

Stockton & Darlington Railway:

# Northgate

Conservation Area Appraisal

Public Consultation Draft

June 2024



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

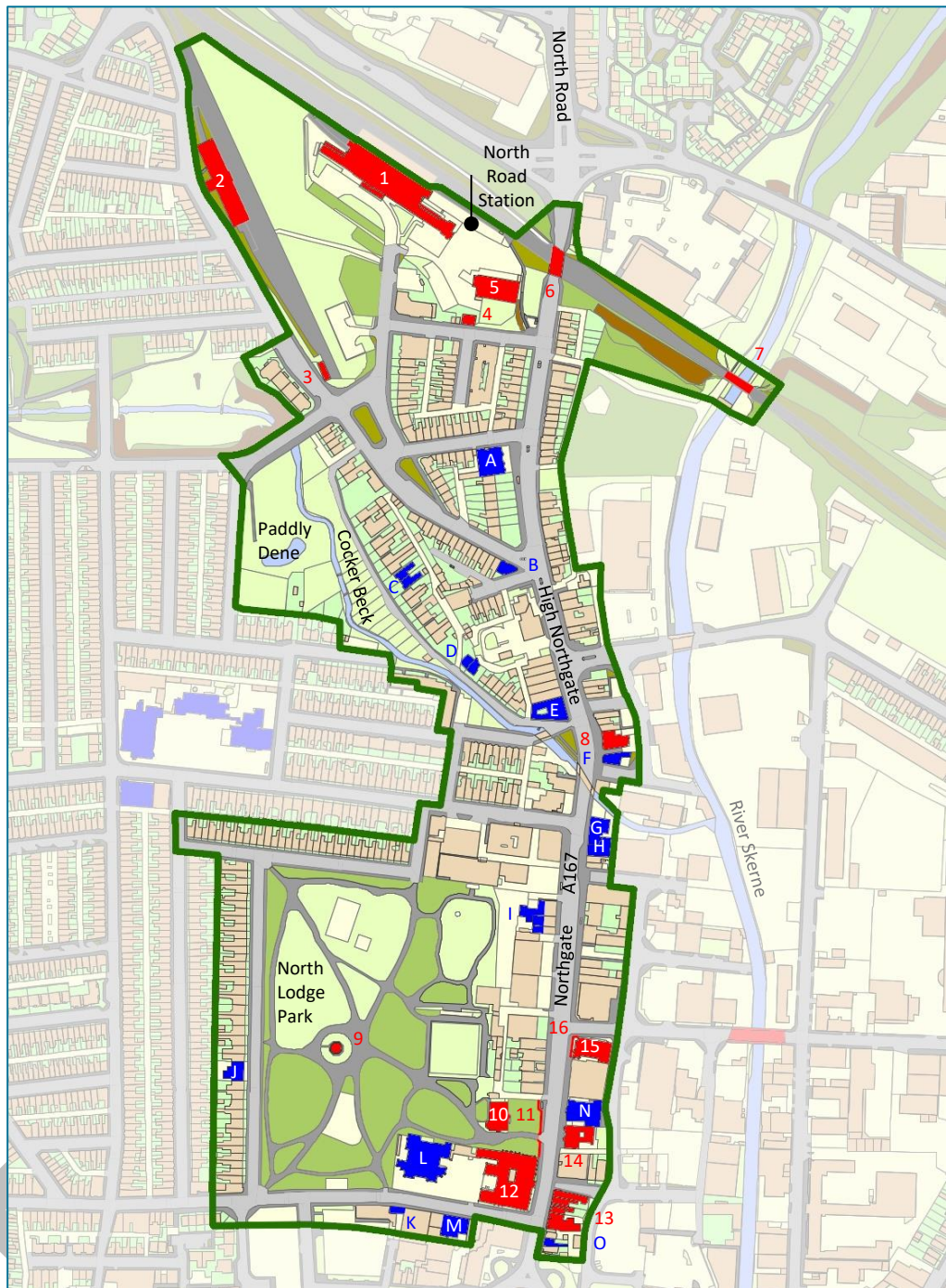


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< Cover image: Detail from the Opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, painted by John Dobbin in 1875. Note that the curved wing walls of the bridge did not exist at the time but were added in 1829 to strengthen the embankments.





Northgate Conservation Area boundary (green line) at the time of review, as adopted in July 2003 (Map © Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100023728. Licence Number 100023728 2024. Graphics by Gaby Rose)

**Listed buildings:** 1. North Road Railway Station, 2. Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works, 3. Lime Cells, 4. 1 & 2 McNay Street, 5. Goods Shed South East of North Road Station, 6. Railway Viaduct, 7. Skerne Bridge, 8. The Railway Tavern, 9. Bandstand to West of Bowling Green, 10. North Lodge, 11. Front Garden Wall to North Lodge, 12. Central School (East Block), 13. 138-148 Northgate, 14. Central School Annex, 15. Northgate United Reformed Church, 16. Forecourt Railings and Gate Piers to Northgate United Reformed Church

**Other notable buildings:** A. Darlington Working Men's Club, B. Melville House, C. 15 & 16 Westbrook Villas, D. 8 & 18a Westbrook Villas, E. Livingstone Building, F. 1 Leadenhall Street, G. Bridge Hotel, H. Odeon, I. Elmfield House, J. Pentecostal Church, K. Darlington Bottling Company, L. Central Secondary School, M. Temperance Institute, N. Salvation Army Citadel, O. The Half Moon

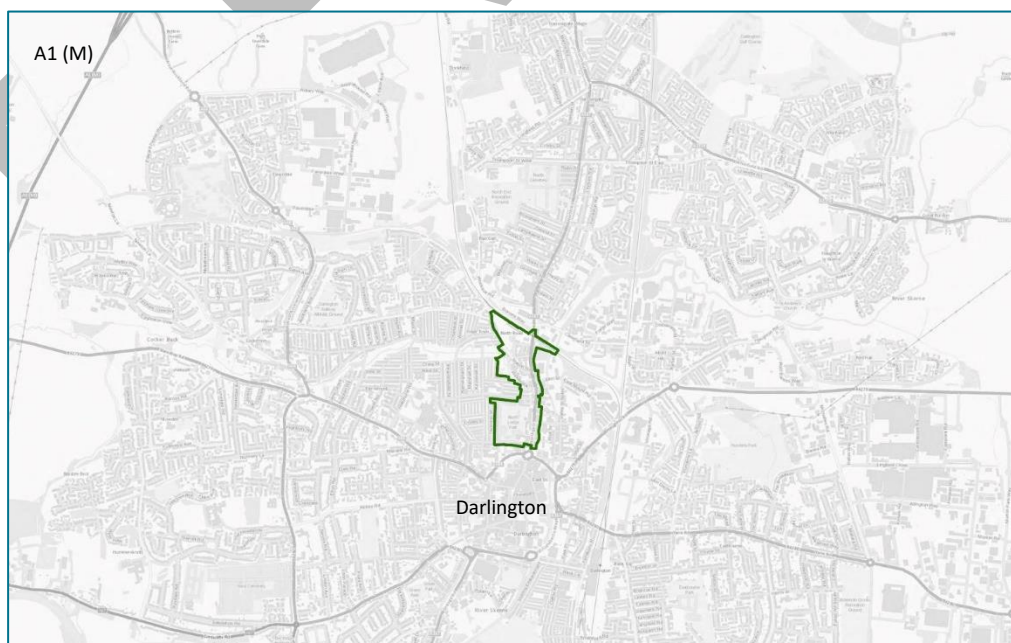
## 1.0 Introduction

A character appraisal assesses the **special interest** of a conservation area that merits its designation. It describes and evaluates the contribution made by the tangible (visible) aspects of its special interest which define the area's **character and appearance**. An appraisal aims to be informative and educational about our cultural inheritance and raise public awareness and support. Adopted documents provide an evidence base for managing change and will be a material consideration in the planning process. They can also identify opportunities for enhancement and assist if funding is sought for larger regeneration schemes, such as heritage action zones.

An appraisal for the Northgate Conservation Area was first adopted in January 2007. In March 2021, a proposed new draft character appraisal was finalised by Land Use Consultants (LUC) on behalf of Darlington Borough Council, but this was not published or adopted. LUC also produced a *Northgate Urban Design Framework and Masterplan* in February 2021 for a large part of the Conservation Area which now forms the strategic direction/vision for regeneration under the Towns Fund scheme (see 3.6). In July 2022, Durham County Council provided *Conservation Area Assessments – Route of the former Stockton & Darlington Railway, Darlington & Middleton St. George*, of the northern half of the Northgate Conservation Area only, which, at the time, was proposed to be separated from its southern half, extended, and renamed as a new conservation area (see 5.2).

### 1.1 The Area

Darlington is a town in County Durham the Northeast of England which lies adjacent to the A1(M). The Northgate Conservation Area is located immediately to the north of the town centre and is of an urban nature. At the time of review, it comprised an area of 21.78 hectares between the northern roundabout of the inner ring road and North Road Station. The Conservation Area lies mainly in the Northgate ward, although two small parts are inside the Pierremont and North Road wards.



Location of Northgate Conservation Area boundary (green line) at the time of review, as adopted in July 2003 (Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020. Licence Number 100023728 2024)



Initially, a North Road Station Conservation Area was designated on 14 November 1974. On 4 December 1997, this was incorporated into the newly created Northgate Conservation Area. On 21 July 2003, the area was further extended to include additional properties to the east side of Northgate, High Northgate and the Skerne Bridge. **It is the boundary adopted in 2003 that is being appraised in this document.**

At the time of review, the Northgate Conservation Area was one of seventeen such designations within Darlington Borough. Further information on our conservation areas can be found on the Council's website ([see 7.3](#)).

The Northgate Conservation Area is currently on the *Heritage at Risk (North East & Yorkshire) Register 2023* due to its 'very bad' condition<sup>1</sup>.

## 1.2 The Appraisal

This document was drafted between September 2023 and February 2024 by the new Darlington Conservation Officer, Gaby Rose, and provides a reassessment of the area including suggested boundary changes. The initial proposal of 2022 to split Northgate into two separate conservation areas ([see 1.0](#)) has now been aborted, although a name change to *Stockton & Darlington Railway: Northgate* as well as changes to the boundary are still being proposed. **Throughout the text, the area will be referred to as 'Northgate'**, as this was its name at the writing of the appraisal.

This appraisal is an opportunity to reassess the Northgate Conservation Area in accordance with current planning policy and guidance, providing a robust document that can be of greater influence in the planning process ([see 2.0](#)). Whilst it tries to cover the main aspects of the Conservation Area, it cannot be completely comprehensive. Omission of particular buildings, features or spaces does not imply that they are of no interest. The appraisal focusses on the following aspects:

- The special architectural and historic interest of the area ([see 3.0](#))
- The current condition of the area, any problems or threats to it, and opportunities for beneficial change ([see 4.0](#))
- The relevance of the current boundary line, and any suggested changes to it ([see 5.0](#))

**The draft is now available for public consultation until **DATE** on the Council's website, along with a feedback form which we would like completed. Paper copies are available at **ADDRESS**.** We have directly approached individuals, groups and organisations that are likely to have a particular interest in the Northgate Conservation Area. **There will also be a press release.** Following the consultation period, the draft will be reviewed in the light of the comments received and finalised before being adopted by the Council.

The author would like to thank Yvonne Richardson, Ross Chisholm, Peter Bainbridge and Caroline Hardie for their time and providing additional information.

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<sup>1</sup> Historic England 2023, page 31

## 2.0 Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This includes an environmental objective to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment<sup>2</sup>. Some of the policies under *16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* specifically refer to conservation areas or ‘**designated heritage assets**’, **which also include all heritage assets inside conservation areas**. A heritage asset is a *building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest*.<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, which forms the basis for all plan-making and decision-making.

The Darlington Local Plan<sup>4</sup> is compliant with the NPPF and includes policies to safeguard the historical environment. The following policies apply to the Northgate Conservation Area – please refer to the Local Plan for the full wording:

**Policy TC 3 Additional Site for Town Centre Uses (only for car parks along Gladstone Street).** Development proposals should take their cue from the historic grain of development within the site, with the design, scale and density of development reflecting the distinct character of the Northgate Conservation Area.

**Policy TC 6 Darlington - Town Centre Fringe (only for designated area shown on policy map).** Development and regeneration will be promoted to deliver a range of mixed-use development and environmental improvements. The uses likely to be acceptable include economic, commercial and residential. The development should conserve historic buildings and where appropriate enhance the historic environment in the area, with an emphasis on creating opportunities for the celebration of Darlington’s heritage.

**Policy ENV 1 Protecting, Enhancing and Promoting Darlington's Historic Environment (A) Designated Heritage Assets.** Proposals should conserve those elements which contribute to such asset's significance, including any contribution made by their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm.

