OTLEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

ASSESSING AND PROTECTING THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF OTLEY CONSERVATION AREA

Otley Conservation Area was extended and designated by Leeds City Council on 15 December 2003 following public consultation. On the same date Otley Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted by the City Council as supplementary planning guidance (SPG). The appraisal is additional and complementary to UDP policies N14-22 in Volume 1, and to policies BC1-9 (Appendix 3) in Volume 2, of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan.

This appraisal describes the character of Otley Conservation Area which deserves protection. It sets out which features make the area special and makes suggestions for enhancement. Opportunities to bring about enhancement will occur largely when development takes place or through local action. The appraisal will be an important influence on planning decisions in Otley.

ABOUT OTLEY CONSERVATION AREA

**Special Character**

- Otley is a freestanding town with a population of approximately 15,000. Despite dormitory expansion, Otley retains its attractive stone-built historic core and a strong sense of place. It has suffered a loss of manufacturing activity but remains a market town serving the area.

- The town has a dramatic landscape setting between hill and river - The Chevin, Weston Moor and Farnley Moor, and The River Wharfe. A fine stone bridge spans the river. The routes of pre-turnpike roads, which sinuously followed features of the landscape, have helped shape Otley. Kirkgate and Manor Square form a strong north-south axis oriented to the river bridge crossing, and Westgate/Boroughgate align with the Wharfe Valley.

- There is an interesting street layout that stems from the 13th century triangular layout of Kirkgate / Boroughgate / Walkergate. Market Place is part of an inner triangle, which is a typical pattern in traditional English market towns. The road to the bridge from Manor Square doglegs round the old manorial enclosure.

- The streets are interconnected by ginnels and yards, notably Bay Horse Yard and New Inn Yard, and by narrow streets such as Market Street and Newmarket. Plot widths are often narrow, reflecting medieval burgage plots along the main streets.

- Otley has many fine old buildings of the 18th century and approximately ten buildings predate 1700. Victorian buildings of high quality are also well represented.
History and Development

Early historical aspects of Otley’s character are: (1) the Parish Church occupies a probable C8th monastic site, and (2) the Manor House area towards the river was an C11th or earlier manorial enclosure or palace of the Archbishops of York.

Important historical figures include: – Archbishop Gray (founder of the town), Thomas Chippendale (designer/craftsman born in Boroughgate), John Carr (architect), the Fawkes family (estate owners at Farnley Hall and local benefactors), the Barker family (of The Old Hall), and industrialists such as Ackroyd, Duncan, Walker, Barker, Dawson and Payne.

A few buildings such as printing machinery works represent Otley’s working past. The former tanneries have been lost to fire in the last 30 years. But the riverside retains a heritage of former mills and associated terraced housing.

Public buildings trace Otley’s history since 1864 when the Otley Board took over from the lord of the manor. Many survive – such as the former council offices, courthouse and jail, police station and board schools.
Key Facts
- Otley Conservation Area (OCA) was originally designated on 07.09.70 by West Riding County Council and Otley Urban District Council.
- Following a review and public consultation, OCA was extended on 20.12.78 by the City Council, bringing in Mount Pisgah, Cross Green and part of the Riverside.
- The extent of OCA is now 101 hectares.
- OCA has more than 200 listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest.
- Three are outstanding:- All Saints’ Parish Church, Kirkgate (Grade I), The Old Grammar School on Manor Square (Grade II*), and The Old Hall at 15/17 Kirkgate (Grade II*).
- There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments in OCA:- Otley Bridge, which was built or rebuilt in 1228, 1673 and 1776; Cup and ring at Wharfedale Meadows (more likely in fact to be scatter-finds).

Typical Building Types, Materials and Details
Traditional Otley is a stone-built environment with features such as:
- buildings of two or three storeys
- coarse Chevin gritstone masonry
- stone or slate roofs
- window openings of a vertical proportion, with stone lintels and cills or stone surrounds
- sliding-sash timber window frames
- panelled timber doors
- classical proportions
- Victorian shopfronts
- stone boundary walls and gate-posts
- stone and granite flags, setts and kerbs.
OTLEY CA: APPRAISAL PLAN (EAST)

KEY
- Conservation Area
- Character Area

Structures
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Listed Buildings
- Other Positive Buildings
- Important Walls

Features
- Historic Surfaces
- Other Positive Spaces
- Significant Views
- Significant Trees (approx. position)

Enhancement Opportunities
- Buildings that Detract
- Spaces that Detract

CHARACTER AREAS
1. Otley Town Centre
2. Otley Riverside
3. Wharfebank / Ilkley Rd / Piper Lane
4. Westgate / Beech Hill
5. North Parade
6. Cross Green
7. Cambridge Street & Leeds Road
8. Gay Lane
9. Station Road
10. Chevin Side & Silver Mill Hill

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Ten character areas have been identified within the Otley Conservation Area.

