Appendix A (P-W)

Ravensworth Conservation Area

Ravensworth Conservation Area was designated in 1982. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

Though the origins of Ravensworth lie with the Castle, the ruins of which provided a source of building material for some of its houses, the village as we know it developed as an agricultural community, and farming remains an important aspect of Ravensworth's character. The most striking feature within the village is the large irregular shaped green, which provides both structure to the form of the settlement and a setting for the buildings which surround it. The largely continuous frontages create a strong sense of enclosure despite the vastness of the open area. As the majority of village lies on the higher land to the north and west, it would suggest that the ground conditions adjacent to the Castle were one of the factors dictating the historic pattern of development for the village.

The standing remains of Ravensworth Castle, on a platform raised above the surrounding land, date from the C14th, though its now ruinous state belies the profound influence which this site had on the development and character of Ravensworth. Now only evident from the swampy ground which surrounds the remains, Ravensworth Castle was originally protected by the most extensive water defences of any castle in the north of England. This makes Ravensworth Castle and its setting exceptionally important from an archaeological point of view.
Ravensworth nestles in an imposing landscape, with the bulk of the village situated on a slight knoll in the centre of a wide valley. Rising ground to the north and south results in the agricultural land which surrounds the village being particularly important to its setting and character. For this reason the Conservation Area incorporates not only the buildings but also the network of paddocks which surround them.

The buildings within the village are largely of C18th and C19th date, constructed mainly in local stone, which is generally of good quality and typically incorporating vertically sliding or Yorkshire sash windows and solid doors. The few painted and rendered buildings provide an important and interesting contrast. Roof coverings vary with stone slate, Welsh slate and clay pantiles predominating. Although there are some notable individual buildings, such as Park House, the architectural qualities of the buildings lies in their grouping and simple vernacular style. Particular care is required to avoid damaging the distinctive, architectural form of vernacular buildings. A number of examples of perhaps well intentioned though ill-considered alterations clearly demonstrate the vulnerability of houses in Ravensworth to this kind of threat. As a result there is much scope for enhancement.

Some modern buildings have intruded into the Conservation Area, though on the whole their impact is due to ill-considered design rather than problems of scale or position. Indeed the development of Mill Close, in particular the frontage to the Green, illustrates how well designed modern development reflecting local vernacular style and grouping, can be successful. Sadly subsequent alterations have marred the original detailing and the architectural unity of the scheme. Stone walls and hedges make a particularly important contribution to the overall character of the conservation area. Ravensworth has a windswept air, due partly to a scarcity of trees, but those at Park House and alongside the Hulme Beck are very important to the character of the Conservation Area and its setting. In the course of time the specimen trees on the Green will make a

similar contribution. A particularly worrying example of damaging change is the erosion of the Village Green. Already crossed by rough tracks, the edges of which tend to suffer from wear, additional pressure results from parking. Saving the Green from this worsening problem is a high priority. By comparison overhead wirescape is less significant, though it does intrude at the north-east, south and west sides of the Green.

Redmire Conservation Area

Redmire Conservation Area was designated in 1981 in connection with the preparation of a non-statutory village plan. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

The economic origins of Redmire are based in the lead mining industry which worked the moors to the north of the village. Although mining activity had little direct impact on the form and setting of the village itself, quarrying of local limestone has scarred the hillside to the north. The village is arranged in a loose and fairly informal manner around the irregular village green and the four roads which lead towards it. An interesting aspect of the general layout is the strong east-west orientation of many individual buildings and groups, in contrast to the north-south axis of the village as a whole. This often results in main facades being turned away from public view. Small garths and gardens separate the building groups, though recent development has affected this spacious arrangement. There is little doubt that this orientation is designed to take advantage of a southern aspect over Wensleydale, and its effect produces an unusual townscape character, unlike any other Richmondshire village. The main area of contrast to this general pattern is in Back Lane (also known as 'The Neukin'), where buildings are aligned tightly to the street providing a strong sense of enclosure.

Located on the north side of Wensleydale, the village is prominent from a number of vantage points, particularly the main A684 road on the south side of the Dale. Although distant views highlight the immense importance of trees to the character of the village, the contribution of the broader landscape setting to the character of the conservation area is limited. For this reason the boundary is drawn quite tightly around the built-up area.

