



Aberford is a place of special architectural and historic interest.

This appraisal and management plan sets out the features that contribute to its distinctiveness and identifies opportunities for its protection and enhancement.

Aberford

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Approved as a material consideration in the determination of planning decisions—30 May 2011.

Summary of Special Interest

Aberford is a historic settlement with evidence of occupation from the Neolithic period to the present day. Whilst the village itself is steeped in history, its modern day appearance is reliant on a few very significant characteristics;

- Located on the "Great North Road" Aberford owes its characteristic linear appearance to its development as a key location on this historically important north-south route.
- Periods of prosperity coupled with being located in the middle of the estates of Parlington, Ledston and Lotherton resulted in high status developments usually reserved for towns and country parks.
- Despite its historic prosperity Aberford remained a rural community, resulting in former estate workers cottages and historic farm complexes being located adjacent to high status buildings. This variation in architectural character exemplifies the historic development of Aberford.

Whilst these factors are key elements in the special character and appearance of Aberford other factors such as green space, mature trees and ecclesiastical buildings all play a part which establishes Aberford as a village of very

special architectural and historic interest, the character and appearance of which deserves the protection which conservation area status brings.

Summary of Issues

Aberford Conservation Area is of both special architectural and historic interest which is worthy of conservation area status. The area has lost a few key elements of its past and has been affected by developments which may not be in keeping with historic character. There is therefore a need for guidance to preserve and enhance the area. The protection of the special character of the conservation area depends on positive conservation management provided in this document. The following key issues have been identified;

- Risk of inappropriate infill development.
- Inappropriate materials used on new build properties within the conservation area, and affecting its setting.
- Poor choice of materials during the replacement of historic features.
- Inappropriate development affecting important views both towards, away from and within the conservation area.



Aerial view of the Aberford Conservation Area.



The varying buildings and street-scapes of Aberford are important characteristics of the conservation area



The Great North Road played an integral part in the development of Aberford, and is very important for the character and appearance of the village today

Extent of the conservation area

This conservation area study for Aberford closely follows the framework for an appraisal in the English Heritage document 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' published in 2006.

The survey work was carried out between June and November 2010.

Current guidance states that conservation area boundaries must be clearly based on analysis of the architectural and historic character of the area. For this reason any boundary must reflect the character defined in this appraisal. It would not be acceptable to include part of an area of a specific character and not another. Inclusion of a character area within the conservation area must depend on an analysis of its historic importance and significance.

Conservation areas are not intended to prevent development. They ensure that development is monitored and controlled to ensure that proposals within or adjacent to the conservation area are sympathetic to the character and appearance of their surroundings. They also ensure that development does not cause the destruction of key features that are essential to fully appreciate its special character and historical context.

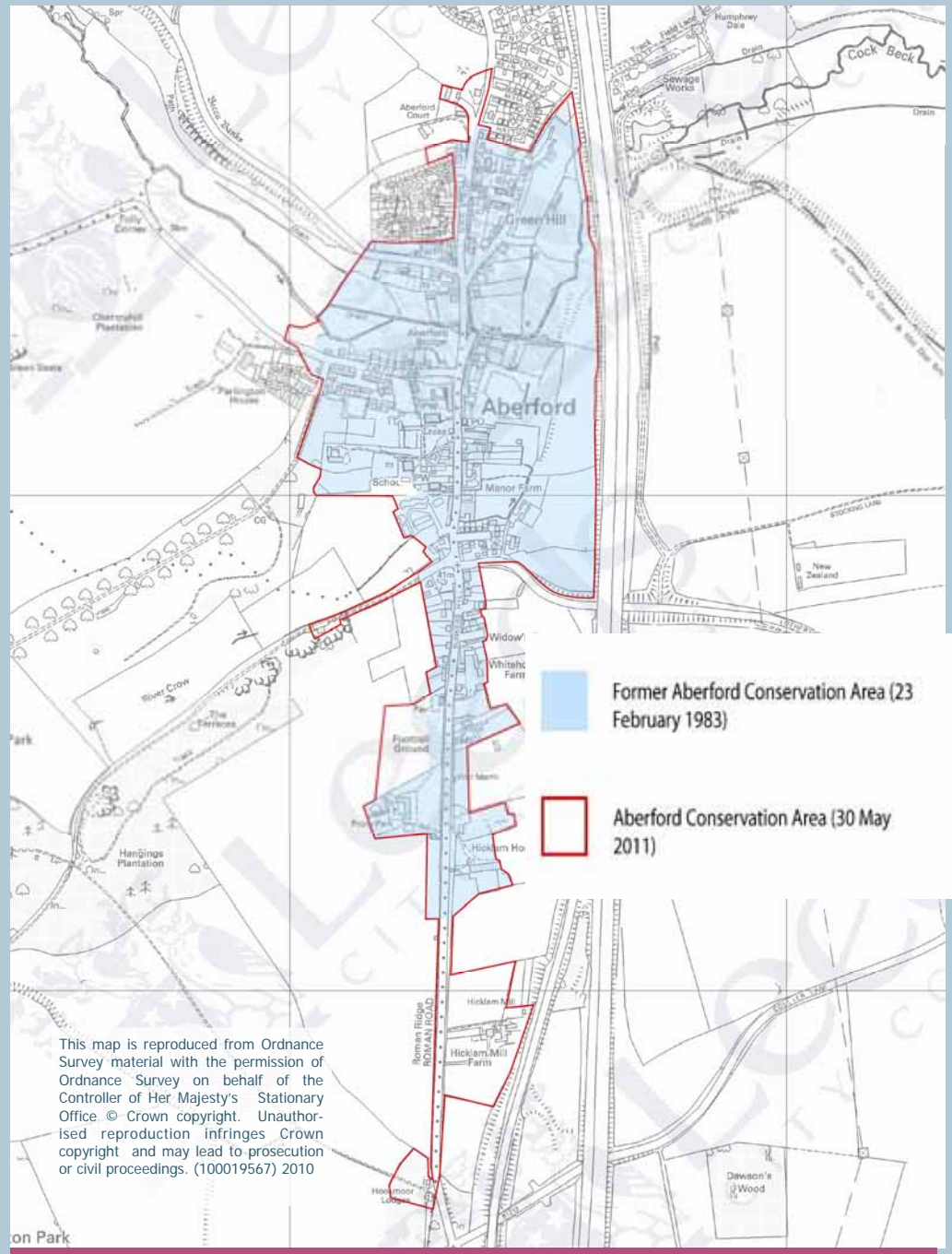
The conservation area was originally designated on 5th November 1969, and was subsequently amended on 23rd February 1983. The review which resulted in the production of the current boundary and associated conservation area appraisal and management plan was approved on 30th May 2011.



The Royal Oak is a historic building which is included within the Aberford Conservation Area.



The Hookmoor Lodges are a focal point at the southern access into the conservation area



Map showing the Aberford Conservation Area

Assessing the Special Interest

Location and Setting

Aberford is a historic village located just to the west of the A1. It is approximately 15.5 kilometres (9.75 miles) to the east-north-east of Leeds city centre and is accessed most readily via minor roads from the east (Cattle Lane) and the west (Lotherton Lane) and the A1(M) from the north and south. The village sits within the Aberford and District Parish boundary.