**AREA 1. OTLEY TOWN CENTRE**

**Description**
The appraisal plan reveals a good range of building types in the mixed-use town centre. Most are positive and in appropriate use and many are listed. But there are also a significant number of buildings that make an unsympathetic contribution to the character or appearance of OCA. These should be regarded as an opportunity for enhancement, preferably through development.

Notable features of Otley’s townscape are well set out in “A Walk around Otley” (please see “Where to find out More”). They include:

- The parish church, churchyard & footpaths, trees & memorials, former vicarage.
- The Market Place, Old Hall, Buttercross, Jubilee Clock and the Black Bull.
- Manor Square, Old Grammar School, Otley Manor House and former stables.
- Yards, ginnels and burgages.
- Maypole and former Mechanics’ Institute.
- River bridge, parks and trees.
- Gateway streets and C18 buildings.
- C19 chapels, churches, schools, banks and pubs.

This ‘movement’ map identifies pedestrian routes. Some routes use spaces that should be pedestrianised. All routes would benefit from environmental enhancement.

The maps highlight positive aspects - such as good frontages, pedestrian dominated areas, well-landscaped spaces and appropriate uses. Negative aspects need to be improved.

(LMU student projects, 1998)
Opportunities for enhancement

- Regeneration of derelict sites, for typical town centre uses including some residential, with well-designed modern / contemporary infill development, in traditional local materials - preferably to an approved urban design brief.
- Change of use of buildings that are positive but underused to appropriate town centre uses including some residential.
- Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
- Well-designed modern shop fronts and signs, or, where there is historical evidence available, restoration of a traditional shopfront.
- Action for the discontinuance of over-dominant existing signs.
- Better linkages between town centre and riverside.
- Schemes to retain and repair historic street surfaces, or to reintroduce them - especially in the yards and ginnels.
- Schemes to widen and repave the footways of the showcase C18 streets - such as Kirkgate - in natural Yorkstone flags and kerbs.
- Schemes to pedestrianise and repave narrow streets - such as Newmarket and Mercury Row - in natural Yorkstone or granite setts.
- Landscape work and the provision of boundary treatment to the public car parks.
- Landscape work to open spaces.
- A Town Trail / Historic Walk with suitable surfacing and signposting.

1 Bridge Street – shopfront restoration

9 Crow Lane – listed building at risk

Bowling Green – lack of enclosure
**AREA 2. OTLEY RIVERSIDE**

**Description**
- The Riverside is one of Otley's greatest assets, well known to local people and day-visitors alike.
- The area is dominated by a broad river, magnificent ancient bridge, long weir with mill, green space, public parks and trees.
- Framing the space are attractive residential terraces of c1900 on both sides of the river - Bridge Avenue, Farnley Lane, Newall Mount and Manor Street.
- Billams Hill has a fine row of Edwardian houses on the west side.
- On the north side of Farnley Lane, the stone-built element of Prince Henry’s Grammar School, with clock tower and gables, has a strong presence in the area. There are also some trees worthy of protection.
- A pair of Queen Anne lodges dated c1700, with quadrant walls and gateposts, adjoin Wharfemeadows Park on the north side. Both the park and the lodges were within the Farnley Hall estate until the Fawkes family donated them to Otley in 1924.

- There are only a few unsympathetic buildings - these are identified on the plan.
- The stone-built northern part of Garnetts’ Mill is the oldest element, retaining water channels and waterwheel pit. This relates directly to the weir and is the historic site of the manorial corn mill.

**Opportunities for enhancement**
1. Pursue an Otley Riverside Project.
2. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
3. Review the former cattle market auction site and its buildings, as part of the forthcoming OTP/MTI Riverside Plan.
4. Review Otley Bridge (a scheduled ancient monument) and the services it carries, and possibly promote the removal of the 1950s concrete cantilevered footway - subject to consultation with English Heritage.
5. Review the river crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, and possibly promote a modern hi-tech suspended footbridge.
6. Consider a landscaped boundary treatment to St. Joseph’s School, adjacent to the south riverside walk - subject to archaeological assessment.
7. Specimen tree planting in public parks, and tree management on both banks of the river.
8. Tree removal to allow views of handsome west face of Otley Bridge (probably by John Carr in 1776).
9. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.
AREA 3. WHARFEBANK / ILKLEY ROAD / PIPER LANE

Description

- Traditional Otley extends westwards to the Otley Mills of Ackroyd and Duncan. Now Wharfebank Business Centre, it is still the historic, economic and visual focus of western Otley.
- All but four buildings in this area make a positive contribution to the character of traditional Otley. Among them are a number of C18 and C19 listed buildings.

