



The Downs Conservation Area

Conservation Area Management Plan
Consultation Draft
January 2015

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1 Introduction

1.1. Context

- 1.1.1 The Downs Conservation Area was designated on 8th February, 1973 by Trafford Council comprising The Downs and the area to its north including Wellington Place, New Street, Lyme Grove and the majority of Norman's Place. The Conservation Area was extended on 4th July, 1974, to include the area to the south including St. John's Road, Albert Square, Delamer Road, part of Ashley Road and the north side of Cavendish Road. It was further extended in 1988 to include the northeast side of Ashley Road and the north of Oxford Road. Additional boundary changes were adopted in 2014.
- 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.*'¹ 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.²
- 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 The Downs has been prepared in conjunction with a Conservation Area Appraisal that defined and recorded the special architectural and historic interest of The Downs Conservation Area.³ The Appraisal reviewed the boundary of the Conservation Area and concluded that it should be extended to incorporate the lower end of Oldfield Road and a small area of housing on Burlington Road. The adopted revised boundaries are shown on Map 1.

¹ Section 69 (1) (a) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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

³ Historic England (English Heritage), *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, (2005).

- 1.1.7 Properties on New Street (Nos. 24-89 even, Nos. 77-89 odd) and Wellington Place (Nos. 1-11 and 2-12 inclusive) in The Downs Conservation Area are currently subject to an Article 4 direction, which controls development of the properties. Under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995, the classes of permitted development that have been withdrawn are: Schedule 2 Part 1 Class A and D and Part 2 Class A, as such planning permission must be obtained for:
- The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house. This includes all extensions, windows, doors, cladding, and dormers;
 - The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwelling house; and
 - The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.
- 1.1.8 It is also proposed in this Management Plan to extend the Article 4 to the properties listed below and shown on Map 2:
- Nos. 1-19 (odd) and Nos. 2-20 (even) Lyme Grove (excluding the modern houses named Hunters Moon and Hampstead)
 - Nos. 82-86 (even), Nos. 32-78 (even) and Nos. 33-43 (odd) The Downs (excluding the modern houses at 80, 80a and 80b)
 - Nos. 47-49 (odd) and Nos. 14-58 (even) Oxford Road
- 1.1.9 The properties on Lyme Grove and The Downs set out above have been proposed for inclusion within an extension of the existing Article 4 direction due to their high-quality historic features and high levels of survival. These buildings reflect a substantial number of elements in the Conservation Area in age, style, materials and form. The buildings reflect the traditional functional character and former uses in the area. As a group they illustrate the development of the settlement in which they stand.
- 1.1.10 The properties on Oxford Road have been proposed for inclusion within the existing Article 4 direction for being a high-quality group of buildings that represent important examples of traditional houses in the area, which should be preserved. The current condition of these properties, with the loss of original features such as windows, doors, gardens and boundary walls, has seriously compromised their significance and is harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These properties should be subject to an Article 4 Direction in order to control inappropriate changes in the future.
- 1.1.11 See policy 1 and appendix C for further detail of control measures in Conservation Areas. If an Article 4 direction is supported affected residents will be consulted individually prior to an Article 4 direction being put in place after the adoption of the Management Plan.
- 1.1.12 This draft Conservation Area Management Plan has been published by Trafford Council following the submission of a draft by Purcell.
- 1.1.13 The proposals set out by this Management Plan shall undergo a period of public consultation and will be submitted for consideration at a public meeting in the area to

which they relate.⁴ The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by persons attending the meeting or during the period of consultation.⁵

1.2. Significance Statement

- 1.2.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal states that The Downs Conservation Area is significant *'for its historic value as a key transport route for over two thousand years. The Downs played a key role during the Civil War and The Narrows is still used as a pedestrian route linking Altrincham and Bowdon today. The area developed rapidly following the advent of the railway, and is characterised by a mixed townscape of urban commercial uses, early Victorian terraced housing and mid-to late-19th century villa development. Strict covenants on development resulted in significant control over quality and density, creating a harmonious and balanced streetscape. Educational use has also been well-represented in the area. Views across the Conservation Area are also of significance, due to its location on the southern slope of the ridge, and the flatness of the surrounding area. There are few open spaces within the Conservation Area but mature gardens and plantings are a significant asset.'*

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.'*⁶
- 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.⁷
- 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 Downs Conservation Area.⁸ 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.

⁴ Section 71 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

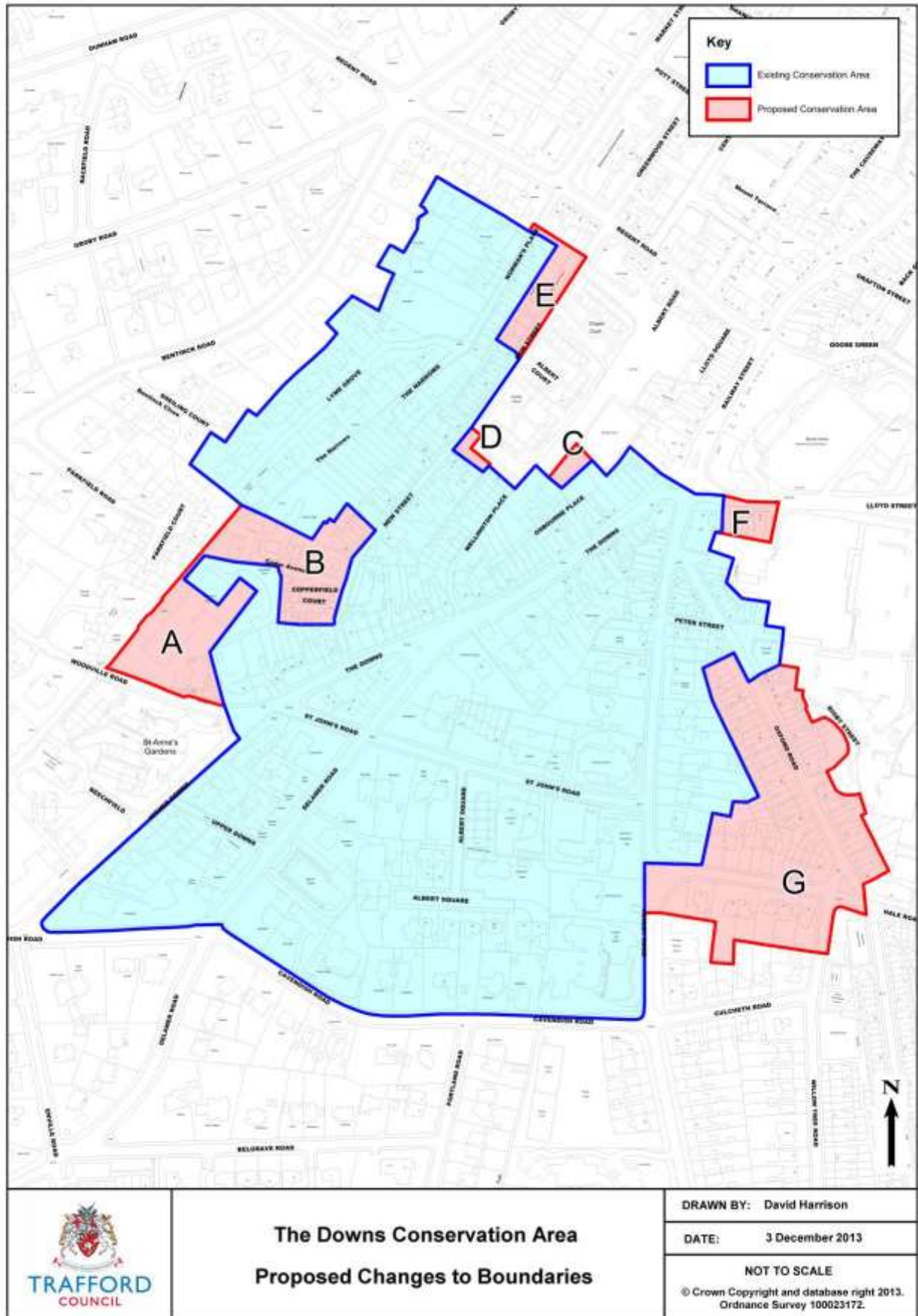
⁵ Section 71 (3) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

