

# WESTON

## 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, Transport and Economic Development on 16 November 2011 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 Weston.
- 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 Weston Conservation Area was originally designated in 1995. Following public consultation on the draft of this Appraisal, the boundary was amended further on 16 November 2011. This Appraisal aims to describe Weston 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 Weston 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.



# 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 to periodically 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 PPS5 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 Weston is in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In 1994, in recognition of the quality of its landscape the Countryside Commission designated the Nidderdale AONB. Saved Policy C1 from the Harrogate District Local Plan, provides that priority will be given to the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and any development should reflect the local distinctiveness of the area.
- 2.5 The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan (2009-14) is a spatial strategy that addresses the need to manage change. The Nidderdale AONB Heritage Strategy, approved April 2009, identifies the objectives, policies and actions required for the sustainable management of heritage in the AONB.
- 2.6 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 has been involved and the contribution it has made to this Appraisal.

### 3 Historic development & archaeology

- 3.1 The name Weston is Anglo-Saxon in origin and means 'western farmstead' ('West' 'ton'). This refers to the settlement's location to the west of Otley which is some two miles east of Weston. The site of the village is well suited to agriculture, on well-drained gently sloping south facing land above the floodplain of the Wharfe.
- 3.2 Weston manor appears to have originally been part of Otley manor but was separated from Otley before the Norman Conquest and made a parish in its own right. This parish extended as far as Dob Park, Askwith and Snowden, and its church was probably on the site of the existing All Saints' Church. The Domesday Book (1086) records that Weston manor was held by Torbrand before the Conquest and thereafter it was granted to Berenger de Tosny. The Domesday Book records that Weston had a church whose priest had a small area of meadow. Four villeins were based in the manor. Villeins were higher status serfs. They were essentially farmers 'tied' to living and working in Weston who had to farm land owned by the lord of the manor as well as their own allotted farmland. They often paid rent or provided goods or produce to the lord of the manor as part of their serfdom. In 1086 Weston manor covered 1,400 acres, half of which was woodland.
- 3.3 The Poll Tax returns of 1378 names a dozen occupants of Weston and provide the first surviving reference to Weston Hall. By this time it was held by the de Vavasour family, as the manor had passed by marriage to Sir Mauer de Vavasour

in the fourteenth century. The manor had previously been held by the de Stopham family. The de Vavasours were lords of Weston manor for more than five centuries and of course were responsible for much of Weston Hall and its associated buildings as we know them, as well as the development of the village itself. In 1833 the manor passed by inheritance to the Carter family and then in 1852 to the Dawson family who reside at Weston Hall to this day.



Farming activity continues in Weston to this day. The survival of farm buildings and features such as orchards provide evidence of the village's agricultural heritage.

- 3.4 The chief economic activity in Weston since its foundation and to this day is agriculture. The principal farmhouses were all built and rebuilt in their present forms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with later additions and alterations, much like Weston Hall and its banqueting house which date from the late sixteenth / early seventeenth century with later additions and alterations. It appears that Weston has always consisted of a few farms huddled around the junction of Weston Lane, Church Lane and Moor

Lane. The Baines's Directory of 1822 records in Weston there being four farmers in Weston. Three of these farms correlate with the present day Hall Farm, Cock Pit Farm and a farm associated with Rose Cottage / Stocks Cottage. The further farm, Manor Farm, consisted of a group of buildings as substantial as that of Hall Farm (with a substantial house named on maps as 'Manor House'), but it was all demolished c.1900. The site of this farm now forms the front entrance and part of the grounds of Weston Manor, a large country house dating from c.1900. It is probable that the cottages at 1-3 The Green and 1-2 Church Lane, which date from c.1900 were built for the farm labourers or estate workers whose dwellings were demolished.

- 3.5 Change in the twentieth century included the closure of two of the three remaining farms such that today Hall Farm is the only working farm in the Conservation Area. The farm buildings east of Church Lane have been successfully converted to other uses and Cock Pit Farmhouse is now a popular café with some working farm buildings associated with it. Weston Hall, Weston Park and the associated buildings remain largely unchanged whilst the Church, the oldest building in Weston, is still regularly used for worship.



## 4 Location & landscape setting



The landscape of the Nidderdale AONB provides a very attractive rural backcloth to the Conservation Area.

4.1 Weston is in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and is on the southern edge of the designation, approximately two miles west of Otley and one mile northeast of Burley-in-Wharfedale. The designation of the AONB, which was made in 1994, formally recognises the national importance of the landscape and the primary objective of the designation is to conserve the natural beauty of the area, which is derived from its geology, physiography, flora, fauna and historical and cultural components.

4.2 Weston 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 heather moorland in the upper reaches of the valley. Weston, Askwith and Denton are similarly placed in the

valley side; they are all c.100-120m above sea level on gently sloping land, evenly spaced and sited alongside becks. The banks of the becks are typically wooded, with woodland plantations the other main areas of tree cover. The prevailing landscape is one of pastoral fields bounded by dry stone walls. At the top of the valley side there is an abrupt change to heather moorland.



Weston Park, and across the Wharfe the north-facing side of Wharfedale. The greenery and trees across the river are highly important to the Conservation Area's setting.

4.3 The Wharfe itself is a significant feature of the Conservation Area's setting; it defines the southern boundary to the Conservation Area, AONB, parish, borough and county. Its glistening surface can be seen from

Weston Lane and the footpath through Weston Park. The wider landscape is divided into rural and urban areas, creating a varied backcloth to the Conservation Area.

4.4 The rural landscape is by and large pasture and washland, but the contribution trees make to the overall landscape character is considerable. Many field boundaries are studded with lines and straggles of mature trees, while field trees are not uncommon. In addition to this there are significant blocks of woodland within the setting of Weston, most notably the wooded Otley Chevin, the terminal feature to views from Weston to the southeast; and to the southwest, the smaller blocks of woodland above Burley-in-Wharfedale which soften the edge of this expanded village. Within the immediate setting of the Conservation Area, Weston is hemmed in to a degree by the dense woodland at Grove and Near and Far Birka to the west of Church Lane and East Wood to the northeast of Weston Park. The contribution to the setting of Weston made by the landscape of Wharfedale is considerable due to the settlement's position on the valley side, elevated above the floodplain with good views across and along the valley. The mixed sylvan and pastoral landscape means Weston Park does not stand out in the landscape as it would if there were far fewer trees among the fields.