**Policy ENV 1 Protecting, Enhancing and Promoting Darlington's Historic Environment (B) Conservation Areas.** Proposals affecting a conservation area should preserve and enhance those elements identified in any conservation area appraisal as making a positive contribution to the significance of that area. Development will not be permitted that would lead to the loss of public or private open spaces within or adjacent to conservation areas where the existing openness makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area or its setting unless the public benefit demonstrably outweighs the harm.

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<sup>2</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities 2023, page 5

<sup>3</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities 2023, page 68

<sup>4</sup> Darlington Borough Council 2022



**Policy ENV 2 Stockton and Darlington Railway.** Proposals that conserve and enhance elements which contribute to the significance of the Stockton and Darlington Railway and its setting will be supported. Proposals will be supported where they include measures that preserve any physical remains along the route, include site interpretation and where appropriate reinstate a legible route where those remains no longer exist.

**Policy ENV 3 Local Landscape Character (C) North Lodge Park.** Retaining and improving the special landscape, heritage and ecological qualities of urban parkland.

**Policy IN 7 Telecommunication Masts.** Development should not have an unacceptable effect on conservation areas or buildings of architectural or historic interest.

## 2.1 Conservation Area Designation

Under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, “the Act”, conservation areas are **areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance**. They are **designated heritage assets**. Their boundaries are not the same as any development limits boundaries (policy H3) shown on the Darlington Local Plan Policies Maps<sup>5</sup> and have a different function, although in places they may coincide.

Section 69 of the Act requires the Council to determine which parts of the borough are areas of special interest and designate them as conservation areas. When considering designation, the Council should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack interest<sup>6</sup>. The courts have held it legitimate to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form the heart of that area<sup>7</sup>. Examples of types of special architectural and historic interest which justify designation are areas<sup>8</sup>:

- with a high number of nationally or locally designated heritage assets and a variety of architectural styles and historic associations
- which are linked to a particular individual, industry, custom or pastime with a particular local interest
- where an earlier, historically significant layout is visible in the modern street pattern
- where a particular style of architecture or traditional building materials predominate
- with a quality of the public realm or a spatial element, such as a design form or settlement pattern, green spaces which are an essential component of a wider historic area, and historic parks and gardens and other designed landscapes, including those on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest

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<sup>5</sup> Darlington Borough Council 2022

<sup>6</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities 2023, paragraph 191

<sup>7</sup> Historic England 2017b, page 4

<sup>8</sup> Historic England 2019, page 27

Conservation area designation (as well as the reassessment of an existing area) is generally carried out by a providing draft appraisal which will go out to public consultation, although there is no legal requirement to do so. In the light of any comments received, the document will then be amended, finalised and formally adopted by the Council. All adopted appraisals can be found on our website ([see 7.3](#)).

## 2.2 Implications for the Council

Following designation, the Council has a **duty to review** Darlington’s conservation area boundaries from time to time and make amendments where necessary<sup>9</sup> ([see 5.0 & 6.0](#)). In addition, section 71 of the Act requires us from time to time to **formulate proposals for the preservation and enhancement of our conservation areas and consult the public on them**. The duty to prepare and review conservation area appraisals and management plans, which may set out a variety of measures to help safeguard and improve a conservation area, is also reflected in the Darlington Local Plan<sup>10</sup>, forming part of our proactive approach towards protecting the borough’s heritage assets.

**In the exercise of planning functions, the Council shall pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the significance<sup>11</sup> as well as the character or appearance of our conservation areas<sup>12</sup>**. Planning functions include both the formulation of robust conservation policies (Local Plan) and the determination of applications for planning permission or advertisement consent, helping us manage change within an area and its setting. The Council should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and their setting to enhance or better reveal their significance<sup>13</sup>. Although character appraisals will inform planning decisions, they alone do not determine whether development would be acceptable or not. The impact of proposed development upon a conservation area, or its setting, will be weighed against other material considerations when reaching a decision.

National planning policy requires us to have up-to-date evidence about our historic environment and assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment, and make this information publicly available<sup>14</sup>. The Northgate Conservation Area appraisal provides such assessment ([see 3.0](#)), and is published on our website ([see 7.3](#)).

Finally, the Council is also required regularly assess Darlington’s conservation areas with regards to their condition ([see 4.1](#)). Reviewed character appraisals or shorter surveys identifying threats and opportunities can be developed into management plans specific to an area’s needs<sup>15</sup>. If a conservation area is considered to be ‘at risk’, the Council will liaise with Historic England. If confirmed to be in poor condition, the area will be put on the national Heritage at Risk Register<sup>16</sup>. We will then work with Historic England to find solutions to remove the conservation area from the register.

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<sup>9</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 69

<sup>10</sup> Darlington Borough Council 2022, paragraphs 9.1.14.c & 9.1.19

<sup>11</sup> Darlington Borough Council 2022, paragraph 9.1.18

<sup>12</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 72

<sup>13</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities 2023, paragraph 206

<sup>14</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities 2023, paragraphs 192-193

<sup>15</sup> Historic England 2019, page 29

<sup>16</sup> Available on Historic England’s website



## 2.3 Implications for the Public

Conservation area status results in additional planning controls:

**Demolition.** Under section 196D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, it is an offence to cause, carry out or permit demolition of buildings inside conservation areas without the required planning permission.

**Permitted development rights.** The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, “the Order”, defines conservation areas as article 2(3) land. Schedule 2 of the Order outlines which permitted development rights have been removed from article 2(3) land. This means that planning permission will be required to carry out those types of development within conservation areas. Further permitted development rights can be removed by the Council imposing directions under article 4(1) of the Order. This means that planning permission will be required for the types of development specified in that direction. Article 4 directions can be useful tools, as they can prevent further decline of an area or even revert harm that has already been caused.

**Please note that there is an article 4 direction for the Northgate Conservation Area (see 3.6) which can be viewed on our website.**

**Works to trees.** Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that anyone intending to carry out works to a tree in a conservation area must give at least six-weeks notice to the Council. This gives us the opportunity to consider whether to make a Tree Preservation Order. The work may go ahead before the end of the six-week period if the Council gives consent. With regard to works to a dead or dangerous tree, unless there is an immediate risk of serious harm, a five-days notice must be given before carrying out the works.

The additional planning controls as well as improvement measures set out in a management plan (see 2.2) help to ensure that existing and future generations can enjoy the benefits a conservation area can offer. Conservation areas that are well preserved can enhance economic well-being and quality of life, as well as offer a certain amount of continuity and stability. Likewise, conservation-led change based on informed decisions can make a positive contribution enabling communities to regenerate. The value of a conservation area can be beneficial to both property owners/occupiers and developers, and estate agents may put increasing emphasis on such a location when advertising properties.

## 2.4 Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

Besides its conservation area designation, Northgate also includes 16 listed buildings, which are shown on the map at the beginning of this document. Under section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, listed buildings are *buildings of special architectural or historic interest* that are included on the **National Heritage List for England** (Historic England website). They are **designated heritage assets** and graded according to their special interest:

- Grade I – of exceptional interest; nationally only 2.5% of all listed buildings are in this category
- Grade II\* – of more than special interest; 5.8% of all listed buildings are in this category
- Grade II – of special interest; 91.7% of all listed buildings are in this category

Please note that not only ‘buildings’ can be listed but also other structures and objects, such as bridges, bandstands and railings.

With regards to the extent of listing, the following applies<sup>17</sup>:

- The list entry on the National Heritage List of England only *identifies* the ‘principal listed building’
- The whole of the exterior and interior of the principal listed building, including any later alterations, are listed
- Any object or structure fixed to the principal listed building at the date of listing are also included
- Any freestanding object (e.g. birdbath or statue) or structure (e.g. outbuilding or wall) within the **curtilage** of the principal listed building which has formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948 is also treated as part of the listed building

The identification of curtilage is ‘quintessentially a matter of fact’. Legal precedent has established three main criteria for the assessment<sup>18</sup>:

- The physical layout of the principal listed building and any other objects/structures
- Its ownership(s), historically and at the time of listing (or 1 January 1969 if listed earlier)
- The functional relationship(s) between the principal listed building and any other objects/structures, historically and at the time of listing (or 1 January 1969 if listed earlier)

The Council determines whether an object or structure is curtilage listed. For any queries about the extent of listing, please contact [conservation@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@darlington.gov.uk).

Works that affect any parts of the listed building are likely to require **Listed Building Consent**. This includes works to:

- the whole to the exterior and interior of the principal listed building, including any later alterations
- any object or structure fixed to the principal listed building at the date of listing
- any freestanding object or structure within the curtilage of the principal listed building

Moreover, some works may also require planning permission. For further information check our website or the Planning Portal ([see 7.3](#)).

<sup>17</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 1(5)

<sup>18</sup> Mynors 2006, page 115ff.



## 3.0 Assessing Significance

Conservation areas are designated for their special architectural and historic interest (see 2.1). Most areas have both, although one may be considered more prominent than the other. Nevertheless, when appraising a conservation area, we also need to look at the wider interests of a place in order to better understand its dynamics. It is therefore helpful to use the cultural and natural heritage values provided in *Conservation Principles. Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* for the assessment<sup>19</sup>:

- **Evidential value:** the physical remains of past human activity (e.g. surviving structures and features) (See 3.2 to 3.5)
- **Historical value:** the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected to a place; this tends to be illustrative or associative (See 3.2 & 3.3)
- **Aesthetic value:** the sensory and intellectual stimulation people draw from a place; it can be the result of the design of a place or its development over time (See 3.4 & 3.5)
- **Communal value:** the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it (e.g. residents and other stakeholders) (See 3.6)

Note that elements can possess more than one heritage value.

**The sum of all heritage values/interests defines the significance of a place.** Only by defining the significance of a conservation area is it possible to assess how its character and appearance is vulnerable to harm or loss. This also helps reduce potential uncertainty for owners and others when investment or development in the area is considered. Moreover, the understanding of significance provides the basis for developing and implementing local policies (see 2.0) and management strategies that will sustain the heritage values of a place in its setting<sup>20</sup>.

### 3.1 Summary

The Northgate Conservation Area comprises the following elements of significance:

The A167 (Northgate and High Northgate) forms the historical linear spine of the area, aligned along the former **Great North Road** between London and Edinburgh. This route used to link the pre-industrial town with its pioneering railway and is still one of the principal gateways into the town.

The oldest surviving feature in the Northgate Conservation Area is probably the **Bulmer Stone** which was left here by the last Ice Age, named after Willy Bulmer who read the news standing on it. At one time it marked the northern boundary of the town. It was also known as the 'Battling Stone' as the town weavers used to beat their flax on it. It was Darlington's flourishing **textile industry** which had attracted representatives of the **Pease and Backhouse families**<sup>21</sup>, who would play such an important role in the nineteenth-century development of the town. Both families owned large areas of countryside inside the present Conservation Area, upon which they constructed **villas**

<sup>19</sup> English Heritage 2008, page 27ff

<sup>20</sup> English Heritage 2008, page 14

<sup>21</sup> Flynn 1992, page 8

**surrounded by parkland or extensive gardens**, which still survive in the form of a designed public park (North Lodge Park) and a more ‘natural’ green oasis (Westbrook). Many of the former villas are also associated with amateur and professional **botanists**.

Darlington is considered to be the **birthplace of the modern public railways** that we know today. The town’s transformation from a compact town to a major industrial centre was largely due to Darlington-born **Edward Pease** investing his time, energy and wealth in pursuing the establishment of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR)<sup>22</sup>. Following a meeting of Pease with engineer George Stephenson at the former’s home at **138-148 Northgate**, the S&DR was constructed, using steam-powered locomotives on raised tracks. The original 26-mile line is now regarded as the **prototype for all modern railways**. On 27 September 1825, the **world’s first public railway on which a locomotive hauled passengers**<sup>23</sup> made its maiden journey across **Skerne Bridge**, now the oldest railway bridge in the world that is still in use. The ride across the bridge has been immortalised in a painting by John Dobbin (see cover image of this document). Today the viewpoint of the painting along High Northgate is known as **Dobbin’s View**. The bridge also used to grace the back of the **five-pound note**, next to a portrait of Stephenson.

The S&DR quarter at the north end of the Conservation Area comprises a complex of structures associated with the **first (1825-1841)**, **second (1841-1850)** and **third (1850s-1870s) generation of railway architecture**<sup>24</sup> which have considerable individual and collective significance. They represent a period in which people were learning by trial and error how to operate the railway in an efficient manner<sup>25</sup>, and incorporate **Italianate/classical styles** which were popular in the pioneering days of the railway<sup>26</sup>. Other structures associated with this embryonic phase of railway development, although no longer extant, were also located here, such as Kitching’s Hope Town Foundry which has become **Whessoe Engineering Limited** carrying out operations worldwide, with its headquarters still retained at Darlington. Over 19 kilometres of surviving live track bed make this line the **longest continually operating modern railway in the world**<sup>27</sup>. The significance of the S&DR is promoted by a number of **local heritage groups**, such as the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway.

