Assessment of the Potential Impact on Heritage Assets of the Development Proposal 2024/91199, 140A, Manchester Road, Longroyd Bridge, Huddersfield HD1 3JA

Dr Stuart Wrathmell FSA, MIfA

1. Designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development

1.1 Kirklees Council's Conservation and Design response to the current application refers to a number of designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development. The distribution of these (excluding the Paddock railway viaduct which stands further to the west) has been used to define a search area of the kind indicated in *SHA Note 3* (para 21) for assets whose settings might be affected by a development. The National Heritage List for England contains seven entries for designated assets in this area. These are shown in Figure 1 and are tabulated below:

Grade	*List entry no.*	*Identification and date*
2*	1134950	Church of St Thomas (1857-59; architect Sir G.G. Scott)
2	1066568	14 and 15 Woodthorpe Terrace (mid-19th century)
2	1066569	Spring Lodge, 27 Woodthorpe Terrace (early 19th century)
2	1215805	160 Manchester Road (early or mid-19th century)
2	1134951	162 Manchester Road (early 19th century)
2	1313528	164 Manchester Road (early 19th century)
2	1215820	166 and 168 Manchester Road (mid-19th century)

1.2 The significance of these assets can be further assessed through historic mapping analysis, to provide an overview of their chronological development and enable them to be contextualised. These are key dimensions for determining settings, in addition to the visual appreciation of a heritage asset (*SHA Note 3*, paras 8 and 26). The maps employed in this analysis have been selected from the Ordnance Survey 6 Inch, 25 Inch and Town Plan series, as those most useful for recording, broadly, chronological change.

2. Historic mapping analysis: see Figures 2 – 5

2.1 The earliest available mapping showing any of the designated assets in useful detail is in the Ordnance Survey series of large-scale town plans (scale 1:1056; Huddersfield sheet 8, surveyed in 1849 and published in 1851). The extract which forms Figure 2 shows the designated asset known as 14 and 15 Woodthorpe Terrace, which then formed a single house called Woodthorpe House. The house now named Spring Lodge is the un-named house next to Clifton Cottage. The two groups of designated assets on what is now Manchester Road, but was then alternatively called Longroyd Lane, are also shown.

2.2 The context for the Manchester Road buildings is the communication route running westwards along the valley of the River Colne, from the south-west corner of the urban

core of Huddersfield, along with the mills and factories which had already been established on the south side of Manchester Road. Of the non-designated heritage assets, the rows of houses forming two sides of Fenton Square had already been erected.

2.3 Woodthorpe House and the house now called Spring Lodge are substantial residences, in elevated locations, that were presumably erected by business owners or professionals above the steep valley side to escape the pollution, noise and grime of the valley floor. In 1849, both houses had grounds which extended southwards, down to Manchester Road. Before the creation of Bank Field Road and Woodthorpe Terrace, access to these and neighbouring houses seems to have been confined to the drive running up the steep valley side, between the grounds of the two Listed houses.

2.4 The 25 Inch map surveyed in 1887-9, published 1893, forms Figure 3. It shows, in addition to the buildings noted above, St Thomas's church. This had been erected in 1857-9 (Harman and Pevsner 2017, 358-9); its architect was Sir George Gilbert Scott, and it is Listed Grade 2*. The church was on a new site, serving a new parish which came into existence in 1859: baptismal records begin in that year; marriages and vestry minutes in 1860 (West Yorkshire Archive Service, Wakefield D115). It seems that the new church was not accompanied by a new house for the incumbent. Instead, the house now known as Spring Lodge became St Thomas's vicarage, and it is so named on the Ordnance Survey town plan surveyed in 1888, published in 1890 (Huddersfield – Yorkshire CCXLVI.15.12). Bank Field Road and the road known as Woodthorpe Terrace had been created by then, providing the incumbent of the vicarage (and his neighbours) with more convenient access to the church.

2.5 Within the next twenty years the row of non-designated back-to-back houses numbered 144 – 156A Manchester Road had been erected on the site of earlier buildings of iron or wood (according to the colour conventions of the 25 Inch mapping). Also of this period is the building to the east, which is named 'Club' on the 1913 revision of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch map (published 1918), now used for commercial purposes.

