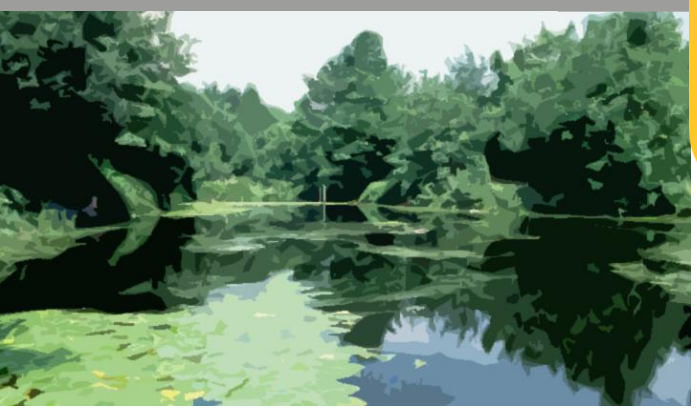
Bury Council

Bury Local Plan

Topic Paper 8:
Built environment and design

March 2025



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1. Introduction

1.1. This Topic Paper is one of a series that has been prepared as part of the process of evidence gathering to support Bury's emerging Local Plan. It sits alongside a range of other Topic Papers covering the following:

- Climate change and carbon reduction
- Housing
- Economy
- Centres
- Tourism and culture
- Communities
- Transport
- Green infrastructure
- Green Belt
- Water and flood risk
- Air quality, pollution and hazards

1.2 The principal aim of the Topic Paper is to set out current key policies, plans and strategies relating to this topic area that forms the framework for the development of the Local Plan and to present a profile of the Borough that will highlight key issues, problems and challenges that the Local Plan should seek to address and which have helped to shape and influence the direction and focus of the Local Plan's policies and designations.

2. Background

2.1. The built environment makes a major contribution to the character of a place and how it functions and impacts on the wider environment. Heritage assets play a significant role in this by highlighting the historical context of a place and adding diversity.

2.2. Through urban design requirements, planning also has a major role to play in ensuring that an area's built environment is attractive, functional, effective and has a positive impact on wellbeing.

2.3. Furthermore, the built environment contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and subsequently has a negative impact on a place's resilience to the impacts of climate change. The incorporation of sustainable design and construction techniques can therefore minimise these impacts.

3. Context

3.1. One of the key early stages in the process is to review other policies, plans and strategies which are of relevance to this particular topic area and which help to inform and influence the direction of the Local Plan. There is a need for the Local Plan to be consistent with planning policy at different levels.

3.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out Government policy in respect of planning matters and this is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This sets out the broad planning framework within which development plans are produced.

3.3. Sub-regionally, the Places for Everyone Plan joint plan (PfE) establishes strategic policies and site allocations across nine of the ten Greater Manchester districts. Following its adoption in March 2024, PfE is now a key part of Bury's development plan that sits alongside the Local Plan.

3.4. There are also a range of other plans and strategies that, whilst not being policy, are of relevance to the Borough from a built environment and design perspective.

National planning policy and guidance

3.5. All development plans must be prepared within the context of the Government's planning policies. These are primarily set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[1] which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

3.6. The NPPF is supported by separate policy documents related to waste[2] and traveller sites[3] as well as more detailed information in Planning Practice Guidance[4].

3.7. Central to the NPPF is the Government's objective of achieving sustainable development and it highlights that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth,

[1] National Planning Policy Framework
[2] National Planning Policy for Waste
[3] Planning policy for traveller sites
[4] Planning Practice Guidance

innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

3.8. In terms of conserving and enhancing the historic environment, the NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

3.9. It states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy 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.

3.10. In terms of achieving well designed places, the paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.

3.11. Paragraph 132 states that plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable.

3.12. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

3.13. In relation to the incorporation of trees into design considerations, paragraph 136 of the NPPF states that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

3.14. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

3.15. Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 26-002-20191001) provides advice on how plans can support well designed places and states that planning policies can set out the design outcomes that development should pursue as well as the tools and processes that are

expected to be used to embed good design. Appropriate policies can be included within:

- a plan's vision, objectives, and overarching strategic policies;
- non-strategic policies in local or neighbourhood plans; and
- supplementary planning documents, such as local design guides, masterplans or design codes, which provide further detail on specific design matters.

Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-2031

3.16. The Strategy is Greater Manchester's plan for all communities, neighbourhoods, towns and cities which make up the city-region. It is a plan for recovery and renewal following the pandemic.

3.17. The Strategy aims to achieve the shared vision of 'Good Lives for All: that Greater Manchester is a great place to grow up, get on and grow old; a great place to invest, do business, visit and study' and how this will be achieved.

3.18. The Strategy builds on the work undertaken by the Greater Manchester Strategy - Our People, Our Place (2017), by ensuring that all the people in Greater Manchester have access to safe, decent and affordable transport, accelerate plans towards carbon neutrality, creation of greener homes and communities and better jobs and skills.

3.19. The Strategy focuses on three key themes of:

- A greener Greater Manchester – focusing on tackling climate change and working toward our carbon neutral aim;
- A fairer Greater Manchester – addressing inequality and levelling-up, from access to good jobs, to transport, health and housing.
- A more prosperous Greater Manchester – delivering economic growth which is more equitable and socially responsible, bringing opportunities and prosperity to all.

Places for Everyone

3.20. Places for Everyone (PfE) was prepared as a Joint Development Plan Document of nine of the ten Greater Manchester local planning authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan). The plan was formally adopted in March 2024.

3.21. PfE is the strategic spatial plan that sets out a collective planning policy framework for the nine constituent boroughs. All policies within the plan are 'strategic policies' and it forms a key part of Bury's wider development plan

and is used to determine individual planning applications. As such, Bury's Local Plan will need to be consistent with PfE.

3.22. As a strategic plan, Places for Everyone does not cover everything that Bury's Local Plan would. Therefore, Bury's Local Plan will set out more detailed policies reflecting local circumstances.

3.23. PfE recognises that Greater Manchester has a uniquely diverse cultural heritage represented by its rich and extensive historic and built environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets. The Plan includes Policy JP-P2: Heritage which states that:

We will proactively manage and work with partners to positively conserve, sustain and enhance our historic environment and heritage assets and their settings. Opportunities will be pursued to aid the promotion, enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of heritage assets, as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing Greater Manchester's distinct character, identity and sense of place.

Local Plans will set out the key elements which contribute to the district's identity, character and distinctiveness and which should be the priority for conserving and enhancing in the future and demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites, buildings or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the positive management and integration of our heritage by:

1. Setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;

2. Ensuring that the heritage significance of a site or area is considered in accordance with national planning policy in the planning and design process and opportunities for interpretation and local engagement are optimised;

3. Integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, with creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place;

4. Delivering positive benefits that sustain and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing; and

5. Exploring opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that restoration of historic buildings offer.

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater

Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value.

Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy.

Where heritage assets have been identified as being at risk, Local Plans should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and placemaking, and they should set out strategies for their repair and re-use. Development proposals which will help safeguard the significance of and secure a sustainable future for Greater Manchester's heritage at risk will be supported in principle, provided they are not contrary to national policy or other policies in the development plan.

Proposals should be informed, as necessary, by the findings and recommendations of the appropriate heritage assessment(s) in the development plan evidence base and/or any updated heritage assessment submitted as part of the planning application process.

3.24. Places for Everyone recognises that high quality design will be fundamental to helping to ensure that Greater Manchester can deliver the attractive places that will enable it to compete successfully with other major cities across the world. Good design need not result in additional costs and indeed can lead to significant savings in the long-term, both for occupiers and society more generally. It can also help to increase the acceptability of development to existing residents and enhance the reputation of the developer. Relatively small design changes can make a considerable difference to the overall quality of a development, and the contribution that it makes to the success of a place. A high level of care is therefore required from developers throughout the design process. All development should achieve a high design quality, consistent with the ten characteristics set out in the National Design Guide.

3.25. PfE includes a range of policies to influence and shape the design of new development. This includes Policy JP-P1: Sustainable Places, which states that:

We aim to become one of the most liveable city regions in the world, consisting of a series of beautiful, healthy and varied places, each having the following key attributes that all development, wherever appropriate, should be consistent with:

1. Distinctive, with a clear identity that:

   A. Conserves and enhances the natural environment, landscape features, historic environment and local history and culture;

   B. Enables a clear understanding of how the place has developed; and

   C. Respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used.

2. Visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments which raise the human spirit through the use of green space, public art and quality design.

