

MASHAM

Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Working for you

approved 10 December 2008

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Conservation Area Appraisals aim to define and analyse the special interest which constitutes the character and appearance of a place. It is these qualities which warrant the designation of a Conservation Area. This Appraisal has been adopted by Harrogate Borough Council and forms an evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF). It is, therefore, a material consideration when determining applications for development, defending appeals or proposing works for the preservation or enhancement of the area. It can also form the basis for a subsequent Management Strategy, which will contain issues, proposals and policies for the conservation and enhancement of the area.
- 1.2 The Appraisal will provide information and guidance to those wishing to carry out works in the Conservation Area that do not necessarily require planning approval. It will therefore be a useful source of information for property owners, agents, applicants and members of the public who live or work in the town of Masham.
- 1.3 The main function of the Conservation Area Appraisal is to enable Harrogate Borough Council and the community to relate planning proposals to the Conservation Area. The Appraisal will help us understand the impact that development proposals would have on the Conservation Area and whether a proposal would be acceptable or appropriate.
- 1.4 The assessment of the area's special architectural or historic interest is based on a careful and objective analysis of the area. The statement of character and appearance in this Appraisal is based on the method of analysis recommended by English Heritage in their "*Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*".
- 1.5 Various qualities are looked at including: historical development, building materials, and relationships between built and open spaces. Although this Appraisal aims to be comprehensive the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.
- 1.6 Masham Conservation Area was designated on 15 October 1975 and, following a review of Harrogate District's Conservation Areas, the boundary was amended in 1995. Following approval of this Appraisal on 10 December 2008 the boundary was amended again. This Appraisal aims to describe Masham as it is today and identify the special character and distinctiveness of its setting, buildings and open spaces. Having identified those special qualities, the Appraisal will examine whether opportunities exist to protect and enhance its character.
- 1.7 By identifying what makes Masham special or distinctive, it is suggested that any future change, whether to individual buildings, building groups or the town as a whole, will be based upon this understanding of the past and present character of the town. In this way, we can manage future change to ensure that it makes a positive contribution towards preserving or enhancing its special character.

Objectives

The principal objectives of the Appraisal are:

- to define and record the special character and interest of Masham;
- to raise public awareness of the aims and objectives of the Conservation Area designation and stimulate their involvement in the protection of its character;
- to identify what is worthy of preservation to aid understanding;
- to assess the action that may be necessary to safeguard this special interest;
- to identify opportunities for enhancement.

2. Planning policy context

2.1 Local authorities have a duty to designate *'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'* as conservation areas under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The same Act also requires local planning authorities periodically to review conservation areas.

2.2 Government guidance on all development affecting conservation areas is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15). PPG 15 advises local authorities to define the elements that make the special character or appearance of conservation areas in order to provide a sound basis on which to develop local planning policies, preservation or enhancement strategies and to make development control decisions.

2.3 In determining planning applications for development within conservation areas and applications for Conservation Area Consent, the Council will give considerable weight to the content of conservation area character appraisals. The consideration of proposals in the context of the description contained in these appraisals will be an important factor in deciding whether a proposal has an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and therefore, whether it is contrary to saved Local Plan Policy HD3, which is the key policy for the control of development in conservation areas.

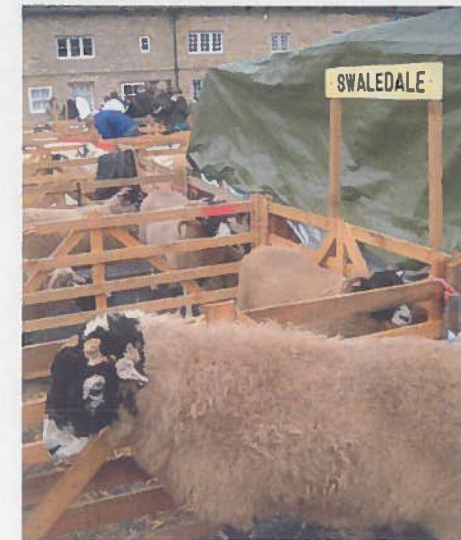
The scope of Policy HD3 also covers development proposals outside conservation areas, which would affect its setting or views into or out of the area.

2.4 Involving the community and raising public awareness is an integral part of the Appraisal process and needs to be approached in a pro-active and innovative way. Community involvement helps to bring valuable public understanding and 'ownership' to proposals for the area. Appendix B details how the local community has been involved and summarises the contribution it has made to this Appraisal.

3. Historic development & archaeology

- 3.1 The name Masham may derive from the Domesday Book reference to *"the ham of Maessa's people"*, ham referring to a small settlement. The Book refers to the taxing of *"twelve carucates there by eight ploughs. Gospatric had one manor there. Ermegis has now one plough and ten villeins and three borders with five ploughs - there is a church"*.
- 3.2 Prior to the Norman Conquest in the late eleventh century, lands around Masham were settled by a succession of people, each group being succeeded by others and a turbulent history is indicated. The Romans had a presence there, but the first permanent settlers were the Saxons who built a church paid for by the Lord of the Manor. The base of an old Saxon Cross stands outside the present Church door. Around 900AD, Norsemen invaded the region, burning and laying waste to the Church and causing great suffering in Masham. They also introduced sheep farming, something for which the town is well known today.
- 3.3 Feudal lands were granted to Earl Alan, followed by Nigel de Albini whose son, Roger de Mowbray, fought at the head of men from Masham against the Scots at Northallerton in 1138. Later, Roger de Mowbray granted Masham Church to the Church of St Peter in York, so establishing a prebend. As a consequence of this the Peculier Court of Masham was established (Peculier is Norman French, meaning particular rather than odd). In the twelfth century the growth of the monasteries gave rise to the founding of granges in Mashamshire where the breeding of sheep was carried out. The plague was to kill many people in and after 1340. At that time, houses were timber-crucked and thatched, with families and animals sharing the shelter provided. In 1393 Stephen de Scrope was granted a Wednesday Market held on the present site.
- 3.4 Masham became the crossroads for several pack-horse tracks, leading to its development as a busy trading place. Later, some of these were turnpiked (e.g. the Masham to Thirsk road in 1755). In that year the present stone bridge over the Ure was built, replacing a succession of earlier wooden structures. In 1753 the Grammar and Free Schools were established.
- 3.5 In the nineteenth century the King's Head Hotel became the most important secular building in Masham as the main posting house in the town. William Danby was a great benefactor to Masham, on one occasion funding the repair of the Church steeple after a gale. Another famous name, Theakston, emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. Mr Theakston had a brewhouse behind the Black Bull in Silver Street and in 1870 built the new brewery and maltings in Red Lane. The railway arrived at Masham in 1875.
- 3.6 Masham today is the local centre for a large rural and agricultural hinterland. The population of the Parish is modest at around 1,260, though there has been an increase of about 20% since 1981. Four

major local industries provide significant employment opportunities: Danby Foods, l'Anson Brother (Animal Feeds) and the Theakston's and Black Sheep Breweries, the two breweries also serving to attract tourists to the town. The Wednesday and Saturday Markets continue to attract locals and visitors, as do the annual Sheep Fair and Steam Engine Rally. However, Masham has not been unduly commercialised and there is a strong feeling that it still belongs very much to the Dale and to the "locals". It is probably much quieter today than a century ago when records suggest that as many as 70,000 sheep were sold every year in the Market Place.



Map 1: The Historical Development of Masham



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4. Location & setting

The town

- 4.1 The town of Masham is the most northerly settlement of any size in the Harrogate District. It stands above the River Ure ten miles north west of Ripon.
- 4.2 The historic core of Masham lies on level ground with an undulating landscape to the West which gradually merges into the Pennines. To the east the land is more gently contoured, eventually falling away into the Vale of York.
- 4.3 The layout of the historic part of Masham focuses on the Market Place and the few streets leading into this central space: Park Street Silver Street, Chapman Lane and Millgate. To the north and east is an open area of grassland beside the River Ure. Lying well below the level of the town, this open space makes up about 50% of the Conservation Area.
- 4.4 The approach to Masham along the A6108 affords the most panoramic views although much of the town is obscured by banks of trees. The dominant feature on all approaches, however, is the spire of St Mary's Church.

- 4.5 The River Ure rises in the hills above Hawes in Wensleydale and passes through Masham and Ripon to join the River Ouse near Boroughbridge.



