



Wetherby 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.



Wetherby

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Approved as a material consideration in the determination of planning decisions - 1 March 2010

Summary of Special Interest

Wetherby is a historic market town lying between Leeds and York. Its location at a crossing point of the River Wharfe on the route of the main road between London and Scotland meant that it was important from the Medieval period until the 19th century as a resting point for travellers as well as a market centre.

Wetherby retains a strong historic character. Its heavy concentration of important historic buildings in the centre of the town, a uniform palette of constructions materials and its historic street pattern are all key elements which contribute to its distinctive character.



The winding course of Bank Street, formerly known as Back Lane.

Summary of Issues

The historic buildings in Wetherby are largely in good repair. It is important that historic architectural features are retained and appropriate materials used in any repairs or alterations in order to preserve the character of the area. Since few buildings in the conservation area are listed, efforts must be made wherever possible to persuade owners of the importance of retaining historic features in unlisted buildings in the conservation area.

Development pressure within or adjacent to the conservation area risks leading to a dilution of the special character of the town unless very high standards of design are met. The use of well-matched oolitic magnesian limestone to face buildings in the conservation area is an important issue. Past attempts at matching have not been entirely successful and further efforts need to be made when agreeing conditions of planning consents in the conservation area.

The town's commercial character is an essential element of its historic character. Some historic shopfronts have suffered from inappropriate alteration and opportunities should be taken where possible to restore them. New or replacement shopfronts should have regard to the guidance on page 18 of this document.



The Market Place is the focal point of Wetherby.



Traditional painted hanging signs such as this one at the Angel Inn make a considerable contribution to the character of the town.



Yards are a significant feature of Wetherby.

Extent of the conservation area

The Wetherby conservation area was first designated in 1971 and was subsequently modified in 1981 and 2010.

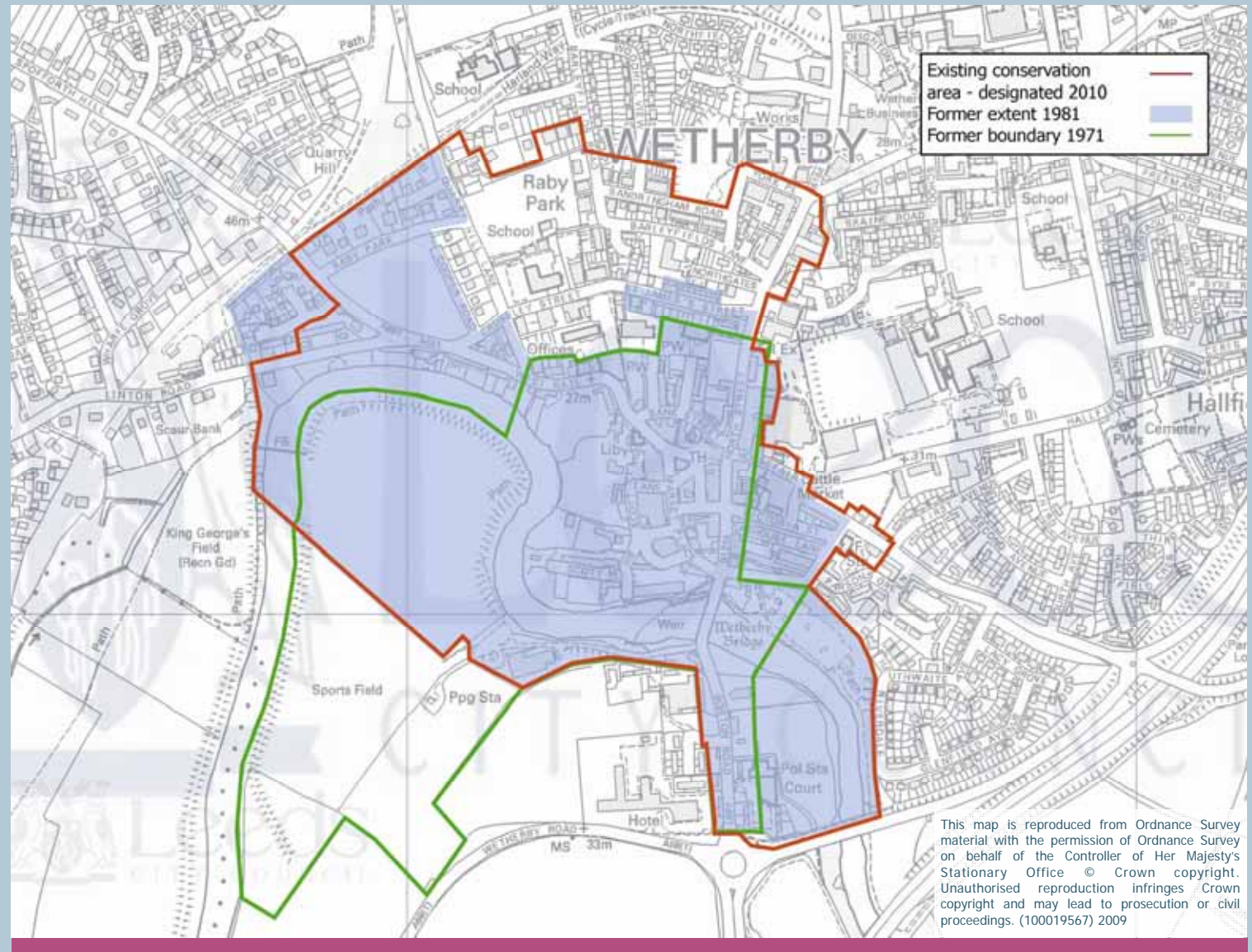
The original conservation area covered the historic core of the town from Boston Road at the south, to St James' Church at the north, High Street to the east and the river bank to the west.

The 1981 modification included the following changes:

- The exclusion of an area of fields by the river to the south west of the original boundary.
- The inclusion of an area around the river to the south east of the boundary.
- The inclusion of Victoria Street, Gashouse Lane and Horsefair to the east and St James's Street to the north.
- The inclusion of Raby Park, a further length of West Gate and the former Wharfe Grange Hospital to the north west.

The 2010 modification included the following changes:

- The inclusion of an area of late 19th century housing to the north.
- A small area of extension to the east on Walton Road.
- An area of exclusion to the west to remove recent development in the grounds of the former Wharfe Grange Hospital.



