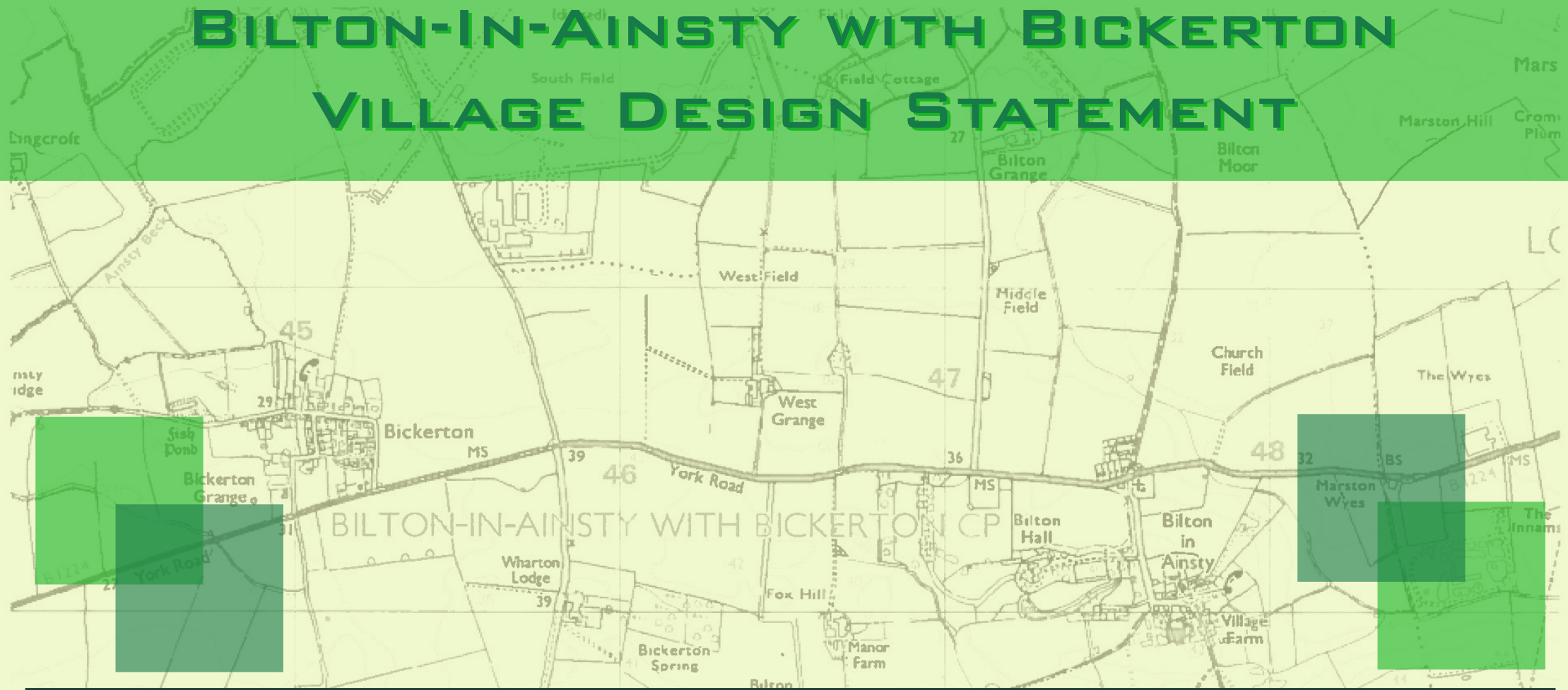


# BILTON-IN-AINSTY WITH BICKERTON VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



## *What is a Village Design Statement*

This Village Design Statement is written by the local community about their local environment. It describes the qualities and characteristics valued by the community in the Parish and its surroundings. It sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in the Parish.

Our aim is to preserve the rural, architectural and historical character of the Parish by enhancing its natural landscape features, built environment, social cohesion, agricultural activity, open spaces and existing settlement pattern.

The Statement endorses and elaborates existing planning guidelines, notably the Bilton in Ainsty Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

## *Who is the Statement for?*

The Statement provides information and guidance for:

- statutory bodies and public authorities
- planners, developers, architects, builders, designers
- local residents and businesses
- local community groups

## *How does the Statement work?*

This Statement has been adopted by Harrogate Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Statement supports Local Plan policies as they affect the Parish of Bilton in Ainsty with Bickerton and should also assist the work of the Parish Council and other local authorities (eg North Yorkshire County Council). The recommendations made here will help architects and developers to understand local views and perceptions at the outset of the design and development process. It will also be useful to residents considering altering or extending their properties, whether these require planning permission or are 'permitted development'. More specifically this Statement develops Harrogate Borough Council's on housing density, layout and design. It will be considered in the assessment of all planning applications.