Architecturally the village contains many good simple vernacular buildings, principally of late C17th, C18th and C19th date. The Bolton Arms, Pyra House and Priory House are good examples of local vernacular architecture, combining the solidity of local stone construction with simple and restrained detailing, usually involving limited openings, sash windows and solid doors. This simple formula has produced a rich variety of buildings and individual design treatments.

In addition to the many good, simple cottages and houses, Redmire contains a number of individual buildings of particular interest. Manor House for example, despite its C19th elevation is of late C17th date with a semi-circular stair turret, and Hogra Farmhouse, early C18th, retains a chamfered ashlar doorway and surrounds to some chamfered mullion windows. But it is the partially hidden Lightfoot Hall and Lightfoot House which are of greatest importance to the architectural history of Wensleydale, being of late C16th or early C17th with external details of timber, not stone.

Buildings are entirely of stone construction, though the quality of the local walled stone is not high, being mainly rubble brought to course, occasionally rendered. A limited amount of better quality squared coursed stone is to be found, for example at Pyra House and the roadside gable of Priory House. Stone slates and Welsh slates predominate, though some re-roofing in modern concrete has occurred, lacking the quality of the original coverings.

Because the village green and numerous mature trees contribute so much to the overall character of the Conservation Area, special care must be taken to protect these important features, and some thought will need to be given to a replanting programme. Some buildings have suffered from well intentioned but ill-considered and damaging change, providing scope for future enhancement work. Although a number of new houses have been built in the Conservation Area, its future preservation and enhancement will rely upon maintaining its distinctive form and character, by limiting infilling which could otherwise damage the original relationship between individual building groups.

Richmond Conservation Area

Richmond Conservation Area was designated in 1971, extended in 1976, and again in 1995. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to these decisions, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced as the case may be.

The origin of Richmond continues to tax the minds of architectural historians. Perhaps the town evolved from one of the ancient but as yet unplaced Domesday settlements of Hindrelac or Neutone, or maybe Richmond was a Norman planned town developed following the construction of the Castle. Could the benefits of such an outstanding natural defensive location have escaped the notice of the pre-Norman inhabitants of the area? Whilst the pre-conquest history remains a mystery, Richmond most certainly owes its existence to the decision of Earl Alan the Red of Brittany to proclaim Norman dominance of the area by building a castle on a high, prominent site in a loop of the River Swale. The site was named "Riche Monte", which translated means "strong hill". The development of the Castle marked the beginning of a new era, with the importance of Gilling diminishing and Richmond being established as a major administrative centre, a position it continues to hold. The name Richemunde was first recorded in c.1110.

The fortification of the site was completed during the reign of Henry II, by which time Richmond had developed from a small hamlet to a considerable town, and had been granted its first market in 1155. The area now occupied by the Market Place was originally the outer bailey of the castle, beyond which the town developed. In response to Scottish raids a town wall was built in the early C14th, though sadly little now remains of this structure. Richmond ranked as one of the chief market towns in the north of England during the Middle Ages, and indeed through to the C19th. Various industries flourished during the mediaeval period including tanning, leather dressing and textiles in addition to local mining activities for both lead and copper. Guilds developed, including the Mercers, Grocers and Haberdashers which has continued since its inception in the C13th.

In addition to its importance as a market town, Richmond also achieved prominence as an ecclesiastical centre. Some impression is gained from the number of recorded sites, which Include the Parish Church of St. Mary plus four mediaeval Chapels, Trinity Chapel in the Market Place which held the Consistory Court, St. Anthony's in what is now Wellington Place, St. James near the Green Bridge, and St. Edmund the King at Anchorage Hill, an area named after a near-by cell of anchorites. Three monastic houses were established in and around Richmond being St Martin's (Benedictine), Greyfriars (Franciscan) and St. Agatha's (Premonstratensian) at Easby.

Richmond is however far more than an historical legacy, and its outstanding character is derived from the combination of a magnificent natural setting, the remarkably high survival rate of its historic street pattern, buildings and floorscape, and the preservation of important open "green" spaces which add considerably to its overall form and

character. These qualities have led to Richmond attaining both national and international recognition as a truly outstanding historic market town. Pevsner described Richmond as "one of the visually most enjoyable small towns in the North of England".

