



Flixton Conservation Area

**Conservation Area Appraisal
Consultation Draft
June 2016**

Flixton Conservation Area Conservation Area Appraisal Consultation Draft: June 2016

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1. Introduction

1.1. Designation of the Flixton Conservation Area

- 1.1.1 The Flixton Conservation Area was designated by the Trafford Council on 1st July 1975. There are no records of any extension or alterations to the boundary. A map of the Conservation Area boundary is given on page 2.
- 1.1.2 The Conservation Area is not on the Heritage At Risk Register for north-west England.

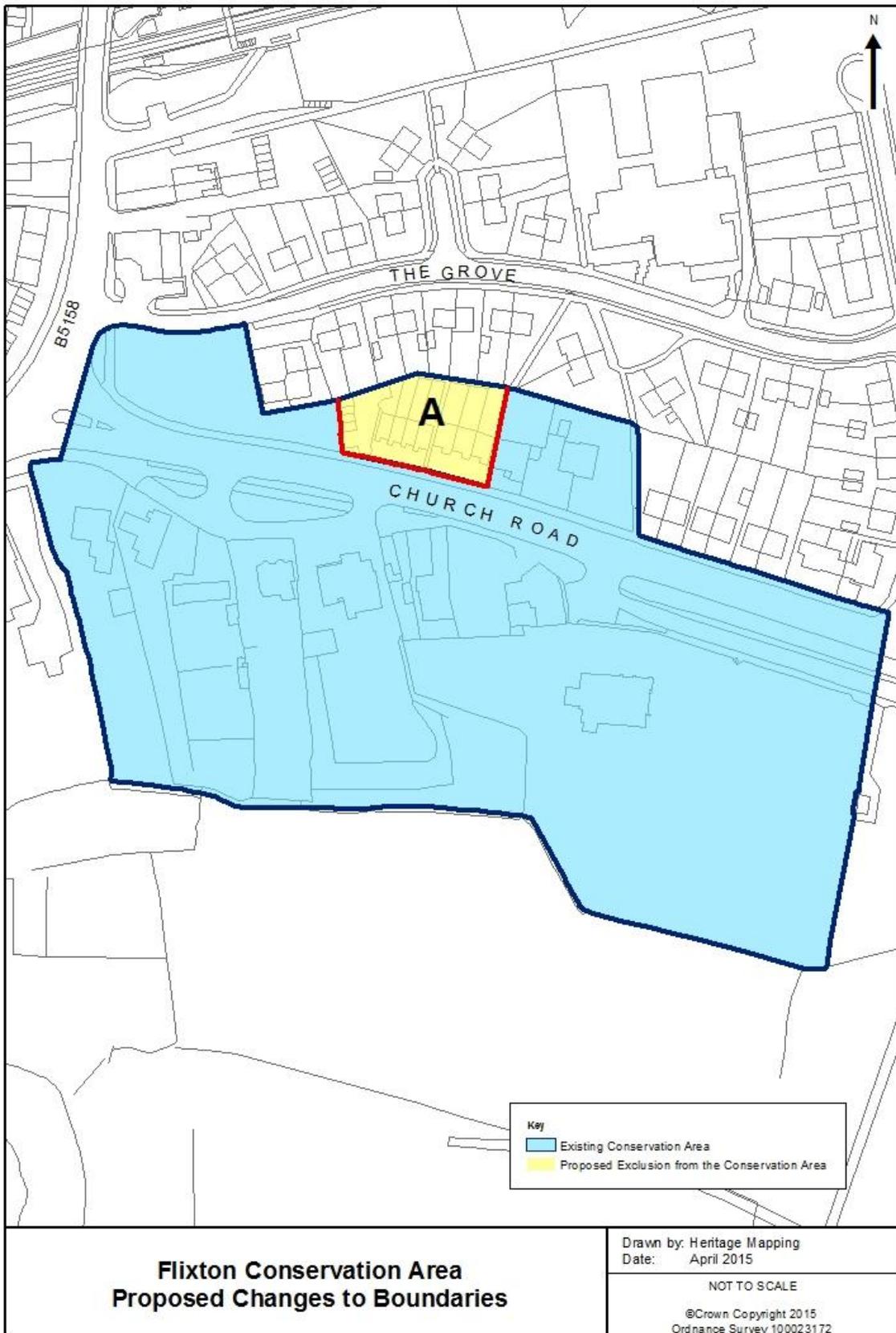
1.2. Definition of a Conservation Area

- 1.2.1 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. Local planning authorities also have a duty from time to time to review the extent of designation and to designate further areas if appropriate.² 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.
- 1.2.2 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.
- 1.2.3 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.³

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

² Section 69 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

³ Historic England, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (2011), para 2.2.21



Map 1: Flixton Conservation Area Boundary with proposed boundary amendment

1.3. Value of a Conservation Area Appraisal

- 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 appraisal 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.'*⁴
- 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.⁵
- 1.3.3 The purpose of the Appraisal is, in accordance with the methodology recommended by Historic England, to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Flixton Conservation Area.⁶ This appraisal has been used to prepare a draft management plan which sets out suggested actions to maintain and enhance the special character of the area. These documents will support the active management of the Conservation Area through the development control process, including support for appeals.
- 1.3.4 The undertaking of an appraisal will lead to a better understanding of the development of the Conservation Area, in terms of its local distinctiveness, setting and condition, which together contribute to the place it is today. This will enable the basis for positive management of the Flixton Conservation Area.
- 1.3.5 An adopted conservation area appraisal is a material consideration to appeal decisions and also relevant to decisions made by the Secretary of State when considering urgent works to preserve an unlisted building in a conservation area. An appraisal can inform those considering investment in the area, help guide the form and content of new development and result in an educational and informative document for the local community.⁷
- 1.3.6 The Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended (GPDO) sets out permitted development rights for certain minor forms of development - i.e. development that may be legitimately undertaken without the need for planning permission. An appraisal can assess whether or not permitted development rights are having an adverse impact on the special interest of a conservation area and whether or not the use of an Article 4 direction is appropriate.
- 1.3.7 This Appraisal will provide a character assessment of the present Flixton Conservation Area and those areas under consideration for extension. The document will seek to identify those factors resulting in adverse harm to the special interest of the Conservation Area, identify whether cumulative change can be addressed through Article 4 directions

⁴ Section 71(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

⁵ Historic England, *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*. (2006) para 2.8

⁶ Historic England, *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*. (2005)

⁷ Historic England, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (2011) paras 1.7 & 1.9

and assess if statutory action is required to safeguard buildings at risk. A review of existing boundaries has also been undertaken to determine if areas should be included or removed from the designation. This discussion is found in Section 6 and the proposed extensions are also shown on map 1 (page 2). Consequentially the document will provide background evidence for assessing the acceptability of development proposals.

- 1.3.8 Further guidance and proposals will be detailed in the corresponding Flixton Management Plan which should be considered in conjunction with this Appraisal.

1.4. Scope of the Appraisal

- 1.4.1 This document is not intended to be comprehensive in its scope and content. Omission of any specific building, structure, site, landscape, space, feature or aspect located in or adjoining to the Flixton Conservation Area should not be taken to imply that it does not hold significance and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the designated heritage asset.
- 1.4.2 As an area evolves evidence may emerge which provides a greater understanding of a heritage asset(s) and the contribution made to the special interest of the Flixton Conservation Area. Such information should be considered in conjunction with the Appraisal during the course of decision making by the local planning authority.
- 1.4.3 The positive characteristics as defined by this document should be the starting point for further discussion with the local planning authority where alterations are being considered to or will affect a heritage asset(s). Each site will be judged on its own merits and there are bound to be variations in the quality of individual developments. It will not be acceptable merely to emulate the least successful or highest density of these or to use such sites as an excuse for making matters worse. Instead regard should be paid to those elements which make the Flixton Conservation Area significant. Ultimately special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.⁸
- 1.4.4 This draft Conservation Area Appraisal has been produced by Trafford Council following the submission of an initial draft by Purcell.

⁸ Section 7(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1. National and Local Planning Policies

2.1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework provide the legislative and national policy framework for conservation area appraisals and management plans.

2.1.2 The NPPF (paragraph 126) states:

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

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;*
- *and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'*⁹

2.1.3 The NPPF (Annex 2) defines a heritage asset as: *'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).'* The guidance also states that a designated heritage asset is one that is classed as: *'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.'*¹⁰ A non-designated heritage asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance that is not protected under legislative framework.

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

2.1.5 The measures will reduce burdens by granting listed building consent automatically for certain categories of work or buildings through a system of national and local class consents. They will also increase certainty and reduce the numbers of unnecessary

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

¹⁰ Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*. (2012) Annex 2

consent applications by creating a certificate of lawfulness of proposed works to listed buildings.

- 2.1.6 This document must be considered alongside the Council's policies concerning development and the use of land as set out in the Trafford Core Strategy formally adopted on 25th January 2012. Of particular relevance are:

Policy R1 – *Historic Environment relating to designated and non-designated heritage assets*;

Policy R4 – *Green Belt, Countryside and Other Protected Open Land*;

Policy R5 – *Open Space Sport and Recreation*;

Policy R6 – *Culture and Tourism*; and

Policy L7 – *Design*.

- 2.1.7 A number of policies and proposals of the Revised Unitary Development Plan adopted in 2006 are currently 'saved', such as ENV21 Conservation Areas, ENV22 Conservation Area Designation and ENV 17 Landscape Character, until they are replaced by the Land Allocations Development Plan Document.

2.2. Conservation Area Policy Guidance

- 2.2.1 This appraisal has taken into consideration methodologies and advice outlined by Historic England 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
- Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance 2008

- 2.2.2 The Historic England document *Conservation Principles*, published in 2008, provides policies and guidance for identifying significance. Four heritage values are assigned through which a site or place can be interpreted; evidential, historical, communal and aesthetic.

- 2.2.3 Further guidance has been issued by Historic England in the suite of documents *Understanding Place* with a view to setting out approaches to undertake assessments of historic areas allowing a greater understanding of the character of a place and its capacity for change. In particular *Understanding Place - Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice* stresses the importance in '*identifying and understanding particular qualities, and what these add to our lives, is central to our engagement with our history and*

culture'. As referenced in *Understanding Place - Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice, Power of Place* published by Historic England, 'stressed the positive impact of local and 'ordinary' heritage – what might be termed the buildings and spaces in between 'monuments' – on the quality of people's lives and its central role in constructing local identity'.

- 2.2.4 In addition, consultation of the Historic Environment Record maintained by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) has been undertaken and also an assessment of the Trafford Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project 2008.
- 2.2.5 The proposals set out by this appraisal shall undergo a period of public consultation and will be submitted for consideration at a public meeting in the area to which they relate.¹¹ 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.¹²

2.3. Control Measures Brought About By Designation

- 2.3.1 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'.¹³ This requirement, as set out in legislation, is also reflected in national and local policy.
- 2.3.2 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.

¹¹ Section 71 (2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

¹² Section 71 (3) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

¹³ Section 72 (1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 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.

3. THE SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.1. History

3.1.1 Flixton does not appear to have been a settlement in the earliest periods and was remote from the main Roman roads. Initial agricultural and residential settlement began in the later medieval period, with a church foundation of 12th century. Flixton has associations with Peter Egerton of Shaw, an active partisan of the Parliament during the Civil War in the mid-17th century but otherwise there are few notable locals.

3.1.2 Growth of Flixton remained slow and the settlement was largely by-passed by the industrial and residential growth of the 19th century, even with the coming of the railway. A school was established in the village in the 1860s but had been demolished by the 1930s. By the latter half of the 20th century the settlement had transformed into an outer suburb of Greater Manchester.

3.2. Architectural Value aching

3.2.1 The defining characteristic of Flixton Conservation Area is not a specific building type or use of materials but the plan form and evolution of the settlement by piecemeal development over the centuries to form a cluster of heritage assets that represent a traditional mixed-use village centre, largely avoiding the development pressures of industrialisation.