## *How was the Statement prepared?*

The original draft statement was prepared in 2009 as part of the Parish Plan but was not carried through to the adoption process. It was resurrected in 2014 following discussions during Parish Council meetings. The Parish Council agreed to the review and where necessary updating of the draft document prior to applying to Harrogate Borough Council for formal adoption of the Statement.

The first Public Meeting was held on 17 March 2015 to discuss the possibility of updating the draft document. All parishioners were invited and over fifty people attended. Volunteers were sought and a Working Group was formed to consider aspects of the Parish such as its history, landscape setting, architectural characteristics, wildlife, roads and footpaths.

The Working Group met at regular intervals and reviewed the draft document section by section. Design Statements prepared by other villages were also reviewed and advice was sought from outside bodies working in this field.

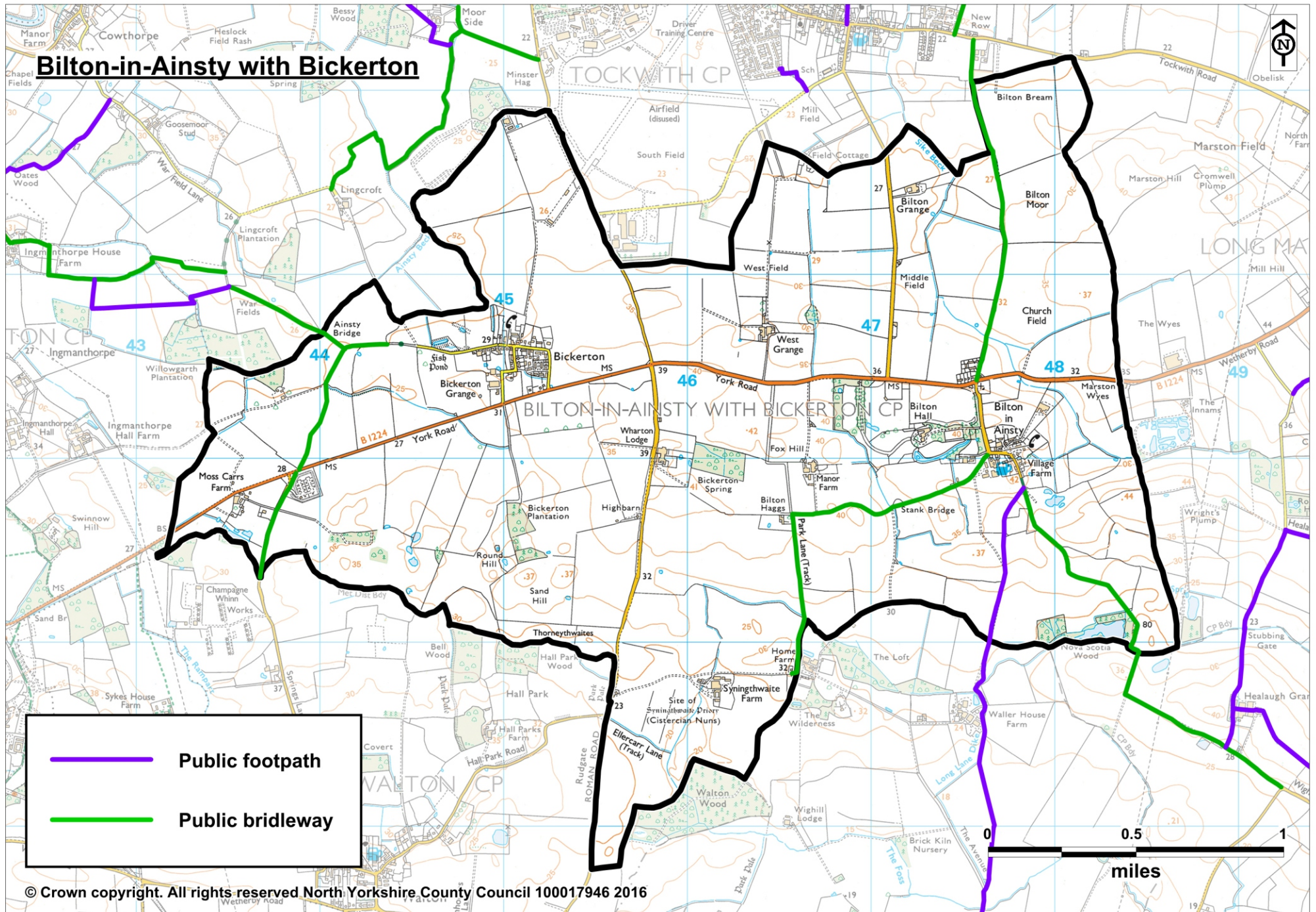
An illustrated draft was exhibited in the Parish Church as part of an Open Meeting so that oral and written feedback could be received from those attending. Following further editing of the text the Statement was discussed with the Parish Council and presented to Harrogate Borough Council and other interested parties. After extensive consultation the Borough Council adopted the Statement as Design Guidance.

