



# DENTON CONSERVATION AREA

Character Appraisal

December 2007

## DENTON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

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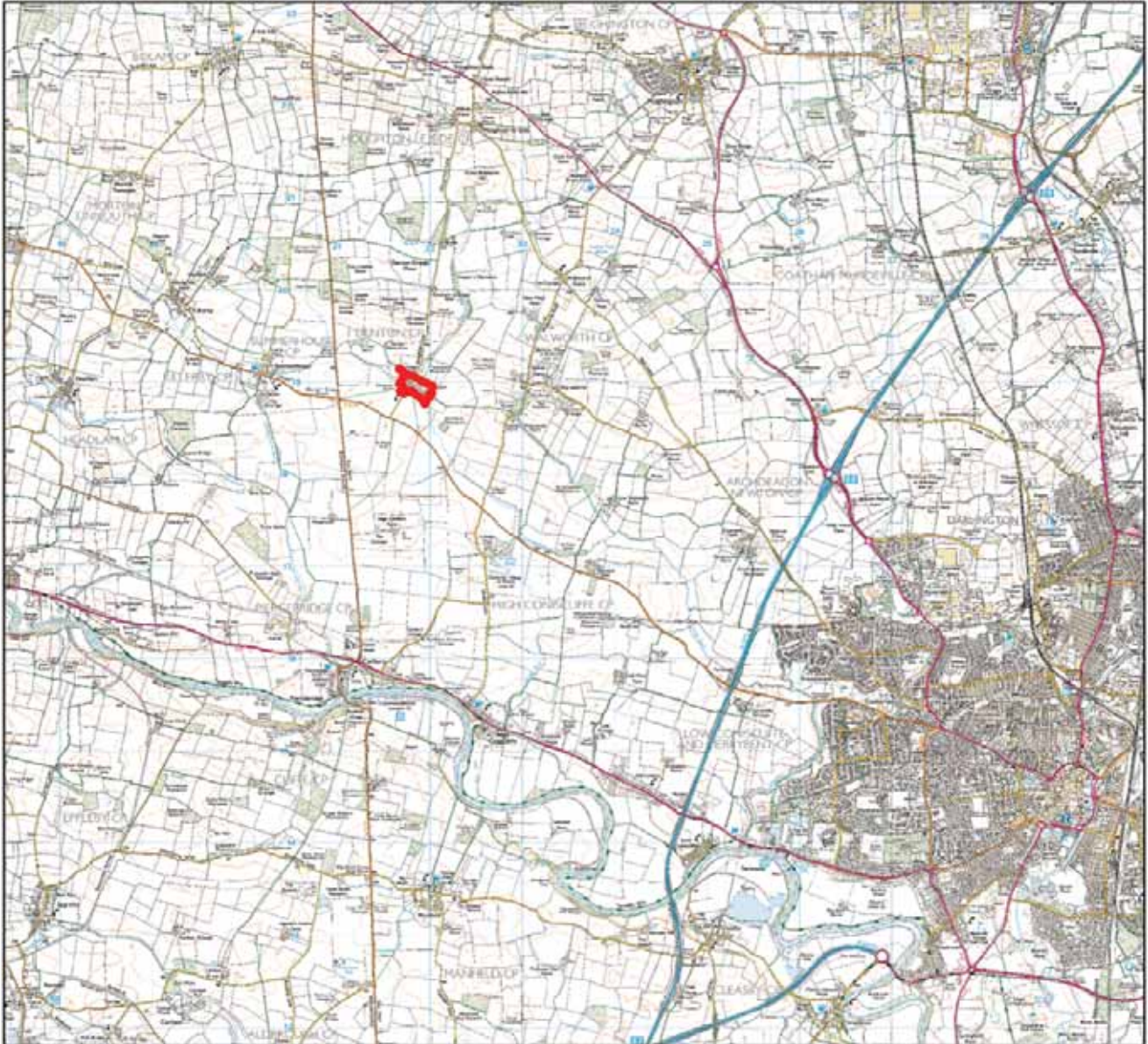
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## DENTON CONSERVATION AREA

(INDICATED BY RED BOUNDARY)



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## 1. PURPOSE OF A CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Denton Conservation Area was designated on 27th July 1981 (see enclosed map).

- 1.1 Conservation Area designation is the main instrument available to local authorities to give effect to conservation policies for a particular neighbourhood or area. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area's special interest.
- 1.2 It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. Our experience of a historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings – on the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular mix of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on vistas along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces between buildings. Conservation area designation is seen as the means of recognising the importance of all these factors and of ensuring that conservation policy addresses the quality of townscape in its broadest sense as well as protecting individual buildings.
- 1.3 A process of change within a Conservation Area is inevitable and the purpose of a character appraisal such as this is to define as clearly as possible the historic (and by implication, archaeological), architectural and natural components of the conservation area that are considered especially important and contribute most to its character.
- 1.4 The principal aims of this document are intended to define:-

- What influences have given Denton its particular character
- What chiefly reflects this character and is most worth conserving
- What has suffered damage or loss and may need reinstating
- Areas that may be improved

## 2. ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

This section of the appraisal contains an assessment of:-

- A. Location and Setting
- B. Archaeological significance
- C. Historical Development
- D. Character Analysis

### Summary of Special Interest

- 2.1 Denton's historic and architectural interest exists as a result of sustained single ownership with limited new development; consequently, the village retains its agricultural and pastoral influence, little changed in 150 years.
- 2.2 Denton remains largely unchanged from (at least) the first Ordnance Survey map of 1859. Only a handful of estate houses appear to have been erected since, and a few more recent stone-clad houses.
  - a) **Location and Setting**
    - 2.2 Denton is a small agricultural village located approximately 6 miles North-West of Darlington and half a mile North of the main Darlington to Staindrop road (B6279).
    - 2.2 Denton lies at the foot of a relatively steep escarpment from the north (the steepness created the head of water for the mill. The mill race and mill pond are still partially evident in the landscape).
    - 2.3 Denton lies in gently undulating and predominantly open countryside around the confluence of two small streams, the Tenement Beck and the Cocker Beck. The Cocker Beck passes through the village on a NW to SE direction, while the Tenement Beck enters the village from the NE.

- 2.4 The bank of the Cocker Beck forms a wide and open visual outlet from the central area of Denton to the North West and South East. Tenement Beck is narrow and less significant in strength being a narrow cut into the landscape from the North, disappearing past the gable end of a Denton Hall farm building. The two becks create natural links between the built and the natural environment and enhance the rural and secluded impression of the village.
- 2.5 The most intensive accumulation of buildings is situated within the bowl of the undulation, near to the two streams' actual junction.
- b) Archaeological Significance**
- 2.6 The earliest archaeological remains found in Denton belong to the Prehistoric period. In 1900, some flint hand tools were found in a field to the East of New Lane. In 1907, a stone hammer of Neolithic or Bronze Age was found at Glebe Farm, off Houghton Lane. While no prehistoric evidence for settlement in Denton has been found, it is clear that Neolithic hunter-gatherers, at the very least, passed through what is now Denton, on the way to hunting grounds or to the river.
- 2.7 The road, known as Houghton Lane appears to have been the main Roman road heading North (presumably from the major Roman settlement at Piercebridge).
- 2.8 An area approximately 200 metres NE of Denton Hall farm (outside the Northern boundary of the conservation area) is highlighted as being the probable deserted remains of medieval Denton. Traces of earthworks can be seen on site, although no building foundations exist.
- 2.9 On the site of the former Church of St Mary, in Church Lane, the site of a 12thC chapel can be found. Some of the headstones in the graveyard are listed (see appendix) and others have been highlighted (in the appendix) for their craftsmanship in stone carving.
- 2.10 St Mary's church (now a private dwelling) built in 1891, replaced the earlier church built in 1810 but extended in 1836. A Grade II listed stone medieval coffin (later used as a drinking trough for animals in the churchyard), existed at the side of the church, but was unlawfully removed around 1996. Durham County Council's website, "Keys to the Past" notes the existence of a medieval stone effigy of a woman, thought to be the wife of the local Lord Aubrey de Conyers, still to be found inside a cupboard in the former church's vestry, now believed to be in the Bowes museum, Barnard Castle.
- c) Historical Development<sup>1</sup>**
- 2.11 There appear to be numerous explanations for the name "Denton". Various descriptions as an Anglo-Saxon word for 'farm in a valley', it could also denote "settlement of the Danes", or derived from 'the Dene', in which it stands<sup>2</sup>. During the middle ages, the village was part of the parish of Gainford.
- 2.12 From the middle ages, Denton was the property of the Earls of Westmorland, but has been in the ownership of various landowning families. By charter (without date) William de Denton, granted to his son and heir, "half the chief messuage, orchard and mill of Denton". Before 1372, Nicholas Brackenbury married Agnes, daughter and co-heir of Nicholas de Denton, obtaining the lands in Denton. In 1442, Sir Thomas Tempest held a large estate under the Earl of Westmoreland. In 1849 the Duke of Cleveland bought the Denton lands from the Culley family.<sup>3</sup>

Medieval ownership of Denton seems confused so only key dates not undermined elsewhere have been used.

