

Wheldrake

A village in a landscape

2014

Wheldrake
Village
Design
Statement

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Introduction

The concept of residents producing and publishing their own village design statement was introduced by the Countryside Commission in 1996. The idea was to encourage local people to identify the features and characteristics of their village which should be enhanced and to produce a document which could influence the operation of the statutory planning system. To date eleven villages in the York area have produced Village Design Statements (VDS).



St Helen's Church, Wheldrake

An effective Village Design Statement :

- is developed, researched, written and edited by local people.
- is representative of the village as a whole.
- has involved a wide section of the village community in its production.

Who is it for?

It provides guidance for residents, architects, planners, developers and the local planning authority each of whom should be able to demonstrate that they have reflected the views of local people, as expressed in the document, in their development proposals. The contribution of minor details such as windows and boundary treatments often cannot be controlled through the development control process so the role of the individual property owner is crucial in maintaining a traditional aspect to the village.

What does it say?

- Describes the visual character of the village in its surrounding Green Belt landscape.
- Demonstrates how local character and distinctiveness can be safeguarded and enhanced in any new development.

The VDS is used:

- To influence all forms and scales of development within the parish boundary.
- With the statutory planning system in the local planning context.
- To manage change in the village, not prevent it.

The production of the Wheldrake VDS

Wheldrake village first started work upon the VDS in February 2010. A steering group was formed in April 2010. A local history exhibition "Wheldrake – Then and Now" launched the process in June of that year. The views of local people were sought through a questionnaire to all households in the village, 30% were returned. A draft document was placed upon the Parish Council website to give everyone the opportunity to get involved in the process, and to ensure that the VDS was representative of the views of Wheldrake parishioners. Copies of the draft VDS and reply forms were placed in village meeting places and their availability publicised in the Wheldrake Parish Magazine. Since these events several drafts of the VDS have been produced and council officers have commented on the contents.

In compiling the Design Guidelines appended to the sections on specific elements of village planning we have paid close attention to the views of local people that were expressed in the questionnaires. Some key issues have also been identified and included.

The end product represents the hopes and desires of local residents **and includes some aspirations that are outside current planning regulations.**

City of York Council is currently preparing a Local Plan. This Village Design Statement will support the Local Plan's strategic objective to protect preserve and enhance York's exceptional historic legacy, including its architecture and archaeology, significant views, landscape setting and the distinctive characteristics of York's villages and neighbourhoods. This Village Design Statement was approved as a draft Supplementary Planning Document to the City of York Council's emerging draft Local Plan on ****.

Design Principles used in drawing up the guidelines for Wheldrake



Elizabethan House and Cottage in Main Street were restored in the 1960s

In drawing up the design guidelines the members of the Village Design Statement Group used the following principles, suggested by community consultation, to guide their thinking.

- Access for all - access to all public spaces, major pedestrian routes, streets and leisure spaces will be accessible to all sectors of the community at all times.
- Creativity and innovation – the Village Design Statement is intended to encourage creativity and innovation whilst maintaining overall coherence and character.
- Connectivity - all areas should be linked to each other and back into the existing village centre, reinforcing Wheldrake as ‘a connected community’.
- Visually attractive – a sense of delight and enjoyment for all will be sought.
- Heritage - visual references should be made to Wheldrake’s heritage in terms of agricultural connections, and building materials and vernacular architectural styles which are currently in use in the Conservation Area.
- Identity – new developments will be distinctive whilst sustaining and reflecting Wheldrake’s existing characteristics.
- Environmentally friendly and sustainable.
- Local context - The quality of the surrounding Green Belt countryside is appreciated by the people of Wheldrake.
- Enhance and protect nature conservation and maintain biodiversity.



Open frontages, estate railings, low hedges and low brick walls complement the York stone paving and verges in Main Street.

Wheldrake village in its landscape

Wheldrake lies in the southern part of the Vale of York. It is situated 7 miles (11 km) to the south east of York and is administratively part of the City of York Unitary Authority. It is situated between the A19 trunk road and the River Derwent and is reached by an unclassified road which leaves the A19 at Crockey Hill. Minor roads to Thorganby, Elvington, Escrick and Crockey Hill meet in the village.

Our wider landscape comprises many elements which were formed over millions of years, and which are constantly evolving. The scene is shaped by a combination of natural processes and human influences, and exhibits features from different stages in its history and development. A specific backdrop may include soils which are thousands of years old, a medieval building, and young trees planted only last week. The particular combination of influences provides each landscape character area with a unique identity.

The Wheldrake landscape covers an approximate area of 4,300 acres (17 km²) and embraces a number of subtly individual landscapes from the flat, expansive clay lands in the north to the gently sloping, sandy and fertile well drained soils of the moraine across the centre and the flat alluvial flood plain of the River Derwent to the east. It contains some very different farm buildings expressing a variety of architectural styles and materials.

To understand what makes the landscape distinctive it is helpful to understand both the physical and human influences that have shaped them.



A traditional field gate and stile leading to the Wheldrake Ings Nature Reserve

Geology

The foundation of any landscape is the geology that lies beneath it. Although this may not always be visible on the surface, the type and characteristics of the underlying rocks and soils will affect the landform, vegetation and the style and construction of the buildings that develop upon it.

During the last glaciation, the Vale of York was glaciated with ice moving south-eastwards and ploughing into a large glacial lake (Lake Humber) impounded by North Sea ice blocking the Humber Gap. The ice overrode the lake deposits forming a terminal moraine at Escrick and Wheldrake which is now confirmed as the last glacial maximum limit. About 11,500 years ago ice retreated, forming another moraine at York. The impounding of melt water resulted in several glacial lakes in front of, between and behind the moraines. The bedrock below Wheldrake is Sherwood Sandstone of Lower Triassic age, dating from over 240 million years ago, though its influence is little felt on the surface. There is no easily obtained local stone, so buildings were historically constructed of wood with wattle and clay daub infilling. Then, from the 16th Century, the brick and pantiles made from the local clays appear.

Drainage

The eastern area of Wheldrake drains towards the River Derwent, via a stream that used to be called the Wilgesic that runs along the base of the northern slope of the moraine. The north-west part of the parish slopes very gently towards the Ouse. At the watershed, which is most visible where Benjy Lane meets the sharp bend in Wheldrake Lane, there is a flat poorly draining area which is inclined to flood in winter and after heavy rain.

Other areas which are prone to flooding and waterlogging are sited where the base clays of the Escrick moraine meet the impermeable clays of the former glacial lakes, notably on Greengales Lane and the Thorganby Road just beyond the allotments. The sand layer above the impermeable clay beds within the moraine supplied the many wells and springs in and around the older houses in Main Street and may be the origin of the village's name. Wheldrake — a tract of land with wells.



Boggy area to the south of Benjy Lane



Land use

The glaciers and their associated lakes left Wheldrake with a mixture of fine sand and clay soils which have traditionally been used for arable agriculture, and this continues to be the case today. The agricultural landscape includes both arable and pastoral farmland and farming still represents the predominant land use within the district. From the end of the Second World War until the mid-1990s, the increased mechanisation and efficiency of farming led to changes in landscape character across the district with significant loss of hedgerows, ponds and drainage systems, and increased use of herbicides and fertilisers. High grain prices led to ploughing of more marginal land and new construction techniques led to the production of large, standardised farm buildings.

Recent diversification has led to an increase in areas being used for leisure purposes such as a golf course, fishing lakes and caravan pitches as well as conversion of redundant farm buildings to office spaces and dwellings.

A number of local farms have joined government sponsored agri-environmental schemes which has resulted in the restoration of hedgerows and ponds, and the encouragement of biodiversity through environmentally sensitive cultivation practices.