## *Were other organisations involved?*

Yes. We had very helpful support at the start of the project from Andrew Towleron, who also attended the Open Meeting. The Parish Council supported the preparation of the Statement and we liaised with staff in the Policy and Place Section of HBC. A list of other statutory organisations who also were consulted is listed in Appendix 2.



# Bilton-in-Ainsty with Bickerton



## History

The villages of Bickerton and Bilton in Ainsty have a long history extending back to Saxon times or earlier and have been linked since Norman times. Both are recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

The meaning of the name Bilton is the homestead of Bila or Billa by a ditch or dyke (Bila's Tun). It is recorded in the Domesday Book as "Biletone" of the "Annesti". There is evidence of much earlier settlement in the area. On Bilton Moor excavations exposed a late Bronze Age hoard. Anglo Saxon sculptured stones were found embedded in the walls of the church, which itself is late Norman. In 1644 the church register records the burials of army captains who were killed in the Battle of Marston Moor. Inside the church there is still evidence of a derogatory picture of the defeated King, reputed to have been scratched by soldiers guarding the prisoners held in the church after the battle.

The name Bickerton (Bicretone in Ainsty Wapentake) as with all village names, gives an early English description of what was to be found. – ton is derived from the Saxon for village or farmstead. Bickerton means Bee-Keeper Farm.

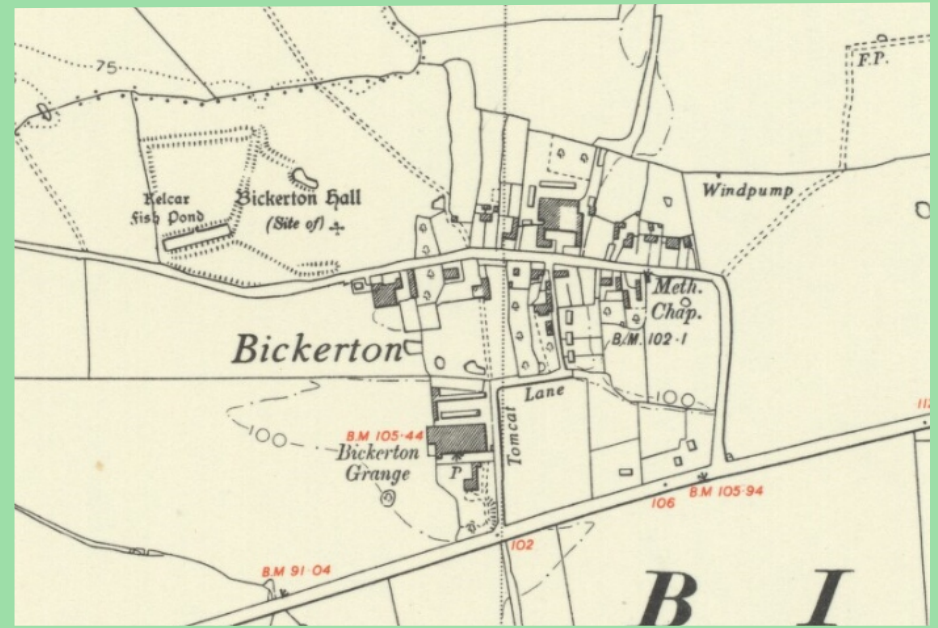
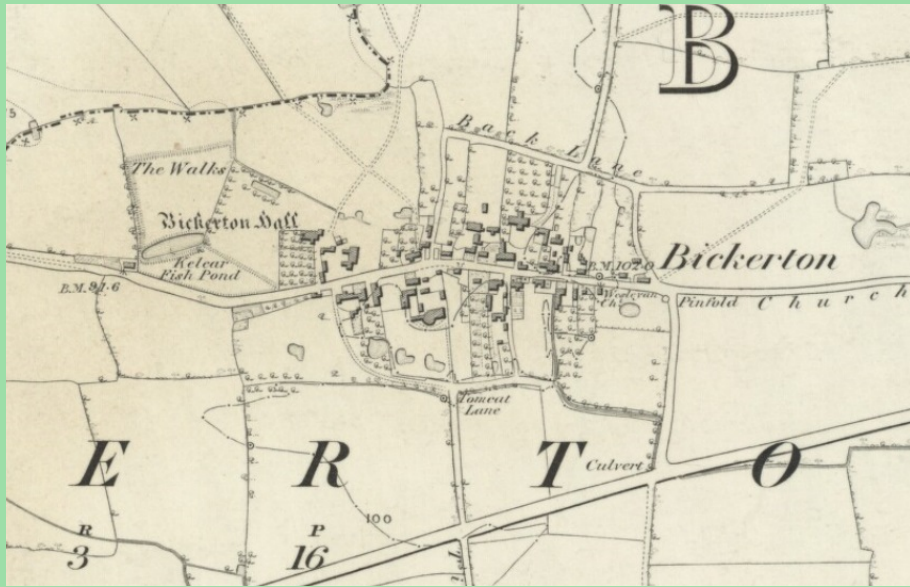
The layout and housing of both villages reflect this long history spanning many centuries. Many individual buildings have been preserved in Bilton in Ainsty as Grade 2 listed properties and the wide verges on Church Street are of a bygone age. Bickerton has a Grade 2 listed former Wesleyan Chapel and the historic linear pattern of farmsteads and dwellings with long gardens along the Main Street are derived from its estate village past. Both villages share the Grade 1 listed parish church of St Helens which is situated in Bilton in Ainsty. In 1994 Bilton was made a conservation area to preserve both the historic nature of the settlement and its distinctive environmental features.

