



# George Street Conservation Area

Conservation Area Management Plan  
April 2016

# George Street Conservation Area Conservation Area Management Plan

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1. Context

- 1.1.1 The George Street Conservation Area was designated on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1987 by Trafford Council. The boundaries were altered and the Conservation Area increased in size in 2014 to include buildings west side of George Street up to Central Way, part of Shaw Street and part of Regent Road. The boundary can be seen on Map 1.
- 1.1.2 A conservation area is an area *'of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'*<sup>1</sup> Designation takes place primarily by local planning authorities under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 71 of the Act imposes a duty on the local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Proposals should be publicised and incorporate public comment.
- 1.1.3 Conservation Area designation recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole. It is not just the contribution of individual buildings and monuments, but also that of features such as topography, layout of roads, pathways, street furniture, open spaces, and hard and soft landscaping which assist in defining the character and appearance of an area. Conservation Areas identify the familiar and cherished local scene that creates a sense of place, community, distinctiveness and environment.
- 1.1.4 The extent to which a building positively shapes the character of a Conservation Area depends not just on their street elevations but also on their integrity as historic structures and the impact they have in three dimensions, perhaps in an interesting roofscape, or skyline. Back elevations can be important, as can side views from alleys and yards.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.1.5 If the Conservation Area is conserved and inappropriate alterations are prevented, the benefits will be enjoyed by the owners, occupiers and visitors to the Area. It is in the public interest to preserve the area but preservation also benefits individuals as a pleasant environment helps to maintain property prices.
- 1.1.6 This Conservation Area Management Plan for George Street has been prepared in conjunction with a Conservation Area Appraisal that defined and recorded the special architectural and historic interest of the George Street Conservation Area.<sup>3</sup> The Appraisal reviewed the boundary of the Conservation Area and recommended that the boundaries should be amended.
- 1.1.7 The George Street Conservation Area is currently on the Heritage At Risk Register compiled by Historic England, the government-appointed body for the protection of the historic environment. The 2014 Register noted that the Conservation Area is currently in

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<sup>1</sup> Section 69 (1) (a) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Historic England (formerly English Heritage), *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (2011), para 2.2.21

<sup>3</sup> Historic England (formerly English Heritage), *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, (2005).

a poor condition, deteriorating and moderately vulnerable.<sup>4</sup> The policies set out in this Management Plan seek to significantly improve the condition of the Conservation Area so that it may be removed from the Register.

1.1.8 This Conservation Area Management Plan has been published by Trafford Council following the submission of a draft by Purcell.

1.1.9 The proposals set out by this Management Plan were subject to a period of public consultation and were submitted for consideration at a public meeting in the area to which they relate.<sup>5</sup> The local planning authority had regard to views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting and during the period of consultation and amendments were made as appropriate.<sup>6</sup>

## **1.2. Significance Statement**

1.2.1 The historic value of the George Street Conservation Area is the driving force behind its significance and stems from its long history of urban settlement from the medieval period. George Street formed the spine of the Lower Town, a working class area with a mixture of residential buildings and artisanal workshops. Some of the existing plots still retain their historic medieval burgage plot boundaries. It is notable that the present defining characteristic of the Conservation Area as a retail and commercial hub has continually evolved since the early Victorian period, resulting in the variety of building styles and dates. The survival of some historic ginnels is also significant. Aesthetically, there is substantial scope for improvements as there are a number of visually intrusive and detracting features which have a cumulative negative effect on the significance of the Conservation Area.

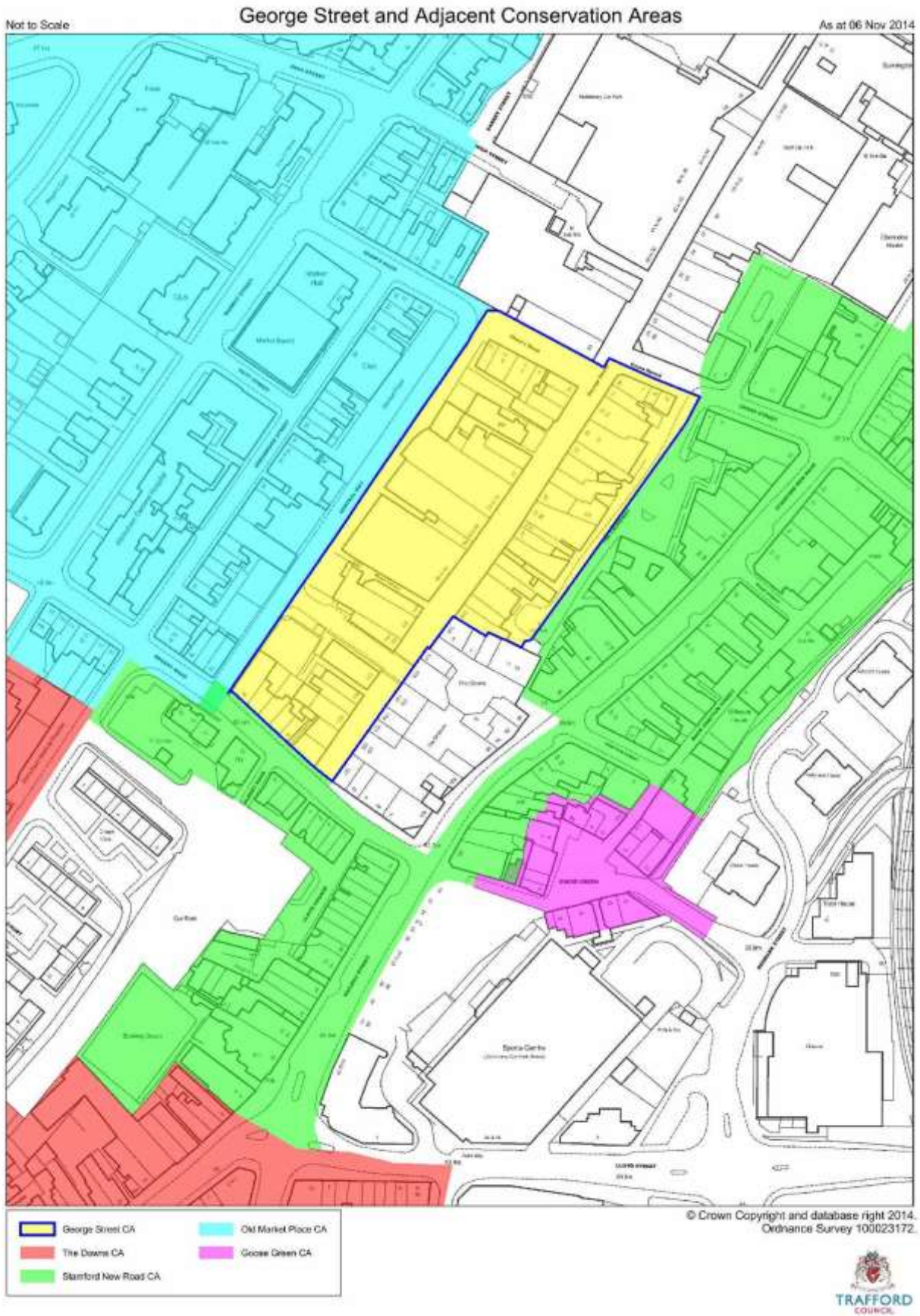
1.2.2 A more detailed assessment of significance is included in the accompanying Conservation Area Appraisal.

