



**Methley Church Side is a place of special character and historic interest.**

**This appraisal and management plan sets out the features that contribute to its distinctiveness and identifies opportunities for its protection and enhancement.**



# Methley Church Side

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL  
& MANAGEMENT PLAN



OCTOBER 2008

# Summary

## Summary of special interest

Historically Methley Church Side formed the church focus of the wider medieval township of Methley. Until the 18th century it was a small agricultural hamlet dominated by the church and Church Side Farm. The 19th century saw the expansion of the settlement into a village, with development including a number of large detached residences, a school, two red-brick terraces and a purpose-built public house.

The trees, green spaces and strong connection with the surrounding countryside help retain the rural character of the village, despite the neighbouring suburbanisation.

Key characteristics:

- The flat topography creates an open character.
- The simple settlement form is based on one principal road (Church Side) with its distinctive dog-leg bends defining the village core.
- The contrast between the large grain of development to the south - with substantial buildings set within large plots, and the finer grain of development to the north - with smaller more regular plots and buildings directly addressing the road.
- Views - to the church tower - the principal landmark of the village, around the cricket field, out to the

surrounding countryside and the sequential, unfolding views along the dog-leg bends of the principal road.

- The diverse built environment, dominated by late 19th century residential buildings, but also including a late 17th century farmhouse, a number of 18th century buildings, as well as the Grade I listed medieval church.
- Common materials unify the village scene - sandstone, brick and stucco-covered rubble, with roof coverings of stone slate and blue slate.
- Historic boundary treatments - stone boundary walls with copings, ornate gate piers and cast iron gates.
- Mature trees and green spaces - the tree-lined cricket field, tranquil churchyard and boundary-belt planting of large plots to the south.

## Summary of issues and opportunities

The protection and enhancement of the special character of the conservation area depends on the positive conservation management of the village. In addition to the existing national statutory legislation and local planning policy controls the following opportunities for protection and enhancement have been identified:

- Assess other areas in the wider township of Methley to see if further conservation areas should be designated, as resources allow.

- Promote and deliver enhancements that will strengthen the sense of place of the village core.
- Ensure future change respects the rural character of the village.
- Encourage the protection of surviving historic detail and the reinstatement of appropriately detailed fittings in the defined positive buildings.
- Establish a list of locally significant buildings and policies for their protection.
- Ensure that all new development, including any future redevelopment of the school site, is sustainable, high quality, well designed 21st century architecture that responds to its historic context.
- Promote public realm enhancements within the conservation area as opportunities arise. Ensure that future public realm works respect and enhance the special character of the conservation area.

- Ameliorate the negative impact of traffic and traffic management measures on the special character of the conservation area.
- Develop a tree strategy to guide future positive management.
- Promote and celebrate the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.



St Oswald's church is the historic focus of the village



Roadside development forms the central core of the village



Green space and trees are essential to the rural character of the village



## Location and context

Methley is located 11 km (7 miles) to the south west of Leeds on the main route to Pontefract and Doncaster (A639). The railway line between Leeds and Castleford forms the eastern boundary of the conservation area.

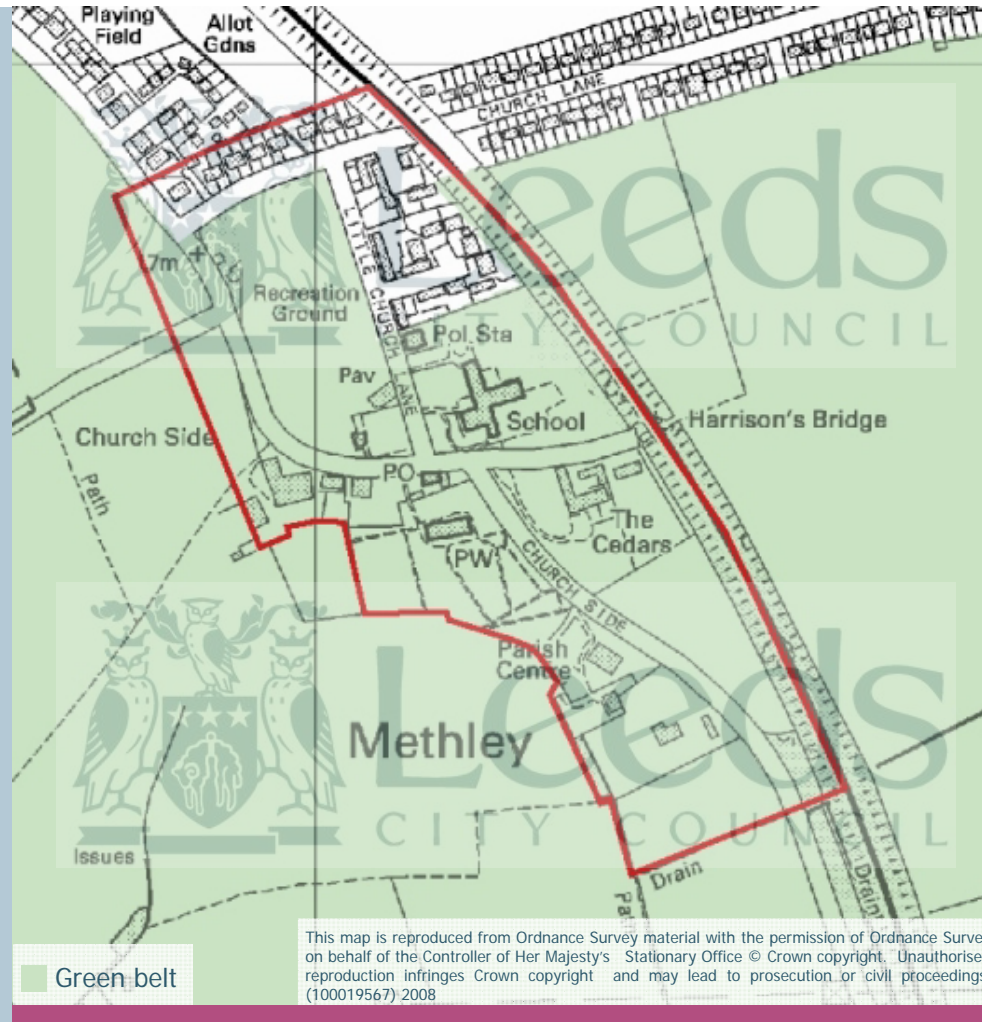
*Methley* is often used to refer to a wider conglomeration of hamlets and villages located in an area of flat-lying land between the rivers Aire, to the north, and Calder to the south. However, the conservation area, first designated in 1975, is tightly focused on the small village that developed around St Oswald's church and will be referred to as Methley Church Side.

## Geology, topography and landscape setting

Methley is located on the Leeds Coal Measures with alternating sandstone and shale deposits, coal and accompanying scat-earths. The surrounding landscape has been radically altered as a result of extensive mining and subsequent land reclamation.

The village sits on the level plateau of alluvial and fluvial glacial deposits of the Rivers Aire and Calder. A distinctive circular boundary to the south of the church marks an oxbow of a former water course and defines the boundary between the upper (north) and lower (south) terraces of sands and gravels.

The topography of the settlement and the surrounding area is very flat,



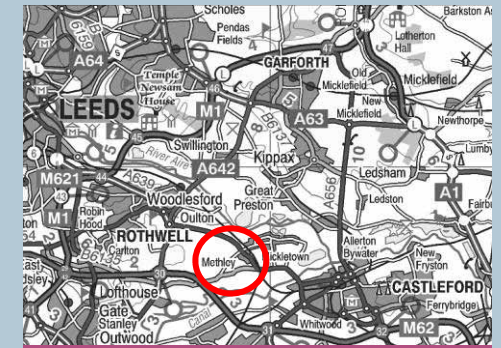
## Methley Church Side conservation area

creating long-ranging, open views. Land rises gently to the west where the remnant medieval parkland of Methley Hall endures and has outlived the house itself, which was demolished in 1963.

The river valley deposits have created fertile agricultural land that forms the predominant setting of the conservation

area. The majority of the village is within a designated Green Belt area.

Residential 20<sup>th</sup> century development relating to the neighbouring settlements of Wood Row, to the north, and Mickletown, to the north east, are adjacent to the current boundary, with Pinder Green to the south, separated by green fields.