3.2.2 The architecture of the settlement illustrates a variety of residential building styles from different periods. The style of the black and white timber-framing of the Arts and Crafts movement in the early-20th century is well represented within the Conservation Area. This Tudor Revival style architecture was popular on domestic buildings and on other structures in this period. The polychromatic brickwork relates to Gothic Revival architecture and the popular use of 'flat' decorative elements on building surfaces.

3.2.3 The earliest building within the Conservation Area dates to c.1672 and is an example of vernacular architecture. The remainder of the buildings are largely post-industrialisation and would have drawn on national architectural styles, standards and mass-produced materials.

3.3. Streetscape and Open Spaces

- 3.3.1 The streetscape of Flixton Conservation Area is comprised of two elements; the busy modern road that cuts through the area, running east to west, and the rural, leafy elements that survive of the original village street.
- 3.3.2 The retention of the ancilliary side streets called The Village in two locations is distinctive and is characterised by wide grass verges, mature tree planting and houses set back from the street. The different character of The Village and Church Road is also demonstrated in the different paving surfaces, with stone setts used on the former and tarmacked paving on the latter.
- 3.3.3 The churchyard surrounding the Church of St Michael to the east of the Conservation Area is a significant open space and almost merges into the open fields beyond with its low boundaries and grassed areas. The area contains many mature trees of different species.

3.4. Views and Landmarks

- 3.4.1 Significant views of the Conservation Area are from its boundary at the west and east of Church Road, particularly when looking into the Conservation Area from the junction of the B5158. Views along Church Road continue to offer elements of interest, just as glimpses and framed views, particularly when looking towards the entrance of the church and the Church Inn, and looking towards the cluster of historic buildings to the south.
- 3.4.2 Views to and from the green spaces in the Conservation Area are also significant. Particularly south across the churchyard towards the river.
- 3.4.3 The church of St Michael, the Church Inn and No. 26 The Village have been identified as landmark features due to their prominence within the Conservation Area.

3.5. Communal Value

- 3.5.1 Flixton Conservation Area is a small area of residential dwellings, a parish church and several restaurant or public house premises. The area still retains its rural character and is often referred to by local people as 'the village.'
- 3.5.2 Flixton Conservation Area holds value to the people who live within it and in the nearby areas as the historic core of their settlement. The settlement has a well-defined sense of place that is largely derived from its historic environment and the heritage assets contained within it.

3.6. Significance Statement

- 3.6.1 Flixton Conservation Area holds special architectural and historic interest as a traditional rural nucleated settlement for its surviving historic plan form, its enclosed rural character, its unique detached buildings from a variety of periods in a variety of styles, its well-established trees and views of surrounding open fields.
- 3.6.2 The continuing village-like character of the Conservation Area is linked to its quiet history and slow residential and industrial growth, possibly due to its position; away from arterial routes and squeezed between two rivers. The historic settlement has been dispersed to the north but the cumulative history of the village contributes to local distinctiveness.
- 3.6.3 The extent of Flixton Conservation Area is defined by the medieval burghage plots to the south. The survival of this historic plan form is significant and the continued use of each plot for a single dwelling is a key characteristic, even if the buildings themselves have been replaced. The widening of Church Road in the 20th century has altered the spatial quality of the settlement but its original layout can still be read.
- 3.6.4 Each plot contains a unique detached dwelling, all dating from different periods and utilising different architectural styles and materials. Buildings range from 1672 to the late-20th century, with each individual building being replaced when necessary rather than additional infill or an intensification of development. The majority of buildings contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, with some later modern development being the exception.
- 3.6.5 Although each building is unique, there are some consistent local details. Brick is the prevalent building material, which is accompanied by timber framing in numerous instances. The timber framing is either original 17th century or relates to the early-20th century Arts and Crafts architectural style. Polychromatic brickwork is used on several properties as a decorative technique. Two substantial historic public houses are key landmarks within the Conservation Area due to their prominent positions and the distinctive timber-framing used for both.
- 3.6.6 The Conservation Area is also defined by its green, rural character, with wide grass verges, a large churchyard, mature trees and properties set back from the road. Views from within the Conservation Area appear even more rural when looking out across the open fields to the River Mersey.

4. ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

4.1.1 This section of the Appraisal comprises a detailed analysis of the special interest of the Flixton Conservation Area with regard to its location and setting, historic development and archaeology, architectural quality and built form, open space, parks, gardens and trees.

4.2. Location & Setting

4.2.1 The Flixton Conservation Area is situated within the Urmston area of the Metropolitan Borough of Trafford in Greater Manchester. The Conservation Area is six miles south-west of Manchester city centre, within the historic county boundary of Lancashire.

4.2.2 Flixton Conservation Area encompasses the historic core of the village of Flixton and runs along a short stretch of the B5213. The village is bound by the River Mersey to the south and the Manchester to Liverpool railway line to the north. The wider setting to the north and west is suburban housing while to the south lies open land and to the east are two golf courses and Flixton Park. A small area of wooded land can be found to the south-west.

4.2.3 The Conservation Area does not encompass any railway stations but Flixton Station is nearby to the north. Immediately north of the Conservation Area is a service station/garage and St Michael's Church of England Primary School. To the west is a garden centre/nursery. Flixton Conservation Area is not connected to any major arterial routes; with the B5213 running from Stretford to Carrington, although the M50 is only three miles to the east.

4.2.4 There are no other conservation areas within the vicinity of Flixton.

Topography and Geology

- 4.2.5 The land on which the Flixton Conservation Area is located is principally flat and falls away slightly to the east of the Conservation Area.
- 4.2.6 The geology of the area consists of Triassic formations that include mudstone, siltstone and sandstone; these are the youngest rock formations in the Greater Manchester area.¹⁴
- 4.2.7 These local sandstones were predominately used for building up until the 19th century, when their prodigious use in the construction of the growing industrial towns surrounding Manchester exhausted sources of local stone.¹⁵

4.3. General Description, Character and Plan Form

- 4.3.1 The Flixton Conservation Area is a compact rectangular area covering the historic village core of Flixton. It spans from the junction with the B5158 to the west, along Church Road, which was widened in the 20th century, to the boundary of the church to the east. The focus of the area is a cluster of buildings developed from medieval burgage plots on the south of the street (B5213), set back from the road on a parallel street called The Village (the historic road before the B5213 was constructed). The Church of England place of worship to the east is also set back on a further section of The Village.
- 4.3.2 The buildings within the Conservation Area are almost all unique, ranging from a 17th century cottage range, a late-18th century house, 19th century properties, an early-20th century motoring inn and late-20th century housing. The Conservation Area is residential in character, with several buildings in restaurant and public house use. The defining characteristic of Flixton Conservation Area is not a specific building type or use of materials but the plan form and evolution of the settlement by piecemeal development over the centuries to form a cluster of heritage assets that represent a traditional mixed-use village centre, largely avoiding the development pressures of industrialisation.
- 4.3.3 There are some noteworthy open spaces within the Conservation Area; the green at the junction of the B5158 and the B5213, and the churchyard to St Michael's church. The two commercial premises also have substantial open spaces, to their rear or side, which has been hard surfaced.
- 4.3.4 The Conservation Area is relatively self-contained, with open fields to the south and a clear distinction in character to the west of the B5158 junction. To the north of the Conservation Area, the 1930-40s suburban road The Grove merges into the Conservation Area to a degree, meeting at The Green to the north-west.

¹⁴ Historic England, *Strategic Stone Study – A Building Stone Atlas of Greater Manchester, Introduction*. (London: Historic England, 2011)

¹⁵ Historic England, *Strategic Stone Study – A Building Stone Atlas of Greater Manchester, Introduction*. (London: Historic England, 2011) 1

4.4. Historic Development of Flixton Conservation Area

- 4.4.1 Below is a summary of the historic development of the Flixton Conservation Area. For further detail on the history of Urmston please refer to appendix C.
- 4.4.2 Although there have been some Neolithic and Bronze-Age finds in the wider area, there have been no major excavations in Flixton, nor is there any clear evidence of a settlement in these earliest periods. Rather, the parish of Flixton has a comparatively late history of human occupation for the surrounding area. It was neither on the main Roman roads to the Roman forts of Chester, Manchester and York, as with other early areas in Trafford, nor is the town mentioned in the Domesday Book.
- 4.4.3 However, its name is of Anglo Saxon origin with 'flet' meaning flat and 'ton' meaning town – signifying its location on a flat plain with close proximity to the flood plain of the River Mersey. The main occupation of the village tenants was farming and there were some yeomen marlers. Corn, fruit and potatoes were grown in abundance and in addition to this, many farms diversified by supplementing their income with cottage industry based activities such as spinning and weaving.¹⁶
- 4.4.4 Instead Flixton appears to have been first properly settled in the later medieval period, measuring three plough-lands and lying in the tongue between the River Irwell and the River Mersey, the former later becoming part of the Manchester Ship Canal.¹⁷ The earliest church – the Church of St Michael – originates from the 15th century but there is known to have been a foundation at Flixton from the 12th century. This indicates that there was some form of domestic and agricultural settlement in the parish of Flixton from at least the 12th century.
- 4.4.5 The red sandstone Church of St Michael's sits at the heart of the Flixton Conservation Area and most of the footprint of the 15th century church survives today, particularly in the chancel. Robert de Lathom inherited the estate in 1190 and appointed Henry de Torboc as the first rector of the church. It is thought that the first stone building was completed on the site in this period. Following this, for the next 300 years, Flixton had to make do with a visiting priest from the Diocese of Litchfield. The title of rector was not regained until 1866. Parts of the chancel contain the oldest fabric, from the 15th century. Several influential local families have closely been involved in the church, including the Radcliffe, Valentine, Asshawe and Egerton families. In 1731 the tower was rebuilt and in 1752 the nave was rebuilt and the south aisle extended. In 1815 the chancel roof collapsed following the undermining of a pillar for a new grave. It was rebuilt at high level above the window tracery. The north aisle was extended in 1852 and in 1863 the tower was rebuilt, in the same style, following safety concerns.
- 4.4.6 Further afield, evidence of medieval Flixton is also found in the distinctive street pattern of burgage plots which delineate the land surrounding the church, evident in successive OS maps. This therefore helps to place the earliest medieval settlement in Flixton within the Conservation Area boundary.

¹⁶ Flixton, Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010

¹⁷ 'The parish of Flixton', *A History of the County of Lancaster*, Volume 5 (1911), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52997> (accessed 22 October 2014)

- 4.4.7 The historic core of Flixton was known historically as Shaw Town, owing to 'Shaw Hall', the manor house that was located to the east of the village. The estate at Shaw Hall was referred to as a manor in 1594, although there is no indication that it was regarded as such during the medieval period.¹⁸
- 4.4.8 More broadly it is notable that Flixton's early history is otherwise remarkable quiet, with only one of its local gentry taking any real role in national events for example, and there being little evidence otherwise of charities or other foundations. Flixton's most notable figure was Peter Egerton of Shaw, who was an active partisan of the Parliament during the Civil War in the mid-17th century.
- 4.4.9 Some idea of 17th century Flixton can be gleaned from the hearth tax records of 1666. These detail eighty-nine hearths in Flixton, although only one house is recorded as containing more than four hearths. This property was owned by Leonard Egerton and was taxed for a total of 11 hearths, which must have stood out considerably in scale compared to neighbouring houses.
- 4.4.10 The same period saw the foundation of a school, which was ultimately sold in the late-19th century and later demolished in the 1930s, although the 1860s school house still stands. While there was therefore evidently a settlement of a reasonable size in Flixton in the post-medieval period, the only surviving fabric from this period, other than parts of the church, can be found in the late-17th century house Larkrise, which is inscribed on its timber rail '1672'.¹⁹
- 4.4.11 Slightly greater in number are the houses which relate to 18th century Flixton; for example, 16 The Village, located within the Conservation Area boundary, and Flixton House, which lies outside the Conservation Area boundary to the west.²⁰ These historic buildings and the street plan form the historic core of Flixton.
- 4.4.12 As with other areas in such close proximity to Manchester, Flixton was affected to some degree by the spreading influence of industrialisation in the later-18th and 19th centuries. It is, however, important to note here that Flixton was less affected in this regard than many other outlying areas of Manchester.