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<sup>4</sup> Historic England, *Heritage At Risk Register – North West*, (October 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Section 71 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>6</sup> Section 71 (3) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



**Map 1:** George Street Conservation Area in relation to neighboring conservation areas



### **1.3. Purpose of a Conservation Area Management Plan**

- 1.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stresses the need for local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Local planning authorities are required to define and record the special characteristics of heritage assets within their area. This Management Plan fulfils the statutory duty placed on the local planning authority *'to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.'*<sup>7</sup>
- 1.3.2 Conservation Areas may be affected by direct physical change or by changes in their setting or in the uses of buildings or areas within it. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which applications can be considered.<sup>8</sup>
- 1.3.3 The purpose of the Appraisal that accompanies this Management Plan is, in accordance with the methodology recommended by Historic England, to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the George Street Conservation Area.<sup>9</sup> This Management Plan should be read in conjunction with the Appraisal. It sets out actions to maintain and enhance the special character of the area, as defined in the Appraisal. These documents will support the positive and active management of the Conservation Area through the development control process, including support for appeals.
- 1.3.4 This Management Plan includes examples of historic buildings that have either been appropriately or inappropriately extended, repaired and / or otherwise altered. The positive examples set out in this document are a guide for what will be expected from developers and owners wanting to build new or make future changes to buildings in the Conservation Area. The poor examples set out in this document or other such like examples of buildings containing similar unsympathetic features will not be required to take retrospective action, unless such features or works constitute unauthorised development. For new planning applications it will not be acceptable to use inappropriate examples as a precedent to justify new proposals for development.

### **1.4. Methodology**

- 1.4.1 This Management Plan builds on work carried out for the George Street Conservation Area Appraisal which was adopted in October 2014.
- 1.4.2 For the Management Plan more detailed site surveys of the Conservation Area were carried out in June and July 2015.

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<sup>7</sup> Section 71(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

<sup>8</sup> Historic England (formerly English Heritage), *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, (2006) para 2.8.

<sup>9</sup> Historic England (English Heritage), *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, (2005).

## 1.5. Planning Policy Framework

1.5.1 This section outlines the legislative and national policy framework for Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

1.5.2 The NPPF (paragraph 126) states:

*Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account;*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;*
- *and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.<sup>10</sup>*

1.5.3 The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act ( 2013) introduced measures to enable owners and local planning authorities to enter into non statutory Heritage Partnership Agreements to help them manage listed buildings more effectively. They will also remove the requirement for Conservation Area Consent, while retaining the offence of demolishing an unlisted building in a conservation area without permission.

1.5.4 The measures will reduce burdens by granting listed building consent automatically for certain categories of work or buildings through a system of national and local class consents. They will also increase certainty and reduce the numbers of unnecessary consent applications by creating a certificate of lawfulness of proposed works to listed buildings.

1.5.5 In addition the Trafford Core Strategy, formally adopted on 25th January 2012, contains the following policies relevant to the Borough's Conservation Areas:

- Policy R1 – Historic Environment relating to designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- Policy R2 – Natural Environment.
- Policy L7 – Design

1.5.6 A number of policies and proposals of the Revised Unitary Development Plan adopted in 2006 are currently 'saved', such as ENV21 Conservation Areas and ENV22 Conservation

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<sup>10</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*, (2012) para. 126.

Area Designation, until they are replaced by the Land Allocations Development Plan Document.

- 1.5.7 All of the Council's planning policies and supplementary planning guidance is available on the council website and should be consulted alongside this Management Plan: <http://trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning.aspx>.

## **1.6. Conservation Area Policy Guidance**

1.6.1 This management plan has taken into consideration methodologies and advice outlined by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) in the following publications:

- Measuring and Assessing Change in Conservation Areas, (2005);
- Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, (2006);
- Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, (2006);
- Understanding Place: An Introduction, (2010);
- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments in a Planning and Development Context, (2010);
- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice, (2010);
- Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, (2011);
- Understanding Place: Character and Context in Local Planning, (2011);
- Streets for All: North West, (2006); and
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, (2008).



## **2. Design Analysis and Guidance**

### **2.1. Introduction**

- 2.1.1 This section is intended to define the key original characteristics of the historic buildings and spaces in the George Street Conservation Area. This design guidance should be used as a reference for building owners as to the acceptable styles, materials and level of change that are permissible. It will also be used by Trafford Council to determine the outcome of applications for changes to the properties or new development within the Conservation Area.
- 2.1.2 At present, the heritage value of the George Street Conservation Area is under serious threat from the cumulative effects of inappropriate retail development, vacancy and poor maintenance. This is resulting in a general run-down feeling and the deteriorating state of the Conservation Area which has resulted in its inclusion on the Heritage At Risk Register.
- 2.1.3 The George Street Conservation Area directly borders two others: Stamford New Road and Old Market Place; and is close to two more: The Downs and Goose Green (see map 1). It is important that any proposal within the George Street Conservation Area which may additionally affect the setting of any of the neighbouring conservation areas takes into consideration the guidance relating to all affected areas.
- 2.1.4 This section will also look at other buildings and features within the Conservation Area, and the public realm, including the distinctive planting, in terms of their typical features and character.

### **2.2. Architectural Styles & Features**

- 2.2.1 The variety of building dates has resulted in an assortment of building styles throughout the Conservation Area. A good number of the historic buildings have retained a high level of architectural detail and character, most notably on the George Street-facing upper floors. With the exception of The Bricklayers Arms there are continuous buildings lines on both sides of the George Street portion of the Conservation Area. The rear building lines, along The Causeway and Central Way, are more irregular. Buildings which are identified as positive contributors in the accompanying Appraisal (shown on Map 2) for their architectural and historic interest should not be subject to any proposed development which would not enhance the building further, e.g. demolition or substantial alterations.
- 2.2.2 A Gothic Revival style is most prevalent on the east side of George Street, running from Nos. 89 to 105. These are typically yellow brick buildings with contrasting red brick detailing. Characteristic features are gable ends fronting onto George Street and ornamented with bargeboards. Pointed arch windows are also common, especially on the uppermost level.



