



## Conservation Area Appraisal

# Cathedral Precinct



This appraisal reviews the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area Assessment, which was published in 2005. The Management Proposals included in this appraisal are based on the outcomes and priorities established by the local community during the public consultation process for the Conservation Area Assessment.

The next appraisal of the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area will be undertaken by September 2012

**September 2007**

**City of Bradford MDC**

[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)

# What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?

**A Conservation Area Appraisal describes the character of a conservation area. It also describes the changes that have taken place in the conservation area over recent years.**

**The appraisal finishes with management proposals which will help to conserve and enhance the area's special character and improve decision making in the future.**

**The Government requires that all conservation areas have an up-to-date conservation area appraisal.**

**An up-to-date appraisal is one that has been undertaken within the past five years.**

The following work has been done to deliver this conservation area appraisal:

- A photographic survey of the buildings in the conservation area.
  - The assessment of the level of authenticity of most of the historic buildings
- An assessment of the issues facing the conservation area at present
- The survey and update of map data relating to the conservation area
- A review of the appropriateness of the conservation area boundary
  - An assessment as to whether new development has made a positive, negative or neutral impact on the character of the conservation area
  - The formulation of management proposals for the area

# What is a Conservation Area?

**A conservation area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).**

The Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area was originally designated in 1993. A review of the boundary of the Conservation Area was undertaken in 2002-2003. The present boundary of the Conservation Area was adopted in September 2005.

Conservation area designation brings with it extra controls. These controls cover:

- demolition of unlisted buildings;
- minor developments such as porches, extensions, satellite dishes and boundary walls; and
- works to trees.

The objective of these measures is to help preserve the special character and appearance of the area and maintain or improve its environmental quality. Whilst it is recognised that conservation areas must be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands it is important that this occurs within a framework of controlled and positive management.

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[www.bradford.gov.uk/conservationassessments](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/conservationassessments)

**Listed Buildings:**  
[www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings)

# Background and Brief History



**The Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area covers an area which is now on the periphery of the city centre but includes part of the oldest settlement of Bradford, plus an area of textile warehousing served initially by the Bradford Canal, and later by the railway. The following timeline briefly summarises its development.**

### 10th and 11th centuries

An Anglo-Saxon church occupied the present-day site of the cathedral during this time, if not earlier, making the Cathedral area the earliest known settled part of Bradford proper. The church stood alongside the 'broad ford' which gave Bradford its name.

### 1281

The earliest record of there being a Parish Church in Bradford. It is presumed that previously there was a chapel dependent on the Parish of Wakefield on this site.

### 1770's

The excavation and opening of the Bradford Canal through the heart of what is now the conservation area transformed a predominantly fielded area into a busy wharfside which over the following decades became surrounded by industry which used the canal to transport bulky goods and raw materials.

### 1870's - 1930's

The section of Bradford Canal in the town centre was closed and

filled in, creating an undeveloped tract of land at the heart of this industrial area, which was now served by Forster Square Station, which opened in 1846. The elegant warehouses of Canal Street were built on the former canal site, with similar development on Mill Street and Bolton Road in a wave of redevelopment which carried on until the 1930s.

### 1919

Bradford Parish Church is raised to Cathedral status and is extended to the north and west after 1945. The building contains elements from the 14th, 15th, 17th, 19th and 20th centuries.

### Late 20th / 21st century

The collapse of the textile industry in the North of England leaves many of the warehouse buildings redundant. Some have been demolished, others have successfully found viable new uses, while others languish empty or underused. The Channel NDF seeks to reinvigorate the area and safeguard the long-term future of the area.



# Key Characteristics

The following summarises the key elements of the character of the Cathedral Precinct conservation area:

- Large ornate Victorian warehouses and civic buildings along the valley floor and a mixture of development on Stott Hill
- A street pattern with a mixture of organic elements and formally planned streets
- Tall terraced development following and emphasising the shape of streets
- Hard urban character to valley floor, organic village-like character to Stott Hill, centred on the Cathedral and its green
- A predominantly commercial mix of building and land uses
- Traditional natural building materials
- Quiet urban enclave character



*Above: The Parish Room to the Cathedral is a Gothic Style building dating from c1900.*

*Right: The narrow industrial back street between Canal Road and Bolton Road.*





Top right: St Peters House was built as Bradford's main Post Office.

