

Local Development Framework

Bolton's Core Strategy Background
Document – BD6C

Cleaner Greener Bolton (Built Environment)
December 2009

Shaping the future of Bolton

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Background Document is one of sixteen produced by Bolton Council to support the autumn 2009 publication version of the Bolton Core Strategy.
- 1.2 In total, there are four Background Documents that cover different aspects of the **Cleaner Greener** theme, BD6A – BD6D.
- 1.3 This Background Document covers the strategic Cleaner Greener theme policies and also policies from the spatial areas which relate to that theme, from the Core Strategy:
- 1.4 Cleaner Greener Theme Policies:
 - **Policy CG3 – The Built Environment**
- 1.5 Policies from the areas which relate to this theme:
 - TC3.1 St Peter's – Conservation Area
 - TC9.1 Little Bolton – Conservation Area
 - TC11 Town centre - design and the built environment
 - RA1.11 – RA1.15 Inner Bolton – design and the built environment
 - RA2.14 – RA 2.17 Farnworth - design and the built environment
 - RA3.8 – RA3.9 Brightmet - design and the built environment
 - M2.5 Horwich Loco Works – Conservation Area
 - M7 Design along the M61 corridor
 - OA1.9 – OA1.11 Horwich and Blackrod - design and the built environment
 - OA3.7 – OA3.8 Westhoughton - design and the built environment
 - OA4.4 – OA4.6 West Bolton - design and the built environment
 - OA5.8 – OA5.12 North Bolton - design and the built environment
 - OA6.9 – OA6.10 Little Lever and Kearsley - design and the built environment
- 1.6 Each Background Document is structured to provide information, which demonstrates the soundness of the Core Strategy as a whole:
 - Conformity with national and regional guidance,
 - Specific evidence on which the policy approach is based.
 - How the policy approach was developed at each stage of the plan making process and a summary of representations at each of those stages
 - Information and guidance provided by the Sustainability Appraisal;
 - A statement that shows how the policies contribute to the effectiveness of the Core Strategy as a whole considering deliverability, flexibility and ability to be monitored
 - Information and guidance provided by the sustainability appraisal
 - Conclusions on soundness
- 1.7 All documents referenced are held within the Public Examination Core Document Library.

2 Background

- 2.1 Policy CG3 - The Built Environment, has been included in the Core Strategy to provide guidance on the topic of design for new development proposals within the built environment. Policy CG3 initially evolved as part of the development management group of policies. As more work fed into the Core Strategy, it was felt that development management policies would sit more suitably in the suite of “Cleaner & Greener” policies. The Built Environment is a logical extension to the Cleaner & Greener section, and is a way in which to actively implement the Cleaner & Greener theme within the Core Strategy.
- 2.2 Policy CG3 provides guidance that will be applied to all development proposals to ensure that they are well designed, to protect landscapes and important historic areas. The spatial area-based policies will be utilised in the areas in which they apply, to ensure that proposals are locally distinctive and well designed. The policies will help to ensure that Bolton is an attractive and well-designed place to live.

Links to the Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.3 The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), Bolton: Our Vision 2007-2017 states that: “A cleaner and greener Bolton is key to making our local areas more attractive. Big improvements in cleanliness have already been made, recycling is on the increase and parks are being improved.”
- 2.4 Policy CG3, and the spatial area policies will help to implement the Cleaner Greener priority theme through improving the physical environment of less attractive areas, ensuring good design for new development and conserving Bolton’s built heritage

Links to the Strategic Objectives

- 2.5 The basis of the council’s strategic approach and vision is explained in Background Document BD1. Sixteen Strategic Objectives flow from the spatial vision, and they are also explained in BD1.
- 2.6 Policy CG3 supports the delivery of the following Strategic Objective:
- Strategic Objective 11 - To conserve and enhance the best of Bolton’s built heritage and landscapes, and improve the quality of open spaces and the design of new buildings.

3 Context

- 3.1 This section identifies the context against which the Cleaner Greener – The Built Environment policies have been prepared. It shows how the guidance, issues and information have been used to inform the final policies.

National planning policy statements and guidance documents

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

- 3.2 PPS1 states that good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. The requirements of PPS1 have been dealt with through the inclusion of the built environment policies within the Core Strategy. Including these policies makes it clear that developments should incorporate good quality design in all instances.

PPS3 Housing

- 3.3 PPS3 underpins the delivery of the Government's strategic housing policy objectives and its goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home, which they can afford in a community where they want to live. PPS3 states that: "Good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities ... Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."
- 3.4 The requirements of PPS3 have been dealt with through the inclusion of built environment policies within the Core Strategy. Some of these policies promote the improvement of an area, as shown in the following policy wording:

"Development proposals in Farnworth will be expected to enhance the townscape through the use of excellent quality design."

PPS6 Planning for Town Centres

- 3.5 PPS6 focuses on development within town centres. The Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by: planning for the growth and development of existing centres; promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all. Much of the requirements of PPS6 have been dealt with elsewhere in the Core Strategy. However, good design is essential for promoting and enhancing town centres, and this has been addressed by having specific area-based policies relating to the built environment in Bolton town centre.

PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

- 3.6 PPS7 gives advice on keeping the countryside open, but allowing improvements in rural facilities and services for local people. Any development in rural towns and villages should respect the character of the area, be of good design and of limited nature. Although Bolton

is predominantly an urban area, there are rural farm complexes, folds, and cottages, as identified in the HLC. PPS7 has been addressed in these instances through the inclusion of policy wording for design and the built environment in the spatial areas of Bolton which display higher levels of the rural vernacular, such as North Bolton.

PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment

- 3.7 PPG15 lays out government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other elements of the historic environment. The requirements of PPG15 have been dealt with through the use of area-specific policies and the inclusion of the following policy wording:

- *“Respect and enhance local distinctiveness, by having regard to the overall built character and landscape quality of the area.*
- *... Historical associations should be retained where possible.*
- *Preserve and enhance the special characteristics of heritage assets and heritage areas*
- *Aim to protect and reuse locally important buildings of architectural and historic merit.”*

PPG16 Archaeology and Planning

- 3.8 PPG16 sets out the government's policy on archaeological remains on land and how they should be preserved or recorded both in an urban setting and in the countryside.
- 3.9 It gives advice on the handling of archaeological remains and discoveries through the development plan and development control systems, including the weight to be given to them in planning decisions and planning conditions.
- 3.10 Much of the advice contained in PPG16 no longer needs to be replicated within the Core Strategy. The requirements of PPG16 have been dealt with through the inclusion of the following wording:
- *“Preserve and enhance the special characteristics of heritage assets and heritage areas*
 - *Aim to protect and reuse locally important buildings of architectural and historic merit.”*

Regional policy and evidence

North West Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.11 Policy CG3, and the built environment spatial area policies have full and proper regard to the policies set out in the North West of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021. In particular, the policies have been developed to conform to policies DP7 and EM1(C) in the RSS.
- 3.12 The RSS policy DP7 “Promote Environmental Quality”, emphasises that environmental quality should be protected and enhanced, especially by promoting good quality design in new development, ensuring that development respects the character and distinctiveness of places and the historic environment is protected and enhanced. RSS also states that:

“Plans and strategies should ... recognise the distinctiveness of different places. Good design, creativity and innovation, are essential to improve the built environment...”

- 3.13 The RSS policy EM1(C) “Historic Environment” emphasises that plans should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment supporting conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest, in particular for the textile mill-town heritage that exists in Greater Manchester.
- 3.14 The requirements of RSS policy DP7, policy EM1(C) and the supporting text have been dealt with through the built environment policies by the two tier approach taken of having an overarching policy and locally specific design policies. The overarching policy promotes the principles of good design, respecting local distinctiveness and protecting and enhancing the historic environment. The area-specific spatial policies highlight specific areas of design interest and local character for protection or enhancement.

Other plans, strategies and evidence

Greater Manchester Police Architectural Liaison Unit - Secured by Design

- 3.15 This guidance focuses on designing places to be safer. Although the built environment policies primarily cover the issue of design, the issue of safety is covered elsewhere in the Core Strategy, under the sustainable community strategy theme of “Safe Bolton”.
- 3.16 Policy CG3 and the area-based built environment policies have been developed in consideration of the following local evidence:

Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project

- 3.17 In Bolton, the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (HLC) 2008 has characterised the visible historic environment of the borough, including the recording of character areas and their constituent attributes and components on a GIS database.
- 3.18 This was followed by the analysis and interpretation of the characterisation data, involving: the analysis and identification of landscape character types and historic character areas; the assessment of the relationship between present character, past historical character and its context; the identification of the potential for archaeological remains (both above and below ground), the historic importance and the current condition of the character areas and their key components; and the identification of the ‘forces for change’ acting on the character areas and their components. The HLC was used a primary reference for the narrative in Annex A, exploring the unique characteristics of the different areas of Bolton. The locally specific policies became apparent after working through this process.

A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton

- 3.19 The Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton (LCA), October 2001, was used in a similar manner to the HLC, to provide information on the unique characteristics of each of the areas of Bolton.
- 3.20 The following were also considered in the preparation of the Built Environment policies:
- Bolton Mills Action Plan
 - “Building Bolton”, Supplementary Planning Document

- Public Realm Implementation Framework for Bolton
- Bolton's buildings at risk register, 2008
- Listed buildings in Bolton
- Scheduled monuments in Bolton
- Parks and gardens of special historic interest
- All landscapes matter – draft policy for consultation from Natural England
- By Design – Urban design in the planning system: towards better practice
- By Design – The planning system and crime prevention
- Planning and access for disabled people: A Good Practice Guide
- Consultation responses

3.21 Please see Annex A for a description of each of the areas of Bolton, drawing on the information from the sources listed above.

4 Council Approach

- 4.1 This section charts the policy and strategy formulation process through the stages in order to demonstrate how the current proposals have been developed.

Core Strategy Key Issues

- 4.2 In the Key Issues consultation document the following general underlying issues were posed for public comment:

EN2 Protecting and promoting Bolton's visual environment

- The borough has 26 conservation areas, 332 listed buildings covering around 600 individual buildings, 4 historic parks and 3 ancient monuments.
- Enhancing local living and the local environment is one of the Community Strategy's priority areas

EN3 Promoting Good Design

- The Council has already adopted a Supplementary Planning document, Building Bolton, to promote good design in Bolton town centre.
- Enhancing local living and the local environment is one of the
- Community Strategy's priority areas

- 4.3 During this stage of consultation, the majority of responses suggested that the Core Strategy should address the topics of: conservation; respecting local distinctiveness; protecting and enhancing historic character and protecting historic assets. One comment made particular reference about being able to see the town hall clock when in the town centre. Another comment related the altering of an area's character due to demolition of properties which were then replaced by apartments. A comment was also made about promoting good design across the borough and not just in the town centre.
- 4.4 It was also suggested that minimum design standards should be expressed and typical materials should be specified.

Core Strategy Issues and Options

- 4.5 The Issues and Options paper set out a range of questions on the topic of built environment policy. The following question relates to the range of issues that could be included in a built environment policy:

Do you agree that:

- BE 1 Layout, density, massing, architectural style, materials and landscaping

- BE 2 Landscape character areas
- BE 3 Safety from crime
- BE 4 Sustainable design and construction
- BE5 Conservation

Should be included as considerations in a policy for the built environment?

