



# North York Moors National Park

## Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

### Osmotherley



July 2023

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## 2.0 Summary of Significance

Osmotherley is an attractive village built on undulating ground, set around a street plan with medieval origins. The historic heart of the village is centred around the church with early medieval origins and market cross with stone table. Although the church is located behind buildings on West End, the tower is visible throughout the village and the roads revolve around the market cross making it the pivotal point for views along North, West, and South End.

The warm golden local sandstone has been used to construct buildings which are predominantly 18th and 19th century in appearance, but with a smattering of Edwardian shop windows. The green spaces of the village green and roadside verges soften the street fronted properties. River worn cobbles sit alongside grassy verges and stone flags to provide rich textures and historic character to the street surfaces. Narrow snickets create an exciting way to explore and frame views to distant hills or hidden courtyards. The roofing materials are mainly pantile in varying shades of terracotta and Welsh slate, but modern concrete pantiles have blended in over time. The mixture of pantile and slate, varied roof heights and stacks, create delightful patchworks of pitched roofs visible from a number of key locations on higher ground. A patchwork of repairs to chimneys and blocked openings and scarring to facades and gables contribute to the patina of age.

Traditional window types – mainly the Yorkshire sliding sash or the multi pane sliding sash enrich building elevations, as do traditional doors ranging from simple tongue and groove typical of agricultural buildings and outbuildings, to mid-20th century domestic panelled doors with oval glazing.

The village retains many of the small historic features often lost in less historic places – date stones, old house names, stone kneelers, Victorian railings, traditional windows, and doors survive well and collectively they provide a strong historic character to the village.



Figure 01. A view of the centre of the village which focuses on the monument and is the intersection between West End, South End and East End.

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation:

**Considerable significance:**

- Tightly packed settlement
- Steep sided topography leading to varying ground levels and building heights.
- Separation from Victorian expansion at the top of the bank
- Narrow flagged and cobbled lanes
- Worn steps to doorways.
- Wall hung lanterns.

**Some significance**

- Archaeological Character

**Unknown significance**

- Buried archaeology and fabric within buildings from earlier dates.

## 3.0 Introduction

The majority of the village of Osmotherley is a Conservation Area. Conservation Areas were first introduced in England in 1967 in recognition of the fact that the quality of historic areas depends not only on the qualities of individual buildings but also on the historic layout and interrelationship of properties, the use of characteristic building materials, the character of public spaces, the presence of trees, and views between buildings and along streets.

These places are protected under the provision of section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which defines them as areas ‘of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

There are over 9,800 Conservation Areas in England<sup>1</sup> of which 42 are in the North York Moors National Park. Osmotherley was designated as a Conservation Area in 1977.

Historic England recommends that such Conservation Areas should be reviewed periodically to assess and communicate why the Area is special and what contributes towards its particular qualities; they also recommend that the boundary of the area designated should be reviewed and that guidelines are produced to help with the Area’s long-term management.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/conservation-areas/> [accessed 22.12.2016]

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan outlines what is special about the Conservation Area and its surroundings and what should therefore be conserved; it also looks at opportunities for change in order to enhance the Conservation Area.

Conservation Areas give broader protection than listing individual buildings as wider features of historic, architectural and landscape are recognised as part of its character. Conservation Area designation introduces controls over the way owners can alter or develop their properties. Owners of residential properties often consider these controls are beneficial because they also sustain and enhance the attractiveness and value of property within it. These controls include:

- the requirement in legislation and national and local planning policies for new development to preserve and enhance special character.
- control over demolition of unlisted buildings
- control over works to trees
- fewer types of advertisements which can be displayed with deemed consent.
- Restriction on the types of development which can be carried out without the need for planning permission (permitted development rights).

In the National Park, grant aid may be available to help restore lost traditional features and thus conserve and enhance the Conservation Area's special qualities.

This report assesses those features and qualities which give Osmotherley its own special interest and which can contribute towards justifying its designation. It seeks to identify the character defining elements of the Conservation Area and describes the degrees of significance (considerable, some, limited or none) that can be attached to those elements such as the street plan, the open spaces, the vistas and views and the historic buildings. However, no appraisal can ever be entirely comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature, or space in the village, should not imply that it is of no interest.

*“The village is beautifully situated, and stands on the source of the Wiske, under the Hambleton Hills, 5 miles S E of Welbury r. station, and 6 E N E of Northallerton; and has a post-office under Northallerton, an ancient weather-worn cross, and fairs on 3 May and 18 Oct. The township comprises 3, 260 acres. Real property, £3, 402: of which £14 are in quarries. Pop in 1851, 935; in 1861, 995. ... There are a linen manufactory, bleach-works, and corn mills. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of York. Value, £200. Patron, the Lord Chancellor. The church has a tower and has been recently repaired. There are chapels for Methodists and Roman Catholics.”*

(John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales 1870-72)

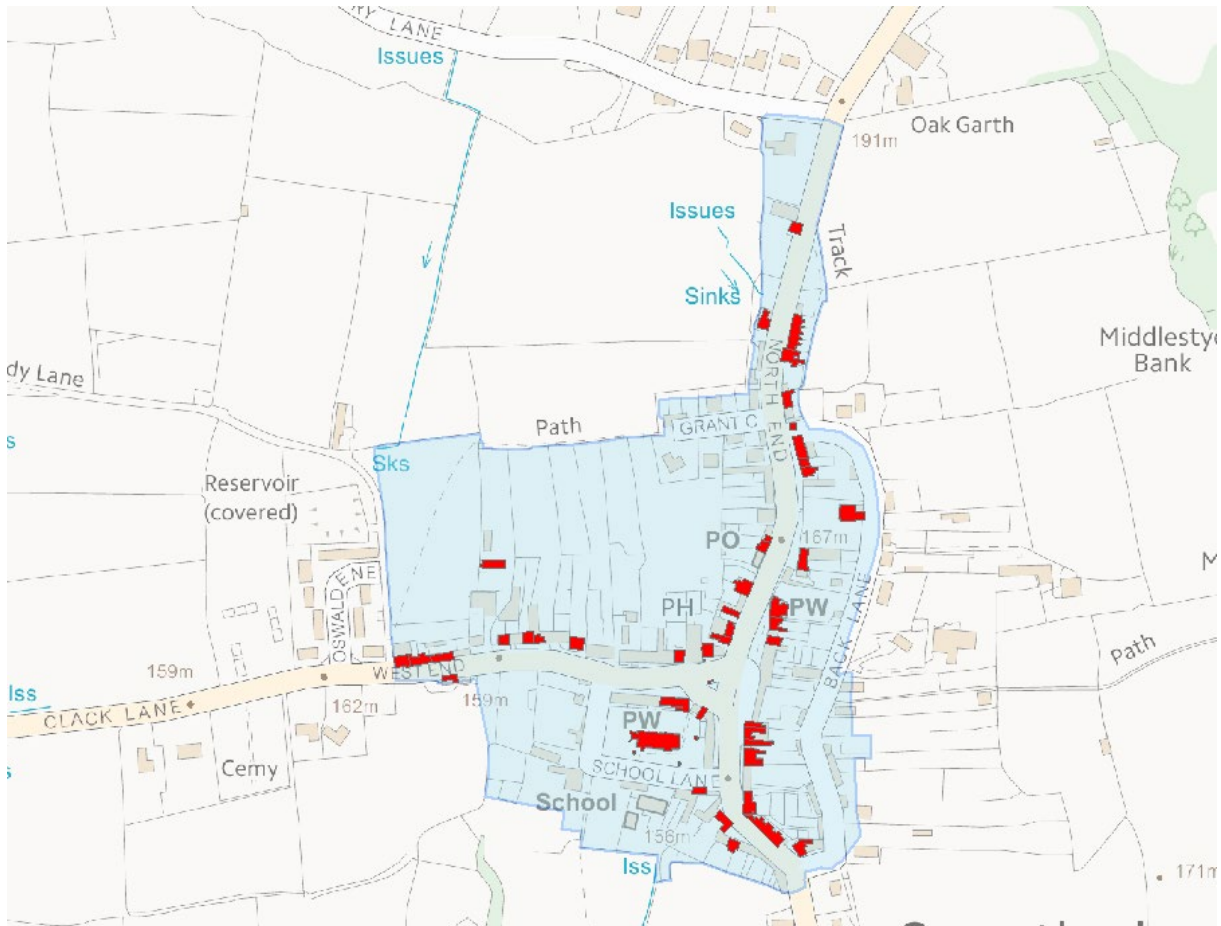


Figure 02. Osmotherley Conservation Area boundary in blue and listed buildings in red

## 4.0 Location and Context

The village is positioned in the landscape at a point where there was access to fresh water from the Cod Beck, but at a height safe from flooding on well drained south facing slopes; such locations were favoured by communities from prehistoric times, although the only direct evidence of the early village is Anglo-Saxon (6th to 11th centuries). The surrounding landscape also boasts a number of prehistoric structures such as burial mounds and ancient boundaries.