The surrounding landscape is formed of gently rolling, predominantly arable farmland, with large fields bordered by low gapped hedges with occasional hedgerow trees. The most significant feature impacting on the village is the A1(M) motorway.

General character and plan form

The village sits within the valley of the Cock Beck. Being based around the Great North Road (which was eventually replaced by the A1), Aberford is on the whole a linear development, with a small nucleated area around the village green. Evidence of farm complexes is still present within the village, though many are now converted to residential and/or subsumed by domestic developments.

The village retains the small town character in its central areas due to the high quality of the historic architecture

and the views towards the open rural setting being restricted.

At present the village is mostly residential with very few remaining businesses and amenities. The area is dominated by a heavy vehicular presence at all times.

Geology, topography and landscape setting

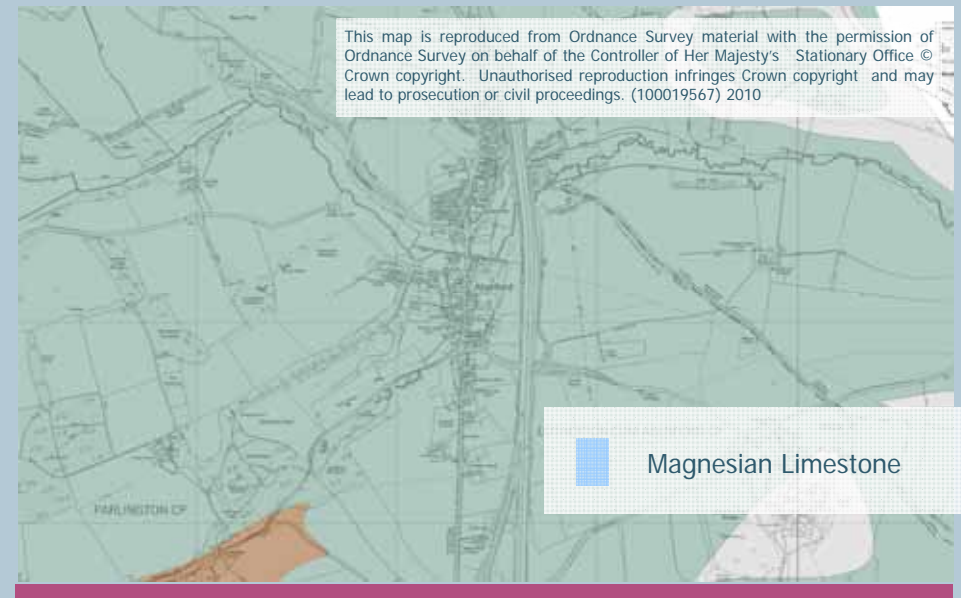
The conservation area is situated entirely on magnesian limestone. The limestone is significant to the development of the area as it provided a source of readily available materials for construction of local housing. It is this locally produced stone that helps to establish its sense of identity.

The flat limestone landscape has an impact on the setting of Aberford. The general area is flat and ideal for arable farming. The highest point in conservation area is approximately only 50 metres above sea level. The village itself is located in the shallow Cock Beck valley at its confluence with the River Crow. It has shallow rises to the north and south, but the impact of the surrounding area is minimal.

There is variation in the surrounding landscape including; wooded areas and open agricultural land. The village retains a distinctly separate identity from its surroundings due to its low ground setting, maintaining the feel of historic settlement.



Aberford in its wider context



The solid geology of the Aberford Conservation Area.

Origins and Evolution

The Prehistoric Area

Aberford village is set within an extensive landscape of Iron Age & Romano-British field systems (*circa* 400 BC – 600 AD); this is evidenced as cropmarks visible on aerial photographs (particularly to the west of the village) and these have been interpreted as forming a large complex of rectilinear and subcircular enclosures, ditched field systems and trackways. Other evidence of prehistoric activity includes three finds of worked flints - one dated as Mesolithic (10,000 BC – 4,000 BC), and the others possibly Neolithic or early Bronze Age (4,000 BC – 700 BC); the flints were found individually during fieldwalking in the 1970s, approximately 600m to the north east of the conservation area.

Roman Aberford

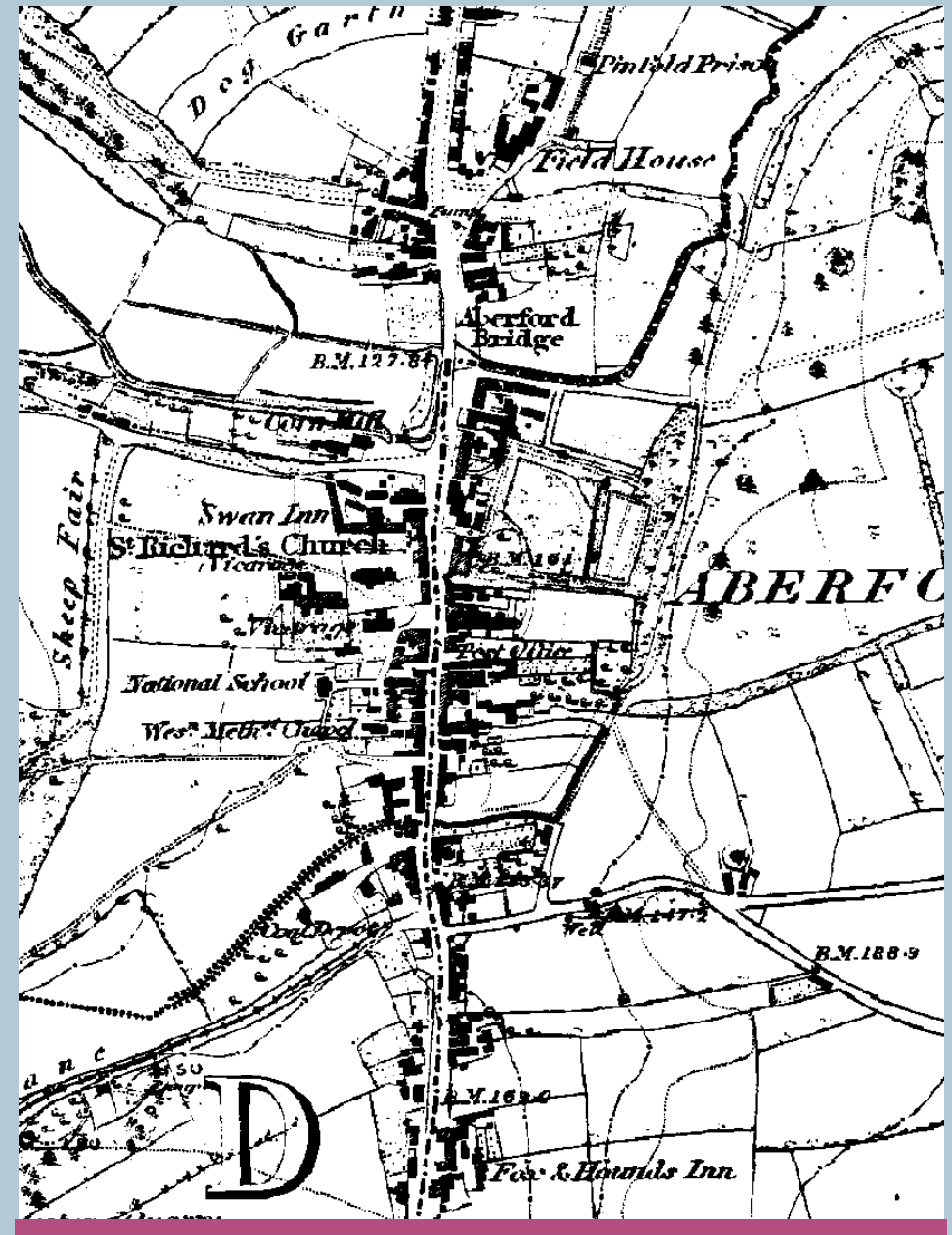
Aberford Dykes (or Becca Banks) are a series of long earthwork structures running east-west just to the north of the village centre. It is not known for certain when they were constructed, however, excavations of a section of the South Dyke (near the southern bank of the Cock Beck) in both 1996-7 and 2007, have indicated that this monument may have been first constructed in the later Iron Age or early Roman period (perhaps in the 1st century AD) as either a territorial or defensive boundary. Whilst the South Dyke “faces” south, other linear