¹⁸ Flixton, Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010

¹⁹ Larkrise, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1067880> (accessed 22 October 2014)

²⁰ 16 The Village, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1162894> (accessed 22 October 2014); Flixton House and Outbuilding Adjoining Immediately North of Flixton House, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1067878> (accessed 22 October 2014)

- 4.4.13 The first move towards industrialisation brought about by the cutting of the Bridgewater Canal in the 1760s appears to have had little impact on the growth or character of Flixton, and the settlement remained small and agricultural. However, the construction of the railway through the north side of Flixton in the late 1840s, particularly the opening of Flixton Railway Station in 1873 as part of the mid-1870s expansion of the railway, brought about the most significant changes, gradually transforming the settlement into a commuter suburb for industrial Manchester.
- 4.4.14 The slower growth of Flixton was perhaps due to the geography of the settlement, the Rivers Irwell and Barton creating a natural boundary to development. However, being located so close to these rivers, it is perhaps curious to also note that the expansion of the Bridgewater Canal into the Manchester Ship Canal in the 1890s did not bring greater industrialisation to Flixton.



View along Church Road towards the church in 1906



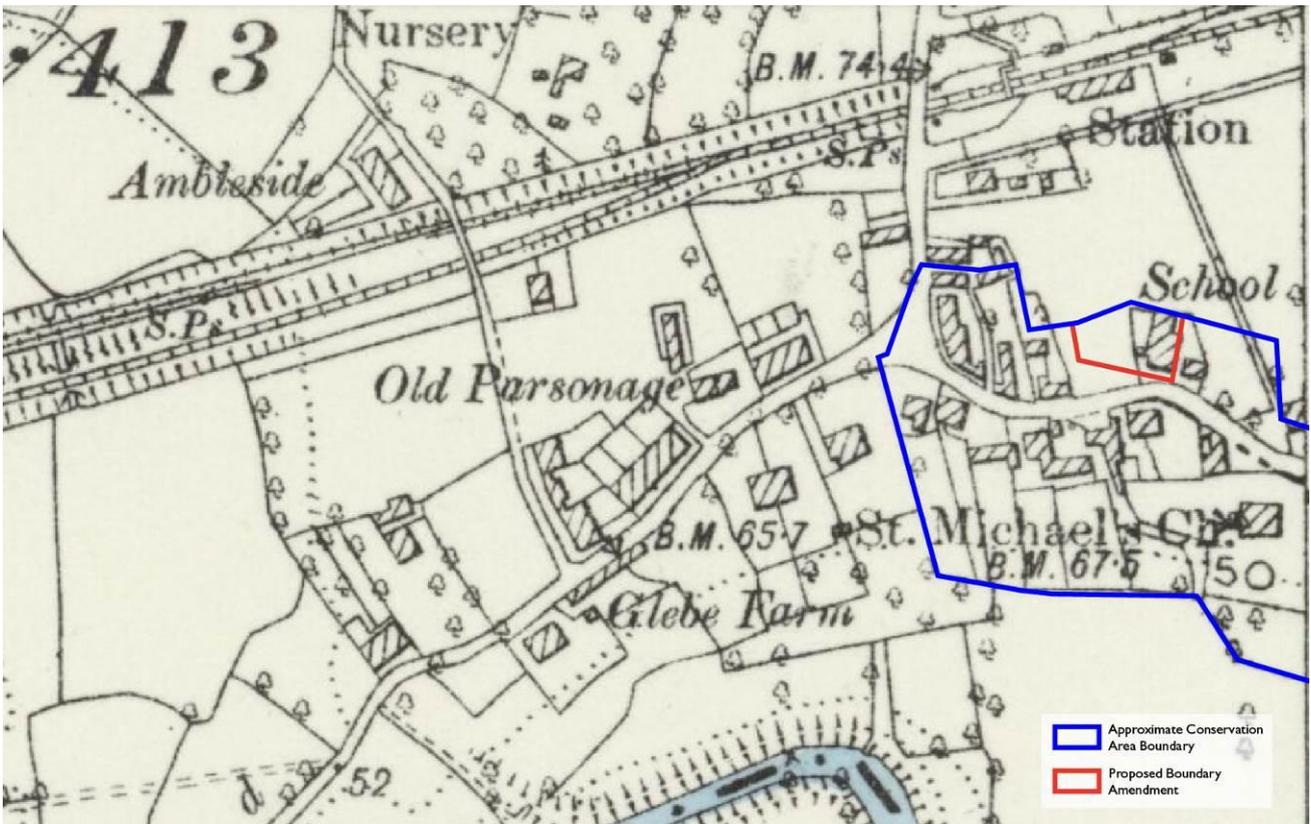
The Church Inn, photographed in 1907

- 4.4.15 Nonetheless, by the latter half of the 20th century, these events had brought about the slow residential and industrial expansion of the area, emanating from the railway line to the north of the Conservation Area. To the north and west, much of the farmland was built on to provide housing for workers at the Trafford Park industrial site during the 1930s. These changes did eventually result in the steady erosion of the boundaries of Flixton's early settlement, transforming the town into another suburb of the industrial city of Manchester.