*“The situation is romantic and beautiful, on the southern slopes of one of the Hambleton range of hills and surrounded on three sides by woods and valleys. The scenery around is rich and finely varied, and some of the views are of great extent and beauty... The village is open, airy, clean, and well built; the houses being principally of stone, which is quarried in the neighbourhood, of an excellent quality for building purposes.”*

(William Grainge 1859, 334)

The bedrock geology is sandstone and so the buildings in Osmotherley are mostly constructed in this. The surrounding landscape is now pastoral, and its gentle undulations create views into the village and out towards rounded hills often framed through narrow lanes. The higgledy piggledy effect of pitched roof tops in pantile and

slate create a rich and varied series of views from various positions within the village on high ground.



Figure 03. Speed's map of the area around Osmotherley dated 1611-12

## 5.0 The Historic Development of Osmotherley

The earliest evidence for a settlement here is 11th century from when Osmotherley was known as Asmundrelac or Asmundreli. It originates from the Old Norse name Asmundr combined with leah meaning a clearing<sup>2</sup>. In 1086 the village and manor of Osmotherley was tenanted to Ligulf and Eilaf, two very Norse sounding names. This period can most easily be seen in the surviving early medieval stonework located in the church porch.

As a result of the Norman Conquest, it is likely that the manor was passed to Normans and before 1197, it was in the ownership of the church of St. Cuthbert at Durham. The survival of a fine dog toothed Norman arch in the church porch suggests a period of investment and rebuilding of the church at this time. The Bishop of Durham was the Lord of the Manor by 1284 and remained so until it was passed to Ripon in 1836<sup>3</sup>.

The 19th century Ordnance Survey mapping of the village captures the layout and the fossilised remains of medieval Osmotherley, possibly from as early as the 12th century. Here the formation of plots along the roadside with street fronted houses can be seen and tofts to the rear, extending from West to South End. Beyond their back lanes, linear tofts suitable for arable use were located and over time, some small-scale development took place which had previously only included outbuildings and coach houses. At the top end of the village was the pinfold where stray animals were held overnight and released in the morning in return for a payment or fine. Water powered mills were also recorded outside the village from the 15th century as was alum shale mining. The sandstone that

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<sup>2</sup> Ekwall 1987, 352

<sup>3</sup> 'Parishes: Osmotherley', in A History of the County of York North Riding: Volume 1, ed. William Page (London, 1914), pp. 434-439. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp434-439> [accessed 20 January 2017].



was used to build the houses was quarried locally and in the 15th century there are references to a quarry for slatestone (for roofs and flags) at Osmotherley<sup>4</sup>.



Figure 04. The pinfold at the top of the village

In the 17th and 18th centuries, more buildings and land came into private ownership and so more investment was made in the farms and houses. It is likely that many of the historic stone buildings in the village date from this period, although they will have been modified. Weaving was a domestic scale activity initially and some houses were fitted with windows designed to take advantage of maximum lighting opportunities either in the ground floor front room (often a gable end window) or along the top floor<sup>5</sup>.



Figures 05-06: Left: Anglo-Saxon carvings from the church. Right: The Norman dog toothed decorated archway in the Church porch

<sup>4</sup> Accounts of the Receiver of Allerton & Allertonshire 1491-1638. CCB B/84/3 (189357A) 8-9 Henry VII [1491-92]

<sup>5</sup> Arnold 1996, 3



Figures 07-10 below: Places of worship in Osmotherley. Left to right: The Old Hall, now with Catholic Church to the rear. This elevation has a much-altered street frontage. The entire elevation has been remodelled in the 18th or early 19th century. St. Peter's Church with Anglo-Saxon origins, many extensions and additions throughout the centuries and major refurbishment in 1892. The Methodist Chapel accessed along an alley and with distinctive 18th century blocked window on the gable end. The replacement Methodist Chapel, now private residence.

Like many small northern villages, Osmotherley has been well endowed with places of worship in addition to the parish church. The Old Hall on North End has a Roman Catholic chapel to the rear but has nothing obviously chapel-like about its design. Its Catholic credentials were formed in 1665 when the building was purchased for recusant Franciscan Friars, but Catholic architecture was deliberately domestic in appearance until relatively late legislation in the late 18th and early 19th centuries removed many of the restrictions placed on Catholic members of the community. John Wesley preached in front of the village cross in 1745 and boosted the growth of non-conformism.

The earliest non-conformist chapels were typically in modest buildings tucked out of sight until it became more widely accepted. A Friends' Meeting House of 1723 (curiously not shown on Backhouse's 1777 map of monthly Quaker meeting places), is located in a field north of the village. A Methodist Chapel of 1754 was accessed behind houses on North End along a delightful snicket. As non-conformism became more acceptable, the Methodist congregation had another more ostentatious chapel built on the street front of North End. The popularity of non-conformism startled the established Church of

England into widespread programmes of church building and church ‘restorations;’ the alterations at St. Peter’s being designed by Hodgson Fowler in 1892. Today, only the parish church, the Friends’ Meeting House, the Catholic Church, and the Methodist Chapel are retained for worship. The later chapel is now converted into a house.

**5.1 Then and now**



Figures 11-12: The centre of the village now cluttered with modern street signs, a bus shelter, road markings, a seat and a bin which compete with the market cross and table.

Like many villages of the 18-19th centuries, inns were plentiful. Of the four inns shown on the mid-19th century Ordnance Survey maps, three have remarkably survived, namely the Queen Catherine Hotel, The Three Tuns, and The Golden Lion. The Crown Inn at the West End appears to have gone out of business in the 19th century<sup>6</sup> and other inns known to have previously existed include the King's Head (previously known as the Duke of Cumberland), the Wagon & Horses Inn on Clack Lane and the Chequers Inn, a former drovers inn with a turf fire which allegedly burned for over one hundred years<sup>7</sup>.



Figures 13-14: The Queen Catherine Inn and Hotel

<sup>6</sup> Shown in detail only on the 25 inch maps dating to the 1850-60s.

<sup>7</sup> Arnold 1996, 3613

The village remained little altered throughout the 19th century. Twentieth century developments were mostly limited to the edges or infills in the village and introduced styles of architecture that no longer reflected vernacular designs or local materials. Instead, modern houses were constructed in generic styles and materials that were no longer locally produced and, in some cases, house have cut across historic boundaries.