The spire of St Mary's Church in Burley-in-Wharfedale is an important landmark within the setting of Weston.

- 4.5 The urban areas of Otley and Burley-in-Wharfedale are also significant components of Weston's setting. The suburbs of Otley border the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, providing a strong contrast with the open character of the Park, despite dense hedge planting

along the edge of the urban area. The core of Otley and the bulk of the town, however, is separated from Weston by an expanse of park-like washland and the Wharfe, meaning Weston feels quite separate and distinct from the town. Burley-in-Wharfedale is less than a mile away. There is no route between Weston and Burley, and the Wharfe and washland separates the two. The pointed spire of St Mary's Church on Burley-in-Wharfedale's Main Street is visible from the vicinity of All Saints' in Weston and its chimes are audible from within the Conservation Area.

- 4.6 In terms of the road network, Weston stands on the main east-west route along the north side of Wharfedale. The core of the village is set around a four-way

crossroads, the north and south routes (Church Lane and Moor Lane) reach dead ends within a short distance of the crossroads. This street pattern means that away from Weston Road, the village is very quiet with local traffic only.

## 5. Landscape analysis

- 5.1 The location, topography and settlement pattern of Weston 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 Weston. It identifies the key landscape characteristics which make the village distinctive.



There are panoramic views across the attractive landscape of Wharfedale from points all over the Conservation Area.

### Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2 A Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has recently been completed for the Nidderdale AONB. The HLC provides an overview of the area surrounding Weston. The data on the historic characteristics has certain limitations as the following criteria have been applied:
- They are visible in the modern landscape;
  - They have been recognised on modern Ordnance Survey mapping;
  - They are larger than 1 hectare.

- 5.3 This data therefore has strong limitations, and can only be used as a guide to understanding the general surviving historic character of the area.
- 5.4 Weston is set on a slight rise above the plain of the Wharfe valley. It is within an agricultural landscape sandwiched between the town of Otley to the southeast and the large, unenclosed heather moorland to the north.
- 5.5 To the west, north and southwest, between Weston and the river, there has been extensive modern reorganisation of field boundaries. This has meant that the small irregular fields bounded by hedgerows that have resulted from historic piecemeal enclosure are therefore now larger in nature, though they do retain many of their erratic internal boundaries. To the northeast, east of East Wood, the piecemeal enclosure landscape has survived more intact, with medium sized semi-irregular fields defined by hedgerows.



Woodland to the west of the Conservation Area

- 5.6 There are two areas of woodland in the immediate setting of Weston. East Wood dates to post-1600 and is therefore not classed as ancient woodland, whilst Grove and Near and Far Birka to the west dates to post 1850.

### Weston Park

- 5.7 This substantial area of historic parkland is the single biggest open space within the Conservation Area and is a key component of its sense of place. The Park as we know it today dates from at least the late sixteenth century, when Weston Hall was rebuilt and remodelled, complete with a detached banqueting house. Both of these formal buildings, designed to impress and indicate wealth and status would have required a suitably arranged and managed parkland setting. Like the Hall, the Park was subject to later alteration and remodelling. Certainly from historic maps it can be seen that the area of formal garden in front of the Hall and to the north of the lake was reduced to its present size in the second half of the nineteenth century and the tree line along Weston Lane was made more regular and continuous than previously. It can also be seen that within the Park, about halfway along the drive there was another fence or wall with a further gateway, effectively dividing the park into 'inner' and 'outer' portions.

Weston Park as seen from Weston Lane. The Park falls away from the



lane. The planted tree lines either side of the drive bisect the Park, which extends as far as the tree-lined banks of the Wharfe.

5.8 These alterations aside, the Park has changed little in character from at least the mid-nineteenth century. The perimeter of the Park is defined by a long continuous tree line along Weston Road. Along Church Lane a dense block of woodland conceals the Hall, banqueting house and formal gardens from view before suddenly stopping to reveal the western elevation of the Hall across an elevated area of grassland. This area and the eastern edge to the south of The Lodge are the only edges of the Park which are not obscured by trees or woodland. The Park boundaries are largely dry stone walls no different to those used in the surrounding fields, their height allows views into the parkland, but from Weston Road and the footpath bisecting the Park, only glimpses of the principal elevation of the Hall and its banqueting house can be seen. The best view of both of these structures available from a publically accessible vantage point is from Weston Lane east of the Grange. From here, there is a tantalising oblique view Hall and banqueting house which poke out between the trees.



Weston Hall (right) and the banqueting house (left)

5.9 The Park is by and large grazed open grassland, with the Hall and associated buildings, formal parkland and lake all sited at the western end. The principal entrance is from the Otley side via the imposing eighteenth century gatepiers with late nineteenth century iron gates. The loosely surfaced drive continues the line of the road from Otley and is lined by regularly spaced trees. The drive rises and rounds a small hillock named Gallows Hill before straightening to create a vista flanked by the lines of trees which terminates in the Hall itself. The drive and its tree lines bisect the Park in a straight line before dipping and rounding the lake to reach the Hall.



Tree-lined vista along the drive to Weston Hall

## Open fields

- 5.10 The fields at the end of Church Lane to the south and west of the Church are large open spaces within the Conservation Area. They are important as the setting to the Church and Hall buildings. Although used as pasture and paddocks they are in some respects like a continuation of the parkland. The fields to the south of the Church are bisected by two parallel rows of mature trees, and the bank to the Wharfe is studded by a continuous line of trees. There are also field trees and, to the west of the Church, a kennel which would have housed the lord of the manor's hunting dogs. The 1852 Ordnance Survey suggests these fields formed part of the Park. The mature trees and the survival of the kennels provide evidence of this former use.
- 5.11 Further fields within the Conservation Area are at Hall Farm and Cock Pit Farm. They provide an important immediate context to the farms and are part of the dispersed nature of the farmsteads. The spaces within the village mean it is in effect intertwined with the surrounding agricultural landscape and, when seen from a distance, sits unobtrusively in it.



The trees planted in the fields south of the Park and Church give them a park-like quality.