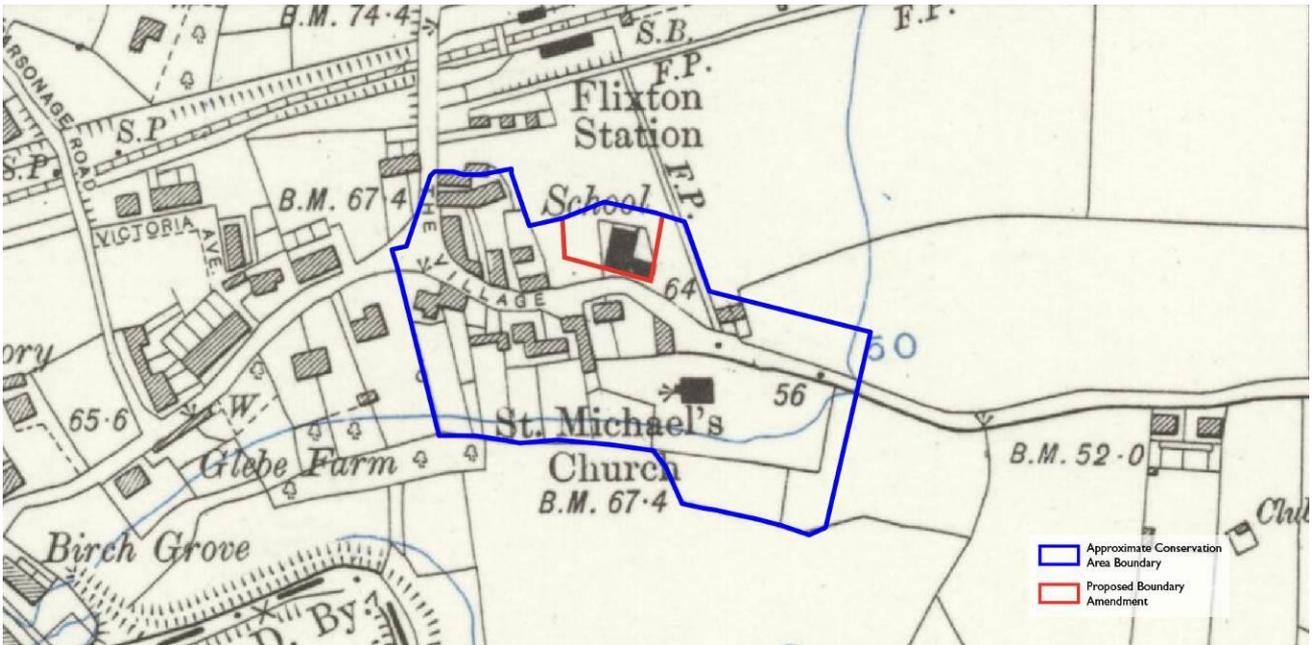
4.5. Map Progression



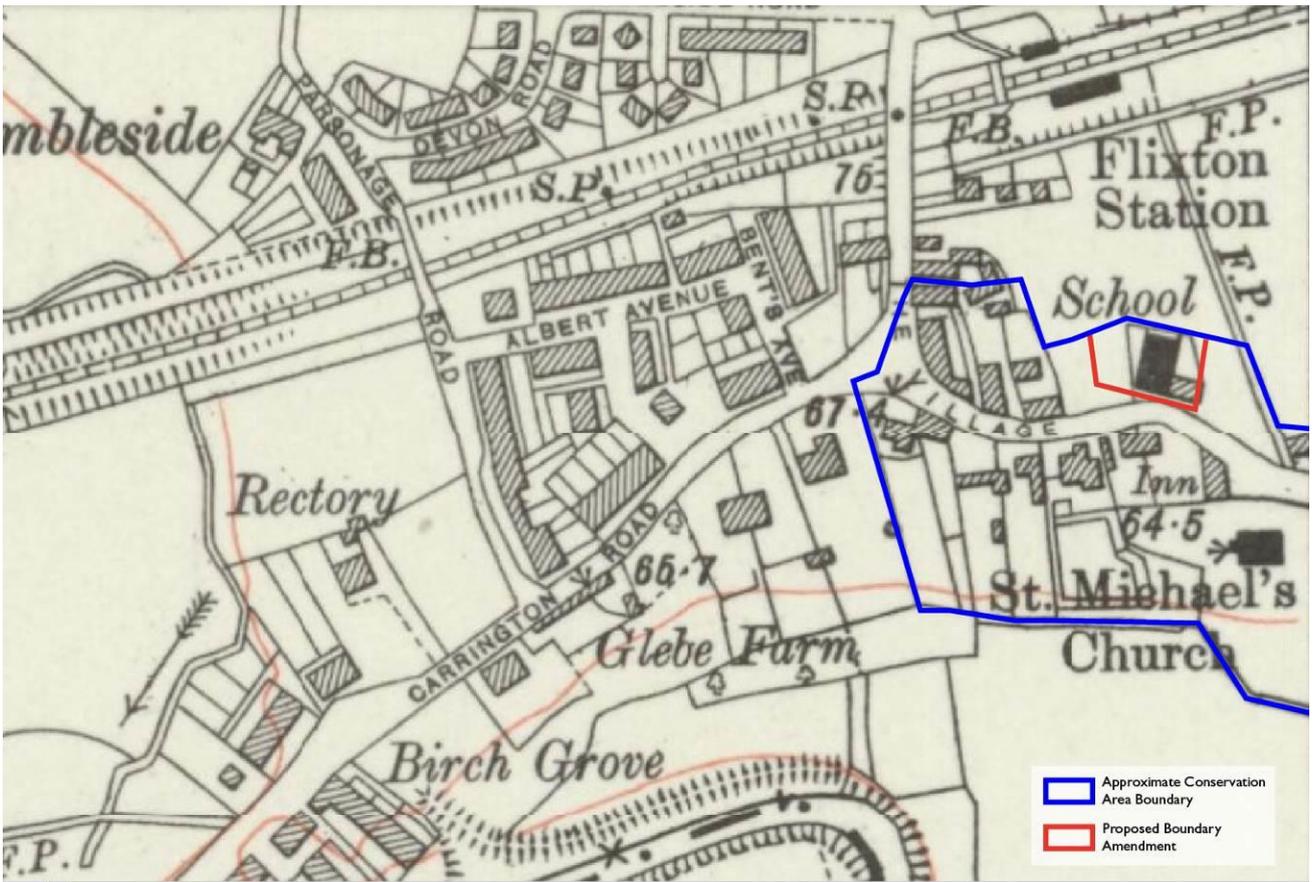
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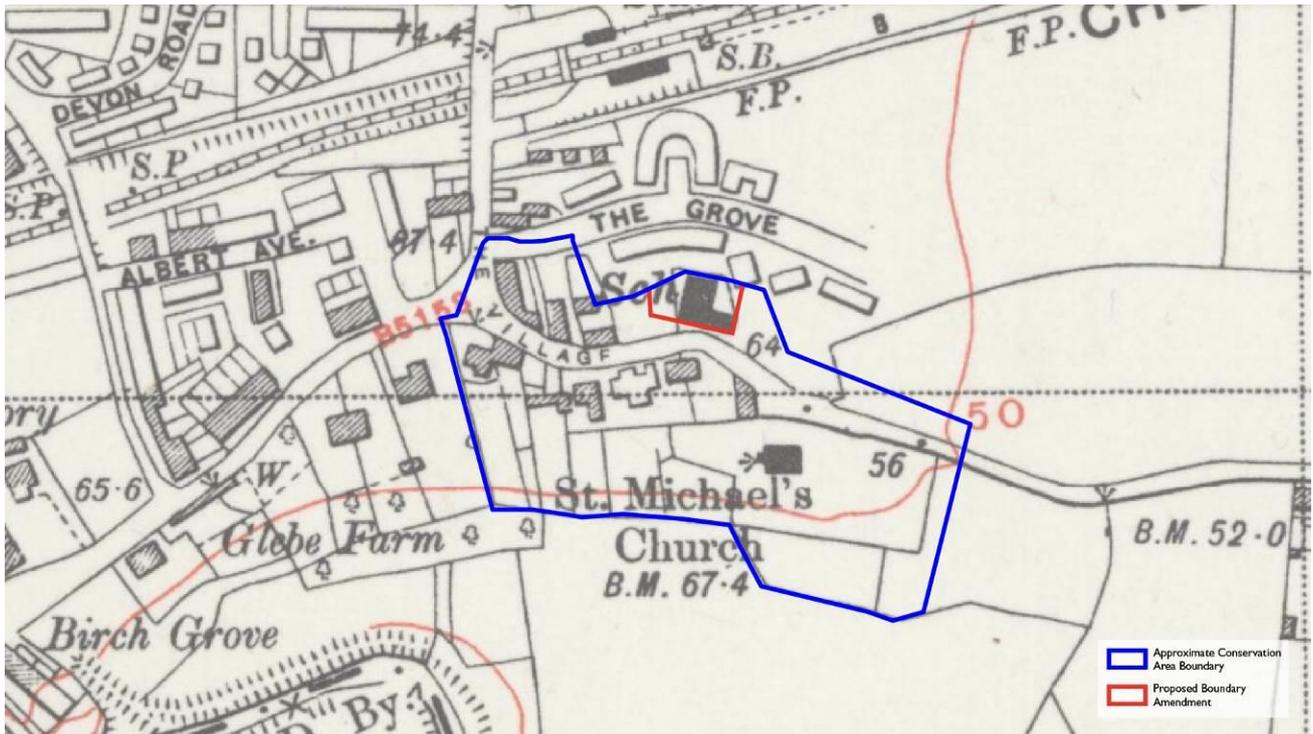
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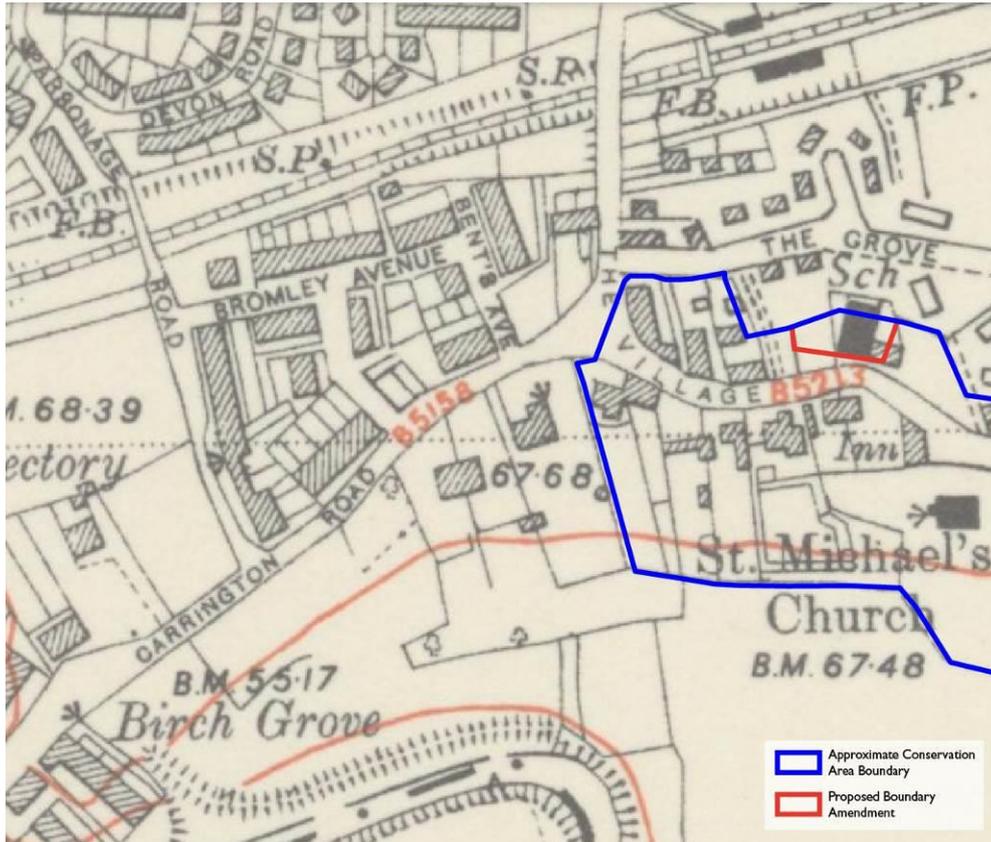
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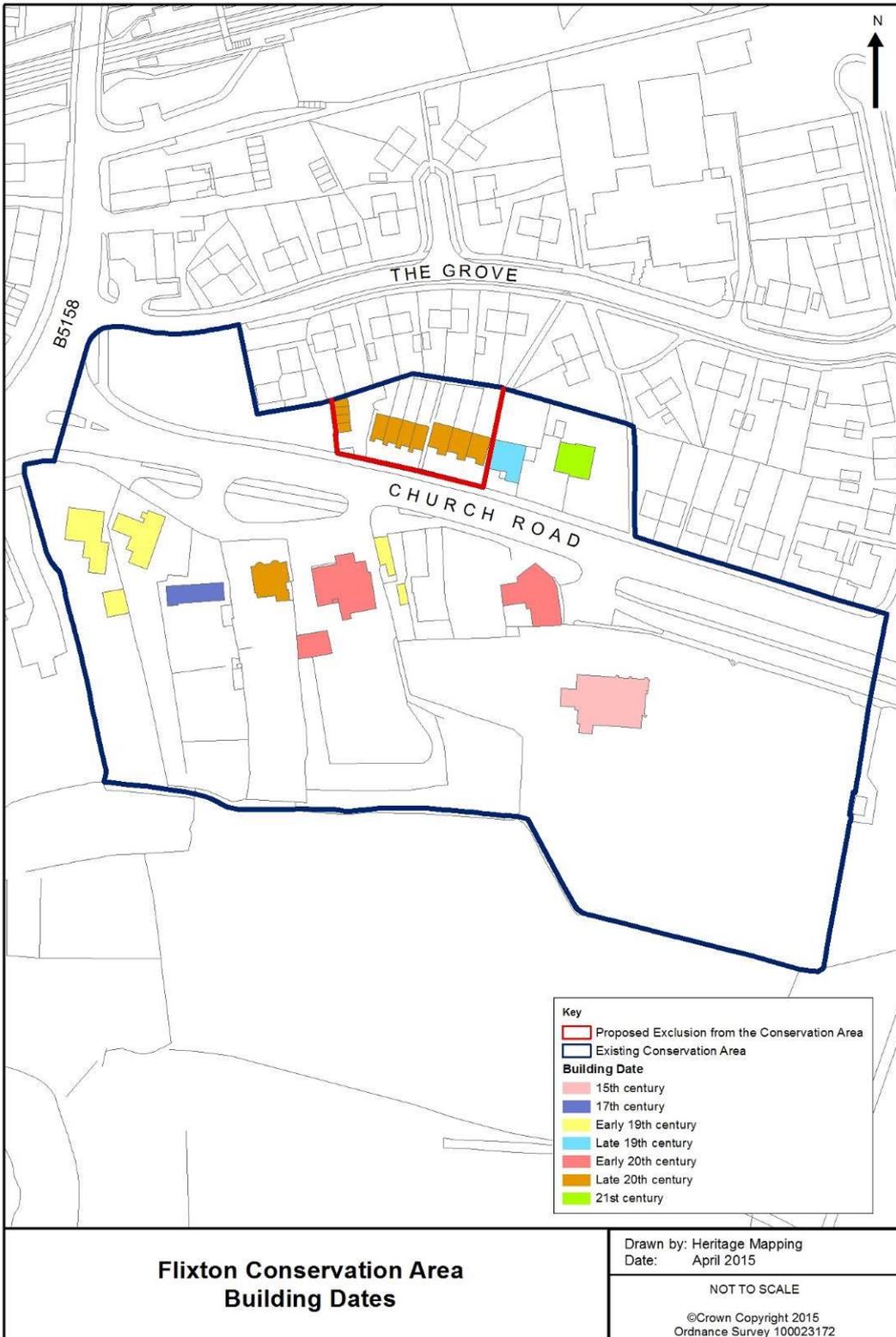
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1952 Ordnance Survey (Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to Prosecution or civil proceedings. Trafford Council OS License No. 100023172)

4.6. Building Development Phases

- 4.6.1 The buildings in the Flixton Conservation Area span from the 15th to the 20th century and represent compact, piecemeal development within a medieval plan form, with many of the detached buildings representing different architectural style. The medieval village core has largely avoided major industrial or later development, only slowly being subsumed into the urban sprawl of Greater Manchester in the mid-20th century by encroaching suburban housing to the west.
- 4.6.2 The village of Flixton has a rather late history of human occupation compared to some of the settlements around it. The earliest known foundation of the church is 12th century but the earliest extant fabric is 15th century, and is the earliest building in the Conservation Area.
- 4.6.3 The cluster of historic structures, surrounding The Village on the south side of the B5213, span a wide date range, the earliest being dated to the late 17th century. There was a settlement of a reasonable size in Flixton in the post-medieval period; however, the long, narrow medieval plots have remained constant, with the building on each plot being replaced on a piecemeal basis.
- 4.6.4 Many of the structures within the Conservation Area are 19th century, with several buildings replacing previous structures on the site. Apart from Larkrise (and the church), none of the other buildings are comparable in plan form to the structures show on the Ordnance Survey maps, until 1898. However, there is the possibility that some earlier fabric was reused in the construction of the new buildings, as we know 16 The Village is late 18th to early 19th century. The 1860s school house has survived to the north.
- 4.6.5 Flixton did gradually transform into a commuter suburb for industrial Manchester but was less affected in this regard than many other outlying areas of Manchester due to the natural boundaries created by the Rivers Irwell and Barton. Many of the other buildings within the Conservation Area are first seen on the 1929 Ordnance Survey map and represent early 20th century development, for example the substantial motoring inn at 26 The Village.
- 4.6.6 By the mid-20th century the construction of the railway line led to slow residential and industrial expansion, which steadily eroded the boundaries of Flixton's early settlement. To the south one individual late-20th century building (22 The Village) has replaced an earlier building on its plot. To the north are two short rows of late-20th century houses that have replaced larger properties on historic narrow plots.



Map 2: Building Dates

4.7. Archaeology

Previous Archaeological Work

- 4.7.1 There are no known archaeological investigations that have been carried out within the Flixton Conservation Area.