The topography of the Swale valley has not only produced an impressive natural defensive position but also a dramatic setting for the Castle and the town which grew around it. The sweep of the river through superb countryside gives the town an added dimension, a factor which has not gone un-noticed by artists over the centuries. That so little development has occurred on the southern bank is certainly fortuitous, for it has preserved a setting to rank alongside the very best. By good fortune, the majority of the C20th expansion has occurred to the northeast of the town with surprisingly little pressure for development within the historic core. The one area where modern development has impacted upon this natural setting is Bolton Crofts, an area of steeply rising ground which provides an impressive backcloth to the town. The green swathe cut by Bolton Crofts and reaching deep into the heart of the town, including Ronaldshay Park, the Cricket Field and Friary grounds, is still a particularly striking and important characteristic of Richmond. To the south of the river, only two small pockets of historic development occurred, firstly at Sleegill, opposite the Castle, and secondly the former Railway Station, close to St. Martin's Priory.

The town centre retains its irregular mediaeval street pattern, due in part to the hilliness of the site, adding considerably to its townscape value, with constant changes in alignment and level. Around the Market Place and Castle itself, narrow winding streets create a strong sense of enclosure, contrasting with the somewhat wider and more formal arrangement of Newbiggin, Frenchgate and Bargate, generally lined by more substantial buildings whilst still retaining a domestic scale. The main changes to the plan of the town occurred in the C19th when, for example, Victoria Road and Queens Road were developed.

Perhaps one of the surprising aspects of Richmond is the seemingly small number of early secular buildings to have survived. Indeed until quite recently it was assumed that little or no trace of the pre-existing mediaeval structures remained. However recent refurbishment work and development has revealed substantial remains incorporated within existing standing structures and close to the surface. The historical development of Richmond as previously outlined, coupled with the archaeological information now being exposed, has emphasised the important role archaeology will play in the future, perhaps even revealing the secrets of its origin.

Although Richmond is thought of as a mediaeval town, in architectural terms it is Georgian buildings which predominate. This is hardly surprising for a town which enjoyed considerable prosperity during the C18th. The somewhat haphazard nature of its re-development may account for the retention of the mediaeval street pattern, though having regard to the recent archaeological finds, perhaps rather more re-fronting as opposed to replacement occurred. A relatively low level of re-development since has left an outstanding legacy of fine buildings, though the quality of some decisions taken earlier this century to remove important historic buildings and re-develop would be questioned in these more enlightened times. The architectural character of Richmond is based firmly in the local vernacular style of solid robust buildings, generally in linked or terraced form, with restrained detailing and limited openings.

This general arrangement holds true from the most elaborate house to the simplest cottage. Even where strong architectural themes are used, such as the Gothick style of 47 Newbiggin, it is brought back to a vernacular interpretation. This is not to suggest Richmond lacks buildings of genuine design quality, but that its special character lies in

the sum of the whole rather relying upon a few outstanding buildings. Indeed the fact that over 450 buildings are "Listed" within the Conservation Area gives some measure of its overall quality.

Local stone, which varies considerably in standard including high quality ashlar, coursed squared rubble, again laid to course, and river cobble, is used as the main walling material, but not exclusively so. Brick, particularly in and around the Market Place, Newbiggin and Frenchgate, also plays an important role, as does render, a material much mis-understood during the C20th, and one which adds colour and contrast to the street scene. Indeed rendered and brick facades far outweigh stone around the Market Place. Render is found in two basic styles, roughcast and stucco (smooth), but is always traditionally coloured either by the addition of a pigment to the render mix or by colourwashing. The widespread use of render and brick reflects the generally comparatively poor quality of much of the local stone, and ample evidence exists confirming that render was far more extensively used than is now apparent. Brick elevations are enhanced by the use of traditional bonds which add considerably to their appearance and quality, a characteristic sadly absent in modern brick facades.

Roof coverings vary quite widely between the three traditional materials of stone slate, Welsh slate and pantiles. A handful of buildings are roofed in Westmoreland slate, though this by no means a common material in Richmond. Modern concrete tiles, often lacking the quality of the original, have been used, although the balance remains strongly in favour of natural materials. The roofscape of Richmond is of immense importance to its overall character. The topography of the area coupled with high public vantage points, for example the Castle Keep, mean that land, buildings and roofscape are rarely hidden from view.

The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are of two or three stories. However this basic picture gives no hint of the huge variation in scale that exists, which when coupled with the winding street pattern and undulating topography, produces a townscape of quite exceptional interest. The elevational treatment of buildings is generally restrained, but with wide variation in design detailing. Vertically sliding sashes are extensively used, employing a range of glazing bar patterns, with Georgian 12 pane and Victorian 4 pane being the most common. Yorkshire sashes are also commonly used, and coupled with examples of balanced casements and a few mullioned windows, form the range of traditional window styles. Traditional doors are of solid construction with the three main patterns being boarded, 6 panel and 4 panel, with mouldings used to particularly good effect. A good proportion of buildings incorporate attractive architectural details such as dressed stone quoins, string courses, architraves and door casings and surrounds.