3. Socially inclusive:

   A. Responding to the needs of all parts of society;

   B. Enabling everyone to participate equally and independently;

   C. Providing opportunities for social contact and support; and

   D. Promoting a sense of community.

4. Resilient, capable of dealing with major environmental events

5. Adaptable, able to respond easily to varied and changing needs and technologies.

6. Durable, being built to last and using robust materials that reflect local character, weather well and are easily maintained.

7. Resource-efficient with:

   A. A low carbon footprint;

   B. Efficient use of land;

   C. Minimised use of new materials;

   D. High levels of recycling.

8. Safe, including by designing out crime and terrorism, reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour and by ensuring that developments make appropriate provision for response and evacuation in the case of an emergency or disaster.

9. Supported by critical infrastructure, such as energy, water and drainage and green spaces.

10. Functional and convenient, enabling people and uses to act efficiently with minimal effort, and responding to needs relating to servicing, recycling facilities, refuse collection and storage.

11. Incorporating inclusive design within all spaces with support for tackling inequality and poverty to form part of creating sustainable places.

12. Legible, being easy to understand and navigate, with the protection and enhancement of key views and new development well-integrated into the place.

13. Easy to move around for those of all mobility levels, particularly by walking and cycling, with enjoyable routes free from obstacles and disorienting stimuli, and with places to rest.

14. Well-connected to other places, particularly by public transport and digital infrastructure enabling everyone to take advantage of the employment, cultural and leisure opportunities across Greater Manchester and beyond.

15. Comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments:

A. Offering a high level of amenity that minimises exposure to pollution; and

B. Addressing microclimate issues such as sunlight, indoor air quality, overheating, shade, wind and shelter.

16. Incorporating high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm, with:

A. Opportunities for recreation and outdoor play for children, and interaction between the generations;

B. Public and private spaces clearly distinguished;

C. Development clearly defining, and promoting activity within, public spaces;

D. High quality landscaping with schemes.

17. Well-served by local shops, services and amenities, including education and health facilities.

Bury's 'Let's Do It!' Strategy

3.26. Bury's Let's Do It Strategy is a ten-year vision and strategy for the Borough. It seeks to build upon a shared sense of local pride and act as a call to arms

for progressing the local vision of achieving *'faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation'*.

3.27. It is a single strategy for the council, police, health, other public services, the voluntary, community and faith sector and business communities and some of its key aims are to:

- Develop every township in the borough to be better and stronger than before the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Tackle the causes of inequality and ensure that our children have a better start in life, with access to improved education and broader horizons;
- Help every adult to have the opportunity to be their very best through access to high quality, local work and to help our older residents stay connected and independent;
- Support local businesses as they seek to recover and thrive; and
- Deliver net zero emissions and a cleaner environment for all.

3.28. Bury's Local Plan will play a key role in delivering the vision and aims of the Let's Do It Strategy and, as such, it is important that there is alignment between these two key local strategies.

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans

3.29. The Borough contains 12 Conservation Areas. Appraisals and Management Plans have been produced for a vast majority of these.

3.30. The Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans initially describe and review the elements that contribute to the special character and historic interest of the Conservation Area, including its history, architecture and environment. They also discuss the challenges to the area's protection and enhancement and consider how best to secure the area's character and distinctiveness.

3.31. The second part of the documents put forward a management plan covering issues of development and enhancement.

4. Local Profile

Current Townscape

4.1. The Borough forms a gateway between the thriving city centre of Manchester to the south and the more industrial and rural landscapes of Lancashire to the north and, as a result, contains many features that are characteristic of both areas.

4.2. The valley of the River Irwell is a dominant characteristic of the Borough and whilst this brings its advantages from an environmental and recreational perspective, it also gives rise to issues of flood risk which, in turn, creates tensions against the need for new growth and regeneration.

4.3. The urban character differs significantly within the Borough and the following paragraphs set out the broad characteristics of each of the Borough's six main towns:

Ramsbottom

4.4. Ramsbottom's physical character developed in relation to its situation on the sides of the Irwell valley with the rivers and streams of the surrounding West Pennine Moors providing the water for textile processes and the power for the town's early industrial development.

