



Local Development Framework – Core Strategy

Issues and Options Discussion Paper

Topic Paper 6 – Historic Environment

1.0 Background

The historic environment is a finite and fragile resource. Sound management of Tameside's built heritage, historic landscape and archaeological assets should be fundamental to the objectives set out in the Core Strategy, in recognition that heritage assets are irreplaceable. The historic environment will need to be considered as a cross-cutting theme touching every policy area. The key national, regional and local policies and guidance relevant to the historic environment are:

- Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) 2010
- PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide 2010
- Government Vision Statement on the Historic Environment 2010
- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) 2005
- World Class Places (Department for Communities and Local Government 2009)
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2008)
- Constructive Conservation in Practice (English Heritage 2008)
- Heritage Works: The Use of Historic Buildings in Regeneration: A toolkit of good practice (English Heritage 2006)
- The Regional Spatial Strategy for North West England (2008)
- Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation 2011
- Heritage Counts (published annually by English Heritage)
- Heritage at Risk (published annually by English Heritage)
- Tameside Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2019
- Tameside Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2004
- Tameside Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document (2010)
- Tameside Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Proposals
- Tameside Buildings at Risk Strategy (Draft)
- History and Archaeology of Tameside series, published by the Council with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU)
- Historic Environment Record, held by GMAU

1.01 At the time of writing, the draft National Planning Policy Framework has been released for consultation. The final document is expected to replace and condense all existing Planning Policy Statements.



2.00 Policy Context

National Policy

2.01 **PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment**

PPS5 replaced PPG 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) and PPG 16 (Archaeology and Planning) in March 2010. The overarching aim of PPS5 is 'that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations'. PPS5 establishes a holistic approach in which all parts of the historic environment with historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest, whether formally designated or not, are termed 'heritage assets'. The PPS promotes the application of common policy principles to all planning decisions relating to heritage assets whether they are buildings, monuments, sites or landscapes, with the emphasis on understanding the *significance* of the asset and assessing the impact of development on that significance.

2.02 **PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (2010)**

Supporting PPS5, the guidance provides advice, ideas and examples to help interpret and implement the policies. It highlights further sources of information to assist local planning authorities, developers and communities in managing the historic environment.

2.03 **PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)**

The importance of the historic environment is acknowledged in PPS1 Sustainable Communities. The role of planning as an important instrument for protecting and enhancing the environment and preserving the built and natural environment is recognised along with the need to reconcile these objectives with economic growth. The PPS sets out the Government's expectation that climate change considerations are to be integrated into all aspects of spatial planning and not considered separately.

One of the key principles in PPS1 is the promotion of high quality inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. Design which fails to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area should not be accepted. The PPS states that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people, supporting and enabling the development of attractive, high quality, sustainable places in which people want to live, work and relax.

2.04 **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The consultation draft of the NPPF, released in July 2011, incorporates most of the policies in PPS5 into a dedicated section on the historic environment. A few of the policies, i.e. HE1 (Heritage Assets and Climate Change), HE2 (Evidence Base for Plan-making) and HE4 (Permitted Development and Article 4 Directions), appear in other sections of the document, and one, HE5 (Monitoring Indicators), has been omitted entirely. The emphasis in the draft document continues to be on understanding the significance of heritage assets and the impact of proposed development on that significance.

The policies are streamlined and condensed versions of those in PPS5. Some of the detail included in PPS5 is likely to be transferred to a guidance document to support the NPPF. The Historic Environment section of the draft NPPF sets out the Government's objectives; "to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance"; and "to



contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our past by capturing evidence from the historic environment and making this publicly available, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost". The objectives are intended to ensure that "the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations".

A number of criticisms have been levelled at the draft. There is some concern that the NPPF falls short of existing levels of protection for the historic environment with its strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. The document appears to alter the balance of justification needed where a proposal involves harm to heritage assets, particularly where the impact on significance is minor or moderately harmful (the draft is inconsistent in this respect, stating in the Historic Environment section that public benefits have to outweigh the harm of the development, whereas in paragraph 14 the harm has to outweigh the benefits). The inference is that no or little justification is required for such changes which, cumulatively, could have serious negative effects on heritage assets and their settings. The lack of a clear definition of sustainable development is also seen as a weakness, as is the lack of clarity on the status of locally important non-designated buildings.

Consultation on the draft NPPF closed on 17 October 2011. Comments were submitted to the Government on the draft document by the AGMA on behalf of the Greater Manchester Authorities.

3.00 Regional Policy

3.01 The North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (2008)

The North West of England Plan is due to be abolished under powers in the Localism Act (November 2011). However, at the time of writing the RSS for the North West is still a legal part of Tameside's Development Plan and is therefore a material consideration.