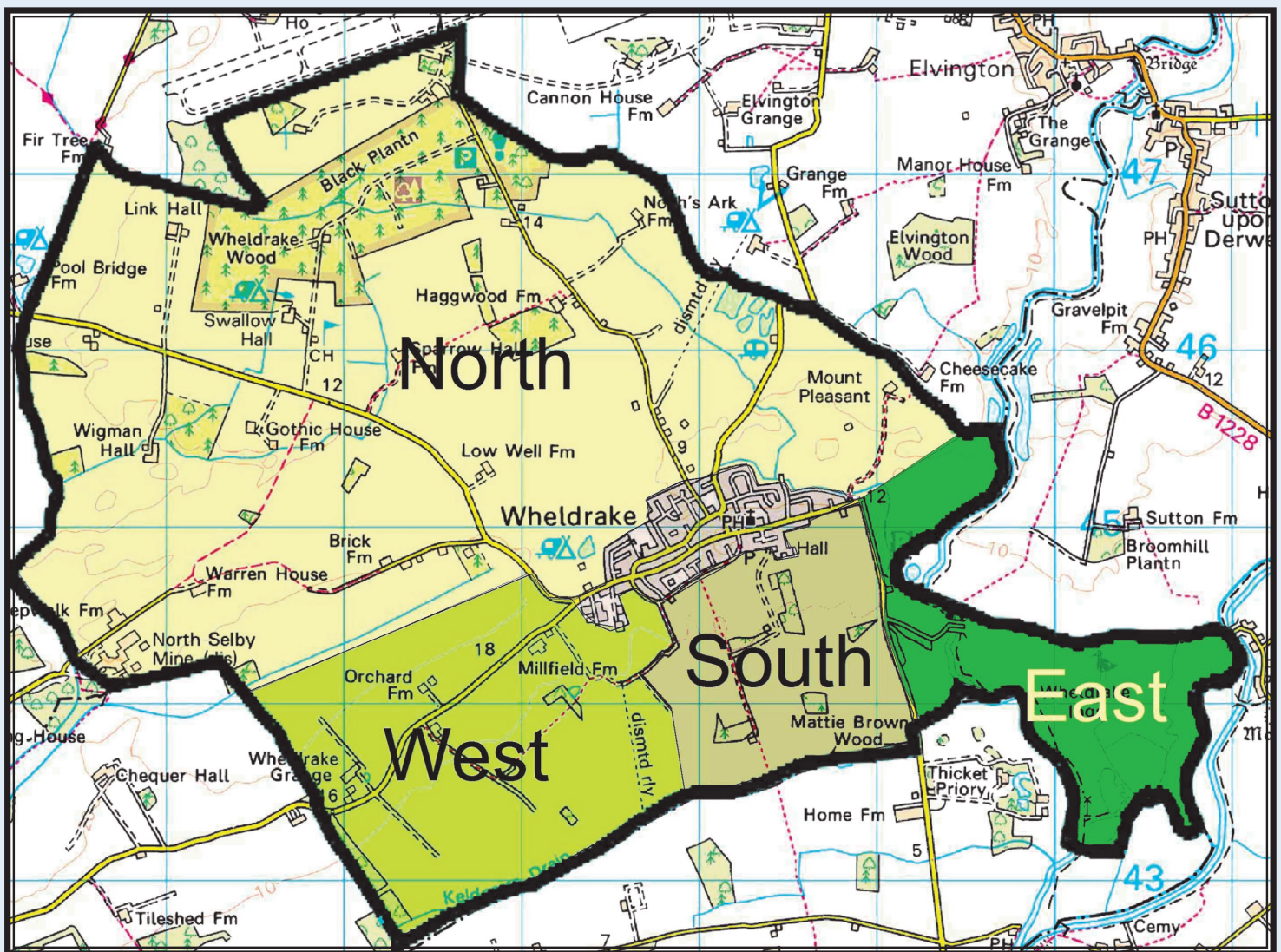


The flat area to the south of the village is used for growing arable crops in large open fields.

Countryside character areas in Wheldrake parish

In Wheldrake Parish particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, field patterns and human settlement have created landscapes of subtly unique character. We have called these landscape character areas. In the parish four such landscape areas were identified by the Village Design Statement Group. Broadly, this identification involved the following stages:

- A desk study which involved the collection and review of existing reports, maps and other published data. This data was used to produce maps, which indicated areas with common characteristics.
- A period of field survey during which subjective responses to the landscape were recorded.
- Considering the pressures and changes influencing each character area in order to identify key landscape management and improvement issues associated with planning.
- Formulating the specific guidelines on Page 11 to apply to these areas of the Parish.



Countryside Character Areas in Wheldrake Parish

Northern character area

This is a broad arc of flat, mainly arable land to the north of the village.

Location and boundaries

This area stretches from the Derwent Valley in the east of the parish and sweeps round in a broad arc to Benjy Lane in the west.

Key characteristics

- Some areas of sandy soils such as Sandholes Common.
- Wheldrake Woods planted on sandy area in the north.
- Generally agricultural land growing root and cereal crops.
- Leisure uses as golf course, fishing lakes and caravan sites.

Formative influences

- Formed at the end of the last ice age on the glacial deposits of the Vale of York. It was the bed of a lake that was dammed behind the Escrick moraine at the end of the ice age. When the moraine was breached by the waters of the Derwent in the east, the lake drained, leaving behind widespread deposits of clay with some sandy pockets that had formed as alluvium on its bed.

Landscape character

- Mostly flat open fields with thorn hedges. Some post and wire fences.
- Red brick farm houses of 18th century date with matching farm buildings.
- Farms well set back from the York Road.
- Modern prefabricated agricultural buildings added in the late 20th century.

Human response

- The site of the medieval north and north east fields with common and waste beyond.
- Enclosed in the 18th century to form a number of mixed farms.
- With the decline in agricultural incomes, diversification increased and redundant farm dwellings and buildings were sold off or converted.

Looking forward

- Use for leisure purposes has increased in recent years.
- More diversification is inevitable.
- Take up of agri-environmental schemes is evident in the replanting of hedges, encouragement of hedgerow trees and the conservation strips around field margins.

Some key issues

- Making agri-environment schemes financially attractive.
- Ensuring the sustainability and environmentally benign nature of other diversification plans.



Wheldrake Woods

Eastern character area (Derwent Valley)

This is the area to the east of the Thorganby Road. There is some pasture, and a small amount of arable land on the site of the deserted medieval hamlet of Waterhouses, which is located on the left of the single track lane to the Ings, but it is mainly the Wheldrake Ings.

The meadows at Wheldrake Ings are nationally important, and are the reason why Wheldrake Ings, as part of the Lower Derwent Valley, is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It is for its bird interest that Wheldrake Ings is also designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) along with the rest of the Lower Derwent Valley. In addition, it is a RAMSAR site (wetland of international importance), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a National Nature Reserve (NNR).

Location and boundaries

It comprises all the land between the Derwent and the Beck as far north as the east-west drain that remains from a former course of the Derwent.

Key characteristics

- It is a flat area of alluvial clay ranging from 3.7m in the centre to 5.2m above sea level near the north boundary.
- Widespread flooding in winter and after periods of extreme rainfall.

Formative influences

- The Derwent Valley floodplain was formed at the end of the last ice age when the lake of melt water being held back by the Escrick moraine burst a channel through into Lake Humber which then itself drained away as the ice blocking the Humber Estuary melted.

Landscape character

- Wheldrake Ings supports a type of rich hay meadow, found on seasonally flooded neutral soils, that has been destroyed almost everywhere else. The diversity of flowering plants is a result of continuous traditional management and the absence of agricultural chemicals. Plants such as greater burnet, the very rare narrow-leaved water-dropwort and a whole host of different grasses characterise the meadows.

- The meadows are home to snipe, skylark, lapwing, redshank and occasionally, lekking ruff. In winter, the flooded meadows attract vast numbers of wintering wildfowl and waders, including bean geese and wild swans. Barn owls may be seen quartering the meadows, especially after the hay has been cut. The reserve frequently plays host to a range of passage waders, wildfowl and other birds. The vast diversity of plants, invertebrates and birds as well as the ancient hay meadow landscape, give Wheldrake Ings an atmosphere that is unique.

Human response

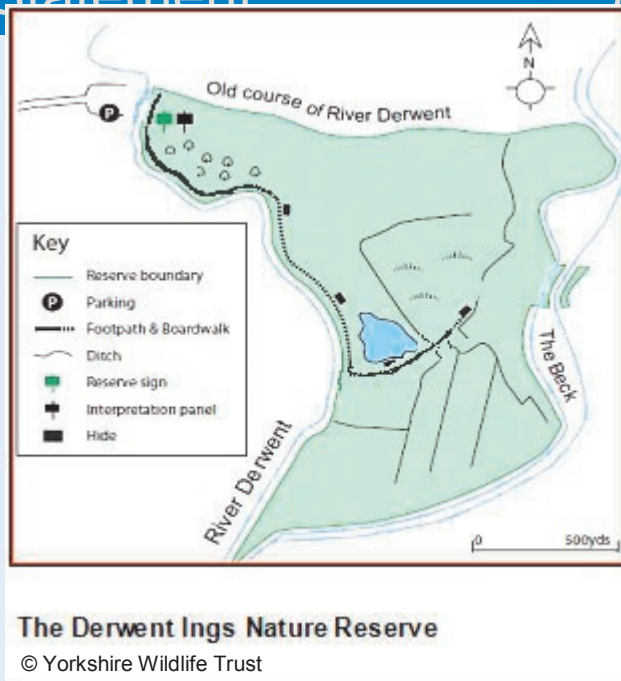
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust bought Wheldrake Ings in 1973. The reserve is managed as part of the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve
- Soon after purchase, the Trust installed penstocks in the two main ditches draining the site, allowing fine control of the water levels on the reserve. Since then, management at the Ings has had different focuses over time.
- The hay meadows of Wheldrake Ings are managed as they have been for hundreds of years. The meadows are cut in July and stock turned out to graze the aftermath until October. Nature then takes over, and the winter floods enrich the meadows with sediment washed down from the moors.
- A bailey bridge replaced the old wooden drawbridge in the 1960s and a footpath and boardwalk allow walkers access to the river bank and hides.
- An eco friendly building and car park was built by Natural England in late 2011.

