Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation

Interim Report

The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit
School of Arts, Histories and Cultures
Mansfield Cooper Building
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

June 2009
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1 Summary and Introduction

1.1 The project
The Greater Manchester Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (GMUHLC) is being undertaken by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU), based at the University of Manchester. It is funded primarily by English Heritage, with contributions from each of the ten local authorities which make up the Greater Manchester area.

The project began in July 2007 and is currently scheduled to finish in July 2010. Work is being undertaken by two Project Officers, Karl Lunn and Liz Forster. The project is managed by Norman Redhead (County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, GMAU) and supervised by Lesley Mitchell (Historic Environment Record Officer, GMAU).

1.2 Context – the national HLC programme
The broad purpose of HLC
Since the early 1990s, there has been a growing awareness amongst those concerned with managing the historic environment that the scale of change within the landscape is a key factor affecting overall character. English Heritage have been developing characterisation as a way of understanding the processes that have created current landscapes, so that sustainable levels for change can be set which will allow character to be maintained.

County-wide Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) projects form part of a national programme supported and developed by English Heritage but carried out by local government, chiefly county council historic environment services. They aim, through a desk-based programme of GIS mapping and analysis, to achieve an archaeologist’s understanding of the historical and cultural origins and development of the current landscape. They seek to identify material remains at landscape scale which demonstrate the human activities that formed the landscape as it is seen today.

HLC projects give broad-brush overviews of complex aspects of the historic environment. They provide a neutral and descriptive general understanding of the cultural and historical aspects of landscapes, and thus provide both a context in which other information can be considered and a framework for decision-making.
Projects can be used to inform a variety of planning, conservation and management-led initiatives and strategies. Their objective is to promote better understanding and management of the historic landscape resource, to facilitate the management of continued change within it, and to establish an integrated approach to its sustainable management in partnership with relevant organisations.

**Characterisation of urban areas**

For the most part, Historic Landscape Characterisation has so far focused on patterns of rural land use. More recently, projects from the Extensive Urban Survey programme have been influenced by the characterisation methodology developed for rural areas. Both programmes have sought to understand the development of the historic environment and both seek to formulate strategies and frameworks for the future management of this resource.

Over the past ten years the methodology of Historic Landscape Characterisation has developed, as new technologies utilising Geographical Information Systems (GIS) for the spatial analysis of historic environment data have emerged. Since much of the landscape of the Greater Manchester area is of an industrial character, the traditional HLC approach of considering urban areas as separate from rural areas is inappropriate here. The Greater Manchester project will therefore form part of the development of the HLC application into more complex metropolitan areas, using a combined method that integrates the modelling approach of Historic Landscape Characterisation with that of Extensive Urban Survey. Projects dealing with similarly mixed areas are currently underway in Merseyside, South Yorkshire and the Black Country.

**1.3 Use of this report**

Archaeological sites, findspots, historic buildings and landscape features are recorded on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record held at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, archaeological advisors to the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities. It is important to consult this office at an early stage when dealing with a planning application that may affect areas of historical or archaeological interest, and on any other management issues and opportunities arising from this report.
2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 Overall aim
The overall aim of the project is to undertake a broad-brush characterisation of the landscape of Greater Manchester using GIS and a linked database which can be interrogated on a wide variety of data, and thus encourage the management and understanding of the landscape through the planning process and the formulation of research strategies.

2.2 Objectives for the Manchester study
There are four project objectives to be addressed individually for each district:

1. Characterisation of the visible historic environment of Manchester, involving the recording of character areas and their constituent attributes and components on the GIS database.

2. Analysis and interpretation of the characterisation data. This will involve:
   - Analysis and identification of landscape character types and historic character areas.
   - Assessment of the relationship between present character, past historical character and its context.
   - Identification of the potential for archaeological remains (both above and below ground), the historic importance and the current condition of the character areas and their key components.
   - Identification of the ‘forces for change’ acting on the character areas and their components.

3. Formulation of management and research strategies, including managing change within Manchester’s historic environment. This will involve:
   - Advice on using the characterisation in planning to influence regeneration and other redevelopment proposals.
   - Informing the consideration of historic character within the Local Development Framework, including potential incorporation of the project results into Supplementary Planning Documents.
4. Outreach and dissemination throughout the life of the project. This will involve:

- Dissemination of the project results and promotion of the resource to Manchester Metropolitan Borough Council, the University of Manchester, relevant regeneration agencies and the public.
- Production of a CD-ROM.
- A formal publication of the results as part of a final report at the end of the project.

Further objectives involving assessment of the character of Greater Manchester as a whole will be addressed in the final report once characterisation of all ten districts has been completed.
3 Methodology

An initial pilot phase for the project was carried out between July and October 2007. Following on from this are two phases of work for each district. Once work on all of the individual districts has been completed, there will be a final phase involving overall review, analysis and interpretation, the production of a report for Greater Manchester as a whole, and the archiving and dissemination of the results.

