

## Planning Committee

2 September 2015

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### Ravensworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Report of the Planning and Development Manager

**Gilling Ward**  
**Key Decision = N**

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#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval for the adoption of the Ravensworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and to consider the introduction of an Article 4 Direction.

#### **2.0 Decisions Sought**

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the adoption of the Ravensworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance and to agree to further consultation on the possible introduction of an Article 4 Direction.

#### **3.0 Link to Corporate Priorities**

- 3.1 This report does not specifically relate to any of the Council's Corporate objectives.

#### **4.0 Introduction & Background**

- 4.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that from time to time Local Planning Authorities shall determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Within Richmondshire we have 41 designated Conservation Areas.
- 4.2 Section 71 of the Act sets out the general duties of Planning Authorities. It states that it is the duty of a Local Planning Authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas.
- 4.3 Within the former Richmondshire Local Plan a Character Statement was included for all of the then Conservation Areas, but in March 2011 English Heritage published revised guidance on the format that Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans should take. The previous Character Statements fall short of this revised guidance.
- 4.4 An Appraisal and Management Plan for the Ravensworth Conservation Area has now been prepared following the approach of the revised guidance (see documents in **Appendix 1**).

## **5.0 Consultation Undertaken and Responses Received**

- 5.1 The consultation period on the draft document ran from 14<sup>th</sup> January until 23<sup>rd</sup> February. Letters were sent to the occupiers of all properties in the Conservation Area, the Ward Member, North Yorkshire Highways, North Yorkshire Historic Environment Records, English Heritage, Richmond and District Civic Society, Ravensworth Parish Council, CPRE and the North East Civic Trust. All were invited to view the draft documents on the Council's website.
- 5.2 Five responses were received from English Heritage, the Richmond and District Civic Society, Ravensworth Parish Council, CPRE and one private individual. There has in general been support for the Appraisal and Management Plan and minor drafting errors have all now been corrected with the benefit of the responses received.
- 5.3 The North East Civic Trust have provided general comments on principles and guidance on earlier appraisals and management plans and their comments have been incorporated into the production of the Ravensworth document.
- 5.4 The Richmond and District Civic Society were supportive of the document but felt greater emphasis should be given to highlight particular aspects which contributed to the character of the Conservation Area. They felt that to ensure these features were not compromised, consideration should be given to introducing an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights in respect of alterations to windows and doors as well as the introduction of rooflights and solar panels.
- 5.5 Current "permitted development rights" for dwellings do enable alterations to be undertaken which can have a detrimental impact on the character of a Conservation Area. The means by which to reduce this risk is through an "Article 4 Direction" which would selectively remove specific permitted development rights and require the submission and consideration of an application for planning permission. In that way, unsympathetic alterations to properties which would otherwise erode the historic character of an area can be avoided.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 The Conservation Area Appraisal analyses the character and appearance of Ravensworth and gives a basis for considering future applications for development to ensure that this character and appearance is preserved or enhanced.
- 6.2 The Management Plan identifies positive steps that can be taken to ensure the identified character can be preserved or enhanced.
- 6.3 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan follows the guidance set down by English Heritage and is generally supported.
- 6.4 If Members are minded to support the principle of an Article 4 Direction, then further consultation should be undertaken with the Parish Council and the owners/occupiers of properties in the Conservation Area.

## 7.0 Recommendation

- 7.1 That the Ravensworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 7.2 That further consultation should be undertaken with the Parish Council and the owners/occupiers of properties in the Conservation Area regarding the introduction of an Article 4 direction.
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## 8.0 Corporate Implications

Scrutiny Consultation	No specific consultation has been undertaken through Scrutiny Committee given the extensive community consultation undertaken as part of this exercise.
Community Engagement	This is referred to in Section 5 above.
Environment & Sustainability	The Appraisal and Management Plan includes statements on the environment and sustainability
Financial Implications and Efficiencies	None
Legal Implications	None
Risk Implications	None
Human Resource Implications	No additional implications, but the Management Plan identifies tasks which will form part of the future work of the Conservation Officer.
Equalities Implications	None
Health & Safety Implications	None

## 9.0 Further Information

- 9.1 Background Papers:  
English Heritage: Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals.  
English Heritage: Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas  
Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- 9.2 File Reference: Ravensworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- 9.3 Appendices - Appendix 1 - Ravensworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Document (Final Draft)

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# RAVENSWORTH

## Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan



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# Introduction

Ravensthorpe was designated a Conservation Area in 1982.