4.5. The urban form of the town is generally dense and compact in the central area with more suburban development to the South and East. The sloping valley sides to the town have influenced the distinctive pattern of terraced streets built along the contours. The use of local stone in the construction of much of the town has had a strong visual impact on the character of Ramsbottom.

Tottington

4.6. Today, Tottington can be characterised as a semi-rural area. Its focal point is the 'village' centre which, for the most part, is made up of high density, stone-built terraced properties along Market Street with similar, high density terraced housing extending out along the main linear routes from the centre towards Bury, Walshaw, Greenmount, Harwood and Turton.

4.7. In relatively recent years, Tottington's pleasant environment has seen significant additions of lower density, post-war housing.

Bury

4.8. Within the historic core of Bury town centre, much of the surviving heritage dates from the early/mid Victorian period and includes some fine classical styled buildings in brick and stone and this core area is designated as a Conservation Area.

4.9. The town centre has witnessed the most radical changes in recent years with the modernisation of the once austere 1960's precinct in the heart of the town to create the more modern and covered Millgate shopping centre. Similarly, the extension to the town centre at the Rock as well as development at Townside and Chamberhall have involved high density and innovatively designed buildings that set the tone for the future image of the Bury's core area.

4.10. The western area of Bury has developed as a predominantly residential location with a wide range of styles and quality. In particular, extensive areas of lower density family housing developed in the Seddons Farm area during the 1960s and 1970s.

4.11. The eastern side of Bury contrasts significantly with the west. East Bury is dominated by traditional industrial and residential uses. The dominant housing type is terraced. However, there is a wide variety of styles and

sizes, ranging from small back of pavement homes, to elegant properties with large gardens. Medium to high density housing is typical of this area.

Radcliffe

4.12. The built form of Radcliffe is generally compact and dense, particularly along Ainsworth Road and Cross Lane. There has tended to be a lack of variety in terms of buildings types, particularly evident with the dominance of red brick terraced housing.

4.13. The town is characterised by three distinct character areas – terraced residential areas to the north and east with more suburban housing to the south. Industry winds it way along the valley floor, whilst the town centre contains a mixture of building forms and ages bordered to the west by the more modern character of Asda and the by-pass.

4.14. The new Radcliffe hub and the wider transformation of Radcliffe town centre will see the introduction of modern and distinctive new development that will significantly improve the built environment in the heart of the town centre.

Whitefield

4.15. Traditionally, Whitefield developed as an elegant 19th and early 20th century residential suburb. And there is still widespread evidence of this era with a considerable proportion of large detached 2-storey properties set within generous mature gardens and smaller semi-detached properties on smaller plots. Whitefield has also retained many strong features from the early 20th century such as the mature trees which line the roads and stone boundary walls.

4.16. Whitefield does not have a particularly compact centre. Bury New Road between Radcliffe New Road and Higher Lane and Morrisons supermarket provide the main focus for town centre uses which extend southwards in a linear fashion along Bury New Road.

Prestwich

4.17. Prestwich is a traditional middle class 19th century residential suburb which largely developed in the late Georgian period.

4.18. The north of the town is characterised by nineteenth century terraces, interspersed with low quality buildings of the twentieth century and recent housing developments which have eroded the historic character.

4.19. The south of the town generally consists of large detached and semi-detached properties set in generous grounds and set back from the road. There are many mature trees and shrubs creating a mature landscaped area. The character and appearance of the area has been eroded by the demolition of some of the original houses and their replacement by blocks of flats during the mid and late twentieth century. Few of the later developments are of any architectural quality and as a result the area has a very mixed appearance.

4.20. The commercial area of Prestwich spans the busy Bury New Road, but mostly on the east side. The Radius development in the heart of Prestwich has added diversity and better quality to the built form in the area of the Longfield Centre as well as adding a significant landmark feature and proposals for the redevelopment of the Longfield present an opportunity to add more modern design and distinctiveness to this part of the town centre.