**Darlington’s industrial expansion** triggered by the arrival of the railway caused a rapid increase in the town’s population and subsequent demand for housing and amenities – the latter also including education and a wide range of leisure facilities – resulting in some of the earliest **railway-led urbanisation** in the world. Throughout the Northgate Conservation Area, much of the **nineteenth-century planform** has survived, with several properties dating from the 1830s and 40s and most of the **scoria-paved back lanes** intact. **Neo-Gothic** buildings and architectural features can be attributed to notable local architects **George Gordon Hoskins** and **Robert Borrowdale**.

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<sup>22</sup> Flynn 1992, page 8

<sup>23</sup> Flynn 1987, page 40

<sup>24</sup> Historic England 2017a, pages 2-3

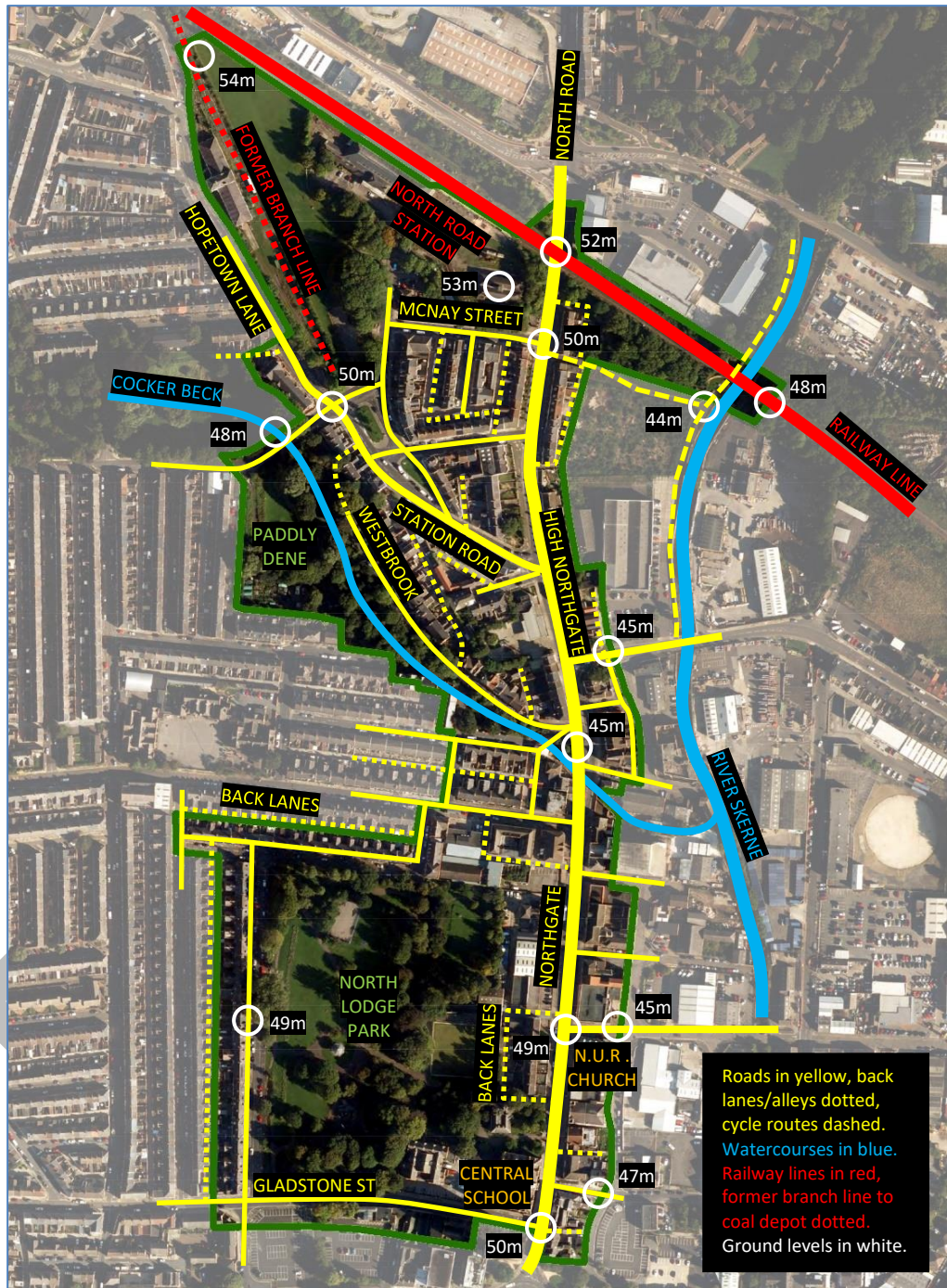
<sup>25</sup> Clark 2006, page 3

<sup>26</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 25

<sup>27</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, page 31

### 3.2 Layout, Planform and Setting

This section provides some of the evidential value of the area (i.e. the existing layout, etc.) as well as some of its historical value (i.e. former building locations).



Layout of the Northgate Conservation Area (boundary line at the time of review, as adopted in July 2003, in green). (Graphics by Gaby Rose)

The Northgate Conservation Area lies to the north of Darlington town centre and is separated from it by the dual-carriageway inner ring road. Its underlying bedrock is made of calcareous mudstones and dolomitic limestones<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/building-stones-england>



The A167, comprising Northgate to the south and High Northgate to the north, forms the linear spine of the area. It is one of the principal gateways into the town and carries a high volume of vehicle traffic, splitting the Conservation Area into a narrow east and a much larger western part. The land rises from a level of 50m at the south end of the A167 to 52m at the north end of High Northgate<sup>29</sup>. Here, the land slopes up noticeably the short distance to the station site, which is the result of human action, not natural topography, due to lowering of the ground levels to allow traffic to pass under the railway bridge where previously there had been a level crossing (see 3.3). There is also a noticeable downwards slope from the A167 towards the river Skerne to the east, which runs almost parallel to the main street just outside the designated boundary.

Roughly at midpoint, the Northgate Conservation Area is further 'dissected' by Cocker Beck, which flows northwest to east into the Skerne. Although the land drops gently towards the beck, this break is not so obvious from the A167 or the land to the east, but it is experienced in the western part of the Conservation Area where the beck is nestled within a lush green corridor that carries on far beyond the boundary. A small park called Paddy Dene including a pond widens the green corridor to the west of the beck. Westbrook follows the curved line of the watercourse along the northeast side of the green corridor, distinctly breaking the layout of the Conservation Area. To the south of Cocker Beck, the roads run strictly in a north-south or east-west direction, perpendicular and parallel to Northgate. This changes slightly as the A167 curves gently after crossing the beck into the northern part of the Conservation Area, and again more significantly where Station Road branches off towards Hope Town in a north-west direction. Throughout the Conservation Area, where there are rows of historical housing, back lanes run parallel to the roads.

At the northern end of the Conservation Area lies North Road Station which serves the line between Bishop Auckland and Saltburn, its facilities now located a short distance to the southeast of the historic station building. There are two railway bridges, one crossing High Northgate and the other the river Skerne. Two road bridges (including Northgate Bridge) and a pedestrian bridge cross Cocker Beck.

Besides the green corridor surrounding Cocker Beck, the Conservation Area also includes North Lodge Park which is a designed green space of roughly rectangular footprint. To the north, there is a large open square where Station Road and Hopetown Lane meet which includes grassed areas and three young trees. Immediately to the north of the square, the historic railway buildings are nestled amongst a number of mature trees which link to another green corridor along the railway line that carries on to the east outside the Conservation Area's boundary.

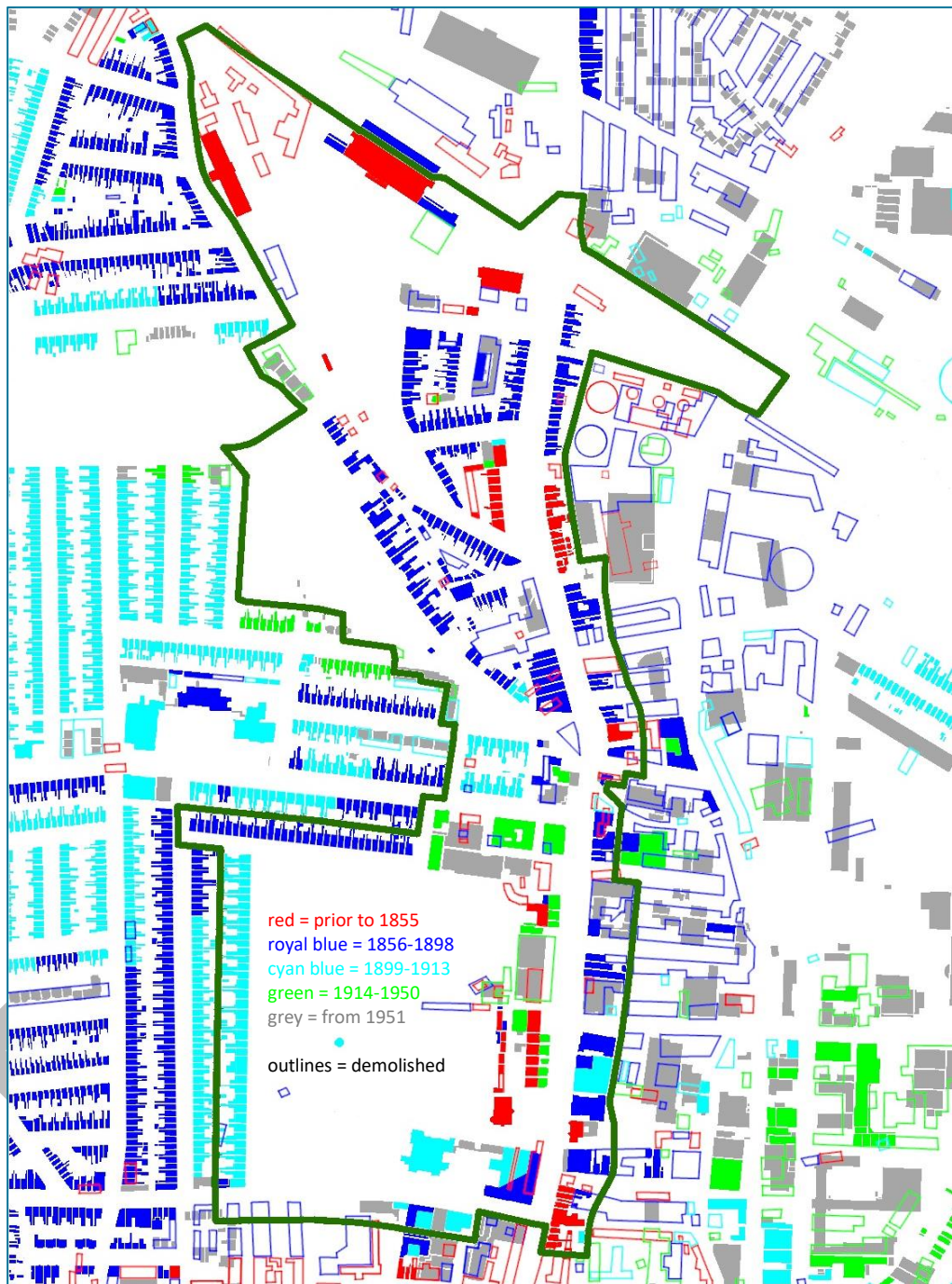
The map regression (below) shows that the planform of the Northgate Conservation Area largely dates to the second half of the nineteenth century (royal blue), with a particular good survival in its northern part. There are also a number of pre-1855 structures (red) dating back to a time when the area was more sparsely settled. Later development around the twentieth century turn (cyan blue) completes the historical planform, largely comprising rows of buildings lining the roads. A notable exception to this is the railway buildings located in the triangular area between the main line and the former branch, which are more generously spaced and follow the directions of the railway lines.

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<sup>29</sup> <https://en-gb.topographic-map.com/map-kb57/England/>



Construction between 1913 to 1950 (green) marks a phase of transition and mainly affects the southern part of the Conservation Area, including a few traditional buildings as well as a large number of roadside extensions to pre-1855 buildings along Northgate (see 3.5).



Planform – map regression of the Northgate Conservation Area (boundary line at the time of review, as adopted in July 2003, in green). (Graphics by Gaby Rose)

Although there has been demolition of old structures (shown as outlines in the map regression) as well as construction of post-1950 buildings (grey) throughout the Northgate Conservation Area, the essence of the historical planform has largely been retained. This is in great contrast to the areas immediately to the north, east and south adjoining the Conservation Area boundary, which had their historical grain erased through large-scale demolition and new construction in a different development pattern.

### 3.3 Historical Development

*This section describes the historical value of the area using information retrieved from secondary sources (see 7.0). The listed buildings are referred to by their designation name and assigned their [NUMBER] given on the map at the beginning of this document. Other notable buildings are assigned their [LETTER].*

The oldest surviving feature of the Conservation Area is probably the Bulmer Stone along Northgate, opposite Garden Street, a boulder of Shap granite from Cumbria that was moved here by a melting glacier at the end of the last Ice Age, c.10,000BC. It was named after Willy Bulmer who, in the early nineteenth century, read out the London news standing on the stone. At one time it marked the northern boundary of the town. It used to be known as the 'Battling Stone' as town weavers beat their flax on it, their homes, a row of vernacular weavers' cottages, behind the boulder. The stone used to be located on the edge of the pavement but was relocated behind the railings of [12] Central School (East Block) in 1923<sup>30</sup>.