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

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

In making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area” (Section 72 of the Act).

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

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

The aim of the appraisal is to identify the elements and qualities of the conservation area that contribute positively towards its character. This will generally consist of:

- the design and materials of the buildings which make up the local vernacular styles,
- the layout and orientation of the settlements
- the landscape and features
- the setting

The appraisal will also identify elements that are unfortunate and are out of keeping with the area’s character. The impact of some of these features may have been reduced by time and scale but they should not be replicated in future developments and, where possible, enhancement opportunities to remove the incongruous aspects should be taken.

## Statement of Significance

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

## Location and Setting

Ravensthorpe lies around 8 km north west of Richmond and 12km south east of Barnard Castle - on the south side of the A66 trunk road. The majority of the built part village is positioned on raised ground, effectively an island above the valley floor of Dalton Beck. To the south and north, parts of the Conservation Area including the land around the castle and Dalton Beck itself - are at a lower level. Just beyond these the land rises up the wider valley sides. To the south the level change is steeper towards Feldom Ranges then the land to the north, which rises at a more gentle level up to the A66 - which was formerly a Roman Road.

# Historic Development and Archaeology

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

Its name is derived from the name 'Hrafn', the founder of the settlement. It was originally called 'Ravenswath' - 'wath' was the Old Norse word meaning 'ford' and would suggest that Holme Beck that passes through the village was forded in Viking Times. Its name and spelling has varied over the years - in the 11th century it was 'Ravenswet', 'Rasueswalt' in the 12th century, 'Ravenswade' in 1201 and 'Ravenswath' from the 13th to the 16th century. It was after this it began to settle on 'Ravensworth'.

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



Photo 1

The Lord of the Manor in 1066 was Thorfin, and the village is documented in the Domesday Book (1086). At that time it was recorded as having 21 households, a church and a priest and quite a large settlement. This is presumed to be in the wider landscape which included Kirby Hill.

The Manor passed through various hands and in the reign of Henry I the Fitzhugh family built a fortress which would have offered protection against Scottish raids. Henry Fitzhugh built the current Ravensworth Castle in 1391 (photo 1) on the site of the previous 11th century fortress and received a licence to enclose 200 acres of land around the castle to make a park. The park pale

('pale' being a medieval term used to refer to a substantial boundary often associated with parks or deer parks), is still evident in numerous areas to the south of the castle (photo 2). After the end of the Fitzhugh male line in 1513 the castle passed through the female 'Parr' line, but by 1571 it passed to the Crown Estate and the castle was ruined largely as a result of being quarried for local building materials. In the middle of the 16th century the castle was substantially pulled down although the antiquarian John Leyland recorded that the gatehouse was still intact. Over the following centuries the castle passed through various ownerships and today is retained in private hands.



Photo 2

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Architectural Features and Building Materials

The most dominant built feature within the Ravensworth Conservation Area is the Castle (photo 5).

## Ravensworth Castle

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

Although in a ruined state, significant parts of the Castle have survived, and the original plan and layout is preserved. The standing fabric - particularly the gatehouse and the belfry tower - survive reasonably well and other remains of medieval structures are preserved below ground. Unusually the main defensive feature of the castle was the waterlogged area surrounding the castle, which was managed by a system of embankments and channels, which still survive as standing earthworks (photo 6). There are also earthworks relating to the deer park attached to the castle and long sections of the wall - which was originally three miles long - survive (photo 7), and Remnants of the medieval village settlement adjacent to the castle are also still in existence.

