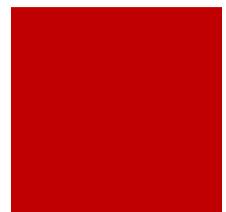


FALLBARN CONSERVATION AREA

CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS PLAN

ADOPTED FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PURPOSES FROM 27thTH OCTOBER 2011



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fallbarn Conservation Area was designated on 7 November 2007 and a Conservation Area Appraisal was written in March 2008. This document draws on this earlier document but also includes an update on the negative features and issues to be found in the conservation area and adds further proposals for effective management (the 'Management Proposals Plan').

The Council is required by law to periodically review its conservation areas and to consult local residents and business owners with any proposals for change. The production of up-to-date Character Appraisals also assists the Council in making decisions on planning applications within or on the edges of the Conservation Area.

This Fallbarn Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2011 with its attendant Management Proposals Plan has been produced for the Council by The Conservation Studio. The survey and background research were undertaken between October 2010 and December 2010, and included an initial consultation with local amenity groups and ward councillors. Preliminary public consultation, via the Council's website, took place in February 2011. A further web based public consultation exercise, together with targeted mailing to residents of the area, was carried out, ending on 25 April 2011. After this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available from the Borough Council) and amendments to the text and mapping were made as appropriate.

The document identifies the character and positive qualities of the Fallbarn Conservation Area, highlight key issues, and puts forward proposals for its management in future years. The general format of the document follows guidance produced by English Heritage on the effective management of conservation areas.

The Fallbarn Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted by the Borough Council as a material consideration for development control purposes with effect from 27th October 2011 and the Recommended Actions in the Management Proposals Plan were agreed to be implemented incrementally as resources allow.



Merry Trees

PART 1 – FALLBARN CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Fallbarn Conservation Area

The Fallbarn Conservation Area was designated by Rossendale Borough Council in November 2007. The small hamlet already had an interesting history and contained buildings of undoubted merit, but the initial impetus for the designation was the poor condition of Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top, and the owner's proposals for the site. Designation provided control over unauthorised demolition, and allowed time for the Council and the site's owner to consider ways in which the site might be developed. To date (2011) no acceptable scheme for restoring these important buildings or for new development on the site has been received. Meanwhile, the historic buildings continue to deteriorate to the point that the Council may wish to consider taking urgent action to ensure that the buildings are preserved for posterity. This is further discussed in the Management Proposals Plan.

Fallbarn is a small, tightly planned hamlet set against the valley side and fronted by the River Irwell, Fallbarn Road and the two groups of historic terraced properties, Merry Trees and Albert Terrace. Views of the group are fairly open from the riverside and there are also glimpses from Rawtenstall and up and down the valley. The two terraces form a gateway to the upper part of the group, and the bridge across the river runs close to this entrance. The river and the river wall are an important part of the setting of the buildings, and the narrowness of Fallbarn Road reinforces the height and scale of both Merry Trees and Albert Terrace. Set closely behind Fallbarn Road are Cherry Tree House, Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Dam To, Fallbarn Barn, and Rose Cottage. These stand as two building groups, Rose Cottage and the former barn (including Nos. 1 Dam Top) being earlier than Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top.



Cherry Tree House

A narrow track leads into the group and up to Cherry Tree House. This is the tallest building in the group and sits at the top of this track, dominating the settlement. Behind and around are fields of scrubby pasture on the rising hillside which provide a sense of enclosure though they also bring shadow in winter. Post and rail fences and copses of trees and shrubs are also typical in the area.

The buildings are a small but concentrated record of the growth from a modest probably 18th century agricultural hamlet to a bold and slightly romantic residential development of the mid 19th century, which uses Gothic details in a style reminiscent of 17th century local styles. The grouping of the buildings reflects this difference and is important to the Conservation Area's character. This is enhanced by the way the land and the track rise up from Fallbarn Road and the views of the buildings and the landscape are formed. The river, in its cutting with the stone retaining and parapet walls, together with the spring and local details and features, are all part of this local scene.

1.2 The control of conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. A conservation area is defined as “an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these conservation areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a conservation area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Fallbarn Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with English Heritage guidance as set out in *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (March 2011). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and conservation areas is set out within “*Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment*” (PPS5).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Fallbarn Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten its special qualities (in the form of the ‘Character Appraisal’);
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and also achieve the enhancement of the conservation area (in the form of the ‘Management Proposals Plan’).

1.3 Community involvement

This document has been produced for Rossendale Borough Council following consultation with the local community at several stages:

The Draft Fallbarn Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2008

The Draft Fallbarn Conservation Area Appraisal was forwarded to the Rossendale Civic Trust and all residents within the Fallbarn Conservation Area, and a meeting was held with the Civic Trust and the residents to discuss the Appraisal on the 18 February 2008. Ten residents attended the meeting. There was general support for the Appraisal's content at the meeting. However, the residents raised a long list of issues. In response to this it was proposed that in addition to the recommendations in the previous section of the appraisal, the following should be investigated by the Council and other appropriate bodies:

- Grant aid towards the potential additional cost to house owners of complying with the additional Conservation Area controls.

- Issues of highway safety, traffic speed and weight limits, access and parking, lighting and signage, all affecting this part of Fallbarn Road.
- The condition of the retaining wall to the River Irwell and the impact of heavy traffic.
- Consideration of the extension of the Conservation Area to include the approach to Fallbarn adjacent to the subway leading to Lever Street.

These Issues have therefore been added to the 2011 Character Appraisal.

The Draft Fallbarn Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan 2011

Before the Appraisal was drafted, but after The Conservation Studio had carried out their survey work, a summary of the conservation area's Key Positive and Key Negative Features and Issues (as updated), its Historical Development, and a Questionnaire, was put on the Council's website for 2 weeks to encourage local feed back to the consultants.