## All Saints' Churchyard

- 5.12 The churchyard at St All Saints' is a unique open space within the Conservation Area. The Church stands almost in the centre of its rectangular churchyard which mirrors the proportions of the plan of the Church. It contains headstones and monuments from the seventeenth century onwards, including a railed table tomb, a sundial and a grave incorporating a (relocated) cup and ring marked stone. Unusually there are few or no trees in the churchyard itself, instead foliage is provided by tree planted in the parkland and fields adjoining the churchyard, providing a sense of enclosure. The principal entrance to the



All Saints' Churchyard

churchyard is via an attractive iron kissing gate, in the northwest corner, with a gate leading to Weston Hall in the north-east corner.

## The Green

- 5.13 The village green with a millstone in its centre is the natural focal point of Weston. This triangular common space is small. It extends between Church Lane and Weston Lane behind Stocks Cottage. The deep verges to the east and south of the green are arguably outlying remnants of the space that existed before the formal roadways were created. The Green is dominated by the lone mature tree in its centre, and the adjacent millstone is a landmark along Weston Lane. The role of the Green as a stopping point or focal point is emphasised by its cluster of new and old street furniture: the village stock, a bench, litter bin, directional signage and a Victorian post box embedded in the wall of Stocks Cottage. Unfortunately the K6 phone box, which stood on the Green since the mid-twentieth century, was removed in recent years.



Weston village green.

## Grass Verges

- 5.14 Most of the roadways through Weston are bounded on both or sometimes one side by grassed verges. These are important to the rural character of the place, as they are in the most part continuous features of the lanes through Weston.



Grass verges are almost a constant feature of the street scene of Weston. They contribute to the area's character.

## Gardens

- 5.15 Gardens are a luxury and hence the extent of garden associated with a dwelling helps us to understand the lifestyle of its historical occupants. The Park has been described above and this is the principal 'garden' in the Conservation Area. There is a clear hierarchy with the small country house of Weston Manor overlooking a substantial garden screened from view by perimeter tree planting. The arrangement of gateway, long drive and tree-lined enclosure is much like Weston Hall but on a smaller scale. Before Weston Manor was built, Weston Grange would have been second only to the Hall in status. This house stands within its own sylvan garden which affords south facing views across Wharfedale but provide privacy from Weston Lane. Cock Pit Farm, Rose Cottage and Hall Farmhouse each have garden spaces which are commensurate with their respective ages, sizes and status.



The spaces associated with dwellings, such as the parkland at Weston Manor shown here, give the conservation a soft, green character.

## Key Views

- 5.16 Weston's position on the valley side has created a mixture of short and longer distance views which encapsulate the



Weston Park and the southern setting of the Conservation Area

special character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its place in the landscape. A list of key views in Weston Conservation Area (which is by no means exhaustive) is as follows:

- Views from Weston Lane over the Park, Hall, banqueting house, Wharfe and wider landscape setting of Wharfedale.
- Views of the Hall from the public footpath within the Park, particularly the view along the drive.
- Views of the east gates to Weston Park and The Lodge from Weston Lane and within the Park
- Vistas along the enclosed, tree-lined Church Lane and Moor Lane
- Views across the valley floor from the foot of Church Lane
- Views of the Church from the south.
- Views towards the Green from Weston Lane, Church Lane and Moor Lane



The east gate and lodge to Weston Park

## Trees

- 5.17 As mentioned in previous paragraphs the trees within the Conservation Area are highly significant to the area's overall character and appearance. The

planted tree lines, perimeter trees and dotted parkland trees have already been mentioned in paragraphs 5.7 to 5.9. These are complemented by the trees within the fields to the south and west of the Church, which were formerly parkland and retain a parkland character (paragraphs 5.10 to 5.11). The solitary tree on the Green and trees within gardens are also important to the street scene of the Conservation Area. Weston Manor in particular has trees planted along its perimeter, and Dean Beck, on its eastern boundary, has banks which are covered with trees, providing a clear edge to the Conservation Area.

- 5.18 To the southwest of the Hall is a small orchard. Orchards are increasingly rare in the AONB, and indeed the wider countryside. The survival of the orchard is important to our historical understanding of how the Park was used to support the Hall.
- 5.19 Trees are key to the overall experience of travelling along Church Lane and Moor Lane. Both of these routes are for the most part bounded by woodland blocks or thickly planted tree lines. The effect is that both of these routes are shrouded, still and sheltered, with sightlines by and large limited to vistas along the routes. Weston Lane is for the most part tree lined but here the broader road and verges and greater spacing of the trees creates less of an enclosure.



## Landscape Features

5.20 The Wharfe is the most substantial body of water in the local area. Along the northern side of Wharfedale numerous tributaries draining the moorland feed into the Wharfe. Dean Beck, which bisects the Conservation Area is one of these tributaries. This stream is most noticeable east of Weston Grange where a semi-circular meander cuts into the valley side within Weston Park, just south of Weston Lane. The wooded banks of the Beck are within the grounds of Weston Grange and it continues southward across Weston Park, where it largely follows manmade channels and is fed by two smaller streams. At the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, Boots Beck is another small tributary flowing into the Wharfe.

## Significant Boundary Features & Boundary Walls

- 5.21 The predominant boundary features used in and around Weston are traditional dry stone walls, which form field boundaries as well as boundaries to private curtilages, including Weston Park and the churchyard. Notable exceptions are the railings to the front of Weston Manor, the timber rail and stone post boundary along the west side of Church Lane and the triangular coped retaining wall to the rear of the Hall.
- 5.22 There are few instances of hedges forming boundary features in the Conservation Area, but where they exist they complement the prevailing rural character of the area.



Pennine dry stone walling is by far the most common boundary feature in the Conservation Area.

## Strategic Pedestrian Routes

5.23 Pedestrian access through and around Weston is limited to the road network: Weston Lane, Church Lane and Moor Lane. The one notable exception is the footpath which cuts across Weston Park, allowing a more direct route from Weston to Otley than Weston Lane. The footpath has been in existence since at least the mid-nineteenth century. To the north of the Conservation Area Moor Lane peters out to a footpath which forks to provide access to Clifton and an indirect route to Askwith. Clifton can also be reached by a footpath through East Wood (just outside the Conservation Area).