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



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

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

## Architectural Style of Village Buildings

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

A number of the older properties have been recognised for their architectural or historic interest and have been Listed Grade II. The earliest of these - dating from the late 16th to early 17th century - is Tofta House (photo 8), just to the north of the castle. The house is T-shaped in plan, originally of three storey and four bays but lowered in the mid 19th century and given a Welsh slate roof and sash windows. The gable of the rear wing still retains evidence in the form of a two light chamfered mullioned window. There are also parts of surrounds of mullioned windows evident on the front and this is a very early form of window. The west gable appears to have been constructed of stone from the castle with two blocked fire windows. A late 18th century garden wall which has an ashlar door surround sweeps up to the main building. To the rear of Tofta House are a range of former functional buildings (photo 9) including a Grade II listed cart shed built of rubble with dressed sandstone three segmental arched quoin openings, and a Welsh slate roof.



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

Of a slightly later date is Park House (photo 10), listed Grade II - built in the mid to late 17th and late 18th to early 19th century. It has an irregular U-shaped plan with the early house now forming the left rear wing, possibly with early extension forming two bays left of the main façade and with later 19th century service buildings to the rear right. The front façade is two storey with four bays and unusually for the village it has a Westmorland slate roof. The door-case has fluted Tuscan engaged columns supporting a decorative frieze. The main facade has 16-pane sash windows but the older section to the rear retains a chamfered mullioned window. Behind the main buildings are range of outbuildings including a cowhouse, coach-house and disused livestock enclosure which are all listed Grade II. They are all thought to date from the mid to late 18th century. All are constructed of rubble sandstone with dressed quoins, some ashlar copings and the livestock enclosure has two small vaulted chambers.

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

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

15 The Green (photo 13) dates from 1786 with an early to mid 19th century outbuilding. The house is of coursed dressed sandstone with quoins and has a stone slate and pantile roof with shaped kneelers. The house is two storeys and two bays with a central door with ashlar surround, incorporating a medieval inscription protected by a pediment. The windows are 16-pane sashes with projecting cills and deep lintels incorporating the inscription 'IE 1786'. A single storey building to the right incorporates an arched opening of dressed stone, presumably for a cart.

In the late 18th to early 19th century Mill Farmhouse (photo 14) was built and has had 20th century alterations. It is constructed of coursed watershot, rubble which is rare for the village, and has a modern pantile roof that has a slate course at eaves with shaped kneelers, ashlar copings and brick end stacks. It is two storey and of two parts, the older part being to the left with two bays. The later range to the right is slightly taller and has one bay with a door to the left in an ashlar surround with pediment. The windows are four-pane modern sashes with cills and deep lintels. At the front of the house is a cobbled garden wall with ashlar copings swept up at the sides to a lower front wall and a modern iron railing.

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



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15

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

Numbers. 41/43 The Green - West View Cottage - (photo 17) also date from this time. Now one house, it is built of coursed rubble with a stone slate roof to the left and modern concrete tiles and stone eaves course to the right with some shaped kneelers, ashlar copings and end stacks. It is of two storeys with a lower extension to the right. Windows are four-pane sashes and there is a central door with all openings having dressed stone or quoins surrounds.

The remaining listed properties date from around 1900 and the majority form a group to the north side of the village green - number 20 with attached building to left; 24; 26 (photo 18); and 28. Number 2 Sunset Cottage - is also from this date, but located a little further north away from the main green. Number 20 is two storey built of rubble sandstone with a pantile roof that has a stone eaves course, shaped kneelers, copings and an end stack. It features a central door with ashlar surrounds and 16-pane sash windows. There is a blocked doorway to the left. The attached building is one of only a few older properties in Ravensworth that is single storey but it is similarly constructed of rubble sandstone, a pantile roof with stone eaves course, shaped kneelers and copings, two doors and two Yorkshire sliding sash windows.



Number 24 is built of coursed rubble sandstone with a stone slate roof, ashlar copings and brick end stacks. The property is two storeys and has three bays with quoins to the left hand side. It has a central door with ashlar surrounds and 16-pane sash windows with projecting cills and deep lintels.

