

Ravensworth

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN



DRAFT for consultation
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Introduction

A Conservation Area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance or which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Ravensworth was designated a Conservation Area in 1982.

Local Planning Authorities are required to “formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area, which are Conservation Areas” (Section 71 of the Act). This Character Appraisal and Management Plan fulfils this duty.

In making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area” (Section 72 of the Act). While this should ensure that harmful change is not allowed, some changes, not normally requiring planning permission (known as permitted development) could still damage the special qualities of the area. Local Authorities have special powers to issue Directions removing certain permitted development rights from properties if it can be shown that it is necessary. It may be appropriate to consider a Direction to this effect for parts of the Ravensworth Conservation Area.

This Appraisal and Management Plan should be read in conjunction with the following documents

- The Richmondshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2014
- National Planning Policy Framework

Statement of Significance

Ravensworth Conservation Area has two distinctly different parts, the castle with its landscape and the village. The character of both parts is derived from its historical development rather than any grand architectural qualities although the castle in its heyday would have been a very impressive structure. The resulting form on the ground is groupings of local vernacular buildings clustered tightly around a village green and all within a rural landscape setting. The significance of the village is derived from the sum of its parts rather than any one particular feature.

Location and Setting

Ravensworth lies approximately 8 km northwest of Richmond and 12km southeast of Barnard Castle on the south side of the A66 trunk road. The majority of the built part village is positioned

on raised ground, effectively an island above the valley floor of Dalton Beck, but to the south and north parts of the Conservation Area (including the land around the castle and Dalton Beck itself) are at a lower level. Just beyond these the land rises up the wider valley sides. To the south the level change is steeper towards Feldom Ranges than the land to the north, which rises at a more gentle level up to the A66 which was formerly a Roman Road.

Historic Development and Archaeology

The village has ancient origins dating back to the time of a Viking settlement.

The name of the village derives from the name 'Hrafn', the founder of the settlement. Originally called 'Ravenswath', 'wath' was the Old Norse word meaning 'ford' and would suggest that the Holme Beck that passes through the village was forded in Viking Times. Its name and spelling has varied over the years: in the 11th century it was 'Ravenswet', 'Rasueswalt' in the 12th century, 'Ravenswade' in 1201, 'Ravenswath' from the 13th to the 16th century and afterwards beginning to settle on 'Ravensworth'.

Photo 1

The earliest archaeology found in the Ravensworth area is a coin from the early Roman period and given the close proximity of the Roman road this is not unexpected.



The Lord of the Manor in 1066 was Thorfin and the village is documented in the Domesday Book (1086). At that time it was recorded as having 21 households, a church and a priest and thus quite a large settlement.

This is presumed to be in the wider landscape which included Kirby Hill. The Manor passed through various hands and in the reign of Henry I the Fitzhugh family built a fortress which would have offered protection against Scottish raids. Henry Fitzhugh built the current Ravensworth Castle in 1391 (photo 1) on the site of the previous 11th century fortress and received a licence to enclose 200 acres of land around the castle to make a park. The park pale ('pale' being a medieval term used to refer to a substantial boundary often associated with parks or deer parks), is still evident in numerous areas to the south of the castle (photo 2). After the end of the Fitzhugh male line in 1513 the castle passed through the female 'Parr' line, but by 1571 it passed to the Crown Estate and the castle was ruined largely as a result of being quarried for local building materials. In the middle of the 16th century the castle was substantially pulled down although the antiquarian John Leyland recorded that the



Photo 2

gatehouse was still intact. Over the following centuries the castle passed through various ownerships and today is retained in private hands.

In the wider landscape around the castle there is extensive evidence in the form of ridge and furrow cultivation for the medieval farming regime of the area.

There were a number of skirmishes in the area during the Civil War and the region was a Royalist stronghold.

After the Enclosures Act of 1778 the majority of the land around Ravensworth is recorded as pasture and meadow with specific reference to sheep.

Milling was also undertaken at this time along with numerous quarries to the south of the Conservation Area for sandstone and limestone and also a coal mine that would probably have provided coal for the local limekilns.

Much of the housing stock dates from the mid to late 17th century when the basic form of the current village was established. Over the years Ravensworth has been described by many, most notably by John Leland (a 16th century antiquarian) as a 'pretty' village and later as 'exceedingly neat'. The artist M W Turner made several sketches of the castle and Walter Scott referenced the village in 'Rokeby' 1813, an epic poem set in the area.

'Modern' development in the village has generally be quite restricted, mostly to individual 'infill' properties but a moderate development at Mill Close (photo 3) dating from the 1970's was built on the site of a 15th Century cruck house that was dismantled and reconstructed at the Richmondshire Museum. More recently the group of dwellings to the rear of Tofta House has been added (photo 4).

Photo 4



Photo 3



Architectural Features and Building Materials

Photo 5

The most dominant built feature within the Ravensworth conservation area is the Castle (photo 5).

Ravensworth Castle

The importance of Ravensworth Castle has been recognised in its designation as both a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Grade I Listed Building.



Although in a ruined state, significant parts of Ravensworth Castle have survived, and the original plan and layout is preserved. The standing fabric particularly the gatehouse and the belfry tower survive reasonably well and other remains of medieval structures are preserved below ground. Unusually the main defensive feature of the castle was the waterlogged area surrounding the castle which was managed by a system of embankments and channels which still survive as standing earthworks (photo 6). There are also earthworks



Photo 7

relating to the deer park attached to the castle; long sections of the wall which was originally three miles in extent survive (photo 7); and remnants of the medieval village settlement adjacent to the castle are still in existence.

