Character Appraisal November 2010



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### 1. Introduction

Middleton One Row Conservation Area was designated on 4 May 1972 and the boundary has remained unaltered since then.

A process of change within a Conservation Area is inevitable and should be managed rather than prohibited. English Heritage describes Conservation Areas thus:

"Conservation Areas are dynamic, changing places that have evolved and developed over many years. They are made up of a variety of different heritage assets buildings, landscapes, archaeology - and the spaces in between that form the allimportant public realm and streetscape in which people meet and go about their business."

The purpose of a Character Appraisal is to define as clearly as possible the historic, archaeological, architectural and natural components of the Conservation Area that are considered especially important and contribute most to its character, in order to manage change and guide new development, if it is considered appropriate. The principal aims of this document are intended to define:

- What influences have given Middleton One Row its particular character
- What chiefly reflects this character and is most worth conserving
- What has suffered damage or loss and may need reinstating
- Areas that may be improved

This appraisal highlights the key features and unique qualities that give the village its special character, with the aim of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the area and providing a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future through the development of management proposals. Undertaking an appraisal offers the opportunity to re-assess the designated area and to evaluate and record its special interest.

#### **Definition of a Conservation Area**

"Conservation Areas are places where buildings and the spaces around them interact to form distinctly recognisable areas of special quality and interest."<sup>2</sup>

Conservation Area designation is the main instrument available to Local Authorities to give effect to conservation policies for a particular area. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of un-Listed Buildings, some control over works to buildings not dwelling houses and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest.

It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying Conservation Areas. Our experience of a historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings, it depends on the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular mix of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on vistas along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces between buildings.

<sup>1.</sup> English Heritage webpage on Conservation Areas at Risk: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/heritage-at-risk/conservation-areas-at-risk 2. Archaeo-Environment Ltd (2008) Barnard Castle Conservation Area Character Appraisal, Barnard Castle: Teesdale District Council.

#### Impacts of Conservation Area Designation

Its main practical use is to aid decisionmaking on planning applications received for works and development within the Conservation Area.

The designation of a Conservation Area introduces additional planning controls that are intended to ensure that any alterations do not detract from an area's "character or appearance" and to "preserve or enhance" the "special interest" of an area.

Outside of Conservation Areas, householders have Permitted Development rights to carry out certain minor works to their properties, such as the erection of garden buildings, front porches or satellite dishes. However in a Conservation Area these rights are much reduced. As a guide, but not exclusively:

- Conservation Area Consent is required for the demolition of most buildings, whereas outside of Conservation Areas only notification is required.
- Planning Permission is usually required for the removal of boundary walls, fences and gates and for new boundary walls, fences and gates.
- The pruning or felling of trees requires six weeks prior notification.
- Alterations to front elevations may require Planning Permission.
- Applications for proposals that affect the character or appearance of the area are advertised in local newspapers.
- Any new development (including extensions) is expected to be in keeping with or improve the character or appearance of the area.

In addition to the above, works to nonresidential properties, such as commercial properties and flats, will require planning permission if the work involves change regardless of whether the property lies within a Conservation Area or not. An example of this is replacing timber windows with uPVC windows on a block of flats, office or shop. Permission is unlikely to be granted where the works are to the detriment of the Conservation Area.

You should check with the Council's Development Management Section to confirm whether your property lies within a Conservation Area before undertaking any work. Work carried out without the required permissions may result in enforcement action, which will cause disruption and can lead to considerable expense.

### The Legislative Context

Nationally, The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, is the Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom that altered the laws on the granting of planning permission relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

Section 72 (1) of The Act is as follows:

"In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a General duty as conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned respects in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of conservation preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."<sup>3</sup>

### The Policy Context

Darlington Borough Council's Development Plan is currently its Local Plan, adopted in 1997 (incorporating Adopted Alterations in 2001). In 2004 the Government introduced changes to the Planning System with the aim of speeding up development plan preparation, making it more flexible and improving community involvement. Therefore, Darlington's Local Plan will need to be replaced by a Local Development Framework (LDF) including a Core Strategy, for which work is underway.

<sup>3.</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, HMSO. Pg 43.

The Local Development Framework is a suite of documents intended to replace Local Plans. Conservation policies are likely to be found within the Core Strategy, and potentially Supplementary Planning Documents, providing detailed policy (as found in the Distinctly Darlington: Design for New Development Supplementary Planning Document).

Conservation policies within the Local Plan were deleted on 27 September 2007 because they replicated national policy. Currently, conservation planning decisions are made primarily based on national guidance in the form of Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, the following policies are particularly, but not exclusively, relevant to Conservation Areas, classed as one of a number of Heritage Assets:

"HE7.2 In considering the impact of a proposal on any heritage asset, local planning authorities should take into account the particular nature of the significance of the heritage asset and the value that it holds for this and future generations..."

"HE7.4 Local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets,

and of utilising their positive role in placeshaping; and

- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets and the historic environment generally can make to the establishment and maintenance of sustainable communities and economic vitality..."

"HE7.5 Local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use."<sup>4</sup>

The production of a Character Appraisal, such as this document, will help guide development management decision, proving locally distinctive guidance on specific Conservation Areas.

# Definition (or summary) of Special Interest

Middleton One Row Conservation Area was designated in 1972 for the following reasons:

"Middleton One Row commands sweeping views over open country from its dramatic position nearly one hundred feet up the steep wooded bank of the Tees. Though not the only village in the county having a single-side street which takes advantage of riverside views, it is the grandest and most spacious example. It became modestly fashionable when a spa opened at Dinsdale in the late eighteenth century, though with a few exceptions the architecture does not reflect this, being later and humbler than Regency. A Roman road crossed the river to the west of the village and the Tower Hill earthwork is believed to be part of the crossing's defence works. Brick and slate predominate as building materials but with a good proportion of render and pantiles."5

Middleton One Row Conservation Area has high quality, intact rural qualities. Greenspace is a key feature, as is the River Tees. Historic development is primarily in the form of Georgian and Victorian residential and villa development, but also includes a Norman Scheduled Monument and a Victorian church, by local architect J.P. Pritchett (junior).