<sup>1</sup> Historical references, Keys to the Past, Durham County council, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>2</sup> Historical, Topographical and Descriptive view of the County Palatine of Durham, E Mackenzie & M Ross, (1834) p.164.

<sup>3</sup> The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham (Vol 4) Robert Surtees, (1840) (Republished EP Publishing, East Ardsley, Wakefield, 1972), p.128.

- 2.13 Denton Hall farm lies at the heart of Denton. Denton Hall itself was originally built as the mansion house of the Tonge family in the early 17thC. Robert Surtees, writing in 1840 stated that the Hall was “no later than Charles I.”<sup>4</sup> For centuries, it would have been the most impressive house in the village. Unfortunately, the house has been much altered and in 1967 was reduced from three storeys in height to two.
- Some local residents believe a medieval Denton Hall stood in the field now known as Hall field, to south of the two pairs of semi-detached houses off New Lane. Some archaeology is apparent in this field when viewed from the air but is unclear what this comprises.
- 2.14 Mackenzie and Ross, writing in 1834 highlight “the ancient chapel of Denton”, as “having become much too dilapidated, it was taken down, and the present building erected in 1810, principally with the old materials”. “A stone coffin, now lying near the entrance, was discovered about three feet below the surface, whilst the chapel was rebuilding. From the sculptures on the lid (which is now broken and removed), it was supposed to have contained the body of a Knight Templar.”<sup>5</sup> Albeit Grade II listed, this coffin disappeared around 1996 at the time of the conversion of the church into residential use (see list description).
- 2.15 Most other buildings in the village date from the 18th and 19thC. Apart from Denton Hall, the cottage beside the Cocker Beck, South of Denton Hall farm may (based on external appearance) be of a similar 17thC date.
- 2.15 In 1892, the land of the Duke of Cleveland, including Denton passed to the Raby Estate under Lord Barnard, in whose ownership the village now rests. Historical texts indicate that Denton was once a much larger settlement, but suffered decline during the enclosure movement in the 18thC.
- 2.16 In 1894, Whellan wrote: “The parochial chapelry of Denton, which is dependent on the parish of Gainford, comprises the townships of Denton and Houghton-le-Side. It is bounded on the east and north by Heighington, on the west and south-west by Gainford and on the south by Coniscliffe. The township of Denton comprises an area of 949 acres, and its annual value is £1002.”
- 2.17 By the middle of the 19thC, Denton was mainly tenanted by workers employed on the Manor Farm. Afterwards, Denton experienced a much slower decline, but traditional services such as a pub, shop and school (which closed in 1977) have all been lost.
- 2.18 The earliest pupil registers suggest that the Church of England mixed primary school on Church Lane operated from 1875. A new classroom was built in 1895.<sup>6</sup>
- Kelly’s (1890) says it opened in 1874 built for 72 children; it is said that the average attendance was 45.
- 2.19 A few estate cottages built in 1923 and later and a few more recently erected detached houses have been added within the village boundary since then. Only 19 houses exist within the village, with the vast majority of buildings being agricultural.

## d) Character Analysis

- 2.20 The majority of farm buildings, both domestic and agricultural, are of magnesium limestone rubble construction and whitewashed thus identifying them as being in Raby Estate ownership. High stonewalls, some whitewashed, of around 1.5 metres or more, enclose the paddocks and yards, many of them fronting the lanes through the village. Where stonewalls do not front the highways, the effect is of an attractive, mostly undeveloped vista over surrounding countryside, a mixture of grazing land, woodland plantations and meadowland.

<sup>4</sup> Historical, Topographical and Descriptive view of the county Palatine of Durham, E Mackenzie and M Ross, 1834, p164.

<sup>5</sup> Historical, Topographical and Descriptive view of the county Palatine of Durham, E Mackenzie and M Ross, 1834, p164.

<sup>6</sup> Durham County Records office.

All other references, Keys to the Past, Durham County council

2.21 The large group of buildings constituting Denton Hall farm is the visual focal point of Denton and a key determinant of the village's character. Around the farm buildings are a number of farm workers' cottages. Denton Hall cottages are the most attractive and probably date from the early 19thC. This row of cottages is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1859, although the windows appear to have been enlarged, probably in the early 20thC.

2.22 Church Lane runs on the north side of here to the Eastern extremity of the village, terminating in a field gate, beyond which is agricultural land and a vague track, which is a public footpath leading to Walworth. At the termination of this lane is the redundant 19thC school building (now residential) with its large unsympathetic modern extension.

2.23 On the South side of Church Lane are three buildings of historic interest – Denton Hall and Glebe House (both listed Grade II) and the former St Mary's Church (the listed buildings are highlighted elsewhere in this document).

2.24 The third building, the former 19thC St Mary's church, built in 1891 in the "Early English" gothic style, replaced an earlier church of 1810, extended 1836 (shown annotated on later Ordnance survey maps). Before the deconsecration of the church a medieval stone coffin existed, situated against the external south nave wall of the church. This appears to have gone missing shortly after the Church of England vacated the building in 1995 (two monuments in the adjacent graveyard are also Grade II listed).

2.25 The built form of the village combines the strong traditional forms of the whitewashed farm buildings with the strong functional forms of the more modern black corrugated barns. The overall feeling is of a tight, private group of buildings, of black and white composition, set within largely open countryside. Denton displays many of the characteristics typical of other Raby Estate villages within the Teesdale area, such as whitewashed houses, neat well-maintained boundaries, walls and open undeveloped spaces.

2.26 Denton is a fine example of a working agricultural village, and without being particularly neat and tidy, or exhibiting exceptional architectural merit, nevertheless displays a strong character worthy of conservation, the retention and improvement of which the Council will support.

The whitewashing of buildings dates back to the 19thC when the Duke of Cleveland became stranded in a storm while out hunting in Teesdale. He was refused shelter at a local farmhouse which he had mistaken for one of his own properties. Determined not to suffer such an humiliation again, the Duke ordered that from then onwards, all buildings belonging to his estate were to be painted white for identification.

## SPECIFIC FEATURES

### 2.27 Character Features

A number of attractive features exist:

- Within the West (New Lane) elevation wall of the large Denton Hall farmbuilding is situated a 19thC red postbox, marked "VR".
- The Raby crest can be seen in a stone plaque inserted in the first pair of semi-detached cottages located on New Lane, when entering the village from the South, and dated "1923".
- Another interesting feature of the village's Raby Estate ownership is the regular whitewashing of the buildings and even the boulders found demarcating, in several places, the lane edges.

The Council will encourage the retention and restoration of features, which add to the historic character and interest of the village.

### 2.28 Roofing Materials

The buildings in Denton possess a diverse mixture of roof cladding materials – artificial slate, natural slate, concrete, clay pantile (some of the latter being traditional handmade tiles, probably 19thC or earlier) corrugated tin, asbestos sheeting and plastic sheet. The Council would recommend and encourage the use and retention of traditional roofing materials, such as natural slate and clay pantile for roofs within the conservation area.

## 2.29 Stone Boundary Walls

Sandstone rubble walls can be found throughout the village. They create a tight entry point into the village from both New Lane, Houghton Lane and the cul-de-sac at Church Lane and focus the eye towards the core of the village.

Fields and parcels of land are defined by high rubble stone walls (many whitewashed by the Raby Estate), heightening the sense of enclosure and privacy prevalent within this compact cluster of buildings and spaces. The Council will encourage the retention and restoration of feature walls (as highlighted in the enclosed character map), which add to the historic character and interest of the village.

## 2.30 Sign post

Although outside the village and conservation area boundary, worth mentioning is the cast iron sign pointing the direction to Denton and Houghton-le-Side. This is probably early 20thC, and can be found at the junction of the B6279 and New Lane.

## 2.31 Trees

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in Denton; however, Conservation Area status provides some protection for trees (please refer to section 5.38 - 5.40 on Policy). There are four main areas of tree cover:- 1) Garth's Hill plantation to the North West (outside the conservation area, but having an impact on views out and from within the area); 2) Tree-cover between Denton Hall and Denton Hall cottages towards the Cocker Beck; 3) Along the stone wall boundary between Denton Hall and the former church (to the South of the graveyard); 4) Houghton Lane, North of Glebe Farm, with a line of mature trees on each side of the stone boundary walls and an arc of trees forming a boundary treatment in the field slightly to the East.