earthworks that are collectively known as the Aberford Dykes face north and although these are undated it has been suggested that these may be defensive boundaries for the post-Roman kingdom of Elmet. The Aberford Dykes are protected as scheduled ancient monuments.

The current Aberford village is a linear ‘ribbon’ settlement, built upon either side of the Main Street (now bypassed by the modern A1(M) to the east). The route through Aberford has been identified as that of the old Roman Road (Ermyne Street, and later known as the “Great North Road”), which is known to connect the Roman settlements of Castleford and Wetherby. The road runs north and provides a major junction with the main road running east to the legionary fortress and provincial capital at York joining this road just to the north of Aberford. Other evidence of Roman activity includes the finds of two copper alloy brooches, dating from around the 2nd Century AD, found to the south of the conservation area. Given Aberford’s location on the road network at a river crossing, there may be a currently unlocated Roman settlement within the conservation area, though it is believed that the remains of the Roman fort is buried below Aberford House.

Saxon and Medieval Aberford

The name Aberford means “Eadburg’s ford” (Eadburg being an Old English female name). Although Aberford is not explicitly mentioned in the Domesday



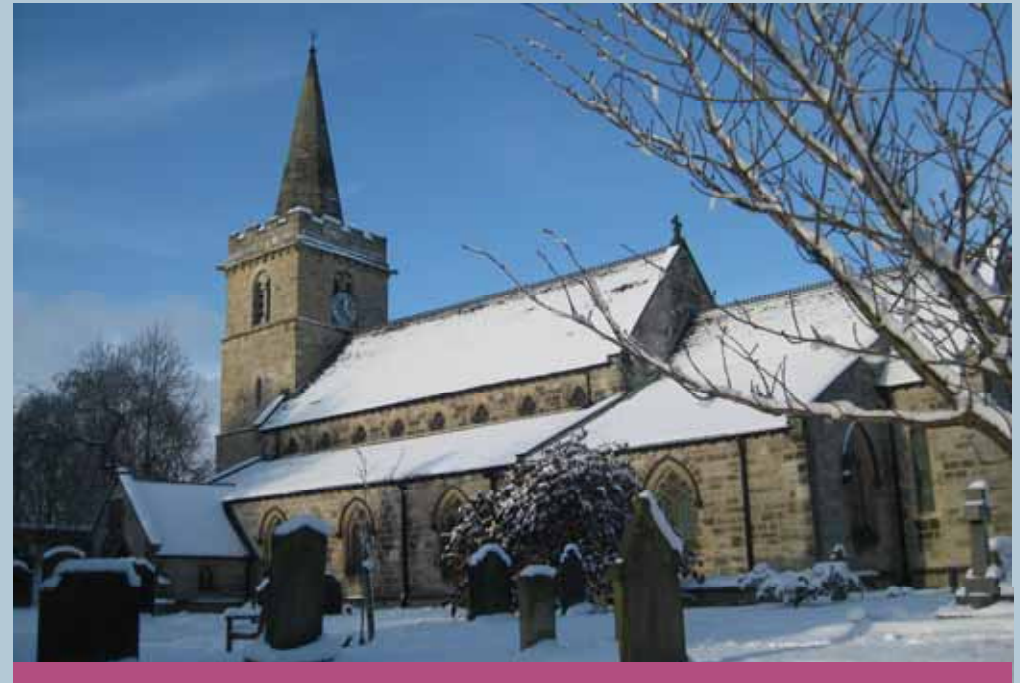
The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1851 highlights how concentrated the settlement in Aberford was along the Great North Road. Today Aberford retains a very similar character.

Survey of 1086, there are references to both 'Cufforth' and 'Parlington', which are both located in close proximity to Aberford. The 11th-century vill of Cufforth is thought to have been located some 1.5km north-west of the conservation area in the vicinity of Becca Hall, and some historians have speculated that the village of Aberford has its origins in a migration of population from Cufforth towards the more sheltered location of the ford and Roman road. Interestingly, despite the first documentary reference to 'Ædburford' (Aberford) not appearing until the Pipe Rolls of 1176, the discovery of Anglo-Saxon stonework found at the church (dedicated to St. Ricarius – a very unusual dedication) does indicate a possible pre-conquest church (and settlement) within the conservation area. Fragments of three Anglo-Saxon crosses were recovered when the church was rebuilt in 1861; they were drawn and recorded by Collingwood in 1915, and despite their damaged and fragmented state were interpreted as dating from the late 9th- and 10th centuries. The fabric of the church dates from the 12th century, and was constructed of local magnesium limestone; although the only surviving fragments of this church today are the lower part of the tower, and a small reset window in the north chancel wall. The church was substantially re-built in 1861.

Traces of the medieval period can be found in the landscape in and around Aberford. Areas of medieval and post-medieval ridge and furrow can be seen

as cropmarks and earthworks on aerial photographs, and the tithe map of 1847 indicates possible medieval land division by a number of fieldnames incorporating either 'Croft' or 'Toft' in the vicinity of Green Hill.

Documentary sources detail the existence of two water-powered corn mills located on the Cock Beck in the mid 14th-century. One may have been on the site of the 18th century corn mill that latterly became the Bridge Garage (on Cattle Lane) before being converted to residential use in 2004. Earthworks in the field immediately to the north and east of this building are thought to be water control features related to the mill. Jeffery's map of 1775 also depicts a windmill just south of the Cock Beck and c.750m to the west of the conservation area, whilst Thorpe's map of 1822 depicts two more windmill sites of possible late 18th-century date to the east and south-east of the conservation area; Aberford North Mill was at cSE 436 369 (finally demolished in the 1980s) and Hicklam Mill at cSE 435 360 (now converted into a dwelling). There are a number of limestone quarries recorded in the landscape all around the village, as well as a group of fields named 'Limekiln Flatt' or 'Little Limestone Flatt' on the 1847 tithe map, which are located just north of the conservation area. These field names indicate a possible site for post-medieval lime kilns, which would have been used for the construction of many of the buildings within and around Aberford village.