The extensive castle remains stand on a low platform separated from the adjacent high ground to the north by a ditch. Aerial photographs have revealed a further range of buildings on the higher ground to the north of the castle and these are interpreted as part of the shrunken village of Ravensworth.

The castle retains substantial sections of upstanding masonry and earthworks defining the foundations of buried buildings. The castle platform is roughly

rectangular in form. A ditch cut across the platform from north west to south east separates the motte which lies in the northern third of the platform from the bailey which lies in the remainder. The castle was approached from the north west where a ditch was spanned by a bridge of which the outer abutment remains as a stony mound. The perimeter of the platform was linked by a series of rectangular towers of which the south west, south east and the gateway towers remain as ruins. The gateway tower is the most complete part of the castle, the walls standing to almost full height. Internal features such as fireplaces and window surrounds and much of the original architectural details remain. The bailey, to the south, has further sections of standing masonry, the most prominent of which is the belfry tower. It is identified as the tower for a chapel and retains architectural details including a Latin inscription around the upper-most storey. Other sections of standing masonry are the north west gable and lower parts of the walls of a long rectangular building identified as a barn or stable block. Earthwork remains of further ranges of buildings are clearly visible throughout the extent of the platform.

Architectural Style of Village Buildings

The biggest portion of the buildings within Ravensworth are of C18th and C19th date, constructed mainly in local stone, which is generally of good quality and typically incorporating vertically sliding or Yorkshire sash windows and solid doors. The few painted and rendered buildings provide an important and interesting contrast. Traditionally roof coverings are generally stone slate and clay pantiles but Welsh slate is also apparent. In more recent times a number of properties have replaced these traditional roof coverings with varying forms of concrete tiles. The

Photo 8



lowered in the mid 19th century and given a Welsh slate roof and sash windows. The gable of the rear wing still retains evidence in the form of a two light chamfered mullioned window and there are part of surrounds of mullioned windows evident on the front and this is a very early form of window. The west gable appears to have been constructed of stone from the castle with two blocked fire windows. A late 18th century garden wall which has an ashlar door surround sweeps up to the main building. To the rear of Tofta House are a range of former functional buildings (photo 9) including a Grade II listed cart shed built of rubble with dressed sandstone three segmental arched quoin openings, and a welsh slate roof.

architectural qualities of the buildings lie generally in their grouping and simple vernacular style.

A number of the older properties have been recognised for their architectural or historic interest and have been Listed Grade II. The earliest of these dating from the late 16th to early 17th century is Tofta House (photo 8), just to the north of the castle. The house is T-shaped in plan, originally of three stories and four bays but

Photo 9



Photo 10



engaged columns supporting a decorative frieze. The main facade has 16-pane sash windows but the older section to the rear retains a chamfered mullioned window. Behind the main buildings is a range of outbuildings including a cowhouse, coach-house and disused livestock enclosure which are all listed Grade II. These are all thought to date from the mid to late 18th century. All are constructed of rubble sandstone with

Of a slightly later date is Park House (photo 10), listed Grade II, built in the mid to late 17th and late 18th to early 19th century. It has an irregular U-shaped plan with the early house now forming the left rear wing, possibly with early extension forming 2 bays left of the main façade and with later 19th century service buildings to the rear right. The front façade is two storey with 4 bays and unusually for the village it has a Westmorland slate roof. The door-case has fluted Tuscan

Photo 11



dressed quoins, some ashlar copings and the livestock enclosure has two small vaulted chambers.

Mill Farmhouse Cottage (photo 11) is dated 1699 and of a far more humble design than the two earlier houses. It is single storey of rubble sandstone with quoins and a modern clay interlocking tile roof. The property has 3 bays and 4-pane sash windows with projecting cills and deep herringbone tooling. This window surround detail with the tooling feature is common on many of the older properties.

Photo 12

39 The Green (photo 12) dates from around 1700 with later alterations. The main façade of this house is ashlar, which is rare in the village, with coursed rubble to the rear and side. The roof is of modern pantiles with stone slate eaves course and shaped kneelers, ashlar copings and end chimney stacks. The house is two storey with three bays. It has rusticated quoins and architraves to openings with a six panel door and 16-pane sash windows.



15 The Green (photo 13) dates from 1786 with an early-mid 19th century outbuilding. The house is of coursed dressed sandstone with quoins and has a stone slate and pantile roof with shaped kneelers. The house is two storeys and two bays with a central door with ashlar surround, incorporating a medieval inscription protected by a pediment.



Photo 13

The windows are 16-pane sashes with projecting cills and deep lintels incorporating the inscription 'IE 1786'. A single storey building to the right incorporates an arched opening of dressed stone, presumably for a cart.

Photo 13

In the late 18th century to early 19th century Mill Farmhouse (photo 14) was built and has had 20th century alterations. It is constructed of coursed watershot, rubble which is rare for the village,

with a modern pantile roof that has a slate course at eaves with shaped kneelers and ashlar copings and brick end stacks. It is two storey and of two parts, the older part being to the left with two bays, The later range to the right is slightly taller and has one bay with a door to the left in an ashlar surround with pediment. The windows are 4-pane modern sashes with cills and deep lintels. In front of the house is a cobbled



Photo 14

garden wall with ashlar copings swept up at the sides to a lower front wall and a modern iron railing.