## 2.32 Sounds

Adding to the tranquillity of the village's character is the almost entire lack of mechanical vehicular traffic. The only sounds (other than human voices!) to be heard being birdsong, the calling of horses, cattle and geese in enclosures, yards and fields within the village confines. During or after heavy rain, the flow of water can be heard in the becks. Occasionally, agricultural machinery can be heard in association with the local farms and stables.

## 2.33 Smells

Odours, also, add to the character of the conservation area; these are predominantly agricultural, being associated with the keeping of livestock and horses.



### 3.0 SOCIAL HISTORY

- 3.1 Denton has a long and varied social history, documented over 300 years. A document dated 1641-2 titled the “Durham Protestations” (...for the maintenance of the Protestant religion for the county of Durham) required all Denton men to sign a legally binding document proving their loyalty to the Crown and the Protestant religion. This was during a period when Catholicism was viewed, both politically and theologically, with great suspicion, when Catholic plots to overturn the English monarchy were suspected.
- 3.2 Among the 29 males of Denton to give their signatures to the “protestations”, notable inclusions were George, Cuthbert and Ralph Tonge, then owners of Denton Hall.<sup>7</sup> As all the men could write their own names, it seems likely only the gentry or gentlemen farmers were called upon to sign this declaration.
- 3.3 Established by Act of Parliament under the reign of Charles I in 1662, the “Hearth Tax Returns for Lady Day, 1666”<sup>8</sup> show how taxes were collected and the wealth of Denton was distributed in that year.
- 3.4 Hearth Taxes were collected on a half-yearly basis by local officials known as Petty Constables. Their role was to establish the number of hearths within each domestic property, and if hearths were hidden they often did this by counting the numbers of protruding chimney stacks. By 1664, they had become known as “Chimney-men”. Taxes were then levied at 2/- (two shillings) per hearth for Solvent residents.
- 3.5 Residents were divided into Solvents and non-solvents. Householders too poor to pay Poor Law tax or Church taxes, or whose house was worth not more than 20/- (20 shillings), did not occupy land of the value 20/- (20 shillings) per annum, or did not possess property to the value of £10 were exempt from the tax, being “non-solvents”.
- 3.6 The Hearth Tax Returns for 1666 show that Denton had 12 Solvents and 19 non-solvents in that year. Between them, the 12 solvents possessed 33 hearths. The largest house, owned by “Anthony Byerley, Gent” possessed 8 hearths (this was almost certainly Denton Hall). Most other properties possessed between one and five hearths, which serves to illustrate the level of grandeur Mr Byerley’s house with eight hearths must have possessed. The 19 non-solvents possessed 19 hearths, one per house and would have been exempt from payment.
- 3.7 In the early 19thC Denton had, like most towns and villages in England, an Overseer to the poor (the overseer being a local official, often also acting as a Constable or Surveyor). The Poor Law meant that financial aid could be given under poor law relief. Such relief was defined as “rent, bedding, coal, clothing, house repairs, funerals, doctors bills and sick relief”.<sup>9</sup> After the end of the Napoleonic wars, with soldiers and sailors still returning to their homes well into the 1820’s, agricultural prices dropped, as a result of the ending of hostilities and the requirement of extra feed for horses and men overseas, bringing ruin to many farmers. Records show they were often forced into labouring for other farmers to survive. Although as prices stabilised, some managed to return to their previous livelihoods.
- 3.8 In 1818 the population of Denton was 184 (95 male, 89 female). 23 years later in 1841, the population had not progressed. 32 of the 34 families were in agricultural occupations, with two others in trade and marketing.<sup>10</sup> Clearly Denton still relied heavily on agriculture for the livelihoods of its residents and sudden changes in agricultural practice and prices had dramatic effects on Denton’s economy.

7 “Durham Protestations”, republished by Andrews & Co, Sadler Street, Durham, 1922.

8 “Hearth Tax Returns for Lady Day 1666”, pub. Cleveland, North Yorkshire and South Durham Family History Society, 2000.

9. North Yorkshire county record office journal No.6 April 1978, R Smith, Parish Welfare in nineteenth century Denton.

10. North Yorkshire county record office journal No.6 April 1978, R Smith, Parish Welfare in nineteenth century Denton.

- 3.9 The Poor Law alms were distributed by the local Overseer (the overseer being a local official, often also acting as a Constable or Surveyor). Sir Henry Carr Ibbotson, living at Denton Hall signed the accounts of the Overseer for 1820.<sup>11</sup> From these accounts, we can determine the stories behind some of the requests for alms. For example:-
- 3.10 George Hey, residing in Denton (variously also spelled as Haigh or Heigh) and his 2nd son also named George. One had been a worsted weaver, but was listed as an Inn-keeper by 1783. His 2nd son, George, would have been 44 in 1818. Here is the full record of help given (It is not clear if this relates to George the father or George the son):-
- 1818-9**  
3s 6d per week for 52 weeks.
- 1819-20**  
House rent £2 2s 0d.  
4s per week for 52 weeks  
George Hey all night 1s (it is unknown to what this alludes, but may have been the visit of a doctor).
- 1820-21**  
4s per week for 29 weeks  
His widdow [sic] 2s per week for 23 weeks  
His funerall [sic] £1 1s 0d.
- 1821-22 (Widow Hey)**  
2s per week for 6 weeks  
1s per week for 46 weeks  
Allowed for rent £2 2s 0d.  
A letter from her 6d.
- 1824-25 (Widow Hey)**  
Going to see Widow Hey to enquire into her income 7s  
Give her for rent £1 5s 0d.<sup>12</sup>
- 3.11 It is clear that following the death of her husband, George, their previous income of 4 shillings per week was reduced. Immediately following his death, Widow Hey's income dropped to 2 shillings per week. By 1824-25, she was considered less worthy of charity, and had had her income reduced again to £1 5s 0d per annum. No further records appear to exist for Mrs Hey.
- 3.12 For those unfortunates elsewhere in Denton, the poorhouses of Bradford, Farsley and Horton (also near Bradford) appear to have had links with Denton's overseer. Quite why links extended to these particular poorhouses is uncertain but the poor were taken there for a small fee of between 5/- and 7/-. This is thought to recompense the cost of the poorhouse representative making the journey there and back.

11. North Yorkshire county record office journal No.6 April 1978, R Smith, Parish Welfare in nineteenth century Denton.

12. North Yorkshire county record office journal No.6 April 1978, R Smith, Parish Welfare in nineteenth century Denton.

## 4.0 POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT AREAS

- 4.1 Denton is generally a very tidy village, with little requiring improvement or restoration. However, three areas worthy of improvement have been identified on the accompanying character map. These are:-
- 4.2 The 17th/early 18thC cottage (highlighted on the enclosed character map) is shown as being a building of local historic interest. This cottage is probably (after Denton Hall) the second oldest building in the village. Currently it appears to be used for agricultural storage. Many of the old hand-made clay pantiles are missing or have slipped, allowing large holes to appear in the roof; this is likely to have serious structural implications for this building. The Council will encourage the sensitive retention and restoration of this property, which adds significantly to the historic character and interest of the village.



The cottage, South of Denton Hall cottages, identified as probably of 17th or early 18th date by its high pitched roof. Possibly originally thatched.

- 4.3 Worth also considering is the removal of overhead powerlines and telegraph poles, which would be a desirable improvement.

- 4.4 The large modern-designed agricultural shed recently erected on the East side of New Lane (although just outside the conservation area boundary), dominates this part of the conservation area, being the largest single building in the village. While the Council recognises the requirement for agriculture to remain viable in Denton, the Council will encourage efforts to reduce the impact of this building on the historic and otherwise traditional main entry point into the village. For instance, indigenous tree or hedge planting around it could soften the impact this building has when viewed from New Lane.



The recently added agricultural shed on New Lane dominates the area.

- 4.5 The graveyard on Church Lane, immediately South of the former Church of St Mary, despite containing important gravestones, tombs and the archaeological remains of churches spanning over 700 years, is becoming seriously overgrown, presumably not having been maintained since the closure of the church in 1995. Recent dumping in the graveyard has exacerbated the impression of abandonment.



Denton churchyard in 2007. Monuments and headstones, some Grade II listed, are disappearing beneath the undergrowth.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION

The statutory definition of 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 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate these areas as conservation areas. This requirement is expanded upon in Planning Policy Guidance note 15, “Planning and the Historic Environment”, Section 4.

- 5.1 Section 69 of the Act imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. There are now more than 8,000 conservation areas in England. Whilst listing procedures are focused on the protection of individual buildings, conservation area designation is the main instrument available to authorities to give effect to conservation policies for a particular neighbourhood or area. Designation introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all the aspects of character or appearance that define an area’s special interest.