Are there any other considerations that should be included in a policy for the built environment – if so please explain what they are.

- 4.6 Following on from the initial question, a question surrounding options for BE 1 was put forward:

Do you support:

Option BE 1A

A general policy taking these issues into account similar to the existing approach in the Unitary Development Plan

OR

Option BE 1B

A policy that would identify character areas with the built up areas of Bolton with the policy approach being further refined in a Supplementary Planning Document

OR

Another Option – please explain what this would be.

- 4.7 The Issues and Options paper set out two options in respect of conservation, BE5 A and BE5 B. These were:

Do you support option:

BE5 A – Focus conservation considerations in the existing conservation areas and on listed buildings, ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens. Limited extensions to existing conservation areas will be considered.

OR

BE5 B – Take into account conservation considerations throughout the borough. The Council will give consideration to the preparation of a list of buildings of local interest for history, architecture and archaeology to augment the nationally defined listed buildings, ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens.

OR

Another Option – please explain what this would be.

- 4.8 During this stage of consultation, the responses received on the issues surrounding conservation were roughly split between preferring BE5A and BE5B. Comments of interest included one which questioned whether the Core Strategy needs to refer to

Conservation Area boundaries being examined for limited extensions. An additional comment made was that the Council should focus conservation considerations on the statutorily designation land and buildings within the borough. One of the comments made on BE5 B requested specific considerations of the setting of designated sites and features in accordance with draft RSS and PPGs 15 and 16.

Core Strategy Preferred Options

- 4.9 In the Preferred Options stage of consultation, the following wording was suggested as the Preferred Policy Approach:

In determining planning applications the Council will require development proposals to:

- Respect and enhance local distinctiveness and its special qualities including the layout, density, height, massing, architectural style, materials and landscaping.
- Respond to the main characteristics/features of the following areas: Bolton town centre; renewal areas, Inner Bolton, Farnworth and Brightmet; the M61 corridor, including Horwich Locoworks, Middlebrook and Cutacre; and the outer areas: Horwich and Blackrod, Westhoughton, Little Lever and Kearsley, North Bolton, West Bolton.
- Create safe places to avoid crime or fear of crime, which are also accessible to everyone regardless of age, gender or disability.
- Recognise the importance of sites, areas and buildings of archaeological, historic, cultural and architectural interest and their settings. In doing so preserve or enhance the historic environment of Bolton including its listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and archaeology

- 4.10 During this stage of consultation, a comment was received which welcomed the incorporation of a landscape character appraisal approach to the built environment, and the intention to recognise local distinctiveness. The comment strongly encouraged the consideration of green infrastructure and biodiversity and the integration of natural environmental features within development in Bolton.
- 4.11 In the Core Strategy, the issues of green infrastructure and biodiversity are dealt with in a strategic manner through policy CG1, rather than through the built environment policies.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.12 The Council's Preferred Option for the built environment, seeks to deliver good quality design and to preserve and enhance local distinctiveness. Creating a strong sense of place can improve perceptions of areas which can have positive benefits on quality of life and well-being. This can have positive benefits on the aspirations of local people and make a minor contribution to reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 4.13 By recognising the unique characteristics of Bolton town centre, this option seeks to ensure development proposals respect the local distinctiveness of the town centre. By requiring good and sensitive design in Bolton town centre may help to build a vibrant and transformed place. Enhancing local distinctiveness and good design can help to preserve

and enhance Bolton's key assets. Along with recognising the unique the sensitive design in Bolton town centre, this can have a positive effect on the prosperity of the borough as improved image can help to secure investor interest.

5 Conclusions

Summary of policy formulation

- 5.1 The content of the policy wording contained within the Publication Document has evolved from that included in the Preferred Options report and Issues and Options report. The Issues and Options stage presented issues for consideration within the built environment policies, and what particular approach should be taken with respect to the character areas of Bolton and Conservation Areas. Although the issue of crime and safety is a consideration for design, it is covered elsewhere in the Core Strategy, under the theme of “Safe Bolton”.
- 5.2 As previously stated, a two tier approach has been taken, having an overarching policy and locally specific design policies. The overarching policy promotes the principles of good design, respecting local distinctiveness and protecting and enhancing the historic environment. The area-specific spatial policies highlight specific areas of design interest and local character for protection or enhancement.

Soundness

- 5.3 The council considers the policies and their contribution to the overall Core Strategy sound as they are:

Consistent with National Policy

- 5.4 This Background Document shows that the spatial vision and objectives are in accordance with national policy.

Justified

- **Founded on robust and credible Evidence Base**

- 5.5 The Built Environment policies have been founded on a robust and credible evidence base, in particular the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation project, the Landscape Character Assessment, “Building Bolton” SPD and the results of public consultations. Representations have been accounted for and incorporated in to the policy.

- **The most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives**

- 5.6 This Background Document shows that the Council has chosen policies that best reflect the available evidence in a locally distinctive manner. It also shows that the Council has developed this policy through a process of publicly consulting upon the contents of the Built Environment policy, and then adjusting the policy to reflect consultation responses.

Effective

- **Deliverable**

- 5.7 The built environment policy will be delivered through the development management process. Consideration will be given to setting out further details in a design Supplementary Planning Document, furthering design information for the areas of Bolton in a similar manner to that contained within “Building Bolton” SPD for the town centre.

- **Flexible**

- 5.8 The built environment policy is flexible because it applies to a wide range of planning applications, and will be considered as part of an assessment of the costs and benefits of a development.

- **Capable of being monitored**

- 5.9 The built environment policies will cover a wide range of planning applications submitted to Bolton Council. The quality of design in a sample of developments will be assessed against the “Buildings for Life” set of criteria by a trained officer. The results of these assessments will be reported in the AMR.