View along River Ure from Masham Bridge

- 4.6 The landscape setting around Masham bridge represents an important feature of the environs of the town. The extensive flood plain to either side of the river Ure form an important aesthetic backdrop to the town as well as providing an important recreational facility for the residents and visitors.

- 4.7 The approach into Masham from Grewelthorpe and Hackfall Woods across Nutwith Common contrasts starkly with that of the eastern approach. The land gently undulates descending from high wooded ground above Nutwith Common, past evidence of prehistoric activity in the form of cairns and enclosures to low-lying meadowland to the River Ure and Swinney Beck. Once again Masham is masked on the plateau behind banks of trees. The dominant man-made feature is the spire of St Mary's Church.



View North into Masham from Nutwith Common- the spire of St Marys commands many views from the approaches into the town.

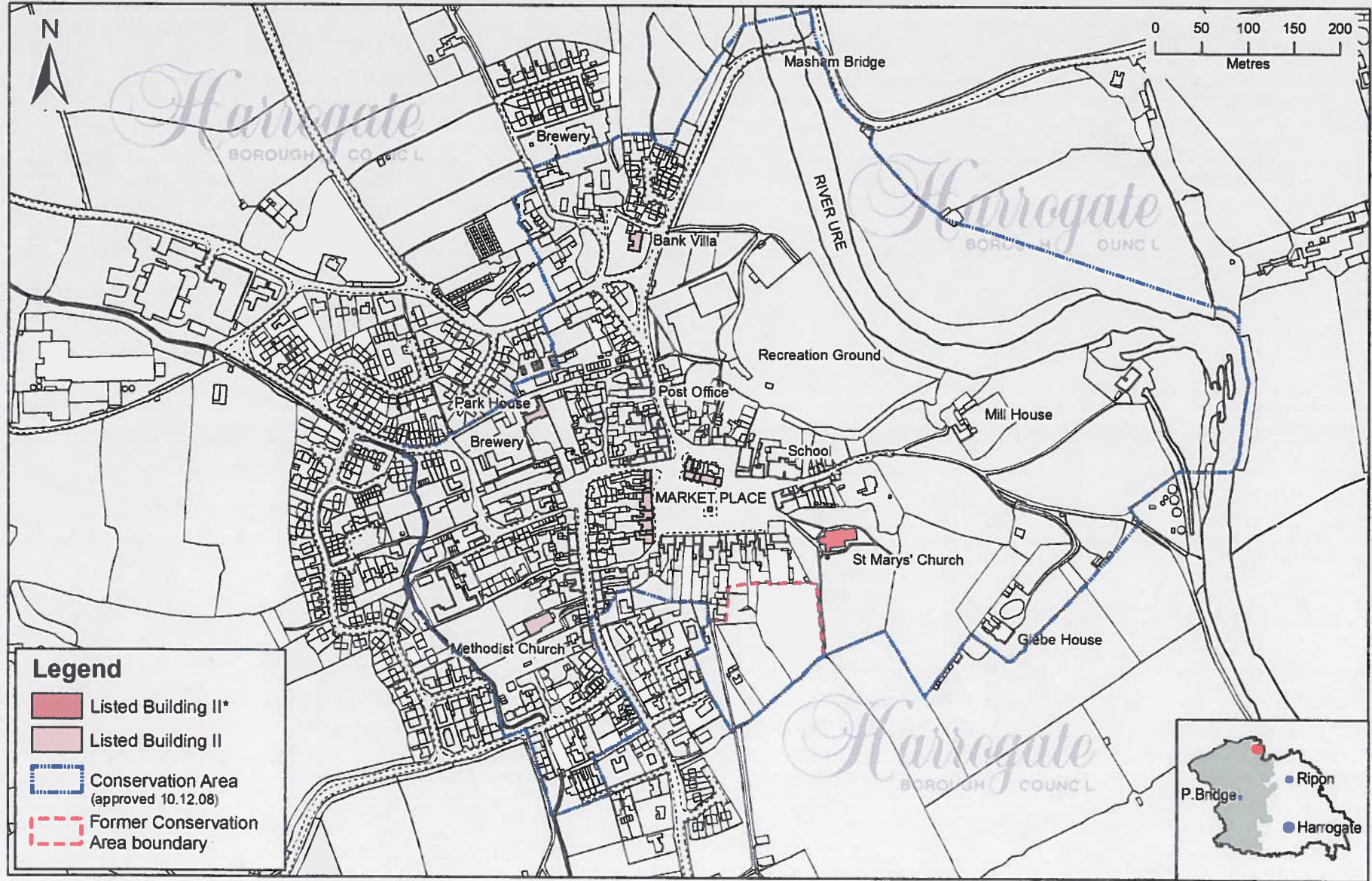
4.8 The first and dominant man-made feature on entering Masham from Nutwith Common is l'Anson's animal feeds. Due to the nature of the business the majority of the building on the site are large scale steel framed industrial buildings. As a result of recent developments, efforts have been made to lessen the impact of these building with the use of earth banks and tree planting.

4.9 The A6108 from Leyburn is the least spectacular entrance into the town past open fields with dry stone and hedge boundaries. Interesting features outside the town are the Marfield gravel pits and the Marfield Nature Reserve (former gravel pits), and the now redundant auction site.



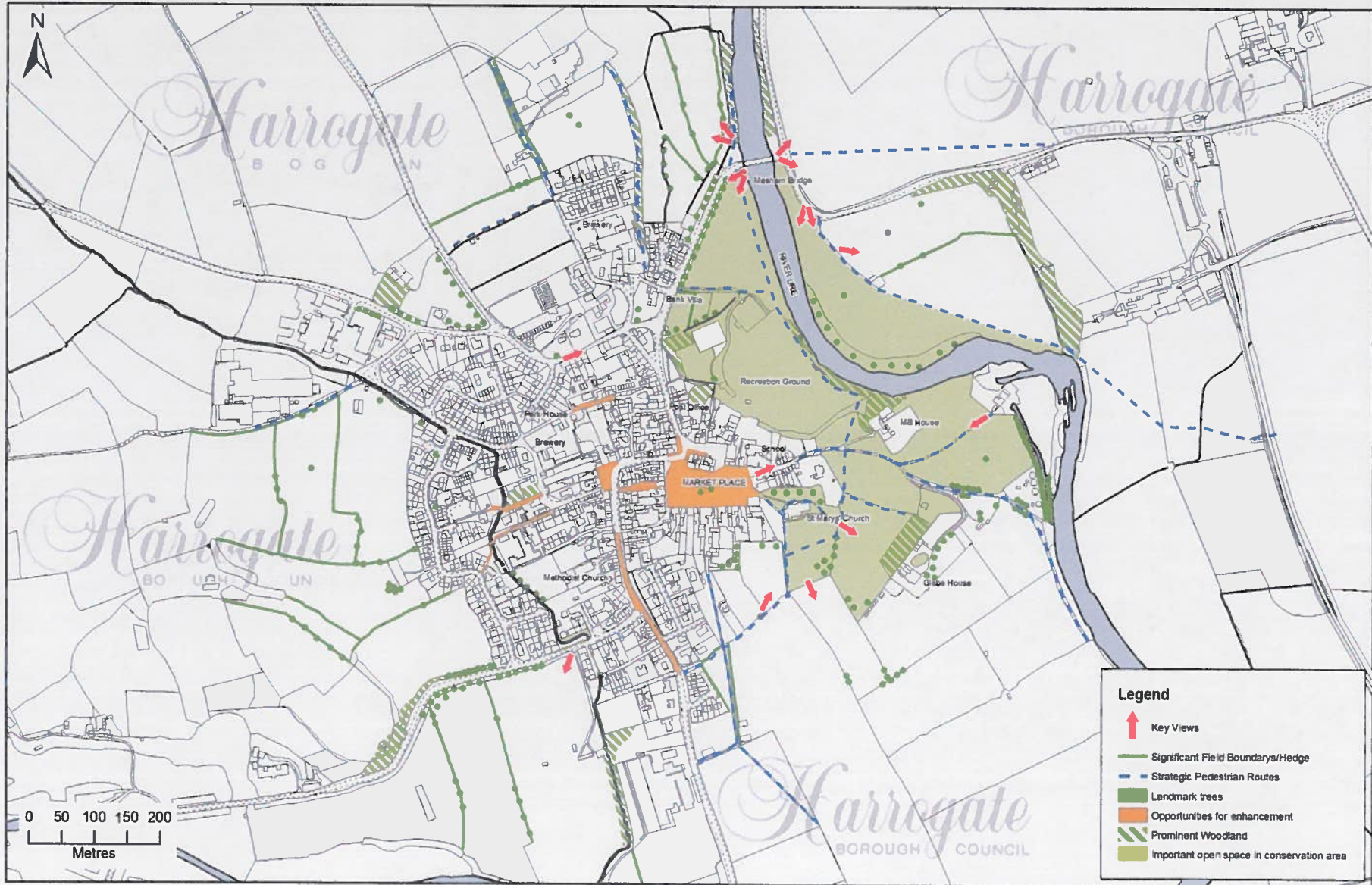
The Masham allotments (Bellfield Gardens) borders onto the Conservation Area boundary. A well-maintained site which provides an important recreational facility for the town, the importance of which was highlighted in the consultation workshop.