### 5.2 Historic Mapping

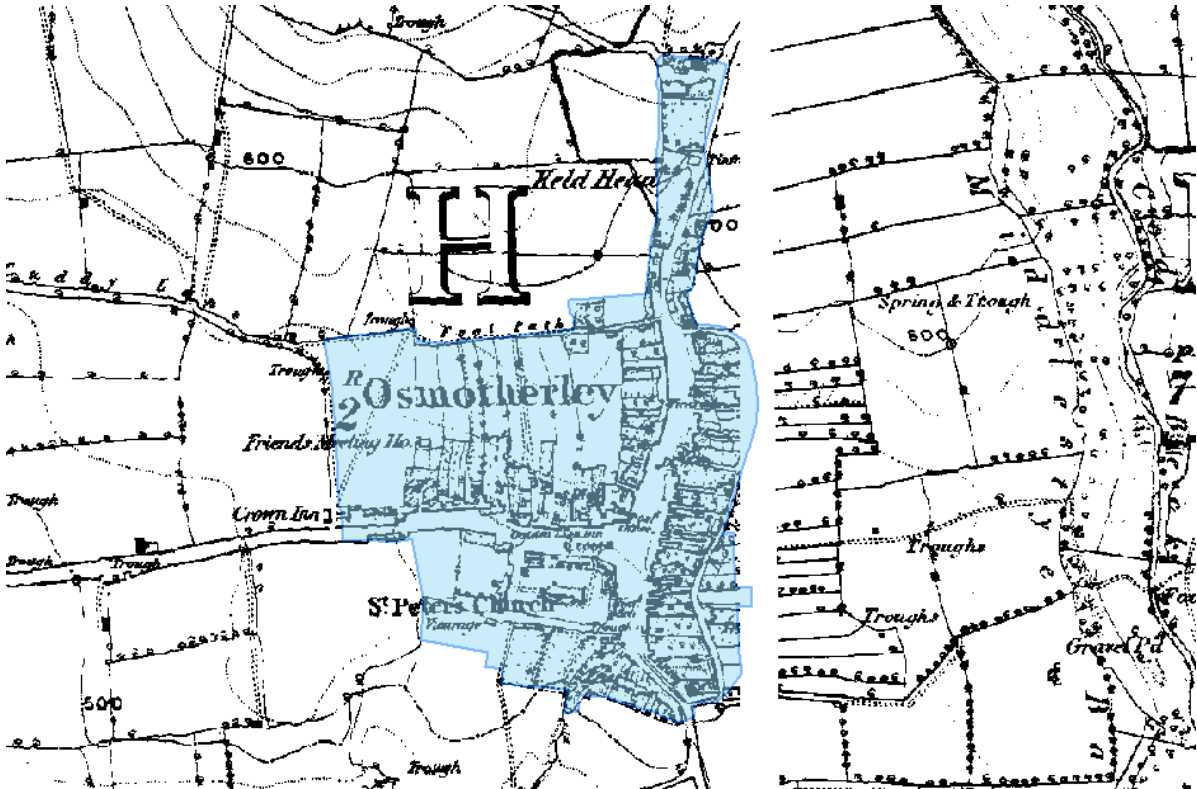


Figure 15: Osmotherley in 1854 (OS 1st edition)

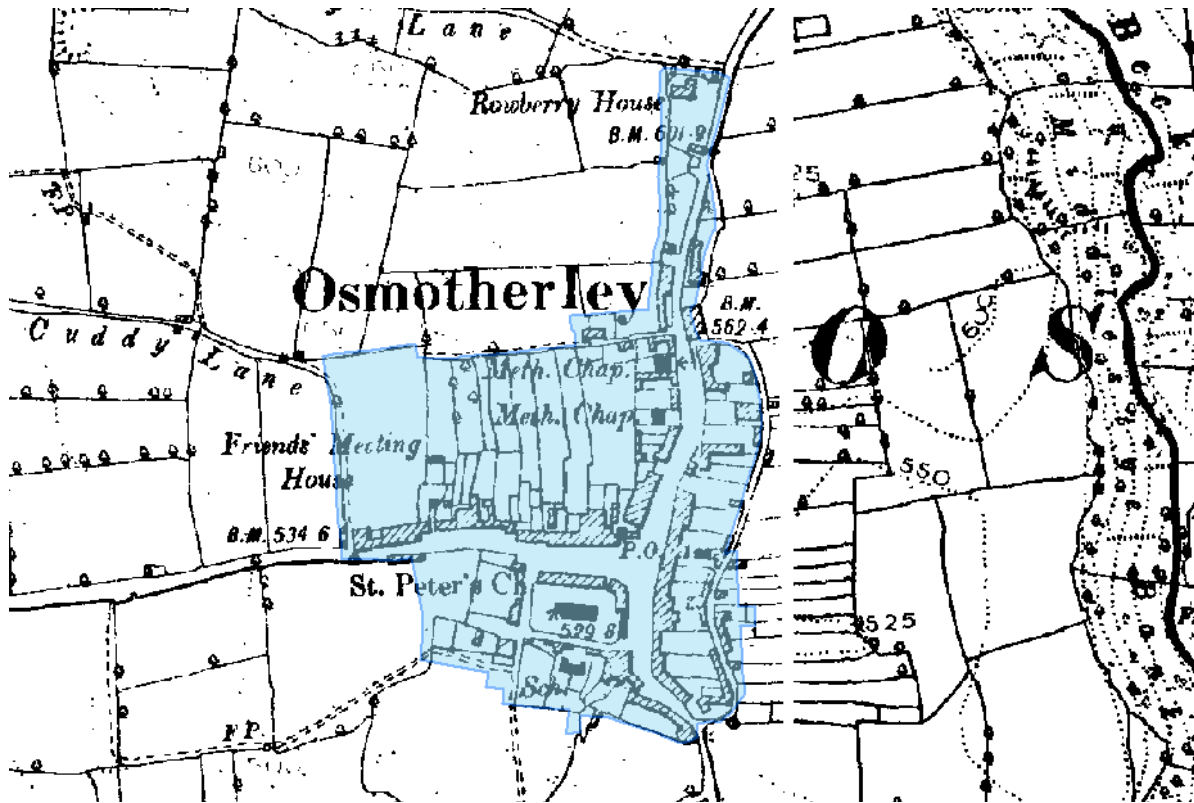


Figure 16: Osmotherley in the late 19th century. There were few changes to the extent of the settlement at that time. The Conservation Area largely reflects ] 19th century Osmotherley but excludes the medieval linear plots of land to the east and instead follows Back Lane.

## 6.0 Archaeology

### **In a nutshell: lost foundations, old street surfaces, cess pits, garden archaeology.**

Beneath the ground lie the remains of medieval Osmotherley. The street fronts may contain evidence of earlier buildings, while the gardens to the rear will contain the buried foundations of earlier outshut extensions and will certainly include cess pits and middens with evidence about everyday life; what people ate, what dishes they ate off and even what diseases they lived with. The modern-day tarmac on the roads may overlies earlier street surfaces and the churchyard may contain evidence of the church which existed here before the Norman Conquest (as well as previous inhabitants). The extent of the village as shown on mid-19th century mapping can also be presumed to be the area with most archaeological potential as this also represents the likely greatest extent of the village in historic times.

Most of the apparent archaeological evidence is in the buildings themselves. Few are a product of one phase of building, but instead represent an evolution from an earlier date, with the buildings being adapted to suit the changing circumstances of the owners or occupiers. This is most obvious with blocked window openings or a new position of a door. Scarring in a gable wall will show where an earlier building was once attached or where a roofline was altered to adapt the roof to new materials, such as the shift from

thatch which needed a steeply pitched roof to drain the water to pantiles which needed a gentler slope.

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation Area:

#### Considerable significance

- Blocked windows and doors
- Scarring of earlier buildings or raised rooflines.

#### Unknown significance

- Sub surface remains such as former surfaces, cess pits, wells, garden archaeology, foundations.

#### Opportunities to enhance

- Developments within the Conservation Area may need to be informed by archaeological work and in some cases, further archaeological excavation carried out before or during development.
- Developments affecting historic buildings may need to be informed by a Statement of Significance

## 7.0 Character Analysis

### 7.1 The Ancient Street Plan and Open Spaces

*In a nutshell: village green, grass verges, varied street levels, medieval street pattern and field boundaries, churchyard, cobbles and flags, stone boundary walls. Ornate iron-railings, trees, hedges, ridge-and-furrow, and walls with coal doors.*

The village is on a meeting point where the road rising from the valley meets another road running north and south. The triangular 'dead ground' created by the meeting of these roads has evolved into a village green and the position of the church and village cross here marks its historic core. Market day was presumably held around the cross with its distinctive stone table on Saturdays but has long since discontinued<sup>8</sup>. The centuries-long use of the roads has left the houses sitting on higher ground, often with a green strip of grass to the front. Where the road has become hollowed out through centuries of use, steps have been used to help access the high ground where houses sit on South End.