Number 26 is of coursed sandstone rubble with a stone slate roof. It is two storeys and has one bay. The door to the left has an ashlar surround and a slab pediment. The windows are 16-pane sashes with projecting cills and deep lintels. Number 28 is of coursed rubble sandstone with a stone slate roof and quoins to the right. It is of two storeys, with three first floor windows of 16-pane sashes with ashlar projecting cills and deep lintels. To the right below the window is a boarded door in segmental arched carriageway of dressed stone. Slightly unusually for the village the stack is not an end stack but positioned between windows.

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

Number 2 - Sunset Cottage (photo 19) - completes the older houses of the village. It is built of coursed rubble sandstone with one of the few Welsh slate roofs in the village. It has two storeys and two bays with a central door in an ashlar surround. Sash windows have 16-panes with projecting cills and deep lintels.

The remaining building of architectural and historic interest in the village is the Village Hall (photo 20). It was built in 1841 as the National School and constructed of coursed rubble with quoins. The roof is Welsh slate with shaped kneelers and ashlar copings. It is the one of two buildings in the village with pointed arch windows of two lights with Y tracery. It has an ashlar bellcote and an end chimney stack.

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

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

- The cross base (photo 22) – possibly from the 16th century and now badly worn, square in plan with the upper corners chamfered and broached stopped. A bump on the upper surface indicates the joint for the next section of the shaft.
- The village pound (photo 23) – thought to date from the 18th century in the form of an irregular oval enclosure of rubble stone with a monolithic gate post to the north-east.
- The footbridge over Holme Beck, 120 meters to the north-west of Mill Farmhouse (photo 24) – from the early 19th century a single segmental arch of dressed voussoirs and soffit with herringbone tooling. The bridge includes a Gothic window head and other carved stone thought to be from Ravensworth Castle.
- Holme Bridge over Holme Beck (photo 25) – thought to date from 1900 and of coursed dressed sandstone. This is a single segmental arch with dressed even voussoirs and soffit. It has coursed rubble spandrels and square coping stone parapets. Above the centre of the arch on both sides are plain dressed rectangular stones.



These buildings detail from the older properties within Ravensworth are reflected in the later 18th and 19th century properties. They are two storey, of coursed sandstone rubble with some ashlar details, pitched roofs sometimes with ashlar kneelers, and copings to the roofs which are generally a clear span of pantiles and/or stone slate. There are a few single storey properties and these are generally clustered around the road from the north. The buildings are generally two or three bays wide, often with a central door and with windows generally having a vertical emphasis and being vertically sliding sashes, both multi-paned and 'two over twos' with projecting cills and deep lintels. Those windows with a horizontal emphasis would originally have had horizontally sliding Yorkshire sashes. These windows are often found to the rear of properties or on outbuildings. and can be seen on the buildings attached to 20 The Green. Chimney stacks are at the ends of roofs (photo 26). There is a dominance of solid over void in walls that is shown on 22 The Green (photo 27). There are some properties where new windows and enlarged window openings have been provided over more recent years, such as at 37 The Green (photo 28). Porches are not a traditional feature, though they do occur on some of the later 19th and 20th century properties. Traditionally dormers and rooflights are not found on elevations fronting on to the village green. The lie of the land means there is a constant stepping up/down in the levels of the properties which is particular evident in the variation of the roof levels (photo 29). Most of the properties front directly on to the village green though some have a small forecourt area behind a small enclosure of a stone wall and/or railings (photos 29, 30 and 31).



**Photo 26**



**Photo 27**



**Photo 28**



**Photo 29**



**Photo 30**



**Photo 31**



**Photo 32**

There are two parts of Ravensworth where twentieth century development dominates. These are around Mill Close and Mill Court/rear of Tofta House where both developments are in locations away from the main vantage points.

Mill Close (photo 33) – was built in the 1970s, substantially as a series of terraced properties around three sides of a green square set to the east. One other row of terraces and a detached property were built to the west of these which reinforces the enclosure of the Village Green (photo 34). The use of a pallet of local building materials (stone and pantiles) on the prominent properties helps to assimilate these comparatively new buildings into the grain of the village.