Looking forward

- The future for Wheldrake Ings is bright, as Yorkshire Wildlife Trust continues to work closely with Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Lightowler Trust. Their support allows Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to carry out the huge amount of on-going management required on this 160ha reserve such as water control, ditch and pool restoration, scrub removal, weed control and biological monitoring.

Some key issues

- Superficially the birds and the meadows require the opposite conditions to thrive. Large areas of open water over winter and spring allow wintering, migrating and breeding birds to thrive; yet such long inundation quickly damages the rare hay meadow communities.
- A management regime is being trialled that will hopefully give a winter water level high enough to support the internationally important numbers of birds which use the reserve while also being low enough to leave the best meadow areas free from water, so allowing them to thrive.



The bailey bridge built to replace the old drawbridge to the Ings

Western character area

- An east to west orientated strip of very fertile, well drained and easily worked land, raised above the surrounding area. The medieval village was built on the westward extension of this land to take advantage of these qualities.

Location and boundaries

- It lies towards the southern part of the parish running roughly east to west surmounted by the road to Escrick.
- Bounded by Benjy Lane to the north.

Key characteristics

- This ridge is raised above the level of the land to the north and south by just a few metres.
- Very gently sloping.
- Arable fields growing mainly oilseed rape and cereals.

Formative influences

- The terminal moraine of the Vale of York ice sheet which deposited large amounts of sand and clay.

Landscape character

- Expansive open fields bounded by generally well kept hedges or post and wire fences.
- Some small copses.
- The site of the defunct North Selby Mine.

Human response

- The higher land made it more exposed to winds and thus the site of the windmill.
- One of the first areas of the parish to be enclosed.
- The site of a Roman farm.
- Continuous enclosure throughout the medieval period.

Looking forward

- An encouraging uptake of agri-environmental schemes.

Some key issues

- Making agri-environment schemes financially attractive.
- Ensuring the sustainability and environmentally benign nature of other diversification plans.



The moraine slopes very gently northwards.

Southern character area

This is the area to the south of the medieval planned village that was originally the site of the manorial hall and possibly a short lived medieval castle.

Location and boundaries

- The northern boundary is the South Back Lane of the village. It is bounded on the East by the Thorganby Road and then the parish boundary to the south.

Key characteristics

- Expansive flat open arable fields.
- Some small copses.
- One farm close to the village.

Formative influences

- The flat nature of the land is due to it being in front of the Escrick moraine on the bed of the glacial Lake Humber.
- In the dry glacial periods, before the final melt set in and lakes formed, cold winds blew arid sands across the plain in front of the Vale of York glacier.



Field path to Thorganby from South Back Lane.

Landscape character

- Well-tended open arable fields.
- A single well-kept 19th century farmhouse with outbuildings.
- Modern prefabricated agricultural buildings.

Human response

- Much of this area was demesne land in the occupation of the lord of the manor at the time of the planned village.
- In later years it was the chief landholding in the village.
- The farm dwelling has always been on the holding.
- The land to the south of the back lane was the original cultivated village land bounded by a turf wall.
- Sold off by the Escrick Estate in the mid-20th century.
- A move away from dairy-farming in the face of falling returns.

Some key issues

- Sustainability in the face of world issues.
- Making agri-environment schemes financially attractive.
- Ensuring the environmentally benign nature of diversification plans.

The setting of the village in the parish

Key characteristics

- Defined boundaries to the built area
- Set on the east west axis of the Escrick moraine.
- Higher than the surrounding countryside.
- Appears to nestle on the high ground due to low building heights.
- Set amid open fields on three sides.
- Square grey limestone tower of church is the highest point.
- Approached from open countryside on all routes.
- A distinct impression of pinkish red brick within green and lush foliage.
- Grass verges and hedgerows beautify the approach roads.
- Historic views of the church from several places in the parish.
- Disused water tower.
- Mature shrubs softening hard boundaries.

Some key issues

- Upkeep of approach roads
- Retaining mature trees as disease strikes.
- Flooding at times on all approach roads.
- Perceived speed of traffic approaching the village.
- Lack of public open spaces.
- Countryside paths terminate at busy roads that have no footways.
- There are no circular walks.

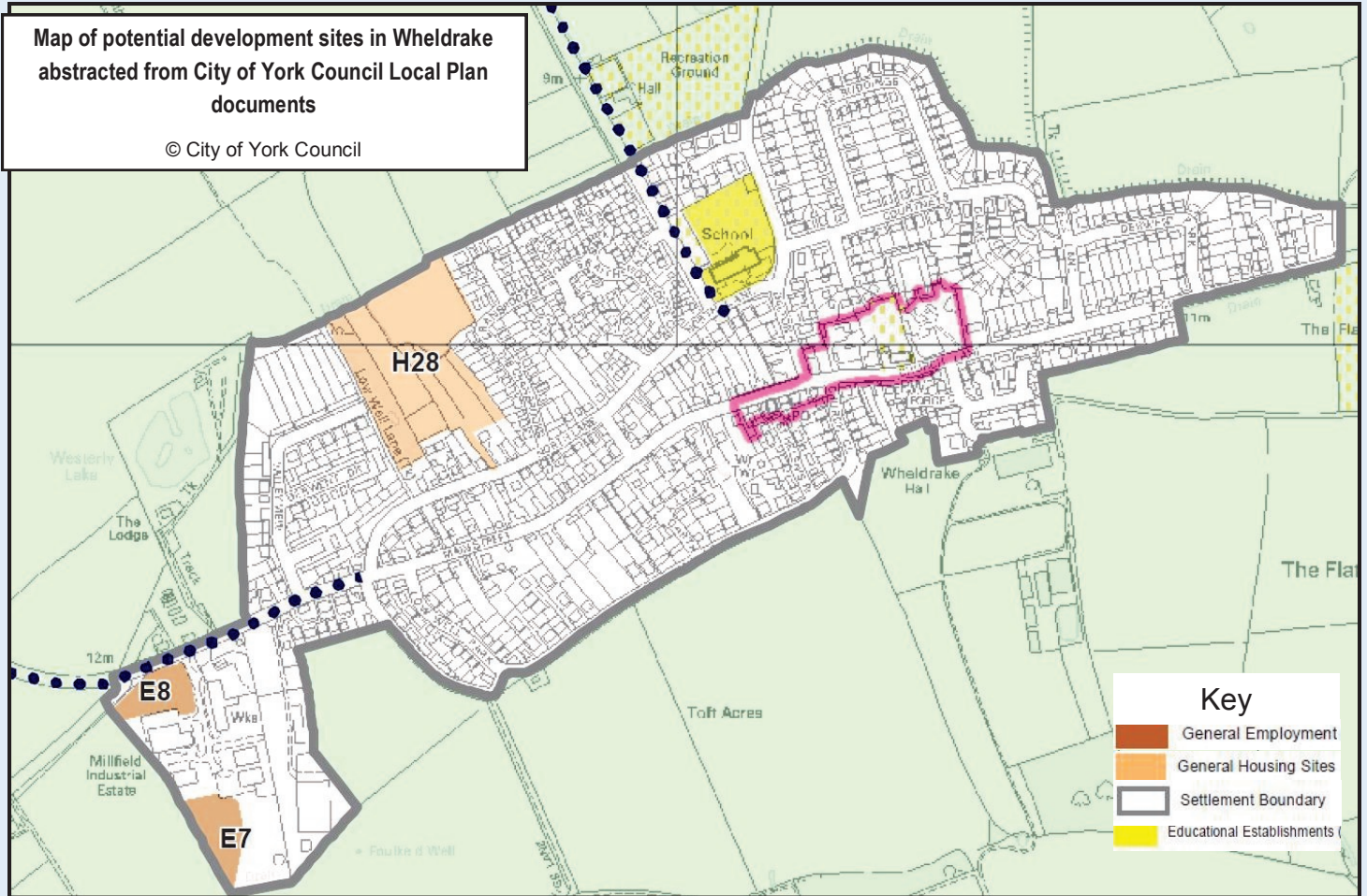
Design guidelines for the countryside character areas

1. Any new development on the village periphery should be in keeping with both the neighbouring properties and surrounding countryside and give high priority to landscape design to protect and enhance the views of and from the village.
2. The planting of native broadleaved trees and shrubs together with the re-introduction of hedges both within and beyond the outskirts of the village envelope should be encouraged to protect wildlife and maintain a natural landscape.
3. Any developments should not detract from the open character of the Green Belt nor prejudice the setting of Wheldrake village.
4. The retention and maintenance of the wide grass verges on the approach roads to the village should be encouraged.
5. The effects of plans to locate industrial or commercial premises in Wheldrake Parish should be considered in context of:
 - Pollution
 - Traffic flows
 - Village amenity
 - Visual impact
 - Wildlife protection
6. International and national nature conservation designations should be strictly enforced. The Lower Derwent Valley is a protected bird habitat, so the assessment of energy resource must take into account the potential for ornithological constraints in the wider area.