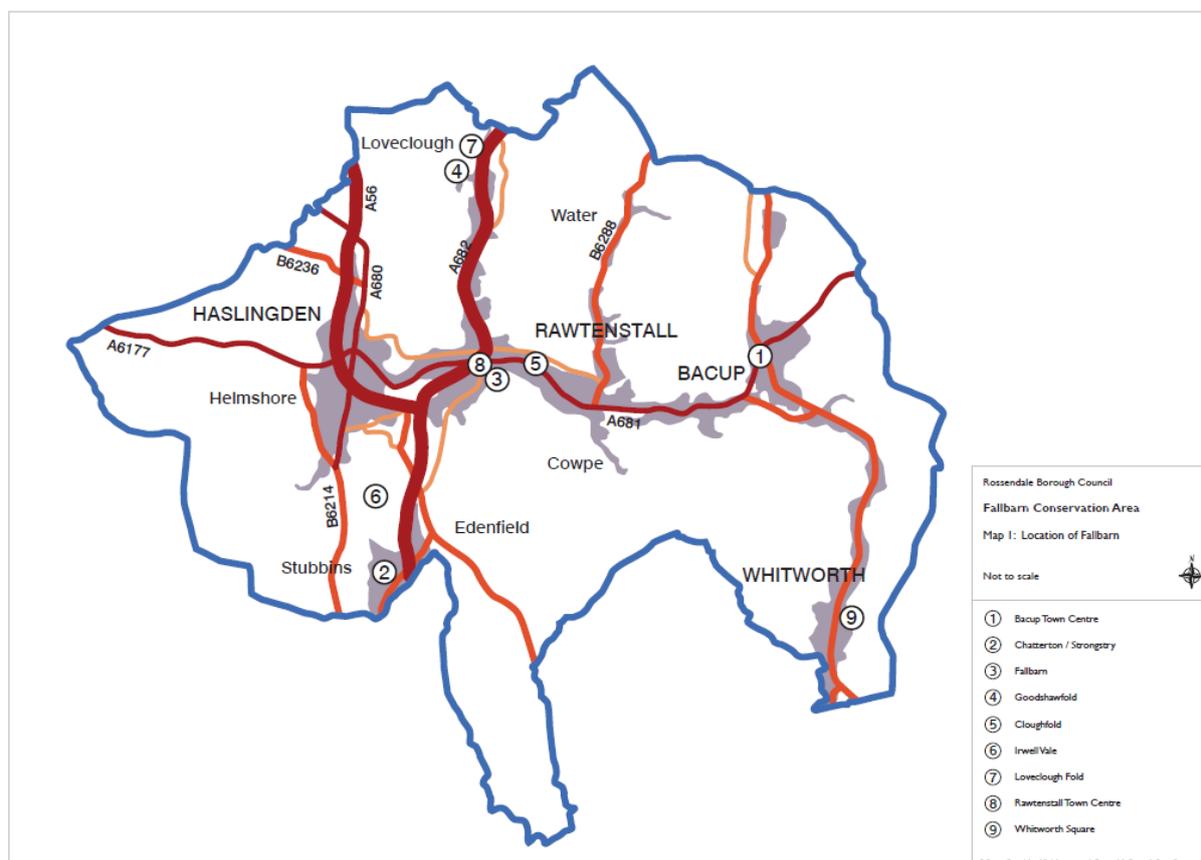
Final public consultation

Following the initial drafting of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan, a web based public consultation exercise, together with targeted mailing to residents of the area, was carried out, ending on 25 April 2011. After this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available from the Borough Council) and amendments to the text and mapping were made as appropriate. Finally, the documents were approved by the Council as a material consideration for development control purposes with effect from 27th October 2011 and the Recommended Actions in the Management Proposals Plan, were agreed to be implemented incrementally as resources allow.

2 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING

2.1 Location

Fallbarn is situated on the eastern edge of Rawtenstall, immediately to the south of the Bacup Road (the A681) and the River Irwell, with the roundabout which marks the beginning of the modern Bocholt Way close by. The Conservation Area is approached by a narrow setted pathway which leads from Bacup Road, under the Bocholt Way, to the pedestrian bridge over the river.



2.2 Landscape setting, topography and geology

Fallbarn lies within the valley of the River Irwell in the south Pennine hills on rising land with steep slopes which continue until they reach Cowpe Lowe hill, some distance away to the south. The hillside and tops are scarred by centuries of stone quarrying, which still takes place towards Scout Moor and Brandwood Lower End Moor.

The southern boundary of the Conservation Area is marked by the course of the River Irwell, which here flows in an east to west direction. The dominant topographical feature is the flatness of the land which follows the line of the river, which contrasts with the rising hillside which starts to the immediate south. This means that within the Conservation Area the land slopes up away from the river, providing enclosure to the Conservation Area and limiting immediate views from the back garden of Cherry Tree House.

Glacial action has been very important in influencing the landscape in Rossendale, both in terms of scouring out the valleys to leave more resistant and higher areas untouched, and through the deposit of drift material. The variable nature of this glacial action and deposition

significantly contributes towards a similar variety of soil types, which in turn are instrumental in determining the type of agriculture most suitable in different areas.



View over the garden of Cherry Tree House

The Pennine moorland is characterised by large boggy areas of grass, heather, and peat, where the high altitude prevents any useful farming apart from summer grazing. These uplands are underlain by Carboniferous rocks, mainly millstone grit, sandstones and coal measures, and the soils are acidic and strongly leached, requiring frequent liming to prevent surface mat formation. However, the sandstone deposits have provided an important source of stone for building and paving – much of London is paved in sandstone flags from Rossendale, and sandstone quarries are marked on historic maps close to Fallbarn, and modern stone quarries are located not far away. Local conditions in Fallbarn apparently include a sort of quicksand which is presumably the result of its proximity to the River Irwell.

2.3 Biodiversity

On the tops to the south of the Conservation Area, the open heather moorland environment provides examples of characteristic flora and fauna. Further down the hill slopes, closer to Fallbarn, the hedges and groups of trees provide a more suitable environment for wildlife such as foxes, badgers, smaller mammals and a variety of wild birds. The River Irwell also provides some potential for wildlife habitats.

3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Archaeology

There are no known prehistoric or Romano-British sites in Fallbarn, and no recorded settlement in the area before the late medieval period, although it is likely that small farmsteads may have existed.

3.2 Historical development

Fall Barn appears to have originated as a small, probably 18th century, farmstead which was based on a spring which remains today next to Rose Cottage. In 1712 Henry Hargreaves, who lived in Higher Cloughfold, left property to his nephew in Fall Barn. The Yates Map of Rawtenstall, dated 1786, shows a few buildings in the present location of the Conservation Area.

Development of the area in the early 19th century seems to have been encouraged by improvements in the road system, and from 1846, by the provision of the East Lancashire Railway to Rawtenstall. In the 1820s the Ashworths owned the Greenbank Estate and they were also trustees (i.e. part-promoters) of the new turnpike road which ran from Blackburn to Todmorden, along what is now the Bacup Road. This was completed between 1826 and 1828. At one point, Weavers Cottage in Bacup Road, now the headquarters of the Rawtenstall Civic Trust, had a small toll house added to it which is shown on the 1846 map. In 1824 Richard Ashworth, baize manufacturer, is listed at Fall Barn in Baines' Directory, and the family name is possibly recorded on Albert Terrace of 1861 which bears the initials IHA or IAH. The name is also reflected in the name of the public house in Bacup Road a few hundred yards from the Conservation Area – the Ashworth Arms.