### Assessment and designation of conservation areas

- 5.2 It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. There has been increasing recognition in recent years that our experience of a historic area depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings – on the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular ‘mix’ of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street

furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on vistas along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of spaces between buildings. Conservation area designation should be seen as the means of recognising the importance of all these factors and of ensuring that conservation policy addresses the quality of townscape in its broadest sense as well as the protection of individual buildings. *appearance* of the conservation area.

- 5.3 Local planning authorities also have under section 69 a duty to review their areas from time to time to consider whether further designation of conservation areas is called for. In some districts, areas suitable for designation may have been fully identified already; and in considering further designations authorities should bear in mind that it is important that conservation areas are seen to justify their status and that the concept is not devalued by the designation of areas lacking any special interest. Authorities should seek to establish consistent local standards for their designations and should periodically review existing conservation areas and their boundaries against those standards: cancellation of designation should be considered where an area or part of an area is no longer considered to possess the special interest which led to its original designation.

- 5.4 The more clearly the special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation is defined and recorded, the sounder will be the basis for local plan policies and development control decisions, as well as for the formulation of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of an area. The definition of an area’s special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to (and detract from) it. Conservation areas vary greatly, but certain aspects will almost always form the basis for a coherent assessment: the topography – for example,

thoroughfares and property boundaries – and its historical development; the archaeological significance and potential; the prevalent building materials; the character and hierarchy of spaces; the quality and relationship of buildings in the area and also of trees and other green features.

The assessment should always note those unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the special interest of the area. More detailed advice on assessment and on other aspects of the management of conservation areas is set out in English Heritage's guidance note Conservation Area Practice.

- 5.5 The principal concern of a local planning authority in considering the designation of a conservation area should be to form a judgement on whether the area is of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. In deciding whether it is desirable to designate, an authority may take into account the resources likely to be required, not only for the administration of conservation area controls, but also for consultation with local residents and formulation of policies for a new area: without follow-up, designation is unlikely to be effective in itself. An authority's justification for designation, as reflected in its assessment of an area's special interest and its character and appearance, is a factor which the Secretary of State will take into account in considering appeals against refusals of conservation area consent for demolition, and appeals against refusals of planning permission (see also paragraph 2.9).
- 5.6 Given the nature of conservation area controls – essentially controls over demolition; strengthened controls over minor development; and the protection of trees – designation is not likely to be appropriate as a means of protecting landscape features, except where they form an integral part of the historic built environment and that factor

needs to be taken into account in considering any planning applications which would affect them. The Courts have held that it is legitimate in appropriate circumstances to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form the heart of that area (*R v Canterbury City Council ex parte David Halford*, February 1992; CO/2794/1991). Designation is clearly not a proper means of controlling activities (eg agricultural operations) which do not fall within the definition of development. Designation may well, however, be suitable for historic parks or gardens and other areas of historic landscape containing structures that contribute to their special interest and that fall within the categories subject to conservation area controls. Where there are no other reasons for designating a conservation area, trees may instead be protected by means of a tree preservation order.

- 5.7 There is no statutory requirement to consult prior to designation or cancellation of designation, but it will be highly desirable that there should be consultation with local residents, businesses and other local interests (eg amenity bodies), over both the identification of areas and the definition of their boundaries. The greater the public support that can be enlisted for designation before it takes place, the more likely it is that policies for the area will be implemented voluntarily and without the need for additional statutory controls. Local planning authorities should advise English Heritage and the appropriate regional Government Office when conservation areas are designated.
- 5.8 English Heritage and the Secretary of State for National Heritage also have powers to designate conservation areas, but look to local planning authorities in the first instance to consider the case for designation. English Heritage's powers relate to London only, where they are required to consult the London borough council concerned and to obtain the Secretary of State's consent to designation.

The Secretary of State must also consult the authorities concerned before using his powers of designation. His policy is to use his own powers only in exceptional cases, for instance where an area is of more than local interest; or where there is evidence to suggest that an authority's ownership of important buildings may have influenced a decision not to use its own powers, and there is a clear threat to the character or appearance of the area. The Secretary of State may also apply such criteria when requested to approve the use of English Heritage's powers.

### **Policies for conservation areas**

- 5.9 Section 71 of the Act places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. It is important that designation is not seen as an end in itself: policies will almost always need to be developed which clearly identify what it is about the character or appearance of the area which should be preserved or enhanced, and set out the means by which that objective is to be pursued. Clear assessment and definition of an area's special interest and the action needed to protect it will help to generate awareness and encourage local property owners to take the right sort of action for themselves.
- 5.10 The Act requires proposals for the preservation and enhancement of a conservation area to be submitted for consideration to a 'public meeting' in the area, but wider consultation will almost always be desirable, both on the assessment of special interest and on proposals for the area. Consultation should be undertaken not only with local residents and amenity societies but also with chambers of commerce, public utilities, and the highway authority. The character and appearance of many conservation areas is heavily dependent on the treatment of roads, pavements and other public spaces

(see paragraphs 5.13–5.18). It is important that conservation policies are fully integrated with other policies for the area, eg for shopping and traffic management. Account should also be taken of wider policies (eg for house renovation grants) which may affect the area's character or appearance. The preparation of local plans provides the best opportunity for integrating conservation policies with wider policies for the area, though a local planning authority's detailed statement of proposals for the conservation area should not itself be part of the development plan (see paragraphs 2.9 above and 4.15 below). Carefully targeted grant schemes using the authority's powers under section 57 of the Act to help with repair and enhancement should also be considered as part of the policy for an area. In certain cases English Heritage Conservation Area Partnership funding may be available.

### **Vacant premises over shops**

- 5.11 Bringing vacant upper floors back into use, particularly residential use, not only provides additional income and security for the shop owner, but also helps to ensure that what are often important townscape buildings are kept in good repair it meets a widespread need for small housing units and helps to sustain activity in town centres after working hours. Local planning authorities are urged to develop policies to secure better use of vacant upper premises, eg by giving careful consideration to planning applications for shop conversions which would eliminate separate accesses to upper floors; by working with housing associations to secure residential conversions; and through the house renovation grant system.

## Local information and consultation

- 5.12 Once policies for a particular area have been formulated, they should be made available to local residents and businesses in leaflet form, setting out clearly why the area has been designated; what its specially valuable features are; how individual householders can help to protect its character and appearance; and what additional controls and opportunities for assistance designation brings with it. Without such information, the support of local residents is not likely to be realised to the full. (English Heritage's guidance note on conservation areas gives advice on such publicity.)
- 5.13 Local planning authorities are asked to consider setting up conservation area advisory committees, both to assist in formulating policies for the conservation area (or for several areas in a particular neighbourhood), and also as a continuing source of advice on planning and other applications which could affect an area. Committees should consist mainly of people who are not members of the authority; local residential and business interests should be fully represented. In addition to local historical, civic and amenity societies, and local chambers of commerce, the authority may wish to seek nominations (depending on the character of the area) from national bodies such as the national amenity societies and the Civic Trust. Authorities should consider whether there is scope for the involvement of local people on a voluntary basis in practical work for the enhancement of an area.

## Use of planning powers in conservation areas

- 5.14 Section 72 of the Act requires that special attention shall be paid in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those which relate directly to historic buildings. The desirability of preserving or enhancing the area should also, in the Secretary of State's view, be a material consideration in the planning authority's handling of development proposals which are outside the conservation area but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area. Local planning authorities are required by section 73 to publish a notice of planning applications for development which would in their opinion affect the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.15 The status now accorded to the development plan by section 54A of the principal Act makes it particularly important that an authority's policies for its conservation areas, insofar as they bear on the exercise of development controls, should be set out in the local plan. There should also be a clear indication of the relationship between the plan itself and detailed assessment documents or statements of proposals for particular conservation areas, making clear that development proposals will be judged for their effect on the character and appearance of the area as identified in the assessment document.
- 5.16 Many conservation areas include the commercial centres of the towns and villages of which they form part. While conservation (whether by preservation or enhancement) of their character or appearance must be a major consideration, this cannot realistically take the form of preventing all new development: the emphasis will generally need to be on controlled and positive management of change.

