

Maclure Road Conservation Area Appraisal



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Historic England



ROCHDALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Rochdale
Development
Agency



 **hpa**
ARCHITECTS

DRAFT

Rochdale Borough Council
Development Management
Floor 3
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale
OL16 1XU

0300 303 8873

development.management@rochdale.gov.uk

Contents

- 1.0 Foreword
- 2.0 Introduction
- 3.0 Planning Legislation and Policy
- 4.0 The location and setting of Maclure Road
- 5.0 The historical development of the Maclure Road Conservation Area
- 6.0 The character and appearance of the Maclure Road Conservation Area
 - 6.1 Saint John the Baptist, Roman Catholic Church
 - 6.2 Former Rochdale Fire Station
 - 6.3 Former Rochdale Fire Station Housing
 - 6.4 29 & 31 Maclure Road
 - 6.5 44 & 46 Richard Street
 - 6.6 Analysis of the quality and contribution of buildings in the conservation area
 - 6.7 Notable Spaces & Trees
 - 6.8 Key Views
 - 6.9 Transport, Highways and Parking
- 7.0 Analysis of the setting of the conservation area
- 8.0 Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the conservation area
- 9.0 Change, Management and Protection

1.0 Foreword

This Conservation Area Appraisal has been commissioned by the Rochdale Development Agency on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council, in association with Historic England. The work is being funded as part of the Rochdale Heritage Action Zone programme, which is centred on Drake Street – the historic route from the railway station down to the Town Hall.

The Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) is a heritage-led regeneration programme run as a partnership between Rochdale Borough Council and Historic England, but which involves key stakeholders also including The Cooperative Heritage Trust, The Cooperative College, Your Trust and Rochdale Boroughwide Housing. Rochdale Business Improvement District also supports the programme, and local communities including residents, business owners, developers and landlords are an integral component.

The ambitious HAZ scheme aims to reverse the neighbourhood's economic decline, attract new residents to the town centre and use its distinctive heritage to support the development of new communities, businesses and development opportunities. By celebrating and promoting Rochdale's heritage, the HAZ also aims to protect and preserve it for future generations to enjoy.

To ensure an enduring positively legacy of the HAZ programme, this Conservation Area Appraisal has been produced as a tool to ensure that the areas and buildings of significance within the Maclure Road Conservation Area are identified, alongside opportunities for restoration and enhancement.

The Maclure Road Conservation Area and its surroundings, are undergoing significant changes. Works have commenced on site at the former Central Retail site, and in September 2021 the Council adopted the Rochdale Station Area Supplementary Planning Document. Consultation has also recently taken place on works to re-design the Station Square. Given the ongoing changes in the area, it is considered an appropriate time to create a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. This will provide an opportunity to guide new development, preserving the elements which contribute to significance and identifying areas for enhancement and better management.

Contributions

Special thanks to Shakra Butt of the Local Studies Library for the access and provision of information. A series of accounts, photographs and images in this report are reproduced from sources made available.

Present day photographs used are property of Rochdale Borough Council.

Reproduced images and maps have their sources cited and a bibliography for all references can be found at the end of the document.



2.0 Introduction

The Maclure Road Conservation Area is situated on the southern fringe of Rochdale Town Centre in the immediate vicinity of Rochdale Railway Station.

The significance of the area is defined as “An early 20th century designed settlement for the relocation of the Rochdale Fire Service. The area is characterised by smooth engineered red brick buildings beneath slate roofs with modernist and art deco flourishes”. The Conservation Area also includes St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church.

Maclure Road is a wide boulevard which provides the primary linkage from Rochdale Railway Station to Drake Street, that then continues to the main commercial centre of Rochdale. Maclure Road at this point is framed by the white dome of St John the Baptist Church to the west and the former Fire Station with its Campanile style tower to the east.

Together these decorative architectural flourishes contribute to a unique and historically significant sense of place.

This area has operated as the primary arrival point for heavy rail passengers into Rochdale Town Centre since the arrival of the railway some 150 years ago.

The Metrolink light rail line now occupies part of the road through Station Square and a tram station is positioned at the southern end of Maclure Road, close to the entrance of Rochdale Railway Station and Nye Bevan House.

The Maclure Road Conservation Area was first designated in 2006. There is currently no appraisal or management plan for the Maclure Road Conservation Area. These documents will provide an important opportunity to identify the areas and buildings, which are of significance within the Conservation Area, as well as opportunities for enhancement.

3.0 Legislation and Planning Policy

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to “...*determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas*”.

Local Planning Authorities also have a duty to review past designations to ensure that areas remain worthy of protection and to promote enhancements where possible.

Permitted development rights are more restricted in conservation areas to help reduce the erosion of this special character. The ability to control development in a conservation area can also be strengthened through the inclusion of Article 4 Directions. These are restrictions that remove permitted development rights.

Currently, Planning permission is required for:

- Substantial demolition of any building or structure in a conservation area.
- The demolition or erection of a wall, gate or fence abutting a highway if this is over 1m or over 2m elsewhere.

Further to these restrictions, works to trees also require notification to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement.

Conservation areas are then further controlled by Planning Policy, both at a National and Local level.

The Government has set out its planning policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Section 16 *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, details how development is expected to consider the needs of heritage assets.

The Local Plan for Rochdale is made up of a suite of policies and plans.:

- The Core Strategy 2016 provides the lead document for this. Within this, Strategic Objective SO3—*To improve design, image and quality of space*, along with Policy P2: *Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage* are the key elements relating to the protection of heritage assets.
- The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 -2016 is also a material consideration as the Allocations Plan is not yet adopted. G/BE/9 Conservation of the Built Heritage concerns Policies BE/16, BE/17 and BE/18 all consider the impact development can have on conservation areas. Other relevant policies include those under Section 19 of the UDP concerning Design and the Built Environment.
- The Place for Everyone combined Greater Manchester Plan Policy JP-P2 supports the celebration and protection of heritage assets.
- Rochdale Borough Council has also published a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) relating to design, housing, retail and the environment. The additional guidance within these documents helps applicants and their agents interpret policy so that their schemes are able to gain the relevant permissions.

In light of both the legislative and policy requirements, it is important that a clear definition and analysis of the special qualities of an area is clearly communicated. This document presents these such findings in written, map and photographic form to help demonstrate this.

Beyond Statutory Legislation and Planning Policy, there is a wealth of Best Guidance available within England.

