

Schedule of Conservation Areas

The statutory definition of a Conservation Area can be found in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states that Conservation Areas are:-

"Areas of special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance."

Furthermore, Section 72 of the above Act requires the Council as its "General duty as respects Conservation Areas in exercise of (its) planning functions ..." to pay "... special attention ... to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area."

Within the District there are fifteen existing Conservation Areas at:-

	Ref.		Ref.
Beamishburn	13	Lintzford	1
Blackhill	14	Low Westwood	15
Burnopfield	10	Medomsley	4
Cornsay	11	Muggleswick	12
Ebchester	3	Satley	2
Esh	7	Shotley Bridge	5
Iveston	9	Tanfield	6
Lanchester	8		

Within all of these areas the Council has recognised the group value and importance of specific buildings including trees, open spaces, village greens, street and village patterns and features of historic and archaeological interest. In some instances Conservation Areas may contain Listed Buildings or structures, others do not.

This schedule of Conservation Areas outlines the essential qualities and characteristics of each of the areas which are identified on the Proposals Map, and the following maps show their boundaries in more detail.

Policies EN15 - EN18 relate to Conservation Areas

1. LINTZFORD CONSERVATION AREA

The Lintzford Conservation Area straddles the boundary between Derwentside District and Gateshead Metropolitan Borough, and the boundaries have been agreed jointly.

The derivation of Lintz is "Hlinc", meaning rising ground or bank, "Lintzford" therefore being a river crossing situated between rising ground. The Conservation Area covers the bowl-shaped valley around the former settlement of Lintzford. The character of the area is mainly provided by the setting of a flat and open area of fields almost entirely enclosed by heavily wooded valley sides. The heart of the Conservation Area is the group of farms and buildings around the former paper mill complex which occupies a spur in the river. The River Derwent itself, with its two bridges and weir, is of course a major feature in the overall composition. Public footpaths afford valuable opportunities for the public enjoyment of the whole setting, and the Derwent Walk itself skirts the south eastern side of the area.

The earliest known date for a settlement in this area appears to be the 14th Century, when a mill (probably a corn mill) existed on the south side of the river. Records show that by 1703 the mill had changed to a paper mill. In 1922 the use changed again to that of an ink works, which continued until 1987, when the industrial use of the building ceased and it was acquired for conversion to residential use.

The mill complex itself comprises a mix of late 18th and 19th Century stone and slate buildings, the most handsome being Lintzford House, which is a two storey, five bay, ashlar stone-fronted Georgian Listed Building. The entrance to the whole site via the 18th Century stone bridge is also an especially attractive vista, framed by Bridge House (also listed) and two mature copper beech trees, providing a fine view of the weir.

Within Gateshead, on the north side of the river, the former stone farm buildings appear to have been built in the later half of the 19th Century, although they have an unusual linear layout which would normally be characteristic of older farm buildings. Nearby on the north side of the Rowlands Gill to Hamsterley Mill road there was at one time a row of 18th Century cottages, presumably built to house either mill or agricultural workers. These were demolished in 1966.

The Pont Haugh Bridge which formerly carried the A694 road was constructed in 1834 and merits mention in Pevsner's Guide to the Buildings of County Durham, is also within the Conservation Area.

2. SATLEY CONSERVATION AREA

The Satley Conservation Area tightly encompasses the whole of the built-up area of the settlement. Satley is of linear form and is situated on a ridgeline along the south side of the Steeley Burn. It can be divided into three areas of broadly similar character.

The northern half of the village is a random collection of traditional farm groupings and other two-storey stone and slate terraces of, at most, 3-4 properties, most dating from the 18th and 19th Century. Almost all of the old burgage plots and fields which once have ran into the village have now been developed with outbuildings e.g. garages and modern farm buildings. There are also a number of relatively modern bungalows, situated both along the roadsides and occupying some of the plots to the rear of the older buildings.