Top: Cathedral tower.

Middle: This industrial building has been shaped by the topography and streets.

Bottom: The atmospheric Cathedral steps.



## Summary of Important Features and Details

**Features and details contribute to the essential character of the conservation area:**

- Grid-like stone elevations, large mass, tall height, constant opening proportions, traditional doors and windows and ornate stone decoration to warehouses, with variations according to age and style of architecture.
- Austere stone elevations, traditional door and window details to Georgian and mock-Georgian buildings in the vicinity of the Cathedral.
- Railing and wall details to key buildings
- Stone street surfaces (where these remain in situ)
- Lack of alteration / modern engineering to some streets
- Group value of Victorian warehouses
- Footpaths providing alternative routes through the area.

## Current Condition

**AUTHENTICITY 90%**

- Each historic building in a conservation area will have originally had features and details which contribute to the character of the conservation area.
- The level of authenticity is based on an assessment of each building to ascertain the level of retention of original features.
- Features assessed are: chimneys, roofs, rainwater goods, walls, windows and doors, boundary walls, bargeboards, and shopfronts. Not all buildings will have all the above features and the scoring sheet is adjusted to take this into account.
- Only residential, commercial and civic buildings built prior to 1956 are scored.
- 25 buildings were assessed for the purpose of the study; this is 78% of all buildings within the conservation area.
- The listed buildings had an average authenticity rating of 91%.

**AUTHENTICITY  
90%**



A breakdown of the authenticity assessment shows which features and details in particular are being retained and/or maintained and where there are the greatest threats.

# Strengths

- The majority of the buildings retain almost all of their traditional features and details.
- Peaceful character of the Cathedral Close / Stott Hill area.
- Hard urban character of valley floor with tall buildings closely lining the streets.
- Strongly traditional roofscape and unaltered traditional facades to most buildings.
- Street pattern has changed very little.
- The successful re-use, and adaptation of some of the buildings.
- Significant areas of traditional streetscape materials are still in situ.
- The area's listed buildings tend to retain a high proportion of their original features and details.
- The unlisted buildings are in general as well conserved as the listed buildings.
- Key open spaces maintain their traditional character.
- Lack of modern engineering to some streets.
- High quality views and vistas through and across the area.
- The Cathedral Precinct retains a higher proportion of traditional building details than most other conservation areas in the district surveyed so far.

*Traditional features and details retained on the majority of buildings in the conservation area.*



# Weaknesses

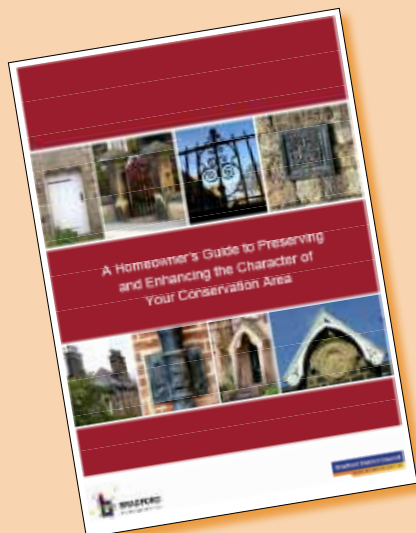
- A significant proportion of the buildings in the conservation area are vacant or are underused.
- There are more vacant buildings and more vacant / underused floorspace in the conservation area than five years ago.
- The conservation area contains significant areas of vacant land and surface car parking which detract from the area's character and vibrancy.
- Some of the footpaths through the area are unkempt and feel unsafe.
- Traffic management interventions are not entirely successful in terms of conservation area character.



*15-17 Canal Road (vacant)*

# Opportunities

- Better decisions by all stakeholders (property owners, the Planning Service, Highways) through reference to the Conservation Area Assessment and this review and subsequent workshops and more communication with the Design and Conservation Team.
- The regeneration of the area as envisioned in the Channel NDF should see buildings in full use and underused land redeveloped in an appropriate manner.



- Recently published Repair and Maintenance Guidance should help property owners make better informed decisions.
- The planned Channel Urban Village to the immediate north of the conservation area and Cathedral Quarter Urban Village to the immediate east of the conservation area, plus the redevelopment of Broadway should increase footfall through the conservation area and help its regeneration.