The two phases of work for each district comprise:

- **Phase 1** Broad-brush characterisation: mapping and digitisation
- **Phase 2** Report production, incorporating analysis and interpretation

3.1 Phase 1 – Characterisation

3.1.1 The character types

Before characterisation work could commence, it was necessary to define the landscape character types that would be encountered within the project area. HLC allows the creation of many different classifications of historic landscape types, each of distinct and recognisable common character. The distribution of landscape types can be mapped using GIS to define polygons; these are supported by written descriptions of the types and the historical processes that they represent.

Each polygon is assigned to one of the character types from the pre-defined set. There are two levels of character types, which allow mapping to be analysed at a broader or a more refined level of detail. For the GMUHLC, thirteen broad types of land use have been defined. These comprise:

- Unenclosed land
- Enclosed land
- Woodland
- Residential
- Ornamental, parkland and recreational
- Industrial
- Extraction
- Institutional
- Commercial
- Communications
Each of these ‘broad’ types encompasses a set of narrow HLC types with specific attributes. For example, the ‘Residential’ broad type includes 22 different narrow types, such as ‘Social housing development’, ‘Terraced housing’, ‘Vernacular cottages’ and ‘Villas/detached housing’. For the full list of broad types and their definitions, together with their associated narrow types and attributes, see Appendices 1 and 2. The character types occurring within Manchester are discussed in further detail in Section 7.

3.1.2 HBSMR
The digital characterisation was undertaken utilising the HLC component of a system known as HBSMR. This is a database, GIS and photographic management system developed by exeGesIS Spatial Data Management Ltd specifically for local authority sites and monuments records (also known as Historic Environment Records, or HERs). HBSMR utilises Access for the database, and either MapInfo or ArcView for the GIS component. The system installed at GMAU uses MapInfo. The HLC component comprises a set of tables and data entry forms, and allows the polygons created for character areas to be linked easily with the related data. Using HBSMR has the further advantage that the HLC data can readily be viewed alongside existing HER data relating to archaeological sites, events and statutory designations. Some types of data, including references to sources such as historic mapping, can be linked to the HLC records where appropriate.

3.1.3 Defining character areas
Polygonisation for the GMUHLC is carried out by first looking at the current landscape using OS 1:10,000 mapping to identify discrete blocks of character. These could include, for example, the grounds of a school or hospital, or the extent of a housing estate of a particular date, looking at the layout of the streets and the types of houses to judge the approximate date at which it was built. The available historic mapping is then consulted to ascertain the previous land uses of the site and to confirm the date of origin of the type.

Time-depth is added to the record for each individual character area by identifying from mapping the character of the area in the past, assigning it to one of the
character types from the defined set. If a site has been redeveloped or its use substantially changed more than once, further previous character types can be entered into the database, going as far back in time as examination and interpretation of mapping allows. For example, a modern private housing estate could have been built on an area cleared of 19th century terraced housing which was in turn built on enclosed land, giving one current character type and two previous types. Where features have been present in the past that are worthy of note but not significant enough to warrant the assignment of a further previous type, such as a single coal pit within an area of enclosed land shown on mid-19th century mapping, this feature will be noted in the ‘Summary’ field of the record associated with the polygon.

Where the extent of an area of modern character covers different character types that were extant at the same time in history (for example a modern residential estate covering the former site of a 19th century cotton mill with contemporary terraced houses and a villa set in a large garden), the predominant previous character type is identified and entered into the ‘Previous type’ field, and the presence of the other types is mentioned in the ‘Notes’ directly associated with this field.

### 3.1.4 Creation of polygons

Polygons were generally drawn using the 1:10,000 mapping, with edges refined using MasterMap where necessary. The scale at which the mapping was set whilst drawing the polygons varied according to the size of the area being drawn. Care was taken to ensure that the edges of polygons were as neat as possible given the time constraints of the project, and that edges joined up without leaving gaps which could cause the ‘leakage’ of subsequent polygons into inappropriate areas. Where character areas of different types were separated from one another by roads, the edges of the polygons were brought out to meet in the centre of the road, except where the road was itself a significant landscape feature forming a character area in its own right, such as a motorway.

Once a polygon had been drawn, any existing HER records with GIS points within the area of the polygon were linked to the HLC record, and the previous types and the attributes of the character area were defined. Any sources referred to in the summary or notes were then linked to the HLC record, or new ‘Source’ records compiled where these did not already exist.
The characterisation of Manchester district commenced in September 2008, and was completed in early May 2009.