## 6. The form & character of buildings

6.1 There are thirteen buildings in Weston included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The high proportion of listed buildings within the village, and of these the proportion of highly graded (I and II\*) listed buildings communicates the particularly high historic and architectural value of the buildings within Weston. 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 the Concept Map in 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 Weston can be located on Map 2:

**Grade I:**  
**Church of All Saints.**

**Weston Hall.**

**Banqueting house approx. 50m east of Weston Hall.**

**Grade II\*:**  
**Barn, later coach house and stables approx. 20 metres south of Weston Hall.**

**Grade II:**  
**Outbuilding approx. 5m north of Weston Hall and linking wall.**

**Ice house approx. 50m north of Weston Hall.**

**East gates, gate piers, railings and outer piers to Weston Hall.**

**Sundial approx. 5m south of Church of All Saints.**

**Table tomb approx. 5m south of Church of All Saints.**

**Group of 3 table tombs approx. 5m east of Church of All Saints.**

**Weston Grange.**

**Hall Farmhouse and attached outbuildings.**

**Barn opposite Hall Farmhouse (Woodlands Barn).**



The western elevation of Weston Hall. The late Tudor north wing is the tall gabled structure on the left. The formal Classical western front dates from the early eighteenth century but conceals an earlier building.

6.3 There are six listed buildings associated with Weston Hall and Park, principal among these is the Hall itself. The Hall dates from the late sixteenth century or early seventeenth century, but might contain an earlier medieval core. It was rebuilt and remodelled by the Vavasours. It is known that Sir Auger Vavasour was selling properties in his ownership in 1602, possibly to finance work at Weston Hall and Park. Externally, the three storey plus attic

and basement cross-wing at the northern end of the range is the most late Tudor in appearance. It would have originally contained private chambers while the hall was the formal space for receiving guests.

6.4 The battered basement of the cross-wing carries a broad canted bay containing three floors of cruciform double chamfer mullion lights with a small attic window set in the gable. This wing is served by a substantial chimney. The hall, which would have originally been a full height open single storey was later adapted into two storeys. The principal eastern front of the hall was re-fenestrated around 1820 as bay of four tall mullioned lights under projecting moulded cornices. The opposite side, facing Church Lane, has an early eighteenth century Classical frontage, with evenly spaced Georgian sash bays interrupted only by the stair windows over the doorway. It might well be that the hall was converted to two storeys when this elevation was rebuilt. The southern range is also from the early eighteenth century and is Classical in style.

6.5 The banqueting house is contemporary with the late sixteenth / early seventeenth century remodelling of the Hall. Indeed the decorative roundels on the second floor of the banqueting house display cockerel and owl motifs representing the respective families Sir Auger Vavasour and his wife Joan Savile. The banqueting house is two storeys plus basement and roof-level gazebo in height, and square in plan with projecting rear stair turret and

canted bay windows. The building is faced with ashlar and gritstone and has ovolo moulded double chamfer cruciform mullion windows, much like the north wing of the Hall. The four sides of the gazebo are full width five light mullioned double chamfer mullion windows. The roof is concealed by a parapet which is surmounted at the corners by corniced square chimney stacks. The banqueting house would have been used for entertaining guests, providing excellent views over the Park and Wharfedale. Not every hall had such a building, and very few survive to this day.



A 1986 photo of the banqueting house at Weston Hall. Unlike the Hall itself, the late Tudor banqueting hall has seen few alterations.

6.6 The carpentry of the structure of the barn to the south of Weston Hall suggests a late fifteenth century date and the building was encased in stone in the seventeenth century, possibly with re-encasing occurring in the eighteenth century when the building was converted to provide coach housing and stabling to the Hall.

The barn, much like a church, consists of a high central nave which is flanked by two lower aisles, with the nave separated from the aisles by a series of structural posts. The lower roof levels of the aisles mean that the tall cart entrance was given its own catslide roof to maintain the required opening height. The barn has coursed gritstone elevations and a long stone slate roof terminating in copings and shaped kneelers. The openings relate to the building's former uses.



The barn at Weston Hall. Its timber structure dates from the fifteenth century.

6.7 Two further service buildings are located close to the Hall. The gritstone and stone slate roofed outbuilding to the west of the Hall dates from the late eighteenth century, but incorporates stonework from a seventeenth century building. Its original use is not clear, though the building does have two corniced stone chimneys, mullioned windows facing the Hall, and a clock in the gable. It is known that this building housed the generator when the house was wired for electric lighting in c.1887. The Hall's ice house, a cold store for food and drink, is dated 1838. It is built into the ground and has a gritstone exterior and brick lining. The principal chamber is circular and has a domed roof some five metres in height.



The east gates to Weston Park

6.8 At the other end of the Park, the east gates incorporate fabric from three different eras. The ashlar Classical piers with a richly moulded cornice date from the mid-eighteenth century, but the weathered urns which top these piers are similar to urns at the banqueting house, suggesting they were moved here from an earlier gateway, quite possibly the gateway halfway along the drive shown on the 1852 Ordnance Survey. The wrought ironwork dates from the late nineteenth century and include the gate leaves with decorative flower motifs and the elaborate openwork inner piers.



All Saints Church. Note the slender twelfth century lancet opening to the right of the porch, and the massive buttress to the left hand gable.

6.9 The Church of All Saints is Norman in origin; the chancel arch is carried by twelfth century piers and a twelfth century lancet window opening survives to the east

of the porch. The porch is dated 1686 and it is likely that other repairs and alterations occurred around this date. Further repairs to the nave were carried out in 1819, along with the construction of the vestry on the north side of the nave, and it is probable that the chancel roof was raised higher than the nave at this time. The 1819 repairs and alterations (and close links with Weston Hall) meant the Church was spared the Victorian era 'restoration' of thousands of other parish churches in the country, which in fact rebuilt many old churches and removed historic fabric from earlier eras to achieve what was deemed to be the building's 'correct' style! As such the nave of All Saints retains the squat, broad proportions of a northern parish church. The walling is a mixture of coursed gritstone rubble and squared blocks with ashlar details. The church has no tower and instead there is a double arched bellcote at the apex of the western gable. There is a massive stepped buttress between the nave and northern aisle on the western gable.



