was heavily restored in the late 19th century by Sir Arthur Blomfield. The Town Hall, with its severe Greek Revival style, dates to 1823-4 when it was built to the designs of Francis Goodwin. It was extended by James Stevens in 1869-70.
- 5.5 Apart from St Michael's Church, the earliest buildings in the conservation area date to the 16th or 17th centuries and are stone or timber-framed. The Unitarian Chapel on King Edward Street dates from 1690 and has coursed and squared rubble walls beneath a stone flag roof. The Chapel has received only minor decorative alterations over the centuries and is therefore an excellent example of a 17th century religious building. The best example of secular buildings from the 17th century are nos. 1-7 Chester Road, a row of stone rubble cottages with Kerridge stone slate roofs. Despite their late 19th century shopfronts, these are the most prominent group of buildings in the conservation area which are clearly 17th century from the outside.



Nos. 1-7 Chester Road

5.6 Also of interest are the 16th or 17th century buildings which have been refronted in brick in the 18th or 19th centuries. These are all in Chestergate:

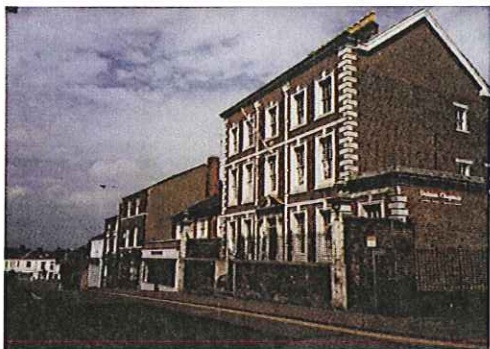
- No. 41 - this building is dated 1691 and includes a coursed stone rubble rear wing with some good interior features such as timber-framing with carpenters' marks, a king post roof, and a late 17th century staircase
- Nos. 50, 52 and 54 - dating to the 17th century with a much later brick front
- Nos. 115, 115a, 115b and 115c – these have a late 17th century structure encased within 1920s alterations, with some notable internal features including a splat baluster staircase, and a queen post roof with wind braces
- Former Bate Hall Hotel - a late 16th/early 17th century building with some mullioned windows and a rubble stone rear range which is listed grade II* for its interior features



Nos 50, 52 & 54 Chestergate

5.7 Within the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area there are also some good examples of very good quality Georgian buildings which are listed grade II*. These are brick structures, with slate roofs, which were built when the town was enjoying a great expansion due to the success of the local silk weaving industry and were clearly designed to impress. All of these are in Jordangate with one in Chestergate:

- Cumberland House, Jordangate – an early 18th century house now divided into two (listed grade II*)
- Jordangate House, Jordangate – a very fine quality double pile house, now offices, dated 1728 (building and front boundary railings and walls all listed grade II*)



Jordangate House, Jordangate

- Former Macclesfield Arms Hotel, Jordangate – late 18th house, now offices (listed grade II*)

- Nos. 60B, 62 and 62A Chestergate - c1700, with good early Georgian interior (listed grade II*)



Nos 60b, 62 and 62a Chestergate

- 5.8 There is also a good range of late 18th and early 19th century listed buildings in the conservation area which are listed grade II. Notable groups occur in Chestergate (where they may hide earlier structures as yet to be identified), King Edward Street, Churchside (a very good group of early 19th century terraced properties), Market Place, Church Street (some with good shopfronts of a slightly later date), and Brunswick Terrace.
- 5.9 Other listed buildings or structures within the conservation area are more varied in terms of their original usage and appearance. The most notable are:
- Macclesfield Library, Jordangate – a mid-19th century former bank now sensitively converted and extended
 - The former George Hotel, Jordangate – a possibly 17th century building with late 19th century refronting and now being redeveloped for housing



Former George Hotel, Jordangate

- Former County Police Offices, King Edward Street – now being converted into flats and dating to c1840
- Regent Foundry, Catherine Street – a large complex of c.1800 now converted into flats
- Bollard in passageway between nos. 41 and 43 Chestergate – an early 19th century example of a cast iron bollard



Regent Foundry, Catherine Street

5.10 Buildings associated with the silk industry are:

- Little Street Mill, Little Street – an early 19th century silk mill extended and converted into a victuallers' premises in 1909
- Nos. 2, 4 and 6 Short Street - a row of early 19th century cottages, possibly built with a weavers' garret, and now fully converted into residential uses, with the adjoining public house, The Old Millstone, added in about 1840-50.

Locally listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit

5.11 A number of buildings within the conservation area have been identified as "Buildings of Townscape Merit" and are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map. This follows advice from English Heritage, in their guidance on conservation area appraisals, and also government policy as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note no. 15 (PPG15) which refers to the need to protect unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.

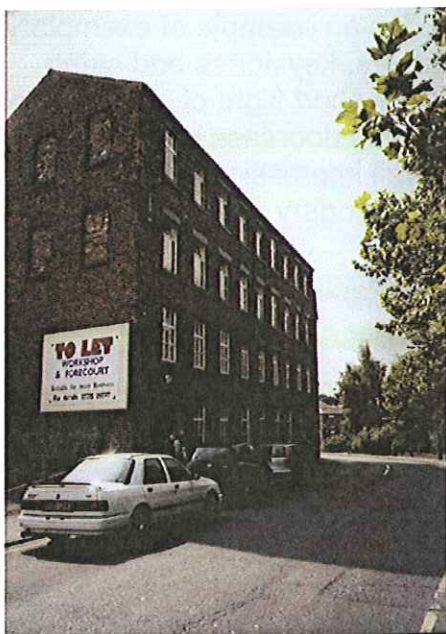
5.12 The Buildings of Townscape Merit in Macclesfield date mainly to the 19th or early 20th century. They are usually good examples, relatively unchanged, of a specific type or style, such as:

- Queen's Hotel, Waters Green, 1860, a six-bay, two storey building built from red brick with cream terracotta string courses and three shallow bays to the ground floor
- Nos. 29-39 (odd) Church Street, a terrace of c.1850 former houses built from red brick each with a sash window to the first floor and a shopfront to the ground floor; slate roofs with prominent brick stacks with "castle" clay pots
- Former factory, Waters Green, c.1900, a prominent former factory built from red brick and decorated with stone string courses



Former factory, Waters Green

- Nos. 3-27 Chestergate, mainly c.1840-1860, a terrace of red brick or painted render buildings, three or sometimes four storeys high, with ground floor shopfronts (older buildings may well lie behind these facades) and residential or commercial uses above
- Nos.1-19 (odd) Catherine Street, a mixed terrace of c.1840-1860, red or painted brick, two windows wide, varying heights
- Former works, King Edward Street, c.1890, a substantial (nine bays wide) four storey brown brick building with a pitched slated roof



Former works, King Edward Street

The Council considers that these buildings deserve special protection and therefore applications for their demolition or for unsympathetic alterations or extensions will normally be refused.

