

LEATHLEY

Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Working for you

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1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation Area Appraisals aim to define and analyse the special interest which constitutes the character and appearance of a place. It is these qualities which warrant the designation of a Conservation Area. This Appraisal was approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport and forms an “evidence base” for the Local Development Framework (LDF). Consequently, it is a material consideration when determining applications for development, considering planning appeals or proposing works for the preservation or enhancement of the area. It also forms the basis for a subsequent Management Strategy, which will contain proposals and policies for the conservation and enhancement of the area.

1.2 The Appraisal provides information and guidance to those wishing to carry out works in the Conservation Area whether or not they require planning approval. So, it is a useful source of information for property owners, agents, applicants and members of the public who live or work in Leathley.

1.3 The main function of the Conservation Area Appraisal is to ensure that any works in the Conservation Area have regard to the special qualities of the area and to devise a strategy to protect these qualities. The Appraisal will help us understand the

impact that development proposals would have on the Conservation Area and whether these are acceptable and/or appropriate.

1.4 The assessment of the area’s special architectural or historic interest is based on a careful and objective analysis of the area, using a method of analysis recommended by English Heritage. Various qualities are looked at including: historical development, building materials, and relationships between buildings and open spaces. Appraisals aim to be comprehensive but the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

1.5 Leathley Conservation Area was originally designated in 1994. Following public consultation on the draft of this Appraisal, the boundary was amended further on 9 February 2011. This Appraisal aims to describe Leathley as it is today and identify the special character and distinctiveness of its setting, buildings and open spaces. Having identified those special qualities, the Appraisal will examine whether opportunities exist to protect and enhance its character.

1.6 By identifying what makes Leathley special or distinctive it is suggested that any future change, whether to individual buildings, building groups or the village as a whole, will be based on this understanding of the past and the present character of the settlement. In this way, we can manage future change to ensure it makes a positive contribution towards preserving or enhancing its special character.



The view over the Conservation Area from the road to Farnley.

Objectives

The principal objectives of the Appraisal are:

- to define and record the settlement's special character and interest;
- to raise public awareness of the aims and objectives of the Conservation Area designation and stimulate their involvement in the protection of its character;
- to identify what is worthy of preservation to aid understanding;
- to assess the action that may be necessary to safeguard this special interest
- to identify opportunities for enhancement.

2 Planning policy framework

2.1 Local authorities have a duty to designate "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" as conservation areas under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The same Act also requires local planning authorities periodically to review conservation areas.

2.2 Government guidance on all development affecting Conservation Areas is set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) and the accompanying PPS 5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide. The Practice Guide advises local authorities to compile Conservation Area character appraisals as a means of gaining a better understanding of the significance of their Conservation Areas. PPS5 advises that these character appraisals should in turn be consulted in determining planning applications which affect Conservation Areas or their setting.

2.3 In determining planning applications for development within conservation areas and applications for conservation area consent, the Council will give considerable weight to the content of conservation area character appraisals. The consideration of proposals in the context of the description contained in these appraisals will be an important factor in deciding

whether a proposal has an adverse affect on the character and appearance of a conservation area and, therefore, whether it is contrary to saved Local Plan Policy HD3 (which is the key policy for the control of development in conservation areas). The scope of Policy HD3 also covers development proposals outside a conservation area which would affect its setting or views into or out of the Conservation Area.

2.4 Involving the community and raising public awareness is an integral part of the appraisal process and needs to be approached in a pro-active and innovative way. Community involvement helps to bring valuable public understanding and 'ownership' to proposals for the area. A report, included in the appendix, details how the local community was involved and the contribution it has made to this Appraisal.

3 Historic development & archaeology

3.1 The name 'Leathley' is Anglo-Saxon in origin and means 'cultivated land (leah) in a woodland clearing (-ley)'. The number of place names along Wharfedale ending in -ley suggest that the valley was extensive woodland when it was first settled. Fields to the south of the village off Leathley Lane have names which, according to Speight (1900), suggest Saxon possession. Another Saxon link in the village is the dedication of the church to St. Oswald, the Saxon king (634-642) who united the kingdom of Northumbria and promoted the spread of Christianity - though the Church at Leathley is Norman in date.

3.2 In c.1042-66, Leathley comprised two manors. One of them contained four carucates for the plough, a mill, and two acres of meadow, belonging to Archil, whilst the other consisted of one carucate for the plough and two acres of meadow belonging to Ulchil. On partition of the lands by William the Conqueror, Archil's manor went to William de Percy, while Ulchil's manor passed to Giselbert Tyson, who had it farmed by three villanes and one border. Robert de Bruis also had two carucates. Following the Norman Conquest (1066) land ownership was adjusted, with Leathley made into a single township (but without a parish or church). The Domesday Book (1086) records William de Percy as holding the majority of Leathley, with the King holding the land which had belonged to de Bruis. Giselbert Tyson retained his land.

3.3 The origins of the foundation of St. Oswald's Church are unclear but, as at nearby Otley, it would appear that Christianity took hold in Leathley long before the Norman Conquest. It is speculated that some form of preaching cross or timber chapel preceded the Church. The Parish of Leathley did not come into being until after the Norman Conquest and the church appears to have been established then. The tower, chancel arch and parts of the north wall date from the twelfth century. The Church's restoration in 1869 was entirely funded by Francis Hawksworth Fawkes of Farnley Hall.



St. Oswald's Church.

3.4 The rector of the Church was appointed by the Lord of the Manor. Part of the rector's income came from the proceeds of glebe land (agricultural fields owned by the Church). The glebe lands in Leathley are of some antiquity and records from c.1800 show that this land consisted of 64 acres

spread across 30 small plots scattered across the township, reflecting the historic field pattern of Leathley. These lands were later consolidated.

3.5 The de Montalts, who were descendants of the above mentioned Archil, were given the lordship of Leathley following the Norman Conquest. By 1315 the manor was held by the Percys whose coat of arms (a crescent with a fetterlock) is cut into a stone in the nave of the Church. At some unknown point the manor passed to the Lindleys of Farnley Hall, who were living at Farnley Hall in 1378, but several subsequent generations lived at the old hall at Leathley.

3.6 The Poll Tax returns of 1378 record Leathley as home to four 'tailors', though it is not clear if these were tailors who worked with cloth made in Otley or clothiers who manufactured cloth on a domestic scale. The village also had a bow and arrow maker whose produce was, presumably, sold at Otley market.

3.7 In terms of economic activity, throughout the medieval and post-medieval period, Leathley was an agricultural community with a mixture of arable and pastoral farming. Most farmers were tenants rather than outright owners of their land and the fields that made up each farm typically were scattered across the township. In 1588, the tenant farmers had a total of 37 crofts (small enclosed fields) in the vicinity of the built up area of the village, covering

an area of 44 acres. It appears, however, that over the centuries land was bought and sold to create consolidated areas of farmland under a single ownership which could then be enclosed. This activity accelerated over the seventeenth century, with adjoining open fields being bought up and made into small enclosures.

- 3.8 This activity made farms more productive and profitable, with the proceeds from farming often invested in more land or in improved buildings. Hence in Leathley there are a number of farmhouses dating from the seventeenth century onwards (this century is when stone became the most commonly used building material), each designed to reflect the wealth and status of its owner.
- 3.9 In 1703 Robert Hitch added the lordship of Leathley to his estate, which already included Leathley Hall inherited by his ancestor Henry Hitch in 1669. The Hitches were a local family long resident in Leathley. Over the seventeenth century the Hitch family had been buying freehold land and, following the purchase of the lordship and associated land, Robert Hitch became the major landowner of the township. It is known that, in 1588, the lord of the manor owned only a third of the township with the rest of the land free tenanted. So, the Hitch family had acquired a significant proportion of the township before Robert Hitch became lord of the manor.
- 3.10 In 1718, an account of a visitor to Robert Hitch Esq. (who at the time was MP for the Borough of Knaresborough) describes how

Leathley Hall had been transformed into 'a large and convenient edifice as at present improved by the worthy owner, who hath been at great expense in adorning and beautifying it with a new south front, a wing to the east, outhouses, and offices, gardens, and other embellishments...'. Upon gaining the title of lord of the manor, it appears that Robert Hitch carried out extensive building works to the Hall to give it its present appearance.



Leathley Hall as seen from Leathley Lane, across its former Park.

- 3.11 The surviving elements of the walled garden and stables both date from the early eighteenth century. It is likely that the large area of parkland at Barks Hill and between Leathley Lane and Leathley Hall was also established in the early eighteenth century to provide a landscape setting commensurate with the remodelled Hall. The park covered 84 acres and combined a number of arable fields which, to this day, exhibit ridge and furrow patterns from this previous activity.
- 3.12 Robert Hitch died in 1723 and was succeeded by his son Henry Hitch.

It appears that, being a local family which steadily rose to prominence, the Hitches saw themselves as traditional village squires and had an interest in the township. After improving the Hall it appears that the manorial corn mill and mill house were re-built in their present form. The corn mill would have been a source of income for the manor - as any corn ground in the township would, by law, have to be ground at the lord of the manor's corn mill for a fee. Similarly, Manor Farm (now Manor House), the farm dated 1620 serving Leathley Hall, was remodelled and improved in the early eighteenth century. Upon the death of Henry Hitch, his sister Ann Hitch carried out his wish for a schoolhouse and four almshouses to be founded in his memory. These were completed in 1769 with an endowment of £12 a year for the schoolmaster to teach the children of the township, reading, writing and English grammar plus other subjects. £4 a year was endowed for each of the almshouses which were to be occupied by 'indigent persons'. The lord of the manor, the Rector of Leathley and the Rector of Adel were the trustees for the School and Almshouses.

- 3.13 With the expiry of the male line of the Hitch family which purchased the lordship and most of the land in Leathley, they passed by marriage to the Maude family who later sold the estate to Walter Ramsden Fawkes. It appears that Leathley Hall, the much extended and upgraded former home of the Hitches, was for many years tenanted by farmers.

3.14 The gradual purchase of more of the land in Leathley was continued by the Fawkeses. In 1846, Frances Hawksworth Fawkes owned the vast majority of the township. The second largest landowner was his relative Ayscough Fawkes, the rector of St. Oswald's whose holdings were concentrated around Scale Hill. Five other landowners held in total a small number of fields. Fawkes had gradually increased his ownership of land in the township over time. This was a continuation of the same activity by previous lords of the manor in the Fawkes, Maude and Hitch families who increased their ownership of the township field by field.

3.15 In 1846, the land in Fawkes' ownership was, for the main part, farmed by seven tenant farmers who each occupied farms of over 100 acres, making up in total over three quarters of the township of Leathley. However, generally these farms were not in neat, consolidated enclosures and were still scattered to a degree, with most farmers still residing in the clusters of buildings in the village rather than in isolated farmsteads.

