Womersley

Village Design Statement
Supplementary Planning Document
February 2012

SELBY DISTRICT COUNCIL
Moving forward with purpose

LDF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Contents

VDS Objectives

To Provide a record of local distinctiveness by describing the unique qualities and character of the village.

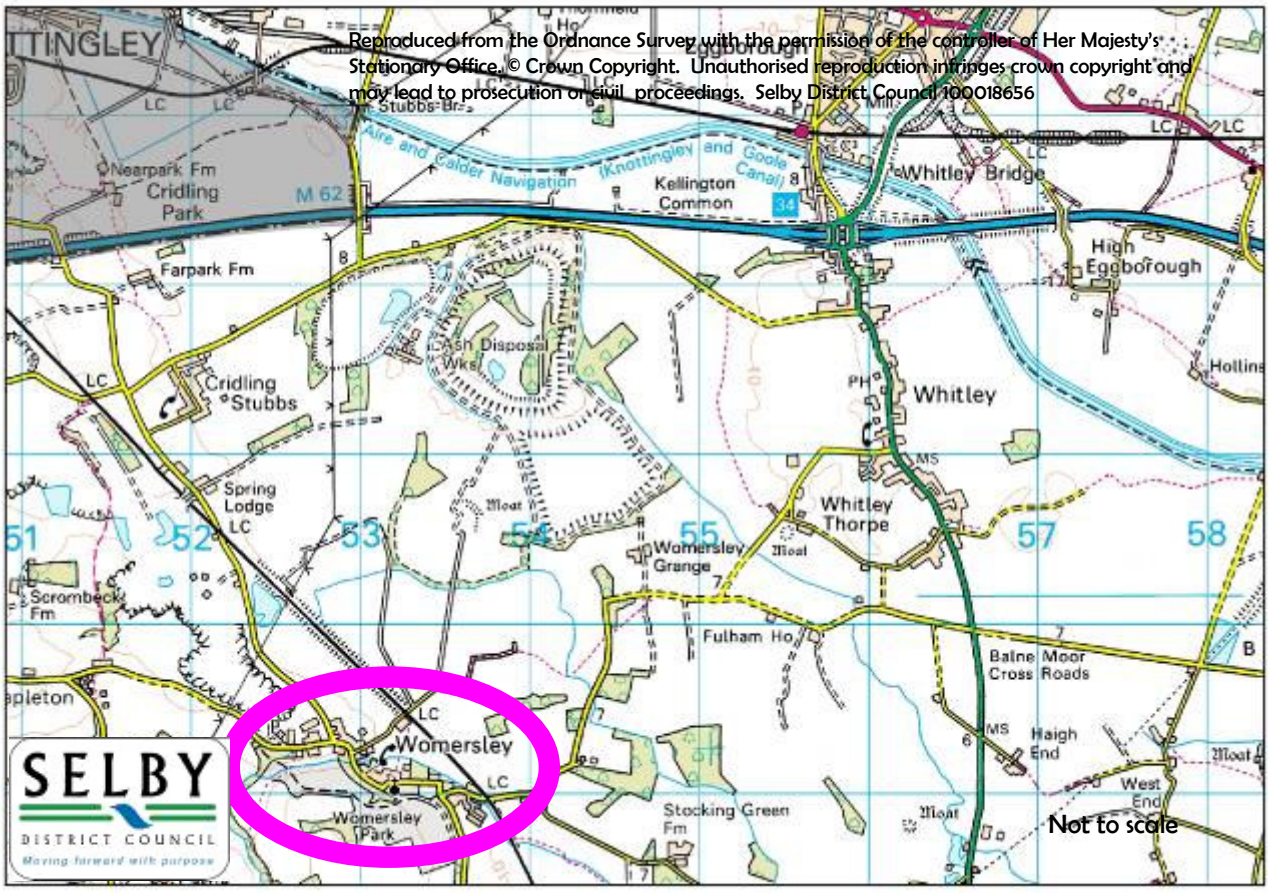
To identify the key features and characteristics of the local natural and built environment to be respected and protected from the impact of inappropriate development.

To provide design guidance for new development so that change is managed and development is in harmony with its setting.

To achieve a higher standard of sustainable design and where possible to enhance the local environment.

To increase the involvement and influence of the local community in the planning system.

Location Map



Purpose of a Village Design Statement

1.0 Our villages all occupy a unique position in the surrounding countryside, and have evolved over hundreds of years to suit the needs and circumstances of the people who lived there through the ages. As a result of this, we are naturally drawn to the elements that make our own village different from others, and those things that make it unique.

1.1 More recently, volume house building and standardisation has failed to reflect both the subtle and obvious elements that create this local distinctiveness. Coupled with this, political ideology, personal tastes and cultural changes have all played their part in the design of buildings. It is now recognised that local distinctiveness is vital in helping to integrate new development and in creating sustainable communities. This can be achieved through an understanding of local character, and ensuring that this understanding is shared with anyone considering development.

1.2 A Village Design Statement (VDS) is such a method. It is intended to explain the *context* or *character* of the village so that anyone who is considering any form of development in the village - no matter how large or small - can do it sympathetically. The VDS covers relatively straightforward work such as replacing doors and windows as well as more significant work such as building extensions and complete new buildings. It sets out the elements that make up *character* in order to improve the quality of design in any new development.