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) provides a framework for development and investment in the North West region over the next 15-20 years. It establishes a broad vision for the region and its sub-regions, identifies priorities for growth and regeneration, and presents policies to achieve sustainable development. Of particular relevance are:

- Policy DP 7 Promote Environmental Quality: Environmental quality should be protected and enhanced, understanding and respecting the character and distinctiveness of places and landscapes. The protection of the historic environment and good quality design should be promoted in new development, ensuring that it respects its setting.
- Policy EM 1 Integrating Enhancement and Protection of the Regions Environmental Assets: The Region's environmental assets should be identified, protected, enhanced and managed. Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should deliver an integrated approach to conserving and enhancing the landscape, natural environment, historic environment and woodlands of the region. Plans and strategies should define spatial objectives and priorities for conservation, restoration and enhancement as appropriate, and provide area-based guidelines to direct decisions and target resources. Priority should be given to conserving and enhancing areas, sites, features and species of international, national, regional and local landscape, natural environment and historic environment importance.



- **Policy EM 1 (C) Historic Environment:** Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, supporting conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest. In particular, the regeneration potential of Pennine textile mill-town heritage that exists in east Lancashire and Greater Manchester, the textile mill-town heritage of East Cheshire and the traditional architecture of rural villages of Cumbria, Cheshire and Lancashire should be recognised.

3.02 **Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation**

The Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (GMUHLIC) is being undertaken by Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit. It is funded primarily by English Heritage with contributions from the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA).

Characterisation has developed as a way of understanding the processes that have created current landscapes, so that sustainable levels for change can be set which will allow character to be maintained. HLC projects give broad-brush overviews of complex aspects of the historic environment. They provide a neutral and descriptive general understanding of the cultural and historical aspects of landscapes, and thus provide both a context in which other information can be considered and a framework for decision-making. Projects can be used to inform a variety of planning, conservation and management-led initiatives and strategies. Their objective is to promote better understanding and management of the historic landscape resource, to facilitate the management of continued change within it, and to establish an integrated approach to its sustainable management in partnership with relevant organisations. Information derived from HLC studies can be used to identify areas of archaeological potential or surviving historic character which would merit more detailed investigation and, possibly, formal designation.

The HLC for Tameside is now complete and includes a full report detailing the results and providing management guidance tables. The HLC will form a vital part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy, identifying areas of historic or archaeological potential, highlighting vulnerable asset types and suggesting areas for further research and possible designation. It is intended that the results will be used to assist in the appraisal of potential conservation areas, to support the preparation of a Local List for the borough, and to inform the production of supplementary planning documents and other studies.

4.0 Context and Characteristics

4.01 Spatial characteristics and historical development¹

Tameside spans an area of flat lowlands in the west to highlands in the east where the Pennines rise. The underlying geology is that of Carboniferous sandstones, yielding the Millstone Grit so important to the local building tradition. The coal measures run north-south through the centre of the borough. Waterways include the rivers Medlock and

¹ Sources include:

Nevell, M D, 1992, *Tameside Before 1066*. Tameside MBC with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

Nevell, M D, 1991, *Tameside 1066-1700*. Tameside MBC with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

Nevell, M D, 1993, *Tameside 1700-1930*. Tameside MBC with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

Burke, T and Nevell, M 1996, *Buildings of Tameside*. Tameside MBC with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

Nevell, M and Walker, J, 1998, *Lands and Lordships in Tameside*. Tameside MBC with Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.



Etherow to the western and eastern boundaries of the borough, and the River Tame which follows a north-south route through the centre. The moorlands and peat bogs once covered significant areas of Tameside, providing valuable sources of common grazing and fuel to inhabitants from the Mesolithic period onwards.

- 4.02 Little built evidence remains of the early human occupation of the borough, although the Bronze Age Cairn on Hollingworth Hall Moor is a notable survival and is one of Tameside's four scheduled ancient monuments.
- 4.03 The strategic value of the hilly terrain in the north and east of the borough is reflected in the existence of Buckton Castle. Possibly built for the second Earl of Chester, recent excavations have revealed substantial 12th century defences indicating a building at the top end of the social hierarchy. Cruck framed buildings, also an indicator of a high-status settlement, represent the earliest vernacular building tradition to survive in the North West. Tameside has good examples of cruck-framed buildings in Apethorn Farm, Newton Hall and Taunton Hall. Later elite residences include Stayley Hall and Hyde Hall. Despite their survival, a number of these highly graded buildings are at risk due to neglect and decay.
- 4.04 The population of post-conquest Tameside was small in number and largely confined to isolated settlements in the river valleys of the Tame and Etherow. Many of Tameside's towns expanded from medieval settlements. Ashton-under-Lyne owes much of its character to the Georgian planned gridiron street-pattern overlying the medieval town. The village of Mottram displays a more organic evolution, with development spreading out from the church along established thoroughfares. The appearance of this village owes much to the use of locally available building materials such as the millstone grit, which is a unifying feature in many settlements on the Pennine fringe.
- 4.05 Urbanisation is especially marked towards the west of the borough, and impressive 19th century urban landscapes remain well preserved in many of Tameside's towns. The eastern side of the borough escaped the same pressure for expansion and remains predominantly rural as a result of its topography and infrastructure.
- 4.06 Agriculture dominated the medieval landscape of the borough. A pattern of agricultural expansion in the 12th and 13th centuries has left traces in the modern landscape, with field boundaries created through assarting (clearance of woodland) still visible in highland areas. The low-lying land in the west of the borough supported a mixed farming economy which is evident in the survival of a range of farmhouses and agricultural buildings across the borough, from the 17th century Audenshaw Lodge Barn to the fine complex of 19th century estate farm outbuildings at Hyde Hall, Denton. East of the valley-side manors of Hyde, Newton and Dukinfield, pastoral farming dominated.
- 4.07 Industrialisation has shaped the historic environment of the borough and defines much of the built heritage that remains. Traces of early industry survive in the 17th century glassworks at Haughton Green. Coal extraction fuelled the Industrial Revolution in Tameside, supporting industries such as ironworking at Park Bridge and engineering in Ashton, Dukinfield and Hyde.
- 4.08 Most important to the local economy was the production and processing of textiles. Woollen production can be traced back to the early fifteenth century in Ashton, while evidence of an early domestic-based industry can be seen in the weavers' cottages in the upland areas of Stalybridge and Mossley, with their characteristic multi-light mullioned windows.



