

# MELSONBY

## CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN



Adopted as supplementary planning  
guidance on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012



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## **MAP**

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A Conservation Area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Melsonby was designated a Conservation Area in 1975.
- 1.2 Local Planning Authorities are required to 'formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area, which are Conservation Areas' (Section 71 of the Act). This Character Appraisal and Management Plan fulfils this duty.
- 1.3 In making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area' (Section 72 of the Act). While this should ensure that harmful change is not allowed, some changes, not normally requiring planning permission (known as 'permitted development') could still damage the special qualities of the area. Local Authorities have special powers to issue Directions removing certain permitted development rights from properties if it can be shown that it is necessary
- 1.4 This Appraisal and Management Plan should be read in conjunction with the following documents :
  - Richmondshire Local Plan
  - The emerging Local Development Framework
  - National Policy Guidance especially Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning and the Historic Environment.
  - Other National Planning Policy Statements
  - English Heritage (2006) Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals
  - English Heritage (2006) Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas

## 2.0 Location and Setting

- 2.1 Melsonby is one of a group of smaller villages set in a triangle between Richmond, Darlington and Barnard Castle, lying 7km north of Richmond and 10km south west of Darlington. The village is positioned on a cross roads oriented roughly north - south just under 2km north of the A66 Trunk Road. The older core of Melsonby follows the course of Waterfall Beck as it runs roughly from west to east through the village, providing changing levels, important relief and a location for many trees and other significant landmarks through the centre of the settlement. The beck meanders out of the village to the east draining into Clow Beck, ultimately to reach the river Tees near to Croft. Properties stand on both sides of the beck and more recent

development extends both north and south from this established centre along the approaches to the village.

- 2.2 At Melsonby the land rises above the plain of the Tees valley towards the higher Pennine moorlands, the village itself nestling within an undulating rich agricultural setting. The elevated position allows spectacular, wide views to be achieved at the eastern end of the village, particularly from the church yard. From here the Tees valley stretches to the coast and the horizon is bounded by the North York Moors and Teesside to the east (photo 1). The more immediate landform is dominated by the valley of the beck and from the east the village is approached through a sunken lane between low cliffs formed by this stream. The undulating nature of the land hides much of the settlement within the wider landscape and a notable rise at Well Bank to the immediate north of the village screens much of the village centre.



Photo 1

- 2.3 The Conservation Area is linear in form, following the course of the beck and mostly encompassing only a single row of properties to each side of the small valley. The western extremity reaches as far as Melsonby Farm and Layton Lane Farm, the final properties identifiable as part of the historic village. Layton Lane House, a modern property, lies outside the Conservation Area boundary. The northern boundary currently follows the line of the back gardens to the houses on High Row and Church Row, extending where appropriate to encompass structures and properties of character. To the south a similar line defines the extent of the area, here extending a short distance along Moor Road to take in some older properties. At the eastern end of the village the boundary is defined by the churchyard wall, the line of the historic bridge over the beck and by the property boundary to the Old Rectory, taking in some of the land to the south of Glebe Farm. Although the Conservation Area encompasses much of the village the

post war housing along Moor Road and around St James Close and the more recent estate to the south of Glebe Farm lie outside the boundary as does the modern development at Wharton's Farm on the north side of the village.

### **3.0 Historic Development and Archaeology**

- 3.1 Historically Melsonby sits within an area which has been settled for many centuries, although little substantial evidence remains to the casual observer. To the north of the village lie the important Iron Age remains at Stanwick and of a similar age Scots Dyke passes north to south through the centre of the settlement. The principal Roman road of Dere Street (B6275) runs from north to south approximately 1.5km away to the east. Archaeological remains from around the village have included Iron Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon finds in locations such as Low Grange Farm and at the church, where Anglo-Saxon grave sculptures dating from around 800AD are now displayed. Some of the early features of the church have survived the various phases of rebuilding and they provide an important link with the origins of the village.
- 3.2 By the time Malsenebi is mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086 a significant Anglo-Saxon church had been constructed as a daughter church to the principle foundation in Gilling Parish, however the village had already grown to such a size that the congregation had a resident priest and had gained its own parish status. The settlement name is thought to have an Irish/Celtic/Viking origin possibly referring to a farmstead of a man named 'maelsuithan' and has changed little since the Norman Conquest.
- 3.3 The church was rebuilt in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, finished about 100 years later and has remained the principle building within the village throughout the centuries. Successive rebuilding has significantly altered its appearance and size and although some Anglo-Saxon style features remain these are limited to the south door (photo 2), a few minor openings and some of the internal arcades. Following centuries of minor alterations the church was 'restored' during the Victorian period, first in around 1850 when the vestry was relocated, the south porch added and new windows were inserted, then again more thoroughly in 1871/72 by Paley and Austin of Lancaster who rebuilt much of the nave, leaving the village with the building it enjoys today (photo 3). The church records date back to 1574 and are now held at the county record office.





Photo 2



Photo 3

- 3.4 The Old Rectory on East Road dates from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century and, like the church, has had a number of significant extensions and phases of rebuilding over the years. To the south of the Rectory are the remains of a possible religious foundation variously identified as a Benedictine nunnery, a 'turriolum' or tower house associated with both Easby Abbey and Marrick Priory, or a chapel. Although the precise history and form of the buildings are unclear they are known to have been demolished by the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and only a small section of wall is noted by Pevsner as remaining in the mid 1960's.
- 3.5 Melsonby's most notable period of history is the later 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries when it flourished as a centre for horse racing and training, particularly on Gatherley Moor to the south of the village. The merits of this local industry are known to have been recommended to Lord Cromwell in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century and George III is thought to have visited on a number of occasions, reputedly exclaiming "Oh for a gasp of Gatherley air !!" on his death bed.
- 3.6 The village benefited from an investment in elementary schools throughout the later Victorian period with the Victoria County History noting such buildings being constructed in 1857 and 1899, whilst a further National School is thought to have been built by the rector in 1863. The first of the schools was associated with the Wesleyan Chapel built in 1844 which was converted into two houses in 1866 when the new chapel was built. It is also thought that both religious foundations had their own reading rooms in addition to the schools and so education was well provided for within the village and the surrounding countryside.

## **4.0 Architectural Features and Building Materials**

### **4.1 Architectural Style of Village Buildings**

- 4.1.1 As is often the case in villages that the church remains the earliest building in the settlement and the church of St James the Great at Melsonby dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The different phases of building can be discerned through the variation in style of stonework as well as the changing style of decoration. Some of the earliest stonework dates from the late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century and can be recognised by its random use of field stone and cobbles as found in the

base of the tower (photo 4) or by its very square block form as found in the lower sections of the eastern wall (photo 5).



Photo 4



Photo 5

4.1.2 The style of the windows dates to this Early English period of church architecture and is recognised by their tall slender lancet form, although many of them here at Melsonby have been heavily restored or replaced particularly in the Victorian period (photo 6). Some very early stonework and decoration survives within the church, notably around the south door (photo 7) and some internal sections, particularly the large circular column of the north arcade. Whilst much of the church was restored through the 19<sup>th</sup> century the porch itself (photo 8) appears to be completely new with a very different, clean-cut form of masonry comprising well dressed stones with sharp edged clear detail, surviving much better than the older work by virtue of being merely 150 years old rather than having weathered through several hundreds of years.