Excavations in the current location between Dodds Street and Selbourne Road, c.150m west of the Conservation Area boundary, uncovered a burial site containing skeletons and grave goods from the later-sixth or early-seventh century, suggesting an Anglo-Saxon settlement possibly to the south of the cemetery<sup>31</sup>. The settlement experienced medieval growth due to its position in the Durham bishopric. Its market (charter granted in 1183<sup>32</sup>) flourished to serve the agricultural hinterland and those passing through the town on the Great North Road, the main historical highway between London and Edinburgh, now Northgate and High Northgate (A167), which traverses the Conservation Area. The term 'gate' is a common suffix for road names around the centre of Darlington and derives from the Old Norse ('gat') for 'street', implying Viking presence from the late-ninth century.



**[14] Central School Annex** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Built by the Robson family, who were Quakers, local linen merchants and accomplished botanists, it formed the north end of the town until c.1825. Old photos show a shallow front garden with metal railings. An extensive rear garden originally extended down to the river Skerne. The building later had variety of uses such as hospital, education facility and restaurant<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 102-104

<sup>31</sup> Cookson 2005, page 10

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/list-index-soc/markets-fairs-gazetteer-to-1516/durham>

<sup>33</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2023, pages 2 & 13



The latter half of the eighteenth century saw the beginning of large-scale industry in the town, resulting in a population increase of approximately thirty percent between 1767 and 1801. The emphasis had shifted from leather processing to textile preparation<sup>34</sup>, which attracted businesspeople into Darlington who were intending to make their wealth in the woollen or textile industry, such as the Robson family. They built a prestigious detached residence at 156 Northgate, now designated under the name of [14] **Central School Annex** (grade II\*)<sup>35</sup>, in around 1800. It is located just a little further north from the Bulmer Stone but on the opposite side of the street and was at the time the most northern building of the town. Beyond it lay agricultural open countryside in the ownership of leading local Quaker families.

In 1818, Edward Pease (1767-1858) and a group of businessmen formed the Stockton & Darlington Railway Company. Pease was a Quaker and retired wool merchant who also owned the weavers' cottages behind the Bulmer Stone<sup>36</sup>. He had realised that there was a need for a railway to transport coal from the collieries of West Durham. Coal was a very important resource at the time both for domestic and industrial purposes, but it was moved from remote locations on poor roads by horse-drawn cart, so a cheaper, more efficient solution needed to be found<sup>37</sup>. On 19 April 1821, the Stockton & Darlington Railway Act was passed to allow the company to build a horse-drawn tramway that would link the Witton Park Colliery via Darlington to the port on the River Tees at Stockton<sup>38</sup>.



[13] **138-148 Northgate** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Originally a pair of later C18 houses, evidence of which is clearly visible on the rear/east elevation along Weaver's Way (i.e. original window openings including a round-arched stair window – not shown). Pease lived here from 1798 until his death in 1858<sup>39</sup>. In 1821 he met Stephenson in his kitchen along Northgate, now the location of 'Best Kebab'. In 1866 the building was remodelled by the division of the Pease house into two shop units, construction of a north extension and reconstruction of the front/ west elevation with stucco, pilasters and a central pediment. In 1909, the second bay was re-fronted including a memorial to the 'first public railway' and Pease's former residence.

<sup>34</sup> Clack, Pearson 1978, pages 16-17 & 19

<sup>35</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1242805>

<sup>36</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 56

<sup>37</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, page 8

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/archives/sd-railway-act-1821/>

<sup>39</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 106 & 111

George Stephenson (1781-1848), an engineer who had already built successful locomotives and recently designed railways for collieries<sup>40</sup>, met Pease at the latter's home opposite the weavers' cottages, now [13] **138-148 Northgate** (grade II)<sup>41</sup>, on the day the 1821 Act was passed. Here, Stephenson persuaded Pease to use steam-powered locomotives instead of horses. He also convinced him that they should run on rails raised above the ground rather than tram tracks set into the ground. These two factors (especially the first) separated the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) from the colliery railways and would change the history of Darlington, the North East, and the world. Pease was so impressed with Stephenson that he made him surveyor of the line in 1822, and later Chief Engineer of the company. Construction work on the S&DR started in the same year, supervised by Stephenson's deputies including Thomas Storey. The distance between the rails used became the standard gauge for railways throughout the world<sup>42</sup>. Following intense lobbying, a second Act of Parliament was approved in 1823 to allow the use of locomotives, and, importantly, adding passengers to the long list of goods that the railway would transport<sup>43</sup>.

On 27 September 1825, the S&DR was officially launched, with its initial focus on the general purpose of trade rather than the operation of a passenger rail service<sup>44</sup>. On the opening day, a holiday was declared in Darlington, and people travelled from all over the region selecting different parts of the route to observe from or hitching a ride from the Masons Arms pub in Shildon<sup>45</sup>. Here, 34 caldron waggons carrying coal, flour and approximately 500 passengers<sup>46</sup> and the first purpose-built passenger carriage, called *Experiment*, reserved for members of the S&DR Committee only<sup>47</sup>, were coupled to steam-powered locomotive *Locomotion No. 1*. The train then set off to Darlington with George Stephenson as the engine driver for the day where six wagons of coal were sent down the branch line to the depot – which would become the backbone of the extending town<sup>48</sup> – and be given to the poor.

After the engine had been refuelled and watered, the train continued its journey, now also with a brass band on board<sup>49</sup>, across [7] **Skerne Bridge** (grade I)<sup>50</sup> heading towards Stockton. The ride across the bridge has been immortalised in the 1875 painting by John Dobbin, see cover image of this document, who had witnessed the event at the age of four. Dobbin was born in Weaver's Yard (no longer extant), which ran along the south border of Pease's house and its extensive rear garden. His father had done sketches standing at the bridge on the opening day, which John turned into the famous painting for the 50th anniversary of the railway<sup>51</sup>. The bridge also features in a lithograph of 1856 (depicting the opening day) and an undated but early oil painting (showing the line working after the construction of the Merchandise Station in 1827)<sup>52</sup>. Edward Pease did not attend the opening ceremony but stayed at his home in Northgate as his favourite son, Isaac, had died<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, page 10

<sup>41</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1322933>

<sup>42</sup> Flynn 1987, 39

<sup>43</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, page 11

<sup>44</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021a, page 10

<sup>45</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, pages 12-13

<sup>46</sup> Flynn 1987, 39

<sup>47</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021a, page 10

<sup>48</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2019a, page 41

<sup>49</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, pages 13-14

<sup>50</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1475481>

<sup>51</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 111-112

<sup>52</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, pages 14 & 19

<sup>53</sup> Lloyd 2001, page 111





**[7] Skerne Bridge** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Railway bridge designed in a classical style by Ignatius Bonomi for the S&DR, 1825; subsequently altered/strengthened. It is the only architect-designed bridge on the S&DR<sup>54</sup> and featured on the company's headed paper. Now the world's oldest railway bridge still in use.

The original line was 26 miles long (rather than just a few miles) and provided the beginning of a national railway network. It ran from the coal mines near Witton Park – where waggons were hauled by horse and stationary engines to Shildon, and from there using steam-powered locomotives when available (there was a shortage in the beginning) or otherwise continued horse-drawn – to the port at Stockton via Darlington and Yarm, where there were branch lines. It was significant that the route did not take minerals straight from the point of extraction to the nearest harbour but diverted via Stockton and Darlington with their growing industries and future source of passenger traffic and local markets<sup>55</sup>. The S&DR was the first railway in the world proving that the new-fangled steam power could work on an industrial basis. It was designed to be a permanent line (many early railways only offered temporary forms of transport) available for anyone to use for a fee at a set rate (early railways were used by mine companies and private industrialists). Moreover, the S&DR was permitted to move a large variety of good types as well as passengers (as opposed to having a single use), which became the successful business model for modern railways. It boosted local industries, changed the landscape, and by promoting the railway as a new form of transport, it helped to trigger a second wave of industrial revolution<sup>56</sup>. The S&DR made possible the rapid expansion of railways in the nineteenth century across the globe, together with attendant huge worldwide social and economic change<sup>57</sup>.

The terraced houses of 69-81 High Northgate were the first railway properties to be built in Darlington, around 1825<sup>58</sup>. In 1826-27, the S&DR passenger traffic flourished beyond initial expectations carrying 30,000 passengers a year resulting in a more than eightfold increase in local traffic<sup>59</sup>. It was at this time that **[8] the Railway Tavern** (grade II)<sup>60</sup> was constructed for the S&DR, one of three public houses built by Heighington-born stonemason John Carter which adapted the concept of a coaching

<sup>54</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 77

<sup>55</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 27

<sup>56</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, pages 6-7, 12, 16-17, 22

<sup>57</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2019a, page 1

<sup>58</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 78

<sup>59</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, page 17

<sup>60</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1486008>

inn to form proto-railway stations. It was also Carter who added the curved wing walls to [7] Skerne Bridge in 1829 (see cover image), to strengthen the embankments; these are now concealed by the present wing walls made of rock-faced stone<sup>61</sup>. The primary purpose of [8] the Railway Tavern was to serve customers of the coal depot terminus of the branch line on the opposite side of the street, and it never developed into a proper passenger station due to its distance to the main line. Tenders to operate the newly built inn were invited in May 1827, but the local magistrates refused to grant a licence. In response, the S&DR built a small retail brewery to the south, on the northern bank of the Cocker Beck, which had also been designed by Carter. This did not require a licence to sell beer for consumption off the premises. The brewery was leased out in May 1828 and initially proved profitable. Following a change in the law which allowed the S&DR to finally obtain a licence for [8] the Railway Tavern in autumn 1829, the brewery was converted into an iron warehouse in 1831 and demolished in 2014<sup>62</sup>.



[8] **The Railway Tavern** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Commissioned in 1826, constructed in 1827, it was built to serve the workers and customers using the S&DR's depot across the road<sup>63</sup>. The ground-floor street frontage was redesigned by notable architect George Gordon Hoskins in 1898, using a distinct 'lozenge' glazing pattern. The heritage-style bollards on the right were provided as part of the 2002-05 Northgate HERS, and the building itself benefitted from restoration works as part of the 2005-09 Northgate PSCA (see 3.6).

Around 1830, town banker and alpine/herbal plant specialist William Backhouse (1779-1844) built [1] **Elmfield House**, on large parkland that he owned, which covered the area between Northgate, Cocker Beck and (now) Gladstone Street. There were woodland walks and a large pond with boathouse to the rear of the mansion. His elder brother Jonathan, the family's head banker, bankrolled the building of the S&DR, whilst William made a subscription of £3,000 for its construction<sup>64</sup>. In 1832, John Beaumont Pease, nephew of Edward Pease, bought the southern end of the

<sup>61</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1475481>

<sup>62</sup> Boyle 2017, pages 13-16, 18 & 21

<sup>63</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, page 21

<sup>64</sup> Banham 2023, 27



Elmfield estate from Backhouse and built [10] [11] **North Lodge** (grade II)<sup>65 66</sup> on it in 1836, where he lived until his death in 1873<sup>67</sup>. He also took ownership of the neighbouring North Terrace (delisted in 2003) built in the 1820s<sup>68</sup>.



Left: [1] **Elmfield House**: c.1830 for William Bankhouse, now much concealed behind a modern extension in the place of a former front garden. Right: [10] [11] **North Lodge**: Home of John Beaumont Pease. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

In 1829, the S&DR opened the Croft branch which ran south through the future site of Bank Top Station<sup>69</sup>, outside the present Conservation Area. In 1831, Quaker businessman and S&DR committee member Alfred Kitching (1808-1882) and his brother William relocated their ironmongery and foundry business, which later became the S&DR locomotive works, from the town centre to the northern tip of the present Northgate Conservation Area<sup>70</sup>, and established the Hope Town Foundry in 1832. The company produced castings for the S&DR<sup>71</sup>. It also built the famous engine *Derwent* in 1845, which was displayed until recently at the Head of Steam Museum.



[5] **Goods Shed** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): By Thomas Storey, George Stephenson's nephew, in an Italianate classical style, 1833, subsequently altered and extended. It is the oldest single-storey, railway goods shed.