- 4.09 The textile industry in the lowland areas was based on linen production during the 18th century, with its focus in Ashton-under-Lyne where a well-established domestic industry already existed. Factory-based production became increasingly dominant, with cotton manufacture taking over from linen by the end of the 18th century. Linking the centres of production were the network of canals and railways that crossed the borough.
- 4.10 The decline of the industry throughout the 20th century saw many of the mills fall out of use. A number of good examples survive, particularly in the river valleys and along the canals. The heroic scale of buildings such as Cavendish Mill in Ashton or Woodend Mills in Mossley reminds us of the importance of textile production to the economy and development of Tameside. In contrast there are few physical remains of the hatting industry, once significant in Denton and parts of Hyde. Surviving elements of this industry are therefore particularly important to the borough's heritage.
- 4.11 Tameside's industrial expansion and the wealth it generated resulted in the expression of civic pride through its buildings. Many community and public facilities such as libraries, swimming baths, institutes and public parks were built with the support of philanthropic industrialists. Mill-owners constructed large, comfortable residences for themselves as well as more modest housing for their workers. The 20th century saw a distinct move away from dense terraced streets with the construction of larger properties set back from the highway along curving streets and large areas of planned post-war housing. The terraced housing and suburban domestic architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries survives well, creating the distinctive urban grain that exists across the borough today.

5.00 Baseline Information

5.01 Key Heritage Assets

The diversity of the built environment that survives today serves as a unique and irreplaceable record of Tameside's development over time. Heritage Assets are protected through the relevant legislative framework for their statutory designation, with international, national and local policy recommending measures for their preservation, management and enhancement. The following table summarises Heritage Asset figures for Tameside correct at May 2011:

Heritage Asset	Number
Listed Buildings ²	314
Grade I	2
Grade II*	20
Grade II	292
Conservation Areas	9
Registered Historic Parks and Gardens ³	1 (Grade II)
Scheduled Monuments ⁴	4
Heritage Assets at Risk ⁵	9
Buildings at Risk	5
Conservation Areas at Risk	4

² The National Heritage List for England <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/default.aspx> May 2011

³ The National Heritage List for England <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/default.aspx> May 2011

⁴ The National Heritage List for England <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/default.aspx> May 2011

⁵ Heritage At Risk Register 2010 <http://risk.english-heritage.org.uk/2010.aspx> May 2011. Figures do not include Grade II listed buildings.



Listed Buildings

- 5.02 Listed buildings are buildings and structures which have been recognised as having special architectural or historic interest. Listing brings these structures under the consideration of the planning system so that thought can be given to their future. English Heritage determines which structures are worthy of listing on behalf of the Secretary of State. Three grades can be assigned: Grade I, II* or II. Grade I structures, the top 2.5% of all listed buildings, are of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be internationally important. Grade II* buildings represent the 5.5% of listings which are of more than special interest. 92% of the national stock of listed buildings is Grade II. The figures for Tameside broadly reflect these percentages.

When a building is listed is it listed in its entirety, including all external and internal features. Many structures in the curtilage of the listed building are also protected, for instance barns associated with a farmhouse. The importance of a listed building also extends to its wider setting.

Conservation Areas

- 5.03 Conservation areas are places of architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Designation is the responsibility of the local planning authority, which has a duty to identify areas which merit such protection. Conservation Area designation brings with it further controls over demolition within the area; specific works to trees, and an expectation that new development will respond to the historic context by preserving or enhancing its significance. Areas have been designated for different reasons: some have associations with our industrial past e.g. Portland Basin and Carrbrook; others are attractive market towns e.g. Mottram, and one – Fairfield -represents two distinct phases of planned development and still displays remarkable historic integrity. Tameside has nine conservation areas – fewer than any of the other Greater Manchester authorities. No conservation areas have been designated since 1992 despite a number of areas being suggested for consideration over the last 20 years. Without support for a borough-wide programme of designation, there is a danger that large parts of the borough's historic environment will remain unprotected and areas currently meriting conservation area status will be degraded through unchecked alteration.