5.13 There are a number of locally listed buildings in Macclesfield but none of them lie within this conservation area.

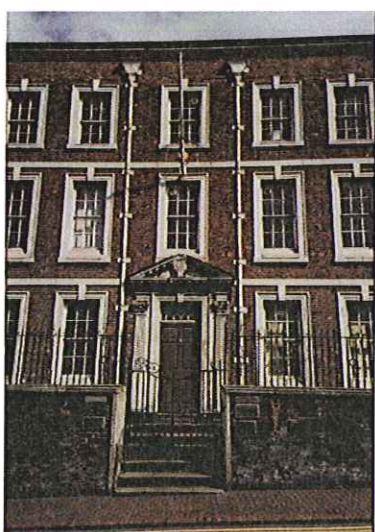
Architectural details, building styles and materials

5.14 The earliest buildings in Macclesfield were built from timber or from local sandstone. This versatile stone can be roughly shaped into blocks and coursed,

or it can be split and used for paving and roofing slate. St Michael's Church and nos. 1-7 Chester Road are the only buildings in the conservation area which are faced in this stone, although some stonework remains on the back elevations to some of the listed buildings in Chestergate. The sandstone is also evident in some of the boundary walls within the conservation area, most notably 108 Steps and Step Hill, where the pathways are lined with long, sinuous stone walls which fall down the hill towards the River Bollin.

5.15 Timber-framing, with wattle-and-daub infill panels, would have been common in Macclesfield until the beginning of the 18th century when brick became fashionable. Most of the buildings fronting Chestergate were probably once built from this material, and several buildings retain evidence for such timber-frames, although the buildings have subsequently been refronted. In 1696 a brick works was sited on Macclesfield Common, to the east of the town, and the early 18th century Enclosure Award records a brickyard in what is now Bank Street. After this date, brick became the almost universal material for new buildings, although there was a brief period in c.1900 when false timber-framing became popular (e.g. The George Hotel, Jordangate).

5.16 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area is therefore notable for the many examples of good quality brick built Georgian and Victorian buildings which face the four principal streets – Chestergate, Market Place, Jordangate and Church Hill. The best quality brick building is probably Jordangate House, listed grade II*. This three storey symmetrical building is dated 1728 on the lead hoppers on the front elevation and provides an example of exemplary Georgian detailing, with stone quoins, architraves, keystones and string courses. The central doorway is accessed via a short flight of stone steps which leads to a six-panelled front door and a fine doorcase with Ionic pilasters supporting a heavy stone pediment. The overall impression is of wealth and substance, aided by the brick and stone front boundary wall with its original wrought iron railings.



Jordangate House

5.17 By contrast, a much more modest terrace of late Georgian properties can be found at nos. 9-17 (odd) Churchside. These are brick with slate roofs, two storeys and just one window wide, with eight-over-eight pane sash windows. Stone has been used for simple, robust decoration: flat-arched painted stone

heads and stone cills, above a stone plinth. These are typical of this part of Macclesfield and many of the other listed houses in the conservation area.

- 5.18 Towards the western end of Chestergate, the majority of the buildings tend to be late 19th century and of a more industrial nature. More are rendered and painted although like many of the earlier buildings in Chestergate they were built as houses and have subsequently been converted into shops. Nos. 88-90 are typical – red and white brick, modillions to the eaves, simple sash windows without any glazing bars, and a good quality timber shopfront. One building is, however, entirely unique: the Picturedrome, a 1911 cinema with some Art Deco details which has recently been restored and is now used as offices.



Nos 88-90 Chestergate

- 5.19 Generally, the buildings in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area display the following characteristics:

- Buildings sit on back of pavement
- Stone slate or Welsh slate roofs
- Brick elevations with late Georgian details
- Sash windows, made from timber
- Panelled front doors
- Simple doorcases with pilasters and door hoods most common feature
- Good quality late 19th century shopfronts
- A few more prestigious buildings have greater decoration and more front gardens

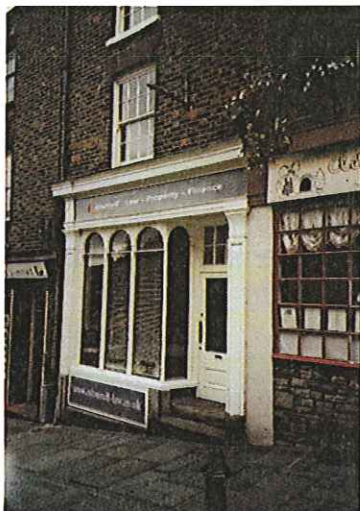
Shopfronts

- 5.20 The three main commercial streets in Macclesfield: Chestergate, Market Place and Church Hill, all contain a large number of well detailed shopfronts dating to the 19th and early 20th centuries. Where new shopfronts have been installed, these are usually in keeping with the surrounding architecture, and some of the new shopfronts have been so well detailed and constructed that it is not always possible to discern how old they are as they have fitted into the street scheme so well. Many of the shopfronts have Gothic details such as pointed arches to the fanlights, which appears to be a common theme.

- 5.21 Some of the most notable are:

- Nos. 29-39 (odd) Church Street,
- Nos. 80-86 (even) Waters Green

- Nos. 5-21 (odd) Church Street
- Nos. 6-12 (even) Church Street



Good Quality 19th century shopfront: No 17 Church St.

- Nos. 1-9 (odd) Market Place
- No. 2a King Edward Street with no. 3 Market Place
- Nos. 3-5 and 9 and 9a Market Place
- No. 6 Market Place
- Various shops in Chestergate including nos. 4, 6 and 8; nos. 44, 46 and 48; nos. 101- 107 (odd); and nos. 122a and 122b (most of these have their original late 19th century shopfronts)
- No. 28 Chestergate has an unusual bow shop window with small panes and a moulded cornice

6 CHARACTER AREAS

Introduction

6.1 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area can be divided into three character areas, according to the topography of the land, the function of the buildings, and their styles and ages. These areas are:

1. Waters Green and Church Street
2. Market Place, the eastern end of Chestergate, King Edward Street and Jordangate
3. Western end of Chestergate

Waters Green and Church Street

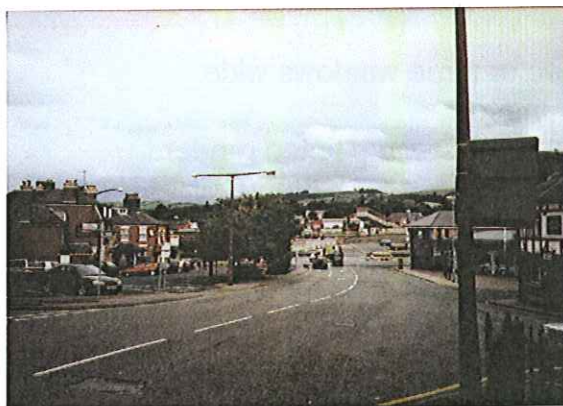
6.2 This is the more industrial area based on the railway and the River Bollin. The steep hill along Church Street is one of the most attractive features, lined with listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit. Stone setts complete the picture.

6.3 Church Street and Waters Green are both medieval in origin although there is little evidence for this early date now. The buildings are very mixed, mainly mid or late 19th century, and often connected with the railway, so there are four public houses or hotels. To the north towards Gas Street, a variety of mixed uses, mainly industrial, still predominate, and the cottages behind The Old Millstone P H are one of only two direct links to the silk industry in the conservation area. Of note are the attractive views up through the trees to St Michael's Church, up Brunswick Hill, and along the two narrow pathways – 108 Steps and Step Hill.

6.4 Waters Green is a long, irregularly shaped space always busy with traffic, and currently in urgent need of an enhancement scheme. Untidy car parking and derelict or poorly maintained buildings are common. It is not possible to see the River Bollin as this has been culverted. The railway line and the constant traffic along The Silk Road create a noticeable blockage to pedestrian movement across the area.

6.5 *Summary of townscape characteristics:*

- Hilly topography
- Church Street has the highest quality buildings and paving
- Buildings mainly mid to late-19th century in date
- Industrial and commercial uses predominate
- Red brick or painted render, with pitched slate roofs
- Open, poor quality spaces in Waters Green and railway station forecourt



Waters Green.