2.6 The detached brick house at the south end of the proposed development area is thought to have been erected in the 1950s, probably a few years after the southern part of the vicarage grounds had been sold off in 1952 (as indicated by the title deeds). The northern part of the grounds continued to be part of the Spring Lodge property, as indicated on the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map revised 1958-63 and published 1966, which shows a boundary line on the course of the present division between the garden of Spring Lodge and the development area. Subsequently, Spring Lodge ceased to be the vicarage, which was reassigned to 15 Woodthorpe Terrace, part of the former Woodthorpe House.

3. Assessment of designated heritage asset group settings

3.1 The assessment explores the relationships between and among the designated assets, before considering the settings of individual designations.

3.2 The immediate context of Woodthorpe House and the house now known as Spring Lodge is the group of substantial villa dwellings with extensive grounds, built by the mid-19th century on the higher parts of the valley side (Fig. 2). The development site is in a peripheral location to this group of houses, and therefore has little impact on what remains of the group, although it impacts on an area of land that previously formed part of the grounds of Spring Lodge (see below). A more direct impact on the core villa grouping is envisaged in planning application 2020/62/91013/W, for the erection of two, three-storey detached dwellings immediately to the north of Spring Lodge, and south-west of 14, 15 Woodthorpe Terrace. This was assessed by Kirklees Conservation and Design as causing no harm to the setting of Spring Lodge, and 'slight harm' to the setting of 14, 15 Woodthorpe Terrace:
https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/filedownload.aspx?application_number=2020/91013&file_reference=818593

3.3 The house now known as Spring Lodge was used as a vicarage for the incumbent of St Thomas's church probably for almost a century, before being replaced by 15, Woodthorpe Terrace, the western half of Woodthorpe House, which has been the vicarage house in more recent times. Thus, these two houses form a historical grouping with the Grade 2* St Thomas's church. The proposed development area is peripheral to this group, the axis of which is broadly along the line of Woodthorpe Terrace. The proposed development is therefore assessed as having no impact on the group.

3.4 The context of the designated assets on Manchester Road is very different. It is an area of workers' housing and associated commercial, residential and entertainment premises. They include a designated former hotel (Nos 166, 168) converted from what appears to have been an earlier weighbridge office (Figs 2 and 3), a designated inn and attached three-storey houses (Nos 160, 162, 164), the undesignated terrace of back-to-back houses, and the undesignated club. The remaining element is the detached red-brick house at the southern end of the proposed development site. In contrast with the current red-brick house, the frontage of the proposed building would be in line with and continue the eves height and external materials of the adjacent terrace. It would occupy about 8 per cent of the Manchester Road frontage within the search area, and would only marginally intrude into the line of sight between the west end of the search area (the former hotel) and the spire of St Thomas's church at the east end (Fig. 5).

4. Assessment of impact on the settings of individual designated heritage assets

4.1 Impacts on individual designations have been assessed by examining views both from and towards designated assets. Many of the views are obscured by trees, and whilst trees may be regarded as landscape artefacts rather than core attributes of the setting, it is in some cases difficult to make a precise estimate of impact because of their presence.

4.2 The highest designation is the Grade 2* St Thomas's church, which therefore has the highest sensitivity to changes in its setting. On the west side of the church, the

setting is provided by the rows of housing forming the northern and western sides of Fenton Square which were erected earlier than the church and limit views of it from these directions. Views from the church westwards are dominated by the former school a short distance to the west of the church and by the Fenton Square rows beyond that (Fig. 6). The upper part of the club building can be seen above the roofline of the western row, and the proposed development would have a broadly similar impact to the club building in the absence of the trees.

4.3 The Victorian villas north of the proposed development area have long-distance views across the valley of the River Colne, over the roofs of a wide range of buildings of varying dates which cover the valley to the south (Fig. 7). Long distance views in a direct line southward from Spring Lodge will be obscured at ground-floor level by the proposed development, but not at first-floor level. To either side of the proposed development area, there will be no impact on views. The impacts on reciprocal views from Manchester Road up to Spring Lodge are similar. Views from 14, 15 Woodthorpe Terrace across the valley will not be impeded by the proposed development, as the ground floor of the former Woodthorpe House is roughly the same height as the first floor of Spring Lodge (Fig. 8). Views of Woodthorpe House from Manchester Road will be obscured on the frontage of the proposed development, but that is a relatively small part of the overall viewing points from Manchester Road and is not a key viewpoint (see below).

