

MIDDLEHAM

CONSERVATION AREAS APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN



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APPRAISAL

Introduction

A Conservation Area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance or which it is desirable to preserve and enhance” (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Middleham was designated as a Conservation Area in 1973.

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 that duty.

In making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving and 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. A Direction to this effect has been introduced in Middleham Conservation Area.

This appraisal and management plan should be read in conjunction with the following documents

- Richmondshire Local Plan
- The emerging Local Development Framework
- North Yorkshire County Structure Plan
- The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber
- National Planning Policy Guidance especially Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15) – Planning and the Historic Environment.
- National Planning Policy Statements

Location and Setting

Middleham is located on a ridge of rising ground between the river Ure to the north and river Cover to the south. It occupies an excellent defensive position overlooking Wensleydale and guarding the entrance to Coverdale. The town is quite compact with the bulk of the buildings being arranged around two irregular squares. The prominent Castle is a reminder of the strategic importance of the site and the town’s long history. The countryside surrounding the town is generally pasture to the north, west and south and arable to the east. The closest settlements are East Witton and Spennithorne, less than 2 miles away. The town of Leyburn is about 2 miles to the north.

Historic Development and Archaeology

Prehistoric evidence is sparse at this location but there is certainly evidence of a Roman presence to the east of Middleham. Middleham is recorded in the Domesday book 1066 as “waste” and at about the same time the first castle is thought to have been built, as a “motte and bailey”. Known as William’s Hill, today the site is an earth work to the south of the present castle. Towards the end of the twelfth century the keep which is the nucleus of the present castle was commenced. Approximately 300 years of alterations and additions followed. It seems likely that the castle occupied a larger area than the current structure, but over the years the town has gradually encroached upon the original plan.

For 200 years Middleham had a settled and prosperous period under the Neville family and their descendants until 1471 when Middleham was forfeit to the crown and for a time was the centre from which northern England was governed. Edward IV granted the manor and castle to his brother who became Richard III. Richard’s son Edward was born in the castle and following Edward’s death the castle passed to Henry VII and remained with the crown until the 17th Century when, along with the manor, it passed into private hands. Towards the end of this period the castle was uninhabited except by keepers who neglected it and records describe “olde castle highly decayed”. In the 17th Century the area around Middleham is believed to have been extensively forested with many references to the Parks and still today an area to the north east is known as the Parks.

The town itself is presumed to have grown during the medieval period reflecting the increased importance of the castle. Evidence from this period is very slight. The swine and market cross, typical of medieval towns are believed to be from around the 15th century. The latter commemorating the market and yearly fair granted in 1389. The Parish Church contains some fragments of Norman work but the prevailing style and plan can be traced to the 13th Century. It also has 14th century additions and was “thoroughly restored” in 1878. In 1478 the church was made a collegiate church and whilst a college proper probably never existed, the church continued to claim collegiate title and privileges until these were finally abolished in 1856. Kingsley House is known to incorporate a medieval structure and it is likely that other buildings may have similar features. The layout of the settlement itself particularly around the two market places may well have medieval origins and certainly by the 16th Century many of the existing building such as the Golden Lion (dated 1682) had been built.

In the 18th Century the knitting industry was well established in the Dales with Middleham being one of the places in which it was concentrated. The town is rumoured to have been famous for brown bread that was transported by packhorse to surrounding communities. The racing industry was to become the biggest influence over the development of the town. The precise start of Middleham’s association with horse racing is unclear but Middleham first appears in the racing calendar in 1729. The moors were used for both racing and training purposes and the buildings known as “the rubbing houses” remain as testament to their racing past. The industry flourished during the 18th Century with regular meetings and explains the very large amount of Georgian/early Victorian buildings in the town

replacing most of the older buildings of Middleham. The buildings of this period largely make up what is regarded as traditional Middleham. Jasmine House, the Manor House, the Priory and Hill House are good typical examples of the larger houses. Well proportioned two and three storey stone built residences. They are visible evidence of the status and prosperity of Middleham at this time. Of slightly later date, and possibly more imposing, are Middleham House, Middleham Grange, Milton House and Neville Hall. Many of the more modest buildings particularly around the Market Place date from this period. One of the more interesting non-residential buildings is Manor House Stables, a fine 17th or early 18th Century building associated with horse training. There are a number of non-conformist chapels such as the Methodist Chapel now converted to residential use and the Wesleyan Chapel dating from the Georgian period.

