



Stokesley

Conservation Area Appraisal

Supplementary Planning Document

Hambleton Local Development Framework
December 2010



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1. Introduction

1.1 DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

1.1.1 A Conservation Area is defined as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

1.1.2 The purpose of a Conservation Area is to protect townscapes of quality and the local distinctiveness of areas valued for their visual characteristics and historic associations. Although Conservation Areas will usually contain individual buildings of importance these tend to be protected through the Listed Building process whilst the Conservation Area designation addresses wider townscape and landscape issues. In looking at Conservation Areas the intangible qualities of views, vistas and context are critical rather than just the immediate fabric of the structures themselves.

1.1.3 The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to:

- Define and record the special interest and understanding of the Conservation Area to ensure a full appreciation of its value.
- Increase public awareness of the aims and objectives of Conservation Area designation and stimulate interest in the protection of its character.
- Assist Development Management in the determination of planning applications, Conservation Area Consents and Listed Building Consent applications, with the aim of developing an appreciation of the cumulative impacts of piecemeal development.

- Identify areas for potential improvement.
- Suggest buildings for inclusion on a local list of buildings which are not included within the statutory list, but which have value to local people and communities for their historic and architectural importance.
- Re-assess current boundaries to ensure they make sense on the ground.

1.1.4 The SPD will also assist Development Management in the application of Policies DP28 (Conservation) and DP29 (Archaeology) of the Development Policies Development Plan Document (DPDPD) of the Hambleton Local Development Framework (LDF). Further information on these policies can be found within the DPDPD, which is available from: www.hambleton.gov.uk/ldf.

1.1.5 This SPD is aimed at members of the public interested in conservation issues, residents of Conservation Areas, applicants for planning permission, their agents and architects, Development Management Planners and others involved in proposals for works within a Conservation Area.

1.1.6 Whilst this document may provide some clarity on the historic significance of the Conservation Area, it is not meant to be an all encompassing document, and areas or features which are not mentioned should not be considered unimportant within the Conservation Area. Please note that all development proposals will be considered on their own merits.

1.2 STATUTORY DUTIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 1.2.1 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 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).
- 1.2.2 In making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving and 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. These are known as Article 4 Directions. An Article 4 (1) Direction is already in place in Stokesley covering the historic core of the town.

1.3 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 1.3.1 A draft appraisal was available for public consultation from September to November 2009. All residents of the Conservation Area were informed of the 8 week consultation period by letter indicating how they would be individually affected with an enclosed leaflet. The consultation was publicised in the local press

and within the Council's newspaper 'Hambleton News'. A public exhibition was held during this time in the Town Hall and issues arising were discussed at the Stokesley Area Forum. A Consultation Statement (October 2010) has been produced which addresses comments made by interested parties. Amendments have been made where necessary to the document in line with comments received.

- 1.3.2 Copies of the draft DPD were also sent to various interested regional and national bodies such as English Heritage and North Yorkshire County Council.
- 1.3.3 The Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted as SPD by the Council on 21st December 2010.

1.4 POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.4.1 This appraisal has been undertaken in the context of existing and emerging planning policies at both national and local level. English Heritage and other amenity bodies have issued expert guidance on the subject of conservation area appraisals and the appraisal should therefore be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- The Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Policies DPDs
 - National Planning Policy Guidance especially; Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment and the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide, March 2010.

2. The Conservation Area

2.1 DESIGNATION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

- 2.1.1 Stokesley Conservation Area was designated in March 1971 and amended in February 1988 following a consultation exercise involving local residents, businesses, amenity societies and interested parties. No further extension or modification has been made to the Conservation Area since that time. However, as part of this current appraisal process three extensions to the boundary are proposed and two areas are to be rationalised to make sense of more recent developments on the ground. The alterations can be seen on maps 1, 2 and 3 to the rear of this document.

2.2 PREVIOUS STATEMENTS

- 2.2.1 The District Council undertook and published a Conservation Area Assessment in 1998. It provides a guide to the implications of the designation, a brief history of Stokesley and defines the boundary of the designated area.
- 2.2.2 That assessment forms a base line guide for this Conservation Area Appraisal.

2.3 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

- 2.3.1 The Conservation Area boundary focuses on the three principal open spaces of the town; West Green, the Market Place and College Square, but also includes the important linear space created along the River Leven. It is proposed to extend the boundary to include the Fire Station, Stone Hall Close, 17 and 19 North Road and at Springfield to include the old primary school building and frontage trees. It is also proposed to rationalise the boundary to the front of the Co-op car park to focus on the boundary trees.

2.4 GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

- 2.4.1 Stokesley is positioned on the north side of the North York Moors on the open farmland between the moors and the Teesside conurbation. The River Leven flows from east to west through the town and forms an important feature to the south of the Market Place. Stokesley lies on the A172

which runs north east to south west from the outskirts of Middlesbrough to the A19 trunk road. The nearest neighbour to the town is Great Ayton lying 2½ miles to the north east, but the main urban influence is Middlesbrough, 7 miles to the north. Stokesley does not have a railway station or rail link, the nearest principal station being located at Middlesbrough.

2.5 LANDSCAPE SETTING

- 2.5.1 Stokesley is well positioned on flat land between two distinct elements of the North York Moors, which form the most prominent horizons. Directly to the south Carlton Bank and Cold Moor rise to in excess of 400m above sea level and include the distinctive rocky outcrop of the Wainstones. To the east the Moors are slightly more distant but include the iconic landmark of Roseberry Topping. To the north the land rises slightly before dropping to the Tees Valley and this undulation screens Stokesley from the industrial landscape of Middlesbrough. Westward the landscape unfolds along the Leven valley to include Hutton Rudby before reaching the A19 and the rolling open agricultural land beyond.



- 2.5.2 The Conservation Area occupies the historic core of Stokesley focussing on the three main open spaces of West Green, the Market Place and College Square; and the riverside location along the banks of the Leven. This encapsulates almost completely the historic town as it existed at the end of the Victorian period. The new 20th Century developments now encompass much of the surroundings to the Conservation Area, particularly to the north and west. To the east an open aspect survives well and is important on the approach to the town, whilst there has been little large-scale development beyond the river to the south.

3. Historic Development and Archaeology

3.1 HISTORY

- 3.1.1 Much detail of Stokesley's ancient past remains to be discovered and the earliest written record of the town appears to be the Domesday Book of 1086, where a water mill is recorded in the settlement of "Stocheslage". This is thought to be the mill noted in the Saxon period and sited on or near to the position of the restored water wheel at the east of the town. This mill complex was unusual as it is reported to have both a water wheel and a horse engine house or gingang. It was unfortunately demolished as recently as 1983.



Restored water wheel from Stokesley Mill.

- 3.1.2 A church is also mentioned in the Domesday record, possibly at or near to the site of the current building, and it is interesting that it was found standing in 1086 as much of the region had been cleared and depopulated during the 'Harrying of the North' by William of Normandy in



Church of St Peter and St Paul

1069. This could indicate that the settlement here was of some significance but not deemed to be a threat to the new ruling class. There are no known remains of the Saxon church and the current church of St Peter and St Paul appears to have its origins in the 14th Century, although it was much altered and rebuilt in the mid 18th Century.

- 3.1.3 A major contribution to the future prosperity of the town was the granting of the Charter to hold fairs, given by Henry III to Baron Eure in 1223. The Charter allowed Stokesley to formally establish its market and from this time the town developed its role as a local trading centre, serving the wider area as far as the Tees and functioning as an essential part of the network of Medieval Market Towns in North Yorkshire. Prosperity led to population growth and by 1300 there were approximately 300 people living in the town including several families working in the textile trade as fullers and weavers. From at least the middle of the 14th Century the pattern of development of the town was beginning to form with extended burgage plots to the rear of principal houses sited around the Market Place. Enclosures began to change the appearance of the surrounding countryside from 1600 onwards, predating by a substantial period the widespread enclosure of common lands during the 18th and early 19th Centuries.

3.1.4 The town has grown as a trading and agricultural centre, set at a crossing point on the small River Leven. By the 17th Century a packhorse bridge provided a dry crossing and this survives today in much its original form. The manor of Stokesley had been associated with Guy de Balliol to whom it was granted following the conquest of 1066. Passing to the Eure family by 1200, who retained the title to the mid 17th Century, it was not until the early 18th Century that the Manor House was constructed, providing the town with one of its most important surviving early buildings. This was the beginning of the town's most prosperous period and between 1700 and 1800 Stokesley developed to become the principal Market Town in Cleveland. Many of the Georgian and Regency buildings that so define the character of the historic town date from this period. Several of the larger houses around West Green and along the High Street are typical vernacular examples of the period and reveal both the scale and quality of development in the flourishing town. Stokesley parish had constructed a workhouse in 1755 on High Green, but this was replaced in 1848 and all evidence of the building has now gone. The Preston Grammar School built with a bequest from John Preston in 1832 stands in College Square and the last of the large buildings of this flourishing period of construction was the Town Hall set in the centre of the Market Place and built in 1853.



Preston School

3.1.5 Stokesley did not become industrialised during this period of growth unlike many nearby Market Towns and this contributes to its current character and quality. There was also no large scale rebuilding of properties around the principal public spaces so the appearance of the centre of the town has in many respects changed little in the last two centuries. The wealth of the town was linked to sea trading routes to London and the

Low Countries and this is reflected in the use of clay tile technology from the 17th Century as the shaped pantile originated from the Low Countries and was soon adopted in the eastern countries as a native tradition. The late 18th Century saw a significant boom in a local printing and publishing industry, with books being produced in Stokesley from at least 1783 and a 'Golden Age' of printing lasting from 1840 to 1880.

3.1.6 Although there was little physical impact on the town itself the meteoric growth of nearby Middlesbrough during the mid to late 19th Century undoubtedly influenced the growth of Stokesley. It was no longer the principal urban centre in the region and trade routes were diverted to the more distant port facilities on the Tees. Stokesley became a genteel outpost and civilised retreat from the excesses of Victorian industry. When the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Railway Company finally constructed the railway line in 1857 it avoided the town by almost a mile to the south on the road to Kirkby. The line closed to passengers in 1954 and finally stopped serving the agricultural community in 1958.