3.2 Phase 2 – Report production, incorporating review, analysis and interpretation

During this phase, the character mapping has been used to analyse patterns of settlement and land use over time in the Manchester area, and maps showing key aspects of these patterns have been produced. Each ‘broad’ type has been considered in a dedicated section, with its defining characteristics outlined. The narrow types which occur in Manchester were then examined for each broad type in turn, and the role of the most significant types within the landscape was considered and discussed. See Section 7, below.
4 Documentary Sources

A wide range of resources were used during the course of the Greater Manchester HLC project. To define the current character, reference was made to the OS MasterMap. As this map is constantly being updated, a copy of the map as it appeared in 2006 was used throughout to ensure consistency over the three years of the overall project. The internet was of significance in providing information on the current use of buildings.

Post-1999 development was indicated by a comparison between MasterMap and the Cities Revealed aerial photographic survey of 1997-99. Of principal importance for ascribing dates of origin to current character types and for defining previous character were the historic Ordnance Survey 6” and 25” maps and the 25” National Survey of mid-20th century date (details of the editions consulted can be found in the ‘Bibliography’ section at the rear of the report). Cheshire Tithe Maps series were consulted for areas in the south of the district (http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/tithemaps/). Reference was made to historic Manchester town surveys including Green’s Map of 1794, the Banck’s Map of 1831 and the 60” OS survey of 1844-49. These maps were available as a digital resource at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.

The information stored on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record provided additional detail and archaeological depth. This contains information on archaeological investigations, monuments and stray finds, statutory designations such as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens, and on historic buildings of local interest. The database is not comprehensive and, indeed, the HLC survey has shown that an enhancement survey of the Manchester Historic Environment Record would be timely and would provide an up to date audit of the City’s heritage resource. Further information on the Greater Manchester HER can be found at www.gmau.manchester.ac.uk.
5 Introduction to Manchester District

5.1 Location and administration
The Metropolitan Borough of Manchester occupies the central southern area of the Metropolitan County of Greater Manchester. The ten unitary authorities of Greater Manchester, of which Manchester is one, were created on the 1st of April 1974 as a result of the Local Government Act 1972. Manchester shares its borders with seven other Greater Manchester districts: Bury, Rochdale and Oldham to the north, Tameside and Stockport to the east and Salford and Trafford to the west. To the south, Manchester is bordered by the borough of Cheshire East.

Services for Manchester are provided by Manchester City Council, which is based at Manchester Town Hall, the administrative centre of the borough.

5.2 Topography and geology
The district of Manchester is situated in the central part of the Greater Manchester embayment. The area is divided into two zones. The area to the north has bedrock geology of predominantly Permo-Triassic Bunter Sandstones. This geology continues to the south and west until it meets the Mid Triassic sand and mudstone groups of the North Cheshire plain. The maximum elevation is around 110 metres above sea level, dropping to around 30m above sea level in the Mersey basin.

Four principal river valleys dominate the district: the Irwell, Mersey, Irk and Medlock. Although much of the district is covered with glacial till, the river valley drainage systems produced extensive drift geology of post glacial river gravel terraces and alluvium deposits (figure 1). The lowlands, particularly around the Mersey Basin, contained large tracts of mossland which remained largely undrained until the middle part of the 18th century (Morris 1983). Before the late 19th century settlement in the south of the Manchester city suburbs was sparse and dispersed. Northenden was the only nucleated settlement core of any significant size and antiquity away from Manchester. Moor and mosses on the fringes of the district were the last areas to be enclosed.
5.3 Archaeological and historical background

This section aims to provide a brief overview of our current knowledge of archaeological periods in Manchester District in relation to landscape and settlement. It is not intended to be exhaustive, and references to key published works are included should the reader wish to find more detailed information.

5.3.1 Early prehistoric

The Greater Manchester HER records thirty seven confirmed find spots from the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Artefact types included polished and perforated hafted implements such as axes and mace heads, and cast bronze implements such as palstaves and spear heads. Querns, flint arrowheads and scrapers are also represented. The prehistoric assemblage within the Manchester district implies economic activities which included hunting, woodworking and farming. Farming activity suggests the presence of permanent or semi-permanent settlement.
The finds are distributed throughout the district with notable concentrations around the Manchester city centre, Cheetham Hill and Moss Side areas. Although concentrations of artefact find spots can indicate the location of prehistoric settlement, the distribution in Manchester may also be the result of accidental discovery in areas of high modern population density.

It is likely that there was a Mesolithic presence in Manchester, although no confirmed artefacts of this period have been recorded. Mesolithic artefacts have been found in Greater Manchester in similar geographic ranges to those which exist within the Manchester district.