*Gothic Revival-style buildings on the east side of George Street*

- 2.2.3 Greenwood's (No. 69 George Street and No. 2 Cross Street) is of a similar period but employs a more typical late 19<sup>th</sup>-century shop style: a wrap-around shop front window with partitioned sections, large first floor windows and smaller attic windows set between the prominent eaves corbels. This attractive detailing is continued onto Nos. 71-75 George Street, but becomes somewhat diluted by the painted brickwork (No. 71) and half-hearted attempt to accurately continue the pattern on the façade of Nos. 73-75.
- 2.2.4 No. 66 George Street is a standalone example embracing the Tudor Revival style which is evident throughout the wider Trafford area, typified by black timbering and a white rendered background. Any further development in the same style as any of the established historic styles within the Conservation Area are likely to appear pastiche and dilute the positive contribution of these buildings. Instead, references should be made to the established historic materials and features so that any new development suits its location and compliments its wider architectural interest.
- 2.2.5 Buildings typically otherwise conform to a simple classical style based principally on balanced classical proportions and rhythmic fenestration. Smaller shops are typically only two bays wide (which allude to the historic division of space into burgage plots), but a number are much larger. Classical detailing such as cornices and string courses are present, as are features such as corbelled shop fascias. Windows are varied in style, but Victorian-style sash windows (which typically have larger glazed panes than earlier Georgian windows) are commonplace. Buildings exhibiting this architectural style and associated features span in date from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to modern buildings, and vary in their degree of architectural quality and success. A number of these, or features thereon, are identified in the accompanying Appraisal as contributing positively to the Conservation Area: No. 88-90 (Iceland), for example, which has attractive corbel detailing and entablature parapet. It would be appropriate for any new development to echo this same style providing the design and choice of materials were of a high quality.



*A corbelled fascia end*



*Nos. 88-90 George Street, which has a surviving historic corbel and classical parapet cornice*

2.2.6 There are several examples within the Conservation Area of incongruous post-war infill, which are typically box-like with poor-quality architectural detailing. The glazed elements on these buildings are their most dominant features. This type of infill also continues on Central Way and The Causeway where service space has been given over to functional but ill-considered extensions. It is recommended that the incongruous appearance of these buildings is addressed for the benefit of the aesthetic value of the Conservation Area.



*Incongruous post-war infill, Nos. 102-106 George Street*



*Incongruous infill in The Causeway, which obscures the historic rear elevation fenestration*

2.2.7 The roofscape across the Conservation Area is varied, with buildings set at different heights and often with differently pitched roofs. Attractive chimneystacks and gable ends also contribute to the roofline, in particular buildings built in Gothic Revival style. These features should be retained and enhanced.

2.2.8 Modern design is not prohibited within a Conservation Area, but needs to positively contribute to its character in order to be successful. This would be best achieved through the following:

- Be suitably located so as to not detract from the historic built environment;

- Respect the established building lines, height, scale and massing within the Conservation Area;
- Be sympathetically designed to befit its context; and
- Use high-quality traditional materials and appropriate methods.

2.2.9 There are no examples of appropriate modern development within the George Street Conservation Area; however, where dated and poor-quality post-war infill development is extant there may be an opportunity in the future to replace these buildings with better quality modern alternatives which enhance the streetscape and quality of the Conservation Area.

### **2.3. Shop Fronts & Signage**

2.3.1 As a commercial area, shop fronts are a key feature within the Conservation Area. The height to which the ground floor shop fronts extend varies, resulting in a disjointed top line along both sides of George Street. Greenwoods, at No. 69 George Street and No. 2 Cross Street, is a good example of a traditional timber shop front with a recessed entrance. There are some examples where entrances are recessed, for example at No. 95 George Street, but these shop fronts have often been overhauled with excessive glazing, reduced stall-risers and minimal pilasters.

2.3.2 The diagram in the Policies section explains the traditional component parts of a historic, or historically-styled, shop front. More detailed definitions are provided in Appendix D.

2.3.3 Commercial branding across much of George Street has generally resulted in fascias which are too large and distort the established proportions and architectural detailing of the historic buildings. There is evidence throughout the Conservation Area of surviving corbels, pilasters and stall-risers (all traditional features of a shop front), although modern additions, including roller shutters and too-large fascias, often disguise or detract from these. Existing historic features, in particular corbels, should dictate the appropriate size of new fascias.



*Greenwoods, Nos. 69 George Street & 2 Cross Street*



*A modern fascia at No. 88 George Street which is notably larger than the historic corbel*

- 2.3.4 Shop fronts should respect and enhance all surviving historic features through custom design, rather than the installation of standard, brand-focused elements, e.g. custom-sized and sensitively-designed fascias which respect the height and depth of any existing corbels or other features, rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Until it is revised, Trafford Council's supplementary planning guidance on shop fronts (1997) is still applicable and contains further details on appropriate design for traditional shop fronts: <http://trafford.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/docs/pg-shop-fronts.pdf>.

## 2.4. Building Materials

- 2.4.1 Brick is the predominant building material used in the historic buildings throughout the Conservation Area. Some brick facades and their stone trim have been painted which damages the character as well as the fabric of the building. Modern buildings, including rear extensions, within the Conservation Area make use of brick but are generally dominated by large glazed areas, cladding or render.
- 2.4.2 Shop fronts are commonly acrylic, aluminium or similar, all of which are less appropriate for the historic setting of the Conservation Area. There are some better examples of more traditional painted timber fascias and pilasters (Greenwoods, in particular). Both traditional and modern shop fronts utilise large sheets of glass (to varying degrees).
- 2.4.3 A large number of historic timber windows have survived, particularly on upper levels. These should be retained where they survive. No. 99 George Street, for example, has retained its original timber sash windows which are set into their arched openings, rather than replaced with cheaper alternatives where a standard-shape frame is either set against the inside of the opening, or squares off the shaped element of the opening. There have been some replacement with uPVC, however, notably on Regent Road and at intervals throughout the Conservation Area, often where upper floors are occupied. Double-glazed uPVC windows are normally inappropriate to the style of the building, create a double reflection which draws more attention to them, lack the patina of historic

windows and have thicker glazing bars which distort their proportions. Any replacements should be carefully considered taking into account the style of the building, and size and shape of the existing openings.