Map 2: The Conservation Area



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Map 3: Landscape analysis



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5. Landscape analysis

5.1 This chapter identifies and describes aspects of distinctive landscape character in and around Masham. The findings make judgements about the key landscape characteristics, which make the town distinctive and provide guidelines to help manage landscape change within the Conservation Area.

5.2 Masham is situated on the west valley side just north of the confluence of the River Burn with the River Ure and is the major settlement in the area. The Ure corridor is recognised as an historically important link across the Pennines between Cumbria and the North York Moors.

5.3 The area around Masham, to the east of the town is dominated by the course of the River Ure as it meanders north to south in its broad and shallow valley. The scale of the landscape is medium to large up the valley sides becoming smaller close to the river in the flat valley bottom.

Key views

5.4 The major view into the town are from high ground above the town from Nutwith Common and the A6108 East of the Town. (See earlier comments). On entering the town the character changes dramatically: the historic core is densely packed and there are only restricted views out into the surrounding countryside.

5.5 Some private properties, particularly those on Little Market Place and Silver Street have an elevated position giving them spectacular views from the rear elevations

over open countryside. The lower reaches of Millgate has a view over the floodplain to the Mill House and the Old Mill.



Views towards the floodplain and 'Shooting Holme' from the rear yards of properties on the North side of Little Market Place.



Open countryside south of St Mary's church

Significant Field Boundaries

5.6 The landscape is diverse and reasonably well-balanced with a mix of arable and grassland use. Fields are generally rectilinear, medium to large and bounded by hedges many of which are fragmented and post and rail fencing is used for stock proofing.

Geology

5.7 The geology of Masham comprises millstone grit overlain by glacial till, with river terrace and alluvium deposits along the Ure valley bottom.

5.8 Typically, the soil composition includes: brown soils, deep well-drained fine loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging with patches of deep, stoneless, permeable, fine, loamy river alluvium over gravel in places.

Sensitivities & Pressures

5.9 The rural character and setting of Masham is sensitive to change. Development has impacted upon approaches to the town, with small industrial units along Fearby Road on the western approach to the town and a large feed mill to the south. There is a wide range of activities in the area that impact upon landscape character, in particular the continued pressure for the expansion of gravel extraction and quarrying in the river corridor. Intensive farming practice has resulted in larger fields and large scale modern farm buildings and there is an increased pressure for tourist facilities. Some of these - specifically caravan parks in the countryside - can have a detrimental impact. These activities impact on the wildlife value and natural beauty of the river corridor.

The Flood Plain

- 5.10 The floodplain runs in a wide strip to the east and west of Masham Bridge. The fields to the south of Masham Bridge, the 'Shooting Holme' has an avenue of mature lime trees and has recently been planted with a row of young oaks.
- 5.11 The flood plain has a mixture of flat recreational well maintained outdoor amenity space, rolling meadows and a small number of agricultural and residential buildings, notably the Old Mill House and sewage works to the east. The land is well serviced by public footpaths and regularly used by dog walkers. There is a cricket pitch and bowling green and a children's play area.
- 5.12 The River Ure is wide at this point and is dominated by Masham Bridge, which is a major vehicular route into the town. The river level and flow changes in character according to the seasons and levels of rainfall and the area is prone to flooding.

Trees Woodland & open spaces

- 5.13 Tree and woodland cover are critical to the character of the Conservation Area. linking the harder historic core with its rural surroundings. There are few trees within the historic core of the town. Those that do exist make a significant contribution to the character of the space.
- 5.14 The approach to the town from the east is dominated by the character of the flood plain and the swathes of native trees to the banks of the River Ure, views into the town are masked with the exception of views of St Mary's Church spire.



Landmark trees within the Market Place and environs of St Mary's Church

- 5.15 The area in the town near the Brewery, Red Lane and Church Street is considered to be at a low risk of flooding according to the Environment Agency. At the boundary of the Conservation Area to the southwest Swinney Beck flows through residential areas of the town, running in a ditch with frequent pedestrian footbridges. This area appears to have a low risk of flooding.
- 5.16 **The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin:** it is thought that Saint Mary's was originally founded in the seventh century. The main entrance to the Parish Church is through a gate in a stone wall to the south east of the Market Place. In the churchyard past the war memorial and Norman doorway is a Saxon cross. On the north side of the church is the grave of Julius Caesar Ibbetson, a seventeenth century local artist.
- 5.17 Two paths lead into the churchyard to the east and west of the well-kept, neat graveyard gardens. To the south, east and west are open views to the countryside through simple timber stock fences. To the west is an undulating field with specimen decidu-

ous trees and a mixture of hedges and fencing. To the east, through the kissing gate is "The standing tree" (This is one of six sculptures located as part of the Masham Leaves trail.)

- 5.18 There are sheep grazing in the field and a public footpath to the east. This is the field where sheep racing takes place at the annual Masham Sheep Fair.
- 5.19 **Spatial Quality of the Church garden:** The garden is basically a well-maintained operational graveyard and burial ground with a number of specimen trees and headstones in neat rows. There is seating around the south side of the Church, which offers a tranquil sunny resting place. The large trees in the churchyard allow glimpses through to the countryside but as you follow the paths the views open out beyond the stock fencing.
- 5.20 **The 'Masham Leaves' trail:** In the early 1990s Rural Arts North Yorkshire (RANY) offered funding to Harrogate Borough Council for community arts promotions and Masham Parish Council devised a project for the town. The sculptor Alain Ayers was commissioned to design and carve leaves using huge slabs of locally quarried limestone reclaimed from the former railway station platform.
- 5.21 The walk is about three miles and the route follows public footpaths on level and gently sloping ground through open land, woods and along two riverbanks. There are stiles along the route, which can be muddy in the flood plains and where the paths cross working agricultural land.

6. The form & character of buildings

- 6.1 There are 68 buildings and structures in the town included on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The Church of St Mary is Grade II*, the remainder are Grade II as follows:

Low Mains Farmhouse

Bank Villa, Burton Road

Masham Bridge

in College Lane:

College Grove

College House.

Low Burn Bridge

in the Market Place:

Market Cross

Churchyard Cross

The Old Rectory

House (10m west of Old Rectory)

Stanhope

Brooklyn House

Radleigh House

Kings Head Cottage

Kings Head Hotel,

Nos. 36 & 38

Cogden House

Deepdale

The Croft

Waterloo House

No. 26

No. 24

No. 22 (Barclays Bank)

Nos. 19, 21 & 23 (Lyth Cottage)

Lingdale

Nos. 10, 12, 14

The Spinning Jenny

Avon House

Nos. 2 & 4

Cottage W of Crowham House

Crowham House

Nos. 3 & 5

Through the Looking Glass (No. 1)

Rudston House

The School

South View

No. 9

Bordar House

Ivydene.

in Little Market Place:

No. 11

Town Hall

K6 Phone Box.

in Millgate:

Old Gaol & Carriage Rise

Mill House

The Old Mill

Glebe House

Nos. 8, 10 & 12

Nos. 2, 4 & 6.

in Park Street:

Nos. 14, 16 & 18

(Morton House) No. 24

The Poplars (Nos. 26 & 28)

Nos. 42 & 46

Methodist Church

No. 21

Nos. 23 & 25

No. 27.

Park House, Park Square

in Silver Street:

Nos. 1-3

Bay Horse Inn,

Fayre Enough Restaurant

No. 6

Shop (No. 8?)

Silverdale

No. 21

Nos. 25 & 27

No. 29.