3.2 ARCHAEOLOGY

3.2.1 The surrounding area is known to have been settled during the Bronze Age and scattered flint finds in fields around Stokesley provide physical evidence of activity in this early period. Later the Tees Valley lay in the territory of the Brigantes Tribe, the Iron Age people who were subjected to Roman rule from the earliest part of the first millennium and eventually allied themselves with the Romans. The wider area has several sites identified as dating from this period and nearby Guisborough is a known Roman settlement. There is however no physical evidence of significant settlement at Stokesley prior to the Medieval period during which the feudal farming system was established.



4. Architectural Qualities and Building Styles

4.1 STYLE AND DETAILS OF BUILDINGS

4.1.1 Throughout the Conservation Area there are a range of building styles and forms that range from large individual properties to small vernacular cottages. The first of these groups, the large grand houses tend to be architect designed and following the prevalent tastes of their time. Examples range from the classically inspired Oaklands; through the slightly smaller but beautifully detailed Handyside House; to the Manor House; and Leven Bridge House/ Levenside House. Each of differing dates these are important buildings within the Conservation Area.



Oaklands - Early Mid 19th Century



Handyside House - Mid 18th Century



The Manor House - Early 18th Century and early 19th Century



Leven Bridge House/Levenside House - Late 18th Century

4.1.2 The range of more modest, locally designed vernacular properties are equally important within the Conservation Area. The town centre is dominated by three storey Georgian and Victorian commercial buildings set mostly at the back of the pavement on narrow plots ranging from 5m to 8m in width. These plots can be very deep running back for 60m to 80m although many have been subsequently truncated by later developments. The rear buildings step down in height from those on the front and are usually laid out to provide a small yard access through part of the width of the plot. Alternatively access to these rear buildings can be gained via the wynds and passages that pass through the frontage buildings. Roofs are almost all pitched and run parallel to the street on the frontage buildings, the rear structures having pitched roofs at right angles to this.



South side of High Street

4.1.3 Moving away from the commercial core of the town the domestic properties tend to follow a similar pattern of 'back-of-



2 West Green

pavement' development on narrow plots but are mostly of a reduced height, few rising above two storeys. The larger properties tend to be focussed around West Green and here small front gardens have been created in some cases to distance the house from the public highway. Similar arrangements occur at College Square but not all properties benefit from this private space. Domestic buildings tend to be of a relatively simple form reflecting the pitched roofs of the larger commercial properties. Chimneys are prevalent, usually set on party walls or gable ends of properties. Dormers remain rare and varied in style and few buildings have hipped roofs, the most noticeable probably being the Police Station and the Town Hall.



East of College Square

4.1.4 In general many groups of terraces of the Georgian and Victorian periods follow established building heights for eaves and ridge lines, resulting in pleasing sweeps of buildings particularly along the northwest side of West Green.



48 to 50 West Green



North west of College Square

By contrast in certain areas a much more varied approach was established during the 17th and 18th Centuries resulting in varied building heights, differing roof pitches and contrasting detailing all of which combine to produce groups of properties of great character. Typical examples of this are also found on West Green as well as Levenside and College Square.

4.1.5 Good examples of both Georgian and Victorian windows exist throughout the town and in one or two places examples of earlier small casement windows can still be found. Buildings of the Georgian period had clear architectural rules to follow creating a distinctive pattern of building throughout the country and Stokesley is no exception. There is a clear hierarchy of window sizes with the smallest at the top, the largest on the first floor and slightly smaller windows to the ground floor. On commercial properties these ground floor windows have usually been replaced

with shop fronts but the pattern remains higher up the buildings. This ordered arrangement could be supplemented by the use of bay and bow windows and several can be found in the town, often with a flat top and rising through the full height of the building rather than being restricted to just the ground floor. Georgian windows tended to be fitted close to the outer face of the building with more exposed boxes for the sliding sash mechanisms. Throughout the period refinements were made with larger panes of glass fitted into ever finer glazing bars.

4.1.6 The 19th Century saw a continuation of much of this style but as technology improved so the panes of glass became larger still and the framework became more industrially manufactured. Bow windows were supplanted by box bays and splayed bay windows and every opportunity was taken to embellish the woodwork with detailed cornices and horns to the sashes.

4.1.7 Doors and door cases are a favourite location to display craftsmanship and there are a number of Georgian and Victorian examples which include elaborate top lights and well decorated corbels supporting hood mouldings. There are also several examples of more modest doors accessing rear yards and these, whilst not as flamboyant, establish an important hierarchy to the buildings and are well worth retaining. Doors themselves tend to be panelled either in four or six panels, although often upper sections can incorporate glazing particularly in shop doors. Georgian doors tend to be of wider proportions whilst Victorian doors can be very tall reflecting the high ceilings within the buildings.



Six panel door



Glazed fanlights



Six panel doors with glazed fanlights



Pedimented doorway

- 4.1.8 Other details used throughout the town include the small windows set close below low eaves on smaller vernacular cottages, carved stone kneelers at the bottom of gables where the roof is finished with a raised weathered course detail, the use of stone quoins on a range of buildings and materials, and the change in materials where single storey buildings have been extended to provide two storeys.



Stone carved kneeler



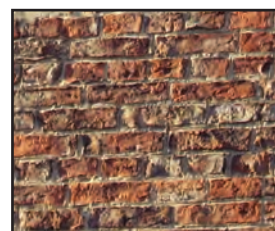
Windows set close below the eaves

4.2 BUILDING MATERIALS

- 4.2.1 Stokesley is principally a town of brick buildings with rendered properties playing an important secondary role in the streetscape. Stone is much less used but is employed on important properties and serves to highlight individual buildings.

BRICK

- 4.2.2 The main type of bricks used historically are locally made soft red and brown hand thrown bricks dating from the late Georgian to early Victorian period. Notable alternatives include pale cream Victorian bricks and Best Red smooth faced bricks of later Victorian period. There are some examples of poor pointing and inappropriate brick selection on prominent modern properties.



Traditional lime pointing



Inappropriate brick selection



Modern cement pointing

RENDER

- 4.2.3 Render is much more widely used than stone and tends to have been originally used on simpler, less prestigious properties. In Stokesley it mostly takes the form of older roughcast render usually painted a white or cream colour. Smooth render is used on some properties and on others a modern cement based product has been employed although this form of modern material is often not appropriate for historic buildings.

STONE

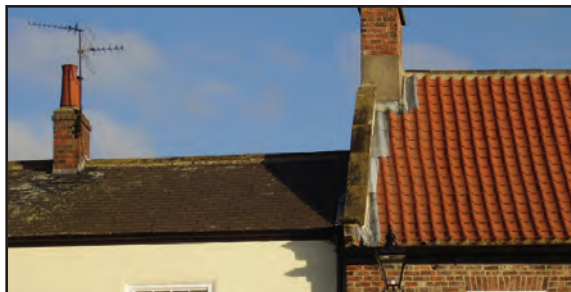
- 4.2.4 Where stone is used in the town it tends to be for prominent buildings and usually takes the form of well cut and coursed blocks of local sandstone. These are sometimes dressed with herringbone tooling which is typical of the local area. Stone is also used for architectural details including door cases, quoins, plinth courses and window surrounds.



Herringbone tooled sandstone

ROOFS

- 4.2.5 Within Stokesley roof forms tend to be simple pitched roofs with gables to each end usually forming part of a terrace. Gables may be flush pointed or raised with a stone weathering detail. As mentioned previously, dormer windows are rare, particularly to principal front elevations and should be resisted wherever possible as they can break up the long uninterrupted rooflines that are important to the character of the town. Roof coverings tend to be natural, single Roman clay pantiles, blue/grey slates or modern concrete products. Pantiles are the traditional form of covering in this area with the use of imported slates gradually increasing from the mid Victorian period onwards. Where modern concrete materials have been used as replacement coverings, the tiles are often inappropriate for the roof structure beneath and should ideally be replaced with a traditional alternative when the need for repair arises.



Slate and pantile roof coverings

4.3 FLOORSCAPE

- 4.3.1 As is typical of most towns today, little historic floor covering survives within the busier areas but the relatively new repaving works have provided much of the town centre with a good quality floorscape suitable for modern use, although in future schemes a more appropriate natural covering would be an advantage to the historic streetscape. The materials used include a



Cobbled drainage channels

range of sawn flags, cobbles, modern paving slabs and blocks. Tarmac has been used particularly where traffic flow is heaviest and on the carriageways themselves. Cobbling has been reinstated widely and successfully, particularly for parking areas, and to distinguish drainage channels. It is here that the locally produced Scoria blocks can be found although they are not particularly widely used in the town.

Cobbling also successfully demarks a pedestrian crossing on West Green, which also acts as a traffic calming measure. Kerbs tend to be modern concrete items although a few stone pin-kerbs survive in less busy areas.



Granite sett drainage channels



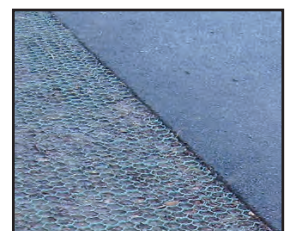
Squared sett footway

- 4.3.2 Away from the heavily used parts of the town centre more traditional surfacing survives. Along Levenside and particularly to the south of the river much of the tarmac



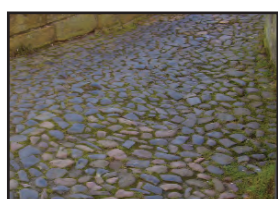
Cobbles at Levenside

road has no formal kerb edging and this is important in retaining the semi rural character of this part of the town. The fords crossing the river mostly have concrete approach ramps but the lack of formal edging helps to assimilate the surface within the Conservation Area. To help protect the grass verges from vehicle overrunning, plastic Grasscrete matting has been laid and could be a useful addition where the erosion of grass becomes an issue.