Scheduled Monuments

- 5.04 Archaeological sites, monuments, structures or buried remains of national importance are registered as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and have statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Works to scheduled monuments require the prior written permission of the Secretary of State. There are 4 Scheduled Monuments in Tameside: the Bronze Age Cairn on Hollingworth Hall Moor, the section of Nico Ditch on Denton Golf Course, Buckton Castle, and the Post-medieval glassworks at Haughton Green.

Registered Parks and Gardens

- 5.05 The Register of Parks and Gardens includes historic designed landscapes (parks, gardens, cemeteries and institutional landscapes) having a level of significance worthy of protection. The grading system for registered historic parks and gardens is equivalent to that of listed buildings with Grade I, II* and II categories depending on the level of significance. Factors such as age, its rarity as an example of historic landscape design and the quality of the surviving landscape are taken into account.



Inclusion of an historic park or garden on the Register in itself brings no statutory protection. However, registration is a material consideration in planning terms and local authorities are required to make provision for the protection of this aspect of the historic environment through policies and the allocation of resources.

Tameside has one Registered Park: Stamford Park (Grade II) in Stalybridge.

Locally Listed Buildings

- 5.06 Local Lists are used by local authorities to identify buildings, structures or features, having architectural, historic, archaeological or artistic interest. Whilst not statutorily listed, they are recognised as being an important part of a local area's heritage.

Local Lists are developed by the local planning authority in consultation with communities. Identification through a local list allows a local planning authority to better understand the heritage assets within its area, their individual heritage significance, and their contribution to the character and distinctiveness of a place. By maintaining a Local List and developing policies for the protection of the heritage assets that are on it, the local planning authority can ensure that significant but otherwise unprotected assets become a material consideration in the planning process.

At the time of writing, Tameside is developing a draft Local List with representatives from local heritage groups.

6.00 Key Challenges and Management Issues

- 6.01 Heritage assets are a non-renewable resource and their stewardship is a responsibility shared by owners, managers and developers as well as regulatory bodies including local authorities. A degree of change to heritage assets is inevitable due to the effects of time, but sometimes more substantial intervention may be required or desired. PPS5 recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. It is important that their fragile and finite nature is given due consideration when changes are proposed.
- 6.02 Decisions about change to heritage assets may involve balancing a number of inter-related public and private interests, e.g. access or climate change. The sensitive adaptation and re-use of historic buildings can, in many cases, be achieved whilst accommodating these interests.
- 6.03 Change within the historic environment is largely controlled through the planning system. At the time of writing, PPS5 sets out the relevant policies, supported by the accompanying Practice Guide. Decisions affecting heritage assets must be taken in line with the policies and guidance contained in these documents and the saved policies in the adopted (2004) Unitary Development Plan.
- 6.04 Reform of the planning system is currently being proposed by the Coalition Government. Under a streamlined regime national policy may not provide sufficient clarity on the appropriate management of the historic environment. This, and the emerging emphasis on localism, makes it important that existing levels of control are maintained at a local level to ensure that heritage assets can be managed in accordance with current best practice. It is important, therefore, that the Core Strategy sets out robust policies to ensure that Tameside's historic environment is given sufficient regard. There may be a



need to articulate development control policies more clearly in the form of a wider Historic Environment Strategy.

Heritage at Risk

Listed Buildings at Risk

- 6.05 English Heritage's annual Heritage at Risk Register identifies Listed Buildings (only Grade I and II* buildings outside London), Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, Protected Wreck Sites and Conservation Areas at risk through neglect and decay (rather than alteration or demolition). Several factors may contribute to buildings becoming "at risk". In most cases lack of maintenance is the root of insidious decay, with vacancy compounding the problem. In the case of archaeological remains, natural processes such as scrub and tree growth, erosion, burrowing animals and damage caused by cultivation can contribute to risk.
- 6.06 Buildings At Risk (BAR) Registers can help in monitoring the condition of the listed building stock; identifying where resources should be concentrated to tackle problems of neglect and decay and securing viable new uses for redundant buildings. Many local authorities maintain their own "at Risk" Registers in accordance with English Heritage's methodology. Tameside's first Buildings at Risk (BAR) Register was compiled in 2000. A partial re-survey was conducted in 2004 but a new survey is now required to bring information up to date.
- 6.07 In its 2010 survey English Heritage established that the proportion of grade I and II* listed buildings at risk nationally is 3.1% (1 in 32). The statistics for Tameside are less encouraging, with **23%** of the borough's grade I and II* listed buildings at risk (5 out of 22). These five buildings - Apethorn Farm, Hyde Hall, Stayley Hall, Dukinfield Old Hall Chapel and Ashton Baths (Hugh Mason House) - represent a significant proportion of the Borough's most prestigious heritage assets. At the time of writing, the only building with a scheme of repair in progress is Stayley Hall. The other four remain increasingly vulnerable, in worsening condition and with no immediate prospect of rescue. The percentage of grade II buildings at risk is estimated at around 15%. The figures indicate that this is a major challenge for the authority to tackle. It is recognised that some of the borough's most important – and irreplaceable – assets could be lost if the problem of listed buildings at risk is not addressed.
- 6.08 There are some buildings at risk, most commonly large houses or farmhouses with associated land, that have fallen into such a state of disrepair that the cost of works required to repair the building is far greater than the value of the estate. In exceptional cases, local planning authorities will consider allowing development which is contrary to policy in order to raise funds for the repair and future conservation of the heritage asset. The repair of intractable BAR cases or complex heritage assets such as Hyde Hall might justifiably be tackled through enabling development, provided any proposal met the criteria for assessment set out in PPS5 Policy HE11, guidance published by English Heritage and Policy C7 in the UDP.