<sup>4.</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government (2010), Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, HMSO. Pg 7.

<sup>5.</sup> Durham County Council, Civic Amenities Act 1967, Middleton One Row Conservation Area



### Assessing Special Interest

#### **Location and Setting**

Middleton One Row is a village approximately 7 miles south east of Darlington, lying south of the larger village of Middleton St George. Middleton One Row is sited north of a bend in the River Tees in this location. It seems likely that recorded settlement began around the Scheduled Norman motte and bailey castle, protecting the river crossing, to the west of the village, spread east along the river to the Front and later development occurred north, gradually filling the area between north Middleton One Row and south Middleton St George. The village is surrounded by countryside and lies north of the River Tees in an elevated position.

#### **General Character and Plan Form**

The form of the village is centred around two features: Middleton Lane, which runs to the River Tees and the River Tees itself. Middleton Lane, upon meeting the village green before the river Tees, forks to form Church Lane to the west and The Front to the East. Development is only on the northern side of the Front, allowing commanding views of the River Tees. The Church Lane route is a dead end to vehicular traffic, but The Front continues further, forking east to follow the route of the river along to Low Middleton and on into North Yorkshire and forking north at Hill Rise to further residential development and following that to rejoin Middleton St George. Part of the route of the Teesdale way runs along the river and is accessible from The Front.

The Conservation Area includes the southern end of the village of Middleton St George, the area between the two villages and the bulk of Middleton One Row, with the exception of various, modern cul-de-sac additions at the edges. The original part of Middleton One Row, as a village, rather than as a settlement around the medieval Castle Motte, can be found on The Front



#### Landscape Setting



Farmland viewed west from Middleton Lane

The landscape setting of the Conservation Area has a major impact on the character of the area. Whether it is open countryside, mature tree cover, private gardens or the greenery surrounding the River Tees, landscape is a prominent feature of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is surrounded by countryside, much of which was designated as an Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) in the County Durham Structure Plan.

The southern end of the Conservation Area is characterised by the close proximity of the River Tees. It is not always a publicly visible part of the Conservation Area, because it is not visible from Middleton Lane, due to residential development where the road forks to become Church Lane and The Front; however, the river forms a prominent part of the area around The Front. The houses on Church Lane often have two principal elevations, in that they face both Church Lane and have commanding views of the river (but in doing so they obscure the river from the road). It is The Front where the river meets the Conservation Area, with elevated views across the river to North Yorkshire countryside.

There are three areas of green space along Middleton Lane in the area between



River Tees from the banks below The Front facing south west

Middleton St George and Middleton One Row. Trees play a big part and much of this green space was designated as AHLV and some has already been lost, bearing in mind Middleton Lane the closeness of Middleton St George with Middleton One Row; Middleton Row had only sparse development in this area, in the form of individual villas until the twentieth century.

The area to the rear of the Scheduled Monument, which runs into the area between The Front and the River Tees, includes the area designated as Village Green.

Part of the Teesdale Way runs along the river Tees at the south of the Conservation Area. The Teesdale Way runs through Cumbria, Durham and Cleveland, exploring the course of the River Tees for 160km, from its source on the high moors of Cross Fell in the Cumbrian North Pennines to its outlet at Middlesbrough on the north east coast.

Private green space is not to be overlooked within the Conservation Area, which is characterised by often long and large back gardens, most commonly found in the historic properties. The villa properties in particular have or have had extensive grounds, some of which has been lost to development.



View of North Yorkshire countryside and Village Green

### Historic Development and Archaeology

#### Medieval Middleton One Row

The river crossing to the west of the village, believed to have been in existence since Roman occupation, may be a likely cause of the siting for the village. Medieval settlement in the area will have focused around the site of the Scheduled Monument, the remains of a motte of a medieval motte and bailey castle. It seems likely that the timber castle was constructed by the Normans to defend the now demolished Pountey's Bridge, from Saxon invaders. The route was the branch of the Roman road called Rikenild Street<sup>6</sup>, on the far south west corner of the Conservation Area. The area has two lost medieval villages of West Hartburn (north east of Middleton One Row) and the original Middleton St George village (south east of Middleton One Row), which may have been lost as a result of local people not owning their own land (protectiveness caused landed gentry to fence off their land, thereby abandoning these villages). It is possible that Middleton One Row survived because local people owned and farmed much of their own land and perhaps because they were not reliant on agriculture because of the likely passing trade from travelers making use of the river crossing at Pountey's Bridge.<sup>7</sup>



The Teesdale Way facing North West

## Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian Middleton One Row

Following medieval settlement, of which no structures remain, the earliest evidence of settlement where the buildings remain is that along The Front, sited due to its proximity to the River Tees and views across to North Yorkshire; this is improved by the elevated street and village green running down to the river. Georgian settlement can be found along the Front, although there has been some modern infill development in this location too. The highest occurrence of groups of Listed Buildings can be found along the Front, evidencing older surviving buildings than can be found elsewhere in the Conservation Area. The oldest surviving building is no. 14 The Front (Tees View), which is at least mid-eighteenth century<sup>8</sup>. The buildings on the Front are fairly typical rural, Georgian buildings, with some larger scale Victorian properties such as those at Nos. 24 and 25 The Front and other modern infill at varying scales and styles. The exception to this is the (delisted) dominant and dignified Devenport Hotel, at an expected larger scale for a building in commercial use, which is described by Pevsner as "completely spoilt apart from two pretty doorcases with open segmental pediments"9.