The core of the village is centred on the triangular Village Green. Around this are located probably the most unadulterated group of traditional buildings in the Conservation Area. These include the Grade II Listed Church of St. Cuthbert and former Vicarage (now Satley House), together with the traditional school building and old School House. This area, including the old Churchyard and Glebe land, is densely wooded and forms an attractive entrance to the south of the village.

At the southern end of the village is the 20th Century Glebeside Estate. This has managed to retain most of its uniform character i.e. slate roofs and brick porches, and has a pleasant outlook onto its own green, which is shadowed by a tree belt along the roadside. To the rear of this is a derelict, post-war Primary School and at the entrance to the village, the Satley Villa Farm complex.

3. EBCHESTER CONSERVATION AREA

The Ebchester Conservation Area centres on the historic core of the village. This includes the site of Vindomora, the Roman fort, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. However, very little of the fort is visible today. Within this area is the Grade II* Church of St. Ebba, dating from the 19th Century, as well as a number of other Grade II Listed properties. Immediately to the south, sloping down to Ebchester Burn, is the remainder of the old village, which again includes a number of listed properties, including the only listed telephone call box in the District. Nearly all of the buildings are of stone with slate or stone slab roofs.

The Conservation Area also extends up Ebchester Hill and down Chare Bank to the Listed 19th Century Ebchester Bridge, including the line of the Roman Dere Street. Both these areas are well-wooded, as is Ebchester Burn which follows a similar route down to the River Derwent. The fields in the bow of the River Derwent occupy what appears to be a flood plain and retain a traditional pattern of extensive hedgerows. The areas of fairly dense tree cover and the fields in the bow are highly important elements in forming the character and setting of the village on the southern slope of the Derwent Valley, particularly when viewed from the north and west on the opposite side of the valley.

4. MEDOMSLEY CONSERVATION AREA

The Medomsley Conservation Area is centred around the older parts of the village, from the junction of the then Front Street (now Manor Road) with Fines Road, as far east as East Farm. The Area includes the paddocks of land to the north (including areas behind the Miners Arms and Manor House Wood) and the south (behind Town Farm to the old Derwent Bank Railway).

Medomsley occupies a linear position along a ridge between the Derwent Valley and Pont Burn. The village itself forms an inverted "Y" shape with the Magdalene estate occupying a large site between Fines Road and the Old Railway.

The Conservation Area extends the length of Manor Road and includes not just the traditional residential terraces and old farm groupings along the road itself, but also many of the paddocks situated to the rear, on either side. The character of the Conservation Area is derived from the long, straight drag of Manor Road, the terraces and farm groups which line it and the extensive tree cover on either side, which forms a tree-lined avenue. The Church of St. Mary Magdalene is a Grade I Listed Building.

The village shops and public house are randomly situated at the western end of the Conservation Area. The modern Primary School is well screened and set back from the road. The most notable commercial development in the village is the Medomsley Saw Mills at the eastern end of the village, although this is relatively well screened from Manor Road.

5. SHOTLEY BRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA

The Shotley Bridge Conservation Area includes the centre of the village down to the River Derwent the older parts of the village along Front Street, Snows Green Road and up Church Bank, the Spa Grounds and woodlands up to and including Snows Green Burn, including part of the grounds of Shotley Park, Snow's Green itself and a finger containing both trees and development along Elm Park Burn/Snows Green Road up to Summerhill and a narrow finger of approximately 500m along the east bank of the River Derwent and the area around Shotley Grove, as far south as the iron foot bridge.

The village of Shotley Bridge evolved as a result of the arrival of the German swordmaking community from Solingen in the 17th Century. The original settlement was situated in the Wood Street area, between Front Street and the River Derwent. However, almost all of the properties have been cleared, removing the last traces of the original community and their swordmaking connections. All that remains are the former corn mill, its mill race and its offices.