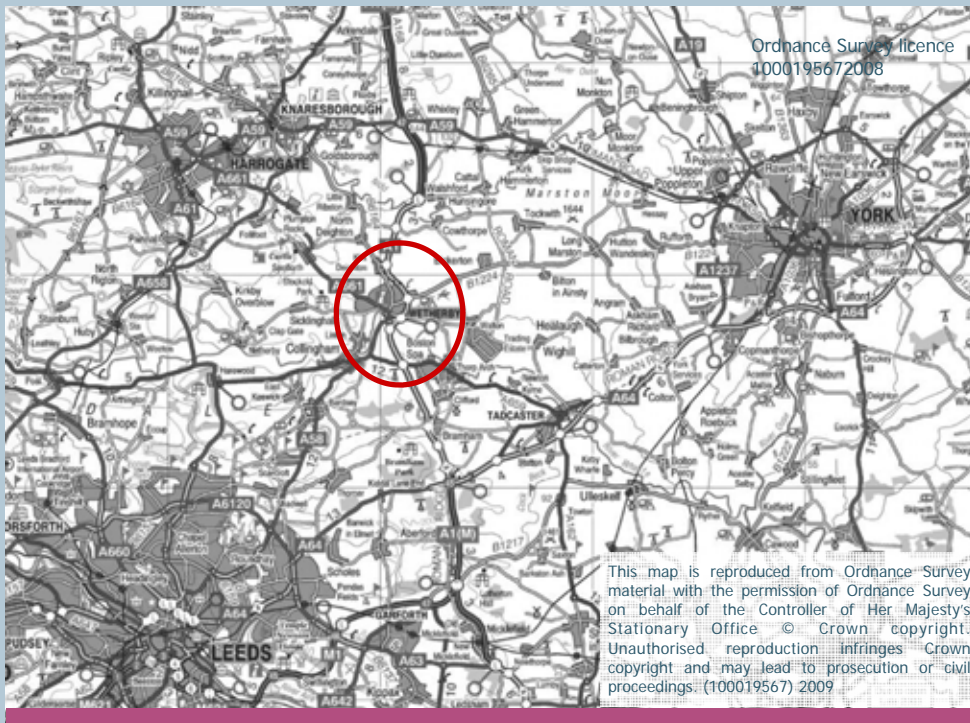
Assessing the Special Interest

Location and Setting

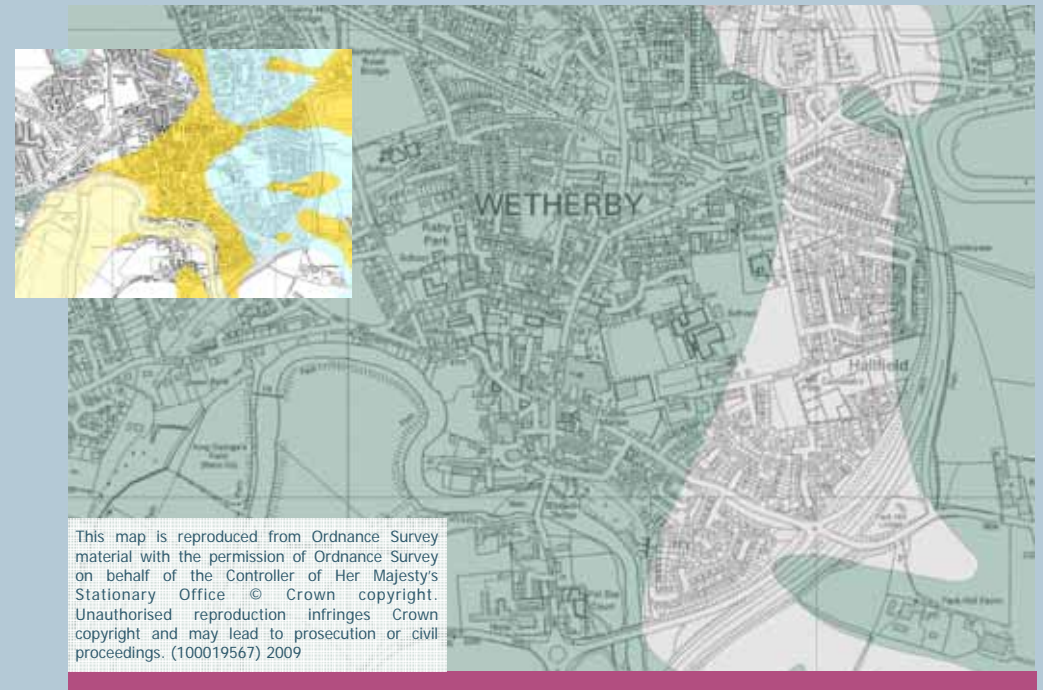
Wetherby is situated 12 miles north-east of Leeds, in the undulating limestone upland between Leeds and York, at a key crossing point of the River Wharfe. It is a rural market town with strong links to its surrounding agricultural landscape. The River Wharfe undergoes a dramatic change of direction in Wetherby as a result of meeting the limestone ridge upon which the town is built, forcing the river back south towards Boston Spa.

General character and plan form

Wetherby's long history as a market town has given rise to its plan form, focused on the large market place which lies just north of Wetherby Bridge. The plan form is typical of a market town, with numerous minor roads meeting at the market place, while the Great North Road gave the town an additional strong north-south axis. The majority of 19th and 20th century development has been to the north of the town, leaving the historic core of Wetherby with a strong historic character.



Location of Wetherby, to the north of the centre of Leeds.



Geology map of Wetherby: Green - Magnesian limestone, Grey - Calcareous mudstone. Inset: overlying glacial deposits.

Geology, topography and landscape setting

Wetherby is located on a narrow ridge of Magnesian limestone which separates the Yorkshire Dales fringe to the west from the Vale of York to the east. Glacial deposits partially overlie the limestone, with more extensive deposition north of Wetherby. The limestone ridge has a low, rolling profile which gives rise to the landscape character of the area: open, gently undulating land with long views across the surrounding lowlands. The soils derived from the limestone and its

associated clays are well-drained and fertile, giving rise to extensive arable cultivation. Fields are generally large and bounded by low thorn hedges with relatively sparse tree cover. The steep-sided valley of the River Wharfe cuts through the landscape on the south side of the centre of Wetherby, with an area of low-lying water meadows on its southern bank. The river valley, which is more heavily wooded than the surrounding agricultural land, plays an important role in the landscape character of the area.

Origins and Evolution

Early archaeology and Roman finds

Archaeological evidence indicates that there was human activity in the Wetherby area in the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods, although little has been found within the town itself to suggest it was a centre of population before the Romano-British period.

Archaeological finds suggest that there was a Roman settlement of considerable size and duration in the same area as modern Wetherby. Pottery and coins dating from the 1st-4th centuries AD have been found near the church and on the western side of the town close to the former railway station. Recent excavation near Wattle Syke, to the south of the town, has also found evidence of a significant Roman-period settlement.

Norman Conquest

Wetherby became part of the extensive Percy estate after the Norman Conquest. It appears to have been largely unaffected by William's "Harrying of the North" after 1069, in marked contrast with land elsewhere in Yorkshire. The Percys built a castle in around 1140 to the west of the Market Place overlooking the river crossing, but it was destroyed a decade later on the orders of King Henry II.

13th and 14th century

Land and property at Wetherby was granted to the Knights Templar in the



Map of Wetherby, drawn circa 1748. The original can be seen in the West Yorkshire Archive, Sheepscar, Leeds.

early 13th Century. They were also granted the right to hold a weekly Thursday market and an annual fair in the town. In 1233, an Indulgence was granted by the Archbishop of York to all who contributed to the repair of Wetherby Bridge, and it is also likely that the first chapel was built around this time.

In 1318 Wetherby was devastated by Scottish raiding parties. The town was rebuilt after the raids and records from 1379 list 97 tax-paying inhabitants, practising a wide variety of trades.

16th and 17th century

The Great North Road brought many travellers through Wetherby. A number of inns catered for their needs; accounts of 1539 mention "le Swanne" and "le Blake Bull", both of which survive in name until the present day, although there is little survival of the buildings from this period.

Hearth Tax returns of 1672 recorded 69 households in Wetherby. Almost two-thirds of households had one or two hearths, while 12 households were classified as poor and therefore exempt from paying the tax.

The Wetherby estate remained in the ownership of the Percy family until it was forfeited to the Crown in 1572 after the family's involvement in the rising of the Northern Earls against Elizabeth I. In 1602 the estate passed into the ownership of the Earls and Dukes of Devonshire, who expanded their land holdings over the following centuries.