The wealth enabled the establishment of charitable works such as almshouses and the first great public work in the mid 19th century was the replacement of the ford (route to Leyburn) and ferry by the first bridge. Initial funding from a trust ran out and the crossing became a toll bridge with associated toll inn. The current bridge was built in 1864 and the bridge ceased to be a toll bridge when it was taken over by the County Highways in 1880. This link was vital for the connection to Leyburn which was developing as the major market centre for the district with the railway station.

Little changed in terms of the overall pattern or extent of the town in the second half of the 19th Century. Within it, however, the “most ancient houses” were noted to have been pulled down and typical with the period new public buildings were erected, the Town Hall, School and Jubilee Fountain. There were many alterations to existing buildings, new bay windows were popular - for example Kirkgate House and Clarendon House, but there are many other examples. The Church was “thoroughly restored” at this time and unusual for a small community is the cast iron framed canopy to the shop.

In the 20th Century the changes have not only related to the rapid growth of areas of the town at Park Lane and the Springs but also to changes in life styles, social structures and customs. In the 1950's the town enjoyed a large and varied range of services including a cinema and gas works. The decline of the town as a self supporting community can probably be traced to the building of a bridge in 1830 replacing the ferry and ford and to the loss of the London to Richmond stage coach service which ran through Middleham. Middleham's importance as a major centre for racehorse training goes from strength to strength, however. The industry has a huge impact on the character of the Conservation Area, from the visual contributions of the buildings to the sounds of the horses on the streets.

Middleham has progressed from “waste”; to the seat of power for north England; to a unique town with a wealth of historical and architectural character.

Architecture and Building Materials

The extensive history of settlement in Middleham has left the town with a wealth of architectural styles reflecting the fashions of the time and skills of the crafts men of the various periods.

The Castle dates from the 12th and 14th Century and these early elements are massive masonry structures built from local stone for defence but also to exude



Photo 1

power and status over the locality (photo 1). The Church of St Mary and St Alkelda dates substantially from the 14th and 15th Centuries, it is also built of local stone but using the skills of the local craftsmen to produce carved gothic details (photos 2 & 3).



Photo 2

The rest of Middleham at this time is likely to have been timber buildings. Evidence of the medieval timber structures still exists in a few of the current houses.

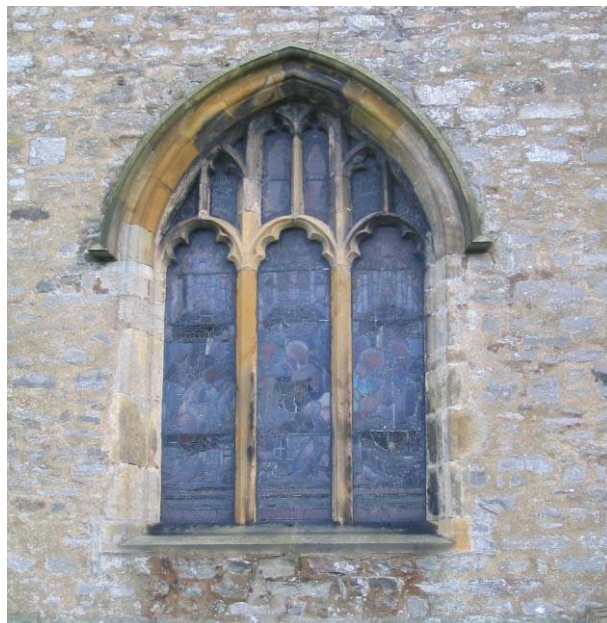


Photo 3

Through the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries these early buildings were either encased in stone or replaced by stone buildings. A local vernacular style similar to other towns and villages of the “Dales” was developed. Generally buildings are two or three storey with steeply pitched roofs and fairly narrow depth plans (photo 4). In general, the third storey is at attic level and the storey height and thus the height of



Photo 4

the windows are smaller than those at lower levels. Walling is generally local stone, though there are two exceptions where hand made bricks were used. Elevations may either be wholly of coursed dressed stone or of squared rubble roughly brought to courses with dressed stone or ashlar used for details such as quoins, lintels sills etc. (photos 5,6 & 7).



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

Where poorer quality stone has been used this was often random rubble and the

whole façade rendered or limewashed to provide both weather protection and a more visually pleasing façade. Colours were generally natural earth pigments. This mixture of stone and render emphasises the human scale of the buildings and the render importantly reflects light onto their surroundings. Some walls have decorative features, recycled from the Castle or on later buildings designed specifically for decorative purposes such as sun dials (photo 8). Roofs are generally gabled but hipped roofs do occur and this variation along with the topography gives variety to the roofscape. Generally roofs are of local stone slates laid to diminishing courses and bound by stone copings, often with kneelers and stone ridge tiles (photo 9).