In terms of individual buildings of note, in addition to the Castle itself and the various religious sites already mentioned, those of national interest include the Georgian Theatre Royal, built in 1788 by Samuel Butler, The Bar and Postern Gateway, perhaps the only surviving remains of the mediaeval town wall, the Obelisk which replaced the mediaeval market cross in 1771, the brick fronted Kings Head Hotel built by Charles Bathurst in the early C18th, the Culloden Tower built to commemorate the victory at Culloden in 1746, and Swale House, which dates from the mid-late C18th, but is important for its historical associations with James Tate and Richmond Grammar School. The Richmond Station complex is also worthy of note not only for the undoubted quality of the original group designed by G.T Andrews of York, but also for an outstanding piece of modern design in the award winning Swimming Pool, skilfully added in 1974. Some of the more unusual entries in the Statutory list are various areas of cobbles in the Market Place, Newbiggin, Frenchgate, Bargate, Cornforth Hill, The Bar

and Tower Street, which emphasise the importance of the floorscape to the overall character of Richmond, both in terms of spatial and visual qualities. The potential for enhancement through the reinstatement of natural materials where these have been lost, presents considerable opportunities.

Trees make a special contribution to Richmond Conservation Area, not only in terms of its river valley setting but also within the central open spaces and streets. Particular features of note along the riverside include the planned parkland landscape of the Temple Grounds, dense woodland at Billy Bank Wood, Low Bank Wood and Clink Bank Wood, and the attractive public open areas at the Batts and around the former Station, much enhanced by substantial planting in recent years. Within the heart of the town trees at Ronaldshay Park, The Friary and Richmond Cricket Club strengthen the value of this important open space, and the avenues at Queens Road and Newbiggin add an extra dimension to their visual appeal.

In addition to the potential for enhancement already highlighted, further opportunities exist both in terms of individual buildings and areas. The character of a number of individual buildings has been marred by perhaps well intentioned, though in practice damaging change, and reinstatement of original detailing and materials is to be strongly encouraged. The Waterloo area is the subject of specific policies in the Local Plan, but other sites, often where demolition has occurred, offer similar potential for enhancement including Tower Street, close to the Castle.

Culloden Mews, Ryders Wynd, Victoria Stable Yard and Woolworth's (57 Market Place), all demonstrate that although conservation interests remain a priority, expansion and growth can be achieved through well conceived and carefully designed modern development which respects the character and setting of this truly outstanding Conservation Area.

Richmond Hill Conservation Area

Richmond Hill Conservation Area was designated in 1983. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

The Conservation Area is based on the site of the former Richmond Barracks, which were built 1875-1877. Bulmer's History and Directory of North Yorkshire (1890) records that the Barracks were designed to accommodate 10 officers and 340 men, and that the complex included a hospital, canteen, library, sergeants mess and stables. The complex was built as the Regimental Headquarters of the Green Howards, the old 19th Regiment of Foot.

The Green Howards have played a particularly important role in the history of Richmond, and the Barracks are a monument to the Regiment, towering imposingly above the town centre. The main blocks, Howard and Hulse, form a prominent landmark from distant viewpoints, remaining dominant despite the C20th development which has enveloped this once isolated site. The entire site is enclosed within a high perimeter stone wall, which creates a very strong sense of unity and separation from the surrounding development and is of special value in its own right. The main buildings were spaciously arranged around the central parade ground, with their elevational treatment confirming the inward-looking nature of the site's original use. This is not to suggest that the outward facing elevations lack quality, but rather that the principal facades front onto the functional focal point. Rather curiously the main buildings are laid out in a strict geometric form which appears to bear no relation to the overall shape or orientation of the site. The buildings are of stone construction, the stone being sombre grey in colour, unfortunately producing a rather cold appearance, which is perhaps

amplified by the very strong and rigid nature of the institutional architectural design. This is particularly true in relation to the main Barrack blocks. Roof coverings are of Welsh slate, which whilst entirely traditional, does little to add visual warmth.