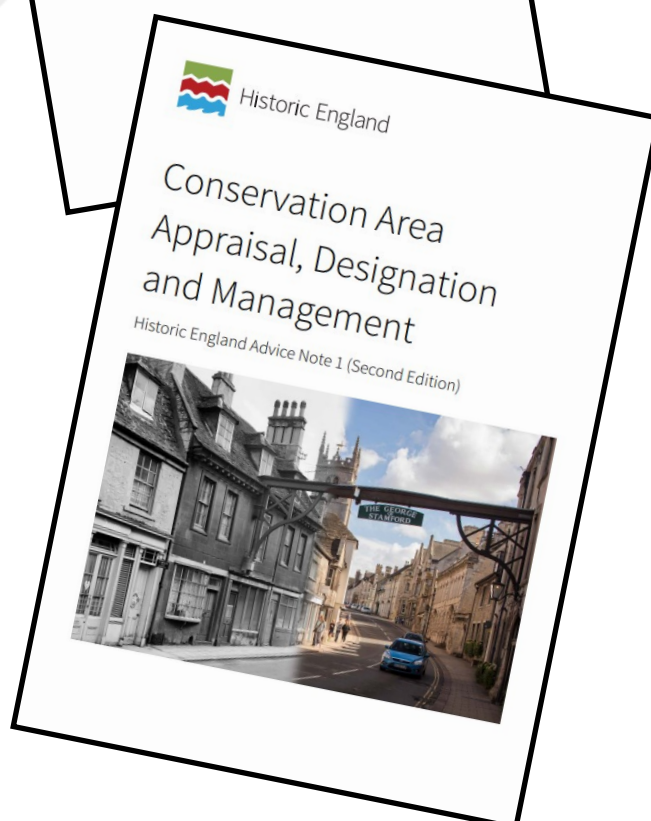
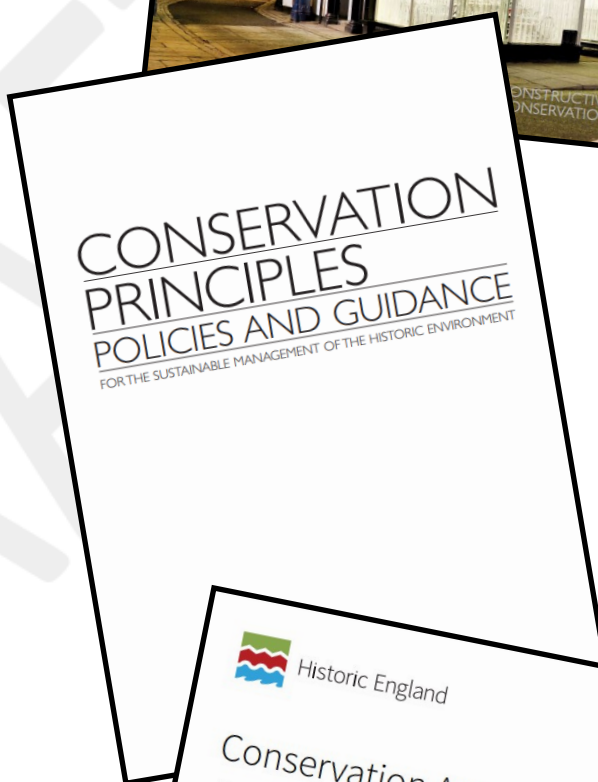
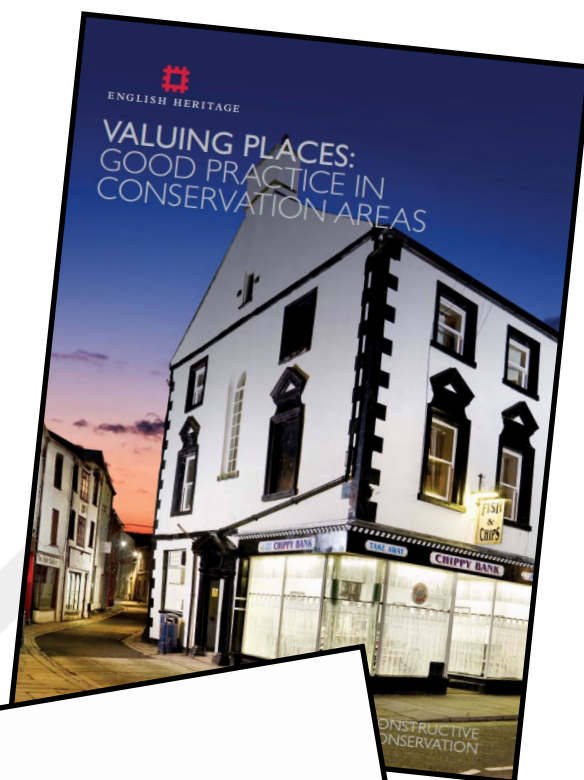
Historic England have published guidance on the value, designation and management of heritage assets and specifically conservation areas. The guides look at understanding the value of assets through to the management of change. These guides have been consulted with through the appraisal process and their specific details can be found in the bibliography of this report.

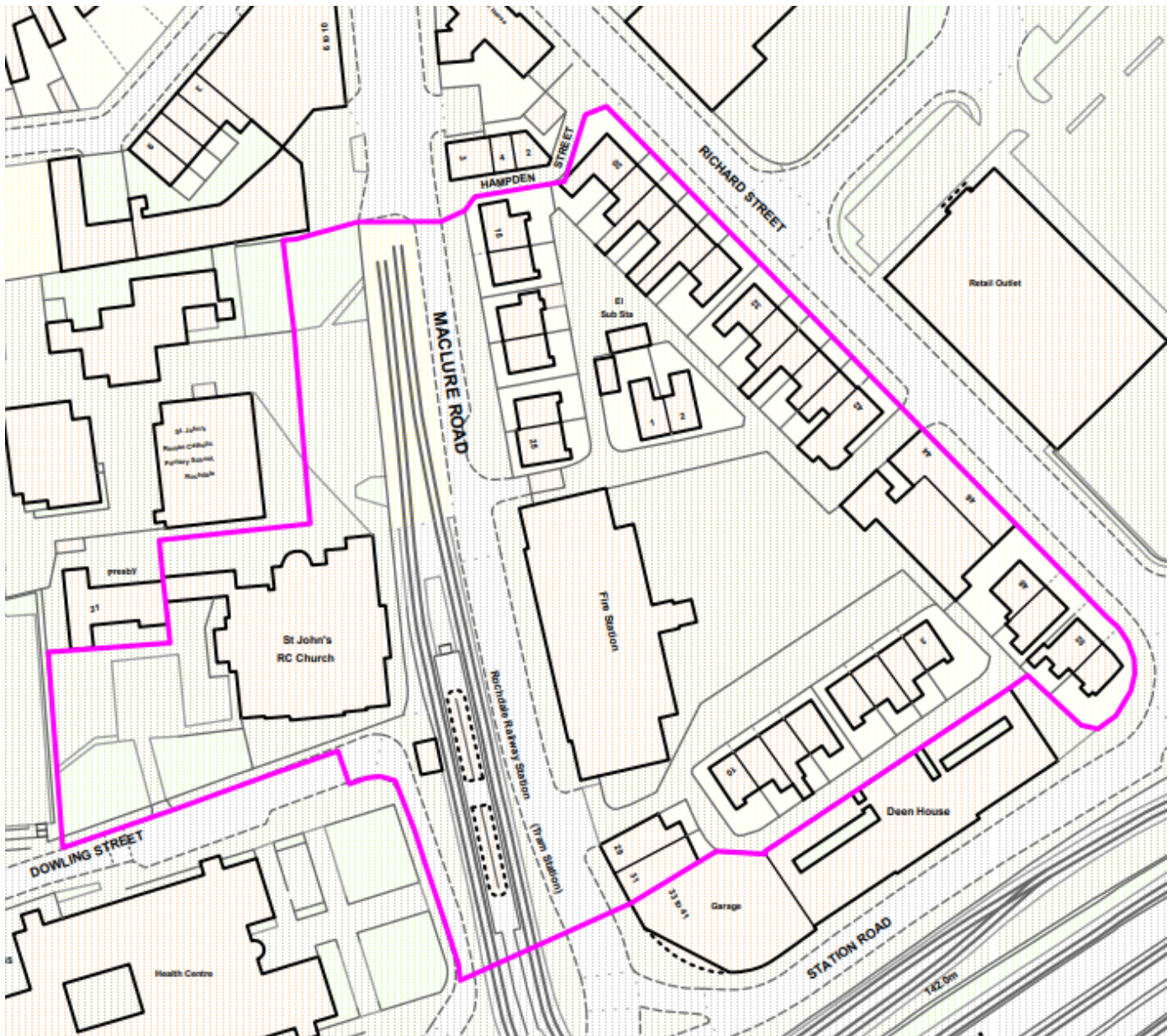
There are also some useful guides for property owners and occupiers available through Historic England's website.

Rochdale Borough Council have published Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) aimed to guide property owners, occupiers and developers.

The most relevant SPDs to the Maclure Road Conservation Area are:

- Shopfronts and Security Shutters Supplementary Planning Document
- Design and planning process—A Guide to Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document
- Guideline and Standards for Residential Developments Supplementary Planning Document
- Rochdale Station Area Supplementary Planning Document





Maclure Road Conservation Area Boundary from 2006 designation

4.0 The location and setting of Maclure Road

Maclure Road forms the main route from Rochdale Railway Station and the adjacent Metrolink tram stop to the commercial core of Rochdale Town Centre some 0.5 miles down the hill to the north.

Maclure Road is a wide boulevard sitting on a north/south axis, lined predominantly with red brick buildings representing a mix of residential, commercial and civic uses. Some street trees are present in linear form and as part of formal groupings.

The conservation area boundary covers the distinctive triangle of land to the east of Maclure Road and is bounded by Richard Street to the east. It extends west to cover the grounds at Saint John the Baptists Roman Catholic Church. The triangle of land creates a strong boundary and given the matching architectural design of the buildings within, this creates a strong, easily identifiable boundary.

By studying historic maps, found on the following pages, we can begin to understand the development of this area.

Published 1849



Historical accounts help us understand that Rochdale originated as a settlement focussed around the River Roch, to the north of Maclure Road.