4.4 The designed setting of Woodthorpe House was, on the evidence of the 1851 town plan (Fig. 2), a garden directly in front of the house, with further grounds running south down the steep slope to Manchester Road. These lower grounds were reached from the end of the garden by steps, and incorporated a series of paths running down the slope. What remains of that setting is the front garden, modified to form the front gardens to each of 14 and 15 Woodthorpe Terrace which terminate along the line of the road in front of Woodthorpe Terrace. The rest has long been in other ownership and put to other uses. It includes the club building on Manchester Road and associated land. The documentation associated with planning application 2014/62/91718/W, which affects the area of the former grounds south of Woodthorpe Terrace, makes no mention of their former relationship to Woodthorpe House:
https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2014%2f62%2f91718%2fW

4.5 A similar setting was provided for the house now known as Spring Lodge. It had (and still has) a garden in front of its most impressive doorway on the south side, and from the south end of the garden a flight of steps gave access to grounds with circuitous pathways on the steep slope down to Manchester Road. These lower grounds were sold off in 1952, a quarter of a century before Spring Lodge was first Listed, and, like the lower grounds of Woodthorpe House, ceased to part of the Lodge's setting. Their location on the steep, downward-sloping valley side beyond a terraced boundary wall or hedge indicates that they were not designed to have a visual linkage with the house and its immediate surroundings (see Fig. 9).

4.6 Both the National Planning Policy Framework and the advice note on the setting of heritage assets make clear that the extent of a setting is not fixed, and 'may change

as the asset and its surroundings evolve' (*SHA Note 3*, para 8; see also National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 2: Glossary - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

4.7 A much more critical line of observation is provided by the driveway shown on the 1851 town plan (Fig. 2), the original (and then only) routeway to the villas on the hill, and one that provided direct access to the two designated houses that remain. This routeway, the western side of which is preserved as a public right of way, is unquestionably the line from which the villas would have been first observed and appreciated by visitors, with Spring Lodge and Woodford House being the first of them to be experienced. The lower part of the right of way now gives access to the rear of the 'Club' building (Fig. 10); the upper part is heavily overgrown but still detectable (Fig. 11).

5. Conclusions

5.1 The 'setting' search area contains one Grade 2* and six Grade 2 designated assets. None of it is known to be located within a Conservation Area. The setting of two of the Grade 2 assets, Spring Lodge and Woodthorpe House, was a larger group of villas erected on the high ground above the Colne valley in the first half of the 19th century. Subsequent to the opening of St Thomas's church, the Grade 2* asset, in 1859, these two properties seem to have been the successive homes of the incumbents, on the evidence of historic and recent mapping. The area proposed for development is peripheral to both these visual and historical groupings, and its impact on their settings is therefore minimal.

5.2 The impact on the setting of the third grouping, the designated assets along the north side of Manchester Road, is more direct but very limited in extent. The only standing building in the proposed development area is the 1950s detached red-brick dwelling which has no architectural merit or historical significance. Indeed, it can be argued that the proposals for the frontage of the development plot would be much more sympathetic to the overall progression of designated and undesignated heritage assets along the road.

5.3 The proposed development area was originally part of the grounds associated with the house now called Spring Lodge, but that association ceased in 1952 when the development area land was sold off – over seventy years ago and about quarter of a century before Spring Lodge was first Listed. It is an area of ground that slopes steeply away from Spring Lodge, formerly provided with curving walkways which were accessed from the driveway on its east side, and by a flight of steps from Spring Lodge's south-facing garden (itself outside the proposed development area). The terrace between the Lodge garden and the lower, sloping grounds strongly suggests that there was no intention to create a visual linkage between the two.