*Key unlisted building close to the Cathedral with the potential for community use.*

*Key unlisted building on Bolton Road in need of a new user.*



# Threats

- Loss of traditional features and details from buildings.
- Poor decisions concerning planning applications, enforcement cases, listed buildings, highway management, and trees.
- Loss of historic street surfaces and traditional character of public realm.
- Continued vacancy and underuse of buildings and sites, blighting the area and bringing uncertainty to the long-term futures of some buildings.
- The potential benefits to the conservation area of planned major redevelopment just outside of the conservation area (such as the Broadway redevelopment and the Channel and Cathedral Quarter Urban Villages) are not fully realised.
- Vacant and underused sites remain vacant and underused or are redeveloped in an inappropriate manner.



# Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area

## Character Contributions



### Key

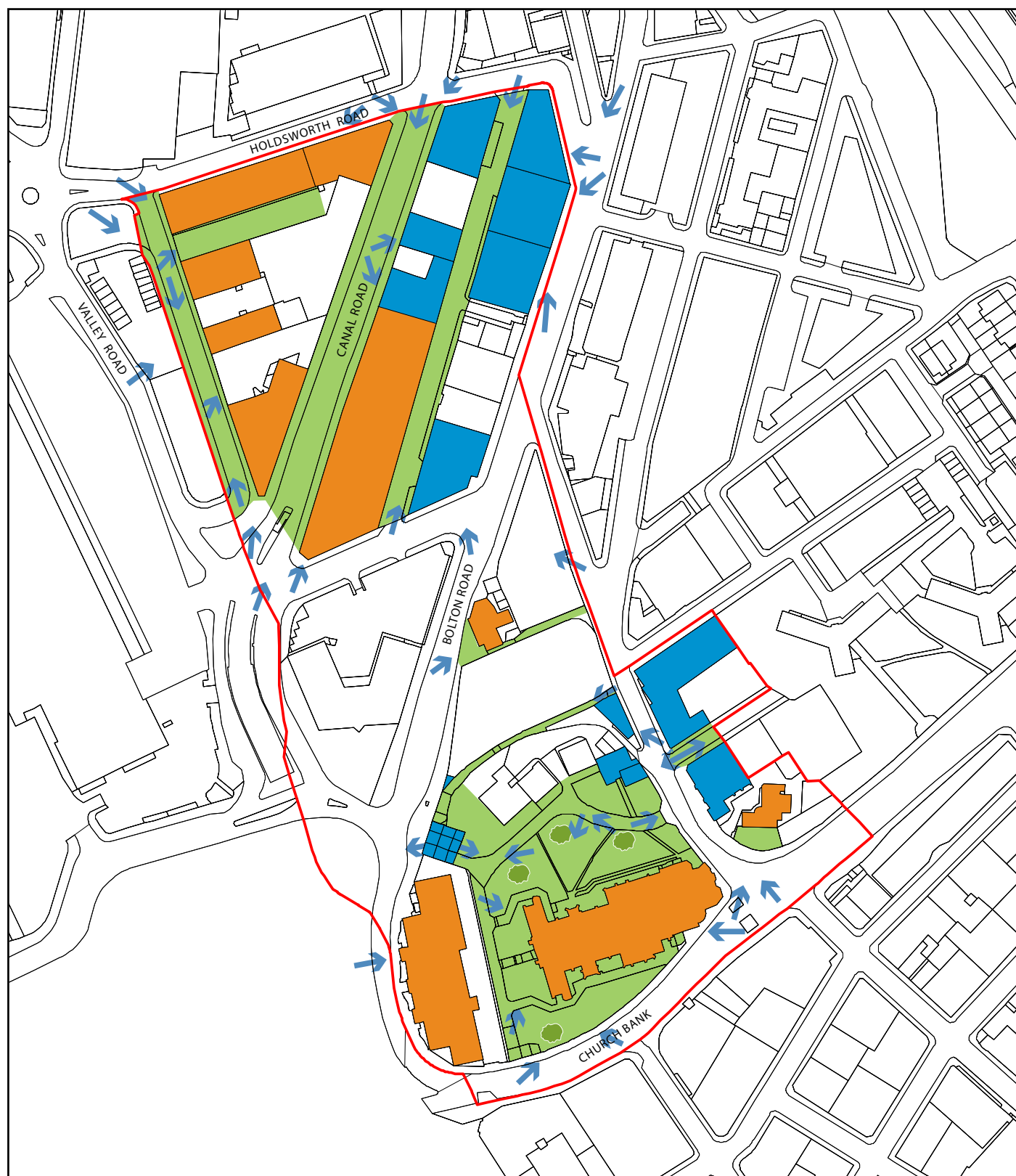
- Conservation Area Boundary
- Areas providing a **positive** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **negative** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **neutral** contribution to character