The distribution of Neolithic axes is ubiquitous across the county with a distribution similar to that of Neolithic hunting implements. Bronze Age perforated hafted implements are found concentrated in areas more suitable for arable farming. Well drained sites on the banks of rivers were a favoured location for early farming settlement. Early settlement and farming in this region was probably gradually introduced in the early to middle Neolithic period with short-lived settlement and woodland clearance episodes. There was a continuation of hunting practices. By the early Bronze Age, clearance and settlement may have been more permanent. It is at this time that substantial funerary monuments first appear in the Greater Manchester area.

The first tangible evidence of structures associated with settlement comes in the form of antiquarian reports of barrows (Bronze Age cemeteries) at Broughton in the Irwell Valley and at Gatley in the south. Direct settlement evidence has been found at Oversley Farm, which lies on the southern edge of the Manchester district on a promontory site overlooking the River Bollin. Here, archaeological excavations ahead of the Manchester Airport Second Runway development revealed the remains of houses, other structures and hearth pits, along with early to middle Neolithic pottery (Grimston Ware) and a large quantity of early Bronze Age domestic pottery. Traces of barley and domesticated sheep or goat fat residues were also discovered. Oversley is an important site because it illustrates the range and extent of archaeological evidence that can be associated with early prehistoric settlement and suggests the geography of other similar early farm sites. Further information on this site can be found in The Neolithic and Bronze Age Settlement at Oversley Farm, Styal, Cheshire by DJ Garner (Gifford Ltd 2007).
There is evidence for climatic deterioration in the middle Bronze Age, from around 1300 BC to the middle Iron Age of c400 AD. This corresponds with a marked decrease in the number of find spots and funerary sites, and an increase in lowland wetlands, so that marginal farming became unworkable and the population declined (Redhead 2004, 13-14).

5.3.2 Iron Age
No Iron Age settlement sites have been confirmed within the Manchester district, although Iron Age pottery from the Roman fort site in Castlefield, quern stones and metal finds of the Iron Age have been recorded. The nearest sites of this period are the hilltop enclosure at Mellor, near Stockport; defended promontory settlements overlooking the River Irwell at Rainsough, near Prestwich and The Burrs at Bury; and at Great Woolden Hall, on the River Glazebrook at the western edge of Chat Moss, Salford. These were enclosed or fortified settlements containing round houses, and all straddled the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods. A mixed arable and pastoral farming regime was practised, with metalworking also being evident. Fragments of salt jars from Cheshire hint at trade networks.

It can be anticipated that further Iron Age and Romano-British remains will be present in this district. An indicator of potential is topography. The promontory sites at either end of Deansgate, one overlooking the confluences of the Irk and Irwell to the east and the other overlooking the Medlock and Irwell to the west, would have made ideal sites for late prehistoric settlement. Elsewhere in the district place names such as ‘castle hill’ (an example is in Crumpsall) can also be indicative of later prehistoric or Romano-British settlement.

The Iron Age lifestyle in Manchester probably involved a continuation of the practices of previous ages with the piecemeal introduction of new technologies and cultural practices. When the Roman army arrived in the Manchester district during the 70s AD it probably came across a partially cultivated landscape dotted with farmsteads, particularly along the river valleys and defended hilltops (Redhead 2004, 15). A good regional summary can be found in Mellor: Living on the Edge – a regional study of an Iron Age and Romano-British Upland Settlement (edited by Nevell and Redhead, Manchester Archaeological Monographs Vol. 1, 2005).
5.3.3 Roman

As a hub of the regional transport network, Manchester grew to be an important centre in the Roman period. The fort was erected c78 AD in a strong defensive position, on raised ground overlooking the confluence of the Rivers Medlock and Irwell in Castlefield. Originally built of turf and timber, the fort went through several phases of rebuilding and expansion before its defences were rebuilt in stone around 200 AD. This phase is represented in the reconstruction of the North Gate and sections of the north and west rampart and ditch system, which can be visited off Liverpool Road in Castlefield (Redhead 2004, 16).

Alongside the Roman fort grew a civilian settlement, the vicus. This was a linear development along the road from the fort’s North Gate extending 100m to the west of the road and eastwards to straddle Deansgate. The southern boundary was the Medlock, whilst Quay Street marks the furthest extent northwards. A cemetery and religious complex were on the east and south-east side. Excavations have found successive building phases from the late 1st to the mid-3rd centuries AD. Typically, buildings were rectangular and of wood or half timbered with dwarf stone walls, some having internal divisions and some being a single room. Representatives of these building types can be seen in the Roman Gardens off Liverpool Road.

Roads to other principal Roman settlements have been observed in the Manchester district, including to Wigan, Chester, Glossop, Buxton, York and Ribchester. The trans-Pennine route to the legionary fortresses at Chester and York was a significant road and this and other road alignments have been traced by antiquarians. These ancient roads often influenced later settlement and transport routes.