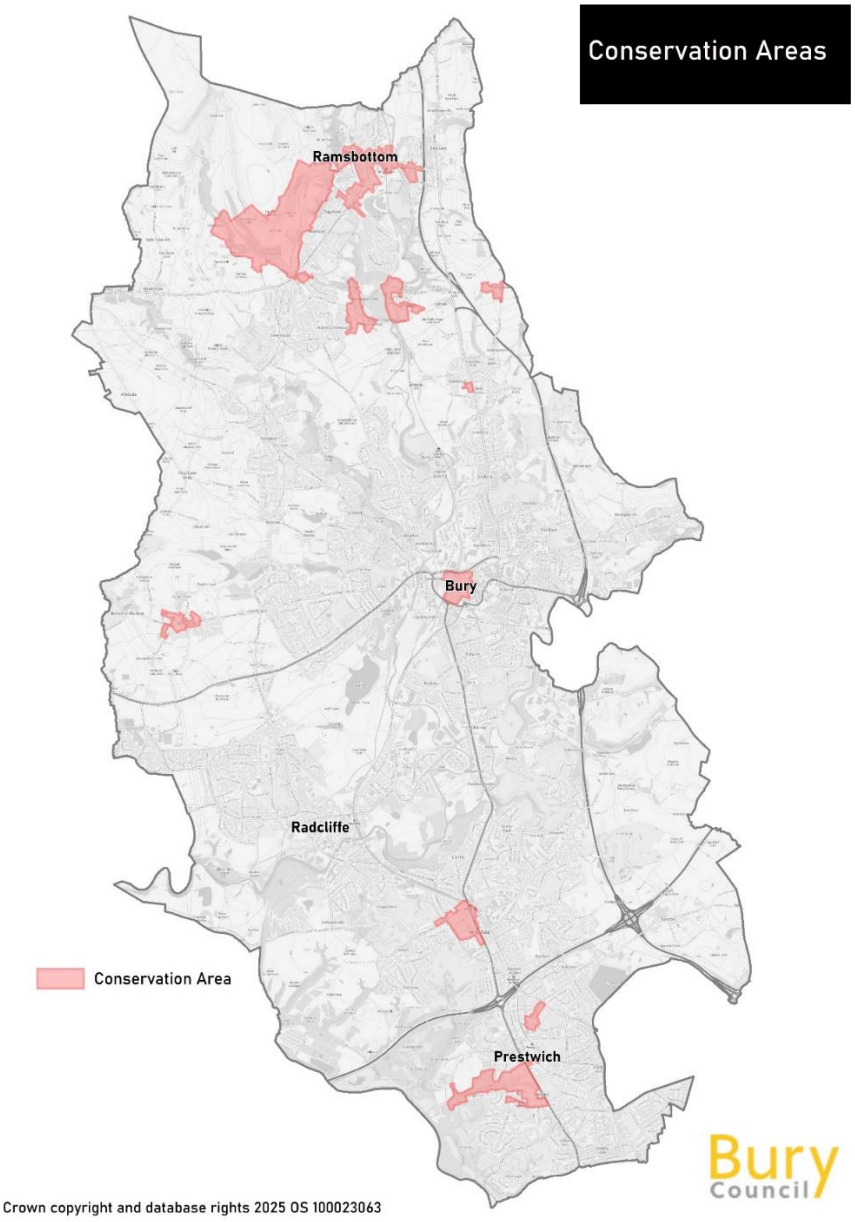
Conservation Areas

4.21. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 gives the Local Planning Authorities a responsibility to designate conservation areas

and bring forward policies and proposals for their preservation and enhancement. This can include groups of buildings, landscapes, historic street patterns, trees, archaeological sites and monuments can be included.

4.22. There are now twelve designated Conservation Areas across the Borough (see Plan 1). Eight of these are located in the north of the Borough (Walmersley, Holcombe, Mount Pleasant, Pot Green, Ramsbottom, Rowlands/Brooksbottoms, Summerseat and Ainsworth) and these have been designated to preserve the older, stone built features and settlements. The other Conservation Areas cover the historic core of Bury town centre and three in the south of the Borough in Whitefield and Prestwich (All Saints, Poppythorn and St Mary's Park).

Plan 1 – Bury's Conservation Areas



Listed Buildings

4.23. Listed buildings are those recognised as buildings of special architectural or historic interest by the Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport. They designate the listed building status based on the advice from Historic England.

4.24. The listing of a building provides statutory protection against alteration or demolition, which would damage its special architectural or historical interest.