Park Farmhouse (31 The Green) dates from the late 18th century to early 19th century (photo 15). This property is built of coursed rubble with quoins and has a modern pantile roof with a stone eaves course and shaped kneelers and ashlar copings with brick end stacks. It is two storey and has two bays with a central door in ashlar surrounds.



Photo 16



30 The Green (photo 16) is of a similar date, again of coursed rubble sandstone with quoins. Unfortunately the building has a concrete tile roof but other aspects of the design follow the typical in Ravensworth, two storey two bays with a central door with ashlar surround and a pediment. The windows are 16-pane sashes in ashlar surrounds.

Photo 17

Nos.
41/43

The Green (West View Cottage) (photo 17) also date from this time. Now one house, it is built of coursed rubble with a stone slate roof to the left and modern concrete tiles and stone eaves course to the right with some shaped kneelers, ashlar copings and end stacks. It is of two storeys with a lower extension to the right. Windows are 4-pane sashes and there is a central door with all openings having dressed stone or quoins surrounds.

Photo 18

The remaining listed properties date from around 1900 and the majority form a group to the north side of the village green : no 20 with attached building to left; no 24; no 26 (photo 18); and no 28. No 2 (Sunset Cottage) is also from this date, but located a little further north away from the main green. No 20 is two storey built of rubble sandstone with a pantile roof that has a stone eaves course, shaped kneelers,



Photo 19



copings and an end stack. It features a central door with ashlar surrounds and 16-pane sash windows. There is a blocked doorway to the left. The attached building is one of only a few older properties in Ravensworth that is single storey but it is similarly constructed of rubble sandstone, a pantile roof with stone eaves course, shaped kneelers and copings, two doors and two Yorkshire sliding sash windows. No 24 is built of coursed rubble sandstone with a stone slate roof, ashlar copings and brick end stacks. The property is two storeys and has three bays with quoins to the left hand side. It has a central door with ashlar surrounds and 16-pane sash windows with projecting cills and deep lintels. No 26 is of coursed sandstone rubble with a stone slate roof. It is two storeys and has one bay. The door to the left has an ashlar surround and a slab pediment. The windows are 16-pane sashes with projecting cills and deep lintels. No 28 is of coursed rubble sandstone with a stone slate roof and quoins to the right. It is of two storeys, with three first floor windows of 16-pane sashes with ashlar projecting cills and deep lintels. To the right below the window is a boarded door in segmental arched carriageway of dressed stone. Slightly unusually for the village the stack is not an end stack but positioned between windows.

The coursed rubble wall with ashlar copings and the plain bar railings with spear finials around this group of buildings are Listed and form an important setting.

Photo 19



No 2, Sunset Cottage (photo 19) completes the older houses of the village. It is built of coursed rubble sandstone with one of the few Welsh slate roofs in the village. It has two storeys and two bays with a central door in an ashlar surround. Sash windows have 16-panes with projecting cills and deep lintels.

Photo 20

The remaining building of architectural and historic interest in the village is the Village Hall (photo 20). It was built in 1841 as the National School and constructed of coursed rubble with quoins. The roof is Welsh slate with shaped kneelers and ashlar copings. It is the one of



two buildings in the village with pointed arch windows of two lights with Y tracery. It has an ashlar bellcote and an end chimney stack.

Photo 21

The other building with pointed arched windows is the Wesleyan Chapel (photo 21) which is next to the Village Hall and dates from 1850.



Other historic features/buildings in Ravensworth that are considered to be important and have been listed are :

Photo 22

The cross base (photo 22) – possibly from the sixteenth century now badly worn, square in plan with the upper corners chamfered and broached stopped. A bump on the upper surface indicated the joint for the next section of the shaft.



Photo 23

The village pound (photo 23) – thought to date from the 18th century in the form of an irregular oval enclosure of rubble stone with a monolithic gate post to the north-east.



The footbridge over Holme Beck 120 meters to north-west of Mill Farmhouse (photo 24) – from the early nineteenth century a single segmental arch of dressed voussoirs and soffit with herringbone tooling. The bridge includes a Gothic window head and other carved stone though to be from Ravensworth Castle.



Photo 24



Photo 25

Holme Bridge over Holme Beck (photo 25) – thought to be around 1900 of coursed dressed sandstone. Again this is a single segmental arch with dressed even voussoirs and soffit. It has coursed rubble spandrels and square coping stone parapets. Above the centre of the arch on both sides are plain dressed rectangular stones.

These building details from the older properties within Ravensworth are reflected in the later 18th and 19th century properties. They are two storey of coursed sandstone rubble with some ashlar details, pitched roofs sometimes with ashlar kneelers and copings to the roofs which are



generally a clear span of pantiles and/or stone slate. There are a few single storey properties and these are generally clustered around the road from the north. The buildings are generally two or three bays wide, often with a central door and with windows generally having a vertical emphasis and being vertically sliding sashes, both multi-paned and 'two over two's'

with projecting eaves and deep lintels. Those windows with a horizontal emphasis would originally have had horizontally sliding Yorkshire sashes. These windows are often found to the rear of properties or on outbuildings etc. and can be seen on the buildings attached to 20 The Green. Chimney stacks are at the ends (photo 26) of roofs. There is a dominance of solid over void in walls that is shown on 22 The Green (photo 27). There are some properties where new windows and enlarged window openings have been provided over more recent years, such as at 37 The

Photo 28



Photo 27



Green (photo 28). Porches are not a traditional feature, though they do occur on some of the later 19th and 20th century properties. Traditionally dormers and rooflights are not found on elevations fronting on to the village green. The lie of the land means that there is a constant stepping up/down in the levels of the properties which is particular evident in the variation of the roof levels (photo 29). Most of the properties front directly onto the village green though some have a small forecourt area behind a small enclosure of a stone wall and/or railings (photos 29, 30 and 31).