Grasscrete matting

- 4.3.3 Elsewhere several private yards, drives and accesses are surfaced in cobbles ranging from angular random shaped cobbles, found along Levenside, to the formal squared granite setts used for entries to some commercial properties along the High Street. Along some parts of Levenside cobbles survive as a gutter to the tarmaced roadway and this is an important survival that should be retained.



Random cobbling



Granite setts

- 4.3.4 Several of the ginnels and rear accesses have retained traditional surfacing and these include stone slabs in some instances and a good example of this can be found at Brewery Terrace where the surfacing scheme has retained and repaired the cobbles of the yard and supplemented these with sandstone flags for the pathways.

- 4.3.5 The cobbles throughout Stokesley vary in appearance with some being laid very close together and tightly packed even in their random form. This produces a visually higher quality finish more appropriate to the Conservation Area. In other places the stones are set in a sea of concrete which is an inappropriate form of surfacing for historic areas and produces a much more uneven surface. There are few instances of dressed stones being used in patterns and except for the occasional use of squared setts, particularly around commercial properties, most of the cobbles are very random in both size and form.

4.4 ENCLOSURES

- 4.4.1 There are many examples of historic boundary treatments throughout the Conservation Area each of which have different levels of importance to the character of the town.



*Boundary wall
to Manor House*

Most properties in the core of Stokesley stand directly at the back of the pavement and have no boundary, but a number of houses, particularly the larger more prestigious buildings around West Green, have front gardens with a range of walls, fences and informal planting. Particularly notable examples include the brick wall to the Manor House which forms an important element at the east end of the Market Place and the brick and stone walls at Carricks Corner to the west end of town which provide an important visual stop to the approach to the Conservation Area. There are several examples of decorative iron railings particularly at Barclays Bank on the High Street, around the Methodist Chapel in College Square and fronting the car park near to the Co-op supermarket at the east end of town.

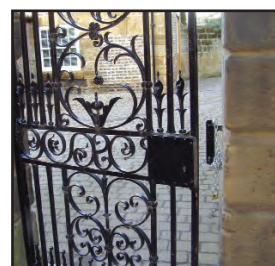


Barclays Bank



East End car park

St. Peter's church is enclosed with simple metal railings and other Georgian properties around West Green have retained or replaced the simple form of ironwork boundary that typifies the more prosperous properties of the period. To the rear of 36 High Street is a splendid example of Georgian decorative ironwork in the form of Kent Gate. Although tucked away at the rear of the building this gem of the blacksmith's art is thought to be in the style of William Kent an eminent national architect and it was restored by the Stokesley Society to its current good condition.



Kent Gate

4.4.2 Along Levenside the river is protected by lengths of modern timber birds-mouth fencing that has weathered well to become an acceptable part of the scenery. The less urban character of this part of town also sees the use of hedging to supplement low brick or stone walls in some cases, and to the south of the river the large detached properties along Leven Close rely to a great extent on large hedges to maintain their privacy. The Victorian mansion of Levenbridge House/ Levenside House has a substantial amount of planting around its boundaries and this is very important both to the immediate surroundings of the property and in more distant views of the Conservation Area.

4.4.3 Of key historic importance is the survival of the village pound at the eastern edge of the Conservation Area close to the school. This small enclosure of brick with a stone coping dates back to the 18th Century, possibly earlier, and is a rare example of the traditional way in which stray livestock was dealt with as far back as the Medieval period. This structure became listed Grade II in 2008.



The Pound

4.5 STREET FURNITURE AND MONUMENTS

4.5.1 The centre of Stokesley has a well considered range of street furniture including modern period style lamp standards and lights to two designs. These have been installed from West Green through the heart of the Conservation Area to the Manor House and College Square. Along the principal roads a tall pole with lamp brackets has been used whilst where less light is required a square-topped Victorian style lantern is installed. This approach is successful and could be extended through the remainder of the Conservation Area as opportunities allow, but it is essential that a limited range of designs is used to give a degree of unity to the town.

4.5.2 Other street furniture tends to be adequately maintained and mostly well positioned. There is a

range of bench seating throughout the more open public areas and this is provided in different designs and for the most part well maintained. Litter bins mostly take a standard form and could be improved with maintenance in some cases. Although not a historic item of street furniture they are a necessary component of modern towns and are not over intrusive in Stokesley. There are also a few traditional post boxes in the town and these are well maintained and well used. Highway signage to modern standard patterns is for the most part restrained and although there is a need for direction signs etc. these are not unduly prominent in the Conservation Area. There does not appear to be the surplus of redundant posts or duplicate signs that can be found in some urban areas. A number of good quality modern cast iron bollards have been located in critical areas particularly along the High Street and these are to a generic historic pattern. Much thought seems to have been given to their provision as they are not too numerous and appear to assist in the flow of pedestrians and protect vulnerable areas.



High Street bollard

4.5.3 The only part of the Conservation Area where telegraph poles are readily apparent is along Levenside. Here they are not too intrusive as they blend into the urban landscape and are hidden to a great degree by the surrounding trees. If the opportunity arises to remove them it should be taken and could be undertaken along with carefully considered improvements to the street lighting arrangements as many of the lamps are fixed to the telegraph poles.

4.5.4 There are few large monuments in Stokesley but the War Memorial at West Green is particularly prominent in terms of its setting and design. At the other end of town the historic water wheel provides a well-maintained monument to the past. Although it is thought to be related to its earlier position in the town its position and interpretation could be improved to enhance its prominence in the street. Elsewhere around the town discrete plaques and signs provide useful and interesting information on historic characters from Stokesley's past and this is



War Memorial, West Green

4.6 TREES AND OPEN SPACES

TREES

- 4.6.1 Trees do not form a major part of central Stokesley's townscape but do provide important highlights, areas of contrast and terminal features in views. The most important group of trees lie along the banks of the Leven where they provide a screen between properties on either side of the river. At the east end of the river the trees are a particularly dominant feature. On the south bank of the River Leven, trees provide an informal green setting to the houses that line the road. Other key trees in this area form the eastern boundary to Levenbridge House, screening its extensive grounds from the main eastern approach to the town and leading up to the bridge.



Trees at Levenside



Trees at Levenbridge House



Trees approaching the bridge

- 4.6.2 Other important groups of trees are those on West Green which provide the setting to some of Stokesley's more prestigious houses and the War Memorial, the trees around the Manor House and

Church which define the east end of the High Street, and the trees that close views around the roundabout at the garage in the area of the water wheel. The trees along Springfield and around the pound at the east end of the town also provide a screen to the new supermarket and provide an attractive green entry to the Conservation Area when approached from the northeast.



Trees at West Green

OPEN SPACES

- 4.6.3 The principal open spaces are the areas of West Green and College Square/ Market Place. The linkage between these spaces is visually complex and depends on the views through from one space to the other to form an important part of the town's character. The High Street forms this link and the tall buildings that bound it contribute to the character of the link and highlight the openness of these principal spaces.
- 4.6.4 Levenside is a smaller, less bustling and much more intimate area but still provides a very important linear space within the Conservation Area that remains public yet is removed from the traffic found in the centre of the town. Numerous crossing points, fords and low banks combine with the shallow water and ducks to create an idyllic area that is almost rural in character and unimposing in scale.
- 4.6.5 Poorer quality open space exists around the garage/ car park/ roundabout area at the east of the town. There is a notable loss of any sense of enclosure in this part of Stokesley and most historic boundaries have been swept away by the impact of traffic and the late 20th Century garage development. The Co-op car park lies outside the Conservation Area but the trees have been retained and supplemented along its boundary. These lie within the Conservation Area and go some way towards mitigating its visual impact.

5. Area Character Appraisals

5.2 CHARACTER AREAS

5.2.1 The aim of this section is to examine the interrelationship of buildings and spaces which contribute to the sense of place within the Conservation Area. For the purposes of this study seven character areas have been identified. The characters of these areas are strongly related and it is not appropriate to consider sharp boundaries between them, rather to consider a gradual change flowing from one distinct area to another.

5.2.2 The seven areas are identified as:

1. West End
2. West Green
3. Levenside (as far as Golden Lion Yard)
4. High Street and Market Place
5. College Square
6. Manor House and St Peter's Church
7. The Eastern End of the Conservation Area.

5.2.3 Although these areas closely reflect those identified in the 1998 study this reflects the comprehensive nature of this earlier document and the legibility of the townscape. The areas comprehensively cover the surviving historic parts of the town and include some sites that contribute to the setting of significant views or principal buildings.

1. WEST END

5.2.4 This is a compact part of the Conservation Area that comprises a wide range of housing in very different scales, sizes and dates. Small terraced



10 to 18 West End



1 to 29 West End

houses are visually important with the well detailed terrace from 10 to 18 West End being prominent in several views and the terrace from 1 to 29 West End leading the eye towards the centre of town. The variety and small-scale difference in detail of these later properties contribute greatly to their character. Their edge of footpath position creates a sense of enclosure and a tight intimate space, which contrasts markedly with the openness of West Green when the corner is reached.

5.2.5 The dominant single property in this part of the Conservation Area is Oaklands, a large mansion of mid 19th Century date constructed in sandstone and classically detailed. Its recent extension lacks the historic detailing of the original house but the scale and massing of this new element contribute to a more balanced appearance. The building's prominent location on a corner plot of the principal western approach to the town has clearly been designed as a statement of power and wealth and it dominates this approach despite being set back in its own grounds.



Oaklands

5.2.6 Directly to the north of Oaklands across the road are two substantial modern properties, 8 and 8A. West End, the style and detailing of which do not complement the wider Conservation Area. Although of a good standard their dormer bungalow form and use of modern red brick are not in keeping with the neighbouring historic properties. The substantial hedge to the roadside helps to minimise their intrusion into the street scene and views along the driveways are also tempered by the neighbouring smaller scale developments at 6 West End.

