



Consultation Statement on the Proposed Waterfoot Conservation Area

April 2026



A High Quality Environment

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Consultation Statement on the Proposed Waterfoot Conservation Area

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Waterfoot Masterplan was approved as a strategic document by Cabinet at its meeting on 16 October 2024. During the consultation on the masterplan, interest was expressed about designating parts of Waterfoot as a Conservation Area.
- 1.2 As a result, an appraisal of Waterfoot's special historic and architectural interest was undertaken in June 2024. This work highlighted that Waterfoot has significant townscape quality which includes a number of characterful buildings of the 19th century and early 20th century, (e.g. Trickett's Arcade, the former Lancashire and Yorkshire and National Westminster Banks, and the former Bridge End House). Traditional craftsmanship and techniques can be found throughout, embodied in a range of architectural features.
- 1.3 The associated Management Plan proposes measures to re-establish this character in order to enhance the appearance of the conservation area overall.
- 1.4 The proposal for Waterfoot Conservation area was discussed at the [Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 20 September 2025](#). The committee agreed to approve the draft proposal for a 4-week public consultation.

2.0 Consultation Process

- 2.1 The public consultation started on Monday 22 September 2025 and ended on Monday 20 October 2025. Letters were posted to all properties identified as falling within the proposed boundary of the conservation area, sites notices were put on lamp posts and other locations within the local area, emails were sent to consultees held in the Council's Local Plan consultation database (including statutory consultees) and a drop-in event was organised at the Waterfoot Yard on 8 October 2025.
- 2.2 During the public consultation, a total of 22 comments were submitted, 7 from statutory consultees and 15 from residents or property owners. The responses are available to view on the Council's website at <https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/heritage/heritage-1/3>.
- 2.3 Following the consultation Waterfoot Conservation Area Appraisal was updated in response to comments made. The proposed Conservation Area Boundary was extended to include an area around Gaghills and a further public consultation was undertaken from Monday 23 February 2026 until Monday 30 March 2026 in order to give residents and stakeholders with property interests within the extended area an opportunity to comment. Letters were delivered to 23 properties directly affected by the boundary change and consultees were invited to submit their views on the boundary and, if they have not already done so, on the proposed Conservation Area generally. All documents were available to view on the website or at the Customer Services Hub at Futures Park and consultation responses were invited using a short online survey form or in writing.

3.0 Summary of Responses

3.1 Responses from the 7 statutory consultees are summarised below:

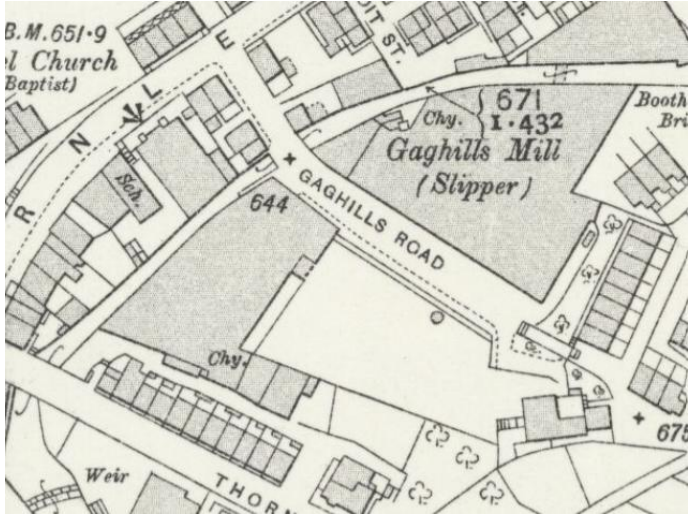
- National Highways has no objection as it does not have any significant effects on the Strategic Road Network.
- The Coal Authority advised that their records do not indicate the presence of any coal mining features at surface or shallow depth within the area which may pose a risk to surface stability and has no specific comments to make on the proposed Conservation Area.
- Lancashire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has no comments.
- Natural England has no comments.
- Historic England is supportive of the production of the CAAMP for the proposed Conservation Area and welcomes the draft CAAMP setting out a positive strategy for historic environment but do not wish to make further comments on the detail.
- Homes England does not wish to make any representations.
- Theatres Trust welcomes the Appraisal's assessment of the former Liberal Club, now the Horse and Bamboo Theatre, as a notable key building within the Conservation Area which positively contributes to the street scene. The Map could include a category above the level of 'Positive Building of Medium Significance' to better identify and promote such important local assets. In relation to the Horse and Bamboo Theatre there should be a specific advertisement strategy within a broader guidance document which recognises and balances the need of the theatre to promote itself and upcoming events within the context of the building's character and significance as a key asset as there is ultimately a heritage benefit in supporting the theatre and ensuring the building remains in sensitive public use.