- Policies will need to be designed to allow the area to remain alive and prosperous, and to avoid unnecessarily detailed controls over businesses and householders, but at the same time to ensure that any new development accords with the area's special architectural and historic interest.
- 5.17 Many conservation areas include gap sites, or buildings that make no positive contribution to, or indeed detract from, the character or appearance of the area; their replacement should be a stimulus to imaginative, high quality design, and seen as an opportunity to enhance the area. What is important is not that new buildings should directly imitate earlier styles, but that they should be designed with respect for their context, as part of a larger whole which has a well-established character and appearance of its own.
- 5.18 Local planning authorities will often need to ask for detailed plans and drawings of proposed new development, including elevations which show the new development in its setting, before considering a planning application. In addition to adopted local plan policies, it may be helpful to prepare design briefs for individually important 'opportunity' sites. Special regard should be had for such matters as scale, height, form, massing, respect for the traditional pattern of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, and detailed design (eg. the scale and spacing of window openings, and the nature and quality of materials). General planning standards should be applied sensitively in the interests of harmonising the new development with its neighbours in the conservation area.
- 5.19 The Courts have recently confirmed that planning decisions in respect of development proposed to be carried out in a conservation area must give a high priority to the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. If any proposed development would conflict with that objective, there will be a strong presumption against the grant of planning permission, though in exceptional cases the presumption may be overridden in favour of development which is desirable on the ground of some other public interest.
- 5.20 As to the precise interpretation of 'preserve or enhance', the Courts have held (*South Lakeland DC v Secretary of State for the Environment*, [1992] 2 WLR 204) that there is no requirement in the legislation that conservation areas should be protected from all development which does not enhance or positively preserve. Whilst the character and appearance of conservation areas should always be given full weight in planning decisions, the objective of preservation can be achieved either by development which makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance, or by development which leaves character and appearance unharmed.



## **Permitted development in conservation areas**

- 5.21 The GDO requires planning applications for certain types of development in conservation areas which are elsewhere classified as permitted development. These include various types of cladding; the insertion of dormer windows into roof slopes; the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway; and the installation of radio masts, antennae or radio equipment housing with a volume in excess of two cubic metres (unless the development is carried out in an emergency). The size of house and industrial extensions that may be carried out without specific planning permission is also more restricted.
- 5.22 On 30 March 1994 the Government announced a new proposal to enable local planning authorities to make directions withdrawing permitted development rights for a prescribed range of development materially affecting some aspects of the external appearance of dwellinghouses, such as doors, windows, roofs and frontages. There would be no requirement to obtain the Secretary of State's approval for such directions, but authorities would have to publicise their proposals in advance and have regard to the views of local people. Further details of these new arrangements will be published by circular shortly.
- 5.23 The withdrawal of permitted development rights outside these categories will continue to require Article 4 directions for which the Secretary of State's approval is generally needed before they can become effective. The Secretary of State takes the view that permitted development rights should not be withdrawn without clear justification and that, wherever possible, residents in conservation areas should continue to enjoy the same freedom to undertake development as residents elsewhere. He does not consider that the designation of a conservation area in itself automatically

justifies making an Article 4 direction. Such directions may, however, have a role to play if they would help to protect features that are key elements of particular conservation areas and do not come within the categories that will be subject to the arrangements set out in paragraph 4.22 above. The Secretary of State will generally be in favour of approving directions in conservation areas where these are backed by a clear assessment of an area's special architectural and historic interest, where the importance to that special interest of the features in question is established, where the local planning authority can demonstrate local support for the direction, and where the direction involves the minimum withdrawal of permitted development rights (in terms of both area and types of development) necessary to achieve its objective.

- 5.24 Sections 107 and 108 of the principal Act make provision for the payment of compensation in certain circumstances where permitted development rights have been withdrawn by an Article 4 direction or an amendment to the GDO.

## Conservation area control over demolition

- 5.25 Conservation area designation introduces control over the demolition of most buildings within conservation areas (section 74 of the Act); exceptions are specified in section 75 and in the relevant direction. Applications for consent to demolish must be made to the local planning authority or, on appeal or call-in, to the Secretary of State. Procedures are essentially the same as for listed building consent applications. Authorities' own applications must be made to the Secretary of State. Scheduled ancient monuments are exempt from conservation area control: scheduled monument consent for proposed works must be sought from the Secretary of State for National Heritage (see PPG 16).
- 5.26 In exercising conservation area controls, local planning authorities are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area in question; and, as with listed building controls, this should be the prime consideration in determining a consent application. In the case of conservation area controls, however, account should clearly be taken of the part played in the architectural or historic interest of the area by the building for which demolition is proposed, and in particular of the wider effects of demolition on the building's surroundings and on the conservation area as a whole.
- 5.27 The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Secretary of State expects that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings (paragraphs 3.16–3.19 above). In less clear-cut cases – for instance, where a building makes little or no such contribution – the local planning authority will need to have full information about what is proposed for the site after demolition. Consent for demolition should not be given unless there are acceptable and detailed plans for any redevelopment. It has been held that the decision-maker is entitled to consider the merits of any proposed development in determining whether consent should be given for the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area.
- 5.28 Section 336 of the principal Act states that a building includes 'any part of a building'. The demolition of part of a building should therefore be regarded as falling within the scope of conservation area control. What constitutes a demolition or demolition of part of a building must be a matter of fact and degree, to be decided in the particular case and ultimately by the Courts. Routine works of repair, maintenance or replacement, including work involving such items as doors or windows, would not in the Secretary of State's view normally constitute demolition. Likewise, the removal of internal features, whether replaced or not, would not usually constitute a demolition and for the purposes of conservation area consent would not, in any event, have a material impact on the building's appearance or affect the character or appearance of the area.
- 5.29 It will often be appropriate to impose on the grant of consent for demolition a condition under section 17(3) of the Act, as applied by section 74(3), to provide that demolition shall not take place until a contract for the carrying out of works of redevelopment has been made and planning permission for those works has been granted. In the past, ugly gaps have sometimes appeared in conservation areas as a result of demolition far in advance of redevelopment.

## Leasehold reform

5.30 The extended arrangements for leasehold enfranchisement under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 included wider provisions for estate management schemes aimed at maintaining the appearance and amenity of areas currently under a single landlord's control. Schemes can be applied for by landlords or representative bodies such as residents' associations up to 30 October 1995 (in some exceptional cases later with the Secretary of State's agreement) and, when approved, transferred to local planning authorities or specially constituted bodies. Within conservation areas, schemes can by default be promoted by authorities or English Heritage between that deadline and 30 April 1996. The costs of management under such schemes fall to be met by the freeholders. In considering whether to approve a scheme the leasehold valuation tribunal is required to have regard inter alia to the past development and present character of the area and to architectural or historical considerations. Moreover, in conservation areas, applicants for schemes are required to notify English Heritage and the local planning authority and invite them to make representations to the tribunal. These provisions should enable authorities in appropriate cases to help maintain the appearance of an architecturally unified estate through regulation of the development, use and appearance of property beyond what can be enforced under the planning system (eg by regulating external decoration and cleaning), and through being able to require proper maintenance and repair of the structure and external elements of the buildings. Further information is available from English Heritage.

## Advertisement control

- 5.31 All outdoor advertisements affect the appearance of the building or the neighbourhood where they are displayed. The main purpose of the advertisement control system is to help everyone involved in the display of outdoor advertising to contribute positively to the appearance of an attractive and cared-for environment. So it is reasonable to expect that the local planning authority's duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area will result in practice in applying more exacting standards when the authority consider whether to grant consent for a proposed advertisement in such an area.
- 5.32 In conservation areas it is important for local planning authorities to be sensitive in the use of their powers under the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992, because many areas include retail and commercial premises, ranging from small corner-shops to thriving commercial centres. Outdoor advertising is essential to commercial activity in a free and diverse economy, and the success of local businesses will usually help owners and tenants of commercial premises to maintain buildings in good repair and attractive appearance.
- 5.33 Local planning authorities may wish to adopt advertisement control policies as part of their duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Such policies can inform prospective advertisers about the type of displays likely to prove acceptable in an area; and they should provide a rational and consistent basis for decision-making on all advertisement control matters, including the serving of discontinuance notices.

- 5.34 Because of the special interest of most conservation areas, certain categories of 'deemed consent' advertisements which may have a significant visual impact are not permitted for display in a conservation area without the local planning authority's specific consent. But a general prohibition of the display of certain classes of advertisement, or the withdrawal or limitation of those which may be displayed with deemed consent, is not usually justified solely because of designation.
- 5.35 Attention is drawn to the value of education and co-operation to help prevent unsympathetic advertisements. Local planning authorities may wish to consider mounting programmes, in association with local businesses, to promote advertisement policies by providing advice about the design and siting of suitable displays which respect the character and appearance of an area (either by the publication of design guidelines, the mounting of exhibitions, the setting-up of an advisory service in a Planning Department, or a combination of these approaches).
- 5.36 Where a local planning authority has pursued this approach, but considers that it has not prevented unsuitable or harmful advertisement displays, the Secretary of State will be prepared to consider making a direction under regulation 7 of the 1992 Regulations referred to above, if the authority can justify it. In seeking such additional control, authorities will be expected to show that they have well-formulated policies for the display of advertisements in the area and that the vigorous use of normal powers of control has proved inadequate.
- Similarly, when considering whether an advertisement is causing 'substantial injury to amenity', so that its display should be discontinued, the Secretary of State will particularly consider any evidence, on appeal, that the authority have acted in accordance with a well-formulated advertisement control policy.
- 5.37 Further advice on outdoor advertisement control, including in conservation areas, is given in PPG 19.
- Trees in conservation areas**
- 5.38 Trees are valued features of our towns and countryside and make an important contribution to the character of the local environment. Under Part VIII of the principal Act, local planning authorities have a power to protect trees and woodlands in the interests of amenity by making tree preservation orders. In addition to this general power, authorities are under a duty to make adequate provision for the preservation and planting of trees when granting planning permission for the development of land. They do this by a combination of planning conditions and tree preservation orders.
- 5.39 Many trees in conservation areas are the subject of tree preservation orders, which means that the local planning authority's consent must be obtained before they can be cut down, topped or lopped. In addition to these controls, and in view of the contribution that trees can make to the character and appearance of a conservation area, the principal Act makes special provision for trees in conservation areas which are not the subject of tree preservation orders. Under section 211, subject to a range of exceptions, (including small trees and ones that are dead, dying or dangerous), anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area is required to give six weeks' notice to the local planning authority. The purpose of this requirement is to give the authority an opportunity to consider bringing the tree under their general control by making a tree preservation order in respect of it. Penalties for contravention, which may include a requirement to replant, are similar to those for tree preservation orders. For guidance on these matters see Department of the Environment Circular 36/78.