The properties at Mill Court and to the rear of Tofta House (photo 35) were built in the 1990s and are substantially detached properties using similar materials and design forms to the local vernacular.



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

Another pair of properties from the first half of the 20th century is the pair of suburban pebbledash semi-detached properties (photo 37) to the east end of the north frontage of properties on the Village Green. These are very typical of a town suburb of this date and again look out of place in a historic village core.

# Materials

Locally until the mid 19th century there were numerous quarries with a reputation for producing high quality building stone. Transport problems and costs saw the decline and eventual closure of most of the quarries. However, the nearby Duns Bank Quarry survives and still provides stone for the local area. Given this historic reputation it is unsurprising that nearly all the buildings in the village are constructed of local stone. The majority of cottages and houses use random or coursed rubble (photo 38) construction for the walling. There are two main exceptions to this - the use of watershot rubble at Millhouse Farmhouse (photo 39) and ashlar at 39 The Green (photo 40). Ashlar is also used for the surrounds of openings often with a herringbone tooling pattern as can be seen at 15 The Green (photo 41). Most of the window openings have deep stone lintels which often has the herringbone tooling and projecting stone cill. An exception to this is the voussour stone details on 31 The Green (photo 42) and the moulded stone surrounds of 39 The Green (photo 43).



Photo 38



Photo 39



Photo 40

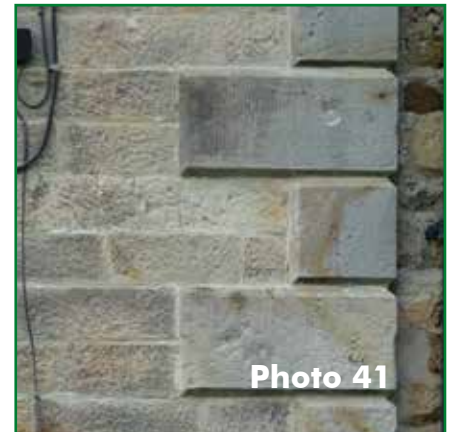


Photo 41



Photo 42

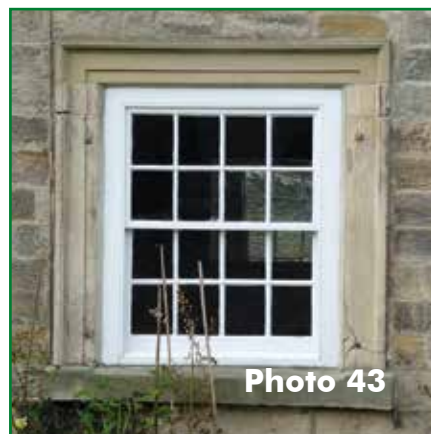


Photo 43



Photo 44

The use of stone has continued throughout the 20th century and despite the form of construction changing from solid wall to modern cavity wall most recent properties continue the tradition of coursed rubble walling, albeit not using stone from the quarries immediately next to the village. Care must always be taken in new construction and repair to avoid leaving sawn faces exposed in rubble stone walls as the smooth surface left by disc cutters contrasts harshly with the surrounding masonry.

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

## Render

Render comes in a number of forms - traditional rough cast render, modern cement render and pebble dash. There are very few rendered properties in Ravensworth Conservation Area. Number 18 The Green is a prominent white painted cement rendered property (photo 45) and certainly stands out as being different to the character of the village, as do the two semi-detached pebble dashed properties to the north east of the Village Green (photo 46).

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



Photo 45



Photo 46

## Brick

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



Photo 47



Photo 48

# Roofing Materials

## Stone Slate

This has been historically used for domestic roofing in the area (photo 49). The stone slates will have been locally sourced. The sandstone slates are thick in comparison to other roofing materials and are laid in diminishing courses, narrowing from large slates at the eaves to small slates at the ridge, often finished with a dressed stone ridge piece. This produces a distinctive character to the roof very different from other natural slates, as the covering is notably thicker and the roof has a textured finish arising from the thick slate edges. Although when first quarried the sandstone slates are a pale grey/buff colour they weather in time to a deeper grey/brown colour slightly darker than walling stone. Good examples of stone slate roofs can be found on many of the listed buildings - 15 The Green (photo 50), 24 The Green, 26 The Green and 28 The Green. The stone slates are often combined with pantiles as an eaves course as referred to below.