In 1961 the Green Howards vacated the premises and the site was commandeered by the Home Office for use as an approved school. This use brought about a limited amount of additional development, though the main buildings remained intact. When this use ceased in the 1980's, the future of this important landmark was in considerable doubt. Following sale to a private developer, a scheme was prepared for the partial re-development of the site.

The development scheme was designed to a particularly high standard, with careful attention to scale, detail and materials. The main original buildings were retained and sensitively converted to residential use, which included some modification to the roofline of Howard and Hulse blocks, and care taken to ensure the spatial qualities of the site were not entirely lost. To date the scheme has been only partially implemented, though the design concept and high quality of execution have provided ample evidence to suggest that it will achieve its objective of preserving and enhancing the overall character of the site.

Hulse and Howard blocks continue to dominate the Richmond skyline, and their new use should ensure that this important landmark, which commemorates the military role of Richmond and the towns' close affiliation with the Green Howards Regiment, is preserved, but perhaps more importantly utilised and enhanced.

Scorton Conservation Area

Scorton Conservation Area was designated in 1977 in connection with the preparation of a non-statutory Village Plan. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

Scorton is a strikingly attractive village arranged around a large and dominant village green. The central and largest area of the green is bordered by roads and unusual in that it is raised above the level of the surrounding village by stone retaining walls. The plan form of the space created between the buildings is rectangular, being well defined on the west, north and south sides by tight building groups and terraces. The scale of the surrounding houses and cottages is somewhat greater than in many villages, with a relatively high proportion of three storey buildings. The east side of the green is more loosely developed, but no less well defined, with the high wall to Scorton Hospital completing the strong sense of enclosure. The historic core extends in three directions, High Row along the Uckerby road, The Greens, which links the village green at its south-east corner to Manor House, and Hospital Road to the east of the green. Building lines are not perfectly straight, with gentle curves, projecting buildings and recessed groups adding to the overall townscape quality.

The village is set within an area of flat, open landscape which prevents a full appreciation of its scale or character from a distance. For this reason the Conservation Area boundary has been drawn tightly around the historic core.

Scorton lies in a transitional area in terms of architectural character, not because the buildings follow anything other than the robust, simple vernacular style, but rather in basic construction. To the east, buildings tend to be largely of brick, and to the west of stone. Scorton sits between and offers a splendid array of walling material with good brickwork, local river cobble, relatively poor rubble, and the traditional answer to poor masonry, quality lime render.

Render makes a special contribution to the character of Scorton, producing pleasing visual contrast as well as an elegant finish to some of its most important and prominent buildings. Evidence also suggests that its use was more widespread before it became fashionable in the second half of the C20th to remove this traditional finish and expose the poor quality underlying rubble walling. Roof coverings are generally of pantiles, some with a slate eaves course, with stone slates and Welsh slates also making a contribution. Most buildings typically incorporate vertically sliding sashes with a variety of glazing bar arrangements and solid doors, but examples of Yorkshire sashes, mullions and balanced casement windows are also to be found. Buildings of particular interest include Scorton Grammar School, a purpose built brick building dating from 1760, the School House, a fine three storey rendered building which pre-dates the founding of the School in 1720, Manor House which dates from the mid-C18th and Clara Meyer, an elegant brick house of mid-C18th date. One final building group of particular significance to Scorton is the Hospital and its associated buildings, which have been a dominant feature of the village and owned by the Order of St. John since 1912.

The importance of the village green has already been emphasised, but hard floorscape in the form of traditional cobbling is also in evidence notably to the front of the Royal public house. The attractiveness of this area should act as a stimulus to encourage a more sympathetic approach to other areas of hard landscape, and certainly offers scope for enhancement proposals. Stone walls, railings and trees all make valuable contributions to the overall character.

Not all buildings retain their original character and examples of well intentioned, though in practice ill-considered alterations offer further opportunities for enhancement.

Skeeby Conservation Area

Skeeby Conservation Area was designated in 1980 in connection with the preparation of a non- statutory Village Plan. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

The Conservation Area is focused upon the older core of this agricultural/commuter village. Skeeby is linear in form, though substantial expansion during the C20th broken this basic layout principle. The village straddles the A6108 Richmond to Scotch Corner road, which tends to have a dominant impact upon the overall character, producing a tunnel effect. Fortunately this rather harsh form is considerably softened by areas of village green and the lively beck on the south side of Richmond Road, and the projection of buildings forward to the carriageway/footpath edge at 2 The Wynd, 29 and 46 Richmond Road. Buildings are generally arranged in groups and terraces, and are predominantly 2 storeys in scale. It is the overall grouping of buildings as opposed to their individual quality which characterises the architectural merits of the village. One important characteristic of the village is that on the north side of Richmond Road many of the cottages have front gardens set behind stone boundary walls, yet on the south side the cottages generally abut straight onto the green

The village lies in a slight depression but in distant views it is the recent development rather than the historic core which dominates the scene. For this reason the conservation area has been drawn tightly around buildings and gardens.