<sup>6.</sup> Whelan (1894) History, Topography and Directory of Durham, London

<sup>7.</sup> Lloyd, Chris Echo Memories, Northern Echo, 2 July 2003.

<sup>8.</sup> Extract from the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for the Borough of Darlington.

<sup>9.</sup> Pevsner, N (second edition revised by Williamson, E.) (1985) The Buildings of England: County Durham, London: Yale University Press. Pg 364.



No. 8 Middleton Lane (former Edwardian police house)

In the mid eighteenth century John Lambton, the First Earl of Durham built Dinsdale Park on his estate to a design by Ianatius Bonomi. who is architect sometimes referred to as 'The First Railway Architect' for his work on railway bridges (including the first railway bridge in the country over the River Skerne in Darlington), as well as houses and churches within County Durham. The Listing in 1967 describes a "Former spa hotel, recently a Residential School. 1829 by Ignatius Bonomi for John Lambton, Lord Durham"<sup>10</sup>. The building, converted to apartments in 2000, lies outside the Conservation Area, but some sources11 say that during the eighteenth century the village of Middleton One Row benefited from its close proximity in the form of passing trade. The Darlington doctor John Peacock wrote specifically

about Dinsdale Spa whilst working with others analysing mineral waters<sup>12</sup>.

`Victorian and Edwardian Later. development occurred along Middleton Lane, gradually filling some of the voids between the two villages, including the red brick Victorian terraces with fine bay windows at Nos. 10, 11 and 12 Middleton Lane and the smaller scale semi-detached houses heading south, of a similar age. These were, with the exception of the former Police House at no. 8 Middleton Lane, a fine Edwardian red brick building, were designed for residential use and generally have large rear gardens. Some are substantial villas set in large grounds, with curved entrances and some are smaller scale detached, semi detached houses with front gardens onto the road.



No. 30 The Front - Georgian



No. 70 Middleton Lane - Victorian

10. Extract from the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for the Borough of Darlington.

11. Lloyd, Chris Echo Memories, Northern Echo, 2 July 2003.

<sup>12.</sup> Cookson, G (ed) (2005) The Victoria History of the Counties of England, A History of the County of Durham, Volume IV: Darlington, London: Boydell and Brewer. Pg 236.

#### James Piggott Pritchett (1830-1911)

James Pigott junior was trained by his father, James Pigott senior, in his York practice. In 1854 Pritchett junior was made a partner in the practice of his brother-in-law John Middleton. Pritchett junior became the first Darlington architect to establish professional credentials as a founder member of the Northern Architectural Association in 1859 and by election in 1863 as Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA).<sup>13</sup>

Pritchett junior is the architect of numerous buildings in and around Darlington including the Darlington Training College now the Arts Centre, chapels other ecclesiastical buildings throughout the north of England, including the Church of St Lawrence in Middleton One Row.

Pritchett junior is buried in the West Cemetery, Hummersknott, Darlington, which he won a competition to design in 1856.

#### Modern Middleton One Row

Early to mid twentieth century development came in the form of primarily semi-detached houses, including the first of numerous culde-sac developments on Coatham Lane and Desmond Road off Middleton Lane, which lie adjacent to but outside of the boundary of the Conservation Area and also Hill Rise north of the Front. These are the beginnings of a subtle change in the character of some areas within the Conservation Area, as the village grew.



More recent late twentieth century and early twenty-first century development is in the form of small numbers of infill along the main routes and additions to the early culde-sacs, bungalows and houses off Church Some of the cul-de-sac Lane. developments, such as The Paddock and Church Close, are within the boundary of the Conservation Area and others lie outside of the boundary of the Conservation Area; some properties are on sites adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation Area so could be reasonably argued to contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area.



New development behind wall to Thorntree House, Middleton Lane.

13. Cookson, G (ed) (2005) The Victoria History of the Counties of England, A History of the County of Durham, Volume IV: Darlington, London: Boydell and Brewer. Pg 54.



New development at 61 Middleton Lane



Ropner Gardens, new development in grounds of former Ropner Convalescent Home

# Archaeology including Scheduled Monuments

Beneath the ground in Middleton St George and Middleton One Row are the remains of earlier times, which have long been forgotten. There is a high potential for such archaeological remains to survive within the Conservation Area. Those areas that are most likely to contain buried deposits are around the Scheduled Monument and the area to the south towards the lost Pountey's Bridge and the Roman Road, Rikenild Street.<sup>14</sup>

There is one identified archaeological designation, in the form of a Scheduled Monument, the remains of a medieval tower motte castle, within the Conservation Area. It is shown on the Key Map at the end of the document.

14. Whelan (1894) History, Topography and Directory of Durham, London

#### Medieval Tower Motte Castle Scheduled Monument

The Norman motte tower is originally presumed to have formed a motte and bailey castle. All that remains now are the remnants of the motte, which is much overgrown and is surrounded by residential development immediately to the north and the west, to a lesser extent to the east and by the Area of High Landscape Value running down to the River Tees.

The medieval motte and bailey castle has a motte measuring 72.1 feet diameter at its base and standing 18ft high, defended by a bank and a ditch, with no traces of masonry<sup>15</sup>. The ramparts were levelled around 1900<sup>16</sup> and the remaining structure was scheduled in 1994.<sup>17</sup>



Scheduled Monument, Church Lane

15. www.fortifiedengland.com

16. www.fortifiedengland.com

17. National Monuments Record

### Spatial Analysis

# The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

The Conservation Area has a somewhat disparate and disjointed feel, with the three distinct character areas described on page 11 making their presence felt. This is particularly evident along Middleton Lane, where gaps in development and clear periods of construction can be seen.