Historic development

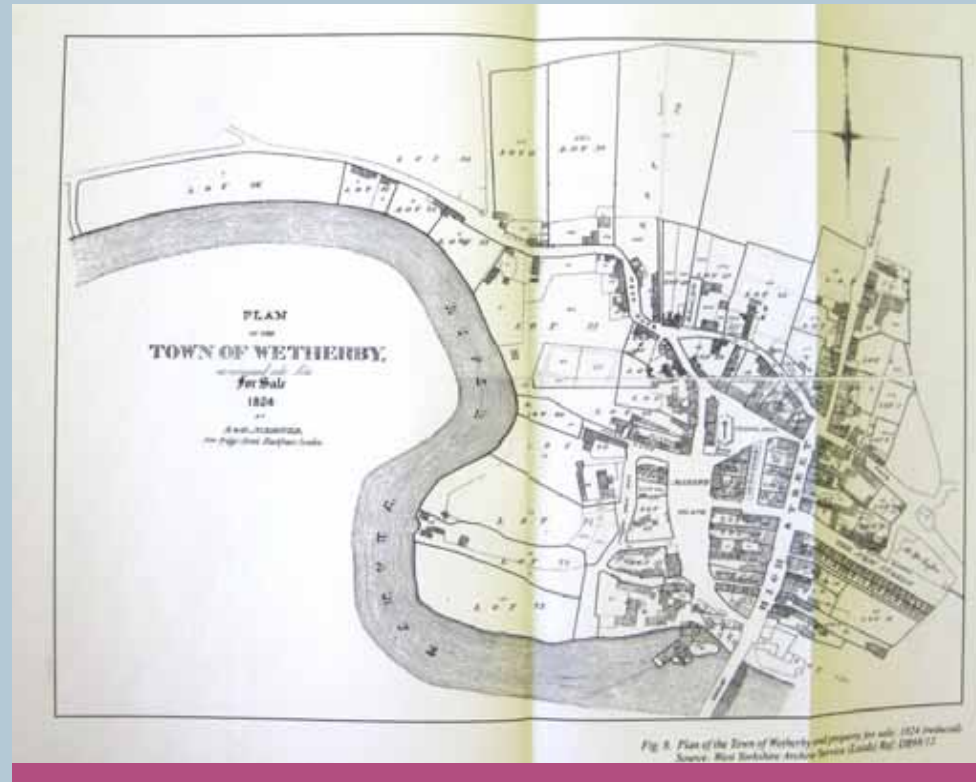
Historic development 1700-1950

The "Great Fire" of Wetherby

In 1723 a fire which started in a chandler's shop swept through the town and destroyed 40 houses, around half the town's building stock at the time. High winds had fanned the flames and the affected buildings were said to be entirely destroyed, along with their contents. The losses amounted to over £7,500.

Great North Road

The western branch of the Great North Road through Wetherby was improved between 1753 and 1804. The increased traffic passing along the road led to a growth in the number of inns, with 15 recorded in 1776. The town was also a focus for the droving trade between Scotland and London. Inns on the outskirts of the town catered for the



1824 map of Wetherby drawn by E & G Driver for the Duke of Devonshire's sale of the town (West Yorkshire Archives).



Victoria Street, formerly New Street, part of the 6th Duke of Devonshire's alterations to the town.

drovers and provided pasture for their cattle.

6th Duke of Devonshire & the Great Sale

The 6th Duke of Devonshire inherited the Wetherby estate in 1811. A map of the town was made in the same year and plans drawn up for improvements. The Market Place was re-ordered and a new street built between High Street and Horsefair, which is now known as Victoria Street. However, in 1824, the Duke's entire Wetherby estate was put up for auction, probably to fund the

Duke's plans for alterations to Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. The town and much of the surrounding farmland was divided into lots and auctioned over three days. Many of the existing tenants bid for their homes, but the prices reached at the auction were so high that many former tenants found themselves on the brink of destitution as a consequence.

Racecourse

Horse racing was popular in the Wetherby area from at least the late 17th Century. Races held at Clifford

Moor were associated with festivities and entertainments in Wetherby during the 18th Century, and by 1750 at least one Wetherby innkeeper was running a racehorse stud. The popularity of steeplechasing grew during the 19th century, and races were held on Linton Ings until 1890. The present racecourse on York Road was used for the first time in 1891. Improvements over the following decades further increased the popularity of the course.

Church and chapel

Wetherby township did not become an ecclesiastical parish in its own right until 1834. Before then, the small chapel which stood in the Market Place was a chapel of ease, subordinate to the parish church at Spofforth. The present church of St. James was built in 1839, with the cost of £4300 raised by public subscription.

Nonconformist denominations had a notable presence in the town from the 17th Century. There are records of Quaker meetings from 1677, and formal meetings took place in Wetherby from 1689 until 1736, when the Quaker meeting house moved to Clifford. The first Methodist meeting house was licensed in 1777, and a chapel built on Back Lane in 1794. A Calvinist chapel on New Street was built in 1817 but fell out of use in the 1830s. The present Methodist Church on Back Lane was built in 1829.

Workhouse

Until 1863, those in need of "indoor" parish relief in Wetherby—in other

words, those who were homeless—were housed in a small workhouse at Stone Dene in North Street. This was replaced in 1863 with new purpose-built premises at the far end of West End. This larger workhouse served over thirty townships as well as Wetherby town. In 1907 the workhouse was augmented by a 20-bed infirmary to its west. Later in its history it became known as Wharfe Grange Hospital and served as a psychiatric institution. It finally closed in 1993.

The coming of the railway

The first railway line to reach Wetherby arrived in 1847. It connected to the main York—Leeds line at Church Fenton and ran through Tadcaster and Thorp Arch to Wetherby and then on to Spofforth. The line was intended to connect to Harrogate, but this section was not completed until 1848. The arrival of the railway had a major effect on the coaching service in the town, which had previously been a source of considerable income. While the



This early example of a purpose-built cinema is an unusual and interesting 20th century building.



1956 OS map of Wetherby. The former HMS Ceres (Moorland) naval training establishment lies to the east of North Street, on the site now occupied by Wetherby High School.

coaching inns in the town suffered a decline, only one ceased to trade; the others simply diversified their activities.

A rail line from Wetherby to Leeds had been proposed in 1844 but did not open until 1876, mainly due to conflict between the various railway operators in the region. The direct connection to Leeds led to the development of new housing to the north of the town, close to the train station, encouraging a new social group, middle-class commuters, to live in Wetherby.

Cinema

The cinema on Rodney Street was built in 1915. It was initially known as the Picture House and used a gas engine projector to show films. Cinemas were rare at this time, and the survival of this building in a recognisable form, and once again in use as a cinema, is noteworthy.

World War II

The Second World War had a considerable impact on Wetherby and the surrounding area. Most significant for the built fabric of the town was the

decision to build two large hostels for munitions workers from the nearby Thorp Arch Royal Ordnance Factory, one on Hallfield Road and the other on York Road. Each was designed to house 1000 workers. Shortly after completion, the York Road site was commandeered by the Admiralty and became a training "ship" called HMS Cabot. German propaganda later reported that HMS Cabot had been sunk, a report which must have had an opposite effect on morale to that intended. By the end of the war the Hallfield Road site had also become a naval training establishment and the two were known as HMS Ceres (York Road) and HMS Ceres (Moorland). The former is now the site of Wetherby Young Offenders Institution, while the latter is occupied by Wetherby High School. Some of the wartime buildings survive next to the playing fields at the school.



One of the 1940s buildings in the grounds of Wetherby High School, constructed to house munitions workers.