NB The 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral' areas relate to the contribution the site/building currently makes to the character of the Conservation Area. The classification in no way means that the site/building has no special architectural, historic or archaeological interest.



# Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area

## Open Spaces, Trees, Views, Listed and Key Unlisted Buildings



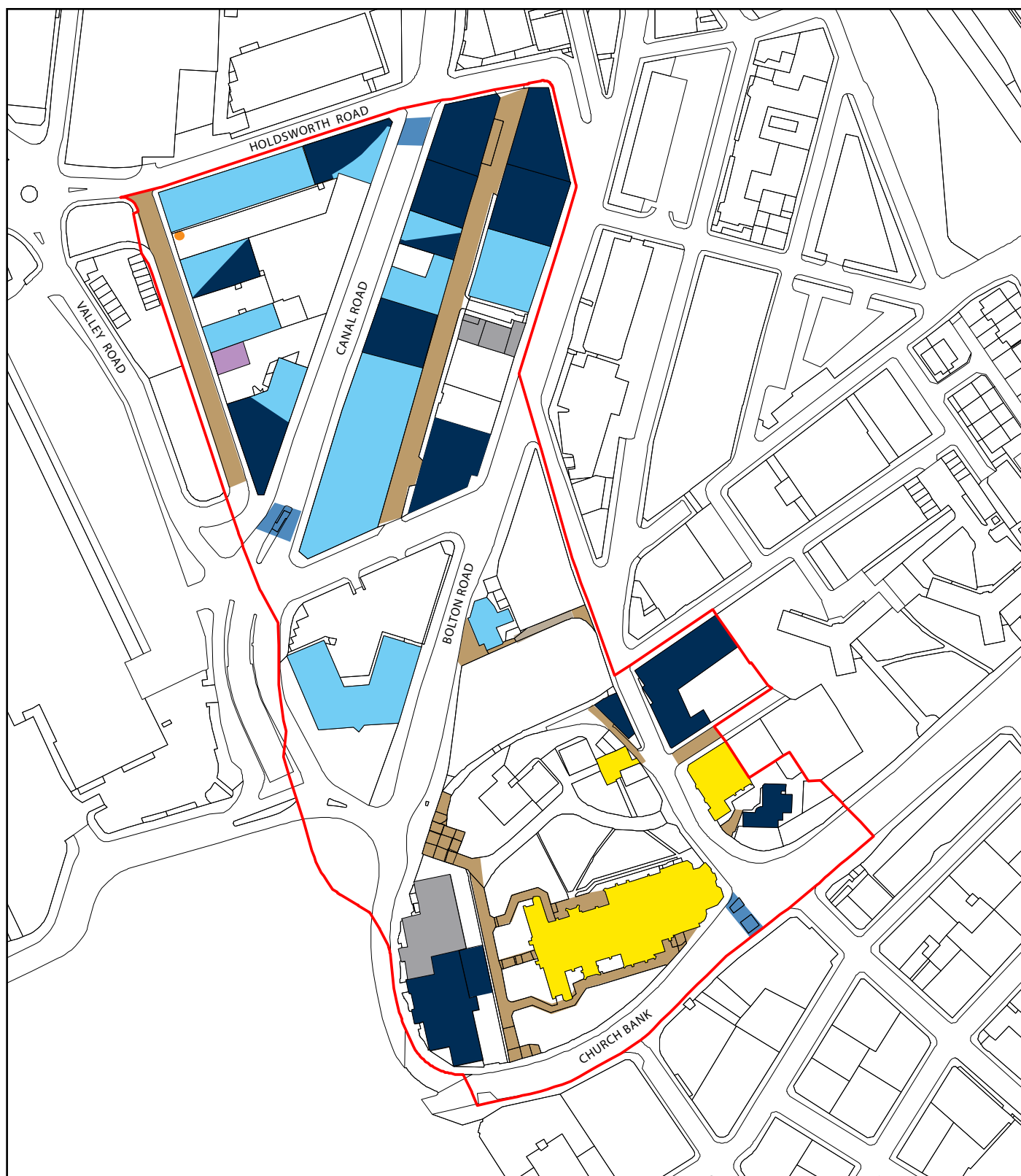
### Key

	Conservation Area Boundary		Listed building
	Key open space		Key unlisted building
	Important tree(s)		
	Key view or vista		

**NB** This map does not identify key trees individually, but merely indicates where there is at least one important tree.

# Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area

## Land Use and Highway Materials



# Key

	Conservation Area Boundary		Demolition		Civic building
	Retail / commercial building		Residential		Stone setts / flags
	Other non residential building		Vacant building / floor space		Un-surfaced / partially surfaced
	Place of worship / religious		New development		Traffic management scheme

# The Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area, the Masterplan and the Neighbourhood Development Frameworks (NDFs)

It is important that the **Conservation Area Appraisal** is set within the context of the wider regeneration aims for the city centre. This began in 2003 with the formation of an urban regeneration company (known as **Bradford Centre Regeneration**), and the commissioning of the architect **Will Alsop** to produce a **Masterplan**.