The York Local Plan

The Wheldrake Village Design Statement will support the York Local Plan’s strategic objective to protect preserve and enhance York’s exceptional historic legacy, including its architecture and archaeology, significant views, landscape setting and the distinctive characteristics of York’s villages and neighbourhoods.

A potential housing site (H28 3.15ha to the north of North Lane, estimated 75 dwellings), and two employment sites (E7, 0.5 ha and E8, 0.45ha on Millfield Industrial Estate) are currently under consideration as part of the emerging Local Plan.



Green belt

The York Local Plan proposes to introduce a permanent Green Belt, which has never been in place before. This will protect and preserve York’s setting and special character by ensuring that inappropriate development is not permitted in the Green Belt.



Mount Pleasant



Brick Farm’s outbuildings

Wheldrake village

Some key 2011 population statistics

At the time of the 2011 census there were 2107 people living in 840 households in the parish. Of these 1031 people aged between 16 and 74 were in work and 393 not in jobs. Out of the 393 who were not economically active 261 were retired and many of the rest were full time homemakers or sick or looking after a dependent.

The statistics also reveal that a large majority of people who live in Wheldrake are not employed in traditional rural occupations and that the bulk of workers, over 800, travel to their place of work using motorised transport. Only 94 people work mainly from home and another 59 travel to work on foot and 17 use bicycles.

Outline history of Wheldrake

Aerial surveys of Wheldrake parish, show an extensive Iron Age or Roman field system, visible as crop marks to the north of the village. There are ditched enclosures, round houses, other enclosures, a track-way and possibly a square barrow. In 2002, a Roman farm was discovered at Wheldrake as a new main water pipe was being laid near Millfield Farm. Excavation of the site revealed structural remains, four Roman graves, animal bones, pottery and the remains of a main Roman road.

After the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, Wheldrake was given by William I to a follower called William Malet. However, by the time that the Domesday Book was written in 1086 the village belonged to William de Percy and was known as Coldrid. There was extensive woodland, 20 acres (81,000 m²) of meadow, three fisheries, a water mill and the church. From a nucleus of about 350 acres (1.4 km²) of land lying around a small deliberately-planned village of 16 plots, the cultivated area began to be expanded. Forest and waste land was being cleared but there was still a large amount of common land to the north of the village.

By the 14th century the land was farmed as four open arable fields with common land for grazing animals. Several gifts of land in Wheldrake were made to monasteries and by the end of the 15th century Fountains Abbey owned a large part of the land in the village. When King Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries, the land in Wheldrake which had belonged to Fountains and other abbeys was confiscated and granted to private individuals. These individuals became the landlords, collecting rent from the farmers and householders who lived in the village. In 1609, when a survey was made, the open fields of Wheldrake still existed. There were 58 leaseholders and 13 freeholders in the village. There were 65 houses. Fifteen people rented only their dwelling houses and no land. These included a weaver and a miller. There was a windmill to the west of the village on a field which is still called Millfield.

In 1773 the landlord, Bielby Thompson, applied to parliament to enclose the land of the manor. It was then that the common land and the village fields were made into enclosed farms with fences and ditches around them. Around 1778-9, the body of the village church was demolished and rebuilt in the Georgian style, although the thirteenth-century stone tower was retained.

There were between 30 and 40 farmers in Wheldrake in the early part of the 19th century. Some lived on farms outside the built-up area of the village but many still had farmhouses with yards, barns and stables in the village Main Street. The chief crops that were grown were oats, peas, turnips and rape. Much of the farm land was used for pasture for animals or as hay meadows. Most of the land was still owned by a landlord and rented to the local farmers. At this time there were a large number of shopkeepers and traders in the village providing for the needs of agricultural workers in Wheldrake and the neighbouring villages.

In the 20th century the main landowner sold many of the farms and houses that he owned in the village. These were bought by farmers and other private individuals. From the mid-20th century as people became more able to travel to their places of work and to larger shops in towns by motorised transport, the village shops and craft businesses suffered a decline in custom and started to close down. Conversely, people employed in towns found the rural environment attractive and chose to make their homes in Wheldrake. The result of this was an increase in the number of houses being built so that the old nucleus of the village is now almost surrounded by late 20th century housing developments.

Character and settlement areas within Wheldrake village

Wheldrake retains the strongly rural, pastoral character of a linear village founded in agriculture. Its legacy of historic buildings and the qualities of its streetscape also generate a distinct sense of place, of arrival from the isolated countryside.

The medieval form and layout of the village survive, with long narrow plots of land extending to the “back lanes”, North Lane and South Back Lane. The latter retains its open setting beyond, but residential development now comes right up to much of North Lane, though important historical links still exist such as Broad Highway.

A total of five character areas has been identified within the village. (See map on pages 18-19.)

Conservation area and North Lane



Typical Main Street property.

This area consists of the three long parallel zones orientated roughly west to east along North Back Lane, Main Street and South Back Lane and, *additionally, Dalton Hill intersection and developments to the south west of Main Street have been added to this character area.*

The official Conservation area of 18.9 ha was designated in 1979. It concentrates upon the historic Main Street, and its continuation as Church Lane, and the “back lanes” established as part of the medieval field pattern. Wheldrake exhibits a classic medieval village “toft and croft” layout. In the Conservation Area the Parish Church (Grade I) and twenty-four other buildings are listed, a notable proportion for a village of this size, reflecting its historic importance and architectural qualities. The Church of St Helen has a 14th Century west tower and a 5 sided apse of 1779. Numbers 53/55 Main Street are probably late 16th Century or early 17th Century in origin and have surviving exposed timber framing to the front wall. Other buildings date mainly from the 18th Century, with several from the early part of the century, and examples of 3 - cell, lobby-entry plan form.

The long, quite narrow Main Street, gently unfolding to the eye through its curves and reaching a slight rise at St Helen’s Church, combined with the way buildings are grouped along it, creates a linear village street of distinct quality. Grass verges running faithfully along the street’s length contribute to this and act as a setting for the buildings.

Buildings are mostly 18th and 19th Century cottages interspersed by more imposing individual houses and farmhouses, clustered along the street frontage and linked by walls, or set behind small walled front gardens or hedges. The result is an attractively varied, yet rhythmical and very cohesive streetscape. Several valuable groups of farm buildings retain the agricultural character of the village, together with the outbuildings extending down the narrow plots behind the frontage properties, and the several lanes and yards that create spatial interest and intimacy.

The historical evolution of the physical fabric of St Helen’s Church and the variety of materials used make for an unusual and arresting building. Its siting, the nearby trees and association with the attractive group of buildings adjoining, including the former schoolhouse, create an enclave of poignant character at the east end of the village.

The simple qualities of the cottages and farm buildings are complemented by the heritage of the local vernacular detailing in natural materials found in many of the more individually historic properties: including tumbled-in brickwork,



St Helen’s Church (Grade I listed)

eaves banding, brick coping to gables, string courses, and flat window arches of gauged brick. There are many examples through the village of Yorkshire sliding sash windows. Cat slide roof forms are typical of historic rear extensions.



Listed buildings. (See Appendix 2)

Key characteristics

- The surviving medieval boundary pattern and its reflection in the form and layout of buildings and plots.
- The strong linear and cohesive character of the Main Street, arising from the grouping of buildings, traditional boundary walls and railings and the line of the street with its grass verge.
- The rich legacy of historic buildings and local vernacular details, creating with the street pattern a distinct sense of place.

Some key issues

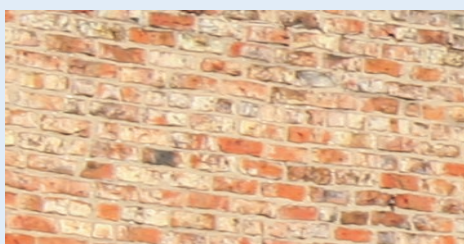
- Unsightly overhead power cables mar many streetscapes.
- Street lighting is inconsistent.
- Parking interrupts traffic flow and intrudes on historic views.
- New estate developments have deviated away from the traditional hue and styles of the older buildings in the village.
- Excessive infilling on Main Street.
- Loss of gardens to development within the village.
- New housing developments have been built at high densities resulting in very small gardens.
- Recent building of three storey homes on small plots breaking the village tradition .
- Builders using mixed architectural styles.

Materials and hue

- Buildings are mostly two storey, with a high proportion of 18th century pinkish coloured brick, clay pantile roofs, and some later use of Welsh slate or plain clay tiles.
- Boundaries are low brick walls, low hedges or estate railings: to the north side of Main Street many are open.
- Paths are York stone, some with decorative local cobbles as edging.



Local brick, cobble and York stone used to good effect.