The economy of Bilton throughout the centuries has been based principally on agriculture and the servicing of the Manor and, later, Bilton Hall. Mr Hall Plumer, the owner of Bilton Hall gave Bilton and Bickerton their first school in 1801, which was situated outside the Conservation Area and is now a house. Bickerton owes its existence to Bickerton Hall, to the west of the village which was probably built in the 1600's and demolished in the late 1800's. The Hall was important to the development of the village and explains why the village maintains its medieval pattern.

Whilst both villages have an agricultural past and are in a setting today which is dominated by farming there is no longer the need for the residents to be engaged in this way of life and its supporting employment. The villages now reflect the change to commuting for work and the internet based individual businesses of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In more recent history the parish is now made up of private residences. A small number of new houses have been built but the population has not grown significantly. As with other similar communities there has been a sharp decline in both facilities and infrastructure. Whilst Bilton still has a pub there is now no shop, post office or community centre in either village. Church attendance has similarly declined and both Wesleyan chapels have long since become domestic dwellings. St Helens has combined with four other village churches to support the regular but infrequent services. There is no school or medical centre in either village. Neither offers any employment opportunities and public transport has recently been reduced to a bare minimum. The villages have taken on most of the characteristics of dormitory communities and it would be impossible to live in either village without one's own transport. The visual character of both villages has a strong imprint of history and its agricultural heritage. The tranquillity afforded by being set away from and bypassed by the B1224 is valued highly by the residents



Development of Bickerton from Mid 19th century



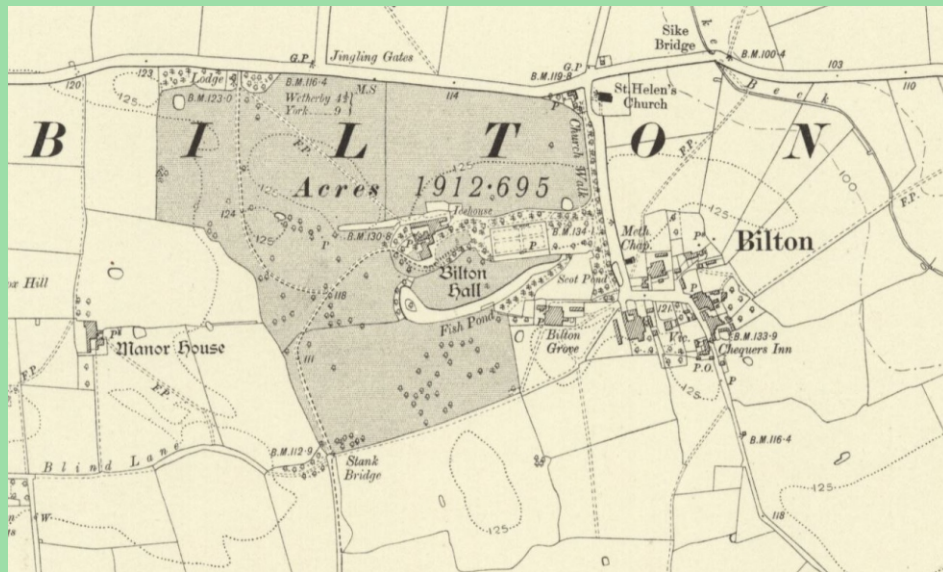
*Development of Bilton in Ainsty from Mid 19th century*