These early maps show the area prior to the construction of Maclure Road.

St Johns Chapel (Roman Catholic) can be seen on 1849 map in a differing location to where it is found today, with Bell Green adjacent, presumably a manor house.

Published 1851



Bell Green is shown on both the 1851 and 1893 publications however in the later the same property is noted as St Johns Convent.

We are also able to see the installation of additional trainlines between 1851 and 1893 maps. This demonstrates the development of the Station which is detailed in historic records to have opened in 1842.

Historic tramlines are shown running along Drake Street and Oldham Road in the 1893 publication.

Published 1893



Top, Extract of: *Rochdale Sheet 11*.
Surveyed: 1849, Published: 1851. Sourced: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/231281058>

Middle, Extract of: *Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX (inset LXXXIXA)* Surveyed: 1844 to 1848, Published: 1851
Sourced: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/102344030>

Bottom, Extract of: *Lancashire LXXXIX.1* Surveyed: 1890 to 1891, Published: 1893. Sourced: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/126520730>

This revision published in 1908 is the first map showing the inclusion of Maclure Road.

In order to make way for the new part of the woollen mill and the housing at the junction of Henry Street and Richard Street was demolished.

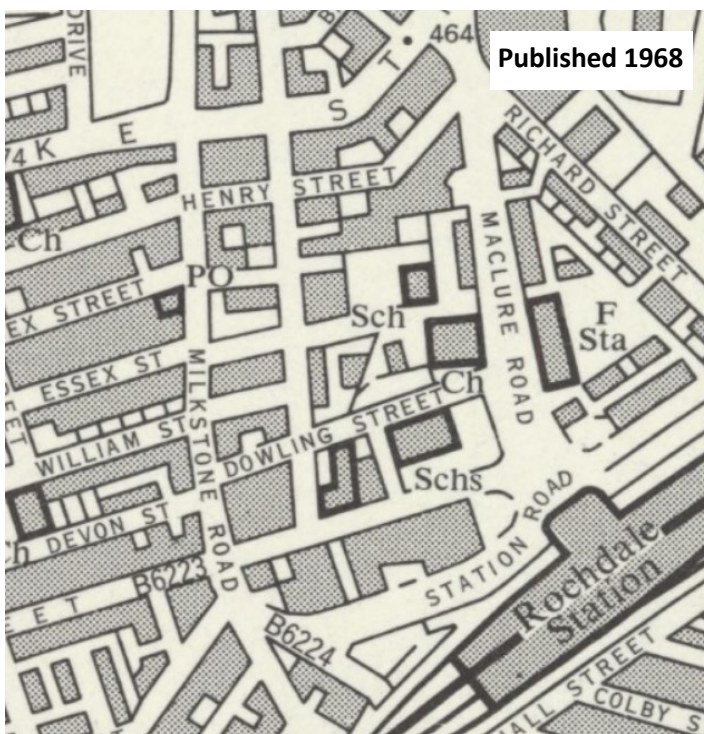
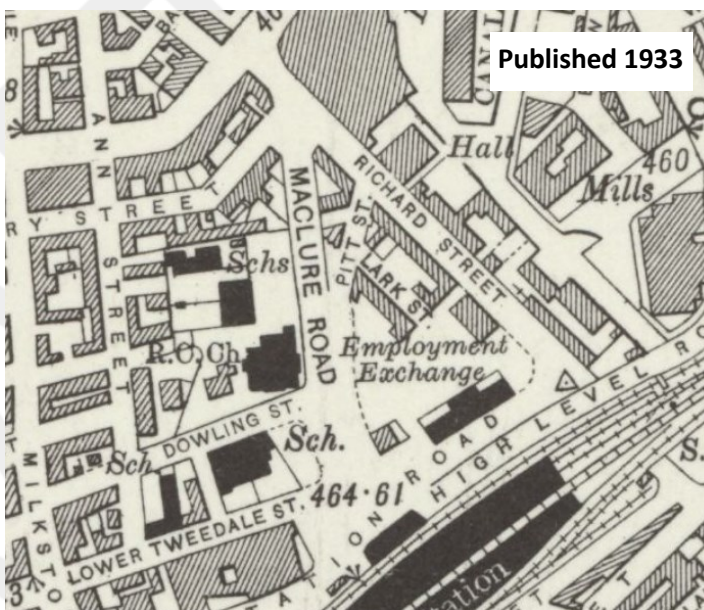
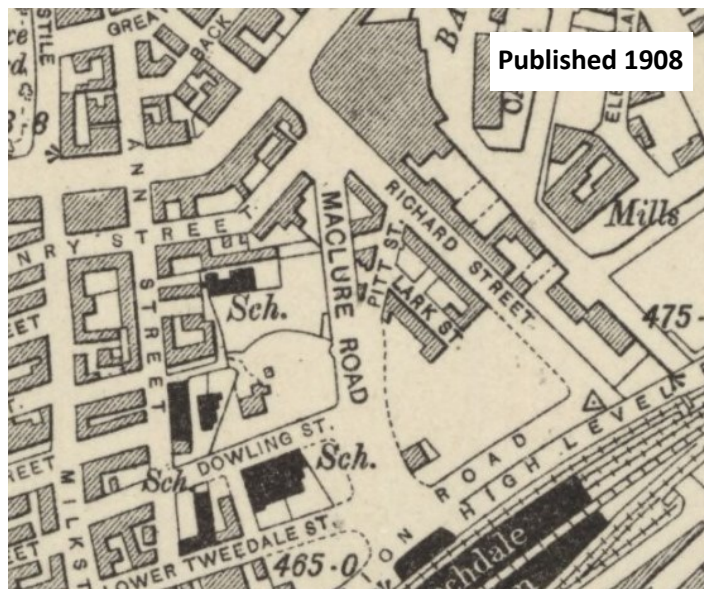
It is not until the revision published in 1933 that we are able to identify Saint John the Baptists Roman Catholic Church on the site where it remains today.

We can also see Deen House shown as the “Employment Exchange”, which was erected during the same period as Saint Johns.

The reference to a “Hall” in the north east section of this later map shows the location of the Masonic Hall, one of the few remaining historic buildings to the northern side of Richard Street.

The map, published in 1968 is the first map showing the inclusion of the Fire Station and associated housing. Historic records detail that the Fire Station was actually erected much earlier in 1933.

We are also able to make out formal garden boundaries around the Fire Station Housing.



Top, Extract of: *Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.NW* Revised: 1907 to 1908, Published: 1910. Sourced: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/101102972>

Middle, Extract of: *Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.NW* Revised: 1928, Published: 1931. Sourced: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/101102972>

Bottom, Extract of: *SD81SE - A Surveyed* / Revised: 1953 to 1965, Published: 1968. Sourced: <https://maps.nls.uk/view/189180924>

5.0 The historical development of the Maclure Road Conservation Area

Rochdale developed as a trading centre for a rural economy and, by 1251 Rochdale had been granted a market charter.

The growth of the woollen industry developed rapidly in the 1500s and, being the primary market town for the agricultural area, Rochdale became one of the principal wool towns of Lancashire. The town centre became well known for as a hub for wool merchants who would gather raw materials, distribute to cloth producers and then move products to fullers and dyers before selling on the fully processed goods.

Rochdale's success boomed in the 18th and 19th century which is when the town experienced considerable growth in the form of mills, warehouses and housing.

Embracing the technologies of the industrial revolution, particularly the automation of cloth and textile production and beginning to process cotton rather than wool, saw the erection of large mill complexes.

Raw cotton was mostly imported to Great Britain from slave plantations in South America up until the 1860s. The combination of the break out of the American Civil War and an overproduction of Cotton Cloth are both blamed for sparking the Lancashire Cotton Famine which took place from 1861-65. Cotton production recommenced in 1864 when it began to be imported from India and Egypt as the industry began to gain traction once more.

INSERT PHOTOGRAPH

Continued investment within infrastructure and manufacturing meant improvements were being made across all elements of cotton cloth production. The building of the Canals was a particularly notable contributor to this.

Rochdale Canal was constructed and opened in the late 18th eighteenth century, improving connections with Manchester and other important industrial towns.

The Rochdale Branch Canal Basin was situated on the lands to the east of Richard Street.

The basin opened in 1798 and by the mid 19th century, had developed in to a complex of warehouses and stores. Smaller warehouses and ancillary buildings were constructed around the basin, including along Richard Street and Drake Street.