Open space within the Conservation area is overwhelmingly green and rural, with development only just holding the countryside at bay. This is in close proximity on Middleton Lane, provides an enclosing element on Church Lane and is both in close proximity in the form of the village green and viewed from a distance in the form of the North Yorkshire countryside on The Front.

The open and enclosed spaces, public and private green space make a positive

contribution to the Conservation Area and without them the character of this rural village would be much changed.

#### **Key Views and Vistas**

On Church Lane views are more restricted and enclosed by housing, substantial planting and protected trees. The River Tees lies behind this area but much of the time it is not a prominent feature due to these features, both natural and manmade.

Along The Front, the key vista is of the River Tees, viewed from an elevated perspective from The Front. From that rolling countryside, managed farmland and the occasional farmhouse can be seen in North Yorkshire.

Key views are along the length of Middleton Lane, which is primarily straight; on part of each side of the road it includes views into the open green space on either side.

Views and Vistas are shown on the Key Map at the end of the document.



Corner of Middleton Lane, Church Row and The Front facing south





#### View eastwards along Church Lane



### **Character Analysis**

#### **Definition of Character Areas or Zones**

Middleton One Row Conservation Area can be split into three character areas:

 The earliest evidence of settlement in the form of the Scheduled Monument, including red brick walls and a stone wall, Edwardian detached and semi-detached dwellings and mid-twentieth century

View of North Yorkshire countryside and Village Green

bungalows along Church Lane.2) The Georgian and earlier predominantly terraces to The Front, the village green

- and open views of the River Tees and North Yorkshire countryside.3) Middleton Lane, evidencing Victorian and Edwardian lodges and villas with large
- Edwardian lodges and villas with large gardens, much of the later twentieth century and twenty-first century cul-desacs, red brick walls and green space.





View eastwards along Church Lane

#### Activity and Prevailing or Former Uses and their Influence on Plan Form and Buildings

The earliest evidence of human intervention, assuming there is likely to have been settlement within a bailey associated with the motte castle Scheduled Monument, is in that area. The castle was located on a high point, at the river crossing of Pountey's Bridge, which was ultimately replaced as the route to North Yorkshire by Croft Bridge. Neither Pountey's Bridge, nor any evidence of residential development near the Schedule Monument remains.

There is some evidence of early 1900s agricultural activity to the rear of terraces on

the Front, but primarily usage has been and is residential, with the exception of the Devenport Hotel on the Front, which is in commercial use. Local services are in the centre of Middleton St George, outside the Conservation Area, although there is a single shopfront remaining at 15 The Front. Behind The Front there lies evidence of agricultural development (as evidenced by Village Farm): the bulk of buildings within the Conservation Area are rural, but residential buildings dominate. The Church of St. Lawrence, the only building in ecclesiastical use within the Conservation Area, sadly fell out of use approximately a year ago at time of writing, as a result of structural problems.





View eastwards along Church Lane



No. 15 The Front

### The Qualities of the Buildings and their Contribution to the Area

### **Unlisted Buildings**

Unlisted buildings of local interest within the Conservation Area are primarily Victorian and Edwardian, not valued as highly as Georgian development when Listing first began in the 1940s.



































#### **Local Details**

There is much consistency in Georgian and Victorian development within the Conservation Area with bay windows a common feature. Villa development, and now twentieth century development in former villa grounds, can often be found behind red brick boundary walls, with curved gate entrances.





#### Typical red brick wall, Middleton Lane

#### Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials and the Public Realm

Most of the best of the Conservation Area is red brick with stone cills and lintels at openings (with the exception of the brick soldier coursing found on much of the historic development on The Front) and some render exists; roofing materials are mainly natural slate, although some pantiles can be found. Red brick boundary walls can be found in most of the Conservation Area, although one stone wall can be found on Church Lane.





Bus Stop and street furniture, facing south on The Front





### An Audit of Heritage Assets

#### **Scheduled Monument**

#### Tower Hill motte castle

Medieval earthwork sited in the far south west of the Conservation Area. In the Council's Scheduled Monument Audit, completed in 2009, the monument was not classed as at risk, but is not accessible due to private ownership, is obscured from view from most directions and there are no interpretative materials on or around the site. Further information is available in the Council's Scheduled Monument Audit.

#### **Listed Buildings**

Listed Buildings are designated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on the advice of English Heritage, for their 'special, architectural or historic interest' under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Once a building is Listed it brings it under the consideration of the planning system which gives considerable control over future alterations and additions.

There are nine Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, all of which are Grade II and all of which are mid eighteenth century to early 19th century (with the exception of the 13th century arched doorways, which have been moved to their current location). With the exception of the Church of St Lawrence, which suffers structural problems, the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area are in good condition and not classed as being at risk.

The urban area of Darlington's List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest has never been comprehensively reviewed, so where buildings have been added to this List they have been as a result of individual, often general public, requests; fortunately the rural parts of the Borough were comprehensively reviewed in the 1980s, the eastern part in 1988. However, Darlington's List would benefit from review, but individual efforts to put buildings forward for Listing have been, and no doubt will continue to be, invaluable to ensure their future protection.

A comparison of the number of buildings of local interest and the number of Listed Buildings highlights that Darlington's List would benefit from review but also that values placed on buildings due to their age change over time: Simply put, more recent buildings are shown to have merit as time passes and they become older and more rare, particularly when in possession of their original features.