Photo 8



Photo 9

Detailing of the buildings is often simple and functional, for example, projecting corbels to support gutters and chimneys. Early windows would have been small slits, either formed with timber or stone millions, and most likely glazed with leaded diamond

lights. A few examples of stone mullioned windows exist, but most have been re-glazed (photo 10). Timber is the traditional material used for doors, windows, shop fronts and often gutters on older properties. These features are the most susceptible to change and some have been replaced by modern alternatives, but where the early details survive they contribute greatly to the integrity of the built form and the quality of the Conservation Area. The glazing style of the windows is very much dependent on the age of the building and varies from the multi-paned vertical sashes of the early structures to the single paned vertical sashes of the later buildings. Yorkshire sliding sashes were also used, and many still remain, but these are now often to the sides and rear of premises or at attic levels (photos 11 & 12). Many good examples of original windows and panelled doors survive. Often the panelled doors have ornate fan lights and, in



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13

the size and proportions of windows as the vertical sliding sash was introduced. The front façade of the houses became a place to keep up

with the fashion of the times, so many buildings were re-faced, fenestration patterns altered and ornate door cases and fanlights introduced. The setting of properties was enhanced by the use of walls, feature gate piers and often decorative railings and many good examples remain. The increasing affluence of the town during the 18th and early 19th Century is reflected in the numbers of Georgian Town Houses that were built, such as Neville Hall, Middleham Grange etc. (photo 15). The

some cases, ornate surrounds (photo 13).

Early vernacular styles gave way to the polite architecture of the Georgian period such as Jasmine House (photo 14). Storey heights increased as did



Photo 14

architectural fashion was not only restricted to houses and the importance of the race horse industry is recognised through the buildings as the use of materials and styles were adapted for the specialist use, for example at Manor House Stables.



Photo 15

From the early 19th Century there were massive changes in building design and materials. The fashion moved away from the classical architecture of the Georgians to the re-interpretation of Gothic and the exploration of the Arts and Craft /Art Nouveau

movement. Notable buildings of this period are Brief House with its Gothic joinery and glazing and eccentric Dutch gables and round chimney stacks (photo 16), the latter is more akin to buildings of the English Lake District. The Old School and the Town Hall are also good examples of the architecture of this date (photo 17).



Photo 17



Photo 16

Stone and render are the dominant materials but there are a few exceptions, this includes two mid 18th Century brick building facades one standing to the west of the Market Place the other tucked in behind Kirkgate (photo 18). As transportation became easier in the 19th Century ,materials such as Welsh or Westmorland slate were able

Photo 18



to be imported. Welsh slate particularly became more widespread on buildings through the 19th Century (photo 19). Technological advances in materials also has had an impact on the town as exemplified in the awning in an Art Nouveau style at Central Stores (photo 20).



Photo 19



Photo 20

Within the Conservation Area the changes brought by the 20th Century have mostly been restricted to adaptation and alterations to the existing properties. Although individually the use of materials such as cement mortars for

re-pointing or the introduction of UPVC windows may be small scale, the accumulative effect can be visually and structurally detrimental. There has been development of modern stable blocks within the back land and yard areas. Generally these have been low key simple buildings mostly obscured from view (photo 21). The one notable building of a unique modern design is the Middleham Key Centre. The Centre is wholly non traditional in form, but makes use of traditional materials and its orientation in the landscape to sit comfortably at the edge of the Conservation Area. Other 20th and 21st Century developments have tended to be restricted to refurbishment and adaptation of existing buildings to new uses. Care needs to be taken to ensure these are sensitively done without affecting their character and their contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Photo 21

In order to enhance the Conservation Area careful consideration must be given to materials, scale and design of new developments, adaptations or extensions and alterations. Previous poor examples are clear and should be learnt from. An article 4 (2) Direction was confirmed at the beginning of 2007 to bring alterations to windows, doors, roofs and render within planning control. A Design Guide was distributed and when considering planning applications regard will be paid to preserving and enhancing the character and appearance as identified within this appraisal.

Character

The long and gradual growth of Middleham over the centuries has resulted in a unique and attractive historic town. The character is determined by the relationship between the many different components of the built environment, the spaces, the landscape, the floorscape, street furniture, the topography and their functions/uses.