Photo 6



Photo 7



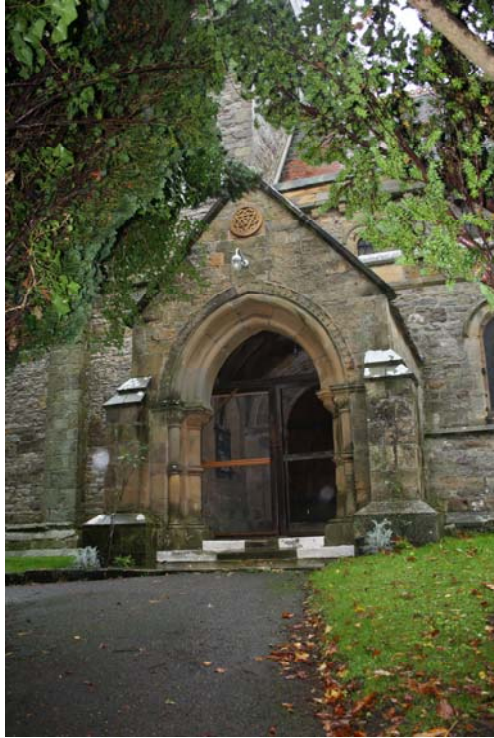


Photo 8



Photo 9

4.1.3 The first domestic buildings are the larger farmhouses - a good example being Layton Farm house at the west end of the village (photo 10). Dated 1698 the large chimney stack at the west end, the small square windows with casement details and the low storey heights with a steeper roof slope are all typical of these earlier buildings. The detail of the stone slate eaves to the roof is an attractive vernacular feature.



Photo 10

4.1.4 Some of the smaller cottages on East Road may also date from this period, the best example being number 12, Fern House (photo 11). The steep pitched roof, substantial chimneys and raised brickwork to the gables are typical features of this period however the window openings have been altered during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to provide typical Georgian sliding sash windows. It is likely that prior to this the earlier windows would have been a casement style similar in form to those at Layton Farm House. Much of the Rectory also dates from this



period although the original property is earlier, dating from the late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Evidence of stone mullioned windows can be found within the southern section of the building. Records tell of its alteration and extension in 1706 and again in 1789 and the appearance of the east front (photo 12) with a rendered finish and large vertically proportioned sliding sash windows set in sandstone mouldings is typical of the mid Georgian period.



Photo 11



Photo 12

4.1.5 The cottages and houses from 32 to 50 High Row are also typical of the last half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (photos 13 and 14). The best preserved of these is number 38 (photo 15) which retains two different styles of multi-paned sliding sash windows, those on the first floor being set deep into the wall within dressed ashlar surrounds whilst the ground floor window is close to the face of the building and has exposed sash boxes. Also of note is the boarded side passage door to the right of the front door (photo 16) and the kneelers and dressed copings at the gables to the roof (photo 17).



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17

4.1.6 Other properties along this row have been subjected to a range of alterations and replacement windows of varying characteristics and suitability for their setting, most notably the unfortunate use of modern uPVC windows which do not complement the historic character of the buildings or the village. In certain cases the shape of the opening has been altered to accommodate revised windows usually to the detriment of the proportions of the building (photo 18). Closer to the centre of the village number 8 High Row is a good example of a carefully updated period property (photo 19). Dating from 1785 and constructed of well squared local stone the original windows to the property would probably have been multi-paned sliding sashes however over the years these have been replaced with replica Victorian sashes. This change has retained the original shape of the openings and the vertical proportions of the glazing whilst updating the appearance of the building.



Photo 18



Photo 19

4.1.7 The late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries saw significant construction throughout the village in a variety of styles. Typical small cottages continued to be built in a vernacular form and The Lilacs at 19 Church Row (photo 20) is a typical example of this period. Important characteristics are the multi-paned vertically proportioned sliding sash windows and the taller room heights when compared to earlier cottages. The painted surrounds against the roughcast render (photo 21) reflect the local style of moulded stone surrounds where the building is finished with exposed masonry for example 31 Church Row (photo 22).





Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



Photo 23

4.1.8 At the eastern end of Church Row Glebe Farmhouse (photo 23) dating from 1800 retains the smaller windows and lower proportions of the earlier period and is finished in a roughcast render to the front elevation, the side gable exhibiting roughly coursed rubble stonework (photo 24). It is a particularly lengthy property and may have at its origins as part domestic and part livestock building with the functions separated by a cross passage, the limited number of chimneys suggesting that the house was at the east end and a later chimney was added on the west gable when the whole building became residential. The bridge over the beck (photo 25) is dated on a date-stone as 1800 and is contemporary with many of the buildings in this area.



Photo 24



Photo 25

4.1.9 The 19<sup>th</sup> century continued to see construction around the central core of the village and this brought new emerging styles to the village. Early examples of the period include numbers 4 and 6 High Row (photo 26) which are of a notably greater size than neighbouring cottages and retain their Georgian pattern windows. The well dressed ashlar stone of number 6 (photo 27) contrasts with the random rubble of its neighbour (photo 28) but both houses share a similar confidence of design and generous proportions to their principle elevations.



Photo 26



Photo 28



Photo 27

4.1.10 By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the fashion for Gothic style had reached the rural north east of England and Wharton Farm house (photo 29) has elements of this exhibited in the tall Elizabethan influenced chimneys (photo 30), the mullioned windows and the Tudor style drip moulds over the windows and doors (photo 31). The steep roof slope also reflects this style. Central Villa (photo 32) is of a similar date and also draws on historic architectural references being more typical of a domestic Tudor style but still featuring large decorated chimneys, mullioned windows and detailed drip moulds.



Photo 29



Photo 30



Photo 31





Photo 32

4.1.11 Several of the larger village institutions date from this period and include the school (photo 33), the Methodist chapel (photo 34) and the Church Hall (photo 35). These buildings are typical Victorian institutional buildings, well detailed, using local materials where they are suitable and reflecting a confidence of design in establishing new styles. The steep roof of the Church Hall with its prominent gable window facing the green and the Early English style lancets of the Methodist Chapel are good examples of the period whilst the simple robust detailing of the school predates the memorial window of 1899 but gives a strong identity to this important village institution.



Photo 33



Photo 34



Photo 35

4.1.12 By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century alternative materials had started to filter into the village and the best example of this is found at 21 and 23 Church Row (photo 36) with the two most prominent brick houses in the village. The design of these houses is typical of the turn of the century using as it does hanging tile and contrasting feature materials for corners and details, here relying on imported sandstone to create

variety in the elevations. The pair of houses at 12 and 14 High Row (photo 37) may also have been brick set on a stone plinth in a similar style however the unfortunate rendering of this building has obscured the original finish.



Photo 36



Photo 37

4.1.13 The 20<sup>th</sup> century has also made a contribution to Melsonby with the low set bungalow of 1930's/40's date at number 33 West Road (photo 38) and later single storey houses at 12 West Road (photo 39) and to the rear of Central Villa (photo 40). These buildings are very much at odds with the established style and form of residential properties in Melsonby and should not be seen as a form to encourage within the Conservation Area. The majority of later 20<sup>th</sup> century construction lies outside the Conservation Area to the south and takes the form of Local Authority housing and bungalows of differing styles and periods.



Photo 38



Photo 39



Photo 40

4.1.14 An important and influential development in property style has been the increased popularity of barn conversions and developments around courtyards, sometimes created for the purpose of tying the new

scheme into the established rural setting. Melsonby has several examples of this type of development including the conversion of the tithe barn and associated buildings at the Old Rectory (photo 41), the barn conversions and new build developments at Orchard House (photo 42) and the residential development of the farmyard at Wharton's Farm (photo 43), much of which lies outside of the Conservation Area. To the extreme west of the village and set in the land to the south of Melsonby Farm an isolated barn complete with gingang feature has also been converted (photo 44).