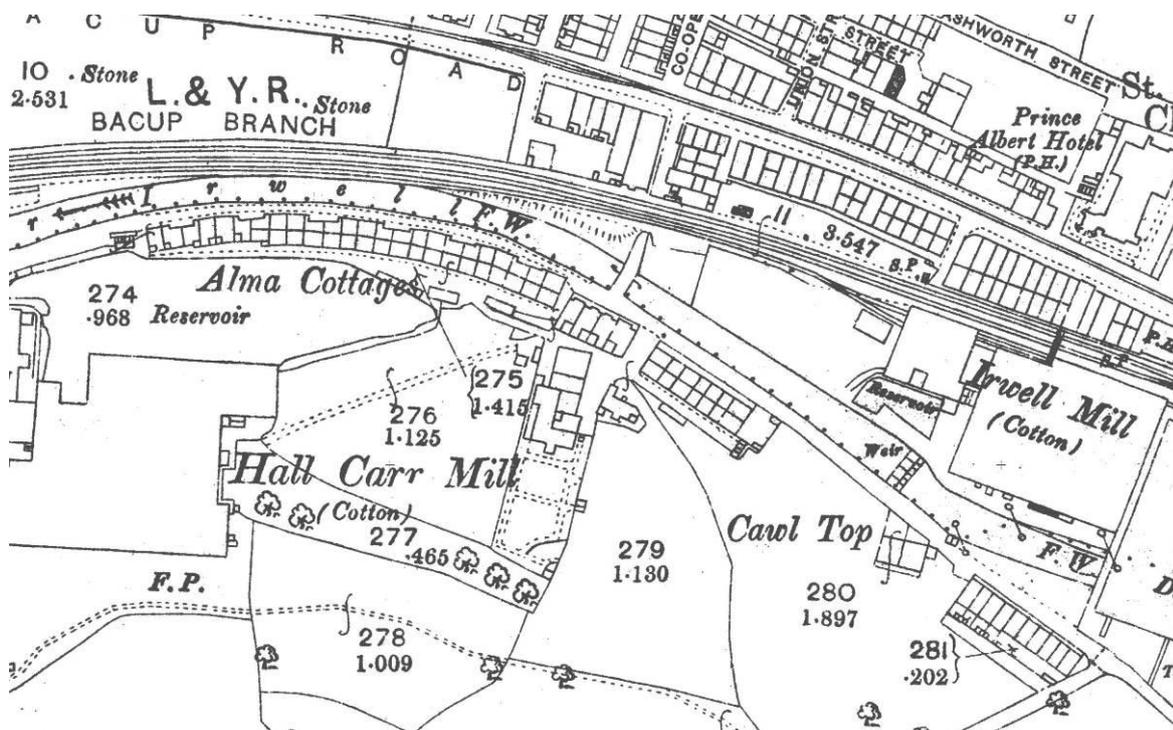
Albert Terrace

Rawtenstall in the 1840s was not yet a town, consisting of a series of small settlements based either on agriculture or the beginnings of the textile industry. Many of these existing settlements were absorbed as the town grew. Fortunes were made during this rapid growth and the increasing trade of this period, and a number of local families (including the

Hardmans, Ashworths and Whiteheads) dominated the town and the valleys around. Out of this wealth came benefactors wishing to provide new buildings for the education and welfare of the townsfolk. Some of the same benefactors also wished to confirm their own status by building their own mansions and impressive industrial buildings, and it was not uncommon for successful industrialist in the North West to engage nationally well-known architects to design and build their legacies. The story of the buildings in the Conservation Area is linked to such events.



Historic map of 1849



Historic map of 1893

The Hardman family were long established woollen manufacturers in Rawtenstall, living at Oak Hill, now Whitaker Park Museum. Richard Hardman of New Hall Hey brought the architect and builder Richard Williams to Rawtenstall during the 1840s, when he was already working on the Houses of Parliament. His arrival may have had some connection with Hardman's wish to make an impact in competition with the Whitehead family. It appears that he commissioned Williams to build a small village at Fallbarn, responding to the success of the Whitehead's Holly Mount village. Cherry Tree House was designed and built by Richard Williams, and he is known to have lived there from 1851 for a number of years. He is important to the history of the Borough due to both his level of output and the quality of his buildings. He designed and built a long list of industrial and residential buildings including New Hall Hey Mill, Horncliffe House, Cliffe Tower, Springfield House, The Royal Hotel, Newchurch Unitarian Church, Hall Carr Mill, Alder Grange, Fern Villa, Victoria Mills, Forest Mill, Brougham Hall, Wesley Villa, and Heymount Mansion. He worked for all the important families during the second half of the 19th century and specialised in building on difficult ground, in this case a form of quicksand, which had previously made many parts of the valley bottom impossible to use. He had a particular and significant impact on the town and is important to the story of Rossendale.

Most of William's work in Fallbarn appears to have been built in c1850. Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top remain, although they have both been vacant since at least 2007. These probably replaced the original farmhouse and the datestone of 1717 on Cherry Tree House may relate to this earlier building. The new buildings were also attached to an existing barn, which has a datestone of 1846, possibly referring to a rebuild in anticipation of the later work. Part of this barn was converted in the 20th century into what is now No. 1 Dam Top and the rest is now called Fallbarn Barn. It is known that Richard Williams also designed Alma Villas, dated 1851, referred to as a group of picturesque workers' houses off Fallbarn Road. These are shown on the 19th century maps as a long back-to-back terrace curving along Fallbarn Road, and appear to be of the same scale as Albert Terrace, but were demolished during the first half of the 20th century. However, fronting Fallbarn Road remain two interesting and different terraces, Merry Trees (Nos. 49 to 55 (odd) Fallbarn Road) and Albert Terrace (Nos. 2 to 14 (even) and Nos. 57 to 69 (odd) Fallbarn Road). The front elevation of Albert Terrace has a date stone 1861 and the initials either IAH or IHA, linked to either the Hardman or Ashworth families. It could be speculated that Albert Terrace was part of Hardman's village designed by Williams but no direct evidence of this has so far been found.

Since its construction, Fallbarn has been surrounded by various industrial buildings including a large mill to the south west (Green Bridge Mill) and a gas holder site to the east. A Riding School operates from a site to the immediate west of the Conservation Area boundary. The construction of Bocholt Way in the 1990s has formed a barrier to movement which is partially overcome by the creation of a subway beneath the new road, although most residents approach Fallbarn by car along Fallbarn Road.

3.3 Historic Environment Record (HER)

The HER for Fallbarn records: Cherry Tree House, Merry Trees Terrace, Albert Terrace and Rose Cottage. It also provides a short description of its historical development. The 1849 map, which was surveyed in 1844-7 (i.e. before Cherry Trees House etc was built), shows Rose Cottage next to two buildings, which probably represents the original farmhouse and the barn. The 1893 map shows the industrial setting to the group, with Hall Carr Mill to the west, and Irwell Mill (both cotton mills) to the east. Of note is the long line of Alma Cottages (now demolished) which previously lay to the west of Merry Trees Terrace – most of these were back-to-backs, and the profile suggests an indented front elevation, possibly similar to Merry Trees Terrace. A further feature is the line of the railway (now Bocholt Road), with a

connecting street to Bacup Road under the track – this remains and is paved with sandstone setts.

3.4 Activities

Fallbarn is a totally residential area although a variety of commercial businesses are located close by, the nearest being the Riding School which immediately abuts the western boundary of the Conservation Area. Mixed uses can also be found nearby along Bacup Road, where there are a number of restaurants and shops. A small early 20th century building, with a possibly 1970s extension, can be seen at the pedestrian entrance to the Conservation Area (Denric Knitware). A large gas holder and other industrial buildings lie to the east and a substantial mill site (Green Bridge Mill) lies further to the west of the Conservation Area.