⁶ Section 71(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

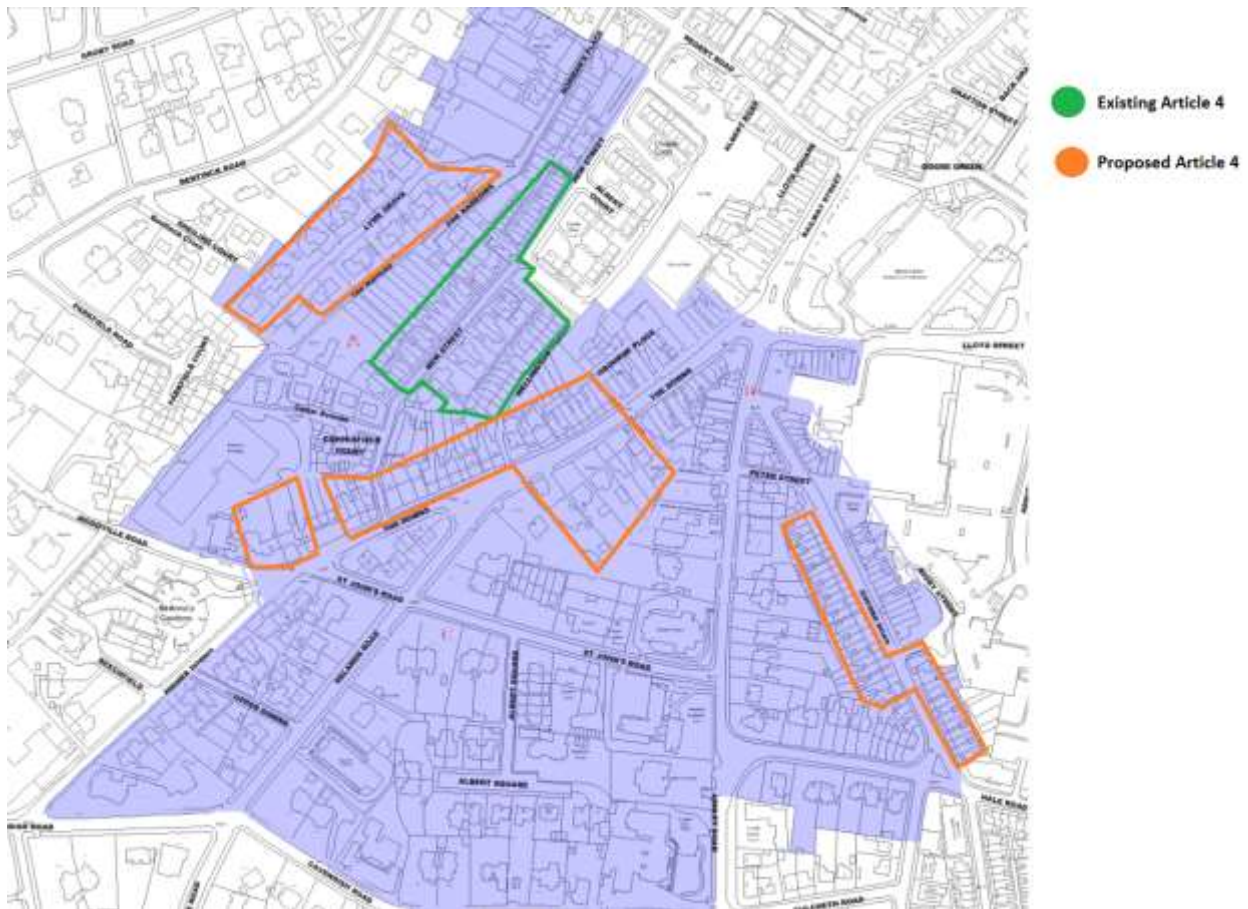
⁷ Historic England (English Heritage), *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, (2006) para 2.8.

⁸ Historic England (English Heritage), *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, (2005).

- 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.



Map 1: Conservation Area Boundary with extensions adopted 2014



Map 2: Plan showing the properties that are proposed to be subject to Article 4 Directions in The Downs Conservation Area.

1.4. Methodology

- 1.4.1 This Management Plan builds on work carried out for the preparation of The Downs Conservation Area Appraisal. Several site surveys were carried out in late 2014/early 2015 during the course of preparing the Appraisal, where photographs were taken and features of the Conservation Area noted. Historic research was carried out in local archives and a summary of the special interest of the Area was prepared.
- 1.4.2 For the Management Plan a more detailed site survey of the Conservation Area was carried out on 1st September 2015. Survey sheets were filled out for each area, which recorded building materials, shop fronts, upper floors, boundary treatments and rear extensions. Extensive photographs were taken and details of the public realm and streetscape noted and photographed.

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:
- 1.5.3 *'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.'*⁹
- 1.5.4 In addition the Trafford Core Strategy, formally adopted on 25th January 2012, contains the following policy on the Historic Environment:
- Policy R1 – Historic Environment relating to designated and non-designated heritage assets.
 - Policy R2 – Natural Environment.
 - Policy L7 – Design

⁹ Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*, (2012) para. 126 .

- 1.5.5 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 Area Designation, until they are replaced by the Land Allocations Development Plan Document.
- 1.5.6 All borough planning policies and supplementary planning guidance are available on the council website and should be consulted in tandem with this Management Plan:
<http://trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning.aspx>.

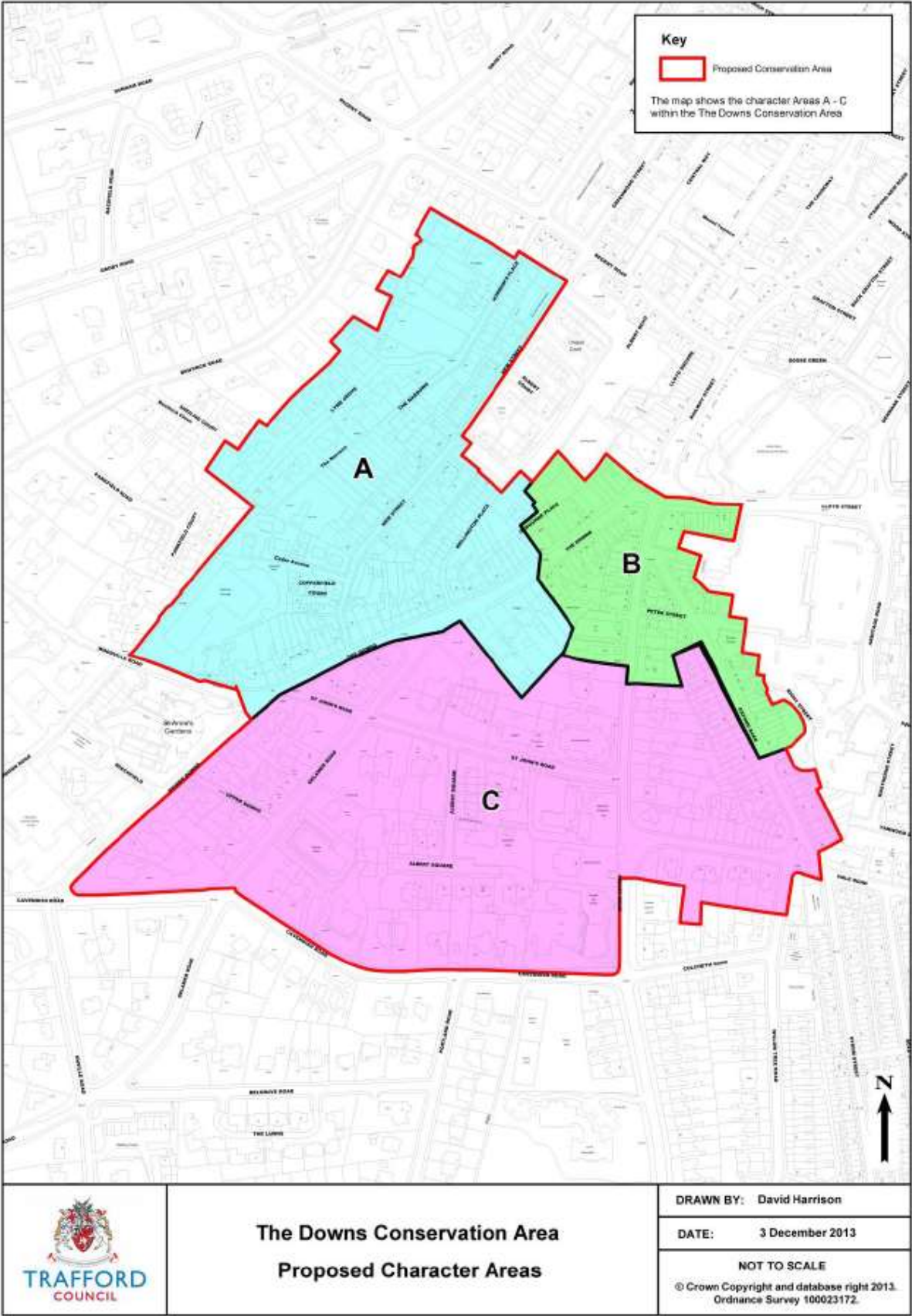
1.6. Conservation Area Policy Guidance

- 1.6.1 This appraisal has taken into consideration methodologies and advice outlined by Historic England (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 structures in The Downs Conservation Area. This design guidance should be used as a reference for building owners as to the suitable styles, materials, shop fronts and advertisements that should be used within the Conservation Area. It will also be used by Trafford Council to determine the outcome of applications for changes to the properties. This document should be read in conjunction with the Draft Sandiway Conservation Area Appraisal and this should follow the principles set out in PG14 Advertisements and PG17 Shop Fronts (and any superseding adopted guidance).
- 2.1.2 The Downs is comprised of three distinct Character Zones, centred on the historic route of The Downs, which runs between Altrincham and Bowdon (see Map 3 below). Views across the Conservation Area are significant and the mix of residential and commercial properties dating from the late-18th, early-19th and late-19th century is all of high quality, retaining many original historic features.
- 2.1.3 The main pressures and problems within the Conservation Area relate to the demand for housing, the pressure to adapt residential houses to 21st century living, commercial unit vacancy, changes to the rears of properties, traffic, parking and bin storage.