1.3 The description of local character in this VDS is not intended to be prescriptive - new development should not be designed to "look old". Instead the VDS should be used as inspiration to design new modern development that is respectful to its surroundings. In this context, that means using the appropriate building materials and architectural styles, and respecting the importance of spaces, building orientation, juxtaposition and size. Overall, new development should look new, and should not slavishly copy the old buildings. However, new development should "fit in" with the *context* of the village.

1.4 The VDS is written so that all developers can avoid lengthy discussion in the planning application process, as the design context is clearly set out from the beginning. Where design is not respectful to the village, the VDS can be used as evidence to justify the refusal of planning permission. It can also be used to demonstrate that a proposed development is in character and may therefore support a planning application.

1.5 Therefore the Local Planning Authority welcomes early discussion with anyone considering undertaking any work so that a consensus can be achieved, and local character can be maintained.

The Womersley VDS

1.6 Womersley is an elongated settlement straddling two roads that meet in the rolling hills in the south of the District. Some Pennine influences are found in the architecture such as the use of large stone slabs in place of tiles at the eaves. Of utmost importance in Womersley is the use of local Magnesian Limestone as the principal building material. Also of note is the privacy of the village through buildings close to the roadway and tall walls.

Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

VDS and Conservation

2.0 The village has a designated "Conservation Area"; a planning tool similar to Listing a building, except that it covers a larger area. Conservation Areas are designated in an attractive historic area where there is a demonstrable character that it is "desirable to preserve or enhance" in the national interest.

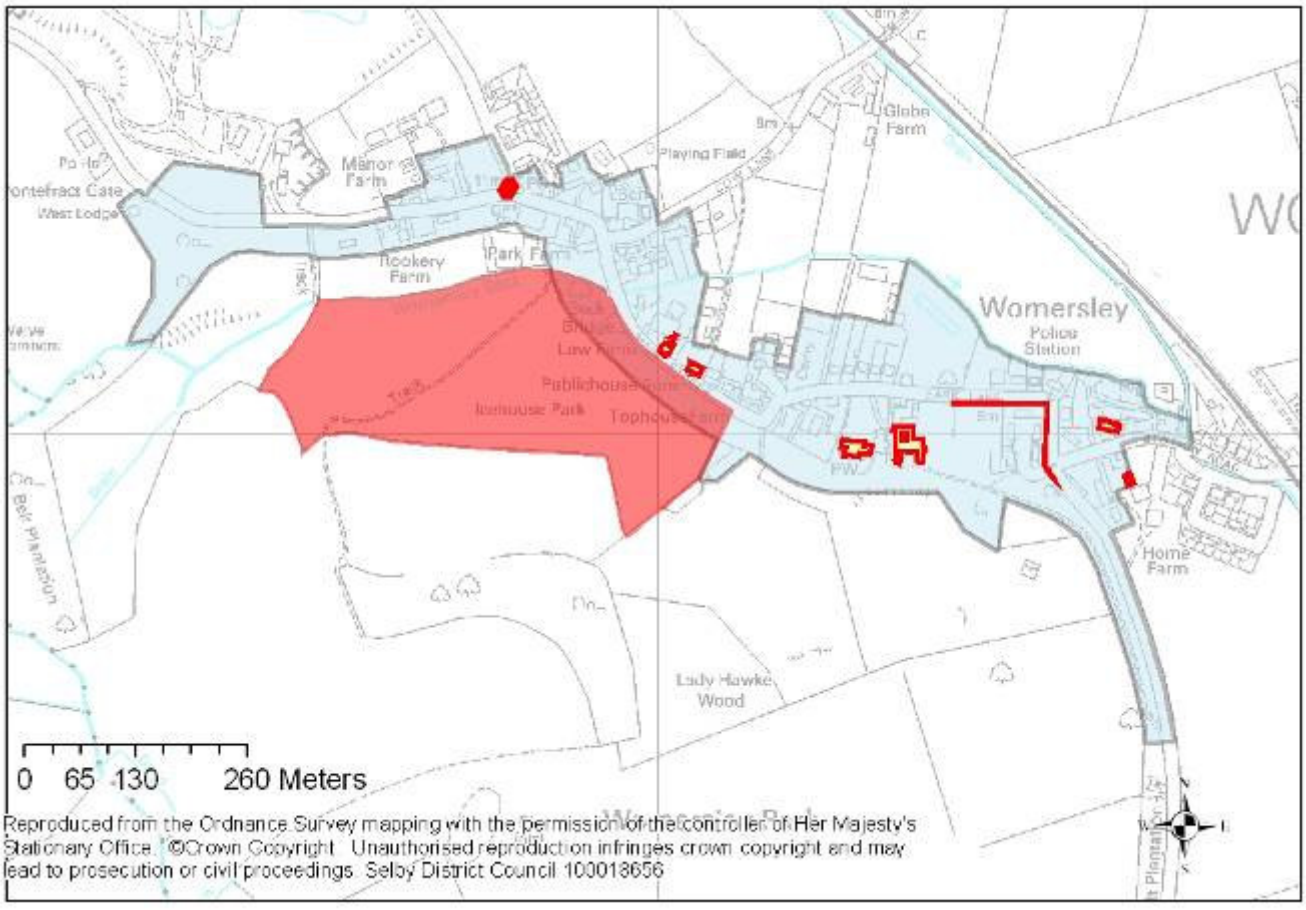
2.1 The aims of the Conservation Area are similar to those of a VDS, but is undertaken using different planning legislation. Conservation Areas are concerned with historic environments, with an emphasis on managing change progressively, maintaining the historic fabric and layout. The Conservation Area designation is set out in a different policy and ultimately carries more weight than the VDS SPD (see hierarchy in appendix 1).