The Branch Canal fell into decline during the 20th century and it was formally closed in 1927. The canal basin was covered over in the 1990s and a modern retail park was erected on the reclaimed land.

The below aerial image shows the canal basin, particularly the mill and warehouse buildings, along with the prominent Saint John the Baptists Church in the foreground.

Another important transport mode which enabled the growth and prosperity of Rochdale was the railway.

The Manchester and Leeds Railway opened between Manchester Oldham Road and Littleborough in 1839, with Rochdale housing an intermediary station. The first Railway Station in Rochdale was located on Oldham Road however,

this was too small and by 1856 plans for a new station were made. The new station, located where we find the present station, opened in 1889.

The Victorian Railway station buildings and canopies were demolished in the 1970s and the platforms were reduced from 8 to 3. Today these disused areas are overgrown with self-seeded trees and vegetation.

The station entrance that remains is the replacement frontage, constructed in the 1970s however some of the Victorian features remain such as the undercroft.



Historic Aerial Image showing Maclure Road and St John the Baptist RC Church dated 1926. Courtesy of Historic England's Britain from Above catalogue. Sourced: <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/EPW016792>



Historic Aerial Image showing Maclure Road and Rochdale Railway Station dated 1926. Courtesy of Historic England's Britain from Above catalogue. Sourced: <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/EPW016784>

The location of the station separated from the town centre was soon highlighted as problematic.

To help the flow of people and goods between the Station to the town centre, Maclure Road was constructed as a wide boulevard.

The introduction of the tramway along Drake Street and that on Oldham Road helped to move and guide people to the town centre.

The tramways were first introduced to Rochdale in 1882 in the form of steam trams but these were later replaced with electric trams in the early 1900s.

The tramways began to decline following the introduction of motorbuses during the 1920s.

The below photograph shows a Rochdale Corporation Car No. 1, sourced from Rochdale Corporation Transport 1902-1969, 2016 by The Local Transport History Library.



6.0 The character and appearance of the Maclure Road Conservation Area

The Maclure Road Conservation Area is characterised by:

1. The strong presence of red brick buildings, particularly at the former Rochdale Fire Station (including campanile tower) and its associated housing
2. The wide boulevard of Maclure Road
3. The white dome of Saint John the Baptists Roman Catholic Church

We have understood the development and need for Maclure Road as a key connection between the town and the railway station.

The presence of this road creates a clear boundary for the conservation area which is strengthened at the meeting points with Station Road and Richard Street.

The combination of building frontages and boundary walls lining the backs of pavements on both Maclure Road and Richard Street creates a strong, formal boundary to the conservation area and denotes a sense of purpose and conformity.

To understand the character of the conservation area in more detail it is important that we understand the key buildings, features and spaces within it. Views into, within and across the conservation area are also important.

These are explored in turn in the following text.



6.1 *Saint John the Baptist, Roman Catholic Church*

Saint John the Baptist is a Grade II* listed building, designated for its artistic and architectural interests. It is the only listed building in the conservation area, and has exceptional heritage value.

The building was constructed in the 1920s to the design of Oswald Hill by Ernest Bower Norris and craftsmen R & T Haworth. The apsed sanctuary includes an impressive mosaic by Eric Newton of fine detail.

Architecturally, the Byzantine style building is constructed of red brick above an artificial stone plinth and includes a 20m wide dome supported by a concrete structure. The building is laid out in a Cruciform plan with the principal entrances found on the south elevation accessed from Dowling Street. The font and pulpit within the Church were taken from the 19th century church predating this building.

The red brick church dominates the western side of Maclure Road, reinforcing the character of the area.

The dome of the Church paired with the Campanile style tower of the former Fire Station frame the views along Maclure Road and uplift the architectural quality of the area. Recently the building has benefitted from National Lottery Heritage Funding and repairs have been completed to the dome and altar.



6.2 Former Rochdale Fire Station

The former Fire Station, along with 32 houses to accommodate firemen on continuous duty, was erected in 1933. Prior to this, the Rochdale Police Fire Brigade were located at Alfred Street, where St Mary's Gate and The Rochdale Exchange centre are now situated.

The demand for the new fire station was due to both the need to house the new motorised fleet of motor vehicles and to replace the substandard housing for the firemen and their families.

The former fire station is a steel framed building of red Accrington brick and dressed Crosland Hill sandstone, below a Westmorland green slate roof. The design is of classical, symmetrical proportions with art deco flourishes. The most iconic feature of the building is the tower.

It is said that the campanile tower was supposed to be part of Saint John the Baptists Church however, spiralling costs meant it was omitted from the final design for the building. When the builders came to construct the former Fire Station they converted this element to be the drill tower.

There are 8 vehicle bays to the former Fire Station which housed the fire engines and the ambulance fleet. The grand central door to the building is now disused. It exhibits a fine stone relief panel above the door which includes motifs of modern technology.

A control room was sited in the northern section of the station and a maintenance workshop was housed in the renovated former Yeomanry drill hall to the rear. The upper floor of the Fire Station included a ballroom for the service and local community.

The former Fire Station is owned by Rochdale Council and now serves as a museum and café at ground floor level with coworking space above, thanks to grant funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



6.3 Former Rochdale Fire Station Housing

The housing built for the former Fire Station staff is constructed of red engineered brick and includes sandstone details and slate roofing, in harmony with the design of the former Fire Station. The housing sits tightly packed in to the triangle of land with paved rear gardens facing inwards on to each other.

There is a clear hierarchy of the housing which is seen in the buildings architectural designs. The housing can be split in to 3 distinct groups:

1. Semi-detached, largest houses on Maclure Road.
2. Semi-detached housing to the south of Richard Street.
3. Smaller, terrace housing.

The former Station Commanders House (below) sits closest to the former Fire Station and forms the first property in the most prestigious group of semi-detached houses. It also sits forwards of the other properties demonstrating grandeur and authority.

These larger semi-detached houses include sandstone window surrounds and mullions at first floor level, a sandstone string course and bay windows on the ground floor. Each pair is attached by formal brick arches which strengthens the street frontage of the Fire Station complex.



The medium sized semi detached houses (above) occupy the south corner of Richard Street. These have unusual brick quoins and bay windows.



The smaller houses (above) sit in the northern section of Richard Street as two blocks of 6 houses. These buildings are the most altered with many including extensions. The end terraces include unusual quoins formed of brick.

All properties have red brick wall boundaries.

There are very few alterations to the roofs or frontages of the residential dwellings.





6.4 29 & 31 Maclure Road (above)

At the southern extent of Maclure Road stands a pair of attractive semi-detached brick built properties dating from the early 20th century. This pair of buildings are believed to be the oldest buildings within the Maclure Road Conservation Area.

The buildings are of 2 bays, split over 3 storeys.

These are the only 3 storey buildings in the conservation area and their prominence helps frames views looking north along Maclure Road.

The upper floors of the building include decorative sandstone window surrounds and gables, topped with pointed finials. The finials echo the grandeur of the neighbouring fire station and tower along with the finials top of Church dome.

The ground floor level includes modern shop fronts with UPVC windows and doors behind semi-perforated roller shutters.

The rear of the properties are unattractive and there is a modern, large catering extract flue.

6.5 44 & 46 Richard Street (below)

These properties occupy a back of pavement position along Richard Street without a garden or boundary wall. This, combined with the larger scale of the property, gives this pair of buildings prominence in the streetscape.