The Grade II Listed sundial, and in front of it the Grade II Listed pair of table tombs in the churchyard

- 6.10 There are three grade II listed structures within the churchyard. The sundial to the south of the Church dates from the late eighteenth century. It consists of a fluted circular gritstone column on a square base. The moulded capping has been reconstructed in recent decades following damage. Nearby is a pair of table tombs dated 1669 and 1671 for William Ward and his daughter Elizabeth. The large gritstone slabs have roll moulded edges. Three other table tombs are to the east of the Church. One is dated 1698 and all three gritstone slabs have squared edges.



Weston Grange

- 6.11 Weston Grange would have been a house of considerable status in Weston, judging by its size and the level of ornament given to its principal south-facing façade. The original five bay frontage dates from the late seventeenth century. It has a hipped stone slate roof and a substantial chimneystack. Decorative features included the projecting ashlar quoins with chamfered edges, the moulded stone string at first floor and the moulded architrave to the doorway. The cruciform square mullion windows at first floor also date for this time. The Grange was altered and extended in 1890. The two eastern bays were added and at ground floor the two canted bay windows were inserted.



Hall Farmhouse

- 6.12 Hall Farmhouse is a mid to late seventeenth century vernacular building with late eighteenth or early nineteenth century alterations. The quoins on its south-facing front elevation indicate the original extent of the house, which was extended by a bay into the adjacent barn, hence the larger first floor window and quoined doorway in the rightmost bay. The squared plain stone reveals to the sash and casement windows all date from the building's later alteration. Curiously, elements of seventeenth century window openings remain. These are the small square niches at first floor and the jambs of former window openings either side of the ground floor windows.



Woodlands Barn

6.13 The barn across Church Lane from Hall Farmhouse dates from the mid-eighteenth century. Although it has been converted to a dwelling called Woodlands Barn, it retains much of its traditional character. The front elevation is still dominated by the large segmental arched voussoired and quoined cart entrance. The other openings on this elevation were all created for the conversion. The barn has quoined angles a stone slate roof and bulbous shaped kneelers.

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

### General form

6.15 With the exception of the east-facing Weston Hall and barns and outbuildings, buildings are orientated with their main frontages facing roughly south, even if this means buildings do not face the lane. Roofs are gabled and the ridges run parallel to the front elevation. Buildings are generally two storeys in height. 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. Buildings and terraces tend to be well spaced.

6.16 Roof pitches are moderate or moderate-to-shallow due to the extensive use of stone slate in Weston. Gables are symmetrical with front and rear eaves at the same height.

### Materials

6.17 Gritstone is the predominant walling and boundary wall material in Weston, reflecting the availability of this material

locally. Historic maps indicate small quarries to the west of the village and at the top of East Wood, suggesting a very local source for building materials. Some of the later buildings, such as The Lodge and 1-3 The Green, are made of sandstone. The majority of roofs are clad in stone slate, although later buildings are roofed with Welsh slate. Windows and doors are made of painted timber.



Gritstone. Although harder to work than sandstone, this rugged material was the most easily obtainable building material in Weston. The predominant use of sandstone in nearby Otley heightens the visual differences between these neighbouring settlements.

### Architectural detailing

6.18 The majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area are the vernacular in style, which gives the village its distinctive Pennine dale character. This said, locally important buildings were built in styles which were fashionable at the time. These include the Tudor and latterly Classical styles applied to Weston Hall, the Gothic Revival detailing of the 1819 alterations to All Saints Church, the broadly Italianate architecture of The Lodge, and the eclectic blending of Italianate and domestic revival at Weston Manor. Some of the higher status vernacular buildings have regular, grid-like layouts of openings and symmetrical massing which gives them a formal, almost Classical, character.



Cock Pit Farm. The regular spacing of tall openings on this vernacular buildings gives a well-proportioned 'no frills' version of the Classical architecture found in towns.

### Roof detailing

6.19 The majority of the buildings have stone tabling at the gables, frequently with kneelers at the corner where the tabling meets the eaves. Roof pitches are simple and are not interrupted 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. A minority of roofs are hipped and some have blue slate roofs, reflecting either the more recent age of the building, or its re-roofing in this material.

6.20 Chimneys are situated at ridge level emerging at the apex of a gable or part way along the ridge. Chimneys are stone built, are 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

6.21 Although the detailing of the stonework in Weston varies with building age, virtually

all buildings in Weston are constructed of squared coursed gritstone with variations in coursing depth evident on all buildings. There is no tradition of the principal elevations being faced with more carefully worked or regular stone 'bricks', with lower quality stonework used on less prominent elevations. Rather, in Weston the same type of coursed stone is used on all elevations of each building, and there is little difference between the stone walling of a higher status building and a more modest building. This gives the settlement a strong sense of visual unity. The exceptions to this general rule is the coursed rubble and stone blocks at All Saints' Church and the smooth more regular stone 'bricks' of The Lodge and Weston Manor, though both of these later buildings appear to have been constructed of more easily worked sandstone than the coarser gritstone used on older buildings. Regardless of age, the buildings in Weston typically have uncluttered flat elevations uninterrupted by significant projections like porches or other front extensions.

- 6.22 Quoins (large corner stones) are a common feature of buildings of all ages in Weston. The quoins are regular and identically sized regardless of building age or status.



Quoins are found on both the vernacular buildings and the more architecturally stylized buildings in Weston.

- 6.23 Window openings for the most part are rectangular in shape and are 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 typically have squared plain stone surrounds with cills lintels and jambs of equal depth, regardless of building age or type. The only exceptions at the quoined openings to All Saints Church and cart entrances, and the chamfered openings to Weston Hall and its banqueting hall. Door openings are treated similarly.

- 6.24 The eaves details to most buildings are unadorned, with most gutters being carried on discrete metal brackets. A few of the more decorative buildings have simple squared dentils carrying the gutters. The Lodge has timber bargeboard details at the wall head, where the roof overhangs.

## Windows

- 6.25 The varied building ages in Weston mean there are a variety of window types in the Conservation Area. The late Tudor northern wing of Weston Hall and the contemporary banqueting house show the oldest domestic window type in the Conservation Area: narrow mullioned lights topped by transoms. The glazing is a mixture of fixed windows and side hinged openers. This continues the vernacular tradition of the earliest windows. Panes are small due to the expense of glass and the difficulty of manufacturing it in great quantities and the number of opening windows is limited. This style of window persisted until the late seventeenth century, as Weston Grange, which dates from this time, has tall openings which could accommodate a sash window, but the opening is divided into four a cruciform mullion to accommodate fixed and side hinged lights.