Local pink coloured brick



Tumbled gabling



Yorkshire sliding sash window



String course

Design Guidelines for the conservation area

Building should respect and enhance the conservation area, so:

7. Height and massing should respect eaves and ridge lines and roof pitches of adjacent properties wherever possible.
8. They should use materials that respect the local character and surroundings. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that bricks and roof materials complement as closely as possible those of neighbouring properties.
9. Trees and natural features to be retained wherever possible.
10. Incorporate adequate parking within the curtilage of building plot wherever possible.
11. Parking should not dominate plots or disrupt the street scene by being brought to the front of buildings
12. Re-use of materials should be encouraged on appropriate sites.
13. Boundary treatments should be sympathetic to their location.
14. The use of traditional treatments such as open plan, hedges, iron estate style railings and low brick walls is encouraged along front boundaries.
15. Space should be maintained around dwellings to avoid the loss of soft landscaping.
16. Adhere strictly to all planning and building regulations and guidelines.
17. Seek to provide discreet storage for recycling containers wherever possible.
18. Consider retention of existing landscaping.
19. Avoid the creation of a terraced effect between neighbouring properties.
20. When considering any applications for energy micro-generation units, such as solar panels, wind generators in the conservation area, the potential impact on the character or appearance of the area should be considered, particularly views from public roads and paths.

Church Lane

This was the main area of piecemeal extension for the village before the late 20th century building developments.

Key characteristics

- The land slopes gently westwards down towards the Derwent floodplain and more steeply northwards down the slope of the moraine.
- A mosaic of ages, types and styles of dwelling, covering three centuries, which includes the old rectory, now used as a nursing home, and some pre and post war council built-dwellings.
- There is a mix of semi-detached two storey blocks of council built dwellings, semi-detached bungalows built for retired people, detached two storey houses and several individually built bungalows.
- Wide grass verges on one and sometimes both sides of the road give some unity to the streetscape.
- Overhead power cables on the north side of the road as far as Derwent Park.
- The entrances to Derwent Park and Blue Slates developments present houses that are side on to the main road with higher "back garden" fences.
- The main through road to Thorganby.
- A long, very straight, stretch of road from the church leading to a right angle bend.
- Street lighting is a mixture of styles.
- Older houses have been extended several times over the centuries.
- All but a few of the ex-council houses have provision for off street parking and some have garages..

Some key issues

- The perceived speed of traffic on Church Lane.
- Overhead power supply restricts planting of landscape enhancing trees.
- Street lighting is inconsistent.



Individually styled detached house.

Building materials and hue

- All dwellings are constructed from brick of various hues.
- Roofing materials are of slate, pan tiles and cement tiles.
- Older rainwater goods have usually been replaced with modern plastic designs in black, grey or white.
- Boundaries are a mixture of privet hedges, old estate railings, waney edge or woven wood fencing, hawthorn, low brick walls and low post and wire fences.
- Existing gates are of wood or wrought iron .



Houses built by the council.



A group of 18th & 19th century cottages with outbuildings in Church Lane..

The northern developments

These are four distinct residential areas, built in the mid to late 20th century, of differing ages and styles .The earlier 20th century modern developments have simpler layout and massing which is more characteristic of the urban form of the historic settlement; whereas the latest housing developments have less openness, and lots of render and detailing which are less characteristic of the historic settlement.

Westfield Estate: Valley View, Harcourt Close, Derwent Drive

This estate, and the six houses on the N side of North Lane, were built between 1965 and 1970 by W. A. Hare & Son of Kelfield to a design by Tom Adams Design Associates of York. Towards the end of World War II the hospital for the prisoner of war camp was located hereabouts. The design of the linked-detached houses were 'highly commended' in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government' award scheme.

Key characteristics

- The land, which is on the Northern edge of the moraine, slopes gently away from Main Street.
- Entirely residential with three cul-de-sacs.
- Pedestrian access along Low Well Lane connecting Valley View with North Lane.
- Sense of unity achieved through open plan design of houses with front lawns (6m deep), small shrubs, flower beds, and some taller trees (40 years old), that is consistent throughout the area.
- Tall trees along the North boundary of the estate and between North lane and Derwent Drive contribute to the green character of the area.
- Two designs of bungalow: gable end facing the street, or parallel.
- Houses on Valley View, Derwent Drive and North Lane are of one design, other than being detached or 'linked-detached'.
- Limited use of render for highlights.
- Houses on Harcourt Close are detached and of a different design.

Some key issues

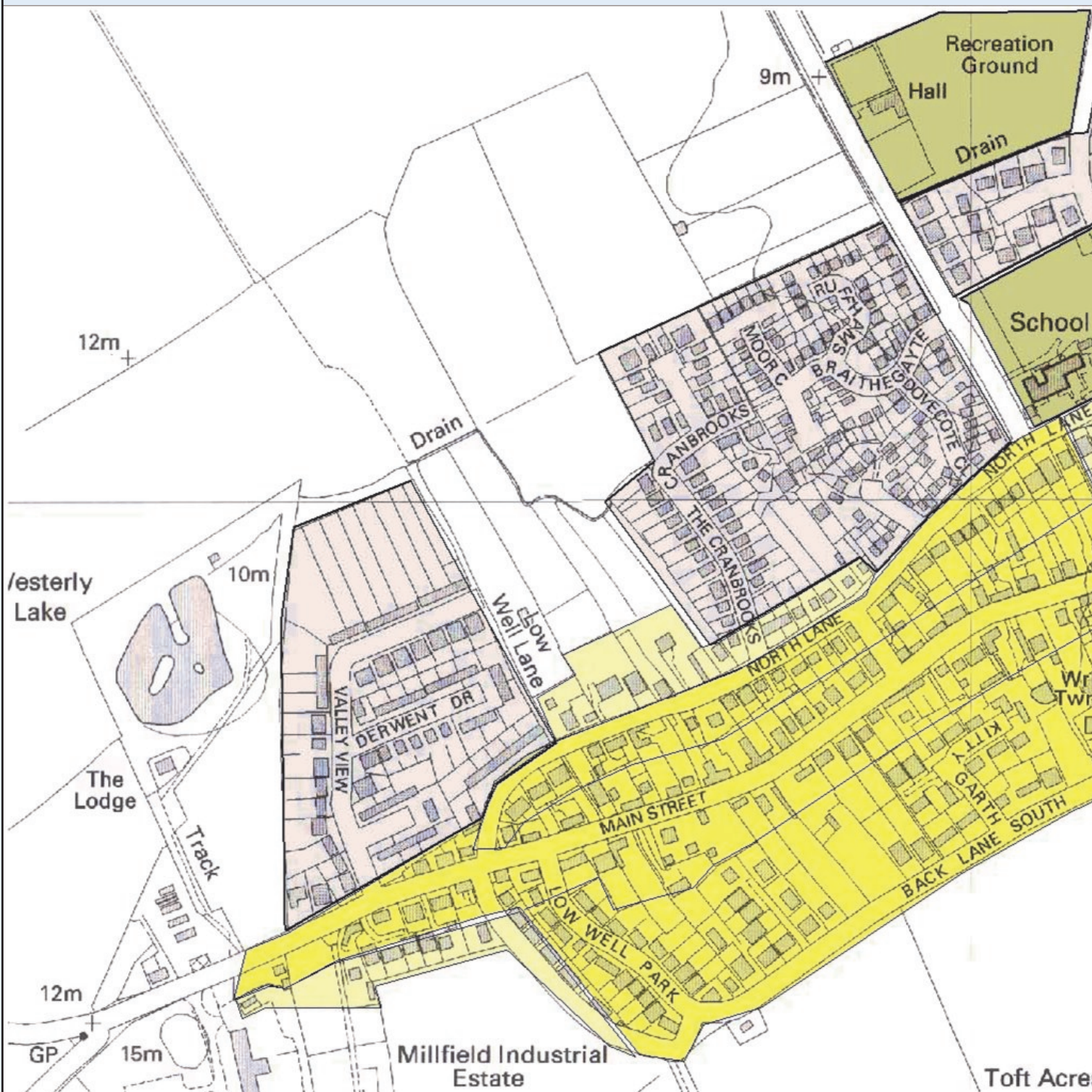
In this open plan residential area there is a consistent architectural design, planning and enhancement strategies should:

- Retain the open plan by discouraging the erection of walls, hedges or fences beyond the building line.
- Discourage breaking the symmetry of the linked-detached houses by building over the garages.
- Retain the subdued colour palette.
- Encourage the protection of mature trees in private gardens.
- Villagers believe that any vehicular link between Valley View and The Cranbrooks should be resisted.