Conservation Areas at Risk

- 6.09 The pressures that face conservation areas come from many different sources. Sometimes they reflect the general economic weakness of the neighbourhood. More often, it is the cumulative effect of a number of minor problems that contribute to erosion of an area's character. Across the country, the most significant threat to the character of conservation areas comes from the loss of historic building details such as traditional windows and doors, boundary walls and roof coverings. Commercial properties may have inappropriate shopfronts and signs or the area may suffer from vacancy and dereliction. The degraded



condition of the streets and the quality of the public realm can also have a negative impact on conservation areas – the clutter of street furniture and signs, poorly maintained pavements or intrusive traffic calming⁶.

- 6.10 Nationally, 7.4% of the conservation areas for which information has been submitted to English Heritage are at risk. 44% of Tameside's conservation areas, i.e. four out of nine, were included in their 2010 Heritage at Risk Register. Economic decline is a major contributory factor in the case of Ashton and Stalybridge Town Centres, along with the loss of traditional features such as original shop fronts, windows and doors. Millbrook has suffered from the dereliction of a number of key sites including Stayley Hall, Oakwood Mill and St James School. Although major projects to revitalise two of these sites are currently under way, erosion of character through the loss of traditional features and materials still remains a threat. An area that remains largely industrial, Portland Basin has seen major redevelopment throughout the 1990s that has altered its historic character significantly. Even in those areas not formally identified as "At Risk", all remain vulnerable to the cumulative effect of small changes that can gradually erode their significance, especially where Article 4 directions are absent or unenforced. The public realm in most of the borough's conservation areas would benefit from further investment.
- 6.11 In line with best practice, specific management guidance should be drafted to address issues arising in each conservation area. Tailored guidance has not been available to date for Tameside's conservation areas. However, a recent programme of appraisal for existing conservation areas seeks to rectify this situation, incorporating design guidance, advice on repair and maintenance, the treatment of the public realm and the conservation of traditional buildings, historic features, urban grain and significant views. It is intended that the appraisals and management principles will be adopted by the Council in early 2012. The documents will be made available as a resource to owners, developers and officers as a basis for informed decision-making within designated areas.
- 6.12 There are certain areas that warrant greater protection than can be provided under a conservation area designation alone. In such cases Article 4⁷ directions can be put in place to restrict the type of development that can otherwise be carried out by householders without planning permission. This has the effect of bringing normally permitted development under the control of the local planning authority, providing more extensive powers to prevent the loss of traditional features and to promote sensitive replacements. Article 4 directions can be very effective in halting the loss of traditional features, which can gradually erode historic character. Tameside has an Article 4 in place in Mottram in Longdendale Conservation Area, and one on a single property in Copley Conservation Area, leaving residential properties in all of the other areas vulnerable to erosion of historic detail. However, an Article 4 can only be effective if Development Control decisions are taken in line with conservation advice. The existence of an Article 4 Direction in Mottram has done little to halt the loss of historic detail over time, particularly with regard to the replacement of traditional softwood sash windows with unsympathetic uPVC and hardwood frames of inappropriate design, because applications have been determined contrary to conservation advice.

Managing Change to Designated Heritage Assets

⁶ English Heritage 2009 *Heritage at Risk: Conservation Areas*.

⁷ Article 4 - Direction removing some or all permitted development rights, for example within a conservation area or curtilage of a listed building. Article 4 directions are issued by local planning authorities.



6.13 Listing and conservation area designation do not prohibit change, but provide a framework within which the impact of change can be properly assessed and intelligently managed. There are examples across the borough where this has not happened in the past, and unsympathetic or harmful alterations have been carried out to listed buildings. The introduction of inappropriate materials, e.g. cement-based mortars and renders, uPVC windows and doors, and uncharacteristic changes e.g. poorly designed extensions, significant loss of fabric or unsuitable development within the historic setting, has had a detrimental impact on the significance of many designated assets. Often, this is not attributable to a lack of specialist advice, but to a lack of willingness on the part of owners, developers or decision-makers to follow that advice in line with adopted development management policies.