Methley in its wider setting



Landscape setting is important to the rural character of the village



Land rises to the west, otherwise the terrain is very flat

# Historic development

## Prehistoric activity

The surrounding landscape was densely occupied during the prehistoric period. A large number of worked flint implements have been found in the area dating to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Crop marks, visible on aerial photographs of the fields surrounding the village, show the archaeological remains of an extensive Iron Age and Romano British landscape of fields, lanes, enclosures and ring ditches overlying an earlier Bronze Age landscape with burial barrows.

## Domesday *Medelai*

The manor of Methley is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 when it was known as *Medelai*. This is thought to mean *middle water-land*, that is *land between two rivers* and is a topographical reference to the location between the Aire and Calder rivers.

The Domesday entry notes the existence of a Saxon church - *a church is there and a priest* and the dedication to Oswald, King of Northumbria (635-641) is typical of such an early foundation.

The archaeological remains of an early church were discovered during the 19<sup>th</sup> century restoration of St Oswald's. The foundations of a thick-walled, aisleless building with a western chamber were uncovered. There is debate over whether these remains relate to a

Saxon structure or a Norman building of late 11<sup>th</sup> / early 12<sup>th</sup> century date.

## The medieval manor

During the medieval period, Methley Church Side was the church focus of the wider manor. The settlement was a small hamlet dominated by the church and located on a main road.

The core of the manor was at Mickletown to the north east, connected by the secondary routes of Church Lane and Little Church Lane and a lost track crossing fields that continues to be marked by Harrison's Bridge under the railway.

The site of a moated manor house survives to the north west, retained as *The Gutter Pond*, a parkland feature in the landscaped grounds of Methley Hall. The Hall itself was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Waterton family, then Lords of the Manor. The Savile family succeeded the Watertons and largely rebuilt the hall between c1590-1612. It was remodelled in a Neo-classical Palladian style in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with an imposing gothic front added between 1830-36 designed by the eminent architect Anthony Salvin. Sadly the Hall was demolished in 1963 following years of dereliction. However, remnant parkland and estate features survive and continue to characterise the landscape.

The church of St Oswald was rebuilt during the Norman period and 12<sup>th</sup> century stonework survives in the lower courses of the north wall of the nave. Today the church largely dates from the

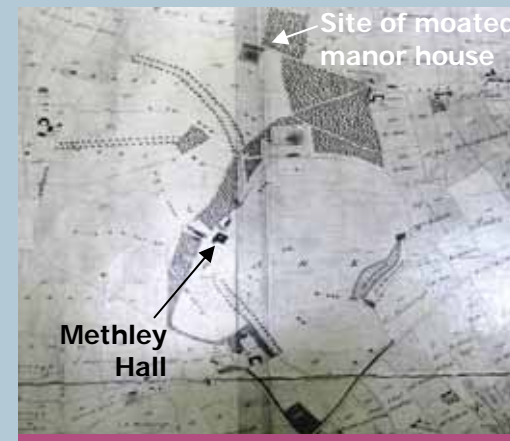
14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and the 19<sup>th</sup> century restorations. It is particularly noted for the nationally significant collection of monuments including medieval, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century examples, some relating to the Waterton and Savile families.

The remainder of the medieval hamlet is likely to have been agricultural in character. Later historic maps show the remains of an extensive medieval strip field system surrounding the village characterised by long, sinuous boundaries, now largely lost.

## 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Methley

The village continued to be characterised by its church focus and agricultural setting until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The first detailed maps of the area date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A survey of 1773 depicts the hamlet surrounded by the medieval strip field system. Development consists of the church with a number of roadside buildings to the north including 28 Church Side, an 18<sup>th</sup> century brick cottage and yard. The triangular plot of Churchside Farm is also marked. The 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse is the oldest surviving secular building in the conservation area. Its lead rainwater head has a date of 1642 and the initials *IMS* probably refer to the then lord of the manor, John Savile and his second wife Margaret. The building is sometimes called *The Old Rose and Crown* recalling its historic use as a roadside inn. The adjacent farmyard to the west has been



Methley Hall and parkland, 1786 (Local Studies Library)



Methley Hall demolished in 1963 (Methley Community Archives)



St Oswald's church. The late 18<sup>th</sup> century spire was removed in 1937 (undated photograph, Leodis)





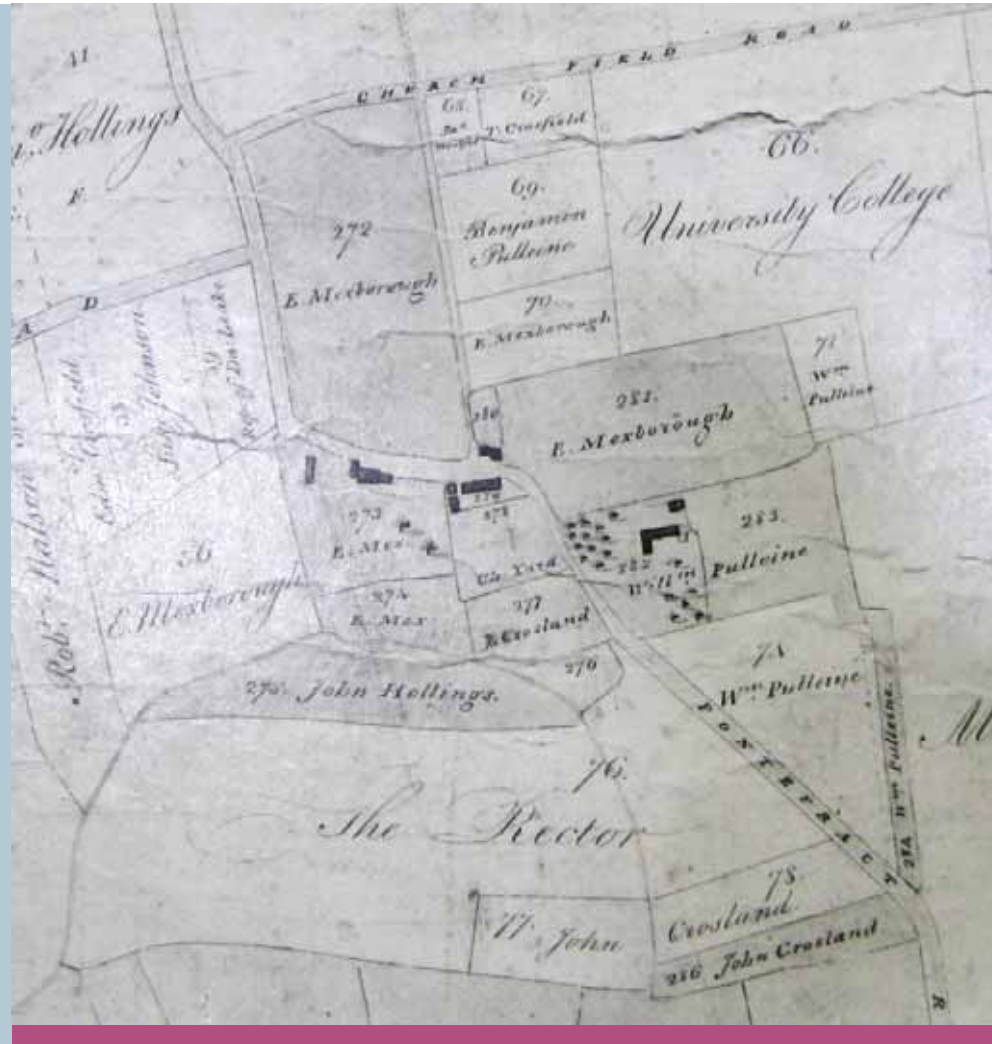
17th century Church Side Farmhouse, also known as the *Old Rose and Crown* (plot 273 on 1786 map)



Church Side farmyard in 2000, prior to redevelopment



18th century 28 Church Side, relates to an earlier, lower road level (plot 279 on 1786 map)



Extract from the 1786 map of the Township of Methley (Local Studies Library)

redeveloped for residential use and has lost its agricultural character.

A more detailed map of Methley Township, surveyed 13 years later in 1786 shows a number of additions to the hamlet. The Cedars, originally known as *Church Side*, is shown in its landscaped grounds (plot 282) and a

small property is marked on the opposite side of the road to 28 Church Side (plot 280). The church is not depicted but the church yard is marked.

### 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial Methley

The impact of the industrial revolution led to an acceleration of change and the

church hamlet more than doubled in size during the second half of the 19th century.