There is little to suggest that archaeology will be a major factor, with perhaps the exception of the known interest in the area around Halfe Hill.

As already hinted, Skeeby contains few buildings of outstanding individual quality, though the simple, robust vernacular style of the majority of cottages and houses is of considerable importance to the character of the village. Buildings are generally of stone construction, mainly rubble and cobble, with little good quality squared stone. In a number of cases the rubble is painted or limewashed, and occasionally rendered, a practice which may have been more widespread before the C20th fashion to strip render developed. Certainly the painted and rendered facades provide a pleasing architectural contrast and enhance substantially the overall character. The cottages and houses incorporate simple traditional detailing, typically with sash windows and solid doors.

Unfortunately the original stone slate and clay pantile roof coverings to many cottages have given way to modern ribbed concrete tiles, though where they remain, the character and value of these traditional finishes is clearly evident.

Buildings of particular interest in Skeeby include Manor House, a fine mullioned house of early-mid C17th date with a good quality interior, the impressive three storey rendered Hall Farmhouse dated 1747, and Halfe Hill House dating from the late C17th.

The importance of the green has already been mentioned, being the only open space of any significance in the village. The green is generally well maintained, though the area to the frontage of the former garage adjoining Pear Tree Close requires attention. Trees, particularly in the centre of the village, make an important contribution as do the stone boundary walls which front the north side of Richmond Road.

The character of some buildings has suffered from well intentioned though ill-considered change, and opportunities should be taken to encourage sensitive restoration wherever possible. Wirescape intrudes in parts of the village, again offering opportunities for enhancement.

Spennithorne Conservation Area

Spennithorne Conservation Area was designated in 1982 in connection with the preparation of a non-statutory village plan. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to the designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced as the case may be.

Spennithorne has its origins in pre-Domesday times, though its present form and character derives from much later periods in the development of the village. Spennithorne contains a relatively large number of substantial buildings, an important factor in its pattern of growth. Large houses set in private grounds, associated outbuildings, together with the modest scale of cottages within the core of the village, combine to produce a settlement typical in character of a small estate village. Making good use of the valley side to gain the benefit of panoramic views over lower Wensleydale, these main houses are enclosed by high stone walls which in addition to providing privacy, create a strong sense of enclosure along the village street.

Spennithorne nestles well into the hillside, with substantial tree cover restricting views of both individual buildings and building groups, allowing the built and natural environments to merge. The extensive tree cover and the topography of the area combine to limit views of the village from a distance, and for the most part the Conservation Area boundary has been drawn quite tightly around buildings and gardens, though closely associated landscape features, for example the avenue of trees along Harmby Road, are included. The Conservation Area is split into two quite distinct parts, the main village and a small group of buildings centred around the site of Spennithorne Old Hall, which are of significance both architecturally and

archaeologically. The oldest surviving part of this medieval complex is the much altered Abbey Cottage, which dates from the C14th.

Architecturally, Spennithorne offers an interesting variety of building periods and styles, including Spennithorne Hall, perhaps of C17th origins, Spennithorne House which dates from the mid-C19th, and Thorney Hall built in c.1861. In addition the village contains a good range of cottages constructed in the vernacular style, a fine School and School House dated 1833, and the Grade I listed Church of St Michael, which dates from the C12.

Whilst stone predominates, some the most significant buildings in Spennithorne are externally rendered, reflecting the high regard paid by previous generations to this traditional finish. Natural stone, Welsh and Westmoreland slates provide the range of traditional roof coverings, though a number of buildings have been re-roofed in modern concrete coverings which lack the quality and texture of the original. Typically buildings incorporate vertically sliding sash or Yorkshire sideways sliding sash windows and solid doors.

The character of Spennithorne owes much to the spacing of buildings and building groups, the intervening gaps being every bit as important as the buildings themselves. Walls play a significant role throughout the conservation area in defining space and providing visual continuity. The importance of the very substantial tree cover has already been emphasised, though as many are mature, care must be taken to ensure that phased replanting occurs.