2.2 The VDS on the other hand is less focussed on the historic aspects. It often covers more modern areas and considers those aspects that make up the existing character, which may not be so squarely focussed on the historic elements. It considers those aspects that may not be of concern to the national interest, but are important to local people.

2.3 There is clearly a crossover of the two mechanisms, particularly where much of the village's character is derived from the historic environment. But the two mechanisms can work alongside each other to help to improve the quality of new development.

2.4 A map of the village's Conservation Area is included in the VDS purely for information. For more information about Conservation Areas, contact Selby District Council Development Management service on 01757 705101.

Map shows extent of Conservation Area in blue, and any Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments in red.



Introducing the village

3.1 Womersley is hidden away at the bottom of Selby District, south of the M62 in the old "wapentake of Osgoldcross" (a former administrative area) where the flat plain of the Rivers Ouse and Aire meets the gently rolling hills of the Pontefract area. In more modern terms, Womersley lies some 15 miles south of Selby and 10 miles west of Pontefract, Womersley village is sited around 2 miles west of the A19, half way between Selby and Doncaster.

3.2 Womersley is a linear settlement astride the road that runs east-west between Darrington and Whitley. The village is a farming community built around a small country estate (Womersley Park), with extensive wealth arising from quarrying the local Magnesian Limestone – a sturdy building material used extensively locally. Womersley quarry measures some 42 hectares.

3.3 Located in the hills, the village shares little of the "Selby style", instead taking numerous design cues from West Yorkshire and the Pennine region. Unlike most North Yorkshire settlements, there is no central village green around which buildings are placed, instead the village is very closed and corridor-like as buildings are regularly close up to the footpath and high stone walls continue the perceived building line.

3.4 The village is mostly residential now, providing attractive housing for commuters to Doncaster, Leeds and beyond. Many of the houses are very private and secluded due to built and natural boundary treatments which create a very defensible place.

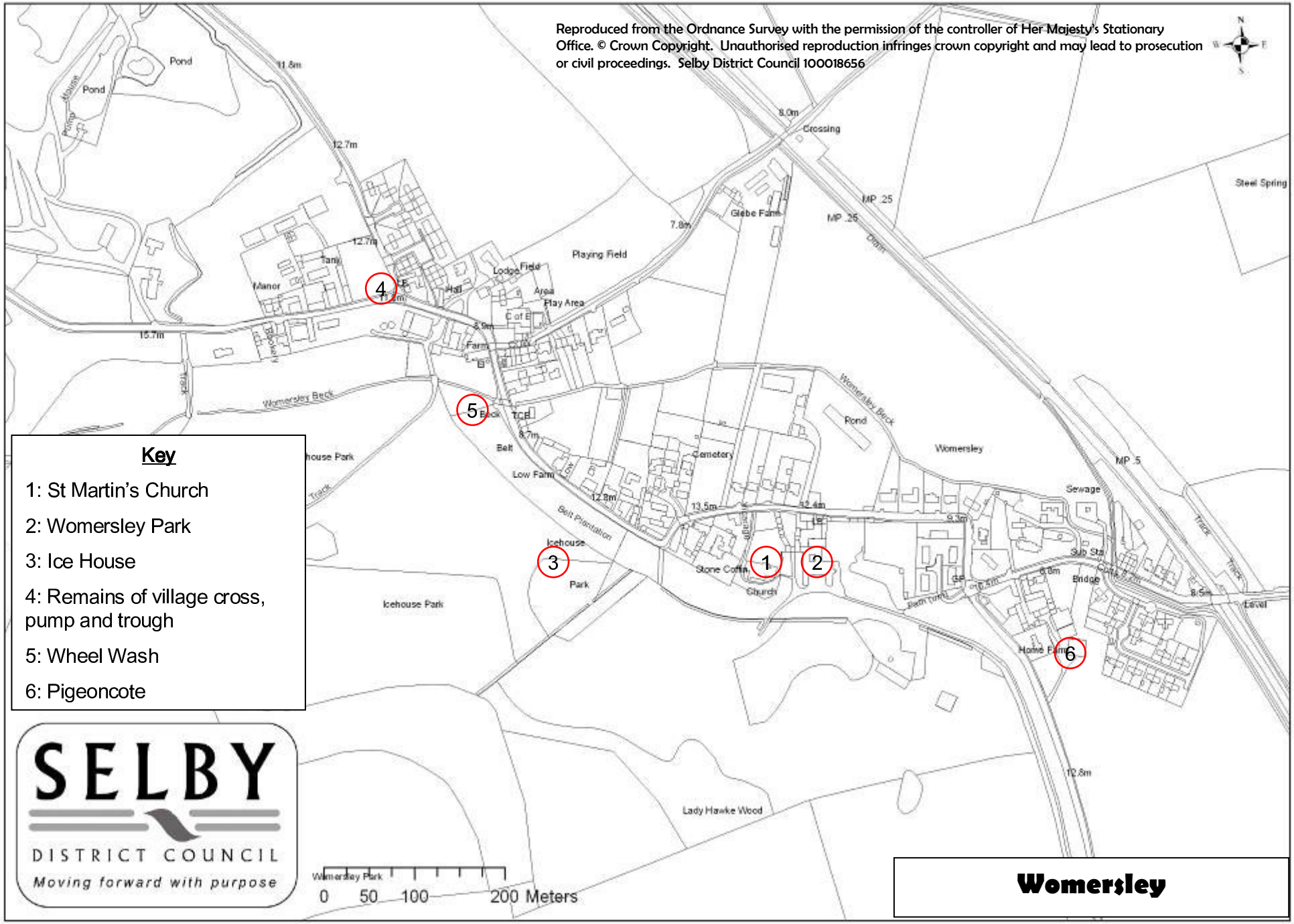
3.5 The landscape around the village includes extensive views across the flat farmland to the east, across rolling hills to the south and west, and the man-made spoil heap to the north which is the highest landscape feature around. What adds greatly to all of the views is the abundance of trees, woodland and coppices.