Functions/uses.

The town is made up of a mixture of uses but predominately residential. The commercial premises are generally concentrated in the Market Square; this includes 4 pubs/hotels which is reflective of the settlement's attractions and commercial viability. Horse training premises are intermingled throughout in yards, some visible, some less so. The Castle as a visitor attraction can be seen from most locations. Dotted around the town are visitor facilities and Bed and Breakfasts.

It is best to look at the various sections of the town separately.

The approaches

There are three main approaches to Middleham.

From the North – The route from Leyburn to Middleham over the River Ure at Middleham Bridge provides stunning views up towards the settlement with the Castle and Church tower outlined in the background set against the backcloth of Witton Fell. Once over the river the route, initially enclosed by stone walls, opens to the east to a grass area known as the Busks (photo 22). An avenue of Limes leads the eye up towards the heart of the town, although the buildings are mostly obscured by a high stone retaining wall to the west side and mature gardens. Parts of the route have been developed piecemeal over the last century. The Conservation Area boundary starts as the road sweeps left into Kirkgate in the historic core of the town .



Photo 22

From the West – The route from Coverdale falls gradually towards Middleham, along a road still delineated by a number of old stone rail posts. The road passes the gallops and grazing on Low Moor to the north and with views to the east over pasture towards William's Hill with Witton Fell behind. The Conservation Area

boundary starts when leaving the open moor. Continuing downhill, the road is enclosed by walls which on the north side changes to dressed stone and forms the boundary to the former Middleham Hall. The outline of the Castle can just be seen over/between the mature trees within the grounds of the former Hall (photo 23). The north sweep of the road, followed by a sharp left turn, screens views into the town until you are amongst the town centre but the castellated gable to the right hand side



Photo 23

affords a glimmer of the architectural delights to follow. This has the effect of bringing the surrounding landscape right into the core of the historic town.

From the East – The route from Masham is bound by drystone walls and the settlement visible on the raised ground with the ever present Castle silhouette and church tower visible at distance. The land to the south of the road has the appearance of formal parkland with groups and individual mature trees. To the north is pasture. The Conservation Area starts as the road straightens and views are opened up into the Market Square (photo 24).

Landscape, William’s Hill, and the Castle.

The boundary of the Conservation Area was drawn to include areas of open landscape known to have been associated with the town and provide the setting for the historic elements. Virtually nothing is known of the archaeology of Middleham and the whole of the core and a lesser extent the immediate vicinity could be of prime archaeological significance.



Photo 24

A “motte and bailey” known as William’s Hill, now an earthwork is positioned to the south of the present Castle. The fields between are currently pasture providing the setting for both. The area to the east of the Castle is currently pasture, farm

buildings and playing fields, and the openness provides a crucial foreground to fully appreciate the Castle itself. Important views can be enjoyed from this area both out into the surrounding countryside and back into the town.

The landscape around the former Middleham Hall and to the north abutting Park Road forms an important green buffer of mature trees and pasture to the west of the town.

To the east of the town there is some evidence in the formality of the landscape which appears to be designed as a parkland setting possibly to Grove House. The fields appear to have been sculpted and trees planted purposely to enhance the natural landscape. Only part of this area is included within the Conservation Area and further research should be undertaken to determine whether the Conservation Area should be enlarged to encompass the whole of this parkland. Important views can be enjoyed over from this area from the end of Grove Terrace and the junction of Back Lane with East Witton Road out into the surrounding countryside.

To the north of the town the Conservation Area boundary is drawn tightly around the buildings in the historic core. However, the access from this direction does have historic significance and along part of its length the area known as the Busks has long been associated with the town. The land is an open grassed area with an avenue of trees particularly important to the setting of Middleham from the north. Further research should be undertaken to determine whether the Conservation Area should be enlarged to encompass the whole of this open access from the north.

These areas of open landscape are vital to the setting and historical association of Middleham

The cobbled areas, Market Place, Swine Market and West End

The spaces within the town are as important as those outside the built core in contributing to its character.

The Market Place is the core of the settlement, though it no longer functions as a



Photo 25

market, it does house the majority of the commercial premises. These consist mainly of shops, cafes, restaurants and public houses. Roughly rectangular in shape, it includes large areas of cobbles and is the meeting point for the three access routes. Buildings face onto the square from all four sides forming a strong sense of enclosure which is only breached by the spectacular views over the Ure Valley along the line of the East Witton Road (photo 25). Within the central cobbled area is the Market Cross, a strong focal point when approaching the Market Place along Kirkgate.