High Burn Bridge, Swinton Road

- 6.2 In addition to the numerous listed buildings and structures within Masham there are a number of unlisted historic buildings, which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and are of particular interest locally. These buildings have been identified on the Analysis & Concept map as being of local interest. There is a general presumption that buildings of local interest within the Conservation Area will be protected from demolition and the Borough Council will be especially vigilant when considering applications for alteration or extension.
- 6.3 The traditional buildings of Masham are predominantly eighteenth and nineteenth century in origin. They are two or three storeys in height and of a simple vernacular form. What is most striking is the limited palette of materials used in their construction.
- 6.4 There are two distinct elements to the town. Those buildings, which face onto the towns open spaces (Market Place, Little Market Place) and main arterial routes (Silver Street, Park Street). These buildings, although in a robust, vernacular style, are more imposing and grander reflecting their original uses as retail or commercial properties.

6.5 In contrast there are numerous alleyways and ginnels whose buildings are smaller in scale housing originally numerous residences and workshops. There are still a small number of businesses operating in these areas.

General Form

- 6.6 Most buildings are orientated with main frontages aligned along the open spaces of the Market Place, Little Market Place or main arterial routes. They are built up directly off the pavement line, giving the town a hard edge, softened only by the occasional tree or planter.
- 6.7 Roof pitches, ridge heights and eaves vary but are unified by the limited palette of materials used throughout the town.
- 6.8 Archways through to developments behind the road frontages are a particular characteristic of Masham.

Materials

6.9 Stone and render are the predominant walling materials. Coursed square stones are utilised in the primary facades with cobble and render interspersed through the town. Stone quoins are a common feature together with stone dressings to windows.

Roof Details

6.10 The majority of roofs are finished in either graduated stone slate or Welsh slate (for those later or re-roofed buildings). There are very few clay pantiles and even fewer modern, interlocking tiles. Great care should be taken to ensure that this limited

palette of materials is encouraged in any future development.

- 6.11 There is a mixture of ridge or gable chimney stacks predominantly in stone although there is evidence of brick in some lower status buildings.
- 6.12 Stone verge coping and kneelers are a common feature throughout the town, although become less apparent behind the major facades and on the lower status buildings.

Windows

6.13 The predominant window style is vertical sliding sash (two over two, or six over six). Yorkshire sliding sashes are also in evidence. PVCu has appeared in the town, however, many buildings retain original timber windows. Most windows have stone heads and cills with the higher status buildings having dressed details.



Vertical sliding sashes

6.14 There are a few examples of inappropriate styles of windows and materials. Priority should be given to ensuring that a high standard is maintained throughout the town by retaining traditional styles, details and materials of windows.



Yorkshire horizontal sliding sashes

Floorscape

6.15 Like most towns and villages bitmac has taken over from what was hoggin (compacted aggregate) and cobble. In Masham some areas of cobble are still in evidence in particular around the Market Place. These areas should be retained and enhanced where possible.



Expanses of bitmac in the Market Place



High quality floorscape enhancement is evident throughout the town

Comparison of styles & construction details in the Market Place:

6.16 **15-23 Market Place**, examples of seveneenth century construction and style.

6.17 Roof detail: the roof pitch of this building is much steeper than many in the town and may well have been thatched at one time. The gables are typically treated with shaped stone kneelers and copings. This example displays what appears to be an original end stack to the gable and a renewed or later addition brickwork ridge stack. The roof material is diminishing (graduated) stone slates.



6.18 Walls: in a course rubble stone, which is often of a superior quality on later buildings within the town. This method of construction, due to the quality of the stone, is often associated with dressed stone quoins.

6.19 Windows: the window to wall ration on an earlier building of this type is much lower than later buildings.

6.20 **7-9 Market Place**, examples of mid-eighteenth century construction and style.

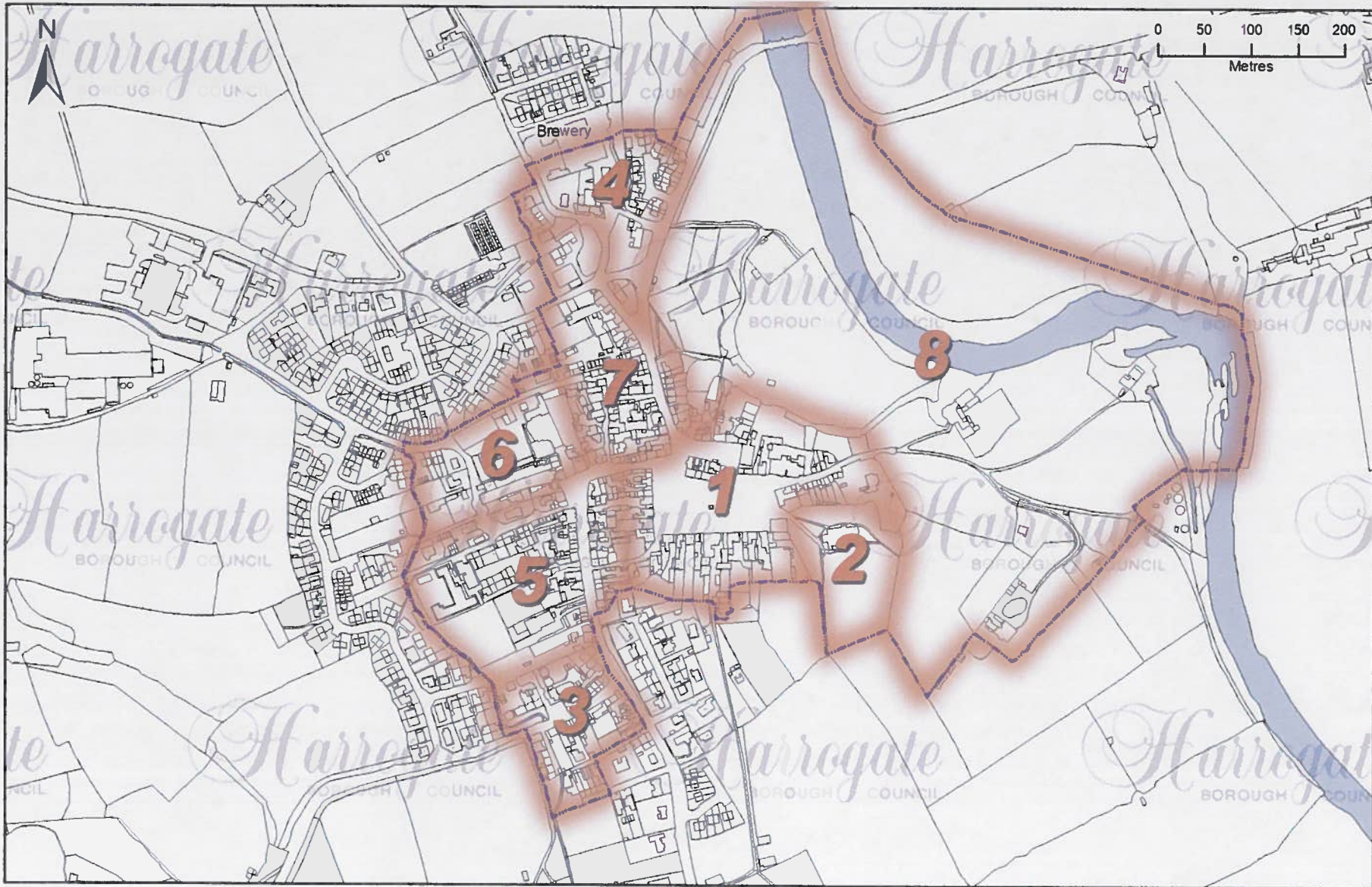
6.21 Roof detail: By this time roof pitches had become much shallower. Although this, and the earlier example, uses graduated stone slates, the advent of the railways in 1875 saw Welsh slate being introduced. Stone kneelers

and copings were still in common use at this time but, as seen in No. 9 Market Place, a straightforward clipped eaves had also been adopted.

6.22 Walls: Rubblestone and coursed rubblestone. Early photos of these buildings show a covering of render - a common solution to disguising a build in inferior stone.

6.23 Windows: these buildings were constructed during Masham's heyday as a commercial centre and more impressive facades were designed. This often meant larger window openings and higher quality stone dressing and surrounds. Vertical sliding sashes became more commonly used.