3.16 In terms of development very few new buildings were built in Leathley in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most notable additions were the Wesleyan

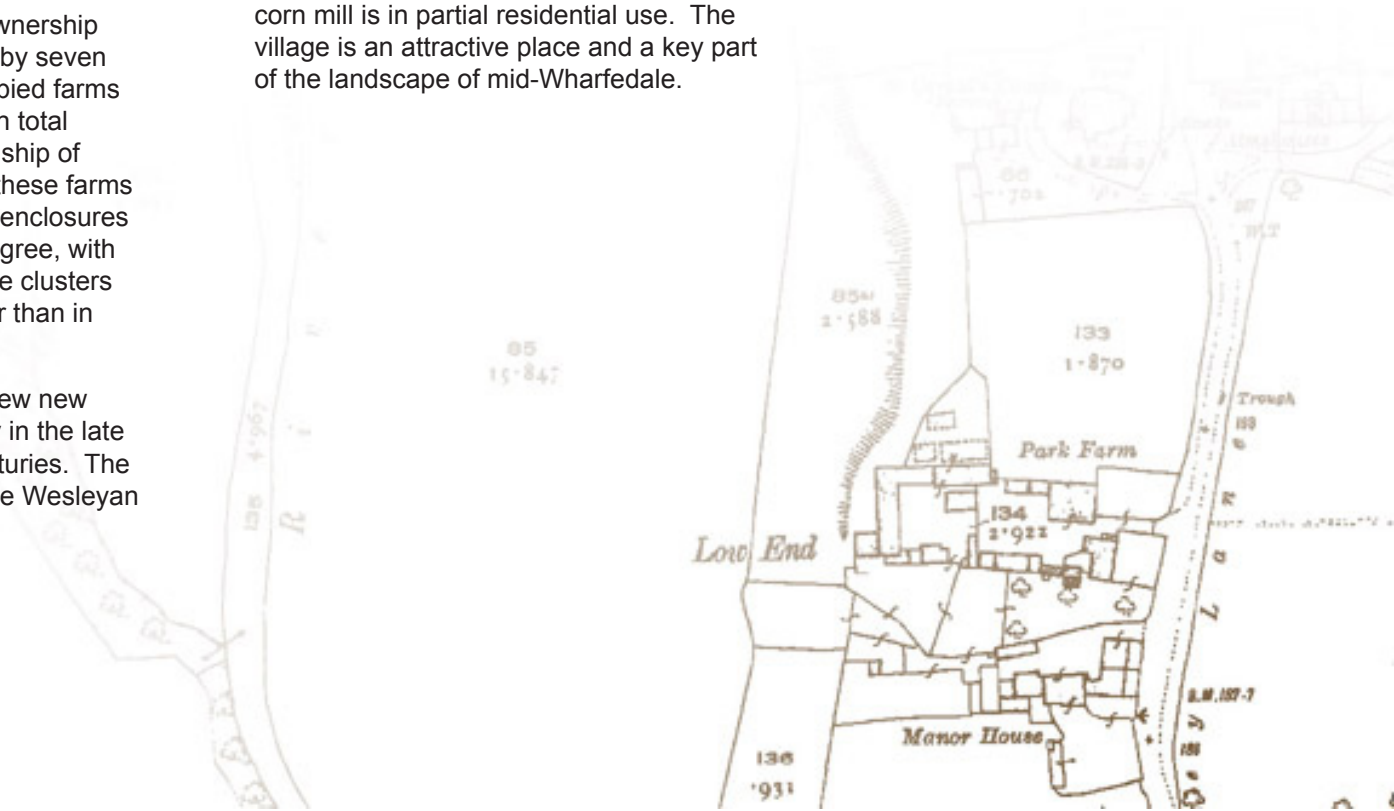
Methodist Chapel dated 1826, a nearby fountain dated 1879 and, opposite the Almshouses, an iron village pump dating from the early nineteenth century.

3.17 At some point in the nineteenth century the manor passed to the Lister Ingham family who moved into Leathley Hall. The Village Hall was added in 1922, with a K6 phonebox nearby in the 1930s completing the group of attractive village buildings and structures adjoining The Green.

3.18 Despite the conversion of many of the old barns and farm buildings to residential use, Leathley retains a strongly rural and agricultural character. Its Church, Village Hall and Almshouses remain in use, and its corn mill is in partial residential use. The village is an attractive place and a key part of the landscape of mid-Wharfedale.



Leathley Village Hall.



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4 Location & landscape setting

4.1 Leathley is near the southern edge of the Harrogate District, in the county of North Yorkshire and lies just outside the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which extends to the opposite side of the River Washburn. The village is some 10km southwest of Harrogate and 2.5km northeast of Otley. The villages of Pool-in-Wharfedale, Farnley and Stainburn are respectively approximately 3km to the southeast, northeast and west of Leathley.

4.2 Leathley stands on the south facing side of Wharfedale, a broad U-shaped valley with significant urban and suburban development on the north facing side. The south-facing slope, by contrast, is typified by scattered settlements and isolated farmsteads, giving a strongly rural character. This valley side has an undulating character, as it is regularly incised by tributaries of the Wharfe which drain the farmland and moorland above the valley. The River Washburn is one of the more substantial tributaries, draining a catchment area which extends as far north as Greenhow and Craven Moor. Prior to the building of reservoirs at Thruscross, Fewston, Swinsty and Lindley Wood, and the construction of a trout farm at Lindley, the Washburn was a more substantial river which was prone to flooding in the vicinity of Leathley.

4.3 The Washburn Valley opens up as it joins Wharfedale, particularly along the eastern side. Leathley is situated at this point giving long distance views over the



A view over the Conservation Area and along the north side of Wharfedale.



A view across Wharfedale with Otley Chevin presiding over the valley.

gently sloping terrain of the lower valley side. The precipitous incline of Barks Hill to the northeast of the Conservation Area effectively acts as the corner between Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley. From the village it is possible to look along Wharfedale to the southeast toward the railway viaduct of the Leeds-York line. Pool-in-Wharfedale is prominent in views across Wharfedale, with the mass of the buildings and the towering chimney of Pool

Paper Mill a prominent landmark in the landscape. The woodland at Otley Chevin presides over the panoramic views and is a key feature of mid-Wharfedale. Otley itself is partially concealed from view from within Leathley by the western side of the Washburn Valley.

4.4 On a more local scale, the topography within the village falls from the northeast to the southwest. There is a gentle climb along Leathley Lane as it passes through Leathley, with the land to the east of the lane higher than that to the west. The village green is approximately sixty metres above sea level with Hartmires and Fish-pool both being higher than this point. From here the land rises with increasing steepness to the north and northeast. The prevailing landscape is one of pastoral fields bounded by dry stone walls, fences and hedges.

4.5 The landscape in and around the village is predominantly open fields, giving



The distinctive form of Barks Hill forms the immediate northern setting of the Conservation Area.

the village a strongly rural character. Although many of the fields have been enlarged, narrow medieval style fields with gentle S-shaped boundaries exist along Leathley Lane near the valley floor, and to the northeast of the village in the Barks Hill area. Beyond Barks Hill to the north and east are the large fields dating from the eighteenth century. These are more regular in shape and have straight boundaries.

- 4.6 The most notable exceptions to the prevailing agricultural setting are the wooded banks of the Washburn which coalesce with substantial areas of woodland plantation at Farnley Lake and Lindley Wood to the west and north-west of Leathley respectively.
- 4.7 In terms of the road network, Leathley Lane forms part of an ancient route from the river crossing at Pool-in-Wharfedale to Killinghall via Beckwithshaw. This route was turnpiked in the nineteenth century as a route from Bradford to Killinghall. This route is the modern day B6161, which places the village on a relatively busy through route. The alternative

route through the area is the A658 which came into existence in the early nineteenth century as a new turnpike road which cut through the fields of Leathley township. This route is busier than the B6161, but the latter is favoured by those wishing to bypass Harrogate.

- 4.8 The village comprises spaced, distinct clusters of development which nominally include the isolated farmsteads and other groups of buildings along Leathley Lane and Stainburn Lane. This scattered development is an important component of the landscape and enhances the rural agricultural 'sense of place' of the Conservation Area. Like the main clusters of development in the Conservation Area, the outlying buildings and groups are important components of the overall landscape.



Low End is one of several distinctive clusters of development which make up the village of Leathley.

5. Landscape character

- 5.1 The location, topography and settlement pattern of Leathley mean it has a varied landscape setting and an open character with significant views of the wider landscape of Wharfedale. This section describes the character of the landscape in and around Leathley. It identifies the key landscape characteristics which make the village distinctive.

Parkland

- 5.2 The 84 acres of former parkland are a substantial feature of the landscape at Leathley. Robert Hitch Esq. might have created the park following his purchase of the lordship of Leathley in 1703. He immediately set about extending and remodelling Leathley Hall and combined several arable furlongs to create parkland commensurate with the Hall. The use of this land as parkland was short-lived. It is now subdivided into five fields but its former extent is still discernible in the landscape and the use of post and wire fences as boundary features means that it is still discernible as a single, substantial open space. Ridge and furrow patterns from the arable farming which took place on the land over the centuries before the creation of the park can still be perceived from above (particularly following snowfall). Since these fields were created out of the parkland, they have deliberately been farmed in an un-intensive manner in order to maintain the historic interest and visual character of the land. This sensitive management has retained what could have easily been lost.



The former park to Leathley Hall, which is visible in the distance. There is a strong line of trees across the Park which might have been first planted when the park was established.

- 5.3 Apart from its scale and openness, which allow significant views of Leathley Hall from Low End, the trees within this former parkland make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of Leathley. A long, irregular line of trees extends from Leathley Lane by Manor House towards the Hall before sweeping north towards Barks Hill. This line of trees was even remarked upon by Speight in his 1900 description of mid-Wharfedale: 'between the bridge and the Almshouses there is a noticeable avenue of fine old trees striking across the park and up the hill northwards'. Barks Hill forms an attractive backcloth to Leathley and retains its parkland character due to the surviving trees planted on its slopes. The original, or oldest, surviving trees in the former Park were presumably planted by Robert Hitch when he created the Park. The ongoing management of the former parkland has seen new trees planted to replace dead trees. The siting and arrangement of the older and younger

trees means they make a significant contribution to the Conservation Area's character.

Fields

- 5.4 The pastures bounded by dry stone walls, hedges and fences dominate the landscape around Leathley. The fields in the vicinity of the village were small crofts which were probably the earliest enclosures in the village. With the exception of the former park, the fields which are interspersed with the built up areas of Leathley were enclosed before



Fields such as the one in the foreground are key to traditional rural character of Leathley. They separate the clusters of development which make up the village.

1600. This land use is so pervasive that the built form of Leathley is interspersed with the fields. The clustering of buildings in Leathley is not such that there is a distinct, enclosed village 'envelope' surrounded by fields, but rather the fields are a key component of the settlement pattern which underpins Leathley's distinctiveness.

5.5 This creates a strong visual link between the village and its surroundings and emphasises the agricultural heritage of the place. The village's layout means it sprawls over a large area, with the village comprising a mixture of isolated clusters of development and individual outlying houses and farmsteads. The Conservation Area at Leathley covers three distinct clusters of development which share the strongest visual and historical relationship: the cluster at The Green, Low End and Leathley Hall and associated buildings. Other clusters of development can be found at Fishpool, the Old Corn Mill and along Stainburn Lane. The village is, in effect, intertwined with the surrounding landscape and, when seen from a distance, sits unobtrusively in it.