The landscape was changing. The North Midland Railway connecting Leeds, Derby and Rotherham opened in 1840 cutting through the medieval agricultural landscape. Its embanked form remains a strong feature in the landscape, and marks the eastern boundary of the conservation area.

Mineral extraction radically changed the surrounding landscape and wider township. Records show that coal had been mined locally for domestic use since the 14<sup>th</sup> century but from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century there was an intensification of activity. Initially bell pits and drill mines were used to increase production, but from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the demand for coal increased rapidly, deep mines such as Methley Junction (1845-50) and Savile (1874-78) were sunk. These developments led to an influx of workers and their families to the area and population levels rose dramatically. The new houses and supporting infrastructure required to accommodate this influx radically changed the nature of the wider township.

Methley Church Side expanded to the north initially with the construction of *Methley Villa* also known as *Holmes Villa* (now 9 and 11 Little Church Lane). The villa was built between 1844 and 1846 and by 1851 was the home of John Holmes, a successful draper (the *JH* of the front elevation crest). The 1848 Ordnance Survey (OS) first edition 6" map shows it within its ornamental

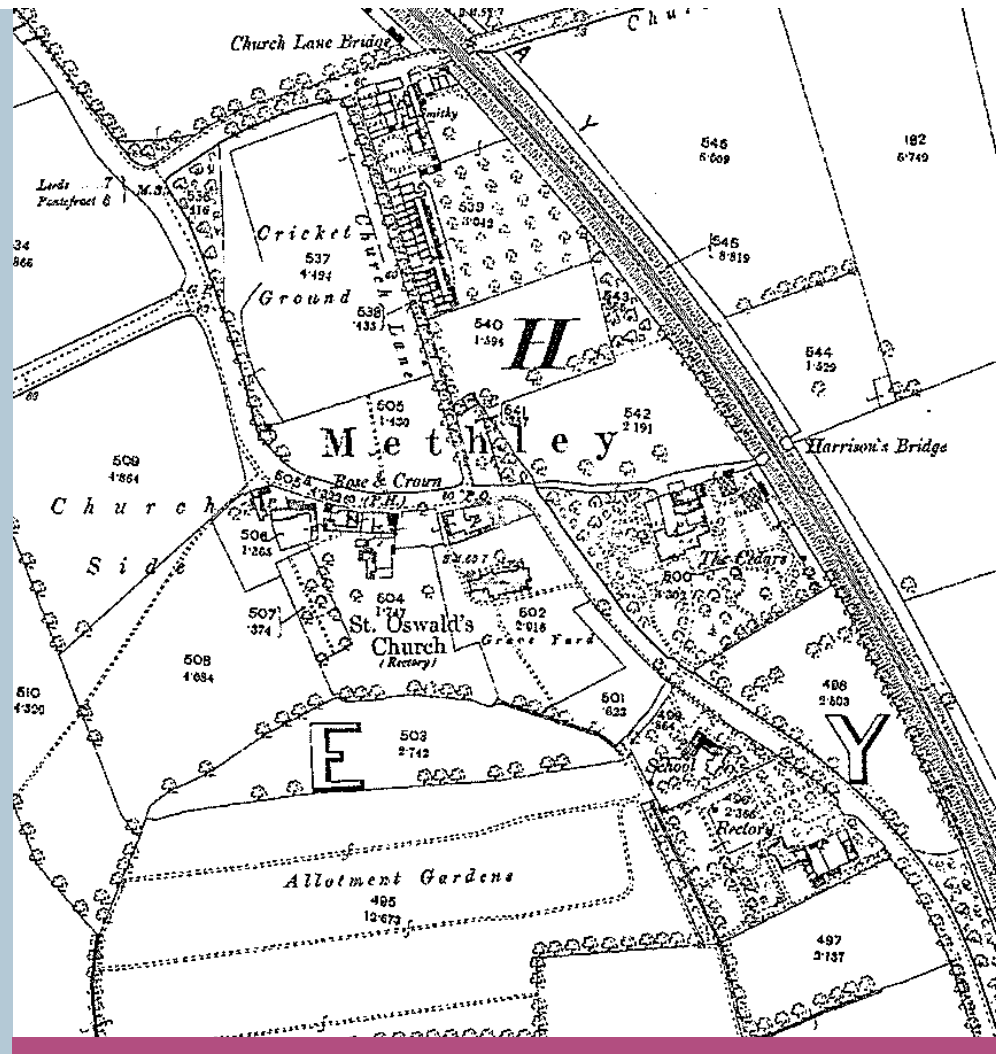
gardens, with an orchard to the south. A number of buildings are shown to the north and include the surviving 1 Little Church Lane & 81 Church Lane and the semi-derelict sandstone and brick workshop adjoining the rear of the villa, later marked as a smithy on the 1892 OS 1:2,500 map.

Development also took place on former glebe land to the south of the church with the construction of the National School c1847 and the Rectory between 1865-1867. The Rectory was built by Rector Philip Savile, a younger son of the Earl of Mexborough, and the building was designed by Anthony Salvin, who had previously worked for the family at Methley Hall.

By the first edition 1:2500 OS map of 1892 two terraces of industrial housing had been added along Little Church Lane, overlooking a cricket ground that had been created from a former field. To the north of Methley Villa the three-storey pair and adjacent two-storey double-fronted house (now 3 - 7 Little Church Lane) had been built. Within the village core the 'new' *Rose and Crown*, with rear stable yard had been constructed to the east of the *Old Rose and Crown*, the 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse.

### 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present

Subsequent change within the conservation area has been limited. A parish hall was added to the immediate west of the school in 1920. This timber-framed, weather-boarded structure on brick pillars and was a relocated First



1st edition Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500, 1892

World War army hospital building. It was demolished in 1970.

A Police Station was built in Little Church Lane in 1949 and is now in residential use.

Methley Infant School was built in 1952 on land previously in the ownership of

*The Cedars*. The school closed a number of years ago and the site is currently for sale.

The Salvin rectory was sold off by the church in the mid 1960s when maintenance costs had become an issue. A replacement rectory was built to the south of the school.

Late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century residential development has taken place. Semi-detached properties have been built overlooking the cricket ground, on the north side of Church Lane, and the cul-de-sac developments of Churchside Villas and The Orchards have formed infill developments between the Little Church Lane terraces and the railway.

### Archaeological potential

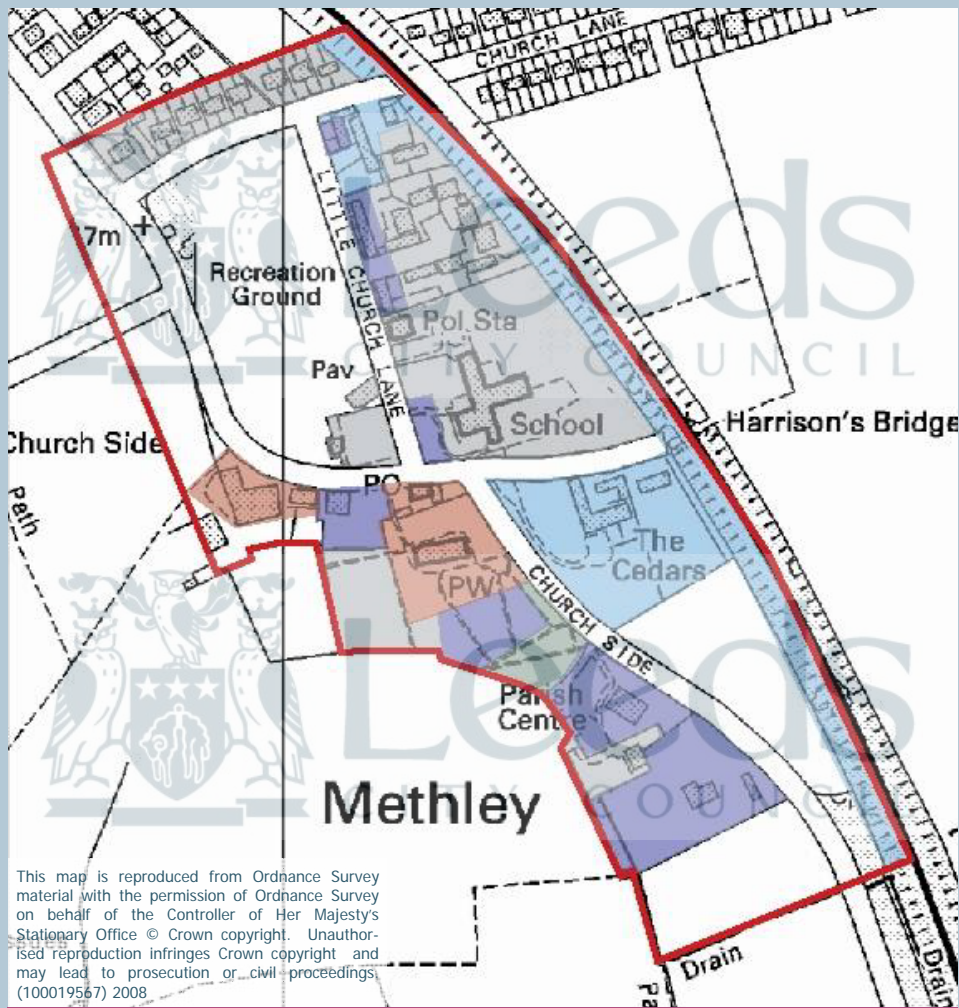
Archaeological deposits and building archaeology have the potential to provide further evidence of the settlement's origins, development and evolution. There is particular potential for evidence relating to:

- Prehistoric activity
- Saxon activity - relating to the early church and any associated settlement focus
- Medieval activity – including the building phases of the church, development of the settlement and agricultural activity.

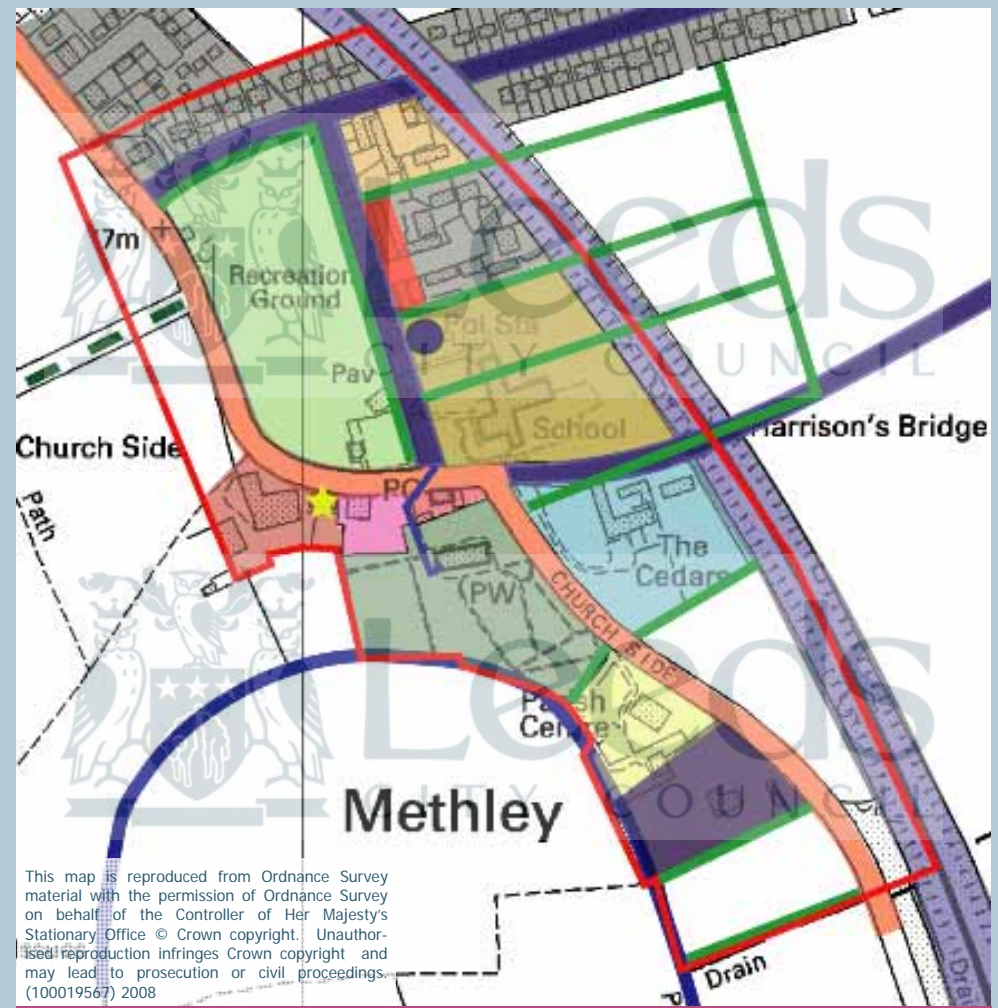
### Historic associations

Methley has historic associations with the composer Edward Elgar (1857-1934), who was a visitor at *The Cedars* during the Embleton family's residence. The sculptor Henry Moore (1898-1986), who was born at nearby Castleford, was first inspired by the gargoyles and monumental sculpture of St Oswald's church.





### Historic development



### Historic analysis





## Spatial analysis

### Settlement form

Methley Church Side is located on flat lying terrain, with land falling gently away to a lower river terrace to the south. This topography promotes an open character in the settlement with wide ranging views out to the surrounding fields to the west and south. The embanked railway line forms a strong boundary to the eastern side of the conservation area and blocks views to the agricultural landscape beyond. It also serves as a boundary between the suburban development of Mickletown and the more rural character of Methley Church Side. Church Lane Railway Bridge is a key gateway between the two settlements.

The village has a simple settlement form focused along the main spinal route of Church Side. The double dog-leg, meandering form of the road, as it passes through the village, strengthens the settlement focus and underlines the sense of 'place'. The historic core remains the focus today, centred on the set-back church and large churchyard, with road-fronting development to the north.

The framework of the village is influenced by the underlying pattern of the earlier field system. A number of the present day boundaries fossilise the line of former field divisions.

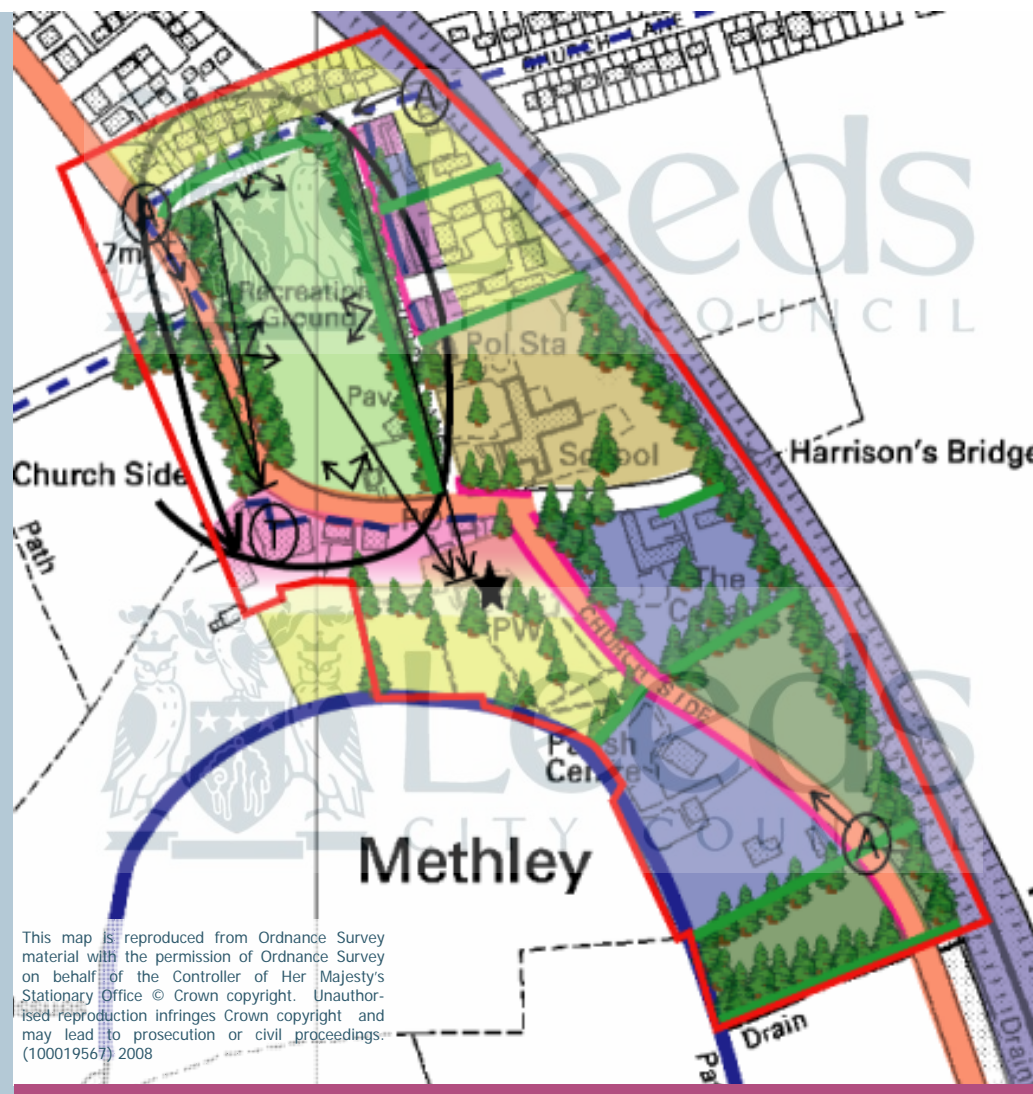
The cricket field forms an important green space that dominates the northern part of the conservation area