Photo 49



Photo 50

## Pantile

Pantiles are the most widely used roof covering in the village and appear to have been the dominant roofing material for many years. They vary greatly in age and character and their different ages and sources combine to produce a richly textured roofscape to the village when viewed from the village green. Several village properties have eaves courses of stone slates, a traditional and interesting vernacular feature which can vary in width from a simple single course to three or four courses of stone. Pantiles and a stone eaves course can be seen at 20 The Green (photo 51). Whilst it is important to maintain sound roof coverings to buildings and the use of modern pantiles is appropriate in the Conservation Area, it is also important to recognise older pantile coverings and to record and preserve them where they exist. Pantiles were often local products that would vary in shape, size and texture from one producer to another. Surviving historic roofs could provide examples of tiles from small local companies now long gone.



Photo 51

**Interlocking Clay Tiles**

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



## Slate

There are several types of slate used on village buildings. Welsh blue/grey slates are the most numerous and the earliest use of slate will date from the latter half of the 19th century when transport systems, particularly the railways, were sufficiently developed to allow slate to be imported to the area. The use of slate has continued alongside pantiles in both re-roofing buildings such as Tofta House (photo 53) and Sunset Cottage but also as a traditional alternative to pantiles. These are best seen at the Village Hall (photo 54) and 18 The Green.



Photo 53



Photo 54

Westmorland slates are a grey/green colour and are rare in the area. Park House (photo 55) being the only house in the Conservation Area to be roofed with them. They are laid to diminishing courses in a similar manner to the local stone slates, but they are not nearly as thick and more akin to the Welsh slates. This is an unusual material to find in a location that is so well provided with good quality stone roofing slate and may be an indication of the high status that this prominent village house has always enjoyed.



Photo 55

## Other Roofing Materials

Recently - throughout Ravensworth - the traditional stone slate roofing materials have been supplemented with more readily available, cheaper alternatives including concrete tiles. They have been used extensively on village properties through the latter part of the 20th century to replace older traditional stone slate roof coverings. They come in a number of forms - both profiled (photo 56) and flat (photo 57). Although not ideal for traditional buildings due to the characteristics of the material itself and the regular mechanical appearance of the finished roof, which differs from the traditional slates or pantiles, the flat tiles have usually mellowed with weathering to blend into the street scene (photo 58). Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the profiled concrete tiles (photo 59). Ideally these will be replaced with more traditional alternatives as they become life expired.



Photo 56



Photo 57



Photo 58



Photo 59

# Floorscape

The village is dominated by the expanses of Village Green which in a lot of areas remains unbound by kerbs (photo 60). In some locations it appears to have been necessary to formalise the demarcation between the roads and the green and verges and a number of means have been used to achieve this, including the standard highways concrete kerbs (photo 61), granite setts (photo 62) and 'grasscrete' (photo 63).



Photo 60



Photo 61



Photo 62



Photo 63

The informality in many places around the main part of the village green is very important to the character of the village and should be maintained to protect the quality of the Conservation Area. In a number of places both timber and stone bollards have been used to prevent overrunning (photo 64). Whilst these are unfortunate in terms of their appearance, they do serve a purpose.

All areas of public road are finished in black tarmac (photo 65).

Accesses away from these roads to the properties on the village green remain un-metalled and are generally crushed gravel (photo 66). Private drives feature a range of surfacing from informal beaten earth paths and rough rubble, through a range of gravels and crushed stone, to concrete, tarmac (photo 67) and modern block paving (Photo 68). This last form of surfacing which is seen substantially on the modern developments of Mill Close and Mill Court/rear of Tofta House (photo 69) provides a very mechanical finish very much at odds with other aspects of the village.