5.6 The sense of spaciousness within village is strengthened by the siting of buildings, for the most part, away from the road behind gardens or other open spaces. This means the street spaces are generally not constrained by the built form nor strongly enclosed. In addition, the spacing of buildings allows views between to the pastoral backcloth of the village.

The Churchyard

5.7 The Churchyard at St Oswald's is a unique open space. It contains headstones dating back several centuries and a number of mature trees. Fortunately, the Churchyard has not been subject to recent re-ordering or clearance. This means the Grade I Listed Church has



The Churchyard at St. Oswald's.

an aesthetically complementary immediate setting provided by the gravestones and monuments which are testament to the passing of time and provide a sense of permanence. Among the monuments in the Churchyard is Leathley's War Memorial. Unusually for such a monument, it takes the form of an Anglo-Saxon cross with spiral and trefoil decoration to the shaft.

5.8 The trees within the Churchyard are in an informal arrangement and this sense of informality is enhanced by the mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees. The trees are now of such an age that the height and mass of their canopies shroud the Church (with some of the trees taller

than the Church tower). Today this makes the Church significantly less visible in the landscape than in centuries past. Indeed, looking over the village from Farnley Park the Church is barely discernible in the landscape when the trees are in leaf. The substantial canopies also limit views into the Churchyard and give it a strong sense of seclusion and enclosure. The Churchyard is elevated above Leathley Lane and Church Fold with a stone retaining wall. The principal entrance to the Churchyard is via a simple, attractive gateway with a simple iron lantern arch.

The Green

5.9 Historically, the village green covered the site of the Village Hall and car park, the area in front of the Churchyard wall, and the area to the south of the junction of Leathley Lane and The Green as far as the village pump. This space would



The Green.

always have been bisected by lanes (as it is now) and it may be speculated that the Almshouses were built on a part

of The Green. This space would not have functioned in recent centuries as a conventional common or green where livestock grazed, as the space which performed this function was further up Leathley Lane, opposite Fishpool Farm.

- 5.10 Instead, this space took the role of a stopping point, given its location at a junction by the Church, and hence it gained various functions over time. It is at The Green that all of the principal items of street furniture are found, including the village stocks, water pump, phone box, and post box, adding interest to the street scene and contributing to the sense that this is the heart of this scattered settlement. What remains of The Green itself is open, grassed verge-like space bordering the roadways and forming an island at the junction of Leathley Lane.

Grass Verges

- 5.11 The roadways through Leathley are edged on one or both sides by grassed verges. These are important to the rural character of the place. The contribution of the verges to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is being



Grassed verges contribute to the rural character of the place.

undermined by vehicles driving onto the verges and churning them up, and the laying of precast concrete kerbs as a means of protecting the edges. While the visual appearance of churned up verges is unattractive and destructive, the areas of concrete kerbing have introduced a discordant, urban note into the street scene. A more appropriate solution to this widespread problem should be considered.

Key Views

- 5.12 The scattered layout of Leathley, and its location on the valley side, has created a mix of short and longer distance views which encapsulate the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the settlement's place in the landscape. A list of key views in Leathley Conservation Area (which is by no means exhaustive) is as follows:

- Views over the village and Washburn Valley from Farnley Park en-route to Farnley.
- Views north from the lowest stretch of Leathley Lane looking north and taking in the Church, Almshouses and Hall.
- Views from around The Green looking towards Low End with the opposite side of Wharfedale as a backdrop.
- The views from different locations across the former parkland looking towards any of Leathley Hall, Low End and the Almshouses, particularly views which include the mature trees within the former parkland.
- The view across the field of the southern side of St. Oswald's Church and Ye Widgeon's Roost.



Almshouses & Village Hall across Park.

- Views south across the valley from the Village Hall and Almshouses.

Trees

- 5.13 Trees make an important contribution to the townscape of the Conservation Area. The contributions made by the trees within the Churchyard and former parkland have already been described in the paragraphs above. The most significant groups of trees within the Conservation Area, aside from the two groups already described, are found along the northern, eastern and south-western edges of the Conservation Area.



Trees are a key component of Leathley's special character. The group in the Churchyard and behind the Almshouses forms an attractive backcloth to the Conservation Area.

- 5.14 The trees to the north and east of The Almshouses form an attractive backcloth to this landmark building and The Green in front of it. When viewed from further afield as part of the overall landscape of the village, this group of trees links the group within the churchyard and the clusters of tree on Barks Hill to provide a leafy,



The trees within the former park are of high townscape value.

well-defined northern edge of the Conservation Area.

- 5.15 The grounds of Leathley Hall at the eastern end of the Conservation Area contain numerous mature trees. These provide a fitting immediate context for the Hall and terminate views eastward from around Low End and Hall Lane. These trees are generally sited around the perimeter of the grounds, but do not obscure the attractive Classical façade of the eastern side of the Hall. More recently planted trees along Hall Lane are beginning to give the Lane an attractive, avenue character and provide both an pleasant edge to the former parkland and a fitting approach to the Hall.

- 5.16 The trees to the south and west of Manor House are the nearest thing to woodland within the Conservation Area. The densely packed canopies of this L-shaped cluster of trees screen views to the south west of the Conservation Area and emphasise its edge. The southern leg of this group of trees is self-sown and lines the eastern bank of the Washburn.
- 5.17 Outside of the above areas, trees are by and large limited to those around field edges and within gardens. Fortunately, the planting of evergreen shrubs and trees is limited. Such planting introduces a discordant, suburban aspect to rural villages such as Leathley and closes off views.

Landscape Features

- 5.18 The Washburn River flows southwards on the western fringe of the village and Conservation Area, but is not particularly visible nor prominent from within the Conservation Area. The built up area of the Conservation Area is sited to avoid the floods which were a serious problem in Leathley until the construction of the reservoirs further upstream. The trees which line the river's banks make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area's setting.

Significant Boundary Features & Boundary Walls

- 5.19 The predominant boundary features used in and around Leathley are traditional

dry stone walls, hedges and fences. Stone walls typically are found as field boundaries adjacent to Leathley Lane and as boundaries to the curtilages of houses. Fences and hedges typically used as a boundary between adjacent fields or between gardens and fields. The boundary walls help to define 'public' and 'private' space and provide a clear, defined edge to street spaces. Fortunately, there are little or no instances where boundary walls have been demolished or part demolished (which could cause the street space to 'bleed' into private space).



Simple, humble boundary features such as this dry stone wall make an important contribution to Leathley's local character.

- 5.20 Within the village, the boundary walls and gateways to some of the buildings have subtle architectural treatment which adds to the richness of the street scene. For example, Park Farm is fronted by a garden wall laid in diminishing courses with flat stone copings. The gatepiers are simple, smooth, square blocks of stone topped by a flat capping with moulded edges. Park

View, Barn Cottage and Park house are fronted by a dwarf wall with chamfered stone copings topped by simple railings with spiked finials. The gateways to both Park View and The Almshouses feature monolithic circular gateposts.

Strategic Pedestrian Routes

- 5.21 Pedestrian access through and around Leathley is largely limited to the road network of Leathley Lane, The Green/ Stainburn Lane and Hall Lane. At Leathley Hall, Hall Lane becomes little more than a track. From here, there are footpaths to Riffa to the east, Pool Bridge to the south and Hilltop Farm up

on Stainburn Lane to the north. All three of these routes cross the fields. Slightly closer to the village, another path north of the Hall leads up to Hartmires on Stainburn Lane. Formerly, there was another footpath from the Almshouses which joined this path near Hartmires, but it is no longer in existence. Perhaps it only served as a short cut between Hartmires and the Church when this house was the rectory? Just outside the Conservation Area, a footpath to the south of Church View links Leathley Lane and Farnley Park, skirting along the edge of the woodland at Farnley Lake.

Wildlife & Nature Conservation

- 5.22 The area is rich in biodiversity with Farnley Lake a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) to the northwest of the village and two other SINC's to the northeast of the village at Willow Garth, West Beck and Low Wood. This places additional protection on these areas which makes up part of the backcloth to Leathley.

6. The form & character of buildings

6.1 There are eleven buildings in Leathley Conservation Area included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. However, there are also a number of un-listed historic buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and are of particular interest locally. These buildings have been identified during the public consultation and are recorded on Map 3 of this Appraisal. There is a general presumption that buildings of local interest within the Conservation Area will be protected from demolition and the Borough Council will be especially vigilant when considering applications for alteration or extension.

6.2 The Listed Buildings in Leathley can be located on Map 2:

Church of St Oswald	Grade I
The Almshouses	Grade II
Leathley Hall	Grade II
Stables south of Leathley Hall	Grade II
Archway with flanking wall northeast of Leathley Hall	Grade II
Manor House	Grade II
Mounting block near east gate to church	Grade II
Stocks near east gate to Church	Grade II
Ye Widgeons Roost, Church Fold	Grade II

Standpipe south of the Almshouses **Grade II**
K6 telephone kiosk near St Oswald's Church **Grade II**



St Oswald's Church. Here we can see its Norman tower, and its extensively restored nave and southern aisle. The small mullioned windows and doorway may well be re-used parts of the 1470 re-build.

6.3 The Church of St. Oswald contains the oldest built fabric in the village. Its tower, chancel arch and part of the north wall are all date from the twelfth century, while an internal door with elaborate decorated iron strapwork is twelfth or possibly thirteenth century in date. The simple square tower is, naturally, the dominant feature and can be seen from some distance. It rises in four stages with irregular quoined angles hemming in coursed gritstone rubble which gives the Church a distinctively rustic, Pennine dale character. The shallow pyramidal tower roof is not prominent, meaning the mass of the stonework below dominates. It was speculated by Speight (1900) that the tower was designed to double as a peel tower - a refuge in

an era when it was not unheard of for townships to be pillaged and burned by Scottish raiders. The nave of the church was rebuilt and enlarged in 1470 but is largely concealed by the north and south aisles. The Church was restored in 1869. This was entirely funded by F H Fawkes of Farnley Hall. The tall gothic revival style arched and traceried openings, and the steeply pitched roofs all date from this restoration.



The Almshouses.

6.4 Across Leathley Lane from the Church, and one of the principal buildings in the village, are the Almshouses built in 1769 as a School and Almshouses (referred in the inscription on the building as a hospital). They were erected in memory of Henry Hitch, the last in the male line of a local family which succeeded in becoming the lords of Leathley manor and owners of the majority of the township. The architecture of the Almshouses echoes the formal Classical style of Leathley Hall and gives them an attractive, dignified appearance. The symmetrical principal elevation with a projecting three bay central section corresponds with the

southern and eastern elevations of the Hall. The main differences, aside from scale, are that the central element is two storeys while the rest of the building is single storey, and the central gable is hipped. The taller central projection was originally the School and was in use until the 1920s, when the school relocated to the Village Hall. The former school is now another Almshouse. The semi-circular window at first floor is set in a recess which continues to ground floor and frames the former school entrance with moulded stone jambs and a pulvinated frieze topped by a moulded cornice. This 'centrepiece' to the elevation is flanked by regularly spaced, symmetrically-arranged door and window openings with projecting plain stone surrounds. The single storey wings have hipped roofs. The arrangement of the three corniced stone chimneys reinforces the symmetry of the elevation.