Denric Knitware is located next to the River Irwell

4 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Layout and building pattern

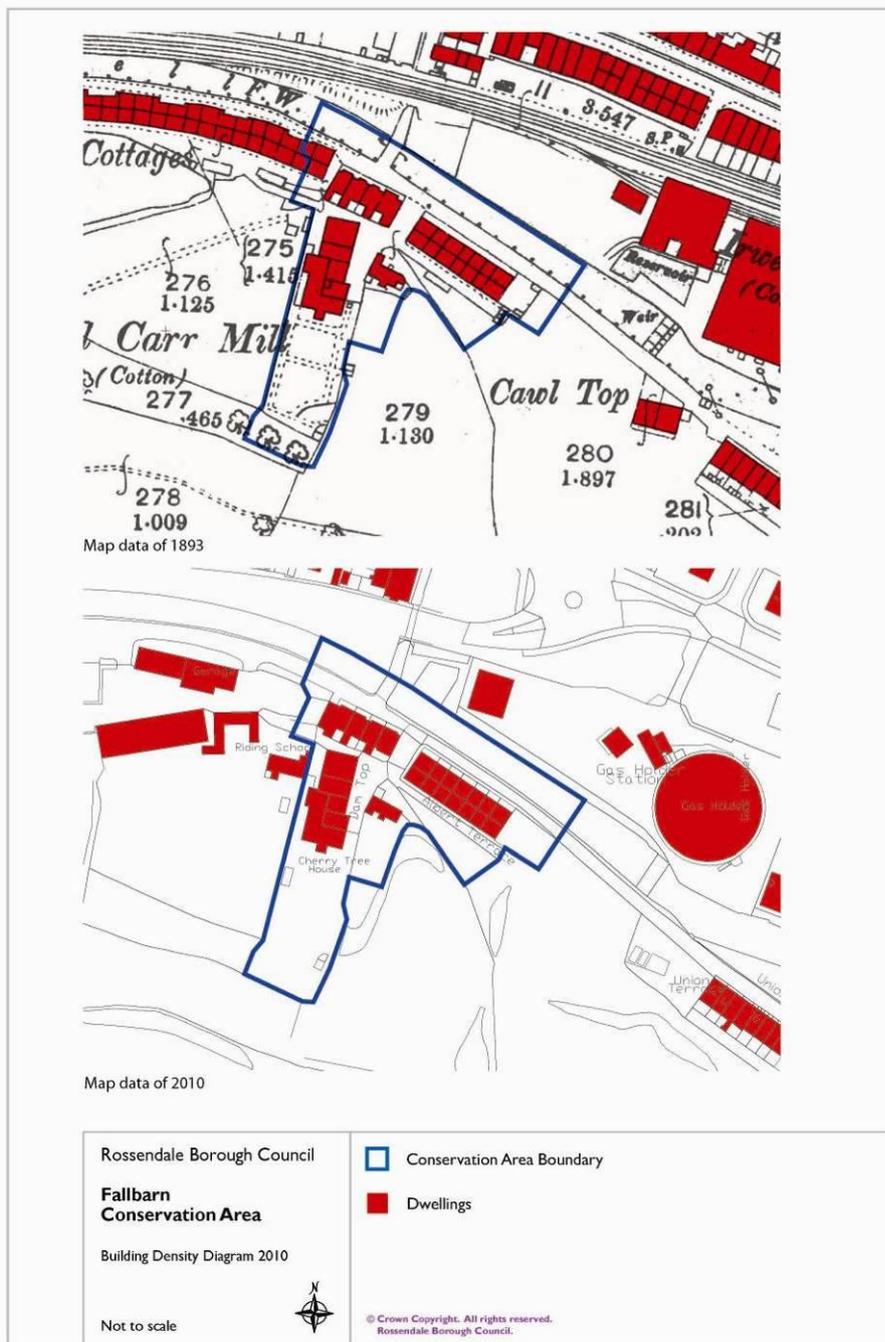
The layout of the very small Conservation Area is defined by the long gentle curve of the River Irwell, and the very similar line of Fallbarn Road, which lies on the southern side of the river. Two terraced blocks, each on a raised stone plinth, face the road and the river beyond: Merry Trees, the larger and more prestigious, with Gothic details which fit in with Cherry Tree House, and Albert Terrace, a slightly later and much plainer group which was built as back-to-back cottages.

A rough unsurfaced track leads up a slight incline from Fallbarn Road towards a group which is formed by Fallbarn Barn, Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Dam Top, and Cherry Tree House. On the other side of the track, Rose Cottage is detached cottage with a pathway to one side, accessed via a gate with stone gateposts, and the former village spring on the other side.



Fall Road and Albert Terrace

There are no open spaces (apart from Fallbarn Road and the river) and few notable trees in the Conservation Area, apart from the tree on one side of Rose Cottage, facing the private trackway, and a line of trees on the southern boundary of the garden to Cherry Tree House. Otherwise, the garden is neglected and overgrown having been cleared of trees and planting in 2007.



Looking up from between Albert Terrace and Merry Trees the four storey gables dominate the view, with Rose Cottage more in the foreground. Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top are less imposing, being the same height as Fallbarn Barn and with a strong coping line, with a parapet and pediment. Beyond the buildings is a largish area of open ground which was cleared of trees and shrubs in 2007 and does not appear to have been touched since. The land rises away from the buildings and gives an open setting to the main front elevation of the house. The boundaries are marked by squared stone random coursed walls with strong stone copings and post and rail fences. The wall has failed in a number of locations. The land rises again beyond the furthest boundary fence and the setting is formed by a group of trees and the hillside.

At the bottom of the track Fallbarn Road has a narrow carriageway and footways, all now finished with a bitumen surface. The riverside has a coursed stone parapet wall and attractive tooled pitched copings. The stone walls to the river cutting are both random and

coursed pitched face stone. The footbridge across the river sits on iron beams with stone copings above which are recent metal post and rail railings. Modern lighting columns are located on the building side of the road and BT posts are in the riverside path. A car park for the use of patrons to the Riding School is located immediately to the east of the buildings, and the Riding School is to the west.

4.2 Views and vistas

The rising land to the south does contain views up to the neighbouring hills, but there are still a number of notable views from within, or from the immediate vicinity, of the Conservation Area. These are:

- From the bridge over the River Irwell to the east and west
- From Fallbarn Road at the eastern end of Albert Terrace, looking southwards up the hills
- View up the track from Fallbarn Road to the dominant group which is formed by Cherry Tree House and its neighbours
- From the garden of Cherry Tree House, looking to the south east and south west.

Some of these views take in neighbouring industrial development or semi-derelict land or structures, which in the long term should be removed or at least improved, as and when opportunities present themselves.

4.3 Boundaries

Most of the historic boundaries in the Conservation Area are built from blocks or rubble of the local sandstone. These can be dry laid as rubble stone, or laid with lime mortar in equal courses, with simple stone copings, using rectangular blocks of sandstone. The best example, but in poor condition, is a stone wall to the east of Merry Tree House garden, with regularly coursed stonework and a ogee curved coping. Another more recent example, about four feet high, tops the retaining wall which separates Fallbarn Road from the River Irwell, the course of which lies some ten feet below the road. This wall has finely tooled triangular stone copings of high quality. Many of the stone walls in the Conservation Area are in poor condition.

The front areas to Merry Trees and Albert Terrace appear to have had cast iron railings with spear heads – a small section remains in front of No. 57 Albert Terrace and another, possibly original example, remain to one side of No. 49, part of Merry Trees. Most of the original examples have been replaced with modern spiked railings which do not copy these original designs. There are simple modern metal railings to the bridge and the adjoining public area on the north side of the bridge towards Bacup Road, which are in keeping.