Some buildings in Spennithorne have suffered from ill-considered alterations, and opportunities should be taken to encourage sensitive restoration wherever possible. Wirescape likewise intrudes, and erosion of the grass verges in the vicinity of the public house needs to be carefully monitored to prevent long-term damage.

Thornton Steward Conservation Area

Thornton Steward Conservation was designated in 1995. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which merit designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

Thornton Steward is a rather unusual village, by-passed by the network of lanes which serve the surrounding rural community. Whilst there are no apparent natural features which might account for its development, such as a river crossing or defensive site, nearby Jervaulx Abbey and Danby Hall may offer some clues. Its origins appear to be based firmly in agriculture, which continues to shape the character of the village and its surrounding setting. The village is basically linear in form, with buildings arranged in groups around a narrow, elongated central green. Buildings generally follow a strong east-west axis, taking benefit of the attractive views across lower Wensleydale towards Jervaulx Abbey.

The core of the village lies on sloping ground, the majority of buildings being hidden from the main access roads to the north. A closer bond between the surrounding landscape and built-up area exists at the east end of Thornton Steward, where open paddocks play an important role in the setting of the village. The most significant are included within the Conservation Area. Otherwise the boundary follows closely the limits of buildings and gardens.

From an archaeological point of view, the Thornton Steward area is of considerable interest not only due to the close proximity of Jervaulx, but also as evidence suggests former development to the south and west, closer to the river, perhaps indicating a shift in the centre of the settlement.

Thornton Steward's architectural character is based firmly in vernacular traditions, with buildings generally being of solid form with restrained detailing, usually incorporating sliding sash, Yorkshire sash or mullioned windows and solid doors. There are exceptions to this general pattern, the most notable being the unusual early C18th castellated house, Fort Horn. Other buildings of particular merit include the Old Hall of C16th origin, Manor House, dating from the C17th, partially re-built in 1953, and The Manse which dates from the early C18th. The overall character of the village however, owes more to the cumulative value of the buildings and their grouping rather than the quality of individual examples.

Stone predominates throughout the Conservation Area, mainly rubble brought to course, though some fine squared stonework and good quality architectural dressings exist. Important contrast is provided by a limited amount of render, the Old Vicarage being the most notable example. Roof coverings follow the traditional mix in this part of the District of stone slates, Welsh slates and clay pantiles, though some modern concrete replacements, which lack the character and quality of the original, are to be found.

The green is clearly the key feature in establishing the form of the village, though an important contribution is also made by the gaps between buildings and building groups, particularly on the south side of the main street, affording views over lower Wensleydale. Trees within the heart of the village, notably on the green, add considerably to the overall character, together with the attractive mix of stone walls and traditional hedges. In contrast, the standard concrete highway fencing on the south side of the village street, is rather out of place.

Whilst the well being of the local farming industry must be recognised, insensitive siting and design of new farm buildings could prove highly intrusive and damaging to the character of the Conservation Area. Ill-considered alterations have marred some buildings and opportunity should be taken where possible to encourage sensitive restoration. Prominent overhead wires also intrude.

Wensley Conservation Area

Wensley Conservation Area was designated in 1990 as part of a non-statutory Village Appraisal. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

Wensley, now a small, attractive village associated with the Bolton Estate, was from 1289 to 1563, an important market town until a plague resulted in abandonment of the settlement. Wensley never regained its historic status, being superseded by nearby Leyburn, and its former importance is no longer in evidence, except that Wensleydale bears its name, the only main dale in the northern Pennines not named after its river. Although Bolton Hall lies some distance to the west, the influence of the estate is clearly evident in the imposing entrance to Bolton Park which dominates the west side of the central green. Much of the village faces the irregular green, which is bisected by the A684. Progressive widening of this road has increased its impact on the village, especially near the High Bridge and on the north side of the green, where a cottage of townscape value was demolished in the 1970's. The village spreads to the north and east of the green, but remains compact. Buildings are arranged in attractive groups, with stone walls playing a particularly important role, providing visual continuity and a strong sense of enclosure.

Set on the north bank of the River Ure, Wensley viewed from the south and west, nestles into a heavily treed landscape with a natural backcloth of the valley side

terminated by a limestone scar. From this angle, only the church is readily visible. Trees dominate the village from the north and east, though from this direction the village forms the foreground to expansive panoramic views of the Ure valley. Whilst the designated Conservation Area concentrates on the core of the settlement, significant tree groups and open land on the south and east sides important to the setting of the village are included.