Sites of Archaeological Interest/Visible Archaeological Remains

- 4.7.2 There are no sites of archaeological interest in Flixton identified within the Greater Manchester Heritage Environment Record (GMHER). The only records for Flixton identified within the HER are the listed buildings (see Appendix A for further information).
- 4.7.3 According to the Trafford Urban Historic Landscape Characterization Report, undertaken by Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU) the parish of Flixton is of late medieval origins. It also states that the 'curvilinear' pattern of the graveyard at St Michaels church suggest Dark Age origins.
- 4.7.4 The Archaeological Data Service also holds no records for sites within Flixton Conservation Area.²¹
- 4.7.5 There are no visible archaeological remains within the Flixton Conservation Area.

Potential for Underground Remains

- 4.7.6 Although there have been some Neolithic and Bronze-Age finds in the wider area, there is no evidence of human activity in Flixton in the earliest periods, with the first evidence of occupation dating to the 12th century. The settlement remained predominantly rural and agricultural until the mid-20th century. The buildings on the medieval burgage plots have been replaced in a piecemeal fashion over the centuries, with replacement rather than addition or infill development. There is likely to be some below ground deposits relating to the earlier structures on the site and evidence of earlier agricultural human activity. However, due to the limited growth of the settlement, there is unlikely to be substantial remains. There may be remains of the earlier 12th century church beneath the existing 15th century structure. Buried deposits within the churchyard will be substantial.

²¹ <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/browser.jsf>, accessed 07/01/2015

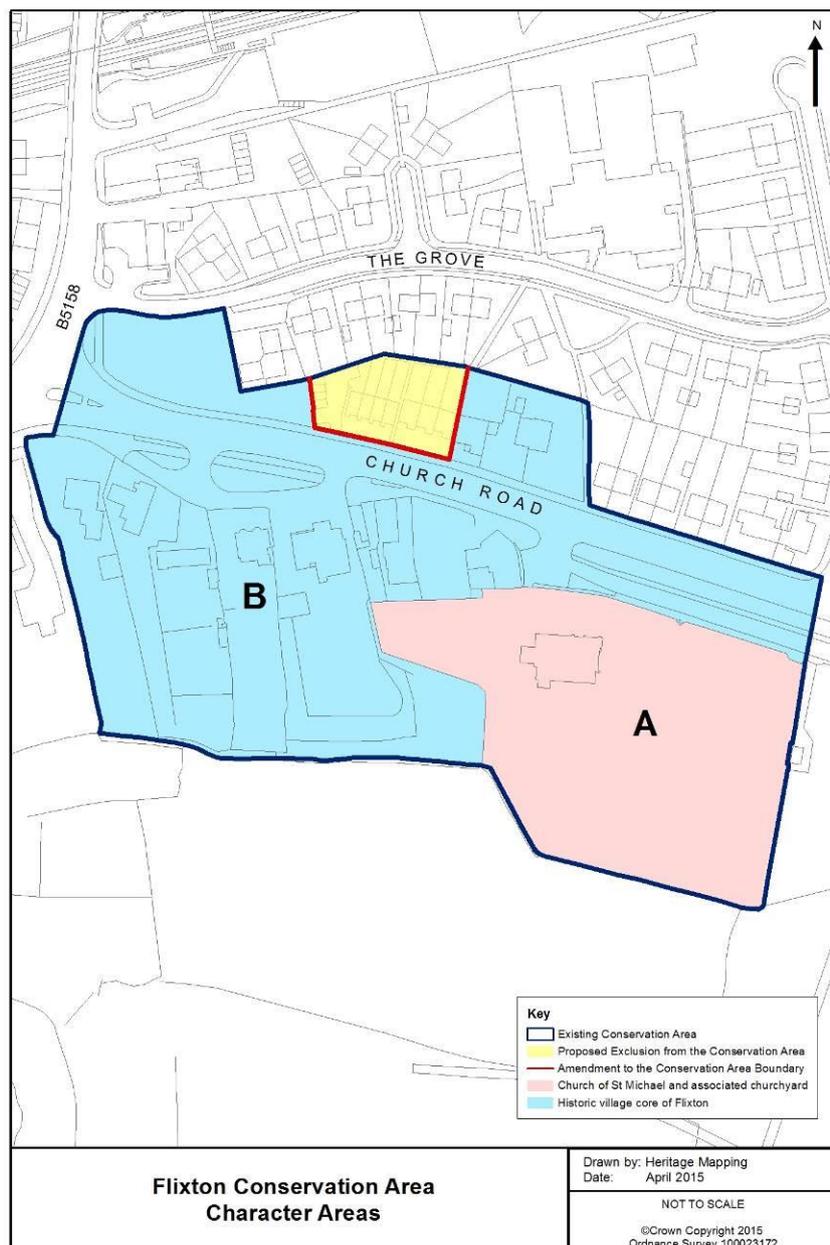
4.8. Architectural Quality & Built Form

Identification of Character Zones

4.8.1 The Flixton Conservation Area comprises of two distinct Character Zones:

A: Church of St Michael and associated churchyard

B: The historic village core of Flixton



Map 3: Character Zones

Character Zone A: Church of St Michael and associated churchyard

Present & Former Uses

- 4.8.2 The church of St Michael is an active Church of England place of worship. This is the predominant use of the Character Zone but other community uses also take place within the church, as an active public building in the village. The churchyard is open and remains in use for burials.

The Buildings

- 4.8.3 The church is the principle structure within the Character Zone. The church is listed Grade II* and is of sandstone ashlar construction with a slate roof, built in a variety of styles including Victorian Gothic and Edwardian baroque, with a Georgian tower. Of particular interest is the porch on the south side, donated in 1909 by George Bolton Scott, and constructed in a heavy baroque style.²²
- 4.8.4 Other structures within Zone A include a significant number of grave markers and monuments that fill the churchyard. Those to the front of the church are older 'flatstones' set within the grass while those to the rear are standing stones. There are several stones in a poor condition that have cracked and fallen, or are close to falling. The earliest stone within the churchyard dates to 1669 and the churchyard was extended to the west in 1868, to the east in 1887, to the south in 1907 and 1940.²³ There are two Grade II listed structures within the churchyard, the Jones Chest Tomb and the Sundial, located near the south porch. Another significant (unlisted) structure is the monument to Roger Wright of 1753-1831.²⁴
- 4.8.5 There are few modern intrusive features within the Character Zone; with development being controlled through the Church of England Faculty Jurisdiction. The most recent additions to the church are early-20th century. To the west of the churchyard are several unobtrusive garden structures relating to the upkeep of the grounds.



The east end of the church



The south elevation of the church, showing the 1909 porch and the listed sundial

²² J. Cooper, Parish Church of St Michael, Flixton: Origin, History and Guide, 2007

²³ J. Cooper, Parish Church of St Michael, Flixton: Origin, History and Guide, 2007

²⁴ J. Cooper, Parish Church of St Michael, Flixton: Origin, History and Guide, 2007



West elevation of the church



Interior of St Michael's church, looking east

Public Realm

- 4.8.6 The public realm in this Character Zone is minimal, with pedestrian paths leading from Church Road into the churchyard and to the church entrance at the west tower. Paths continue around the church. The churchyard 'flatstones' create ad hoc pathways but are dangerously slippery to walk on in wet weather. There is minimal street lighting; a few light fittings hang from the north side of the church.
- 4.8.7 To the north of the church a low stone boundary wall surrounds the churchyard and separates it from The Village. In front of this is a grass verge and to the north-west is an area of stone setts used for parking. The churchyard is accessed through substantial iron gates between stone piers.



View of the north elevation of the church, from Church Road

Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 4.8.8 The open, green, leafy character of this Character Zone is significant and is a substantial element of the Conservation Area. Within the churchyard are mature trees and planting, with neat areas of grass between the grave markers. To the south and east the churchyard gives way to the wider agricultural landscape, with wide panoramic views to the south, across the River Mersey.

- 4.8.9 The churchyard is bound to the north by a row of mature tree planting that follows the low boundary wall. The trees include deciduous and coniferous varieties such as birch, holly and yew.



View of the north churchyard, looking east



View of the south churchyard, looking south from the east end of the church



View of the fields beyond the churchyard to the south-east.

Development Opportunities

- 4.8.10 There are no opportunities for development within Character Zone A.

Character Zone B: The historic village of Flixton

Present & Former Uses

- 4.8.11 Character Zone B encompasses the historic core of Flixton, a settlement with a remarkably quiet early history and slow, steady expansion in the 20th century following the construction of the railway line. Historically, Flixton has been a rural settlement of residential dwellings that would have related to nearby agricultural activity. The 1848 OS map shows less than 15 properties within the village, many of which would have been farmsteads. It was not until the 1898 OS map that any use other than residential is recorded, with the foundation of the school. The 1929 OS map is the first to record the presence of an inn.
- 4.8.12 Today, the buildings within the Character Zone are predominantly residential, comprising a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties of varying sizes, scale, age and design. There are two commercial premises, which are the Church Inn, a public house and restaurant and No. 26 The Village, which is a restaurant (previously a motoring inn). The Rectory is in part residential and part business use.

The Buildings

- 4.8.13 There are two listed buildings within the Character Zone; No. 16 The Village and Larkrise, both listed Grade II. No. 16 The Village is late 18th century/early 19th century, having been extended more recently. It is built in Flemish bond brick with slate roofs, a 20th century porch and 20th century leaded windows. The list description notes that the building has been included for group value.
- 4.8.14 Larkrise is the oldest extant building within the character zone and is dated to -1672, with late-18th century additions. The house is a two bay timber framed structure with a stone plinth and timber-framed structure with square panels. The eaves have been raised to incorporate two casement windows.

- 4.8.15 Holly Bank is an attractive classically designed early-19th century building of three bays in chequered red and buff brick with slate roofs, set back from the road.



Holly Bank



Larkrise



No. 16 The Village

- 4.8.16 No. 350 Church Road is the old school house, which dates to the 1860s. The house is L-plan with a projecting front gable end and polychromatic brickwork above the windows, including some herringbone pattern. This building forms the last surviving element of St Michael's School which was built in 1861 but was demolished in the 1930s. In addition to being a tangible link to Flixton's educational and community history it is the only surviving historic building on the northern side of the Conservation Area.²⁵
- 4.8.17 The Rectory is a modern building, adjacent to the school house, and has been built in a similar style. The building is L-plan with steep pitched slate roofs, a front gable, and contrasting brick decoration around the windows. The Rectory is occupied by the priest serving St Michael's church. The building serves as both residential accommodation and parish offices. The separate office use to the west is delineated by a timber fence in the front forecourt.

²⁵ Flixton, Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010

- 4.8.18 A narrow building at No. 28 The Village possibly relates to an earlier, larger house on the burgage plot that has since been lost. The building is likely to have been extended from an early-1800s cottage and has a double pitched slate roof, a later timber-framed/painted façade and modern uPVC leded windows. A feature of interest is a substantial advertisement on the west elevation for the adjacent motoring inn (No. 26 the Village) that reads 'Threlfall's Greyhound Hotel.'²⁶



350 Church Road, the former school house



The Rectory



28 The Village

- 4.8.19 There are two structures in commercial use within the character area. No. 26 The Village is an early-20th century motoring inn, historically known as the Greyhound Hotel, now in use as a restaurant. The building has two substantial projecting bays of brick below two timber-framed gable ends in the Vernacular Revival style. To the rear is a large car park and to the west is an interesting garage with two doors and a steep pitched slate roof. The other is the Church Inn, a public house, situated directly adjacent to St Michael's church. The Church Inn is a large corner building with a timber-framed front façade and rendered rear elevations. To the west is a large car park. Church Inn has been extensively altered and extended when compared to a photograph of the public house in 1907 (Its angled corner is a reflection of the original road alignment).

²⁶ Threlfall's Brewery was based in Liverpool and was active between 1861 and 1967. It was the eighth largest brewery in the UK in 1967.



26 The Village, formerly the Greyhound Hotel



The garaging relating to the historic Greyhound Hotel



The Church Inn

4.8.20 Several late-20th century buildings can also be found within Character Zone B. No. 22 The Village has been built on one of the medieval burgage plots on the south side of The Village. This is a large residential property set back from the road and finished in white render, with two substantial bay windows on the ground floor and uPVC window frames throughout.