The village centre contains most of the Listed Buildings in Shotley Bridge, the overall composition of the compact development in the vicinity of Front Street compared with the larger houses fronting Snow's Green Road, Church Bank and Benfieldside Road, is pleasant in contrast and style. Front Street is notable in that it contains a relatively well preserved concentration of traditional shop fronts. Amidst the trees and traditional large detached villas of Snow's Green Road an unusual pair of Swiss chalets are to be found, befitting the village's history as a 19th Century spa. Along the steep and wooded Church Bank are situated a number of older buildings, including most notably the 19th Century St Cuthbert's Church, designed by John Dobson.

The predominant feature of the area to the north, along the Snow's Green Burn, is the number of mature trees to be found, creating a parkland setting, which acts as a backcloth to the compact built-up village itself. To the north of Oley Meadows is the dense Paddock Wood. Meandering through this, between the A694 and the River Derwent, is Spa Drive which leads down to the Spa Pleasure Grounds, where the Listed Spa, Bathhouse and Saloon are situated, overlooking a cricket ground and pavilion. Between the A694 and B6310 (Snow's Green Road), is the expansive Shotley Park, a semi-formal parkland surrounding the listed early 19th Century house, which also contains the wooded burn. At and around the junction of Snow's Green Road and Benfieldside Road are the original buildings of Snow's Green itself, including some interesting rows of cottages, Snows Green Farm and the partly listed Snow's Green House.

Finally, the Conservation Area extends in a long finger to the south, encompassing the trees between Cutlers Hall Road/Shotley Grove Road and the River Derwent as far as the listed early 19th Century Shotley Grove House, a villa constructed of dressed stone, which is now divided into two, with its own lodge and stables. To the south of this are a collection of other houses and buildings of varying quality, but situated in an attractive woodland setting.

6. TANFIELD CONSERVATION AREA

The Tanfield Conservation Area includes virtually the whole of this small village, including parts of the surrounding field network as well as the three road approaches to it. Two recent housing developments to the north-west (St Margaret's Drive and The Hayricks) and most of another to the south (Tudor Drive) are excluded.

The character of this Conservation Area is derived from three broadly similar areas. At the heart of the village is the impressive Grade II Listed St Margaret's Church, with its substantial stone tower set amongst the dense tree cover and stone walls of the Churchyard and Cemetery (which includes many listed Gravestones). Immediately to the west of the Church is the Village Green, bisected by the road, but with a number of properties, some of them Listed, built of traditional stone and slate, forming a triangle of development. Finally, to the north and east of the Church it is the solid stone walls and tree lined avenues which are most notable as one approaches the village. Set amongst this is the complex of buildings surrounding the 17th Century Tanfield Hall, with its Grade I Listed 18th Century gates.

The Tanfield Conservation Area has a character of its own which gives its origins to the variety of land uses, lack of clutter and differing forms and styles of street furniture and car parking.

7. ESH CONSERVATION AREA

The Esh Conservation area includes the whole of the village, including Esh Hall and the Vicarage but excludes the eastern extremity of Front Street and the Hill Crest housing estate. The fields to the east and west of the drive to Esh Hall are included, as well as part of the field to the east of Whitfield House and the Green Court housing estate.

Esh appears to have been originally a small agricultural settlement centred on the Village Green, the Hall (the earliest existing parts of which date from the 17th Century) and the Church of St. Michael, which was rebuilt in 1770. Few, if any traces of other buildings of that period survive. In the 19th Century houses and cottages were built beside the road which runs along the northern edge of the village, connecting it with other villages on the pastoral land to the west and the City of Durham to the east. Possibly because of its elevated position, the village was otherwise little affected by the building activity which engulfed many other villages in the County at that time. Early in the 20th Century the local housing authority built a small estate to the west of the Green, and in recent years a small estate of private houses was built to the east of it.