The layout of the village with street fronted properties and linear plots to the rear represents a layout common from the 12th century and reflects what is often considered to be a Norman reorganisation of settlement after the Conquest in 1066. This period can

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<sup>8</sup> Grainge 1859, 339

also be discerned in the Norman stonework of the church. The churchyard with its mainly 19th century gravestones and a smattering of 18th century ones possesses great historic character but is also an important green space that allows the church to be appreciated in isolation without too much crowding from adjacent buildings.

The linear plots (tofts) extended back from the houses on the main road as far as Back Lane and longer linear fields suitable for small scale arable production extended beyond. These linear plots are still visible in the landscape today and relate directly to the medieval village of Osmotherley but are currently excluded from the Conservation Area. In medieval times, they were probably only defined with ditches or prominent stones but enclosed with walls in the 16th century. Other linear plots to the north of West End are now obscured by tree cover but are contained within the Conservation Area.

Some of these plots still retain the gentle undulations of ridge and furrow where the land was ploughed from medieval times up until at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Beyond the linear plots was open moorland which provided common grazing ground until 1755-1824 when some of this land was enclosed to form the regular rectilinear enclosures that can be seen today<sup>9</sup>. The landscape beyond the historic houses of Osmotherley therefore tells us the village's history.

## 7.2 Field Patterns, Ancient Streets and Earthworks



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<sup>9</sup> NYRO CRONT 1514 I



Figure 17: Surviving evidence of medieval property boundaries and ridge and furrow earthworks

The streets are softened by grass verges which have survived as the road network has matured, sinking ever deeper into the ground surface, leaving houses sitting on the original higher ground. Pathways cut through these grass verges, surfaced in cobbles or flags. Access to houses has been increased to accommodate cars and, in the process, some modern suburban materials have been introduced. Services have been cut through the traditional surfaces and replaced with tarmac leading to a gradual loss of traditional surfaces in some places. The differences in levels have resulted in the use of stone steps linking paved surfaces, often worn with age and while they are not accessible to everyone, they are rich in historic character.

### 7.3 Surface Treatments, Open and Green Spaces



Figures 18-22: A range of surface treatments including traditional trods, stone flags, inlaid smoothed pebbles and borders of red and blue glazed paving bricks.

## 7.4 Boundaries



Figures 23-30: A range of boundaries including decorative wrought iron, timber boarded gates and fences, tall stone walls both linear and curved and timber hatches on outbuildings to the rear of houses, particularly on Back Lane.

Boundary features in the village, where they exist, are of stone; they make a particularly strong contribution to the streetscape at North End on the approach to the village and along Back Lane, where the stone wall is punctured with coal doors. Most street fronted houses have no boundary walls, but a few have ornate wrought iron railings on top of dwarf walls which survived the wartime reclamation. Some garden walls have disappeared due to the demands of car travel but a fine Georgian garden wall with sweeping curves survives at The Old Hall. Elsewhere, trees and hedges provide privacy and greenery.

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation Area:

### **Considerable significance**

- Medieval street pattern
- Medieval linear field boundaries and ridge and furrow
- Village green with market cross and table
- Grass verges
- Raised pavements and steps.
- Sweeping coped boundary walls and strong gateways
- Stone boundary walls
- Railings on dwarf walls
- Cobbles and flags

### **Some significance**

- Coal doors in walls

### **Opportunities to enhance**

- Future developments should respect the linear nature of the medieval boundaries.
- New development should avoid curving street patterns but can make use of lanes and alleys to break up massing.
- Where medieval field boundaries are outside the Conservation Area, they should be considered as positively contributing towards its setting.
- The loss of traditional boundaries and green verges in order to accommodate parking should be resisted.
- Traditional surface treatments should be protected from loss through resurfacing, maintenance works by utilities companies and permitted development.
- Limit street signs, road markings, bins, furniture to reduce clutter, especially around the market cross
- Protect the market cross green space from further encroachment.
- If the bus shelter is to be replaced in the future, consider a less prominent position or the use of materials with greater visual permeability.
- The use of characteristic boundary treatments can help new developments fit in

- Attempts to urbanise country tracks and paths should be resisted

## 7.5 Vistas and Views

In a nutshell: pitches and pantiles, dominant church tower, market cross as terminus to views, alleys frame views to countryside beyond, distant views of hills and trees.

The natural topography in and around Osmotherley creates an undulating environment into which the village nestles; this creates distant views of hills which form a backdrop to the church tower or the varied rooftops.

The market cross on the crossroads is of course the focus to many internal views down the main roads, but few of the roads are straight so views are often terminated by domestic scale buildings.

Repeated visual links to the countryside beyond are important through alleyways, spaces between houses on Back Lane or farm gates; this was an agricultural community for centuries and so these links merit retaining. Similarly, views through archways and alleys are often into courtyards with cobbled surfaces and old outbuildings which capture some of the village's historic and agricultural origins. The undeveloped character of the gardens seen from Back Lane give attractive views and give Back Lane a subservient back land character with green spaces and utilitarian buildings contrasting with the densely built frontages to North and South Ends.

The church tower is designed to be seen throughout the village and all other rooftops are subservient to it. The pitched roofs in red pantile or grey slate combine to provide a richly textured pattern, often visible from above and any future developments need to enhance such views.

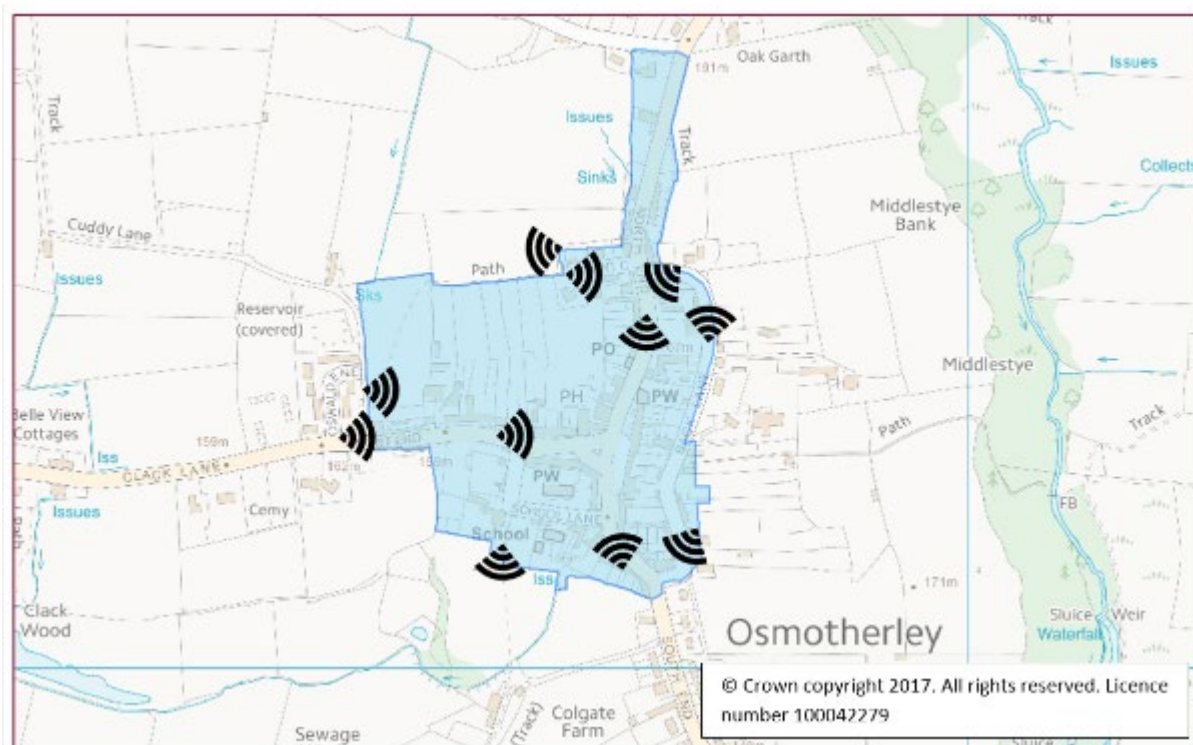


Figure 31. Views and vistas in the Conservation Area

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation Area:

#### Considerable significance

- Views terminated by the market cross
- Backdrop of hills to the church tower and rooftops
- Visual links to the countryside through archways, alleys and gaps in buildings and views across undeveloped gardens from Back Lane towards tightly packed buildings and the countryside beyond
- Visual dominance of the church tower
- Pantile and Welsh slate roofscape

#### Opportunities to enhance

- Future developments should ensure that the church tower remains dominant in views across the village rooftops.
- Views of rooftops should continue to be of pitched roofs in traditional materials.
- Views through alleyways are characteristic of the village and should be retained or incorporated into any new developments.
- Views towards the surrounding hills and countryside are valued.