Photo 64



Photo 65



Photo 66



Photo 67



Photo 68



Photo 69



Photo 70



Photo 71

The village has very limited lengths of footpath which are constructed only around the modern developments of Mill Close (photo 70) and the rear of Tofta House (photo 71). These sections of modern highway-standard road layout are rather suburban in nature but fortunately they are only short lengths and hidden away in locations where they do not dominate the character of the village.

There is some evidence of cobbles being a traditional flooring material and these are best exemplified to the front of West View Cottage (photo 72) and 39 The Green. Stone flags also appear to the frontages of some properties such as 7 The Green (photo 73), where they have unfortunately been badly damaged, and at the rear of the Bay Horse Inn where there is a good example of stone setts (photo 74).



Photo 72



Photo 73



Photo 74

## Enclosures, Fences and Gates.

There are two types of boundary treatment used substantially in Ravensworth. Stone walling, sometimes accompanied with railings and hedging, and found throughout the built part of the Conservation Area is either coursed rubble stone to the front of more modest village properties or the formal dressed stone walls in front of some of the larger houses such as Tofta Farmhouse where ashlar stone is used for the gate piers. The variety in form of copings in the village is worth noting with pyramidal dressed stone (photo 75) and stone flags (photo 76). One important wall is that of the village pound which is listed in its own right (photo 77).

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



The railings at 24, 26 and 28 The Green are listed in their own right and are an excellent example of a traditional style (photo 79). It is important to note that these railings all differ and are handmade examples of local blacksmithing rather than modern commercial items. Other modern railings in the village do not quite meet this same level of craftsmanship (photo 80).



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

**Photo 81****Photo 82**

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

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

**Photo 83****Photo 84****Photo 85**

## Street Furniture and Monuments

There is a limited amount of street furniture in Ravensworth but the range that exists includes several important items, which make a valuable contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The most prominent item on the Village Green is the cross base (photo 86). Although the telephone kiosk (photo 87) positioned to the west of the Green is of a standard national design, it has an important place in the community and appears well cared for. It is an important landmark, though a little lost against the backcloth of houses. Slightly smaller, but similarly important, is the post box set in the wall of 58 The Green. A few bench seats are positioned at strategic points around the village often to take advantage of particular views (photo 88). These are usually serviceable but could benefit from some periodic maintenance. There are a few bins that are grouped by one of these seats. Away from the village on the approach from the north is a monument erected to celebrate the millennium (photo 89).

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



Photo 86



Photo 87



Photo 88



Photo 89



Photo 90

## Character - Functions and Uses

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

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

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

## Views and Approaches

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

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



Photo 91



Photo 92



Photo 93



Photo 94

From within the Conservation Area the gentle slope of the land from north to south and the associated ridge of high land a mile to the south means that views can be enjoyed south to the surrounding countryside (photo 95 and 96). However, the position of the castle at close quarters to the south east is hidden by the buildings and hedges, shrubs and trees around the Green. As the majority of the properties front onto the Green the building frontages can be clearly enjoyed through 360°. Views of the Village Green cannot be appreciated from the access roads because of the hedging, narrow entry points and curves of the road (photo 97).



# Character Areas

## Ravensworth Castle

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



Photo 98

## The Village The Green

The Village Green is the dominant feature of Ravensworth village and the majority of the properties are to be found around it. It is roughly triangular in shape and gently slopes from its north east high point to the west and more steeply to the south. It is surrounded on all sides by buildings that consist mainly of two storey houses, either grouped in short terraces, semi-detached or occasionally detached (photo 99). These vary slightly in their relative position to the Village Green (photo 100). The gaps between the properties are small allowing access by foot and vehicles to the areas behind. The overall impression is of a continuous frontage. The lay of the land means that there is variation to the height of properties with roofs stepping to follow the contours of the land (photo 101). Where the gaps between buildings are larger, as they are around the Village Hall, the continuity of the frontage is maintained by the linking of the buildings with substantial walls, (photo 102) thus reinforcing the feeling of enclosure around the Green. The general unity in the colour of materials gives the impression of a homogeneous built form but on closer inspection there are unique differences between buildings - such as the pointed arched windows of the Village Hall (photo 103) and Chapel (photo 104), the deep flat lintels (photo 105) and the use of voussoirs (photo 106).