and creates its open character. Buildings frame the north, east and southern edges, directly addressing the field and augmenting its special sense of place.

Development to the south and east of the church is characterised by its large grain, with substantial, detached buildings set back from the roadside within large grounds and partially concealed behind strong boundary treatments. In contrast, the residential ribbon development along Little Church Lane has a much finer grain, shaped by the small, regular plots and strong build line of the terraced developments. The large plots and set-back building siting of Methley Villa (now 9 and 11 Little Church Lane) and the former Police Station provide variation in form. The plot size and footprint of the former Methley Infant School disregards the spatial hierarchy of the village.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century development of semi-detached houses on Church Lane relates more to the Mickletown suburbs than Methley Church Side. Later 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century residential infill developments are arranged in cul-de-sac form in set-back locations.

A number of undeveloped fields are included at the southern extent of the conservation area. The field to the south of the former Rectory has a tree lined boundary which is historically significant marking the division between the cultivated medieval strip field system and the open common to the south marked as 'Windmill Common' on the 1773 map.



### Spatial analysis

Principal Road	Green fields	Significant trees
Railway	Cricket field	Views
Cycle trail	Field boundaries	Termination to view
Village Core	School site	Area of special sense of place
Large Grain 19th century	Fine grain 19th century	Significant build line
Key landmark	Arrival point	Church and churchyard
20th century residential	Oxbow of former river course	Significant boundary



## Key views and landmarks

- The church tower is the principal landmark of the village and the focus of many of the key views.
- Views across the cricket field to the church tower, framed by Church Side Farmhouse and the Rose and Crown, are the defining views of the village. These important scenes are, to some extent, diminished by the visual impact of the cricket nets, pylon and inappropriate streetlamps. Historic photographs show that the church tower has become more obscured by the maturing churchyard trees.
- Views south along Little Church Lane terminate on the church tower.
- Open views around the Cricket Field are important.
- Long ranging views out to the surrounding green fields to the south and west create a strong link between the village and its landscape setting.
- The redeveloped residential complex, on the site of Church Side farmyard, forms an important termination to initial views into the village on arrival from the north.
- The dog-leg bends of the road create unfolding, sequential views through the village. Along the principal road views are often contained by roadside development and the strong boundary treatments of stone walls and mature trees.



The defining view of the village - the landmark church tower seen across the cricket field



The view in c1910, the church with its spire and less tree cover (Methley Community Archives)



The redeveloped farmyard is the focus of initial views approaching the village from the north



The winding course of the road creates unfolding views through the village



Views are tightly contained by roadside development and strong boundary treatments



Views to open fields closely tie the village to its rural setting

## Built environment

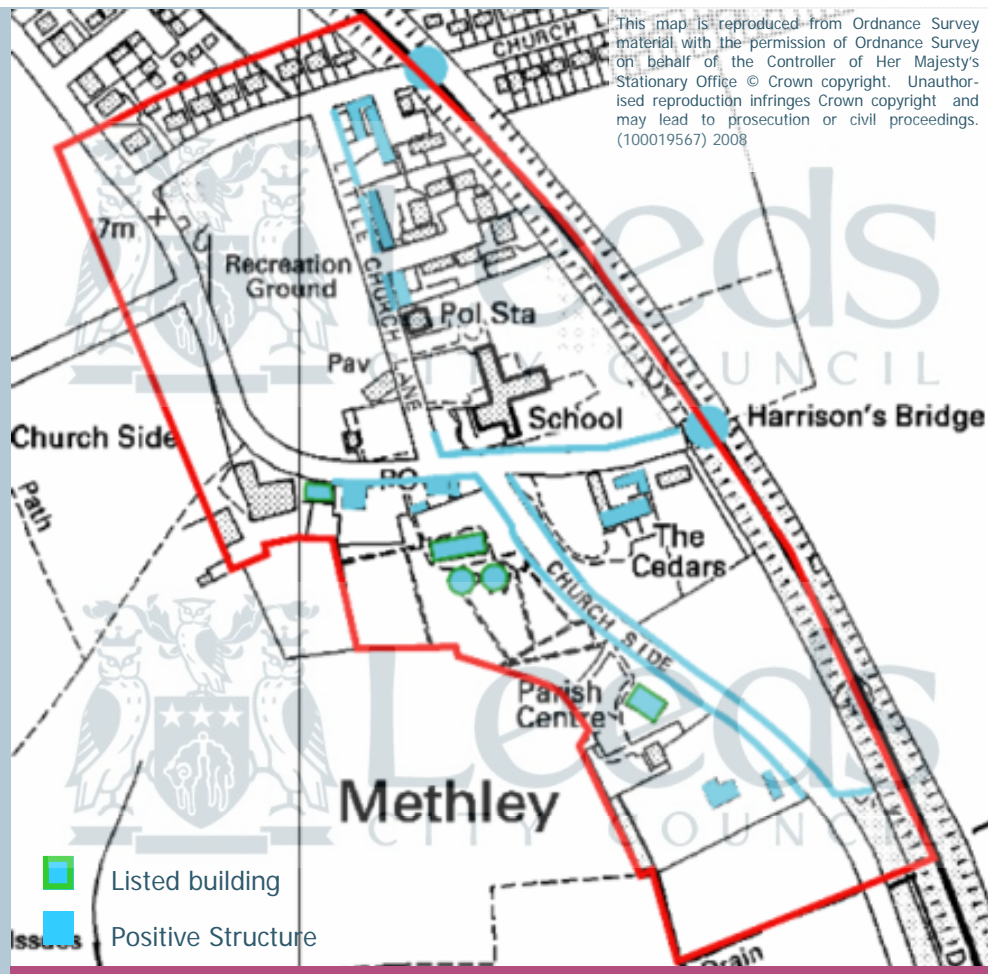
### Architectural characteristics

Methley Church Side has a diverse range of historic buildings. The use of common materials unifies the buildings to some extent, but overall it is their variety of date, form and original function that defines the special character of the village.

Earliest survivals include the medieval church and the 17th century farmhouse, with late 18th century buildings including *The Cedars*, a small country house. Late 19th century structures predominate and include public buildings, such as the National School and the *Rose and Crown*, and a range of domestic styles including stone built houses, red brick terraces and a stuccoed villa.

There are relatively few listed buildings, with five entries in the register including the church and two groups of chest tombs and gravestones, the former National School of c1847 and the 17th century farmhouse. The majority of buildings within the conservation area are unlisted historic buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the village.

Methley Church Side's 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> development has added little to the character of the village. The mid 20<sup>th</sup> century single storey school pays little attention to its setting and recent residential development has had a tendency to suburbanise the rural character of the village.



### Built environment analysis

#### Materials

The predominant building materials of the village are sandstone, brick and stucco covered rubble, with roofing of sandstone slate and later blue slate.

Sandstone is the dominant building material and is used both as squared and coursed masonry and as more irregular rubble.

A dark red-brown 18th century handmade brick is used at 28 Church Side, with a similar brick used in the adjoining early 19th century 30 Church Side. Later machine-made red brick is used in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial terraces of Little Church Lane.