Less appropriate modern boundaries include the high wooden fence around part of the Riding School site, and another length of timber panel fencing to the back boundary of Rose Cottage. Simple timber post-and-rail fences can be seen in the surrounding fields, enclosing land which is used for horse grazing.



Railings in front of Albert Terrace

Less appropriate modern boundaries include the high wooden fence around part of the Riding School site, and another length of timber panel fencing to the back boundary of Rose Cottage. Simple timber post-and-rail fences can be seen in the surrounding fields, enclosing land which is used for horse grazing.

4.4 Public realm

The public realm covers the spaces between the buildings including pavements, roads, street lighting, street furniture, and any other features of local significance. Most of them will be the responsibility of the Lancashire County Council Highways Department or the Environment Agency (for the River Irwell).

Street surfaces and pavements

Modern tarmacadam is used for all of the pavements and street surfaces in Fallbarn, although the road surface along Fallbarn Road is full of potholes. There are traditional sandstone setts on the pedestrian link to Lever Street, but these are just outside the Conservation Area. A small area of disturbed historic paving (sandstone setts and paving slabs) can be seen on private land around the back of the terrace blocks which face Fallbarn Road, and sandstone paving slabs can also be seen in front of these blocks, which they sit up about 0.9 metres (Albert Terrace) or about 0.45 metres (Merry Trees) above the road level, creating a raised plinth. The original sandstone steps also remain in front of these two blocks.



Merry Trees sits on a sandstone plinth above Fallbarn Road

Street lighting

Street lighting in the Conservation Area is modern and of no special merit. Overhead wires and telegraph poles are also negative in their impact. This is an issue which local residents raised in the past which is discussed in greater detail in the Management Proposals Plan.

Street furniture and other features

There is virtually no street furniture or other features apart from an old black and white cast iron name plate on Merry Trees, which should be retained. The more modern 'Albert Terrace' sign on the flank wall of No. 57 is in need of cleaning. Next to Rose Cottage is a spring and water trough set in a stone wall and arch, the whole appearing to date to the 19th century.



The spring and water through next to Rose Cottage

5 THE BUILDINGS OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 General description

Within the Conservation Area are two groups of terraced houses (Merry Trees and Albert Terrace), a detached cottage (Rose Cottage) and a fourth group made up of Cherry Tree House, Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Dam Top, and Fallbarn Barn. No. 1 Dam Top is part of the original barn, and the whole may now be in single ownership (it is difficult to tell from an external inspection). These buildings together form a notable group, and include examples of high status Victorian Gothic architecture (Cherry Tree House and Merry Trees), designed by an architect of national importance, Richard Williams. He is best known for his steeply pitched roofs and for his *cottage orné* buildings which are unusual for Rossendale.

Merry Trees and Albert Terrace are the most visible buildings, standing high above Fallbarn Road to either side of the entrance track to Cherry Tree House and facing the River Irwell. Both are two to three storey mid 19th century properties built in roughly faced stone with high slate covered roofs, the slates being arranged in a decorative 'fish scale' pattern. Each has a stone plinth and railings to set them above road level. Merry Trees has high quality Gothic details linking it to William's work of the early 1850s, whilst Albert Terrace, a more utilitarian structure of back-to-back houses, has a datestone of 1861 with the initials IAH or IHA, linking the terrace to either the Hardman or the Ashworth families.



Fallbarn Barn is now two houses

Fallbarn Barn appears to be c1800 and possibly altered at the building of Cherry Tree House – it bears a datestone 'Rebuilt 1846'. It is a good plain building constructed in coursed stone with a slate roof. On the opposite side of the track is a small stone house (Rose Cottage) which is built into raised ground and which, from parts of its walling, suggests a similar date

to the barn. It has a central chimney stack and may once have been larger. It has been adversely affected by external pipework, the use of modern windows and by the painting of the stonework.

Cherry Tree House is the dominant building in the group. It stands high above the barn, ranging from two to four storeys, and constructed from pitched faced coursed stone with a steeply pitched slate roof. Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top provide the building bridge between the height of Cherry Tree House and the two storey Fallbarn Barn, and have similar though less striking details as Cherry Tree House. All of these buildings – Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top appear to be vacant and are in very poor condition.

5.2 Positive buildings

All of the buildings within the Conservation Area are considered to be ‘positive’ as their style, detailing and building material provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a *positive* contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area. In Fallbarn, these buildings appear to date to the early to mid 19th century. Cherry Tree House, Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Dam Top, Fallbarn Barn and Merry Trees are also considered to be of additional merit and are marked accordingly on the accompanying Townscape Appraisal Map.

The identification of these ‘positive’ buildings follows advice provided within English Heritage’s *Guidance on conservation area appraisals*, which provides a helpful list of criteria in Appendix 2. The guidance advises that a general presumption exists in favour of retaining those buildings which make a ‘positive’ contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Proposals to demolish such buildings will therefore be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. This implies therefore that all buildings marked blue and orange on the Townscape Appraisal Map will be retained in the future unless a special case can be made for demolition.

5.3 Building styles, materials and colours

The historic buildings of the Fallbarn Conservation Area are built exclusively from the local sandstone, the light brown stone being cut into regularly sized rectangular blocks with a roughly tooled outer face, usually referred to as ‘rock-faced’ stonework. The joints are relatively fine and traditionally were filled with small quantities of white lime mortar. Where the stone is weathered, it takes on a dark brown or even black tone. Roofs are covered in dark grey natural slate, and for Merry Trees and Albert Terrace these are arranged in a fishscale pattern. Cherry Tree House is also slated, but the slates are laid in diminishing courses towards the ridges.

Merry Trees

Merry Trees is a significant and high quality architect-designed terrace worthy of protection and enhancement. It was probably built at about the same time as Cherry Tree House, i.e. about 1850, but is more highly detailed than Albert Terrace with stone dressings around the windows and doors, substantial and very tall chimneys, and (for two out of the four houses) original Gothic windows. The front elevations are enlivened by the use of canted ground floor windows and small second floor gables with pointed barge boards. It is two and three storeys high and built in coursed pitched faced stone with a steeply sloping decorated slate roof. The terrace stands on a stone platform raised above road level and topped by large stone flags. There is a slightly projecting plinth at the base of the main walls. This has been constructed to take up the change in levels and appears to accommodate cellars in the front part. There are small stone framed doors/coal holes in the front of the platform. Most of the railings on part of the platform are not original.



Detail of Merry Trees

The three storey elements project at each end on the front elevation and have tall lateral gables and top floor windows. The quality of the stone detailing is maintained on the gable elevations. There are dressed stone details at openings and corners with splayed edges and reveals. Openings have stone decoration and hood moulds with plain shield labels. There are single, four pot, and double, eight pot chimney stacks in dressed stone with coursed moulded stone pots and drip moulds. Timber barge boards remain.

The group also retains its original bay and oriel windows with canopies in slate and lead. Above the bays, rough stone arches are visible. Nos. 53 and 55 have their original Gothic timber window frames, which have deep mouldings and triple arched tops, but in Nos. 49 and 51 these elements have largely been replaced.