Map 4: Character area analysis: Zoning



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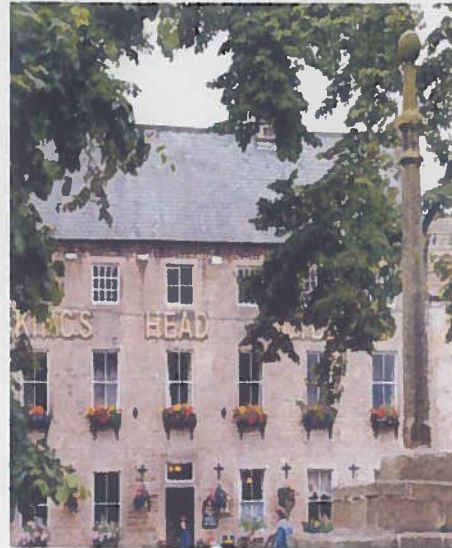
7. Character area analysis

7.1 This section examines the buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area in greater detail looking at sub areas. The aim is to identify the special character of the area that provides Masham with its particular 'sense of place' and to summarise the details and features that are important. The sub areas can be defined according to historical development, building form and uses and location. These areas are:

- 1 Market Place & Environs
- 2 St. Mary's Church
- 3 Swinton Terrace
- 4 Black Sheep Brewery (North end)
- 5 Park Street (West to Conservation Area Boundary)
- 6 Theakston's Brewery & Environs
- 7 Silver Street & Environs
- 8 River Ure Floodplain

1. Market Place & Environs

- 7.2 The historic core of Masham, that is, Market Place, Little Market Place, Millgate and St Mary's Church, forms what was the commercial heart of Masham, housing many of the towns public buildings and commercial properties.
- 7.3 In the Market Place many of the buildings have grander proportions and are constructed with superior materials and details.



The Kings Head - eighteenth century former posting Inn and surprisingly Excise Office within the heart of the Market Place (Grade II listed). A coaching arch leads through to Kings Head Yard and open farmland beyond.

- 7.4 Historically, the buildings around the Market Place were low thatched structures, but as Masham developed as an important commercial centre, these buildings were upgraded to reflect their new status (major re-building and remodelling took place in the eighteenth century).
- 7.5 All the buildings around the Market Place are listed as being of special architectural or historic interest. They are of two and three storey and without exception are built off the back of the pavement line. A dominant feature of these buildings and

in general those in Masham is the limited pallet of materials with which they are constructed. Local stone or render with stone or slate roofs predominate within the town, and great care should be taken to use this restricted palette of materials when dealing with new build or extensions.

- 7.6 Those buildings which enclose the southern and western boundaries of the Market Place incorporate several passageways through to buildings at the rear. Historically, these would have housed small scale industries and workshops as well as smaller houses and cottages which serviced the town.
- 7.7 The northern boundary is more fragmented, with the built form being broken by access through to Church Street and Little Market Place.
- 7.8 The properties 3-13 Market Place form an island separating Market Place from Little Market Place consisting in the main of 2-3 storey stone properties dating from the eighteenth century with their frontages addressing Market Place.



3-13 Market Place



The Medieval Market Cross (Grade II listed) subdivides the Market Place. It is laid out for parking to the west and space for events (market stalls) to the east which is used as additional parking space when events are not taking place. Mature trees around the cross serve to further divide and soften this large hard landscaped space.

- 7.9 Little Market Place includes the Community Office and former Police Station and is dominated by the Town Hall - a grade II listed structure built in 1913 of coursed square stone with ashlar dressing. Although only two storeys this building has a commanding presence within this compact space.
- 7.10 The Square itself is disjointed, the northern and eastern sides, comprising the Community Office, Police Station and Town Hall, address the Square and are built off pavement level, whilst the southern side presents the rear of the properties of 3-13 Market Place and the bus shelter.



The Town Hall (Grade II listed) commanding Little Market Place



The southern side of Little Market Place is an untidy mix of the rears of properties, street furniture, shelters and hard landscaping.

- 7.11 An important pedestrian route up from the 'the Shooting Holme' emerges between 7&9 Little Market Place (northern side), although presently this is very understated. This route also gives access to the public toilets behind No.7 Little Market Place and descends steeply down to the cricket ground. This is a restricted path which would benefit from better signage and improvements to hard landscaping in particular the floorscape.



The Community Office, Little Market Place: a late eighteenth century building of coursed, dressed stone with a Welsh slate roof. (Grade II listed)

- 7.12 Millgate is a former packhorse route which leads to the lower levels of the floodplain, site of a former ford and the old mill. The western end of Millgate is marked by the school (former Grammar School) dating from the mid-eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century of coursed square stone with ashlar dressings and stone slate/machine tile roofs.
- 7.13 Ivydene marks the entrance to Millgate from Market Place - an imposing mid to late eighteenth century house. Ashlar stone, Welsh slate and graduated stone slate roof.
- 7.14 Millgate is constricted by the stone terrace (2-12 Millgate) on the southern side and the former gaol to the northern side. Typically all properties are built off the back of pavement which gives emphasis to those limited views through to the distant countryside.
- 7.15 Nutwith House marks the sharp descent of Millgate towards the flood plain and open countryside and stand apart by the nature of its tall stone boundary walls built up to the edge of the carriageway and its landscaped gardens surrounding this detached residence.



The school house originally used as a the grammar school was built by William Danby and was improved by Admiral Harcourt. This building dates from the mid-eighteenth century with nineteenth century additions (Grade II listed)

2. St Mary's Church

- 7.16 St Mary's Church and its environs forms a welcome break from the built up form of Market Place in general. Located in the south-east corner of Market Place and dating from the twelfth century with alterations and extensions from the fourteenth, sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Church is constructed of coursed squared sandstone and ashlar with a lead roof.
- 7.17 The Church's four stage tower dominates the skyline from all approach roads. However, this dominance is reduced immediately on entering the town because of its constricted and built up nature. The Church's visual impact returns when one enters Market Place, its spire being well framed by specimen trees both around the Churchyard entrance and at the Old Vicarage. The Churchyard to the south borders onto open countryside while the eastern boundary is in the main contained by the boundary walls of Glebe House, the former vicarage.



The entrance to St Mary's Church from the Market Place is framed by mature trees.

3. Swinton Terrace

- 7.18 The Swinton Estate has influenced the appearance of the whole town, but especially Swinton Terrace where Ann Danby, the second wife of William Danby (owner of Swinton and Lord of the Manor), funded the building of twelve almshouses, a school and schoolhouse in Swinton Road (Terrace). Limited development has taken place along Swinton Road despite it being an important access road to Swinton Park and beyond.



The southern extent of Swinton Road/Terrace with the higher status properties 11-19 in the distance. The almshouse is just visible on the right.

- 7.19 On entering Swinton Road from Park Street the residential properties to the southern side of the road are two storey stone properties built off the back of the pavement with slate roofs while the bays of Nos. 11-19 project to the ground floor.
- 7.20 The northern side of the road has a less formalised layout which is visually dominated by landmark buildings, specifically the Almshouses and school (now a private residence).



2-8 Swinton Terrace, the almshouses, although presently unlisted are without doubt 'landmark' buildings within Masham. Formalised front gardens and decorative railings demarking the boundaries are not common features in Masham.

- 7.21 The character of the northern side of Swinton Road is defined by the stone walls and railing demarking the small front gardens to the almshouses and schoolhouse, an uncommon feature within the historic core of Masham.



The western end of the Conservation Area is defined by new development around Swinburn Court. The general materials and details are sympathetic with Masham's vernacular and the open space in front is dictated by Swinney Beck which crosses in front of the properties (before eventually joining the River Burn).

4. Black Sheep Brewery - north end

- 7.22 The zone designated as 'Black Sheep Brewery (North End) includes: The Avenue including Avenue Bank, the Wensleydale Garage and the Renton Well junction.
- 7.23 This area, because of its location on the periphery of the developed town, is rather fragmented in nature. It is a mix of old and new development, the key features of which are the Black Sheep Brewery site, Bank Villa and the Renton Well junction.



The Black Sheep Brewery

- 7.24 The Conservation Area boundary bisects the brewery complex - with the modern phase of construction outside the Conservation Area.
- 7.25 The brewery site is a mix of nineteenth and twentieth century buildings predominantly two storey. The older buildings are of coursed stone with slate roofs. This range of industrial buildings has developed organically continuing to the present day with new ranges of industrial steel framed

buildings; there is no established building line and limited scope for expansion on the existing site. One of the landmark buildings among the group is the former Lightfoot Brewery maltings building which was later bought by Theakstons Brewery before being purchased by the Black Sheep Brewery in the 1990's. This maltings building dominates the high ground, being visible from the approach road into Masham from Masham bridge, and is made distinctive by the 'Black Sheep Brewery' sign painted onto the stonework.

