

## HERITAGE STATEMENT

Redevelopment of former Whalley Motor Services site  
into new offices at  
18 Accrington Road  
Whalley BB7 9TD



Date: **October 2025**

Job ref: **7261**

## Introduction – Whalley Conservation Area

### **Summary of special interest**

Whalley is located on the River Calder in Lancashire, surrounded by rolling hills which provide both limestone and sandstone for building. The small town is notable for the ruins of a late 13th century Cistercian abbey, part of which is still in use as a conference centre, and for St Mary's and All Saints' Church, with its attractive churchyard in which are three Saxon crosses. King Street, the principal commercial street, contains four 18th century (or earlier) inns and a variety of small, mostly locally owned shops. Although 20th century housing development has impinged somewhat to the north of the town, the river setting and the many fields and open green spaces of Whalley provide an attractive rural character to the conservation area.

The Whalley Motor Services building / site is located directly to the East of King Street, and is located on Accrington Road.

### **The planning policy context**

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as "an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". It is the quality and interest of an area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a conservation area. Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

The Whalley Conservation Area was designated on the 11th September 1972. This document updates and replaces the Conservation Area Appraisal for Whalley which was prepared by the Council in the early 1990s.

### **General character and plan form**

Whalley is notable for the following townscape features

- Riverside location, enclosed by hills on three sides
- Ruins of Whalley Abbey including the 17th century house now used as a Conference Centre
- 14th century parish church of St Mary and All Saints
- Whalley Railway Viaduct to west of town, crossing the Calder Valley
- 17th, 18th and mainly 19th century buildings along King Street and Church Lane
- Long views across the river Calder and up to the surrounding hills

The Whalley Conservation Area includes the more densely built-

up area along King Street, where the buildings sit on the back of the pavement with concealed rear gardens, as well as the more spacious, suburban character of the northern part of King Street and Church Lane. The Sands is distinctly rural, with paired 1920s houses sitting well back from the road, and more historic properties, some with very large gardens (e.g. no. 38).

Most of the boundaries in the conservation area are defined by sandstone rubble walls topped by a variety of copings which are usually triangular-shaped but are sometimes round. The stone is laid in large, roughly squared off blocks, and the walls are generally between one and one and a half metres high where they define front boundaries, or up to two metres high to the rear. Sometimes, there is evidence for cast iron railings, such as nos. 4-18 King Street, where some of the low walls are built from single blocks of stone with a canted coping. Often modern railings have been installed such as those at no.12 with uncharacteristic detailing such as gold ball finials. For many of the residential properties, hedges of privet or an evergreen shrub have been planted behind low sandstone walls to provide increased privacy. Whalley Abbey contains a variety of sandstone walls, some with fine quality moulded copings. Gate piers are often a single piece of stone, with perhaps a recessed panel along the whole length as decoration. There are also some timber boarded or picket fences, all of them modern.

### **Spaces and views**

A number of the larger, more prestigious buildings in Whalley act as focal points in views: St Mary and All Saints Church is the most important one, set in its attractive churchyard; the ruins and standing remains of Whalley Abbey, although somewhat concealed by high walls from The Sands, are very important in views from the Nab; the Methodist Church in King Street and the Adult Education Centre (the former Grammar school) are significant in views along King Street; as are the three former coaching inns – the Whalley Arms, the Swan Hotel, and the Dog Inn. The Maureen Cookson Department Store is a very dominant building, especially when viewed along George Street. The dramatic location of Whalley on the banks of the River Calder, and the close proximity of the surrounding hills, provide ample opportunities for stunning views into and out of the town. The most important are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map. Of special note is the significance of the ruined Abbey site, the river Calder (with particularly important views from the bridge), and St Mary and All Saints Church.