Character Analysis

Spatial Analysis

Settlement form

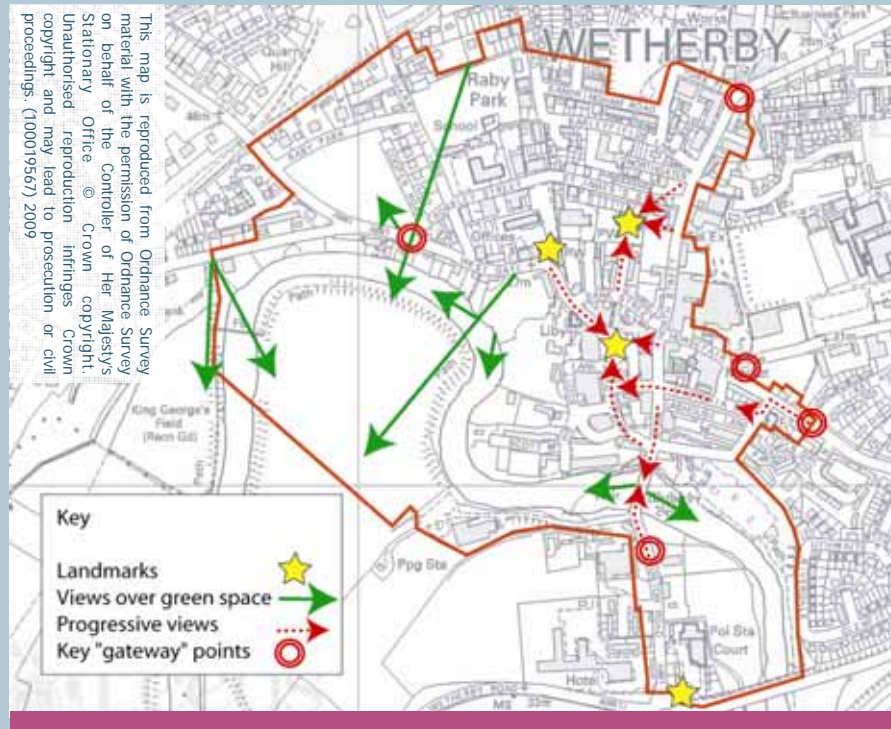
Wetherby's plan form is typical of a market town of early foundation, with a large triangular market place, gradually infilled over time as permanent buildings replaced market stalls. Roads enter the northern end of the market place from north, east and west, while from the south Wetherby Bridge controls movement into and out of the town.

The town's connection with the river as a focus of activity and a power source is also reflected in the settlement form. The line of Scott Lane / Scott Mews extends to the river's edge and the weir associated with the former water mill is a key element in the character of the town.

Activity and grain

Activity levels in the centre of the town are high, with activity focused on the Market Place and High Street area. Although the principal streets are wide, three-storey buildings create a pleasing sense of enclosure. Traffic levels are high on all principal roads. Beyond the functional core of the town, activity levels are lower, with domestic buildings of two storeys lining narrower, quieter streets.

The built form is generally fine-grained and varied. Those modern buildings



Map showing key views and landmarks.

which disrupt the fine grain do not sit comfortably within their surroundings. The pattern of activity and grain is disrupted beyond the eastern boundary of the conservation area. The telephone exchange and the large area of car parking to the east of the town centre, which lie just beyond the conservation area, may present opportunities to enhance the setting of the conservation area if development is proposed in the future.

Key views and vistas

The conservation area presents an unfolding sequence of progressive views as one walks around the town. Key views within the conservation area are

made up of informal groupings of positive buildings, with uniformity of materials but variety of forms and roofscape giving interest to the visual scene.

Key views out of the conservation area towards the south give a sense of the rural setting of the town. The town's elevation over the meadows (water meadows) south of the river is of particular significance. Distant views to a wooded horizon are also important.

Landmarks

The Town Hall is the focal point for the town, standing alone in the centre of the Market Place. It draws the eye on

approach from Westgate but is only gradually revealed as one progresses up Market Place from the south. The public realm around the Town Hall has recently been enhanced by an award-winning highways scheme which has created a pleasant and uncluttered public "square".

Wetherby Bridge is a significant landmark to the south of the historic core of the town. As the only vehicular crossing point over the River Wharfe in the town it funnels all traffic travelling north or south. Views of the town unfold as one progresses down Boston Road towards the bridge, and the steep descent to the bridge, combined with the change of direction dictated by the angle of the bridge and the approach road, creates a dramatic sense of arrival. The historic character of the town is rather concealed, however, by the over-dominant late-20th-century buildings around the bridge.



Long views terminated by mature trees are a key element of the area's character.

Character Analysis

Built environment

Architectural characteristics

The majority of buildings in the conservation area date from the late 18th or 19th centuries and are generally of fairly standard domestic form, of two or three storeys and respecting either classical Georgian or vernacular norms of design and proportion.

Materials

The characteristic walling material in the conservation area is locally-quarried oolitic magnesian limestone, which is somewhat granular and creamy in colour. A pale grey limestone has been used in some recent buildings in the town and although quarried from a fairly local source it has not proved to be a successful match and highlights the importance of the colour and granular texture of the stone to the character of the town's buildings.

Roofs are generally covered with Welsh slate, which replaced local stone and thatch in the early 19th century. Pantiles, probably from the Vale of York, also occur on some historic buildings and provide an additional element in the streetscape.

Local details

The majority of the buildings in the conservation area are of simple design, with their distinctiveness resting on the use of proportion and local architectural detail. The use of an exaggerated



Vernacular houses constructed of local oolitic magnesian limestone with pantile roof and horizontally-sliding sash windows.

joggle joint in the stonework over window and door openings widely used in the Harewood area is an example of this. The survival of horizontally-sliding sash windows is also a regionally distinctive architectural detail.

Streetscape and public realm

The public realm in the town is generally of high quality, with recent enhancement schemes in Market Place and Horsefair making a positive contribution to the streetscape. The use of high quality materials in the public realm and the retention of historic paving wherever possible helps to retain

the character of the area. In general there are low levels of street clutter in Wetherby. The historic core of the town may be an appropriate location for the implementation of traffic orders to further reduce the need for yellow lining and street signage.

Greenscape

While Wetherby lacks a traditional public park, there are a number of areas of public green space within the conservation area which make a considerable contribution to its character. The garden around the Georgian Bath House, renovated

through the efforts of the Wetherby Civic Society, is an important area of green space and provides important views of the river and the Town Ings.

The small garden at the corner of Bank Street and North Street is a tranquil area at the heart of the town.

The area near the bandstand at foot of Wetherby Bridge is an important area of public open space which offers views of the river and the historic bridge as well as providing informal recreational space to residents and visitors of all ages.

The mature trees in Raby Park are of considerable significance in the conservation area. The unimproved grassland of Raby Park has an informal parkland feel, which softens the otherwise hard character of the west end of Crossley Street. Crossley Street School's playing field also contributes to the informal and open character of this part of the conservation area.

The open and undeveloped Town Ings are an important element of the character of the town and are highly valued by local residents. The mature trees fringing the river and the edges of the Ings are positive features in the greenscape.



View over Crossley Street School playing field towards the church.