Photo 41



Photo 42



Photo 43



Photo 44

## 4.2 Materials

### Stone

4.2.1 The majority of the village buildings are of stone, mostly a locally sourced limestone of varied colour and laid to random courses. The area immediately to the south of the village has a long history of quarrying and mining and is likely to have provided the majority of building materials used in Melsonby over the ages.

4.2.2 The earliest stone building in the village is the church and this exhibits a few styles of stonework, the earliest dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This can be distinguished generally by the large squared blocks typical of early stonework (photo 45). Later stonework used smaller blocks of stone for the walls and this dominates the later Early English phase of construction and completion of the original church during the 13<sup>th</sup> century (photo 46). Pevsner notes an amount of surviving early stone features around the tower area however many of the windows and



other features belong to the Victorian period of restoration and can be distinguished by more regularly cut stonework which has not had the same degree of weathering.



Photo 45



Photo 46

- 4.2.3 Nothing else of medieval date survives to materially contribute to the Conservation Area and the earliest domestic structures are of coursed random rubble, usually with sawn heads and sills and sometimes complete framing to the windows or door openings (photo 47). Buildings are finished with well dressed quoins to the corners and chamfers decorated higher status openings in some cases but in general stonework is simple, solid and with robust detailing (photo 48).



Photo 47



Photo 48

- 4.2.4 The Victorian period saw the flourishing of stonework details with finely dressed stone appearing on wealthy farm houses such as Wharton's Farm (photo 49) with intricate detailing being employed to good effect in window surrounds (photo 50) and chimney stacks (photo 51). The larger public buildings also reflected this style of stonework and this defines much of the character of buildings such as the School on West Road (photo 52), the Wesleyan Chapel on Moor Road (photo 53) and the former Church Hall on Church Row.





Photo 49



Photo 50



Photo 51



Photo 52



Photo 53



Photo 54

4.2.5 Although many of these principle buildings have distinctive features an important but subtle element of a building's character is the difference in walling stone used for the main construction. This is most notable on the houses adjacent to the school on West Road (photo 54) where the property most closely associated with the school itself has larger, more expensive stone blocks forming the walls, finished with a well dressed herringbone pattern. Adjacent cottages of a similar age and style have a more vernacular, less machined appearance and form to the stone with a pitched face leaving a rugged finish. The scale of the stones varies significantly and the jointing further exaggerates the differences in construction, creating an attractive variety to a single terrace of properties.

#### Render

4.2.6 Rendered buildings make an important contribution to the village scene, highlighting certain properties within the landscape and providing an interesting variety of building materials. Render has several uses in the context of the village. It can be used to disguise poorer quality less expensive random stonework and provide a more visually harmonious finish to a building, or to provide a weather proof coating to an exposed building or one constructed of less high quality stonework. These are the traditional roles in which render has been

used. If a building has been subject to several phases of alteration, a render coat can disguise a patchwork appearance and help reinstate a visual harmony to the building. Finally in the 20<sup>th</sup> century fashion and economics play a role in the development of rendered buildings. Many older properties were rendered to update their appearance, a fashion that has been reversed in recent years, sometimes resulting in the incorrect removal of render where it had been applied for sound structural reasons. Where recent development has taken place rendered block-work is often used as an economical finish to a structure rather than expensive and time consuming masonry work. The render is seen as relating better to the historic environment than a modern brick finish and this would certainly be the case in Melsonby where brick is rare.

4.2.7 Render can take two main forms, a roughcast render which is a traditional finish and works well with older buildings, or a modern smooth hard cement finish which may be either pebble dash finished or smoothed off with a float to provide a flat surface. The traditional finish was formed from a lime based mortar using large gauge aggregate to provide bulk and create the distinctive rough finish to the buildings. The modern cement based render creates a hard impervious skin regardless of its final finish. This does not work in harmony with traditional construction and does not allow moisture to escape through the dense cement.

4.2.8 Examples of rendered buildings in Melsonby are numerous and include Grange Farmhouse at the eastern end of Church Row (photo 55). This property has a traditional roughcast render to the south facing front elevation which makes an important visual contribution to the area around the church. Further west along Church Row, The Lilacs (photo 56) presents a very traditional appearance with a smooth finish to the historic render and a considered use of paint colours to emphasise the windows. The Old Rectory on East Road has an important example of a smooth finished lime-washed render to the front elevation which is used to emphasise the architectural quality of the façade, however its discrete and heavily screened position make this a difficult elevation to fully appreciate (photo 57).



Photo 55



Photo 56



Photo 57

4.2.9 A more modern hard render has been used at 25 (photo 58) and 29 Church Row and the differing paint colours here do little to unify the pair of much altered older cottages. A similar lack of uniformity occurs at Fern Cottage and the adjacent property on East Road facing onto the green (photo 59). Here however the modern extension to Fern Cottage has been rendered to match the main house unifying the single property if not the group. Certain of the older cottages to the rear of the Black Bull retain the traditional render finish and this highlights the buildings in glimpsed views through the streetscape and into back-land areas (photo 60). The modern hard render applied at 27 West Road (photo 61) creates a very flat and visually dead finish to the building when compared to the traditional renders used elsewhere in the village, for example at Grange Farmhouse. A hard cement render has been used to provide shelter to the gable end of 28 High Row (photo 62) however the principle frontages of this group of buildings remain in stone.



Photo 58



Photo 59





Photo 60



Photo 61



Photo 62

4.2.10 The bungalows at 29 West Road (photo 63) and 12 West Road show different forms of modern render, the first producing a textured finish appropriate to the inter war style of the building. The weathered grey render at 46 High Row (photo 64) blends well with the neighbouring stonework, however further along the street at 12 and 14 High Row a pair of traditional houses have been thoroughly modernised and the two forms of contrasting render used clash both with each other and with the setting of the building (photo 65). Finally mention must be made of the much extended property at the corner of Glebe Court and East Road (photo 66) where render has been used to disguise the modern extension, most probably constructed in block-work, and visually attempt to unify it with the original house, probably constructed of stone.



Photo 63



Photo 64





Photo 65



Photo 66

## Brick

4.2.11 Brickwork is unusual in Melsonby, probably due to the abundant supply of good building stone in the immediate area. Only one building is constructed in facing brick, the pair of houses at 21 and 23 Church Row (photo 67). The properties are typical late Victorian or Edwardian houses and use a locally sourced common stock brick with sandstone dressings to the windows and quoins.



Photo 67

4.2.12 Elsewhere brickwork is used for a few incidental buildings such as the small single storey store to the rear of the Black Bull pub, but mostly it appears as detailed elements such as chimney flues and stacks as noted on the prominent gable of 26 East Row (photo 68), or on secondary gables as found at 33 Church Row (photo 69). Many of the bricks used in details are older handmade bricks typically irregular in colour and with slight distortions to their shape.



Photo 68



Photo 69

4.2.13 To the rear of Church Row several of the properties were extended some time ago using modern common stock bricks which do not complement the quality of these historic buildings (photo 70).

4.2.14 Given the scarcity of brick buildings in the village it would be out of keeping to allow new buildings to be built entirely of facing brick and this material should be restricted to details and highlights only.