The back elevations of this group are similarly well considered. Again there are big lateral gables and tall roof pitches with strong tallish outshots at ground level with double pitched roofs. Window openings are generally plainer. There is a modern timber dormer with French windows and a balustrade above the main eaves level, and an upper level conservatory at one end.

Albert Terrace

Albert Terrace dates to 1861 and was built as a back-to-back terrace, a use which appears to have been maintained. It faces the road with three tall gables at roof level which adds to its dominance of the street. It is much plainer than Merry Trees, with simple stone lintels, but it has significant presence in the street, providing a two and three storey high stone terrace built with robust details and materials. It is also longer than Merry Trees, having an

additional central lateral bay and gable. Like Merry Trees, it is built using pitched face coursed stone with some dressed stone details, but these details are plainer and more utilitarian style. This suggests a later copy by a different designer. However, it has much of the form and scale of its neighbour though with greater depth, giving space for true back-to-back accommodation, an arrangement which is plainly demonstrated on the flanks walls at each end of the terrace.



Detail of Albert Terrace

The front elevation has plainer windows and simpler stone surrounds, with smaller window openings in the gables. Overall, the window frames and doors are much altered and due to their design and materials are out of character with the original design of the building. The rear elevation is much plainer with dressed stone only for the lintels and window sills. Each property has a simple dormer window in the roof giving three storey accommodation. Both end elevations of the block are spoiled by modern external pipework. The rear elevation has a regular pattern of windows, doors, pipework, aerials and satellite dishes.

Rose Cottage



Rose Cottage

Rose Cottage is a detached stone building set into the hillside with a stone slate roof and a chimney stack with no pots. Some external walls are altered and all have been painted. The walls are partially built using narrow watershot coursing, common in the 18th and early 19th century, and some parts appear to be earlier and others altered. It is a slightly odd shape in being deep at right angles to the roof ridge, and therefore with large gables. The gables have plain cement roof verges and there are simple small windows, though they are set in an unusual pattern. All this suggests that Rose Cottage was, some time ago, a different shape or part of a larger structure. The doorway by the track has a deep lintel with a simple dripstone above, and a modern conservatory/entrance porch is located to one side.

No. 1 Dam Top and Fallbarn Barn

No. 1 Dam Top and Fallbarn Barn have been created from a possibly 18th century barn which was once part of the early farm settlement and was rebuilt in 1846 (date stone). The original farmhouse is thought to have been replaced by the building of Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top, as confirmed by the stone bonding at the meeting with Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top, which suggests that it was once attached to a different building. The mullioned window at the rear of the barn is similar to other examples in the area which date to c1800.

The barn and No. 1 are, like parts of Rose Cottage, also built in watershot coursed stone with a slate roof containing rooflights and a slender modern chimney stack. The building is a simple rectangle of two storeys with the opposite side barn door openings remaining, each with a semi-circular arch top and large cornerstones at the returns. The elevation facing Rose Cottage also has two stone framed doorways and three window openings each with stone lintels and sills. The elevation to the Riding School is the same but for an additional window, which has a central stone mullion, a feature common towards the end of the 18th or early 19th century. Timber effect uPVC frames now sit in the openings. In front of the building are the remains of a stone flag hardstanding with a small cobbled road.

Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top

Cherry Tree House is an austere copy by Richard Williams, architect, of a 17th century mansion, built to a design common in the local area at that time. Parts of the house are of mixed heights, detailing, and jumbled rooflines. The front is symmetrical with a central three storey porch and mullioned windows to each side. The stone detailing is from the 17th century; including hood mouldings, stone window tracery, arches and lintels, cornices and verges, but being from the mid 19th century the stone details are still sharp and not eroded.

Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 to 5 Dam Top are the most imposing structures in the group. In 2002 they were considered (and rejected) for statutory protection by being added to the list of buildings of 'special architectural or historic interest'. The inspector's report of that time describes the buildings as follows:

Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 to 5 Dam Top together make up a complex of mid 19th century buildings built in an austere Neo-Vernacular style reflecting the 17th century building tradition in the locality. The complex is built of regularly coursed local sandstone with ashlar dressings and a slated roof. Its steeply-pitched roof and full height gabled porch have stone copings and ball finials, and the multi-light stone mullioned windows, those to the ground floor with segmental arches to the lights, have mouldings with hood moulds with label stops. The window openings have sash frames without glazing bars, and the main doorway, set below a slightly jettied upper floor of the projecting porch, has a planked and studied door. The house is of double pile form, both parts of two storeys with attics, together with a lower range of two storeys. This robustly detailed building is a good example of its type. This example is a competent but not exceptional design. The building is clearly an important component of its locality, and of local historic interest.

Whilst Cherry Tree House was rejected for statutory listing, it is an obvious candidate for local listing (see section 2.6 in the Management Proposals Plan) and may, as criteria change, be reconsidered for statutory listing. It would be a great loss for Rossendale's architectural heritage if this important building was not preserved for future generations, including any original internal features and its plan form.



Cherry Tree House



Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top

6 SUMMARY OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE FEATURES

6.1 Key positive features

This Character Appraisal concludes that the most significant *positive* features of the Fallbarn Conservation Area are:

- Location between the River Irwell and rising land to the south-east of Rawtenstall
- Historic links with the Hardman family, one of Rawtenstall's most important textile manufacturers of the 19th century
- All of the buildings in the Conservation Area are important to its character, both individually and the way they form part of the building group
- These buildings date from the early 19th century to 1861
- Cherry Tree House, Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top, and Merry Trees, are all higher calibre buildings, the result of considered and knowledgeable design by an architect (Richard Williams) of acknowledged skill
- Cherry Tree House is an unusual example of a 19th century interpretation of a 17th century mansion, and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top are joined to Cherry Tree House but are plainer
- No. 1 Dam Top, and Fallbarn Barn, have been converted from a simple stone barn which was apparently rebuilt in 1846 (date stone) – both are in residential use
- Merry Trees is a short terrace of four houses with Gothic details, gabled fronts, and some remaining high quality joinery
- Albert Terrace (date stone of 1861) is plainer, with three gables on the front elevation
- Rose Cottage is a detached stone building close to Cherry Tree House, possibly relating to the original farm group but much altered
- Although there has been some loss of original fabric and detail on the buildings, all retain their basic structure and elevational treatment – some parts of buildings are extremely well preserved, including chimney stacks and some window frame details
- Merry Trees and Albert Terrace form a more visible group, facing the road and the river
- An inner area, with views of Rose Cottage, Fallbarn Barn, the stone trough and spring, Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Dam Top, and Cherry Tree House, form an essential part of a different character group within the heart of the Conservation Area
- The relationship between the river, the road, the bridge and the two terraces fronting the roadway is important to the first impressions of the group
- The open land and garden above Cherry Tree House give it the necessary room for the key elevations to be readily seen
- The various stone walls, flag hardstandings, copings, gateposts and stone features are important to the detailed character of the area
- The open views into and out of the area are important to the setting of the buildings and their contribution to the local scene
- Views linking the area with the Green Bridge Mills complex of buildings are important to the area's setting

6.2 Key negative features

This Character Appraisal concludes that the most significant *negative* features of the Fallbarn Conservation Area are:

Spatial:

- Fallbarn Road is considered by local residents to have become a rat-run, and is too narrow to take such traffic – traffic calming measures are therefore required

- Further issues of highway safety such as enforcing weight limits, access, parking, lighting and signage, all affecting this part of Fallbarn Road
- The poor condition of some of the boundary walls
- A shortage of parking spaces for local residents
- The impact of commercial and industrial development on almost all sides of the Conservation Area and the resulting impact on some of the views from and into the Conservation Area
- The safety railings outside No. 65 are considered to be inappropriate
- The poor appearance of the pedestrian bridge over the river
- Fallbarn Road – poor surface quality using modern surface treatments
- The impact of modern street lighting and telegraph poles on the appearance of Fallbarn Road
- Wheelie bins are visible in many locations
- The condition of the retaining wall to the River Irwell and the impact of heavy traffic
- The use of the road by riders and the danger of speeding traffic to the horses

The buildings:

- Unsympathetic changes to the historic houses, particularly the loss of original windows and doors
- The lack of grant aid towards the potential cost to house owners of meeting higher Conservation Area standards
- The heavy weathering and dirty patina of stonework, the uncontrolled cleaning of which could have an adverse impact upon the surface of the stone and also upon the general character of the Conservation Area. (Any cleaning should be coordinated and managed and carefully carried out by specialist firms)

Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top:

- Cherry Trees House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top are vacant and in poor condition – various proposals for their demolition and for new buildings on the site have been resisted by the Council in the past
- The potential for unsympathetic change to the setting of Cherry Tree House
- The uncertainty of the future for the above buildings impacts on the surrounding properties and on the character of the Conservation Area generally

The majority of these 'negative' features are considered further in a series of recommendations which are contained within the Management Proposals Plan for Fallbarn.

PART 2 THE FALLBARN CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the Management Proposals Plan

Part 1 of this document, the *Character Appraisal*, has identified the special positive qualities of the Fallbarn Conservation Area which make the conservation area unique. Part 2 of this document, the *Management Proposals Plan*, builds upon the positive features and addresses the negative features which were first identified in 2007 and have more recently (2011) been updated, to provide a series of recommendations for improvement and change. These are the responsibility of private property owners, Rossendale Borough Council or Lancashire County Council. The structure and scope of this document is based on the suggested framework published by English Heritage in *Guidance on the management of conservation areas* (2005). Both the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and the Management Proposals Plan should be subject to regular monitoring and reviews, as set out below.

The involvement and approval of the local community in the formulation and delivery of these documents helps to strengthen their status and will hopefully mean that the various actions identified in the Management Proposals Plan will have greater impact and longevity. For Fallbarn, this has been achieved by an informal public consultation via the Council's website in February 2011. Following the initial drafting of the Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Plan, a further web based public consultation exercise, together with targeted mailing to residents of the area, was carried out, ending on 25 April 2011. After this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available from the Borough Council) and amendments to the text and mapping were made as appropriate. Finally, the Fallbarn Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted by the Borough Council as a material consideration for development control purposes with effect from 27th October 2011 and the Recommended Actions in the Management Proposals Plan were agreed to be implemented incrementally as resources allow.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The following recommendations are based on the key negative features identified as part of the Character Appraisal. Some of them may have to remain aspirational for the time being, but it is considered 'good practice' to identify possible actions which could be implemented in the future if the funding is available. Other recommendations rely upon the Borough Council providing sufficient staff resources to ensure that the proposed actions are carried forward. All of the recommendations rely upon a successful partnership between the Borough Council and the local community, assisted by the County Council as appropriate. Of note is the fact that many residents consider that the area as a whole needs upgrading, and expressed that they would have liked to see the Council do more since the last Character Appraisal was completed.

2.1 Conservation area boundary review

As part of the survey work for the Character Appraisal, and considering the changes requested by the local community in 2007, a full assessment of the existing Conservation Area boundary was carried out. The community expressed a desire that the Conservation Area boundary be extended to include the approach to Fallbarn from the north via the subway. It was assumed that this refers to the extension of Lever Street, and the open area of land, enclosed by railings, which overlooks the River Irwell. This area was carefully inspected and considered in relation to the special interest of the Fallbarn Conservation Area. Overall, no recommendations for changing the boundary are proposed for the following reasons:



Lever Street

- Despite the survival of the sandstone setted road surface, the immediate setting of Lever Road has been heavily compromised by the construction of Bocholt Way destroying the visual link between the Fallbarn Conservation Area and the Bacup Road
- The area is dominated by heavy traffic along Bocholt Way and modern industrial buildings of no special interest
- The small open area facing the river contains no historic features of any merit and is a modern introduction into the street scene
- The adjoining building (Denric Knitware) is of little interest – it probably dates to the 1920s with a 1970s extension facing the footway
- The existing Conservation Area boundary follows the northern line of the River Irwell, which appears to be a logical and appropriate position given that the importance of the Conservation Area is the group of buildings on the south side of the river

RECOMMENDED ACTION 1:

- Following careful consideration of the area to the north side of the River Irwell, it is recommended that no changes are made to the existing Conservation Area boundary

2.2 The control of unlisted houses

It has been noted that nearly all of the properties in the Conservation Area have to a degree been adversely affected by the alterations to the roofs, chimneys, windows and front doors. These changes are 'permitted development' which can be controlled by the Council through the imposition of an Article 4 Direction. Article 4 Directions are made under the *General Permitted Development Order 1995*, and can be served by a local planning authority to remove permitted development rights where there is a real threat to a particular residential building or area due to unsuitable alterations or additions.

An Article 4 Direction is accompanied by a Schedule that specifies the various changes to family dwellings, which will now require planning permission. Usually, such Directions are used in conservation areas to protect unlisted houses in use as a family unit, rather than flats or bedsits where permitted development rights are already much fewer. It does not mean that development, such as changes to windows or doors, will necessarily be impossible. It does, however, mean that planning permission has to be sought and this allows for the merits of a proposal to be considered against the conservation interests.

Whilst an Article 4 Direction cannot be retrospective, the serving of one would incrementally improve the character and appearance of the conservation area. An Article 4 Direction can also be focused on groups of buildings, rather than the whole conservation area, such as unlisted buildings of particular local significance and all 'positive' buildings. Any Direction will require an up to date photographic survey to record the present condition of the buildings concerned, and written guidance will need to be provided to householders. Where resources allow, the provision of grants to help with the additional costs associated with traditional materials or the reinstatement of lost architectural features (such as the replacement of uPVC windows with windows to a traditional design) can be helpful.



Modern alterations to Albert Terrace

Under an Article 4 Direction, planning permission can be required for the following, depending on the permitted development right removed:

House extensions

Planning permission will be required for the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house (including entrance porches) which fronts a highway, private road or open space (this lowers the limit of 'permitted development' already imposed by conservation area designation).

Painting of dwelling houses

Planning permission will be required for the painting of the exterior of a dwelling house.

Roofs

A planning application will be required for alterations to a roof slope which fronts a highway, private road or open space, including a change in the roof materials and the insertion of roof lights (new dormer windows already require planning permission under separate legislation).

Chimneys

The removal of a chimney or its partial demolition will require planning permission.