Map 3: Character areas A, B and C adopted in 2014

2.2. Building types and uses

- 2.2.1 The Conservation Area is comprised of three distinct Character Zones; with an eastern commercial area (B), bound by residential properties on either side (A and C). The residential dwellings comprise of late-18th century and early-19th century development to the north and later Victorian, large individual villas to the south.
- 2.2.2 The predominant use of the Conservation Area is residential, the houses of which are an attractive mix of early and later 19th century terraces set within small front gardens, dense late Victorian commercial shops and detached villas set back within extensive grounds.
- 2.2.3 Character Zone A is the oldest area of the Conservation Area and the main former and present use is residential. Character Zone B is made up of some buildings that were built pre-1852 but have been converted to commercial or retail use in the late-19th century. The majority of properties were built in the late 19th century specifically for the purpose. Many are now in mixed use, with residential apartments above. Character Zone C is residential in character but is supplemented by large public buildings such as schools and churches, largely dating to the second half of the 19th century.
- 2.2.4 Modern development within the Conservation Area has not centred on any one area and is characterised as late 20th century infill, making use of existing sites. Some of the larger residential properties in Character Zone C have been converted into apartment blocks or offices.

2.3. Architectural styles and features

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- 2.3.1 The architectural styles include short Classical terraces with simple but attractive detailing, High Victorian dense commercial development with polychromatic brickwork and large villas in various revival and Arts & Crafts styles.

Character Zone A

- 2.3.2 Character Zone A is the earlier core, comprising The Downs, New Street, Wellington Place, Norman's Place and Lyme Grove. The Downs has the greatest variety of buildings within the Character Zone, with many unique two storey terraces with town gardens. Those at the lower end are larger and often have rear courts with outriggers and other service accommodation.
- 2.3.3 The area is characterised by short terraces in a simple Classical style dating to the late-18th and early-19th century. Each terrace was developed by a different builder and as such has distinctive and unique features such as the door design, fanlights and railings. New Street, Wellington Place and the north side of The Downs in particular are significant for this arrangement.



Original doors on The Downs with timber panels and stained glass



Original doors on New Street



Original doors on New Street



Original door on the left and a replacement on the right at Nos. 72-74 New Street



*Original fanlight, bell pull and railings on No. 42 The Downs.
The door is a slightly later replacement with stained glass*

- 2.3.4 Pairs of symmetrical houses with a central door arrangement are a key design feature. Examples include Nos. 72-74 and 79-81 New Street. String courses, low brick walls and brick arched entrances are all common local details. Each short terrace also incorporates a name or date stone. Railings have been removed in the past but recent reinstatement is generally not successful in terms of design or materials. Some original railings do survive, for example at No. 42 The Downs.

- 2.3.5 Original door surrounds and fanlights are a key feature, and while many original doors do survive, it is clear that some others are high-quality replacements or adapted original, for example with the insertion of stained glass panels. Traditionally, external Georgian doors would not have included glazing. Later houses have traditional Edwardian stained glass panels to doors and windows.
- 2.3.6 A high proportion of original early-19th century sash windows have survived within the Conservation Area, some in a good condition and some in need of renewal. Some have been replaced in the later 19th century with larger two or four pane sashes, while more recently inappropriate uPVC top-opening casements have been installed.
- 2.3.7 Lyme Grove has the largest properties in the Character Zone, which have bow windows, stained glass panels, pitched dormers, decorative brickwork both in colour and dentillated bands, and stone for lintels, cills and keystones.
- 2.3.8 Nos. 77-89 and 24-80 New Street and Nos. 1-11 and 2-12 Wellington Place are already subject to an Article 4(2) Direction in order to protect the important external appearance of the properties and to ensure historic features are retained. There is scope to extend the Article 4(2) to properties at Nos. 1-19 (odd) and Nos. 2-20 (even) Lyme Grove and Nos. 82-86 (even), Nos. 32-78 (even) and Nos. 33-43 (odd) The Downs in order to better protect the character and appearance of Character Zone A.



View along Lyme Grove



Simple classical terraced houses with round arched doors, 8 over 8 sash windows and Flemish bond brickwork at 46 New Street



High Victorian architecture making use of polychromatic brickwork and fanciful Gothic gables and arches



Details such as bay windows, 6 over 6 sash windows, broken-pedimented porch and rubbed brick arches



Simple terraces on New Street harmed by inappropriate style doors, uPVC windows and intrusive satellite dishes

Character Zone B

- 2.3.9 Character Zone B is comprised of late-19th and early-20th century commercial properties in a High Victorian style with a mix of shop fronts. This architectural style incorporates elements of Gothic, Italianate and other revival elements, such as decorative bricks, polychrome brick detailing, pointed arches and pitched dormer windows. This area encompasses the bottom of The Downs and Oxford Road and exhibits a denser urban grain than other zones in the Conservation Area. Architectural features include brick detailing, bands of stone or brick, ornate bargeboards, decorative ridge tiles and chimney stacks, decorative gable ends, pitched dormer windows and string courses.
- 2.3.10 Ashley Road is characterised by three-storey semi-detached villas of Cheshire brick with cellars and attics, set within gardens. The houses have bow windows, sash windows and are relatively plain in decorative style.
- 2.3.11 The loss of original features such as windows, doors, gardens and boundary walls from the residential properties along Oxford Road has seriously compromised their significance and is harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



High Victorian terrace of substantial houses. Many have suffered from inappropriate replacement of features such as windows, doors and boundary walls



Cheshire Vernacular features such as black and white timber framing from the early 20th century on Hale Road



Late Victorian buildings in commercial and retail use on the lower Downs with some poor ground floor frontage alterations



Local details include eye catching timber bow windows and shop fronts along Oxford Road

Character Zone C

- 2.3.12 Character Zone C is the largest area, centred around St John's Road, encompassing an area of development by speculative builders that was subject to strict covenants at the time, such as prescribed plot sizes, materials and design. This has created an area with a harmonious character, with matching low stone boundary walls and houses set back within large grounds behind dense planting. Equally, the speculative construction has led to considerable variation in style and detailing, which is made obvious from the prominent position of the houses on raised ground, with imposing entrances.
- 2.3.13 Architectural designs are in a variety of revival styles including Arts & Crafts, Cheshire Vernacular, Italianate, Gothic and High Victorian. There are also some examples of Jacobean architecture (Bowdon Preparatory School). The principle streets characterising this are Ashley Road, Cavendish Road, Delamer Road and The Downs. Externally, the buildings retain many original features such as windows, doors, roofs and gardens with the low stone boundary walls.
- 2.3.14 St John's Road has a different character, as a street with a high proportion of modern 20th century infill development. The 1960s dark brown bricks, timber boarding and concrete roof tiles are all out of character with their surroundings. The modern development continues along Albert Square, where it terminates in a cluster of rendered early 20th century houses in the Arts & Crafts style.



Many buildings within the Conservation Area are unique, such as this rendered, Gothick style villa



Example of the large villas found within Character Zone C (Cavendish Road)



The rendered houses of Albert Square



Example of the cream 'Bowdon' brick buildings within Character Zone C (Delamer Road)

2.4. Building materials

Character Zone A

- 2.4.1 The predominant building materials in Character Zone A are red and Cheshire brown brick, in a variety of bonds, utilising red brick and decorative terracotta for the principal façades. The earlier buildings make use of Flemish bond with burnt headers to give interest to the simple elevations, while later Victorian buildings rely on decorative terracotta or stone mouldings. Welsh slate is the predominant roofing material, while modern alternatives are generally unsuccessful aesthetically.
- 2.4.2 Particular features are the delicate cast-iron fanlights, original timber panelled doors and sash windows and some original railings. Boundary walls are generally low red brick with stone copings in this area.