6.14 In the context of changing national planning policy, there is a possibility that increased pressure for development may precipitate more damaging proposals. It is important that local policy responds to any weakening in protection for historic assets to ensure that the interests of the borough's historic environment are adequately safeguarded. A robust set of development management policies will be critical in maintaining an adequate level of protection for heritage assets and for improving the standards of management within the historic environment, which have, in the past, often been sacrificed in favour of economic concerns.

Heritage-led Regeneration

6.15 Much research has been undertaken in recent years to evaluate public perceptions of the historic environment. Findings consistently indicate that the built environment has an impact on how people feel about their quality of life and that people value their heritage. The creation of an attractive environment can deliver many benefits and heritage assets have a crucial role to play in this.

6.16 Investing in historic buildings can bring about improvements in the condition and appearance of buildings and neighbourhoods, as well as increased economic prosperity and higher property values in the locality. Communities perceive wider beneficial impacts from investment in heritage on crime figures and anti-social behaviour; physical and mental health; education; community cohesion and social inclusion⁸. Heritage should not be seen as a constraint on redevelopment schemes, but rather as a "unique selling point", requiring flexibility and creativity to identify the optimum viable use. Through innovative, high-quality, sustainable design solutions, heritage assets can significantly contribute to the provision of an attractive, sustainable and healthy environments.

6.17 English Heritage's 2010 Heritage Counts report identified that

- £1 of investment in the historic environment generates £1.6 of additional economic activity over a ten year period.
- Investment in the historic environment attracts businesses. One in four businesses agree that the historic environment is an important factor in deciding where to locate, the same as for road access.
- Investing in the historic environment brings more visitors to local areas and encourages them to spend more. Approximately one in five visitors to areas which have had historic environment investment spend more in the local area than before, and one in four businesses has seen the number of customers increase.
- Historic environment attractions generates local wealth. Half of all jobs created by historic environment attractions are in local businesses.

⁸ Ela Palmer Heritage 2008 *The Social Impacts of Heritage-led Regeneration, Executive Summary*



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- 6.18 Examination of a number of case studies concluded that by investing in the historic environment places can increase their economic resilience, drawing visitors, shoppers and businesses all attracted there by the historic environment.
- 6.19 Tameside does not have a strong track record in heritage-led regeneration. Heritage assets have not generally been recognised as a focus for the improvement of areas; consequently, much historic fabric has been left to deteriorate. For example, despite recent investment in the St Petersfield area, the Grade II* Ashton Baths at its heart remain vacant and in poor condition. A few notable exceptions such as the rebuilding of Ashton's Market Hall and the development of Longlands Mill, Stalybridge, show how historic assets can be successfully regenerated, bringing wider economic and social benefits to the surrounding area.
- 6.20 Much work still remains to be done. The problem of listed buildings at risk is likely to increase in the short to medium term as the effects of the economic recession continue to be felt. More buildings may come to be at risk as the cost of maintenance and repair increases, and developers may be deterred from taking on complex regeneration projects for a number of reasons, including higher levels of VAT on repair, the difficulty of securing finance and the perceived constraints of dealing with designated heritage assets. The Council has a key role to play in identifying sites with regeneration potential, assisting in the development of enhancement schemes and promoting investment in vulnerable heritage assets. The potential contribution of heritage assets to vibrant, thriving and unique places needs to be recognised and harnessed in order to create high quality environments.

Design and Place-making

- 6.21 Good design is essential in creating an attractive, safe and prosperous environment. Historic assets play an important role in making places more sustainable and distinctive, acting as a prompt for high-quality design that responds to its context. There have been many examples of modern design within the borough that appear out of character and fail to make a positive contribution to the context, resulting in standard, "anywhere" developments, often car-centred.
- 6.22 The recently adopted Residential Design SPD encourages design that enhances the character and image of the borough. The Core Strategy should promote high-quality, responsive design that creates a sense of place and draws on the existing strengths of the borough's unique heritage. This extends to the public realm.

Climate Change

- 6.23 Sustainable design is becoming increasingly important. It is recognised that the conservation of heritage assets is in itself highly sustainable. Whilst it is recognised that measures to tackle climate change may be incorporated in a historic context, the impacts of such changes require careful assessment to ensure that heritage assets and their settings are not harmed.

The quality of shop fronts

- 6.24 Shop fronts have a key role to play in creating attractive, vibrant areas in which to shop. Traditional shop fronts have helped to establish the character and appearance of many of our towns and villages, both within and outside conservation areas. Their replacement with poor-quality modern shop fronts incorporating oversized fascias, internally illuminated signage and roller shutters diminishes the quality of the urban landscape. The loss of original shop fronts in towns such as Stalybridge and Ashton has had a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene with insufficient attention being paid to the proportion, scale, form and style of some replacement shop fronts as well as the



materials used. Although some improvements have been made in Stalybridge through the provision of shop front improvement grants, the quality of many retail premises across the borough falls short of the standards we should be seeking to secure the enhancement of our historic town centres – particularly those within conservation areas.