4.8.21 On the north side of Church Road are two short terraces of late-20th century housing built in brick with concrete roof tiles, white horizontal boarded panels and plastic doors and windows.



22 The Village



Late-20th century housing to the north

Public Realm

- 4.8.22 The public realm of Character Zone B is characterised by domestic scale boundaries, hard surfacing and narrow green strips. The main road running through the centre of the historic core of Flixton is Church Road (B5213), a busy road that was straightened in the late-20th century, leaving the original street form as quiet paved areas running parallel to the road in two places. These parallel 'loops' are known as The Village and create a distinctive leafy, rural character in front of the church and in front of the cluster of buildings to the south-west. The village-like character of the Character Zone is typified by the traditional sign post at the western entrance to the Conservation Area.
- 4.8.23 The paving used throughout the Conservation Area ranges from modern tarmac for the busier surfaces to traditional stone setts in the entrance to the churchyard. More recent stone setts (part of the 1970s enhancement scheme in the area) have been used to pave the western portion of The Village. Narrow grass verges separate the pavement and the roads. In some places ad hoc tarmac repairs are unsightly.
- 4.8.24 Boundary treatments vary across the site, from low brick and stone walls to white picket fencing and substantial iron railing with stone piers. Low brick walling is the most common treatment (although these vary in condition), while the iron railings to No. 22 The Village feel somewhat out of scale. Hard surfacing to the front of the late-20th century terraces on the north of Church Road is detrimental to character and appearance. The picket fencing to The Village is a dominant feature but is not historic.



The traditional style signage at the entrance to the Conservation Area



Paving within the Conservation Area



Paving within the Conservation Area



Examples of the different boundary treatments in the area

Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 4.8.25 Character Zone B is well provided with green, open spaces and is well-planted with large mature trees and hedges. The two side 'loops' of The Village are separated from the main Church Road by green verges and tall trees. The lower eastern portion of the Character Zone is less green, with property boundaries hard against the street, although these still have smaller-scale planting within them. To the north-west of the Character Zone is The Green, a triangle of open land with an avenue of trees along Church Road. Many of the houses on the south side of the road are set back behind dense planting. The whole area is generally well-maintained.
- 4.8.26 The presence of green spaces and hedgerows encourages nesting birds and creates wildlife corridors, the sounds of which contribute to a sense of tranquillity.²⁷



The Green, to the far west of the Conservation Area



Green verges along Church Road



Car park to the rear of 26 The Village, a former public house

Development Opportunities

- 4.8.27 Due to its small scale and the retention of the medieval burgage building plots within the historic core of Flixton, there is little opportunity for development.

²⁷ Flixton, Draft Conservation Area Appraisal, 2010

4.9. Landmarks & Key Views

- 4.9.1 The principle landmark feature of the Flixton Conservation Area is the church of St Michael, as the visual and communal heart of the historic settlement. Distinctive views of the church are glimpsed through the trees when travelling east and west along Church Road. The small scale of the settlement creates glimpsed and framed views within the Conservation Area but the open fields to the south create a sense of spaciousness.



Views of the church from the west along Church Road

- 4.9.2 When travelling into the Conservation Area from the east the Church Inn immediately draws the eye, with its distinctive black and white timber-framed façade that curves around to the west. Further west, No. 26 The Village, a former motoring inn also draws attention due to its prominent location and its scale compared to the smaller houses surrounding it.
- 4.9.3 Key views are those seen when travelling both east and west along Church Road. One of the most prominent views is from outside the Conservation Area, when looking from the junction with the B5158 past the traditional signpost towards the cluster of historic buildings to the south. Other important views are those looking towards the entrance of the church and those looking from the churchyard out across the open fields to and from the south.



View of the churchyard and longer views south across the fields



View west along The Village, past the church



View across Church Road to The Village



View west along Church Road



View east into the Conservation Area from the B5158

4.10. Local Details

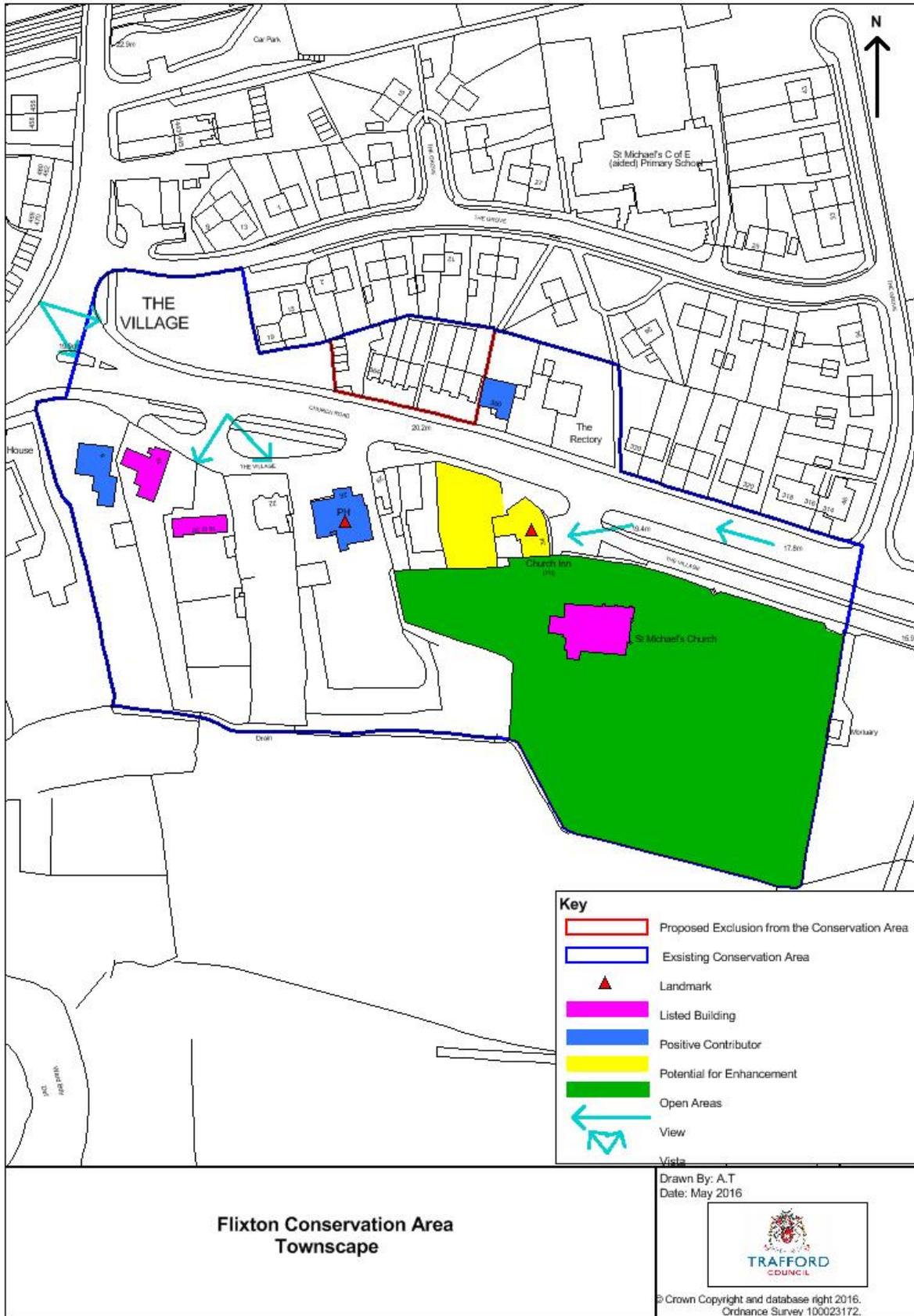
- 4.10.1 Red brick is the prevalent building material for residential properties but the most dominant feature is the timber-framing, of both the 20th and 17th century, which can be seen on four of the properties within the Conservation Area. The warm red sandstone of the church of St Michael is also a local feature; the distinctive patterned ashlar of the 1909 south porch being of particular value.
- 4.10.2 Other local details include the use of stone setts for The Village paving and low brick walls, iron railings and stone piers as boundary treatments.

4.11. Shop Fronts

- 4.11.1 There are no retail outlets within the Conservation Area. However, there is one restaurant and a public house, both of which make liberal use of signage to advertise their premises and special offers and events.
- 4.11.2 The Church Inn has both freestanding signage and signs attached to the building; the scale and quantity is out of keeping with the character of the Conservation Area.
- 4.11.3 No. 26 The Village is now a restaurant but was formerly a motoring inn/public house. Signage used to advertise the business is traditional in style, but the quantity is excessive.



Signage relating to the Church Inn



Map 4: Townscape Analysis

5. AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1 A basic audit has been undertaken of heritage assets within the Conservation Area. These include listed buildings and those which make a positive contribution, which are referred to as Positive Contributors. The standing properties have in most cases been assessed from the street scene to determine their current condition. Please note that the heritage asset description is principally to aid identification and is not intended to provide a comprehensive or exclusive record of all the features of significance. The amount of information varies greatly and absence of any feature external or internal does not, therefore, indicate that it is not of interest. Any evidence relating to a heritage asset, which may present itself since the time of survey will also be taken into account during the course of a planning application.

5.1.2 This assessment has been undertaken using the criteria of the Historic England at Risk Register condition assessment: very bad, poor, fair and good.²⁸

5.2. Listed Buildings

5.2.1 Listed buildings are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for their special architectural or historic interest. Listing gives them protection as alterations, additions or demolitions are controlled by listed building consent, which is required by local planning authorities when change is proposed. Listing ranges from Grade I (the highest level of protection) through to II* and II.

5.2.2 The accompanying list descriptions are included in appendix A. the buildings are either Grade II* or Grade II listed. 5.5% of all listed buildings in England are listed at Grade II*, and are considered nationally important and of more than special interest.²⁹ 92% of all listed buildings in England are listed at Grade II, and are considered nationally important and of special interest.³⁰

²⁸ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/imported-docs/f-j/key-to-entries-on-the-register.pdf>, accessed 07/01/2015

²⁹ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/listed-buildings/> (accessed 14 November 2014).

³⁰ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/listed-buildings/> (accessed 14 November 2014).

Church of St Michael



Date: 15th century onwards

Condition: Good

Grade: II*

The Church of St Michael is the highest graded listed building within the boundary of the Flixton Conservation Area. It was listed at Grade II* in 1966. The building is a Church of England place of worship, with the earliest fabric dating to the 15th century, although there is likely to have been a church on this site since the 12th century. The Historic Environment Record states that parts of chancel were built in the 15th century, nave and aisles built 1756, chancel rebuilt 1815 and the tower rebuilt 1731, 1824, and 1888.

The church is a landmark feature within the Conservation Area, built in red and buff sandstone, and set within an extensive churchyard, surrounded by open fields. Pevsner writes that the views out over the open fields are a key feature of the church. The church can also be seen from the nearby village of Carrington and the town of Urmston.

The church has recently been subject to extensive repairs.

Jones Chest Tomb at St Michaels Churchyard GII



Date: c.1751

Condition: Poor

Grade: II

The Jones Chest Tomb was listed at Grade II in 1987. The chest tomb is of 1751, with raised panels on each side and square corner balusters supporting an inscribed slab with moulded edge. The Latin inscription commemorates the death of Joannes Jones and Anna Jones. The southern section of the tomb is in disrepair with the stone balustrades broken in half and one of the panels unfixed.

Sundial at St Michaels Churchyard GII



Date: c.1772

Condition: Fair

Grade: II

The sundial was listed at Grade II in 1987. The sundial is late-18th century, c.1772³¹ and built in stone with cast-iron railings and bronze dial. It can be found on the south side of the churchyard.

³¹ J. Cooper, Parish Church of St Michael, Flixton: Origin, History and Guide, 2007

No. 16 The Village



Date: Late 18th, early 19th century

Condition: Good

Grade: II

No. 16 The Village was listed at Grade II in 1987. No. 16 The Village is late-18th century/early 19th century, having been extended more recently. It is built in Flemish bond brick with slate roofs, a 20th century porch and 20th century leaded windows. The list description specifies that the building has been included for group value.