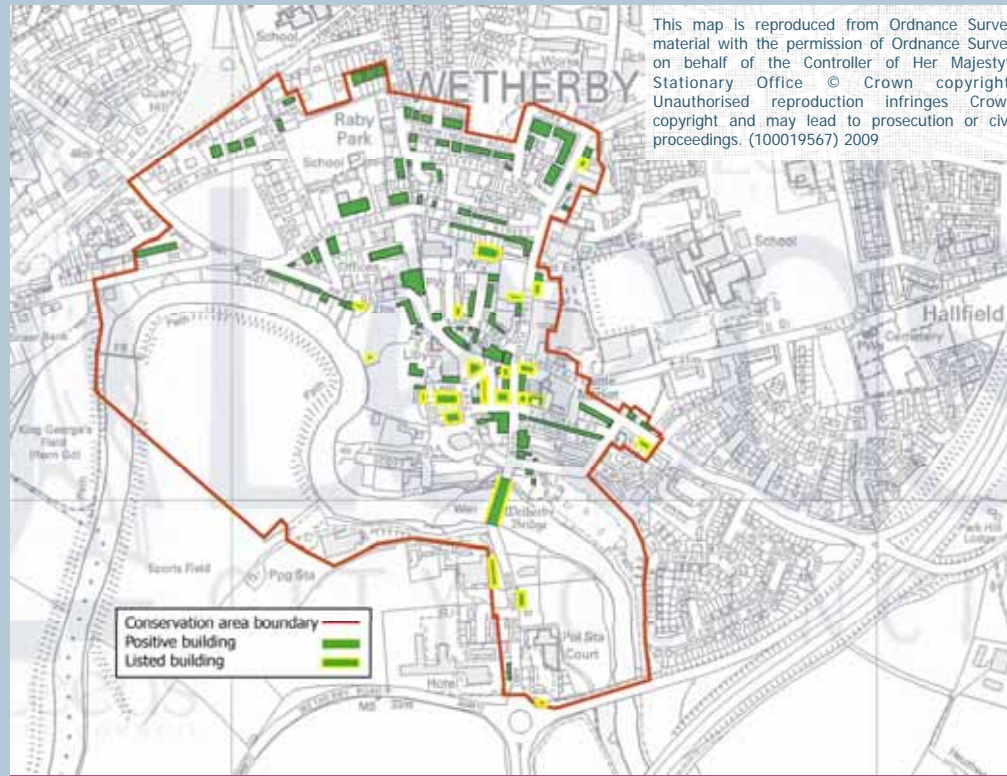
Character Analysis

Positive buildings

The buildings coloured green on the map (right) make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. This contribution may be in one or more of the following ways:

- Landmark buildings
- Buildings which provide evidence of the area's history and development
- Buildings of architectural merit
- Buildings with local historical associations
- Buildings which exemplify local vernacular styles
- Groups of buildings which together make a positive contribution to the streetscape

There should be a presumption in favour of their retention in all but exceptional circumstances.



Positive buildings in the conservation area

Character Areas

Wetherby Conservation Area is not a uniform area. Different parts of the town were developed at different periods in history and contain different types of buildings and spaces. The conservation area can therefore be divided into sub-areas known as *character areas*.

Each area has a different character and distinct built forms, generated by the period of its development and the function of the buildings and spaces. A shared palette of construction materials and landscape unifies all the character areas with one another. The three character areas which make up Wetherby Conservation Area are described on the following pages.



21-25 West Gate, one of the few listed domestic buildings in the conservation area.



Wetherby Cinema, opened in 1915. Cinema buildings of this date are extremely rare.



9 Walton Road, an example of a charming vernacular building in the conservation area.



The former Non-Conformist chapel on Victoria Street, built in 1817.

Character Analysis

Character area 1—historic core

This area encompasses the historic core of Wetherby. Its boundary approximates to the extent of the town around 1850 and follows roads and lanes which can be traced on early maps.

Key characteristics:

- Fine-grained built form
- Oolitic magnesian limestone the dominant building material
- Mainly two-storey in height, with three-storey buildings in areas of highest activity
- High level of activity around High Street and Market Place
- Good group of traditional shopfronts

Key ways to retain character:

- Use of magnesian limestone of appropriate colour and grain as predominant building material
- Retention of traditional built forms
- Retention and reinforcement of fine-grained urban environment
- Retention of high levels of activity at street level
- Retention of traditional shopfronts and hanging signs



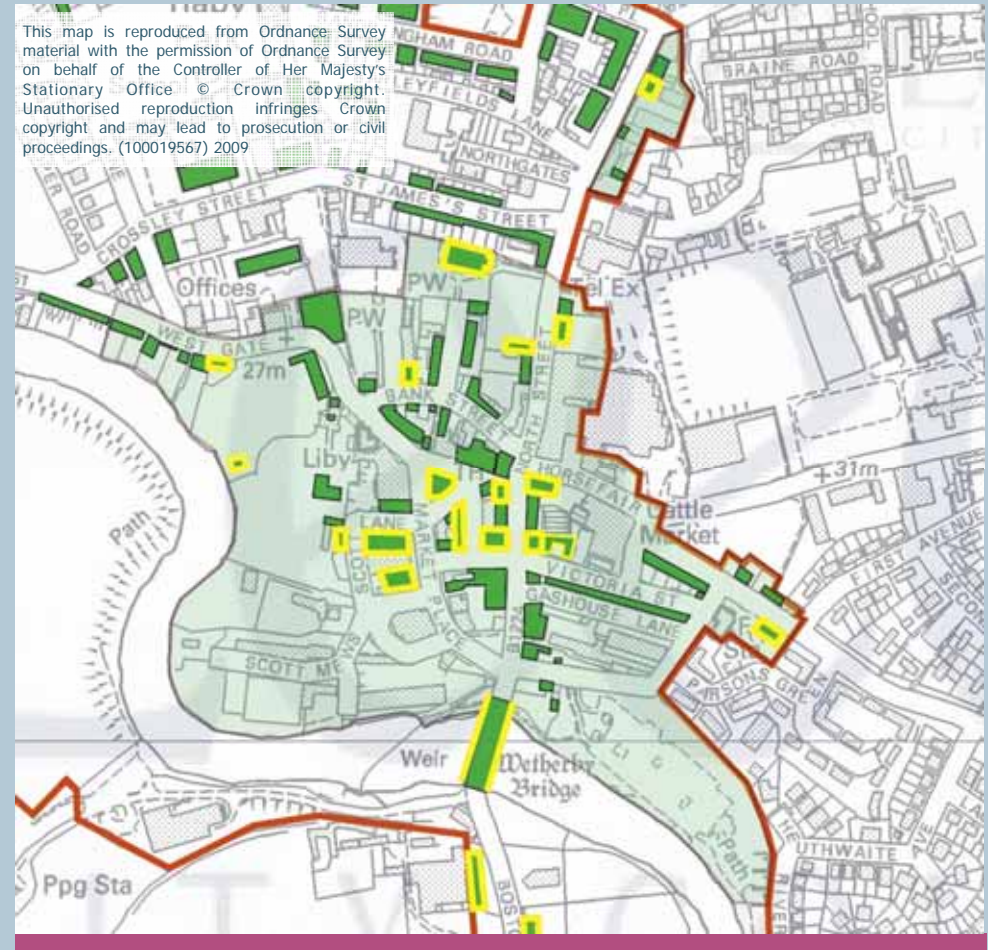
The busy heart of the town contains a mixture of two- and three-storey early 19th century buildings.



This row of 17th Century buildings on North Street survived the fire of 1723.



Shops off Bank Street provide a high level of activity in the town centre.



Character Area 1, showing positive buildings in green and listed structures highlighted in yellow.

Character Analysis

Character area 2— late 19th-century expansion

This area encompasses the late 19th century expansion of the town to the north. It is associated with the arrival of the railway, which led to an expansion of middle-class housing, led by the entrepreneurial activities of Henry Crossley. The former workhouse is also included in this character area.

Key characteristics:

- Buildings mainly constructed of coursed magnesian limestone with Welsh slate roofs and timber windows.
- Two storey in height.
- Small front gardens generally enclosed by low walls.

Key ways to retain character:

- Retention of front gardens with garden walls.
- Retention of slate roofs and chimneys.
- Retention of regular appearance of terraced rows.