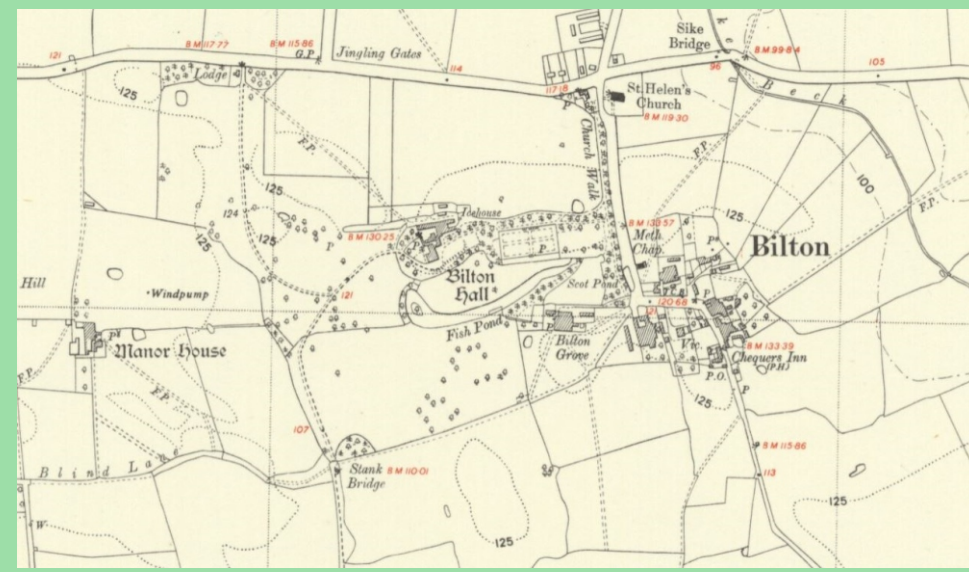
1850



1895



1910



1952

## *The Built Environment*

Owing to the diversity of the buildings within the parish, this section is divided into three parts

- Bickerton
- Bilton in Ainsty – within conservation area
- Bilton in Ainsty – outside the conservation area

### ***Bickerton***

The settlement of Bickerton lies entirely on the northern side of the B1224 York Road. Access to the village is via Tom Cat Lane to the west or Turnpike Lane to the east. Both of these roads lead to Main Street forming a horseshoe-shaped loop and incorporating a cul de sac to the west of Turnpike Lane and two court developments off Main Street.

Entering from Tom Cat Lane, the rural approach to the village is characterised by high hedges surrounding the land of Highfield and the brick walls of the handsome Bickerton Grange. Bickerton Grange is a mixed working farm with a number of old brick built outbuildings. The remainder of Tom Cat Lane is a mix of building styles, material colours and rooflines. There are bungalows and two storey buildings with a mix of brick and stone. All the properties have off street parking which is important as it is a narrow road and the pavements are intermittent and of limited width. The buildings in this part of Bickerton exemplify the range of construction materials used, from the red/brown brick of the older dwellings, the red brick used in newer housing and magnesian limestone which can be seen in both new and old constructions.

Entering Main Street with Virginia House on your left and The Old Post Office on your right, directly ahead of you is Northfields, a development of red brick, two storey houses built in courtyard style on a former farmyard. One attractive feature is the archway in the centre which provides views to the open fields to the north of the village.



Main Street contains some of the oldest houses in the village. All the houses are set back from the road some with a mix of walls of varying heights and materials, hedges and low fences as boundaries to the front. As you look down the street in any direction, you will not see any uniformity which reflects the development of the village over time. Many of the properties are on substantial plots with gardens either to the front or rear of the properties.

Turning west along Main Street the road passes Kelcar Fish Pond eventually dividing into two separate tracks, one of which was the old coach road into Wetherby, the right fork leads to Lingcoft Grange. The old coach road is partly a bridle path which is used daily by joggers, dog walkers and horse riders. The imposing properties on the south side have wonderful views over the field that was formally the site of Bickerton Hall. On the grass verge of Holly Cottage there is the First World War memorial and a traditional red telephone box.

The properties along Main Street are very varied in style and boundaries. The houses on the north side have expansive views over open fields from the rear of the properties. The former Wesleyan Chapel to the south side of the street was assigned Grade II listed building status in 1986, 160 years after it was first built.

Near here is the cul de sac of Chapel Close, a development of six detached two storey houses with garages built around 1990 in red brick with tile roofs.

As you turn into Turnpike Lane from Main Street, there are extensive views overlooking the fields to the east of the hamlet. The development on Turnpike is on one side of the street only, with a variety of single and two storey properties, individually designed. All have off street parking and have defined grass verges to the front of the properties.