Photo 26

Swine Market is connected to the Market Place by a narrow gap where the opposing buildings are at their closest

(photo 26). Once to the west of this narrowing the road widens into a roughly triangular shape, having frontages on three sides, the feeling is more one of the opening out of the



Photo 27



Photo 28

road rather than the enclosure of the buildings. On the long south eastern side, the buildings part to provide a wide access to the Castle but the enclosure is then reinforced by the massiveness of the Castle, despite its set back position (photo 27). Cobbles in this area are not as extensive as the Market Place but the space houses two focal features, the Swine Cross and the Jubilee Fountain (photo 28).

To the south west of Swine Market the broad space between opposing houses of West End creates a continuation of the open space. This area includes two green wedges, on each side of the central road known as the Plantations. This is an important feature of the town providing a welcome area of greenery in a town



Photo 29



Photo 30

otherwise dominated by hard surfaces (photo 29). The termination of this space at the western end is made by the position of the property Hillside, which is effectively in the middle of the space and along with the mature trees and boundary wall of the former Middleham Hall (photo 30).



Photo 31

The cobbles generally around the town provide a setting for many of the buildings. An enhancement programme in the recent past is substantially responsible for the extent of the cobbles as we see them today (photo 31).

The frontages around Market Place, Swine Market, West End and Kirkgate,



Photo 32

Market Place

Buildings of a whole range of sizes and heights front onto the roughly rectangular Market Place. The majority are listed and in the local vernacular style as identified previously. On the north and south sides of the Market Place the buildings are generally grouped in terraces and with the fall of the land to the east this creates a varied roofscape punctuated by chimneys and the facades stepping down the hill (photo 32). On the whole each building within the terrace is unique having been built to an individual's requirements giving overall a varied appearance, rather than one of uniformity of a designed terrace. On the east side of the Market Place, Jasmine House and The Black Bull present common frontage but with two very contrasting styles of architecture and scale (photo 33). The west of the Market Place has the more broken aspect, with several groups of buildings juxtaposed and at 90 degrees to the Market Place rather than fronting on to it (photo 34). The mix of orientation of the buildings around the Market Place means that visually the front facades are punctuated by gables that occasionally are hipped.



Photo 33



Photo 34

There are numerous access points through these frontages, some purely an arch through the building such as to the side of the White Swan (photo 35), but others are quite large gaps with glimpses of the buildings behind such as that to Middleham Grange.

Swine Market

The road from the corner of the Market Place to the east passes through a narrow space dominated by the ornate awning of Central Stores and the frontage of the building on the



Photo 35

south is recessed back from the road behind a cobbled forecourt. The buildings on this first portion of Swine Market are grouped in terraces and, with a few exceptions, are Listed. Those



Photo 36

which are not listed make an important contribution to the character of these groups of buildings. Most of the individual buildings are unique and Milton House has a particularly striking feature with the flanking 2 storey segmental bow windows which is further emphasised by its raised setting, behind a stone wall and railings (photo 36).



Photo 37

residence, becomes a focal point when viewed from the west and The Old School, a Victorian Gothic building, becomes the focal point when viewed from the south (photo 37). The alignment of buildings on the south side of the road curves around the bend and into West End. The curve is broken quite widely by the access to the Castle.

Part way along Swine Market the road swings to the south. The orientation of buildings on the north side of the road moves through 90 degrees at the junction with Park Road. Neville House, a fine early 19th century detached

West End

Photo 38

Leading from Swine Market into West End the wide space between opposing buildings is continued. The frontages are now orientated generally east/west facing onto the Plantation. Those properties on the east side form a continuous terrace of many differing styles of house. The most impressive along this length is The Manor House, a fine 1772 building which has many features associated with it, including the railings (photo 38) and the stable buildings.





Photo 39

The frontage is broken visually by a group of properties positioned within the central space. The west side of the West End is more diverse in its alignment with terraces broken at 90 degrees at several positions forming a “courtyard” arrangement with a small green landscaped area as its focus (photo 39). These houses are relatively small and of a variety of styles.

Kirkgate

Kirkgate falls fairly steeply away from Market Place to the north. The properties to the east, step down the hill in a terrace of mainly three storey render and stone facades to the junction with North Road (photo 40). Views over the farm land and



Photo 40

Ure valley to the north can be enjoyed. Stone walls and railings are a particular feature of this stretch of buildings, and the Ryders Café has a particularly fine pair of early bay windows (photo 41).