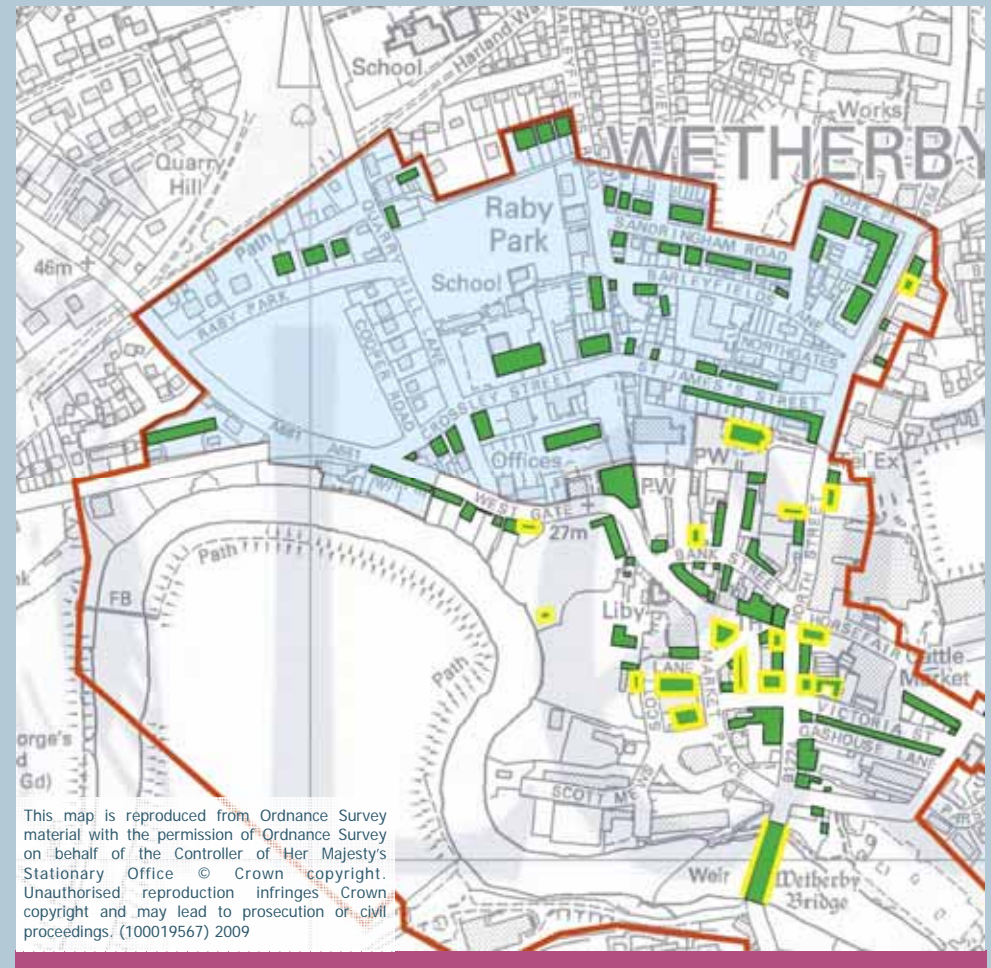
Crossley Street. Note the canted bay window to each front parlour.



Sandringham Road. The window bays have been linked with a pentice along the length of the row.



A more vertical emphasis is found on Caxton Street, with prominent chimneys, gable finials and dormers.



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Character Area 2, showing positive buildings in green. There are no listed buildings in this character area.

Character Analysis

Character area 3—riverside area

This area lies to the south of the town and includes the river banks, ings and the area around the police station. The open character of the landscape and river views, flanked by mature trees, make a considerable contribution to the character of the town. The gateway associated with the former West Lodge of Wetherby Grange is a key landmark on the southern edge of the conservation area.

Key characteristics:

- Open space framed by mature trees.
- Progressive river views.
- Long views across low-lying land to the south.
- Narrow views down Boston Road emphasise entrance to town.

Key ways to retain character:

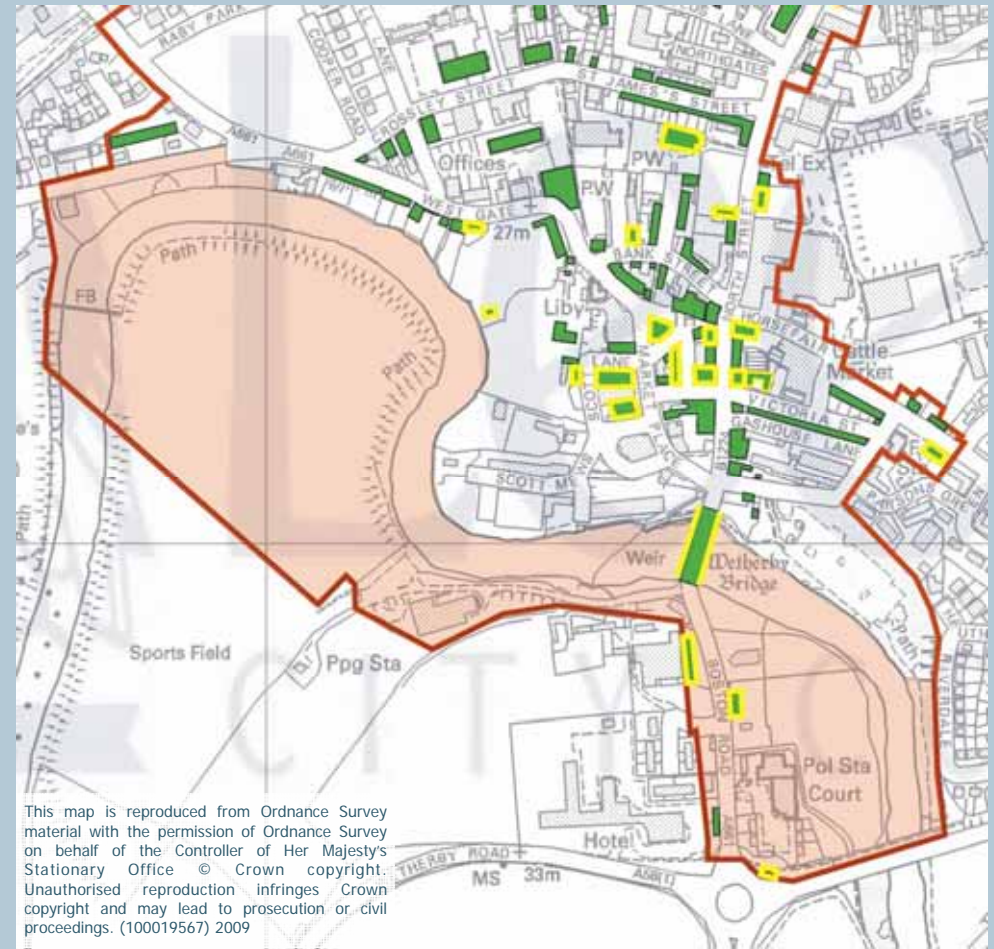
- Retention of narrow views and sense of arrival travelling north on Boston Road.
- Retention of long views from north bank of river.
- Retention of open character of riverside green space.
- Retention and renewal of riverside trees.
- Seek opportunities to enhance the setting of positive buildings off Boston Road / A1 Link Road.



Long views over the ings towards distant trees give a sense of elevation and openness.



River views are very important to the character of this area.



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Character Area 3, showing positive buildings in green and listed structures highlighted in yellow.

Management Plan

Opportunities for management and enhancement

Wetherby is an attractive and thriving town. However, there are a number of features and issues which currently detract from its special character. Addressing these issues offers the opportunity to enhance the conservation area. Positive conservation management will ensure the ongoing protection of the town's special character.