Public realm

- 6.25 Measures for traffic management, unsympathetic hard and soft landscaping, proliferation of signage and street clutter can all have a negative impact on the public realm. For example, although the regeneration of Ashton's Market Hall successfully revived the listed building, improvements did not extend to the surrounding area resulting in a hotch-potch of materials around the building in varying condition. Greater attention needs to be given to how the public realm is maintained to provide visual consistency and to avoid deficiencies in repair, replacement or reinstatement. The use of different colours within the public realm to distinguish each of the borough's towns has often had a negative visual impact, particularly in conservation areas and within the setting of designated heritage assets where historically inappropriate town colours have been imposed.
- 6.26 There has, in recent years, been a focus on the provision of public art across the borough. However, unless it is integrated sensitively with its context public art can be inappropriate, overbearing or irrelevant. The desire to introduce an artistic statement must be carefully weighed with a consideration of whether it is necessary in the first place, or whether environmental improvements can be achieved more successfully by, for example, addressing the quality of materials used for hard and soft landscaping, tree-planting or the introduction of sensitive lighting. Any measures to improve the public realm should take account of their compatibility with the historic environment.

7.00 Key Issues and Options

- 7.01 A crucial part of Tameside's Core Strategy will be to ensure the effective understanding, protection, management, enhancement and enjoyment of the historic environment. In consideration of the information above, a number of key issues emerge which highlight the challenges and opportunities facing the historic environment in the borough.

Ensuring a robust evidence-base

7.02 Conservation Areas

- A number of significant historic areas within the borough are currently unrecognised and lack formal designation as conservation areas, including Mossley, Hollingworth and Broadbottom; 19th century industrial landscapes such as the Tame Valley, Park Bridge, Daisy Nook and Tameside's river and canal network; areas of workers' housing in Hyde, Denton and Guide Bridge, and fine 19th and 20th century urban landscapes such as those along Mottram Road, Stalybridge and Taunton Road, Ashton, and the historic landscape at the Pennine Fringe. The completed Historic Landscape Characterisation study also highlights additional areas worthy of considering for designation.
- There is a recognised need to proceed with a programme of conservation area appraisals across those parts of the historic environment that currently lack formal protection to help safeguard their character and historic significance.

7.03 Local List



- A number of individual buildings, features and historic landscapes make a significant contribution to local distinctiveness and identity. Although their special interest is not sufficient to merit statutory designation, their level of local interest justifies retention and sensitive management. The creation of a Local List and associated policies is needed to help protect such assets.

7.04 Buildings at Risk

- The borough currently has a number of heritage assets at risk, including five of its Grade II* listed buildings and four conservation areas. Although the number of Grade II buildings at risk cannot be confirmed, it is estimated 15% are in poor condition. Collectively, these exceed the national average, highlighting the problems facing the Borough's heritage assets. A comprehensive BAR survey is needed to determine the true scale of the problem; identify specific building types that are more vulnerable. This information can then be used to prioritise action and direct resources.

7.05 Conservation of heritage assets

- Poor standards of maintenance and repair are a widespread problem in both listed buildings and conservation areas. Neglect of regular maintenance tasks and minor repair is usually at the root of serious cases of decay.
- BAR statistics indicate that there is a clear need for the Council to act to reverse the decline in the condition of its listed building stock and improve the appearance of townscape, particularly within the industrial and town centre conservation areas.
- Tameside's industrial legacy is strongly represented in its historic building stock; however, areas such as the Tame Valley are becoming more vulnerable to changes in the manufacturing economy, leaving industrial buildings at particular risk of vacancy and dereliction. This is a greater problem for unlisted mills, which make up the distinctive character of the borough.
- The contraction of public sector budgets may leave some civic/municipal buildings vulnerable to vacancy, disposal or demolition, particularly those outside Ashton.
- Certain types of heritage at risk may be appropriate targets for regeneration schemes, for example vacant industrial buildings, particularly those associated with the borough's network of waterways. The Council should seek to identify opportunities for heritage-led regeneration in waterside buildings and former industrial premises in order to boost the local economy and enhance the environment and quality of life of communities.
- In order to halt the cumulative erosion of character the introduction of Article 4 Directions should be considered in conservation areas where sufficient historic detail remains and where its loss would threaten historic character. However, there applied consistent and appropriate planning decisions must be made to retain such character. An approach that has unfortunately not been applied in Mottram.
- Tackling vacancy within the upper floors of commercial buildings should be encouraged as a way of injecting vitality into the borough's townscape, improving the condition of buildings and increasing activity in historic cores such as Ashton, Stalybridge and Hyde.



7.06 Managing change in the historic environment

- Reform of the planning system is likely to result in condensed national policy. It is important, therefore, that the Core Strategy clearly articulates the importance of conserving heritage assets, their role in place-making and their positive contribution to quality of life within the borough.
- Crucial to the conservation of heritage assets and their settings is a robust set of development management policies.
- There is a recognised need to improve the standard of work to heritage assets, by insisting on high quality design and materials, appropriate to the historic context. Much of Tameside's built heritage has suffered as a result of such standards being applied.
- Retail premises within our conservation areas are particularly vulnerable to unsympathetic changes. Poor shop fronts and advertisements detract from the character and appearance of historic areas, harming local identity and distinctiveness. Specific guidance may be needed to ensure that proposals preserve traditional architecture and enhance townscapes.