Measuring Delivering – Cleaner Greener - The Built Environment (CG3)
Strategic Objectives met: SO11
Indicators (and targets)
CABE “Buildings for Life” standard for well designed homes and neighbourhoods
Flexibility and phasing
The Council will apply this policy flexibly by considering it as part of an assessment of the costs and benefits of a development.

Annex A

Background information on the areas of Bolton

In each of the areas of Bolton, the information gathered from the LCA and the Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation project (HLC) has been combined with other information, evidence and national policy (listed above) to inform our approach to the treatment of the Built Environment.

The different areas of Bolton are mixtures of the various characteristics of broad residential types, along with other key features such as green spaces, retail, employment, education, leisure and landscape characteristics. These features will be described further for the various areas of Bolton in the document below.

Bolton town centre

In the Unitary Development Plan, the boundary of Bolton town centre is currently defined by the inner road box of St Peter's Way, Topp Way, Marsden Road, Moor Lane and Trinity Street. It is proposed to extend this to the west and to the south, to include areas that are functionally connected to the town centre around the University, Community College, railway station, and areas of development opportunity to the north and south of Spa road. Exact boundaries of this area will be defined in the Allocations Development Plan Document.

In Bolton town centre, several urban landscape characteristic areas have been identified by the HLC project. These include:

- Commercial cores, markets, public houses and entertainment sites
- Civic and municipal areas
- Business parks, distribution centres, warehousing and storage sites
- Several examples of institutional establishments
- Terraced properties (some of which is in commercial use)
- A small amount of residential, in particular low rise flats
- Relatively large amounts of surface car parking

Please see the HLC project for the key observations and advice relating to character areas found in the town centre, described above.

Bolton town centre is the principal location in the borough for retailing, leisure, cultural and civic activities. The town centre is overwhelmingly urban, with only two small pockets of green Recreational Space offsetting the built up nature of the area, this also means that there is no evidence relating to the LCA to be drawn upon for information here.

There are several conservation areas in the town centre: Deansgate, Silverwell Street/Wood Street, St Georges, Mawdsley Street/Nelson Square, Churchgate and the

Town Hall, making it a prime location for examples of architectural interest due to the wealthy industrial past of Bolton. The HLC project highlights the many details about the characteristic areas of the town centre, and the following text is derived extracts from the report.

Bolton's streets contain a mix of buildings originating in different periods (dating from at least the mid-19th century onwards), with markets, shopping precincts, a variety of retail outlets, and businesses including banks, post offices and public houses. In the northern part of the town centre, there is a market hall dating to 1853 and a more modern building named 'The Market Place' immediately adjacent to this. The civic and municipal buildings are concentrated in the town centre, making up the administrative centre. Buildings here include the Town Hall, law courts, the central police office and magistrates' court, government offices and the Art Gallery, Library and Museum. The higher status examples of civic buildings are often grand and ornate buildings of architectural significance, such as Bolton Town Hall. There are two small business parks in the town centre, of which "Bolton Technology Exchange", was built on part of a former corn mill site. There are several examples of institutional establishments within the town centre including Bolton University, Bolton Community College, The Friend's Meeting House, the Parish Church near the former historic core of Churchgate and St George's Church which is grade II* listed and is on the buildings at risk register. Bolton town centre contains relatively large amounts of surface car parking which has had a significant impact on the landscape in the 20th century. There are also smaller areas of informal and formal car parks that make up elements of the urban streetscape. A limited amount of social housing is located within the town centre. There is a small estate located off Gas Street which includes low rise flats and town houses, and Hargreaves House on Trinity Street, which is low- to medium-rise block of flats, built between the late 1950s and 1970, and is prominently located on one of the main gateways into the town centre.

The HLC project makes an observation about housing in the town centre which may be relevant to future developments: "New-build flats can have a significant impact on the landscape, erasing whole areas of previous character types, including historic street layouts as well as built fabric. Special consideration should be given to the impact that large new structures may have on existing historic landscape character."

Summary - Bolton town centre

This area is the civic, retail, commercial and cultural core of Bolton. The key landscape features of the town centre are the architecturally significant civic buildings, the taller heights of buildings compared with the rest of the borough and the limited quantities of green spaces. The current pattern of streets reflects the historical evolution of the town centre. Many of these streets have been pedestrianised. Conservation Areas cover much of the town centre and there are a number of important landmark buildings, many of them listed. A supplementary planning document entitled "Building Bolton" has been published that sets out the principles of good contextual design within the town centre.

Inner Bolton

For the purposes of the Core Strategy, inner Bolton is the area around Bolton town centre extending along Chorley Old Road, Halliwell Road, Blackburn Road, Tonge Moor Road to the north; Bury Road to the east; Manchester Road, Bradford Road, Derby Street/St Helens Road, and Deane Road/Wigan Road to the south (as shown on the key diagram). Inner Bolton is the most built-up area of Bolton and contains a wide range of different land uses, however the urban area is dominated by terraced housing. There are also significant amounts of employment land and several patches of Recreational Open Space in the area. The areas of housing are dominated by gridiron street patterns, clustered around the large numbers of former textile mills and mill sites due to Bolton's industrial heritage. The Council has prepared an Action Plan for all the borough's mills, and this will guide decisions on their future potential and usage. The HLC project describes terraced housing as: "Rows of houses with a unified frontage, constructed predominantly in the late 18th to early 20th centuries. These were often built to accommodate Bolton's industrial workers, particularly in the 19th century. The scale of these developments ranged from short individual rows to large scale ribbon developments along arterial routes and more extensive gridiron estates." The HLC project describes the historic landscape interest relating to areas of terraced housing: "Terraced housing once formed a significant element of the urban landscape in the north west. Surviving remnants are an important reminder of the industrial-era heritage of the region". Examples of traditional terraced housing are visible along Willows lane in the Daubhill area. There are also some pockets of more modern planned social housing estates and low-rise flats, examples of which can be found in surround the northern end of Hulton Lane in Deane, and surrounding Cannon Street to the north of the Derby Street shopping area. The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of terraced housing, planned estates of social housing and low-rise flats.