- 7.26 'Bank Villa' is the only listed building within this zone of the town, an early nineteenth century two storey residence of coursed square stone with ashlar dressings and a graduated stone slate roof. This building dominates the junction of the A6108 and Silver Street, and is distinguished by a large area of garden surrounding the property.
- 7.27 The junction at Renton Well marks the point at which the road rises up to the higher ground where the historic core of the town is situated. The period "colonial style" bungalow (18 Silver Street) is distinctive situated above the well on the high ground. Development in this zone is disjointed as is style and materials (not uncommon of the periphery of many historic towns and villages).
- 7.28 Renton Well marks the road junction with the A6108 and Silver Street, built in 1887 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

- 7.29 The new development of housing to The Avenue is not typical of the majority of buildings in the town, set back from the road with small front gardens which disappear as you progress further into the heart of the town.



Towards the junction at Renton Well where the A6108 leaves the town towards Masham Bridge and the Shooting Holme. The new housing of The Avenue is visible in the background and the gardens to Bank Villa immediately on the junction.

5. Park Street (west to Conservation Area boundary)

- 7.30 Park Street follows very much the seventeenth and eighteenth century development pattern in the town of two storey, stone-built, short terraced properties built off the back of the pavement.
- 7.31 The street patterns and plot configurations suggests evidence of Medieval crofts and garths which is further reinforced looking at older maps of the town, aligned east to west from Park street.
- 7.32 There is a mixture of roof pitches along Park Street reflecting the age range of properties from the seventeenth century onwards.

- 7.33 The development pattern is broken in two locations: The Park Street Methodist Church - which is set back well behind the established building line; and Park Square - a long established small square now used for parking.



Properties 14-18 Park Street in the right hand foreground display a shallower pitch from the late-eighteenth century, while following building (No 24) clearly dates from the seventeenth century, both are of local stone with ashlar dressings and graduated stone slate roofs.

- 7.34 Maple Creek Flats and the Fire Station built around the late 1960's early 70's do not contribute greatly to the character of the Conservation area but whose impact mature planting and trees around them lessen to some extent.



Park Street Methodist Chapel c1890, unusual in that it is designed in a contemporary Classical style (Grade II listed). The dramatic statement it makes is enhanced by the fact that it is set well back from the road breaking the established building line.

6. Theakstons Brewery & Environs

- 7.35 The Theakstons brewery was purpose built in the mid-nineteenth century by the Theakstons family expanding their brewing business in the town.
- 7.36 The brewery development stands alone in terms of size, scale and detailing compared with its immediate surroundings. The buildings are larger in scale but blend in well through the choice of materials used (stone and slate). The various buildings on the site are linked by a central



Theakston's complex of buildings was purpose-built as a brewery and maltings and the unusual roof forms reflect functional uses within the buildings

courtyard, which at the time of construction must have coped well with the traffic generated on the site. Today the current workings of the site, modern traffic and residential development around the site must present greater problems.

- 7.37 Red Lane approaching the brewery has a more open patchwork of buildings, with the



The view from the brewery down Red Lane, where the mature trees and lack of footpaths to the carriageway gives this area a semi rural character.

detached houses of Sunnyside and High Garth set behind boundary walls.

- 7.38 The Conservation Area ends at Westholme Road, a modern semi-detached housing development.
- 7.39 Park House to the east of the brewery is a seventeenth century house extended and altered in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of coursed rubble stone with ashlar dressings and a stone slate roof. It is approached from Park Square through an ornate gated entrance.



The formal gardens to Park House are an uncommon feature in the town. The current house is sited within the grounds of the former Manor House.

7. Silver Street & Environs

- 7.40 The southern reaches of Silver Street on the western side follow the traditional pattern of the core of the town with properties built off the back of pavement with the exception of Nos. 19-29 which are set back behind small front gardens. There is a mix of size and scale of buildings reflecting the spread of ages of properties.
- 7.41 The eastern side of Silver Street breaks with this familiar pattern with the twentieth century housing having small front gardens. These two storey terraced properties are built into the hillside overlooking the 'Shooting Holme' and recreational ground.



- 7.42 This is a busy access route through the town where the carriageway and pavements are narrow considering the volume of traffic.



Silver Street from the Market Place

- 7.43 Organic development has taken place to the rear of Silver Street around College lane linked by Quaker Terrace. This area, over time, has housed a number of small-scale industries and workers cottages. Today housing predominates, however a number of workshop, storage buildings and retail premises can still be found. The buildings in this area are densely packed and built directly off the back of the carriageway with no formalised footpaths.

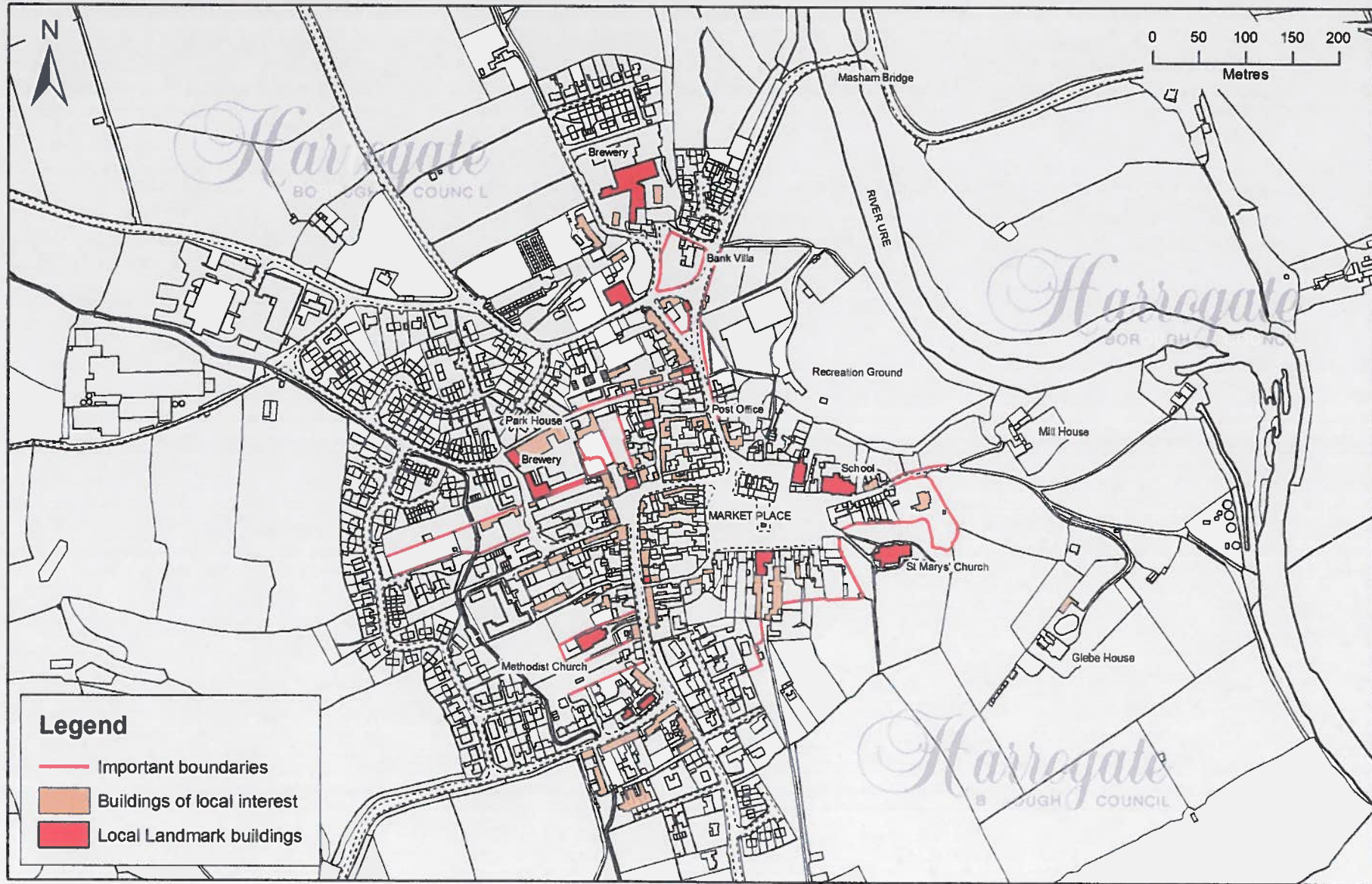


Quaker Terrace: a patchwork of development with housing and workshops

8. The Floodplain

- 7.44 The floodplain surrounding the course of the River Ure encompasses almost 50% of what is the Conservation Area of Masham. There is very little built development within this zone other than the sporting facilities on the 'Shooting Holme', Mill House, the Old Mill, Glebe cottage and house and the sewage treatment works. As it passes through this zone the River Ure is wide and relatively slow flowing, lined on both banks in its northern section by mature native trees. This open meadowland was dealt with in more detail earlier.
- 7.45 The recreational facilities around the 'Shooting Holme' provide welcome facilities for the residents and visitors to the town, including bowls, children's play area, cricket and tennis as well as open space for bonfires and overflow parking for the town.