Brick is also used in smaller extensions, outbuildings and for chimney stacks. Unusually a building to the rear of 3-7 Little Church Lane is of mixed



Sandstone is the dominant building material of the village, 1-5 Little Church Lane



Brick is common, early 19th century handmade brick and stone slate roof, 30 Church Side



Stucco covers rubble and brick, Methley Villa, 9 & 11 Little Church Lane



construction with side and rear walls of red brick and front elevation of sandstone with brick dressings.

A number of buildings have stuccoed elevations, probably over rubble construction, such as the prestigious residences of The Cedars and Methley Villa and a more modest double fronted house, now subdivided into two dwellings at 13 & 15 Little Church Lane.

Generally roofs predating the late 19<sup>th</sup> century are of sandstone slate. Some, such as the National School, are laid to diminishing courses with smaller slates at the ridge and progressively larger ones to the eaves. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century coverings are commonly of thin blue slate, such as the brick terraces of Little Church Lane.

### Positive buildings

St Oswald's Church: The church is the oldest and principal building of the village retaining elements of 12<sup>th</sup> century fabric, but dating mainly to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and 19<sup>th</sup> century restorations. It has a secluded, set-back location away from the roadside and its presence in the general streetscape is limited, apart from the important views to the landmark tower.

The large churchyard contains a number of listed chest tombs and gravestones, including some 17<sup>th</sup> century examples. Other unlisted monuments are of interest including the war memorial set within the hedged garden of remembrance.

The York stone footpaths, sandstone boundary walls, ornamental gate piers

and ornate iron gates are all important elements of the built environment of the churchyard and its impact on the surrounding streetscape.

Church Side south – Late 19<sup>th</sup> century Gothic: To the south of the church the listed former National School of c1847 and the unlisted former rectory of 1867 form an architectural group with the church. These large, detached sandstone buildings are all set deep within their large plots, partially hidden by strong boundary treatments and all feature gothic detailing.

The former rectory, now known as *The Chantry*, was designed by Anthony Salvin who is today viewed as one of the most important architects practising in Britain during the 19th century. The brick and sandstone outbuildings forming an enclosed service yard approached from a now-blocked southern gateway, form an integral element of the property.

The Cedars: *The Cedars*, to the east of the church, shares some of the characteristics of the Church Side south group - it is a large detached building set well back from the roadside in private grounds and screened with boundary belt planting. However, unlike the stone built, gothic detailed group this late 18th century stuccoed, double fronted property has classical detailing. Historically this was the most prestigious residential building in the village. It is now in use as a residential care home with a large side-wing brick extension. The former stable yard is retained as part of the conversion but the glasshouses, where historic

photographs show vines and bananas being cultivated, have been lost and the garden subdivided for the construction of Cedars Cottage.

Village core: The buildings fronting onto Church Side to the north of the church form the village core and include the earliest surviving secular structures. This diverse group includes the 17th century farmhouse and its redeveloped farmyard, the late 19th century 'Rose and Crown' and the 18th and early 19th century brick pair that turn the corner. Shared characteristics include the siting of the buildings hard against the pavement edge and the double-fronted elevations, two and three windows wide with central doorways. The earliest buildings relate to a lower, pre-turnpike road level, with the farmhouse set below today's road surface and the proportions of 28 Church Side foreshortened by the elevated road level.

The late 17th century Church Side farmhouse features distinctive large gabled dormers, tripartite stone mullioned windows with drip mould detailing, substantial projecting gable end stone chimney stacks with moulded capstones and gable copings and kneelers to the roof. The double-pile plan retains earlier fabric and evidence for a lost adjoining building. The rear wing is of 19th century date. The residential redevelopment of the farmyard to the west has resulted in the loss of its agricultural character and has severed the important relationship with the farmhouse.



National School, c1847



Rectory, c1867, designed by Anthony Salvin



West elevation of the late 18th century Cedars

The neighbouring *Rose and Crown*, however, retains its strong connection with the farmhouse. Built in the late 19th century this pub can be read as an updated version of the 'Old Rose and Crown' that it was built to replace. It shows how buildings can successfully be of their time and inspired by their historic setting. The building mirrors the scale, massing and materials of the farmhouse and references its double fronted façade, three windows wide with central doorway, gabled dormers and substantial chimney stacks with moulded capstones. The decorative slate roof, plaster owl bosses and moulded rafter end details at the eaves typify the late 19th century move away from vernacular detailing to pattern book standardisation.

The adjoining brick pair of 28 and 30 Church Side continue the double-fronted façade detailing but to a more domestic scale; two-windows wide with central doorways. The use of dark red brick and stone slate add colour and texture to the special character of the village. The rise in road level has changed the original proportions of the elevation of No. 28, visually elongating the building and emphasising its horizontal lines. The door has been considerably truncated! For both buildings the brick is laid to variations of English bond with rows of header courses. Detailing is kept simple with brick voussoirs to windows and doorways. The adjoining yard to the west of No. 28 is enclosed by a high brick boundary wall and features historic outbuildings that retain their



The old and new Rose and Crown - eaves details, reset 1642 rainwater head, 'JH' crest at Methley Villa and gothic details of the National school

original stone slate roofs. No. 30 has a hipped roof which is unusual in the village.

Little Church Lane: The buildings of Little Church Lane vary in form and materials but, unlike the rest of the village, this road includes a number of set-piece developments that share a uniformity not seen elsewhere.

The late 19th century red brick terraces form a distinctive group with two main phases of construction visible along their length. The regular uniformity of the fenestration pattern is a defining characteristic, as is the strong build line and small front garden plots. Original

door and window fittings have been lost but the painted stone voussoir and sill details and the fanlights over doorways survive and emphasise the regular repeating rhythms along the terrace, as does the vertical pattern of downpipes.

The group of stone-built houses to the far north shares a common character despite different forms and dates. The late 19th century pair of three storey buildings, Nos. 3 & 5, represent a more urban form of development than seen elsewhere in the village. To the north, No. 1, is an early 19th century building that originally addressed Church Lane and may be a conversion of an industrial building. To the south, No. 7,



Red brick terraces, Little Church Lane

is a double-fronted, two-storey house with a slightly set back location. It may be part of the same development as Nos. 3 & 5. The stone voussoirs and sills unify this group with the red brick terraces that feature the same detail. Historic 4-pane sashes survive in the three-storey properties and porches are a common detail with Nos. 5 and 7 featuring a distinctive glazed timber design with hipped roof and semi-circular arch carried on moulded pilasters.

The extended Methley Villa is set between these two groups (now Nos. 9 and 11). This early 19th century, double-fronted stuccoed villa is set back from the roadside behind a low sweeping boundary wall which has lost its original iron railings. The single-fronted extension replicates some of the exposed stone detailing of drip moulds, cornice, plinth and storey bands, but the visible gabled roof unbalances the overall elevation, compared with the concealed hipped roof of the original hidden behind the sandstone pediment.



## Streetscape

Historic streetscape features contribute to Methley Church Side's special character.

Historic boundary treatments are important. Squared and coursed sandstone walls topped with copings are common, lining Church Side and Little Church Lane. These walls strongly define private and public spaces and add to the enclosure levels along the main road. Impressive gateways feature stone piers with decorative capstones and ornate iron gates. The gates to the churchyard are particularly fine examples. Red brick boundary walls with timber gates feature in the northern brick terrace of Little Church Lane enclosing the regular front garden plots.

Iron railings were once more prevalent. The fixing holes of lost railings survive in the copings of low stone walls, such as at 'Methley Villa' (now 9 and 11 Little Church Lane). Historic photographs show the ornate heavy railings that have been lost from the boundary walls of 1-7 Little Church Lane. A boundary of plain iron spiked railings encloses the field adjacent to the railway at the south of the conservation area.

Surviving historic surfaces add texture and interest to the conservation area. The York stone footpaths of the churchyard are a distinctive feature. Many of the pavements in the village retain sandstone kerbs which adds to the high quality of the general



Elaborate gate piers to the eastern entrance of the churchyard



Sandstone boundary walls are an important characteristic of the village



Streetscape features add to the special character of the conservation area, such as the ornate cast iron gates and York stone pavements of the churchyard

environment. A cobbled surface survives in the yard of 28 Church Lane.

A historic cast iron bench is sited at the north west of the cricket field. It features the makers name 'Frederick Dyson and Sons Ltd, East Street Leeds' cast into the legs.