3.6 The local building material is key to the character of the village, as Magnesian limestone is an attractive material quarried within a few miles. Architecturally, buildings are rectangular and generally feature a small window which adds to the defensive appearance.

Entering the village from the south –via Churchfield Lane. Working farms still dominate the village

Several working farms remain throughout Womersley which add to its character

Buildings that abut the narrow footpath and high stone walls create a narrow "corridor" effect.



Key

1: St Martin's Church

2: Womersley Park

3: Ice House

4: Remains of village cross, pump and trough

5: Wheel Wash

6: Pigeoncote

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Womersley

Village Map

Buildings of Interest

3.7 Womersley Park with adjoining coach-house and stables, in Park Lane is Listed Grade II*. It is a small country house of C17 origins with extensive later additions and alterations, built in the local Magnesian limestone but mainly rendered. The house is U-shaped on plan with inverted U-shaped coach-house and stables adjoining to north-west. The complex retains many original features and opulent interiors.

3.7 The main entrance to Womersley Park is on Churchfield Road, However this can also be accessed from Park Lane there is a Grade II Listed wall and two gateways to Womersley Park. Along Park Lane is a late C18 using Magnesian limestone rubble and pinkish-brown brick with ashlar dressings. Some of the archway entrances have been blocked up at some point. The wall extends around the corner of Park Lane for approximately 30 metres to form an integral part of the streetscape.

3.9 The Grade II Listed Top House Farmhouse in Main Street dates back to the C17 with later C18, C19 and C20 additions and alterations. Built in the local Magnesian limestone rubble, with ashlar and brick dressings, and an unusual-for-Selby-District stone slate and pan tile roof, the building is part of a wider group of similar style.

3.10 The C12 Century Church of St Martin in Park Lane is Listed Grade I. with an iron fence facing the footpath, it also has a beautiful working clock. Altered throughout history it was restored by Bodley in 1895. Constructed in Magnesian limestone rubble and ashlar with red plain tile, grey slate and stone slate roof. Inside, monuments include an effigy thought to be of Adam de Newmarch d1287, stone coat of arms above, a Baroque cartouche to Tobiah Harvey, d1720, a Neo-classical wall monument to Frances Harvey Stanhope d1794, and another by R Blore of Piccadilly to Elizabeth Harvey d1824.

3.11 Went farmhouse in Main Street is Listed Grade II, a C17 farmhouse with later alterations. Like many other buildings, built in Magnesian limestone rubble with ashlar dressings, pan tile roof with stone slates to eaves. The interior reputedly has an original staircase that is boarded off.

Other Interesting Features

Walls and other interesting features
3.12 As well as buildings, walls in the village were built in the late C18 using magnesian limestone rubble and pinkish brown ashlar dressings. Any further walls are to be built in the village should follow the same principle. Womersley has a range of other interesting structures including Home Farm Pigeoncote in Station Road – formerly featuring a glass dome and used for astrological purposes, the remains of the mediaeval Magnesian limestone Village Cross and the village pump and trough (Bank Wood Road).

3.13 Elsewhere in the village, The Ice House is an unusual feature and also an ancient monument, the wheel wash, Pontefract Gate Lodge, The Old Vicarage and The Manor House are also buildings of interest.