- Future development should be assessed against its impact on the views shown on figure 9 above Pitches and pantiles.



Figure 32: External view of the roofscape of Osmotherley





Figures 33-36: A range of key views including Back Lane, looking down onto South End from North End and across West End

## 7.6 The Historic Buildings of Osmotherley

In a nutshell: modest sandstone buildings, two-three storeys high, varied orientations, mostly street fronted, nestled in an undulating landscape. Georgian and Victorian, domestic, ecclesiastical, civic, and agricultural. Pantiles and slate, broken ridge lines, stacks, kneelers, and water tabling. Sliding sashes, weaving windows, Edwardian shop fronts, solid sills and lintels, timber doors, double doors and passages, blocked openings, and the patina of age.

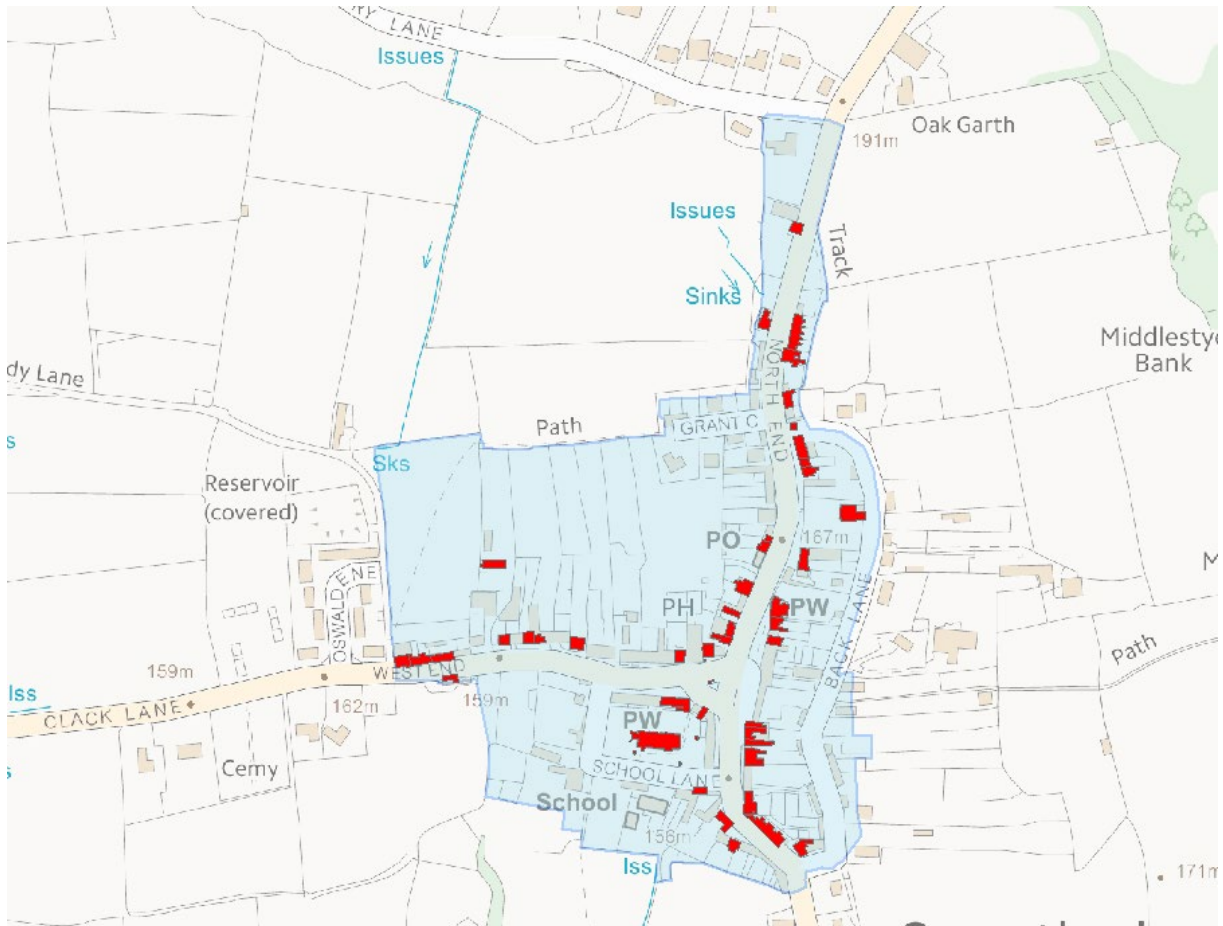


Figure 37: Osmotherley Conservation Area with Listed Buildings highlighted in red.

Osmotherley is endowed with many historic buildings which have a good rate of survival of traditional external features such as windows, doors, kneelers, and roofing materials. The Conservation Area contains a high proportion of listed buildings, but nearly all street fronted buildings make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and all pitched roofs make a contribution, even when set back from the roads.

Most properties are made of the locally quarried sandstone; there are many examples of hard cement having been used to repoint the sandstone ashlar blocks of the buildings and this has led to erosion of the stonework. Brick was used for patching and later extensions and makes an appearance in a very small number of 20th century houses and the school. Pebble dash and render do exist but are relatively rare being found on North End and South End.

The building stock is mostly 18th and 19th century in appearance, but some of those positioned on the street front in the village centre are almost certainly sitting on plots occupied since the 11th or 12th centuries. Indeed, some buildings may have had new facades supplied in the 18th century but retain earlier features within. One or two buildings have documentary evidence to support an earlier date such as The Old Hall bought in 1665 by Lady Juliana Walmsley for Franciscan friar recusants<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Arnold 1996, 1524





Figure 38: A row of mainly Georgian frontages on South End with a mixture of roof heights which is distinctive to the village and window types representing the traditional Yorkshire sliding sash, 8/8 sliding sashes and modern replacements. The tall central building retains a cross passage next to the house door.

The investment in building stock in the 18th century was part of a much bigger trend across the country, but it is evident in Osmotherley, not just from the predominance of Georgian styles of architecture, but the date stones proclaiming the dates of rebuilding phases and often the owner's name too. Such 18th century buildings typically had stone kneelers and water tabling to the roofs and dressed sandstone lintels (and sills) to doors and windows. Windows in the 18th century buildings were traditionally fitted with multi pane Yorkshire sliding sashes or vertical multi pane sliding sashes and doors were solid, apart from higher status houses which might have ornate fanlights. Doorways, and sometimes windows too, were often surrounded with massive, dressed quoins or solid jambs. Houses of this date often had a small attic window on the gable end and in some cases in Osmotherley a similarly small window might be found near the chimney stack allowing extra light to make weaving possible from the home. Communal weaving rooms in the top floor of the houses in North Terrace were fitted with extra-large windows to allow more light in.



Figure 39-44: Several of the Listed Buildings throughout Osmotherley with a range of traditional forms, characters, level of status and detailing including historic windows and door styles.

## 7.7 Datestones



Figures 45-48: A range of datestones seen on buildings and lintels.