#### Church of St Lawrence

Grade II. 1871, J.P. Pritchett (junior). Squared rock-faced sandstone in narrow courses with ashlar dressings. Welsh slate roofs. Aisleless nave with porch on south, original vestry (now kitchen) on north and choir / vicar's vestry added on west end; tower with spire in south-east angle between nave and chancel; chancel with organ chamber on north. Geometrical-style tracery. Tower of 3 stages. Plain and plastered interior. 1957 stained glass window by L. C. Evetts in north wall in memory of Rev. P. W. Francis. Pevsner describes it as having "a funny little polygonal tower with open belfry and spirelet at the SE end of the nave.



#### 2 arched doorways in the garden of Mown Meadow, no. 64 Middleton Lane

Grade II. Circa 13th century. Believed to have formed part of Bishop's Manor House / Bishop Palace, which once stood near St Cuthbert's Church and the River Skerne at Feethams; the building bought and demolished by Richard Luck in 1870, arched doorways moved to current location the same year. The second arch may be a composite structure assembled from various fragments



#### No. 27 & 28 Church Lane

Grade II. Mid-late eighteenth century with early 19th century rebuilds and late 19th century and 20th century additions. Linear range in three sections.



# No. 12 The Front (Jessamine House)

Grade II. Circa 1830. Flemish-bond brick.



### No. 13 The Front (South View) Grade II. Circa 1830. Flemish-bond brick.



#### No. 14 The Front (Tees View)

Grade II. Probably 18th century with 19th century alterations. Possibly originally two cottages. Painted roughcast walls.



### No 15. The Front.

Grade II. Early 19th century. Former Post Office. Incised render on brick



#### No. 19 & (The Deanery) 19a The Front (Deanery Cottage)

Grade II. Early 19th century. House, now divided into two dwellings. Flemish-bond brick



# No. 22 The Front (Yohn House) & No. 23

Grade II. Late 18th century – early 19th century. House and cottage, now one dwelling. Flemish-bond brick.

# Listed Buildings and the Scheduled Monument are shown on the Key Map at the end of the document.

# The Contribution Made to the Character of the Area by Green Space and its Biodiversity Value

The quality and quantity of green space within and adjacent to the Conservation Area is vital to the character of the area. Whether it is open countryside, mature tree cover, managed private gardens or Village Green and green areas surrounding the River Tees, green space is a prominent feature of the Conservation Area.



Countryside viewed east from Middleton Lane

There are approximately 256 single Tree Preservation Orders within the Conservation Area; there can be found at Thorntree Villas, around Almora Hall at the front of no. 64 Middleton Lane in the curtilage of no. 9 The Front, surrounding St Laurence's Church, adjacent to no. 1A The Paddock, around no. 2 Castle Close and on the site behind, around nos. 24 and 25 Church Lane and around the Scheduled Monument. There are approximately 27 group Tree Preservation Orders within the Conservation Area, primarily



Rear of no. 8 Church Lane 1

to the East of the Scheduled Monument and around Almora Hall. There are also numerous single Tree Preservation Orders on trees that lie adjacent to or in the setting of the Conservation Area behind Middleton Lane, on Church Lane and behind the Oaklands. The high number of preserved trees evidences the positive contribution trees make to the character and appearance and the significance of the Conservation Area.

Tree Preservation Orders are shown on the Key Map.



River Tees from the banks below The Front facing south west

# The Extent of Intrusion or Damage (negative factors)

Damage to the Conservation Area has primarily been caused by new development rather than by alterations to historic development, which is relatively intact, however some modern replica materials on traditional buildings are creeping in. New development is mainly in the form of 1960s and 1970s cul-de-sacs, although more recent later twentieth century and even some early twenty-first century development has been poor and not especially sympathetic to the Conservation Area in terms of design, form and materials, arguably increasing the form making the least positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

The use of modern, replica materials such as buff brick, artificial slate roofs and uPVC windows and doors will be discouraged as not making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. New or replacement boundary treatments need particular care so as to complement existing, high quality solutions.

Should new development be proposed and be considered appropriate within the Conservation Area, it should avoid pastiche and be guided by development making a positive contribution. The same can be said for extensions for existing development, which are often most successful when guided by the host building.



Village Green from The Front



Contrast between modern and traditional features, Church Lane

The overhead electricity cables within the Conservation Area make a negative contribution to the Conservation Area.



Loss of traditional fenestration, no. 25 The Front



Modern bay window, The Front



### Weak uPVC windows and use of render, The Front

The	Weak, modern materials (windows & roof)
•	

#### The Existence of any Neutral Areas

The Conservation Area is characterised by contrast because what is recognised as good is very good and what is poor is clearly not part of the best of the Conservation Area.

However, the public realm has a neutral impact on the Conservation Area in that it

neither detracts nor enhances. It is defined by 'heritage' street furniture (bins and seats), 1980s streetlights, tired public toilets and a good quality, stone bus shelter on The Front. Overall, whilst the street furniture is in reasonable condition, it is rather generic and more locally distinct solutions would enhance the public realm within the Conservation Area.



#### **General Condition**

The historic buildings within the Conservation Area are generally relatively intact, with the exception of the Church of St Lawrence, which is suffering structural problems. Residents evidently take pride in the appearance of their properties and gardens and maintain them accordingly. That is not to say that some properties can look a little tired, particularly where original timber windows exist that may be in need of some maintenance before removal and replacement with uPVC is considered.

# Problems, Pressures and Capacity for Change

One is seven of the UK's Conservation Areas are at risk.<sup>19</sup>

"They [Conservation Areas] are also vulnerable to change, some of it for the better but sometimes with the potential to do lasting damage to their special character - and thus to the social and economic life of the communities to which they belong."<sup>20</sup>

Whilst Middleton One Row is not classed as being At Risk, there are improvements that can be made. Historic buildings that have fallen out of use, such as the Church of St Lawrence are always a concern, spiralling costs for repair lead to concerns about preservation.