Photo 29

There are two part of Ravensworth where twentieth century development dominates. These are around Mill





Photo 30



Photo 31

Photo 32



Close and Mill Court/rear of Tofta House where both developments are in locations away from the main vantage points.

Mill Close (photo 33) – was built in the 1970's as substantially a series of terraced properties around three sides of a green square set to the east. One other row of terraces and a detached property were built to the west of these which reinforces the enclosure of the Village Green

(photo 34). The use of a pallet of local building materials (stone and pantiles) on the prominent properties helps to assimilate these comparatively new buildings into the grain of the village.

Photo 34



Photo 33

The properties at Mill Court and to the rear of Tofta



House (photo 35) were built in the 1990's and are substantially detached properties using similar materials and design forms to the local vernacular.



Photo 35

Photo 36



The school (photo 36) built in 1967 has little regard for the local vernacular character of Ravensworth, being more a 'house style' used at the time by the Education Authority. Fortunately its position behind the frontage of traditional properties means that it has little impact on the character of the Conservation Area as a whole.

Another pair of properties from the first half of the twentieth century is the pair of suburban pebbledash semi-detached properties (photo 37) to the east end of the north frontage of properties on the Village Green. These are very typical of a town suburb of this date and again look out of place in a historic village core.



Photo 37

Materials

Stone

Locally until the mid 19th century there were numerous quarries with a reputation for producing high quality building stone. Transport problems and costs saw the decline and eventual closure of most of the quarries, however, the nearby Duns Bank Quarry survives and still provides stone for the local area. Given this historic reputation it is unsurprising that nearly all the buildings

Photo 38

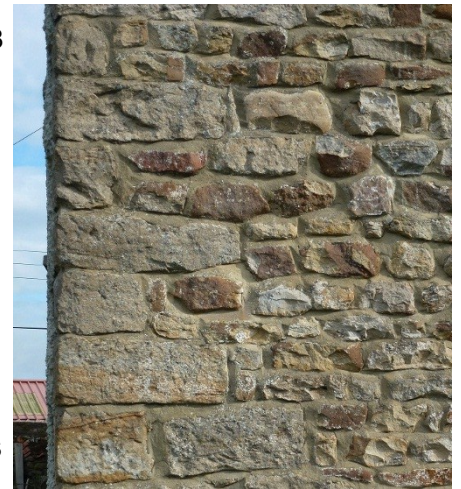


Photo 39

in the village are constructed of local stone. The majority of cottages and houses use random or coursed rubble (photo 38) construction for the walling. There are two main exceptions to this and that is the use of watershot rubble at Millhouse Farmhouse (photo 39) and ashlar at 39 The Green (photo 40). Ashlar is also use for the surrounds of openings often with a herringbone tooling pattern as can be seen at 15 The Green (photo 41). Most of the window openings have deep stone lintels which often has the herringbone tooling and projecting stone cill. An

Photo 40





Photo 41



Photo 42



Photo 43

exception to this is the voussour stone details on 31 The Green (photo 42) and the moulded stone surrounds of 39 The Green (photo 43).

The use of stone has continued throughout the 20th century and despite the form of construction changing from solid wall to modern cavity wall most recent properties continue the tradition of coursed rubble walling albeit not using stone from the quarries immediately next to the village. Care must always be taken in new construction and repair to avoid leaving sawn faces

exposed in rubble stone walls as the smooth surface left by disc cutters contrasts harshly with the surrounding masonry.

Lime wash was a traditional way to weatherproof the poorer quality of stone and would have appeared as a colour finish to a property and one of the properties on the green does have a colour finish to the stonework (photo 44).



Photo 44

Render

Render comes in a number of forms, traditional rough cast render, modern cement render and pebble dash. There are very few rendered properties in Ravensworth Conservation Area. No 18 The Green is a prominent white painted cement rendered property (photo 45) and certainly

Photo 45



stands out as being different to the character of the village, as do the two semi-detached pebble dashed properties to the north east of the Village Green (photo 46).



Photo 46

The limited use of render contributes significantly to the character of Ravensworth and restricting the range of materials used for new construction in the village to stone for all external faces would continue to protect and enhance the Conservation Area.

Photo 47

Brick

Brick is rare in Ravensworth and only appears notably in the chimneys and rear elevations, such as the back of the Bay Horse Inn (photo 47). It has also been used to construct a very few small ancillary buildings/boundary walls such as The Cedars (photo 48) and chimneys but these are less prominent in the Conservation Area. Brick has not been used for any significant external work on buildings in the village and, in a similar manner to render, brick should be resisted in its future use in the village in order to maintain the dominant use of natural stone which gives Ravensworth so much of its individual character.