### **Activities/uses**

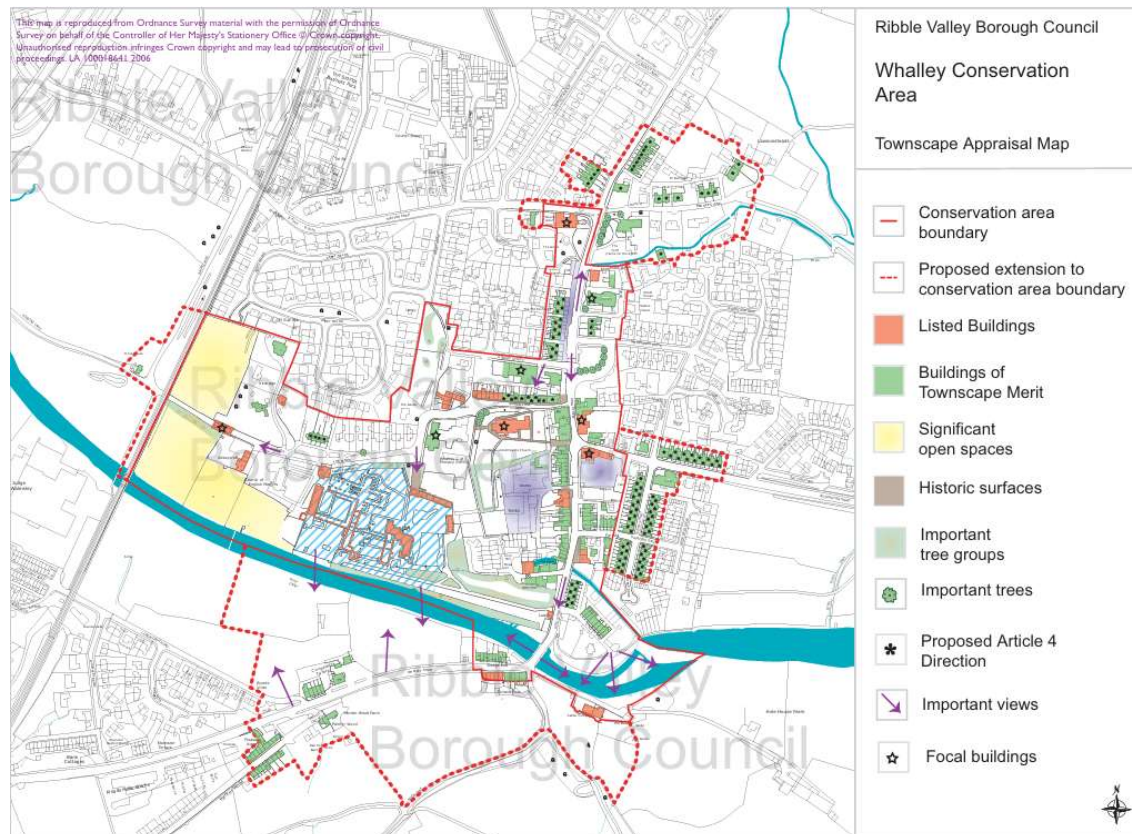
Whalley is primarily a residential area, based around the commercial centre in King Street. The town is notable for its riverside location and for the Abbey ruins, now open to the public and providing a museum and café. The former Abbey Gateway, on the west side of The

Sands, is now in the care of English Heritage, and part of the old cloisters is now used by the Roman Catholic Church as a church hall. The modern (1926) R C brick-built church lies immediately next door.

### Location of Site on Accrington Road

#### Accrington Road – Dashed Red line extension to Conservation Area

Accrington Street is an early route connecting Whalley town centre to Blackburn. Nos. 1541 date to the late 19th century (nos. 27-39 are shown on the 1892 map, refer to Conservation area appraisal – RVBC website) and are built from stone with slate roofs. They have small front gardens enclosed by low stone walls and hedging. The former Reading and Assembly Room were built in 1890 by a company formed by the gentlemen of Whalley for social functions. It is now in use as a night club. Also included is the former Police Station built in 1894, which is now a residential dwelling.