Map 5: Analysis & concepts



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Appendix A

1. Management strategy

The purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy is to provide a clear and structured approach to development and alterations which impact on the Masham Conservation Area. The special qualities, which “it is desirable to preserve or enhance”, have been identified in the Appraisal.

Although Masham is an attractive town, it does not follow that all buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area necessarily contribute to that attractiveness. Ultimately the aim is to (a) explore whether there are any buildings or areas which are at odds with or spoil the character of the Conservation Area and (b) to consider how the special character or distinctiveness, as defined in earlier sections of this document, might be best preserved or enhanced.

Clearly some of the ideas or suggestions will relate to buildings or land in private ownership. It is important to note that individual owners and/or the local community will not be under any obligation to make the changes or improvements suggested. However, they may be encouraged to think about suggestions made, and once the Appraisal has been adopted, the findings and recommendations will be considered by the Borough Council in response to any applications for planning permission, listed building consent, conservation area consent or requests for grant aid.

2. Monitoring & review

The Borough Council is required to review its conservation areas on a regular basis. This may involve the designation of new conservation areas, the de-designation of areas that have lost their special character, or the extension of existing conservation areas. The special character of Masham has been re-evaluated as part of the process of preparing the character appraisal and this contributes to the overall review.

Part of the review process involves the maintenance of a comprehensive and up to date photographic record to establish a visual survey of buildings of local interest in the Conservation Area. This record was compiled with involvement of the community at the consultation workshop.

3. Maintaining Quality

To maintain the recognisable quality of the Masham Conservation Area and to ensure the highest quality of design, the Council will:

- from time to time review the character appraisal and management strategy, which will act as a basis for development control decisions and the preparation of design briefs;
- require all applications to include appropriate written information and legible, accurate and up to date, fully annotated scale drawings;
- keep under review a list of buildings of local interest, that positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- where appropriate, prepare supplementary planning documents including design guidance and development briefs;
- expect the historic elements which are essential part of the special architectural character of the Conservation Area to be preserved, repaired and reinstated where appropriate.

4. Conservation Area Boundary Review

As part of the process of producing the Appraisal, the existing conservation area boundary was reviewed. The outcome of the public consultation event identified adjoining areas as being of positive interest in ways which directly relate to the special character of the existing Conservation Area. The future inclusion of these areas was determined on the basis of whether they have “special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Similarly, areas which were within the Conservation Area boundary but considered to be of insufficient architectural or historic interest will be removed from the Conservation Area.

Land and buildings around King's Farm, a traditional farmhouse was added to the Conservation Area - its inclusion will protect vistas of St Mary's Church on approaching the town from the adjacent footpath.

Further proposals were made for the inclusion of the whole of Rodney Terrace; however, the buildings outside the Conservation Area boundaries

are with the exception of the Vicarage relatively modern and considered not to be of sufficient architectural or historic interest to be included. The Vicarage although set within an attractive large garden is also considered at this stage to be of insufficient merit to be included.



Black Sheep brewery – modern buildings outside the Conservation Area.

At the consultation workshop it was suggested that the whole of the Black Sheep Brewery site be included. But, it is considered that those brewery buildings currently outside the Conservation Area, being mainly steel-framed and relatively modern, are not of sufficient interest.

Exclusion of the Wensleydale Garage site and its environs (right) was suggested. This industrial scale building, with its overpowering forecourt canopy, does little to enhance the Conservation Area. However, to retain this area within the Conservation Area will give a greater degree of control over any future development or redevelopment of the site. Consequently, the suggestion was not supported and the Conservation Area remains unchanged.



It was also suggested that Maple Creek flats and the Fire Station off Red Lane be removed from the Conservation Area as these 1970s buildings are considered to contribute little in architectural or historic interest. However, it was felt that Oak Beck provided a natural boundary. Therefore, this suggestion was not supported and the boundary remains unchanged at this point.

5. The management of change

The special character and appearance of Masham Conservation Area is vulnerable to erosion and significant harm through often well-intentioned but misguided alterations and inappropriate change.

Whilst there is scope for enhancement, there are no sites within Masham Conservation Area that could be considered to have a wholly negative impact on its character.

At the consultation workshop, the impact of heavy goods vehicles on the town was highlighted as a problem. The town has several high volume heavy goods traffic generators and as a result of the confined nature of the town their impact is considerable. This situation should be carefully monitored and given due regard when considering any future development. Bypassing the town was highlighted during the town workshop but it is unlikely that this will be considered within the near future.

There are no officially designated 'Buildings at Risk' within Masham Conservation Area and very few buildings are redundant or considered to be in a bad state of repair.



Chapman Lane - One of the few vacant sites within the Masham Conservation Area, sold recently for redevelopment.



Park Street - The former Catholic Church is currently being marketed for redevelopment and although just outside the Conservation Area has the potential to have considerable impact when developed.

6. Opportunities for enhancement

Masham is an attractive town, and most of the buildings are in good condition. The town has maintained its appeal as a tourist destination, primary and secondary home location and employer. This has led to pressures on what is a limited building stock within Masham and must be carefully monitored.

There are few redundant buildings within the Conservation Area, and the majority of the building stock within the town is well maintained.

Opportunities exist for the enhancement of the following areas:

1. Car parking & pedestrian routes into the town centre

As a result of the town's popularity as a tourist destination, partly as a result of the extensive calendar of events, there is considerable pressure on the infrastructure of the town.

Masham would benefit from a comprehensive study relating to car parking provision and traffic/pedestrian movement. However, in the absence of this the following areas would benefit from attention:

Car Park to 'Shooting Holme': This important green space acts as the overflow car park and major car park when events or markets take over the Market Place. The single track access road to and from the 'Shooting Holme' is a problem during peak usage. Consideration should be given to improving this situation.



Access onto the 'Shooting Holme'

Pedestrian routes from the 'Shooting Holme' into the town are not obvious because of the topography and are difficult, if not impossible, for the disabled and infirm to use.

A comprehensive study should focus on sympathetic signage, lighting and floorscape in order to address these issues.

There is evidence of erosion of the grassed areas by vehicles.

Small car park to 'Shooting Holme' - cricket field:

Access up from cricket pavilion/'Shooting Holme'. Every effort has been made with ramps and steps, however they are not ideal. The ramp is long, steep and has no adequate resting place. Narrow footpaths hinder access into town. Alternative accesses to and from the 'Shooting Holme' would benefit from signage.



Access to Silver Street from the cricket pavilion and the 'Shooting Holme'

2. The Market Place

The Market Place works well as the town car park and as a focal point for events. But, when not fully utilised, the large expanse of tarmac and eroded cobble gulleys to the perimeter are detrimental to the overall aesthetics of the area. Future enhancement of the Market Place should be considered to address these issues.

In addition to these specific highlighted areas for enhancement there are a number of general enhancements, which should be considered as follows:

- Reinstall windows to their former pattern and detail where use of standardised factory made joinery and PVCu windows has undermined the character of historic areas;
- Greater effort should be made to place overhead cables underground;
- Replace items of street furniture and lighting with ones of more appropriate design;
- Re-lay cobbles outside Aura Antiques, on the south side of Little Market Place.



The Market Place, although an efficient car park, presents a large expanse of tarmac which would benefit from possible demarcation with cobble setts.



The distinctive cobble gully to the perimeter of the Market Place is being progressively eroded and would benefit from protection and enhancement. A level stone kerb to either side of the gully would provide a definitive 'stop edge' for the tarmac.



There is an ad hoc mixture of signage, street furniture and lighting throughout the town which would benefit from rationalisation.