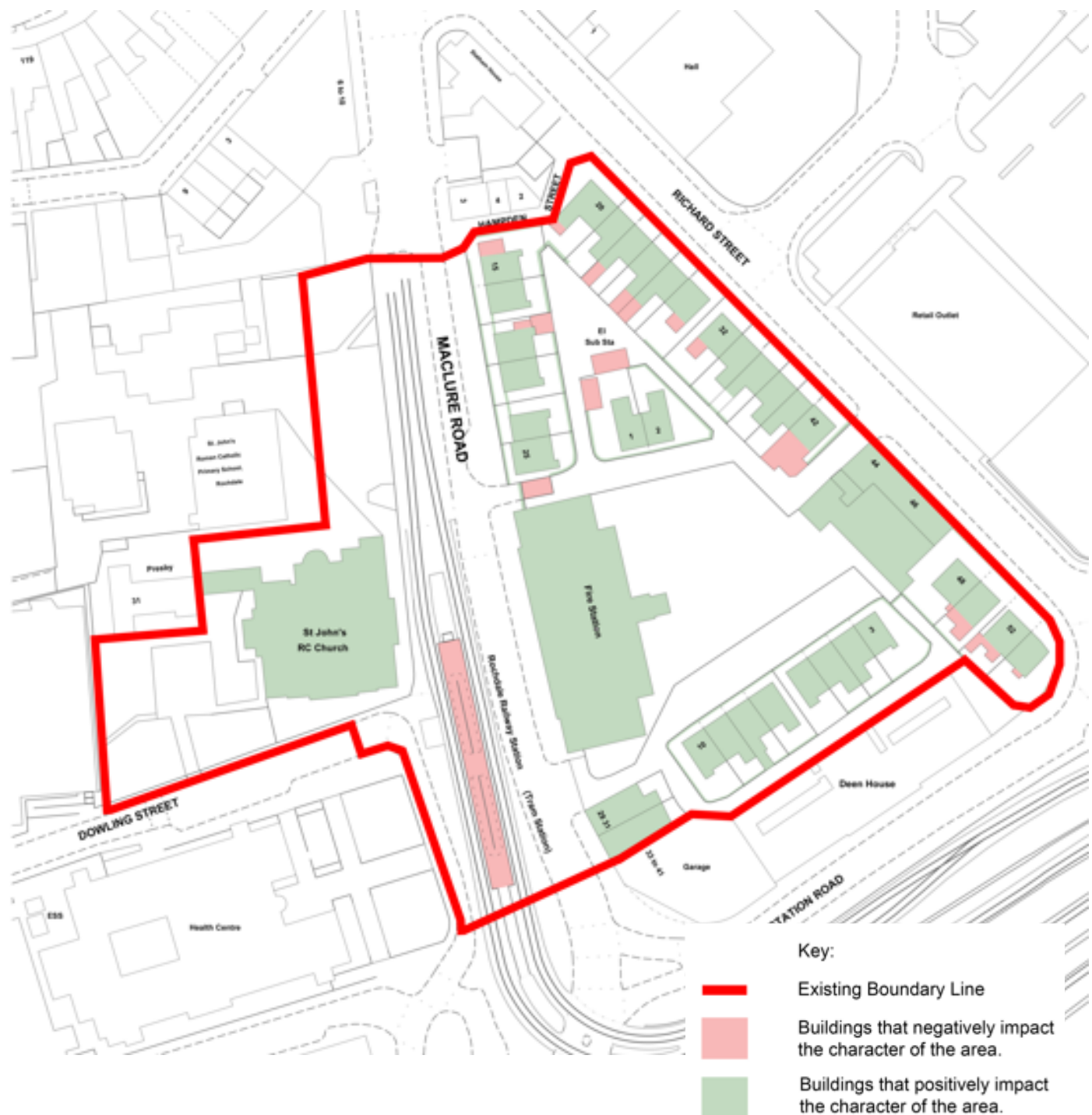
46 Appears to be the main building with 44 being a small extension to the north. A building is shown in this location on the 1933 published map, although appears to have been demolished and cleared by the 1968 publication.

No. 44 is constructed of smooth engineered brick laid in a running brick bond. No.46 includes an English bond design to the brickwork. Decorative brick quoins are included in the design and the brick work sits atop a sandstone masonry plinth. Adjoining to the rear of these buildings is the former workshop.

The buildings are now being converted to an Artist's studio thanks to funding from RBC, Historic England, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.



6.6 Analysis of the quality and contribution of buildings in the conservation area



Following careful analysis, it is apparent that the majority of buildings make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The above map sketch shows those which make a positive contribution as green, and those negative in orange.

Positive buildings are those which make a positive contribution to the historic and

architectural character and appearance of the conservation area . These buildings are the reason for the designation and demolition or unsympathetic alteration to these should be resisted.

Negative buildings are those which are clearly harmful to the character of the area and their removal / redesign would usually be favourable.

By understanding the buildings within the conservation area and exploring their characteristics we are able to begin defining the special character and significance of the area.

The key features have been found to be:

- The use of smooth engineered red brick, slate roofs and sandstone details consistently across all buildings
- The clear hierarchy in architectural design to depict the importance of buildings and their occupiers
- The erection of boundary walls and connecting arches creating a tight core of development centred around the Fire Station
- The inclusion of art deco flourishes through the architectural detailing of the buildings

The buildings which clearly contribute to this, and have been identified as positive contributors to the character of the area are:

1. The Former Fire Station
2. The purpose built housing for station staff
3. St John the Baptists Church



These key components identified require protection to avoid further degradation caused by small incremental changes. By individual property owners.

This could be controlled through the use of additional protection such as an Article 4 (2) or by the production of a Design Guide to detail appropriate window, door and other alteration specifications.



6.7 Notable Spaces & Trees

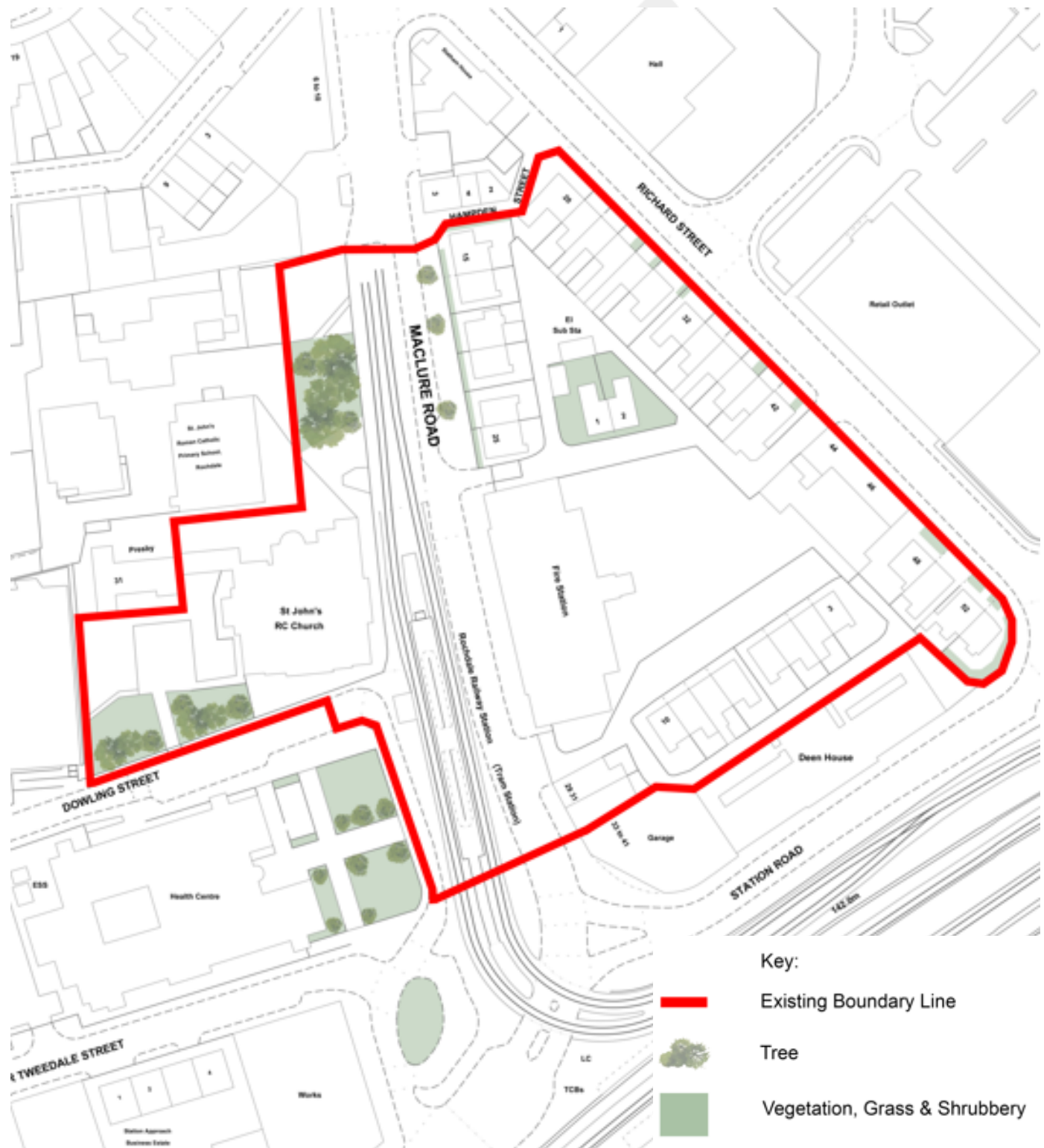
The main space of note within the conservation is that to the rear of the former fire station. This is now fully enclosed and was previously part of the training and maintenance facilities in the station complex.