5.4 The proposed development area never formed the access route to Spring Lodge: that was provided by the driveway just beyond the east side of the proposed development area, now represented by a public right of way, which led to the entrance on the north side of Spring Lodge. The same driveway provided access to Woodthorpe House, which had sloping grounds on the east side of the route; these, too, were

severed from the House and used for other purposes. The driveway itself, which would be unaffected by the proposals, is the key line of observation for experiencing the two villas as they would have been experienced by visitors in and before the 1850s. Some improvement of the public right of way would significantly enhance that experience.

5.5 Looking from Woodthorpe House, the proposed development would have minimal impact on views – certainly less than the three-storey houses approved for the north side of Spring Lodge, south-west of Woodthorpe House. Looking from Spring Lodge, there would be an impact on views due south, but not on other sectors of the viewshed which contains a great variety of buildings and roofs spread across the valley floor and the lower slopes of the high ground on each side.

5.6 The context of the houses, inn, hotel and club along the north side of Manchester Road was formerly the mills and factories which had developed along the south side of the road. Now these have gone, replaced by modern workplaces, the most significant of which is Kirklees College. The proposed development of student accommodation on the north side of the road therefore represents the modern equivalent of the relationships evident in the local built environment in the second half of the 19th century.

Bibliography and abbreviations

Harman, R. and Pevsner, N. 2017, *Yorkshire West Riding: Sheffield and the South* (revised ed.).

SHA Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (second edition, Historic England, 2017).

Illustrations

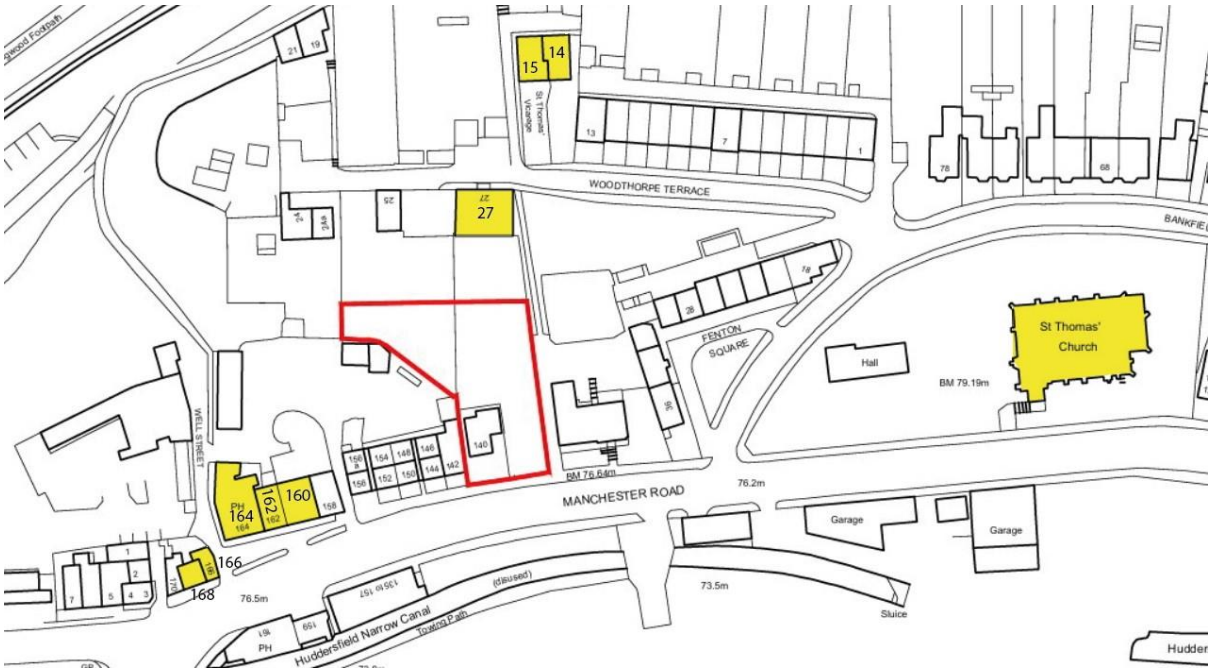

Fig. 1 Designated heritage assets (shaded yellow) in the vicinity of the proposed development area (outlined in red)