Flemish bond brickwork, slate roofs, doors bow windows, original timber sashes and mature planting



Red brick, terracotta detailing, bargeboards, original stone lintels, and windows

Character Zone B

- 2.4.3 In Character Area B many buildings have retained original features at high level, such as window, roofs and decorative brickwork. Red brick and terracotta is used but more commonly Cheshire brown brick and polychromatic decorative detailing in blue and white brick is used. Slate is the traditional roofing material and is mostly Welsh but some are Westmorland slate. At ground floor level the buildings have been subject to a higher degree of alteration due to the rapidly changing nature of the commercial units. Modern materials such as plastics, aluminium and illuminated signage are found here. The residential properties along Oxford Road have also suffered a high degree of alteration, with uPVC windows and doors, and removal of front gardens.

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Italianate features such as deep bracketed eaves and double height bay windows can be seen on Hale Road. Note the converted basement

Character Zone C

- 2.4.4 In Character Area C the original developers made extensive use of the cream 'Bowdon' brick, particularly on Delamer Road, as well as red brick and Cheshire brown brick. Larger and public buildings such as the Bowdon Preparatory School for girls are built in rusticated stone, while a small number are rendered (Albert Square). Roofs are generally in Welsh slate although some 20th century buildings have utilised different materials such as timber cladding and pantile roofs, with limited success.
- 2.4.5 Local details include timber bargeboards, single or double pane sash windows, deep timber bracketed eaves, clay ridge tiles, terracotta tiles and decorative chimney pots.



Substantial late 19th century housing on the south of The Downs built in cream 'Bowdon' bricks



Rusticated stone is used in the Conservation Area on the larger buildings. Bowdon Preparatory School

- 2.4.6 Across the Conservation Area, the Victorian tradition of designing houses in Revival styles has led to a wide range of building materials being used within a small area. For example Lyme Grove contains an eclectic mix of styles, features and decorative materials.

2.5. Scale and massing

Character Zone A

- 2.5.1 Character Zone A is characterised by a combination of two and three storey terraced and semi-detached housing originally designed for both the middle and working classes. The scale is larger along Lyme Grove, with a smaller, denser urban grain to the south of this. These houses have small town gardens to the front and yards to the rear, and follow the earlier narrow plot layout.

Character Zone B

- 2.5.2 Within Character Zone B the buildings along the lower part of The Downs are generally two and a half storey, often with attic dormers. To the east along Oxford Road the scale of the shops is smaller but the residential houses are fairly substantial, often with inappropriate converted basements and modern openings, which are harmful to the Conservation Area.

Character Zone C

- 2.5.3 Character Zone C is characterised by large detached or semi-detached houses, often of two storeys tall with substantial basements and attic storeys. The massing of the houses in this area is much larger and their raised position within the plot increases their prominence.



The diminutive scale of early 19th century housing along The Downs



Landmark building at the entrance to The Downs from Railway Street



A example of the substantial semi-detached and detached villas along Delamer Road



The church hall and spire of St John's church, a key landmark within the Conservation Area

2.6. Green spaces

- 2.6.1 In Character Zone A the tree at the road junction of The Downs and Delamer Road is of particular importance as an important landmark within the public realm. In Character Zone B many of the houses front directly on to the roads but wide streets and spacious junctions still manage to create a feeling of spaciousness. The loss of front gardens from conversion to driveways on Oxford Road is detrimental to the Conservation Area. Character Zone C has a spacious suburban feel due to wide streets, large plot sizes and mature tree planting. It also feels quite enclosed and private due to the role of the planting to screen the houses. In this area the few public buildings have some green space, such as the two churchyards.
- 2.6.2 The planting in Character Zone C is of particular interest due to its design and development in the 19th century when there was much interest in arboretums and tree collections. The gardens contain a wide variety of mature trees of different species, many exotic. Similarly, the planting of boundary hedging above and behind the stone walls is also varied with regard to species.

- 2.6.3 The important historic routes within the Conservation Area should also be acknowledged here for their amenity value as open spaces. The Narrows for example leads from Altrincham to Bowdon through Norman's Place. The contrast between these narrow pedestrian walkways and the open character of The Downs is strong. The Downs is wide and spacious and softened by a traffic island containing a single tree. There is no planting within the public realm but the characteristic gardens are very visible and are a strong positive element within the Conservation Area



Mature raised gardens behind low brick retaining walls are common



The Narrows, note the inappropriate timber fencing



The junction of The Downs and Delamer Road



View along Cavendish Road



Loss of gardens to create parking for converted offices, Delamer Road



New Street showing the positive impact of the mature trees and the negative impact of wide yellow lines and plastic bollards.

2.7. Trees and Landscaping

- 2.7.1 The Conservation Area has few open or green spaces but this lack of public space is made up for by the extensive mature trees and dense hedges and planting within the private gardens. This is particularly prominent in Character Zone C but even the small front gardens in Character Zone A are well-established and their raised position adds to their prominence. Lyme Grove for example has small gardens to the front and rear, within brick boundary walls.

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2.8. Shop fronts, advertising and signage

- 2.8.1 The majority of the shop fronts within the Conservation Area are found in Character Zone B. They make use of a wide variety of window treatments but retain earlier features such as cast-iron pillars at Nos. 27-31 The Downs and an architectural wooden fascia at Nos. 12-14.
- 2.8.2 There is a single shop front within Character Zone A on New Street as in the photo below. This is an original late 19th or early 20th century shop front and should be used as a guide for alterations elsewhere within the Conservation Area. Features include stall riser and cornice, recessed doorway and pilasters.
- 2.8.3 The majority of shop fronts have been subject to on-going alteration and additions, creating a cluttered streetscape at ground floor level. Many of the existing fascia signs are too 'brash' and have lighted signs at right angles to the building line, which detract from historic character.

- 2.8.4 Canvas awnings are considered to be historically accurate details but many of the current awnings in use (La Farina) are inappropriate for their scale and materials. Appropriate examples can be found at Nos. 1 and 7 Oxford Road
- 2.8.5 Original or appropriate traditional features can be seen:
- No. 31a The Downs – bow window with glazing bars, decorative column and stall riser, although the fascia boards are too large
 - No. 27 The Downs – slender columns and a fascia set back within the extent of the shop front
 - No. 11 The Downs – the recessed doorway, large windows with slender supports, individual lettering and stall riser
 - No. 8 Ashley Road – the pilasters and arched windows are appropriate but the fascia is overlarge – extending beyond the fascias
 - No. 5 Oxford Road – traditional pilasters, glazing bars and a recessed fascia with subtle lettering
 - No. 13 Oxford Road – a high quality traditional-style replica shop front with pilasters, stall riser, recessed door, Queen Anne style glazing and slender fascia with painted letters
- 2.8.6 Intrusive and inappropriate features include:
- The residential property entrance at No. 23a The Downs
 - The shop window, projecting fascia and signage at No. 21 The Downs
 - The overlarge fascia at No. 19 The Downs
 - The plastic signage and modern materials at No. 25 The Downs
 - The garish colours and modern shop fronts at No. 18 The Downs and No. 12 Ashley Road
 - The modern porch projection at No. 16 The Downs
- 2.8.7 Several commercial and retail properties have inappropriate security features that create blank façades and a feeling of unease and insecurity within the area. Solid metal roller shutters are particularly problematic, especially when shops are vacant for long periods. Some shops have internal shutters that are more acceptable (No. 3 Oxford Road) but these solid options are always less successful than open shutters.



An original shop front within Character Zone A on New Street



Shop fronts along the lower Downs



Traditional replacement shop front on Oxford Street



An appropriate use of awnings within the Conservation Area, no. 1 Oxford Road



Inappropriate use of solid security shutters on Oxford Road



Original shop fronts with stall risers, slender glazing bars and panelling. The fascias are not appropriate

- 2.8.8 Advertising within the Conservation Area generally relates to existing shop fascias but there is a common problem of excessive 'for sale' and 'to let' boards seen here, as seen across Altrincham. These boards can often be doubled across a property if the lower and upper floor is to let separately. Vinyl window stickers at Nos. 1-5 The Downs, a now vacant property, are particularly visually intrusive.