The Medieval remains at St Ricarius' Church provides evidence for a potentially significant settlement at Aberford, though it may not have been established until the 12th century.

Post-Medieval Aberford

By the 17th century Aberford was established as a centre for pin manufacturing, producing domestic and hackle pins for wool combing and dressing flax. This successful attempt at industry helped the expansion of Aberford, and by the end of the 18th century it is clear from historical mapping (Jeffery's 1775 map) the village had developed into essentially its present form, but with Parlington Lane being the likely main access to the village from Leeds. As such, many of standing buildings within the village centre date from either the 18th and



The former water-powered corn mill may have its origins in the 14th century.

19th centuries. By the end of the 18th century Aberford was thriving as a

coaching stop as the old Roman road through the village had been developed as part of the Ferrybridge and Boroughbridge Turnpike road. Evidence for this period includes the remains of one of the toll houses at northern end of the village as well as the Grade II listed milestones that line the length of the main road. The Swan Hotel (located on the west side of Main Street) is the most impressive of the remaining 18th-century coaching inns, and features a large central archway which allows access to the inn's yard and stabling (which is still in existence). Aberford was very significant in the movement of any goods moving from north to south throughout the region. The wide grass verges to the south of the village are remnants of droving lanes that were used to move livestock through the area from the north to the markets in the south.

Though Aberford was thriving, with many imposing Georgian townhouses being constructed, the village remained a fundamentally rural settlement. This relationship is still apparent today, with grand polite architecture such as Aberford House on Main Street located amongst coaching inns, historic farm complexes and workers cottages.

19th Century Aberford

Architecturally, the Gascoigne family of Lotherton Hall and Parlington Hall, (now demolished but formerly located approximately 1400m south-west of the conservation area) have had a vast impact on the village of Aberford.

Within the conservation area is the former estate lodges and the Hookmoor Lodges, built in c.1800 and which are thought to have been designed by the architect John Carr of York. The family also funded the village's library and reading room in 1843 and built Aberford's most imposing building, the Grade II* listed, Gothic-inspired, almshouses at Priory Park between 1843-5. The Gascoigne's estate also included a number of limestone quarries and three colliery sites in the local area, and in 1835 the family built the Aberford railway, which was initially used to transport coal from their collieries at Garforth to the coal depot located at the end of Parlington Lane, Aberford. The railway line later developed as a busy Victorian passenger service, and closed in 1924. The former colliery railway, known locally as "The Fly Line" is now a popular footpath and is important for views along the River Crow, much of which was covered by a stone culvert in the past.

Aberford continued to develop throughout the 19th century, but not with the pace of previous centuries. Its popularity and importance was retained whilst it was still located on the main road north.

20th century commercial decline and domestic developments

Aberford's decline as a self-contained village was a gradual process that occurred throughout the 20th century, typical of many other villages.



The Gascoigne Almshouses (now Priory Park) highlight the enormous impact that the surrounding country estates had on the development of Aberford



Parlington Lane Cottage is an imposing Georgian building constructed along Parlington Lane.

Construction of the A1 bypass in 1962 around Aberford had the greatest impact by removing the through traffic that frequented the village regularly. Today Aberford contains very few of the amenities it once had, though the residential population has increased due to the new housing developments which have taken place, particularly in the



The Swan Hotel is the most impressive of Aberford's remaining coaching inns, and indicates the importance the village had in the movement of goods in the region.



Hicklam House is an example of the high status architecture that was constructed in Aberford in the 18th century on the back of economic prosperity.

later 20th century. The character of the village is still retained through the farmhouses, wide road and historic architecture which were so significant to the development of this very important village.

Character Analysis

Spatial Analysis

Settlement form

Due to its location on the former "Great North Road" Aberford developed as a linear settlement. There is a small nucleated area at the junction of Field Lane and Main Street, but the area is principally linear. Despite 20th century suburban developments in the village Aberford retains its historic settlement form and character.

Character of Spaces

The spatial character of the conservation area is defined by the long and open Main Street/Bunker's Hill. Bunkers Hill is a wide open road with wide verges that presents a distinctly rural character at the southern extremity of the village and help create a gateway into the village. This character is partially replicated at the northern end of the village, but recent suburban developments in this area lessen the impact somewhat. The central core of the village maintains the width of the Great North Road, but the increased density of architecture, particularly historic buildings, provides a more enclosed feel. Main Street is defined by strong build lines, whether they be front boundary walls, or back-of-pavement properties. These build lines help define an area which could be classed as the "village centre". The areas around Bunkers Hill and the Main



The junction at Main Street and Field Lane is a hub of activity enhanced by the green area, and historic architecture located in the vicinity

Street/Field Lane junction have a distinct sense of place (see map on p9) that makes them focal points in the village, standing at either end of what could be classed as the historic core.

Key views

Due to the village being located on the low ground of the Cock Beck Valley the conservation area views are generally restricted to north and south along Main Street/Bunkers Hill, and are identified on the map overleaf.

The main road through Aberford is so wide that the village has very few focal points due to lack of enclosure. Aberford Bridge, the buildings around the village green, and the former water mill do provide this function and are useful points of orientation. Many of the buildings are of great architectural and



The width of the road in relation to buildings has a significant impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. As the village is located in a dip the significant views within the conservation area are restricted to along the dominant road.

historic significance and provide key landmarks throughout the village.

Activity and layout

There is a strong mixture of vehicular and pedestrian activity throughout the conservation area. The conservation area provides through access for many motorists, and the many residential properties ensure significant pedestrian activity. The focus of the pedestrian activity runs from the junction of Field