The eastern side of the road commences with the notable Brief House and

then continues in a short row of properties to turn through 90 degrees into Church Lane and run up to the focal point of the Lych Gate (photo 42). These properties are substantially two storey stone cottages. The remainder of the east side is bound by the dressed stone wall to Kingsley House which is set well back raised above the road. The mature gardens and trees of Kingsley House contribute to the enclosure of the street to the eastern side (photo 43).



Photo 41



Photo 42



Photo 43

The Church of St Mary and St Alkelda and Middleham House

These two buildings and their extensive grounds form an important group and open area tucked behind the frontage buildings of the town. The mature trees and openness is appreciated from many vantage points, particularly when approaching the town or glimpsed along footpaths and streets such as Church Street. The buildings have an architectural quality though completely different in style. The character has developed over the centuries with both using natural local materials. The Church is clearly visible but views of Middleham house are restricted. The main facades face onto its own landscaped grounds but parts of Middleham House and its outbuildings form the common boundary between the two properties. The most important trees have been protected by Tree Preservation Orders but other trees also contribute to the character of the conservation area. The area around Middleham house would benefit from a management plan to allow some species to reach their potential and contribute to the wider landscape.

The back lanes, yards, barns and outbuildings

Away from the main frontages described above are many back lanes, alleys and yards. The minor streets are North Road, Back Lane, Back Street and Grove Terrace. These streets contain a mixture of types of properties, they are generally the more humble residences and ancillary buildings for the properties on the main frontages. The possible exception being Grove House which is positioned just off

Photo 44



the Market Place, presumably to enjoy the extensive views east over the valley. A lot of the yards serve the racing industry, house stables (photo 44), barns and exercise areas. Others contain the myriad of outbuildings, coach houses such as the Coach House to Castle Hill House (photo 45), and barns associated with the principle buildings. The nature of this type of buildings is such that they are often under used and neglected. Often a new use and adaptation is the best way to ensure the conservation of

Photo 45



this type of building, but care needs to be taken to ensure that the character of the building is retained and contributes to the character of the Conservation Area. These ancillary buildings are critical to the character of Middleham. The accesses through narrow cobbled passages and often under arches are all an important features of the town.

Conclusion

Middleham has a strong and distinctive character greatly influenced by its picturesque rural setting. The harmonious relationship between the green spaces within and around the Conservation Area and the built form of the town is seen as particularly important as one enhances the other, forming a unique character.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Preservation and Enhancement

It is the aim of the District and Town Councils that the existing character and appearance of Middleham Conservation Area should be preserved and enhanced.

Listed Buildings

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.

There are 43 buildings in the Middleham Conservation Area which are listed and thus merit the tightest controls over any changes to them. 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.

The Protection of other Buildings

There are buildings and features in the Conservation Area which are not listed, but which contribute to its character and appearance. For example, the row of terraces along Church Street, the barns and outbuildings behind the frontages and features such as the Victorian sewer vent. While residential properties are subject to some increased planning controls brought about by the designation of the Conservation Area and the introduction of the Article 4 (2) direction, changes may still take place that would damage the character of the Conservation Area. This could particularly be true for features such as the Victorian sewer vent that have no formal protection.

There are many unlisted buildings that have retained much of their historic character through the survival of original features, 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.

With the support of the local community, a Direction has been made removing certain “permitted development rights” from properties within the Conservation Area. This introduces control over windows, doors, roofs and render on any part of the building facing onto a highway or public open space. A plan showing the area covered by the Direction is in the Appendix.

A design guide has been produced for Middleham. It is not just restricted to the elements that are subject to the Article 4 Direction but includes general design advise.

Design Guidance

Extensions and alterations will be expected to follow the design guidance included in the Appendix. The designation of a Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change, especially that which would enhance the character of the area and ensure Middleham’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.

Render - Sadly there has been a tendency to strip render exposing the underlying poor quality rubble, which has done little to enhance the character of individual buildings or the area as a whole.

Opportunities

There are aspects of Middleham 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.

Overhead wires

The Conservation Area has a particular problem with overhead wires. The extent is show on the plan in the Appendices. The wires are mainly telephone but electric wires are also present. The poles are positioned at regular intervals and wires run



Photo 46

to the front facades of many of the buildings. Technology has developed substantially over recent years and every effort should be made to achieve either the undergrounding of these wires or their omission altogether (photo 46).