A proliferation of 'sale' signs on the first floor of commercial units



Modern plastic fascias on shop fronts within Character Zone B



Large format banners associated with a public house

2.9. Rear elevations

- 2.9.1 While the principal elevations of the properties within the Conservation Area have avoided excessive change and are in a good condition, the rear elevations have been subject to extensive alteration over time. Most change has taken place at the rear of the both residential and commercial properties to create additional and more useable living spaces.

Character Zone A

- 2.9.2 In Character Zone A the early layout of the building plots has meant that each property only has a small back yard, which is now under pressure of development for more living space. The outrigger building form of the rear that is commonly seen was dictated by the plot form and depth, the need to allow for some natural light, and to fulfil service uses including access to an outside privy.

Character Zone B

- 2.9.3 The condition of the rear elevations also varies greatly. Many of the rears of properties to Ashley Road for example are in a deteriorating condition. Properties within Character Area B appear to have suffered the most alteration and extensions, linked to their commercial use, to the detriment to the historic character. Recent planning applications for retail units within Character Zone B have related to extensions and alterations to the rears of properties (for example 16-20 The Downs).

Character Zone C

- 2.9.4 There has been a long tradition of historic alterations to the rear of properties. On Oxford Road for example, alterations include the conversion of outbuildings to additional living spaces, the demolition of redundant features such as privies/coal stores, the conversion of outbuildings to garages and the addition of outriggers on one, two or three floors. Such alterations vary greatly from one property to another both in terms of the structural changes and the design of elements such as windows. Some alterations are historic but many are more recent and also vary in the level of harm to character and appearance. Ancillary facilities have been adapted to new uses by owners to meet 21st century needs; some have included inappropriate materials and extensions.
- 2.9.5 Larger detached properties within Character Zone C are subject to additions such as side and rear extensions and conservatories. Extensions in modern materials are unlikely to be acceptable and should not be visible from the street or principle elevations.



Rear elevations to properties along The Downs viewed from New Street



Rear elevation showing rendered outriggers, ground floor extensions and converted attic spaces with additional windows



Interesting three storey outriggers can be seen to the rear of Hale Road

2.10. Boundary Treatments

Character Zone A

- 2.10.1 Character Zone A has a fairly dense urban grain with terrace houses set back from the street behind low boundary walls containing small town gardens. These are generally brick walls with coping stones, sometimes with original or replacement railings of varying heights. Supplementary privet hedges are also seen here and some walls created from upstanding natural slabs. Stone gateposts in a variety of styles and sizes are seen here, although some have been repositioned to make room for a driveway. This has also resulted in the loss of boundary walls and gardens.
- 2.10.2 The rears of properties are often bound by taller brick walls, for example the rears of The Downs seen from New Street. These can be in a poor condition and in need of repointing.

Character Zone B

- 2.10.3 The buildings at the lower end of The Downs within Character Zone B are hard against the street (as are some properties at the lower end of New Street) and as such have no boundary treatments. On those with low brick walls, the use of railings becomes more common closer to the town centre. The majority of railings are reinstatements and are generally intrusive due to the scale and modern design. Some timber fencing can be seen in the Conservation Area (i.e. Ashley Road), which is not in keeping with the character and appearance. Along Oxford Road a short row of terraces have had their front walls and gardens removed completely to create parking, which is harmful to the streetscape and does not reflect traditional frontages. Further south the majority of gardens have been paved over with some basements converted to garages although at the far end the low stone walls have survived.

Character Zone C

- 2.10.4 Character Zone C is comprised of large planned housing plots, with strict covenants on the boundary treatments that were accepted. All properties here originally had low stone walls with stone gateposts but size and colour varied. The houses are generally set on higher ground and highly visible from the street beyond boundary treatments despite the mature hedge, tree and shrub planting. Hedges are of holly, privet, laurel and yew above a rusticated stone wall with additional screening provided by shrubs within the garden. Conversion to apartments or offices has put pressure on gardens, seeing replacement with hardstanding for parking.



Typical low stone boundary wall, additional planting and a local mile stone



Historic gatepost with modern driveway



Reinstatement railings are generally poor quality and inappropriate



Gateposts have been painted and possibly front widened to create a driveway



Houses along Oxford Road that have lost their gardens to create off-street parking



Original boundary treatments found throughout Character Zone C

2.11. Public Realm

Character Zone A

- 2.11.1 The public realm of Character Zone A is characterised by modern tarmac roads, although in some areas, including Lyme Grove and Wellington Place some have stone setts at the edges and some have been reinstated to driveways. The street lamps are very tall and fairly intrusive as they rise above the rooflines of houses. However, the traditional gas-lamp-style lamp posts in Lyme Grove and Wellington Place are appropriate for the historic setting. There is also an original Victorian post-box at the top of The Downs.



Victorian Post Box

- 2.11.2 Traffic calming measures along New Street attempt to control the flow of traffic along this narrow street, but this has led to a cluttered streetscape of tarmac, concrete paving, signage, yellow lines, speed humps and bollards. Parking controls and restrictions have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area in general, with a proliferation of signage, parking metres, and road lines.

Character Zone B

- 2.11.3 Character Zone B is also largely tarmacked, with concreted paving stones, and some areas of cobbles. Modern interventions include traffic islands, stainless steel bollards and tall intrusive lighting columns. The urban and commercial character of this area is strengthened by modern pavements, bollards, traffic lights and islands.

Character Zone C

- 2.11.4 Character Zone C has a less urban and a more suburban character, with tarmacked roads and pavements but with traditional stone kerbs. Modern driveways to properties add to these hard surfaces and some of this private space is of poor quality and detracts from the street scene, for example the coloured concrete flagstones in front of some of the modern houses on Nos. 1-11 Albert Square.
- 2.11.5 There is a mixture of signage, both old and new, and a mixture of street lighting including modern black lamp posts and concrete posts.



Signage in a variety of styles gives a cluttered appearance



Traditional stone setts and more modern surfaces sit side by side on Lyme Grove



A traditional style lamp in Character Zone A



Modern paving along the lower end of The Downs

2.12. New development

2.12.1 Inappropriate development within The Downs Conservation Area i.e. that, which will have a negative impact on the ability to appreciate its architectural history and special interest, is defined as:

- The significant loss of front garden space in favour of off-road parking. Where buildings are set further forwards in their plot such development will not be permitted. Buildings within a larger plot and/or set further back from their front boundaries will have greater flexibility but still need to respect a sympathetic balance of hard surface area to garden.
- The removal and/or alterations to historic boundary walls, gate posts and/or gate openings.
- Front extension which will make the building more prominent from the road where there are presently glimpsed or partial views. Where there is a unified front

building line across a collection of buildings, front extension would not be appropriate, including porches or verandas where there were none originally.

- Side and/or rear extension which will significantly reduce the intervening space between the existing building and plot boundary.
- The increase of roof heights which is not in keeping with the building's wider context.
- The subdivision of an existing plot into multiple plots and infill development will generally not be permitted due to the impact on the spacious character of the Conservation Area and the prevalence of surviving historic plots throughout the Conservation Area.
- The demolition and replacement of a building identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as a listed building or positive contributor (see Map 4). However, this is not an exhaustive list of buildings inappropriate for demolition. Applications will therefore be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Alteration, re-building or new development which is stylistically inappropriate and/or comprises an inappropriate palette of materials.
- Basement development work which will significantly alter the proportions of a building's exterior (with the additional of light wells or semi-sunken extensions, for example).

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Character Zone A

- 2.12.2 The majority of modern development within the setting of Character Zone A has been excluded from the Conservation Area, for example Albert Court and Chapel Court. However the mid-20th century chapel and associated hall on New Street are included within the boundary. Copperfield Court is a late 20th century development that incorporates an earlier structure into some of the dwellings and there are several infill properties at the top of The Downs. This infill development from the 1960s and 1970s is intrusive for its choice of materials, poor quality and unsympathetic design. Dark brown bricks, white timber cladding, Classical porches and a lack of traditional boundary treatments all cause harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Modern development at 80,80a and 80b The Downs



Copperfield Court

Modern development on The Downs



Additions to the ends of terraces attempt to emulate the existing structures but fall short on detailing such as decorative key stones and corbels

Character Zone B

- 2.12.3 The modern development within Character Zone B is centred on Ashley Road. This includes the modern buildings at Nos. 30 and 32 Ashley Road, which uses brown brick, metal window frames and pillars and the more recent Weatherspoon's on No. 1 Ashley Road, is of red brick, sandstone and glass. Fairbank House on Ashley Road is a modern office development, a substantial structure that takes design cues from the large semi-detached villas in the area, with pointed arches, polychromatic brickwork and dormer gables.
- 2.12.4 Views along The Downs to the east are visually harmed by a tall new building (outside the Conservation Area) at the corner of Stamford New Road and Lloyd Street, which detracts from the character of the area.