5.40 When considering whether to extend protection to trees in conservation areas, local planning authorities should always take into account the visual, historic and amenity contribution of trees. In some instances new plantings or re-plantings may be desirable where this would be consistent with the character and appearance of the area.

## Archaeology and Planning

5.41 Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. They can contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.

5.42 Cases involving archaeological remains of lesser importance will not always be so clear cut and planning authorities will need to weigh the relative importance of archaeology against other factors including the need for the proposed development.

5.43 The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications, whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled. Developers and local authorities should take into account archaeological considerations and deal with them from the beginning of the development control process. Where local planning authorities are aware of a real and specific threat to a known archaeological site as a result of the potential exercise of permitted development rights (as set out in Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning General Development Order

1988) they may wish to consider the use of their powers under Article 4 of that Order to withdraw those rights and to require specific planning permission to be obtained before development can proceed. Most such directions require the Secretary of State's approval, either before they can come into effect or within six months of being made, unless they relate solely to a listed building.

## The first step: Early consultations between Developers and Planning Authorities

5.44 The needs of archaeology and development can be reconciled, and potential conflict very much reduced, if developers discuss their preliminary plans for development at an early stage. Once detailed designs have been prepared and finance lined up, flexibility becomes much more difficult and expensive to achieve. In their own interests, therefore, prospective developers should in all cases include as part of their research into the development potential of a site, which they undertake before making a planning application, an initial assessment of whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains. The first step will be to contact the County Archaeology Officer or equivalent who holds the SMR, or English Heritage in London. The SMR provides information about the locations where archaeological remains are known or thought to exist. Where important remains are known to exist or where the indications are that the remains are likely to prove important, English Heritage are also ready to join in early discussions and provide expert advice. Special notification requirements apply in designated Areas of Archaeological Importance.

5.45 These consultations will help to provide prospective developers with advance warning of the archaeological sensitivity of the site. As a result they may wish to commission their own archaeological

assessment by a professionally qualified archaeological organisation or consultant. This need not involve fieldwork. Assessment normally involves desk-based evaluation of existing information: it can make effective use of records of previous discoveries, including any historic maps held by the county archive and local museums and record offices, or of geophysical survey techniques.

### Field Evaluations

5.46 Where early discussions with local planning authorities or the developer's own research indicate that important archaeological remains may exist, it is reasonable for the planning authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before any decision on the planning application is taken. This sort of evaluation is quite distinct from full archaeological excavation. It is normally a rapid and inexpensive operation, involving ground survey and small-scale trial trenching, but it should be carried out by a professionally-qualified archaeological organisation or archaeologist. The Institute of Field Archaeologists publishes a directory of members, which developers may wish to consult.

Evaluations of this kind help to define the character and extent of the archaeological remains that exist in the area of a proposed development, and thus indicate the weight, which ought to be attached to their preservation. They also provide information useful for identifying potential options for minimising or avoiding damage. On this basis, an informed and reasonable planning decision can be taken.

Planning permission will be required if you propose to:-

- Demolish any building within a conservation area.
- Demolish any boundary wall, fence or gate if it is more than 1 metre high and fronts a public highway; public right-of-way or an open space, or 2 metres high elsewhere.

5.47 The Council would not normally give planning permission to proposals which would:-

- Detract from the visual, historic or architectural character of the area or its setting;
- Mean the loss of buildings, walls or features, which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area;
- Result in the loss of gardens or open spaces;
- Be detrimental to features which create the distinctive character of the area, and which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.48 Controls also extend to **trees** in conservation areas, where:-

- At least 6 weeks notice must be given for works to trees over a diameter of 75mm, and taller than 1.5metres, which would mean the lopping, topping or felling of trees.
- Some trees are also protected by Tree Preservation Notices (for further details contact the Arboricultural Officer on 01325 383087).

Further details of all planning policies can be found in Borough of Darlington's Local Plan (adopted 1997), copies of which are available to view at Darlington Town Hall or online at [www.darlington.gov.uk/planning](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/planning).

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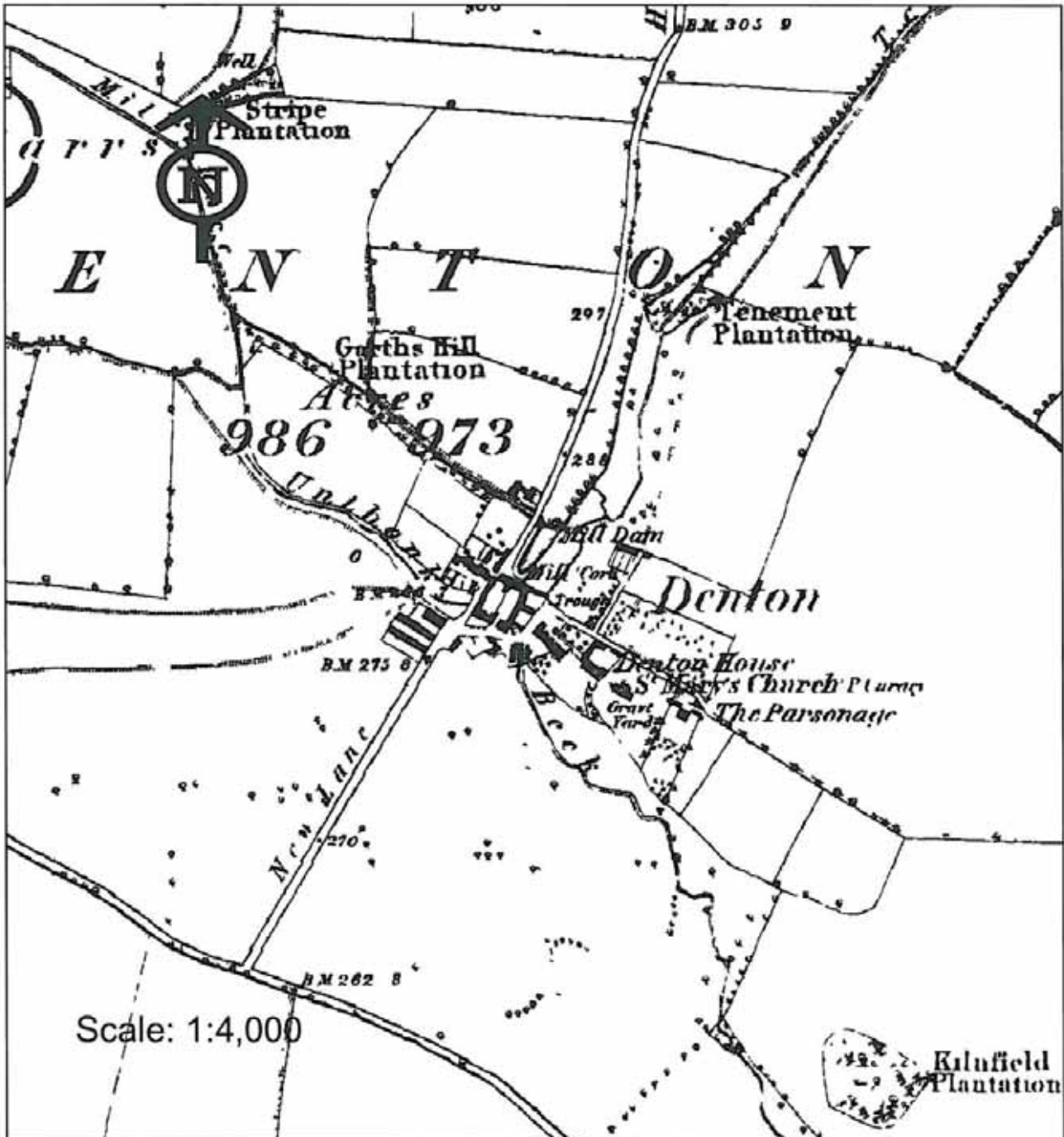
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Darlington DL1 5QT  
Conservation Officer: 01325 388604  
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English Heritage (North East region)  
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41-44, Sandhill  
Newcastle  
NE1 3JF  
Tel: 0191 2611130