<sup>65</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1121285>

<sup>66</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1322934>

<sup>67</sup> Lawson, Gouldsbrough 2010, pages 3-4

<sup>68</sup> Lloyd 2005, pages 142-143

<sup>69</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, '5. North Road to Croft via Bank Top'

<sup>70</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 5

<sup>71</sup> <https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/people/ap27762/kitching-alfred>

In 1833, the S&DR took passenger transport inhouse (this was initially carried out by private operators using horse-drawn coaches on the line) and now provided a fully steam-hauled service<sup>72</sup>. Also in that year, the [5] **Goods Shed** (grade II\*)<sup>73</sup> was built by S&DR Chief Engineer Thomas Storey replacing the original 1827 Merchandise Station's purpose of handling non-bulk freight transported by rail. In turn, the upper level of the Merchandise Station was converted from a goods into a passenger station<sup>74</sup>. The prominent clock tower of the Goods Shed, which was added by the succeeding S&DR Chief Engineer John Harris in 1839-40 (along with an extension to double the floor area), was an early attempt by the S&DR to establish a 'master clock' at Darlington with there being different time zones throughout the country. Between 1840 and 1848, all train companies gradually moved towards using Greenwich time, although it was not compulsory until 1880<sup>75</sup>.

In 1840 the Railway Goods Agents' Office was built, now known as [4] **1 and 2 McNay Street** (grade II)<sup>76</sup>. It was designed by John Harris and is contemporary with his works to the [5] Goods Shed. Maps show that the Goods Shed's rails merged to the street frontage at the east side of the office building, appearing to be the collection point for local merchants, once they had paid their bills at the offices<sup>77</sup>. Around the same time, the [3] **Lime Cells** (grade II)<sup>78</sup> depot building was constructed along the branch line, replacing or adding to the earlier (1825) coal and (1828) lime facilities located at the terminus of branch. The imported lime was delivered by bottom-opening chaldron wagons on the upper floor and emptied into the four cells below, and made available for purchase from Hopetown Lane<sup>79</sup>. It is assumed that the many workers houses in the surrounding area are held together by lime (mortar) bought here<sup>80</sup>.



*Left: [4] 1 and 2 McNay Street: Former Railway Goods Agents' Office, built in 1840 for the S&DR incorporating Italianate elements. It was later converted into two flats. Right: [3] Lime Cells: Constructed shortly after 1839 to store building lime. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

Passenger services were again relocated in 1842, and this time to the purpose-built [1] **North Road Railway Station** (grade II\*)<sup>81</sup> completed by John Harris. Intervisibility between the goods and passenger stations would have been important for day-to-day management<sup>82</sup>. In the previous year, the Great North of England Railway, having

<sup>72</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, 'Whessoe Works' & 'Historical Background'

<sup>73</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1121262>

<sup>74</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021b, pages 5 & 10

<sup>75</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 26

<sup>76</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1121282>

<sup>77</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, pages 18 & 72

<sup>78</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1391819>

<sup>79</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, pages 5, 14, 16 & 30

<sup>80</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 75

<sup>81</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1322962>

<sup>82</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 35



purchased the Croft branch from the S&DR, had provided the first station at Bank Top, only a short distance to the town centre, to service its new line between York and Darlington<sup>83</sup>. The North Road Station building originally included a station master's house on the west side, with the S&DR ceramic plaque E9 (of 1857) still showing that this end was used for domestic purposes<sup>84</sup>.



**[1] North Road Railway Station** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): By S&DR Chief Engineer John Harris in a utilitarian Italianate style, 1842; initially single storey, subsequently altered and extended; the first floor was added in 1876 to house new telegraph equipment. The Neo-Gothic chimney stacks do not fit stylistically. It was at this station where the world's first luggage allowance was introduced in 1846<sup>85</sup>. From 1857 to 1892, the historic steam engine *Locomotion No. 1* was displayed on a plinth outside the station<sup>86</sup>, and from 1974 to 2021 inside the building, after it had been converted to a museum (Head of Steam).

Between 1800 and 1850, Darlington's population had risen from 4,670 to 12,452, an increase of 175%. Immigration can be the only explanation for such a large increase. In that period, totally new industries (e.g. iron works) had come to the town as a result of the arrival of the S&DR and started to replace the traditional ones (e.g. textile manufacturing)<sup>87</sup>.

In 1853 the **[2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works** (grade II)<sup>88</sup> was built along the west side of the branch line, which also included a dwelling ('cottage') in the central part to the roadside. It is now the oldest known railway carriage manufactory in the UK. The building mainly served the repair and, later, construction of railway carriages, possibly replacing an original workshop (no longer extant) established by George Stephenson in 1837 to the north of the former Merchandise Station, following an increase in passenger traffic. It was located opposite the Kitching Foundry and surrounded by all manner of light industrial and railway buildings and structures, operating in a busy environment. Originally the carriages, which at that point were still compact and clearly had their design derived from

<sup>83</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, map XXXII

<sup>84</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 3

<sup>85</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, pages 20 & 27

<sup>86</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 35

<sup>87</sup> Clack, Pearson 1978, page 19

<sup>88</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1121229>

horse-drawn stagecoaches, gained access into the building through the central part by the use of a turntable on a single-track spur off the branch<sup>89</sup>.



**[2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works: Workshops, 1853**, by architect and Quaker Joseph Sparkes for the S&DR, who also extended the North Road Station in the same year<sup>90</sup>. The appearance to the road is more utilitarian, but the elevation along the depot branch line includes Italianate elements. It is the oldest remaining railway carriage manufactory in Britain<sup>91</sup>.

The 1855 map (see below) shows the former Merchandise Station building (demolished in 1864<sup>92</sup> although parts of the northern wall and probably its foundations still survive) which at the time operated as ‘Weardale Lime Office’<sup>93</sup>, opposite the [5] Goods Shed on the other side of High Northgate. It also depicts the initial cast-iron railway bridge over the road. The 1840 North Eastern goods station (no longer extant) opposite of the S&DR passenger station ([1] North Road Railway Station) across the rail tracks can be seen just outside the present Conservation Area boundary; it was sold to the S&DR in 1857 and from then on their main point of goods handling<sup>94</sup>. The northernmost building complex, between the [2] S&DR Carriage Works and passenger station, is the Kitching Foundry. From here, the branch line led to the coal and lime depot at its terminus (no longer extant) at Northgate Bridge. In the southern part of the present Conservation Area, the built-up area had modestly expanded north along Northgate since c1825. There were also green spaces: allotment gardens between the branch line and passenger station, Westbrook Gardens between the branch line and Cocker Beck – these were set out by S&DR director Henry Pease (1807-1881), Edward’s son, in 1837<sup>95</sup> including intersecting walks, a pond and temple<sup>96</sup> – and the extensive landscaped grounds behind [I] Elmfield House.

<sup>89</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021a, pages 10-13, 15, 16, 62 & 64

<sup>90</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 30

<sup>91</sup> Clark 2009, page 50

<sup>92</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway 2021, pages 19-20

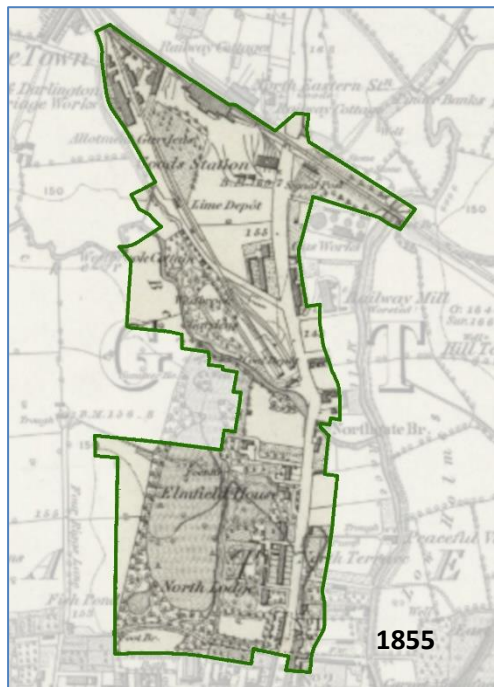
<sup>93</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 22

<sup>94</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 17

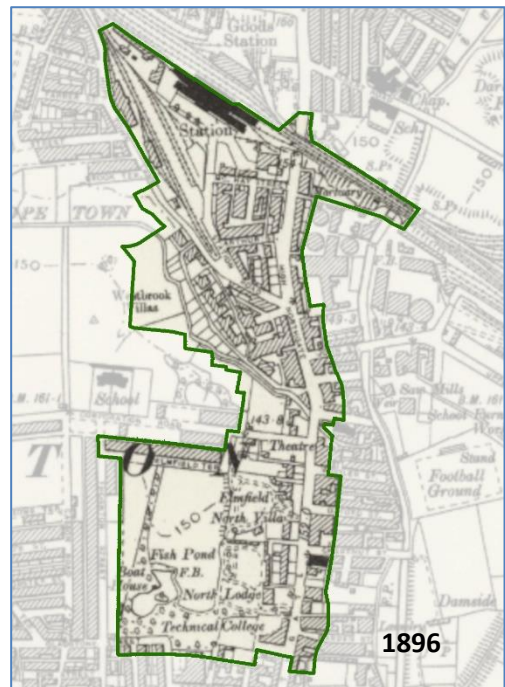
<sup>95</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 51

<sup>96</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 19

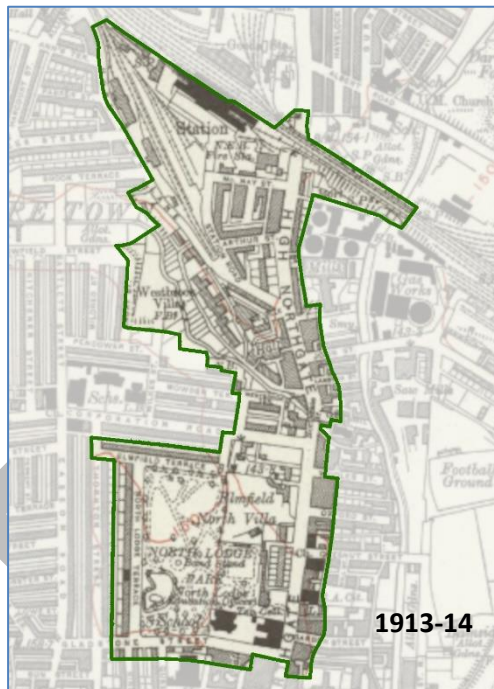




1855



1896



1913-14



1950

Six-inch OS maps reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland ([maps.nls.uk](https://maps.nls.uk)) and overlaid with Northgate Conservation Area boundary line (green) **at the time of review**, as adopted in July 2003. The map dates provided are at the time of survey.

In 1856 the [6] **Railway Viaduct** (grade II)<sup>97</sup> was constructed when the line was widened to four tracks, replacing a former level crossing and subsequent cast-iron bridge across North Road<sup>98</sup>. The extensive cuttings that took place altered ground levels and removed the original approach to the [5] Goods Shed from High Northgate<sup>99</sup>. In the same year, the Darlington & Barnard Castle Railway opened, which diverged at Hopetown Junction<sup>100</sup>, a short distance to the northwest outside

<sup>97</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1121286>

<sup>98</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 76

<sup>99</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 54

<sup>100</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, point 49

the present Conservation Area; an act of parliament subsumed the company into the S&DR in 1858 <sup>101</sup>.



[6] **Railway Viaduct** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Plans to build a bridge were begun in the 1840s, and the bridge finally built in 1856; altered/rebuilt in 1876, and road level further dropped after 1949 to allow for double-decker busses<sup>102</sup>. An early photograph shows a plaque with the date MDCCCLVI on the side. Altered prior to 1935.

Following his father's death, William Backhouse Jr. (1807 - 1869) sold Emfield to Alfred Kitching in 1856<sup>103</sup>, with the [1] Elmfield House becoming the latter's new home. Besides building locomotives, Kitching was at the time was also one of the directors of the S&DR<sup>104</sup>. He added small piece of land to the north adjoining Cocker Beck to plant trees, perhaps to screen the coal depot<sup>105</sup>. In 1857, Kitching built the S&DR's 118<sup>th</sup> engine and named it *Elm Field*, after his new home. His son John (1854-c.1935) was a keen horticulturist and prettified the grounds further<sup>106</sup>.

In 1860, the Hope Town Foundry was sold to the S&DR to enable them to extend their [2] S&DR Carriage Works. Part of Kitching's general engineering work was transferred to another site (no longer extant) located along the main line to the northwest just outside the present Conservation Area boundary, along with much of the best machinery. This became to be known as the Whessoe Foundry, operated by Charles l'Anson and his son<sup>107</sup>. In 1861, the S&DR built an engine shed which could accommodate twelve locomotives, a short distance to the north along the main line, just outside the present Conservation Area boundary.