3.2 In summary the responses to the first online questionnaire consultation showed that:

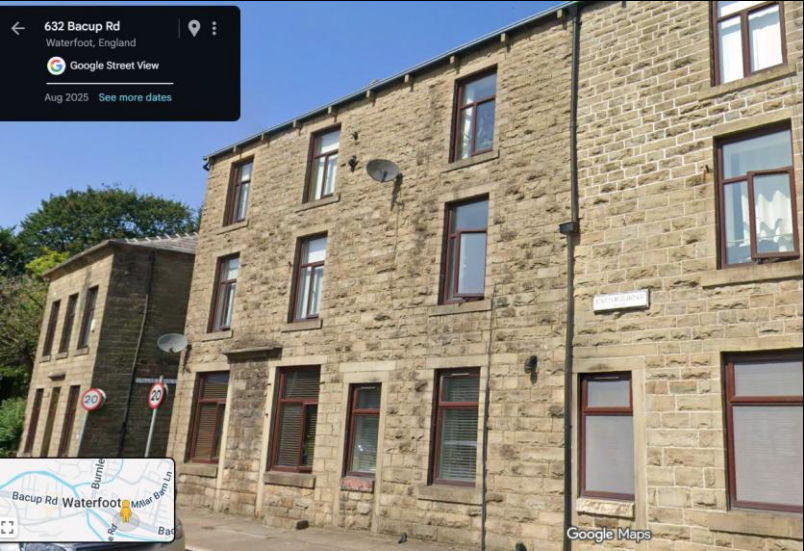
- 14 representations (64%) were in support of the designation of Waterfoot as a Conservation Area whilst 1 (4%) was against and 7 (32%) had no opinion;
- 6 consultees (27%) requested a reconsideration of the proposed boundary;
- 2 consultees (9%) disagreed with the assessment of character and appearance of the area, 11 (50%) were in favour and the remainder (41%) had no particular opinion;
- 12 consultees (54%) agreed with the threats identified in the Appraisal and Management Plan, the remainder (46%) were unsure or had no opinion;
- 10 consultees (45%) agreed with the management plan recommendations, 1 objected (4%) and the remainder (51%) were unsure or had no opinion on this matter.

3.3 There was one response to the second consultation from Gaghills Bowling Club. It was noted that the bowling green is on the boundary of the extension. The Bowling Club supports the designation of Waterfoot Conservation Area provided it does not cost individuals or businesses money to change existing buildings.

3.4 A summary of the comments received is outlined in the table below in the first column. The second column sets out the Local Planning Authority response and any actions undertaken. These include handwritten comments recorded on Post-It notes placed on maps at the drop in event on 8 October 2025 (see Appendix 1).

Key comments received during the public consultation	Actions the Local Planning Authority is considering
Comments received on the proposed boundary of the conservation area	
Including Cowpe in the conservation area	Cowpe is a distinct settlement with a different setting and character. It is not considered appropriate to include areas of Cowpe within the proposed Waterfoot Conservation Area.
Removing the Woodlea Mission on Tenterfield Street from the conservation area	The Woodlea Mission is identified as a positive building of medium significance in the Appraisal and Management Plan. It therefore makes a positive contribution to the specific character and historic importance of the local area. It also adjoins the Old Union House which is referred to as “remarkable for its retention of all of its original decorative leaded glass windows and front door”. The Woodlea Mission and the Old Union House are two positive buildings of medium significance to the character and appearance of the area. Their inclusion into the boundary of the conservation area is considered important. As such it is considered that the proposed boundary should not be altered to exclude the Woodlea Mission.
Including Gaghills Mill, Gaghills House, Gaghills Cottage, Tricketts House, Mytholme House, Booth Fold and the bowling green in the conservation area (mentioned at the drop-in event);	Gaghills Mill, House and Cottage adjoin the northern boundary of the proposed conservation area. The Gaghills Mill (Slipper) shown on the historic map is now demolished.  The building to the south of Gaghills Road (numbered 644) which potentially formed part of the Gaghills Mill complex is still present, so is Gaghills House (now operating as a nursery) and Gaghills Cottage. Between the building numbered 644 and Gaghills House is a bowling green which can be considered as an important open space. There is an argument to include those buildings, especially those from the Gaghills Mill complex