1: Manor Farm
2: Home farm Pigeoncote
3: Village pump and trough
4: Pontefract gate lodge
5: Old vicarage

1

2

3

4

5

Character Summary

• ribbon style, one at a time houses
• corridor effect = high gates, hedges, stone walls and tree belts
• frequent courtyards and U-shaped clusters of farm buildings that are
• long and thin rectangular footprint, numerous wings, outshuts and extensions
• Magnesian Limestone blocks irregular and hand cut, often just rubble
• Each house is unique
• different proportions to neighbours
• gable roofs
• houses eaves face the front.
• Farm buildings = blank gable wall to the street.
• limestone walls dominate: openings for windows and doors are small.
• Windows variety of shapes, white timber with multiple panes
• Headers and cills in stone
• mullions and other complete surrounds in stone common
• Designs are simple without elaborate carving.
• Doors feature a stone step and simple stone surrounds
• doors timber plank and battened designs.
• red/orange clay pan tile= NO Welsh slate
• heavy stone slabs replace the last few courses of pan tiles at the eaves.
• chimneys with clay pots
•wide water table and kneeler stones.

Womersley Character

Layout

4.0 Generally a single road, ribbon style. One at a time, mostly farm buildings and conversions. Later houses. Along Main Road there are some court yards, some high gates, hedges, stone walls and tree belts create a very enclosed corridor effect through the street scene.

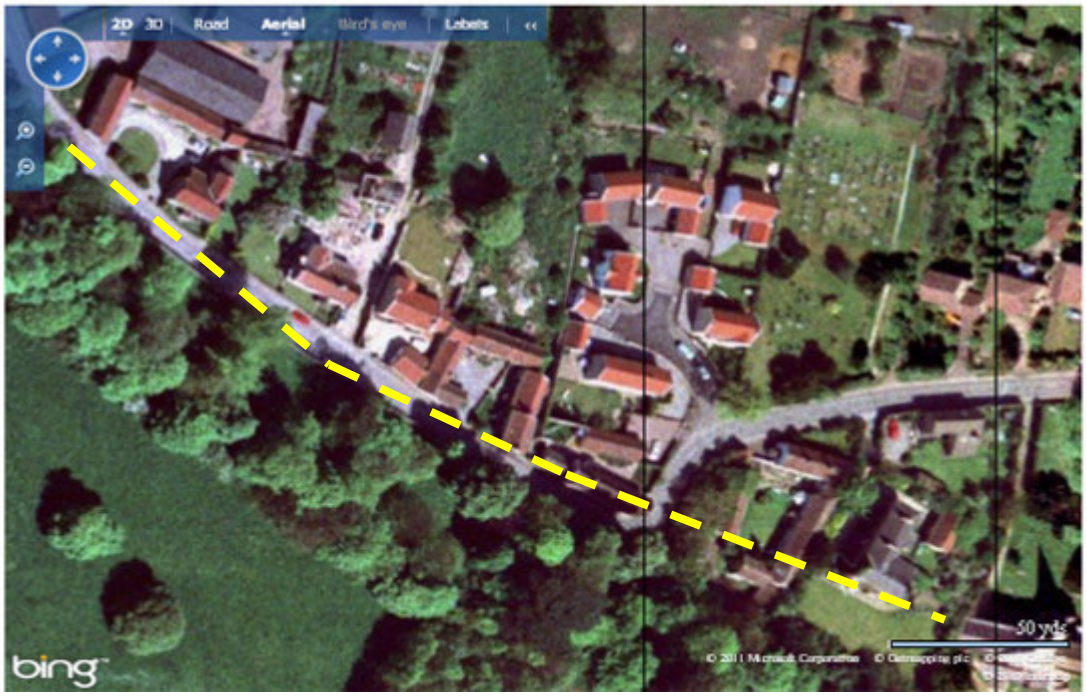
4.1 Linear, one at a time houses that face the road, but frequently there are courtyards and U-shaped clusters of farm buildings that are gable-on to the road with a blank wall.

4.2 On plan it appears that some buildings - particularly in Main Street - follow a building line that no longer exists. The road on Park Lane was rerouted by Lord Hawke to divert traffic away from the park, to make his estate more private. The sharp bend in the road would support this view, as though the right of way was terminated. The map demonstrates the perceived line of the street with a broken yellow line. Continuing this theory, it would also follow that the original road continued from the sharp bend through to the Church and Womersley Park hall, emerging on Churchfield Lane around the existing mini roundabout.

4.3 Views are restricted to the length of the street, as dense vegetation and high walls and buildings prevent views outward. A very private place that encourages the passer by to continue without stopping

Entering the village from Darrington via Bank Wood Road. Farm buildings are mostly gable-on the road, while houses are mostly eaves-on to the road.

An example of the courtyard style development off Main Street. Several blank elevations create a defensive appearance.



Buildings

4.4 All buildings employ a basic rectangular footprint, but numerous wings, outshuts and extensions give more variety along the street scene. Local Magnesian Limestone is the main building material, although some lime render in a pale orange/pink is found occasionally. Brick is only found on the post-war houses and should be avoided.

Long thin footprint unusual in the District. walls and vegetation create an enclosed street.

4.5 Each house is unique, with different proportions to its neighbours. Properties are frequently very long and thin which is unusual in Selby District where houses are usually shorter.

4.6 The simple gabled roof shape is dominant, and on houses the eaves face the front. Farm buildings and the ends of courtyards feature a blank gable wall to the street.