The village straddles a high ridge between two tributaries of the Wear, and on its north side the land-form plunges steeply down three hundred feet to the valley bottom. Despite this elevation, the closely built form of the village and the copses of trees around the Vicarage, Church and Hall prevent it from having an exposed character. The contrast between the sense of enclosure which is achieved in the village and the dramatic views of the surrounding countryside from certain positions, make the village particularly impressive.

The heart of present-day Esh is the village green which extends along Hall Road to Esh Hall. The buildings surrounding the green include the Grade II Listed St. Michael Church built in the mid 18th Century, and other stone built properties such as Glebe Farm, Esh Laude R.C. School, as well as a mixture of smaller, slate-roofed properties. There is a 17th Century stone cross on the green which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Front Street runs west and east along the northern edge of the Green and to the east is characterised by stone built terraced properties dating from the 19th Century whilst to the west there is a mixture of 20th Century properties and infill bungalows. At the western extremity of the settlement is Esh Glebe House, (Grade II Listed building) which is surrounded by a fine belt of mature trees.

8. LANCHESTER CONSERVATION AREA

In May 1972, Durham County Council designated the old village area of Lanchester, around The Green and Front Street, as the District's first Conservation Area.

The historic core of Lanchester is broadly linear in form following the valley bottom of Smallhope Burn with hillsides rising steeply to the west and east. It is predominately commercial at the southern end of Front Street and still retains its domestic character.

The properties along Front Street and around The Green are mainly two-storey with natural stone walls and slate roofs, although one or two of the older buildings still have their original stone slab roofs. There are a number of Listed Buildings in the village, most notable of which are those clustered around The Green and the Grade I, 12th Century All Saints Church.

The other areas included within the Conservation Area consist of a mix of two-storey brick and stone terraces and individual properties, mostly with slate roofs. The two main clusters of terraced properties are to the north of Front Street, at Victoria Street, and to the south of Front Street, in the vicinity of the old Railway Station.

As far as the landscape of the village is concerned, The Green is the focal point with belts of trees stretching from the All Saints Churchyard east up Peth Bank, west up Cadger Bank and north along Smallhope Burn, between the Bypass and the rear of Front Street. Another linear belt of trees follows the old railway, now the Lanchester Valley Way.

The Village Core is now cut off from the surrounding countryside except to the south along Smallhope Burn and most notably to the north east, where the fields and hedgerows rise steeply up the hillside.

9. IVESTON CONSERVATION AREA

Iveston is a linear hilltop village prominently situated approximately 2 miles east of Consett. The Conservation Area encloses the village to the north and south by lines roughly parallel to Iveston Lane including all the frontage buildings and open spaces. The western edge is marked by Back Lane and the embankment surrounding Iveston Lane to a point immediately south of the New Inn, the eastern edge by the footpath east of Bankfoot Farm. There is one Grade II Listed group of buildings at Board Cottage, situated at the north western corner of the village.

Iveston is one of the few examples of a colonizing, hilltop village typical of many found in the Pennines. Original building lines are visible as are the original field patterns or 'tofts' (long narrow plots of regular depth) to the north of the settlement. Surrounding land is in agricultural use, very open with limited tree cover.

The form of the village is linear based along Iveston Lane and the Village Green. Despite a 300 year history of coal mining, Iveston has an agricultural character with plots of open land extending to the heart of the settlement. The qualities of the village are mainly derived from the open, informal disposition of the buildings around open spaces, especially the large Village Green, rather than the individual architectural merits of specific properties.

The approach from the east re-enforces the random disposition of buildings as Iveston Lane meanders up through a change in level. Trees and hedges play an important role in directing movement up towards the Village Green and also create a softer setting which contrasts effectively with the exposed skylines as viewed from the north and south.

10. BURNOPFIELD CONSERVATION AREA

The Burnopfield Conservation Area includes the older parts of the village as well as its wooded setting and is centred around Busty Bank and Front Street in a basic 'T' shape. It extends from the Pack Horse Public House to The Leazes on an east/west axis and from the former Bowes Railway line to the junction of New Road and Busty Bank on a north/south axis.