Market Place, the eastern end of Chestergate, King Edward Street and Jordangate

6.6 This is the historic and commercial core of Macclesfield, based on the medieval Market Place and 13th century church. The Market Place has been carefully paved and improved and the shops facing the open space have good quality shopfronts and are generally well maintained. Prestigious buildings, including the Town Hall and St Michael's Church, face the Market Place and provide the centrepiece of the whole town. Surrounding the church, Churchside is a quiet backwater which faces the wooded hillside leading down to the River Bollin. Here, the narrow pathways gently curve down to the lower level, with sandstone setts and walls providing interest.

6.7 Along Jordangate are a number of detached Georgian houses, now offices, of which Cumberland House and Jordangate House are the most important.

Towards Hibel Road, the mainly residential buildings are more modest, and terraced, with some empty sites facing the road.

- 6.8 King Edward Street has a similar mixture of good quality Georgian houses, mainly used as offices, with one very negative building, the 1960s Sovereign Court. This road is also somewhat blighted by gap sites and the loss of traditional gardens and boundaries to car parking.
- 6.9 Chestergate has been pedestrianised as far as the junction with Churchill Way and contains continuous terraces of mainly listed buildings of Buildings of Townscape Merit. There are a few modern insertions, mainly neutral in their impact as they reflect the original building line and historic precedent in terms of building heights, although their modernist styles and choice of materials are not in keeping with the area.
- 6.10 The 1980s bank on the corner of Market Place and Chestergate, and the neglected appearance of Sparrow Park beyond Churchside, are the most negative features. There are also a number of modern buildings, including the Police Station and the extensions to the Town Hall and the library, which are somewhat out-of-scale with the existing Georgian and Victorian buildings.

Summary of townscape characteristics:

6.11 Chestergate and Market Place:

- Domestic scale for most of the buildings apart from the Town Hall and St Michael's Church
- Narrow frontages, usually just two or three windows wide
- Two or three storeys the most common
- Front elevations are usually brick, with some painted render
- Stone is only used for the more prestigious, one-off buildings like St Michael's Church or the Town Hall
- Georgian details the most common – sash windows, panelled doors, fanlights



Nos. 1-7 Market Place

6.12 Jordangate and King Edward Street:

- More prestigious, larger buildings
- Most of the buildings date to the late 18th and 19th century
- Georgian details again, but more decoration using stone and wrought iron

- Buildings can be set back from road
- Slate or stone slate roofs
- Gap sites and backland development intrude



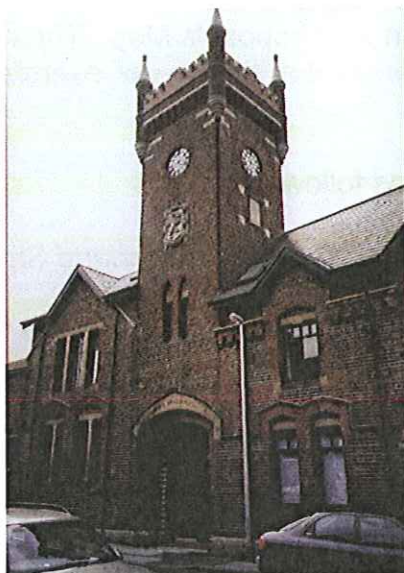
Nos. 14-26 Jordangate

Western end of Chestergate

6.13 This forms a mixed area with most of the buildings having ground floor shops. Industrial buildings can also be found, such as the former factory facing King Edward Street and the former foundry in Catherine Street. The buildings tend to be mid to late 19th century although nos. 1-7 Chester Road are 17th century and unusual in that they are built from stone. Smaller terraced cottages face Catherine Street. The survival of the silk mill, with its associated buildings, in Little Street, is important. Westminster Street and the site and building at no. 100 Chestergate, are all negative features. The only building of any size is the former Drill Hall in Bridge Street.

6.14 *Summary of townscape characteristics:*

- Mainly two storey terraced properties facing Chestergate
- Some gap sites
- Some good shopfronts
- Buildings mainly mid-to late 19th century
- Nos. 1-7 Chester Road, and parts of nos. 115 and 115a Chestergate, are 17th century



Drill Hall, Bridge Street

7 ISSUES

Introduction

- 7.1 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area is notable for its 13th century church and 19th century Town Hall, both of which face the medieval Market Place, and for the survival of the medieval street plan in the surrounding area: Chestergate, Jordangate and Church Street. Long rows of well-detailed late 18th and early 19th century houses make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area, particularly the more prestigious Georgian properties facing Jordangate and King Edward Street. The pedestrianisation of the Market Place and part of Chestergate provides the town with an attractive shopping centre, and the removal of through traffic has greatly enhanced the quality of the environment.
- 7.2 However, the character of the conservation area has been adversely affected by the loss of the medieval plot boundaries, and the demolition of buildings and the opening up of various sites for car parking. Other negative features include the poor condition of some of the properties facing Waters Green, and the urgent need for an enhancement scheme in this area.



Waters Green is in urgent need of improvements

Conservation Area boundary review

- 7.3 The current conservation area boundary was carefully assessed at the time of the survey for this appraisal, and some minor changes are proposed to alter the boundaries in a number of places, as shown on the Proposals Map. These changes are all relatively minor and mostly represent a “tidying-up” exercise to follow slightly more logical divisions.
- 7.4 Two more substantial changes are proposed, as follows:

7.4.1. Extend the current boundary northwards to include Cumberland Street and the southern section of Brock Street.

These two streets contain several terraces of mid to late 19th century cottages which although somewhat altered still retain sufficient historic and architectural interest to merit inclusion in the conservation area.

7.4.2. Add Church Street West and Charlotte Street West to the Christ Church Conservation Area.

These two streets contain a number of good quality mid-19th century cottages and are also paved in attractive sandstone setts, providing a good quality urban environment.

Areas requiring enhancement

7.5 The Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area provides a largely attractive environment but there are a number of detrimental features:

7.5.1. *Waters Green.*

This area is surrounded by poorly maintained buildings, and the quality of the car parking area, street surfaces and fittings is extremely low. A comprehensive enhancement scheme is urgently required.

7.5.2. *Sparrow Park.*

This is currently rather neglected and would benefit from an enhancement scheme as well as opening up the views to the Pennines. Improved signage from Market Place and Waters Green would help to attract higher visitor numbers to this important viewpoint.

7.5.3. *Chestergate*

The existing pedestrianised area in Chestergate now requires repaving and other enhancements to bring it up to the quality of the enhancements in the Market Place.

7.5.4. *Churchill Way.*

The site between Churchill Way and Little Street, most of which is in private ownership, and awaiting redevelopment, would benefit from the sensitive restoration of the existing buildings and perhaps some new infill development to create a new street frontage.

7.5.5. *Car park, Chestergate.*

The car park adjacent to no. 100 Chestergate breaks the historic street frontage and some improvements would be welcome.

Gap sites

7.6 The poor quality of some of the spaces to the east of Jordangate and in King Edward Street has already been noted. These have been caused by the demolition of buildings, the removal of historic plots boundaries, the loss of gardens, and the infilling of the remaining space with car parking and access roads. The car parking area behind the former Macclesfield Arms Hotel in Jordangate, facing King Edward Street, and the loss of the original rear garden to Jordangate House, are both particularly regrettable. Other negative spaces include the car park to the Police Station, off Brunswick Street, and the site of the former Martineau Hall in Jordangate, also used for car parking.