Photo 48



Roofing Materials

Stone Slate

This has been historically used for domestic roofing in the area (photo 49). The stone slates will have been locally sourced. The sandstone slates are thick in comparison to other roofing materials and are laid in diminishing courses, narrowing from large slates at the eaves to small slates at the ridge, often finished with a dressed stone ridge piece. This produces a distinctive character to the roof very



different from other natural slates as the covering is notably thicker and the roof has a textured finish arising from the thick slate edges. Although when first quarried the sandstone slates are a pale grey/buff colour they weather in time to a deeper grey/brown colour slightly darker than walling stone. Good examples of stone slate roofs can be found on many of the listed buildings namely 15 The Green (photo 50), 24 The Green, 26 The Green and 28 The Green. The stone slates are often combined with pantiles as an eaves course as referred to below.



Photo 50

Photo 51

Pantile

Pantiles are the most widely used roof covering in the village and appear to have been the dominant roofing



material for many years. They vary greatly in age and character and their different ages and sources combine to produce a richly textured roofscape to the village when viewed from the village green. Several village properties have eaves courses of stone slates, a traditional and interesting vernacular feature which can vary in width from a simple single course to three or four courses of stone. Pantiles and a stone eaves course can be seen at 20 The Green (photo 51). Whilst it is important to maintain sound roof coverings to buildings and the use of modern pantiles is appropriate in the Conservation Area, it is also important to recognise older pantile coverings and to record and preserve them where they exist. Pantiles were often local products that would

vary in shape, size and texture from one producer to another and so surviving historic roofs could provide examples of tiles from small local companies now long gone.

Photo 52

Interlocking Clay Tiles

Some of the original roofs of the village have been replaced with interlocking pantiles (photo 52) and although these do not quite have the character of the original, they assimilate reasonably well into the overall street scene.



Slate

There are several types of slate used on village buildings. Welsh blue/grey slates are the most numerous and the earliest use of slate will date from the latter half of the 19th century when transport systems, particularly the railways, were sufficiently developed to allow slate to be



Photo 53

imported to the area. The use of slate has continued alongside pantiles in both re-roofing buildings such as Tofta House (photo 53) and Sunset Cottage but also as a traditional alternative to pantiles and these are best seen at The Village Hall (photo 54) and 18 The Green.



Photo 54

Westmorland slates are a grey/green colour and are rare in the area generally. Park House (photo 55) being the only house in the Conservation Area to be roofed with these slates. They are laid to diminishing courses in a



similar manner to the local stone slates, but they are not nearly as

thick and more akin to the Welsh slates. This is an unusual material to find in a location that is so well provided with good quality stone roofing slate and may be an indication of the high status that this prominent village house has always

Photo 55

enjoyed.

Other Roofing Materials

Over more recent times throughout Ravensworth the traditional stone slate roofing materials have been supplemented with more readily available, cheaper alternatives including concrete

Photo 57



tiles. Concrete tiles have been used extensively on village properties through the later part of the 20th century to replace older traditional stone slate roof coverings and come in a number of forms both profiled (photo 56) and flat (photo 57). Although not ideal for traditional buildings due to the characteristics of the material itself and the regular mechanical appearance of the finished roof, which differs



Photo 56

from the traditional slates or pantiles, the flat tiles have usually mellowed with weathering to blend into the street scene (photo 58). Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the profiled concrete tiles (photo 59). Ideally these will be replaced with



Photo 58



Photo 59

more traditional alternatives as they become life expired.

Floorscape

The village is dominated by the expanses of Village Green which in a lot of areas remains unbound by kerbs (photo 60). In some locations it appears to have been necessary to formalise the demarcation between the roads and the green/verges and a number of means have been used to achieve this, including

Photo 61



Photo 60



Photo 62



Photo 63

the standard highways concrete kerbs (photo 61), granite setts (photo 62) and 'grasscrete' (photo 63) .



Photo 79

The informality in many places around the main part of the village green is very important to the character of the village and should be maintained to protect the quality of the Conservation Area. In a number of places both timber and stone bollards have been used to prevent overrunning

Photo 65

(photo 64). Whilst these are unfortunate in terms of their appearance, they do serve a purpose.



All areas of public road are finished in black tarmac (photo 65). Accesses away from these



Photo 66



Photo 67

roads to the properties on the village green remain un-metalled and are generally crushed gravel (photo 66). Private drives feature a range of surfacing from informal beaten earth paths and rough rubble, through a range of gravels and crushed stone, to concrete, tarmac (photo 67) and modern block paving (Photo 68). This last form of surfacing which is seen

Photo 69



Photo 68

substantially on the modern developments of Mill Close and Mill Court/rear of Tofta House (photo 69) provides a very mechanical finish very much at odds with other aspects of the village.





Photo 70

The village has very limited lengths of footpath which are constructed only around the modern developments of Mill Close (photo 70) and the rear of Tofta House (photo 71). These sections of modern highway-standard road layout are rather suburban in



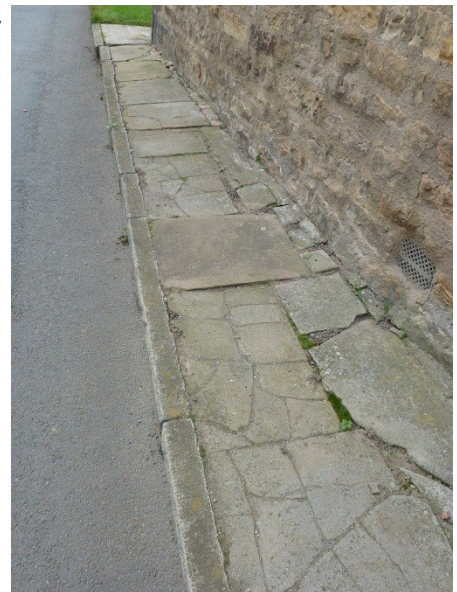
Photo 71

Photo 72



nature but fortunately they are only short lengths and hidden away in locations where they do not dominate the character of the village.