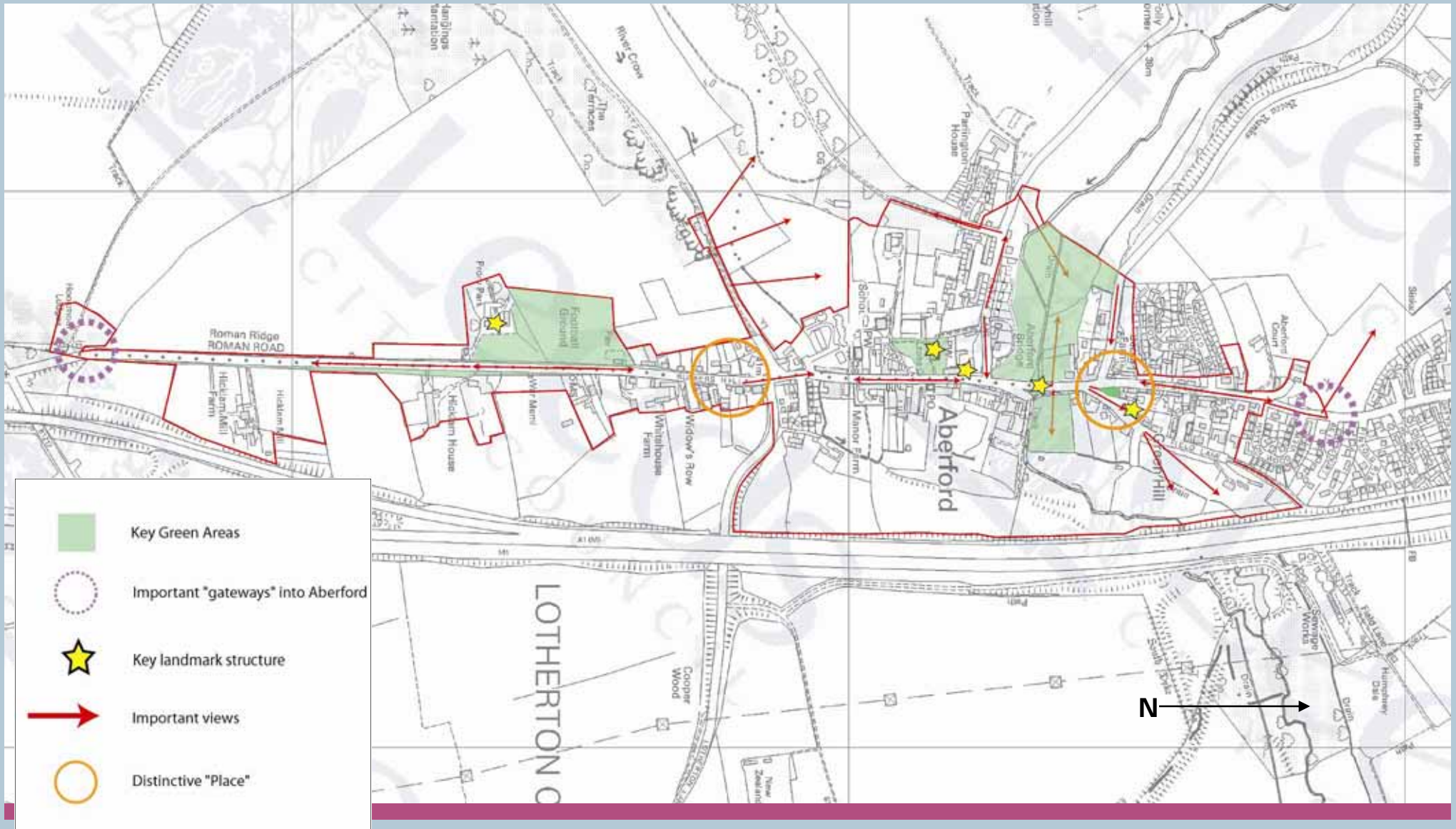
Lane and Main Street south to the junction of Bunkers Hill and Lotherton Lane. This is due to the public services and commercial premises located there.

Due to the gradual development of the area the village has a piecemeal appearance which helps establish and identify Aberford as a historic location.

Character Analysis

Spatial Analysis Map

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Character Analysis

Built Environment

The conservation area has a cross-section of buildings the majority of which date from the early 18th to mid 20th centuries. The rural setting, modern development and historic prosperity has led to a varied building stock that has a positive impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Unusually this varied building stock is not grouped into types, with farm complexes, coaching inns, ecclesiastical buildings, town houses and domestic cottages all comfortably intermingled and all making an important contribution to the village.

In order to adequately cover these features the architectural characteristics, local details and materials of these buildings will be analysed, with each significant group looked at in turn.

Historic farm complexes

The most conspicuous of these complexes are Whitehouse Farm and Becca Farm. Both groups of buildings make an important contribution to the area by directly associating with the agricultural past that has virtually disappeared from the village centre.

The most positive aspects lie in the rural vernacular feel. The main farmhouses and outbuildings have a

simple character and appearance. They are commonly constructed of coursed limestone with very little ornamentation. This simple rural character and appearance should be retained.

There are areas where farm complexes have been cleared, with individual elements remaining, such as the converted barn within the Beckside development. These support the rural history of the area, but do not make the same contribution as the complete farm complexes.

Domestic scale cottages

Throughout the conservation area are small scale domestic properties and cottages. Usually located on the back of pavement edge the buildings housed the working class of Aberford historically. Important elements of these buildings are:

- Back of pavement edge location
- Construction of limestone, but with variation in finish, with exposed stone and render both employed.
- One-to-two bays wide.
- One and a half to Two-storey eaves height.
- Slate roofs with eaves running parallel to the street.
- Chimney stacks with clay pots articulating the roofscape.
- Very little ornamentation.
- Retention of traditional timber doors and windows.



Whitehouse Farm complex has a very high retention of historic farm buildings and is indicative of the rural past of the conservation area.



A mix of render and natural stone provide variation in the domestic properties appearance within the conservation area.



Many of the historic buildings are domestic cottages which are typical of a rural community, and provide contrast to the larger more ornate buildings.

The simple detailing and domestic scale of these properties is an important feature for retention within the conservation for the contrast which it provides the larger scale high status properties.

18th and 19th century grand architecture

The historic prosperity of Aberford led to the construction of some very impressive properties, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries. Examples of the wealth and prosperity can be seen most clearly in the highly detailed Field House, Aberford House, the Gascoigne Almshouses (now Priory Park) and Hicklam House. Located throughout the village these buildings exemplify the wealth possessed in Aberford (and by surrounding estates) at the time. The majority of the grand buildings are listed, but key features which set them apart include;

- Ashlar limestone and/or brick construction.
- Ornate detailing such as fanlights, stone ridge tiles, quoining and parapets.
- Increased height of 2-to-3 storeys.
- Set within own grounds and set back from the road edge.
- Usually located behind large stone or brick boundary walls, often also with ornate detailing.
- Wooden vertical sliding sash windows.

It is important that new developments do not impose upon the dominance of the grand architecture, particularly within central Aberford. The buildings were constructed to be dominant and conspicuous historically and it is important for the character and appearance of Aberford that this characteristic is retained.

Miscellaneous Architecture

As well as those building types already mentioned Aberford has ecclesiastical buildings and public houses buildings which all make a contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Whilst there are few of each of this type of building, what is present makes an important contribution, particularly the white-rendered public houses of the Arabian Horse and The Swan Hotel. Both are very conspicuous and are landmarks within the conservation area. The complex of the Swan Hotel, including wagon sheds and outbuildings is a key indication of Aberford's past. The existence of Aberford's last few remaining public houses is an important acknowledgment of Aberford's past as a key village along the Great North Road.

The conservation area has a significant amount of infill architecture. Whilst some groups reference the historic environment and are sympathetic towards it, others are not. Any future developments should be in keeping with the positive characteristics identified within the Aberford Conservation Area.



Aberford House retains many ornate and decorative details associated with its high status construction. The high build quality make the 18th century buildings very conspicuous next to the domestic architecture.



The Arabian Horse is a key landmark within the conservation area, its build qualities also being typical to much of the area.



Any new builds within the conservation area should be in keeping with scale and materials of positive buildings in the vicinity.

Character Analysis

Streetscape and public realm

The development of Aberford along the Great North Road resulted in a linear village. Whilst not unusual in itself the immense width of the road which is still present gives the impression of a town centre, as opposed a small village. The wide road together with wide paths and deep verges have a great impact on the character of the village. Pedestrian and vehicular activity is spread throughout the area as the piecemeal development has meant that there is no true centre.