Romanisation of the Manchester area was a transient affair and its impact on the native structure and economy was slight. There appears to have been a period of intensive exploitation of natural resources by the military, with much evidence for iron working being found in Roman Manchester. There were no villas which might indicate large, managed estates. Instead, settlement seems to have continued in the pre-Roman form of dispersed farmsteads dependent on pastoral economy, with some cereal production on better-drained soils (Redhead 2004, 17).

Further information can be found in the publication Roman Manchester: a Frontier Settlement (by S Bryant, M Morris & JSF Walker, 1986). This book is out of print but can be accessed on GMAU’s website www.gmau.manchester.ac.uk.
5.3.4 Early medieval

Despite a scarcity of archaeological evidence from the post-Roman and early medieval periods, it is probable there was some kind of occupation in the Manchester district at this time. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle reports that in the year 919, King Edward ordered his army to repair and man a “burh” (fort) at Manchester as a frontier defence. The Castlefield Roman fort is one likely location, as possible Saxon “Grubenhauser” (sunken floor houses) were found beside the North Gate, suggesting short-lived post-Roman occupation. A more likely location, however, is the area around Manchester Cathedral. This proposition is substantiated by the discovery of a 6th century AD Anglo-Saxon cinerary urn at Red Bank and an 11th century AD sculptured stone at the Cathedral. The spur of land bounded by Hanging Ditch was an ideal defensible position and the focus of later medieval military, ecclesiastical and urban development. *Medieval Manchester* by Michael Morris (GMAU 1983) gives a good account of the early medieval evidence for Manchester.

During the Saxon period, Greater Manchester was probably a sparsely populated frontier region. The account in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles supports this theory, although much of the area may have been laid waste by King William in the 1070s. In the outlying district, only Northenden and Baguley feature in the Chronicle. Nico Ditch, which runs in a roughly east-west direction between Ashton Moss and Hough Moss in Chorlton-cum-Hardy, is attributed to the late Saxon period. It may have been an administrative boundary ditch in a featureless landscape. Manchester was reputedly destroyed by the Danes sometime after 870 (Thomson 1967, 22). Place name evidence surviving beyond the medieval period implies a gradual transition from Celtic to Saxon culture with Roman roads and other established communication routes being the focus of early Saxon “tons” or farmsteads. Away from the roads, Celtic names are more prevalent.

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Manchester lay within the Hundred of Salford. The Hundred contained all the land between the River Ribble and the Mersey. It was held by the Norman noble, Roger de Poitou. There are references to land at Manchester held by St Michael’s and St Mary’s churches.

5.3.5 Medieval

Manchester had become a town of regional importance by the medieval period, receiving its market charter in 1282. Across the river was the earlier borough of Salford, which was the administrative centre of Salford Hundred, but the church of St
Mary formed the ecclesiastical centre. St Mary’s Church is known to have been established by the 13th century, but was probably built on an earlier religious site. St Mary’s became a collegiate church (priests’ college) in 1421. A castle at Manchester is mentioned in 1184. This was replaced by a manor house, probably present by 1282, on the site now occupied by Chetham’s College. The manor had monopolies over fisheries, fulling mills and communal ovens from the late 13th century.

The medieval town developed in the Hanging Ditch, Fennel Street, Deansgate and Market Street area. Burgages (town plots) were noted from 1316; in 1473, 155 plots were present. The growth of the medieval settlement is illustrated in Medieval Manchester (Morris 1983); it took the form of linear expansion via Long Millgate northwards, Shudehill eastwards and Deansgate southwards. Rows of narrow-fronted timber-framed buildings lay along the principal streets. The occupiers at this time were engaged in crafts and trade, with the buildings serving as homes, warehouses and workshops combined. Excavations at Cathedral Yard, Manchester, where the Old Wellington Inn and Sinclairs Oyster Bar now stand, showed that this part of the town was used for leather working, with over 200 pieces of leather off-cuts being found (Redhead 2004, 19). A deed of 1487 describes a three- or four-storeyed courtyard building which contained a hall, parlour and chamber, with a garden and stables within the courtyard.

By the end of the medieval period, Manchester had established itself as a regional centre of flax and woollen manufacture and trade. This economy continued into the early post medieval period.

Baguley and Northenden were the other settlements mentioned in 1086. The Church of St Wilfred’s in Northenden was founded in the medieval period. Ardwick Green, Cheetham Hill, Beswick, Blackley, Bradford, Didsbury, Failsworth, Gorton, Harpurhey, Moston and Shackerley Green are also settlements with probable medieval origins. A number of medieval halls were also noted in the district. Ardwick Manor, Baguley Hall, Barlow Hall, Moston Hall, Peel Hall, Withington Old Hall and Hulme Hall have confirmed medieval foundation dates (Walker and Tindall 1985, 106-15). Halls were the nuclei of medieval manors.