Photo 74



There is some evidence of cobbles being a traditional flooring material and these are best exemplified to the front of West View Cottage (photo 72) and 39 The Green.



Photo 73

Stone flags also appear to the frontages of some properties such as 7 The Green (photo 73), where they have unfortunately been badly damaged, and at the rear of the Bay Horse Inn where there is a good example of stone setts (photo 74).

Enclosures, Fences and Gates.

Photo 75



There are two types of boundary treatment used substantially in Ravensworth. Stone walling, sometimes accompanied with railings and hedging, and found throughout the built part of the Conservation Area is either coursed rubble stone to the front of more modest village properties or the formal dressed stone walls in front of some of the larger houses such as Tofta Farmhouse where ashlar stone is used for the gate piers. The variety in form of copings in the village is worth noting with pyramidal dressed stone (photo 75)

and stone flags (photo 76). One important wall is that of the village pound which is listed in its own right (photo 77).

Photo 77



Photo 89

Away from the main village core, substantially around the castle, dry stone walling is used and this varies discretely in style mostly reflecting the individual waller who originally built these walls and the material available for their construction. The age of these walls, from the medieval park (photo 78) to comparatively more recent times, has meant a need over the years for repairs and this has varied along the length of many old walls.

Photo 78

The railings at 24, 26 and 28 The Green are listed in their own right and an excellent example of a traditional style (photo 79). It is important to note that these railings all differ and are handmade examples of local blacksmithing rather than modern commercial



Photo 79

items. Other modern railings in the village do not quite meet this same level of craftsmanship (photo 80).

Photo 80

Hedging

is the other boundary treatment evident in Ravensworth particularly along the roads entering the village from the north (photo 81) and the south (photo 82), with an intermittent hedge along the road from the east. Hedging is also the boundary treatment of the fields to the north of the village between the buildings and Holme Beck.





Photo 81



Within the confines of the village trees are limited mainly to the few individual specimens on the Village Green (photo 83) and the group of trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order to the side of The Bay Horse Inn.

There are very few front gardens to provide any softening to the junction between the grass of the Green and the stone of the buildings. Within the wider landscape, small groups of trees feature within the backcloth to the south (photos 84 and 85).



Photo 84

Photo 83



Photo 85

Street Furniture and Monuments

There is a limited amount of street furniture in Ravensworth but the range that exists includes several important items, which make a valuable contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The most prominent item on the Village Green is the cross base (photo 86). Although the telephone kiosk (photo 87) positioned to the west of the Green is of a standard national design, it has an important



Photo 86



Photo 87

place in the community and appears well cared for. It is an important landmark, though a little lost against the backcloth of houses. Slightly smaller, but similarly important, is the post box set in the wall of 58 The



Photo 88

Green. A few bench seats are positioned at strategic points around the village often to take advantage of particular views (photo 88). These are usually serviceable but could benefit from some periodic maintenance. There are a few bins that are grouped by one of these seats. Away from the village on the approach from the north is a monument erected to celebrate the millennium (photo 89).



Photo 89

Street lighting is provided throughout the village on a series of modern brackets mounted on existing poles, these are quite sparse and their design is poor (photo 90) in a historic context.



Photo 90

Character

Functions and Uses

Ravensworth is primarily a commuter village for Darlington, Teeside and Richmond thanks to the close proximity of the A66 and its easy access to the A1(M). This makes Ravensworth a tranquil escape from a busy workplace.

The historically important agricultural sector now employs only a small number of people and the stone quarrying has substantially disappeared from the area. Just to the north of the village is Ravensworth Nurseries a thriving horticultural business.

Ravensthorpe still retains a primary school, village hall and a public house but there is no village shop or post office. There is a limited bus service to the village.

Photo 91

Views and Approaches

The nature of the topography around Ravensthorpe means that from the east –west running ridge a mile south of the village extensive distance views can be enjoyed (photo 91). However, from other compass directions the village is generally well hidden.

From the south a green swathe of hedging acts to screen views of the village until you enter the Village



Photo 92



Photo 93



Green near the Chapel. The gaps in the hedging to the east do, however, afford views over the marshy land towards the castle (photo 92). From the north the continuous hedging is only broken in one place by a gateway near Holme Bridge (photo 93) and views can be enjoyed over the fields to the roof line of the properties along the north side of the village green that follow the higher ridge of land. The properties along this north approach then act like a funnel around the bend until the expanse of the Green gradually opens up. From the east the hedging is more intermittent and views can be glimpsed of the castle while approaching the village (photo 94). Interest is then sparked by the fine wall hiding Tofta House, until arriving in one corner of the Green it's full expanse stretches ahead.



Photo 94

From within the Conservation Area the gentle slope of the land from north to south and the associated ridge of high land a mile to the south means that views can be enjoyed south to the

surrounding countryside (photo 95 and 96). However, the position of the castle at close quarters to the south east is hidden by the buildings and hedges/shrubs/trees around the Green. As the majority of the properties front onto the Green the building frontages can be clearly enjoyed through 360 degrees. Views of the Village Green cannot be appreciated from the access roads because of the hedging, narrow entry points and curves of the road (photo 97).