Photo 70

## Roofing Materials

### Pantiles

4.2.15 Natural clay pantiles are the dominant roofing material within the village and appear to have been so for many years. There are several types and forms of tiles dating from various periods of construction but the majority are recent renewals. A few village properties including The Laurels on Church Row (photo 71), Layton Lane Farmhouse (photo 72), Melsonby Farmhouse (photo 73) and the recent building conversion on the corner of East Road and the green have eaves courses of stone slates, an interesting vernacular feature which in Melsonby tends to be restricted to two or three courses. Whilst it is

important to maintain sound roof coverings to buildings and to accept that the use of modern natural clay pantiles is acceptable in the Conservation Area it is also important to recognise older pantile coverings and to record and preserve them where they exist. Pantiles were often local products that could vary in shape and size from one producer to another and so surviving historic roofs could provide examples of tiles from long vanished local companies. Good examples of older pantile roofs include several of the properties between 8 and 24 East Road (photo 74) which are particularly prominent, and 34 High Row.



Photo 71



Photo 72



Photo 73



Photo 74

4.2.16 The use of alternative forms of natural clay tiles differing from pantiles has been relatively widespread in Melsonby. A number of properties have used single Roman rolled tiles possibly as replacements for either slates or old pantiles and examples include 17, 21 and 23 Church Row (photo 75), and 15 East Road. The other form of tiling, not commonly found in this area uses small plain tiles, sometimes referred to as 'Rosemary' tiles and these have been used to re-cover the Church (photo 76) and Post Office roofs (photo 77) in the past. Whilst not strictly a local form of roofing these alternatives have a similar colour to pantiles and blend well into the wider setting of the Conservation Area. As a natural material they are also more appropriately employed on historic buildings than more modern roofing alternatives.





Photo 75



Photo 76



Photo 77

## Slate

4.2.17 Natural blue/grey slate is the most common traditional alternative to pantiles within the village and is used on a range of buildings including several new properties. As a material the earliest use of blue/grey slate will date from the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when transport systems, particularly the railways, were sufficiently developed to allow slates to be imported to the area. A good quality Welsh slate roof will have a lifespan of up to 100 years at which point it is most likely that the fixing nails and battens will require attention, however the slate itself will be reusable and typically 80 to 90% should be able to be recycled back onto the roof. This type of roof is identified by regular even courses of thin slates with a relatively smooth blue/grey finish.

4.2.18 Locally sourced Dales stone slates are also found in the Conservation Area both as the eaves course to pantile roofs and as a complete roof covering. This material is increasingly uncommon and its scarcity makes it important to record and preserve such roofs where they exist. The slates are heavy in comparison to other forms of covering and so the internal roof structure is usually found to be of larger more substantial timbers. The roofs have an attractive appearance with the slates being laid in diminishing courses and exposing a thick stone edge to give a distinctive pattern to the courses. Different quarries and different beds of rock would produce slates of different thickness and there is a great deal of skill in selecting slates and laying them evenly across the slope of a roof to give an even finish. The village has several examples of this type of roof most notably at the prestigious



properties of Wharton's Farm House (photo 78) and Central Villa (photo 79) and these should be preserved.



Photo 78



Photo 79

4.2.19 An alternative to the natural Welsh slates are Westmoreland green slates of which the Old Rectory has the only example found in the village. These slates can be identified as they are thicker and with a courser grain to the stone than their Welsh counterparts. They are laid in diminishing courses with deeper courses at the eaves and smaller slates at the ridge and have much more texture than blue/grey slate roofs.

#### Other Roofing Materials

4.2.20 Melsonby has had a large number of roof replacements during the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and this has often been undertaken using various types of concrete tile. These have now had the opportunity to weather down to a less intrusive colour and form, however, they are not an ideal covering for an historic property due to the characteristics of the material and the additional weight they can impose on an historic roof structure. The extensive use of the various forms of concrete tile has a definite impact on the character of the village and in particular on the roofscape when seen in wider views. Most of these tiles have now mellowed and are not too obtrusive (photo 80), however their limited lifespan is beginning to show in some cases and where it is proposed to renew these coverings a more appropriate natural material should be used.



Photo 80

4.2.21 A few examples of manufactured slate are also to be found in Melsonby. These are a similar size and colour to traditional blue/grey slates but can be easily identified by their very regular appearance, their semi-gloss finish and their thin, flat character on the roof slope which gives them an insubstantial appearance when compared to natural slate.

4.2.22 There are individual examples of alternative roofing materials which are distinctive and provide some variety within the roofscape and as isolated examples do not have a major impact on the character of the wider Conservation Area. A number of smaller incidental buildings use sheet materials as roof coverings notably the garage on Moor Road where corrugated iron sheet appears to have been used over an earlier stone slate roof (photo 81). Although this can take on its own character over time it is not a material which reflects the quality of the Conservation Area and where possible the use of sheet materials should be discouraged.



Photo 81

### 4.3 Floorscape

4.3.1 Throughout Melsonby tarmac dominates the floorscape and little remains of the traditional historic forms of surfacing. Historically roadways are likely to have been unbound rolled earth tracks covered with crushed rock until the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century with footpaths, where they existed, comprising cobbles or perhaps stone flags. Kerbs would have been formed of sandstone edging. Within the village a single small area of this type of surface remains outside 38 High Row (photo 82). It is important to note the pattern of cobbles and their density as more modern attempts at cobbling nearby fail to replicate this and in some cases resort to a few cobbles in a bed of smooth concrete, a finish which does not complement the character of the Conservation Area. Further along High Row at number 6 good quality cobbles have been used along with stone flags to create an attractive forecourt to the property, allowing parking space if required (photo 83). At the entrance to The Old Rectory on East Road squared sets have been employed to create a high quality approach to the property (photo

84). Other forms of surfacing include crushed and rolled stone to some rear yards, flag stones to the footpaths at the side of Wharton's Farm House (photo 85) and modern concrete blocks and sets to provide driveways in a few locations including Wharton's Farm and off East Road. In some cases concrete drives remain however these are not usually of appropriate quality in the Conservation Area and should be resisted and replaced where possible.



Photo 82



Photo 83



Photo 84



Photo 85

#### 4.4 Enclosures Fences and Gates

4.4.1 Stone walls are an important component of the character of Melsonby, defining routes through the village, boundaries to property and protecting against hazards. Most of the village properties have front gardens of varying sizes and these are almost exclusively defined at least in part by stone walls. In many cases the walls are supplemented by substantial hedges and shrubs which grow above and over the walls to create the lush and verdant views through the village. None of the principle walls in the village are of brick or other material and only in a very limited number of cases are railings used, notably at 1 to 7 Moor Road (photo 86) and at 13 to 19 Church Row (photo 87).





Photo 86



Photo 87

4.4.2 The copings to the stone walls vary with distinctive pyramidal copings to the churchyard wall (photo 88), deeply tooled copings on the approach to the village at Melsonby Farm (photo 89) and more widely found half round copings elsewhere in the village. Many sections of wall use traditional random thickness top stones set on edge as a coping, a practise widely used in local dry stone walling (Photo 90).



Photo 88



Photo 89



Photo 90

4.4.3 Waterfall Beck has a subtle but notable impact on the village, creating the small valley in which Melsonby lies and providing the boundary to the north side of West Road. Here a number of the properties are accessed by small bridges over the beck and this provides a distinctive character to this part of the village (photo 91). Elsewhere the beck is either in a short culvert as at the front of numbers 8 and 10 West Road or it forms an open stream as it runs through the private gardens east of the green.



Photo 91

## 4.5 Street Furniture and Monuments

- 4.5.1 Aside from the gravestones in the churchyard the principle monuments within the village are the numerous commemorative benches, all well maintained, which surround the green. The variety and number of these make the group a feature in their own right and should be seen as an asset to the village. The majority of street furniture is of later 20<sup>th</sup> century date and includes an Elizabethan post box (photo 92), the village telephone box - a K6 pattern in good condition, and the nearby village pump (photo 93). This later item may be an addition on the site of the original water source for the village as it is a pattern often seen for sale and appears to be of a more domestic size rather than large enough to serve the village.