In the late medieval period the landscape was dotted with isolated halls and farmsteads set against a background of open field systems, pasture meadows and large tracts of woodland, although some small settlements were established such as
Heaton Gate at Heaton Park, and Northenden. A deer park at Blackley was mentioned in 1282 (HER Pref Ref 1246.1.0). Such parks were probably utilised for hunting. The classic open field systems associated with medieval villages and a communal agricultural regime have been recognised on historic mapping around Manchester and Northenden. Piecemeal enclosure associated with scattered farmsteads and pasture was more common in the district, however. Mosses, important for seasonal pasture, hunting and turbage (peat cutting rights), were a significant feature in the landscape.

Medieval corn mills were present at Northenden and at Birches in Withington (HER Pref Ref 9732.1.0). Water-powered mills along the Irk river valley were established for fulling cloth in the late medieval period. Excavations near Wythenshawe Hospital revealed evidence of an iron furnace, indicating the presence of other medieval industrial activity in the district (Nevell 2008, 48-50). It can be assumed that some part of the rural economy in the Manchester district supplied the needs of the growing textile industry and market economy of Manchester town.

5.3.6 Early modern
Manchester was a regional centre for the spinning and weaving of wool, linen and flax in the late 16th and throughout the 17th century. The area was also noted for smallwares and silk. Cotton rose to importance in the later post medieval period, after the mid-16th century. In about 1540, Manchester was described by John Leland as “the fairest, best built, quickest and most populous tounne of al Lancastreshire” (from Nevell 2008, 51). The next one hundred years saw a doubling of the town’s population and episodes of major building. Clothiers (cloth finishers) and the textile trade were the main driving force behind this economic growth.

Manchester Hall was established as a regional department of the London cloth market by the end of the 16th century, whilst the 17th century saw the emergence of the wealthy clothier. The rich merchant classes became involved with politics, bought manorial estates and adopted the roles of the elite classes. They were responsible for much of the institutional, industrial and urban development around Manchester at this time.

Manchester became a textile boom town at the end of the 17th century. The population doubled between the years 1563 and 1664. The commercial heart at this time was west of Deansgate and north of St Mary’s Gate. This area appears to have
been a piecemeal development of yards, workshop dwellings, inns, warehouses, market squares and merchant houses with little forward planning.

By 1664 Manchester was the largest town in Lancashire (Nevell 2008, 66). As it became a sprawling industrial shambles, the wealthier merchants and clothiers moved out to high status country estates (further information can be found in the publication *Manchester* by Alan Kidd (third edition, 2002)). Newall Green Farm at Wythenshawe is an example of a high status house of the early post medieval period. The style of building in this self-sufficient estate imitated the halls of the established elite. At the upper end of the social spectrum, Heaton Hall and deer park dominated the landscape in the north part of the current district.

In the south of Manchester, Northenden was probably a small village at this time. The rural areas were sparsely populated with isolated farms and halls. Some farms were engaged in domestic cloth production. Small settlements arose as nucleated folds in association with earlier farms or as ribbon development along established routes. Several rural chapels of ease were built in the late medieval to early post medieval period. A gradual increase in the population led to a greater pressure on the agricultural regime. The later medieval period was a time of increased enclosure of wastelands, the clearing of woodland, the introduction of new crops and experimentation in agricultural improvement.

Between 1664 and 1777, the population of Manchester increased seven-fold. This was the result of immigration supplying the growing weaving and fustian trades (Nevell 2008, 67). The fustian trade in particular led to greater prosperity amongst the merchant classes.

The town expanded into former agricultural land to form the area now known as the Northern Quarter. Constructed as a gridiron development, this area contained a mix of domestic textile workshops, commercial yards, shops, terraces and other types of workshop. Well laid out streets of higher status terraced houses, small villas, formal squares and institutes also impacted on the urban townscape during this time, particularly around Piccadilly Gardens, King Street and New Bridge Street. The period also saw the introduction of planned villa suburbs to the south of the city around Beswick and along Oxford Road. Wharfs around Quay Street were first constructed in 1736 (Nevell 2008, 75). The River Irwell and the 1765 Bridgewater
Canal linked Manchester to Liverpool and therefore to world trade. Larger warehouses were built as a result around the river wharfs and canal basins.

The first steam-powered cotton spinning mill in Manchester was built in 1781-82 on Shude Hill by Richard Arkwright and Partners (Nevell 2008, 82). A boom in mill construction began in Manchester after this time. The early water-powered mills required large quantities of water as part of the production and power processes. This influenced their positioning along the River Irk, the River Medlock and Shooters Brook.