Neglected buildings, land, sites and features

In general, buildings in Middleham are in good condition, however there are some buildings in a poor state of repair. Generally these are ancillary buildings, barns etc. to the rear of the main frontages but as these are an important part of the character of the town their decay and ultimately their loss would be to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area. There are, however, some frontage properties where early signs of decline are evident and it is in the best interests of all properties that routine maintenance be undertaken.

There is little open land within the Conservation Area that has a negative impact. The exception being the site of the garage on North Road.

Middleham has a wealth of features in the public domain which contribute to the character of the area. Unfortunately their maintenance and repair are rarely a priority. Dry stone walls are a very important feature especially on the approaches to the Conservation Area and these need to be regularly inspected and repaired as necessary. Old street furniture, such as the listed lamp standard in the Market Place and the Victorian sewage vent, and new litter bins and modern lamp posts similarly need inspection and maintenance. Any new street lighting should be co-ordinated and be sympathetic to the historic character of the town, with particular regard to the existence of a listed lamp post.

The approaches

In general the approaches to the historic town core are being marred by a proliferation of parking, poor design and general untidiness. This is particularly true of Leyburn Road and East Witton Road. There is little scope for introducing pavements, but the areas raise concern for pedestrian safety.

Parking

Parking is a high profile issue in the town. As the historic town developed no consideration was given, or needed, for the requirements of motor vehicles and thus their accommodation is immediately at odds with the character of the historic town. Visual intrusion of parked cars on open frontages is detrimental to the setting of historic townscape. Vehicles are, nevertheless, an inevitable part of modern life and their management is a critical issue. The majority of the open frontages within the town are continuously parked with vehicles. Negotiations have been ongoing to find alternative car parking and securing a parking facility appears essential for the future prosperity of the town. Special regard will need to be paid to the impact of such a facility on the character and appearance of the historic town, whilst remaining clearly 'visible' and easily accessible.

Development

The opportunity for development within the Conservation Area is fairly restricted. Those open areas that have been identified generally have a positive contribution to

the character of the area the exception to this being the neglected buildings, land and sites identified above. The Castle and its environs are particularly sensitive to change and any proposals in close proximity should preserve and enhance its setting. 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 accumulative effect of issues such as parking, services etc. on the character of the Conservation Area.

The harm of specific small scale alterations that can be undertaken to individual properties, without the need for planning permission, has been identified and the Article 4 (2) direction introduced to ensure alterations to windows, doors, roofs and render are sympathetic to the character of the area. There are however other small changes which can have detrimental effects. For example, gas bottles can be very visually intrusive and should be obscured from view wherever possible. Other examples include insensitively positioned satellite dishes. Many of these small changes have been identified and advice given in the Middleham Conservation Area – A Guide to Design but further advice can be obtained from the District Council (see contacts below).

Design in the public domain

At present there have been a somewhat adhoc approach to the design of elements of the public realm. There are numerous different designs of bins, street lights, seats, traffic signs and other seemingly small scale elements but the compound effect can be visually disjointed/discordant. It should be the aim to agree a range of street furniture which should be used when the existing is to be replaced thus achieving a consistency of approach.

Sustainability

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, ground heat pumps and local refuse and recycling collections may all have the potential to detrimentally effect the historic environment. As proposals come forward, each case will have to be considered on its merits but consideration should be given to the environmental benefits gained from each.

Action Points

The character appraisal should be taken into account when considering applications through the planning process.

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.

Neglected buildings/land which spoil the character and appearance of Middleham will be investigated. In critical cases, action will be taken to ensure repairs/improvements are carried out.

The **open spaces and trees** have been identified as being crucial to the character of the town and should be preserved.

The **enlargement of the Conservation Area** to encompass the whole of the open access from the north and the parkland landscape to the east should be investigated further.

The Design guide should be updated regularly.

The Article 4 Direction should be monitored and enforced as appropriate.

Dialogue should take place with the statutory groups (Bt electric boards etc.) to :

- i) ensure remedial works in the streetscape are of sufficiently high standard.
- ii) pursue the under-grounding of the various unsightly wires and removal of the then redundant poles.

A range of street furniture should be agreed and used when the existing is to be replaced thus achieving a consistency of approach.

Work to resolve the parking issues in a manner sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area should be continued.

Care and special attention needs to be given to proposals with sustainable credentials to ensure the character of the Conservation Area is not detrimentally effected.