The main character of the Conservation Area is derived from this historic core and the traditional groupings of buildings contained within it. This is also the commercial centre of the village containing the old Co-op buildings, and a number of commercial properties extending down Busty Bank. This, coinciding with the tight grouping of traditional terraced properties around the core, gives the village centre a very compact appearance.

Much of the Conservation Area has fairly dense tree cover especially rising upwards from Front Street and along the valleys of Mill Burn and Bryan's Leap Gill. Many trees are covered by tree preservation orders where they are situated close to existing buildings.

The Conservation Area contains a Grade II* Listed Building, Burnopfield House on the south side of Front Street, but this is not readily visible due to tree cover. Woodlands, a building on Sheep Hill, similar in appearance to Burnopfield House is worthy of retention.

11. CORNSAY CONSERVATION AREA

The village of Cornsay was first recorded before the year 1200, and is an example of an "open" Durham village - a long narrow green surrounded by houses and farms, with 'tofts' or paddocks in evidence behind.

The Conservation Area comprises the whole built-up area, as well as the fields around the buildings which form their setting. It also includes the steep north-facing valley side of the Pan Burn, above which the farms at the northern end of the village stand.

The village lies on an open ridge of the Pennine foothills, and possesses a rugged, upland quality derived from the simple North Pennine style of architecture. Identity comes from the extensive Green, which retains a roughly grazed appearance, defined by buildings and dry stone field walls. A mid-eighteenth century Well-house is located at the northern end of the Green, which is a Grade II Listed Building.

There is sparse tree cover which re-enforces the openness and sense of exposure felt in Cornsay, and elevation is emphasised by the expansive view from the Village Green down into the valley of the Hedleyhope Burn to the south and east.

12. MUGGLESWICK CONSERVATION AREA

Muggleswick is an isolated settlement high up on the edge of the moors with very few buildings. Historically there has been habitation at Muggleswick, since the 13th Century, when the Priors of Durham had a country property there, known as a "refugium". Substantial remains of this property can still be seen.

The boundaries of the Muggleswick Conservation Area are made up of the ridge to the north of Muggleswick Burn, the field wall enclosing the church to the south, the curtilage of Lane Head at the foot of the Moor escarpment to the west and Grange Farm to the east.

The settlement of Muggleswick has two distinct centres. That on the road from Edmundbyers to Waskerley contains two newer buildings. The setting, though, is particularly attractive as the intersection of the road with access road leading to the older part of the village gives the appearance of forming a Village Green. The access road to the original village is gated and follows the small open valley with Muggleswick Burn on its northern side. The road is lined with mature trees and dry stone walls.

The old part of the village comprises a group of buildings dating mainly from around the 17th Century. It also includes the 13th Century "refugium". The majority of the buildings are Listed, with the "refugium" being a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Somewhat detached from this grouping to the south is Muggleswick Church built in the latter part of the 19th Century. This building is contained within a dry stone wall and has an extensive graveyard. A number of tombs dating from the 17th Century are Listed.

The main character of the area is derived from its open valley setting, centred around Muggleswick Burn with extensive views over the surrounding moorland. The settlement itself has a rugged and bare appearance with a sparse scattering of buildings. The open landscape surrounding the village, although cultivated, is relatively unspoilt.

13. BEAMISHBURN CONSERVATION AREA

The Beamishburn Conservation Area is an enclosed 'V' shape valley which is bounded to the west by the main Causey Road (A6076) and to the East by Cobby Lane and Beamish Park, including Beamish Hall. To the North it is bounded by a ridge line running to the north of Beamish Red Row and to the south by the southern extremity of Carrickshill Wood and Causey Lodge.

The area is dissected by the Beamish and Causey Burns which form the focal point within the landscape. When entering into this area from either direction on Beamish Burn Road, the landscape forms an attractive 'bowl' effect.