From Turnpike Lane you turn into Pinfold Close, a development of 22 four bedroom houses with garages. All are of red brick and tile construction, set back from the road at a standard distance. Some of these houses have been extended or had conservatories added.

The only buildings on the B1224 on the south side of the hamlet are two bungalows set either side of the Filling Station. The bungalows both have substantial plots.

## *The Built Environment*

### *Recommendations for future development within Bickerton:*

- The structure of the village interspersed by agricultural land promotes a feeling of openness which should be maintained. Large uniform cul-de-sac developments or high walls are not compatible with the character of the village.
- Future development should provide off street parking and be restricted to two storeys
- Pavements in the village are mainly informal paths with grass verges to soften their edges and this practice should continue in preference to wide urban-style pavements.
- Street lighting and other street furniture should be avoided to prevent light pollution and avoid urbanizing the character of the village.
- Boundaries of gardens fronting onto roads should be in keeping with the architecture, using evergreen hedges and low walls
- Variety of plot size and shape is important and care should be taken in new developments to ensure that appropriate building and landscaping materials are used to blend with existing dwellings.
- Security lighting should not obtrude outside the property boundary.
- The War Memorial and Red Telephone box should be retained, along with the Post box, which has an Edward V11 crest.





## *The Built Environment*

### ***Bilton in Ainsty – Conservation Area.***

The current conservation area approval came into effect on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009. There is an extensive document called 'Conservation Area Character Appraisal' which is available from the Harrogate Borough Council website. This document details the buildings, boundaries, landscapes etc. at the time of granting the conservation status. It advises on future developments and the maintenance of the special character of the village.

The entrance to Bilton in Ainsty is marked by the Grade I listed St Helens Church built in the twelfth century and restored in 1870. Also on the York Road is a late Georgian house Beech Cottage with a later addition Church Walk Cottage – both of limestone and slate construction. These are Grade II listed. The road into the heart of the village is lined to the right with native trees, hedges and field views., and to the left of the road are very wide grassed verges which are fundamental to the character of the village.

To the right of this road as you enter the village is Bilton Park which contains the Grade II listed eighteenth century building Bilton Hall. Following many renovations, this building has been rendered. The building is distant enough from the village to form part of the landscape rather than the footscape.

In the centre of the village, there are two Grade II listed buildings, Bilton Brow, mid- nineteenth century red/brown brick and ashlar building with a slate roof, set in a slightly elevated position. Also The Old Vicarage, a late eighteenth century red/brown brick building with a slate roof, built in the Gothic style. Strong pointed arches frame the windows and doors. The other substantial building at the centre is Chestnut Farm, a rendered building with open fields to the side and a variety of farm buildings.

From the village centre Church Street narrows with hedge lined spurs carrying on towards the Chequers Inn and Village Farm. Another spur goes to Westlands, a more recent cul-de-sac of nine two storey detached houses, each with off street parking. A further spur goes towards Ainsty Farm Cottages, which were built using traditional materials, and on to a row of terraced houses on Post Office Row with slate roofs.

In summary, Bilton in Ainsty has many interesting and diverse buildings, the predominant materials are red/brown brick with red pantile or slate roofs. Hand made bricks are used on some older properties. Most buildings are set back from the road and have boundaries of low walls and hedges. Windows are primarily wooden sash.

### ***Bilton in Ainsty – outside the conservation area***

On the north side of the York Road, opposite St Helens there is a collection of family houses, mostly two storey semi-detached. There are two rows, one a cul-de-sac off Moor Lane with thirteen properties, the other set back off the B1224. The exterior of the houses is a mix of red brick and rendered with tile roofs. A number of these properties have had extensions. The area houses are surrounded on three sides by views over fields.

### ***Recommendations for future development within Bilton in Ainsty***

- All development within the conservation area should comply with the recommendations of the Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2009.
- All developments to be set back from the road and restricted to two storeys.
- Off street parking must be provided, but size of hard standings to the front of dwellings should be in proportion and suitable screening encouraged
- Red/brown brick is preferred, although rendered buildings may be appropriate. Materials need to be in sympathy with existing dwellings.
- Low walls and hedges are preferred to fences for boundaries. The hedges should be of traditional nature – holly, hawthorn, beech
- The rural setting should be preserved and countryside views should not be obscured.



*Historic Buildings in Bickerton*



*Historic Buildings in Bilton in Ainsty*



## Roads and Footpaths

### Roads

Although all adopted roads are surfaced, treatment of the 'floorscape' varies within the villages. Most road verges in Bilton-in-Ainsty are grassed. The wide verges alongside the main route through the village are a significant feature, collectively known locally as 'the greens', soften the edges of surfaced roads and suit the rural setting of the village. Most of these verges are accompanied by narrow surfaced pavements. The roads within Bickerton typically provide fully surfaced pavements and kerbs which, although often necessitated by relatively short distances between property frontages and road edges, detracts from the rural nature of the village by producing unnecessarily hard edges to the roads and should be avoided where possible.