Car parking to rear of former Macclesfield Arms Hotel, Jordangate

New development

7.7 The opportunities for new development in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area are now severely restricted due to the high number of listed buildings and the lack of available building land. However, some infilling of gaps sites might in fact be advantageous to the historic environment. Suitable sites include:

- To either side of the former Macclesfield Arms Hotel, facing both Jordangate and King Edward Street
- In Waters Green and Gas Road, where poorly maintained buildings could be redeveloped
- Between Churchill Way and Little Street (but retaining the existing buildings)
- Corner of Chestergate and Catherine Street (the car park)



Site between Churchill Way & Little St.

8 THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE MACCLESFIELD TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

Local Plan policies

8.1 Macclesfield Borough Council is committed to preserving and enhancing the character of the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area and this

appraisal should be read in conjunction with the *Macclesfield Local Plan as adopted in January 2004*

- 8.2 *Chapter 3 Environment: Built Environment* provides useful guidance on the control of listed buildings and new development within conservation areas, with Policies BE1 - BE5 and BE15-BE24 being particularly relevant.
- 8.3 Chapter 10 deals specifically with Macclesfield, and includes a number of policies and proposals which are relevant to the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area. The northern edge of the conservation area, around King Edward Street and Jordangate, is noted as being part of a larger *Mixed Use Regeneration Area*, which stretches down Jordangate to Hibel Road. A site on the corner of Churchill Way and King Edward Street is noted as having redevelopment potential. To the east, the backlands to the Jordangate buildings, already noted as being in need of some improvements, are part of a *Mixed Use Area* which stretches almost from Hibel Road to the southern side of Churchside. The hill and the land slightly further east, which is largely covered in trees, are protected as *Existing Open Space*. Chestergate and Market Place form part of the *Prime Shopping Area*, although it is on the northern edge, and therefore care needs to be taken to ensure long-term viability. Waters Green and Gas Road, including the station site which is largely outside the conservation area, are all noted as being in need of enhancement. Most of the commercial buildings around Waters Green are protected by Policy MTC5, which seeks to ensure that A2 and A3 uses (restaurants and public houses) do not predominate. Policy MTC6 specifically seeks the conservation and enhancement of Waters Green, including the repair of the buildings, the creation of a more pedestrian-friendly environment, and the improvement of the street surfaces and signage.

Design guidelines for new development

- 8.4 Chapters 3 and 10 in the Local Plan 2004 both provide useful guidance on how the Council will respond to planning applications in the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area. All new development in the conservation area should therefore adhere to the general policies as set out in Policies BE1-BE4, and to the guidance below:
- New development should respect its context in terms of scale, height and massing.
 - Facades should normally conform to the original building line.
 - Materials should blend with or complement the materials used commonly in the town in the 18th and 19th centuries: local brick and stone, Welsh slate or stone slate.
 - Roofs will normally be pitched
 - Doors and windows should be made from timber and painted

Design guidelines for extensions to existing properties

- 8.5 Where they are listed, extensions and alterations will be controlled by the usual criteria adopted by the Council, as set out in the Local Plan 2004 Chapter 3 "Built Environment", policies BE16, BE17, BE18 and BE19. These policies

seek to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the listed structure or building, and should be read in conjunction with government guidance contained within PPG (Planning Policy Guidance Note) 15.

8.6 *Extensions to existing buildings within the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area should:*

- Achieve a high standard of design.
- Should respect the height, bulk and general form of the original building
- Should be secondary in character to the original building
- Roofs will normally be pitched, and covered using Welsh slate or stone slate
- Chimneys should be provided where appropriate
- Matching materials must be specified
- External joinery details should match existing

Improvements to the public realm

8.7 In Chapter 10 of the Local Plan, the Council sets out a number of proposed initiatives to improve the quality of various spaces in Macclesfield. The Council's aims are to conserve and enhance the historic character of the town centre, and to improve the environment, particularly for pedestrians, whilst maintaining and encouraging local shops and businesses. Waters Green is particularly identified as being in urgent need of improvement (Policy MTC6).

Street surfaces and pavements

8.8 The setted carriageways and stone pavements identified in the Public Realm Audit must be protected and repairs carried out using matching materials. Further areas of sandstone setts or paving should be provided in the town centre, particularly in Jordangate, the western end of Chestergate, and Waters Green, as funds permit. It is also recommended that road markings such as yellow lines should be thinner and more muted in colour as befits their location.

Sites for enhancement

8.9 A number of sites are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map as requiring enhancement. Some of these are in private ownership and therefore beyond the control of the Council.

These are:

1. *Waters Green.*
2. *Sparrow Park.*
3. *East and west Chestergate.*
4. *Churchill Way/Little Street.*
5. *Car park, Chestergate.*

Street lighting

8.10 The existing wall-mounted "Heritage" street lights should be retained where they have already been fitted and their use extended to the whole conservation area.

9. CONCLUSIONS

How residents can help

- 9.1 This appraisal seeks to explain what is important and precious about the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area and to suggest ways in which its character and appearance can be best preserved and enhanced for future generations. Whilst the Council can initiate improvements and control new development, the co-operation and enthusiasm of local residents provides a vital constituent to the future successful management of the conservation area. This means that local residents and other property owners need to work with the Council and agree common aims and objectives. Hopefully, this Appraisal will provide a framework for a positive partnership for mutual benefit.

Further information

For more information about the Macclesfield Town Centre Conservation Area, please contact:

The Conservation Officer,
Planning Department,
Macclesfield Borough Council,
Town Hall,
Macclesfield,
SK10 1DP.

Tel: 01625 504667
Fax: 01625 504675

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas, contact:

English Heritage,
23 Savile Row,
London W1X 1AB.
General telephone inquiries: 020 7973 3000
Customer Services 020 7973 4916.

For the "Care for Victorian Houses" leaflet, contact:

The Victorian Society,
1 Priory Gardens,
Bedford Park,
London W4 1TT
Telephone: 020 8994 1019