A red 'GR' post box and late 20th century stamp dispenser are set into the wall of 28 Church Street, recalling its earlier use as the village Post Office.

Leeds manufactured cast iron bench



'GR' post box dating to the reign of George V (1910-1936)





The tree-lined cricket pitch is an important green space in the village

## Greenscape

Trees and green spaces form an essential element of Methley Church Side's special character.

The churchyard and the tree-lined cricket field are important green spaces in the village. Each has a strong sense of place and acts as a focal point within the settlement. The large, well-tended churchyard is a haven, shielded from the road by its strong boundaries and mature tree canopy. Benches are

provided allowing the tranquillity of the area to be appreciated.

The cricket ground forms a dominant element of the village with regular matches and practice sessions providing important activity. The bowling green, club house and car park are located to the southern end, with a score board pavilion to the west side. The well-maintained pitch is enclosed by mature oak trees with a low rail boundary treatment to the east and north and a hedge to the west. Benches are located along the boundary inviting people to make use of the space. To the north



The churchyard is a place of tranquillity and peace



The woodland copse on the edge of the cricket field links the village with its countryside setting



Surviving historic field boundary between the medieval open field system and common land

west corner a copse of trees forms an area of semi-woodland with an unmown verge that brings an informal character to the area, softening the edge of the village and merging with the surrounding countryside, underlining the intrinsic rural character of the village.

Trees are an important feature of the village. As well as the cricket field and churchyard groups, many of the large plots feature boundary belt planting, including sycamore, horse chestnut and beech. Trees play an important part in the enclosure levels along Church Side, towering over the mid-height boundary walls and screening the large detached properties from the road. In contrast areas that have lost tree cover appear barren and stark, such as the surroundings of Church Side farm.

Smaller garden plots, such as those along Little Church Lane, are also important to the character of the conservation area, softening the hard edges of the built environment. Hedges are commonly used as secondary boundary treatments behind boundary walls and along side boundaries.

The conservation area includes a historically significant field at its southern extent. Its tree-lined boundary marks the division between the medieval strip field system and an open area of common land to the south.



## Opportunities for management and enhancement

There are a number of features and issues that currently detract from the special character of Methley Church Side. Addressing these issues offers the opportunity to enhance the conservation area, while positive conservation management measures will ensure the ongoing protection of the area's special character.

### Conservation area boundary review

The conservation area boundary has been reviewed and no changes are required. Other areas of the wider township of Methley may have sufficient special architectural and historic interest to be conservation areas in their own right.

**Action:** Assess other areas in the wider township of Methley to see if further conservation areas should be designated, as resources allow.

### Strengthening the village core

The village core is currently underplayed. A stronger sense of place should be created by strengthening the central focus around the church. A range of measures (explored further below) can contribute to this overall aim. These include:

- Reducing the negative impact of the road and traffic management measures.
- Enhancing key views to the church tower.
- Enhancing the soft landscaping around the redevelopment at Church Side farmyard that forms an important view on approach to the village from the north.

**Action:** Promote and deliver enhancements that will strengthen the sense of place within the village core.

### Maintaining the rural character of the village

The intrinsic rural, informal character of the village is under threat from the creeping spread of suburbanisation. It is important that future change within Methley Church Side respects its rural character. This includes the design of any new buildings, soft landscaping and public realm works.

**Action:** Ensure future change respects the rural character of the village.

### Protecting the surviving historic architectural details and promoting the replacement of inappropriate fixtures and fittings

Given the limited listed building coverage, it is not surprising that incremental loss of traditional architectural detailing is an issue in the conservation area. The replacement of windows, doors, traditional wall surfaces and roof coverings with

inappropriate materials and designs is a negative feature that affects individual buildings and the wider streetscape. This cumulative change is particularly noticeable in the terrace rows where the original uniformity has been weakened.

Surviving historic features should be maintained and sympathetically repaired where necessary. In the positive unlisted buildings, the replacement of inappropriate, poorly detailed fixtures and fittings is encouraged.

Repair and reinstatement of boundary railings and gates would form a useful, targeted enhancement scheme. Historic photographs provide a good source of information to guide such schemes.

**Action:** Encourage the protection of surviving historic detail and the reinstatement of appropriately detailed fittings in the defined positive buildings.

### Protecting positive buildings and establishing a local list

The listed building designation of the village does not reflect the local importance of much of the historic building stock in the conservation area. English Heritage, PPG15 and the Heritage Protection White Paper 'Heritage Protection for the 21<sup>st</sup> century' encourages local authorities to establish lists of locally important buildings and to formulate local policies for their protection. As part of the ongoing Heritage Protection reforms, English Heritage will produce criteria and good practice guidance for such local listing.



Reinstating lost historic details, such as boundary railings, would enhance the conservation area



Historic photographs provide a good source of information for reinstatement schemes (Community Archives Group)



Surviving historic features should be maintained and repaired



Any future appropriate redevelopment of the school site should enhance the conservation area

This appraisal shows historic buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area. There is a presumption that they will not be demolished except in exceptional circumstances. They will form the basis of the local list for the conservation area.

**Action: Establish a list of locally significant buildings and devise policies for their protection.**

### Sensitive new development in the conservation area (including any future redevelopment of the school site)

To be successful, any future development within the conservation area needs to be mindful of the local character of the village, while at the same time being distinctly of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and addressing contemporary issues such as sustainable development.

A particular threat to Methley Church Side is the tendency for new build to be of suburban form and design, executed in materials of lower quality than the

Successful new development in historic areas will:

- *Relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land*
- *Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it*
- *Respect important views*
- *Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings*
- *Use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings*
- *Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting.*

*Cabe and English Heritage, 2001, 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas'*

surrounding positive historic buildings. Equally, poorly designed and detailed *pastiche* development can be as eroding to special character as development that shows no regard for its setting.

Any future redevelopment of the school site provides an exciting opportunity to add sustainable, high quality, well designed, locally distinctive 21<sup>st</sup> century architecture to the built environment of the village. The site is within the Green Belt which imposes development constraints that will need to be considered in any future proposals.

This is an important site at the heart of the village and its redevelopment offers significant opportunities for the enhancement of the conservation area. Redevelopment here has the potential

to reintegrate the site back into the village and to better connect the large grained development of the church core with the fine grained ribbon development of Little Church Lane. Historic spatial patterns and grain should be reintroduced as part of the layout of any redevelopment. Subdivision of the site would bring it back within the spatial hierarchy of the village.

The boundary wall along the southern extent of the site and boundary trees are important to the special character of the conservation area and should be incorporated into future proposals.

**Action: All new development, including any future redevelopment of the school site, should be sustainable, high quality, well designed 21<sup>st</sup> century architecture that responds to its historic context in terms of urban design (eg layout and density) and its architectural design (eg scale, form, quality of materials and building methods).**

### Public realm enhancements

Methley Church Side's public realm offers a number of enhancement opportunities.

A streetscape audit and rationalisation of existing signage, road markings and street furniture would provide the opportunity to clear the streetscape of unnecessary clutter. Redundant and duplicate items should be removed, and consideration given to the reduction and sensitive design, siting, scale and



grouping of fixtures, fittings and markings.

Particular issues that would benefit from enhancement include:

- Appropriate and sympathetic design for street furniture such as streetlights and bus shelters.
- Tree planting on the verge in front of the redeveloped farmyard - this would create a stronger arrival point to the village core and better integrate the new buildings into their setting.

**Action:** Promote public realm enhancements within the conservation area as opportunities arise. Ensure that future public realm works respect and enhance the special character of the conservation area.

### Traffic management

Traffic and traffic management measures currently impact negatively on the conservation area. Signage and road markings relating to the zebra crossing are particularly obtrusive. Any potential redesign of these measures to reduce their negative impact on the special character of the area, would strengthen the sense of place and be a positive enhancement to the village core. Maintaining safety for all users of the highway will be a major consideration in any design.

**Action:** Ameliorate the negative impact of traffic and traffic management measures on the special character of the



Public realm and traffic management measures offer scope for enhancement of the conservation area

conservation area while ensuring safety.

### Tree management

Trees form an important part of the character of the village. Conservation area designation affords some degree of protection. However, to ensure that this element of Methley's special character is protected and enhanced a tree strategy should be formulated to assess the need for the designation of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and other general tree management issues, such as a replanting strategy to manage the impact of the loss of trees through

over maturity. Tree protection and planting is going to be an increasingly important element of the Council's approach to climate change adaptation.