4.7 Where there are no buildings, high Magnesian limestone walls and tall timber gates, together with mature trees and other vegetation create a very private, enclosed street.

Architecture

4.8 The Magnesian limestone blocks are irregular and hand cut, often just rubble. The limestone walls dominate and openings for windows and doors are small.

4.9 Windows are a variety of shapes, but made in white timber with multiple panes of glass. Headers and cills are made in stone, but several older buildings feature mullions and other complete surrounds in stone – again unusual in the District. Designs are simple without elaborate carving.

4.10 Doors similarly feature a stone step, and some simple stone surrounds, but elaborately detailed entrances are notable by their absence. Doors themselves are mostly timber plank and battened designs.

Womersley Character

4.11 The roofscape is a very important aspect of Womersley. Like most villages in the District, the simple gabled shape is covered in a red/orange clay pan tile, but unusually Welsh slate does not a feature. Even more unusual in the District context is the use of heavy stone slabs that replace the last few courses of pan tiles at the eaves. This is a Pennine area style uncommon elsewhere in Selby District but very common in the village.

4.12 Further roof features include chimneys with clay pots, and other stone work such as a wide water table and kneeler stones.

4.13 Overall the village has a sturdy look, defensible and unwelcoming, but this is its charm as the overall character of Magnesian limestone, the unusual details and tight layout create a unique sense of place, and one of Selby Districts most attractive places to live.

Later additions to Womersley

Later additions to Womersley

5.0 Over the years piecemeal development has occurred in Womersley, mostly in the same style and character of the traditional heart of the village. Post war development across the country has taken a more standardised approach to layout and materials, and Womersley is no exception. Although it has escaped vast swathes of housing estates, the following areas have been developed with varying attempts to follow the Womersley style.

Appendices

Appendix A: What is a Village Design Statement and how do I use it?

A1 This Village Design Statement (VDS) is intended to give advice and guidance to anyone who is considering any form of development in the village no matter how large or small. It covers simple works such as replacing doors and windows as well as more significant works such as extensions and new buildings. It is not only concerned with housing, but covers all types of development with the intention of improving the quality of design in new development.

A2 It is not about whether development should take place, instead, the VDS is intended to expand upon the policies in the *Adopted Selby District Local Plan* in order to explain it and give greater detail as to what is meant by the Policies within it. This helps developers and Planning Officers agree on some details that are not specifically set out in the policy itself: in this case the VDS sets out how development should be undertaken so as to respect the local identity.

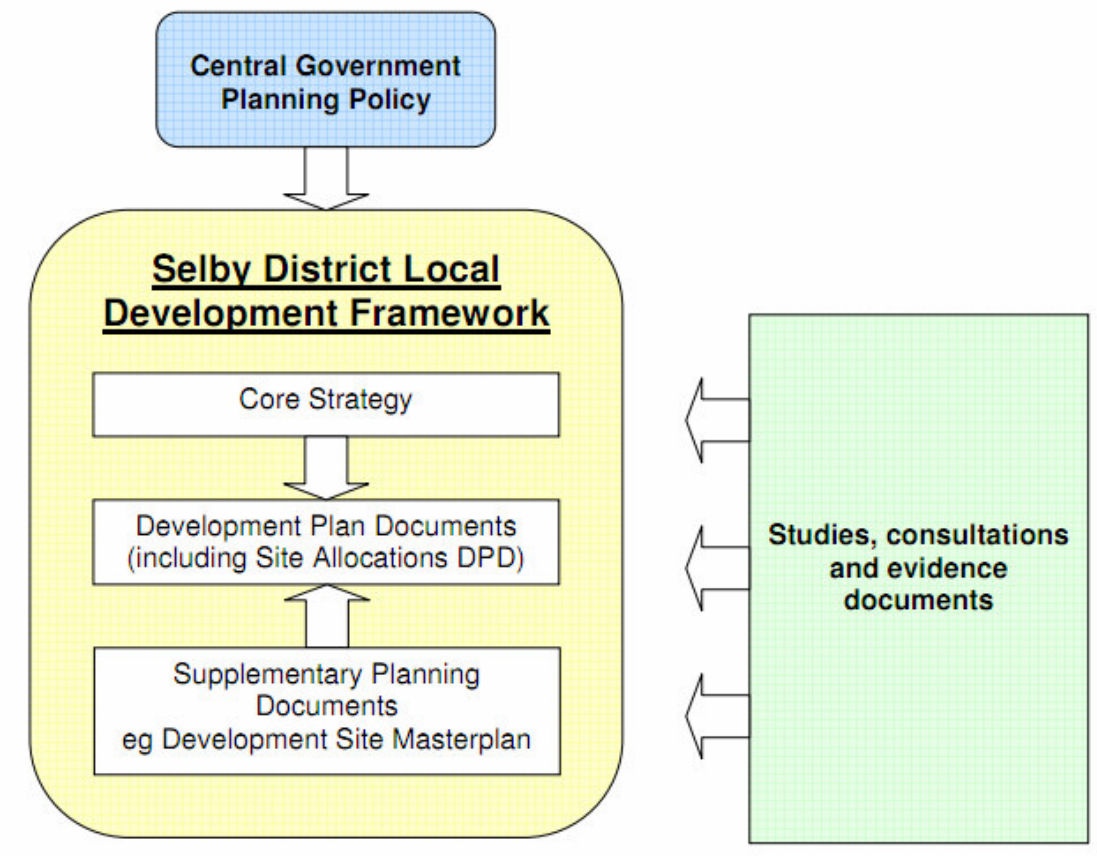
A3 The VDS is a "Supplementary Planning Document" (SPD) which is a legal document that sits in a hierarchy of plans and strategies called the Local Development Framework (LDF).