5.2.7 At the eastern end of the street the Masonic Hall and The White Swan public house provide an important focus as the road turns



The White Swan

towards West Green. The Hall is an uncompromising Victorian block in bright red engineering brick with brickwork details to openings and the eaves. The White Swan by contrast is an understated vernacular building that gains its prominence as the sole commercial premises in the immediate area and from its location at the head of the street. From this important point two very different areas lay ahead, the open sweep of West Green to the north, and the more intimate space of Levenside to the east.

2. WEST GREEN

5.2.8 This is one of the principal spaces in the town and probably the most visually pleasing, indeed as a village green it compares well with any other in the region. Although surrounded by many fine Georgian and Victorian houses the roughly triangular space itself is key to the



West Green

character of this area. It provides a setting for the town's War Memorial which is complemented by the important specimen trees that give the area texture and relief, markedly influencing the character of the space and creating much more interesting vistas. Aside from these features the green is open allowing good opportunities to view the surrounding buildings and appreciate the sense of enclosure created by the range and variety of properties.

5.2.9 Straight terraces comprised of properties ranging from the early 18th Century through to late Victorian buildings enclose the south west and north west sides of the Green. There are established building lines to these terraces that strengthen the appearance of the street and, whilst it is only in a few instances that this line is departed from, a variety of bay and bow windows and small porches provide texture to break up any potential severity of line. The properties all retain front gardens set out and fenced in a variety of styles and this further helps create an interesting and vibrant scene, whilst retaining a common sense of scale and proportion to these front areas. There are a few passages and accesses through to backland plots and gardens and in the western corner a public footpath, Silver Street, accesses new developments and recreational open space behind these frontages.

5.2.10 In size the houses range from small, low, two storey cottages of distinctly vernacular character through a variety of more traditional houses to significant individual properties. Of particular note is Handyside House, a well detailed Georgian property with a central two storey block linked to two pavilions in a Palladian inspired plan. The adjacent properties at 54 to 58 provide an interesting contrast in a variety of sizes and materials whilst all retaining an important vernacular character. To the south of Handyside House a pair of well detailed late Victorian houses straddle an arched access to rear mews properties whilst to the north the row of two storey cottages display a splendid variety of bay and bow windows along with some less well considered modern replacements. In the corner the pair of houses at 34 and 36 West Green are a good example of small brick cottages with gabled porches.



54 to 58 West Green



34 and 36 West Green

5.2.11 Running at right angles the north west side of West Green is altogether more imposing with larger houses including number 2, Stokesley House, number 4, Richlieu House and number 8, Carlton House that straddle a rear access and 12 West Green, a fine double fronted stone property that contrasts with the dominant stone buildings that surround it. Along this sweep of the street the character is that of a wealthy section of the town where large well detailed houses combine a subtle range of details and materials to produce an impression of graceful Georgian country style. This extends along the west end of the High Street, certainly as far as 60 and is perhaps best displayed at number 42 High Street (Barclays Bank).



Barclays Bank

5.2.12 The final side of West Green is the curving sweep from Leven Wynd to the White Swan and this takes in a similarly varied range of buildings, which have seen numerous changes to fenestration detailing and the insertion of modern doors.



South of West Green

3. LEVENSIDE AS FAR AS GOLDEN LION YARD

5.2.13 Leading off from the corner of West End and West Green the entry into Levenside may appear undistinguished at first but the tightly framed view gradually opens out to reveal a streetscape of great character and charm. In some ways the small



West of Levenside

scale of this part of town has almost a rural village character with the shallow river winding through the informally laid out street plan flanked with large trees that break up the urban form. The river is very accessible and this is one of the most important aspects of this part of town. It is crossed by both pedestrian and road bridges, has several fords crossing it, steps and footpaths leading into it, and the banks are neither steep nor deep set. Combined with the ever-present ducks, this results in a tranquil scene markedly different from the nearby busy High Street.

5.2.14 At the western end of this area the properties stand tight to the edge of the road and are of small scale industrial and storage character with small terraced houses interspersed. Heading north east along the riverbanks the road widens out and the street becomes more residential in character with short terraces of modest vernacular cottages following the line of the river as far as Red House Court where number 2 Levenside stands at right angles to the established flow of the street.



West of Levenside

5.2.15 Across the river to the south the properties are slightly larger and less densely packed with open green spaces to the front and occasional views between the houses. The view east is terminated by number 37 Levenside, a property of the early 18th Century extended in the 19th Century in a distinctive combination of stonework to the ground floor and brick to the upper storey. Its position is significant as it marks the point at which the road bridge reaches the south bank of the Leven and the more open character of the south bank gives way to a narrower street, fitted tightly between the river and the neighbouring buildings. Some of these are relatively new structures, replicating the scale and materials of nearby cottages, however in some places the detailing lacks the fine touch of many historic developments and the access archway, although necessary to meet current standards, is too large

in scale and proportion to be convincing in the historic context. Passing through the archway the larger scale of the new development quickly becomes apparent and the houses are to standard late 20th Century designs constructed in brick to blend with the surroundings. The form of the new scheme is out of character with the rest of this part of the Conservation Area but works well within the confines of the estate and, being surrounded by traditional properties, does not impact unduly on the wider townscape.



Levenside Place development



37 Levenside

5.2.16 On the north bank the view is of the rears of the commercial properties that face onto the High Street and as such the scene is a jumble of small outbuildings, boundaries and rear extensions. Although there are a few instances of modern servicing requirements the buildings on the whole present an attractive and vibrant range of colours, textures and forms that rise to the three storey buildings beyond. The banks here are connected by one of the most iconic structures in this part of town, the Packhorse Bridge, thought to date from the late 17th or early 18th Century.



Packhorse Bridge

5.2.17 In common with much of the rest of Stokesley this area has a wealth of narrow alleys and wynds connecting it to the High Street and serving small

courtyards and service areas. Between 47 and 49 Levenside one of these provides access to the old industrial area occupied by the Union Mill. This large building is prominent in views of the town from the south due mostly to its sheer size, being several storeys higher than any of the surrounding structures. Its setting has been compromised to a degree by the creation of large areas for circulation and parking that served the heavy goods traffic when the mill was active.



Union Mill

4. HIGH STREET AND MARKET PLACE

5.2.18 This area lies at the core of historic Stokesley and forms some of the most familiar scenery associated with the town. It comprises several small public spaces linked by roads of varying widths all set between tall, predominantly Georgian, buildings. This sequence of spaces heading from West Green through to College Square and the almost imperceptible change from open space to High Street and back to public square is an important part of the character of the town, and the positioning of significant public buildings on island sites within the width of the High Street, the Police Station and Town Hall, make an important contribution to this.



West Green towards High Street

5.2.19 The subtle change from West Green to the High Street begins on the south side of the street at numbers 79 and 81, modern buildings that step in to narrow the width of the Green at the point where Leven Wynd meets the main thoroughfare. The transition is less defined on the north side of the street where the entry to Brewers Yard makes a convenient point between the narrower High Street outside the Methodist Church and the wide entry to the Green further west. From these points the space between the three storey buildings narrows creating a focussed view that draws the eye along the street to College Square in the distance. The NatWest Bank building at 2 Bridge Road creates a crucial pinch point to the view, neatly contrasting with the Methodist Church opposite, the curved flanking walls and stepped back plan of which are the only break in the frontage along the whole of the north side of the street.



Methodist Church

5.2.20 Beyond this point the spaces becomes less legible, with the main roadway continuing from west to east, but a significant space opening up along Bridge Road to the south. This space tapers imperceptibly to the bridge and allows an important view through the depth of the town to the river. The High Street is divided beyond this space, passing to both the north and south sides of the Police Station and its associated buildings. These structures are believed to have their origins in the low shambles buildings,



Bridge Street

slaughterhouses and butchers that were constructed as part of the historic market, and their low stance and limited height allow them to sit within the surrounding three storey properties with a distinctly unique character.

5.2.21 Passing further to the east the Market Place opens up to link the two halves of the High Street again. Considering its historic importance, social and economic role in the life of the town and its location at the heart of Stokesley this space is rather small and almost insignificant by comparison with the principal spaces of College Square and West Green. The larger buildings lining the High Street to the north and south dominate it and the sense of enclosure is completed by the low shambles group to the west and the properties at the back of the Town Hall to the east. These latter two storey domestic scaled buildings step up to the much larger Town Hall creating an easier transition and a more visually comfortable space, less dominated by the bulk of the Hall.

5.2.22 Beyond the Market Place, the High Street returns to its unique split character divided by the Town Hall group, with the principal route running to the north side and a quieter secondary frontage passing to the south.



Buildings behind the Town Hall

Both parts of the street are dominated first by the continuous sweep of the flanking Georgian and Victorian properties to north and south, and secondly by the mass of the Town Hall, an imposing building that presents rather blank faces to the High Street on either side as it faces out to the east. From here a further transition occurs as the High Street passes through the large square, currently a car park, that forms the south west section of the College Square open space.



Town Hall

5.2.23 Although consisting mainly of a complex group of open spaces and streets running on an east west axis, the core area also has an additional dimension to its character in the small wynds and passages passing through on a north south alignment. There are several of these ranging in size from Brewery Terrace, which accommodates a terrace of historic houses and a more recent development of bungalows, to passages such as Kent Gate which provides no more than a pedestrian thoroughfare to a service yard. Within these rear yards and passages much of interest can be found, including the splendid example of Georgian ironwork that is the Kent Gate, and this underlines the importance of these often disregarded areas in providing depth to the more obvious frontage buildings within the Conservation Area.

5. COLLEGE SQUARE

5.2.24 This irregular shaped square is defined by more domestic scale properties than the High Street and its character is markedly less commercial despite retaining shops in some parts of the frontages.