6.5 Leathley Hall is another principal building in the village. It was rebuilt in its present form by Robert Hitch in the early eighteenth century. The Hall's main elevation faces west towards the village and over its parkland, rather than south, giving the Hall more presence in the village than it would have if a side or secondary elevation faced west. This elevation incorporates a mixture of Classical and vernacular details. It is nine bays long with the central three bays slightly narrower than the rest and projecting forward of the rest of the elevation under a central gable. This gable is coped with kneelers at the eaves, like the other gables on this building. All corners have regular chamfered quoins. The main doorway is



Leathley Hall and, to the right, its stables. Both are Grade II Listed.

set in the middle bay of the central gable. It is in a panelled recess with semi-circular fanlight above. These openings are framed by a columned door case topped by an open triangular pediment. This Classical style doorcase is the decorative centrepiece of the elevation. The other openings are tall window openings with Georgian sash windows and moulded architraves. The windows to the upper floor are taller than those at ground floor giving a 'piano nobile' effect. The spacing of the bays means that this Classical façade is not quite symmetrical, which is compounded by the roof which is gabled at one end and hipped at the other, and the asymmetrical arrangement of the moulded cornice chimneys.

6.6 The stables serving the Hall are almost as large as the Hall itself in terms of its height and footprint, but the hipped roof, and plainer architecture communicate that this building is secondary to the Hall. The stables were built in the early twentieth century by Robert Hitch, but were altered later in the twentieth century. The positions of the chimneys suggest that the northern end of the building suggests

some form of domestic accommodation (for staff) or possibly offices at the end of the building, which is also the only element where there are tall Georgian sash window openings at ground floor. The stables' main elevation faces east and is seven bays long, with a near-symmetrical elevation altered by later openings. The end bays project forward slightly from the main body of the building under hipped roofs. These projecting bays have chamfered quoins. The stone string between ground and first floors sweeps upwards where it meets the quoins. The majority of the remaining windows are paired fixed and casement windows with square mullions and projecting plain stone surrounds.

6.7 The walled garden at Leathley Hall dates from the early-to-mid eighteenth century. The southern wall of the garden, which contains its arched main entrance, is listed. This section of wall is twenty metres long and three metres high with the taller, ramped central section four metres high. The wall is randomly coursed brick, but the copings and gateway are sandstone. The gateway has plinthed and imposed jambs topped by a voussoired semi-circular arch with an oversized projecting keystone. This keystone carries a projecting mould topped by a stone block.



The walled garden at Leathley Hall



Manor House.

6.8 Manor House is the principal building in the cluster of buildings which comprise Low End. The house is not known ever to have been a manor house, but was more than likely the manor farm (i.e. the major farm belonging to the lord of the manor and the farm most closely associated with the Hall). A lintel on the right hand gable was probably originally over the front door. It is dated 1620 (the probable date of the house's construction). The front elevation, however, is eighteenth century in character as the mullioned window openings date from this era. The three-light plain stone windows with slightly recessed square mullions are typical details of the eighteenth, rather than seventeenth, century. The central Venetian window to the upper floor is in the same style as the other openings and introduces a hint of Classicism to the elevation. The arrangement of the other window openings, to make them roughly evenly spaced and symmetrical, also hints at Classicism but this is undone by the off-centre doorway which probably relates to a seventeenth century internal layout of the house. The stone porch is later. Manor House is made of coursed gritstone with quoined angles.

6.9 Ye Widgeons Roost, a farmhouse, is another of the principal buildings in the village. It is unclear how long the house has been so named, or if it has any earlier names (a widgeon is a species of duck, hence the name of the farmhouse may arise from its proximity to the Washburn and its floodplain). The exterior of the building suggests a seventeenth century origin, with extensive alterations in the eighteenth century. The westernmost bay of the house exhibits double chamfer mullion windows set in chamfered reveals



Ye Widgeon's Roost..

to both ground floor and first floor. The upper window is a four light window with a central king mullion. The ground floor window is under a drip mould. These windows are typical seventeenth century openings for this region. The other windows on the elevation are to the east of the gabled porch with a gently arched door opening with chamfered reveals. These windows are set in slightly projecting, square, plain stone reveals with slightly recessed, slender, square stone mullions. These details are more typical of the eighteenth century. The long, four-bay

front elevation is under a continuous stone slate roof with corniced chimneys at the apex of each gable, with tabling and shaped kneelers below. The ashlar balustrade with shaped balusters and square dies in front of the house is more than likely salvaged from elsewhere rather than built especially for this farmhouse.

6.10 Four listed items of street furniture contribute to the attractiveness of the village and its sense of place, complementing the Church and Almshouses at The Green. The oldest of these are the village stocks, which were probably erected in the seventeenth century. Curiously, there are five leg holes rather than an even number. The stock rails are flanked by stone pillars, the right one is broken, but the left retains its full 1.5 metre height and faceted ball finial. According to Speight (1900) this pillar: 'has traces of old shackle-irons near the top. It has evidently been used as a whipping-post...'

6.11 At the opposite side of the Church gate to the stocks are the mounting steps, used



The village stocks with integral whipping post on the left. Curiously, there is an odd number of leg holes.



The mounting steps outside the churchyard.

to assist riders mounting and dismounting from horses. The steps are made of squared gritstone with three steps on the upper side and five steps on the lower side due to the fall of the land. The steps date from the eighteenth century, so it could be speculated that they were erected by the Hitches who built the nearby Almshouses.

- 6.12 The village stand pipe or pump stands to the south of The Green and dates from the early or mid-nineteenth century. It is made of cast iron and takes the form of a fluted column with a domed capping with bud finial. The lion's head spout is below the capping and is attached to a roll



The village pump. Was it a philanthropic gift like the Almshouses?

moulding. The telephone box to the west of the Village Hall completes the cluster of historic street furniture around The Green. It is of the familiar Sir Giles Gilbert Scott 'K6' design of 1935 and is of cast iron.

- 6.13 The key characteristics of the local architectural style based on the principal elevations of the historic buildings are:



Once common, K6 phoneboxes such as this are becoming increasingly rare, with some such as this one in Leathley being protected by Listed status.

General form

- 6.14 Buildings are either oriented with their main frontages either facing the street or other wise face south and present a secondary (gabled) elevation to the street. The most significant exception to this is Leathley Hall which is designed to face west, towards the village and over its parkland. The majority of the roofs are gabled and the ridges run parallel to the principal elevation. The Hall, its stables and the Almshouses all have hipped roofs. Buildings are generally two storeys, though the Village Hall and most of the Almshouses are single storey. The presence of verges and green spaces such as gardens in front of buildings means that virtually all buildings are set back from the street. Roughly half of the buildings,

such as Park Farmhouse, Park View, Barn Cottage and Park House, are sited so they are parallel with the street. The rest of the buildings, such as Manor House and Ye Widgeon's Roost are orientated to give a more southerly aspect and as a result are set at an angle to the street. Buildings and terraces tend to be well spaced.

- 6.15 Roof pitches are moderate and gables tend to be symmetrical with front and rear eaves at the same height. Buildings like Park Farmhouse and the Manor House have asymmetrical gables due to the presence of rear lean-tos and offshuts. The row which includes Park View and the Village Hall have noticeably shallow roof pitches.



This view of Low End shows the typical height and form of buildings in the Conservation Area, as well as the way buildings are either oriented to face the road or south.

Materials

- 6.16 Sandstone and gritstone are the predominant walling and boundary wall materials in Leathley, reflecting the availability of this material locally. Roofs are clad in stone slate, regardless of age or original status, although the Village Hall has been re-roofed in artificial stone slates following the theft of the original stone slate roof. Windows and doors are made of painted timber.

Architectural detailing

6.15 The majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area are vernacular in style, which gives the village its distinctive Pennine dale character. This said, the Hall and the buildings associated with it, including the Almshouses and the Manor House, incorporate varying degrees of Classical detailing, giving them a distinguishable group value. Typical Classical features in these buildings are symmetrical (or near symmetrical) elevations, regularly spaced openings and some sort of central feature such as a decorative doorway, arched window or Venetian window. St. Oswald's Church



Stone slate, stone walling, lime mortar and timber gutters, windows and doors are the most commonly used material in the Conservation Area.

incorporates a mixture of vernacular details which tell the story of its Norman construction and evolution over the centuries, plus extensive Gothic Revival

style openings and steeply pitched roofs which date from the Church's restoration in 1867.

Roof detailing

- 6.16 The majority of the buildings have stone tabling at the gables with kneelers at the corner where the tabling meets the eaves. Roof pitches are simple and uninterrupted by dormers or rooflights. A proliferation of rooflights and the introduction of dormer windows would be significantly detrimental to the roofscape of the Conservation Area, which is highly prominent when seen from further uphill.
- 6.17 Chimneys are situated at ridge level emerging at the apex of a gable or part way along the ridge. Chimneys are stone built, robust in appearance and feature a cornice. Chimneystack are always expressed within the thickness of the wall and hence do not stand proud of the external wall.

External walls

- 6.18 The stonework varies with building age and status. The two extremes of the extent



A typical roof in Leathley. The lateral stack on the right is not typical of the Conservation Area.

to which stone was worked and shaped can be found on the same building: St Oswald's Church. The ancient age of the twelfth century tower is communicated by its irregular horizontal courses of rubble, and the inconsistent shapes and sizes of the quoins at its angles. This gives the structure its beautifully rugged, sturdy appearance with the irregular faces of the walls providing shadows and texture. By contrast, the handiwork of the Victorian church restorers to the nave of the Church exhibits a high degree of tooling to give smoother flat wall faces, fine joints and crisp mouldings, mullions and tracery.

- 6.19 The stonework to the other buildings of the Conservation Area lies between these two extremes. The Hall and its stables have smooth, finely jointed elevations as do the Almshouses to a slightly lesser degree. A similar degree of workmanship can be seen in the seventeenth and eighteenth century stonework at Ye Widgeon's Roost and Park Farmhouse, for example, where the stonework is quite finely jointed and



Coursed rubble with traditional lime mortar at St. Oswald's

wall surfaces are smooth. This contrasts with the rougher, less tooled stonework of the barns associated with them, reflecting the respective status these two types of building originally had. Regardless of age, the buildings in Leathley typically have uncluttered flat elevations uninterrupted by significant projections like porches or other front extensions.

- 6.20 Quoins (large corner stones) are a common feature of buildings of all ages in Leathley. The quoins vary with the most worked quoins being the smooth-faced, chamfer edged quoins at the Hall and its stables. With the exception of the quoins to the Church tower, quoins tend to be regular and identically sized regardless of building age or status. Quoined openings in the Conservation Area are limited to barn door openings.
- 6.21 Most window openings are rectangular and always taller than they are wide, giving a vertical emphasis. Windows are well-recessed in the masonry openings to protect them from the elements. Windows are typically set in slightly projecting, plain stone reveals, with the cill projecting further than the rest. Door openings are treated similarly.
- 6.22 The eaves details to most buildings are unadorned, with most gutters being carried on discrete metal brackets. Exceptions include the Village Hall where shaped dentils carry the gutters and the Church which has moulded stone gutters.