In 1863, the S&DR opened a major new Locomotive Works to north of [1] North Road Railway Station which became to be known as the North Road Shops (no longer extant), also outside the present Conservation Area, in order to cope with the demand<sup>108</sup>, relocating its former manufacture at Shildon<sup>109</sup>. These works, along with the now-established rail link between London and Scotland (via Bank Top), made

<sup>101</sup> Allen 1964, page 120

<sup>102</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 135

<sup>103</sup> <https://geneagraphie.com/pedigrees/Pennyghael/Janson.pdf>

<sup>104</sup> <https://collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/people/ap27762/kitching-alfred>

<sup>105</sup> Lawson, Gouldsborough 2010, page 4

<sup>106</sup> Lloyd 2005, pages 143-144

<sup>107</sup> [https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Whessoe\\_Foundry\\_Co](https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Whessoe_Foundry_Co)

<sup>108</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, 'Whessoe Road Engine Shed'

<sup>109</sup> Flynn 1989, page 107



Darlington the centre of a complex railway network and heavy engineering industry, leading to a huge rise in the number of workers in the town engaged in both the operating and maintaining the network. The local engineering works fed off the dramatic increase in work<sup>110</sup>, with the North Road Shops employing 339 workers by 1866, rising to 1,400 by the 1890s<sup>111</sup>. Following the S&DR's merger with the North Eastern Railway (NER) later in 1863, which already had facilities at York, the Northgate railway quarter became something of a backwater<sup>112</sup>. Nevertheless, the Darlington Committee of the NER still controlled the former S&DR routes for the next ten years<sup>113</sup> and held its meetings at [1] North Road Railway Station until 1876<sup>114</sup>.



Top left: [C] 15 & 16 Westbrooke Villas: By GG Hoskins in polychromatic Neo-Gothic design, 1864. Top right: [D] 8 & 8a Westbrooke Villas: By Robert Borrowdale in Neo-Gothic design with ecclesiastical elements. Bottom: [B] Melville House: Cocoa palace, a landmark built by local architect Robert Borrowdale in 1879. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

In the 1860s-70s, the Westbrooke Villas were built on Henry Pease's gardens to accommodate railway management staff<sup>115</sup>; they are the last middle-classes houses to be built inside the present Conservation Area boundary. [C] 15 & 16 Westbrooke Villas were probably the first commission of architect GG Hoskins (1837-1911) after

<sup>110</sup> Clack, Pearson 1978, page 21

<sup>111</sup> Emmett 2003, page 8

<sup>112</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021b, page 5

<sup>113</sup> Flynn 1987, page 40

<sup>114</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 29

<sup>115</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 51

he set up in Darlington in 1864<sup>116</sup>. The eccentric [D] **8 & 8A Westbrook Villas** are said to have been designed by stonemason and architect Robert Borrowdale (1833-1908)<sup>117</sup>. In 1879, Darlington's first 'cocoa palace' opened in [B] **Melville House** along High Northgate, also built by Borrowdale (his final work in Darlington), providing a place where teetotallers could socialise; it soon went out of fashion and shut before the century turn<sup>118</sup>.

In 1869, St George's Presbyterian Church was built on land along Northgate purchased from John Pease in the southern part of the present Conservation Area. Since its reunion with the Congregational Church Union Street (recently demolished) in 1972<sup>119</sup> it has become the [16] [17] **Northgate United Reformed Church** (grade II)<sup>120 121</sup>. In 1873 the [E] **Livingstone Buildings** were completed along High Northgate, named after the explorer who died in that year<sup>122</sup>.



Left: [16] [17] **Northgate United Reformed Church**: 1869; in a severe C13 style in coursed freestone. Right: [E] **Livingstone Building**: 1873; only the southern complex survives today. Nos. 19 & 29 were part of the 2002-05 Northgate HERS (see 3.6). (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

Slightly further north and on the same side of the street, the Theatre Royal was erected in 1865, Darlington's first purpose-built theatre, but was closed three years later and demolished in 1873. The new Theatre Royal opened in the same location in 1881. After being burnt down resulting from a stage performance of fireworks two years later, the derelict shell was bought in 1887 by the owner of the [G] **Bridge Hotel** next door (which was rebuilt in 1898, still in the same ownership as the theatre<sup>123</sup>) who restored the theatre, including electric lights for the stage<sup>124</sup>. In the same year, the [N] **Salvation Army Citadel** was constructed further south on the same side of the street, its foundation stone laid by the Citadel's founder General Booth<sup>125</sup>.

<sup>116</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20080322011630/http://www.communicate.co.uk/ne/westbrook/page4.phtml>

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/9244082.westbrook-wander/>

<sup>118</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 148-149 & 159

<sup>119</sup> Flynn 189, page 100

<sup>120</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1258167>

<sup>121</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1258171>

<sup>122</sup> Lloyd 2001, page 145

<sup>123</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 67

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/culture/film/features/20217334.15-old-pictures-odeon-darlington-luxe-cinema-northgate/>

<sup>125</sup> Flynn 1988, photos 65 & 67



Left: [G] Bridge Hotel: Rebuilt in 1898, with the former Theatre Royal to the left, now the [H] Odeon. The building used to extend until fairly recently further to the left/north, which is now an external space with a remaining fireplace. Right: [N] Salvation Army Citadel: 1887; to the right of it is [14]. Central School Annex. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

By 1880, Darlington's textile industry had largely been out of operation<sup>126</sup>. In 1885, the initial workforce of eleven at the [2] S&DR Carriage Works had reached its peak with 150 employees, but NER announced its closure as it was more economical to do all carriage works in York and ceased all works in Darlington site the following year<sup>127</sup>. North Road's location on the edge of Darlington was less from ideal, and once NER controlled all the lines in the area<sup>128</sup>, the new station at Bank Top completed in 1887 took much of the passenger and freight traffic away from [1] North Road Railway Station<sup>129</sup>.

During the late 1880s, after his father had died, John Kitching allowed more of the former Elmfield estate to be built on. Inside the present Conservation Area boundary, Thornton Street soon sprung up, followed by Elmfield Terrace. Kitching lived at [I] Elmfield House until 1920<sup>130</sup>.

The six-inch 1896 map (see above) shows that much of the existing planform within the present Conservation Area had been established by the late-nineteenth century, with a continuous building frontage along Northgate and High Northgate and new roads forking off to either side. The 25-inch edition (not provided) clearly shows the location of [F] 1 Leadenhall Street built by Robert Borrowdale and [O] The Half Moon, although it is likely that the pub is much older, judging from its appearance and location. Since the issue of an 1870 map<sup>131</sup> (not shown), there had been a significant increase in buildings in the area, in particular workers housing, which was required for the expanding workforce of the railway and its associated industries. High Northgate had become a busy shopping centre serving the housing around the station site<sup>132</sup>. New railway lines had been put into place to join with the east coast mainline, with [1] North Road Railway Station becoming a major passenger facility. The former Kitching Foundry had partly been demolished to make way for extra sidings for the Royal Agricultural Show in 1895; the remainder was demolished in 1975<sup>133</sup>. The branch line had also been shortened, its southern stretch and coal

<sup>126</sup> Clack, Pearson 1978, page 21

<sup>127</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021a, page 39

<sup>128</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, 'North Road (Darlington)'

<sup>129</sup> [http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/d/darlington\\_north\\_road/](http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/d/darlington_north_road/)

<sup>130</sup> Lloyd 2005, pages 144 & 146

<sup>131</sup> Clark 2006, page 9

<sup>132</sup> Flynn 1994, photo 47

<sup>133</sup> Clark 2006, pages 11 & 17



depot (the latter closed in 1871<sup>134</sup>) now replaced by urban architecture. By then, a much larger coal depot (no longer extant) had been provided along the main line to the southeast of [7] Skerne Bridge, outside the present Conservation Area boundary. The branch also no longer served the [3] Lime Cells, maybe as waggons had become too large for the building<sup>135</sup>. Moreover, the [5] Goods Shed had been converted into a NER fire station<sup>136</sup>, with an extension added to the south elevation.



Left: [F] 1 Leadenhall Street: by Robert Borrowdale; the lion at the apex is a later lion replacement. Right: [O] The Half Moon: probably the oldest surviving pub inside the Conservation Area (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

Following the passing of the 1889 Technical Education Act<sup>137</sup>, Central House, now designated under the name of [12] **Central School (East Block)** (grade II)<sup>138</sup>, was built by the Town Corporation as Darlington's first Technical College in 1896 in the south-eastern corner of present Conservation Area, on land formerly owned by the North Lodge Estate, which had begun to be broken up in 1894<sup>139</sup>. The building was designed by GG Hoskins, and the row of weaver's cottages formerly owned by Edward Pease was demolished in 1895 to make way for its construction. Another school (which is now listed by curtilage) was built in a similar Neo-Gothic style to the west of [12] Central School (East Block), on the site of the former open-air school<sup>140</sup> (see below), opening in 1911; it was initially known as the Higher Grade School and in 1916 renamed to [H] **Central Secondary School**<sup>141</sup>.

<sup>134</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 19

<sup>135</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 16

<sup>136</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021b, pages 39

<sup>137</sup> Flynn 1988, photos 56 & 60

<sup>138</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1160912>

<sup>139</sup> Lawson, Gouldsborough 2010, page 4

<sup>140</sup> Flynn 1987, page 84

<sup>141</sup> Flynn 1988, photos 56 & 60



**[12] Central School (East Block)** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): 1896 by G.G Hoskins in an elaborate Perpendicular style, with the two female figures on the gable tops representing Art and Science<sup>142</sup>. **[H] Central Secondary School** to far left.

In 1900, a new street named North Lodge Terrace was constructed on the westside of the North Lodge estate in response to the demand in housing. A year later Gladstone Street was extended to meet Northgate<sup>143</sup>. Between 1851 and 1901, Darlington's population had risen by 366% from 12,452 to 45,958 still due to its growth in the railway and heavy engineering<sup>144</sup>.



**[9] Bandstand to West of Bowling Green** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Restored and re-opened in 2010 after long-term dereliction.

In 1901, the North Lodge estate was acquired from the Pease family by the Town Corporation so that the grounds could be turned into a public park – Backhouse's castellated boat house remained beside an enlarged pond<sup>145</sup> – and the building facilitate municipal offices; the Education Department was based in **[10] North Lodge** from 1905 to 1970. In 1903, North Lodge Park officially opened<sup>146</sup>, including an

<sup>142</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 57

<sup>143</sup> Lawson, Gouldsbrough 2010, page 4

<sup>144</sup> Clack, Pearson 1978, page 21

<sup>145</sup> Lloyd 2005, page 144

<sup>146</sup> Lawson, Gouldsbrough 2010, page 4



octagonal [9] **Bandstand** (grade II)<sup>147</sup>. In 1906, the Bowling Green and pavilion opened<sup>148</sup>; it was hoped that the new green would relieve the pressure on South Park<sup>149</sup>. In 1910, Darlington's first open-air (girl) school was constructed in North Lodge Park, consisting of a wooden frame with two canvassed walls; the canvas could be moved depending on the wind direction to shield from. Some of the sickly pupils had been prescribed by their doctors, so hammocks were slung between the trees so that they could take a nap. The school only operated in this location for two months and was then relocated<sup>150</sup>.



Top: [A] **Darlington Working Men's Club**: 1901, re-fronted in the 1920s. The building and boundary walling benefitted from improvement works under the 2005-09 Northgate PSCA (see 3.6). Bottom left: [M] **Temperance Institute**: 1903. Once a handsome building, the ground floor is now disfigured. Bottom right: [K] **Darlington Bottling Company**: 1900, entrance and display windows now blocked. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

In 1900, the [K] **Darlington Bottling Company** opened along Gladstone Street. In 1901, following a meeting of railwaymen in a cocoa house in the town centre, the newly formed [A] **Darlington Working Men's Club** established itself in a couple of terraced properties at the end of High Terrace along High Northgate, providing reading and leisure facilities for the working man, run by ordinary working men<sup>151</sup>. In 1903, the [M] **Temperance Institute** along Gladstone Street had opened, providing facilities (e.g. meeting rooms for trade unions and friendly societies, billiard room,

<sup>147</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1121287>

<sup>148</sup> Lawson, Gouldsborough 2010, page 4

<sup>149</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 64

<sup>150</sup> Lloyd 2005, pages 145-146

<sup>151</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 129 & 135



bathroom) away from the temptations of the public houses. Fund raisings and donations from wealthy families such as the Peases and Backhouses had provided the money for its construction<sup>152</sup>. It later included the Picturedrome where movies were shown<sup>153</sup>. The Institute proved so popular that in 1909 an additional Temperance Hall (demolished in 1959) was opened next door<sup>154</sup>.

The 1913-14 map (see above) shows the row of terraced housing including [J] **Pentecostal Church** in a Neo-Gothic style had been completed along North Lodge Terrace. Further terracing had been provided along the northern border of North Lodge Park as well as further west beyond the present Conservation Area boundary. To the north of Cocker Beck, the Assembly Hall (no longer extant) is marked behind the northern complex of the Livingstone Buildings (no longer extant), where movies used to be shown<sup>155</sup>.



[J] **Pentecostal Church** (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Unusually located within a row of terraced housing; now a mosque.

In 1920, North Lodge Park was extended to its present size by the inclusion of the Elmfield grounds<sup>156</sup>. In 1932, the lake was filled and re-landscaped. Three years later, the boathouse was converted into a shelter, and finally demolished in 1954<sup>157</sup>. Also in 1932, the area between the [2] S&DR Carriage Works, [1] North Road Railway Station and the former Kitching Foundry began to be used as a railway scrapyards (until the 1960s) for the disassembly of withdrawn locomotives<sup>158</sup>, and was later grassed over to be used for events connected with the museum<sup>159</sup>. In 1938, Theatre Royal had been transformed into the Regal cinema (now [H] **Odeon**). At that time, Darlington had proportionally more cinema seats than any other town<sup>160</sup>.