*No. 99 George Street, with its original windows*



*Standard windows set into slightly round-arched openings at No. 87 George Street*

- 2.4.4 Roof coverings are often obscured from view, either due to the combination of the buildings' height and lack of vantage point or by the fact that they are flat structures. A lack of view does not excuse the use of poor-quality materials. Pitched roofs are predominantly slate or tile covered. Pitched roofs are preferable over flat roofs for new buildings which are two or three storeys in height, as this would add further visual interest to the roofline. Welsh or Westmorland slate is preferable for new roofs as these materials better reflect the aged patina of the existing roofs.

## **2.5. Boundary Treatments**

- 2.5.1 As the building line fronts straight onto George Street, there are no boundary treatments within the main body of the Conservation Area (surface treatments are discussed under public realm) as they are not compatible with the commercial nature of the pedestrianised thoroughfare. As such, none should be established in the future.
- 2.5.2 On The Causeway and Central Way, informal boundary treatments take the form of wide, dropped kerbstones or, in some places, standard composite kerbstones. There are also sections of Victorian brick walls and later, railings, timber fencing and an assortment of bollards. However, there is no cohesive scheme and, with the exception of the highway boundary treatments, walls and railings have generally been installed in a reactive, ad hoc manner and are a negative feature within the Conservation Area.





*The south end of Central Way, with boundary treatments including bollards, railings, brick walls, dropped and standard kerbstones, and post fences.*

## 2.6. Public Realm

2.6.1 A scheme of public realm improvements throughout Altrincham was instigated in April 2015 and is anticipated to continue beyond late 2016. This is as a result of the *Public Realm, Movement and De-Cluttering Study* commissioned by the Council in 2012. A small section at the northernmost end of the Conservation Area, Shaw's Road and its junction with George Street, has seen public realm improvements over the Summer of 2015. The rest of George Street is proposed for improvement in the last, as yet undated, phase of the scheme which is intended to unify Altrincham town centre with high-quality surface treatments, and cohesive street furniture and planting. At present, the public realm throughout the Conservation Area is disjointed and dated.

2.6.2 There are some traditional setts located within the secondary thoroughfares, most notably on the ginnel cut-through between George Street and The Causeway. The date of these is unclear, but their design echoes the history of the Conservation Area, especially with the reference to a central gully. There is evidence of original setts underneath the rough tarmac of the three other ginnels connecting George Street with Central Way, which have potential to be revealed and restored to encourage connectivity within the town.



*Traditional cobbles between George Street and The Causeway*

- 2.6.3 The surface treatments on the main pedestrian thoroughfares are all modern and of a dated design. Standard tarmac is present on The Causeway, a secondary thoroughfare, with a large amount of poor-quality road markings, which are detracting and have the potential for improvement. The large numbers of vehicles parked on The Causeway and the large refuse bins on both secondary thoroughfares are also a detracting feature. A better scheme is evident on Central Way, with brick setts complimented with an avenue of small trees and sensitively-designed streetlamps, although there is still scope for further improvement.



*Public Realm on Central Way*

- 2.6.4 Street furniture within the Conservation Area comprises standard but dated benches and refuse bins painted in the Council's black and gold colour scheme. Large timber planters are located at intervals along George Street and do not match any other features within the Conservation Area, although the planting adds something to the aesthetic value of the streetscape. The future public realm improvements will address these features and should incorporate the mature trees already extant on George Street as they add to the sense of established history. The streetlamps already extant on Central Way are an appropriate sympathetic design to continue onto George Street, where there is no supplementary lighting other than shop fronts and a small number of wall-mounted lamps.
- 2.6.5 Advertisements are a very prominent feature in the Conservation Area (defined as '*any word, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction*').<sup>11</sup> Although advertisements are to be expected in a retail area such as George Street, the heavy accumulation of temporary and small-scale advertisements has become a highly detracting feature which needs to be addressed for the benefit of the Conservation Area. In particular, the omnipresent wall-mounted to-let or for sale signs significantly reduce the ability to appreciate the buildings which make up the Conservation Area, and also draws attention to its problem with vacancy.

<sup>11</sup> Section 336, Town and Country Planning Act 1990.



*A-boards, additional shop front advertisements and to-let signs on George Street*

## 2.7. Scale & Massing

2.7.1 The buildings within the Conservation Area are predominantly two or three storeys in height, resulting in a varied roofline which is indicative of their historic development. Some extensions at the rear of the principal buildings (i.e. on Central Way or The Causeway) are suitably smaller in scale and evidently subservient. However, there are some instances, especially on Central Way, where ill-considered modern development affects the ability to appreciate the original rear elevations and features (windows and chimneystacks, for example). These areas are historically subservient to the main George Street thoroughfare and this hierarchy of space should be preserved.

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*Attractive rear elevations unhindered by inappropriate modern development at the north end of Central Way but with potential for further enhancement through improved boundary treatments and re-location of intrusive features such as the air-conditioning units*

2.7.2 There are some instances, especially on the east side of George Street, where buildings have retained their narrow burgage plot dimensions. A large number of plots have historically been merged, resulting in larger buildings occupying what were historically several plots. In some instances, the larger massing of these later buildings is emphasised by their lack of proportioned, classically-influenced fenestration patterns, which draws

attention to how box-like these buildings are, even though they may be similar in size to other buildings which have been more appropriately designed. The building occupying plot Nos. 74-84 George Street is a particularly ill-considered building within the Conservation Area, which is even more incongruous for its sheet-glazed George Street façade. Further amalgamation of smaller plots should be discouraged.

- 2.7.3 Notably taller developments have been constructed within the setting of the Conservation Area in the post-war period and more recently. This should not be taken as a precedent that further larger buildings are acceptable. It is recognised that central urban space is at a premium and therefore it is desirable to make as much use of the available space as possible. However, buildings exceeding the established height of the built environment within the Conservation Area need to be carefully considered so that negative impact and any effect on the ability to appreciate the architectural and special interest of the Conservation Area is minimised.