Alsop's Masterplan put forward a radical vision for the transformation of the centre, particularly with regard to the quality of the built environment and the public spaces. The Masterplan identified four separate neighbourhoods in the city centre – the Bowl, the Channel, the Market and the Valley. The Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area is within the Channel Neighbourhood.

For each neighbourhood, a Neighbourhood Development Framework (NDF) has subsequently been produced. The role of the NDFs is to translate the visionary nature of the Masterplan into a series of deliverable projects. Each NDF has identified 16 projects making 64 in total.

The map (right) shows the projects which will have an impact on the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area, together with an assessment of their compatibility with the existing historic and architectural character.

**Key NDF Projects relating to Cathedral Precinct** (For a full list of NDF Projects please refer to the 'Bradford City Centre Overview' document).

## 28. Canal Road / Valley Road Access Strategy

New development will be co-ordinated to ensure that traffic associated with the Valley Road

retail parks and the Channel Urban Village is concentrated on Valley Road, leaving Canal Road free for traffic to and from Broadway.

**Likely Impact on Conservation Area: NEUTRAL**

## 29. Barkerend Road and Church Bank

The reduction in through traffic along Barkerend Road and Church Bank means that they will be remodelled as an attractive, pedestrian priority avenue with a high quality public realm.

**Likely Impact on Conservation Area: POSITIVE**

## 30. St Peter's House

The redevelopment of Broadway will mean that this important civic listed building will regain a prominent

