

HALIFAX TOWN CENTRE

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

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.

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CALDERDALE
COUNCIL
TOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT

HALIFAX

LOCATION

Halifax is the major town in Calderdale, situated towards the east of the District at the foot of the Calder Valley. The Conservation Area covers the original medieval core and a wide area of surrounding historic buildings and spaces.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

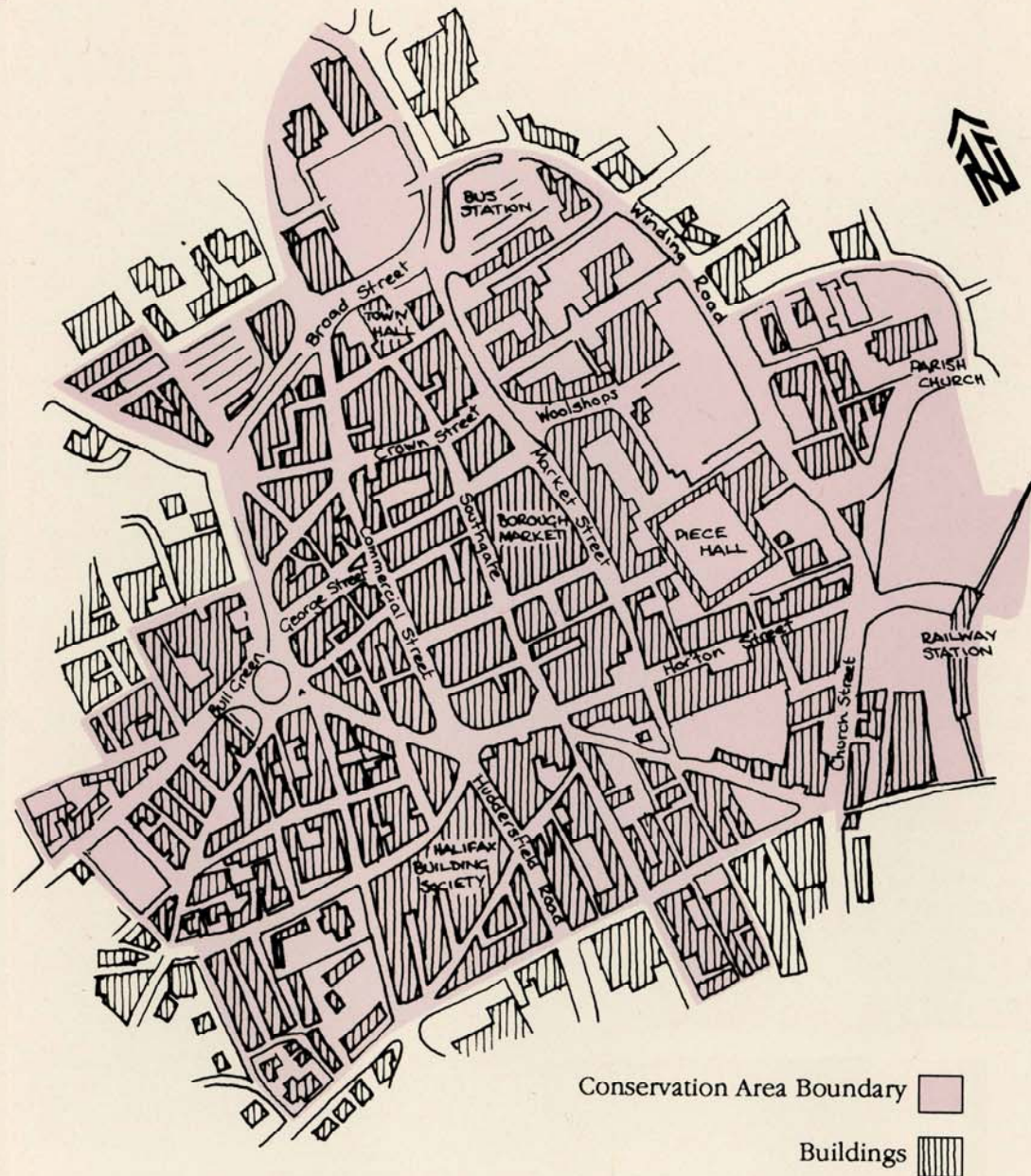
Halifax is a prime example of a Victorian/Edwardian civic and commercial centre. In and amongst the town's 19th and 20th century buildings are relics and remains of the earlier town which originally dated from medieval times. Small courtyards hide behind major late 19th century development and in them are found the more domestic examples of earlier architecture. It is, however, the abundance of late 19th and early 20th century buildings which has created the Halifax that we see today. The industrial and commercial confidence of that era is reflected in the new streets and buildings that were laid out. Halifax has not undertaken the type of wholesale redevelopment that many other cities carried out with post-war enthusiasm. Thus, where other places often destroyed their early history, letting their Victorian buildings be demolished to make way for modern development, Halifax has been fortunate in retaining a considerable amount of these in a compact area which contributes to a townscape of great character.

CHARACTER

Generally the scale is not that of a large metropolis but more akin to a substantial market town where the human being fits happily into his surroundings. The style of Victorian development is often rich in Neo-Gothic or Baroque detailing and in many cases this creates a feeling of splendour and dignity. Despite the often good compatibility of buildings there is little regimentation or uniformity. As a result the individual building often displays its own character, providing interesting skylines as well as intriguing townscape features, yet fits well between its neighbours. In addition, the use of local materials, particularly stone, projects a sturdy and prosperous appearance.

The boundary of the Conservation Area has been drawn to include the principal civic and commercial buildings of the town centre and other buildings in or adjoining it which reflect its historical development. Sites or areas which affect views in or out of the town centre are also included, as are the surroundings of the Parish Church. This is particularly important as views to nearby hillsides are characteristic of Halifax and the town centre itself is often seen from its approach roads.

The Halifax Town Centre Conservation Area was designated on the 23rd of October 1974 and the boundary was extended on the 21st of January 1981.



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 Halifax 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.