The land is now used to provide carparking at the newly converted shared workspace which has been created in the former Fire Station.

There is some greenery in the conservation area in the form of street trees and hedgerows of the housing lining Maclure Road.

1 and 2 Fire Station Yard are the only properties with grassed gardens. All other areas are hardstanding/impermeable.

Green spaces and trees/hedgerows (including those in the setting of the conservation area) are shown on the below map sketch.



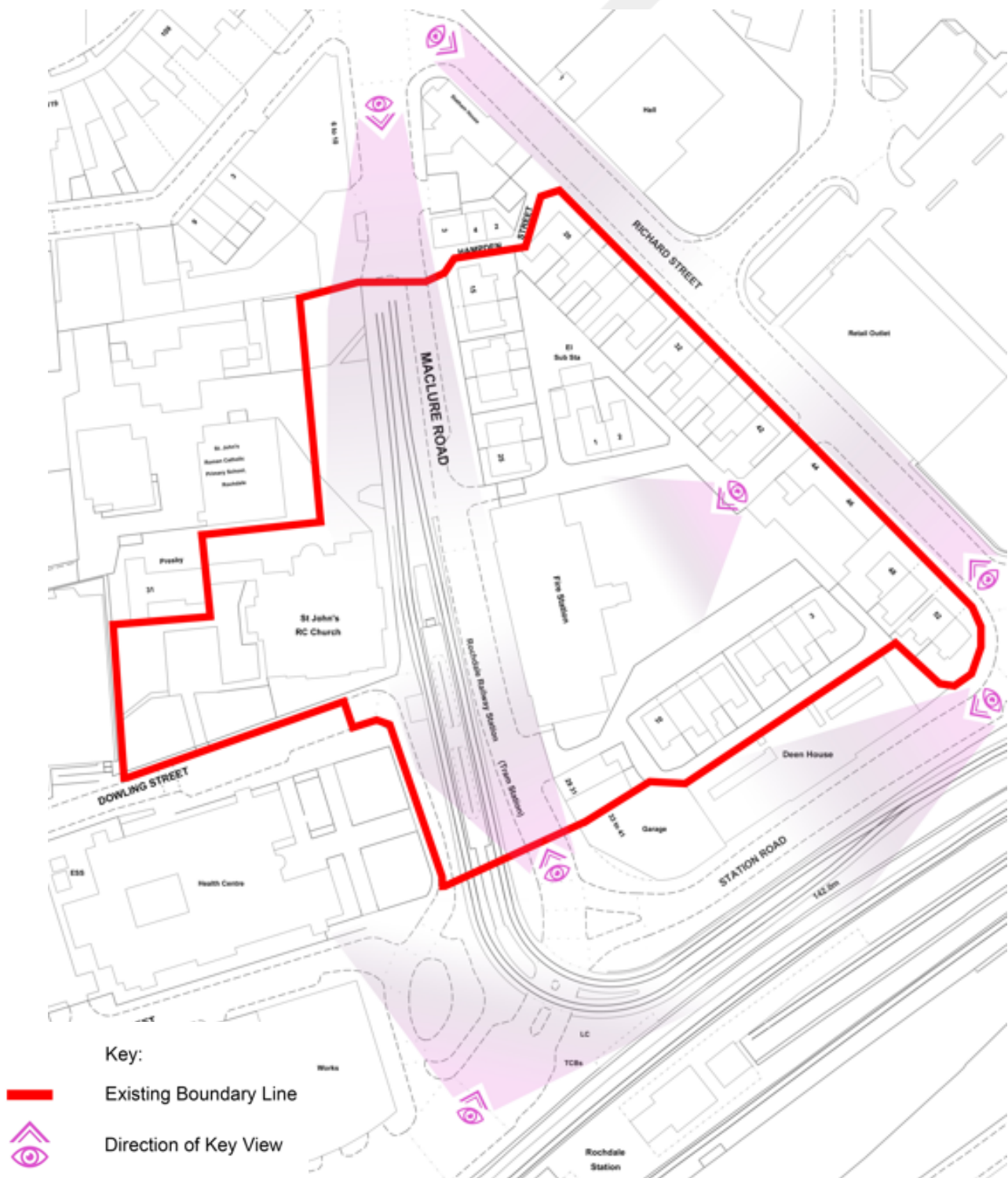
6.8 Key Views

The best views are those from the north and south of the conservation area looking along Maclure Road and Richard Street. The Maclure Road views are framed with the Tower of the fire Station and the Dome of the Church. A key feature within all views are the walled property boundaries.

The former fire station tower is most prominent feature in the conservation area, this can be seen from every property and open space.

It is also noted that the inclusion of the Tram stop, tram line and associated paraphernalia has had a detrimental impact on views across Maclure Road between St Johns and the former Fire Station.

Key views have been marked on the below map sketch showing the location and direction of the view in pink.



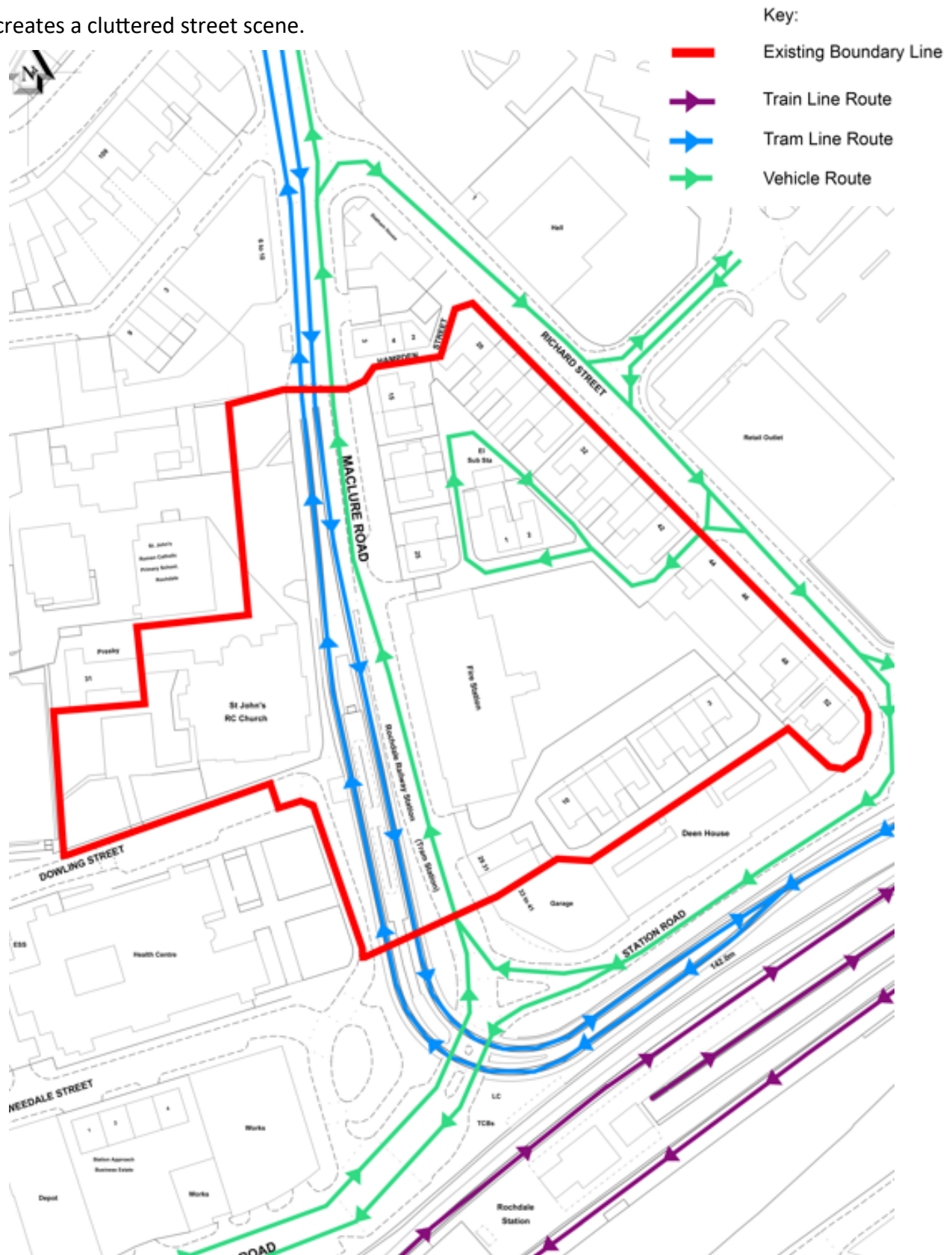
6.9 Transport, Highways and Parking

The use of Maclure Road as a thoroughfare, particularly for the tram, dominates its character.