To varying degrees, properties in both villages are mostly set back from the roadways, either by open green verges or gardens in front. Parking in both villages is predominantly off-street. Street lighting and 'street furniture' are limited and mainly associated with newer developments where they introduce a more urban feel that can be visually intrusive and counter to the 'dark skies' initiative. This should be avoided in the future.

### Footpaths

Both Bilton-in-Ainsty and Bickerton have footpaths and bridleways which connect them to outlying villages and to the surrounding countryside. Most of these routes are hedge-lined tracks providing access to local farmland, but some footpaths are grassed, set at the edge of open fields with some stretches running alongside woodland. These paths especially connect Bilton-in-Ainsty with the villages of Tockwith and Heaulagh, and Bickerton with Cowthorpe.

Footpaths, tracks and bridleways are essential for walking, horse-riding, dog exercising and physical recreation. They should, therefore, be maintained and extended wherever possible because they:- encourage people to walk instead of drive; integrate the village with the surrounding landscape by promoting greater access to and use of the countryside; and provide extensive views across the parish, stretching to the Hambleton Hills in the north and the Pennines in the west.

### Highway Recommendations

- Footpaths, tracks and bridleways should be maintained and extended wherever possible.
- Grass verges are preferred for all roads within the villages with additional surfaced paths on the inside on sections of heavy use, where feasible.
- Road furniture, signage and mark-ups should be kept to a minimum.
- Erection of speed bumps is not appropriate.
- On-road storage of wheelie bins is not appropriate.



## Wildlife

Hedgerows, arable farmland, mature trees, grass verges and areas of green pasture characterise the villages of Bickerton and Bilton in Ainsty and provides an ideal habitat for a variety of wildlife.

The ponds in Bickerton and Nova Scotia Wood provide important wetland habitats which attract a variety of wildfowl and are host to numerous insects including pond skaters and damselflies. Newts are also found in the locality.

In early Spring, the wooded areas of Bilton in Ainsty are full of snowdrops, closely followed by bluebells and at this time of year, hares can be observed in the open fields.

Thrushes, yellowhammers, great spotted woodpeckers, many species of finches and tits, swallows, swifts and spotted flycatchers are among the birds found in the villages. Flocks of geese are regularly seen passing overhead as they make their way to the lake found in the grounds of Bilton Hall. Tawny owls can often be heard and they regularly breed in Bilton in Ainsty village and the surrounding countryside. Skylarks, curlews, partridges, pheasants and green plovers also breed successfully in the surrounding fields. Winter visitors include redwing and fieldfare.



## Landscape

The two settlements of Bickerton and Bilton in Ainsty lie on the western side of the Vale of York. Both are reached by lanes that lead only to the village and enjoy a considerable degree of tranquillity. The topography of the Parish splits the catchment area into two with the northern part draining towards the river Nidd, the land to the south generally drains towards the river Wharfe.

The Ice Age glacier of 14,000 years ago has left its mark on both villages and the surrounding farmland. As it advanced it eroded the land to the north and carried gravel, sand and clay south, this mixture was eventually deposited when the glacier melted in warmer times. Bickerton now stands on this subsoil as does Bilton, which has the addition of fluvial deposits from the edge of a glacial lake which originally covered most of the Vale of York.

The land surrounding the villages is essentially agricultural with mainly arable fields which abut the villages, reinforcing the rural character of the settlements. Numerous and well managed hedgerows are a defining feature of the Parish. Most of the land is undeveloped with virtually all of it being actively farmed.

There are a number of copses of native woodland species within the Parish. A particular feature being the mature woodland of Bilton Hall which is visible from York Road as one approaches Bilton. Within the boundary of each village there are many trees and hedges which greatly enhance the green environment.

## Recommendations

- The visual aspect from the approach roads should be preserved by the avoidance of intrusive fringe developments or buildings that impact on the skyline.
- The woodlands and hedgerows and the historic field pattern around and within the settlements should be conserved as landscape amenities and wildlife habitats.
- Green areas penetrating into the village should be preserved.
- The rural aspect of the unspoilt countryside surrounding the village should be preserved.
- Agricultural land within the villages should be protected.