Traditional eaves, gable, quoin, stonework and window details at Park Farmhouse

Windows

- 6.23 In Leathley two traditional window types can be found. The most common, vertically sliding sash casement windows, are found on most buildings in the Conservation Area. The other type is the side hung casement window.
- 6.24 The majority of the sash windows in the Conservation Area are multi-pane Georgian style sash windows with slender glazing bars. Windows are testament to both the unavailability of larger sheets of glass and the skilled workmanship of joiners in Georgian times. In time, larger glass panes became more commonly available, resulting in the one-over-one and two-over-two sash windows found at Park House. The survival of sash windows and their variations adds interest to the street scene and is testament to the village's long history.
- 6.25 The side hung casement type window was commonly used before the invention of the sash window (which became the dominant window type in northern England

over the eighteenth century). Therefore side hung casements are generally found on eighteenth century and older buildings such as Ye Widgeon's Roost and Manor House. They are also found on converted barns and farm buildings, such as those at Park Farm. As barns and farm buildings did not traditionally have sash windows, and modern top hinged windows would be inappropriate, side hung windows are a suitable vernacular style detail.



The retention of traditional sash windows has strengthened the group value of these three dwellings

- 6.26 Fortunately, very few traditional sash and casement windows in Leathley have been replaced with PVCu or standard factory made timber windows, which is often to the detriment to the overall character of the buildings concerned. Each inappropriate window installed erodes the character of the Conservation Area and the contribution the fenestration of buildings makes to the street scene.
- 6.27 There are very few dormer windows and rooflights in Leathley and a proliferation of them would be detrimental to the roofscape, which is particularly visible from further up the hill.

7. Character area analysis

7.1 This section examines the buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area in greater detail to identify the special character of the village and to describe the details and features that help define the special “sense of place” of Leathley, which is a scattered, agricultural village in a rural setting despite its proximity to the towns and expanded commuter villages of Wharfedale.

7.2 The dispersed layout of the built-up areas within the Conservation Area means it is readily divided into smaller ‘character areas’ for the purpose of this Appraisal. Although the Conservation Area is divided into sub-areas for this chapter, the significant visual links between the sub-areas is an aspect of the Conservation Area’s character which cannot be ignored. The sub-areas can be defined according to historical development, building form and uses and location. These areas are:

1. **The Church and The Green**
2. **Low End**
3. **The Hall and Former Parkland**

1. The Church and The Green

7.3 This sub-area contains what most people would recognise as the heart of this scattered village and parish given its geographical location, its situation at the junction of the main routes through the area, and the concentration of buildings and structures in or formerly in community use. The elements of this sub-area with a past or present community use are the Church and Churchyard, the Almshouses,

the Village Hall, The Green and car park, the village pump and trough, the village stocks, the mounting steps, the telephone kiosk and post box.

7.4 These seemingly disparate buildings, structures and spaces combine to create a harmonious group which can be seen as an accumulation of past and present activity in the village and are important in distinguishing this place as the heart of a community. The contrasts between these different village buildings creates attractive views and vistas. However, features like traditional stone boundary walls, stone elevations, stone slate roofs traditional openings, grass verges, the southern aspect of principal elevations and the space around buildings are all unifying features.

7.5 The listed status of the principal buildings in this group, the Church and Almshouses, means they have already been described in Section 6 of this Appraisal, as have the telephone kiosk, mounting steps, village pump and stocks, and Ye Widgeon’s Roost (the only private house in this sub-area). The principal open spaces: the Churchyard and The Green have already been described in Section 5.

7.6 The Village Hall is dated 1922 and appears to have been built originally as a school, superseding the school in the Almshouses. It has a gently sloping roof and a primary elevation with an off-centre doorway in a gabled porch with a portal with chamfered reveals and segmental arched head. The

gables to the porch and main body of the building have tabling and shaped kneelers. The artificial stone slate roof is pierced at the ridge by two iron ventilators. The windows to the front elevation are fifteen-over-fifteen pane sash windows. The Village Hall car park, which like the site of the Village Hall itself was once part of The Green, is gravel surfaced and edged with large lengths of timber. It sits discreetly in this sensitive location and does not detract from the ambiance of the area. The car park adjoins the attractive, symmetrical mass of the Almshouses, which are fronted by small front gardens and a dry stone retaining wall.



The barn at Ye Widgeon’s Roost.

7.7 The barn at Ye Widgeon’s Roost is the only building in this sub-area not orientated with its principal elevation facing south. Instead it faces Leathley Lane and occupies a significantly lower position than Ye Widgeon’s Roost. The barn has a long, uninterrupted stone slate roof with tabling and kneelers at the gables.

Apart from small ventilator openings there are few other openings in the coursed stonework other than the central barn door with a voussoired cambered arch head and quoined jambs. The building has a vertical board door. The barn retains its traditional character and complements both the nearby house and other barns in the Conservation Area, contributing to its agricultural character.

2. Low End

7.8 This cluster of buildings appears to have originally been two farmsteads. It is marked on historic maps as 'Low End'. The orientation of the farmhouses, barns and outbuildings at Low End gives this sub-area a distinct character. The buildings at Park Farm are at the northern end of this group. The barns and outbuildings, which are now three dwellings, are set back from Leathley Lane. No.8 Park Farm, the former barn, is set at the back of the site with its principal elevation facing toward Leathley Lane. The conversion retains much of the traditional character of the building, namely an uncluttered tabled stone slate roof, the dominance of the rough faced coursed stonework and traditional barn openings including the camber arched barn door, narrow ventilators and square pitching hole openings. Set at a right angle to No.8 and facing south is another conversion: Nos.4 and 6 Park Farm. This building has an uncluttered stone slate roof and vernacular plain stone openings and is legible as a former farm building rather than a pair of dwellings. Nos. 4-8 Park Lane form a



No.8 Park Farm: a sympathetic barn conversion.

rough L-shape around a gravel surfaced yard into which dry stone walls have been introduced to create subdivisions. The agricultural character of the site is enhanced by the survival of smaller farm buildings and structures, though they appear underused.

7.9 The Park Farm group is fronted to Leathley Lane by Park Farmhouse, and attractive vernacular style farmhouse. It faces onto Leathley Lane and has a symmetrical three bay front elevation with a central doorway flanked by mullioned pairs of sash windows. The house is well-detailed



Park Farmhouse.

with projecting quoins with chamfered edges, projecting plain stone reveals to the openings and moulded stone dentils carrying the gutter. This formal elevation is fronted by a small wall-enclosed garden.

7.10 It is complemented by the longer mass of Park View, Barn Cottage and Park House which has a shallower stone slate roof and is fronted by a formal-looking dwarf stone wall; topped by railings. The building itself appears to have had an unusual evolution. It was possibly built either as a pair of cottages or a house and cottage associated with, and attached to, Manor House, forming the eastern side of the farmyard, which was accessed through the now blocked voussoired square cart entrance which led into the farmyard from Leathley Lane. The name Barn Cottage is misleading, as old OS maps show this flat archway as a route through the building rather than a barn door. Park View and Park House exhibit similar detailing: Victorian two-over-two pane sashes with slightly projecting plain stone reveals. The three bay Park View



Park View, Barn Cottage & Park House.

has the character of an attractive but modest house, particularly given its formal front boundary. The arch-way through to the farmyard was infilled at some point in the twentieth century, creating the dwelling Barn Cottage. The building has an uninterrupted stone slate roof and corniced stone chimneys which all appear to date from the eighteenth century.

- 7.11 The northern range of the farmyard behind Manor House was demolished in the twentieth century, leaving the present L-shaped block of buildings. Manor House faces south and presents a gable to Leathley Lane. The unusual projecting chimneystack is all that remains of the corner building which stood between Manor House and Park House (this appears to have been demolished in the twentieth century). A low lying stone slate roofed outbuilding is attached to the western end of Manor House. It enhances the rural agricultural character of Low End.

3. The Hall and Former Parkland

- 7.12 This sub-area is not publicly accessible and can only be viewed from Leathley Lane and Hall Lane. The architectural and historical interest of the sub-area is largely the product of two or three generations of the Hitch family who were lords of Leathley Manor from 1703 to c.1769 and owned Leathley Hall from 1669-1769. The Hitch family was long resident in Leathley township and appears to have



The openness of the former Park coupled with the western rather than southern orientation of the Hall makes this character area a prominent part of the village scene.

- gradually increased its ownership of land within the township before buying Leathley Hall and, a generation later, the lordship and the lands associated with it. From their impact on the built environment of Leathley it would appear that the Hitches were either keen to leave a legacy or to make their wealth and status apparent, or both. For it appears that, upon acquiring the title of lord of the manor in 1703, Robert Hitch then set about the rebuilding of Leathley Hall into its present form, complete with coach house, walled garden and parkland.
- 7.13 This created Leathley Hall as we know it today (and as described in Section 6). What is unusual about the Hall is that it faces into the village across its open parkland and a western aspect has been chosen over a southern one. Halls and country houses were traditionally well

screened by high walls, perimeter trees and planting, and its principal elevation was usually south facing and only visible to those invited into the estate, with the parkland a private domain. At Leathley Hall the principal elevation is presented to the passer-by at the expense of giving the principal rooms a view across Wharfedale and more daylight. It appears that no effort was made to screen the Hall or its Park. The motivation for this is open to speculation. The upshot of the rebuilding of the Hall and creation of the Park by Robert Hitch means that Leathley is somewhat unique in having a country house as a prominent part of the village scene, it being visible from both of the other sub-areas of the Conservation Area and from the uphill approach to Farnley, where it forms a key element of views over the village.