The introduction of industrial scale mills radically altered Manchester’s townscape. Between 1782 and 1816 the number of steam-powered textile mills rose from one to eighty six. These mills were on a large scale and employed hundreds of people. Between 1801 and 1851 the population rose from 75,281 to 303,382 (Nevell 2008, 93). The Irk and Medlock valleys continued to be the focus of expanding industrialisation. Ancoats and Chorlton-on-Medlock also were areas of significant development, Ancoats being one of the world’s first planned industrial suburbs. Industrial development later expanded along the early 19th century Rochdale and Ashton Canals. The Duke of Bridgewater’s Canal brought coal direct from his Worsley coal mine into Castlefield where it supported the expanding industry and housing. Outside Manchester, mills had a dispersed distribution with industrial development at Harpurhey, Blackley, Gorton, Newton and Levenshulme.

The cotton spinning industry was complemented by the growth of textile finishing in the 18th and 19th centuries in the form of bleaching, dyeing and printing. Many of the works and mills were located alongside rivers as they required large amounts of water for processing. Other major industries developed from the late 18th century, such as engineering works, iron foundries, paper mills and glass works, but few buildings survive today and those that do are a vulnerable heritage resource.

Textile mills continued to evolve and industrial sites expand throughout the 19th and into the early 20th century. Also at this time town houses and small mercantile establishments were replaced by larger scale warehouses, hotels, theatres and high status public institutes. By the end of the 19th century, commercial warehouses became the principal character type of Manchester’s commercial core. These were prestigious buildings of iron and steel faced with stone, tile and glass inspired by the
medieval merchant houses of Florence and Venice. Warehouses became the show rooms of textile merchants.

Suburbs on the outskirts of town were overwhelmed in the middle and later 19\textsuperscript{th} century by the massive scale terraced workers’ housing developments. The earliest workers’ housing of this type had an experimental phase, particularly around Ancoats and Angel Meadows in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} to early 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Later planned gridiron developments expanded into Hulme, Moss Side, Rusholme, Miles Platting, Ardwick and Longsight. The quality of workers’ housing gradually improved in the mid- to late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

Railway companies purchased a significant amount of land in the Manchester district in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Sidings, passenger stations, railway warehouses and goods yards are still a prominent feature of the Manchester landscape. Their construction impacted on trade, and also opened the Manchester outskirts as commuter suburbs. Outside Manchester in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, urban cores developed in probable association with local industry at Gorton, Harpurhey and Cheetham Hill. Residential and commercial ribbon developments occurred along Rochdale Road, Oldham Road, Ashton Old Road and Wilmslow Road. Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Withington, Levenshulme, Crumpsall and Didsbury became the new outer villa suburbs.


5.3.7 20\textsuperscript{th} century
In the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century and the inter-war period, industry entered a phase of decline due to a general economic depression and shrinking world markets. Some textile sites were taken over by electrical, chemical and light engineering firms. Other sites became abandoned by industry. The trend of the mid- to late 20\textsuperscript{th} century was
decentralisation and the development of large scale, planned, mixed commercial/light industrial estates on earlier industrial sites. Development entailed new builds and some conversion. There was some continuation of some heavy industrial sites, particularly engineering.

Despite the decline in industry, the 20th century was the greatest era of house-building. Improvements in the public transport systems and roads had perhaps the greatest impact on the character of Manchester outside the city core. Roads and rail allowed people to live away from the workplace. Private developers were responsible for planned estates of middle class semi-detached and detached houses.

Possibly the earliest example of municipal housing within the district is found in the 1889 Victoria Square courtyard flat development on Oldham Road, Manchester (HER Pref Ref 8504.1.0). A shortage in working class housing in the early inter-war period led the corporation to subsidise housing development. In 1931 Wythenshawe was incorporated into Manchester to provide land to relieve the acute housing shortage (Nicholas 1945, 14). The idea was to provide a garden city for Manchester’s inhabitants. However, between 1919 and 1939, 30,000 corporation-supported houses were built in the city alone.

Further development occurred in large planned estates on either side of the new city parkways, including Kingsway and Princess Way. Later, housing estates were organised into neighbourhood units on an even bigger scale. Each “unit” was complete with commercial core, church, schools, parks, institutes and other public facilities. Withington, Burnage, Wythenshawe, Woodhouse Park and Sharston are examples of this kind of development. By the early post-war period, the view was prevalent that earlier industrial housing developments were obsolete and problematic slums. The result was widespread “slum” clearance and redevelopment. Beswick, Miles Platting, Moss Side and Hulme were proposed for redevelopment (Nicholas 1945, 145-166). Further late 20th century corporation-founded residential development occurred in areas such as Cheetham Hill to the north of the city, and Ancoats in the east.