<sup>152</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 61

<sup>153</sup> Flynn 1987, page 101

<sup>154</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 101-102

<sup>155</sup> Flynn 1987, page 101

<sup>156</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 63

<sup>157</sup> Lawson, Gouldsborough 2010, page 5

<sup>158</sup> Clark 2006, page 50

<sup>159</sup> [http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/d/darlington\\_north\\_road/](http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/d/darlington_north_road/)

<sup>160</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/culture/film/features/20217334.15-old-pictures-odeon-darlington-luxe-cinema-northgate/>



[H] Odeon (photo © Gaby Rose, 2023): Art Deco style between Victorian buildings; formerly the site of the Theatre Royal.

The 1950 map (see above) shows that the lake in North Lodge Park had been removed, and a few new buildings as well as extensions to existing buildings been built to the north and east of the park. In 1951, plans were drawn to convert the former fire station ([5] Goods Shed) into a depot for the maintenance of railway-owned road delivery vehicles<sup>161</sup>; by that time, the southern extension had been removed and a complex of buildings been erected between the former [5] Goods Shed and [1] North Road Railway Station.

Train services had decreased after the war. Towards the end of the 1960s, employment in the railway and engineering industries declined, leading to a degree of local degeneration. With Bank Top having become the main station for Darlington, [1] North Road Railway Station was closed to passengers in 1964 and completely closed the following year<sup>162</sup>. Likewise, the Darlington & Barnard Castle branch closed in 1965, with the rails removed soon after<sup>163</sup>. The North Road Shops (Locomotive Works) shut down officially in 1966 after years of uncertainty<sup>164</sup>.

The construction of the dual-carriageway inner ring road between 1969 and 1973 cut a swathe through Northgate, demolishing a large number of buildings to the south of [12] Central School (East Block), just outside the present Conservation Area boundary. This dissected Northgate to such a degree that it has since led to the development of two separate streets, with the northern part (A167) inside the Conservation Area now being 'cut off' from Darlington's bustling town centre and consequently declining further.

On 27 September 1975, exactly 150 years after the first steam-powered passenger train made its historic journey, the Darlington Railway Centre and Museum was opened inside [1] North Road Railway Station. In the same year, the remains of the former Kitching Foundry were demolished<sup>165</sup>.

<sup>161</sup> Purcell Architecture Ltd 2021b, page 54

<sup>162</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 21

<sup>163</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, point 49

<sup>164</sup> Emmett 2003, pages 13-23

<sup>165</sup> Clark 2006, page 56

### 3.4 Spatial Analysis

Note that planform, road and railway line layouts, watercourses, topography, and buildings are described in the previous sections (see 3.2 & 3.3). Listed buildings are referred to by their designation name and assigned their [NUMBER] given on the map at the beginning of this document; other notable buildings are assigned their [LETTER]



Spatial analysis of the Northgate Conservation Area (boundary line **at the time of review**, as adopted in July 2003, in green) (Map © Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100023728. Licence Number 100023728 2024. Graphics by Gaby Rose)

The Northgate Conservation Area includes a number of focal points which feature within the key views, see below. Whilst the [9] Bandstand, St George's Hall and the [6] Railway Viaduct are only visible from shorter distances, [12] Central School (East



Block), [15] Northgate United Reform Church, the [5] Goods Shed, [7] Skerne Bridge, [G] Bridge Hotel and [B] Melville House are also visible over longer distances. The area's most prominent focal point, however, is just outside the currently designated boundary. Northgate House, a 1960s office block of nine storeys (plus two more storeys for the stairs tower), overshadows the road junction of Northgate and Gladstone Street. Due to its height, it can even be seen from the north end of the Conservation Area as well as the foot-and-cycle path at [7] Skerne Bridge.

By the late-nineteenth century, much of the built environment of the area had achieved good urban enclosure and cohesion – as typical for a town centre – with rows of two-to-three-storey buildings and prominent boundary walling fronting the roads and back lanes. Whilst much of it is still in place, the loss of old structures has had a negative impact on the spatial experience of the Northgate Conservation Area. Moreover, modern buildings have generally not been in keeping with the development pattern of the area, undermining the sense of enclosure and cohesion to various degrees. A particularly detrimental example would be the filling station replacing the northern Livingstone Building. In addition, a number of historical frontages are now concealed behind single-storey extensions, with those to the western side of Northgate having undermined the spatial experience in those locations. Whilst the new housing types that have been introduced throughout the Conservation Area are out of character (see 3.5), they at least contribute to the enclosure of space. In various locations, mature trees and other vegetation also add a sense of enclosure, albeit more organically.

An area of notably lower building density is the railway site at the northern end of the Conservation Area. This has not been fully accessible to the public but will be once the regeneration works have been completed (see 3.6). Here the buildings are very loosely spaced. The former industrial yard between the [1] North Road Railway Station and [2] S&DR Carriage Works is now grassed over, reminding of the former allotment gardens that were here prior to the full industrialisation of the site (see 3.3). Mature trees prevent views from the street onto the station building and intervisibility between the carriage works and the remainder of the railway buildings.

The Northgate Conservation Area includes three good (open) public spaces, as shown on the map above, which feature in some of the key views. They all include some degree of vegetation. Whilst most of the Conservation Area is accessible to the public, the private green space between Westbrook and Cocker Beck and the green corridor along the railway line are not, but they visible from public viewpoints.

The key views of the Northgate Conservation Area are mostly internal, rather than from outside the boundary into the area, with the exception of views 1 and 14.

**View 1** has been taken from the roundabout of the dual-carriageway ring road, which divides Northgate into two independent sections. Mature trees planted on the sunken traffic island in the centre of the roundabout partially conceal this external view into the south entrance of the Conservation Area. Moreover, the tower block of Northgate House on the left adjoining the designated area overshadows the surrounding buildings, including [12] Central School (East Block), which can be seen projecting behind it. On the opposite side of the street is the row of historical buildings including [13] 138-148 Northgate and [O] The Half Moon, although they cannot be identified from this angle. The spire of [15] Northgate United Reform Church is a distant focal point on the right-hand side of Northgate, and the brick façade of the [N] Salvation Army Citadel can just be glimpsed in front of it; the adjoining [14] Central School Annex is much concealed behind a lamp post.



Crossing the roundabout into the Conservation Area, **View 2a** has been taken from the junction of Northgate with Gladstone Street, looking north. In this location, both sides of the street are well enclosed by building frontages, with the Neo-Gothic design of [12] Central School (East Block) on the left dominating the view, and trees of North Lodge Park just visible behind. On the opposite side, the prominent red brick facades of [14] Central School Annex and the [N] Salvation Army Citadel are much concealed by a lamp post and traffic sign. The spire of [15] Northgate United Reform Church remains the focal point on this side. In the far distance, the trees along the railway corridor can be spotted, to the left of the white façade of the [H] Odeon.



Crossing over to the opposite side of the street, **View 2b** still focusses on [15] Northgate United Reform Church, which has become more clearly visible. In the foreground is the prominent pediment of [13] 138-148 Northgate, with [14] Central School Annex and the [N] Salvation Army Citadel notably continuing the gable-fronting 'theme' closer to the church. On the left, a stone figure on top of the northern gable on [12] Central School (East Block) can be seen above the streetscene.

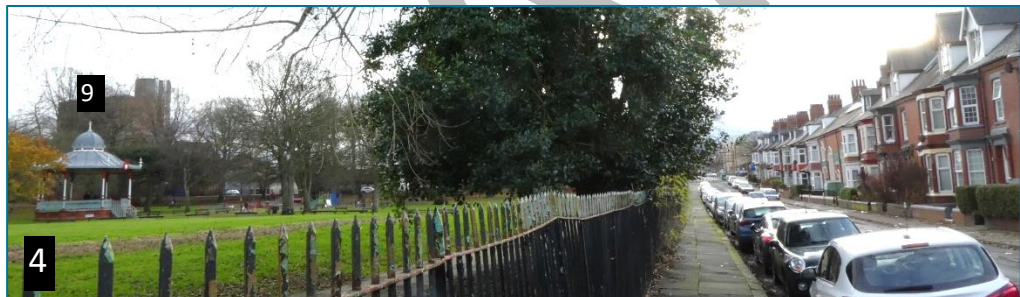




Walking down Gladstone Street, **View 3** has been taken from the junction with North Lodge Terrace, looking north. A long row of traditional brick houses lines the road along the west side of North Lodge Park behind shallow front gardens. Its two-storey bay windows, dormer windows and chimney stacks create a strong rhythm. A line of intermittent trees inside the park helps channel the view down North Lodge Terrace. On the chamfered street corner in the foreground is one of the metal-gated entrances into the park, with the [9] Bandstand just visible behind mature trees.



**View 4** has been taken from the opposite end of North Lodge Terrace looking south, with the row of traditional brick houses lining the street to the right and the line of intermittent trees inside North Lodge Park to the left, the latter behind the original upright metal railings which enclose the public green space. From here, there is a good view onto the [9] Bandstand inside the park, with Northgate House towering above it in the background, just outside the Conservation Area.



Moving to the north side of North Lodge Park, **View 5** has been taken from the junction of North Lodge Terrace with Elmfield Terrace, looking east. Again, the road is lined with mature trees inside the park behind the original metal railings on the right, and a brick terrace on the opposite side. The houses here also have shallow front gardens but only single-storey bay windows; nevertheless, these create a rhythm along with the chimneys. Some of the properties now have modern renders which undermine the originally intended uniformity of this historical row. At the south-eastern end of North Lodge Terrace, St George's Hall with its pyramidal roof provides a local focal point.





Elmfield Terrace then turns north for a short distance until it meets Corporation Street. **View 6** has been taken from the eastern part of Corporation Road focussing on [G] Bridge Hotel at the junction with Northgate. To the left, a terrace including two-storey brick-built bay windows lines the street behind shallow front gardens; here, too, some of the properties now have modern renders which undermine the uniformity of this historical row. Further along there is a modern timber-clad building of unusual shape which is uncharacteristic for the area. On the other side of the street there are two large brick buildings that were constructed between 1913 and 1950, presenting some of the last traditional structures to be built in the area. The one closest to the foreground is in office use and has a scoria-paved back lane to its western elevation, which is just visible in the far right-hand bottom corner.



Returning onto the main street, **View 7a** starts off a sequence of four views along the spinal axis of the Conservation Area, looking south. The first one has been taken from the busy junction of High Northgate with Chestnut Street, the latter visible in the foreground to the left. To the right, the surviving (southern) [E] Livingstone Building prominently lines the junction; it only stands out now as its neighbouring buildings have been demolished. Behind it is a small public green space with benches and trees. As High Northgate gently slopes downhill towards Cocker Beck and curves right, the red brick gable of [G] Bridge Hotel and adjoining white block of the [H] Odeon can be seen on the other side of Northgate Bridge. In the distance, the spire of [15] Northgate United Reform Church provides the focal point.



Moving on, **View 7b** has been taken from the junction of High Northgate with Lambton Street. In front of [8] the Railway Tavern on the left the pavement widens, where there used to be the standage where carts and wagons could await the refreshed return of their drivers. Across the street is the small public green space with benches and trees. It is the location of the former Westbrook Building designed by local stonemason Robert Borrowdale in 1873, which was later named 'the most bizarre building in town'. The detached gable-fronted brick building on the opposite side of the street, to the right of [8] the Railway Tavern, is [F] No. 1 Leadenhall Street,

the only surviving house out of eight or nine that Borrowdale had built in the street<sup>166</sup>. Further on, the red brick gable of [G] Bridge Hotel (facing Cocker Beck) and the adjoining white façade of the [H] Odeon can be seen across Northgate Bridge. In the distance, the spire of [15] Northgate United Reform Church again provides the focal point, with the white-rendered corner of [13] 138-148 Northgate visible behind and [12] Central School (East Block) across the street.



Moving further, **View 7c** has been taken from Northgate Bridge with the street now rising steadily away from Cocker Beck. To the left are [G] Bridge Hotel, with the demolished building part being an external space to the far left, and the adjoining [H] Odeon. Across the street is some traditional brick architecture built in the first half of the twentieth century (see View 6) which still has its original shopfront and windows. Whilst the left side of Northgate is well enclosed by buildings fronting the street, the sense of enclosure on the right-hand side has been undermined by modern extensions and other buildings that are unsympathetic to the historical development pattern. In the distance, there are three landmarks: [15] Northgate United Reform Church remains very prominent, and on the other side of the street [12] Central School (East Block) and Northgate House (just outside the present Conservation Area boundary), with the tree tops of North Lodge Park in front. The trees at the far end of Northgate mark the location of the roundabout of the ring road (see View 1), with the white-rendered corner of [13] 138-148 Northgate just visible to the left.