Sensitive new development in the conservation area

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

Successful new development in historic areas should:

- 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
- Respect historic boundary walls and retain historic garden plots
- 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.

(based on CABE & English Heritage publication 2001, 'Building in Context: New development in historic areas')

Action:
New development must respond sensitively and creatively to the historic environment.

Protect surviving historic architectural forms

As a result of the limited listed building coverage in the settlement, there has been incremental loss of traditional architectural detailing in the conservation area. Replacement of windows, doors and roofing materials with inappropriate materials and designs is a negative feature that affects individual buildings and the wider streetscape. This cumulative change is particularly noticeable in vernacular buildings and in some terraced rows where the original uniformity has been weakened.

Action:
Surviving historic features should be retained and where necessary sympathetically repaired.

Protect archaeological remains

Wetherby has been inhabited for over 2000 years and buried evidence of past occupation may survive in and around the town. Development which may disturb archaeological remains



The unity of Victoria Street is disrupted to some extent by poorly-matched windows and doors which have replaced originals.

may require a watching brief to ensure the preservation of archaeological finds.

Action:
Development which involves below-ground excavation must have regard to the potential for archaeological finds.

Historic street signs

Historic street name signs should be conserved and re-painted when necessary rather than removed or replaced with modern street signs. Any existing disrepair should be used as an opportunity for enhancement.



Evidence for past occupation of Wetherby is to be found throughout the town.

Stone street name signs are very unusual. They should be carefully conserved in situ and not painted over or removed.

Action:
Historic street name signs should be retained and conserved

Celebrating the special character of the conservation area

There are opportunities to celebrate, promote and make more accessible Wetherby's special character and historic interest. A number of town guides and historic trails are already available. Blue plaques commemorating special associations and events also raise awareness. Opportunities to recollect former street names could be another way to aid understanding and recognition of Wetherby's interesting history.

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



An unusual carved street name sign.



Cast iron street name plate in need of some maintenance.

Public realm

Wetherby has benefited in recent years from enhancement of the public realm. In general, street furniture is good quality and appropriate for the conservation area. Where opportunities arise for further enhancement, these should be completed to the same high standard as the recent Market Place scheme. When new road signs are installed, their siting should be considered in the context of the wider streetscape and they should not harm the setting of important historic buildings.

Action:
The siting and design of road signs and street furniture in the conservation area should have regard to current "Streets for All" guidance.



The public realm in Wetherby is generally of a high standard.

Paving and surfacing

The surviving stone paving in Wetherby is generally in good condition. The retention of existing stone paving slabs, setts and kerbstones is important in maintaining the historic character of the settlement. Recent paving schemes in the town have enhanced the character of the conservation area through careful design and sensitive use of materials.

Opportunities should continue to be taken to further enhance areas of stone paving and to retain historic paving materials whenever possible.

Action:
Continue to retain and enhance historic paving in the conservation area.



Good quality paving has a positive impact on the character of the conservation area.

Tree management

Conservation area designation affords protection to trees from unauthorised felling or lopping. The full canopies of large mature trees make a significant impact on the character of the conservation area, particularly along the River Wharfe. The variety of tree species offers interest and amenity throughout the year.

Action:
Large mature trees should be retained wherever possible in order to preserve the character of the conservation area. Opportunities should be taken as appropriate to plant young trees in order to ensure the continued existence of mature trees in the future.



Trees along the course of the River Wharfe are an important element of the town's character.

Infill development

A number of buildings in the conservation area lie in sizeable gardens. Inappropriate infill development which blocks important views or harms the relationship between existing buildings and the spaces around them would affect the character of the conservation area. Intensification of development which disrupts the character of the conservation area should be resisted. The scale, massing and proportion of buildings and the spaces between them are important in retaining the character of the conservation area.

Action:
Any development proposing the infill of a site, or the subdivision of a plot, should respond to the scale, massing, layout and distribution of positive structures within the conservation area.



Key views into and out of the conservation area should not be harmed by new development.

Development affecting the setting of the conservation area

It is important that development around the conservation area does not harm its setting. Any development in or around Wetherby which affects the setting of the conservation area should have regard to views into and out of the conservation area, the setting of positive buildings and the character of the landscape. Appropriate design and materials should be used in development adjacent to the conservation area.

Action:
The impact of development on the character and appearance of the conservation area should be considered. This applies equally to development outside the conservation area if it is likely to affect the setting of the conservation area.



Development outside the conservation area can have an impact on its character.

Shopfronts

The design and appearance of shopfronts in Wetherby town centre has a considerable impact on the appearance and character of the conservation area.

Planning permission is needed to alter shopfronts in the conservation area, and in many cases advertising consent is also needed for shop signs. The primary consideration in achieving a well-designed shopfront is that it sits comfortably both as a part of the building in which it is placed, and as a part of the wider streetscape.

Retention of historic features

Existing historic shopfronts in the conservation area should be retained in situ whenever possible. Before an existing shopfront is discarded, consideration should be given to its condition and quality. Even if it has



Well-designed shopfronts can considerably enhance the character of the area.

been altered it may be repairable, or original details may survive behind later cladding.

New shopfronts

The Bigger Picture

The quality of the street as a whole should be considered as part of any proposal to alter a shopfront, with the aim of retaining or enhancing the street scene as well as the individual building. Respect for the appearance of the street will result in a better-looking retail environment for all. The standard corporate shopfront of a large company or chain store may need to be adapted for shops in the conservation area, and use should be made of alternative fascias and signs more suitable for use in sensitive historic environments.



This new shopfront fits well within the conservation area and enhances the Market Place.

Respect for the building

An attractive shopfront is designed to complement the building of which it is part. All elements of the design must work together and the proportions, scale and detailing of the whole building must be considered. Subdivision between buildings should be reflected in the shopfronts and not obscured.

The vertical emphasis of the building should be carried down to ground level through the shopfront to avoid the appearance of the building above "floating" on top of the shopfront. There should be a reasonable gap between the top of the shopfront and the first floor windowsills.

The main shopfront elements should be in proportion with one another. Generally, the stallriser should not occupy more than 20% of the total height of the shopfront. The entablature should also not occupy more than 20% of the total height of

the shopfront. Common features which occur along a street should be respected.

Materials

Shopfronts should be constructed from high-quality materials. Timber is normally the preferred material and would generally be painted. The use of plastic for any major element of a shopfront is rarely appropriate in the conservation area.

Fascia

The fascia is an integral part of the shopfront and is usually the principal location for lettering. Dimensions are set by the overall proportions of the shopfront; fascias should not overlie other elements of the shopfront or any other architectural elements of the building as a whole. They will generally be constructed from painted timber, although in some circumstances other high-quality materials may be

appropriate. Plastic is rarely an appropriate material for a fascia.

Lettering will generally be either painted onto timber or may take the form of applied letters cut from matt-coated metal or good-quality vinyl. Other forms of lettering may be appropriate if they form part of a high-quality and well-designed shopfront.

Signage

Hanging signs are a traditional feature of the English street scene and can be a showcase for the art of signwriting as well as drawing attention to the business advertised. New hanging signs should generally be of painted timber, usually with hand-painted decoration. Signs should not be over-large and should be fixed to the building between the lower edge of the fascia and the first-floor window sills. The lower edge of the hanging sign must be at least 2.6 metres above pavement height.

Illumination

Illumination of signs is only usually necessary for premises which operate outside normal office hours, such as restaurants. Halo or spot illumination which highlights the shop's name is usually more subtle than the uniform illumination of a whole fascia. Projecting box-profile fully internally-illuminated signs would almost never be appropriate in the conservation area.

Action:

Historic shopfronts in the conservation area should be retained. New shopfronts in the conservation area should preserve or enhance the character of the area.