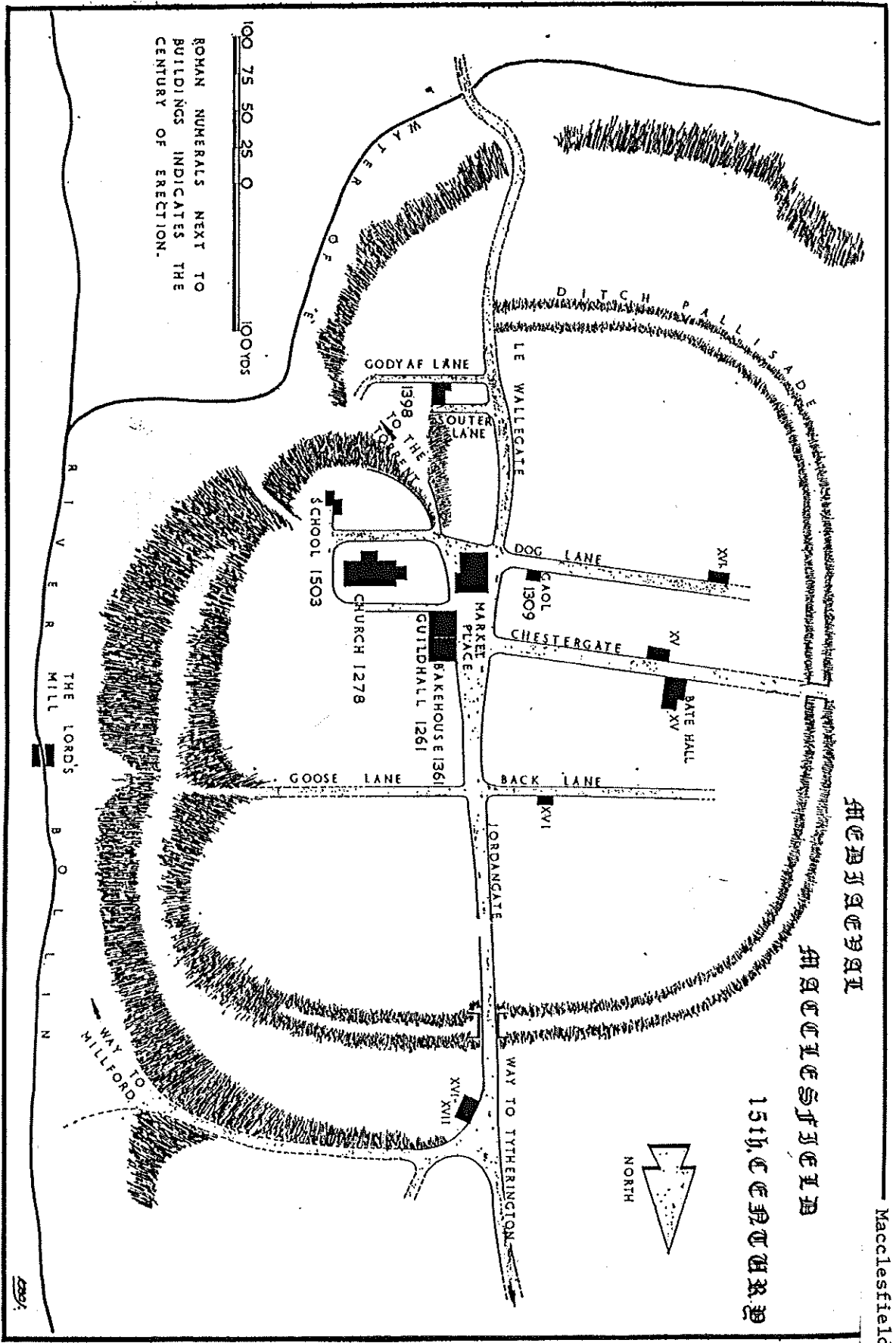
For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets, contact:

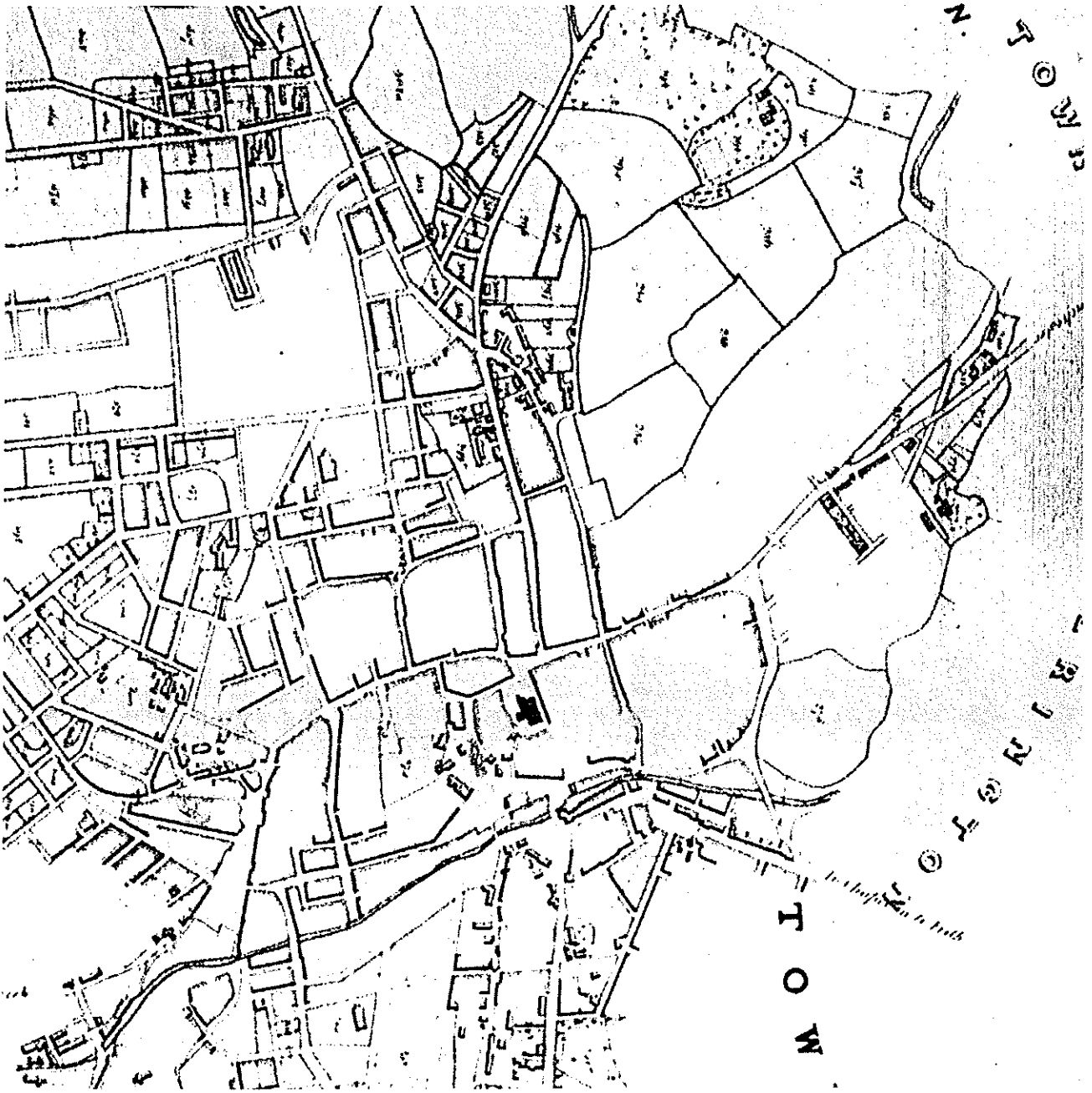
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB),
6 Fitzroy Square,
London W1P 6DY.
Tel: 020 7377 1644

Further reading:

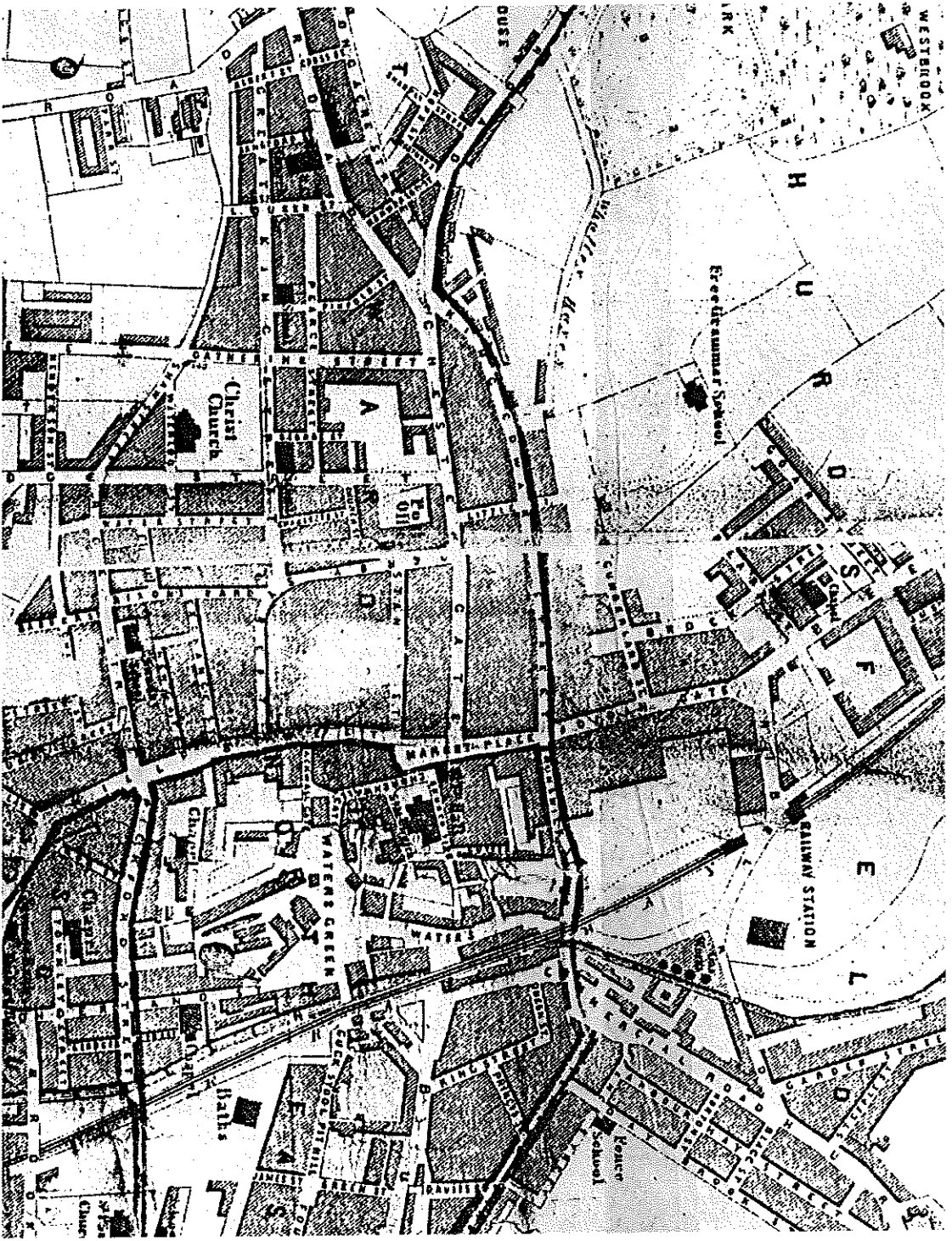
The Buildings of England: Cheshire
Cheshire Historic Towns Survey
A history of Macclesfield

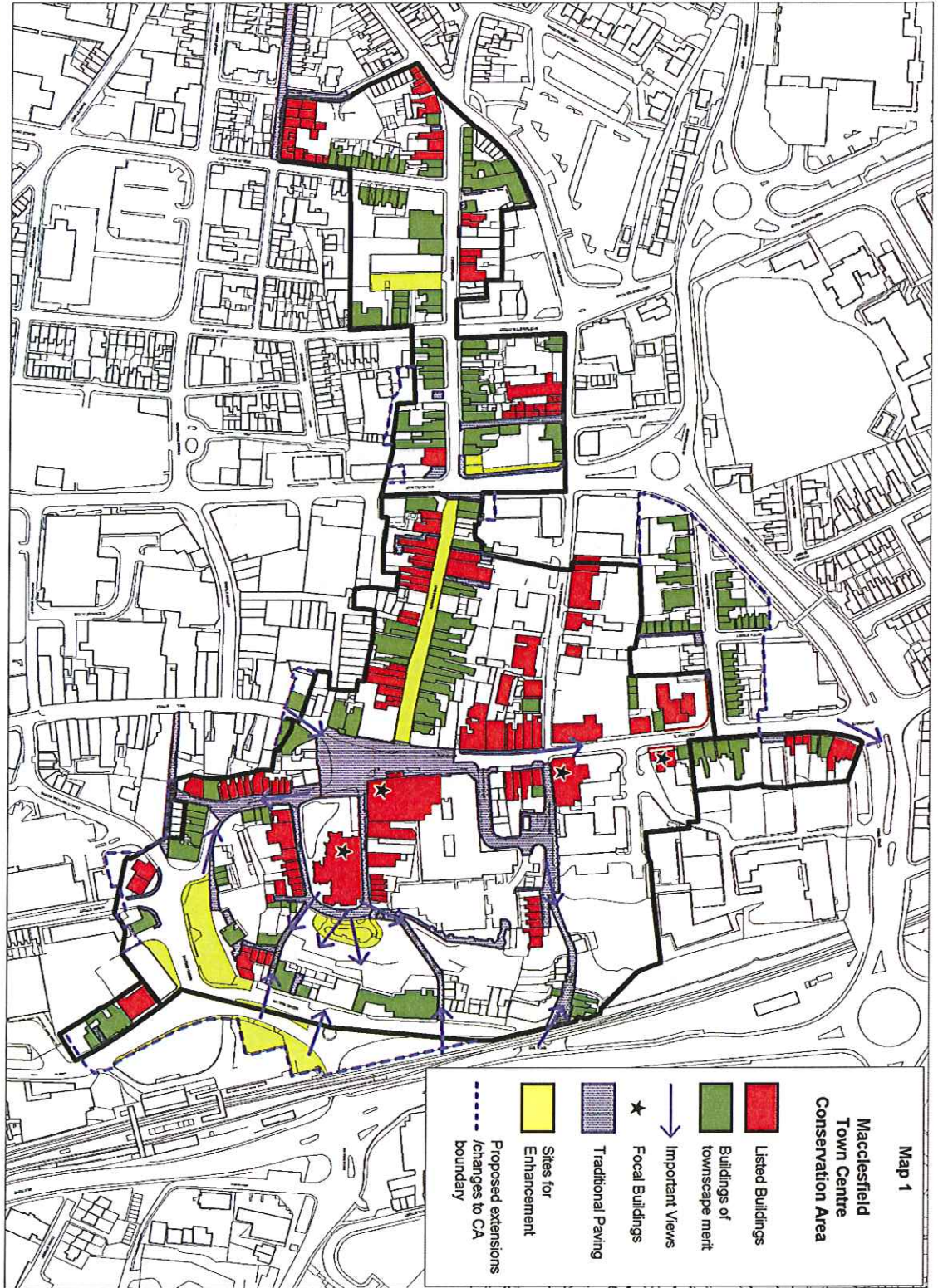
N Pevsner and E Hubbard
Cheshire County Council
C Stella Davies