- The original 1793 Riverside Mill, reportedly dangerous, was demolished in c1975, but the overall group including its curtilage buildings remains positive: Pegholme Mill (1889), workers’ terrace, and the western mill and office frontage.
- The mill goit sluice gates survive to the NW.
- Both the north and south banks of the river are attractively wooded.
- Grove Hill Park, with the C18 Grove Hill House, complements the setting of the mills and has fine trees, gateposts and war memorial.
- The 1851 map shows mill workers’ housing on Piper Lane in curving terraces like Peels Crescent.
- Nos. 1-31 Ilkley Road is a long, elegant Victorian terrace of three storeys, which has gardens down to the riverbank.
- Later workers’ housing - on Ilkley Road, Piper Lane, Bradford Road, Ash Grove and the Granvilles - are also associated with Otley Mills and the listed former mill school of 1871. These were built in traditional materials and make a positive contribution to Otley’s character.

Opportunities for enhancement

1. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
2. Landscape work and woodland management to both banks of the river.
3. Investigate opportunities for permissive public access.
4. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.

AREA 4. WESTGATE / BEECH HILL

Description

- This area is the western gateway to the town centre and is part of traditional Otley.
- Ashfield Works (the former Ashfield Foundry) has been the subject of an industrial archaeology appraisal. It is of historic importance because of its association since 1854 with the printing industry and Wharfedale Press. Its stone-built ranges have the characteristic scale, materials and detailing of the local vernacular, and make a positive visual, as well as historic, contribution to OCA.
There is an opportunity here for an imaginative regeneration scheme.

- In the vicinity of the sheltered housing developments on Westgate there is a weakness in the townscape, but the streetscene does have continuity - thanks to the positive effect of trees and walls on the south side. The river also acts as a link.

There are townscape gaps on the south side, either side of Century House Works, and on the north side at the site of the former cinema and Beech Hill car park.

- The residential terraces of Guycroft and Mount Pisgah (1868) and the C18 rows at back of pavement on Westgate and Beech Hill form a positive entrance to Otley.

**Opportunities for enhancement**

1. Regeneration of derelict sites with well-designed modern/contemporary infill development, in traditional local materials.
2. Promote the development of two potential sites on the north side of Westgate and two on the south side:
   - Ashfield Works probably has the potential to be a major riverside development opportunity, with a mix of conversion and newbuild adjacent to the river, and improved public access - subject to highway assessment and a planning and development brief.
   - Deep site on the W. side of Guycroft between Westgate and the river probably has potential for residential development.
   - Corner site abutting the west side of No.54 Westgate (Century House Works) probably has potential for a new corner building.
   - Backland site to the south of Westgate, probably has the potential to take access from Westgate near the Cross Pipes PH. This site could extend as far as Walker’s Printing Works at the rear of Kirkgate in Otley Town Centre - subject to highway appraisal and industrial archaeology assessment.
3. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
4. Riverside on south bank:- tree management; landscape work; investigate potential to negotiate public access to the river bank as part of new development.
5. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.

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**AREA 5. NORTH PARADE**

**Description**

- This area typifies working Otley, in that there are workers’ stone-built terraced houses to either side of a major factory, Silvine Works, of William Sinclair & Sons.
- Some of the factory buildings date from 1884 and make a positive contribution to the conservation area.
- The six terraces in the area - on North Parade, North Street, North Avenue, Ramsey Terrace and Wharfe Street - make a positive contribution to the special character or appearance of ‘traditional Otley’. One row retains its original dormers.
- North Parade provides a degree of enclosure to the Licks car park on the site of the former cattle market.
- On Riverdale Road there are the Sunnylee Estate cottages of 1915, built in an attractive Vernacular Revival tradition, and some fine highway trees.
- On Wharfe Street is the former National Infants’ School of 1891, which merits retention and conversion.

**Opportunities for enhancement**

1. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
2. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.
AREA 6. CROSS GREEN

Description
- The buildings of the Cross Green area are very positive, with only the odd exception, and the maypole on the junction is an historic focal point.

The eastern part has more than a dozen traditional stone terraces - including Fern Bank, Park Terrace, Danefield Terrace and Grosvenor Terrace - many of which have elegant detailing. In front of Grosvenor Terrace is an attractive green space with fine trees. The Summercross PH, and adjacent terraces and the cemetery lodge with gatepiers are appropriate end-stops to the CA.

