

# SPOTLAND BRIDGE AREA

## Character areas

### Proposed conservation area alterations

*DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION*



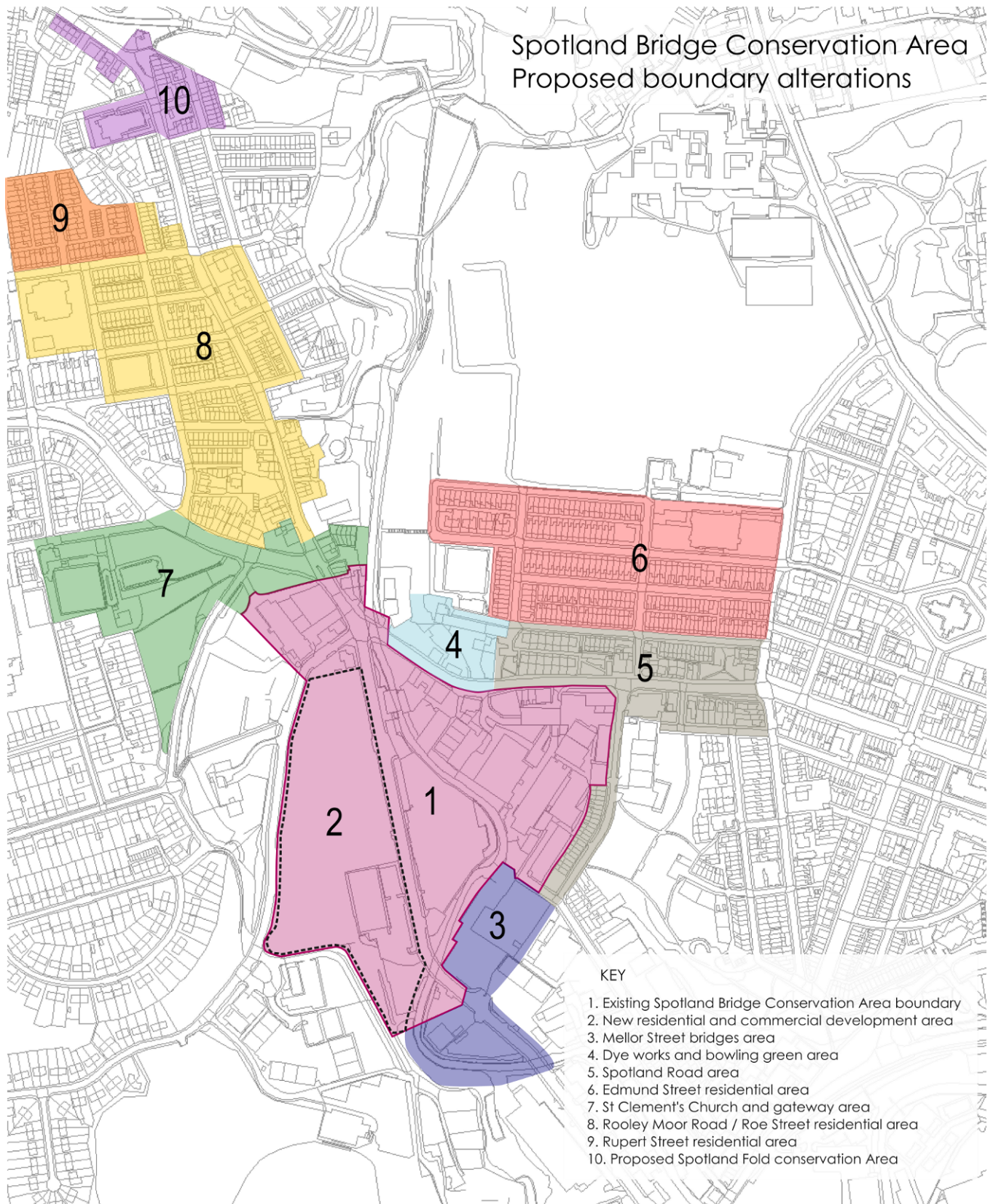
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## 1. Existing Spotland Bridge Conservation Area

The special historic and architectural interest of the Spotland Bridge Conservation Area is focussed on the grouping of textile mills and ancillary buildings that together form a remarkable townscape representing the whole of the cotton industry from its tiny Georgian beginnings based on water power, through the dramatic developments of the Victorian phase, based on steam, to the final large scale developments of the Edwardian period, largely based on electricity and modern transport.

Spotland Bridge New Mill and Spotland New Mill are impressive 'cathedrals of bricks', significantly contributing to the character of the conservation area. Their chimneys are prominent townscape features of importance to the area's identity. That on the Dexine site is particularly dominant in views to and through the area. The River Spodden, Mellor Street and Spotland Bridge are the main axis along which this well preserved industrial settlement was established. Individually, many of the buildings have their own historic and/or architectural interest. Some features of architectural interest, primarily original windows, have been lost however, sufficient architectural features remain for the area to be architecturally of value. Those lost features could be reinstated piecemeal when suitable opportunities arise.

Recommendation: Area 1 is an area of historic and architectural interest and should remain within the conservation area boundary.



## 2. New residential and commercial development area

Prior to demolition, Mellor Street Mill was within the western part of Spotland Bridge conservation area and contributed to the special historic and architectural character of the area. There are no historic buildings or features incorporated into the redevelopment, nor is the new development specific to the character of the area. 'Naylors' opposite Mellor Street former Tramway Office demonstrates the benefits of conservation area designation bring in negotiate high quality design. Whilst unapologetically contemporary and industrial, this does not detract from the character of the conservation area which in itself is industrial and comprises architecture of varying date and styles.

Recommendation: The question of whether or not to keep area 2 within the conservation area is a difficult one partly because the designation has contributed to a higher quality of development. On balance, it is recommended the area be removed from the conservation area because of the large size of the housing development and the location of the redevelopment sites on the edge of the conservation area which allows the boundary to be re-drawn without omitted any buildings of historic or architectural interest. The area would be considered as the setting of the conservation area.





### 3. Mellor Street bridges area

In January 2013, the two concrete bridges (1904-5) spanning over the River Spodden were listed as structures of national important (Grade II). They were constructed to carry Mellor Street, as part of the construction of the tramway. When the Spotland Bridge Conservation Area was first designated research concerning these bridges had not been undertaken and their significance was not fully appreciated. As a result only one of the bridges was included. They are now known to have been innovative in their use of concrete technology and influential in the use of ferro-concrete systems for construction. The views from and immediate environmental around the bridges could be enhanced. The warehouse south of Primrose Street could also be included as the brick mill is consistent with the character of the conservation area and may have potential for conversion.

Recommendation: Area 3 be included within the Spotland Bridge Conservation Area.





#### 4. Dye works and bowling green area

This area overlooks Spotland New Mill and the River Spodden from the adjacent hill north of Spotland Road. The Dye Works, a long rectangular stone building, is particularly interesting as it predates the 1831 historic map and stands apart from the surrounding brick terraced. Dye works were used in the final step of processing wool cloths, and were typically built by the 'clothiers'. It is therefore a rare survival of the early mechanisation of the woollen industry that was first recorded as having started in the valley in 1610. Its date and changes over time make it of archaeological value and has evidential value in witnessing the development of the woollen industry. To the south of the dye works is a row of substantial stone houses that would positively contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Recommendation: Area 4 be included within an extension to the Spotland Bridge Conservation Area.





## 5. Spotland Road

When the Spotland Bridge Conservation Area was designated, this area along Spotland Road was identified as a proposed extension. This linear area is characterised by modern residential development and punctuated with landmark buildings, of varied styles and materials. Among them is the former Victoria Hotel, a historically significant building thought to have been designed by the prominent Arts and Crafts architect, Edgar Wood, who also designed nearby Silver Street Chapel. Whilst some architectural features have been altered, many are reversible and the property could be restored. 170 Spotland Road is another significant asset. Once a weaver's cottage, it then became a public house but is at risk through neglect and currently detracts from the area. These buildings are locally important in terms of their historic and architectural interest.

Recommendation: Although this area comprises two buildings which should be considered of local importance that are significant for the Spotland Bridge area, there is not sufficient continuity in the quality or historic and architectural interest linking them and the existing conservation area to support conservation area designation in this area.





## 6. Edmund Street residential area

Sitting between Spotland Bridge Conservation Area and St Edmund's Church Conservation Area, this residential area is characterised by rows of red-brick terraced houses. There are attractive vistas along these terraced streets, particularly looking towards Spotland New Mill (Dexine) along Cinnamon Street. The houses were built in the late 19th century to accommodate Spotland Bridge mills workers. Although the layout has been well preserved, the original architectural features (windows and doors) have been lost. Silver Street Chapel (Grade II listed) by the Arts and Crafts architect Edgar Wood is within this area, however its character is already protected by virtue of its listing.

### Recommendation:

This residential area is historically linked to Spotland Bridge and conservation area and has a distinct character. However, the loss of original features detracts from the architectural interest and character of the area. It is therefore recommended not to include this area in the reviewed Spotland Bridge Conservation Area boundary.





## 7. St Clement's Church and gateway area

This area is one of the main gateways to Spotland Bridge Conservation Area. Located to the north of the current conservation area, it sits at the junction of Spotland Road, Mellor Street, Rooley Moor Road and Edenfield Road. The area is dominated by the Grade II Listed St Clement's Church, which looks out towards the Pennines and down over the industrial settlement of Spotland beneath. The Church and associated buildings, the Vicarage (Grade II listed) and Church Inn P.H. add social context to the mills below and the visual connection between the two is very important. The orientation and architectural details at the junction of the four roads creates a strong and unique townscape, which has the potential to be restored as an attractive node showcasing Spotland's history and identity. The Church Inn is a fine and well conserved example of a Victorian Public House and should be considered locally important.

Recommendation: It is recommended Spotland Bridge Conservation Area be extended to include area 7.





## 8. Rooley Moor Road / Roe Street residential area

This historic residential area is composed of rows of terraced houses, built in the late C19th as accommodation for Spotland Bridge cotton mills workers. The setted streets and stone pavements are exceptionally well conserved and combined with the preserved street pattern create an attractive historic townscape. This residential area links the current conservation area to the area of historic and architectural interest at Spotland Fold. One option would be to designate this area to create one large conservation area. However, the majority of historic windows and doors have been lost and some houses have been painted; reducing the homogeneity and therefore the architectural and historic interest of the townscape. The historic character of the area could be enhanced through piecemeal changes as and when owners undertake improvements to their properties. Guidance could be produced that advises home owners on the style of windows and doors typical of this period of house.

### Recommendation:

Conservation area designation does not automatically bring protection to setted streets and stone pavements. Based upon this and the lack of preserved architectural features, it is recommended this area is not designated as a conservation area.



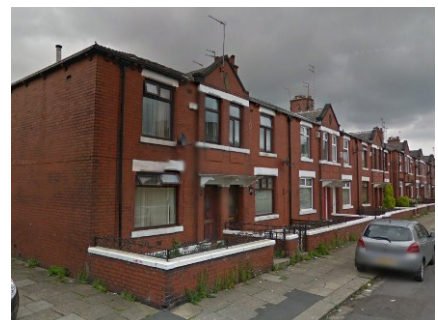


## 9. Rupert Street conservation area

Located directly to the north of Spotland Meanwood school, this early twentieth century residential development has a distinct character and makes an important contribution to the townscape. The form of red-brick terraces is in keeping with the surrounding Victorian housing, but the architectural detailing is idiosyncratic. There is a playful use of geometric shapes in the semi-circular and triangular gables and diamond motif. More research is required to establish whether there is an architect or social aspiration behind this planned development or whether a builder was replicating motifs from elsewhere. The alleys between the terraces have maintained their setts and the stone pavements are well conserved which enhance the historic character of the area. Whilst no original windows and doors were found to have been retained, the area maintains a special architectural and historic character.

### Recommendation:

This residential area has a strong architectural and historic interest which it is desirable to preserve and enhance. Through the consultation more information may come to light about this area which could be designated as a conservation area on its own or linked to an enlarged Spotland Bridge Conservation Area.





## 10. Proposed Spotland Fold Conservation Area

Located to the north of Rooley Moor Road, Spotland Fold is a historic area indicated by its presence on the 1831 map and also in the surviving cottages. Here a number of varied buildings cluster on the curve of the road to create a distinct townscape. The Grade II Listed Spotland Methodist Church is an important landmark of the area, however the majority of other historic buildings in the area are much altered.

### Recommendation:

Designation would only be recommended if consultation showed strong community support and therefore demonstrated communal value which would increase the overall significance of the area.





## References

- Local studies at Touchstones Rochdale
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- Books
  - From the Workhouse to the Wards. 175 years of the medical history of Rochdale, 1830-2005, G.T. Whitworth
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