*Nos. 102 - 106 George Street, which are notably box-like*

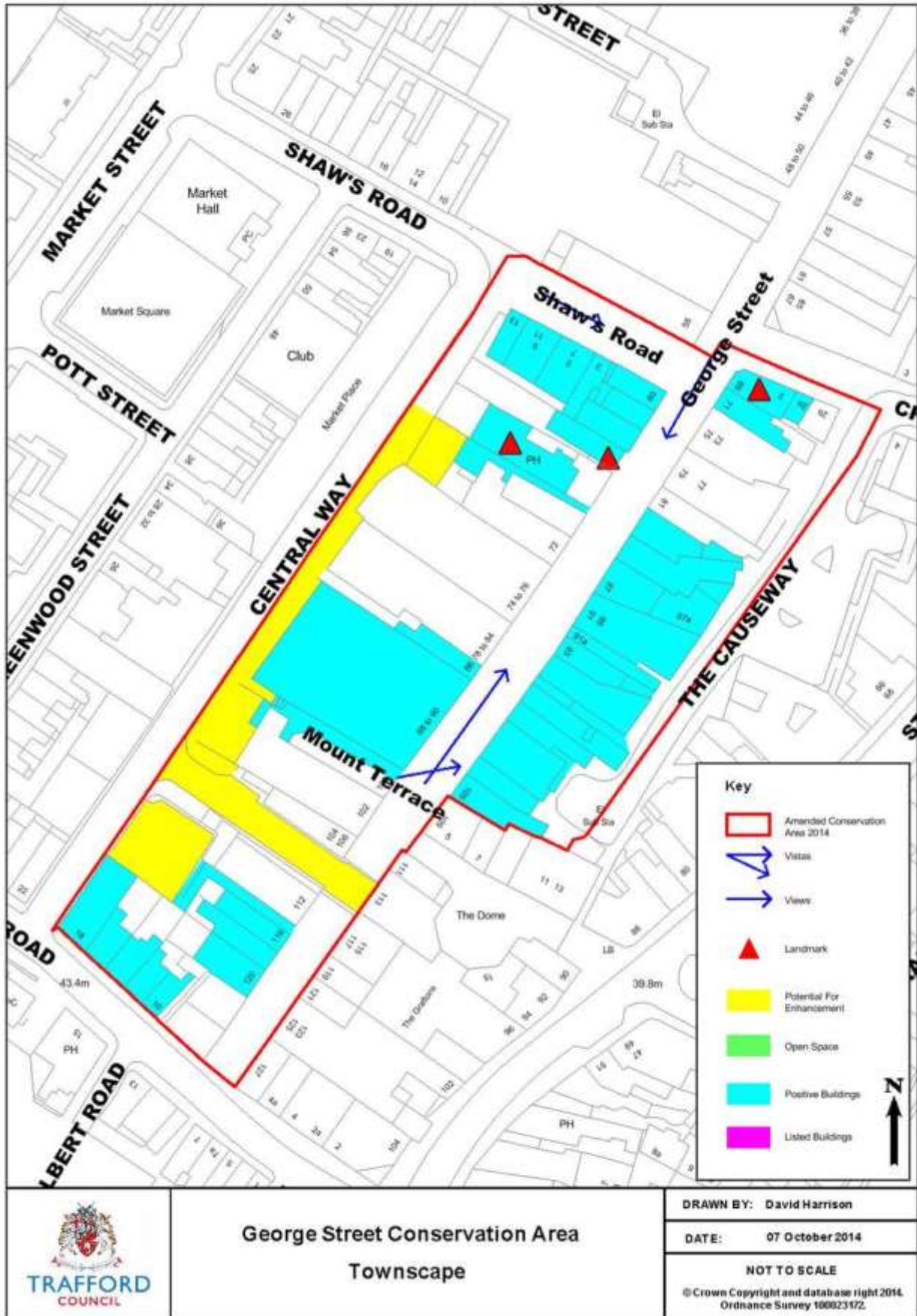


*Nos. 74-84 George Street, incongruous for its design as well as its scale and massing*

## 2.8. Other Features

- 2.8.1 The partial preservation of the historic hierarchy of space within the Conservation Area is notable and should be protected from further loss. This is manifest in the small number of surviving burgage plots, connecting ginnels and the service areas behind the principal buildings fronting onto George Street. There is potential in particular to enhance the ginnels as well as the areas of Central Way and The Causeway, which have a confused identity and are suffering from an accumulation of detracting features. Please note the Townscape Analysis Map 2 was done as part of the adopted CAA. However there have been subsequent improvements made to the public realm and the paved area on Central Way opposite market canopy marked has an area for enhancement that has already been improved.





Map 2: Townscape analysis from Adopted Conservation Area Appraisal

### 3. Conservation Area Management Policies

#### 3.1. Conservation Principles and Philosophy

- 3.1.1 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource. The key aim for the protection of the George Street Conservation Area must be the preservation and enhancement of its character, appearance, and special architectural and spatial interest.
- 3.1.2 The George Street Conservation Area is primarily characterised by its architectural variety (within which there are many good examples of historic styles) and the historic division of space which is testament to its long history of settlement, as evidenced in the survival of several ginnels and a number of medieval burgage plots. These features, together with all other significant and positive contributing elements within the Conservation Area, should be preserved and enhanced.
- 3.1.3 There is scope for further improvement. In particular, vacancy, inappropriate development and the visual impact of commercial signage and advertisements need to be addressed as these are having a cumulatively detrimental effect on the significance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.1.4 The policies below seek to preserve the key historic elements which define the appearance and history of the George Street Conservation Area. The policies set the parameters for future change, allowing some flexibility in materials used, whilst insisting on the correct design of replacement features in order to gradually bring back the coherence of the Conservation Area that is an essential part of its special interest.

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#### 3.2. Adoption & Enforcement

Section 1 of this Management Plan details Trafford Council's statutory obligation to adopt and enforce conservation area status.

##### Aims

- To maintain the special interest of the Conservation Area, in particular the historic hierarchy of space and the relationship of the Area's retail nature with the built environment.
- To ensure the policies and guidance contained within this plan remain up-to-date.

##### Policy 1

*The Council will investigate reported cases of unauthorised development (permitted or other development) as appropriate and take action as necessary to ensure compliance with these management policies and those contained within the NPPF, Trafford's Core Strategy and Revised Unitary Development Plan.*

##### Policy 2

*Trafford Council will make this Conservation Area Management Plan publically available for reference.*



### **Policy 3**

*Trafford Council will review and if necessary update this plan on a regular basis, no more than five years apart, in order that the policies contained within it remain up-to-date and relevant.*

### **Policy 4**

*Seek to undertake a Heritage at Risk strategy for the Conservation Areas across Trafford Borough that sets out and prioritises the buildings at risk, and provides a strategy for dealing with them in a targeted way. This strategy could include ways to engage with owners and the enforcement options available to the Council.*

## **3.3. Design, Materials and Techniques**

Sections 2.2 and 2.4 of this Management Plan provide further detail relating to the following policies.

### **Aims**

- To ensure that historic fabric does not become irreversibly damaged or lost through the use of inappropriate materials and techniques.
- To preserve the architectural integrity and quality of the Conservation Area.