Over-dominant fascias detract from the character of the streetscene.



An eye-catching and attractive advertisement for a shop.

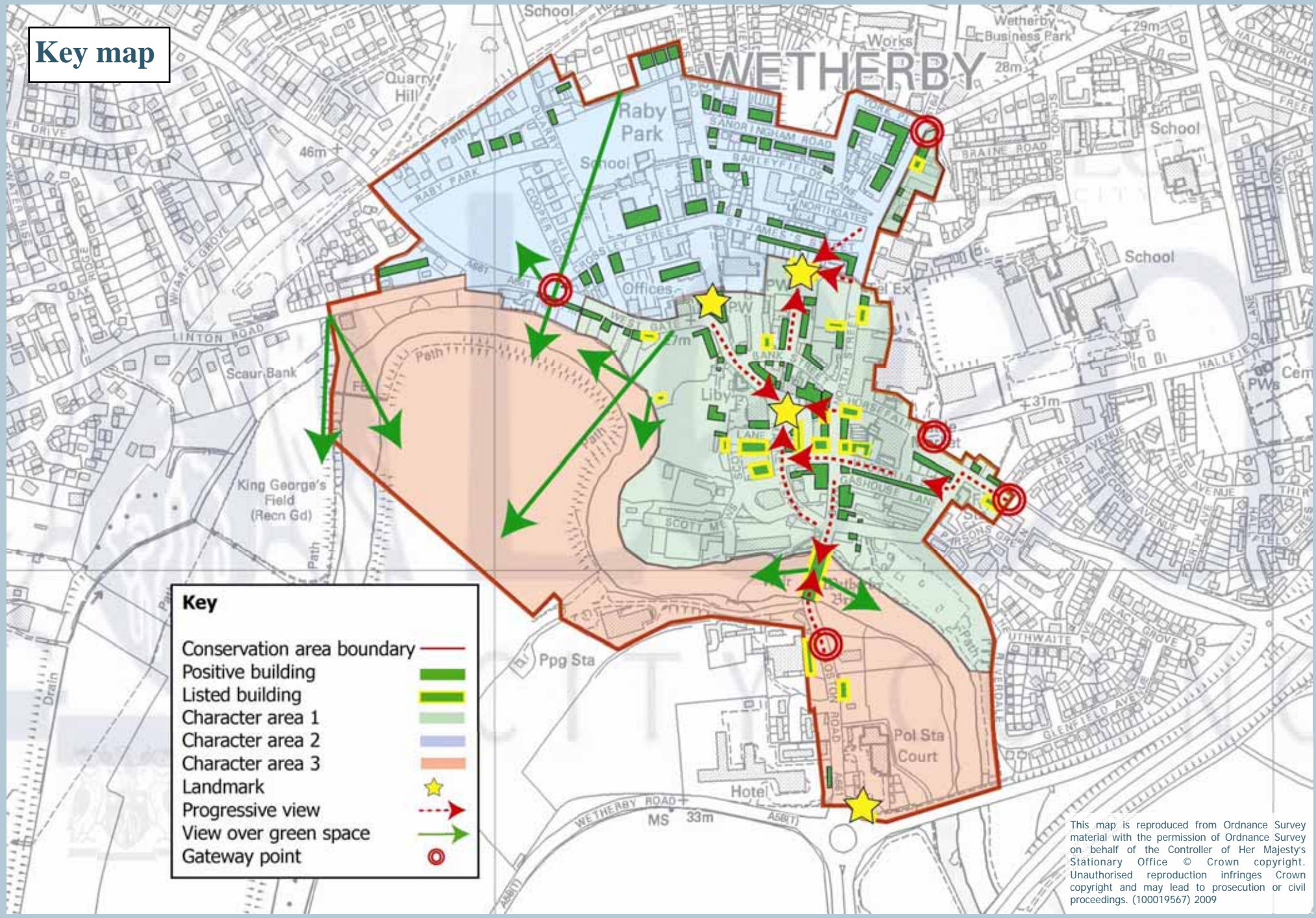


The Shambles creates a distinctive shopping environment, potentially attractive to tourists and regular shoppers.



Historic details often survive beneath later alterations to shop facades.

Key map



Key

- Conservation area boundary ———
- Positive building ———
- Listed building ———
- Character area 1 ———
- Character area 2 ———
- Character area 3 ———
- Landmark ★
- Progressive view - - - - -
- View over green space ———
- Gateway point ○

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Where to find out more

Wetherby & District Historical Society is an active local society with an interest in local historic buildings and social history. Wetherby Civic Society plays an important role in promoting high standards of architecture and design in the town and is responsible for Wetherby's blue plaques and Historic Town Trail.

A wide range of original documents, public records and books can also be found in the following locations:

- Wetherby Library (Local History Section)
- Central Library (Local & Family History Section), website: www.leeds.gov.uk/library
- West Yorkshire Archive Service, Chapeltown Road, Sheepscar, Leeds. website: www.archives.wyjs.org.uk
- West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service, Wakefield

website:
www.archaeology.wyjs.org.uk

In addition, much information is available on other websites:

- www.heritagegateway.org.uk includes all listed building descriptions and some photos
- www.leodis.net has archive photos of the Leeds district
- www.old-maps.co.uk has early Ordnance Survey maps.

How to find out more about historic buildings

Leeds Central Library has a large architecture collection which includes books on historic buildings. A useful general book on understanding historic houses is *How Old is Your House?* By Pamela Cunnington (most recent publication 2002). Shire Books also publish a range of excellent short books on historic buildings.

There are a wide range of national societies devoted to the study and conservation of historic buildings. Many of these national bodies have regional groups in Yorkshire.

- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) www.spab.org.uk. A good source of practical information about looking after buildings of all periods.
- Ancient Monuments Society www.ams.org.uk. Devoted to the study and conservation of ancient

monuments, historic building and fine old craftsmanship, with a particular interest in church buildings.

- Georgian Group www.georgiangroup.org.uk Interested in the study and conservation of 18th- and early 19th-century buildings.
- Victorian Society www.victoriansociety.org.uk Interested in the appreciation and conservation of 19th and early 20th century buildings of all types.
- 20th Century Society www.c20century.org.uk Active in promoting appreciation and protection of 20th century architecture.

Adult education courses on historic buildings and/ or local history are sometimes run in the Leeds area. Check with your local provider for current information.



Finding Out More

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 which 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 Wetherby 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 Chapter 5 Environment and Appendices A3 Building Design, Conservation and Landscape Design and A4 Archaeological Policies
- Leeds City Council, Local Development Framework, emerging document that will ultimately replace the Unitary Development Plan.

Community involvement and adoption

A draft version of this appraisal went through a public consultation period. A four week consultation period included:

- An exhibition at the local library, with access to a paper copy of the appraisal

- A public 'drop-in' meeting to discuss the proposed changes, view an exhibition and paper copies of the appraisal was held at the Town Hall on 18 November 2009 between 3-7pm.
- Direct mailing to all properties affected by the proposed changes to the boundary.
- Direct mailing to all identified stakeholders and interested parties including internal consultation within the City Council with officers and councillors and with Wetherby Town Council.
- Internet access via the Council's webpage to the appraisal and response forms.

All consultation responses were evaluated and the appraisal was amended where appropriate. The Open Panel report to the Planning Board sets out the comments received and the actions undertaken as a result. This appraisal was formally adopted following approval at the Planning Board meeting of 11 December 2009 and became operational as non statutory planning guidance from 1 March 2010. It is a material consideration in the planning process.

This document is available to view and download on the Council's website — www.leeds.gov.uk/conservation