Photo 95



Photo 112

Photo 96



Photo 97

Character Areas

Ravenworth Castle

To the south east of the village within the Conservation Area are the low-lying ruins of Ravenworth Castle (photo 98). As described earlier these consist of an open scrub/pasture and wetland area with some standing ruins. This area is of high archaeological value and has been recognised as being both a Schedule Ancient Monument and a Listed Building. Though the castle's link with the village is beyond question, its physical impact on the village is limited to the robbed building materials from the ruins that can now be seen



Photo 98

in some of the village properties. Views of the castle are appreciated through gaps in the hedges along the approaches from the east and south, but once within the village itself it is substantially hidden.

The Green

The Village Green is the dominant feature of Ravensworth village and the majority of the properties are to be found around it. It is roughly triangular in shape and gently slopes from its north east high point to the west and more steeply to the south. It is surrounded on all sides by buildings that consist mainly of two storey houses, either grouped in short terraces, semi-detached or occasionally detached (photo 99). These vary slightly in their relative position to the Village Green (photo 100). The gaps between the properties are small allowing access by foot and vehicles to the areas behind. The overall impression is of a continuous frontage. The lay of the land means that there is variation to the height of properties with roofs stepping to follow the contours of the land (photo 101). Where the gaps between buildings are larger, as they are around the Village Hall, the continuity of the frontage is maintained by the linking of the buildings with substantial walls (photo 102) thus



Photo 100



Photo 99



Photo 101

Photo 102



reinforcing the feeling of enclosure around the Green. The general unity in the colours of materials gives the impression of a homogeneous built form but on closer inspection there are unique differences between buildings such as the pointed arched windows of the Village Hall (photo 103) and Chapel (photo 104),

the deep flat lintels (photo 105) and the use of voussoirs (photo 106).



Photo 103



Photo 104



Photo 105



Photo 106

Photo 107

Mill House Farm/Forge Farm

This area leads away from the Village Green on the approach road from the north (A66). It is a short stretch of road with houses dotted along both sides at various orientations. The majority are detached but there is one group of three. This area has a greater proportion of single storey properties (photo 107) than elsewhere in the village. To the rear of the properties on the west is a large range of agricultural buildings which are of no particular interest in conservation terms (photo 108 and 109).



This area seems to be the site of a former mill and the building alongside the beck seems to reflect this former usage and is of particular interest (photo 110). The open grass verges in this location are important to the character of the area and as a precursor to the main Village Green.



Photo 108



Photo 109

Photo 110

Mill Close and Tofta House Developments

These two late twentieth century developments are very obviously modern and this is particularly evident in the standard highways design (photo 111), but overall they are not intrusive to the character of the area, due primarily to the form of the new buildings and the use of traditional materials similar to the local vernacular.



Mill Close (photo 112) was built in the 1970's as substantially a series of terraced properties around three sides of a green square set to the east. One other row of terraces and a detached property were built to the west of these which reinforces the enclosure of the Village Green (photo 113). The use of a pallet of local building materials (stone and pantile) on the prominent properties helps to assimilate these



Photo 112



Photo 111



buildings into the grain of the village, but on closer inspection the type of stonework, boundary treatment, change in proportions of solid over void etc. do mark the properties as essentially modern.

Mill Court to the rear of Tofta House (photo 114) was built in the 1990's and was designed as a tight group of substantially detached and linked properties related to an existing outbuilding group that was also converted. Use was also made here of similar materials and building forms which reflect the local vernacular of Ravensworth. Again, the overall impression of this development is one that is not intrusive to the character of the area, but on closer inspection some of its modern credentials become apparent.

Open Spaces and Trees

The critical open space in Ravensworth that contributes to the character of the Conservation Area is the expansive Village Green together with the associated grass verges and also the Castle with its surrounds.

The fairly comprehensively built frontages around the Green mean that there is little other open space of interest. The one exception to this being the area of trees between the Bay Horse Inn and Park House which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (photo 115).



There is one particular mature tree near the cross base that forms a focal point within the Village Green (photo 116), but



other more recently planted specimens (photo 117) should also be respected for their ability to contribute to the character of the Green in the future.

The boundary of the Conservation Area was originally drawn to include a number of surrounding fields, particularly to the north behind the built frontage sloping down to Holme Beck and again behind the built frontages to the west. The fields are substantially pasture but some are arable and provide a valuable setting for the village within the context of its agricultural landscape.

Conclusion

Ravensworth is a Conservation Area with a wealth of history, a blend of landscape and buildings which span centuries of activity. This has produced a highly attractive area with a homogeneity of forms and architectural styles, using local material in a local vernacular style.

Consideration could be given to a further outward extension of the Conservation Area to include the landscape of the 'Park' associated with Ravensworth Castle.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The District Council's aim is to ensure that the existing character and appearance of Ravensworth's Conservation Area should be preserved and enhanced.

Listed Buildings

Some historic buildings are 'listed' by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport on the recommendation of English Heritage because of their exceptional interest. Listed Building Consent is required for any work to the interior or exterior of the building that would affect its special interest. More information about listed buildings is available from the Council. Whilst the aim of listed building legislation is to preserve and enhance them for their own sake, any changes affecting them should also be considered in terms of their effect on the Conservation Area.