Photo 92



Photo 93

- 4.5.2 At Layton Lane Farm the former mounting block and churn stand has been adapted to support the property name and this is perhaps one of the last reminders in the village of the important role of the horse and agriculture in the development of rural settlements (photo 94).





Photo 94

4.5.3 More individual features include a range of sundials including the one on Layton Lane Farmhouse dated 1646 above the lintel to the door dated 1698 (photo 95). Others worth noting are found on the rear of 51 West Road (photo 96), and at 20 High Row (photo 97).



Photo 95



Photo 96



Photo 97

4.5.4 More recent additions to the street scene are perhaps of less character but retain a functional purpose. The village notice board (photo 98) is clearly well used and the various litter bins are performing a useful service as the village remains mostly clear of waste. There is a preponderance of markers for services which although now of a muted colour still form prominent groups at key points in the Conservation Area (photo 99). All road signage is to a modern standard as is the majority of the lighting with a particularly insensitive post opposite 24



High Row. Whilst the eastern half of the village appears mainly free of overhead wires but the western half retains many of these to the detriment of wider views.



Photo 98



Photo 99

## 5.0 Character

### 5.1 Functions and Uses

- 5.1.1 Melsonby was noted by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a “retired agricultural village” so clearly it did not share the bustling character of other more active villages at the time. An inspection of the trade directories at the end of the century however shows that the majority of the population was still employed in agriculture or its subsidiary industries including a blacksmith and, perhaps unusually, a steam ploughing contractor. These contractors were not common in the north of England as the field systems were of insufficient size to benefit greatly from mechanisation until the arrival of the petrol tractor during the inter-war period.
- 5.1.2 The village still retains a strong agricultural employment base although this is now secondary to commuters to Darlington and Teeside. The desirability of village life coupled with easy access to the road network and reasonable travel distances make Melsonby a popular residential village however it has avoided becoming a purely dormitory settlement and retains an active character throughout the day. The nearby quarrying, for so long an important employer locally, has mostly ceased and the mechanisation of the remaining sites requires far fewer workers. Local opportunities for employment within the village and its immediate surroundings are therefore limited.
- 5.1.3 Melsonby has a limited range of services available for residents including the Black Bull public house (photo 100), the village school towards the west of the village and the garage, prominent on the corner of Moor Road and West Road (photo 101). The village post office and shop is currently closed and its future is uncertain however it is hoped that it can be retained as a viable business in the core of the village.



Photo 100



Photo 101

## 5.2 The General Character

5.2.1 The historic core of Melsonby is a linear village oriented along Waterfall Beck and set around the steeply contoured village green. In this respect the village is unusual having such a uniquely sloping central space with an open watercourse at its core. The historic development is generally aligned along each side of the green and stretches off to the west in a similar orientation as the valley of the stream narrows. The eastern end of the village is much more heavily wooded and this gives a distinctively different character to this part of Melsonby, whilst to the west of the village the houses grow more tightly packed and concentrated. Most properties follow the prevailing orientation of the village with ridges running east to west parallel to the principle roads and watercourse. The modern development to the south fails to follow the established pattern but is discretely separated from the old village with the result that the historic core has not been adversely affected by the imposition of modern development and the village has been able to expand to accommodate new residents.

## 5.3 Views and Approaches to the Village

5.3.1 The village is positioned in a shallow valley formed by Waterfall Beck and this results in its hidden position when viewed from a distance. Although only 1 mile from the A66(T) and a similar distance from the A1(M) it is completely unseen from both and benefits from a quiet setting as a result.

5.3.2 The village can be approached from each of the four compass points. From the east the approach passes racehorse gallops, a reminder of the past equine history of the area, before cresting a low hill to reveal Melsonby in the distance as a wide spread settlement with the church centrally positioned (photo 102).



Photo 102

5.3.3 This is a deceptive viewpoint as the extent of the village is exaggerated by the modern linear developments along Moor Road to the south and Aldbrough Road to the north. The historic core of the village which forms the Conservation Area is mostly hidden behind trees at the bottom of the shallow valley. The church itself appears remote from the village in this view and stands high above the settlement.

5.3.4 From the south the village is approached down a long shallow descent and is dominated by modern development of the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century including the post war developments along Moor Road and St James Close and the new properties at Glebe Court (photo 103). The historic core of the village is completely hidden almost until it is entered at the central cross roads and whilst the church tower can be seen it does not dominate the wider view partly due to the enclosing tree cover.



Photo 103



Photo 104

5.3.5 Along Layton Lane approaching the village from the west the view is much restricted by high hedges and rolling farmland with the open vistas to the north across Teesdale being the most notable feature. The village remains hidden as the approach to it winds between high hedges and round farm buildings at the western extremity of the village (photo 104) before crossing the site of the ford and revealing a view along West Road. Up to this point the sense is one of approaching a farm yard rather than a village and there is little indication that the settlement is at hand until it is entered.



5.3.6 The approach from Stanwick and Aldbrough is up hill and again Melsonby remains discreetly screened almost until it is reached (photo 105). The attractive modern development at Wharton's Farm has changed the approach from this direction replacing the former modern farm steading and buildings which previously detracted from this approach. The rear elevations and roof slopes of the properties along High Row are clearly visible once the crest of the hill has been gained and these give an important indication of the historic core of the village, balanced by the church tower to the east.



Photo 105

## 5.4 Character Areas

5.4.1 Melsonby is a spatially complex and diverse village with no clearly defined separation between distinctive character areas. The area around the church is clearly different from that around the school however between the two spaces there is more of a transition rather than a range of distinctly defined character areas. For the purpose of this study five character areas have been identified within Melsonby. These areas are not rigidly defined and the number of them within this small village hints at its complex overall character :

- The west end of the village.
- The central core of the village.
- The Village Green
- The Church yard and Church Row
- The woodland and Old Rectory

### 1. The West End of the Village

5.4.2 This part of Melsonby is unique in being divided in two by both a stream and a series of dense private gardens (photos 106, 107 and 108).



Photo 106



Photo 107



Photo 108



Photo 109

5.4.3 To the north side the terraces of High Row from number 20 through to Layton Lane Farm define a hard boundary, initially at the road side but to the west stepping back to provide attractive cottage gardens between the houses and the road (photo 109). This sweep of properties is broken only between numbers 28 and 32 where an access to two modern properties set back from the established village frontage is filled with dense tree cover and a substantial stone wall. Only the driveway breaks the defining edge of the street. To the rear of the terraces the Conservation Area takes in back gardens and enclosures but omits the late 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings of Middleton House and Rosebank Cottage.

5.4.4 At the western end of the terrace Layton Lane Farm opens out to a range of older agricultural buildings which are discretely positioned behind the notable house and a significant group of trees (photo 110). Layton Lane House lies beyond the Conservation Area boundary and is partly hidden behind trees and traditional farm buildings.



Photo 110

5.4.5 To the south side of West Road the properties take on a different relationship to the public highway. Beyond the school to the west a small group of traditional houses with front gardens line the street creating an intimate sense of enclosure (photo 111) with Melsonby Farm and its mature garden and trees along with 51 West Road closing the view out of the village to the west (photo 112). The mass and form of the school creates a distinctive feature with its position at the road side making this important village facility a significant landmark in this part of the settlement (photo 113). Between the school and the Black Bull Inn the properties are larger and set back from the road in large private gardens with substantial planting and tree cover screening clear views of the buildings (photos 114 and 115).