The Victorian period (1837-1901) introduced a wider variety of architectural styles. Pointed arched windows were used on civic buildings such as the School House and two over two or four over four pane sashes were made possible by advances in plate glass manufacture which had the benefit of allowing more daylight in; similarly, wider bay windows on domestic houses were added to create more light and space. The invention of the railway network also made it possible to introduce more materials and new designs into the area. By the Edwardian period (early 20th century), window styles were lighter with more slender panes and less fussy detailing to the woodwork.

These phases of alteration and adaptation are evident in the village's buildings. Many contain scarring of former lean-to buildings, or blocked windows where the buildings have been modernised including altering the floor levels. The Old Hall displays considerable archaeological evidence of a reworked façade, and 18 West End appears to have blocked a former coach house entrance now fitted with an arched window. Former agricultural buildings have been absorbed into domestic dwellings and once open passageways to rear courtyards, brought into the warmth of the house.



Figures 49-50: A extensively reworked façade and evidence of a previous steeply pitched thatched roof.

The majority of properties are two storeys high, with some typical Georgian two and a half storey high houses. A few Georgian properties have subsequently had dormer windows added to the roofs (such as The Flags with replacement dormers in a Victorian style), but many more have added velux windows to avoid altering the roof shape. Full three storey buildings are generally limited to higher status houses such as The Old Hall. The number of storeys is perhaps less relevant than the perceived height of the buildings in a village where undulations can raise a single storey cottage above the height of a two-storey building.

Roofing materials are mostly red pantile, likely made locally with Welsh slate introduced once the railway was constructed to the west at Northallerton. Rainwater goods were traditionally in cast iron, but plastic can now be found on a number of properties. Shaped kneelers point street wards with a particularly ornate torch finial on The Hermitage with a 1757 datestone. Chimney stacks and stone water tabling also make a positive contribution to the roofscape. Overall, the roofscape is of pitched roofs of varying sizes and orientations and a combination of red pantile and Welsh slate resulting in a tapestry of colours and shapes that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.



Figures 51-55: A range of roofing details, featuring slate and pantile at a variety of orientations.

The housing stock is relatively modest and with one or two exceptions, lacks ostentation. The exceptions include the Old Police House with its grand entrance framed by pillars and Corbury House (66 North End) with its ornate arched door surround to the original front doorway. A ha-ha to the rear of Applegarth suggests an elevated status too, possibly of an 18th century date.

Many properties have their origins as farmhouses with barns attached, sometimes on the longhouse plan, but these long house origins are increasingly difficult to discern as most have continued a long history of adaptation by becoming terraced rows of cottages. Some properties retain elements of their former agricultural character, but this has largely been lost from the village.



Figures 55-60: Agricultural character present throughout the village and integrated into new developments. Traditional openings and materials have been maintained.

At 33 West End (listed), an early 19th century barn has been incorporated into the house. Another distinctive link to the agricultural past is the rare survival of the village pinfold to the north end of the village. No. 20 West End still has the reduced corner to allow large agricultural machinery to pass through the adjacent gap with a reduced risk of hitting the wall.

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation Area:

### **Considerable significance**

- Street fronted housing, varying orientations
- Weaving windows
- Traditional window styles, mostly multi pane sashes and Yorkshire sliding sashes.
- Medieval building plots
- Georgian and some Victorian (neo-Gothic) architecture
- Sandstone lintels, sills, quoins, and jambs
- Traditional agricultural character
- Passageways and archways
- Pitched roofs and broken roof lines with pantile and Welsh slate.
- Chimneys, kneelers, water tabling, cast iron rainwater goods.
- Two to two and a half storey high buildings

### **Some significance**

- Three storeys high higher status buildings
- Ornate fan lights

### **Opportunities to enhance**

- Where historic buildings, usually, but not always listed buildings, are the subject of large-scale alterations, there may be a requirement for a Statement of Significance to help inform the works and/or archaeological recording.
- Homeowners should be encouraged to use soft lime mortars when repointing stonework to avoid causing damage by using cement.
- New developments should use stone that matches the local geology. Modern materials such as glass combined with traditional materials such as timber can produce buildings sympathetic designs that reflect their surroundings and the historic context.
- Ostentatious buildings are not particularly characteristic of Osmotherley, and new development should seek to reference the more modest vernacular properties.
- New development or extensions to existing houses should have pitched roofs (or lean-to roofs where it is an extension) and often chimney stacks on the main roof line. Flat roofs would be a negative feature in the current roofscape.
- Where terraces are proposed, the roof lines should be broken.

- Despite conversions and new uses, agricultural character should be retained.
- Roofing materials should reflect the existing tradition of pantile or Welsh slate and include water tabling where appropriate.
- New development should reflect the scale, massing and height of the existing building stock influenced by the local topography. Buildings are a modest two to three storeys.
- There is scope for buildings to be orientated differently to maintain roofscape variety.

## 7.8 Windows

Double door frontages are more common in terraces where one door created an entrance into domestic accommodation and the other was a passageway to the rear. Worker's housing was provided for the mills and alum industries, and these provided distinctive rows such as Paradise Row built in 1823. However, the distinctive top floor windows that flooded light into weaving areas of the weaver's cottages on North End are not visible from the street front, because they are located to the rear. However, they are an important piece of historic evidence for past industry in the village.



Figure 61: The date stone of Paradise Row 1823

The elements of a building elevation most likely to be replaced over time are the chimneys, doors, and windows. Chimney stacks have survived well, but doors and windows are more vulnerable. However, a good number of traditional wooden windows survive, mainly consisting of Yorkshire sliding sashes, multi pane sashes and Victorian two or four pane sashes. A building can have a mixture, representing change over time.





Figures 62-70: Window types in Osmotherley including the Yorkshire sliding sash; tripartite Yorkshire sliding sash, 8/8 sliding sash (there are good examples of 6/6 sliding sashes in the village too) and the Victorian 2/2 sliding sash.

## 7.8 Shopfronts

Some properties had shop fronts added in Victorian or Edwardian times, but few survive as over half of the shops have been lost since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thompson's shop front on West End is a good example of an older property with a later shop front. While arched frames were popular in Victorian times, the simplicity and delicacy of this shop suggest an early 1900s date. Others which survive in houses are squared or rounded bays, but most shop fronts are now modern replacements, sometimes in plastic.

## Then and Now



Figures 71-73: Historic and current images of Thompsons Store





Figures 74-75: Historic and current images 18 West End



Figures 76-78: A few examples of traditional shopfronts present within Osmotherley.

## 7.8 Doors

Doors are a mixture of timber traditional types ranging from plain plank doors typical of the modest house, farmhouse, or outbuildings, to six panel doors of the Georgian period, four panel doors of Victorian times, half glazed timber doors, and mid-20th century doors with oval windows. Georgian doors may have had a fanlight in high status houses, but by the 19th century a simple rectangular over light was popular to allow light into the entrance hall. Some of these survive along North End. PVC has made inroads into a few houses resulting in a loss of historic character.



Figures 79-87: Examples of traditional timber boarded doors and over lights

The simple batten plank door was the most common prior to the 19th century apart from in high status houses. Latterly it was mainly used for outbuildings. Rounded arched openings reflected classical styles of architecture in high status houses of the 18th/early 19th centuries and the six-panel door was also popular up to the early 19th century. The fanlight was also a popular Georgian addition which allowed more light in the entrance hall but could also be highly decorative. The need for light resulted in half glazing from Victorian times and rounded or oval glazing was particularly distinctive of the 1930s to 50s. Today, many homeowners recognise that the four-panel door was common in Victorian times and so seek to reflect this in their replacement doors.

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation Area:

- Considerable significance**
- Batten and plank doors
  - Timber panelled doors appropriate for the age of the building.
  - Over lights
  - Multi pane sash windows
  - Yorkshire sliding sash windows.