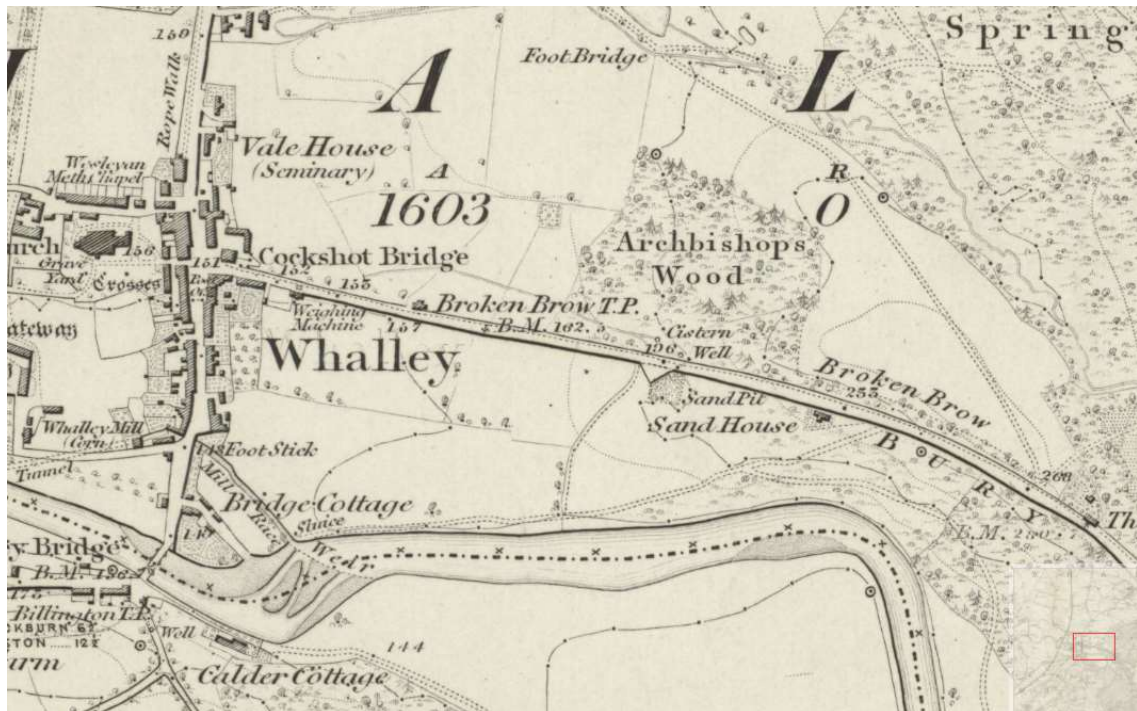


Whalley Conservation Area Townscape Appraisal Map



The Whalley Motor Services Site is located outside of the red and dashed red lines of the Conservation Area.

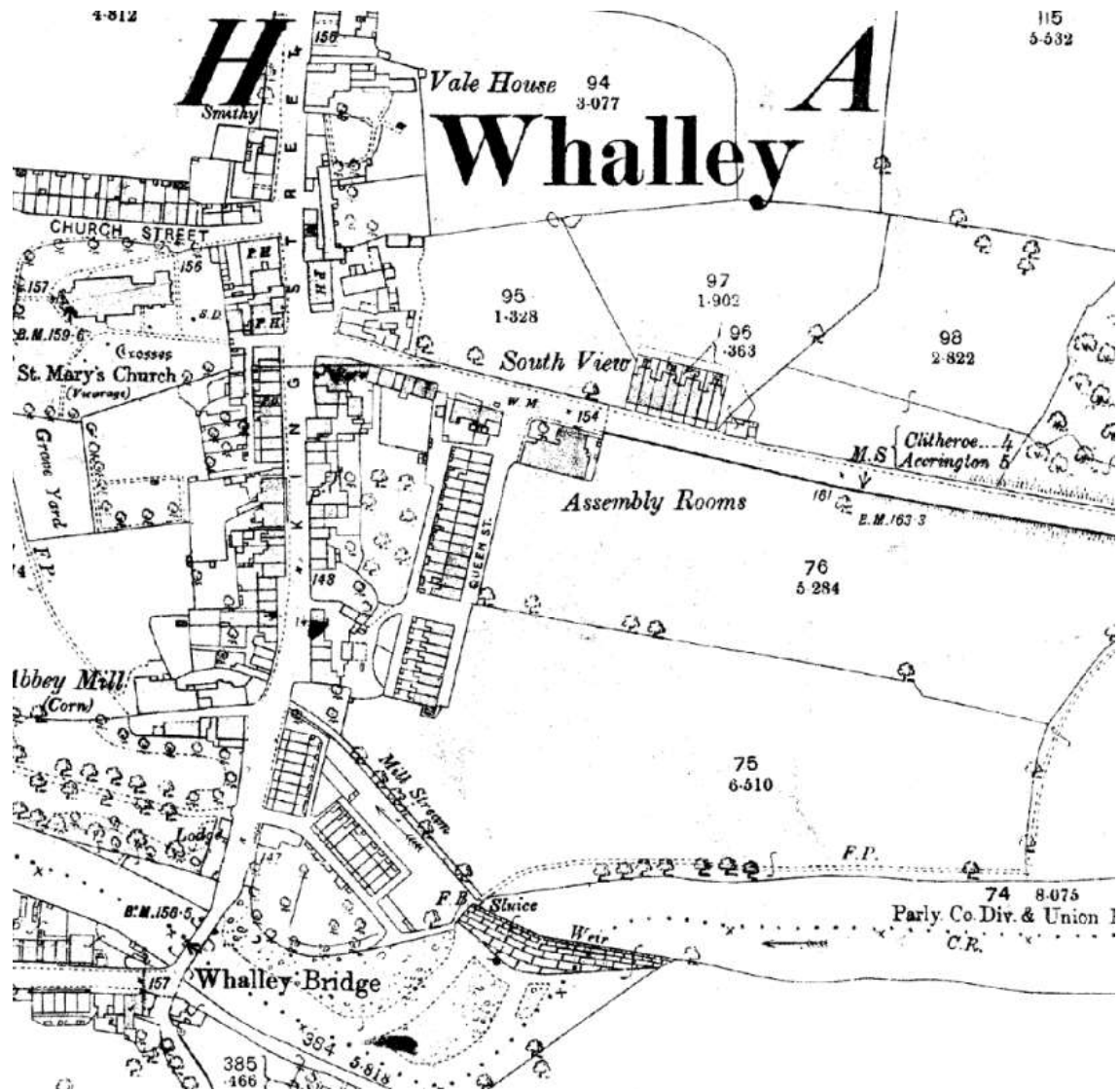
### Historical Development to Accrington Road in relationship to site