Mid-late twentieth century and early twenty first century development, much of which is unsympathetic in terms of design, form and materials do not, on the whole, make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. It may be that there is additional pressure for infill development within the Conservation Area. In locations where there exists valuable green space this should be resisted and where it can more easily be accommodated it should follow the form of the best of development in the Conservation Area (which is primarily front facing onto the road and where entrances penetrate boundary walls these serve one property), which is primarily from the 1930s and earlier.

There have been some planning granted for backland permissions development in the often long, large back gardens of the Victorian and Edwardian houses as well as in the grounds of the villas of the same period. These have stifled the earlier, more positive character with often poorly designed and sited, residential development. In order to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area, backland development of this nature needs to be resisted and where the principal of development is appropriate, a form more consistent with development facing on to the street, as commonly found in the best of the Conservation Area, should be encouraged.

There are also a number of areas of green space, most of which is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value or Village Green, which should protect it from inappropriate development, but it is the quality of these spaces that remind the observer how close the countryside is; the view across the River Tees from The Front is a particularly prominent example of this and should be protected.

19. English Heritage, 2009 Heritage at Risk: Conservation Areas

20. English Heritage webpage on Conservation Areas at Risk: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/heritage-at-risk/conservation-areas-at-risk



#### Church of St Lawrence viewed from Ropner Gardens

Church of St Lawrence





Former Ropner Convalescent Home converted to flats



Loss of traditional fenestration, no. 25 The Front



New development behind wall to Thorntree House, Middleton Lane



Ropner Gardens, new development in grounds of former Ropner





### Community Involvement

A public engagement process has taken place on a draft version of the document. This included a public, drop-in event, which gave residents the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss the draft Appraisal's content, comment on the proposed boundary additions (which have since been removed from the Appraisal ) and provide input. The draft Appraisal was available on our website and as paper copies in the Town Hall reception and in the Crown Street Library; paper copies were available on request from the Conservation Officer. A response form was available to enable residents to provide comment on the draft Appraisal.

Now the Appraisal has been finalised, an electronic version is available on the Council's website and a paper copy for reference is available in the Crown Street Library. Paper copies are also available on request from the Conservation Officer

### Suggested Boundary Changes

Some boundary additions were proposed when we engaged with local residents. However, it has been decided not to proceed with the proposed boundary additions at this time. We may reconsider boundary additions in the future, should it be considered expedient.

### Management Proposals

Once the Appraisal process is complete it is intended to produce proposals for the future management of the area, which will take the form of a mid-long term strategy, a Conservation Management Plan, for preserving and enhancing the Conservation Area. Whilst Middleton One Row Conservation Area has been indentified as being relatively intact it has also been indentified as potentially at risk from future inappropriate development and the loss of valuable green space. Therefore a future management plan can identify policies to address these issues with the intention of inclusion with the Local Development Framework. A management method English Heritage and central government strongly encourage local government to consider is the use of an Article 4(2) Direction.

#### Potential Article 4 (2) Direction

An Article 4 (2) Direction would remove residents' 'permitted development rights' (their allowance to undertake some minor works to their homes without the need to apply for planning permission). This would mean residents would need to apply for planning permission for small changes in form or material to external elevations fronting a highway, watercourse or public open space; however there would be no fee for an application made as a result of an Article 4 Direction. Like-for-like repairs and reinstatement of historic or architectural features will be encouraged and works that preserve or enhance the do not Conservation Area are unlikely to receive planning permission.

The benefits of an Article 4 (2) Direction are improved planning control that residents can think the Council already has, which may enhance the quality of an area and can improve house prices<sup>21</sup>. The downside may be some restrictions on alterations to your house and the potential for more involvement with the Council's planning department (although planning applications required only as a result of an Article 4 (2) are free of charge). We are interested in knowing residents' views on this, but if we were to progress an Article 4 (2) Direction this is a separate process, which would be the subject of an additional consultation process in the future, so you would have a further opportunity to ask questions and provide comment.

<sup>21.</sup> English Heritage commissioned market research consultants BDRC to undertake a national survey of estate agents in April 2009 to find out how Conservation Area Status affects property prices. It found that unsympathetic replacement windows and doors, particularly plastic/PVCu, is the single biggest threat to property values in Conservation Areas. It also found that 82% of estate agents feel that original period features tend to add financial value to properties and 78% of estate agents feel that original period features help to sell a property more quickly. More information is available on English Heritage's website: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/heritage-at-risk/conservation-areas-at-risk/estate-agents-survey/
# Guidance

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5):

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps5

English Heritage's Good Practice Guide for PPS5:

http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/pps-practice-guide/pps5practiceguide.pdf Council leaflet: Living in a Conservation Area: A Guide for Residents (available as a paper copy on request)

http://www.darlington.gov.uk/dar\_public/Documents/Development%20and%20Environment/ Development%20and%20Regeneration/Planning%20Services/Conservation/CAGuide.pdf

Local Planning Policy: Distinctly Darlington: Design for New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (available as a paper copy at a cost of £20 on request)

http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Living/Planning%20and%20Building%20Control/Planning%20 Services/Planning%20Policy/NewDesignSPD.htm

Council leaflet: What Listing Means: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers of Listed Buildings in Darlington (available as a paper copy on request)

http://www.darlington.gov.uk/dar\_public/Documents/Development%20and%20Environment/ Development%20and%20Regeneration/Planning%20Services/Conservation/WhatListing Means.pdf

Council document: Scheduled Monument Audit 2009 (available as a paper copy on request): http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Living/Planning+and+Building+Control/Planning+Services/ ProtectionControl/Conservation/AncientMonuments.htm

English Heritage guidance: Your Home in a Conservation Area

http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.20516

English Heritage website:

http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/heritage-at-risk/conservation-areas-at-risk/

## **Contact Details**

If you are unsure whether your property is in a Conservation Area, or if you would like guidance on appropriate alterations and what requires planning permission, Conservation Area Consent or Listed Building Consent, the quickest way to find out is to call the Council's Conservation Officer on the number provided below.