A4 The different types of document in the LDF cover topical issues as well as area-based issues, and contain policies for making planning decisions. This is a relatively new system that replaces the old Local Plan system, however this is a period of transition and so the 2005 Selby District Local Plan has been "saved" as a *'Local Development Document'* until such time that newer documents can replace it.

A5 This Village Design Statement SPD is therefore based on Policy ENV1 of the Saved Selby District Local Plan 2005, which states:

> *"ENV1: Proposals for development will be permitted provided a good quality of development would be achieved. In considering proposals the District Council will take account of*
> *• the effect upon the character of the area or the amenity of adjoining neighbours*
> *• the relationship of the proposal to the highway network, the proposed means of access, the need for road/junction improvements in the vicinity of the site, and the arrangements to be made for car parking*
> *• the capacity of local services and infrastructure to serve the proposal, or the arrangements to be made for upgrading, or providing services and infrastructure*
> *• the standard of layout, design and materials in relation to the site and its surroundings and associated landscaping*
> *• the potential loss, or adverse effect upon, significant buildings, related spaces, trees, wildlife habitats, archaeological or other features important to the character of the area*
> *• the extent to which the needs of disabled and other inconvenienced persons have been taken into account*
> *• the need to maximise opportunities for energy conservation through design, orientation and construction; and*
>
> *any other material consideration"*

The diagram shows the hierarchy of plans.



A6 When preparing development proposals, the developer should refer to this VDS in a "Design and Access Statement" to demonstrate how its advice and guidance has been used. This will help people understand how a particular design for the development has come about. Where a site lies on or near the "border" of two or more character areas, the advice of each should be taken in to consideration and used appropriately.

A7 If planning permission is required, the District Council's Planning Officer will also use the VDS to assess the design of the application. If it cannot be demonstrated that this VDS has been used, or it is considered that it has not been used correctly, it could result in the refusal of planning permission.

A8 Even if planning permission is not required, it is still very much in the interests of the village to undertake any development work in sympathy to the village's character. It will increase the appeal and the value of the development and ensure that the aesthetic qualities of the village continue for future generations to enjoy.

Appendix B: General advice for prospective developers

B1 This section considers more than just the aesthetic issues and offers advice and guidance for prospective developers in achieving a suitable development proposal.

General good design

B2 There are lots of conflicting issues in considering new development, but whatever the compromise, the village character should always be maintained.

B3 The character described in the VDS does not restrict new designs or materials or insist that everything is designed to "look old". Instead, it is the job of the developer to design and build a modern building that satisfies modern needs, exploits new technology and building methods, and uses them to create a desirable, profitable development that works with its environment to seamlessly integrate with the local area. Modern, but appropriate development is encouraged.

B4 It is helpful to consider the visual impact of developments from all angles and from longer distance. Accurate perspective (isometric) drawings or street scene views to show how new developments would appear in relation to their neighbouring properties and in the wider street scene could be very useful.

B5 There is an emphasis on evolution not revolution in the village, and so multiple smaller developments will have less impact than a single large-scale development. This approach reflects the way the village has grown in the past.

B6 Examples of inappropriate designs, materials and layouts within the village should not be used as a precedent for further inappropriate use of these features.

The Planning Process

B7 Anyone considering development should contact the District Council for planning advice before submitting an application. This will help to iron out potential issues and lead to a smoother planning process. The Parish
Council would also welcome early discussion and to help wherever they can.

B8 Discussion with neighbours before applying for planning permission will give them an opportunity to discuss any concerns, and that may avoid unnecessary neighbour disputes.

B9 Some development do not need planning permission, but the need for good design remains. Understanding of the local character and applying it may increase the value of a development and ensure that the important local character remains. www.planningportal.gov.uk

Repairs and maintenance of buildings

B10 Many buildings in the villages are old, having been built long before building regulations came in to effect, before plastics were invented, and before vehicles began damaging structures through impact, chemical attack via exhaust gases, and water damage from splashing through puddles. The need to maintain and repair our older buildings is never more apparent, but it is essential that the correct materials and methods are used to maintain character, but also to ensure that the building continues to live.

B11 Bricks and stone may be bonded together using a mortar, but up until the Great War, most buildings used a lime mortar mix rather than a sand-and-cement mortar used today. Cement mortar is extremely hard and does not flex which can lead to cracks appearing, particularly where foundations are shallow or soft. The rain cannot penetrate cement easily and so it is found that the bricks and stone wear out faster than the mortar joints leaving the mortar exposed. This accelerates wear and buildings will become damp, unstable and ultimately collapse. A lime mortar is no more expensive and no more difficult to use than cement, but it is the better choice for many buildings in the district. Where stone is used, a sand and cement mortar should never be used.