	previously owned by Sir Henry Trickett's due to his prominent role in the history of Waterfoot.
Including Rossendale Players Theatre to the conservation area	Rossendale Players Theatre shown as a School on the above historic map is located at 69 Burnley Road East. If the conservation area is extended to include Gaghills Mill, House and Cottage as well as the bowling green, it would be an opportunity to include this former school building. As a stone-faced building with the gable facing the road which features lancet windows either side of the central entrance, it makes a distinctive contribution to the street scape and conservation area.
Including Trickett's Park to the conservation area	Trickett's Park is located approximately 60m north of Gaghills Road. It is identified in the draft local list of non-designated heritage assets. Information regarding this proposed local list is available at Local List of Non-Designated Heritage Assets Heritage Rossendale Borough Council . The park was created in 1920-1922 and hosts a war memorial at the western gateway to workers from Trickett's Gaghills Mill who were killed during the first world war. The positive contribution of Trickett's Memorial Ground to the character and appearance of the local area together with its historic significance for the town are in favour of its inclusion in the proposed conservation area. However, the park is not adjoining the proposed conservation area and it is not deemed suitable to include it within the boundary of the conservation area.
The conservation area boundary is complicated, not straight lines.	A definitive boundary is required to inform planning decisions. However, there is a need to review the boundary in general so that the approach is consistent in terms of property boundaries, pavements and streets.
Comments received on the assessment of the character and appearance of the area	
For the Horse and Bamboo and other 'notable, key buildings' to be categorised above the 'positive building of medium significance'	It is felt that the categorisation of buildings in the appraisal is adequate and there is no need for another category to be introduced.
Refer to Stotts Buildings instead of Rostron Buildings in text and photo legend	We will amend the final version of the conservation area appraisal and management plan to replace Rostron Buildings by Stotts Buildings.

	
Shop at 719 Bacup Road is a great example of Victorian shop	The special historic features of the shopfront at 719 Bacup Road have been mentioned in the appraisal and highlighted by a photograph in page 46.
Woodlea Mission has undergone substantial alterations and its architectural integrity is limited compared to other buildings	It is agreed that the Woodlea Mission building on Tenterfield Street has had substantial alterations since the foundation stone of the United Gospel Mission Hall (Woodlea) was laid in 1894 (https://www.rossendale-fhhs.org.uk/files/rawtenstall_churches/church_041.html). Nonetheless the remaining features of the building (including its foundation stone) are sufficient to provide a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the proposed conservation area.
Dwellings on Holt Street should not be awarded the 'neutral' categorisation due to the fact that they are not in keeping with the character of historic buildings and there are maintenance issues (mentioned at the drop-in event)	Comments are noted. Although improvements could be made to the external appearance of the outdoor areas at these properties, the 'neutral' categorisation is still considered suitable. 