- Edwardian shop fronts

### **Some significance**

- Fanlights
- Four pane Victorian windows
- Arched windows

### **Opportunities to enhance**

- The historic character of the village was eroded in the late 20th century through window replacements that failed to reflect the traditional styles. Window types should be chosen which reflect the date and character of the building.
- The choice of window type in new developments is important in helping new buildings fit in. New development should avoid using 'mock' sashes.
- The use of timber as a window frame is preferable to plastic.
- Secondary glazing can be a more effective way of insulating a building than double glazing and should be considered in historic buildings in the Conservation Area, particularly listed buildings where it will not be permitted to replace historic windows with double glazing.
- Where good quality shop windows survive, they should be retained.
- New shop fronts should be made of traditional materials, not plastic.
- Weaver's windows are evidence of how Osmotherley functioned economically and how people lived; they should therefore be retained.
- Replacement doors should be chosen from a range of traditional styles and be in timber. The use of narrow off the peg plastic doors and doorframes has eroded historic character, but the use of grant assistance and planning controls has helped to reverse this.

## **7.9 The Little Details**

**In a nutshell: ancient table, market cross, hanging inn signs, sun dials and date stones, boot scrapers, phone box and troughs.**

While much of the historic character of a settlement is to be found in the streets and building elements such as windows, doors and roofscapes, it is often the overlooked small historic features that are attached to the buildings or sit within communal spaces that add an additional layer of interest. Individually these little details might make little impact, but collectively, they contribute considerably to the character of a village. These are the elements that add local distinctiveness and texture to the built environment and, sometimes, a sense of connection with history – these can all too easily be overlooked, replaced, 'improved' or ignored, adding to a subtle sanitisation and erosion of character. These are the sorts of things we do not always notice until they are gone.



Figures 88-93. Left: A date stone from South End providing the owner’s initials in 1821 when their trade may have been as a cobbler. A sundial from West End, a trough, ghost sign, the hanging inn sign, and the remains (top half) of the first market cross in a new position.

In Osmotherley, generations of inhabitants have added sun dials, boot scrapers, plaques, fancy door knockers, weathervanes, and carvings to their houses, and in the street, there are remains of old troughs, a mounting block, a K9 telephone kiosk and the old market cross outside Thompson’s. A crenelated garden wall to the rear of the Catholic Church adds visual interest and hanging inn signs contribute to overall character. The most important feature of the public realm is of course the present market ‘cross’ and stone table representing a gathering and trading point for many centuries. It was here that Wesley preached in 1745:

“I reached Osmotherley in the evening and found a large congregation waiting – I preached immediately, God renewing my strength and comforting my heart”.

The following elements have been identified as being of significance to the Conservation Area:

#### Considerable significance

- Datestones
- Sundials, weathervanes, hanging shop signs.
- Market cross, table, relic cross
- Bootscrapers
- Troughs, mounting blocks, dairy stands

- K9 telephone kiosk

### Some significance

- Fancy door knockers

### Opportunities to enhance

- Small historic features are to be cherished and quirky hanging signs and ornamental details on buildings can add interest.
- Fascia boards to shop fronts should be modest in size.

## 7.10 Then and now



Figures 94-95: The main changes to the streetscape on West End are the introduction of parked cars, some loss of traditional surfaces and the replacement or additions of some windows.

## 8.0 Recommendations for Future Management

The Conservation Area Appraisal process is designed to review the boundaries of the Conservation Area. This is done in consultation with the local community. No new boundaries are proposed; however, the report does acknowledge that the linear field system to the east of the village is an important part of the history of the village and is of historic interest but is currently outside the Conservation Area. However, some development has taken place which does not respect these boundaries and so some of their significance has been lost. If these boundaries are to remain outside the Conservation Area, it is important that they are seen to be part of its setting. In planning terms, this means that the linear fields currently outside the Conservation Area would be afforded some protection from inappropriate development by paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Guidance (2012), which states:

‘Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas....and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.’

## **8.1 Conserving and Enhancing Significance**

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal has also identified what the architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area is and how that contributes towards its significance. This process has flagged up a number of features which merit conservation and enhancement and which should be taken into consideration in any management decisions in the future. These ‘opportunities to conserve and enhance’ have been included in the main report so that it can be clearly seen why they are being recommended because they follow on from the statements of significance. For ease of use, they will be duplicated here.

## **8.2 Conserving and Enhancing the Street Plan, the Surfaces, Open Spaces and Boundaries of the Conservation Area**

- Future developments should respect the linear nature of the medieval boundaries.
- New development should avoid curving street patterns but can make use of lanes and alleys to break up massing.
- Where medieval field boundaries are outside the Conservation Area, they should be considered as positively contributing towards its setting.
- The loss of traditional boundaries and green verges in order to accommodate parking should be resisted.
- Traditional surface treatments should be protected from loss through resurfacing, maintenance works by utilities companies and permitted development.
- Limit street furniture to reduce clutter, especially around the market cross
- Protect the market cross green space from encroachment.
- If the bus shelter is to be replaced in the future, consider a less prominent position or the use of materials with greater visual permeability.
- The use of characteristic boundary treatments can help new developments fit in
- Attempts to urbanise country tracks and paths should be resisted.

## **8.3 Conserving and Enhancing the Archaeology of the Conservation Area**

- In line with National Planning Policy, developments within the Conservation Area may need to be informed by archaeological work and in some cases, further archaeological excavation carried out before or during development and developments affecting historic buildings may need to be informed by a Statement of Significance

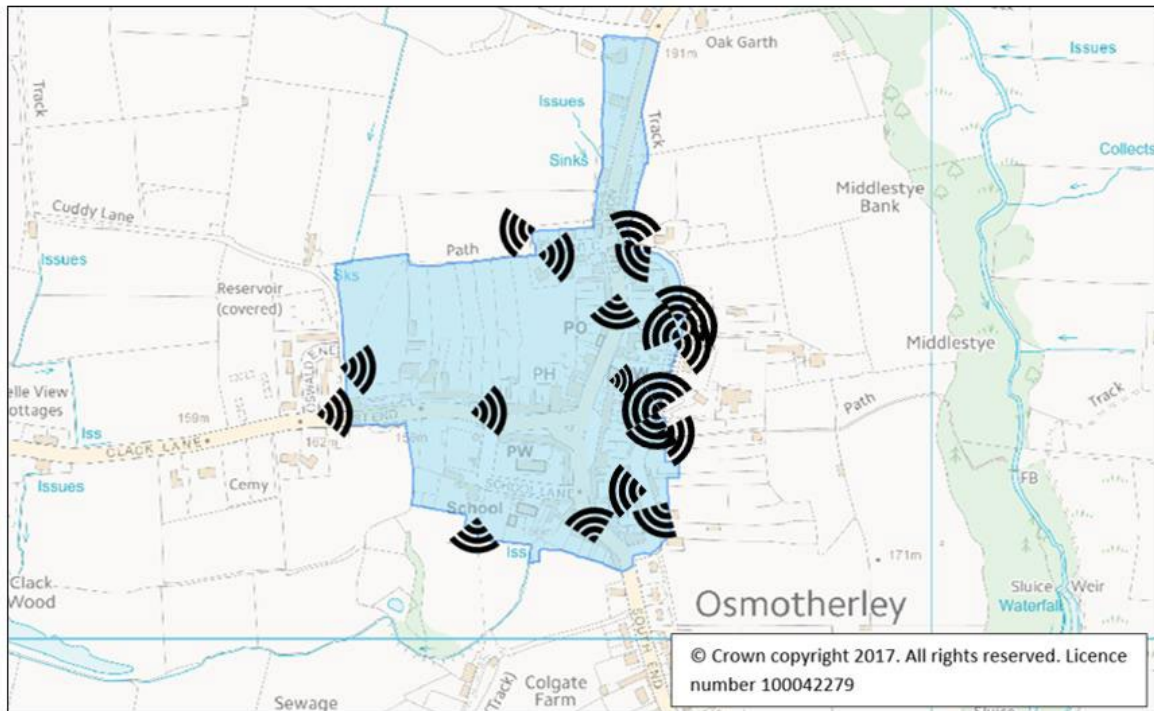


Figure 96: Views worth cherishing.