There are concentrations of employment in The Valley and south of Bolton town centre. The fringe of the town centre has a number of retail parks and there are clusters of older shops along some of the radial routes, serving both local needs and in some cases specialist needs for a wider area. There are two conservation areas in inner Bolton, one of which is Deane village and includes the 17th –18th Century St Mary's Church, and the other is Queens Park, which is a nationally recognised historic park and an important area of urban open space. There is a small pocket of open land through which the River Croal flows, known as Raikes Clough that has been identified by the Landscape Character Appraisal as an 'Urban Valley'. The key features of this landscape character type are detailed in the LCA. One of the recommendations from the LCA that is relevant to this small area is to: "Strengthen these wildlife corridors given their accessibility to large numbers of the public; and promote their accessibility and interpretation potential." This is important in this area due to the presence of industrial units and the urban location which could potentially have detrimental effects on the green corridor.

Summary - Inner Bolton

Inner Bolton is characterised by the sizeable proportion of high-density older private sector terraced housing and local authority owned housing, frequently in close proximity to former textile mills. The key landscape features of Inner Bolton are the higher urban

density, the predominant proportions of terraced housing in gridiron patterns surrounding mills and the areas of Recreational Open Space and the historic listed Queens Park.

Farnworth

For the purposes of the Core Strategy, Farnworth is bounded by St Peters Way, the boundary with Salford, the western edge of the built-up area around the Royal Bolton Hospital, and Doe Hey Brook; it also includes those parts of Kearsley to the west of St Peters Way (as shown on the key diagram). Farnworth is an urban area of housing that also contains a wide variety of different land uses including areas of Recreational Open Space, several schools, employment uses and a town centre which is the second largest in the borough. There is one conservation area in Farnworth, Greenside Conservation Area, and several listed buildings including a toll-house dated c. 1855 and St Thomas's Church dated 1877-1879. The housing in Farnworth is a mixture of terraced housing concentrated around Farnworth town centre, planned social housing estates, some of which is from as early as the 1920s (the Central Avenue and North Avenue estate), and planned private housing which spans a range of ages up to very recently built dwellings, with the more modern housing being concentrated in the western part of Farnworth.

The HLC project describes planned estates as: “having a significant visual impact at a landscape scale, particularly where they have been designed and laid out with a geometric or other characteristic plan form”, a particularly good example of this is the radial formation of streets visible in the Violet Avenue area (the “Flower estate”), close to Harper Green playing fields. Similarly to inner Bolton, the terraced housing in Farnworth is dominated by gridiron street patterns due to Bolton's industrial heritage (HLC project): “This HLC type was used to describe rows of houses with a unified frontage, constructed predominantly in the late 18th to early 20th centuries. These were often built to accommodate Bolton's industrial workers, particularly in the 19th century. The scale of these developments ranged from short individual rows to large scale ribbon developments along arterial routes and more extensive gridiron estates.” The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of terraced housing and planned estates of private and social housing are detailed at the end of this chapter.

There is a concentration of modern industrial buildings at Express Industrial Estate, as well as former textile mills and other older industrial buildings, with a concentration of these around Lorne Street at Moses Gate. The Council has prepared an Action Plan for all the borough's mills, and this will guide decisions on their future potential and usage. Although Farnworth is mainly built-up, there are areas of recreational open space, notably Farnworth Park, a nationally recognised historic park, and more extensive open land to the west and south. The most southerly area of Farnworth is described in the Landscape Character Appraisal as the landscape character type: ‘Agricultural Flood Plain’, and has been classified in the UDP as Protected Open Land. The key features of this landscape character type are detailed in the LCA. The Landscape Character Appraisal gives the following general description of an Agricultural Flood Plain: “This landscape area occupies the lowland belt between the Pennine fringe to the north and, to the south, the ridge that extends from Blackrod south-eastwards towards Kearsley. The geology, which is formed by the Lancashire coal measures, is reflected in the undulating topography. The area is

divided by strong linear elements including the Middlebrook Valley, railway lines and the motorway.”

Summary - Farnworth

The key landscape features of Farnworth are the geometric, planned social housing estates, estates of planned private housing, terraced housing in gridiron patterns in close proximity to former textile mills and the landscape character area of “agricultural flood plain” next to the southern boundary of Bolton.

Brightmet

For the purposes of the Core Strategy, Brightmet is bounded by Bradshaw Brook Valley, Stitch Mi Lane, the borough boundary with Bury and the former Bolton to Bury railway line (as shown on the key diagram). Brightmet is predominantly an urban area of housing, however there are also significant amounts of green space and several schools in the area.

The majority of housing in Brightmet is interwar and post-war planned estates of social housing, however to the south of Bury Road are estates of private housing, comprised of detached and semi detached housing. The HLC project describes planned estates as: “having a significant visual impact at a landscape scale, particularly where they have been designed and laid out with a geometric or other characteristic plan form”, examples of these are visible in parts of Brightmet, particularly to the east of Waggon Road. The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of planned estates of social housing. There are many green pockets of Recreational Open Space interspersed throughout the social housing estates. The area of Brightmet contains two listed buildings but no conservation areas. Tonge Cemetery is on the edge of Brightmet and has been identified in the Landscape Character Appraisal as a good example of a great urban cemetery: “It retains many of its original features and has an impressive array of funerary monuments. The cemetery makes a major contribution to the historic landscape of this section of the valley.” There are some retailing and employment uses along Bury Road and a 14-hectare area of Protected Employment Land on the eastern boundary of the borough, comprised of industrial depots. The western edge of the Brightmet area is dominated by Bradshaw Brook Valley, which is split into the Green Belt area of Severn Acres Country Park, and the Protected Open Land area of Leverhulme Park together with Tonge Cemetery. In the Landscape Character Appraisal, Severn Acres Country Park is defined as a landscape character area of ‘Wooded/Rural Valley’ and Leverhulme Park is an ‘Urban Valley’. The key features of these landscape character types are detailed in the LCA.