4.25. Buildings may be included for their special historical associations, as well as their architectural merit. There are three categories of listing which indicate the relative importance of each individual building. However, the additional planning controls protecting listed buildings apply equally to all grades. The listed building categories are:

- Grade I: buildings of exceptional interest
- Grade II*: these are particularly important buildings of more than special interest
- Grade II: buildings of special interest.

4.26. The list of buildings in Bury covers more than 320 buildings and structures. The type and character of these listed buildings is varied and reflects the historical development of the Borough. They include stone and timber framed buildings originating from the 15th, 16th and 17th century, mills, churches, telephone boxes and war memorials.

4.27. They are found throughout the Borough but there are predictably concentrations within the Borough's Conservation Areas. Most of them are Grade 2, but the following have a higher grade:

- Radcliffe Cenotaph 2*
- St Mary's Church, Prestwich 1
- Monument to John Brooks, St Mary's, Prestwich 2*
- Hey House, Holcombe, 2*
- Lower Chesham 2*
- Brandlesholme Old Hall 2*
- St Mary's Church, Radcliffe 1
- Christ Church, 2*
- Ainsworth Chapel, 2*
- Radclife Tower 1

- Dearden Fold Farm 2*
- All Saints Church, Whitefield 1

Archaeological sites and monuments

4.28. Archaeological remains and monuments are vital evidence of our history. They are, however, highly vulnerable to damage and destruction and if lost can never be replaced.

4.29. Local Authorities have responsibilities for the protection and recording of sites and monuments, as set out in National Planning Policy Guidance.

4.30. The Council work jointly with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) and rely upon its service for all archaeological advice. GMAAS maintains a database, the 'Historic Environment Record' of all known archaeological sites in the Borough. The database contains chance finds, burial remains, historic buildings, parks and gardens and industrial monuments.

4.31. The Historic Environment Record for Bury includes approximately 1,300 identified archaeological sites. These vary greatly in importance and character. In addition, there will always be unknown remains that may come to light as a result of development or other actions.

4.32. Many sites are poorly understood through lack of research. It is essential that appropriate consultations take place when these sites are affected by development and the appropriate action taken to preserve or record the archaeological evidence.

4.33. Ancient Monuments are included within the Historic Environment Record. There are four such monuments in Bury which are of national importance and which are protected by being Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs). There are other monuments, structures and remains that are also important but are not currently protected. The protected monuments are:

- Bury Castle: circa 1469 and is the remains of a fortified and moated manor house located in the heart of Bury Town Centre.
- Radcliffe Tower: circa 1403, adjacent to the line of the former Roman road at Radcliffe.
- Affetside Cross: a post-medieval cross adjacent to Watling Street, the Roman road from Manchester to Ribchester.
- Castlesteads: Iron Age/Roman settlement and hill fort set on a promontory north of Bury Town Centre.

Non-designated heritage assets

4.34. In addition to the designated heritage assets described above, the NPPF also recognises non-designated heritage assets and states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

4.35. Work began on a local list of Bury's non-designated heritage assets some time ago but was disrupted in 2010 by a lack of resources. Since the introduction of the NPPF local lists have increased in importance and now have more significance. Consequently, work on Bury's local list resumed in 2016 and a draft list has been produced, with approximately 500 entries.

4.36. The list will be a 'living document' as additional information comes to light and structures are both added and deleted as records increase in accuracy. It is the first step to identifying such assets so that the significance of each asset can be fully researched when proposals for removal or alteration come forward. The list has been produced using selection criteria based on guidance from Heritage England. It is also based on suggestions put forward by civic and historical societies when the original work began.

4.37. The approach to the production of the list has been to ensure that each part of the borough and its character is represented. It is also important to cover all relevant periods of the borough's development and to ensure that all building and structure types are covered.

4.38. Not surprisingly, buildings within the 12 conservation areas are well represented. The centres at Prestwich, Tottington, and Radcliffe are also represented and buildings of interest within the setting of listed buildings are commonly included. There are some gaps in information. Most buildings have an individual summary sheet but some remote or inaccessible buildings, such as farms, may not. However, early maps and place names have helped in showing that sites have been occupied for some time, and this is the starting point for further assessment.