- 6.26 Later window openings such as those at the 18th century remodelled elevations of Weston Hall, Hall Farmhouse and Cock Pit Farm all have openings designed to accommodate sash windows, which became the most commonly used type of window from about the early eighteenth century until the early twentieth century. As glass manufacture improved and its cost of manufacture fell larger panes were used, hence the c.1900 Weston Manor having large single paned sash windows. These variations add interest to the street scene and are testament to the historic development and redevelopment of the village.
- 6.27 Unfortunately, a minority of traditional sash and casement windows have been replaced with uPVC or standard factory made timber windows, which is often to the detriment to the overall character of the buildings concerned.
- 6.28 Very few dormer windows and rooflights are evident in Weston. A proliferation of these features would be detrimental to the roofscape.



Weston Grange: one elevation, two different eras, two different window types. At first floor the mullioned and transomed casement windows are original to this late seventeenth century building. The large single paned sash windows were inserted in 1890.

## 7. Village analysis

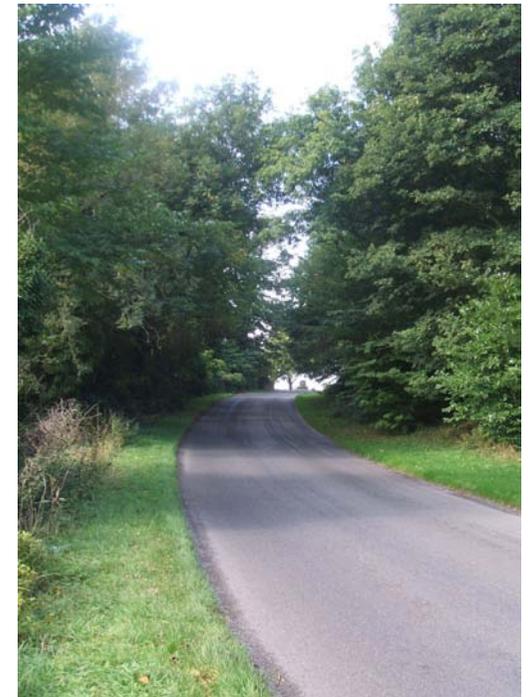
- 7.1 This section examines the buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area in greater detail to identify the special character of the village and to describe the details and features that help define the special “sense of place” of Weston, which is a compact estate village in a rural setting despite its proximity to the towns and expanded commuter villages of Wharfedale.
- 7.2 The village is very small and unlike most other Conservation Areas does not readily lend itself into sub-division into smaller areas of different character. There are however discreet areas of particular character, for example the green and Weston Park, but these different areas have much in common, which gives the whole its strong sense of place.
- 7.3 The overall character of the village is that of well spaced, south-facing development with buildings orientated towards the south rather than the street. The buildings are not arranged to create a strong sense of enclosure, but the arrangement of



The Lodge

- open spaces, buildings, roads and street furniture emphasise the role of the green as a focal point. The interspersal of the built form with open pastoral fields and parkland underlines the village’s rural character and weaves it into the landscape.
- 7.4 Approaching from Otley, the relatively straight course of Weston Lane provides a vista which terminates at The Lodge and the east gates to Weston Park. Closer there is a juxtaposition between the formal, monumental nature of the gateway, and the prosaic character of the pattern-book brick twentieth century suburb of Otley which recedes from the lane. The gateway, with its wrought iron gates, and inner piers and substantial ashlar out piers, is flanked to the south by The Lodge, which dates from the second half of the nineteenth century. In keeping with the tradition of lodges, its massing, materials and architecture are designed to impress and give the passer by an indication of the wealth and status of the principal hall or house. The principal gable overlooks the entrance to the Park, while the lower secondary gable looks along Weston Lane towards Otley. The Lodge is vaguely Italianate in style with overhanging bracketed eaves, decorative openwork bargeboards and semi circular and segmental arch openings flanked by pilastered mullions and jambs with foliage to the impostes. The canted bay window the number of windows looking onto Weston Lane show the need for its original occupant to monitor the gateway.

- 7.5 From here the pedestrian can go through the side gate and follow the right of way through Weston Park, which has been described in Chapter 6. The views from the right of way back towards the gateway, across Wharfedale and down the drive towards the Hall and banqueting house are of particular note. The route continues up the valley side to rejoin Weston Lane, and more panoramic views emerge as one ascends. The openness of the Park can be appreciated, as can the visual emphasis created by the planted tree lines along the drive. Keeping along Weston Lane, the dry stone boundary



Weston Lane. The millstone on the Green is just visible on the horizon under the tree canopies.

to Weston Park defines the edge of the street and allows views into the parkland, between the regularly spaced trees along the edge of the Park. The greenery of the parkland is complemented by East Wood and the pastoral fields between Throstle Nest Close and Dean Beck, which provide an attractive rural backcloth to the Conservation Area. Along the higher stretch of Weston Lane west of East Wood there are fine views over the Park and Wharfedale.

- 7.6 Crossing Dean Beck there is a sense of arriving in a village as the verges widen and the Green and its millstone and the adjacent buildings come into view. The first building, Weston Grange is largely concealed from view by the foliage in its garden. The stone slate roof, chimneystacks and gabled rear wing can be glimpsed. The tall square monolithic gate piers with large ball finials indicate the historic status of this building within the village. The adjacent houses at 1-3 The Green and 1-2 Church Lane are equally obscured from view by trees and hedges. This south-facing vernacular row of modest houses dates from around 1900



The western elevation of Weston Manor. The belvedere is just visible on the right.

and it could be speculated that they were built to house farm or estate labourers whose dwellings on the opposite side of Weston Lane were cleared to make way for Weston Manor and its grounds. The houses are stone with a continuous slate roof.

- 7.7 Weston Manor occupies a large oblong plot fronting Weston Lane. Historic maps suggest there was a substantial house fronting the Green and behind it there was a long range of south-facing buildings (possibly farm buildings and cottages) and a detached building to the northwest. The 1891 OS labels the large house as Manor House and the associated buildings as Manor Farm. All of these buildings were cleared to make way for Weston Manor and its grounds, though the drive follows the route of the farm track through the former group of buildings. Weston Manor itself cannot be seen from Weston Lane, but the part-railed boundary and the ashlar gateposts with Classical detailing all hint at the grandeur of the principal house. The 'estate' associated with Weston Manor is largely screened by trees, much like Weston Park.