College Square itself is a quieter part of



Kent Gate Yard

Stokesley's main thoroughfare however the traffic on the High Street does have an impact. Most of the open space is laid out as car parking and the presence of significant numbers of cars is perhaps detrimental to the overall character of the urban space. A secondary route, North Road, leaves the north west corner of the square between modest terraced properties and

provides access to the backland areas of the High Street. The main elevations to the west side of College Square are a continuation of the three storey commercial properties along the High Street and this provides an important transition to the more domestic scale and character found to the north of the square. Along this northern boundary the variety of properties is notable with two and three storey houses in brick and render sporting various window and door arrangements including bay windows and elaborate doorcases.



6 College Square



East of College Square

5.2.25 The central block of buildings is a key feature in College Square. They comprise eight separate buildings with assorted extensions and alterations each to individual styles and designs. Nowhere else in the town is there as much variety in such a small group and this is critical to the character both of the buildings themselves and the way in which they impact on the square. The west facing buildings are conventional in appearance, complementing the buildings they face across the square, however the idiosyncrasy of the rest of the group gives great character to the assortment of semi ecclesiastic architecture and former school buildings. The sandstone building at number 29 being the Old Grammar School of 1832, which replaced an 18th Century school on the same site and has a striking presence particularly with the large brick school building set behind it and filling the north east corner of the group.



Preston School



Old Grammar School

5.2.26 Turning to the west side of the square the corner property 41 and 42 College Square is an interesting contrast, being constructed in good quality stonework with a raised first floor above a semi basement,



41 and 42 College Square

now garages. The rest of this side of the square comprises two storey terraces, less varied than the north side but nevertheless in generally good condition and providing an appealing sense of enclosure to the square. The Manor House wall and large trees close the southern side of the square provide a more open and green character, something that contributes greatly to the quality of this area.

5.2.27 The wall turns to the south and forms the east end of the secondary element of the College Square sub-area. Also given over to car parking this area is more commercial in character, with several offices and, further to the west, increasing numbers of pubs and shops. It lacks the openness and presence of greenery of the main part of College Square, the result being a more urban appearance, which provides the setting for the main elevation to the Town Hall. The impression of enclosure here is almost deceiving and results from the scale of buildings lining three sides of this area. In fact the space is completely open to the north east and the principal route in the town passes through in a wide thoroughfare. This area is also linked by the network of passages, wynds and alleys to the riverside, the church yard and properties set in rear areas.

5.2.28 At the far eastern end of the town East End and Springfield provide an introduction to the Conservation Area in a modest manner. Of a later date than much of the Georgian core of Stokesley these substantial Victorian buildings



East of High Street

set tight against the edge of the street include both commercial and domestic properties in a variety of forms and sizes.

6. MANOR HOUSE AND ST PETER'S CHURCH

5.2.29 This is a very discrete part of the Conservation Area, physically and visibly separate from its surroundings. Even within this part of the town each building has its own private surroundings and setting, demarked from its neighbours mostly by high solid walls, so the whole area around the church and Manor House appears very private and enclosed.

5.2.30 There are two principal historic buildings in this character area and although they are possibly the two most influential, largest and most important in the town, visibly they contribute little to the general character of the Conservation Area due to being set back from the main public spaces.



St Peter and St Paul's Church

5.2.31 The Manor House was originally a private residence within the town. Dating from the early 18th and early 19th Centuries it is a large building set within a very large walled curtilage. The



Manor House

surrounding high masonry walls in both brick and stone combine with a number of substantial trees to sever the building from its wider context. Whilst this disconnects it to some degree from the town, it allows the building to stand graciously on its plot, only suffering from the expanse of tarmac that has provided car parking for its previous use as a courthouse and public library. The surrounding walls that separate the house from the town have a distinct presence in the Conservation Area in their own right and the impressive gateway, saved in 1832 from Angrove Hall, provide a suitably prestigious entrance to the Manor House itself.

5.2.32 This identified character area takes in a wide sweep of the eastern part of the town that is occupied by a variety of buildings that provide the setting to the church. To the south of the church yard four large properties occupy substantial private grounds. These are all of the late 20th Century and to individual designs. Large open lawns and specimen trees set off the distinctive architecture of the 1960's and 70's. Viewed from across the River Leven these houses seem incongruous next to the historic church and their main merit is in the low density that they provide and the open spaces and trees that lie within their plots. Moving to the east of the church Manor Farm may be an older property, possibly dating from as far back as the 18th Century but it has been very much altered and its historic character compromised in public views. More 20th Century properties fill the space between the church and the Manor House but their scale, setting and the surrounding walls and boundaries ensure that they do not compromise either of the important historic buildings unduly.



Gate pillar at Manor House

5.2.33 Heading east along Manor Close a modern bungalow provides an introduction to the back of the garage building, possibly the least satisfactory part of the Conservation Area. This garage is generally well maintained and clearly a successful business, however it is completely at odds with its surroundings and the strong horizontal character of the building and the materials and forms used in its construction are inappropriate in the Conservation Area. Moving on from this site the adjacent terrace of 1950's houses, Manorside, are also at odds with the



Rear of Stokesley Motors

character of the core of the town but their scale, position and form do not make them as dominant as the garage. Opposite these the row of Victorian houses and shops at East End provide an important link into College Square.



1 to 4 Manorside

7. THE EASTERN END OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

5.2.34 This comprises a large swathe of the town and is occupied exclusively by residential properties although their variety is notable. Towards the western end and along the banks of the Leven the houses are traditional in form and range from the small cottages at 9 to 15 Levenside through to the more substantial individual properties of 1 to 5 and 19, 21 and 27. These properties exhibit a wide range of styles, dates and materials often in the same building and they are tied together by a shared relationship to the riverside and the surrounding planting and trees that provide the context for the buildings. In terms of the Conservation Area the character of the individual buildings is of less importance than the general wide sweep of the river and its setting, the buildings and large trees forming an important framework for the views.



9 to 15 Levenside

5.2.35 At the far eastern end of the town the impressive villa of Levenside House and Leven Bridge House sit in isolation in their shared gardens. Although of grand proportions and typically well detailed in a late Victorian style this building again is remote from most public views, the site being completely dominated from a distance by the belt of large trees that surround it. These trees are some of the most important in the Conservation Area as they are prominent in views across the countryside from the east and south. The belt of trees extends south beyond Leven Close to encompass the properties to the rear of Station Road. These are mostly of late 20th Century date and in a very secluded setting, their importance to the Conservation Area lying in the contribution that the trees make to the setting of the town. At the far end of Leven Close lies the Old Rectory, an important 18th Century building set in its own grounds and discrete and detached from general view. Again this important building makes little contribution to the character of the Conservation Area due to its secluded position.

5.3 LANDMARK BUILDINGS

5.3.1 Within the Conservation Area there are a number of buildings that make a particularly important contribution to the townscape and play a significant role in establishing the character of the town. These landmark properties need not be the largest buildings or those of most historic interest; rather they may be noted for their striking features or their critical corner locations. The following buildings and features are considered to make a particular contribution to the character of Stokesley:

- **Town Hall, High Street.** This large block of a building provides a very solid backdrop to many High Street views and defines the western end of the open space in front of the Manor House.



- **Manor House, High Street.** The impact of the scale of this house is much reduced by its setting in such large grounds. The surrounding wall is important in defining much of the eastern end of the town.



- **St Peter's Church.** Not a prominent building in the town but nevertheless an important social and historical focal point. The tower is one of the taller structures in Stokesley but manages to remain hidden in trees from many viewpoints.



- **Methodist Church, High Street.** This building is a complete contrast to the majority of its neighbours. The high Victorian Gothic style set back from the road with its curved flanking walls provides a distinctive break in the restrained Georgian street.



- **Oaklands, West End.** This large house is a key gateway feature in approaches from the west. Its scale and position dominate West End and the modern extension, although not detailed to the same quality as the original building and becoming uncompromisingly modern to the rear, helps to create some symmetry to the west elevation that further increases its impact.



- **Terrace at 10 to 18 West End.** Although much smaller than Oaklands, the elevated site and position close to the road make this row of small cottages as imposing in the approach as any other building in the town. The high quality detailing and stone construction are well worth examination.



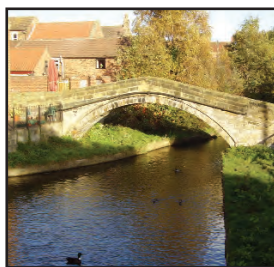
- **Handyside House, West Green.** A beautifully proportioned Palladian influenced house, well detailed and preserved this property makes its impact with both its symmetrical layout and its position set back from the street. The front garden underlines the quality of the property.



- **Stokesley House, 2 West Green.** The most imposing building on the north side of West Green, a street of several good buildings.



- **Packhorse Bridge, Levenside.** This bridge provides an important pedestrian link in the town and its historic form is aesthetically pleasing.



- **Grammar School and Church House, College Square.** These properties are an important feature of College Square occupying a prominent location.



Their variety of styles, details, materials and scale add to their quality and the impact that they make in the street.



- **Police Station, High Street.** Although this is a relatively small building its position is prominent and, coupled with its form, it reflects the scale and proportions of the shambles buildings that previously occupied the site at the heart of the town.



- **Levenbridge House/ Levenside House, Helmsley Road.** This is a typical large late-Victorian mansion, solidly built and well proportioned but it is marked out because of its location, dominating the approach to the town from the east.



- **Union Mill, Levenside.** Hidden from much of the town this huge building is historically important as one of the last historic industrial buildings in Stokesley. Its size makes it visible from various view points to the south of the town, in particular from the bypass.



5.4 IMPORTANT VIEWS AND VISTAS

5.4.1 Whilst there are many images associated with Stokesley, a number of significant views and vistas contribute to defining the character of the Conservation Area. The following six are considered to be the most important in the town, taking in the important elements that make up the character of Stokesley and defining its sense of place.

- Views along Levenside particularly in the western section.
- Vista across West Green from the Masonic Hall corner.
- Vista from the northwestern side of West Green looking east through to the Market Place.
- Vista from the entry to Brewery Terrace looking southwest across West Green.
- Vista from the Town Hall looking east across to the Manor House and College Square.
- View from the Manor House looking west particularly along High Street.