**Action:** Develop a tree strategy to guide future positive management.

### Celebrating Methley Church Side's special character

There are opportunities to celebrate and enjoy the special character and historic interest of Methley Church Side.

The village already benefits from an extensive historic photographic archive created and maintained by the

Community Archive Group that meets every week. It is also included as part of a historic trail covering the wider township area. There is scope to build on this work and increase understanding and accessibility through a range of activities and outreach events including:

- A village guide promoting the historic interest of the area and highlighting surviving features.
- A series of walks linking with other sites of historic interest in the surrounding area.
- Guided walks and talks about the history and architecture of the area.
- Open days at the church and a churchyard trail highlighting some of the historic graves of particular interest.
- Promotion of the historic interest of the village as part of the marketing and publicity of the Trans Pennine Trail that passes through the conservation area. The pub and church make an ideal stopping off point along the route for walkers and cyclists.

**Action:** Promote and celebrate the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

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Local Studies Library, Central Library, Leeds.)

1786 – 'Map of the Township of Methley in the West Riding of the County of York from a survey made in the Year 1786' (copy held by the Local Studies Library, Central Library, Leeds. Original held by the West Yorkshire Archive Service, Chapeltown Road - RDP76/\*14)

1787 – 'A plan of Methley as allotted and divided in 1787'. Surveyed by William Whitelock. (West Yorkshire Archive Service, Chapeltown Road – WYL466/30)

1837 – 'Plan of the Township and Parish of Methley in the County of York. Made in 1837 by Henry Teal' (copy held by the Local Studies Library, Central Library, Leeds)

1850 – Ordnance Survey 1:10, 000

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1893 – Ordnance Survey 1:10, 000

1908 – Ordnance Survey 1: 2,500

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1956 – Ordnance Survey 1:10, 000

## Other sources

*Documents relating to the Rectory held at West Yorkshire Archive Service:*

WYL555/36 -1865-66. Plans, elevations, specifications and related papers and correspondence for a parsonage house. Architect W H Crossland, Leeds.

WYL555/37 – 1874. Plans, elevations, specification and related papers for fence wall and sundry alterations at rectory. Architect W H Parkinson, Leeds.

These documents suggest that Salvin's designs for the rectory were executed by a local architect.

*Documents relating to the National School held at West Yorkshire Archive Service:*

WYL313/51 – 1847, 1859, 1860. National School. Building Grant Plan. Plans, elevations and cross sections of the original school building (1847), drawings relating to the extension (1859).

This document shows that the western wing of the school building was added as an extension in 1859.

## Internet sources

Access to archives - [www.a2a.org.uk](http://www.a2a.org.uk)

Community Archives Network that hosts the online archive of Methley Community Archive Group - <http://www.commanet.org>

English Heritage Images of England, listed building photographs and descriptions - [www.imagesofengland.org.uk](http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk)

Historic Ordnance Survey maps - [www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk)

Leeds City Council online historic photograph archive - [www.leodis.net](http://www.leodis.net)

Leeds City Council Local Development Framework - [www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment\\_and\\_planning/Planning/Local\\_development\\_framework.aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Environment_and_planning/Planning/Local_development_framework.aspx)

Methley village web site - [www.methley-village.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.methley-village.fsnet.co.uk)



'Methley past and present' a virtual tour of the village in historic photographs - <http://www.bomfi.co.uk/archive/mt/pandp.htm>

Secret Leeds - [www.secretleeds.com](http://www.secretleeds.com)

Transpennine trail for cycling and walking - <http://www.transpenninetrail.org.uk>

## Sources of further information

Central Library (Local & Family History Section), The Headrow, Leeds LS1. Tel 0113 247 8290 email: [localstudies@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:localstudies@leeds.gov.uk) website: [www.leeds.gov.uk/library](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/library)

Leeds Civic Trust, Leeds Heritage & Design Centre, 17-19 Wharf Street, Leeds LS2 7EQ Tel: 0113 243 9594 Email: [office@leedscivictrust.org.uk](mailto:office@leedscivictrust.org.uk) website: [www.leedscivictrust.org.uk](http://www.leedscivictrust.org.uk)

Methley Community Archive Group, meets every Monday morning 10-12 at Methley Community Centre, Main Street. [methley@uku.co.uk](mailto:methley@uku.co.uk)

Methley and Mickletown Residents Association, meets on the first Monday of every month, 7-9pm at Methley Community Centre, Main Street. [methleyresidents@live.co.uk](mailto:methleyresidents@live.co.uk)

Victorian Society (West Yorkshire Group), Clarendon, 23 Clarendon Road Leeds LS2 9NZ (postal address only)

West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, Newstead Road, Wakefield WF1 2DE Tel 01924 306810 email:

[wysmr@wyjs.org.uk](mailto:wysmr@wyjs.org.uk) website: [www.arch.wyjs.org.uk](http://www.arch.wyjs.org.uk)

West Yorkshire Archive Service, Chapeltown Road, Sheepscar, Leeds LS7 3AP. Tel 0113 214 5814 email: [leeds@wyjs.org.uk](mailto:leeds@wyjs.org.uk) website: [www.archives.wyjs.org.uk](http://www.archives.wyjs.org.uk)

## Acknowledgements

Thanks for information and assistance during the making of this appraisal go to Methley Community Archive Group, Methley and Mickletown Residents Association, Methley in Bloom, Local Studies Library, Central Library, West Yorkshire Archive Service and West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service.

The funding for the production of this document was made available through the South East Outer Area Committee of Leeds City Council.

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## What is a conservation area?

A conservation area is '*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'.

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## What does conservation area status mean?

Conservation area status provides the opportunity to promote the protection and enhancement of the special character of the defined area. Designation confers a general control over development that could damage the area's character. The details are complex but can be summarised as:

- Most demolition requires permission and will be resisted if the building makes a positive contribution to the area.
- Some minor works to houses is no longer "permitted development" and will require planning permission. Examples are rear dormer windows, external cladding and most satellite dishes on front elevations.
- Advertisement controls are tighter
- Most work to trees has to be notified to the Council who has six weeks in which to decide to impose restrictions.
- Generally, higher standards of design apply for new buildings and alterations to existing ones.

Change is inevitable in most conservation areas and it is not the intention of the designation to prevent the continued evolution of places. The challenge within conservation areas is to manage change in a way that maintains, reinforces and enhances the special qualities of the area.

## What is the purpose of this appraisal?

This appraisal provides the basis for making informed, sustainable decisions in the positive management, protection and enhancement of the conservation area.

It provides a clear understanding of the special interest of Methley Church Side by:

- accessing how the settlement has developed
- analysing its present day character and
- identifying opportunities for enhancement

This appraisal follows the current guidance set out by English Heritage in the 2006 publication 'Guidance on conservation area appraisals'.

The appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

## Planning policy context

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the wider national, regional and local planning policy and guidance. Relevant documents include:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning
- The Yorkshire and Humber Plan (The Regional Spatial Strategy) May 2008, particularly Policy ENV9 Historic Environment
- Leeds City Council, Unitary Development Plan Review 2006, particularly policies N14-22, Chapter 5 Environment in Volume 1 and Policies BC1-9, Appendices A3 Building Design, Conservation and Landscape Design and A4 Archaeological Policies in Volume 2
- Leeds City Council, Local Development Framework, emerging framework that will ultimately replace the Local Plan.

## Community involvement and adoption

A draft version of this appraisal went through a four week public consultation process that included:

- A presentation and discussion session on the appraisal findings at a

public meeting of Methley Residents Association on 14th July 2008

- Direct mailing to all residents of the conservation area
- Direct mailing to all identified stakeholders and interested parties including internal consultation within the City Council with officers and councillors, Methley Residents Association, Methley Community Archive Group and Methley in Bloom.
- Access to a paper copy of the draft appraisal and response forms at the local library and Rose and Crown pub
- Internet access via the Council's webpage to the appraisal and response forms
- Local publicity to advertise the consultation.

The consultation responses were evaluated and the appraisal was amended in light of comments received. This document was formally adopted by the Planning Board meeting 18 September 2008 and became operational as non statutory planning guidance from 2 October 2008. It is a material consideration when applications for change within the conservation area and its setting are considered by the Council.

**This document is available to view and download on the Council's website - [www.leeds.gov.uk/conservation](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/conservation)**