- 7.8 The design of the house is idiosyncratic. The projecting centre bay takes the form of a three storey square belvedere with Italianate style semicircular arch openings with moulded imposts. The belvedere is topped by a bracketed projecting cornice surmounted by a parapet which conceals the roof. By contrast the rest of the house is domestic revival in style with projecting gables with jettied half timbering, slightly overhanging roofs, but with quite plain

tall window openings arranged in a symmetrical composition. To the rear is a former coach house / stables and a further outbuilding which is itself a dwelling, West Point.



Moor Lane

- 7.9 To the west of Weston Manor, Moor Lane is a narrow route barely wide enough for two vehicles to pass. It is lined on both sides by trees and sinks into the hillside, giving it an enclosed character, though there are good views in places over the countryside to the west. On the west side of Moor Lane are the now disused farm buildings associated with Cock Pit Farm. The stand in their own yard running parallel to Moor Lane. The principal range consists of two barns. It would appear that the northern cart entrance was either used for threshing while the lower cambered arch opening has been slightly infilled. It appears that this part of the range was adapted to form a cow shed with store above. The principal buildings appear to be nineteenth century in date. Cock Pit Farmhouse dates from 1855. It has a symmetrical three bay frontage with central doorway with minimal decoration to give an austere, Classical appearance.



The barns at Cock Pit Farm

7.10 Returning to the Green, the south side is defined by the rear elevation of Stocks Cottage. Although it is dated 1892, this one-and-a-half storey cottage dates from the seventeenth century. The single cell depth, chamfered rear window opening, irregular quoins and steeply sloping roof with gable windows all suggest that before rebuilding and re-fronting this was a thatch-roofed coursed rubble cottage, similar to others which are known to have existed in this part of Wharfedale. The gable and front windows and doors and associated stonework are all from the 1892 rebuild. A granary dating from the late eighteenth century is to the west of Stocks Cottage and is linked to it by a nineteenth century building used to house livestock.

7.11 The granary retains traditional features and details, including the external stone staircase. The granary is attached to Church Lane Barn which is now a private art gallery. To Church Lane it presents a blind gritstone elevation, save for the central arched opening with regular quoins and quoined jambs. This doorway was presumably only used to create a draught

for threshing and winnowing rather than access. Small ventilator openings stud the stonework. The building dates from the late eighteenth century, but was built slightly earlier than the attached granary.



Church Lane Barn

7.12 The barn abuts the rear of Rose Cottage, which was probably a farmhouse, given that it was originally two rooms deep, as shown by the building's double pile plan which presents twin gables to Church Lane. The south facing house has a high wall to its garden. The house probably dates to the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century. Further south is a detached barn, Woodlands Barn which dates from the mid-eighteenth century and has been sensitively converted to a dwelling. Across the lane, Hall farm is probably the most complete group of historic farm buildings in the Conservation Area. To the rear of the farmhouse and principal barn there are numerous small scale outbuildings which appear to include a stable and pig pens.

7.13 To the west of the south-facing farmhouse, which is arranged in a laithe with its former barn, is an east-facing range of farm buildings which probably date from the

early nineteenth century. Possibly built as a threshing barn and cow shed, the building has been adapted with a first floor doorway inserted through the voussoirs of the principal archway, which has been in filled with stone. The disparate farm buildings and farmhouse form an attractive group of historic interest and group value. Perhaps the diversity of buildings on the farm reflects historic diversity of farming activity at Hall Farm. As its name might imply was one of its principal functions to serve Weston Hall with milk, meat, eggs and other produce?



Hall Farm

7.14 From the Green, Church Lane is bounded by broad verges which narrow, creating a funnel-like space into the gateway leading to the Church and the rear of the Hall. This lower stretch of lane has a highly enclosed character due to the density and height of the tree canopies to either side. The eastern side of the lane is delineated by a high dry stone wall, but the western side has a distinctive boundary consisting of a dwarf retaining wall studded by monolithic piers which are linked by square timber rails. The southern side of the first

bend when coming downhill is believed to be the site of the Vicarage, and indeed the 1852 Ordnance Survey shows a building facing onto an enclosed garden to its south, but there is no trace of either on later maps.



Church Lane. Note the unusual boundary along the left hand side of the lane.

7.15 Continuing south, the lane opens up to allow views of the western elevation of Weston Hall. This formal, but secondary elevation is set back from the lane behind

a lawn fronted by a retaining wall with triangular copings. Beyond this, a small stable is the only building not mentioned previously. It is a low two storey building with a stone slate roof which is pierced at the centre of its ridge by a square lantern. It is believed that this building is where huntsmen would take their meals. This could be conceivable given the building's position between the Hall and kennels and the stable doors at ground floor.

7.16 The lantern would throw light into what otherwise would be a dark, north facing upper floor. In the field to the west the low single storey kennel building associated with Weston Hall can be seen. Its high walls enclose an outdoor area for the dogs. The two storey element to the west might well have been a bothy for the keeper of the kennel.