Opportunities for enhancement
1. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
2. New maypole and paving scheme.
3. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.

AREA 7. CAMBRIDGE STREET & LEEDS ROAD

Description
- The stone terraces in this area contribute positively to the character and appearance of traditional Otley.
- The terraces on Cambridge Street have elegant paired door surrounds, canted bays and gabled wings. Carlton Street and Orchard Street were built at about the same time and some have wide passageways.

The terraces at the back of pavement of Albion Street and Croft Street are more austere but have character.
- These merits outweigh the intrusion of a few 1960s blocks.
- On the south side of Leeds Road are two historic works buildings: David Payne's Caxton Works and the Albion Works of John Kelley. These are accompanied by four residential terraces - three stone-built and one (rendered) brick.

Opportunities for enhancement
1. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
2. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.

AREA 8. GAY LANE

Description
- Gay Lane is the southeastern former turnpike gateway to the town centre and is part of traditional Otley.
- On the east side of Gay Lane most buildings are positive. Bloomfield House is a listed building and has a walled garden. There is a surviving barn on Back Orchard Street. On the corner with Fairfax Street is the well-detailed former LICS building of 1901.
- The petrol filling station and Tate's works are a considerable intrusion.
- On the west side of Gay Lane there are three robust groups of buildings. Behind a terrace with a datestone of 1841 is Elliott's Steel Croft Foundry of c1887. South of The Yeoman pub, which is an attractive Victorian building, is Toll Bar House (1850), and Cambridge House, which is an elegant double-fronted house facing south. Chevin House in the southern corner is a stone-built house of c1850 with elegant detailing.
This and The Chevin terminate the view south on Gay Lane.

Between the Gay Lane frontage and Myers Croft runs a long strip of open space, now allotments. This and many other plot boundaries are remnants of the historic crofts (long plots) of Bondgate. An open stream, called Steel Croft Beck, runs north along one of the boundaries. The layout of Myers Croft, an example of social housing, also follows the historic crofts.

Opportunities for enhancement
1. Regeneration of derelict sites with well-designed modern/contemporary infill development, in traditional local materials, preferably oriented N-S and picking up croft boundaries.
2. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
3. Retention of allotments, which denote the historic crofts, as open space.
4. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.

AREA 9. STATION ROAD

Description
- Station Road survives as an elegant street that retains its setts and stone footways. Yorkstone setts continue into the former railway station yard of 1865. Together with Queens Place, the street makes a positive contribution to Otley.
- Station Road was developed in former croft(s) in two or more phases. The long terrace on the west side is in a mix of Gothic Revival styles and has paired doorcases and canted bays. The houses on the east side have turn-of-the-century architectural features.

Opportunities for enhancement
- To the north are three well-proportioned workshops, including the former Primitive Methodist Chapel of 1874 - all in traditional materials. Other nearby buildings are not so.
- Station Road is on a principal walkers' route to The Chevin.

AREA 10. CHEVIN SIDE

Description
- The Chevin rolls down to Birdcage Walk, on which the hamlet of Chevin Side forms a focus. There is a group of traditional terraces, a converted mill and the former station master’s house. Plastic windows do not suit the converted mill. Walls and trees frame the spaces.
- The intervening two-lane by-pass barely intrudes on Chevin Side as it is set down among trees, except for the rather utilitarian bridge.
- Together with the adjacent stone-built villas in wooded grounds - Woodlands, The Old Vicarage, Station House and Beech Grove - Chevin Side forms a very attractive and coherent area, which is traversed by the previously mentioned walkers’ route to The Chevin.
- Adjacent to Chevin Side is the Silver Mill Hill hamlet, where the tall former mill, listed Grade II, dominates the scene in a (mostly) fine landscape setting.

Opportunities for enhancement
1. Unsympathetic buildings should be redeveloped or maybe re-clad and/or re-roofed.
2. Development should be resisted in the setting of Silver Mill Hill hamlet.
3. Tree management.
4. Householders are encouraged to retain or reinstate original external architectural details of their houses.
A conservation area is a place of special architectural or historic interest which has been given protection through the planning system. There are 63 conservation areas in Leeds, each with its own unique character. They vary greatly: from Leeds City Centre to the town centres of Morley, Otley and Wetherby, to the great suburbs of Roundhay and Headingley, to tiny hamlets like Woodhall Hills or Stank Hall.

In all cases though the aim is the same: to recognise those characteristics that make the place special and try to protect it from harmful change. The City Council has to give special attention in dealing with all planning matters in a conservation area to "preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area". Everyone is encouraged to do the same, from residents to government departments.