Streetscape features which are important include;

- Curves and dips in the roads result in terminated views creating interest out of otherwise ordinary features.
- Strong boundary treatments, particularly stone walls and mature hedgerows, creating a strong build line.
- Mature areas of trees interspersed with the properties adds important variation to the character of the conservation area.
- The many properties which are located on the back-of-pavement create enclosed spaces and a strong streetscape in the historic centre.
- Variation in the orientation of structures and the impact they

have on the streetscape from their size, scale and status.

- The wide open roads and grass verges create a strong sense of space

The public realm elements below each have an impact on the conservation area both individually and cumulatively.

- **Street lighting**

Within the conservation area the street lighting is quite varied. Heritage style streetlights are present in and around the village green and have a positive impact on the area. The painting of the columns black has helped them sit more comfortably in the historic environment.

- **Pavement surfacing**

Stone flags and kerb stones are still present in many areas and are very important in maintaining the historic appearance of the area. The use of asphalt though does not relate well to the traditional materials, but when used consistently does not impact too negatively on the conservation area.

- **Street furniture**

Generally street furniture is of a simple nature, including painted black metal barriers on Main Street with simple benches and barriers around the junction of Main Street and Field Lane. This simple and uncomplicated design enhances the rural character and appearance of Aberford.



Historic flag stones, simple street furniture, historic boundary walls and back of pavement edge location of many buildings are present throughout the conservation area, and all make a positive contribution to the streetscape



Back-of-pavement location of many properties is an important characteristic for the streetscape of Aberford



Stone boundary walls make a very important contribution to the character of the area.

Character Analysis

Greenscape

Trees, verges and open green space are all essential elements of the Aberford Conservation Area. Many of the mature trees and green areas are located amongst the housing and have a positive impact throughout. They help break up the conservation area, identifying it more as a green and rural location than would be first assumed.

- Significant open space within the Conservation Area

Within the conservation area the open green flood plains of the Cock Beck flanking the Aberford Bridge, and the small village green at the junction of Field Lane and Main Street all make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the area. These areas provide variation to the heavily built-up domestic environment of much of the village.

Field Lane, Parlinton Lane and Becca Lane both make an impact on the greenscape of the conservation area due to the rural nature of their character and appearance. The open space accessed from Field Lane towards the A1, again containing the Cock Beck, and Becca Banks footpaths highlight the rural setting of Aberford that may not be immediately obvious once within the village.

- Countryside setting
The surrounding landscape is very significant to the character and appearance of Aberford. Much of the surrounding area is a designated Special Landscape Area (SLA) and is designated Green Belt. Flat limestone countryside setting provides views at the north and south extremities of the village, whilst the glimpses throughout the whole of conservation area of rural and open landscape are very restricted and give Aberford an enclosed and independent character.

- Mature trees
Mature trees play a significant role in the conservation area. Individual trees and small groups in gardens and along roads enhance the rural and natural feel of the conservation area. Heavily treed areas, particularly St Ricarius' churchyard and Field Lane, have a positive impact on the conservation area, as do those on the southern end of the village which help create an important entrance to the village.

- Wide grass verges
The width of the Great North Road is particularly emphasised in Aberford through the wide grass verges. Used by drover's until the mid 20th century the verges enhance the rural character of Aberford. The verges are particularly key features to the north and south of the village centre, with the greatest impact being made just south of Bunker's Hill.



The open green space surrounding Aberford provides an important green and rural setting for the conservation area. From within the village glimpsed views of the setting are an important characteristic.



The "village green" (Pump Hill) at the junction of Main Street and Field Lane makes an important contribution to the character of the conservation area.



St Ricarius' churchyard makes an important contribution to the natural feel of the conservation area.

Character Analysis

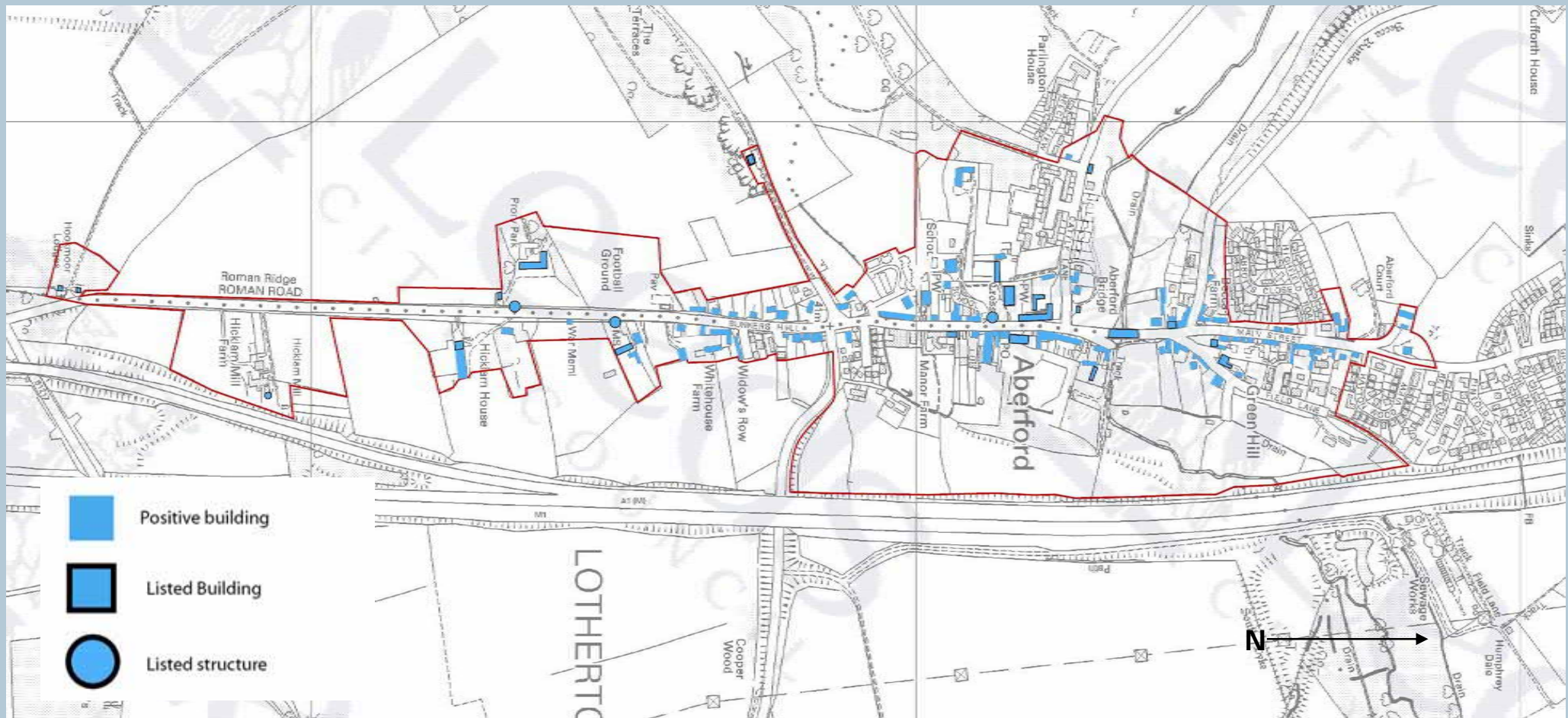
Positive buildings

On the map below buildings coloured blue make a positive contribution to the character of the area. This contribution may be in one or more of the following ways:

- Landmark buildings
- Buildings which provide evidence of the area's history and development
- Buildings of architectural merit
- Buildings with local historical associations
- Buildings which exemplify local vernacular styles
- Groups of buildings which together make a positive contribution to the streetscape

There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of heritage assets. Substantial harm or loss affecting any designated heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification. Any application to demolish a positive building will require

justification taking into account the considerations at HE9.4 of Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment.