Community Involvement

From the onset of the appraisal process Middleham Town Council were consulted and a working group established. This group undertook extensive survey work that fed into the working appraisal document. The group and the Town Council were consulted on the working appraisal document to produce a draft appraisal.

A summary document of the draft appraisal was be circulated in Middleham and to the various interested bodies, English Heritage, North Yorkshire County Council etc. A conservation character discussion open day was be held and comments invited. The comments were considered and a final Conservation Area appraisal produced. The appraisal was reported to the Environment Committee of the District Council and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Useful Information, Appendices and Contact Details

Middleham Conservation Area character map
Scheduled Monuments
Archaeologically Sensitive Area

Listed Buildings
Key unlisted Buildings
Middleham Design Guide
Article 4 (2) Direction Plan
Tree Preservation Orders

Designations

There are 4 Scheduled Monuments within Middleham Conservation Area :

William's Hill
Middleham Castle: twelfth century tower Keep castle and fourteenth century
concentric castle
The Swine Cross
Middleham Market Cross

The majority of the area has been identified as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area
(See Map) within the Richmondshire Local Plan.

Key unlisted Buildings and Features

Victorian sewer vents
West End Methodist Chapel
The Grove
Part of Castle Hill (East) House
Hillside West End
Property next to the Manse West End

Tree Preservation Orders

TPO 1989 No 14 : Timber Yard West End
TPO 1980 No 1 : St Mary and St Alkelda's Churchyard
TPO 2002 No 9: Middleham

Listed Buildings within the Parish of Middleham

Address	Grade
Middleham Bridge, A6108	II
Castle Hill House West, Castle Hill (Castle Hill House)	II
Gates and gate piers to Castle Hill House, Castle Hill	II
Coach House to Castle Hill House, Castle Hill	II
Middleham Castle, Castle Hill	I
Warwick House, Kirkgate	II
Waterford House, Kirkgate	II
Brief House, Kirkgate	II
Middleham House, Kirkgate	II
Carlton House, Kirkgate	II
Church of St Mary and St Alkelda, Kirkgate	I
Kingsley House, Kirkgate	II
Gates and gate piers of Kingsley House, Kirkgate	II
Market Cross, Market Place	II
Lamp standard, Market Place	II
The Black Bull, Market Place	II
Jasmine House and Ferndale House and railings	II
Carriage drive gates and gateway to The Grove, Market Place	II
Clarendon House and railings, Market Place	II
House occupied by Mr and Mrs Montgomery. House occupied by Mrs Brown, Bow Cottage and screen wall, Market Place	II
The Nosebag, Market Place	II
Commercial Hotel, Market Place (Richard III)	II
Pickersgill Butchers, Market Place (Fish and Chips)	II
Stable Door Teashop and Golden Lion Cottage, Market Place	II
Black Swan Inn, Market Place	II
Castle Hotel (No 34 and Foxtor House (No 34A), 34 – 34A, Market Place	II
Castle House, Market Place	II
Rosemount, Market Place	II
Kent House, Market Place	II
The White Swan, Market Place	II
Post Office, Market Place (White Swan Brasserie)	II

Premises of the Wensleydale Advertiser, Market Place (Dress Shop)	II
Pear Tree House, Market Place	II
Millers House, Market Place (Middleham Grange)	II
Gates to Millers House gate-posts and railings, Market Place (Middleham Grange)	II
Swine Cross, Swine Market	II
Victoria Jubilee Fountain, Swine Market	II
Neville Hall, Swine Market	II
Old School and railings, Swine Market	II
The Priory, railings and carriage entrance gates	II
Sundial House, Swine Market	II
Hill House West and railings, Swine Market	II
Hill House East gate-piers and railings, Swine Market	II
Glasgow House and gate-piers, Swine Market	II
Glasgow Cottage, Swine Market	II
Central Stores and awning, Swine Market	II
Castle Keep Art and Craft Shop, Swine Market (Tea shop)	II
Milton House and railings, Swine Market	II
Desmond House, Swine Market	II
House of Mrs and Mr Bell, Mr and Mrs Adamson, Swine Market (Castle Hill Terrace)	II
Hall gate-piers, West End	II
West Shaw and outbuildings, West End	II
Warwick Cottage and Moat Cottage, West End	II
Laundry House, West End	II
Manor House and Railings, West End	II
Manor House stables, West End	II
The Manse, Manse Flat and Manse Cottage, West End	II
Peacocks Cottages East, West End	II
Peacocks Cottages West, West End	II
K6 Telephone Kiosk outside Town Hall, Market Place	II