Summary - Brightmet

Brightmet is predominantly an area of more modern housing at lower densities. The key landscape features of Brightmet are the geometric, planned social housing estates interspersed with green pockets of Recreational Open Space, and the landscape character areas of “urban valley” and “wooded/rural valley” along the route of Bradshaw Brook.

The M61 Corridor

The M61 corridor runs along the motorway in its whole length through Bolton. It includes a number of existing locations for employment, including Middlebrook, and the Wingates and Lostock Industrial Estates. The motorway passes through areas of Green Belt and Protected Open Land, and has examples of industrial estates close to the corridor that are easily accessible from the motorway. The HLC project categorises most of the surrounding land as former historic enclosed land that is now defined in the UDP as Green Belt, Protected Open Land or industrial works. Both Wingates industrial estate and Lostock industrial estate are modern industrial areas that have been identified as the former land type of “enclosed land/ piecemeal enclosure”, and have not been identified as having a historic industrial use.

The M61 corridor runs through the middle of two landscape character areas, ‘Agricultural Coal Measures’ are to the south of the motorway, and ‘Agricultural Flood Plains’ are to the north. The key features of these landscape character types are detailed in the LCA. The Landscape Character Appraisal notes that: “The pattern of settlement within this area ... has created a very linear landscape”, and suggests the following action point that is relevant in this area: “Reduce the impact of the M61 motorway by encouraging planting on the embankments. This will serve as an acoustic and visual barrier.”

Summary - The M61 Corridor

The key landscape features of this area are the pockets of industrial estates clustered along the M61 corridor, and the open aspect of the two landscape character areas of “agricultural coal measures” and “agricultural flood plains” bisected by the motorway. Due to the large areas of Green Belt and landscape character types, any development that takes place along the M61 corridor must be sensitive to the open aspect and ecology of the area.

Horwich and Blackrod

For the purposes of the Core Strategy, Horwich and Blackrod stretches across the most westerly boundary of Bolton borough, and includes the towns of Horwich, Blackrod, and the open areas between. Horwich includes a traditional town centre, three conservation areas, a scheduled ancient monument, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Red Moss and a wide variety of housing in terms of age, size and tenure. There are small industrial areas along Chorley New Road and Crown Lane.

The largest conservation area in Horwich is centred on the Wallsuches site and is largely located within the Green Belt. Dated from 1775, this historic mill site is a good example of a bleaching and finishing works complex and is in the latter stages of being sympathetically converted into residential use. There is also a conservation area located around Horwich town centre which is identified in the HLC project as the “commercial core” and also as the historic settlement core. The buildings are predominantly mid to late Victorian in character. The HLC project describes suburban commercial cores in the following way, they are: “areas of considerable historic character, but are situated on roads that are now far busier than they would have been when the buildings were first

constructed. Access to such shops may be difficult due to restricted parking; they are likely to have a localised customer base and may lose out to businesses with a more central location. Where businesses are less viable, such properties may be at risk of falling into disuse or being poorly maintained.” The HLC project provides management recommendations for commercial cores, one suggestion that is particularly relevant to Horwich is as follows: “Historic commercial cores should be seen as primary areas for conservation-led regeneration.”

There is a core of terraced housing adjacent to the Horwich Loco Works, reflecting the historic industrial nature of the area, however a large amount of housing in Horwich is post-war planned private housing estates comprised of mainly detached and semi-detached properties with larger gardens. The HLC project describes the historic landscape interest for private estates: “Large areas of private housing have a significant visual impact at a landscape scale, and represent the physical embodiment of suburbanisation, an important aspect of 20th century social history.”

Blackrod is on the opposite side of the M61 from Horwich. The town itself is mainly residential, though there are industrial uses along Station Road. Blackrod is situated in an elevated position, surrounded by open countryside and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal runs close to the western edge of the borough. The housing types identified by the HLC project are terraced housing along the main route through Blackrod, surrounded by estates of post-war social housing towards the north west, and private housing towards the south east. Scot lane end is small pocket of housing located to the south of Blackrod. To the north of Blackrod is a very small pocket of modern housing on the extreme edge of the Bolton borough boundary, adjacent to the town of Adlington. The HLC project defines this as a new development on the site of a former industrial works. Buildings of note within identified by the HLC project within Blackrod include a 19th century villa and the Church of St Katherine which originally dates from the 16th century.

There are also several small farm complexes set within the Green Belt around Horwich and Blackrod, many of which have origins prior to 1851 (HLC). The HLC describes the historic landscape interest for farm complexes:

- “Historic farm buildings and cottages may be associated with remnants of earlier enclosure patterns, forming an integral part of rural landscapes”
- “Where old farm buildings and cottages have survived within urbanised areas, they serve as a reminder of historic origins and context, helping locations to preserve an individual identity and ‘sense of place’.”

The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the HLC for the urban character of farm complexes, terraced housing, social and private planned housing estates. The urban area of Horwich is surrounded by three landscape character areas: ‘Rural Fringes’, ‘Upland Moorland Hills’ and ‘Agricultural Flood Plains’, and the urban core of Blackrod is entirely surrounded by the landscape character area of ‘Agricultural Coal Measures’. The key features of these landscape character types are detailed in the LCA.