OS Six-inch England and Wales mapping data for Accrington Road, Whalley Surveyed: 1844 to 1846, Published: 1848

<https://maps.nls.uk/view/102343928> (sourced from National library of Scotland)

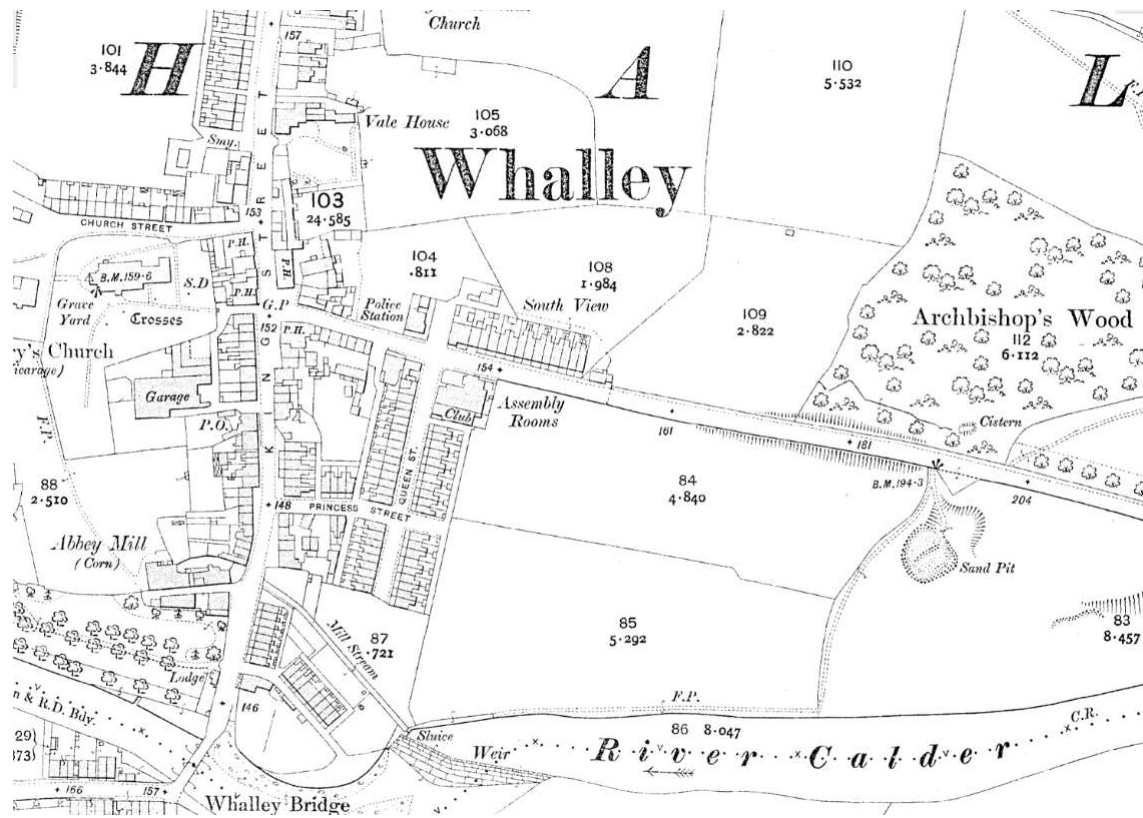
During the 1844 to 1846 when the area was surveyed no historic buildings existing in the location of the Motor Services site. The terrace dwellings (buildings of town scape merit) opposite the site did not exist. The Former Whalley Police station and former Reading and Assembly Room (Rendezvous Night Club) also did not exist at this time.