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The Weatherspoon's development on the junction of Ashley Road

Character Zone C

- 2.12.5 Within Character Zone C the 20th century development is largely inappropriate for its setting, taking no design cues from its surroundings. The YWCA building for example, which is currently vacant and considered to be a development opportunity. Southbank on

Cavendish Road and Trinity Church on Delamer Road are also vacant. However, refurbishment of Trinity Church has now commenced as part of a scheme for conversion into apartments. Planning permission has also been granted for schemes to convert Southbank and Delamer Lodge into residential accommodation.

- 2.12.6 The large individual housing plots in this Character Zone are under development pressure for either replacement or adaption for 21st century use. Many existing buildings have been converted to multiple occupancy but it is important that the special character of the building set within extensive grounds is retained. The development of garden land and increases in density would have an adverse impact on the grain of the Conservation Area. For example the triangular site at the top of The Downs was originally a single house plot and now contains three large housing blocks showing the impact of increased density on the historic grain.



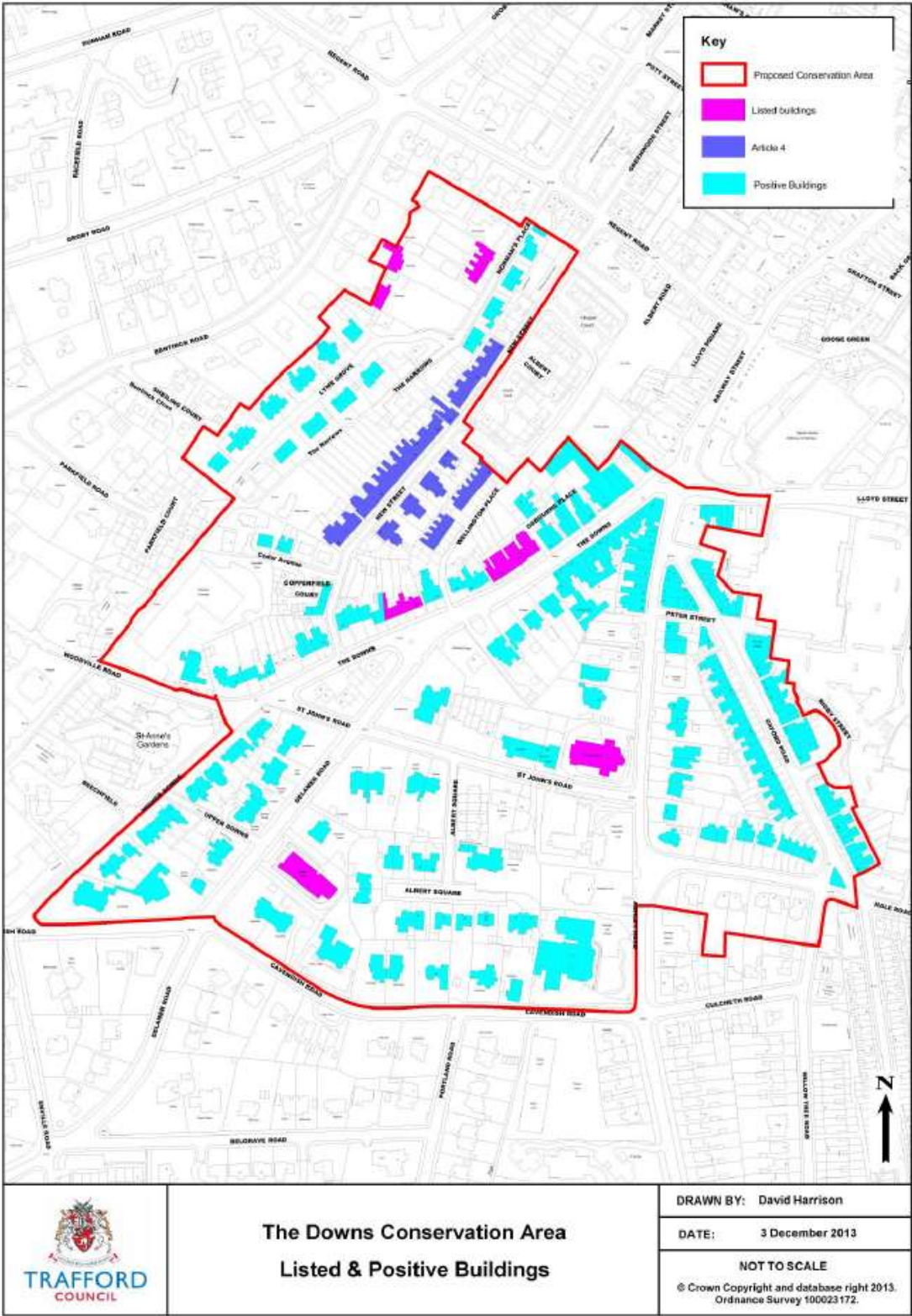
A replacement buildings on the site of a previous 19th century villa



Redundant church on Delamer Road prior to work starting on a residential scheme



The derelict YWCA building on St Johns Road



Map 4: Townscape analysis

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 Downs Conservation Area must be the preservation and enhancement of its character, appearance and special architectural interest.
- 3.1.2 The Conservation Area has a harmonious mix of residential and commercial styles from the late-18th to the early-20th century. It has always, and continues to be, subject to alteration and development pressures. In order to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area, an assessment of significance and guidance on future management has been undertaken.
- 3.1.3 The ensuing policies therefore set out parameters to manage future change to the Conservation Area. It is not the intention to prohibit change; the policies will stipulate appropriate materials, methods, and designs which will conserve the special character of the Conservation Area where change is proposed.

3.2. Adoption and Enforcement

Aims

- To maintain the special interest of the Conservation Area, in particular to bring back the coherence of the residential dwellings through appropriate repairs and replacements.
- To consider the widening of the Article 4(1) direction for the Conservation Area. There is currently an Article 4 Direction on Nos, 77-89 and 24-80 New Street and Nos. 1-11 and 2-12 Wellington Place.
- To ensure that building owners and local estate agents are fully aware of the Conservation Area and possible Article 4 designations which affect permitted development rights.
- To ensure the policies and guidance contained within this plan remain up-to-date.

Policy 1

The Article 4 Direction will remain in force on the houses identified on Map 2 (p.5). Under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995, the classes of permitted development that have been withdrawn are: Schedule 2 Part 1 Class A and D and Part 2 Class A, as such planning permission must be obtained for:

- *The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse. This includes all extensions, changes to windows, doors, cladding and dormers.*
- *The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse.*

The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.

The council should consult on the possibility of widening this restriction to the Conservation Area under the Article 4(2) direction. A map showing the proposed additions to the Article 4(2) are included in map 2 (see also section 1.1.8). To apply an Article 4(2) Trafford Council must define the properties to be included within the direction, consult with owners and notify them of its adoption. Consideration should be given to the withdrawal of permitted development from the following classes: Schedule 2 Part 1 Class A, B, C and D and Part 2 Class A. This covers more classes than the existing Article 4 and it is proposed the existing Article 4 could also be extended to covers these classes. As such planning permission would need to be obtained for:

- *The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house. This includes all extensions, changes to windows, doors, cladding and dormers.*
- *The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwelling house.*
- *The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.*

Policy 2

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.

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Policy 3

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

Policy 4

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 5

Seek to undertake a Heritage at Risk strategy for the Conservation Areas across Trafford Council 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.

Policy 6

3.3. Design, Materials and Techniques

Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

Aims

- To ensure a consistent use of traditional building materials and local details throughout the Conservation Area, preserving the sense of visual harmony and ensuring that historic fabric does not become irreversibly damaged or lost through the use of inappropriate materials and techniques.
- To ensure the varied character of the buildings in the Conservation Area is preserved through the continued use of an appropriate palette of materials and features.

Policy 7

Ensure that adaptations to achieve 21st century expectations are sensitive to the historic character and appearance of the building; balancing the need for new facilities with the retention of original features, detailing and decorative materials.

Policy 8

Each proposal for change should be informed by an assessment of the existing building and its wider context in line with the requirements of national guidance. Proposals for change will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Policy 9

Repair work to historic buildings is to be carried out using like-for-like materials and using the appropriate traditional technique.

Policy 10

Brick walls should not be painted or rendered. Where repairs are needed to the brickwork this should be done with like-for-like replacements. The predominant building material is to be red, cream or brown brick, with contrasting coloured details.

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Policy 11

Lime mortar matching the colour and material composition of the existing pointing and render should be used for any repointing or rerendering works to historic buildings and boundary walls.