Character Analysis

Overall summary of character

Whilst the buildings have differing origins and characteristics, their development and history forms a coherent conservation area. The cottages, high status buildings and farm buildings retain a high level of build quality and form an overwhelming stock of positive historic buildings. The later infill developments in and around the conservation area on the whole sit comfortably in their historic surroundings, and allow the historic environment to dominate and establish the character of the village. The Great North Road is very important in establishing this character, together with the buildings it forms a place with a sense of common history that has developed steadily throughout from the 17th century to the present day.

Key characteristics which make a positive contribution throughout the conservation area:

- Dominance of the width of the Great North Road and associated verges in the streetscape.
- Regularly coursed magnesian limestone the predominant material for buildings/boundary walls.
- Domestic two-two and half storey scale and massing of buildings.
- Buildings orientated on the whole facing the street, with many

located on the back of pavement edge.

- Use of render on many properties within the village, but not the majority.
- Regularly spaced fenestration on all buildings.
- Traditional roofing materials with chimney stacks and pots.
- Traditional stone and/or mature hedgerow boundary treatments.
- Very little street clutter.
- Mature trees interspersed with properties.
- Open green spaces and mature wooded areas.
- Permeability through the conservation area via footpaths and green spaces.

Key ways to retain character:

- Dominance of the Great North Road in the streetscape.
- Keeping the domestic scale and massing within the conservation area.
- Retention of spaces between buildings. The layout of buildings should be sympathetic to positive buildings in the area.
- New-build properties to reflect the scale of adjacent properties and employ regular fenestration.
- Key views towards open green space and high status buildings retained.



Any new build properties should take reference from existing positive architecture within the conservation area, particularly with regards scale, materials, massing, and detailing and respect important views.

- Use of magnesian limestone in the construction of new boundary walls and buildings.
- New buildings orientated to face the street.
- Retention and enhancement of green spaces.
- Retention of the permeability and accessibility to these green spaces within, and adjacent to, the conservation area.
- Continued use of traditional roofing materials with chimney stack and pots to articulate the roofscape.



Green space is also very important in establishing the character of the conservation area.

Management Plan— Opportunities for management and enhancement

This section highlights opportunities to enhance the character and setting of the Aberford Conservation Area. Not all opportunities for enhancement involve the reworking of an inappropriate structure, rather they can apply to street furniture, open spaces and highways issues. This list is by no means exhaustive, as conservation areas can always be improved upon.

Protection and enhancement of the Great North Road

Aberford developed as a linear settlement along the Great North Road, one of the primary north-south routes in the country. This road is still incredibly conspicuous within the village, and the conservation area, due to its great width, deep grass verges to the northern and southern extremities of the village, and historic street surfacing. This road played an important role in the history of Aberford, and has a major impact on its character today.

Action:
Any developments to the road should respect the character and appearance of the road. Where possible the wide grass verges and historic street surfacing will be enhanced through increased

maintenance and sympathetic treatments. Street surfacing and highways works will be undertaken sympathetically to ensure that the road retains its importance and special character.

Protection and enhancement of Green Space within the conservation area

The Conservation Area has a multitude of green spaces. Many of these are accessible and visible to the public and so have a large impact on the conservation area.

The green spaces, many privately owned, along with important elements such as mature trees and historic boundaries, should be preserved and well maintained where appropriate. The footpaths in and around these areas should similarly be maintained to improve access and movement through the conservation area.

Action:
Ensure that any future proposals respect the importance of green space in and around the conservation area by ensuring key views and access are not compromised. Also ensure that the movement through and around the conservation area isn't restricted due to development.



The Great North Road around which the village is based is extremely important to the character and appearance of Aberford. The proactive management of this feature would help preserve and enhance the conservation area.

Tree management

Trees form an important part of the character of the area. Conservation area designation affords some degree of protection. A tree that has a trunk diameter of 7.5cm when measured at 1.5 metres above ground level is protected within a conservation area. Six weeks notification to Leeds City Council is required to undertake works to trees above this size. If the works are deemed unacceptable then a Tree Preservation Order may be made to

give the tree permanent protection. If possible a tree strategy could be undertaken to identify the most significant trees in a conservation area. This could lead to the designation of more Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and can also identify general tree management issues if further required. A replanting strategy should also be considered in order to manage the impact of loss of trees through over maturity.

Action:
Consideration should be given to formulating a tree strategy to protect and enhance the local green character.

Resistance to inappropriate forms of infill development

To be successful, any future development within the conservation area needs to be mindful of the local character of the conservation area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

A particular threat is the tendency for new build to be of suburban form and design, executed in materials of lower quality than the surrounding positive buildings. Equally, poorly designed and detailed 'pastiche' development can be as eroding to special character as development that shows no regard for its setting.

Conservation areas are sensitive to the effect of new development. Often the infill does not take into account the scale, massing and proportion of structures in the area. Spaces between the structures are also important. All of these criteria are important in maintaining the character of the area. The failure to ensure that these characteristics are upheld can result in developments that will have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Successful new development in historic areas will:

- *Relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land*
- *Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it*
- *Respect important views*
- *Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings*
- *Use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings*
- *Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting.*

Cabe and English Heritage, 2001, 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas'

Action:
New development must respond sensitively and creatively to the historic environment.

There will be a presumption against infill development which does not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. New development should respond to the scale, proportion, layout, boundary features and materials of positive structures within the conservation area, as well as the spaces in between them and the effect this may have on the amenity of adjacent properties.

Public realm enhancements

When resources are available a specifically funded streetscape audit and rationalisation of existing signage, road markings and street furniture would provide the opportunity to clear the streetscape of unnecessary clutter. Redundant and duplicate items could be removed, and consideration given to the sensitive design, siting, scale and grouping of fixtures, fittings and markings.

Particular issues that could benefit from enhancement include:

- Appropriate treatment for street furniture (streetlights, benches etc).
- The sympathetic development and enhancement of surface treatments on public highways, particularly paths, and retention of historic surface treatments.
- More discreet public realm features such as smaller traffic signs and paler yellow lines when they are due for renewal.
- Ensuring all public realm is consistent and uniform.

Action:
Promote public realm enhancements within the conservation area as opportunities arise and funding permits. Ensure that future public realm improvements respect and enhance the special character of the conservation area. This will include;

- Making sure the siting and design of road signs and street furniture in the conservation area have regard to current English Heritage "Streets for All" guidance (see references).