7.07 New development

- In areas where development is proposed, designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings must be protected and enhanced.
- Any development must be of high quality and sensitive to the character of existing settlements and dwellings, employing building materials, styles and layouts appropriate to the context.

7.08 Public realm

- There is a need to improve the quality of Tameside's public spaces, particularly within town centres and conservation areas.
- There should be a greater emphasis on the enhancement of the public realm, reducing the dominance of the car through more sensitive planning of road layouts, street furniture and surface treatment.
- The borough would benefit from a co-ordinated approach to public realm enhancements, improving streets and public spaces by reducing clutter and reinforcing local character through sensitive design.
- Many examples of public art within the borough have not been sufficiently responsive to their context. The desire to create a visual statement needs to be more carefully balanced with the need for it to respect and enhance its surroundings.



8.00 Cross-cutting Issues

8.01 Many of the issues identified in this topic paper will be related to matters highlighted in other topic papers. The key inter-related issues include:

Climate Change and Decentralised Energy

8.02 The historic environment is as vulnerable to the effects of global climate change as any other type of land or buildings. Heritage assets were the creations of lower carbon societies and represent more sustainable forms of construction than many of their modern neighbours. It is recognised that they have their part to play in mitigating the effects of climate change, but opportunities to enhance energy efficiency, improve resilience to changing weather patterns and accommodate renewable forms of energy must be balanced with the effects of such measures on the significance of the asset and its setting. The retention and re-use of irreplaceable heritage assets must also be recognised as an inherently sustainable outcome.

Combined Town Centres and Retail

8.03 The creation of unique, vibrant, high-quality centres must recognise the part the historic environment can play in strengthening individual character and contributing to sense of place. Historic assets, traditional retail frontages, well-designed public spaces and street patterns contribute to the richness and diversity of the townscape and, where combined with high quality modern design can create attractive, vibrant environments with their own distinct identities.

Development and Flood Risk

8.04 The location of new development and handling of surface water should be designed to minimise the impact on existing historic assets. The increased frequency of extreme weather events may pose greater risks for some heritage assets and will require sensitive management given the potential impacts on significance.

Housing

8.05 The need to provide new housing in the borough must take into account existing empty or under-used properties, encouraging reuse of existing dwellings (which often contribute positively to townscape) wherever possible. The potential to upgrade or convert traditional housing should not be ignored in favour of demolition and new development, which may be less sustainable in terms of whole life costs and embodied energy.

8.06 A number of the borough's listed buildings, some of which are vacant and in poor repair, may be ideal candidates for residential conversion; opportunities for appropriate schemes of regeneration should be encouraged.

8.07 The development of brownfield sites and greenfield land, and the release of Green Belt may have significant impacts on fragile historic landscapes, heritage assets and their settings.

8.08 The design of new housing must be sympathetic to historic context, avoiding generic designs which do not enhance the character and individuality of the existing historic environment. The legacy of poor design in residential development across the borough must be tackled with a greater emphasis on high quality design, materials, construction and layout.



Economy and Employment Land

- 8.09 Heritage has the potential to make a significant contribution to the economy of the borough through the creation of attractive, thriving places that generate further investment and activity. A poor quality environment will have a negative impact on economic growth. Many of the employment sites in the borough are located within historic buildings. A move away from the traditional employment base of manufacturing may place a number of heritage assets at risk.

Transport and Infrastructure

- 8.10 Existing infrastructure often includes heritage assets or affects the setting of heritage assets in the vicinity. Opportunities should be taken to conserve and enhance elements of infrastructure that are of architectural and historic significance, and planning decisions need to take full account of impacts. Where existing or proposed infrastructure projects have the potential to harm heritage assets and their settings, opportunities should be taken to eliminate or reduce this harm as far as possible to protect the long-term viability of the heritage asset.

Green Infrastructure

- 8.11 Tameside's Green Infrastructure network encompasses historic landscapes and heritage assets, including formally recognised assets such as listed canal structures or Registered Parks and Gardens, and those with no formal designation e.g. cemeteries, churchyards, village greens and moorlands. Green Infrastructure may also form the setting of heritage assets such as scheduled monuments or listed buildings. Investment in Green Infrastructure can provide opportunities for recreation, education, better interpretation and safeguarding of heritage assets, e.g. through the greater use of the borough's canals, the development of cycle routes along disused rail lines and the enhancement of urban green space and country parks etc, which often form the backdrop to historic places. The creation of new Green Infrastructure should be responsive to existing historic landscape character.

Health and Inequalities

- 8.12 Caring for the historic environment is an important part of delivering attractive, safe and healthy places which contribute to a better quality of life and improved health among the population.