Second World War bomb damage left gaps in the cityscape which were filled by post-war commercial development. More recent bomb damage in 1996 allowed reconstruction of the Arndale centre and large department stores. Former mixed
industrial and residential areas south of the city, particularly around Oxford Road, became university facilities in the late 20th century.

The city core continues to be redeveloped; the last two decades of the 20th century saw major changes as run-down former industrial sites were replaced by residential and office developments. This brought a major change to the city centre, which was revitalised by having thousands of people living there. Modern high rise offices and hotels are a significant part of the Manchester cityscape. The current trends in residential construction are for new high rise flats and mill/warehouse conversion. Areas of earlier social housing estates are being replaced by new dwellings constructed by civic authorities, private developers and housing association partnerships – for example, New Islington.

Manchester has undergone several successive changes, with each phase removing traces of the past. Rapid industrial and commercial development in the 19th century nearly obliterated the medieval core. The decline in the cotton industry and subsequent redevelopment have damaged Manchester’s early industrial and urban heritage. However, some early 20th century developments, such as some of the social housing in the Wythenshawe district, are becoming significant heritage assets in their own right. There is much to learn about the internationally important archaeology relating to the development of this city. There is a danger that the boom and bust development trends of the post-20th century era will have a damaging impact on Manchester’s historic environment. Care must be taken to ensure the district’s most important heritage sites can be identified, understood, managed and protected.
Figure 2  Map showing the borough of Manchester by broad character type
Manchester’s present-day character is overwhelmingly urban and suburban, with about 42% of its land area covered by the Residential broad type (see Figure 3 and Table 1). Around the core of the city of Manchester there are several phases of residential development occurring as concentric zones. The earliest urban development occurred in the Hanging Ditch/Cathedral area in the medieval period. There is fragmentary survival of street patterns and archaeological fabric from this time. The Georgian expansion is more evident – the gridiron street pattern and some town houses and workshop dwellings survive from this period.

The introduction of large powered textile mills in the 19th century led to the construction of terraced workers’ housing in extensive gridiron estates on undeveloped agricultural land on the city’s outskirts (e.g. Hulme), or as ribbon developments along principal routes. Satellite settlements such as Gorton, Northenden and Cheetham Hill formed at this time either as industrial towns or middle class suburbs. Large estates of early to mid-20th century social and private housing make up the outer extent of the settled areas. The inner ring that was formerly occupied by terraced houses and industry was extensively redeveloped in the post-war period, mainly with social housing. Redevelopment continues, particularly close to the city core; a significant amount of earlier 20th century social housing has already been replaced by later residential developments. Apartment new builds and mill and warehouse conversions are also common.

Economically, Manchester district is dominated by the city. Industry forms discrete zones within the district. These locations were influenced by natural water courses and late 18th to 19th century communication routes. The textile industry was replaced by other industries after the Second World War; traditional industrial sites tend to be reused for industry and commerce.

The central commercial zone is dominated by large ornamental warehouses, prestigious institutes and other buildings of the late 19th to early 20th century. Street patterns of the 18th and 19th century are preserved in the city centre, as commercial development tends to be confined to existing plots. Areas of early industry/commerce survive to the north and south of the city, particularly in the Northern Quarter and around former canal wharfs. Modern multi-storey office blocks are a significant feature in the cityscape.
Beyond the city core, urban and suburban centres developed in the 19th century. Several Victorian commercial high streets are present within the district. They frequently occur as ribbon developments, Rusholme and Openshaw being good examples. Areas of 20th century planned housing estates are organised in units, each with its own commercial and institutional resources. Wythenshawe Centre is a good example of later planned commercial development.

Agricultural land forms a small element of the landscape and is confined mostly to the southern part of the district. The remaining open land is used for recreational purposes rather than agriculture. No ‘Unenclosed’ land was identified within the current Manchester landscape during the study.

From the 18th century parks have been a planned element of Manchester’s urban landscape. They still form a significant element of Manchester’s character in comparison with other areas (such as Bolton, Bury or Trafford). This could be a reflection of the intensely urban nature of the district.

Post medieval transport networks have had a strong influence on the urban development of the Manchester district. Several historic canals and railway networks centre on Manchester city. Warehouses and industrial sites are concentrated around canal basins and railway depots. Long avenues of the late 19th century and parkways of the 20th century radiate from the city centre. Post-war road improvement schemes in the city core include the A57(M) Mancunian Way. The single largest site attributed to the Communications HLC type in this district is Manchester International Airport. This site covers around five square kilometres and extends across the boundary into Cheshire East.
Figure 3  Pie chart showing the percentage area covered by each broad character type in Manchester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad type</th>
<th>Area covered (km²)</th>
<th>% of district represented</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>49.16</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horticulture</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational</td>
<td>24.64</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>11.33</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extractive</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals for district</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1  Area coverage of the broad types represented in Manchester