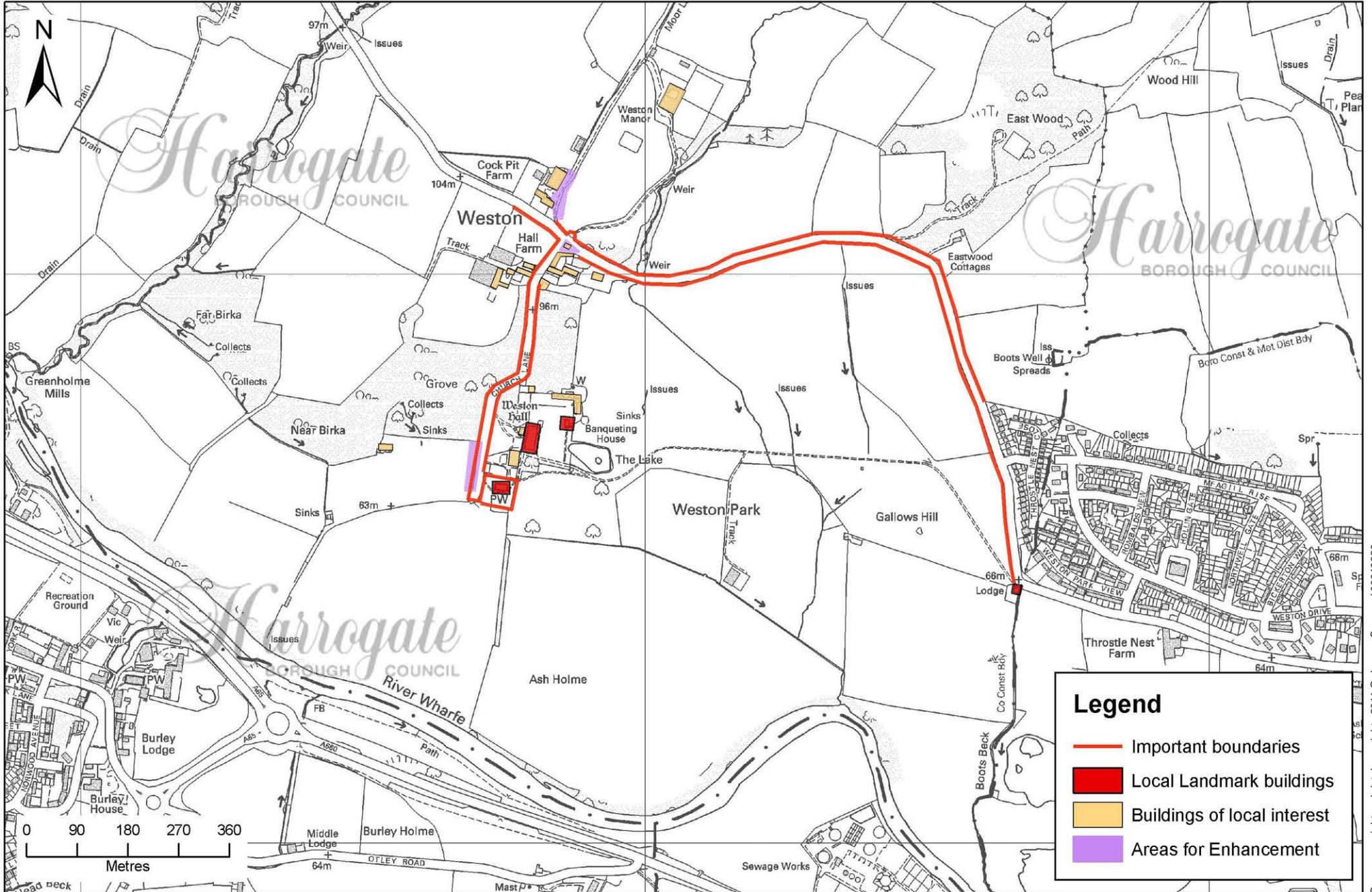
Map 1: Historical development of Weston



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### Map 3: Analysis & concepts



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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 Weston Conservation Area. The special qualities, which “it is desirable to preserve or enhance”, have been identified in the Appraisal.

Although Weston 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) to 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 not be under any obligation to make the changes or improvements suggested. However, they may be encouraged to think about the suggestions made, and the findings and recommendations of this appraisal 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 Weston 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 Weston 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. An outcome of the public consultation event was one suggested boundary alteration to enlarge the Conservation Area. The possible inclusion of this area was determined on the basis of its “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 northward to include Manor Cottages on Moor Lane. This short row of four cottages dates from 1904. It is highly likely they were built in conjunction with Weston Manor (1899). The cottages are stone built in a vernacular style. The cottages are separated from Weston Manor by an agricultural field. Although attractive, the cottages have lost some historic features and details, such as traditional doors and windows. It is considered this, coupled with the relative remoteness of the cottages form the heart of the

village mean it would be inappropriate to include these cottages within the Conservation Area.

In preparing this Appraisal, the Conservation Area boundary has been surveyed by the Conservation and Design Team. The survey has resulted in one slight boundary amendment being suggested at Hall Farm. It is proposed to include the traditional stone built farm buildings to the southwest of the farmhouse. These buildings appear to date from the early nineteenth century. They complement the other farm buildings at Hall Farm, which retains a diverse range of historic farm buildings. It would therefore be logical to include these buildings within the Conservation Area.



Manor Cottages



One of the historic farm buildings west of Hall Farmhouse

During the six week consultation period on the draft of this Appraisal, no comments were received relating to the conservation area boundary.

The revised conservation area boundary, as adopted on 16 November 2011, is indicated on Map 2.

## 5. The Management of Change

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

## 6. Opportunities for Enhancement

Weston 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 general enhancement of the green to strengthen the village's sense of place, particularly the replacement of the cast concrete kerbs with a soft edge or a more appropriate kerb detail.

- The enhancement of the parking area associated with the Church in a manner which respects the rural backwater feel of the area.
- The appropriate re-use and/or repair of disused farm buildings. These buildings make a significant contribution to the area's character and appearance.
- The removal of non-native evergreen hedges and trees which bring a discordant, suburban character to the village and reduce the sense of openness
- The reinstatement of appropriate traditional timber windows and doors.
- The proactive management of mature and veteran trees which contribute to the village scene.

## Existing buildings

The survey of the existing buildings within Weston 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 Weston 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. For example, the construction of new openings and the consequent breaking up of the continuous boundaries around the green would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. 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 Weston 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 significantly 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.



Weston Park: new trees have been planted to maintain the historic tree lines.

## 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 Weston 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 fairly 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, parkland and green spaces of Weston 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 Weston in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is 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.

## Checklist to manage change

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

- This small village is very sensitive to development, which should not impinge on the form and character of Weston.
- 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, as 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. In general the principal elevations of buildings should face south.
- 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 Wednesday 19th May 2010 at All Saints Church, Weston. 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 Weston special to them. On return to the Church, 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 14 February – 28 March 2011. Following consultation, amendments and additions were made to the text. The Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Economic Development approved the Appraisal on 16 November 2011 and it is published on the Council's website.

# Appendix C

## Further reading

Baines's Directory 1822

North Yorkshire and Cleveland Vernacular Buildings Study Group (1980)  
'Report no. 698: Weston Hall Barn'

North Yorkshire and Cleveland Vernacular Buildings Study Group (1994)  
'Report no. 1457: Barn SW of Stocks Cottage, Weston'