Photo 111



Photo 112



Photo 115



Photo 116



Photo 117



5.4.6 Between the two rows of domestic properties lies a distinctive space, which is formed of the private front gardens of the High Row properties, detached from the houses by the roadway. The tumble of rich planting and small incidental garden buildings is only disturbed by a single property at 12 West Road, a low set bungalow of 1960's date. This wider space is bounded on the north side by a stone wall which forms a strong edge to the road, although the punctuation of this to allow car parking to be formed has somewhat diluted the character and strength of this feature (photo 116). To the south side Waterfall Beck forms the boundary with a substantial bank of greenery screening views through the space and creating private areas within the centre of a very public space.



Photo 116

5.4.7 The Black Bull marks a change in the character of the village and its position standing at the edge of the road make it a prominent village landmark (photo 117).



Photo 117

## 2) The Central Core

5.4.8 Here Melsonby is at its most densely developed and this part of the village forms the commercial core of activity, housing as it does the village pub, the post office and the garage. The cross roads are key to the character of this area, creating a wide open hard surfaced space which has no equal within the village (photo 118). The size of the

space is defined in part by the road layout but exaggerated by the set back of properties to the south side of West Road and East Road which increase the spacious feeling. Central Villa dominates the area addressing two streets as it stands across the corner of its plot (photo 119). The new development on the former works site is rather low key, making its contribution through its careful detailing, size and mass and footpath edge position but this property links more clearly to the Village Green character area (photo 120).



Photo 118



Photo 119



Photo 120



Photo 121

5.4.9 Moor Road has a unique character within the village, its close street frontages, terraced properties and large buildings create a sense of enclosure more normally found in larger urban areas, however the limited length of this street ensures that this does not become overbearing or detract from the essentially rural character of the village (photo 121).

5.4.10 To the north of the central core the village displays its full variety with large well proportioned town houses bounding the north side of High Row, refurbished Victorian properties providing a strong termination to the short terrace street to the west and two modern properties sitting rather at odds with the character of the Conservation Area on large plots in the middle of the village. An important glimpse of backland sites and properties is gained between numbers 8 and 12 High Row (photo 122) where the established formality of a well planned yard to number 10 can be seen. Pippin Cottage on the Aldbrough Road is completely modern in scale and character but the use of appropriate materials limits its impact on the character of the Conservation Area (photo 123).



Photo 122



Photo 123

5.4.11 There are views out from this area principally focussed on the cross roads from which the Aldbrough Road provides a lengthy view to the north whilst Moor Road allows glimpses to the later 20<sup>th</sup> century developments to the south. Looking west the Black Bull encloses much of the view with its gable wall but beyond this the informality of the western part of the village can be appreciated. The spacious open character of the village green dominates the views to the northeast.

### 3) The Village Green

5.4.12 As the principle public open space of the village this is unlike most village greens as it slopes steeply to the beck, leaving little flat land for traditional village green uses (photo 124). This does not seem to deter the use or popularity of the space which in many ways defines the public perception of the village as a whole. Its open character, the relationship to a range of buildings, the semi-private nature of the eastern part of the green and the impact of trees both set within the space and at a distance combine to create an attractive and interesting area.



Photo 124

5.4.13 The north side of the green is bounded by Church Row, a single sided street facing the green with a range of buildings from the dominant gable of the converted hall to the small, traditional cottages set back from the road at 11 to 19 (photo 125). The substantial, high quality property at Wharton's Farm House does not play a significant role in the streetscape here as it is set back behind a high dense hedge, a feature of several of the properties along this part of the street. At



number 21 Church Row the character of the street changes with the buildings stepping forward, closer to the pavement edge to leave only a small yard in front. The building style changes too, from the vernacular cottages such as The Laurels, to a late Victorian red brick pair of houses at 21 and 23 Church Row. The remaining properties along here are less stridently different, being finished in render or stone.



Photo 125

5.4.14 The southern side of the green mirrors to some degree the north. The variety of property sizes and types is less marked but vernacular cottages dominate this part of the village and provide an attractive vista with long well kept cottage gardens reaching down to the roadside and a strong stone retaining wall providing the boundary between the public and private areas (photo 126). Further to the east the nursery buildings stand closer to the street and a less regular form develops. The properties at 26 to 32 East Road are very prominent on the road side, their presence exacerbated by their elevated position. The garage and high block-work retaining wall do not contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area (photo 127).



Photo 126



Photo 127

5.4.15 The good quality modern development on the corner of the green defines the space to the west with a small group of trees screening the electricity sub station at the road side (photo 128). The space spills out to the Aldbrough Road at the junction with Church Row and High Row and this allows glimpses into the more developed, harder landscape of the central core of the village with the post box, telephone box and village pump providing features of interest and the

new property to the north of Central Villa closing much of the view. The low set building which forms the corner at 2 High Row does not make a significant statement and the large trees on the green dominate this part of the space (photo 129).



Photo 128



Photo 129

5.4.16 The green diminishes to the east, a low stone boundary wall demarking the point at which the public realm finishes, however the openness of the space is retained and draws the private gardens of The Bungalow and Beck House into the public view (photo 130). This is a very soft boundary with the rise of the land to the houses and the new developments themselves being softened by planting. The trees in the woodland to the east and within the churchyard provide an important backdrop to this scene.



Photo 130



Photo 131

#### 4) The Church Yard and Church Row

5.4.17 The west end of Church Row forms the northern boundary to the village green however eastwards from the terraced houses the character of the street changes markedly. The street changes from one dominated by open space and domestic frontages to a secluded route, tightly enclosed to the north by the ornamental trees in the churchyard and bounded to the south by the relatively blank and solid elevation of the former barns, now converted in part to houses (photo 131). The curve to the street limits views and a gradual unfolding of features along the street makes for an interesting route through the village.

5.4.18 Despite the size and historic importance of the church it has relatively little visual impact on even this part of the village as a result of it being screened by the surrounding trees. Glebe Farm house at the east end of the street provides an important highlight in the predominantly green environment and its strong gable elevation is an important feature (photo 132). The entry to Orchard House is relatively discreet and blends into the informal character of Church Row whilst the more recent approach to The Old Barn, The Byre, Beck House and The Bungalow presents a more modern engineered street access which is less in keeping with the rural informality of this part of Melsonby.



Photo 132

5.4.19 The church yard itself is a discrete tranquil area separated from the rest of the village by a stand of trees on its southern side. A stone retaining wall surrounds the churchyard and maintains its elevation above the surrounding land on all sides accessed via a particularly nice set of steps. To the north and east the open countryside falls away beyond the Conservation Area boundary revealing fine views across the Tees valley as far as the coast and the North York Moors on the horizon. To the west the space to the rear of the terrace on Church Row provides a less than ideal setting for the important public area of the churchyard. The space within the churchyard is, as expected, completely dominated by the church however it is only from here that the church has a dominant role and can be fully appreciated. The undulating grassed space with ornamental trees and well cared for memorials provides a high quality space within the village which must be carefully protected from damage to its character as a result of any future adjacent developments.

##### 5) The Woodland and Old Rectory

5.4.20 This is a diverse part of the village encompassing as it does the wooded dell which contains Waterfall Beck, the properties around Orchard House, the approach to the village from the east and the range of buildings which include the Old Rectory. The overall impression of this area is one of dense tree cover and the approach to the village from the east is dark and secluded within the sunken lane beneath the overhanging greenery (photo 133). The Old Rectory does



not have an important role in the streetscape as it presents a large looming blank gable to the road side and the rest of the property is discretely hidden behind the high hedges and trees. The subsidiary buildings to the Rectory are similarly forbidding from the roadside, presenting a very solid face to the public realm with a few small windows set high in the wall (photo 134). The solidity of these large stone walls is important to the character of this area and is mirrored to some degree by the lower walls enclosing the woodland and leading to the bridge. The properties at 38 and 40 East Road (photo 135) have been much altered over many years and, although they probably originally took the form of a pair of vernacular stone cottages they are now very much out of keeping with the character of the surrounding Conservation Area.