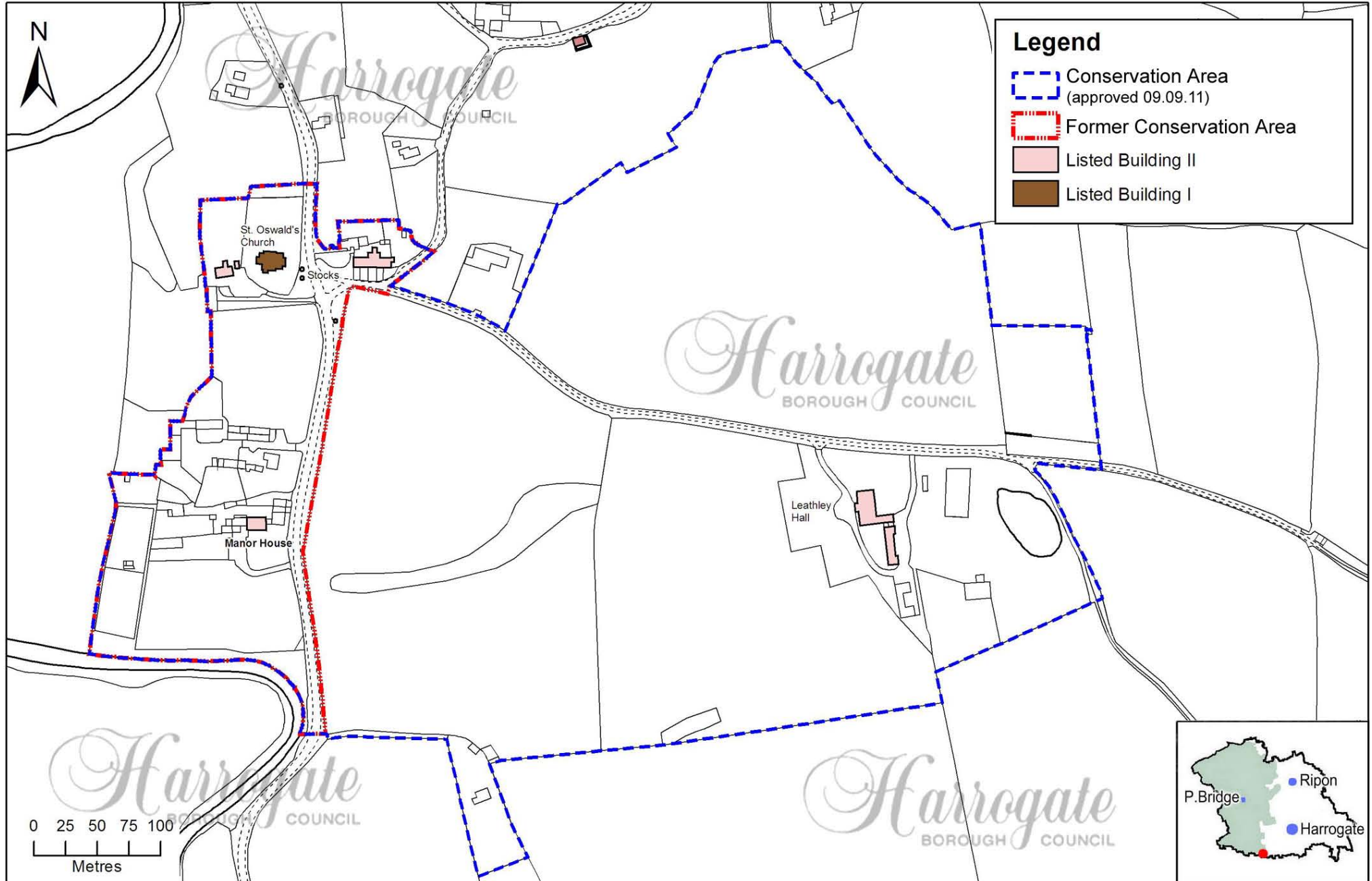
- 7.14 The survival of the stable block, walled garden and fishpond, which are all believed to date from the re-building of the Hall, complete the cluster of development. These elements give a fuller picture of how this early eighteenth century house functioned.

Map 1: Historical development of Leathley



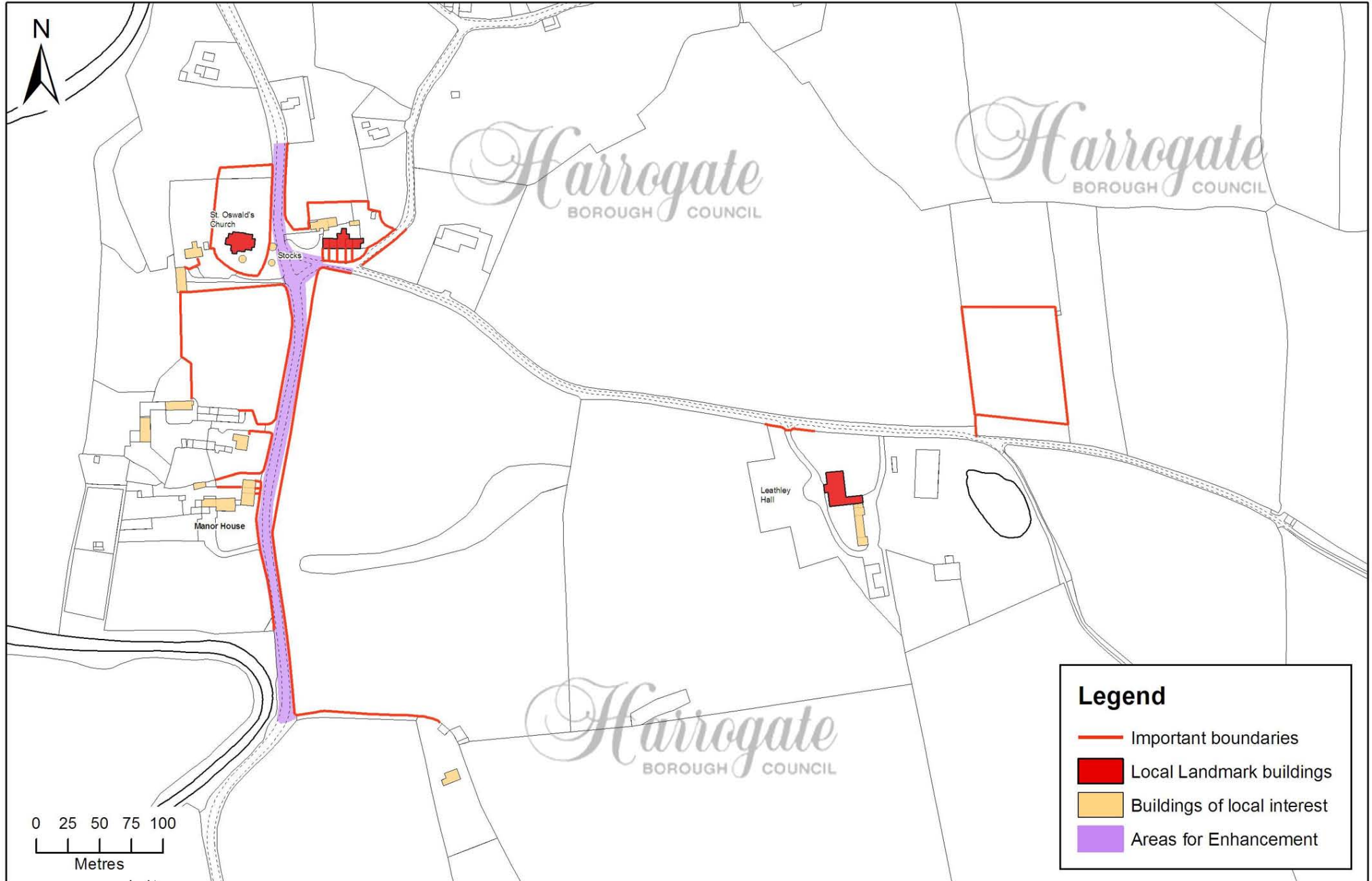
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Map 2: Leathley Conservation Area boundary



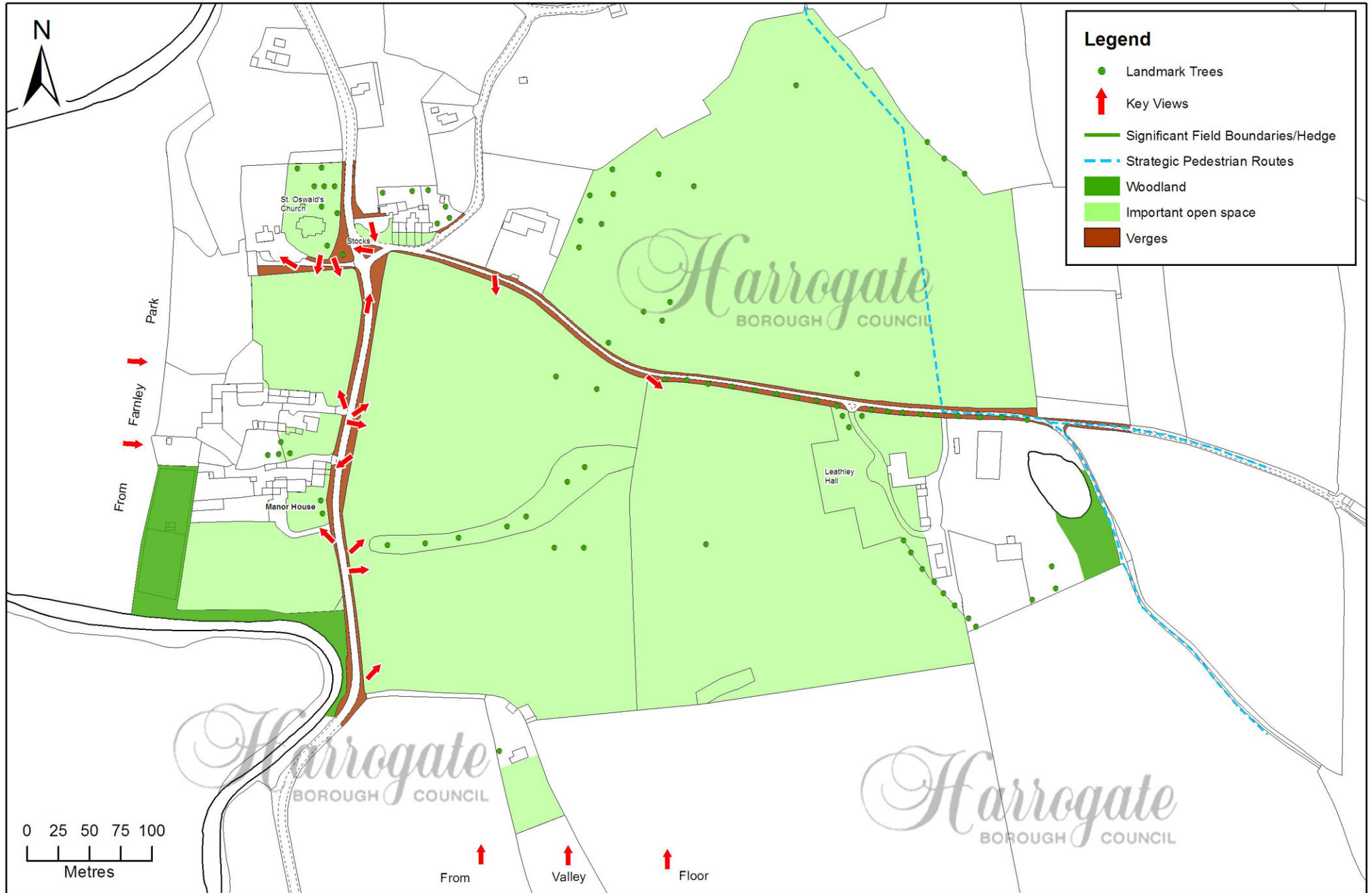
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Map 3: Analysis & concepts



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Map 4: Landscape analysis



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Appendix A

1. Management strategy

The purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy is to provide a clear and structured approach to development and alterations which impact on Leathley Conservation Area. The special qualities, which “it is desirable to preserve or enhance”, have been identified in the Appraisal.

Although Leathley is an attractive village, it does not follow that all buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area necessarily contribute to that attractiveness. Ultimately, the aim is to: (a) explore whether there are any buildings or areas which are at odds with, or spoil, the character of the Conservation Area, and (b) consider how the special character or distinctiveness, as defined in earlier sections of this document, might best be preserved or enhanced.