## Appendix 1

### Overview of Ages of Properties in the Parish

<i>BILTON</i>			<i>BICKERTON</i>		
Pre 1800	7	15%	4	6%	
1800-1850	0	0%	7	11%	
1850-1899	8	18%	6	9%	
1900-1949	2	4%	14	22%	
1950-1999	25	56%	29	46%	
2000	2	4%	2	3%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44 houses</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62 houses</b>	

### Houses with views to open countryside

	<i>BILTON</i>	<i>BICKERTON</i>
Pre 1900	34%	27%
Pre 1950	38%	50%
Post 1950	61%	50%



## Appendix 2

This appendix will list those organisations consulted during the preparation of this Statement.

These will include:

- Parish, District and County Council
- Countryside Agency
- English Heritage
- English Nature
- Environment Agency
- Yorkshire Water
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
- Ramblers Association
- Sustrans
- Bridleways Association
- Council for the Protection of Rural England



## Appendix 3

The Village Design Statement should be read in conjunction with the Harrogate District Local Plan Proposals. The main policies likely to affect the design of development in and around the village are as follows:

### **Countryside:**

- Policy C2 Landscape Character

### **Nature Conservation:**

- Policy NC7 Enhancement of nature conservation

### **Heritage and Design:**

- Policy HD1 Statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest
- Policy HD16 Approaches to settlements
- Policy HD20 Design of new development and redevelopment
- Policy HD22 Advertisement control
- Policy HD23 Satellite dishes and antennae

### **Recreation:**

- Policy R1 Existing recreation open space
- Policy R2 Existing recreational facilities
- Policy R4 Open space requirements for new residential development
- Policy R5 New sports and recreational facilities
- Policy R11 Rights of Way
- Policy R12 Sport and recreation development in the countryside

### **Amenity:**

- Policy A1 Impact on the environment and amenity

### **Housing:**

- Policy H5 Affordable housing
- Policy H6 Housing development in the main settlements and villages
- Policy H7 Housing development in the countryside
- Policy H8 Rural affordable housing
- Policy H9 Sub-division of dwellings
- Policy H13 Housing density, layout and design
- Policy H14 Housing amenity
- Policy H15 Extensions to dwellings
- Policy H16 Annexes to dwellings
- Policy H17 Housing type
- Policy H18 Siting and design of dwellings in the countryside
- Policy H19 Agricultural occupancy
- Policy H20 Replacement dwellings in the countryside

### **Employment:**

- Policy E2 Retention of industrial/business land and premises
- Policy E5 Existing non-conforming uses

- Policy E6 Redevelopment and extension of industrial and business development
- Policy E7 New industrial and business development in the main settlements and villages
- Policy E8 New industrial and business development in the countryside

### **Shopping:**

- Policy S3 Small shops
- Policy S4 Shopping in the countryside
- Policy T2 Vehicle access
- Policy T3 Traffic management
- Policy T4 Traffic calming
- Policy T16 Disabled parking
- Policy T17 Cycle parking
- Policy T21 Foot and cycle access
- Policy T22a Measures to promote cycling
- Policy T22b Measures to promote walking

### **Tourism:**

- Policy TR1 Visitor accommodation
- Policy TR3 Camping and caravan development - safeguarded locations
- Policy TR4 Camping and caravan development - site characteristics
- Policy TR6 Tourist attractions

### **Community Facilities & Utility Services:**

- Proposal CF9 Other new community facilities
- Policy CF10 Telecommunications development
- Policy CF11 Major utilities networks
- Policy CF12 Renewable energy

The Local Plan is in the process of being amended through a Selective Alteration.

The following policies are being amended:

- Policy H3 Renewal of Planning Permission for Housing
- Policy H5 Affordable Housing
- Policy H13 Housing Density
- Policy H17 Housing Type

and the following policies are being added:

- Managed Housing Release
- Hotel and Guest House Protection
- Community Facilities Protection

The proposed change to the Local Plan through the new policy on Managed Housing Site Release is already used for Development Control purposes through the approval of the Council's Interim Housing Release Policy

*Appendix 4*

Listed Buildings in Bilton in Ainsty

Beech Cottage Grade II

Bilton Brow Grade II

Bilton Hall Grade II

Church of St Helen Grade I

Folly or Game Larder Grade II, 200m west of Bilton Hall

Mile Post Grade II, 350m east of turning to Bickerton

Mile Post Grade II, 400m west of turning to Bilton

Mile Post Grade II, 150m east of Springs Lane

Mounting Block Grade II, 5m west of Church of St Helen

Old School House Grade II

Stable Block Grade II, 50m north of Bilton Hall

Syningthwaite Priory Farmhouse Grade I

The Old Vicarage Grade II

War Memorial Cross Grade II, to west of Church of St Helen

Listed Buildings in Bickerton

Chapel House (Former Wesleyan Chapel) Grade II