### **Policy 5**

*Each proposal for change should be informed by an assessment of the existing building and its wider context. Proposals for change will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.*

### **Policy 6**

*Repairs to the buildings identified as positive contributors in the accompanying Appraisal should be carried out in a like-for-like manner using appropriate traditional materials and techniques.*

### **Policy 7**

*Original architectural detailing and features should not be removed or replaced and historic brickwork or stone detailing should not be painted. Where repair is necessary this should be carried out on a like-for-like basis.*

### **Policy 8**

*Repairs, refurbishment or replacement to traditional timber windows and doors on all floors must be carried out on a like-for-like basis and replacing the minimum fabric necessary. Where original windows and doors survive they should be retained. Where doors and windows have to be replaced these should normally be in timber and they should respect the size and form of the original opening(s) and be of an appropriate traditional design. The use of uPVC window frames will not be acceptable. If thermal upgrading is required, discrete secondary glazing with a frame that follows the glazing bars of the external window should be used or else conservation standard or 'Slimlite' double glazing.*

## **3.4. Shop Fronts, Advertisements & Signage**

Section 2.3 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

### **Aims**

- To enhance the historic retail nature of George Street.

- To preserve historic shop front features.

#### **Policy 9**

*All historic shop front features should be preserved where extant and incorporated into any new proposals. This should be individually tailored to each shop front and consider the wider visual impact on the overall street scene.*

#### **Policy 10**

*Proposals should follow the principles set out in the Council's Planning Guidelines - Shop Fronts 1997 or subsequent replacement guidance and this Management Plan. Advertisements, signage and shop fronts will be assessed on their effect on amenity and public safety.*

#### **Policy 11**

*There should be a presumption in favour of preserving traditional and historic fascias, whether this is through repairs, replacement or reinstatement. Traditional fascias consist of painted timber with painted, metal or timber lettering. New fascias should not protrude above ground floor level, project outwards or beyond the edges of the building. In cases where signage has already been increased beyond the original fascia and are considered to be disproportionate, a reduction in their size will be sought.*

#### **Policy 12**

*Vinyl and window stickers are generally considered to cause substantial injury to amenity by reason of their scale and impact significance. The Council will seek to maintain active open frontages with views into the premises.*

#### **Policy 13**

*The proportions of an advertisement should reflect those of the building and excessively large or repeated advertisements that dominate a building will not be supported. Side elevations of buildings are unlikely to be appropriate for advertisements due to visual harm. Excessive amounts of signage will result in a cluttered streetscape and detract from the building and wider area. Proposals with excessive amounts of signage will not be supported.*

#### **Policy 14**

*Colours should be in harmony with the buildings and not be overly dominant within the street scene. Corporate branding should take some design cues from the area's heritage and individual character to reflect local identity rather than a one-size-fits-all approach to generic branding.*

#### **Policy 15**

*The use of powder or plastic-coated aluminium is strongly discouraged. Signage with individual lettering in a small font size will be encouraged rather than large flat fascias and large lettering. Traditional materials and methods of advertising will be encouraged, such as hanging wooden signs from brackets. Traditional fascias consist of painted timber with painted, metal or timber lettering. Aluminium framing or reflective plastics are not acceptable within the Conservation Area, while joinery should be high-quality.*

**Policy 16**

*Illuminated signage may be acceptable in certain circumstances, for example in creating attractive and vibrant street scenes during the evening. Internally illuminated fascia boxes are strongly discouraged within the Conservation Area. The preferred option is for external lighting which could include discrete lighting behind individual letters. The luminance levels should comply with guidance set out in the Institute of Lighting Professionals' Guidance Note for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011.*

**Policy 17**

*The addition of awnings or canopies will be considered on a case-by-case basis. They should be well-designed and of a high quality using traditional materials and stylings, and a muted colour palette.*

**Policy 18**

*The use of freestanding signs such as A-boards on the public highway is unlikely to be permitted as they create a cluttered and unattractive appearance and cause obstructions along the busy streets.*

**Policy 19**

*Small format banner advertisements are only acceptable for temporary periods to draw attention to specific events or activities within the town. The siting of advertisement banners upon listed buildings and other positive contributors will however be strongly resisted.*

**Policy 20**

*Large advertising hoardings will not normally be permitted within the Conservation Area due to the significant visual impact this would have on its surroundings. However, hoardings advertising key regeneration or housing developments may be acceptable in sensitive areas, subject to appropriate detailing and limited agreed time frames.*

**Policy 21**

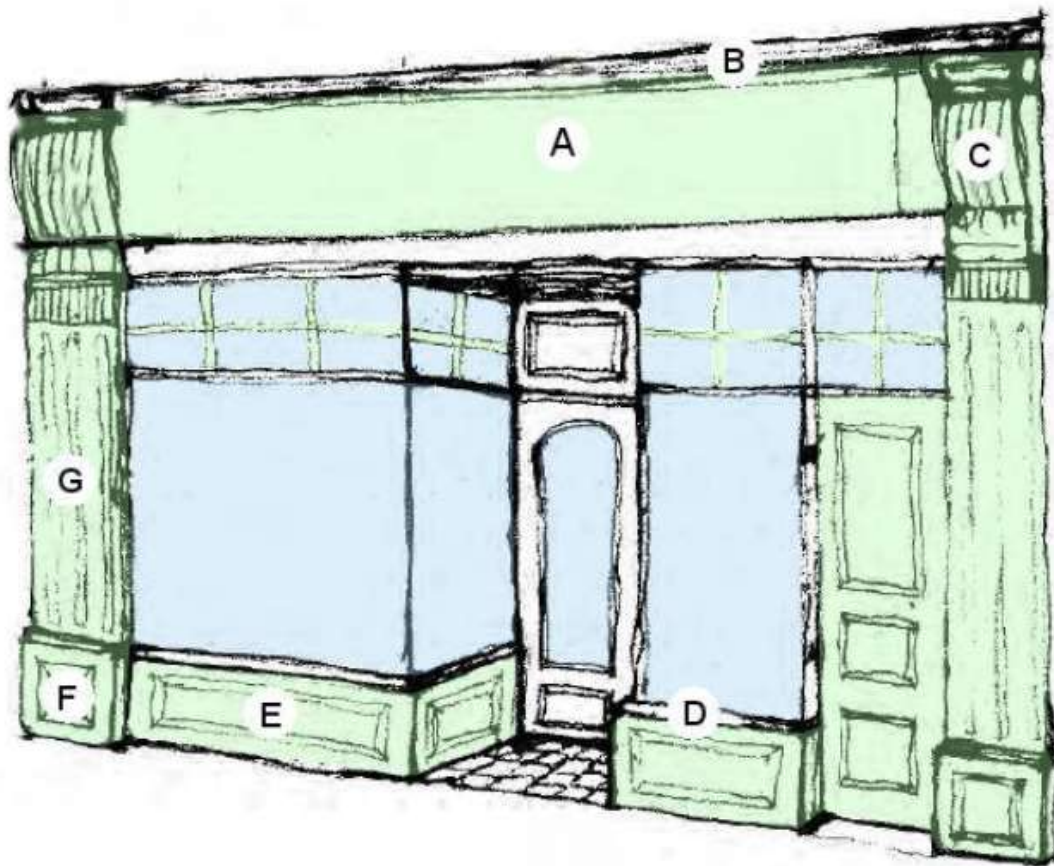
*Large format banners will only be permitted where a building is to be scaffolded for building or related work, and where such scaffolding covers an entire elevation. No commercial advertisements will be permissible on these. The entire scaffolding mesh must be covered by a 1:1 scale image of the building being constructed/refurbished, or other similar appropriate image for all works other than short term routine maintenance. The advertisement consent will last no longer than the agreed building programme or one year, whichever is the shorter.*