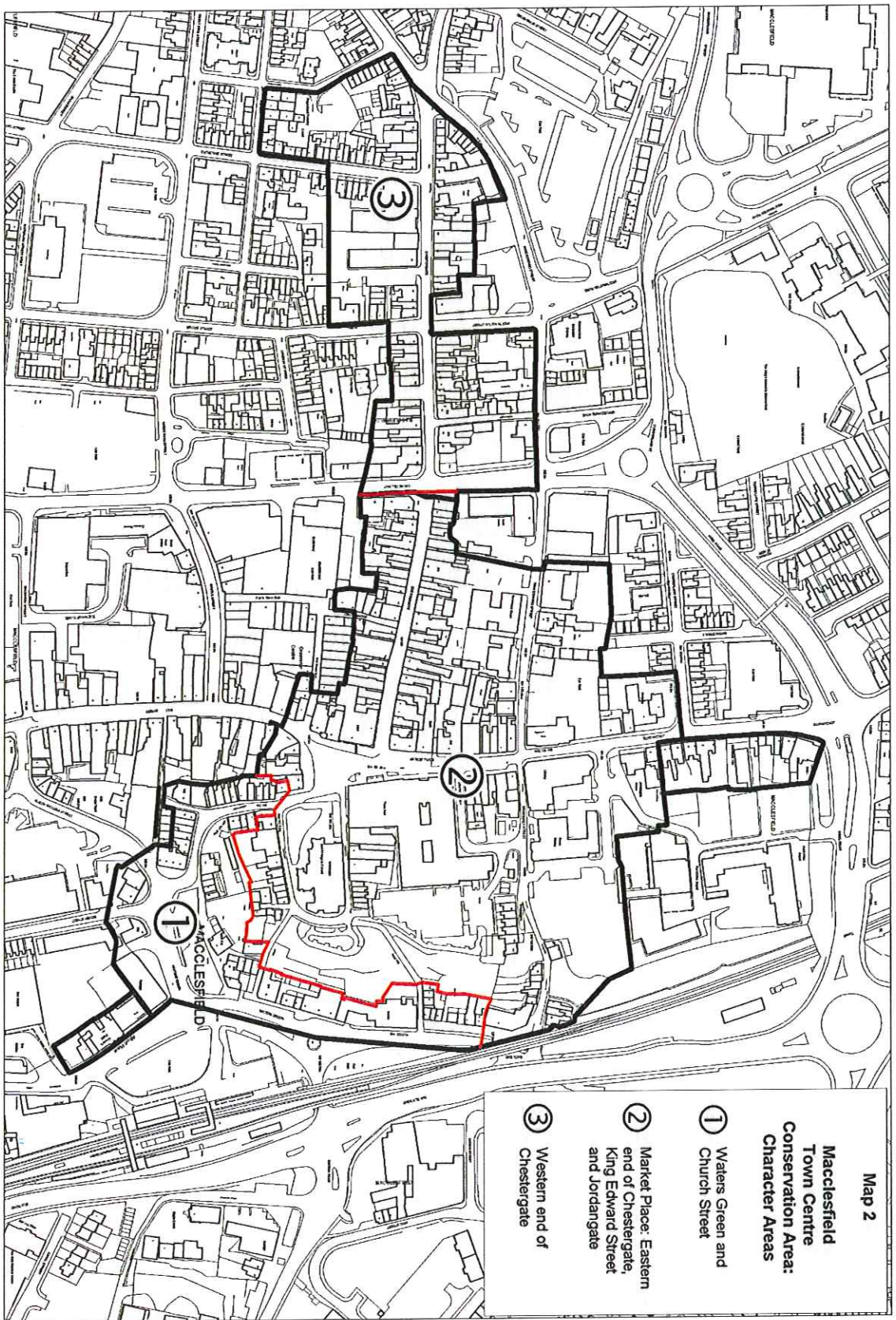
Map of Macclesfield 1858





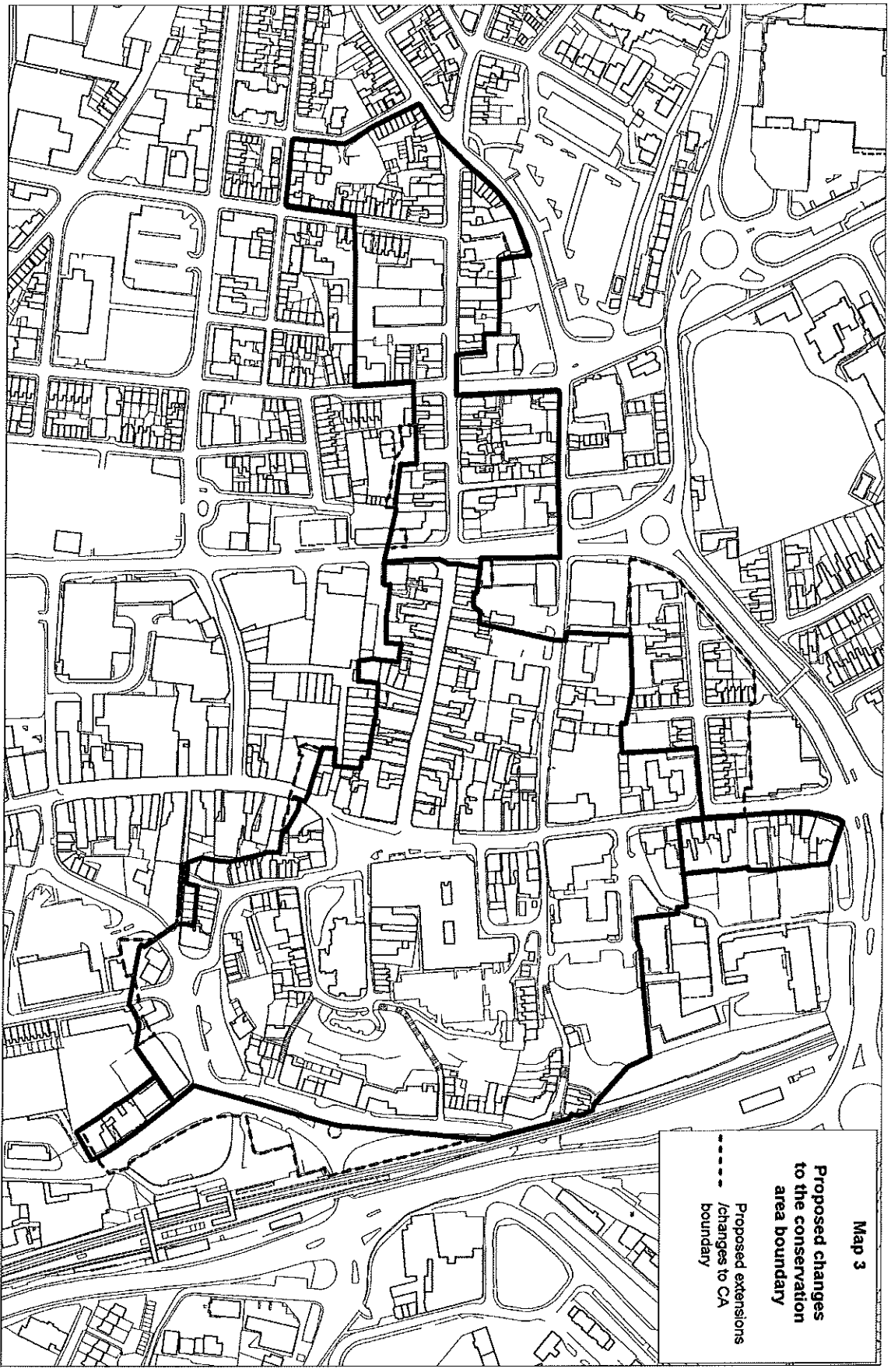
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NORTH
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 44



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Sustainability Appraisal of Macclesfield Conservation Area Appraisal

Introduction

1. The Macclesfield Conservation Area Appraisal provides proposals for the preservation or enhancement of the Macclesfield Conservation Area as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. Conservation Area Appraisals have three purposes:
 1. To identify the particular characteristics of the conservation area that justify its designation as a conservation area and which should be preserved or enhanced.
 2. To provide guidance:
 - to owners on how they can preserve or enhance their buildings (including advice on changes for which no planning application is required)
 - on the Council's likely response to applications for planning permission.
 3. To identify works of improvement, enhancement or other initiatives which could be taken by the Council or other agencies.