Photo 99



Photo 100



Photo 101



Photo 102



Photo 103



Photo 104



Photo 105



Photo 106

### Mill House Farm/Forge Farm

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

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



Photo 107



Photo 108

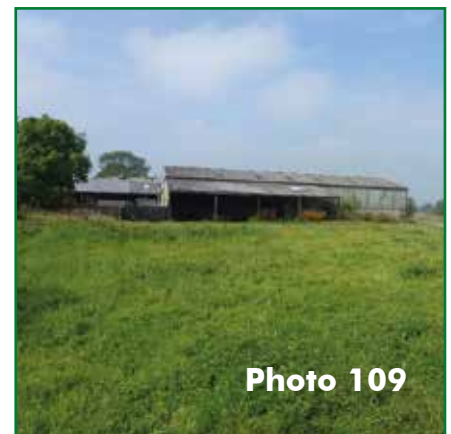


Photo 109

## Mill Close and Tofta House Developments

These two late 20th century developments are very obviously modern - which is particularly evident in the standard highways design (photo 111). Overall they are not intrusive to the character of the area, due primarily to the form of the new buildings and the use of traditional materials similar to the local vernacular.

Mill Close (photo 112) was built in the 1970s substantially as a series of terraced properties around three sides of a green square set to the east. One other row of terraces and a detached property were built to the west of these, which reinforces the enclosure of the Village Green (photo 113). The use of a pallet of local building materials (stone and pantile) on the prominent properties helps to assimilate these buildings into the grain of the village, but on closer inspection the type of stonework, boundary treatment, change in proportions of solid over void. do mark the properties as essentially modern.

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



Photo 110



Photo 111



Photo 112



Photo 113



Photo 114

## Open Spaces and Trees

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

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

There is one particular mature tree near the cross base that forms a focal point within the Village Green (photo 116), but other more recently planted specimens (photo 117) should also be respected for their ability to contribute to the character of the Green in the future.



Photo 115



Photo 116



Photo 117

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

### Conclusion

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

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

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

### Listed Buildings

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

### Buildings at Risk

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

### Preservation and Enhancement

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

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

### Design Guidance

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

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

## Wirescape

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

## New Development

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

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

## Sustainability

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

## Action Points

The character appraisal should be taken into account when considering applications through the planning process:

- Open spaces and trees that have been identified as being crucial to the character of the village should be preserved.
- Care and special attention needs to be given to proposals with sustainable credentials to ensure the character of the Conservation Area is not detrimentally affected.
- Consideration should be given - and further consultation with the village undertaken - on the removal of Permitted Development Rights in relation to the design of windows, doors, rooflights and the installation of solar panels.

## Community Involvement

A letter was circulated to the properties in Ravensworth and to the various interested bodies, Parish Council, English Heritage, North Yorkshire County Council, NE Civic Trust and Richmond and District Civic Society, advising of the draft Appraisal and Management Plan and where a copy could be viewed. Comments were invited and there was a positive response generally to the plan. The Appraisal was reported to a Committee of the District Council and formally adopted.

## Useful Information, Appendices and Contact Details

### Designations

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

### Listed Buildings within Ravensworth Conservation Area

Cross Base	The Green	Grade II
2 Ravensworth (Sunset Cottage)	The Green	Grade II
20 Ravensworth with building attached to left	The Green	Grade II
24 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
26 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
28 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
Wall and railings to front gardens of 24, 26 and 28 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
30 Ravensworth	The Green	Grade II
Ravensworth Castle	The Green	Grade I
Pound	The Green	Grade II
Village Hall	The Green	Grade II
41 and 43 Ravensworth (West View Cottages)	The Green	Grade II
Bridge over Holme Beck approx 120 metres North-West of Mill Farmhouse	The Green	Grade II

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

### Tree Preservation Orders

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

**This information is available in  
alternative formats and languages**



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