There are a few sporadic buildings which intrude into the landscape, but these are generally fairly well screened by existing landscape features. This results in a very open landscape with a number of high quality woodland areas especially Carrickshill Wood. The grounds attached to Beamish Hall, which are high quality parkland and well maintained, are also included.

The centre of the 'bowl' area is Beamish Burn Bridge, itself a Grade II Listed Building dating from late 18th Century. Either side of the road at this point are two contrasting buildings, one a Listed farmhouse and the other known as The Cottage. Over the bridge is a Grade II Listed Building West Lodge, which was formerly a lodge for Beamish Hall.

Beamish Hall as mentioned above is contained in its own very attractive extensive grounds and is a Grade II Listed Building. It provides an attractive entrance to the Beamish Burn area from Beamish Museum.

14. BLACKHILL CONSERVATION AREA

Blackhill Conservation Area is centred around Laburnum Avenue, and is enclosed by Benfieldside Cemetery to the north and west, Consett Park to the south and Aynsley Terrace to the east. The area has a broadly L-shaped linear form. It also includes the areas to the south and west of St Aidan's Church, as well as the two large areas of tree cover within the Cemetery and Consett Park.

This area benefits from a rather formal plan: with the well laid out park and cemetery; Laburnum Avenue which, with the trees lining it, gives the impression of an older Victorian suburban 'boulevard'; and the 'grid iron' street pattern of the residential properties to the south of St Aidan's Church.

Within this area there are four Listed Buildings - St Aidan's Church and Vicarage (both 1885) and the two mortuary chapels of Benfieldside Cemetery (1876). There are a number of other notable buildings of interest including the Cemetery Lodge House, Benfield Hall Nursing Home and the St Aidan's Masonic Lodge, which together with the larger Victorian properties in the vicinity of the northern part of Laburnum Avenue create an interesting group of buildings.

The tree cover provided by the Park and Cemetery, together with the openness of streets such as Laburnum Avenue, which is tree-lined, means that this area acts like a breathing space between the tightly built up urban areas within Consett. Consett Park in particular, marks the clear boundary between Consett and Blackhill.

In addition to the largely suburban environment of Laburnum Avenue, there is an interesting grid-iron pattern of residential streets to the south of St Aidan's Church. These were built by the Consett Iron Company in 1882-3 to provide rented accommodation for the then growing workforce. They are largely unaltered, stone built properties, many with their original offshoots, although few have their original windows and doors. What makes this area particularly interesting is its layout. For at the end of almost every street and back lane one views a building situated so as to be almost symmetrical. For example, looking south along Cort Street, the view is enclosed by the grand Park Royal Hotel (built by Richard Murray in 1876 as a luxury hotel, and later sold to the CIC who used it until closure in 1980). Looking south along the lane between Cort and Roger Street, one sees the symmetrical building now used by the Vaux Brewery. Looking north up Cort Street and Roger Street, the views are closed by two of the grander houses on the north side of St Aidan's Street. One can only assume the layout of this area was meticulously planned by the Company and is therefore a most interesting part of the town's Industrial Heritage.

Although Consett Park forms the natural boundary between Consett and Blackhill the large Victorian stone built properties of Aynsley Terrace (the Promenade) have also been included because they face onto the Park and relate to it in much the same way as the large Victorian properties of Laburnum Avenue face the Cemetery Grounds.

15. LOW WESTWOOD CONSERVATION AREA

The Low Westwood Conservation Area includes the ribbon of development on the north side of the A694 from the works to the mineral railway, and the terraced properties on Ennerdale and Langdale Terraces to the south.

Low Westwood has a narrow, linear form of development stretching out along the A694, which runs parallel to the River Derwent in the valley to the north. The two principle features of the settlement are the long terraces of predominantly stone houses, situated on both sides of the road, and the dense tree cover, which acts as a pleasant backdrop to the buildings.