#### Conserving and Enhancing the Vistas and Views of the Conservation Area

- Future developments should ensure that the church tower remains dominant in views across the village rooftops.
- Views of rooftops should continue to be of pitched roofs in traditional materials.
- Views through alleyways are characteristic of the village and should be retained or incorporated into any new developments.
- Views towards the surrounding hills and countryside are valued.
- Future development should be assessed against impact on the views (figure 94)

#### **8.4 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic and Distinctive Buildings of Osmotherley**

- Where historic buildings, usually, but not always listed buildings, are the subject of large-scale alterations, there may be a requirement for a Statement of Significance to help inform the works and/or archaeological recording.
- Homeowners should be encouraged to use soft lime mortars when repointing stonework to avoid causing damage by using cement.
- New developments should generally use stone that matches the local geology but modern materials such as glass combined with traditional materials such as timber can produce buildings which fit well within their environment where they reflect their surroundings and respect the historic context.
- Ostentatious buildings are not particularly characteristic of Osmotherley, and new development should seek to reference the more modest vernacular properties.

- New development or extensions to existing houses should always have pitched roofs (or lean-to roofs where it is an extension) and often chimney stacks on the main roof line. Flat roofs would be a negative feature in the current roofscape.
- Where terraces are proposed, the roof lines should be broken.
- Where agricultural buildings are subject to new uses, their agricultural character should be retained.
- Roofing materials should reflect the existing tradition of pantile or Welsh slate and include water tabling where appropriate.
- The height of new development should reflect the scale and massing of the existing building stock which is two to three storeys and domestic in scale, but its impact on the roofscape will be dependent on local topography.
- There is scope for buildings to be orientated in different directions to add variety to the existing roofscape.
- The historic character of the village was eroded in the late 20th century through window replacements that failed to reflect the traditional styles.
- Window types should be chosen which reflect the date and character of the building.
- The choice of window type in new developments is important in helping new buildings fit in. New development should avoid using 'mock' sashes.
- The use of timber as a window frame is preferable to plastic.
- Secondary glazing can be a more effective way of insulating a building than double glazing and should be considered in historic buildings in the Conservation Area, particularly listed buildings where it will not be permitted to replace historic windows with double glazing.
- Where good quality shop windows survive, they should be retained.
- New shop fronts should be made of traditional materials, not plastic.
- Weaver's windows are evidence of how Osmotherley functioned economically and how people lived; they should therefore be retained.
- Replacement doors should be chosen from a range of traditional styles and be in timber. The use of narrow off the peg plastic doors and doorframes has eroded historic character, but the use of grant assistance and planning controls has helped to reverse this.

### **8.5 Conserving and Enhancing the Little Architectural and Historic Details.**

- Small historic features are to be cherished and quirky hanging signs and ornamental details on buildings can add interest.
- Fascia boards to shop fronts should be modest in size.



## 8.6 Recommended Boundary Changes

The Conservation Area Appraisal process is designed to review the boundaries of the Conservation Area. This will be done in consultation with the local community, one extension is put forward for consideration.

The current boundary of the Conservation Area does not include the linear field system east of the Back Lane. This has some merit being considered as a medieval relic feature which makes a significant contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area and as such should be protected as a heritage asset in the planning process. All boundary changes proposed will be subject to further public consultation.

## 9.0 Conclusion

Osmotherley is an attractive village built on undulating ground and set around a street plan with medieval origins, probably 12th century. The historic heart of the village is marked by the church which has a tower visible throughout the village. The roads centre on the market cross making it a terminus to views along North, West, and South End.

Local sandstone has been used to construct buildings which are predominantly 18th and 19th century in appearance. River worn cobbles sit alongside the village green, grassy verges and stone flags to provide rich texture and historic character to the street surface. Narrow snickets create an exciting way to explore and, frame views to distant hills or hidden courtyards. The roofing is mainly pantile in varying shades of terracotta and Welsh slate, but modern concrete pantiles have blended well too. The varied roof colours, heights, and stacks, create delightful patchworks of pitched roofs visible from a several key locations on higher ground. Traditional window and door types enrich building elevations, ranging from simple tongue and groove typical of agricultural buildings and outbuildings, to mid-20th century domestic panelled doors with glazing.

The village retains many of the small historic features often lost in less historic places such as date stones, old house names, stone kneelers, and Victorian railings and collectively they provide a strong historic character to the village.

The current boundary of the Conservation Area captures these qualities but does not include the linear field system east of Back Lane. This should be considered as a medieval relic feature which makes a significant contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area which should be protected as a heritage asset.

Recommendations to conserve and enhance the special qualities include the need to improve control over street surfaces, particularly when utility companies carry out work, the desire to reduce street signage and clutter and to respect the valued views.

By outlining the character of the buildings and boundaries in the village, future changes can better fit in by referencing the traditional styles, materials, scale, and massing of the building stock. In Osmotherley's case, these are mostly modest one to three storeyed buildings in sandstone with pitched roofs, usually in red pantile or Welsh slate and which make a positive contribution to the roofscape. Traditionally buildings have been

orientated with the principal elevation facing the street front, but also gable end to the street front. Through passages have also been used to access rear courtyards and gardens, but these can also frame views beyond. Where boundaries exist, they are normally in stone, but railings and hedges are also distinctive; using boundaries which reference the existing character of the area can help new development fit in. The removal of front garden boundaries to accommodate car parking should be resisted.

Traditional window styles are common where window sashes are divided into smaller panes with glazing bars and they are also set back within the window aperture, not flush with the elevation. Similarly, doors are normally panelled to avoid blank, flat surfaces. These features add depth and interest to the elevations and their use can also help new development or alterations fit in. The withdrawal of some permitted development rights in the village, along with grant aid to replace lost historic features, has had the benefit of conserving, or enhancing many of its historic features and has controlled the use of plastic windows and doors.

There is a good survival of little historic details such as date stones and redundant historic features such as milk stands and boot scrapers; conserving these will help to ensure that the historic character of the village survives. In the past, buildings were often adapted to new uses and fashions rather than being demolished; consequently, the scarring of former roof lines and blocked openings add to the patina of age.

## 10. Appendix and Acknowledgements

National Planning Policy Framework

The Town and Country planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (69, 70, 71 & 72)

Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019)

North York Moors Local Plan (July 2020)

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Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Osmotherley Conservation Area  
Archaeo-Environment Ltd for North York Moors National Park Authority

# 11. Management Overview

## Development Management

The Local Planning Authority are dedicated to managing Conservation Areas in accordance with the above detailed Planning Policy and Legislation. Development in a Conservation Area is controlled under the requirements of the General Permitted Developments Orders, Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Town and County Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Advice on development within a conservation area is available on the Authority's website. It is also recommended to submit a 'pre-planning application' to determine if planning permission is needed and any constraints upon development, before submitting an application. Planning Enquiries can be sent to [planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

## Archaeology

Developments on a small and large scale have the potential to impact upon archaeological remains. Any application for development will be subject to meeting archaeological requirements in the submission, determination, and post-decision periods. The Authority's Historic Environment Records and their specialist archaeological advice team can be found on the North York Moors National Park Authority Website. Enquiries can be sent to: [conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

## Nature Conservation and Wildlife

The Authority will determine applications for development in accordance with the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, section 15 of the NPPF (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment). Enquiries can be sent to: [conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

## Trees

Trees in the Conservation Area are protected by the designation where they have a stem diameter greater than 75mm (3 inches) when measured at 1.5 metres (5 feet) above ground level. Anyone wishing to prune or remove a tree must seek the necessary permissions from the Authority. Enquiries can be sent to: [conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

## Building Conservation

The current Conservation Area is covered by an Article 4 Direction, for further details on what this covers please find it on the website [northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://northyorkmoors.org.uk), or email the Building Conservation Team. The building Conservation team provide specialist advice on development to listed buildings and within Conservation Areas. General enquiries can be sent to [building@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:building@northyorkmoors.org.uk) and applications for specialist pre-application advice can be submitted via the Authority's website. Information on Conservation Areas [www.northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk)