

CONSERVATION AREAS

Conservation Areas are places that Councils recognise to be of special architectural or historic interest. Designating a Conservation Area is a statement of intent by the Council to protect and, if possible, improve upon its special qualities.

A Conservation Area does not mean that there will be no new developments or alterations to existing buildings. We live in a changing world, and the places where we live must be able to adapt to the demands of present - day life. However, the Council has a duty to make sure that all changes increase the attractiveness of the area and do not harm its special character.

This is important, as once unsympathetic changes to buildings and spaces have started to take place, the character of these historic areas can very quickly disappear. If we don't decide now which areas are important to retain and protect because of their historic significance and character, it could well be too late in years to come.

There are a number of special controls and requirements that apply to Conservation Areas in order to protect their character. For example, consent is required to demolish buildings and other structures, and as a

general rule, this will be resisted. New development must normally be built of natural stone, and all new buildings, along with alterations to existing buildings, must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. If you want to fell or prune a tree, the Council must be notified in advance.

If you are thinking about making any alteration to a property, or undertaking other work, in a Conservation Area, it is advisable to contact the Town Planning Department (tel;Halifax (0422) 357257) to find out if any consents are needed. Practical advice about restoration or alterations and the possible availability of grant-aid can also be obtained from the Department.

The Council hopes that being in a Conservation Area will encourage owners to maintain and restore their buildings in keeping with the area's character. Such action will make an important contribution towards retaining the special character and quality of towns and villages in Calderdale.

AKROYDON

C O N S E R V A T I O N A R E A

Printed on Recycled Card January 1992



AKROYDON

LOCATION

Akroydon is a 'model' village on the northern outskirts of Halifax, less than one mile from the town centre. The site slopes gently from east to west towards the Hebble Valley.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

Akroydon was the brainchild of the notable 19th century Halifax mill owner and philanthropist Colonel Edward Akroyd. His family, together with the Crossleys and Sir Titus Salt, had pioneered power mills in the area, and each subsequently tried to improve their workers' terrible working and housing conditions. Colonel Akroyd first experimented at nearby Copley (also a Conservation Area) where the lessons learned were incorporated into his plans for Akroydon. The village was built in conjunction with the Halifax Permanent Benefit Building Society. Plans were obtained from Sir G.G. Scott, and local architect Mr W.H. Crossland became the acting architect to the scheme. Designs were submitted to a meeting of proposed shareholders in June 1860 and were well received. Crossland's scheme was for a large green park surrounded by two rows of terraced houses on all four sides. In March 1861, the contractor commenced operations, first building two blocks of eighteen houses in all, followed by four blocks, containing thirty-one houses.

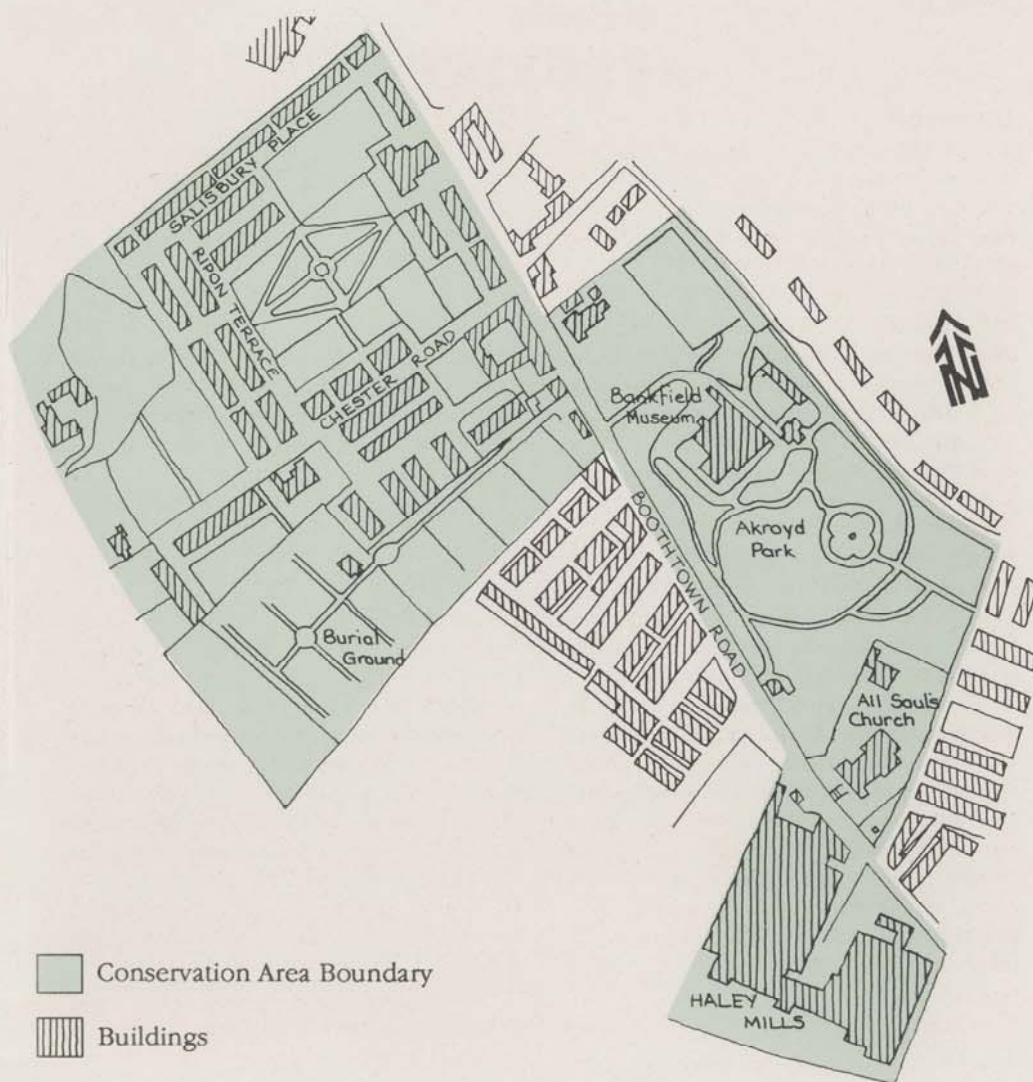
In addition to the village, Akroyd developed

the other main features included in the Conservation Area. He provided the site and paid for All Souls Church, which is one of the finest Victorian churches in the country. He built Bankfield Mansion as his own residence, but after acquiring large estates in Suffolk, he gave it to the people of Halifax. Akroyd's mills also survive, being simple typical mill buildings of the period depending for architectural effect on size, symmetry and repetition of elements.

CHARACTER

Akroyd's advanced ideas gave birth to the Akroydon of today. Its ultimate success may be judged not only from its appearance in many books on housing and social improvement in the 19th century, but also by the fact that it is still a pleasant and popular area with local people. The architecture and townscape form one of the best Victorian residential areas in Halifax. The main Square is still used for recreation by the residents and the original allotments are also in use. The whole area is a very valuable survival, for not only is it the built testimony of a great man's ideals of social justice, but is, in addition, an outstanding and well-preserved example of Victorian architecture and planning.

The Akroydon Conservation Area was designated on the 15th of December 1976.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Great care should be taken in preserving or improving Conservation Areas. New development must be designed in sympathy with the character of the area. Many alterations could harm the character of buildings in Akroydon and work should be carefully considered before proceeding. The drawing opposite shows some of the characteristics of the Conservation Area that it is important to keep so that it will remain at its most attractive.

Remember that the simplest form of conservation is regular maintenance, as this will retain the original building fabric and reduce the cost of subsequent repairs and renewals. Roofs are particularly important and should be inspected each autumn. Chimneys should also be inspected, checking the condition of the masonry, pointing and pots. Flues should be swept to prevent fire hazards.

Any cast-iron gutters, downpipes and railings should be inspected annually for corrosion and repainted every 5 years. All gutters should be kept clear of leaves and vegetation. Windows and doors should be repaired at the first sign of ill fit or decay, and any renewal should be in a matching style. Ideally, external paintwork should be renewed every 5 years.

Natural materials and traditional methods should be used for all repairs and restoration work.