5.4.2 Along Levenside the views in either direction are of particular quality and take in the almost village character of this part of town. The views are linear following the meandering course of the river and this is reflected in the flow of the established building lines of the houses flanking the banks. Trees play an important part in these views, giving a green character to the area and restricting the field of vision to create a sense of anticipation as the view unfolds.



Levenside

5.4.3 The three vistas across West Green are important as they allow an appreciation of the space and the quality of the buildings surrounding it. The trees set on the Green are of crucial importance in these views as they subtly screen some buildings and reveal others depending on the position of the viewer.

5.4.4 From the corner of the Green with West End the entire north side of West Green terminates the view and subtly leads towards the High Street. From the north west corner and the entry to Silver Street, the properties at 79 and 81 West Green stand out as their gable end breaks forward of the sweeping building line, however the view to the east stretches off into the distance taking in the whole of High Street with the trees of the Manor House and properties on College Square in the far distance.



North West



East



West

5.4.5 To stand at the Manor House corner the view not only takes in the grandeur of the Town Hall which forms a large element in the scene but also allows significant long views between the buildings along the High Street as far as parts of West Green. College Square opening out to the right does not play such an important role; rather it provides an intangible feeling of being in an open space. Despite being a principal element in the form of the town, College Square lacks a significant viewpoint across it due in part to the dominating presence of the island buildings, in part to the modest character of the properties that make up the square, and in part to the use of the space for car parking.

5.4.6 As well as these principle views and vistas there are many more subtle and small scale glimpsed views that are important to the character of the Conservation Area. These mostly rely on the many wynds, yards, smaller roads and alleys that permeate the town and allow a sense of depth and revelation to be appreciated, particularly between the High Street and Levenside, and to the north of the High Street. These views are of great importance collectively as they can give an understanding of the development of the town, its orientation and the hierarchy of streets. Whilst not identified individually care should be taken to pay regard to the qualities and characters of these individual views in any future development or enhancement proposals.

5.5 GENERAL CONDITION

5.5.1 There is much evidence of investment in properties in the recent past and a range of building projects are currently underway demonstrating a continued regime of maintenance. There are very few poorly maintained buildings within the Conservation Area, however one or two properties could benefit from timely maintenance, informed repairs to their fabric or other improvement works.

5.5.2 Stokesley is fortunate in having relatively few unsympathetic modern shop fronts. There are a number of good quality individual shops with signage appropriate to their setting, several of which have examples of traditionally styled hand painted signs. Where chain stores or national groups have a presence, the signage is mostly restricted to traditional locations and forms, or has been applied in a sensitive manner. Examples of this are found at the large Boyes Store and the two bakers shops on the High Street, where the signage is restricted to the established fascia. Barclays Bank is worthy of mention as its corporate signage has been sensitively applied to the property in a way that does not dominate the building. Of the stores that have a less acceptable form of signage the Spar stands out as perhaps the most prominent example, however even here although the shop front is out of keeping with the Conservation Area, its impact is limited as the signage and shop front respect the traditional layout of shop units in the town. Other examples of signage that could be improved include Boots and the estate agents and building society adjacent to the Methodist Church. Guidance on the design of shop fronts and appropriate materials for use in the town can be found at the Annex to this document.

5.5.3 Although the majority of buildings have been well maintained in recent years there is evidence of older repairs that have not been undertaken in a manner appropriate to the historic building itself or to its setting in the Conservation Area. Cases of inappropriate strap pointing or the use of unsympathetic materials particularly hard cement mortars and renders are present in the Conservation Area. However, some shopfronts and windows to upper floors are suffering from neglect and decay and the repair of such features should be encouraged.

5.6 POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT OR ENHANCEMENT

- 5.6.1 The largest single area suitable for investment in the Conservation Area is that around the garage at the eastern end of the town. This area, whilst in a reasonable condition, does not contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area and its eventual redevelopment could enhance the approach to the town centre if handled sensitively. The modern building dominates much of the approach to Stokesley and its scale, mass and strong horizontal emphasis combined with the use of bright modern materials are detrimental to the character of the town. Any replacement building must better respect the form and scale of the historic buildings elsewhere and the site could be employed to create a high quality gateway feature at the east end of Stokesley. A design brief for the site would help guide future development.



Stokesley Motors

- 5.6.2 Other smaller sites exist in backland areas particularly to the north of High Street. These long plots with historic boundaries are important to the grain and character of the town and are served by the narrow ginnels and passages that are so important to the town. Several of these plots are currently used for car parking and to service the buildings fronting the High Street but they may become available for development in the future or have the ability to be enhanced in some way. There are also individual sites and small plots within the Levenside area of town and where vacant buildings are proposed for redevelopment it is important that nothing of importance is lost and that any replacement building respects its setting. An example of inappropriate detailing is found on the southern bank of the river close to Bridge Road where the new development of houses around a courtyard has gained access through an arched opening.

This opening is far larger than other comparable accesses in the town and its proportions and scale are inappropriate to the Conservation Area. The properties within the development are of good quality but do not reflect the prevailing scale or details of the nearby, established vernacular housing. The result is an estate appearance that does not readily assimilate to the area of the town in which it is set.



Levenside Place

- 5.6.3 Union Mill is currently in use as an agricultural/equine retail outlet. However the upper floors of the building and the majority of the tarmac car parking are unused and would benefit from redevelopment and improvement.
- 5.6.4 Within the core areas of Stokesley a major influence on the character and quality of the town is the amount of car parking that takes place in prominent public areas. Facilities for visitors and local shoppers are crucial to the vitality and viability of the town but the impact of car parking can be detrimental if not carefully handled. A reduction in the amount of car parking in central locations could be balanced by making provision in less sensitive areas close to the Conservation Area particularly on backland sites that relate well to the primary shopping frontages. The selective removal of car parking could allow some areas of the town to be opened up for pedestrian use and further visitor attractions or retail areas such as pavement cafés or semi-permanent stalls. However no such sites have been part of the appraisal process.

5.6.5 The cycle track that has recently been created at the eastern end of Levenside does not complement the character of the pathway on which it has been set. Whilst the provision of routes for cycles is appropriate in the Conservation Area it should be undertaken sensitively to the setting of the route and it appears here to have been created using a standard highway design. The lane itself is unsuitable for vehicular traffic and a shared surface could have served the same function without the need for kerbs and road markings. It also appears that standard highway street lighting has been installed, at odds with the other recent lighting in the Conservation Area that has a more historic style. Low intensity lighting provided on square-topped lanterns would have been a more visually appropriate solution in this part of the town.



Cycle path along Levenside

5.7 NEUTRAL SITES AND AREAS

5.7.1 The majority of the town generally makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area however there are a number of smaller areas the character of which is discordant with the historic character of the town. These may be of good quality but do not reflect Stokesley's general historic appeal, rather they are more typical of modern housing developments. None intrude unduly on the general appearance of the Conservation Area and they are identified here as being neutral in character rather than having a negative impact.

5.7.2 In the south east the late 20th Century houses on Leven Close are of very good standard but fail to respect the style, form or layout of the wider Conservation Area. A similar situation on a rather more modest scale is the case at Levenside Place where a small modern estate has been inserted into the historic street plan. Behind West End to the south, the former gardens of Oaklands have been developed in the late 20th Century as part of a modern estate in a form inappropriate to the wider area, although here the development is part of the larger development to the south. It is proposed to amend the Conservation Area boundary here to exclude this new development.

5.7.3 In the north east corner of the Conservation Area the modern bungalow adjacent to the Pound pays little regard to the historic setting of the site although at this point much of the core of the town lies some distance away, separated by substantial trees and planting. To the north of the town centre the rear yards retain some of their historic layout but the service uses and piecemeal developments and speculative building projects do not reflect the quality found along the High Street.

5.7.4 Finally the surroundings of the Union Mill reflect the recent past commercial use of the site rather than its historic form and layout. This may be addressed in any reuse of the building in due course.

5.7.5 Although of neutral character these areas do not harm the wider general appeal and quality of Stokesley, rather they allow the Conservation Area to continue to develop to meet the needs of the current residents and visitors. These areas can serve to demonstrate how and where designs can be improved in new developments to better complement the Conservation Area in future.

6. Management Plan

6.1 MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

6.1.1 The purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is to provide a clear and structured approach to proposed development, repairs and alterations which have an impact upon the Stokesley Conservation Area.

6.1.2 The aim of the Management Plan is to identify buildings and spaces which have the potential for improvement or further enhancement. Although Stokesley is an attractive town, there are some buildings or spaces which could be improved or enhanced for the wider benefit of the Conservation Area. The Management Plan will therefore highlight such issues and suggest measures to address them.

6.1.3 The Management Plan, at this stage is by no means complete. Comments are therefore welcomed if there are additional buildings or spaces suggested for inclusion within the plan.

6.2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.2.1 The District Council monitors Conservation Areas as part of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). In particular, the AMR focuses upon the number of Conservation Area Appraisals produced by the Council and monitors the target for further compilation.

6.2.2 Hambleton District Council is required to review its Conservation Areas from time to time, which may involve alterations to the boundaries of existing Conservation Areas or even the designation of new Conservation Areas. The special character of Stokesley has been considered as part of this review process and forms part of this assessment.

6.3 MAINTAINING QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY

6.3.1 In order to maintain the quality environment of the Conservation Area, the District Council will:

- Carry out a review of the Conservation Area character appraisals and Management Plan from time to time.
- Require an appropriate level of

supplementary information at the planning application stage.

- Establish a 'local list' of historically significant buildings, not already included within the statutory list of Listed Buildings.
- Where appropriate prepare design guidance for specific development schemes within the public realm.