The Old Church Farm

Village Shop



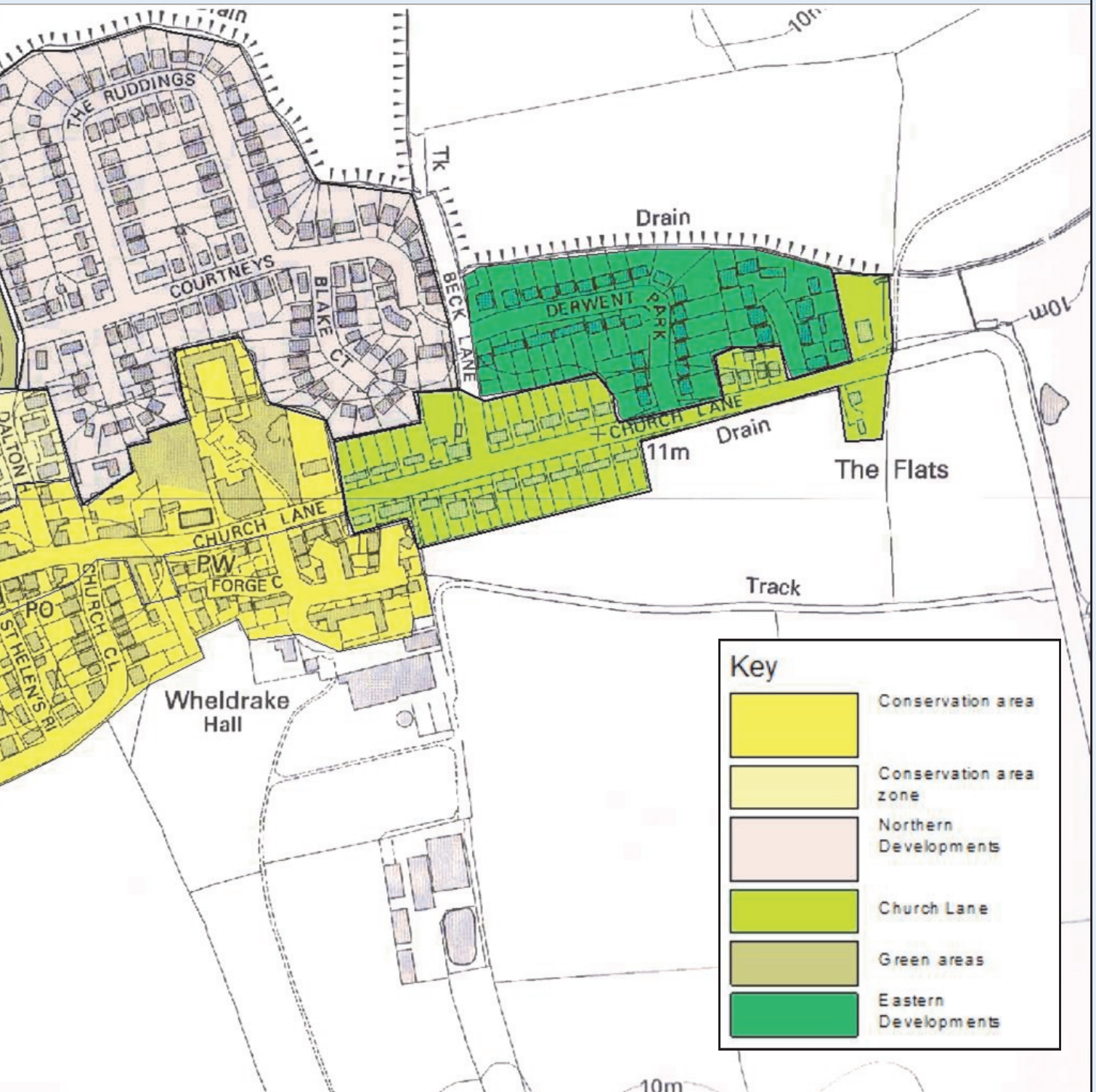
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The old Low Well Farm



The Wenlock Pub



Areas within Wheldrake village

Westfield Estate: Valley View, Harcourt Close, Derwent Drive (continued)



Valley View



Derwent Drive

Bricks

Tiles



Building materials and hue

Broadlands, Greengales Lane, The Ruddings, Blake Court and The Courtneys.



Corner of the Ruddings



Characteristic bungalows



Broadlands

Key characteristics

- A wide variety of styles and sizes of dwellings
- Detached houses and bungalows.
- With few exceptions dwellings have front boundaries of low, muted colour brick walls which bring a unity to the areas.
- Well established gardens with mature shrubs.
- Attached single or double garages.
- White fascia boards.
- Roads are curvilinear or cul-de-sacs.
- Generally brick in variety of muted colours ranging from pinkish brown to grey
- Some houses and bungalows are ornamented with limited use of white rendering, rustic wooden gables or sandstone

Some key issues

- Broken road and path surfaces.
- Greengales Lane is perceived by residents to experience a lot of through traffic.
- Villagers complain of noise, danger and disturbance due to perceived relatively heavy traffic and speed bumps.
- Waterlogging and minor flooding of some gardens.
- Generally brick in variety of muted colours ranging from pinkish brown to grey
- Some houses and bungalows are ornamented with white rendering,

Broadlands, Greengales Lane, The Ruddings, Blake Court and The Courtneys.(continued)

Building materials and hue



The Cranbrooks area



The Cranbrooks

Key characteristics

- Some grass verges to front.
- Detached bungalows with some two storey houses in Cranbrook Close.
- All have front boundaries of low, muted colour brick walls.
- Well established gardens.
- Roads are curvilinear or cul-de-sacs.
- Footpath through to the Barratt estate.

Some key issues

- Encourage the retention of mature trees in private gardens.
- Village residents believe that any vehicular link between Braithegate and The Cranbrooks should be resisted to prevent a “rat run”.
- Retain grass verges for openness.

Building materials and hue

- Pinkish red brick with white half rendering to gables on some dwellings.
- White bargeboards and rainwater goods.



Braithegate, Ruffams, Moor Close



Key characteristics

- Largely built by Barratt Homes to typical Barratt styles and layouts.
- Curvilinear roads and cul-de sacs.
- 20 mph home zone speed restriction.
- Detached two storey houses with integral garages.

Building materials and hue

- Red or buff coloured brick and white rendered walls with brick decorative panels.
- Quirky ornamentation to gable bargeboards.
- White rainwater goods.



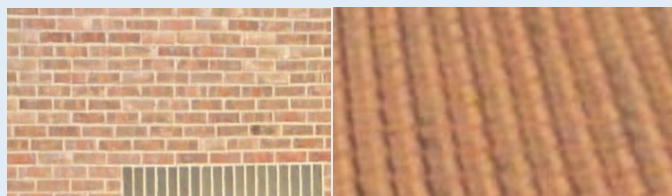
Dovecote and Raker Closes

Key characteristics

- Two small developments, mostly of two storey detached houses with integral garages, but some semi-detached homes.

Building materials and hue

- Dark red brickwork and roof tiles with brown woodwork and rainwater goods.



The eastern developments off Church Lane

Blue Slates



Derwent Park

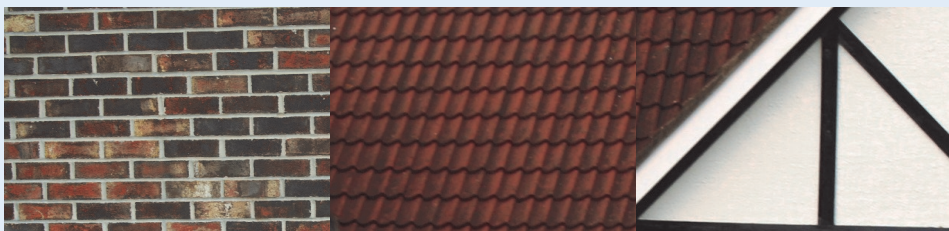


Key characteristics

- Two separate developments, Derwent Park and Blue Slates, of differing ages and styles each with an entrance from Church Lane.
- Detached two storey houses with attached garages and off street parking.
- Open plan estate design, usually with shrubs and small lawns and some semi-mature trees, both evergreen and deciduous. Some of the houses in Derwent Park have been extended by building above the attached garages.
- Cul-de-sacs

Building materials and hue

- The **Blue Slates** development gives an overall impression of being black, white and brick red due to rendering of buildings at first floor level and dark coloured woodwork framing.



- The **Derwent Park** area displays a more muted colour palette compared to Blue Slates.



Derwent Park

Western approach

A cluttered entrance to the village due to advertising signs associated with the Millfield Industrial Estate on the south side and a derelict nursery and small shop on the north side. Beyond the former Derwent Light Railway crossing, the view into the Historic Centre down Main Street is attractive.