**Policy 22**

*Security features should not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Shatterproof and laminated glass is preferable, followed by internal shutters and grilles of a mesh or lattice design if they are absolutely necessary. External grilles and roller shutters are not appropriate and are unlikely to be supported.*

**Policy 23**

*Signage or advertisements in upper floors windows should not detract from the overall elevation or fenestration. It is recognised that businesses occupying rooms above shops benefit from such features but they should be as discreet as possible so as not to negatively affect the street scene.*



**Key**

- A - Fascias
- B - Cornice
- C - Console/Corbel
- D - Sill
- E - Stall-Riser
- F - Plinths
- G - Pilasters

**3.5. Public Realm**

Section 2.6 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

**Aims**

- To unify the component parts of the Conservation Area, and also the Conservation Area with its wider setting.
- To enhance the character and appearance of the public spaces within the Conservation Area.
- To enhance key views within, into and out of the Conservation Area.

**Policy 24**

*Where funding permits, the Council should look to address the over-dominant road markings on The Causeway.*

**Policy 25**

*Where funding permits, Trafford Council should address the current road and direction signage so that it better compliments the Conservation Area's improved public realm.*

**Policy 26**

*Discordant lighting columns and different levels of lighting will be replaced using reduced light levels "warm white" LED lighting. When necessary to replace lighting columns, they should be of the appropriate height to meet recommended safety levels for the type of street but where possible be in a style sympathetic to the historic character of the area. Where resources allow, historic iron lampposts that require replacement may be replaced with Victorian repro 'post top' luminaires. These replacements will be assessed on a case by case basis. Street furniture appropriate to its setting should be used; in traditional or bespoke designs and materials.*

**Policy 27**

*Trafford Council should ensure that, once completed, the improved public realm is maintained to a high standard.*

**Policy 28**

*The traditional setts in the George Street-The Causeway ginnel should be retained and a similar scheme established on Mount Terrace and the other two ginnels between George Street and Central Way.*

**Policy 29**

*The extant historic ginnels should be preserved and enhanced.*

**Policy 30**

*The identified key views should be preserved, particularly those along George Street.*

**Policy 31**

*Assessment of the current street furniture should be carried out to consider the requirement to remove or reconfigure intrusive designs.*

**3.6. Boundary Treatments**

Section 2.5 provides further detail relating to the following policy.

**Aims**

- To ensure consistency is established across the Conservation Area.

**Policy 32**

*The ad hoc boundary treatments should be addressed on The Causeway and Central Way. These should be of a good quality using traditional materials such as brick. No boundary treatment may also be appropriate. Any proposed boundary treatment should take into consideration its wider context and be considered on a case-by-case basis.*

### **3.7. Demolition, Extensions & New Development**

Sections 2.2, 2.7 and 2.8 provide further detail relating to the following policies.

#### **Aims**

- To retain and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.
- To preserve the archaeology of the medieval town layout.

#### **Policy 33**

*Any new development should take inspiration from the established architectural styles within the Conservation Area. Appropriate features, materials and detailing are to be integrated into the design (see 2.2 of this Management Plan and the extended discussion in the accompanying Appraisal). Modern design is not prohibited within the Conservation Area but should be sympathetic to its historic context; of a high standard; of an appropriate scale; and use appropriate, high-quality materials. Designs of low quality that do not respect their surroundings should be refused consent.*

#### **Policy 34**

*Any new development should respect the established height of the historic buildings within its setting, not seek to match the height of the tallest building within the Conservation Area.*

#### **Policy 35**

*The demolition or substantial re-development of any building identified as a positive contributor in the accompanying Appraisal and map 2 will not normally be permitted.*

#### **Policy 36**

*The flush, continuous building line along both sides of George Street should be preserved (acknowledging the exception of the recess in front of the Bricklayers Arms).*

#### **Policy 37**

*The varied roofscape along George Street should be retained and enhanced by any new development, which should be of an appropriate height. Loft conversions may be permitted only if conservation rooflights (i.e. set flush with the surface of the roof and with thin, black frames) are used and are restricted to the rear elevations of properties.*

#### **Policy 38**

*The incongruous appearance and massing of the later buildings not identified as contributing positively to the Conservation Area should be addressed as the opportunity arises through appropriate and sympathetic design.*

#### **Policy 39**

*Further inappropriate development at the rear of the George Street-facing buildings will not be permitted and, where opportunities arise, improvements to the existing inappropriate extensions/development should be sought. Any rear extensions should be subservient in character to the main George Street-facing buildings, be sympathetically designed and use traditional materials.*

#### **Policy 40**



*Where original burgage plots still survive their characteristically narrow boundaries should be preserved. In most instances these plots are occupied by buildings identified as positive contributors, affording the burgage plots additional protection from inappropriate change (see policy 35). Nos. 70, 72, 81, 100 and 104-106 George Street are not occupied by buildings identified as positive contributors but their distinctive character should be retained where any future development is proposed. For example, reflecting the narrow width of the component burgage plots in the design of any new development.*

**Policy 41**

*Additions and installations on the exterior of properties should not be visible from principle elevations. However, rear elevations are simpler in detail and additions should be carefully detailed to avoid harming significance. Bin storage, solar panels, satellite dishes, fire escapes, ventilation, ducting, extraction flues, roof top servicing units and air conditioning units should be unobtrusive and well-screened and only installed if absolutely necessary.*

**Policy 42**

*Those developing sites within the Conservation Area should consult with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service on the potential to uncover archaeological evidence of the medieval town layout if the proposed change could affect below-ground archaeology.*

**Policy 43**

*Solar panels or solar tiles resembling slates should be discreetly located on secondary elevations. The installation of solar panels on principal elevations visible from the highway is discouraged as it would be detrimental to the aesthetic value of the streetscape.*

## **4. Implementation and Review**

- 4.1.1 Following consultation and subsequent amendments, this Conservation Area Management Plan has been adopted by Trafford Council as a Supplementary Planning Guidance document. The design guide and policies contained within it are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals for proposed works within the Conservation Area. In addition to further assist implementation, where funding allows, the Council will look for opportunities for the production of a guidance leaflet to raise awareness of the historic importance and character of the Conservation Areas and responsibilities of owners and occupiers.
- 4.1.2 Trafford Council, the building owners and occupiers should obtain the necessary consents for any changes to their property and to avoid making unlawful changes without consent. It is Trafford Council's responsibility to review and determine planning permission for changes within the area, monitor the condition of the Conservation Area, maintain and enhance the public realm, keep building owners informed of the Conservation Area designation, and to review and update this plan on a regular basis.