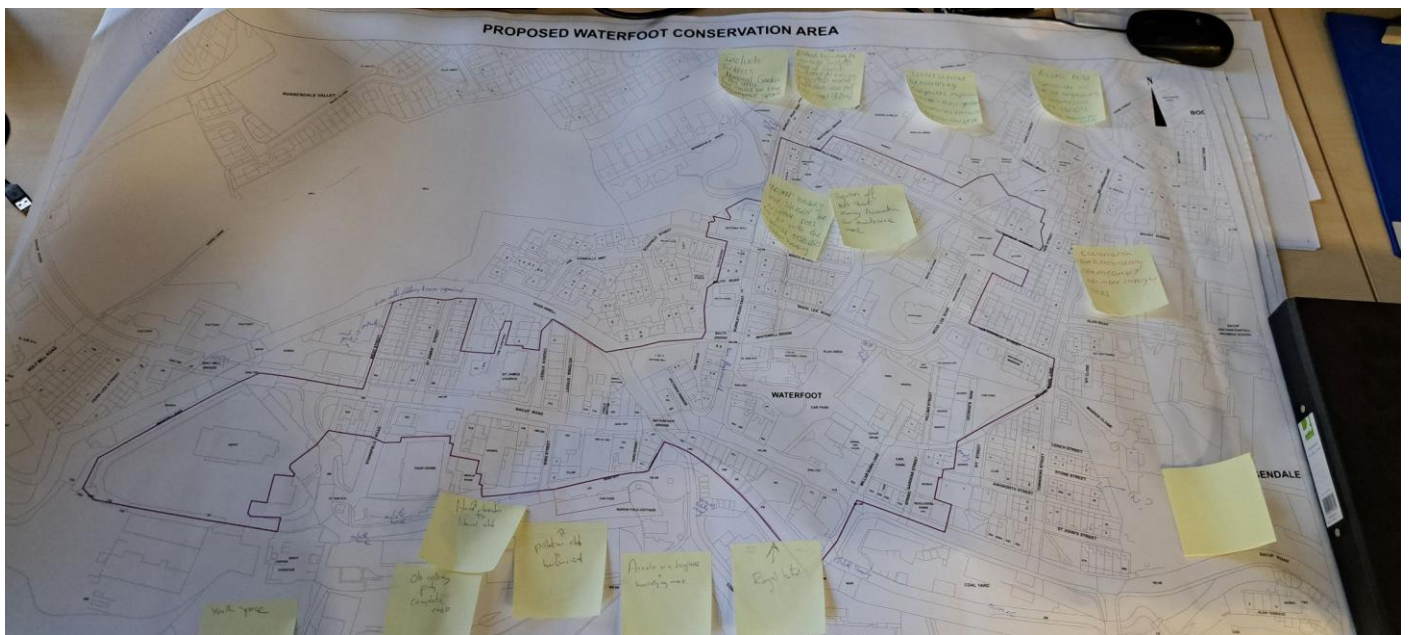
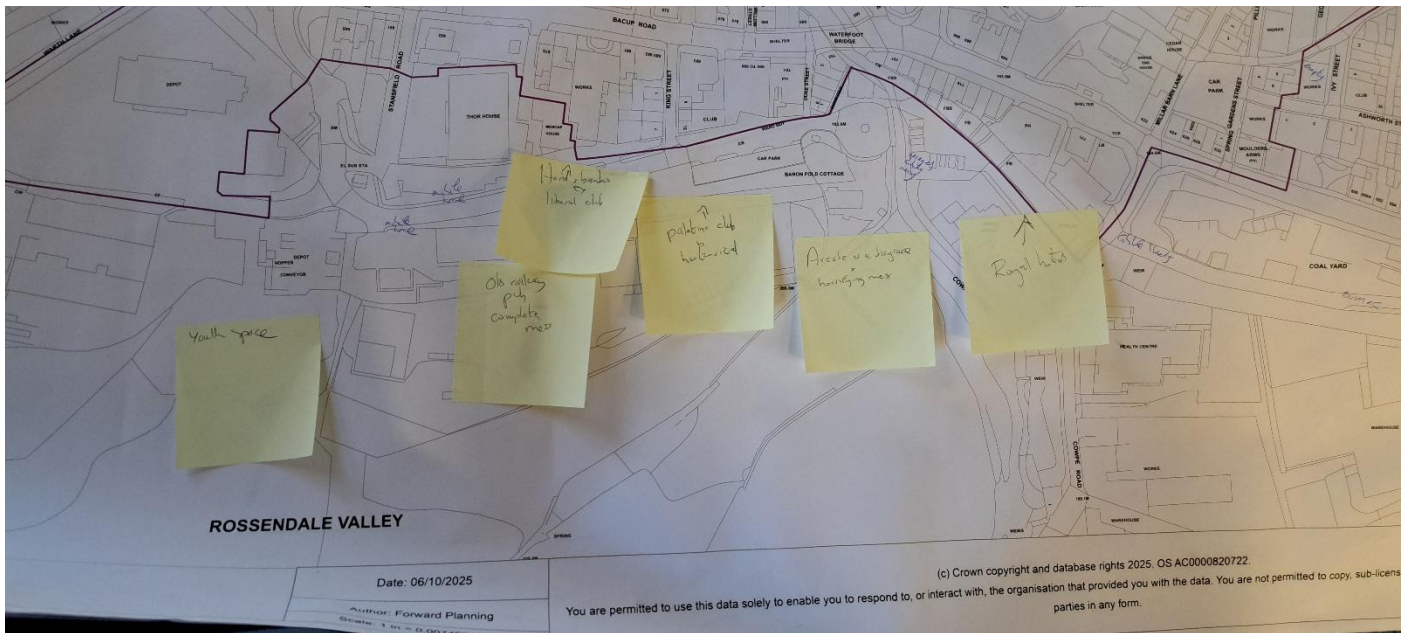
	