Buildings at Risk

The buildings in Ravensworth appear to be in good condition. The only buildings that might be considered to be at risk are those unlisted structures which make up the outbuildings and subsidiary elements such as walls which are generally to the rear of properties. Such buildings do contribute to the character of the Conservation Area and should be maintained in a decent state of repair.

Preservation and Enhancement

Preservation and enhancement will be achieved by promoting and, where necessary, approving proposals for schemes which contribute positively to the character of the area and ensuring that permission is not granted for the demolition or alteration of any building or structure if it would be harmful to the character or appearance of the area. The designation of a Conservation Area is not intended to prevent change, especially that which would enhance the character of the area, and ensure its viability as a settlement. In particular, the proposed design and materials should accord with those traditionally used.

The open spaces and trees which have been identified by this study as being crucial to the character of the village should be preserved.

Design Guidance

The general design guidance for any work requiring planning permission in the Conservation Area is to aim to ensure that works are of a high quality and at the same time preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. In particular :

The increasing high profile of achieving a sustainable environment and life style are likely to present further challenges to the historic environment. The use of alternative energy in the form of solar panels, wind turbines, air source heat pumps, local refuse and recycling collections may all have the potential to detrimentally affect the historic environment. As proposals come forward, each case will have to be considered on its merits but consideration should be given to the environmental benefits gained from each.

Action Points

The character appraisal should be taken into account when considering applications through the planning process. • The design and materials should accord with those traditionally used.

- New buildings should reflect the simple forms of the existing historic buildings in the village.
- The siting of new development should be carefully considered to ensure that it compliments the existing grain of the Conservation Area.
- New developments should not obstruct identified views of importance.
- The immediate and long term impact of any new development on existing trees must be

carefully considered. New planting should respect important views through the Conservation Area.

Wirescape

Overhead wires do not intrude at Ravensworth in the same way as they can in some other Conservation Areas. There are some parts of the village that would benefit from the reduction in overhead cabling and poles, particularly around The Bay Horse Inn, by the Chapel and the access to the Green from the north. These could benefit from the undergrounding of services and the removal of surplus poles. The large central Village Green which dominates the Conservation Area is clear of poles and thus those that do exist are visually sidelined.

New Development

The opportunity for further development within the Conservation Area is fairly restricted. Those open areas and particularly the Greens and surrounding agriculture land have a positive contribution to the character of the area and their preservation is critical. The open areas in public ownership, such as the Greens, are not likely to be subject to development pressure however some other open spaces such as gardens may attract the attentions of developers. In these cases a robust assessment of the value of the open space, along with views into and out of the area, should be made to establish the contribution which each particular site makes to the character of the Conservation Area. If it is found that its contribution is important and the character of the area would be harmed, then development should be resisted. All proposed development should have regard to the special character identified in this Appraisal. Although each proposal will be treated on its merits, attention needs to be paid to the cumulative effect of issues such as parking, services etc. on the character of the Conservation Area.

The harm of specific small scale alterations that can be undertaken to individual properties, without the need for planning permission, can have a cumulative harmful effect on the character of Conservation Areas. When carrying out alterations to windows, doors, roofs etc., care needs to be taken to ensure works are sympathetic to the character of the area. There are, however, other small changes which can have detrimental effects. For example, gas bottles, wheelie bins and oil tanks can be very visually intrusive and should be obscured from view wherever possible. Other examples include insensitively sited satellite dishes.

Sustainability

- The open spaces and trees that have been identified as being crucial to the character of the village should be preserved.
- Care and special attention needs to be given to proposals with sustainable credentials to ensure the character of the Conservation Area is not detrimentally affected.

Community Involvement

A summary document of this Draft Appraisal will be circulated in Ravensworth and to the various interested bodies, English Heritage, North Yorkshire County Council etc. and comments invited. The comments will be considered and a final Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will then be produced. The Appraisal will be reported to a Committee of the District Council and formally adopted.

Useful Information, Appendices and Contact Details

Designations

Ravensworth Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the Conservation Area.

Listed Buildings within Ravensworth Conservation Area

Cross Base	The Green	Grade II
2 Ravensworth (Sunset Cottage)	The Green	Grade II
20 Ravensworth with building attached to left	The Green	Grade II
24 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
26 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
28 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
Wall and railings to front gardens of 24, 26, and 28 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
30 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
Ravensworth Castle	The Green	Grade II
Pound	The Green	Grade II
Village Hall	The Green	Grade II
41 and 43 Ravensworth (West View Cottages)	The Green	Grade II

Bridge over Holme Beck approx 120 metres north-west of Mill	The Green	Grade II
Mill Farmhouse and front garden wall	The Green	Grade II
3 Ravensworth (Mill Farmhouse Cottage)	The Green	Grade II
15 Ravensworth (Ash Cottage) with attached outbuildings to right	The Green	Grade II
Park House	The Green	Grade II
Cowhouse approx 15 metres west of Park	The Green	Grade II
Coach-house approx 30 metres west of Park House	The Green	Grade II
Enclosure for livestock accommodation	The Green	Grade II
31 Ravensworth (Park Farmhouse)	The Green	Grade II
39 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
Holm Bridge over Holme Beck	Waitlands Lane	Grade II
Tofta House	Whashton Road	Grade II
Cart-shed approx 5 metres to north of Tofta House	Whashton Road	Grade II

Tree Preservation Orders

Area Tree Preservation Order no 2/74 at Park Farm.