Replacement windows and doors

The replacement of existing windows and doors which front a highway, private road or open space will require planning consent – note that part L of the Building Regulations, requiring double glazing for new windows, can be relaxed in the conservation area (or for listed buildings).

The creation of car parking in front gardens and the removal or replacement of front boundaries

The creation of a parking space in a front garden, and or the removal of a front boundary, such as a low stone wall, will require planning permission.

An Article 4 Direction can be 'fine tuned' to suit the particular circumstances of a conservation area. In Fallbarn, the greatest threat appears to be to the existing slate roofs and chimneys, given that most of the windows and front doors in the conservation area have already been altered apart from Cherry Tree House and some of the houses in Merry Trees. The painting of previously unpainted stonework and the addition of porches are also relevant though these changes do not appear to provide such as threat to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

As previously recommended in the 2007 Character Appraisal, it is therefore suggested that the Council serves an Article 4 Direction to bring under planning control all alterations to the existing roofs including:

- Changing roof materials
- The insertion of a roof light
- Alternations to chimney stacks, including their full or partial demolition
- Changes to the rainwater goods
- Changes to windows and front doors (whilst accepting that existing windows or doors may remain or be replaced 'like for like')
- The addition of porches



An Article 4 Direction would protect the original slate roofs on Merry Trees

RECOMMENDED ACTION 2:

- The Borough Council should consider serving an Article 4 Direction on the Fallbarn Conservation Area, to cover all of the buildings which are marked in blue as 'positive' on the Townscape Appraisal Map
- The Borough Council should provide guidance notes for residents concerning the use of traditional materials and details
- The Borough Council should consider providing grants to help householders in the Fallbarn Conservation Area with the additional costs of using traditional materials and details

2.3 The public realm

The public realm in the Conservation Area is generally poor quality and badly maintained. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Upgrade the existing street lights to new 'reproduction' 19th century lamps which would be more appropriate for the historic setting
- In partnership with BT, consider improvements to the overhead wires and telegraph poles, perhaps by undergrounding these elements
- Ensure that the street surface along Fallbarn Road is kept in good repair
- Consider the provision of additional signage, appropriately designed, for the buildings in the Conservation Area (these could copy the existing 'Merry Trees' sign)
- Consider adding sandstone setts to the footway over the River Irwell, linking to the existing setts in Lever Street (although this will include land which is just outside the Conservation Area boundary)

RECOMMENDED ACTION 3:

- Funding permitting, the Borough Council and the County Council should consider some or all of the enhancements detailed above.

Issues raised by the community also relate to the management of the public areas in Fallbarn, particularly the control of traffic, the shortage of residents' parking, the impact of

fast moving traffic along Fallbarn Road, the enforcement of weight restrictions and the possible improvement of the bridge over the River Irwell, including painting the railings. All of these are matters for the County Council or Environment Agency but will be subject to staff resources and funding.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 4:

- The Borough Council and the local community could open discussions with the County Council Highways Department to see if any improvements (including possible traffic calming) can be made in relation to the issues described above

2.4 Improvements to privately owned land

It has been noted that many of the stone walls, gate piers and other stone features in the Conservation Area are in poor condition, and that the private track to Cherry Tree House is also poorly maintained. The former village spring and its stone surround must also be preserved by careful maintenance, but it is not clear who is responsible for this.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 5:

- Encourage, perhaps through grant aid, the owners of the trackway to Cherry Tree House to improve the surface and the stone wall boundaries facing the trackway, including the former village spring

2.5 Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top

The 2007 Character Appraisal for the Conservation Area noted that Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top and Cherry Tree House, which are in the same ownership, are all vacant and in poor condition. Since then, the buildings have been left to deteriorate further and no acceptable proposals for their preservation or for redeveloping the site have been received by the Borough Council. The poor condition of these buildings not only (potentially) affects the fabric of the buildings, but is causing blight on the surrounding properties and generally has a negative effect on the character and appearance of the Fallbarn Conservation Area.

As a matter of urgency, the Borough Council should ensure that these important buildings are wind and weather-tight and that measures to protect them from further deterioration are undertaken. If the owner is not prepared to do this work voluntarily, the Borough Council has powers to carry out the work on his behalf and to charge the cost of this work to the owner – the work is undertaken in much the same way as with an Urgent Works Notice for a listed building, but requires the Secretary of State's approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 6:

- The Borough Council should undertake a survey of Cherry Tree House and Nos. 3 and 5 Dam Top to assess their current condition and should inform the owner of any remedial works which it considers may be necessary
- If the owner of these buildings is unable or unwilling to carry out the necessary work, the Borough Council should consider carrying out the work on his behalf (subject to the Secretary of State's approval) although the cost will have to be met by the owner or become a charge on the property

Any new development of the Cherry Tree House site must:

- Protect the physical relationship of the existing buildings
- Restore and reuse the existing buildings

- Preserve or enhance their setting
- Ensure that the access track is properly restored and maintained in the future
- Not have an adverse effect on views into or out of the Conservation Area



Cherry Tree House is vacant and neglected

2.6 Unlisted buildings of special but local interest

As recommended in PPS5, the preparation of a 'Local List' for the Borough should be a priority. The first action should be the drawing-up of a set of criteria, based on English Heritage guidance and local building types. All of the important 'positive' buildings in the Character Appraisal (section 5.2 *Positive Buildings*) should be included as a basic minimum. The former village spring should also be added.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 7:

- The Borough Council should work with community groups to produce a new 'Local List' of buildings in Fallbarn.

2.7 Protection of views

The hillside location of Fallbarn, and the orientation to the River Irwell, provides opportunities for both long and short views of some note into and out of the Conservation Area. These also take in, less positively, a certain amount of modern industrial development which is detrimental to the setting of the Conservation Area. One such site is the gas holder on the north side of the River Irwell.

RECOMMENDED ACTION 8:

- When considering applications for change within or around the Fallbarn Conservation Area, the Borough Council should seek to protect existing positive views and, as opportunities arise, encourage the removal of negative buildings which impact on these views.



View westwards from the rear garden of Cherry Tree House

3 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Local authorities are required by law to periodically review their conservation areas and the preparation of Character Appraisals and Management Proposals is part of this obligation. Indeed, in the past keeping Character Appraisals and Management Proposals Plans up to date has been a Key Performance Indicator in the Best Value assessment of local authorities, and as a result, a five year review cycle is now considered to be best practice.

Over the next five years the Borough Council should therefore be expected to regularly review the content of this document, to carefully monitor change within the Fallbarn Conservation Area, and to involve the community in any proposals for enhancement (subject of course to the funding being available).

The Borough Council should therefore:

- Carry out periodic reviews of the effectiveness with which the service addresses pressures for change;
- Update the baseline photographic survey of the Fallbarn Conservation Area on a three yearly basis;
- Review the Fallbarn Conservation Area Character Appraisal on a five yearly basis;
- Review and update the Fallbarn Conservation Area Management Proposals Plan on an annual basis.

4 CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries relating to conservation areas and historic buildings, please contact:

The Conservation Officer,
 Rossendale Borough Council,
 Development Control,
 One Stop Shop,
 Town Centre Offices,
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 Rossendale,
 Lancashire BB4 7LZ.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 Map 1 Townscape Appraisal Map

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