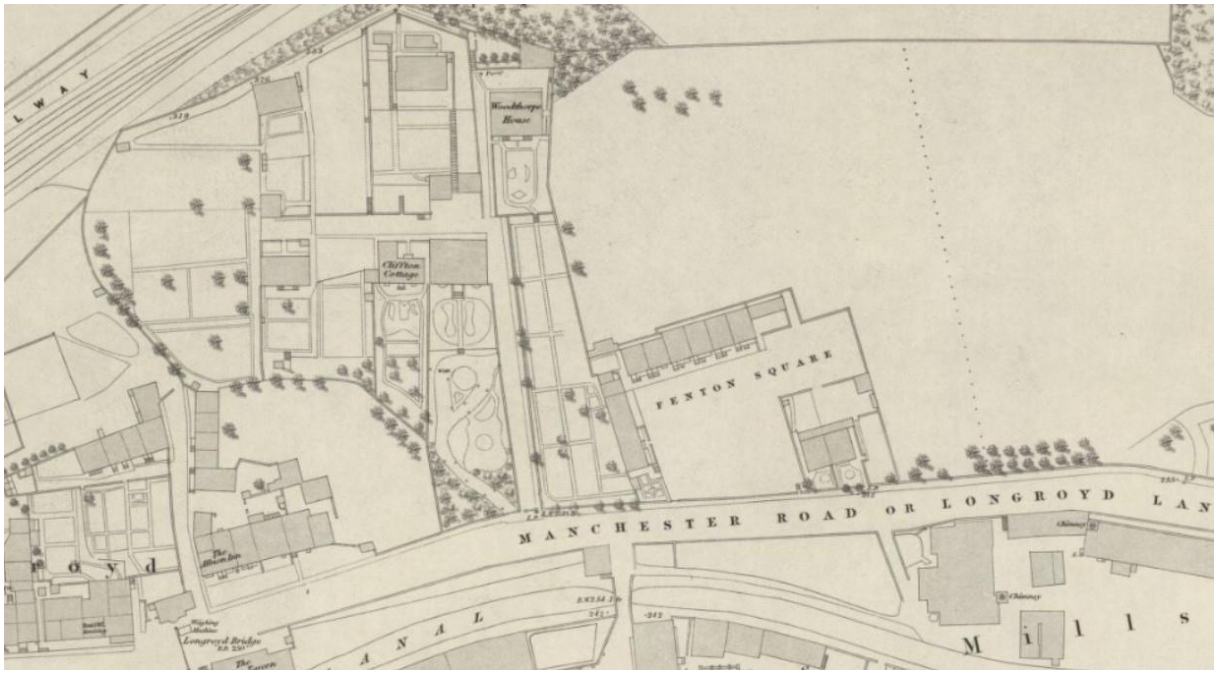

Fig. 2 Ordnance Survey Town Plan surveyed 1849; published 1851

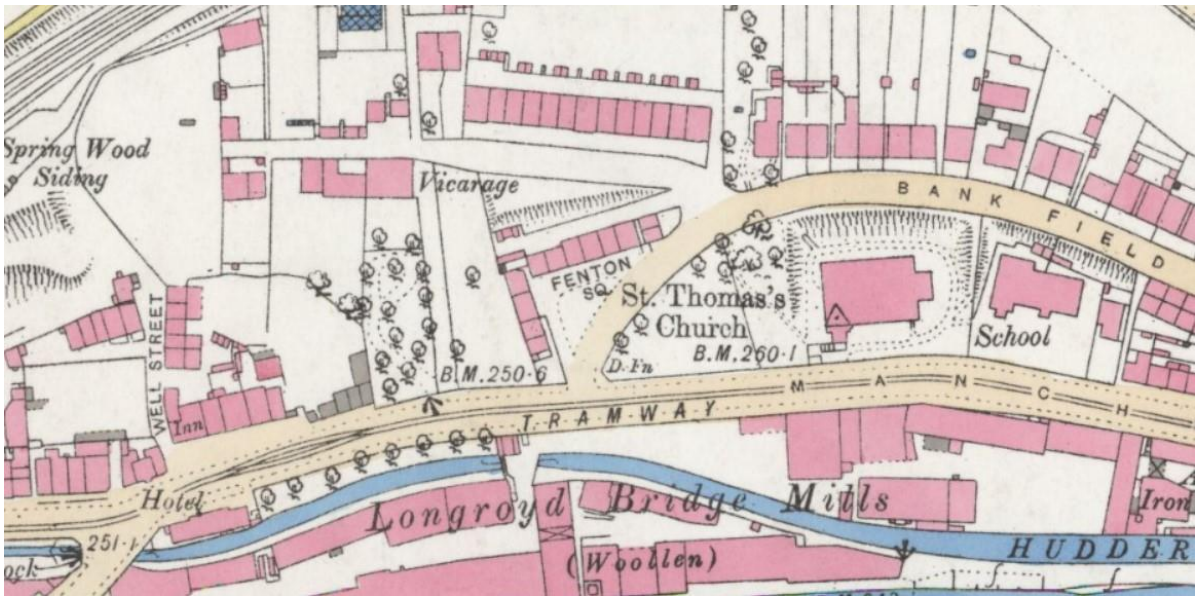

Fig. 3 Ordnance Survey 25 Inch map (Sheet CCXLVI.15) surveyed 1887-89, published 1893