The proposed extension of the conservation area boundary around Gaghills would result in an additional positive view: across the bowling green facing southwest towards Thornfield Avenue with glimpses of varying rooflines including the gables of the old Waterfoot primary school.	Agreed. We will amend the map of prominent views and add a photograph and short description in the Appraisal.
Comments received on the main threats to the proposed conservation area	
Main threat are owners or tenants not complying to planning rules	Bullet no. 3 of the list of identified threats refers to inappropriate alterations to shopfronts which have had a significant detrimental impact. Bullet 4 also outlines the installation of PVC windows and loss of sash windows which causes harm to the character and appearance of the area.
Trickett's Arcade poor condition was highlighted	The last bullet point refers to Trickett's Arcade. Waterfoot Masterplan is looking at options to bring Trickett's Arcade into good condition. The designation of Waterfoot as a conservation area can help attract funding to renovate buildings.
Removal of flag stones	This has been inserted in the threat regarding piecemeal repairs to surfaces.
Abandoned buildings and inability of retracing owners is considered a threat	The sixth bullet point refers to the general lack of maintenance to some commercial premises, particularly Trickett's Arcade.
Comments received on the recommendations	
Request the introduction of a specific advertisement strategy for the Horse and Bamboo within the proposed guidance document	This can be considered during the preparation of a guidance document to businesses and homeowners.

Actions to stop the degradation of Trickett's Arcade should be taken	This is being considered as part of the Waterfoot Masterplan.
Enforcement actions to reverse changes to shop fronts not adequate with the character of the area	Enforcement actions are listed in the recommendations especially for buildings that have been subject to unauthorised works (last bullet point on page 57).
Introducing a cap to the number of tattoo and takeaway shops	The Rossendale Local Plan contains a strict policy regarding the development of hot food takeaways in the Borough (Policy R5). However, there are no current local planning policies regarding the location or number of tattoo shops. This can be considered as part of the Local Plan review.
Other general comments	
Planning enforcement should be tougher on works that do not fit with the surroundings or those that do not meet legal requirements	Enforcement actions are listed in the recommendations especially for buildings that have been subject to unauthorised works (last bullet point on page 57).
The creation of a community of small businesses can help drive change.	Comments noted.
More parking is needed	Comments noted.
The designation would fit with the plans to develop Waterfoot as an 'arts town' and attract visitors	Comments noted.
Suggestion for a youth space (mentioned at the drop-in event)	Comments noted.
Open space at Railway Inn a mess (mentioned at the drop-in event)	Comments noted.
Palatine Club is historical	Included in Appraisal.
Royal Hotel	Included in Appraisal.
Comments received during the second consultation on the proposed change to the Conservation Area boundary	
The bowling green is at boundary of extension. Supported provided it doesn't cost individuals or businesses money to change existing buildings etc.	Comments noted. Proposed changes to buildings in the conservation area should maintain or enhance the character of the conservation area and the use of more sensitive and traditional designs may incur additional costs. However these costs may be offset by possible uplifts in values resulting from a higher quality environment and conservation area status. Furthermore the designation of Waterfoot as a conservation area can help attract funding to renovate buildings.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The Waterfoot Conservation Area Appraisal was published for just over 4 weeks public consultation from 22 September 2025 until 20 October 2025. A drop-in event was organised at the Waterfoot Yard on 8 October 2025.
- 4.2 In total 22 comments were submitted, 7 from statutory consultees and 15 from residents or property owners.
- 4.3 In response to comments that the boundary should be changed to include a further area in the north around Gaghills Mill, an additional focussed consultation was undertaken on the proposed boundary change from 23 February until 30 March 2026 in order to give residents and stakeholders with property interests within the extended area an opportunity to comment. 1 response was submitted from the bowling green which supported the extension provided that it would not lead to increased costs.
- 4.4 The representations have been considered by the Forward Planning in consultation with the Council's heritage advisers Growth Lancashire, and a number of amendments are proposed to the Waterfoot Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Appendix 1: Photographs of Maps with Post It comments at drop in event, Waterfoot Yard, 8 October 2025



SED WATERFOOT CONSERVATION AREA