B12 When installing modern features on a traditional building such as satellite receiver dishes, conservatories, replacement guttering and fascias etc, new windows and doors, and damp proofing can all seriously affect the integrity of both the appearance and the way traditional buildings function. Modern materials are often cheaper to buy, but may have a shorter operational life, and also lack the physical qualities that are needed in traditional buildings. However advice is available from HELM (English Heritage's Historic Environment Local Management arm) who offer a wealth of information to help make an informed choice about materials and methods of repair to older buildings. See www.helm.org.uk.

Highway and parking advice

B13 Safety is paramount, but modern standardised road designs do not always sit comfortably within historic areas. When designing road layouts it is important that a balance is achieved to allow safe access without detriment to the local character. This means that a bespoke design will be needed.

B14 Historic areas were never designed for the private car and so these environments are spoiled by inappropriate and ill considered parking arrangements. Rural villages often feature heavy machinery and on-street parking is therefore problematic. Bespoke solutions will be required to minimise highway disruption and to maintain local character and amenity.

B15 New accesses should be designed to minimise the loss of boundary vegetation and achieve an appropriate balance between highway safety and amenity.

Energy conservation and sustainable development

B16 New development can play its part in reducing the risk and impact of climate change. Installing modern environmental systems in an attractive setting can have a serious detrimental impact on the character of the village. Therefore domestic wind turbines, solar panels and photovoltaic cells should be carefully sited to reduce their visual impact. If they cannot be placed sympathetically to limit their visual impact, then consideration of alternatives should be made. Ground source heating and better insulation may be just as effective by reducing consumption instead of generating more power.

B17 In order to reduce carbon emission, it is not only the ongoing costs that should be considered, as methods in construction may also limit environmental impact. Timber, stone, slate and labour from local sources will reduce the amount of travelling required overall thus reducing emissions and maintaining local employment. More information about sustainable construction can be seen at www.bre.co.uk.

The natural environment

B18 Any new development on the edge of the village should conserve or enhance the soft landscaped edge by the provision of appropriate tree and hedgerow planting. Hard edges of walls, fences or other structures should be avoided. Selby District Council has a landscape Character Assessment that will assist in understanding the landscape around the villages.

B19 Hedges and trees within the village are an essential part of the character. These should be conserved and reinforced through new planting in any new development whether small or large.

B20 Even small areas of hard landscaping can lead to a sharp decline in local wildlife with the removal of nesting, breeding or feeding habitats. This has a drastic effect on our natural ecosystems and so hard landscaping and removal of vegetation is strongly discouraged.

B21 Many plant and animal species that have declined in the wider landscape in recent years are increasingly dependent on the opportunities provided to them through the built environment, such as putting up bird and bat boxes, making ponds, and planting native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Indirect actions such as using peat free or home-made compost also benefit wildlife. Further information can be found from the Natural England website: www.naturalengland.org.uk.
Flooding

B22 Much of the District lies in the *severe* flood risk area, but all areas may be susceptible to some form of flooding. Flooding can include short term flash flooding after a heavy downpour which can cause localised damage. There are two considerations when designing out flood risk: a) the impact of flooding on a development, and b) the impact of the development on flooding. The following advice is generic, but does not imply that all areas are at risk of severe flooding. Detailed advice about how to cope with flood risk - including maps showing those areas most at risk - can be found on the Environment Agency's website www.environment-agency.gov.uk , or through planning application stage or pre application process.

B23 To reduce the impact of flooding on a development, consider the plot in relation to slopes, water courses and known flood risk areas. If a flood is likely or possible, how would the water affect the development? Building on stilts and raising the ground floor level of the building may not be the answer, as the dry occupants would still be trapped because they would still be surrounded by water.

B24 Water storage capacity is particularly important; hard landscaped areas such as paved parking areas and driveways should be avoided, instead a permeable surface such as gravel is able to absorb water much more easily and hold it, prevent it escaping and building up elsewhere. It will also slow any flowing water down, and this will reduce the risk of impact damage. Collecting water from the down pipe in a butt may also assist in reducing the amount of water that the ground has to cope with. Trees and large vegetation help to bind soil together to prevent land collapse, so in areas where there are no trees, consider planting some to make sure the land can take the weight of water it holds.

Crime prevention

B25 Selby is generally a low crime area, but there are simple steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of crime further still in new development. For example, clear definition between public and private spaces, siting buildings to ensure areas are overlooked, removing potential hiding places, and designing buildings that are not easily broken in to.

B26 "*Secured by Design*"is a publication by the Association of Chief Police Officers that sets out these and other simple but effective methods of reducing the opportunities for crime. Schemes that meet the criteria set out are eligible for awards, and may attract lower insurance premiums. A copy may be obtained here: ACPO CPI, First floor, 10 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NN. Phone: 0207 084 8962 or Email: acpocpi@acpo.pnn.police.uk.

B27 In addition, North Yorkshire Police have specialist Police Architectural Liaison Officers who would be pleased to offer 'designing out crime' advice in respect of development proposals. They may be contacted on 0845 6060247.

Selby District Council

Civic Centre

Doncaster Road

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