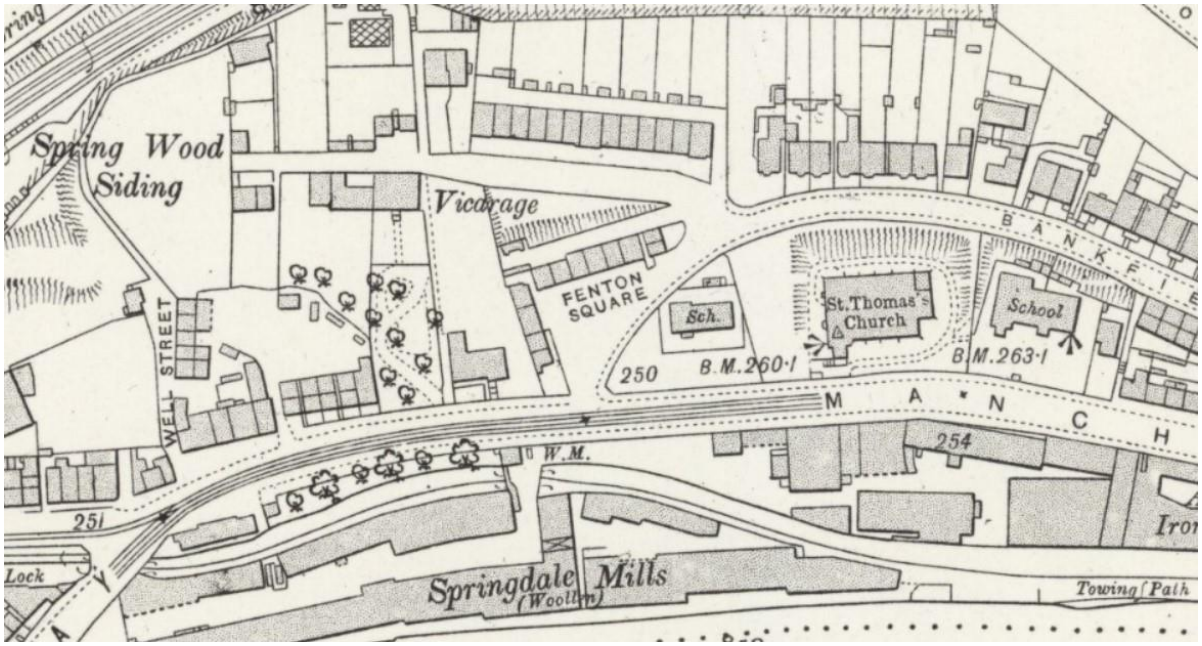

Fig. 4 Ordnance Survey 25 Inch map (Sheet CCXLVI.15) revised 1905, published 1907

Fig. 5 Manchester Road, viewed from the west end of the search area eastwards to the spire of St Thomas's church