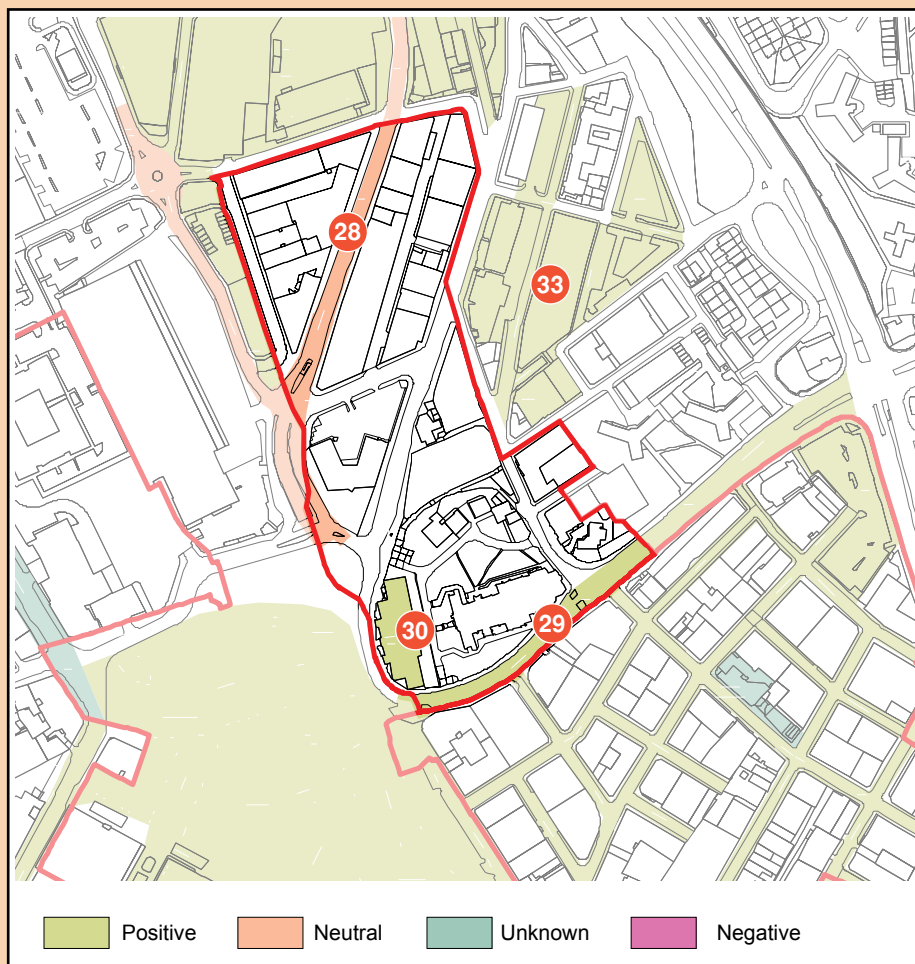
position in the townscape. The NDF promotes the re-use of this building as specialist retail with restaurants and cafes.

**Likely Impact on Conservation Area: POSITIVE**

## 33. Cathedral Urban Village

The redevelopment of the underused land and buildings outside of the conservation area at Captain Street, North Street and Wellington Street as family housing in an urban village had as its cornerstone St Mary's Primary School, which is within the conservation area. The closure of the school since the publication of the NDF now puts the viability of this proposition into question.

**Likely Impact on Conservation Area: UNKNOWN**





Any changes that have had a significant impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area since the previous assessment in 2005 are detailed below.

# Changes affecting the Conservation Area

## New Development



**26 Canal Road** is being converted to apartments, with the exterior works virtually completed. The conversion has maintained the traditional features and details of this listed building which was originally a warehouse.

### POSITIVE CHANGE

A small hut housing utilities equipment was erected adjacent to the Grade II Listed **18-20 Mill Street** and the attached Listed walls and railings. The small building was retrospectively granted planning permission and listed building consent subject to a few minor amendments intended to enhance its appearance. The building nonetheless detracts from the setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### NEGATIVE CHANGE

**LESSON:** A higher quality of development must be sought in conservation areas. New development should sit well with the existing buildings and structures.



# Buildings

**The following buildings have become vacant since the publication of the Conservation Area Assessment:**

- 27 Bolton Road
- 39-41 Bolton Road
- 15 Canal Road
- St Peter's House, Forster Square (partially vacant)
- 17-19 Stott Hill
- St Mary's Primary School, Stott Hill.

## NEGATIVE CHANGE

**The following buildings were vacant when the Conservation Area Assessment was written and remain vacant:**

- 1 Stott Hill
- 29 Canal Road (partially vacant)
- 32 Canal Road (partially vacant)
- 34-36 Canal Road
- 38 Canal Road
- 16-18 Mill Street (partially vacant).
- 1 Stott Hill.

## CONCERN

The prolonged vacancy or underuse of these buildings makes their longer term future uncertain, and presents an atmosphere of neglect in the place. The conservation area would benefit if these buildings were returned to use.

# Boundary

The appropriateness of the conservation area boundary in the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area will be assessed during 2009 - 2010 and any changes thought to be necessary will be consulted on and reported to the relevant committees as appropriate.

# Trees and Open Space

No trees of amenity or townscape value have been lost in the conservation area since the publication of the conservation area assessment.