Policy Context

3. All local authorities have an adopted Local Plan which sets out each Council's policies and which is used extensively for development control purposes. These plans are regularly reviewed, as central government guidance changes rapidly and local economic and social conditions require adjustments to the Council's policies. The relevant document for the Macclesfield Conservation Area is the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan, which contains a number of policies which seek the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas.
4. The Macclesfield Conservation Area Appraisal seeks to supplement a number of policies in the adopted Local Plan (Jan 2004). Policies in the Built Environment Chapter seek to ensure high standards of design, preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the Borough's Conservation Areas and preserve and enhance Listed Buildings and their setting. There are also more detailed policies contained within the Macclesfield Town Centre Chapter, some of which relate to areas within the conservation area. Other policies in the town centre chapter consider a variety of local issues including shopping, mixed-use areas, regeneration areas, housing, offices, pedestrianisation and car parking. The boundaries of the conservation areas are indicated on the Proposals Map.
5. The 1997 Macclesfield Borough Local Plan contains the same policies on design, conservation areas and listed buildings as the recently adopted Local Plan. Policies on Macclesfield Town Centre are also broadly similar although the new Plan contains two additional redevelopment areas. The policies in the 1997 Local Plan

were subject to an Environmental Appraisal as were the new policies in the 2004 Local Plan.

6. The 1984 Macclesfield Area Local Plan identifies the Macclesfield Conservation Area on the Proposals Map and contains a number of policies which seek to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

7. Policies seeking to preserve or enhance the special character of the Macclesfield Conservation Area have been in place for a number of years. The Conservation Area Appraisal is simply seeking to supplement these: by defining what is special about the Macclesfield Conservation Area; by providing information about its historic development and architectural worth; by identifying current problems and putting forward proposals which seek the future preservation and enhancement of the area; and by including detailed advice on all new development. The publication of the Conservation Area Appraisal will, therefore, have very little environmental impact.

8. The Conservation Area Appraisal does recommend that additional properties are added to the Macclesfield Conservation Area and if this happens these properties will be subject to additional control.

Environmental Appraisal of the Local Plan Policies on Design, Conservation, Listed Buildings and Macclesfield Town Centre

9. In 1994, an Environmental Appraisal was carried out on the draft Macclesfield Borough Local Plan. Matrices were used to identify and present environmental impacts. Two axes formed the framework of the matrix, with the vertical axis containing a list of policies and the horizontal axis containing a set of environmental components against which those policy areas were assessed. The environmental components chosen are broadly consistent with those suggested in the Department of the Environment's good practice guide 'Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans'.

10. The detailed results of the Environmental Appraisal on the policies that the Conservation Area Appraisal supplements are shown in the table below.

Environmental Components	General Design Policy	Conservation Areas	Listed Buildings	Macclesfield Town Centre – Waters Green	Macclesfield Town Centre – Mixed Use Areas
Soil/ Agricultural Land Quality	-	-	-	-	-
Air Quality	-	-	-	-	-
Water Quality	-	-	-	-	+
Noise Pollution	-	-	-	-	-
Energy Use	-	-	-	++	++
Land	+	+	+	+	++
Wildlife	-	++	-	-	-

Landscape	++	++	++	-	-
Built Heritage	++	++	++	++	++
Open Space	+	++	-	++	++
Human Beings	+	+	+	+	+

Key: ++ significant beneficial impact
+ beneficial impact
- no relationship/ insignificant benefit

11. In summary, the Built Environment Policies (on design, Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) rank highly in terms of sustainability. This is due to the fact that the policies seek to protect and enhance man-made features of high heritage and architectural value. Conservation and re-use of existing buildings helps to save energy, land and other natural resources and preserves resources for future generations. Design policies seek to ensure the scale and character of new development reflects the environmental capacity of the area to accommodate new development. Macclesfield Town Centre Policies attain a high sustainability level. Sustainable policies include shopping, housing, and employment related policies, which due to the concentration of uses in the town centre create energy savings through enabling multi-purpose journeys and short journey lengths. Redevelopment and regeneration policies encourage the re-use of existing land resources and buildings and enhance the urban environment through the improvement of open spaces and the creation of new pedestrian routes.

Sustainability Appraisal

12. A Policy Appraisal Matrix has been produced to assess the Macclesfield Conservation Area Appraisal. This is based on the following broad objectives which have been taken from the publication "A better quality of life: a strategy for sustainable development in the UK":

- Maintenance of high and stable levels of growth and employment
- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- Effective protection of the environment
- Prudent use of natural resources

Objective	Appraisal
Maintenance of high and stable levels of growth and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No adverse impact on employment • Environmental enhancement/ preservation of the areas within the town centre should lead to increased patronage which has economic benefits • There are likely to be higher building costs for properties within Conservation Areas but this will normally be reflected in higher property values • The Council might be able to offer grant

	aid towards any additional costs that are incurred due to a property falling within a Conservation Area
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those living in, working in or visiting Macclesfield Town Centre will benefit from the environmental improvements that come from its designation as a Conservation Area • Environmental enhancement of the built environment in the town centre will improve its vitality and viability • Access within the town centre and to individual properties will not be adversely affected
Effective protection of the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic landscapes, buildings and open spaces within the Conservation Area will be protected and enhanced • No adverse impact on air quality and pollution
Prudent use of natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages the use of locally sourced building materials and recycled building materials where appropriate

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive

13. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive requires the Environmental Report to consider "reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme"

14. In this case there are few alternatives to be considered. The policies to preserve and enhance the Macclesfield Conservation Area are already in place and have been the subject of an Environmental Appraisal. The Conservation Area Appraisal is simply supplementing these as recommended by best practice.

15. If a Conservation Area Appraisal is not produced for the Macclesfield Conservation Area there is a danger that the character of the conservation area could be further eroded. The appraisal is a positive tool in the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area as it: identifies the particular characteristics of the conservation area that justify its designation as a conservation area and which should be preserved or enhanced; it provides guidance to owners on how they can preserve or enhance their buildings; and it identifies works of improvement, enhancement or other initiatives which could be taken by the Council or other agencies. Without the guidance the character of the Conservation is likely to be further harmed.

16. The Conservation Area Appraisal proposes to add some additional properties to the Conservation Area. If properties are added this will give the Council greater powers to control changes in these areas to ensure that they preserve or enhance

the Conservation Area. If these areas are not added there is a danger that the character of the area could be further eroded.

17. The SEA Directive requires the following to be included in the Environmental Report:

“the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects”

18. The Environmental Appraisal which was undertaken on the policies in the Local Plan took all of the above factors into account and found that all the policies which relate to the Macclesfield Conservation Area either had a significant beneficial impact, a beneficial impact or no relationship/ an insignificant impact. There were no policies which had an adverse environmental impact. The Conservation Area Appraisal simply supplements these policies and it will not, therefore, have an adverse environmental impact. Indeed, as the Sustainability Appraisal above demonstrates the Conservation Area Appraisal will have a positive impact on environmental factors.

19. The Environmental Report also needs to set out “the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme”. In light of the above, it is clear that the Conservation Area Appraisal will have a positive effect on the environment and will not lead to any adverse effects on the environment. It is, therefore, not necessary to identify measures to reduce adverse effects on the environment.