OS mapping data for Accrington Road, Whalley 1890s

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/fdeebbd0e124ea89625e71b837140f0> (sourced from Mario Map / Lancashire Heritage Maps)

By the 1890s late Victorian period we can see from the mapping data above that the Assembly Room was now constructed along with 8 terrace properties opposite our site.



OS mapping data for Accrington Road, Whalley 1910s

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/fdeebbd0e124ea89625e71b837140f0> (sourced from Mario Map / Lancashire Heritage Maps)

By 1910 the Whalley Police Station has been constructed along with additional terrace properties opposite the site. The Motor Services building, neighbouring semi detached dwellings, and properties to the rear of the site have all been constructed after 1910 and in the twentieth century onwards.



A view of Whalley from 1900 looking along Accrington Road towards King Steet. The Former Reading and Assembly Room building on the left hand side and the terrace properties on the right hand side.

## Assessment of Significance of Neighbouring Buildings on Accrington Road



The Former Whalley Police Station now a residential dwelling, located on Accrington Road. Classed as a Building of Townscape merit. The building is located approximately 60m from the Motor Servicing site.



The Terrace houses opposite from no. 15 to no. 41 Accrington Road are indicated as buildings of townscape merit. A Proposed Article 4 Direction applies to these dwellings. The elevations are generally typical and utilitarian appearance akin to typical 'workers' terraced dwellings of the time and within the local area. Although the frontage would have formed a respectable street scene on what would have been and continues to be in a prominent position on an approach to Whalley with coursed natural stone and cut stone surrounds to windows and doors.

In respect, the proposed office building has been set back 21m from the frontage of the terrace properties, many of these properties opposite also have hedges / railings or dwarf walls to the front amenity space, and are set back from the pavement. This all helps provide a visual break between the proposed office building and the existing terraced properties.



The former Reading and Assembly Room were built in 1890 by a company formed by the gentlemen of Whalley for social functions. Although this has been a night club for the past 30 years plus and is referred to as Rios or Rendezvous. Classed as a Building of Townscape merit.



Whalley Motors LTD located on Accrington Road, Neighbouring the former Reading and Assembly Room (Rendezvous). The Whalley Motors building is a modern workshop building with steel truss and purlin roof with profiled cladding over. The front is faced in stone with

steel Concertina – Slide & Fold industrial doors to the workshop space at ground floor. The sides and rear are rendered brickwork.



Neighbouring semi detached assumed from around the 1950s or 1960s onwards.

## Conclusion

Proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a conservation area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance. This should include considerations as to whether it conserves and enhances the special architectural and historic character of the area as set out in the relevant conservation area appraisal. Development which makes a positive contribution and conserves and enhances the character, appearance and significance of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials and existing buildings, structures, trees and open spaces will be supported.

From the information provided within the design and proposals it is obvious that the proposed offices will be a major improvement compared to the current delapidated vehicle workshop. There will therefore be a significant positive contribution to the character and appearance near to and adjoining the conservation area.

The proposed detail and overall design approach has been to respect the fact that the site is directly adjacent to the extended Whalley Conservation Area. RVBC Planning have been directly consulted as part of the pre app service with meeting to discuss and ensure the choice of materials, and form of the building are all best suited for the siting adjacent to the conservation area. For example due to the mix of materials and various styles it was considered whether the main frontage would be in stone to match many of the buildings within the conservation area, although it was agreed that facing brick would be just as in keeping with the immediate surrounding, mainly the neighbouring semi detached dwellings which are constructed in facing brick along with the other neighbouring Rendezvous night club which all walls are fully faced in facing brick.

Accrington Road contains a number of retail and commercial businesses. The site is long established for commercial / industrial use and sits within the main urban core of Whalley Town Centre.

The proposed new building would enhance the overall character and quality of the adjacent Whalley Conservation Area and be a significant improvement over the existing Motor Services buildings. The scale and massing is relative to the size of the site and sympathetic to the neighbouring buildings.



Visual of proposed office development