The use of Maclure Road for both motor vehicles and the tram add a level of complexity to the highway and increases the need for formal traffic controls and signage.

This creates a cluttered street scene.

The below map shows the various users of the space. The interchange between these to the south of the conservation area is quite problematic. The area is particularly unattractive to pedestrians and cyclists.





The use of Maclure Road as a linkage between Rochdale Railway Station and the town centre is clear by the inclusion of highway signage, bollards, hazard warning signs, planters and service boxes, within and in the immediate setting of the conservation area.

On street parking adjacent to the properties on Maclure Road and Richard Street adds a further layer to this.

The detrimental impact of the highway/tram controls and signage is exemplified in these photographs which show the southern part of Maclure Road, at the gateway to the conservation area. The situation to the north gateway (at the junction with Drake Street) is similar, and improvements are required to create a more welcoming area.





Street lighting is a mixture of typologies with standard highway columns lining the footpaths and illuminations hanging above some signs. A further column light with a hemisphere luminaire runs along the tramlines. These quantity and range of designs adds visual clutter to the streetscape.

Within the conservation area there are a number of service boxes along with a substation located at the core of the housing. The substation is a relatively attractive purpose built building of red brick with hipped roof behind a parapet wall. This is shown in the below photograph.



There are only a small number of public bins in the conservation area and commercial waste is stored away from the public highway.

On street parking is limited to defined parking bays. The use of these is controlled through the use of a permit system and this does not appear to be over subscribed.

Private parking has been added to the rear of properties which is accessed via the former Fire Station Yard.

Parking is provided in the form of newly created driveways and the erection of garages and car ports, all created through the modification of rear boundary walls. Some of these interventions are considered to be unsympathetic to the character of the conservation area, particularly as the likes of prefabricated buildings and modern materials have been installed. A prefabricated garage building can be seen adjacent to the electric substation in the photograph shown on the left.

7.0 Analysis of the setting of the conservation area

The conservation area is bounded by a series of buildings and spaces which make both positive and negative contributions to its setting.

There are 2 distinct buildings which make a positive contribution to the setting:

1. Deen House
2. Rochdale Masonic Hall

These buildings contribute positively to the setting of the conservation area due to their architectural design and materiality.

Deen House, shown in the below photograph, is the former Employment and Benefit Offices and this building sits along the back of pavement on Station Road. The building is now split into a number of units and has been extended and altered to the rear. Most recently the building has been used as a community education and upskilling centre.

The original building is constructed of three parts: a main central two storey building, flanked by two single storey wings.

The brick used to construct this building is different to the buildings found within the conservation area in that it is a darker and more varied colour, along with having a textured finish.

The property does however include architectural details which are much akin to the wider conservation area. These details include a sandstone string course, decorative sandstone entablatures above the doors and brick flat segmental arches above the windows.

There have been some unsympathetic additions to the property such as roller shutter doors and UPVC casement windows. The building could easily be uplifted through minor reinstatements and the building should be considered for inclusion in the conservation area.

As this building does not have the same characteristics and materiality as those within the conservation area, it is not proposed for inclusion.





Rochdale Masonic Hall is of 6 bays over 2 storeys. The dedication stone is dated 1926 and the building presents us with a principal elevation of dressed ashlar and side elevations of red brick.

A recessed entrance creates an imitation portico decorated with 4 columns on plinths with Egyptian capitals. A decorative frieze surrounds the entrance.

Raised masons motif sits in the pediment above the first floor windows.

The ground floor windows are attractive stained and textured glazing set in lead work. These are protected externally with Perspex covers.

First floor windows to the front are 6 over 6 faux sash and casements, again covered with external Perspex facing. The southern most first floor window is covered over.

First floor windows to the front elevation include Egyptian inspired modernist decoration around the heads.

Sliding timber sash and casement windows of 6 over 6 design can be found to the side elevations.

There are string courses between ground and first floor and above first floor windows to the front elevation.

The hall has a flat roof with the adjoining building to the rear (assumed to be part of the former canal basin complex) has a slate covered dual pitch roof.

This building is now also open to the public and is a licenced wedding venue and ballroom.

The grand detailing and materiality of this building resonates Rochdale's former wealth and importance, making a positive contribution to the setting of the conservation area.

As this building does not have the same characteristics and materiality as those within the conservation area, it is not proposed for inclusion.

Other notable buildings in the setting of the conservation area have been explored to understand their potential for inclusion in the conservation area.

1 Richard Streets presents a building formerly associated with the industrial activity of the canal basin. This modest building, presumably a former office or gate lodge, includes an attractive ashlar façade complementary to the adjacent Masonic Hall. The unsympathetic additions have downgraded its architectural quality however, these could easily be reversed to help reinstate the historic character of the property.

Central Retail Park is a collection of modern steel framed buildings with brick cladding to the lower third and metal cladding above. The buildings turn their backs on Richard Street, creating a strong boundary and removing an active frontage in this area. These buildings have a negative impact on the setting of the conservation area through lack of consistency in design, materiality and their large scale and massing. The buildings are not considered to be of architectural or historic merit.

St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School is situated directly north of the Church. On Maclure Road. The site includes an attractive two storey building with 3 gables which was erected as part of the Church development. The building has been considerably altered, particularly through the installation of unsympathetic windows which have diminished its architectural quality. Furthermore the building is set back behind a formal boundary wall, separating it from Maclure Road.

Modern, single storey shops occupy 33-41 Maclure Road / Station Lane in a key gateway position at the boundary of the conservation area.

These buildings do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area and could be improved or even redeveloped entirely.



NYE Bevan House is a modern health care centre which is composed of 2 main arterial buildings. The materiality of the building includes red brick and off white cladding to complement the adjacent listed church. This being said, the scale and design of the building is not complementary to the character of the conservation area.

Haji Cash and Carry occupies a former industrial building at the southern end of Maclure Road. The building is set back away from the conservation area beyond the tram lines and the taxi rank. The brick shed has been overclad on the Maclure Road elevation with corrugated sheet metal. Doors on this elevation (which are no longer used) have been covered over with roller shutter doors. This creates a negative impact on the setting of the conservation area.





Rochdale Railway Station sits at the southern extremity of Maclure Road. The station is the primary reason for the installation of Maclure Road to help passengers navigate more easily to the town centre. It has clear historical significance to the town.

The railway station itself has a replacement façade dating from the 1970s. This is an understated yellow brick building, hidden behind the tram lines. The self seeded shrubs atop the entrance give the appearance of a unmaintained rather than primary entrance.

Internally the station does retain some of the Victorian features, including the stairs to the disused platforms. The station entrance also provides a route through to the south side of the railway.

Given the separation of the station from the conservation area and its appearance as a mid 20th century building this is not considered to contribute positively to the setting of the conservation area.