Key Characteristics:

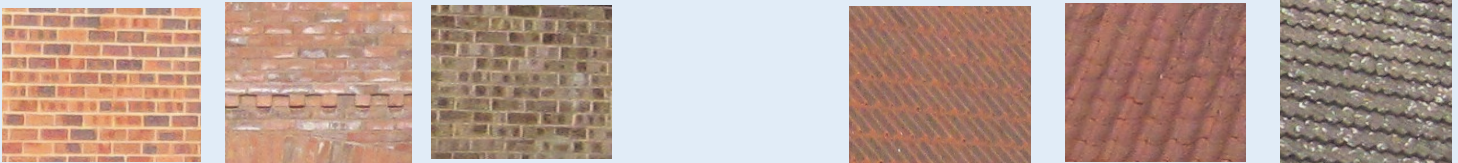
- Industrial estate and former garden centre dominate the approach.
- Linear development with housing and large gaps on both sides of the road.
- Broad grass verge interrupted by narrow section near the former railway crossing.
- Mixed frontages: hedge, wooden fence, open plan.
- Main access to the village for local traffic and through traffic to Thorganby.

Key issues

This is the principal entrance to the village. Improvement strategies should:

- Negotiate rationalisation of the signs on the south side.
- The redundant former nursery buildings are within the greenbelt, their low form preserves the setting of the village and the distinct sense of arrival. Any redevelopment of these buildings should reflect these characteristics.

Building materials and hue



Signage at the industrial estate



Bungalow built on the old railway trackbed.



Disused nursery buildings.



One of many historic views of St Helen's Church tower.



White van deliveries add to the perceived traffic problems.

Design Guidelines for building within the village envelope

New Buildings

21. Should respect and enhance adjacent properties and the character of the areas in which they are sited so:
 - New buildings at the edge of sites should ideally not exceed the existing rooflines in height.
 - They should use materials that respect the local character and surroundings. Trees and natural features to be retained where possible.
 - Alternatives to flat roofed extensions should be sought wherever practical, particularly where they affect the village street scene.
 - Encourage the inclusion of chimneys to act as central heating vents.
22. Should respect the form, layout and density of development in the area.
23. Should provide adequate parking within the curtilage of the building plot wherever possible.
24. Sustainable development in the form of green building design and re-use of materials should be encouraged on appropriate sites.
25. Contemporary design should be sympathetically considered where it respects the context and quality of the site and conforms to other guidelines and legislation.
26. Boundary treatments should be sympathetic to their location. The use of methods of enclosure such as hedges, iron estate style railings and low muted-coloured brick walls is encouraged along front boundaries in parts of the village where this is characteristic. Open plan frontages are also encouraged where appropriate.
27. Space should be maintained around dwellings to avoid the loss of soft landscaping and avoid the creation of a terraced effect between neighbouring properties.
28. Should provide a variety of housing types suitable to meet the needs of all sections of the population, to allow opportunities for residents to stay in the village.
29. Seek to provide storage for recycling containers.

Alterations, extensions and repairs

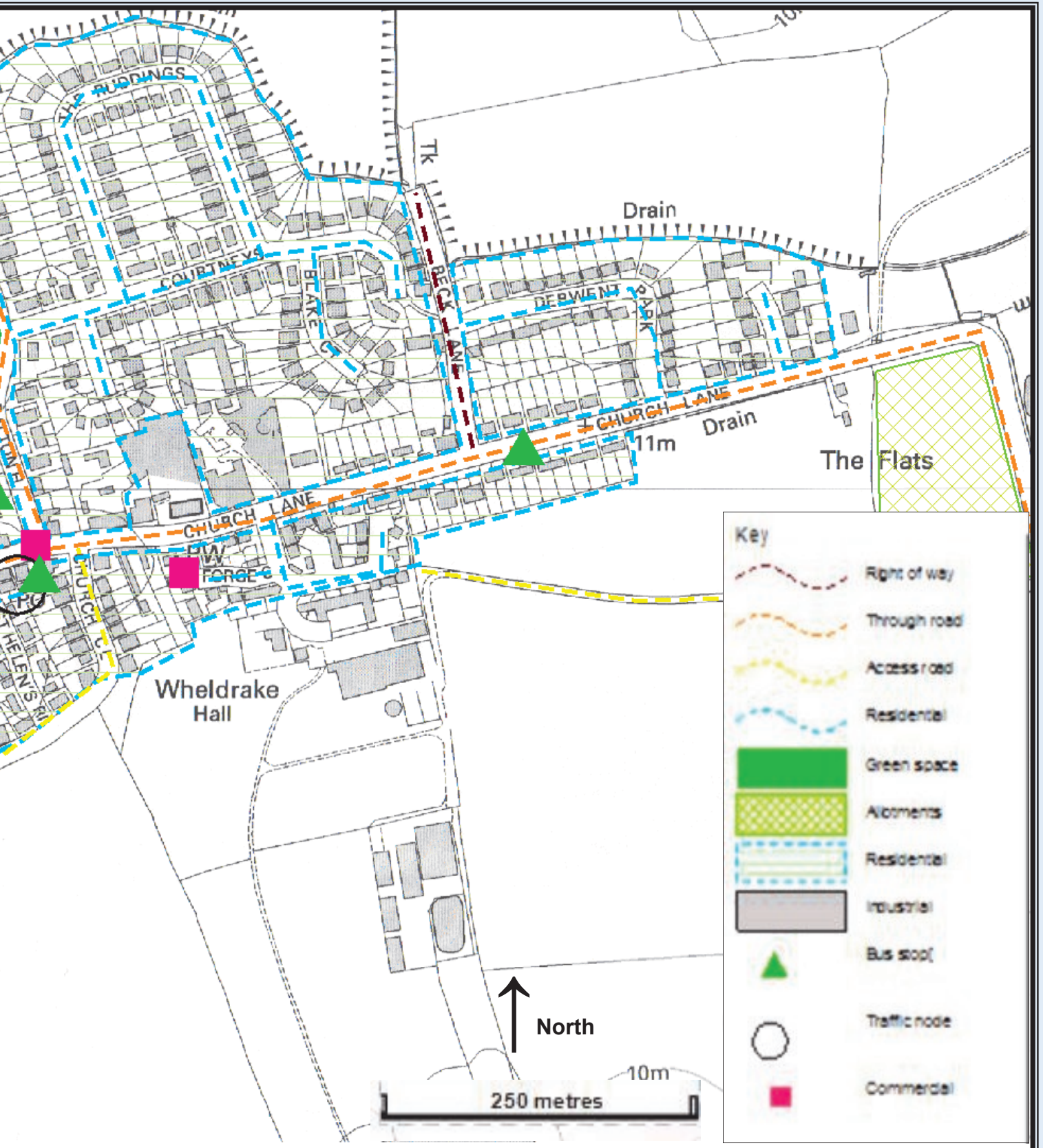
Extensions and repairs to existing buildings should observe all the guidelines for new buildings and should also:

30. Respect neighbours property, privacy and amenity and consider retention of existing landscaping.
 31. Alternatives to flat roofed extensions, and the use of complementary roof materials, should be sought wherever practical, particularly where they affect the village street scene.
 32. Avoid building that could result in parking outside the curtilage of the property where possible.
- All building, rebuilding, alterations, extensions and repairs, which are subject to planning control, must respect the above design guidelines. Other developments are respectfully requested to do so.

Wheldrake village



Infrastructure



Significant elements of the village infrastructure identified by residents

Routeways

Through Roads

These are the busiest roads in the village carrying, at certain times, relatively significant levels of traffic. The village through roads link with major local roads and access roads leading to residential the and commercial areas of the village and beyond.

Access Roads

These are the minor roads which lead to each residential area in the village. They include South Back Lane and Broad Highway as well as roads to individual premises.

Residential roads

These residential roads have footpaths and provide vehicular access for residential and occasional service vehicles .

Pedestrian Routes

These public routes provide links between areas in the village, such as from the school to the shop and between different parts of the village. These are the transitional spaces and routes from one kind of space to another. Some of these spaces have traditionally given pedestrians unfettered routes between properties from the Back Lanes to the Main Street of the village. They also provide links between new and existing parts of Wheldrake. Innovation is possible here. Their inclusion in new plans will be a matter for negotiation with developers as will the extent of public access.

Public Rights of Way and other countryside access

These are an integral part of public access to the countryside and each has a unique character. They are leisure spaces, which as well as giving access to nature, also contribute to the health and wellbeing of people who use them. These paths, as well as linking different parts of the parish could be developed to form a part of a continuous circular walk around and through the village.

Cycle routes

Currently no specific cycle routes exist in the village.

Traffic nodes

These occur where through routes meet at road junctions. They are frequently the sites of bus stops and are close to community and/or commercial premises. They tend also to attract more pedestrian traffic and road crossing by pedestrians.

Commercial and industrial facilities

Shops

There is a Costcutter general store, which incorporates an off licence, Post Office and newsagent, on the village Main Street catering for most everyday needs although an increasing number of families is ordering groceries online. There has also been a growth in “white van” deliveries as people take advantage of catalogue, telephone and internet ordering and courier services. Replies to the questionnaire suggested that village residents would like to see more shops, but the demise of village pubs, shops, etc. nationally would suggest that the viability of more retail outlets might be questionable.

Pubs

The Wenlock is the only remaining pub in the village, the Alice Hawthorne having been converted to a dwelling in the 1990s.