## Appendix A: Bibliography

### National Planning Guidelines

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012)
- Trafford Core Strategy (adopted January 2012)
- Trafford Borough Council, *Supplementary Planning Guidance PG17* (1997)

### Historic England (formerly English Heritage)

- Listed Buildings: <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/listed-buildings/> (accessed 9 June 2015)
- Measuring and Assessing Change in Conservation Areas, (2005) Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, (2006)
- Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, (2006)
- Understanding Place: An Introduction, (2010)
- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments in a Planning and Development Context, (2010)
- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice, (2010)
- Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, (2011)
- Understanding Place: Character and Context in Local Planning, (2011)
- Streets for All: North West, (2006)
- Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance, (2008)

## **Appendix B: Contacts**

### **Trafford Council Contacts**

General development control enquiries concerning the George Street Conservation Area should be referred to Development Control. Telephone: 0161 912 3149

Enquiries relating to trees within the Conservation Area should be addressed to the Local Planning Authority's Arboricultural Officer. Telephone: 0161 912 3199

Enquiries relating to accessing Historic Environment Records, archaeological planning advice, and charges, where appropriate, should be addressed to the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, University of Salford, Centre for Applied Archaeology, Joule House, Salford M5 4WT [gmaas@salford.ac.uk](mailto:gmaas@salford.ac.uk)

### **National Organisations**

#### **Historic England (formerly English Heritage)**

North West Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Canada House, 3 Chepstow Street, Manchester, M1 5FW  
Telephone: 0161 242 1416. <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/>. email: [northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:northwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

#### **Victorian Society**

The Victorian Society  
1 Priory Gardens Bedford Park London W4 1TT  
Telephone: 020 8994 1019 [www.victorian-society.org.uk](http://www.victorian-society.org.uk) email: [admin@victorian-society.org.uk](mailto:admin@victorian-society.org.uk)

#### **Georgian Group**

6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5DX  
Telephone: 087 1750 2936 [www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk) email: [info@georgiangroup.org.uk](mailto:info@georgiangroup.org.uk)

#### **Twentieth Century Society**

70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ  
Telephone: 020 7250 3857 [www.c20society.org.uk](http://www.c20society.org.uk) email: [coordinator@c20society.org.uk](mailto:coordinator@c20society.org.uk)

#### **Institute of Historic Building Conservation**

Jubilee House, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire SP3 6HA  
Telephone: 01747 873133 [www.ihbc.org.uk](http://www.ihbc.org.uk) email: [admin@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:admin@ihbc.org.uk)

## Appendix C: Control Measures Brought About By Designation

In determining applications for development in conservation areas, local planning authorities must pay special attention *'to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'*.<sup>12</sup> This requirement, as set out in legislation, is also reflected in national and local policy.

When applied to designated heritage assets such as listed buildings legislation and national policy may take precedence over policies in local Conservation Area Management Plans.

In order to protect and enhance conservation areas any changes that take place must do so in a way that encourages positive conservation and management. Statutory control measures are designed to prevent development that may have a negative or cumulative effect on the character and appearance of an area and include the following:

- Planning permission is usually required to totally or substantially demolish buildings or structures including walls, gate piers, gates, chimneys, fence or railings within a conservation area.
- The extent of 'permitted' development is reduced for commercial and residential properties restricting such things as cladding, extensions to the side of the original dwelling or the installation of satellite dishes. Further control measures such as Article 4 directions may be placed upon an area. These may be served to further restrict permitted development rights, for example, elements or alterations such as windows, doors, chimneys, boundary walls and gate posts and restrict certain types of extensions.
- Trees with a stem diameter of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5 metres from soil level, enjoy a measure of protection if they stand in a designated conservation area. The Council requires six weeks written notice of any proposed felling or pruning of such trees, other than the removal of dead wood and the felling of dead and/or dangerous trees, which do not require notification. In the case of the removal of undesirable trees to allow superior trees to flourish, known as 'selective thinning', the requirement is relaxed to allow the removal of trees of stem diameter up to 100mm to be removed without giving the Council prior notice.
- Should the notified tree work be unacceptable to the Council, the latter will make a Tree Preservation Order during the six week notification period, thus ensuring continuity of protection. Local Authorities cannot insist upon a replacement for a tree lawfully felled within a conservation area, unless the tree is also protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Certain categories of advertisement which have deemed consent under the Advertisement Regulations are restricted in areas of special control.

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<sup>12</sup> Section 72 (1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## Appendix D: Glossary of Architectural Terms

### **Barge Boards**

Timber boards fixed below the eaves of a cornice. They have a practical use in covering and protecting the rafters.

### **Console/Corbel\***

A projecting block supporting something above.

### **Cornice\***

A flat-topped ledge with moulded underside, projecting along the top of a building.

### **Designated Heritage Asset (NPPF, Annex 2 definition)**

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park or Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated as such under the relevant legislation.

### **Entablature**

The collective name for the three horizontal bands which make up the uppermost section of a classical façade.

### **Fascia\***

The horizontal band element of a shop front.

### **Gable End**

A triangular wall at the end of a pitched roof.

### **Gothic Revival**

A mid-19<sup>th</sup>- to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century architectural style influenced by medieval Gothic architecture, typically through the use of pointed arches.

### **Heritage Asset (NPPF, Annex 2 definition)**

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

### **Non-Designated heritage asset (NPPF, Annex 2 definition)**

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance that is not protected under legislative framework.

### **Parapet**

A section of high-level wall intended to conceal the roof behind

**Pilaster\***

A flat representation of a classical column.

**Plinth\***

A projecting course at the bottom of a wall or column; generally moulded at the top.

**Reconstituted Stone (or composite)**

A man-made imitation stone made from crushed stone embedded in mortar, cement or plaster. The surface can be finished to simulate different types of stone.

**Roofscape**

A scene or view of roofs.

**Setts**

Squared stones used for paving.

**Sill\***

A horizontal board at the bottom of a window or door.

**Stall-Riser\***

A section of low wall supporting the shop window above.

**String Course**

A horizontal band projecting from the surface of a wall.

\* *Also see the diagram in section 2.3.*