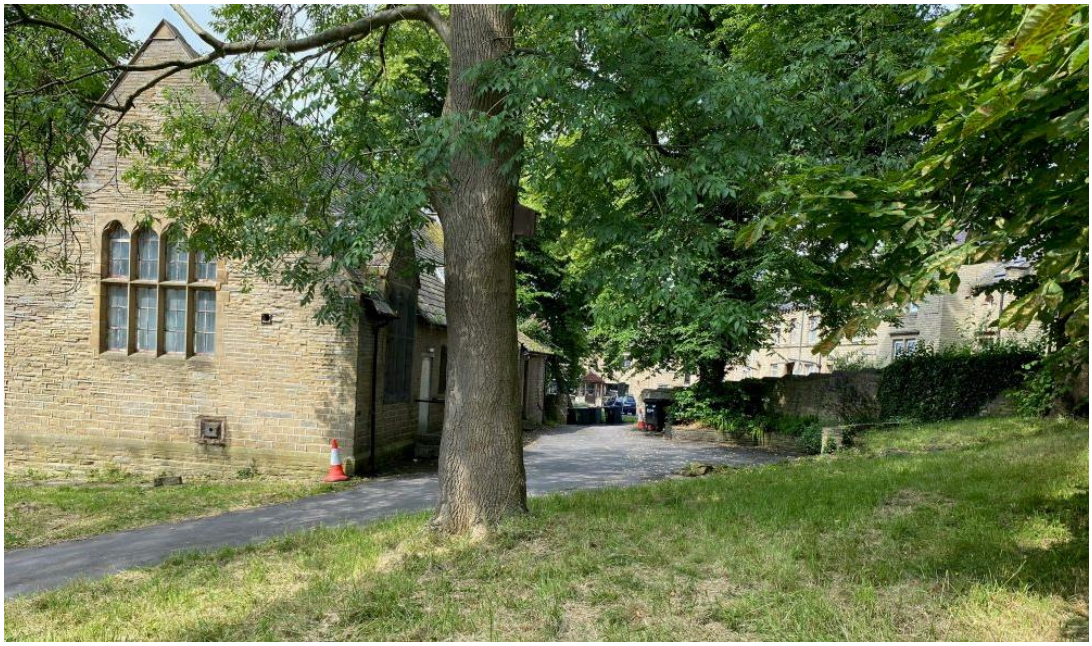

Fig. 6 View from the west end of St Thomas's church, westwards towards Fenton Square terraces

Fig. 7 View south-westwards across the valley of the Colne from the drive on the east side of Spring Lodge

Fig. 8 View southwards from near the south-west corner of 15 Woodthorpe Terrace along the public right of way marking the original driveway to both Spring Lodge and Woodthorpe House