Conservation Officer

Chief Executive's Department (Regeneration)

Town Hall

Darlington

DL1 5QT

Telephone: 01325 388604

Fax: 01325 388616

Email: urbandesign.conservation@darlington.gov.uk

## Glossary

## Advisory Groups, Panels or Committees

Government policy encourages Local Authorities to set up Conservation Area advisory committees. Local Authorities may have one conservation advisory committee to cover all their Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, or committees for individual Conservation Areas if they are large. Most advisory committees consist of a mixture of representatives from local groups and representatives from national amenity societies and professional bodies. The purpose of the committee is to provide the Council with advice on conservation area management plans and enhancement proposals, as well as on all applications for Conservation Area consent, planning permission and listed building consent.

## Amenity Notices Section 215 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990

A useful way for Councils to take action in Conservation Areas and indeed in any space visible from the public highway. They apply to 'any land' and not just buildings and can be used to deal with other problems such as broken walls and fences, accumulated rubbish or overgrown gardens and hedges. More information can be found in Town & Country Planning Act 1990,

Section 215: Best Practice Guide, ODPM (now DCLG) 2005, which can be found on the DCLG website: www.communities.gov.uk

## Appraisals

Conservation Area appraisals identify what is special and needs protecting and help in the area's management. They can, and should ideally, be carried out with the involvement of the local community, so that the appraisal is owned by the whole Council and the community who live and work in the area. There are various ways to carry out appraisals, depending on the size and scale of the area. An appraisal needs to combine historic records and maps with a visual analysis of the present state of the area. Further guidance is given in English Heritage's Guidance on Conservation Area appraisals.

### Area of High Landscape Value

Areas identified in the County Durham Structure Plan and extended in Darlington's Local Plan for its distinctive and attractive landscape character, to give added weight to its protection from inappropriate development. It should be noted that the majority of AHLV lies outside of development limits and is heavily protected from new development.

### **Article 4 Directions**

Article 4 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (as amended) enables Local Planning Authorities to make 'directions' withdrawing certain permitted development rights that the Order permits, such as the right to change windows and doors. 'Article 4(2)' of the General Permitted Development Order allows Councils to take away that right ('permitted development right') from houses within Conservation Areas. This would involve the service of a legal notice ('Article 4(2) Direction') upon property owners and occupiers informing them of the rights that have been amended. Planning permission would then be required for the specified alterations however the planning application fee is waived. Article 4(1) of the GPDO can be used to withdraw permitted development rights on any type of land or building, but they need to be approved by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, via the Government Regional Office. For further information, please see Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage 2006.

These permitted development rights do not apply to flats or commercial properties because even without a Conservation Area or Article 4 Direction planning permission is required for alterations that 'materially affect the external appearance of the building'.

### **Building Regulations**

Nearly every building project needs to comply with the Building Regulations. They exist to ensure the health and safety of people in and around all types of buildings, so ensure safe construction techniques and completed structures. They also provide assessment for energy conservation and access to and use of buildings. Even works that are "permitted development" may require Building Regulations approval. In Conservation Areas when refurbishing an unlisted building the issue of the energy efficiency of the existing windows may well be raised by the Building Inspector, and the Inspector needs to be convinced of the historic merit of the building to allow any exemption from the requirements to upgrade the insulative properties of the windows (which their can mean replacement).

### **Conservation Area Consent**

Conservation Area consent is required for the demolition of buildings or structures over 115 metres cubed within Conservation Areas.

### **Designation of Conservation Areas**

Local planning authorities designate Conservation Areas to protect parts of their area that they have assessed as being of special architectural or historic interest. In some exceptional cases the Secretary of Communities State for and Local Government and English Heritage can designate areas. Normally Council officers will identify the area and define its special interest and boundary, then identify all the within addresses the area. Public consultation is required before the

preparation of a report to the appropriate Council committee, and the report to the committee must include the consequences of designation as well as the results of the consultation, and notification of the committee date needs to be published at least three days prior. If the committee resolves to approve the designation at the meeting then that is the date of designation, but the Council needs to place a notice in the local newspapers and the London Gazette and inform English Heritage and their Government Regional Office.

### Enforcement

Where works have taken place in a Conservation Area that the local planning authority considers needed Conservation Area consent or planning permission (for Conservation Area Consent this would mean the unauthorised demolition of a building and for Planning Permission this would mean works that required planning permission because they affected the character or appearance of the Conservation Area), the local planning authority may issue an Enforcement Notice. Owners then have a right of appeal against the notice, but if not upheld or appealed and the unauthorised work is not rectified, the Council may put the work right and seek to recover the costs or it may decide to prosecute whenever expedient.

### Floorscape and street furniture

These are the two main elements that make up the public realm. If you think of outdoor spaces as rooms, then the floorscape is the floor covering and street furniture the furniture. In a living room you choose the best floor covering for the room to set off the décor and appropriate furniture that you carefully arrange attractively to make the room look at its best. This is what should happen in our streets – floor covering should match or be appropriate to whatever local buildings are made from, the local stone or brick. Street furniture should be of an appropriate design, be kept to a minimum, and be carefully arranged.

#### **Heritage Asset**

"A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated as such under the relevant legislation."<sup>22</sup>

### **Historic Environment Record**

"Historic environment records are information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use. Typically, they comprise databases linked to a geographic information system (GIS), and associated reference material, together with a dedicated staffing resource".23

#### **Historic Street Furniture**

Historic street furniture such as drinking fountains, cattle troughs, lamp columns, bollards, post boxes, milestones and rural fingerposts, together with monuments and memorials, make a major contribution to local identity. Local groups have an important role to play in identifying examples and working to ensure their longterm preservation and routine maintenance. They can be Listed if put forward and considered significant enough.