Clearly, some of the ideas or suggestions will relate to buildings or land in private ownership. It is important to note that individual owners and/or the local community will be under no obligation to make the changes or improvements suggested. However, they may be encouraged to think about the suggestions made and, once the Appraisal has been adopted, the findings and recommendations will be considered by the Borough Council in response to any applications for planning permission, listed building consent, Conservation Area consent and requests for grant aid.

2. Monitoring & review

The Borough Council is required to review its Conservation Areas on a regular basis, this may involve the designation of new Conservation Areas, the de-designation of areas that have lost their special character, or the extension of existing Conservation Areas. The special character of Leathley has been re-evaluated as part of the process of preparing the Character Appraisal and this contributes to the overall review.

Part of the review process involves the maintenance of a comprehensive and up to date photographic record to establish a visual survey of buildings of local interest in the Conservation Area. This record was compiled with the involvement of the community at the public consultation event.

3. Maintaining quality

To maintain the recognisable quality of Leathley Conservation Area and to ensure the highest quality of design, the Council will:

- From time to time review the Character Appraisal and management strategy, which will act as a basis for development control decisions and the preparation of design briefs;
- Require all applications to include appropriate written information and legible, accurate and up to date, fully annotated scale drawings;
- Keep under review a list of buildings of local interest, that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- Where appropriate, prepare supplementary Planning Documents including design guidance and development briefs;
- Expect the historic elements, which are essential parts of the special architectural character of the Conservation Area, to be preserved, repaired and reinstated where appropriate.

4. Conservation Area boundary review

As part of the process of producing the Appraisal, the existing Conservation Area boundary was reviewed. The outcomes of the public consultation event were to extend the Conservation Area boundary to the north, south, east and west. The possible inclusion of these areas was determined on the basis of their “special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

At the consultation event, it was suggested to extend the Conservation Area west as far as the Washburn. It is considered inappropriate to extend the Conservation Area west as far as the Washburn as this land comprises open fields of no special architectural or historic interest and which, by and large, are not visible from public vantage points within the Conservation Area. Furthermore, the fields are already protected from inappropriate development by virtue of being within the Green Belt. Including these fields within the Conservation Area would not strengthen this protection.

Residents at the consultation event suggested that the Conservation Area should be extended north along Leathley Lane to include the fields and development to either side, including the cluster of buildings at Fishpool, the Old Corn Mill and the Holbeck Wood to the north of the Old Corn Mill which contains the mill goit and former mill pond. This substantial area comprises mainly south-facing linear development which is interspersed with garden spaces, paddocks and fields. Holbeck Wood is well-served by public footpaths and is shrouded by dense tree cover. It is considered inappropriate to extend the Conservation Area north to include this area for the following reasons:

- Although attractive, the character of this area is significantly different to that of the Conservation Area in that very few buildings overlook or face onto Leathley Lane and are instead concealed by high hedges or fences. Vistas are channelled along Leathley Lane and there are few opportunities for clear views of many of the buildings or into the spaces along the lane. This contrasts strongly with the Conservation Area where the different clusters of buildings are highly visible and the street spaces have an open character.
- Many of the buildings have significantly large modern extensions and, in several cases, there are modern extensions to the principal elevations. Several of the dwellings have substantial garage blocks. All of these modern alterations, although attractive, undermine the historic character of the area, particularly in comparison with the buildings and spaces already within the Conservation Area, which by and large have not been subject to this degree of alteration.
- The special interest of the Old Corn Mill is protected by its status as a Grade II* listed Building. In the same vein, The Mill House, Fishpool Farm, and the milepost by Milestone House are all protected as Grade II Listed Buildings. Listing confers a higher degree of protection than Conservation Area designation.
- Several of the fields which separate the buildings and groups of buildings have been made into large gardens. These changes have significantly altered the general landscape character of this area by introducing tall boundaries and domestic planting. This contrasts with the Conservation Area where the buildings typically

have tight curtilages and open fields are the dominant open spaces.

- This area is protected from development of an inappropriate location, height, scale or footprint by virtue of it being designated Green Belt. This places a far stronger presumption against development than Conservation Area designation.
- The additional planning controls that Conservation Area designation confers would not be able to protect the mill goit and pond at Holbeck Wood. Conservation Area designation protects buildings, trees, open spaces, buildings and above ground structures.
- The topography and tree cover are such that there are no strong visual links between this area and development within the Conservation Area.

It was also suggested at the consultation workshop to extend the Conservation Area boundary along Stainburn Lane to include Barks Hill, The Rectory, Green Lane Farm, the former Methodist Chapel, West Winds, The Cottage and Hartmires. This area of scattered development ascends towards Stainburn. It is considered inappropriate to include this area within the Conservation Area for the following reasons:

- Although the area is attractive and traditional in character, it consists of scattered development with most buildings isolated from each other. There is not the same clustering of development as in the Conservation Area, and hence there is not the same sense of place.
- This area is protected from a development of an inappropriate location, height, scale or footprint by virtue of it being designated Green Belt. This places a far stronger presumption against development than Conservation Area designation.
- Some of the buildings have been significantly extended, which has undermined their traditional character and appearance.
- The special interest of The Cottage and the former Methodist church are already protected due to their status as Grade II Listed Buildings. Listing confers a higher degree of protection than Conservation Area designation.

- The topography and tree cover are such that there are no strong visual links between this area and development within the Conservation Area.

Local residents suggested that Leathley Hall, its stables, pond, walled garden and its former park should be included in the Conservation Area due to their historical interest and prominence in the landscape. Although the Hall is protected by Listing status and the fields which were formerly the Park are within the Green Belt, it is felt that their strong historical and visual links to the existing Conservation Area mean they form a valuable component of the special interest of Leathley. The Hall was built for the same family which built the Almshouses and probably improved buildings such as Manor House. A later occupant paid for the restoration of St. Oswald's. The orientation of the Hall to face west towards the village rather than south and for the land in front of the Hall to be deliberately left open is highly unusual for a house of its original status and function and adds to Leathley's sense of place. A by-product of this is that the Hall is visible across the parkland from both of the clusters of development already within the Conservation Area.

The line of trees extending the former park is a strong land-scape feature which is currently unprotected. The completeness of the Hall with stables, fishpond and walled garden creates a related group of historical interest. It is felt that these reasons provide



Stainburn Lane: an attractive landscape, but development is very scattered.



Leathley Lodge is remote and invisible from within the village and is already protected by Listing status.

sufficient justification for the inclusion of the Hall and former parkland between the Hall and rest of the village within the Conservation Area.

The final boundary suggestion made at the workshop was to extend the Conservation Area to the south to include Leathley Lodge, Leathley Bridge and Flatts House. The Lodge and bridge are Grade II Listed Buildings. It is felt that these designations, coupled with their distance from the rest of the village and the screen between the village and Lodge provided by the trees along the bank of the Washburn mean it would be inappropriate to include them within the Conservation Area. Flatts House dates from the first half of the nineteenth century and was originally called Flatts Villa. It is to the south of the former parkland of Leathley Hall, making it quite prominent in the landscape. The house is south facing and retains its traditional character and appearance, and is still legible as a modest late Georgian villa. With the inclusion of the former parkland to the north within the Conservation Area boundary, the inclusion of Flatts House is feasible.



Flatts House is a traditional late Georgian House which is prominently located at the edge of the former park to Leathley Hall.

The draft of the Conservation Area Appraisal, along with a proposed boundary to the conservation area underwent a six-week consultation period with residents and other stakeholders. Several comments on the proposed boundary were received.

The inclusion of the field named Barks Hill (but not the adjacent dwelling called Barks Hill) was the most suggested boundary alteration, as this was an important backdrop to the village, contains important trees and was historically part of the parkland associated with Leathley Hall. Historic maps confirm that Barks Hill was indeed part of the parkland associated with Leathley Hall, and that the existing mature trees on and near the brow of the hill were planted as part of the parkland landscape. The topography means that this area is prominent in views across the fields to the east of Leathley Lane. All of these factors mean it would be appropriate to include Barks Hill within the conservation area.

The inclusion of the former Methodist Chapel on Stainburn Lane was suggested for inclusion in the conservation area. It is considered that this

building, which is remote from the existing conservation area, receives significantly higher protection due to its status as a Grade II Listed Building.

During the six-week consultation it was suggested that the former pinfold or animal pound at Leathley Cottage should be included in the conservation area. The inclusion of the animal pound was considered in preparing the draft of this Appraisal along with the inclusion of the Fishpool area. It is considered that the remote location of the animal pound (over 400 metres north of the existing conservation area) makes it somewhat remote from the existing area of special interest, plus it would not be possible to include the animal pound without also including land and building in between that have been identified as not being of special architectural or historic interest.

It was suggested that the Borough Council should not pursue the proposal in the draft of this Appraisal to include the walled garden to the north of Leathley Hall, as its interest is sufficiently protected via the status of its southern wall as a Grade II Listed Building. It is considered that the walled garden is an important component of the buildings, structures and spaces associated with Leathley Hall, which together give a full picture of how the Hall functioned in the eighteenth century (see paras. 7.12-7.14 of this Appraisal). The group value of the buildings and structures associated with the Hall (and their close proximity to each other) would make it illogical to exclude any one component. Whilst the southern wall of the garden is protected by listing, its three other walls receive no formal protection. On this basis, it would be beneficial to include the walled garden within the Conservation Area. This proposal received support from some of the other consultees.

Another boundary suggestion was to include Leathley Hall and its Listed stable block, but to exclude more recent features such as the unlisted stables, greenhouse, swimming pool and tennis courts due to the perceived controls conservation area designation would place on their maintenance, improvement or replacement. Conservation Area designation would only affect these buildings and structures where the works would require planning permission, therefore upkeep and most forms of improvement would not be affected. Whilst the replacement or enlargement of the buildings may require planning permission, the impact on the setting of the two listed buildings on the site is already a material consideration. What is acceptable in terms of changes to the setting of the listed buildings will

more than likely maintain the special interest of the conservation area. Moreover it would not be feasible and impractical to subdivide the curtilage of Leathley Hall into a part within the conservation area, and a part outside of the conservation area. This is particularly so given that the trees and boundary wall to the garden are important features.

The final boundary amendment suggested during the six-week consultation period was the inclusion of the Old Corn Mill within the conservation area. The potential inclusion of the Mill was explored in preparing the draft of this Appraisal. It is considered that the special interest already receives far greater protection via its status as a Grade II* Listed Building (it is therefore among the top 10% of the most important listed buildings nationally). It is considered that the Mill's listed status and remoteness from the existing conservation area mean it would be inappropriate to extend the conservation area to include it.

Other alterations to the Conservation Area are slight and are intended to ensure that the boundary follows boundary walls and is readable 'on the ground'. The Conservation Area boundary, as approved on 9 February 2011, is indicated on Map 2 of this Appraisal.

5. The Management of change

The special character and appearance of Leathley Conservation Area is vulnerable to erosion and significant harm through often well-intentioned but misguided alterations and inappropriate change.

There is scope for the enhancement of the churchyard village green which form the focal point of the village. Similarly the grassed verges around the village are being eroded by vehicles driving over them.