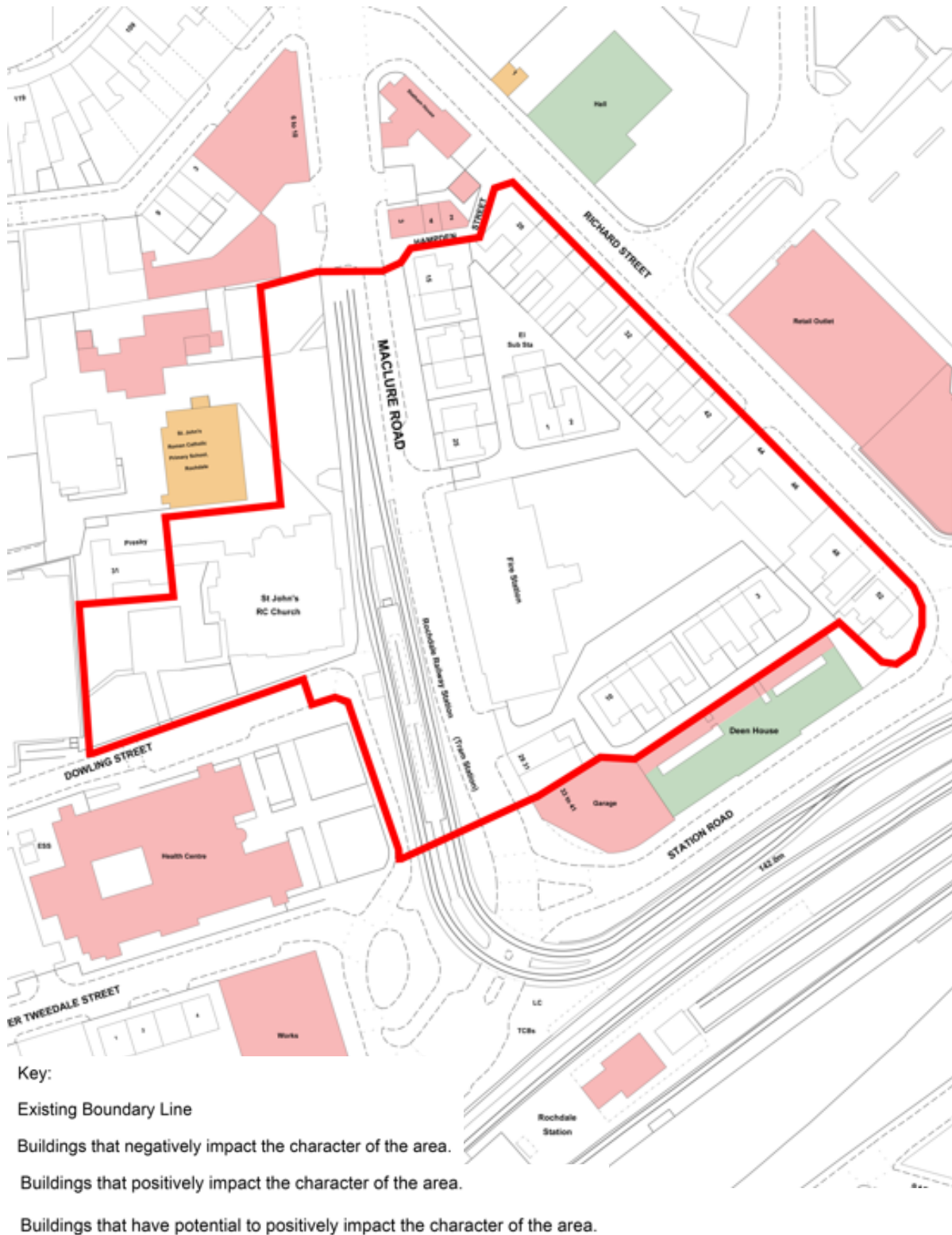




The Rochdale Tram Station occupies the middle of Maclure Road between the Health Centre / St John the Baptist's Church and the Fire Station. This erodes the connection between the former Fire Station and St John the Baptists Church.

The platforms create dominant structures in the middle of the highway. The operation of the trams requires a number of plant boxes and gantry's running along the tracks which support electrical wires, in turn powering the trams. The accumulation of these elements creates a considerable amount of clutter in the streetscape.

Whilst the tram lines help connect the town centre with the wider area, the installation of the station and tramlines has unfortunately had a detrimental impact on the quality of the conservation area.



The above map sketch categorises the contribution that the individual properties make to the quality of the setting of the conservation area.

Buildings highlighted green contribute positively to the quality of the setting of the conservation area. Those shown pink have the potential to make a positive contribution following some minor improvements and those orange have a negative impact.

This exercise of exploring the buildings and spaces immediately surrounding the conservation area has demonstrated that the existing boundary should not be extended.

This is due to the buildings outside the boundary not sharing or contributing to the special character of the area, being of differing materials, ages and architectural styles.

8.0 Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the conservation area

The combination of the information presented within the report thus far allows us to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the area.

It is important to capture this information to enable to a management strategy to be developed which reacts positively to each of these elements.

<u>Strengths</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uniform design and layout of residential buildings creates high quality area.• Consistent use of a limited material palette gives a strong sense of place.• Strong linear boundary walls formalise the edges of development and define the extent of the conservation area.• The campanile tower of the Fire Station gives a central focus to the local area and the landmark is instantly recognizable.	<u>Weaknesses</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of parking has resulted in a need for on street parking areas. These areas downgrade the quality of the streetscape.• Commercial premises at the southern entrance to the conservation area are of low architectural quality.• Poor gateway views in to and out of the conservation area which could be improved through more sympathetic development. In the conservation areas setting.
<u>Opportunities</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Properties are generally well maintained. This pride of place should enable the Council to work positively with property owners to develop design guides to continue to safeguard these heritage assets.• Rochdale's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019 has helped the general public understand the need to reduce carbon consumption for the benefit of all. The release of a design guide in conjunction with this would likely be welcomed.• An application has been made under the Levelling Up Fund 'Priority Place' funding for the regeneration of Station Square in alignment with the recommendations set out in the Rochdale Station Area Supplementary Planning Document.	<u>Threats</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued desire from occupants to extend and alter properties.• Continued alteration of windows details removing consistency in design.• Continued removal of boundary walls to create private parking areas.• Climate emergency and fuel poverty crisis adds additional pressures to property owners and occupiers to continue to undertake thermal upgrades to buildings.• Additional highway / Metrolink control measures could be introduced creating more clutter in the street-scene.

9.0 Change, Management and Protection

The analysis of the conservation area and its immediate setting has identified the need for additional measures to be taken to ensure the special character of the conservation area is preserved and enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

This should be completed in the form of a Conservation Area Management Plan which includes some high level design guidance, to complement this appraisal.

The inclusion of additional protection to the residential properties would also be appropriate to reduce the continued implementation of changes.



9.1 Management

The Management Plan should be a working and evolving tool for use by property owners and occupiers along with developers, designers, decision makers and the Highway Authority.

It should be drawn together in collaboration with local stakeholders, particularly property owners and occupiers. The engagement process will help enrich the understanding of the special character of the conservation area and will help ensure that the management plan is usable and relevant.

The Management Plan should be informed by the gazetteer which has been compiled to aid the production of this appraisal. This baseline of information should be reviewed periodically to monitor the success of the Management Plan in the preservation and enhancement of the significance of the Maclure Road Conservation Area.

The Management Plan must include design guidance to help set out the Council's expectation for development. Where possible it should include example images and photographs to help communicate and explain this.

The Management Plan should also advocate regular maintenance and upkeep of buildings and spaces.

9.2 Protection

The special character of the conservation is easily identifiable at present however, the appraisal process has demonstrated that incremental changes to properties (completed under General Permitted Development Rights) have begun to erode and downgrade this. Permitted Development Rights are reduced in Conservation Areas and planning permission is required for the demolition of buildings, gates, walls and fencing and where works are proposed to trees. Commercial properties and flats do not have the same permitted development rights as residential properties and therefore such a control would not need to apply to these building types.

The Council, as Local Planning Authority, have the ability to add additional protection to the buildings within the conservation area, such as through the inclusion of an Article 4 (2) Direction. This will further remove permitted development rights to residential properties, meaning that occupiers and owners would subsequently need to apply for planning permission to undertake alterations which would usually be captured under their permitted development rights. In this instance it would be prudent to add restrictions to property frontages and roofs.

Government guidance on how and when to make an Article 4 (2) Direction is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 53 states that:

"The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:

- where they relate to change from non-residential use to residential use, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts (this could include the loss of the essential core of a primary shopping area which would seriously undermine its vitality and viability, but would be very unlikely to extend to the whole of a town centre)*
- in other cases, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area (this could include the use of Article 4 directions to require planning permission for the demolition of local facilities)*
- in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible. "*

The collation of information to produce the gazetteer and the study of buildings and spaces within the conservation area, provides sufficient robust evidence to enable this.



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