

Selby: now

The Built Environment

Conservation Area

The Conservation Area provides a number of character zones:

The Abbey Church and its surrounds comprise the whole of the original Selby settlement and is central to the identity of the town. Adjoining this area are **the market and Finkle Street** which have been traditionally used for trading and market venues.

The main commercial and retail centre of the town stretches along **Gowthorpe** and is dominated by traffic presenting a noisy and often hostile environment to the visitor.

Immediately outlying the town centre are **Audus Street, Armoury Road and Brook Street** which have good examples of late 19th century/early 20th century architecture including residential terraces.

Millgate is a compact area of narrow winding streets with residential properties characterised by features such as pitched pan-tiled roofs with distinctive handmade brickwork and interlinked yards.

The town has also been influenced by the Georgian period. **The Crescent** (pictured below) lies adjacent to the major civic spaces of the Abbey and the Park and is a focal point to the town centre.



Armoury Road



Armoury Road



Brook Street



Mercantile Buildings



Ousegate West

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Westmill Foods



Lock Keepers Cottages

River Ouse



Selby Waterfront

The River Ouse has played a significant role in the development of the town; from the building of a medieval riverside quay and warehouses associated with the Abbey, through to the town becoming an active port and centre for shipbuilding, until its closure and the subsequent arrival of the railway. This changing history of trade and commerce has resulted in a unique and very special character along the town-side bank of the River, reflected in the buildings, which are of varying age and quality but include the dominant towers of Westmill Foods, Corunna House, Tyson's Ironworks and significantly, the first railway station in Yorkshire. Most of the mercantile buildings are brick and fronted by wharves. Occasional glimpses of the Abbey can be gained through the varying roofscape.

By contrast, the opposite side of the river corridor in the town has a relatively open and natural aspect, with banks of grass as part of the flood

defence system, fringed with willows on the waters edge.

The river itself is tidal with strong currents and as most of the wharves now stand unused, there is very little in the way of river traffic. Flooding in November 2000 resulted in temporary measures being taken to improve the existing flood defences, with permanent improvements underway. The river is crossed by three swing bridges, the Toll Bridge and the massive structure of the railway bridge are found in the Town Centre and a third swing bridge has recently been installed on the Selby Bypass, which opened in spring 2004.

Beyond the railway bridge is the hidden jewel of Selby Canal Basin with its attractive Lock Keepers Cottages. The 5½ mile long canal provided an important link between the Rivers Ouse and Aire and significantly contributed to the growth of shipping activity in the town.

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The Holmes to Selby Dam Pumping Station

This section of the waterfront is open in aspect, the bank was raised to provide flood defences and now affords important views both upstream and down due to the bend in the river. The pumping station lifts water from the medieval drainage channel of Selby Dam into the river. The industrial site of the Holmes Estate behind the bank is in a poor state of repair.

Westmill Foods/Abbot's Staithe

The mill is one of the few remaining commercial users of the river for the delivery of its raw materials. It stands adjacent to the Abbot's Staithe, a late 15th century or early 16th century limestone building which is the sole survivor of the Abbey complex. It is largely hidden from public view by 18th century and 19th century brick buildings. The current mill tower juxtaposed with the Abbey tower is a Selby landmark. The mill site is industrial in nature and as such has no public access. The overall appearance of this area is neglected.

Ousegate West of the Toll Bridge

This area is where the ferry was taken to cross the river before the Toll Bridge was opened in 1792. The waterside garden, created following the demolition of riverside cottages and sheds used as shops, is one of the few public open spaces adjacent to the river and provides good views of both the river and Toll Bridge. Inland are various brick buildings including Corunna House, described by Pevsner as 'The handsomest house in Selby.' Nearby buildings were cut through to create New Street to give access to the Toll Bridge.

Ousegate East to the Railway

There are several fine mercantile brick built buildings including Tyson's Ironworks, built in the 19th century, but also some recent development that detracts from the overall appearance of this area. On the river's edge, the derelict filling station adjacent to the Toll Bridge is presently an eyesore. Much of the rest of the riverbank is privately owned wharf and is unused.



Holmes Estate



The Quay



Abbots Staithe



Corunna House



Ousegate

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Flaxley Road



Abbots Road



Doncaster Road



Monk Lane

Railway to the Canal

The underpass below the railway line (pictured below) is dark, damp, unattractive and an informal car parking nearby adds to the feeling of neglect. Just beyond stands Yorkshire's first railway station, a private building containing some fine cast iron work. More unused wharves and overgrown banks obscure views of the river. They lead to a former industrial area, currently being developed for housing.

Suburban Development

Major estates have been built to the North, West and South of the town.

Flaxley Road to the North has a number of rows of late nineteenth century terrace housing; a large pre-war council estate of semi-detached properties; a later council development of bungalows for the elderly and more semi-detached houses. Most properties are of brick and tile with small gardens and small pockets of public open space.

Similarly, Abbots Road Estate to the south has a number of late nineteenth century terraces around which a large post-war council estate, of mainly semi-detached properties, bungalows and some more recent flats have been built. Properties are mostly of brick and tile. The gardens are larger and verges and grassed areas help create a more open aspect.

Selby West off the A63 Leeds Road and A19 Doncaster Road is typically brick built, well-maintained 1960s semi-detached estates with gardens. This is a desirable area for house buyers, which has resulted in some modern executive development further out from the town.

Ribbon Development

Examples of residential ribbon development along the radial roads out of town include late 19th century and early 20th century terraces along the A63 and A19. Gowthorpe Hall built in the early 19th century closer to the town centre, has been much added to and now forms the premises of Selby High School. Various large houses of the late nineteenth century and more recent times have also been built, often with closes of smaller more recent developments now standing in the grounds of the demolished larger houses. The styles of houses vary from Georgian to mock-Tudor and inter war suburban.





Open Space

The Design Guidelines of this document outline specific recommendations for treatment of open spaces. However, it is considered that open spaces should be protected and enhanced. Any future developments in the town should identify links between spaces to enable their function to fulfil the potential for connectivity and visual amenity.

The following character areas were defined for the town and should be considered in future development opportunities for Selby.

Formal Parks

The Park is a major civic space connecting the railway and bus stations to the Abbey and provides a gateway to the town for visitors and residents.

Streetscape

The streetscape of the retail centre should compliment the distinct architecture and the civic spaces of the town such as Micklegate and Market Place.

Recreational Open Space

The majority of recreational open space lies within the residential areas and provides play and sports facilities. The town has several allotments which have wildlife and recreational value.

Waterfront

The Waterfront, including Selby Canal (pictured above), has potential to develop as a major civic amenity for the town. With the development of the flood defence scheme, a series of open spaces along the wharfside and beyond will enable the river to become connected to the town.

Green Corridors

Running South from the railway station is a green corridor of derelict and vacant land which, with the allotments lying adjacent to the canal and railway lines, provide valuable resources for wildlife. A second corridor runs east-west along the floodplain of the Selby Dam including the Community Fields within the town.



Finkle Street



Bus Station



Selby Park



Selby Lock



Station Car Park

Routeways and Links.

The linkage of the built environment and open spaces through the many streets, yards and snickets are the life blood of the town centre. These distinctive features are the pedestrian routes and it is essential to maintain and enhance the safety of pedestrians and prioritise these routes over car use and associated traffic.

Key access points of the railway and bus stations need to be promoted to ensure a warm welcome to all visitors to the town.

The use of the cycle within the town can grow should safe routes be identified and opportunities exist to create linkages with the Trans Pennine Trail which passes through the town.

Ironworks