6.4 BOUNDARY REVIEW

6.4.1 As part of this appraisal the boundary of the Conservation Area has been reviewed and amendments are proposed.

6.4.2 There are five alterations proposed to improve the protection of the character of the Conservation Area. These are:

- Amend the boundary to the rear of Oaklands to exclude the modern houses which relate to the new estate more than that of the Listed Building.
- Rationalise the boundary around the car park to the front of the Co-op store.
- Extend the boundary to include the old primary school building to the front of Stokesley school and trees fronting Springfield.
- Extend the boundary to include the two sections of backland properties to the rear of the High Street at Kent Gate which accommodates the Fire Station and at Brewery Terrace and Stone Hall Close. Both of these areas currently accommodate modern developments that could be considered out of keeping with the historic character of the Conservation Area, however they retain the site layout and to a large degree the development patterns of the historic town. To include these areas will allow an appropriate level of control and influence over any future redevelopment proposal to ensure that the historic character of this backland area is not further compromised and that adequate regard is had to the historic setting of the sites.

6.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT OR ENHANCEMENT

6.5.1 Although Stokesley is a very attractive town and generally within a good state of repair, there are

some properties which would benefit from the application of appropriate repair techniques and the replacement of many inappropriate repairs with ones more in keeping with the age of the properties. For example:

- Re-pointing and care of brick and stone, carried out in appropriate matching materials using a lime based mortar, to the appropriate style.
- Care and repair of existing roofs and roof coverings, including the replacement of inappropriate modern coverings with more appropriate pantile or slate.
- Care and repair of traditional cast iron guttering and downpipes, including the replacement of modern plastic rainwater goods with cast iron wherever possible.
- Repair and enhancement of traditional shopfronts.
- Care and repair of existing traditional windows, including the reinstatement of more appropriate historic designs and materials wherever possible.
- Use of appropriate to historic paint colours, such as the Dulux Heritage range, Farrow & Ball or the Little Green Paint Company (other paint companies also provide heritage ranges).
- Improvement of modern signage with timber signs finished in appropriate historic colours.
- Replacement of modern cement based mortars with lime based renders, more in keeping with the historic character of the buildings and streetscene.
- Maintenance of existing historic floor surfaces and the informal treatment of highway verges where appropriate, such as those at Levenside.

6.5.2 Where buildings of historic value within the Conservation Area fall into a state of disrepair, the Council will consider the use of statutory powers to enforce the owners of such properties to implement appropriate repairs to ensure longevity of the building.

6.5.3 In addition, there are a number of sites where improvement and enhancement would be beneficial to the character and appearance of Stokesley. These are:

- The garage site east of the town.
- Backland parking areas to the north of the High Street.
- Union Mill
- Buildings to rear of 41 High Street.

These areas are shown on map 2.

6.6 DESIGN GUIDANCE

6.6.1 A design guide for works of repair and alteration to buildings and spaces within the Conservation Area can be found as an Annex to this appraisal. The Design Guide concentrates on specific issues relevant to the Conservation Area such as materials, shopfronts, streetscape and public open space.

6.7 EXISTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

6.7.1 The appraisal has identified 122 Listed Buildings under 94 separate listing descriptions within the Stokesley Conservation Area. These are included within the following list of heritage assets. The current appraisal has also identified a number of buildings which provide a significant contribution to the historic character of the town. These are identified on Map 2 as being of local interest.

6.8 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

6.8.1 The impact of cumulative change can have a significant adverse impact on the character of historic buildings within the Conservation Area. For these reasons, an Article 4 Direction was issued in 1992 to protect such buildings from the impact of cumulative change. This covers the front and rear elevations of all buildings fronting the main streets within the Conservation Area (see Map 1). The Direction removes certain permitted development rights, which means that many alterations such as window and door replacement require the benefit of planning permission.

6.8.2 Further details relating to the Article 4 Direction in Stokesley can be found on the Council's website at www.hambleton.gov.uk or by telephone - Planning Policy & Conservation Officer.

6.9 HERITAGE ASSETS

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

- There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Stokesley Conservation Area.

Tree Preservation Orders

- There are 38 individual plus 8 group TPOs within the Conservation Area.

Key unlisted buildings within the Conservation Area

- Identified on Map 2 as buildings of local interest.

Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

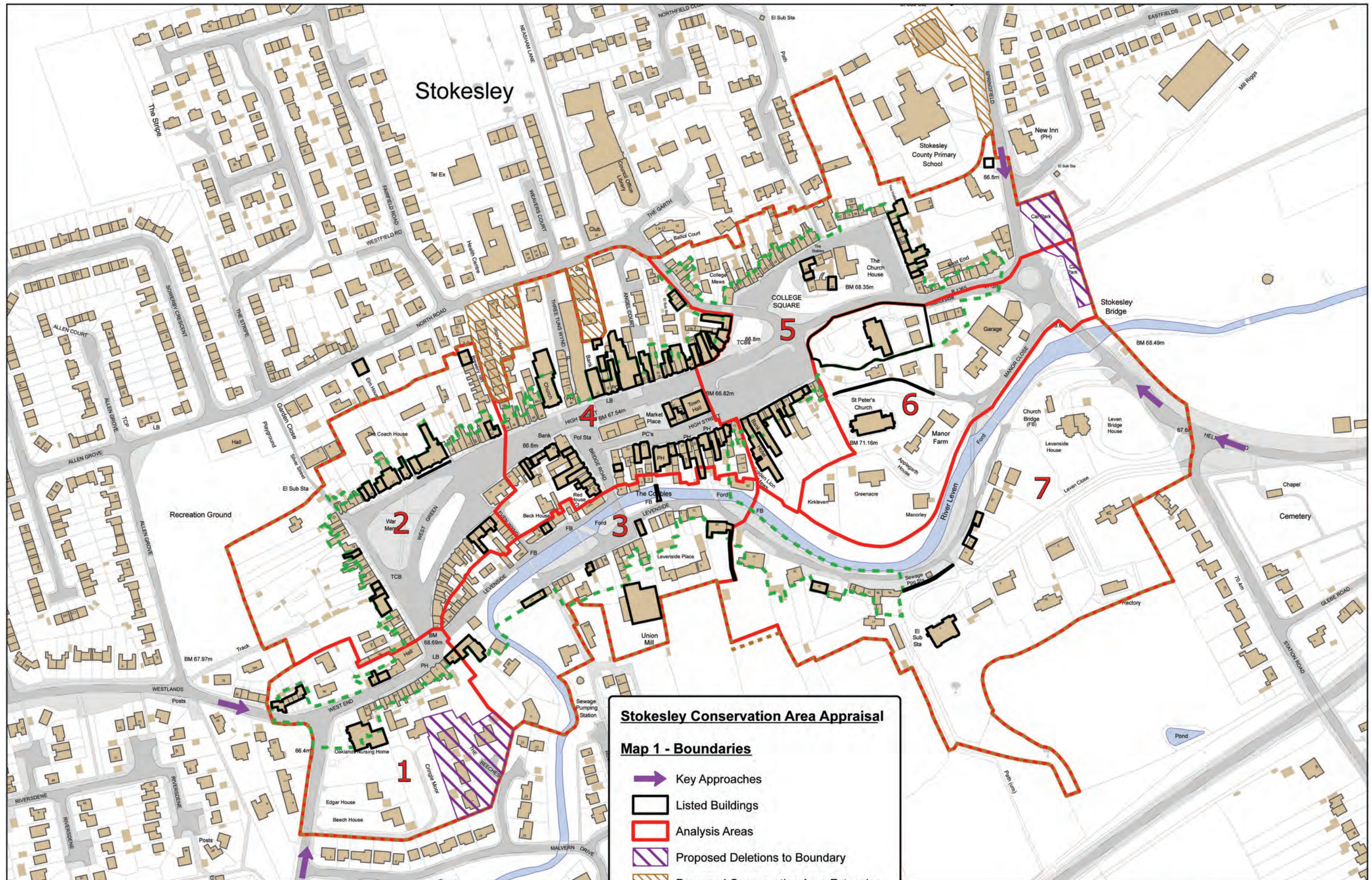
- There are 122 listed buildings, under 94 separate listing descriptions within the Conservation Area, listed below:

Building Name	Street Name	Grade
7	Brewery Terrace	II
3	Bridge Road	II
4	Bridge Road	II
6, 8 and 10	Bridge Road	II
12 and 14	Bridge Road	II
Red House 16 and 18	Bridge Road	II
Woodville 25	College Square	II
Windsor House 26	College Square	II
Former Preston School	College Square	II
41 and 42	College Square	II
43-46	College Square	II
47	College Square	II
Linthorpe House 48	College Square	II
49	College Square	II
Ivy House 2	High Street	II
4	High Street	II
6	High Street	II
8	High Street	II
10	High Street	II
12	High Street	II
14	High Street	II
16, 18 and 20	High Street	II
22 and 24	High Street	II
30	High Street	II
32	High Street	II
34	High Street	II
Gates and gate piers north of no 36 and attached outbuildings	High Street	II

Building Name	Street Name	Grade
36 and 38	High Street	II
Outbuildings to rear of no 38	High Street	II
Outbuildings to north of number 38 with extension wall	High Street	II
Barclays Bank 42	High Street	II*
Methodist Church	High Street	II
60 and 62	High Street	II
Church of St Peter and St Paul	High Street	II
Wall on North side of St Peter's churchyard	High Street	II
11	High Street	II
Martin House and garden wall to east 13	High Street	II
15	High Street	II
17 and 19	High Street	II
21 and 23	High Street	II
HSBC Bank 25	High Street	II
Chapters, 27	High Street	II
33	High Street	II
35 and 37	High Street	II
The Spread Eagle Public House 39	High Street	II
41	High Street	II
The Roseberry, 43	High Street	II
45 and 45A	High Street	II
47	High Street	II
The Queens Head Public House 49	High Street	II
51	High Street	II
53	High Street	II
59 and 61	High Street	II
63-67	High Street	II
69	High Street	II
71	High Street	II
The Pound	Springfield	II
6 and 8	Levenside	II
Packhorse Bridge	Levenside	II
Number 3 including the former number 5 with garden wall to north of no 3	Levenside	II
The Old Rectory 7	Levenside	II