Any new development should respect the historic environment into which its placed, taking reference from positive buildings.



The public realm of Aberford is generally of a good standard, but there is always room for improvement when opportunity allows.

- **Ensuring that street lighting respects the historic streetscape and proportions of buildings.**

Protect surviving historic architectural details and promote the replacement of inappropriate fixtures and fittings

The incremental loss of traditional architectural detailing is an issue which affects many conservation areas. Replacement of windows, doors and roof coverings with inappropriate materials, colours and designs, is negative and affects individual buildings and the wider streetscape.

Surviving historic features should be maintained and sympathetically repaired where necessary. Where historic fenestration and features have been lost in the identified positive buildings, reinstatement of appropriate, traditional detailed fittings is encouraged.

By encouraging the protection of surviving historic detail and the reinstatement of appropriately detailed fittings in the defined positive buildings, the character of the conservation area can be further enhanced.

Action:
Where repairs or alterations are proposed on historic structures, surviving historic features should be retained and where necessary sympathetically repaired.

Boundary Treatments

The Aberford Conservation Area, due to its layout and historical context, is particularly at risk from inappropriate boundary walls and fences. In order to retain the established character, all boundary treatments should be sympathetic with those in existence, and those which add character to the area, such as coursed natural stone walls and mature hedgerows.

Action:
It will be encouraged that new boundary treatments within Aberford Conservation Area are consistent with the traditional nature of those already in existence. Positive existing boundary treatments will be valued and retained where possible.

Development affecting the setting of the conservation area

It is important that development around the conservation area does not spoil its setting. Views towards and away from a conservation area can be detrimentally affected by inappropriately placed structures, or groups of structures, at key locations around the conservation area. Appropriate design and materials should still be used when designing structures adjacent to the conservation area, as well as consideration given to the impact they may have on views towards and away from the conservation area.

Action:
The impact of developments outside the conservation area that might affect the character and appearance of the conservation area should be considered. This will ensure the character and setting of the conservation area is not compromised.

Protect archaeological remains

As previously mentioned, the Aberford Dykes are nationally scheduled ancient monuments. The churchyard is also of key archaeological interest. What remains of the water control features in the field north of Cattle Lane, south of the river should be retained. Significant development either side of Main Street within the conservation area is likely to result in the recommendation for some archaeological work.

Action:
Development which involves below-ground excavation must have regard to the potential for archaeological finds. In areas of high sensitivity archaeological surveys may be required.

Energy performance and the historic environment

Climate change and economic uncertainty has increased the need for properties, both domestic and commercial, to improve their energy

efficiency by both decreasing carbon emissions and decreasing the strain on fossil fuels. As Central Government's Planning Policy Statement 5 states: "The historic environment has an important role to play in addressing climate change." The retention and reuse of heritage assets avoids the material and energy costs of new development. The City Council also encourages home owners and developers to find solution to improve energy efficiency. This can be undertaken by simple maintenance and repair of properties, ensuring that they are draft free and in good condition, as well as the use of microregeneration equipment and energy renewables. Conservation areas and listed buildings can be sensitive to this form of development though, so every care should be made to ensure that the installation of items such as wind turbines and solar panels should sit comfortably in the historic environment, and should be sympathetic to context in which they are placed.

Action:
There will be the assumption that the existing building stock is reused where possible. Where permission is required, it will be ensured that the installation of microregeneration equipment on a building does not have a negative impact on the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

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Where to find out more

Local sources are:

Aberford and District Parish Council website- www.aberfordonline.com

Central Library (Local & Family History Section), The Headrow, Leeds LS1. Tel 0113 247 8290 email: localstudies@leeds.gov.uk website: www.leeds.gov.uk/library

Leeds Civic Trust, Leeds Heritage & Design Centre, 17-19 Wharf Street, Leeds LS2 7EQ Tel: 0113 243 9594 Email: office@leedscivictrust.org.uk website: www.leedscivictrust.org.uk

Victorian Society (West Yorkshire Group), Clarendon, 23 Clarendon Road Leeds LS2 9NZ (postal address only)

West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, Newstead Road, Wakefield WF1 2DE Tel 01924 306810 email: wysmr@wyjs.org.uk website: www.arch.wyjs.org.uk

West Yorkshire Archive Service, Chapeltown Road, Sheepscar, Leeds LS7 3AP. Tel 0113 214 5814 email: leeds@wyjs.org.uk website: www.archives.wyjs.org.uk

In addition, much information is available on other websites:

- Access to archives - www.a2a.org.uk
- www.heritagegateway.org.uk includes all listed building descriptions and some photos

- www.leodis.net has archive photos of the Leeds district
- www.old-maps.co.uk includes early Ordnance Survey maps.

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Finding Out More

What is a conservation area?

A conservation area is '*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'.

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

What does conservation area status mean?

Conservation area status provides the opportunity to promote the protection and enhancement of the special character of the defined area. Designation confers a general control over development that could damage the area's character. The details are complex but can be summarised as:

- Most demolition requires permission and will be resisted if the building makes a positive contribution to the area.
- Some minor works to houses is no longer "permitted development" and will require planning permission. Examples are rear dormer windows, external cladding and most satellite dishes on front elevations.
- Advertisement controls are tighter
- Most work to trees has to be notified to the Council which has six weeks in which to decide to impose restrictions.

- Generally, higher standards of design apply for new buildings and alterations to existing ones.

Change is inevitable in most conservation areas and it is not the intention of the designation to prevent the continued evolution of places. The challenge within conservation areas is to manage change in a way that maintains, reinforces and enhances the special qualities of the area.

What is the purpose of this appraisal?

This appraisal provides the basis for making informed, sustainable decisions in the positive management, protection and enhancement of the conservation area.

It provides a clear understanding of the special interest of Aberford by:

- assessing how the settlement has developed
- analysing its present day character and
- identifying opportunities for enhancement

This appraisal follows the current guidance set out by English Heritage in the 2006 publication *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*.

The appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space

should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

Planning policy context

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the wider national, regional and local planning policy and guidance. Relevant documents include:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Department for Communities and Local Government, 2010, *Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) - Planning for the Historic Environment*
- Leeds City Council, Unitary Development Plan Review 2006, particularly Chapter 5 Environment and Appendices A3 Building Design, Conservation and Landscape Design and A4 Archaeological Policies
- Leeds City Council, Local Development Framework, emerging document that will ultimately replace the Local Plan.

Community involvement and adoption

A draft version of this appraisal went through a four week public consultation process, which included;

- Identified stakeholders and interested parties being directly notified.

- The appraisal and response form being made available through the Council's website.
- Posters were placed around the conservation area directing residents towards the information on-line and the public meeting which took place on 1st March 2011 at Aberford Village Hall.
- The consultation was placed on Leeds City Council's 'Talking Point' public consultation system.
- Press releases were distributed.
- Information placed on the Aberford and District Parish Council website.

The consultation responses were evaluated and the appraisal amended in light of comments received. This document will be proposed for approval at the Leeds City Council Planning Board. If approved the appraisal will be a material consideration when applications for change within the conservation area or its setting are considered by the Council from 30th May 2011.