18-20 The Village, Larkrise



Date: c.1672

Condition: Good

Grade: II

Larkrise was listed at Grade II in 1966. Larkrise is the oldest residential extant building within Flixton Conservation Area and is dated to 1672, with late-18th century additions. The house is a two bay timber framed structure with a stone plinth and timber-framed structure with square panels. The eaves have been raised to incorporate two casement windows. Internally the house has an inglenook fireplace with a chamfered curved bressumer beam and wattle and daub. There are also historic tie-beam roof trusses and struts.

5.3. Positive Contributors

- 5.3.1 The term positive contributor identifies a non-designated heritage asset which makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. These buildings, structures and sites are classed as heritage assets as they are identified by the local authority as having a degree of significance, meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest.³² A single building, group or landmark can be classed as a positive contributor. Identification within the appraisal focuses primarily on a building or structure and does not necessarily take in account the positive contribution made also by landscaping, spaciousness and other historic structures within the curtilage or setting of positive contributors. These characteristics amongst others must also be taken into account during the decision making process. Where a building, structure or site is not identified in the appraisal as a positive contributor, this does not necessarily mean the building detracts from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Further enhancement may be required or investigation into the potential significance of the building, structure or site.
- 5.3.2 These elements have been assessed with reference to Historic England criteria set out in their document *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*, paragraph 2.2.21.³³ The criteria are listed in appendix D.

³² Department of Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*. (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012).

³³ Historic England, *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*. (London: Historic England, 2011) para 2.2.21

No. 26 The Village



Date: Early 20th-century

Condition: Fair

No. 26 The Village is currently a restaurant but was built in the early-20th century as a motoring inn and has previously been known as the Greyhound Hotel. Motoring inns were built from the early-20th century as more people began to own vehicles and a network of inns were needed to provide roadside refreshment, accommodation and services. No. 26 The Village is a large building with two substantial projecting bays of brick below two timber-framed gable ends in an Arts and Crafts style. To the rear is a large car park and to the west is a contemporary two-door garage of interest, with a steep pitched slate roof. The both buildings are in a fair condition and retain traditional timber window frames.

The building is considered to be a positive contributor within the Conservation Area for its landmark quality, its illustrative value of a particular building type relating to the early motor industry, its use of local features such as timber-framing and its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Detracting features such as excessive signage, banners, lighting and an intrusive smoking shelter relate to its current use. Internally it appears that few original features or plan form survives.

No. 350 Church Road



Date: 1860s

Condition: Good

No. 350 Church Road is a private residence on the north side of Church Road and is the old school house, relating to the 1860 school foundation in Flixton. The house is L-plan with a projecting front gable end and polychromatic brickwork above the windows, including some herringbone pattern.

The building is considered to be a positive contributor within the Conservation Area for its prominence along Church Road, its association with the 1860s school, its architectural value and its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Holly Bank, Church Road



Date: 1825

Condition: Good

Holly Bank is a private residence on the far western corner of the Conservation Area. The property is an attractive early-19th century building c.1825 of three bays in chequered red and buff brick with slate roofs, set back from the road. It was formerly known as The Old Rectory.

The building is considered to be a positive contributor within the Conservation Area for its architectural value, for contributing positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets and for its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6. ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION

6.1. General Condition

- 6.1.1 The properties within the Flixton conservation area are generally well maintained, with only minor maintenance issues noted.

6.2. Intrusion and Negative Factors

Individual Properties

- 6.2.1 The majority of the buildings within the Flixton Conservation Area are residential properties, which are in a relatively good condition. There are no vacant buildings and the public realm is well-maintained.
- 6.2.2 Modern window replacement with plastic window frames and leaded glazing is common but is unsightly and out of character.
- 6.2.3 On the north side of Church Road the former Headmaster's house has multiple spalled bricks, a truncated chimney stack, stone mullions and transoms which have been painted and atmospheric staining to stone copings. The property to east is a poor quality copy but appears to be in good condition. The two terraces to the west are in reasonable condition.
- 6.2.4 On the south side of Church Road No. 8 appears well maintained, though all windows have been replaced with modern casements and one opening to the gable has been reduced in size with poor quality brickwork above and below. No.16 has also had the windows replaced with modern casements. The gable wall has been re-pointed in cement. Larkrise appears well maintained.
- 6.2.5 The Greyhound Hotel is now a residential property. Flaking paint and cracking was noted to the render. All the windows have been replaced with modern alternatives.
- 6.2.6 The two commercial (restaurant and public house) premises within the Conservation Area have accumulated ancillary structures, signage and fixtures, that are intrusive and erode the character of the area. The Church Inn typifies this, with its highly-visible external smoking shelter.
- 6.2.7 On the Church Inn rot was noted to some of the sections of timber framing and there was cracking to the render. The timber windows require decorating. The brickwork of the Village Inn has been re-pointed with a poor quality mortar of insufficient depth which is failing. Vent ducts penetrate through several windows.



Highly visible rear of the Church Inn, with inappropriate signage and smoking shelter.

- 6.2.8 St Michael's Church is constructed of red sandstone walls with slate roofs. There were delaminated stones noted in multiple locations. There are areas of heavy moss build up, particularly at plinth level. One downpipe is damaged at the base and a temporary plastic pipe is provided. The roof appears to be in good order.



Delaminated sandstone to church walls

Open Spaces and Areas

- 6.2.9 The car parks associated with the two commercial premises in the Conservation Area are negative elements. The large expanses of tarmacked surface are detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. One covers a burgage plot that was previously developed while the other is less visible and is set back behind the buildings.
- 6.2.10 Some open joints noted to the stone wall to the church yard and there was generally damage where iron fixings for former railings have rusted. A modern wall further down is built of rendered blockwork with concrete copings. There is cracking to the render generally.



Damage to church wall copings from former railing fixings

- 6.2.11 There are a mixture of hedges, brickwork and stone walls to other properties, which are generally in good order, other than the wall to the Church Inn which has eroded pointing and spalled brickwork.

Intrusive Development

- 6.2.12 No. 22 The Village is a large residential property built to replace a previous structure on an historic burgage plot to the south of Flixton Conservation Area. Although this pattern of development is in keeping, the scale and architectural style of the building is not. The iron gates and stone piers surrounding the property are also intrusive and do not reflect the rural character of The Village.



No. 22 The Village, out of scale for the rural medieval settlement

- 6.2.13 Two terraces of late-20th century housing and associated garaging on the north side of Church Road are considered to be intrusive to the character and appearance of the Flixton Conservation Area. The development does not respect the architecture, plan form or materials of the surrounding environment and the houses are set back from the road with unsightly front areas of hard paving.



Modern houses to the north of Church Road

6.3. Problems, Pressures and Capacity for Change

- 6.3.1 Common problems within Flixton Conservation Area relate to the replacement of windows with modern uPVC alternatives with leaded glazing, the poor condition of boundary treatments and excessive signage relating to commercial premises.
- 6.3.2 A previous application for a large extension to No. 350 Church Road (1860s school house) has been dismissed but the pressure for further development on an inappropriate scale to existing historic properties within the Conservation Area is still a concern.
- 6.3.3 Traffic along Church Road is busy; care should be taken to ensure this does not become detrimental to the rural character of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3.4 The large car park to the Church Inn is a possible development site within the Flixton Conservation Area. There is the opportunity to reinstate a single residential property on the site, as historically this was an individual burgage plot and 19th century Ordnance Survey maps show there has previously been a single detached dwelling on the site.

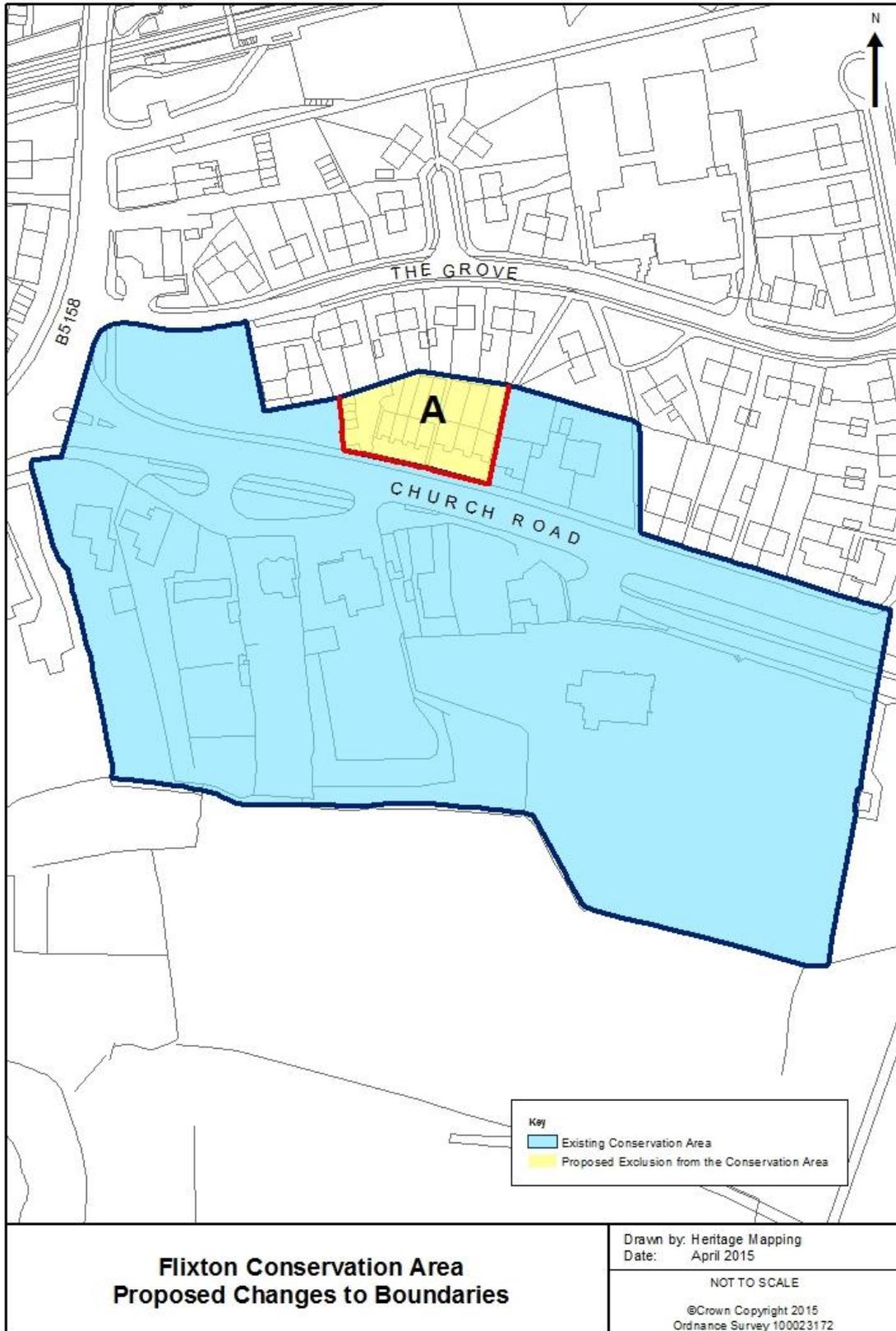
- 6.3.5 Flixton Conservation Area is an attractive residential area within the catchment of Greater Manchester and as such is unlikely to be susceptible to vacancy or high levels of decline. There is limited scope for development within the Conservation Area but the possibility of development to the south and east is likely erode significant views out across the open fields and harm their Green Belt status.



The large car park to the rear of the Church Inn.