Design

4.39. The intrinsic qualities of Bury's setting and historical development have shaped its character to the distinct place it is today. It is important that developers and designers understand this setting in order to ensure that new development has relevance to the Borough and is responsive to its context.

4.40. Bury forms a link between the thriving city centre of Manchester to the south and the more industrial and rural landscapes of Lancashire to the north and this is reflected in the character of many of the Borough's buildings and spaces.

4.41. The design and construction of new places and spaces could significantly impact on the future character of the Borough. Maintaining or contributing towards the strong sense of place and distinctiveness in Bury is an essential requirement for new developments. Too many recent developments have failed to respect the distinctive character of the Borough and it is important that this trend is reversed.

4.42. Much of the Borough's present-day character and appearance derives from the industrial expansion of the late 18th Century and early 19th Century. However, the origins of individual parts of the Borough stretch back further and yet they continue to play an important part of the character, culture and economy of the Borough.

4.43. Until relatively recently, the design and layout of new development featured only lightly in national planning policy meaning that the ability to influence the design of new development was limited. This led to a number of developments in the Borough displaying poor visual quality that disregarded the distinctive character of Bury.

4.44. However, as described previously in this Topic Paper, the NPPF now places design at the centre of the planning and development process, recognising that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.

4.45. It states that plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable.

4.46. There is a clear social, economic and environmental case for improving the design quality of new development throughout Bury. Good design is linked to investment, high quality jobs, improved health, a reduction in travel and the improved attractiveness of the Borough as a place to live, work and invest.

Built environment regeneration opportunities

4.47. The built environment shapes the living conditions and quality of life for our communities and workers. Whilst many parts of the Borough present a high-quality built environment, there are some areas that are particularly poor-quality and in need of regeneration and environmental improvement.

4.48. Two areas of the Borough, in particular, stand out as being in need of regeneration and environmental improvement, to the east of Bury town centre and in the Milltown Street area of Radcliffe.

4.49. Whilst these areas aren't in need of wholesale regeneration with the displacement of existing residents, businesses and other operators, they would, nonetheless, benefit from significant improvements to the built environment.

Amenity

4.50. Poorly considered development can have a negative impact on the amenity of the surrounding area as well as the occupants and users of a development itself.

4.51. Access to daylight and sunlight is important for general amenity, health and well-being, for bringing warmth into a property and to save energy from reducing the need for artificial lighting and heating.

4.52. Pollution and general disturbance arising from noise, vibration, smell, litter, artificial light and opening hours can also have a significant impact on amenity and people's quality of life. Similarly, inadequate parking and servicing arrangements associated with a development can have an adverse impact on amenity.

Food and drink uses

4.53. Restaurants, hot food takeaways, cafes, snack bars, public houses or any other uses involving the sale of food and drink can potentially pose a number of associated environmental and highway safety problems which need to be carefully controlled. The factors to be considered when assessing planning applications mainly relate to the effect on amenity, particularly where residential properties are in close proximity, road safety and traffic flow.

4.54. Such uses are most appropriately located within town and district centres and other mixed-use areas, where their impact will tend to be least damaging and demand for their services is greatest.

Advertisements

4.55. All advertisements affect the appearance of the built environment where they are displayed and, as such, there is a need to control the visual effects of advertisements on their surroundings, particularly where this is in the interests of amenity and public safety.

4.56. In terms of amenity, advertisements can affect the appearance of a building and the visual amenity of the immediate neighbourhood where it is to be displayed. From a public safety perspective, advertisements can affect the likely behaviour of drivers of vehicles who will see the advertisement, can

lead to possible confusion with any traffic sign or other signal, or possibly interfere with a navigational light or an aerial beacon.

5. Summary of Key Issues

5.1. This Built Environment and Design Topic Paper has highlighted a number of Key Issues that need to be considered in taking the Local Plan forward. These Key Issues are considered to be as follows:

- The Borough has a diverse character and townscape.
- The Borough is home to a range of designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- There is a need to ensure that all new development displays high standards of design and layout.
- There are areas of the Borough that are in need of regeneration and improvements to the built environment.
- There is a need to ensure that new development does not lead to unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area or users and occupants of the development.
- Food and drink uses pose a number of potential associated environmental and highway safety problems which need to be carefully controlled.
- There is a need to ensure that new advertisements do not have negative effects on amenity or public safety.

Bury Council