Existing Buildings

The survey of the existing buildings within Masham clearly identified that a distinctive character exists, although to some extent this has been eroded by subsequent alterations, which have not always recognised that distinctiveness. Over the past 30 years, public awareness and expectation that the planning system would protect the 'familiar and cherished scene' has increased substantially. Additionally, there now exists a greater understanding of the impact which incremental change can have upon the distinctive character of historic areas. Options to safeguard and enhance the architectural character of Masham could include some or all of the following:

- The Borough Council will consider the need for additional design guidance, which is more specific to Masham, for future alterations to direct change towards materials and design detailing which compliments the defined local architectural character. Such design guidance would be in the form of non-statutory planning guidance. If adopted, this guidance would act as a yardstick against which proposals could be assessed and could assist both existing and future residents in understanding what is desirable;
- Formal control over future alterations of buildings could be introduced through what is known as an Article 4 Direction, which removes permitted development rights. These are the rights granted by Statute to alter dwellings without the need for planning permission within strict limitations. Article 4 Directions can be designed to be specific to particular types of development, relating, for example, only to roof covering or front elevations. It cannot place an embargo on change, but rather brings certain types of development within the scope of planning control, so the impact of any proposed change can be properly assessed. Article 4 Directions, which are drawn up by the local planning authority, namely the Borough Council, are the only means of applying equal control to all buildings within the Conservation Area. Without such a Direction, alterations will only be subject to control where planning permission or listed building consent is required. Equally, any non-statutory planning guidance will only be capable of being applied in those cases where applications are

necessary. Article 4 Directions could be introduced throughout the conservation area or just to individual buildings whose special interest is considered to be at risk from incremental change;

- Promotion of schemes that seek to restore the architectural character of altered buildings. Quite a few buildings have been altered, which has changed their architectural form in a way which conflicts with the distinctive character of Masham. Some to such an extent that the original form and character is no longer recognisable. The introduction of standardised twentieth century door patterns and PVCu windows and porches is well established, but much original fabric remains. Use of non-traditional finishes such as staining for joinery is detrimental to the character and appearance of the town and controls or guidance to encourage painted timber and traditional details and materials should be introduced. Non-sympathetic alterations should be resisted;
- From time to time the Borough Council operates grant schemes to help maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Quality Erosion & Loss of Architectural Detail

The character and appearance of buildings in the Conservation Area is harmed by the removal or loss of original architectural features and the use of inappropriate materials. For example, the loss of original joinery, sash windows and front doors can have considerable negative impact on the appearance of an historic building and the area. Insensitive re-pointing, painting or inappropriate render will harm the long-term durability of brick and stone work.

In all cases, the Borough Council will expect original historic features and detailing to be retained, preserved and refurbished in the appropriate manner, and only replaced where it can be demonstrated that it is beyond repair.

Roof Alterations & Extensions

The conservation area contains many historic rooflines, which it is important to preserve. Fundamental changes to the roofline, insensitive alterations,

poor materials, intrusive dormers, or inappropriate roof windows can all harm the character of the historic roofscape and will not be acceptable.

Telecommunications Equipment, Satellite & Cable Dishes

External telecommunications apparatus including cable runs can harm the appearance of historic buildings. The Borough Council can provide guidance on the installation of telecommunication equipment including satellite dishes.

Overhead Wires are intrusive throughout the Conservation Area, and undergrounding of cables would considerably enhance the character of the town. This should be a long term aim in the interests of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Important Trees

The existing mature trees, together with stone walls, railings and hedgerows throughout the Conservation Area, add to its charm and character. The loss, for example, of the native trees in the Market Place would significantly erode the character. In accordance with the Council's Landscape Design Guide, the existing pattern of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, trees and shrubs in and around the town should be preserved and repaired through managed planting and maintenance. In considering both of these areas, guidance should be geared towards tree/shrub planting and management methods that improve wildlife habitats.

Trees which make a particular contribution to the Conservation Area should be protected by Tree Preservation Orders (trees in conservation areas have a degree of protection).

Outdoor Advertisements & Street Furniture

The design and appearance of street furniture and advertisements in the town adds to street clutter and needs improvement in order to visually enhance the character and appearance of the area.

New Development

A key consideration is the impact that future development proposals (whether in the form of new buildings or through the extension of existing buildings) might have on the distinctive form and character of the Conservation Area.

New buildings will only be permitted where they respect, rather than compete with the historic skyline, respect landform and landscape pattern and are accompanied by a comprehensive landscape scheme that is integral to the design. New development must be of a suitable quality of design and execution and should relate to its context and respect the established values identified in the Appraisal. The Council will encourage new development that complements the establish grain or settlement pattern, whilst representing the time in which it is built and the culture it accommodates. New development should respect and not impact on the exiting spaces between buildings.

A further key consideration for new development is the appropriateness of the overall mass or volume of the building and its scale. A new building should be in harmony with, or complementary to, its neighbours. It is also important that the materials generally match or complement those that are historically dominant in the area. Within these criteria, new development should aim to achieve creative design solutions.

Employment & Commercial Activity

It is important to retain elements of employment use in the town, whilst managing their detrimental impact on the special character of the town.

Neutral Buildings & Spaces

Neutral elements or buildings may have no special historic or architectural quality in their own right, but nonetheless provide a setting for listed buildings and unlisted building of special character or interest. This backcloth is important and needs careful management as a setting for the special elements.



Shop frontages require careful consideration, Corporate signage and colours can be detrimental to the Conservation Area.



Inappropriate detailing and materials can have a significant effect on the special character of a place.

Checklist

In managing future change in the Conservation Area, the following will be important:

- Development should not impinge on the form and character of Masham and its setting.
- Buildings should be constructed of materials which match or complement local traditional materials. Masham currently has a restricted palette of materials which should be promoted.
- Design should reflect the distinctive local architectural style both in terms of overall form and detailed design as appropriate to the context.
- In general new buildings should follow the established building line.
- Integrate tourism and recreation facilities with landscape character.
- Protect the character and approaches to Masham by preventing inappropriate development.
- Preserve settlement patterns through appropriate development.
- Enhance Park Square as a space rather than a bend in the road.
- New development should not adversely impact on the historic skyline, respecting important features such as the church spire.
- The repair and reuse of older buildings should be encouraged in the first instance rather than redevelopment.
- Positive management of the ageing stock of mature trees.
- Retain important gaps between buildings to ensure glimpses of trees and views are maintained.
- Minimise clutter of signage and street furniture.
- Protect and enhance riverside habitats and preserve the varied texture of the landscape.
- Repair and manage existing hedgerow trees, prioritising the areas contributing to the setting of Masham.

Appendix B

Public Consultation

The Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the requirements for public consultation. To meet these requirements, and to inform a review of the Conservation Area, a public consultation event was held on Saturday 17 July 2007. This consultation took the form of a public meeting and included a walkabout and a workshop session. Prior to the event residents were notified via a leaflet. In addition, a press release appeared in the local newspaper informing residents and consultees that a review of the Conservation Area was taking place and that a workshop had been arranged. This information also appeared in the 'Latest News' section of the Council's planning website.

The format of the workshop included a short presentation on why the Conservation Area is being reviewed, the purpose of the Appraisal and management plans and a brief resumé on the changes that have happened since the original designation.

The main activity was a walkabout, which involved dividing into groups walking around part of the Conservation Area. The groups were encouraged to make notes and take photographs to identify what makes Masham special to them. On return to the Town hall, the workshop session enabled the groups to share the information gathered on the walkabout by annotating large maps of the village with text, symbols and photographs. The maps then facilitated a feedback session, mainly focusing on identifying potential areas within the Conservation Area in need of enhancement.

The outcome of the consultation event and the information gathered directly contributed to producing this Appraisal. Key issues raised at the event included:

- the contribution of the large cobbled Market Place and the narrow lanes and ginnels to the character of the town centre;
- the importance of green space near the river in providing a setting for the town;
- The impact of inappropriate minor alterations to traditional buildings and the loss of architectural details;
- The importance of hand painted historic signage which should be retained; and
- Problems of heavy goods vehicles in the town centre.

Every effort has been made to take into account and give due consideration to the views of the local residents and to represent those views in this Appraisal document.

Local involvement is an essential aspect of the consultation process and local residents were encouraged to comment on the draft documents during the consultation period from 26 April to 6 June 2008. Further, minimal amendments to the text were made following this consultation, and the Conservation Area Assessment adopted by the Council and published on its website.