The former prominence and subsequent decline of Wensley, suggest that archaeology may be a significant local factor, though areas of known interest lie to the south of the river.

The character of architecture in Wensley is firmly based in local vernacular traditions. Buildings are generally of two storey scale with restrained and simple detailing. Many of the cottages display detailing which might be described as archetypal C19th estate architecture, with heavy stone door and window surrounds (pitched faced with plain margins), iron framed windows, gabled projections and decorated barge boards. Others reflect more closely C18th style, with limited openings containing vertically sliding sashes or Yorkshire sashes, some in plain ashlar surrounds. East Lodge, at the entrance to Bolton Park, is a more heavily decorated estate cottage with a canted bay with parapet and finials, a 2 light casement window with strapwork cresting, and a two storey tower. Other buildings of particular interest include Wensley Hall (early-mid C19th) and the extremely fine Church of Holy Trinity, dating from the C13th, the tower of which was blown down through neglect in 1709 and rebuilt in 1719.

The dominant central green is generally well maintained and Wensley appears to suffer less than other villages from erosion caused by parking. An outstanding landscape feature within the village is the highly attractive tree lined shallow valley formed around Wensley Brook

Wensley has not been subjected to excessive development pressures and great care must be exercised in considering any future proposals to ensure the spacious character of the settlement pattern is not eroded. Whilst the vast majority of historic buildings remain unspoilt, a few examples of ill-considered and damaging alterations, offer scope for future enhancement work.

Whashton Conservation Area

Whashton Conservation Area was designated in 1995. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which led to designation, and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced, as the case may be.

The early origins of Whashton are uncertain, and although nearby mineral extraction may have had some influence on its development, the present character of the village is essentially agricultural. The form of the village is unusual, based on an elongated triangle in shape, enclosing a rather undulating green. The narrow point of the triangle is at its western end, from which the green gradually widens to the terminating farmgroup at the east end of the village around Whashton Farm. The majority of buildings are located on the north side of the green, with the largely undeveloped south side of the triangle being marked by a ridge crowned by a stone wall, towards which the green rises. Most buildings are orientated east - west, emphasising the strong linear form to the village. Buildings are quite widely spaced, the gaps between being particularly important to Whashton's overall character.

Whashton lies on the south slope of a wide valley, with the bulk of the village being just below a pronounced ridge line, which from the south screens much of the village. The main approach, from the west, is quite spectacular, with the road winding its way

through a narrow, tight valley, and rising towards the first groups of buildings which skyline at this point. This attractive valley is important for its small scale landscape quality. From the south, little of the form of the village is evident, views being limited to glimpses of buildings in a wider landscape setting. Views of the village from the north and east are limited, and the conservation area boundary follows more closely the limits of the built settlement.

Whashton contains few buildings of outstanding individual quality, its architectural character being derived more from their overall grouping and form, though Whashton Farmhouse and Whashton Lodge are notable examples. The former dates from the late C17th with fragments of mullioned windows evident, and a stepped external chimney stack, with the later dating from the early C18th and used during the C19th as a "London" school. Buildings are generally of stone construction, which is of good quality and laid to course. Roof coverings are mainly of stone slates and natural red clay pantiles, though a number of buildings have been re-roofed in modern concrete substitutes. The major exception to this general pattern is Whashton Farm, being externally rendered, an interesting and welcome contrast. Architecturally, buildings in the Conservation Area follow the vernacular style, with simple detailing and limited openings, typically incorporating sliding sash windows and solid doors. The otherwise plain entrance doors to a number of cottages is enhanced by small stone canopies.

The massing of building groups plays a particularly important role in defining the character of the village, highlighting the gaps which complement the village green and provide a loose, but clear and consistent structure to the settlement.

Stone walls make a vital contribution to the core of the village, linking building groups and creating a sense of enclosure. Few trees of significance exist within the heart of the village, though several mature hedgerow trees and some fine hedges add greatly to the character of the village setting from the west.

Sadly, a number of buildings in Whashton have suffered from well intentioned, though ill-considered alterations, which have damaged their architectural detailing, and the design merits of some infill development is questionable . Care will need to be taken to avoid further damaging change, and opportunities should be seized wherever possible to encourage sensitive restoration. Some erosion of the village green, particularly at its eastern end, may degenerate into long term damage if left un-checked.