Summary - Horwich and Blackrod

The key landscape features of Horwich and Blackrod are the landscape character areas of “upland moorland hills”, “rural fringes”, “agricultural flood plains” and “agricultural coal measures”. Horwich and Blackrod are mainly surrounded by land that is either Green Belt or Protected Open Land. There are Conservation Areas in Horwich town centre and in Wallsuches. Cores of terraced housing surround Horwich town centre and the Loco Works, lower density private and social suburban housing development surrounds these cores. Stone is a frequently used building material in Horwich.

Westhoughton

For the purposes of the Core Strategy, Westhoughton is bounded by the course of Middlebrook to the North, the borough boundary with Wigan to the South, and is bounded to the East and West by the approximate edges of junctions 5 and 6 of the M61 motorway respectively. In the Core Strategy, the settlement of Chew Moor on the north side of the M61 is considered alongside Westhoughton. Westhoughton is a compact urban area dominated by housing, surrounded by land identified in the Unitary Development Plan as areas of Green Belt and as Protected Open Land. On the edge of Westhoughton is the Wingates industrial estate which is described in the section on the M61 corridor area. There is also a conservation area next to Westhoughton town centre, which includes a church and graveyard. The vast majority of housing located in Westhoughton is post-war planned private housing estates, a large proportion of which has been built in the last forty years. There are also areas of terraced housing and social planned housing, some of which suffers from levels of deprivation, in particular, the Washacre area to the south of the town centre. The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of terraced housing, post-war planned private and social housing estates.

Westhoughton has large amounts of open areas that principally lie surrounding the urban core of the town, and are defined in the current UDP as Green Belt, Recreational Open Space and areas of Protected Open Land. The landscape character area described as ‘Agricultural Coal Measures’ surrounds Westhoughton. The key features of this landscape character type are detailed in the LCA. The Landscape Character Appraisal gives the following pieces of advice relating to agricultural coal measures: “Restrict the extension of the urban edge out into the rural fringes. The clear distinction between the urban fringe and the rural areas should be maintained and reinforced by natural strong defensible boundaries where possible. Where appropriate, this should include block woodland planting to create a visual screen...” The LCA also says that we should: “Recognise the cumulative landscape impact of small scale changes such as highway improvements, traffic calming and incremental development which have gradually imposed a more urban character on the rural fringes. In future therefore, the aim should be to secure the use of sympathetic material and appropriate landscaping.”

Summary - Westhoughton

The key landscape features of Westhoughton are landscape character area of “agricultural coal measures”. Areas of Protected Open Land and Green Belt surround the post-war private housing estates, terraced housing and social housing.

West Bolton

For the purpose of the Core Strategy, West Bolton includes the areas of Heaton, Ladybridge, Over Hulton, the residential parts of Lostock, Hunger Hill and the open spaces between these areas, which includes large amounts of Greenbelt. West Bolton sits between three other areas of Bolton: Westhoughton, Inner Bolton and North Bolton, and shares the southern borough boundary with Salford and Wigan. There is a Conservation Area on Chorley New Road. The Middlebrook Valley forms an important gap between Heaton and Ladybridge, and other countryside areas are in the Green Belt. To the east of Over Hulton is the Cutacre Strategic Development Site, which is considered elsewhere in the Core Strategy.

In the main, West Bolton tends towards being one of the more affluent areas of Bolton, and this is reflected by the style and maintained condition of housing. The majority of housing in West Bolton is dominated by larger style detached or semi-detached with generous-sized gardens, especially along Chorley New road. Heaton and Lostock in particular are characterised by low density private estates of housing, which has been the subject of pressure from house builders for infill and redevelopment schemes. Much of the housing in West Bolton has been identified by the HLC project as being comprised of late 20th century origin, however the housing surrounding Newbrook Road in Over Hulton was mostly built before the 50s and is dominated by larger semi-detached houses. The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations highlighted by the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of planned private estates are detailed at the end of this chapter.

There are four different landscape character areas visible in this part of Bolton: 'Agricultural Coal Measures' to the south around the Over Hulton area, 'Agricultural Flood Plains' in a stripe to the north of the M61, a small pocket of 'Urban Valley' in the middle of the area and 'Rural Fringes' to the north of the area. The key features of these four landscape character types are detailed in the LCA. The LCA gives a general description of the 'Rural fringes': "The Rural Fringes form a low lying manicured landscape surrounding the uplands, characterised by gradually ascending pastureland with strong vertical links to the open moorland in the north... The majority of the fields are improved grassland with urban fringe elements including, horse pasture, the provision of recreation facilities including golf courses and crematoria. This structure has led to a more manicured appearance on the urban fringe. The presence of man-made reservoirs strongly influences the landscape character and provides a key habitat for bird-life as well as a visually accentuated landform."

Summary - West Bolton

The key landscape features of West Bolton are the landscape character areas of "agricultural coal measures", "agricultural flood plains", "urban valleys" and "rural fringes". Larger-style houses at lower-densities with generous gardens predominate, and are set within large areas of Greenbelt. Housing is mainly dated from the twentieth century, with most built during the latter half of the century, often in small, private estates.

North Bolton

For the purposes of the Core Strategy, North Bolton includes the urban areas of Smithills, Astley Bridge, Bromley Cross and Bradshaw, as well as the open areas stretching to the northern borough boundary. The urban areas are mainly residential, though there are significant shopping areas in Astley Bridge and Harwood and a smaller one at Bromley Cross. There are no major concentrations of employment. There are a large proportion of the borough's conservation sites in North Bolton and an historic park and garden at Smithills Hall. The open areas to the north are in the Green Belt and include parts of the West Pennine Moors. The Eagley and Bradshaw valleys provide corridors of open land extending between the urban areas. Many of the open areas are well used for recreation, and The Jumbles, Smithills Hall and Estate, and Moss Bank Park are all foci for recreational activity.