## NO CHANGE/POSITIVE



# Works to Highways

Following the permanent closure of part of the Inner Ring Road in tandem with the redevelopment of the Broadway area, the highway and pavements along Canal Road and Forster Square have been resurfaced, and new pedestrian crossings created at the junctions with Balme Street and with Bolton Road. The works have attempted to minimise clutter at junctions and have removed some hatched paintwork to the roadway. The pavements to Canal Road are tarmac and small buff coloured square modules to Forster Square, with red blister paving at pedestrian crossings.

## NEUTRAL CHANGE

Church Bank has been closed to all through traffic apart from buses. In order to control through traffic, the road has been narrowed by the junction with Stott Hill to a single lane using two traffic islands topped with signage and bollards. While much of the work is reasonably discrete, the signage and bright concrete bollards detract from the street scene and interrupt a key vista into the conservation area and the views of the Cathedral itself. Similar signs at the entrance to Stott Hill from Church Bank have the same effect.

## NEGATIVE CHANGE



# Negative Impacts

As part of the review of the conservation area a number of properties displaying inappropriate alterations and additions have been noted.

Whilst a minority are considered to have a severely negative impact on the character of the conservation area, there are a number of properties displaying relatively minor visual detractors, such as inappropriate doors and windows, and painted stonework. The Council will look to ways of mitigating these works and will actively discourage the occurrence of similar situations arising within the conservation area in the future. Design guidance on the repair and maintenance of historic properties has recently been published by the Council.





# Management Proposals

**The overall aim of the Conservation Area Management Proposals is to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area, by ensuring that the Council and the community work together to maintain historic features and details and limit the loss of character.**

The objectives aim to:

- improve service delivery.
- raise awareness and understanding about the special character of the conservation area.
- improve decision making so that all repair, development and alteration result in a positive contribution to the character of the place.

The objectives of the Management Proposals are based on the issues identified in the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area Assessment and prioritised by members of the community who took part in the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area Assessment public consultation.

	Objective	Actions	Timescale
1	Design and Conservation Team to maintain contact with the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yearly newsletter about conservation area issues</li> <li>• Design and Conservation website to be made as informative, user friendly and up-to-date as possible</li> </ul>	Yearly 2007-2013
2	Improved communication between Council officers and key partners in the conservation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of a conservation area forum</li> <li>• Workshops</li> </ul>	Monthly As required
3	Improve the quality and amenity value of the public realm, open spaces and highway materials in Keighley Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer working relationship between Design and Conservation and other Council Departments</li> <li>• Production of design guidance for the enhancement of the public realm</li> </ul>	Continual  As resources permit
4	Retain the traditional scale, proportion and character of the shopping / business areas in the Cathedral Precinct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft shopfront design guidance to be consulted on in early 2007 and adopted during 2007.</li> <li>• Planning Policy</li> </ul>	Review guidance periodically
5	Preserve and enhance features and details that contribute to the character of the Cathedral Precinct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings to be published by the design and Conservation Team in 2007.</li> </ul>	Review guidance periodically
6	Promote good quality new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of guidance on appropriate sympathetic design to suit the character of the conservation area.</li> <li>• Production of design briefs where appropriate.</li> </ul>	2007-2013 as resources permit
7	Retain the commercial activity in the Cathedral Precinct. Ensure all investment is contributing to the character of the conservation area and its activities.	Maintenance of links and discussions between Design and Conservation Team and partners outside of and within the Council.	Continual
8	Monitor Planning Applications to add value to the historic environment	Design and Conservation Team to work more effectively within the wider planning service.	Continual
9	Reduce street clutter and advertising hoardings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation and Design Team to work with Highways Design Team to reduce signage</li> <li>• Design and Conservation team to work with the planning service to remove unauthorised hoardings and control any new advertisements</li> </ul>	Continual
10	Address illegal works to listed buildings and unauthorised development	Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Planning Enforcement Team	Continual
11	Retain important trees	Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Trees Team	Continual
12	Improve traffic management in the Cathedral Precinct.	Design and Conservation Team to work with Highways Design to make the conservation area's through routes more pleasant for pedestrians and motorists.	Continual
13	Monitor Change loss/gain and feedback to local community and Council officers working in the conservation area.	Design and Conservation Team to review the Cathedral Precinct Conservation Area every five years in line with Best value Indicator 219a	Review by September 2012