An area is designated by the City Council following consultation with local residents and others interested in the neighbourhood. From time to time, the Council is required to review its conservation areas and make recommendations for protecting them. This might include a change to the boundaries of the designated area, or specific planning policies or suggesting sites for improvement.

For a property within a conservation area planning controls are stronger than elsewhere. Cases are dealt with on their merits. 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 are no longer "permitted development" and will require planning permission. Examples are: - rear dormers, 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 are expected for new buildings and for alterations to existing ones.

PLANNING POLICY

National planning policy for conservation areas is set out in PPG15 'Planning & the Historic Environment', and local policies for all aspects of planning are brought together in the Leeds Unitary Development Plan.

English Heritage has published statements of policy and guidance on conservation areas, including the following. These are available by telephoning English Heritage on 0870 333 1181:

- "Conservation Area Appraisals"
- "Practice and Management"
- "Development in Historic Areas"
- "Power of Place"

Otley from the Chevin

WHAT A CONSERVATION AREA IS

This report and further information is available via the Conservation and Heritage link on the Development Department’s page on this website: www.leeds.gov.uk

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OTLEY

Books, articles, photographs, old maps and postcards, street directories, and listed building descriptions can all help to build up a picture of the locality.

SOURCES INCLUDE:

Otley Museum: The Mechanics (Civic Centre), Cross Green, Otley. The Museum has 1970s surveys, pictorial collections and much more.

Tel. 01943 461052 (mornings).
Otley Library: 6 Boroughgate, Otley. Tel. 0113 2243285.
Otley One-Stop Shop (LCC): 8 Boroughgate, Otley. Tel. 0113 2477706.
Central Reference Library: (Local & Family History Section), The Headrow, Leeds LS1 3AB. Tel 0113 247 8290. Website: www.leeds.gov.uk/library Email: local.studies@leeds.gov.uk

West Yorkshire Archive Service: Chapeltown Road, Sheepscar, Leeds LS7 3AP. Tel. 0113 2145814. Website: www.wyjs.archives.org.uk E-mail: wyjs@leeds.org.uk

West Yorkshire Archaeology Service: Registry of Deeds, Newstead Road, Wakefield WF1 2DE, Tel. 01924 306794. Fax: 01924 306810. Website: www.arch.wyjs.org.uk
OTHER WEB SITES INCLUDE:

www.otleyinternet.co.uk/gallery.htm has an old pictures gallery.
www.communique.co.uk/brad/octf is the website of Otley Conservation Task Force.
www.leodis.net has pictures of the Leeds area including Otley.
www.imagesofengland.org.uk has listed building descriptions.
www.old-maps.co.uk has early Ordnance Survey Maps.

CONSERVATION AREA STUDIES INCLUDE:

■ "Otley Conservation Area Assessment" by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, March 2000. This report included a survey of building periods.

TOWN STUDIES INCLUDE:

■ "Otley and Wharfedale Community Plan 2001/02". Contact: Kiera Swift, Locality Coordinator: Tel. 0113 2144838.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH CONSERVING OTLEY

Otley Conservation Task Force.
Website: www.communique.co.uk/brad/octf
Contact: Ian Andrew.
Email: is_andrew@hotmail.com

Otley Museum, The Mechanics (Civic Centre), 2 Cross Green, Otley. Tel. 01943 461052.

Otley and Wharfedale CIT, North West Community Planning.
Contact: Kiera Swift, Locality Coordinator. No. 3 The Green, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4RH.
Tel. 0113 2144838.
Email: kiera.swift@leeds.gov.uk

Otley Town Partnership and Otley Town Council.
Contact: Otley Town Clerk’s Office: The Civic Centre, 2 Cross Green, Otley. Tel. 01943 466335. Fax: 01943 468658.
Email: otleytowncouncil@aol.com

Otley Market Towns Initiative.
Contact: Ian Stewart, Yorkshire Forward Market Towns Manager. Email: ian.stewart@yorkshire-forward.com


"Otley CAP Scheme Preliminary Application" by Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), LCC, July 1997. This report included surveys by DPE on: - townscape quality, landscape opportunities, pedestrian areas, surface materials, enclosure, walling and roofing materials.

"Otley Town Study" by Clare Lane, LMU Dissertation, June 1992. This project included case studies on historic buildings, shop fronts & signs, recent development, and a proposed extension.

"Otley Conservation Area Policy Report" by Leeds City Council - Nov. 1977. This report looked at: - key buildings; shop front design; intrusive signs; neglected buildings and spaces.

HISTORY REFERENCES INCLUDE:


■ "Guide to Otley Museum Documentary Collection".

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