There are a wide variety of housing types in north Bolton, displaying strong contrasts between historic dwellings in close proximity to more modern developments. The Johnson Fold and Hall i'th'Wood housing areas both suffer from a degree of deprivation and have been identified as Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. There are also some other parts of North Bolton that are relatively deprived such as the Oldhams Estate. In the main however, North Bolton tends towards being one of the more affluent areas of Bolton. There are many housing estates comprised of larger style semi-detached and detached dwellings with larger gardens, including 19th and 20th century villas set in the northern parts of Bromley cross, to the north of Turton High School Media Arts College. The HLC project has identified ribbon development of late 19th century terraced housing along the southern part of Darwen Road, many of these dwellings are smaller-style, attractive stone-built terraces with small gardens. The conservation area of Egerton covers the northern stretch of Darwen road, which is centred on the historic settlement core, the core was possibly established in the early post-medieval period. Between Cox Green Road and Blackburn Road the housing is mainly in an expansive private estate built after the 1960's, comprised of predominantly detached houses with large gardens and arranged in Cul-De-Sacs. Scattered throughout the Green Belt in north Bolton are lots of small farm complexes, reflecting the historic agricultural nature of the land. The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of private estates, terraced housing, villas and farm complexes.

The Landscape Character Appraisal summarises the landscape character areas located in North Bolton as mostly 'Upland Moorland Hills' stretching across the northern boundary of Bolton, with two wedges of 'Wooded Rural Valleys' running north to south (Eagley Brook and Bradshaw Brook) across the central northern area of Bolton. The key features of these landscape character types are detailed in the LCA. The Landscape Character Appraisal notes that for upland moorland hills: "The Pennines mark the northern fringes of the borough, rising up to 450 metres above sea level. This area represents the only surviving moorland in the borough... The agricultural parts of the areas have been in general decline for some years, with the neglect of many drystone walls in upland areas and some dereliction of vernacular farm buildings", and suggests the following action point that is relevant to this area: "A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. Planting schemes must seek to ensure that

new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.”

Summary - North Bolton

The key landscape features of North Bolton are the landscape character areas of “upland moorland hills” and “wooded rural valleys”. The Conservation Areas in North Bolton are: Riding gate, Bradshaw Chapel, Firwood Fold, Birley Street, Bank Top, Hill Top, Saint Paul’s Halliwell, Barrow Bridge, Eagley Bank, Dunscar Fold, and Egerton. Due to the high levels of Conservation Areas and landscape character areas in North Bolton, it is especially important to reflect the character of the local area for new developments. If new development is occurring outside a Conservation Area, it should still respect and enhance the overall character of the local area, with particular regard to materials and design.

Little Lever and Kearsley

For the purposes of the Core Strategy this area includes the whole of Little Lever, those parts of Kearsley to the east of the A666, and the open areas between them, including Moses Gate Country Park and a large area of Green Belt. In this area of Bolton, the boundary is shared with those of Salford and Bury. There is a conservation area at Ringley which is comprised of a large portion of Recreational Open Space, houses from various dates and St Saviour’s Church and primary school. The urban areas of Kearsley and Little Lever both contain residential areas, however Kearsley has greater amounts of employment land than Little Lever: there are significant industrial locations at Europa and Lyon Industrial Estates and a small shopping area on the A6.

The majority of housing located in Little Lever is post-war private estates of semi-detached housing, however there are areas of social housing in the Dove Bank estate and around Elm Road. The Dove Bank estate is a more modern estate with short rows of houses, domestic garages and small blocks of flats in an area of former fields. It was built after 1955 and does not exhibit the typical geometric form of older social housing estates, giving the estate a more open feel. Kearsley displays similar housing characteristics as Little Lever, with the majority of housing being planned private estates of semi detached housing with some areas of social housing interspersed, most of which has been built on green field land. The HLC project describes the historic landscape interest of private estates in the following way: “Where residential development has taken place on areas of former enclosed land, the outlines of estates and internal roads and property divisions may follow the lines of former field boundaries, leading to the fossilisation of elements of earlier landscapes.” When compared with housing in the rest of the borough, there are very few areas of terraced housing in Little Lever and Kearsley. The key threats, opportunities and management recommendations are highlighted in the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for the urban character of Little Lever and Kearsley.

Kearsley and Little Lever have large amounts of open areas that lie principally along the Croal and Irwell Valleys, and are defined in the current UDP as Green Belt, Recreational Open Space and areas of Protected Open Land. There is a significant recreational area at Moses Gate Country Park, a Site of Biological interest at Clifton Moss and a Site of Special Scientific Interest at Nob End. The areas of Green Belt and Protected Land are

also described in the Landscape Character Appraisal as ‘urban valleys’ to the north around Little Lever, and ‘settled valleys’ to the south around Kearsley. The key features of this landscape character type are detailed at the end of this chapter. The LCA makes note of the following site of particular interest at Ringley Fold: “Pylons and power lines are a dominant feature in this area. The village, with its bridge, stocks and Ringley Old Bridge (a Scheduled Ancient Monument), has developed around an unusual sequence of three churches and several surviving groups of 17th and 18th century buildings. It forms an unexpected and attractive reminder of the pre-industrial landscape of the valley.”

Summary - Little Lever and Kearsley

The key landscape features of Little Lever and Kearsley are the landscape character areas of “urban valleys” and “settled valleys”. Large amounts of open areas lie principally along the Croal and Irwell valleys. There are higher proportions of semi-detached post-war private and social estates and lower proportions of terraced housing, when compared with the rest of the borough.