#### **Litter Abatement Notices**

Under Section 91 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 anyone aggrieved by litter can apply to the Magistrate's Court for a litter abatement notice. If the owner fails to comply with the notice, they are guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine, together with a further daily fine for each day the offence continues. Local amenity societies and groups may find this a useful tool for encouraging landowners to clean up neglected road verges and railway embankments where accumulated litter has become a damaging eyesore.

#### Management Plan

Local Authorities are required to "formulate and publish proposals" and a Conservation Area Management Plan is a tried and tested way of ensuring that all relevant considerations have been taken into account. A comprehensive Management Plan includes policies for enhancing the Conservation Area's streetscape, highways, landscapes and public spaces.

Management plans help ensure that the special character is protected when making decisions on planning applications or in identifying projects to improve the public spaces.

### **Management Strategy**

Essentially the same as a management plan, although a management plan deals principally with the controls in a Conservation Area and will sometimes include a forward programme while a management strategy will always include positive enhancement proposals.

### **Permitted Development**

Under planning legislation (General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended in 2008) owners of single dwelling houses have the right to alter them in certain ways without needing planning permission from the Council. For example, a house can have its windows, front door or roof covering changed or its front elevation painted in a striking colour without the need for consent. In Conservation Areas, such alterations can be very harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

22. Department of Communities and Local Government (2010), Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, HMSO. Pg 13. 23. Department of Communities and Local Government (2010), Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, HMSO. Pg 14.

### **Planning Portal**

The Planning Portal is the UK Government's online planning and building regulations resource for England and Wales. The site can be used to learn about planning and building regulations, apply for planning permission, find out about development near you, research government policy or appeal if you have had a refusal of planning permission or other consent: www.planningportal.gov.uk

#### **Public realm**

This is the term used for the spaces between and within buildings/built up areas that are publicly accessible, including streets, alleys, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces.

## Regulation 7 Direction Removing Deemed Consent

This useful part of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) England Regulations 2007 allows Local Planning Authorities to apply to the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government for a direction removing the rights of estate agents to put whatever boards they want up in a defined area, normally part of a Conservation Area. They may be restricted to a single board per property or to boards of set dimensions. The fact that estate agents boards are damaging the character and appearance of a Conservation Area first needs to be demonstrated.

#### **Repairs Notices**

Section 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, enables Local Planning Authorities to serve a Repairs Notice on the owner of a Listed Building specifying those works which it considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building. Repairs Notices are not an end to themselves, but are a preliminary step towards serving a Compulsory Purchase Order. If after two months following the service of the Repairs Notice the specified repairs have not been done, the Council may begin compulsory purchase proceedings on the building.

#### Setting

"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."<sup>24</sup>

#### Significance

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic."<sup>25</sup>

#### Stopping the Rot

Local amenity societies and groups can identify neglected buildings in Conservation Areas, and, where appropriate, encourage the Local Authority to take statutory action. See English Heritage's guidance on our website under Heritage at Risk > Buildings at Risk > Reducing the Risk, which has a link to detailed Stopping the Rot guidance in the guidance library on: www.helm.org.uk

#### **Trees in Conservation Areas**

Trees in Conservation Areas have some extra protection, though not as much as if they were covered by a Tree Preservation Order. Before the intended works are carried out to the trees, the Council must be given 14 days notice of what you intend to do, which gives them time to go and see the site; they would either agree to the works, suggest an alternative approach or serve a Tree Preservation Order to resist or better control the proposed works.

24. Department of Communities and Local Government (2010), Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, HMSO. Pg 14. 25. Department of Communities and Local Government (2010), Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, HMSO. Pg 14.

### **Tree Preservation Orders**

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999. Single and group TPOs are issued by a Local Authority, which serves to protect a particular tree or group of trees against unauthorised pruning, felling or damage. Any tree protected by a TPO cannot be pruned or felled without permission from the Local Authority; works done without permission can result in enforcement or prosecution. To find out whether a particular tree is protected, please write to Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration), Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT, or send a fax to 01325 388616, or email planning.enguiries@darlington.gov.uk Please note that we do not provide this information over the telephone.

### **Unauthorised Works**

Unauthorised demolition of a whole building or structure in a conservation area can be a criminal offence. Other works of development that have been carried out with the necessary planning permission can also be regarded as unauthorised works and the local planning authority can serve an enforcement notice requiring the works to be undone.

#### **Urgent Works Notices**

Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 enables Local Authorities to serve Urgent Works Notices for the preservation of Listed Buildings. These powers are confined to emergency repairs, for example to keep the building wind and weatherproof and safe from collapse. Such works are only ever intended as temporary measures, and will not normally change the building's 'at risk status'. If full repairs are not forthcoming, the Council can then explore the use of a Repairs Notice.

## MIDDLETON ONE ROW CONSERVATION AREA HISTORIC MAP DATED 1857-8 (O.S. FIRST EDITION)



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# MIDDLETON ONE ROW CONSERVATION AREA HISTORIC MAP DATED 1899 (O.S. SECOND EDITION)



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# MIDDLETON ONE ROW CONSERVATION AREA HISTORIC MAP CIRCA 1948 (O.S. FOURTH EDITION)



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# MIDDLETON ONE ROW CONSERVATION AREA AERIAL IMAGERY 2005



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## MIDDLETON ONE ROW CONSERVATION AREA ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP 2010



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# DARLINGTON MIDDLETON ONE ROW CONSERVATION AREA

Character Appraisal November 2010