7. IDENTIFYING THE BOUNDARY

- 7.1.1 The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, the NPPF and best practice guidance produced by Historic England all state that the boundaries of existing conservation areas should be reviewed from time to time. Parts which are no longer of special interest should be excluded. Where drawn too tightly, the conservation area should be extended to include more recent phases or plots associated with buildings of historic interest.
- 7.1.2 It is now recognised that conservation area boundaries need to be seen within a wider context of urban development. Designated areas should provide protection to buildings that were perhaps not previously considered to be of architectural merit and to the spaces between buildings, such as streets and neutral areas. It is also the case that further information can come to light about the historic importance of buildings and spaces.
- 7.1.3 Taking this into account, the boundary of the Flixton Conservation Area has been assessed for any potential revisions and one areas for exclusion has been prospected.
- 7.1.4 **Proposed Extension Area A:** Modern terraced houses on the north side of The Village. These houses are in a style that is unsympathetic to the Conservation Area. Their late 20th century date means that they have no historic interest.



Map 5: Flixton Conservation Area Boundary with proposed boundary amendment

8. A PLAN FOR FURTHER ACTION

8.1.1 Below is a list of the key issues within the area which need to be addressed and action points for improvement. These will be expanded upon with management policies in the Flixton Conservation Area Management Plan.

- Intrusive additions and alterations to heritage assets can impact on significance and ultimately will result in a cumulative effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Alterations include replacement windows and doors of inappropriate design and material, rainwater goods, rooflights, dormers, erection of boundary treatment, wiring and ventilation. The replacement of traditional materials such as slate or clay tiles, leadwork, cast iron rainwater goods, masonry and joinery and replacement with composite materials can diminish the quality and distinctiveness which heritage assets provide.
- Address the issue of inappropriate window and doors on residential properties, for example uPVC window frames and faux leaded glazing. Further guidance regarding the use of materials will be provided in the Management Plan.
- Address the excessive use of signage related to the commercial premises within the Conservation Area.
- Retain the traditional stone sett paving to The Village, giving it a character distinct from Church Road.
- Repair tarmacked pavements in a co-ordinated scheme to give a coherent and more visually pleasing appearance.
- Any new development proposed should be of a high quality design and reflect the characteristics of the different Character Areas i.e. should respect the medieval burgrave plot plan form of the settlement and should be on a domestic scale.
- Avoid infill development on the south of the Conservation Area, retaining the historic layout of single properties within each large burgrave plot.
- Work with local estate agents to ensure that they are aware of the Conservation Area designation and that they pass this on to purchasers of property within the area.
- The green spaces and mature trees should be retained in order to maintain the leafy, green character of the area.
- Monitor traffic levels along Church Road to ensure this does not encroach further upon the special interest of the village i.e. its rural character.

9. Bibliography

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The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, *Trafford Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project* (2008)

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16 The Village, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1162894>
Flixton House and Outbuilding Adjoining Immediately North of Flixton House, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1067878>

Trafford Local Studies Centre

TRA/1597, collection of historic photographs of Trafford area

Urmston tithe maps 757-761, 1848

Burdett map, 1777

Board of Health Survey 1852

Trafford Lifetimes Images

TL0236, Lily Street, Urmston c.1900,

http://legacy.trafford.gov.uk/content/tca/display_image.asp?ImageID=1194

TL0731, Crowd waiting for King Edward to pass on a Royal visit to the area, 1909,

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TL9300, The Jewish Cemetery, Urmston,

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http://legacy.trafford.gov.uk/content/tca/display_image.asp?ImageID=6614

TL0914, Urmston Hall, Manor Avenue,

http://legacy.trafford.gov.uk/content/tca/display_image.asp?ImageID=1864

TL7932, Flixton Road, Urmston, looking towards Flixton,

http://legacy.trafford.gov.uk/content/tca/display_image.asp?ImageID=5104

Appendix A: Listed Building Descriptions

Name: Church of St Michael

List entry Number: 1067876

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 1966

URMSTON CHURCH ROAD SJ 79 SW (south side) (SJ 7493 NE) 4/23 Church of 29/6/66 St. Michael G.V. II* Church. Part of chancel C15, nave and aisles 1756, chancel rebuilt 1815, tower rebuilt and restored in 1731, 1824 and 1888, vestry C19. Ashlar with slate roof. Nave and chancel under continuous roof, pitched roofs to aisles and a central west tower. 5-bay south aisle and 3-bay north aisle with projecting plinth, round-arched windows with impost capitals and keystones, rusticated quoin strips and eaves cornice. South porch with gable pediment on attached columns. The chancel has a 3-light east window with cusped Y-tracery and weathered diagonal buttresses, both features which are repeated in the C19 vestry. Castellated 3-stage tower with round-arched west door, 3-light west window, broken pediment above 1731 plaque, 3-light round-arched belfry openings with hoodmoulds and keystones and finials above the castellations. Interior: 3-bay nave arcade with round arches on Tuscan columns. King-post roof trusses. Carved stone font, pulpit and reredos. Brass plaque to Richard Radcliffe of 1602, also early C19 wall plaques. Stained glass. Timber pews. R. Richards, Old Cheshire Churches, 1947

Listing NGR: SJ7472993965

National Grid Reference: SJ 74729 93965

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

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Name: Jones Chest Tomb at St Michaels Churchyard

List entry Number: 1162835

Grade: II

Date first listed: 1987

URMSTON CHURCH ROAD SJ 79 SW (south side) (SJ 7493 NE). 4/24 Jones chest tomb to south of Church of St. Michael - G.V. II Chest tomb. c.1751. Stone. Raised panels on each side and square corner balusters support an inscribed slab with moulded edge. The Latin inscription commemorates the death of Joannes Jones, died 1751, aged 52 and Anna Jones, died 1755, aged 47.

Listing NGR: SJ7473293950

National Grid Reference: SJ 74732 93950

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Name: Sundial at St Michaels Churchyard

List entry Number: 1356521

Grade: II

Date first listed: 1987

URMSTON CHURCH ROAD SJ 79 SW (SJ 7493 NE) (south side) 4/25 Sundial immediately south of Church of St. Michael - G.V. II Sundial. Late C18. Stone with cast-iron railings and bronze dial. Baluster-type shaft with dial and broken gnomon on 2 stone steps which support the plain railings.

Listing NGR: SJ7472893953

National Grid Reference: SJ 74728 93953

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Name: 16, The Village

List entry Number: 1162894

Grade: II

Date first listed: 1987

URMSTON THE VILLAGE SJ 79 SW (south side) (SJ 7494 SE) 4/36 No. 16 - G.V. II House. Late C18/early C19. Flemish bond brick with rendered rear (now front) and slate roof. 2-bay 2-storey house with 1 bay added to left and a C20 porch to rear. Original door between bays 2 and 3 now blocked. 3 original 3-light casement windows with C20 leaded glass and cambered brick- arched heads on each floor. Ridge and gable chimney stacks. C20 windows to rear. Lean-to conservatory to left return. Included for group value.

Listing NGR: SJ7458494017

National Grid Reference: SJ 74584 94017

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Name: 18-20, Larkrise

List entry Number: 1067880

Grade: II

Date first listed: 1966

URMSTON THE VILLAGE SJ 79 SW (SJ 7494 SE) (south side) 4/37 Nos 18 and 20 29/6/66 (Larkrise) GV II House. "IFW1672" carved on timber rail but with brick additions of late C18. 2-bay timber-framed structure on stone plinth with brick additions to left, right and above. Slate roof. The timber-framed structure is 3 square panels in height with diagonal braces to the principal posts. Original studded oak door to left and later door inserted to right. Later 3-light windows. 1-bay Flemish bond brick addition to left and right with cambered brick arches over replaced casement windows. The eaves were also raised in brick and incorporate 2 casement windows. Ridge chimney stacks. Similar rear elevation which has had some of the timber members replaced or rendered over. Interior: door opens onto inglenook fireplace with chamfered curved bressumer beam and a wattle and daub heck with chamfered heck post. Chamfered floor beams some of which are C20 replacement. Tie-beam roof trusses with inclined struts.

Listing NGR: SJ7459893998

National Grid Reference: SJ 74598 93998

From: The National Heritage List, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Appendix B: Contacts

Trafford Council Contacts

General development control enquiries concerning the Flixton 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: Historical Development of Urmston

Pre-historic activity is evident from finds which have been discovered in the area, for example Bronze Age spearheads. Furthermore, Anglo-Saxon discoveries have also been made in the area, such as a Saxon cross, which suggests that it has a long history of occupation in some form, if not perhaps of settlement.³⁴

In the wider area, there were a number of Roman roads which connected forts at Chester, Manchester and York, and the area was therefore of considerable importance both strategically and commercially during the Roman period. There is also some potential for a Romano-British farm settlement on the site of 16th century Urmston Old Hall, excavations of which have turned up remains of Roman pottery.³⁵

This infrastructure continued to be an important feature of the area through the Anglo-Saxon period, and into the medieval period. Furthermore, by this later period, the area's important function as a crossing point on the Irwell seems to have been established, indicated by the discovery of a causeway in the area which may be medieval in origin.³⁶

Clearer evidence of settlement in the Urmston area is found in the 12th century, with the Manor of Urmston first recorded as being held by Richard de Urmston, and who in 1193–4 gave 40 shillings after the rebellion of John Count of Mortain for the king's good will.³⁷ The de Urmston family name is named after the local area, which was in the same period also known as Wermeston, Urmeston and Urmestone.³⁸

At some stage in the 14th century, the lordship of Urmston was acquired by the de Trafford family, who owned the manor until the 16th century, and who were a prominent land-owning family in the Trafford area more broadly.³⁹

Throughout the medieval period and into the post-medieval period, Urmston can be broadly characterised as being rural and agricultural. A good example of this is Urmston Hall, the ancient seat of the Urmston family and parts of which date to the late 16th century, which continued in use as a farmhouse into the 20th century until its demolition in 1937.⁴⁰

³⁴ 'Townships: Barton', A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 4 (1911), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=41441> (accessed 24 October 2014)

³⁵ M. Nevell, *The Archaeology of Trafford; A study of the origins of Community in North West England before 1900* (1997)

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ 'Townships: Urmston', A History of the County of Lancaster: Volume 5 (1911), <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=52999> (accessed 22 October 2014)

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Ibid



Urmston Hall, the ancient seat of the Urmston Family (TL0914, Trafford Local Studies Centre)

In the 16th century ownership of the Manor of Urmston passed to de Hyde family through marriage, and remained in this family's hands until the eighteenth century.⁴¹ In the 18th century, the lordship and manor passed into the hands of Anne Hulme, also the heiress of Davyhulme. Ownership of both then passed through Anne's marriage to Thomas Willis, the son of the noted antiquary Browne Willis of Bletchley.

In the 19th century, the lordship and manor of Urmston, as well as Davyhulme, passed into the hands of George Lewis Ridehalgh, then to his son Colonel George John Miller Ridehalgh, and finally to Colonel Ridehalgh's son Mr George Ridehalgh, in whose hands both Urmston and Davyhulme remained in 1911. Colonel Ridehalgh built St Clements at Urmston in the 1860s. However, despite this, and the Ridehalgh family's long connection with the Urmston area, it appears that their primary residence was at Fell Foot, on Lake Windermere, and the Ridehalghs are all buried there.

Urmston, in this period more broadly, was affected by the industrialisation of Manchester which spread across the Trafford area. This started in the later 18th century with the cutting of the Bridgewater Canal in the 1760s, and was furthered in the 19th century with the construction of the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway through the area in the 1840s.

The 1870s was a particular period of change in the Urmston area, with an extension to the railways and new railway stations opening at the village of Urmston, as in Flixton, in 1873. This brought about a significant transition in the character of the area, from a broadly agricultural area to an area which is today one of the largest residential suburbs of the city of Manchester.

⁴¹ Ibid

The cutting of the Bridgwater Canal in the 1760s, followed by the opening of Urmston Railway Station in 1873, and development of the Manchester Ship Canal in the 1890s all made significant contributions to the development of the area for residential and industrial concerns. In the twentieth century development continued apace, with the expansion of Urmston as a major urban area in Trafford, and as part of the conurbation which surrounds the modern city of Manchester. It is during this later phase of development that Barton-upon-Irwell fell under the wider Urmston district.



Flixton Road, Urmston, 1909 (TL7932, Trafford Local Studies Centre)