MAPS - HISTORIC AND MODERN

Site Location Plan: Denton 1859



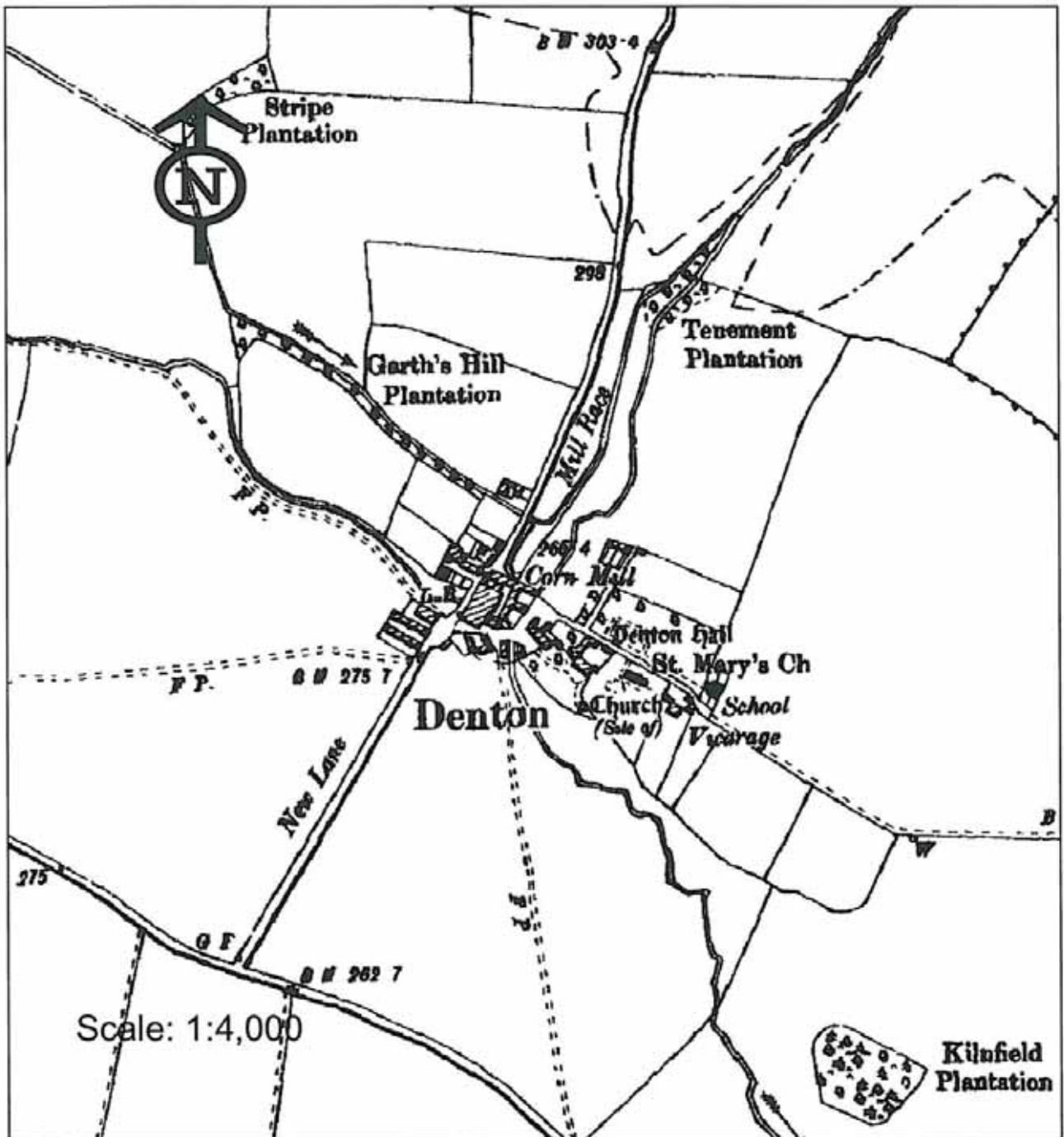
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Development & Environment Dept.,  
Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT



Site Location Plan: Denton 1898 - 1899

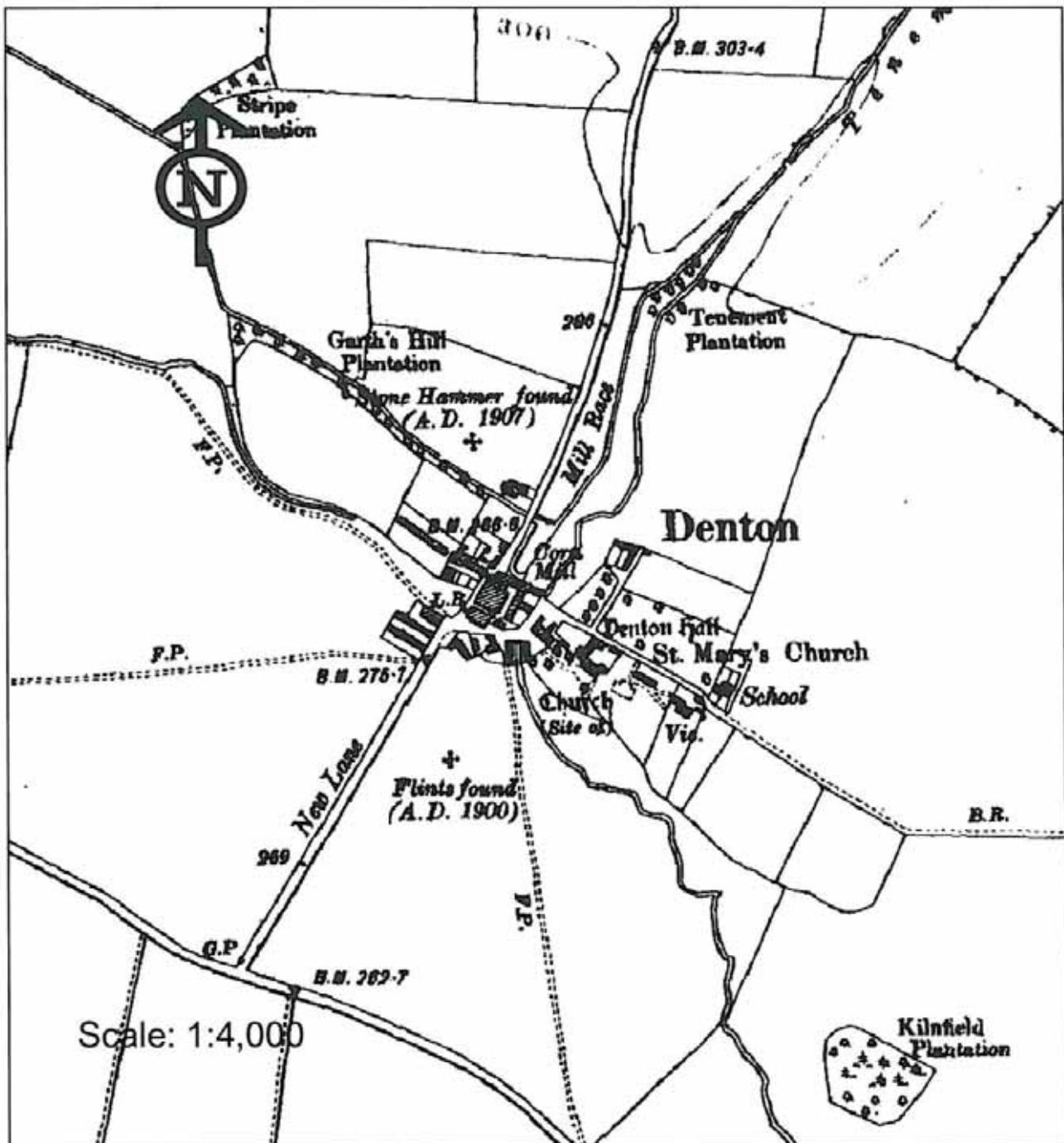


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Site Location Plan: Denton 1923 -1924