Building Name	Street Name	Grade
Garden wall to north of number 7	Levenside	II
19	Levenside	II
Preston House and garden wall to south east 29	Levenside	II
37	Levenside	II
55	Levenside	II
Union Flour Mill	Levenside	II
Riverside Cattery with link wall and outbuilding to east 67	Levenside	II
Leven House 71 and 73	Levenside	II
Garth House 75	Levenside	II
Town Hall	Market Place	II
Number 1 and building to west of number 1	Market Place	II
Westbrook Garage	Market Place	II
Manor House and wall adjoining Garden walls and gate piers to north, west and south of Manor House	Market Place	II*
1 and 3	North Road	II
4	West End	II
6	West End	II
10-18	West End	II
Oaklands	West End	II
Stokesley House 2	West Green	II
Forecourt wall, gate piers and railings to numbers 2 and 4	West Green	II
4	West Green	II
Carlton House 8	West Green	II
12	West Green	II
14	West Green	II
16	West Green	II
18	West Green	II
1 and 3	West Green	II
5 and 7	West Green	II
44	West Green	II
56	West Green	II
58	West Green	II
Handyside Cottage 60 and 62	West Green	II*

Stokesley



Stokesley Conservation Area Appraisal

Map 1 - Boundaries

- Key Approaches
- Listed Buildings
- Analysis Areas
- Proposed Deletions to Boundary
- Proposed Conservation Area Extension
- Conservation Area
- Article 4 Direction

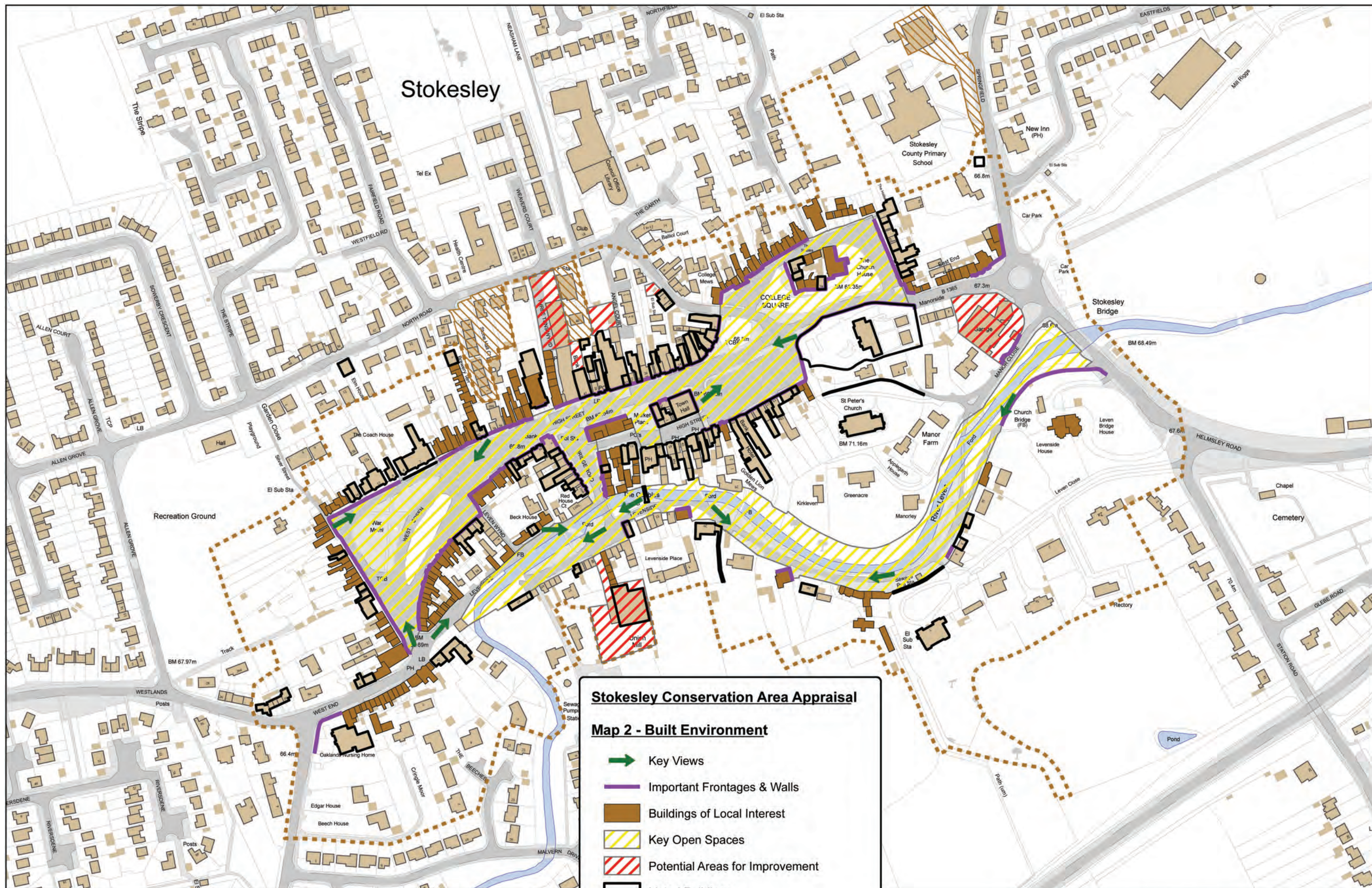
HAMBLETON
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Stokesley Conservation Area Appraisal

Map 2 - Built Environment

-  Key Views
-  Important Frontages & Walls
-  Buildings of Local Interest
-  Key Open Spaces
-  Potential Areas for Improvement
-  Listed Buildings
-  Proposed Conservation Area Extension
-  Conservation Area

HAMBLETON
DISTRICT COUNCIL

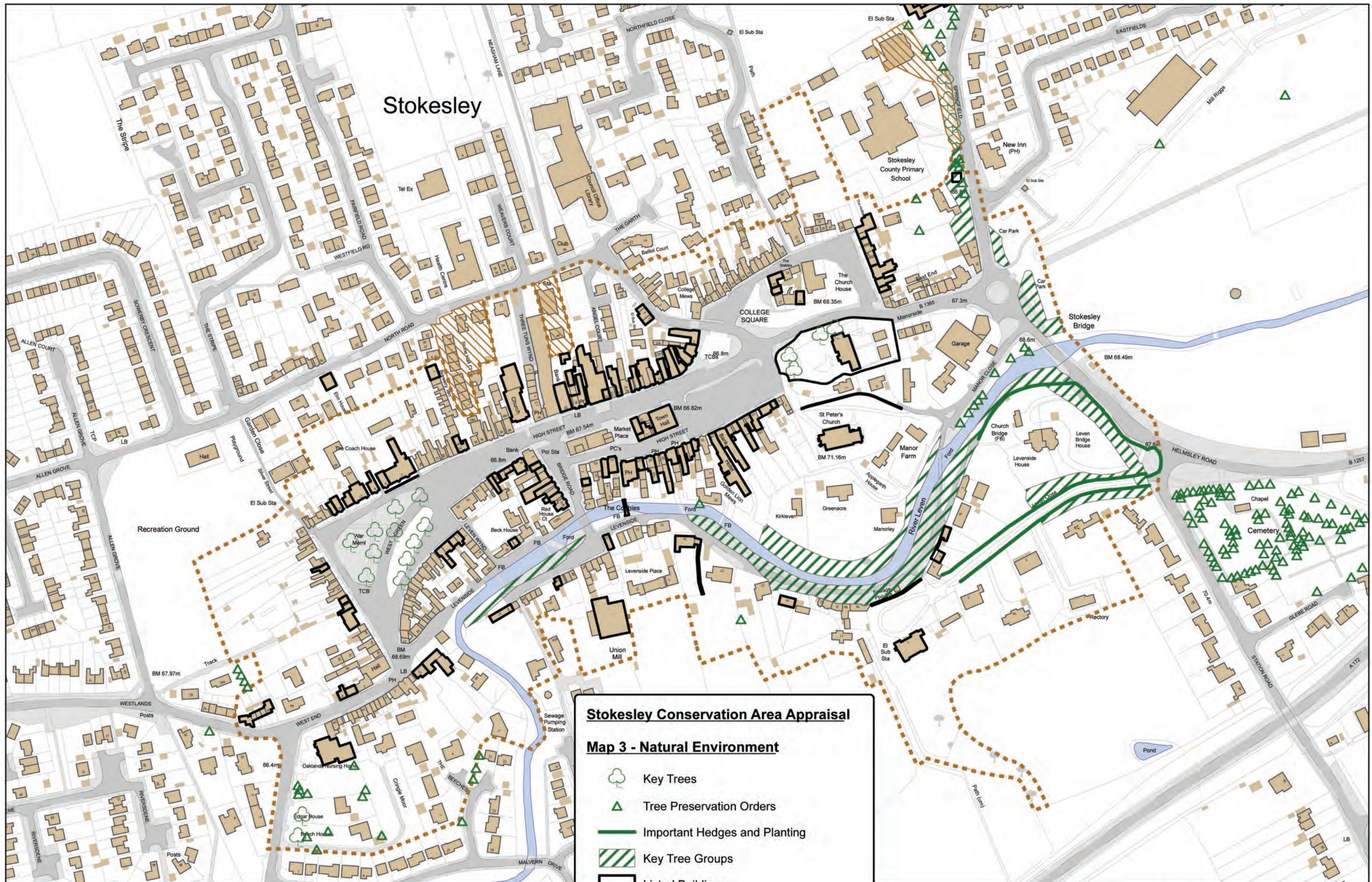
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N.B. Proposed works to all trees within the Conservation Area requires notification to the Local Planning Authority



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Stokesley Conservation Area Appraisal

Map 3 - Natural Environment

- Key Trees
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Important Hedges and Planting
- Key Tree Groups
- Listed Buildings
- Proposed Conservation Area Extension
- Conservation Area



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