6. Opportunities for enhancement

Leathley is an attractive village, and the buildings are occupied and in good condition. There are, however, a number of opportunities for the enhancement of some areas as follows:

- The enhancement of the grass verges around the village and introducing a means of protecting them which would not harm their present soft, green and informal character. As the verges

form part of the public highway, any works should follow the guidance in the joint English Heritage and Department for Transport document 'Streets for All - Yorkshire and Humber' in order to ensure that the significance of the conservation area is respected.

- The general enhancement of The Green to strengthen the village's sense of place.
- The pro-active management of trees within the Churchyard, including the potential removal of large trees which obscure the tower and clock.
- The protection of front gardens and a presumption against creating hard or highly enclosed areas in front of houses and the demolition of front boundary walls.
- The removal of non-native evergreen hedges and trees which bring a discordant, suburban character to the village and reduce the sense of openness.
- Rationalisation of road signage.
- The reinstatement of appropriate traditional timber windows and doors.
- The proactive management of mature and veteran trees which contribute to the village scene and the planting of replacement trees to ensure that the death or removal of a tree does not create a gap in the village scene.
- The repair and rebuilding of traditional dry stone walls, particularly along roads.

Existing buildings

The survey of the existing buildings within Leathley identified that a distinctive character exists, although to some extent this has been eroded by subsequent alterations, which have not always recognised that distinctiveness. Over the past thirty years, public awareness and expectation of the planning system to protect the "familiar and cherished scene" has increased substantially. Additionally, there now exists a greater

understanding of the impact which incremental change can have upon the distinctive character of historic areas. Options to safeguard and enhance the architectural character of Leathley could include some or all of the following:

Design Guidance

Additional design guidance, which is more specific to the Conservation Area, could be considered for future alterations to direct change towards materials and design detailing which complements the defined local architectural character. This would be in the form of non-statutory planning guidance. If adopted, this guidance would act as a yardstick against which proposals could be assessed and could assist both existing and future residents in understanding what is desirable.

Article 4 Directions

Formal control over future alterations of buildings could be introduced through what is known as an Article 4 Direction which removes permitted development rights. These are rights granted by Statute, within strict limitations, to alter dwellings without the need for planning permission. Article 4 Directions can be designed to be specific to particular types of development relating, for example, only to roof covering or front elevations. It cannot place an embargo on change, but rather brings certain types of development within the scope of planning control. Article 4 Directions are made by the Borough Council, and in some cases, would need confirmation by the Secretary of State. Article 4 Directions could be introduced throughout the Conservation Area or just to individual buildings whose special interest is considered to be at risk from incremental change.

Reinstatement of architectural detail

Some buildings have been altered, which has changed their architectural form in a way which conflicts with the settlement's distinctive character. The introduction of standardised twentieth and twenty-first century door patterns and PVCu windows and porches has undermined the character of many historic areas. The use of non-traditional finishes such as staining for joinery is detrimental to the character and appearance of the village and controls or guidance to encourage painted timber and traditional details and materials should be introduced. Non-sympathetic alterations should be resisted.

Grant schemes

From time to time the Borough Council operates grant schemes to help maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Quality Erosion & Loss of Architectural Detail

The character and appearance of buildings in the Conservation Area is harmed by the removal or loss of original architectural features and the use of inappropriate materials. For example, the loss of traditional joinery, sash windows, front doors and roofing materials can have a considerable negative impact on the appearance of a historic building and the area.

Insensitive re-pointing, painting or inappropriate render will harm the long-term durability of stonework.

In all cases, the Borough Council will expect original historic features and detailing to be retained, preserved and refurbished in the appropriate manner, and only replaced where it can be demonstrated that it is beyond repair.

Roof Alterations & Extensions

The Conservation Area contains many historic rooflines, which it is important to preserve. Fundamental changes to the roofline, insensitive alterations, poor materials, intrusive dormers or inappropriate roof windows can all harm the character of the historic roofscape and will not be acceptable.

Gardens & Front Boundary Treatments

Front and rear gardens make an important contribution to the streetscape and overall character of the area. The Borough Council will resist the loss of soft landscaping and traditional boundary walls. In certain locations traditional boundary features should be reinstated.

Telecommunications Equipment, Cable & Satellite Dishes

Attaching external communications apparatus, including cable runs, to

historic buildings can harm the appearance of the buildings. The Borough Council can provide guidance on the installation of telecommunication equipment including satellite dishes.

Overhead wires are intrusive in parts of the Conservation Area and the burying of cables would enhance the character of the village. This should be a long-term aim in the interests of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Floorscape

It is unlikely that in past times the street surfaces in Leathley were formalised with setts, paving or cobbles and it is considered that modern tarmac is the natural successor to the rammed earth and stone that would have preceded it. Any new surfaces should respect the prevailing character of the village.

Important Trees

The existing mature trees throughout the Conservation Area add to its charm and character. In accordance with the Council's Landscape Design Guide, the existing pattern of trees and shrubs should be preserved and repaired through managed planting and maintenance. In considering both of these areas, guidance should be geared towards tree and shrub planting and management methods that improve wildlife habitats.

Outdoor Advertisements & Street Furniture

The design and appearance of some of the street furniture and advertisements in the village adds to the street clutter and needs improvement in order to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

New Development

A key consideration is the impact that future development proposals (whether in the form of new buildings or through the extension of existing buildings) might have on the distinctive form and character of the Conservation Area.

New buildings will only be permitted where they respect, rather than compete with, the historic skyline, respect landform and landscape pattern and are accompanied by a comprehensive landscape scheme that is integral to the design. New development must be of a suitable quality of design and execution and should relate to its context and respect the established values identified in the Appraisal. The Council will encourage new development that complements the established grain or settlement pattern, whilst representing the time in which it is built and the culture it accommodates. New development should respect and not adversely impact upon the pattern of existing spaces between buildings.

A further key consideration for new development is the appropriateness of the overall mass or volume of the building and its scale. A new building should be in harmony with, or complimentary to its neighbours. It is important that the materials generally match or complement those that are historically dominant in the area. Within the above criteria, new development should achieve creative design solutions, whether contemporary or traditional in style.

Neutral Buildings & Spaces

Neutral elements or buildings may have no special historic or architectural quality in their own right but, nonetheless, provide the setting for buildings or spaces of special character and interest or may simply conform to the general grain and settlement pattern of the area. This backcloth helps the area to retain its cohesiveness and therefore need special management.

7. Landscape Issues

The following guidelines have been developed in recognition of the landscape sensitivities and pressures which exist within the Conservation Area:

Village Edges

The visual and spatial relationship between Leathley and the surrounding countryside is a vital facet of the Conservation Area. At present there is a strong relationship between the built form and the adjacent pastoral fields which extend into the heart of the village, giving a scattered development

pattern. Consequently, virtually all of the built up area of the village forms part of the village edge. The planting of high hedges of any species or the erection of high fences behind or between buildings would cut vital visual links between the village and its setting and spoil the existing relationship. Similarly the treatment of gardens that adjoin agricultural fields should not assume a suburban character by virtue of their landscaping, boundary features, or outbuildings such as sheds. Instead, the focus should be on using native deciduous planting to give traditional garden spaces which relate to their context. There should be a presumption in favour of retaining traditional dry stone walls as the boundaries to gardens and fields.

Tree planting

The fields and green spaces of Leathley all contain trees which contribute to the village scene. These trees would all benefit from management to ensure that the existing amenity and habitats they offer are maintained or enhanced. In the longer term, the need to plant new trees to succeed existing new planting should be addressed in order that the eventual loss of individual mature trees does not create unwanted holes in the canopy or townscape.

Footpaths

The location of Leathley, near the edge of an area popular with walkers, makes its footpaths of particular importance in terms of connecting the village with other settlements and destinations. Ways of improving the footpath network in and around the village and providing more links with the surrounding landscape should be examined. The condition of the existing footpath network in the area could be improved without changing its character.

Wildlife & Nature Conservation

The village lies close to three Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Possibilities exist for the creation of wildlife corridors, particularly along the becks and through areas of woodland to improve diversity and enhance the landscape pattern around the village.

Checklist to manage change

In managing change in the Conservation Area, regard should be paid to the following:

- As Leathley is such a small settlement it is very sensitive to development. Consequently, any development should not impinge on its form and character.
- New development and landscaping should not divorce the Conservation Area from its rural setting or present an inappropriate edge between the settlement and the countryside. Links and views between the two should be retained or enhanced.
- The regular maintenance of older buildings is encouraged, together with the restoration of traditional features where these are absent.
- The repair and re-use of older buildings should be encouraged in the first instance rather than demolition and redevelopment.
- New development and repairs should be constructed of materials which match or complement traditional natural materials.
- Design should reflect the distinctive local architectural style both in terms of overall form and detailed design, and be appropriate to the context.
- Development should not impact upon tree cover.
- In general, new buildings should complement the form and layout of the existing settlement. Principal elevations of buildings should face onto the street.
- New development should not adversely impact upon the historic skyline.
- Maintain the softness of roadside verges by avoiding the introduction of kerbs where none existed historically.
- The positive management of the stock of mature trees should be undertaken.
- Retain important gaps and the general space about buildings to ensure glimpses of trees and views are maintained.
- Minimise the clutter of signage, street furniture, lighting and road markings.
- Repair and retention of boundary walling.

Appendix B

Public Consultation

The Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the requirements for public consultation. To meet these requirements, and to inform a review of the Conservation Area, a public consultation event was held on Saturday, 10th October 2009 at Leathley Village Hall. This consultation took the form of a public meeting including a walkabout and a workshop session. Prior to the event residents were notified via a posted leaflet that the consultation event was taking place.

The format of the workshop included a short presentation on why the Conservation Area is being reviewed, the purpose of the Appraisal and management plans and a brief resumé on the changes that have happened since the original designation.

The main activity was a walkabout around the Conservation Area. The community was encouraged to make notes and take photographs to identify what makes Leathley special to them. On return to the Lodge, the workshop session enabled the group to share the information gathered on the walkabout by annotating a large map of the village with text, symbols and photographs.

The outcome of the consultation event and the information gathered directly contributed to producing this Appraisal. Key issues raised at the event included:

- the preservation of important views.
- identifying buildings of local interest.
- suggestions for changes to the extent of the Conservation Area.
- the retention of important boundary walls.
- the retention and management of trees.

Every effort has been made to take into account and give due consideration to the views of the local residents (and to represent those views in this Appraisal document).

Local involvement is an essential aspect of the consultation process and local residents were encouraged to comment on the draft document during the consultation period from 17 May – 28 June 2010. Following consultation, amendments and additions were made to the text. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport approved the Appraisal on 9 February 2011 and it is published on the Council's website.



Appendix C

Further reading

Caffey, H (2006) Almshouses in the West Riding of Yorkshire 1600-1900

Langdale, T (1822) A Topographical Dictionary of Yorkshire for the Year 1822

Smithson, G H (1979) Leathley Hall, Leathley

Speight, H (1900) Upper Wharfedale

Wood, G A (1997) Open Field and Enclosure in Leathley, 1550-1800

(NB this is an unpublished undergraduate dissertation and not a published book or article)