Photo 133



Photo 134



Photo 135

5.4.21 Orchard House and the other domestic properties to the north are at best glimpsed through the trees (photo 136) but their presence provides a backdrop to the wood, hinting at the domestic setting within the village. Within the deeper reaches of the glade lies a small pantile roofed shed (photo 137) which provides a human element in the greenery and this complements the historic bridge spanning the beck and allowing views into the woodland. This area is a tranquil secluded spot, well positioned to provide a worthwhile asset to the village and make a significant contribution to the whole character of Melsonby, particularly the eastern parts of the village.



Photo 136



Photo 137

## 5.5 Open Spaces and Trees

5.5.1 There are four very distinct open spaces within Melsonby each with its own character and each playing a different role in the function of the village. The churchyard provides a formal quiet space with expansive views out to the north and east between the surrounding trees. It is well defined by the encompassing churchyard wall and dominated by the church itself. The Village Green is a busier space, forming the focus of the village and defining the character of the central area. Its sweeping contours and the way in which the beck bisects the public area make it very different from many other village greens and give it a distinct identity, whilst allowing good views across to appreciate the surrounding buildings. Waterfall Beck to the west end of the village is unusual in that it creates an open space from a number of private individual gardens each of which is secluded and surrounded by hedges. There is, nevertheless, a feeling of openness and views across the beck and gardens are bounded by the surrounding terraces of traditional village houses. The area of woodland at the east of the village is much less open but it provides an important setting to the approach to the village and the trees and open space both have a role in determining the character of Melsonby.

5.5.2 Trees throughout the village play an important role in defining certain views and vistas whilst screening other parts of the village. The woodland to the east provides the most important group of trees, however other significant groups include those in the churchyard which define the space and screen views of the church; the trees around the western end of the green which provide relief to the more urban character of the centre of the village; the garden trees to the south side of West Road which screen open views of the houses beyond and those which add to the rural character of the western end of the village beyond the school. Here the trees provide an important transition between the village and the surrounding fields and screen direct views of several of the larger buildings. On High Row an important group of trees between 28 and 32 provide some variation to the terrace and screen views out of the Conservation Area to the more modern houses behind.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 To ensure the continued protection of the quality of the Conservation Area consideration should be given to extending the boundary in one significant area. This lies to the rear of Church Row and is suggested for inclusion as it comprises a series of long established gardens which appear to retain the historic property boundaries, and the older more historic sections of the original buildings of Wharton's Farm, now converted to modern housing. The inclusion of this area would protect earlier landforms and property boundaries and retain the character of some of the better barn conversions in the village.
  
- 6.2 Two minor alterations are also suggested to reflect boundaries on the ground. Firstly an extension should be considered to include the curtilage of Glebe Farm close to the church. This would make more sense of the current property boundary and protect views of the village from the west against small scale domestic intrusion of an inappropriate nature. Secondly a small sliver of the Conservation Area should be removed to the south of the Tithe Barn where modern boundaries do not correspond to that of the Conservation Area itself. The alteration would not affect the character of the village in any way but would remove the small part of the modern development of Glebe Court from the considerations of Conservation Area legislation.



## **7.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **7.1 Preservation and Enhancement**

- 7.1.1 It is the aim of the District Council that the existing character and appearance of Melsonby Conservation Area should be preserved and enhanced.
- 7.1.2 Preservation will be achieved by refusing permission for the demolition of any building or structure if it would damage the character or appearance of the area.
- 7.1.3 In the future should any neglected buildings spoil the character and appearance of Melsonby they will be investigated. In critical cases, action will be taken to ensure repairs are carried out.
- 7.1.4 The open spaces and trees have been identified as being crucial to the character of the village and should be preserved.
- 7.1.5 Consideration will be given to making an Article 4 direction to protect the character of the Conservation Area where this is thought to be necessary.

### **7.2 Design Guidance**

7.2.1 Extensions and alterations will be expected to follow local design guidance for the village which will be produced when resources permit. The designation of a Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change - especially that which would enhance the character of the area and ensure Melsonby's continued economic vitality. The general design guidance for any work requiring planning permission in the Conservation Area is that the character and appearance of the area should be preserved or enhanced. In particular :

- The design and materials should accord with those traditionally used.
- New buildings should reflect the simple forms of the existing historic buildings in the village.
- The siting of new developments should be carefully considered to ensure that it complements the existing grain of the Conservation Area.
- No new developments should obstruct identified views of importance.
- The immediate and long term impact of any new development on existing trees must be carefully considered. New planting should respect important views through the Conservation Area.

### **7.3 Listed Buildings**

- 7.3.1 Some historic buildings are 'listed' by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport on the recommendation of English Heritage because of their exceptional interest. Listed Building Consent is required for any work that would affect the special interest of a Listed Building, whether inside or outside. More information about Listed Buildings is available from the District Council.
- 7.3.2 There are 28 entries on the register of Listed Buildings for the Melsonby Conservation Area and these merit the tightest controls over any changes to them. The entries include a number of grave markers, gates and other structures which add to the historic character and value of the village. Whilst the aim of Listed Building legislation is to preserve them for their own sake, any changes affecting them should also be considered in terms of the effect on the Conservation Area and the design guidance already referred to.

### **7.4 The Protection of Other Buildings**

- 7.4.1 There are buildings and features in the Conservation Area which are not listed, but which contribute to its character and appearance. While residential properties are subject to some increased planning controls brought about by the designation of the Conservation Area, changes could take place to them that would damage the character of the Conservation Area.
- 7.4.2 There are many unlisted buildings that have retained much of their historic character through the survival of original or appropriate installation of replacement window and door designs. Facades, roofs and other features such as walls and railings have generally been retained unspoilt by modern inappropriate materials. This is a credit to the owners of these properties. Normally on dwellings many such changes could be made without the need for planning permission.
- 7.4.3 It is important that appropriate repairs and alterations continue to be encouraged as this is essential to maintaining the quality of the Conservation Area.

### **8.0 Opportunities**

- 8.0.1 There are aspects of Melsonby which are either out of keeping with the character of the Conservation Area or which could be enhanced to create a more positive contribution. The elements identified below have been taken forward to the Management Plan along with other issues to produce a strategy of working to improve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## **8.1 Neglected Buildings, Land, Sites and Features**

- 8.1.1 In general, buildings in Melsonby are in good condition, however there are some sites and buildings in a poorer state of repair. Generally these are ancillary buildings, barns and other areas to the rear of the main frontages but as these are an important part of the character of the village their decay and ultimately their loss would be to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area.
- 8.1.2 There are some frontage properties that could benefit from sympathetic repairs and alterations to improve their contribution to the Conservation Area. In particular the restoration of traditional features to historic buildings and the replacement of appropriately proportioned and detailed features such as windows. Melsonby has a significant proportion of windows in historic properties that have been lost to modern replacements, often these do not often contribute appropriately to the quality and character of the Conservation Area.
- 8.1.3 Melsonby has several features in the public domain that contribute to the character of the area. Many of these are in good condition and make an interesting and worthwhile addition to the village. It is important to respect these in future works within the village and also to exercise restraint in trying to add further features and commemorations. Of particular note are the telephone box, the churn stand to Layton Lane Farm and the range of seats around the green, the steps to the churchyard.
- 8.1.4 Stone walls are important features in the village and they vary in their construction and function. These need to be regularly inspected and repaired as necessary. A full review of the street furniture should be undertaken with a view to replacing outdated or damaged items, conserving and repairing any good quality items or pieces of historic interest and to rationalising and, where appropriate, removing anything unnecessary.

## **8.2 Parking**

- 8.2.1 Parking can be a problematic issue in villages, however in Melsonby the majority of properties have access to off-road areas or private spaces and limited road widths in some places deter or prevent unlimited on-street parking. Parking does occur on-street around the green but this is controlled within a single area to the north side and along the wider section of the main street to the west. Along High Row there is limited opportunity for parking vehicles and this has led to the central green area between the street and the beck being adapted for parking. The creation of openings in the wall and areas of hard standing is unfortunate but at current levels it does not completely dominate the street scene. It is difficult to see how vehicles could be accommodated elsewhere in close proximity to the terraced houses.



### **8.3 Wirescape**

- 8.3.1 Melsonby has not benefited from a programme of removal of overhead wires and this could make a great improvement to many of the open vistas and views through the village. Although not a dominant feature, the timber poles add to street clutter and in a few areas, notably around the central cross roads and along sections of East Road, the wires cut across open views. Their impact is reduced somewhat by the scale and prominence of trees throughout the village which disguise the presence of wires, however conflict between overhead wires and trees could become an issue. This should be resolved in favour of the visual amenity of the area by retaining the trees and providing a programme of undergrounding for the wires. The loss of trees purely to retain overhead wires which do not complement the character of the Conservation Area should not take place.
- 8.3.2 Of significant impact in some areas is the presence of large numbers of concrete hydrant identification plates, particularly outside Central Villa and on the corner of Aldbrough Road and Church Row. Several of these are in poor condition and a rationalisation programme could minimise the amount of street clutter here.

### **8.4 Development**

- 8.4.1 Opportunities for development within the Conservation Area are limited although the garage site in the centre of the village is a prime location which may have potential for development in the future. This would clearly be linked to the change of use of the site and any development here would need to retain the important industrial building at the south end of the site and respect the contribution that the significant retaining wall makes to the streetscape. The frontage to West Road is extremely limited and access considerations may significantly restrict the possibility of any major scheme. A clear understanding of the existing buildings on site is also essential to ensure that nothing of importance is jeopardised in this important historic location.
- 8.4.2 All proposed development should have regard to the design guidance and the special character identified in this Appraisal. Although each proposal will be treated on its merits, attention needs to be paid to the cumulative effect of issues such as parking, services etc. on the character of the Conservation Area.
- 8.4.3 There are small changes which can be made to dwellings without the need for planning permission, for example, gas bottles and oil tanks and these can be very visually intrusive. Ideally these should be obscured from view wherever possible. Other examples include insensitively sited satellite dishes.

### **8.5 Sustainability**

8.5.1 The increasing high profile of achieving a sustainable environment and life style are likely to present further challenges on the historic environment. The use of alternative energy in the form of solar panels, wind turbines and ground heat pumps all have the potential to detrimentally effect the historic environment. As proposals come forward, each case will have to be considered on its merits. The introduction of differing refuse collections will also have to be sensitively considered so as not to have a detrimental effect on the character of the Conservation Area.

#### Action Points

This Character Appraisal should be taken into account when considering applications through the planning process.

Preservation will be achieved by refusing planning permission for the demolition or any building or structure if it would damage the character of the area.

Neglected buildings/land which spoil the character and appearance of the conservation area will be investigated. In critical cases action will be taken to ensure repairs/improvement carried out.

Amendment of the conservation area to include

- a) Land at rear of Church Row.
- b) Land within cartilage of Glebe farm

And exclude Land south of Tithe Barn

## **9.0 Community Involvement**

- 9.1 A leaflet will be distributed to all properties within the Conservation Area inviting residents to an exhibition held in Melsonby Methodist Primary School Hall on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 between 4pm and 7pm. Copies of the draft document will be available at the exhibition and upon request. The draft document will also be circulated to various interested bodies such as English Heritage, North Yorkshire County Council and the Parish Council.
- 9.2 Comments are invited on the content and proposals of the Conservation Area Appraisal and comments will be considered and the document amended where necessary. Comments can be made by completing the questionnaire available from [www.richmondshire.gov.uk](http://www.richmondshire.gov.uk), by writing to Planning Policy, Swale House, Frenchgate, Richmond, DL10 4JE or by email to [planning.policy@richmondshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@richmondshire.gov.uk) by no later than 4pm, Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2011.
- 9.3 The final Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan produced will be reported to the Planning Committee of the District Council and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## **10.0 Useful Information, Appendices and Contact Details**

### **10.1 Scheduled Monuments**

- 10.1.1 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Melsonby Conservation Area.



## 10.2 Tree Preservation Orders

10.2.1 There are two sets of trees with Tree Preservation Orders. These are marked on the map to the rear of the document and are located at West Road and in front of Orchard House Farm.

## 10.3 Listed Buildings within Melsonby Conservation Area

Table 1

Building Name	Street Name	Grade
BRIDGE OVER WATERFALL BECK	CHURCH ROW	II
WHARTONS FARMHOUSE	CHURCH ROW	II
19	CHURCH ROW	II
31	CHURCH ROW	II
CHURCH OF ST JAMES	CHURCH ROW	II*
TODD AND RAINE MEMORIALS APPROXIMATELY TWO METRES EAST OF PORCH OF CHURCH OF ST JAMES	CHURCH ROW	II
CHEST TOMB APPROXIMATELY SIX METRES SOUTH OF TOWER OF CHURCH OF ST JAMES	CHURCH ROW	II
GROUP OF THREE MEMORIALS ON WEST SIDE OF SOUTH PATH APPROXIMATELY FOUR METRES FROM PORCH OF CHURCH OF ST JAMES	CHURCH ROW	II
GLEBE FARMHOUSE	CHURCH ROW	II
ORCHARD HOUSE 6	CHURCH ROW	II
FERN HOUSE 12	EAST ROAD	II
16, 18 AND 20	EAST ROAD	II
HOPE COTTAGE 30	EAST ROAD	II
THE OLD RECTORY 46	EAST ROAD	II
GATES AND GATE PIERS ADJOINING NORTH EAST REAR RANGE OF THE OLD RECTORY THE OLD RECTORY*	EAST ROAD	II
FORMER TITHE BARN APPROXIMATELY TWENTY METRES SOUTH WEST OF THE OLD RECTORY	EAST ROAD	II
OUTBUILDING APPROXIMATELY TEN METRES NORTH WEST OF OLD RECTORY	EAST ROAD	II

4	HIGH ROW	II
HILL HOUSE 6	HIGH ROW	II
HILL CREST 8	HIGH ROW	II
38	HIGH ROW	II
46	HIGH ROW	II
LAYTON HOUSE FARMHOUSE 52	HIGH ROW	II
SPENCER COTTAGE	WEST ROAD	II
SCHOOL HOUSE 41	WEST ROAD	II
43 AND 45	WEST ROAD	II
MELONSBY FARMHOUSE 53	WEST ROAD	II

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Note : Numbers 24, 26 and 28 High Row were listed until 23/07/2006 when they were de-listed.

#### **10.4 Buildings of special interest within Melsonby Conservation Area**

10.4.1 The buildings of special interest are highlighted on the map in pink. These buildings are unlisted, but have historic merit and can be considered undesignated heritage assets for the purpose of definition under Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (2010).