Policy 12

Half-timbered elements should be repainted white with black timber where such features are part of the original design.

Policy 13

Rainwater goods should be black cast iron or aluminium.

Policy 14

Roofs should be repaired with the original roofing material; this will either be in Welsh or Westmorland slate or clay tiles.

Policy 15

Where original timber doors and windows survive these should be retained. If refurbishment is required this should be done in a like-for-like manner and replacing the minimum fabric necessary to make the repair. If thermal upgrading is required, secondary glazing with a frame that follows the glazing bars of the external window should be used.

Policy 16

Replacement of doors or windows should be in timber. Other materials such as aluminium may be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that a design can be found which matches the form of the original window design for that particular property or is of an appropriate door design to match the historic style of that particular property, and the replacement represents a significant improvement over the existing windows and doors. Where windows are replaced, they should respect the size and form of the original opening(s) and glazing bars, and be of an appropriate traditional design. Replacement doors and windows should not detract from the established character of the building.

Policy 17

Replacing single glazing with double glazing is acceptable only if the windows require replacing and there is no material change to appearance i.e. making use of slim line/conservation double glazing. Historic glazing should be retained where possible. UPVC plastic windows and standard double glazing is not considered acceptable.

Policy 18

Maintenance should be carried out regularly to ensure vegetation is not damaging brick or stonework and rainwater goods are clear, to avoid deterioration to fabric.

Policy 19

Established architectural detailing and features such as stained glass, fanlights, chimney pots or decorative terracotta and joinery are not to be removed or replaced, unless on a like-for-like basis. All replacement features to the front of properties should conform to the original design of the property, as set out in the design guidance above.

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Policy 20

Ducting, ventilation, satellite dishes and other functional features should not be installed on the front elevation of properties. Additions to rear and ancillary street elevations should be unobtrusive to protect the visual amenity of the Conservation Area.

Policy 21

The installation of modern windows or light wells to serve newly converted basements at the front of the property should not be permitted if they harm the appearance of the Conservation Area. This will include the inappropriate use of materials, the loss of front gardens and boundary treatments or the introduction of hardstanding.

Policy 22

Roof lights should not be installed in locations that impact on the aesthetic value of the principal elevation or streetscape and should not be disproportionately large compared to the established fenestration. Conservation roof lights should be installed rather than standard roof lights.

3.4. Shop Fronts, Advertisements and Signage

Section 2.7 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

Aims

- To ensure that traditional and historic shop fronts do not become irreversibly damaged or lost through the alteration or installation of inappropriate shop fronts or advertisements that fail to enhance existing heritage assets.
- To provide detailed design guidance for owners and applicants regarding alterations to premises, including appropriate design of shop fronts and the accommodation of new commercial uses.
- To enhance the positive contribution traditional shop fronts make to the Conservation Area and setting of heritage assets.
- To ensure that building owners and local estate agents are fully aware of the Shop Fronts Planning Guideline, 1997, a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

Policy 23

Proposals should follow the principles set out in the Shop Fronts Guidance, 1997 and this Management Plan. Advertisements, signage and shop fronts will be assessed on their effect on amenity and public safety.

Policy 24

Advertisements should not detract from the building or shop frontage. Signage that is of an appropriate scale and style will be required and the use of appropriate materials, colours and illumination will be key to their success.

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Policy 25

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 26

Awnings and canopies within The Downs Conservation Area will need to be carefully designed using traditional materials (plastics are strongly discouraged) or subtle colour-schemes to be considered appropriate. Retractable canopies are favoured over fixed ones. The most appropriate style is a canvas awning that retracts into a slim line box on the building below the first floor building line.

Policy 27

Large advertising hoardings or large format banners will not normally be permitted within The Downs 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. Large format banners will only be permitted where a building is to be scaffolded for building or related work, and that such scaffolding covers an entire elevation. No commercial advertisements will be permissible on these.

Policy 28

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

Policy 29

Vinyl and window stickers should cover no more than 20% of the total window area and will only be permitted within The Downs Conservation Area if they are not considered to cause substantial injury to amenity by reason of their scale or impact significance.

Policy 30

Proposals for shop fronts should have a presumption in favour of preserving traditional and historic fascias, whether this is through repairs, replacement or reinstatement.

Policy 31

Design - Suitable shop fronts include those with a subtle use of colours and traditional design such as stall risers, thin timber glazing supports, and traditionally glazed window displays. Large display windows should have vertical glazing divisions while architectural features, such as cornices and stall-risers should be retained as part of any alterations or repairs. Replacement shop fronts should make use of these traditional features. The design for retail premises that spans across two or more distinct structures should incorporate vertical divisions of the original width, retaining a visual distinction at ground and upper floor levels.

Policy 32

Scale - New fascias should not protrude above ground floor level, project outwards or beyond the edges of the building. The most successful fascias fit within the existing boundaries of the shop front i.e. below the cornice. Consideration should be given to the scale and proportion of traditional shop fronts within the surrounding streetscape. New fascias should not obscure existing architectural features or extend across two or more individual shop fronts. The fascia should form an integral part of the design of the shop front surround, rather than be a separate board superimposed upon the building.

Policy 33

Colour palette – Shop fronts should be in harmony with the buildings and not be overly dominant within the street scene. Garish and neon colours are not acceptable. 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 34

Materials - The use of powder or plastic-coated aluminium for shop fronts is strongly discouraged. Signage with individual lettering will be encouraged in opposition to large flat fascias with no depth. Traditional materials and methods of advertising will be encouraged. 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 35

Illumination - 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. 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 36

The use of appropriate illumination to pick out the key characteristics or architectural qualities of listed buildings and those within conservation areas will also be encouraged where appropriate and where there is no significant harm to any neighbouring residents.

Policy 37

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. External grilles and roller shutters are less appropriate and are unlikely to be supported.

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3.5. Vacancy and under-use

Sections 2.11 and 2.7 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

Aims

- To preserve the vibrancy and strong economic and historic presence of the Conservation Area as a local centre of business.
- To ensure under-use of premises is addressed to avoid deterioration of fabric and harm to aesthetic significance.

Policy 38

Applications for repairs, renovation and change of use for upper floors to residential use will be looked upon favourably. Residential and commercial new uses on upper floors are preferred but creative solutions such as pop-up shops, galleries, workshops and community facilities are welcomed to encourage better use of these spaces.

Policy 39

Where properties are adversely affecting the amenity of the Town Centre, the Council should use its powers under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to require action from

property owners to remedy the external condition of the premises. Enforcement action should be taken to require the improvements to be carried out if necessary.

Policy 40

Trafford Council should work with owners of vacant priority sites within The Downs in order to achieve appropriate solutions for the future of the buildings. Priority sites include the YWCA building (Alexandra House), Southbank, Delamer Lodge and the church on Delamer Road.

3.6. Boundary Treatments

Section 2.9 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

Aims

- To avoid low-quality boundary treatments that have an undesirable effect on the character of the Conservation Area and the removal or alteration of those boundary treatments, including gateposts that add to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- To ensure the consistent character of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.

Policy 41

The low-level brick boundary walls to residential dwellings within Character Zone A are to be retained. Replacement boundary walls are to extend no higher than the original boundary walls. Supplementary planting above these walls is acceptable. The introduction of new railings is only acceptable when set back within the garden, behind new or existing planting. Surviving original railings should be retained. Tall brick walls to the rear of properties should be retained and repaired when necessary.

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Policy 42

The low-level stone boundary walls to residential dwellings within Character Zone C are to be retained. Replacement boundary walls are to extend no higher than the original boundary walls. Supplementary planting above these walls is acceptable while the use of railings is discouraged. Trees and shrubs should not be planted too close to the boundary walls to avoid damage by roots.

Policy 43

Original gateposts are to be retained and should not be painted rendered or otherwise altered. Removal will not normally be acceptable. New gateposts are not to exceed the height of the original gateposts. Copies of original gateposts in stone are encouraged as acceptable replacements. Gate openings are not to be widened or re-positioned unless it can be proven that access is unsafe. Any gate additions should be constructed in traditional materials and should not create a solid visual barrier to the property beyond.

Policy 44

Boundary treatments (and front gardens) should not be removed to create additional hardstanding, garaging or parking. In particular, the distinctive raised/mature gardens that survive in Character Zone A, the surviving treatments on Oxford Road and the substantial grounds within Character Zone C should not be removed. The reinstatement of traditional front gardens and boundaries will be encouraged..

Policy 45

Having no boundary treatment is acceptable in locations where this does not already exist, for example properties fronting directly onto the road in Character Zone B. Rear property boundaries in these locations, such as high brick walls, should be retained and repaired when necessary.