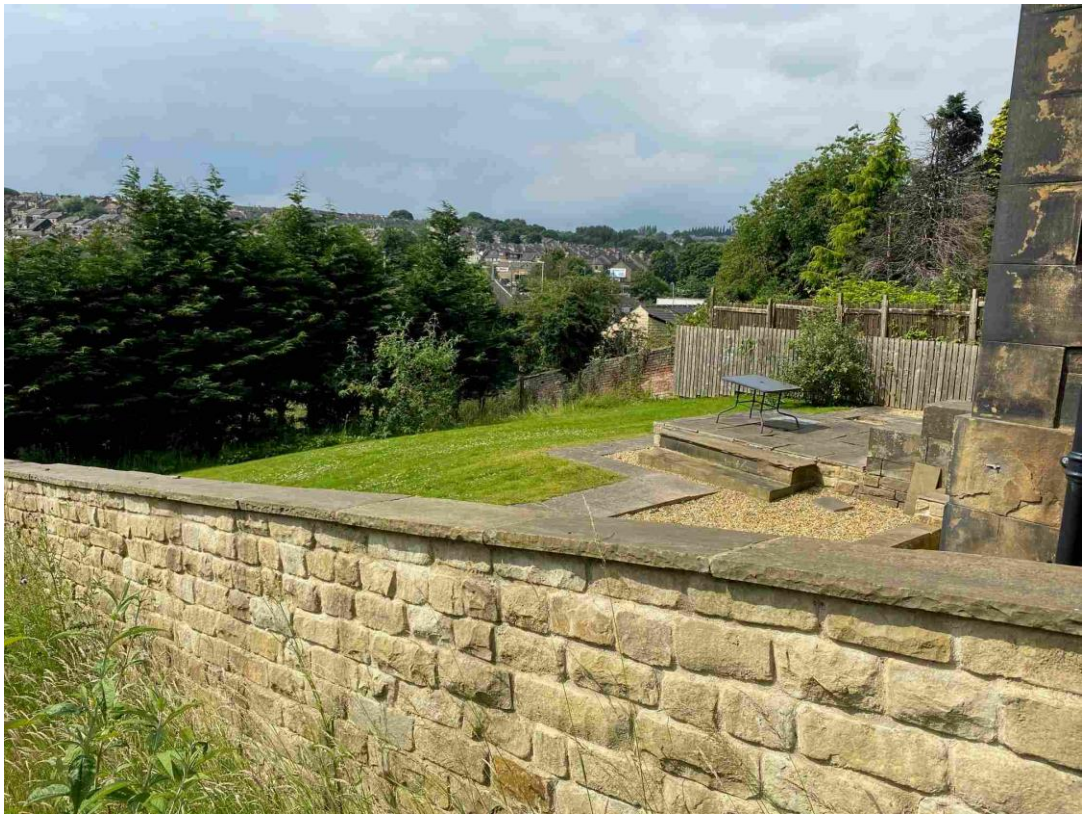

Fig. 9 View south-westwards across the garden of Spring Lodge and the slope to the boundary line marked by the line of trees.

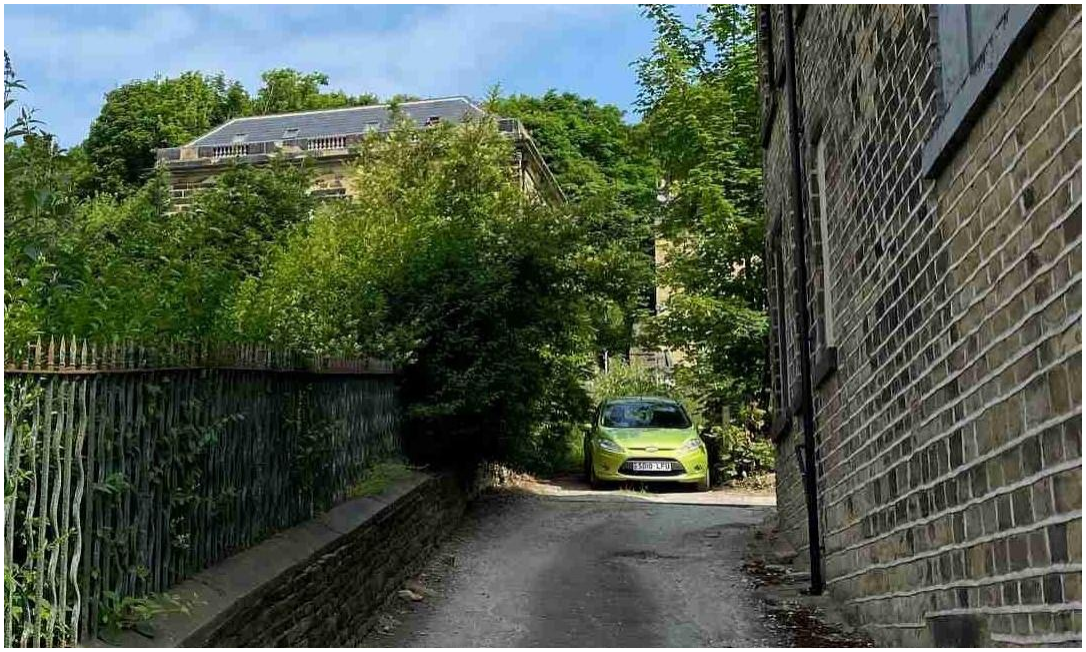

Fig. 10 View northwards from the lower stretch of the drive formerly giving access to Spring Lodge and Woodthorpe House

Fig. 11 View northwards from the upper stretch of the drive formerly giving access to Spring Lodge and Woodthorpe House