

## 1. Introduction

The Greenfield area is a historic part of Colne, growing up as a small farming settlement clustered around a tributary of Colne Water and surrounded by dry stone walls, trees and open fields. The hamlet is still relatively secluded in character despite the encroachment of industrial Colne in the C19th and the M65 motorway infrastructure in the C20th. As such it is an important reminder of the rural farming origins of Colne.

Greenfield hamlet was designated as a Conservation Area in 1992, with the boundary being extended further to the north in 1997. It comprises an early farming hamlet having its origins in medieval times as the manor of a wealthy Tudor landowner. The Beck running N to S effectively splits the hamlet into two parts. To the eastern side of the Beck, the earliest building is Greenfield Hall, listed Grade II. It was originally a farmhouse having its origins in the C15th, with the current building dating from 1580. On the S front are impressive mullioned windows of late C16th date to all three storeys, having arched lights to ground and first floors, and the attic storey having plain windows added in the C17th. The two-storey house (Greenfield House) attached to the right hand side is of C19th date. Just to the S of Greenfield Hall is the C17th barn which served the farmhouse, now converted to residential use and also listed at Grade II. Opposite the barn across a stone setted courtyard is the former stable block with a distinctive arched frontage, also now in residential use.

To the West of the Beck the buildings are later in date, mainly of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, including another former farmstead with a similar collection of barn and other outbuildings, all now converted to residential use. Greenfield Farm House lies at the northern end of the hamlet and is a typical mid C19th stone farmhouse. Greenfield House at the southern end of the hamlet is a grand Victorian house set within wooded grounds, built by George Phillips, a local mill owner who gave his name to the nearby Phillips Lane.

The consistent local building materials of buff sandstone and heavy stone roofing slates are crucial to the character of the hamlet. Walls are predominantly sandstone, laid in a variety of traditional ways, and roofs are sandstone slates laid in diminishing courses. Local sandstone also characterises the public realm, with dry stone walls and stone setts defining the external spaces, along with some naturally-rounded cobble stones probably taken from the Beck. Historic hedgerows and trees surround the buildings and are important to the setting of the hamlet and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Many are protected by TPO.

## 2. History of Greenfield

Greenfield was one of the earliest settlements in the Colne area, if not the first. There have been several archaeological finds in the Greenfield area dating from the Roman period (AD43-AD410) and Early Medieval period (AD410-1066). The earliest mention of Greenfield is as a presumed medieval 'Manor' held by the Banastre family from 1457 onwards. The Banastres were a Norman family, still represented locally and by Sir Roger Bannister, the famous runner. The Banastre family are recorded as living at Greenfield in the mid C15th and the 'Greenfield Estate' is referred to in 1518. It was held by the Houghton family in 1533 before passing to the Townleys in 1541. Greenfield Hall was built around 1580 by the Townleys of Royle. Now a Grade II listed building, it retains the C16th cross-wing of an earlier hall house, and can be seen as a good local example of wealthy Tudor landowners replacing their earlier medieval timber houses with impressive residences built in the local stone.

The name 'Greenfields' evokes the traditional agricultural system of centuries past. The Green Field would have been the meadow for grazing sheep, for the wool from which the local textile industry had its first beginnings. An archaeological survey of agricultural land to the W of Greenfield hamlet and Whitewalls Drive was undertaken in 2015. This revealed evidence for medieval/post medieval agricultural exploitation, including broad ridge and furrow cultivation (or strip meadow farming) typically associated with medieval open-field agriculture. Tree lined bank and ditch field boundaries were also recorded, indicative of the post-medieval enclosure of open-field cultivation into enclosed field plots within the property of the Greenfield estate. Green Field and its barn (both Grade II listed) is marked on Greenwood's 1818 map of Lancashire. There is also evidence of enclosed fields associated with Greenfield Farm. The OS map of 1848 indicates a well close to the Beck, and additional buildings clustered around the hamlet, which is still surrounded by hedge-enclosed fields.



Figure 1: Greenfield Hall and Greenfield House