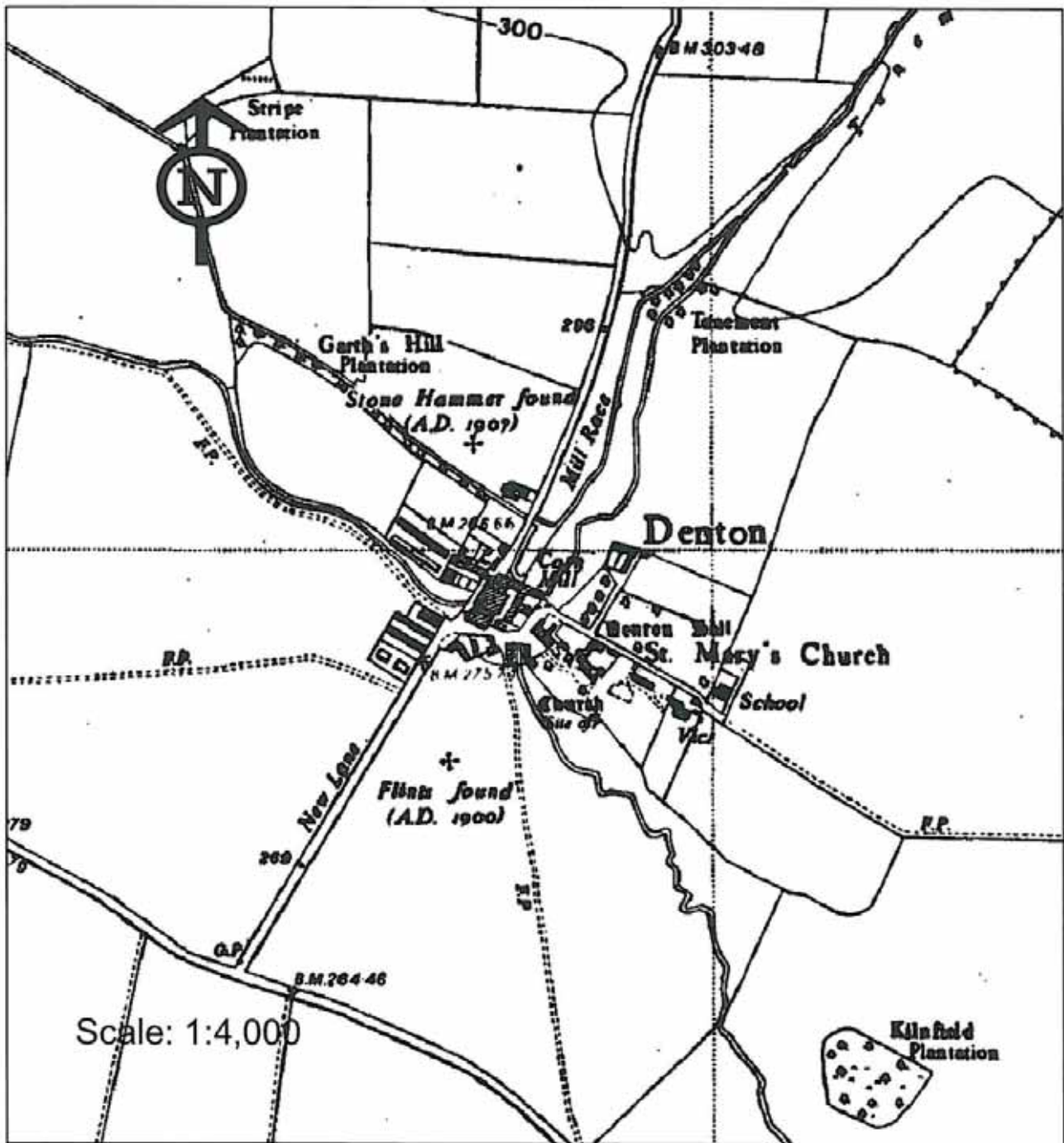


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Site Location Plan: Denton 1948



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Aerial photo of Denton (viewed from the west).

## DENTON'S LISTED BUILDINGS



Milepost. Grade II. Listed 16.07.1986, building no.15/94. Outside conservation area boundary on West side of the B6279, 700 metres South East of the junction with New Lane.

A late 19thC cast iron milepost, triangular, located on the Painted white with sans serif letters painted black. "Durham County" on back plate. Hands pointing to "Staindrop 6" and "Darlington 5". NB: Missing at the time of survey.



Stone coffin. Grade II. Listed 16.07.1986, building no.5/96. St Mary's church, Church Lane, Denton.

Stone coffin without lid. Medieval, sandstone. Coffin hollowed out for the shape of a head and body. Was located against the external South side of the Nave wall of the former St Mary's church. Missing since c.1996.



Headstone. Grade II. Listed 16.07.1987, building no.5/97. Headstone c.20 metres south of former Church of St Mary, Church Lane, Denton.

Small headstone, 1714 to Thomas Hall. Sculpted by Johnathon Welford (?). Sandstone. Central projection showing a pair of hands enclosing an inverted heart (emblems of charity); flanking semicircular projections with rosettes. Worn inscription: "Here lieth the Body of Thomas son of John and Ann Hall...who departed... 1714"



Headstone. Grade II. Listed 16.07.1987, building no.5/98. Headstone c.25 metres south of former Church of St Mary, Church Lane, Denton.

Large headstone. 1795 to John Thompson and his family. Sandstone. Shaped top has sunk panel with relief carvings of an urn flanked by winged angel heads. Good quality lettering. Long inscription on front dedicated to members of Hall family dating from 1795, 1798 and 1801 (including a son who left in 1801 and died in America the same year).

**Glebe House, South side of Church Lane, Denton. Grade II.**

Listed 20/03/1967, building no.5/95. House, mid 18thC with alterations. Limestone with sandstone dressings, recent clay pantiled roof. Two stories of three bays.

Image taken before unauthorised change of windows to uPVC.



**Denton Hall, South side of Church Lane, Denton. Grade II. Listed 06/06/1952, Building no.5/99.**

House, late 17th-early 18thC. Roughcast masonry, concrete tiled roof. Originally three stories, reduced to two stories c.1967. Victorian sash windows. Internally, many features remain, including, original staircase, cupboards, doors and cornices.



Denton Hall before being reduced to 2 storeys in 1967



**Limekiln, off Dere Street, Denton (outside conservation area boundary). Grade II. Listed 16/07/1986, Building no.5/100.**

Limekiln, late 19thC. Squared stone with yellow brick arches. Two-cell kiln built partly into the bankside. Kilns have flat rear walls each with three small segmental-arched pots. Included as an unaltered, though late example.



## BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST



Signpost, cast iron, probably dating from the start of the motor age. Early 20thC in iconic black text on white background. Points the way to Denton and Houghton-le-side. Outside the conservation area boundary, at the junction of Staindrop Road (B6279) and New Lane.



Three traditional farm buildings (and a modern building 2nd from the left) on the West side of New Lane, shown on the 1859 Ordnance survey map.



Group of agricultural buildings, possibly 18thC or early 19thC, with interesting roofscapes, proportions and layouts. Shown on the 1859 Ordnance Survey maps.



A former single storey cottage beside the Cocker Beck. Random stone-built with a high pitched roof and asymmetric fenestration, likely to be 17th or early 18thC.



The former St Mary's church on Church Lane, east of Denton Hall. Built in 1891, by Darlington architect JP Pritchett. The last church service was held on October 8th 1995. Sold by the Church of England in 1996 and converted to residential use.



## CHURCHYARD MONUMENTS

Most of the headstones and monuments in the Denton churchyard are 18th and 19thC. While some are quite plain, many are attractively and creatively carved. Some (shown below) have lead poured into carvings to create contrast. The quality of carved headstones emphasizes the wealth existing in Denton particularly in the 18thC.



## ARCHITECTURAL, HISTORIC AND NATURAL FEATURES

### WALLS

Magnesium limestone boundary walls form an important part of Denton's character. Efforts should be made to restore and retain these features, which add so much to the impression of enclosure within Denton.



### TREES

Trees assist in reducing the air temperature in summer months, encourage wildlife, and soften surrounding hard landscaped areas, such as walls and buildings.



### WATERWAYS

Moving water has a positive impact on an area; from the sounds and movement, to the wildlife this attracts. The confluence of the two becks - the Cocker and Tenement - is likely to have been a significant factor in Denton's initial existence.





- 1) The photographs (above) show the remains of the equipment from the former corn mill, now unoccupied, but part of the group of buildings used by Michael Dods racing stables. Note the presence of the white flour, still, decades after the mill closed.
- 2) Note the wear on the steps to the left, worn to less than half their original thickness, revealing what must have been a period of long and heavy usage.

- 3) The packhorse bridge, built of cut stone and mostly intact beneath the plant growth, but its rubble stone surface is being slowly segregated. The Mill race separated from the Beck below this point.
- 4) The tenement Beck after heavy rain. This shows the potential force of the mill race (originally to the left of the Beck, beyond the line of trees).