Policy 46

Timber fencing panels are generally not acceptable as a main or supplementary boundary treatment where adjacent to the public highway. Tall and ornate railings detract from the original modest properties and should not be used. Traditional planting and low boundary walls are preferred.

Policy 47

Pointing to boundary walls is to be minimal and of traditional lime mortar.

3.7. Streetscape and Public Realm

Sections 2.6 and 2.10 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

Aims

- To enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by improving road surfaces that is appropriate for their historic setting.
- To enhance key pedestrian routes and reduce the impact of heavy traffic within the Conservation Area.
- To retain historic features which add interest to the character of the area.
- To preserve key views within the Conservation Area

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Policy 48

Historic pedestrian routes, alleys and squares should be preserved, particularly the pedestrian route along The Narrows.

Policy 49

Where funding allows areas of damaged road or pavement surface are to be repaired, and a strategy is to be sought and implemented regarding maintenance, road markings, signage and on-road parking. Road markings are intrusive in some areas and narrow 'conservation' style primrose yellow lines of low profile should be introduced or the lines removed altogether when possible. Maintenance of The Narrows should be carried out on a regular basis to avoid deterioration.

Policy 50

Utility companies and other contractors should be made aware of the importance of the streetscape of the Conservation Area to avoid unsympathetic repairs and poor reinstatement following repairs. Any new proposals for IT infrastructure such as cabinets, masts, columns and

the like should not be sited on or adjacent to prominent buildings, positive contributors or within identified important views and vistas.

Policy 51

Surviving historic stone setts, paving and kerbstones should be preserved and kept in good condition. Reinstatement and repair is also encouraged. Every effort should be made to retain and restore historic street furniture rather than replace them.

Policy 52

Discordant lighting columns and different levels of lighting are found throughout the Conservation Area and will be replaced as necessary using a standard 6m high tubular column but with reduced light levels to “warm white” LED lighting. 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 53

Where resources allow, a traffic survey should be carried out to understand speeds, volumes and traffic patterns in order to preserve the historic character of the Conservation Area. Traffic movement should be controlled in favour of pedestrians. Thought should be given to the locations of on-street parking, the effectiveness of current traffic calming measures and their impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area.

Policy 54

Mature trees should be retained as their loss greatly diminishes character.

47

Policy 55

Where resources allow, a tree management strategy should be prepared and implemented throughout the Conservation Area, taking into consideration Tree Preservation.

Policy 56

The open spaces within the Conservation Area, including those around the public buildings, such as churches and schools, are to be maintained and conserved. Development on these areas, including the addition of hardstanding for parking is not acceptable.

3.8. Demolition, extensions and new development

Section 2.11 of this Management Plan provides further detail relating to the following policies.

Aims

- To encourage regeneration and investment that will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- To ensure new development within the Conservation Area is appropriate for its setting is of high quality and innovative in design.
- To preserve potential significance archaeology within the Conservation Area.

Policy 57

Two storey extensions to the rear of buildings are unlikely to be permitted. Single storey extensions or the conversion of outbuildings may be acceptable, subject to proposed size, scale, design and materials. Any proposed extensions should be high-quality and in-keeping with the character of the surrounding historic rear elevations. Extensions, to an existing building, should have regard to its established style by respecting the building's established features, form, proportions and materials.

Policy 58

New extensions to the side of properties are unlikely to be acceptable. Where extensions already exist, any further enlargement of the extension is also unlikely to be permitted. Extensions which alter the form and massing of roofs of residential dwellings will not be permitted. Loft conversions may be permitted only if conservation rooflights are used and are restricted to the rear elevations of properties.

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Policy 59

Basement extensions will be strongly discouraged, particularly in locations where front gardens, boundary treatments and planting is removed to increase access and light to the front of the basement light well. Development concerning the basement of a property should be sensitively designed so that it does not detract from the established architecture of the building and the balance of its exterior is not significantly altered (with the addition of light wells or large, semi-sunken basement extensions, for example).

Policy 61

Opportunities and proposals for reuse of redundant and vacant sites should be looked upon favourably, providing they respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Policy 62

Change of use and conversion from single residential dwellings to apartment blocks or offices (particularly within Character Zone C) will need to be robustly justified and the provision for car parking should be carefully detailed to avoid the loss of mature gardens and screening.

Policy 63

Thought should be given to the redesign of The Downs road system to reduce the dominance of vehicular traffic.

Policy 64

Any new development is to take inspiration from the established architectural styles which are well-established within the Conservation Area, such as the simple early-19th century and late Victorian revival styles. Use of traditional materials and architectural details would ensure new development is appropriate for its setting. Modern design is not prohibited within the Conservation Area but should be sympathetic to its historic context; have regard to appropriate siting, of a high standard; of an appropriate scale and proportions; and use appropriate, high-quality materials.

Policy 65

The Council will seek to resist the demolition or significant alteration of buildings identified as positive contributors including detached out buildings in the grounds of these buildings. (see Map 4).

Policy 66

The scale of any new development should mirror the existing building and plot sizes. The council reserves the right to refuse applications where any proposed development impedes on the building density of the wider area and/or the characteristics of the Conservation Area.

Policy 67

Trafford Council must consult with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service on the potential to uncover archaeological evidence of medieval or Anglo-Saxon features relating to the agricultural activity or settlement in these periods if any development is proposed which may affect this.

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Policy 68

Solar panels 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 any necessary subsequent amendments, this Conservation Area Management Plan will be adopted by Trafford Borough Council as a Supplementary Planning Guidance document. The design guide and policies contained within it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals for proposed works within the Conservation Area.
- 4.1.2 Both Trafford Council and building owners are responsible for the implementation of this plan. It is the responsibility of building owners to make 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

Planning Policies

- 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 Metropolitan Borough Council, *Linotype Conservation Area, Broadheath, Altrincham, Supplementary Planning Guidance – PG23* (November 2000)

Historic England

- 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 Downs 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

National Organisations

Historic England (formerly English Heritage)

North West Office, 3rd Floor Canada House, 3 Chepstow Street, Manchester, M1 5FW
Telephone: 0161 242 1416. <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/>. email: 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 email: admin@victorian-society.org.uk

Georgian Group

6 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 5DX
Telephone: 087 1750 2936 www.georgiangroup.org.uk email: info@georgiangroup.org.uk

Twentieth Century Society

70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ
Telephone: 020 7250 3857 www.c20society.org.uk email: coordinator@c20society.org.uk

Institute of Historic Building Conservation

Jubilee House, High Street, Tisbury, Wiltshire SP3 6HA
Telephone: 01747 873133 www.ihbc.org.uk email: 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*'.¹⁰ This requirement, as set out in legislation, is also reflected in national and local policy.

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.

¹⁰ 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.

Cill

The horizontal member at the bottom of a window or door to which vertical members are attached.

Coping

A course of masonry or brickwork that caps a wall in order to minimise water ingress. It can either slope in one direction (splayed or wedge coping) or slope in two directions away from a central high point (saddle coping).

Crown Glass Bullseye Panes

A type of hand-blown glass common between the 17th and 19th centuries. The glass took the shape of a flat disk, which could be cut to size; the glass is thicker and more opaque towards the centre, creating an effect known as a bullseye.

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.

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).

Horns (Sash Windows)

A moulded section projecting beyond the outer meeting-rail joint of a sash window frame. They restrict the weight being put on the frames, and are a feature of sash windows from the mid-19th century when larger sheets of glass began to be used. Their use in modern sash windows is largely decorative.

Lime Mortar/Render

A type of mortar/render composed of lime and an aggregate, such as sand, mixed with water. It is a soft, porous material that works particularly well with softer building materials such as historic brickwork, terracotta or natural stone.

Lintel

A horizontal beam or stone bridging an opening, usually above a door or window. It can be a structural load bearing component, a decorative feature, or a combination of the two.

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.

Outrigger

A local term used to describe a single storey outbuilding attached to the rear of a dwellinghouse. They were typically half the width of the house with a monopitched roof and originally served as storage or as WCs.

Quoin

A dressed or emphasised stone at the corner of a building, used for strength or to create a feature of the corner or an impression of strength. They can be imitated in brick or other materials.

Reconstituted Stone

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.

Sash Window

A window formed of one or more moveable panels formed as a frame to hold panes of glass. The panels are balanced by concealed weights and open by sliding in grooves.

String Course

A horizontal band or moulding, either of stone or brick, that projects from the surface of a wall.

Side Hung/Top Hung Casements

A window that is attached to its frame by one or more hinges and opened by using a crank or handle that also serves as a window lock. It can either be hinged at the side (side hung) or at the top (top hung) to open inwards or outwards.