Industrial estate

There is a small industrial estate, Millfield Industrial Estate located on the western edge of the village. The units cater for retail, light industrial and office activities.



Wheldrake Industrial Estate

Key features of the infrastructure include

- Three main traffic nodes where through routes meet at the junctions of North Lane and Main Street, Dalton Hill and Main Street and Greengales Lane and North Back Lane.
- The conservation area of Main Street and the Back Lanes between the rectory and the western end of the village.
- The school and village hall which have open land around their buildings.
- Through routes to Elvington, Thorganby and Escrick.
- The small industrial estate to the west of the village.
- Residential areas to the north east and south of the historic village.
- The combined post office and shop on Main Street.

Some key issues

- Sight lines at the traffic nodes that are situated on Main Street are regularly restricted due to parked vehicles.
- The Main Street is narrow so that parked vehicles present a hazard, particularly during the morning and evening busy times outside the shop.
- The perceived speed of traffic in residential areas.
- The weight and size of some delivery vehicles using the through roads.
- The siting of bus stops close to traffic nodes.
- A relative lack of public open spaces.

Entering Wheldrake Main Street



Teatime traffic on Dalton Hill



Whilst infrastructure matters are beyond the remit of the Village Design Statement, the following points express the aspirations of residents as recorded during the production of this document.

Aspirations for the village infrastructure

- Access through the village by HGVs should be discouraged unless for local delivery purposes.
- Consideration should be given to the provision of measures to prevent speeding into and out of the village whilst recognising that any scheme should be of a design appropriate to the rural context.
- Grass verges should be preserved to maintain the rural character of the village.
- Emphasis should be placed on reducing the excessive environmental impacts of motorised transport through design that encourages walking, cycling and use of public transport and gives priority in road space allocation to these modes. Development should compliment the aims and objectives of the council's low emissions strategy.
- Designers could be encouraged to introduce specific identity, such as the use of block paving, to residential roads to alleviate the blandness of tarmac and concrete and emphasise pedestrian priority. (Subject to funding availability.)
- The provision and maintenance of safe cycling and pedestrian routes within and beyond the village envelope should be considered. (Subject to funding availability.)
- The provision of cycle parks at commercial facilities (e.g. shops and businesses) should be encouraged.
- Encourage the reduction, by progressive planning, of the distances people need to travel for all purposes within the village and promote walking and cycling.

Spaces, soft landscaping and boundaries within the village envelope

Focal Spaces

These are the public open spaces within the village which provide the opportunities for social and leisure activities. The village needs a variety of hard and soft landscaped spaces of different scales. A number of small scale spaces already exists, where seating combined with tree planting provide a place to rest, socialise and appreciate the village surroundings. Focal spaces offer developers the opportunity for innovation but they risk of becoming cluttered with street furniture.

Soft landscaping

This is the planted area of the village. It consists of private gardens and public planting. The village's private gardens are an enormous and precious asset. Most of the houses have well stocked and beautifully kept gardens.

Boundaries

Traditionally, front boundaries have been of low hedging, estate railings or small brick walls. Many houses on Main Street as well as some of the newer developments have open plan frontages with curtilages which are respected by neighbours.

Design guidelines for spaces, soft landscaping and boundaries in the village

33. Large areas of public amenity lawn are to be avoided since they are high maintenance and are of little environmental benefit.
34. Public planting of indigenous species of a suitable size and scale is to be encouraged in appropriate spaces for both its aesthetic and environmental benefits.
35. Soft landscaping of private garden spaces with appropriate indigenous species on a suitable scale is welcomed for both its aesthetic and environmental benefits.
36. Hard landscaping should be carried out with locally traditional and sustainably sourced materials.
37. Where back gardens have boundaries onto public roads or pathways the use of medium height hedging is preferred to high walls or fences



Estate railings and planting forming a picturesque boundary on Main Street

Protected trees

Trees may be protected under planning law in three ways; by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or because they are located within a conservation area or by a restrictive planning condition. This protection makes it an offence to carry out any work to a protected tree or wilfully damage or destroy a protected tree, without the planning authority's permission. Consequently the council's permission is required to carry out any works such as pruning, felling or works which disturbs and causes damage to the roots of a protected tree.



Trees in Main Street add to the beauty and character of the Conservation area.

Community facilities

The **allotments** and **Community Orchard** on Skylark Field to the east of the village are a welcome, and very popular, facility.

Sandholes Common was awarded to the village by the Enclosure Commissioners “for the getting of sand” and it remains common land under the management of the Parish Council.

The **village hall**, with its sports facilities, and the school were built in the late 1970s when the village was undergoing a rapid expansion. Both buildings were single storey constructions surrounded by areas of playing field.

The **school** was built to replace the Victorian red brick village school, which was situated next to the church. This building is now known as White Rose House and is used as a residential centre owned by the Girl Guides. Although the present school started life as a single storey building, subsequent need for expansion, due to the growth in the population of the village, has necessitated the building of an upper floor.

There is a small enclosed **play area** with play equipment for younger children on Broad Highway adjacent to the school field.

The **green areas** surrounding these facilities provide welcome open spaces in the built landscape of the village..

Utilities

Wheldrake has mains gas, water and electricity supplies. The oldest parts of the village still have obtrusive overhead electricity cables. Some of the utility sub-stations are ugly and needlessly obvious.

Lighting & Security

There is a variety of styles of street light in the village; some streets have three or four different styles within a few metres. Church Lane residents mentioned a lack of lamps on the south side of the road.

Signage & Street furniture

Generally within Wheldrake signage has been adequate and proportional. Commercial premises in the Main Street cater largely for village residents, who are aware of their presence, so have no need to use brash means to attract passing custom.

The untidy and disorganised signage on the industrial estate attracted some negative comments in the survey responses.

Design guidelines for community facilities, utilities, lighting, security and street furniture.

- 37. Wherever practical, cabling should be installed underground and every opportunity taken to re-route existing overhead services.
- 38. Designs should, where possible, blend in with the existing streetscene.
- 39. Sub-stations should be sited discreetly, styled to match their surroundings and/or concealed with soft landscaping when siting them in residential areas.
- 40. Changes to lighting and installation of new lamps should respect the rural character of the village and avoid adding further designs to individual streetscapes, wherever possible.
- 41. We encourage private security lighting to be moderate and non-invasive.
- 42. New buildings should be designed in such a way as to promote crime prevention.
- 43. Any signage and street furniture should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the village environment; it should be low key (colour, size and lighting) and easy to maintain.



The allotments on Skylark Field

Wheldrake's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Broad Highway Verges

North Selby Mine

Benjy Lane Meadows

Wheldrake Wood

West Plantation

Gilbertson's Plantation

Sandholes Plantation

Warren House Farm Pond

Mattie Brown's Covert

Appendix 1: Heritage Assets identified by Wheldrake residents

Although none have been 'Listed' (see Appendix 2) the following all make a positive contribution to the character of Wheldrake and are so important in the street scene that their value should be taken into consideration as part of any development proposal.



Eighteenth and nineteenth century cottages and outbuildings, 17 to 21 Church Lane



House in Church Lane designed and built by Mr Bielby, the village builder, in the mid 20th century



Sometime known as Jubilee Cottage, 34 Main Street was built in the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897. Spot the diamonds on the chimney pots.



Heritage telephone kiosk in Main Street



Mount Pleasant Farm in the Northern Character Area of the Village



Wrought iron lantern holder at the eastern gate of St Helen's



Stones on the front boundary of the Wenlock, said to be from the old church.



Enamel advertisement for a milking machine on the old Blythe Farm



"Duck" Signpost at the top of Dalton Hill

Appendix 2: Listed structures and buildings in Wheldrake

16, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

20, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

21, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

23, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

51, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

52, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

60 and 62 Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

63 and 65 Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

7, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

70, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

The Old Church Farm, 75, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

9, Main Street, Wheldrake, York Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Blythe Farm 66 Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Church Cottage Grade II 1 Church Lane, Wheldrake, York

Church of Saint Helen Grade I 1 Church Lane, Wheldrake, York

Costcutter Stores 56 and 58 Grade II 17 St Helen's Rise, Wheldrake, York

68 Main Street, Grade II, Wheldrake, York

Dairy Arch and Pigeon Cote to Wheldrake Hall Farm Grade DL Wheldrake

Elizabethan House and Elizabethan Cottage 53 and 55 Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Granary Cottage 11 Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Half-way House Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Ingle Cottage 5 Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Sundial, Approximately 7 Metres to South West of Church of Saint Helen Grade II Wheldrake

The Post Office 72 Grade II Wheldrake

Village Farm Grade II Main Street, Wheldrake, York

Acknowledgements

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The people of Wheldrake who provided the old photos, attended exhibitions, answered questions, returned surveys, made comments and gave encouragement.

Unless otherwise specified in the caption, all photography is by the VDS group members.

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The church of St Helen, the sundial in the church yard and the Old Post Office as pictured by the children of Wheldrake school.