The final view of this sequence is **View 7d** which has been taken from the junction of Northgate with Chestnut Street. [15] Northgate United Reform Church now features prominently in the foreground to the left and forms a distinct group with the adjoining buildings including the [N] Salvation Army Citadel and [14] Central School Annex, held together by a gable-fronting 'theme'. Further up the road, the pedimented central section of [13] 138-148 Northgate carries this on (see View 2b). On the opposite side of the street, the single-storey extensions in front of North

<sup>166</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 141, 143-144 & 154



Terrace have weakened the sense of urban enclosure. Behind them, the trees to the entrance of North Lodge Park can be seen in front of [12] Central School (East Block) and Northgate House, the latter just outside the present Conservation Area.



Going back to High Northgate, **View 8** has been taken from next to the filling station's digital price board so that it does not impede the view. The former cocoa palace of [B] Melville House is a quirky local landmark at the junction of High Northgate with Meville Street and Station Road. Galvanised streetlights in its vicinity detract from the building. The A167 gently curves right steadily rising north. On the left is a good-quality terrace with large front gardens, the first houses to be built in c.1825 following the arrival of the railway, with the former [A] Darlington Working Men's Club being the end property, just visible behind the vegetation. The terrace in the distance has smaller front garden so the houses are closer to the street, narrowing the view. On the right side, the street is lined by an early terrace of c.1825 with no front gardens. Some of the properties are now altered quite significantly, although the chimneys have generally been retained and remain prominent. The trees in the far distance mark the railway site and line.



Turning left onto Station Road/Hopetown Lane, **View 9** has been taken from the junction with Widdowfield Street looking southeast onto the triangular public square which used to be the location of the branch line tracks to the coal depot. The open space is well bounded by stone walling to the left containing the railway site (not shown on the photo). Further stone walling to the right (just out of view) is believed to be remnants of the former depot or branch line. On the left, mature trees soften the south end of the railway site, whilst three young trees grow on a large, grassed traffic island in the centre of the square. In the background, rows of terraced housing front the square on gently curved lines. This is overall an attractive public space, although the galvanised streetlights and a modern house do detract.





Going down Widdowfield Street, **View 10** has been taken from the with Drury Street, looking south. The green space to the left is the small park of Paddy Dene along Cocker Beck, its entrance on the curved street corner. A row of traditional brick houses features a painting of first black professional footballer Arthur Wharton on the northern gable wall, outside the present Conservation Area boundary. The terrace lines the western side of this pleasant public space, with mature vegetation along the other sides.



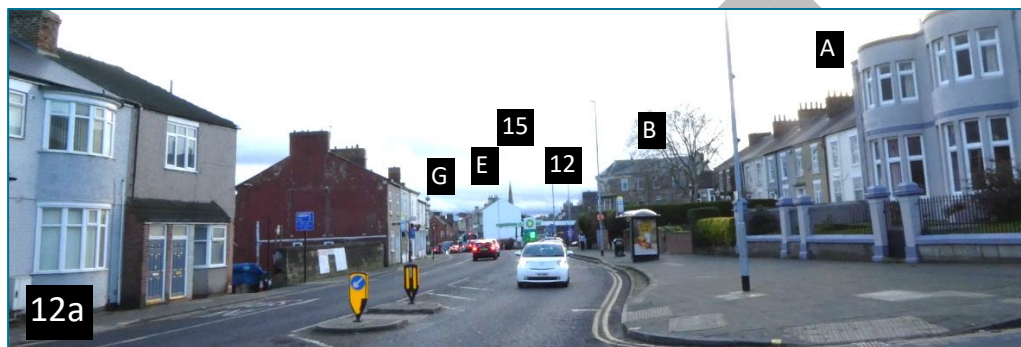
Heading back to High Northgate, **View 11** has been taken from the gap between numbers 84b and 94, known as **Dobbin's View**, the viewpoint of John Dobbin's belated painting of the opening day of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, see cover image of this document. [7] Skerne Bridge is less noticeable from the east side of street due to a tall stone boundary wall blocking the view but is more easily visible from the slightly elevated western roadside. Two terraces frame this view. The far-end property of the left-hand terrace (not shown) is inscribed '1857 – FAITH HOUSE', a former reading room constructed by the Darlington Workmen's Mutual Improvement Society which was later turned into a mortuary caretaker's cottage<sup>167</sup>. Today, the land between High Northgate and the river is a brownfield site which is not part of the present Conservation Area. It detracts from the picturesqueness of the bridge but would have been more unsightly when Dobbin did the painting, being the location of the gasworks (opened in 1830<sup>168</sup>) which possibly blocked the view onto the bridge.



<sup>167</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 12

<sup>168</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 13

**View 12a** has been taken from the junction with Arthur Street, looking down High Northgate, south. To the left is the gap between the two terraces which frame Dobbin’s View (see View 11) with the stone wall in between. To the right is the former [A] Darlington Working Men’s Club with its distinct curved bay windows and prominent piers to its front garden, the latter having belonged to the original two houses. Behind it is an adjoining, recessed row of Georgian houses with generous front gardens (see View 8). Well-established vegetation softens the view, partially concealing [B] Melville House. Galvanised streetlights add a rigid element which detracts. The street curves gently to the left with the white gable of the surviving [E] Livingstone Building being in the focus in the distance. As the street dips down to Cocker Beck, the gable of [G] Bridge Hotel becomes visible. In the far background, three landmarks at the other end of the Conservation Area can be spotted: the spire of [15] Northgate United Reform Church, [12] Central School (East Block), and the tower block of Northgate House to the right of it, just outside the boundary.



**View 12b** has been taken from further up High Northgate, from the pedestrian crossing to Skerne Bridge Entrance, still looking south. This view is clearly channelled by the street being lined by some handsome terraced housing. The properties to the right have some high-quality architectural detailing, basements and front gardens bounded by metal fencing on dwarf sandstone walling. The terrace to the left is more basic but also includes basements with railings in front and some detailing which is of interest. The houses with the arched lintels were cohesively improved by the owner inspired by the achievements of the HERS and PSCA schemes in the 2000s (see 3.6). Further on, the space opens up at the former [A] Darlington Working Men’s Club revealing [B] Melville House partially concealed by the mature vegetation of the Georgian terrace’s end gardens. As the streets curves left out of sight, there is a glimpse of [12] Central School (East Block) in the far distance with Northgate House towering above to the right, outside the present Conservation Area boundary.



Going back to the junction with Arthur Street, **View 12c** has been taken from the opposite direction, looking north. The focal point in the distance is the [6] Railway Viaduct which is flanked by trees to both sides. Again, the view is being channelled by rows of houses lining the street. The trees behind the left terrace with the high-quality architectural detailing (see View 12b) mark the railway site which is currently



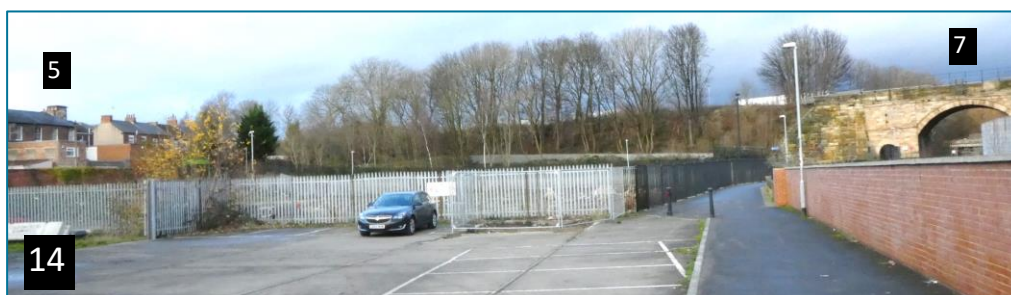
being regenerated. The (probably self-seeded) trees behind the more basic, last terrace on the right-hand side are on the embankment of the railway corridor.



**View 13** has been taken from the north end of High Northgate again, at the junction with Skerne Bridge Entrance, looking at the railway site currently under construction, with the clock tower of the [5] Goods Shed being the focal point, as was its design intention. A new entrance to the site has been created on the corner with McNay Street. The open space around the Goods Shed is an important factor as is its intervisibility with the former goods office, now [4] 1 & 2 McNay Street, due to their original functional relationship. The view is framed by the terrace with the high-quality architectural detailing (see Views 12b&c) on the left and the [6] Railway Viaduct on the right.



**View 14** has been taken from the recently created foot-and-cycle path along the Skerne outside the present Conservation Area, focussing on [7] Skerne Bridge. Historically, both riverbanks in this location – which are also outside the currently designated boundary – were heavily industrialised including the gasworks (see View 11) and would have not been accessible to the public. Today, the opened-up foreground still reminds of its industrial past, and whilst this slightly distracts from the picturesque bridge it is an important part of the history of the site. The terrace in the background to the right lines the eastern side of High Northgate with the tower of the [5] Goods Shed just visible behind. Mature trees line the railway corridor.

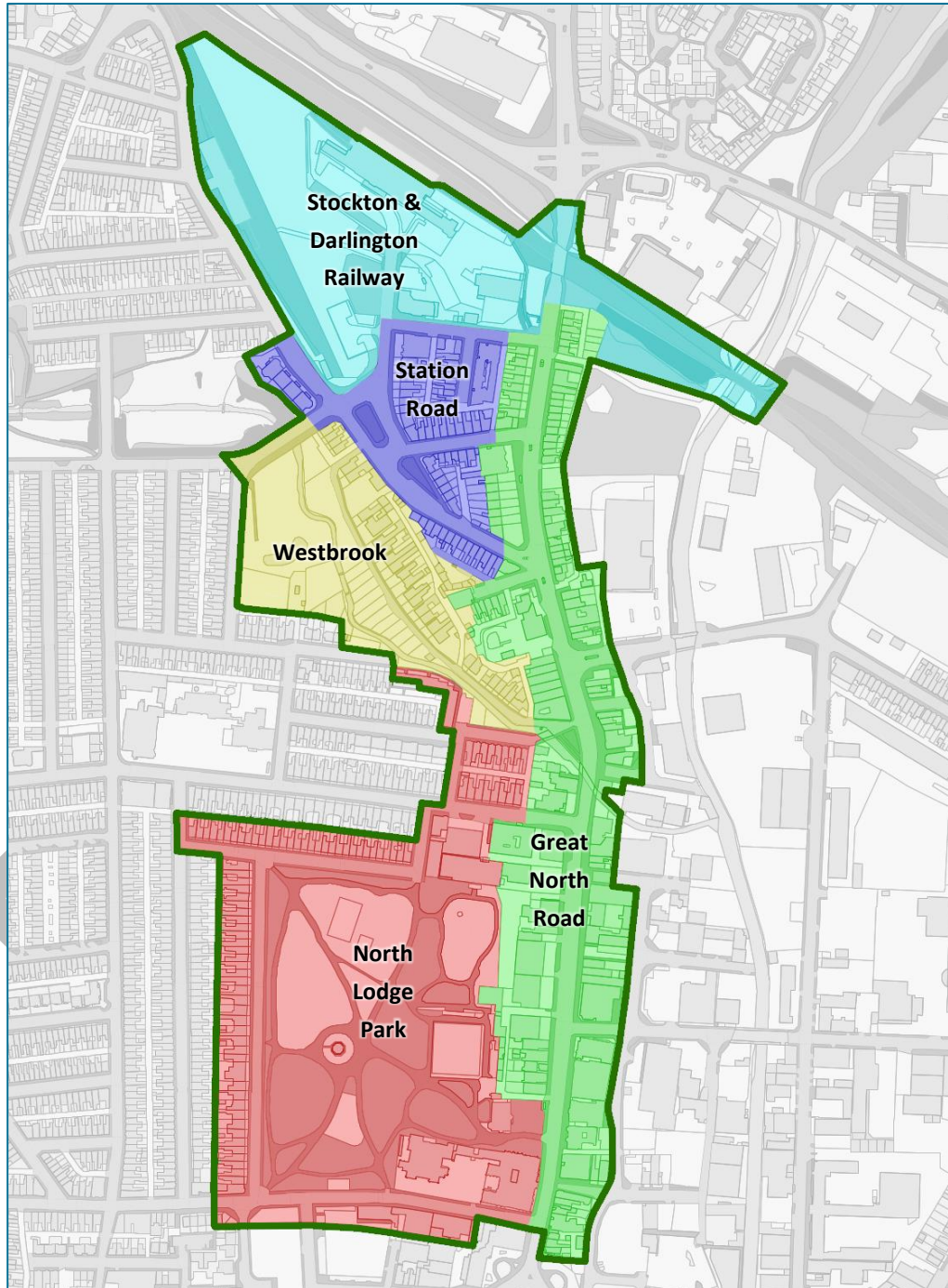




### 3.5 Character Analysis

This section should be read in conjunction with the historical development (see 3.3) and spatial analysis (see 3.4). Listed buildings are referred to by their designation name and assigned their [NUMBER] given on the map at the beginning of this document; other notable buildings are assigned their [LETTER].

The Northgate Conservation Area comprises the following character zones:



Character zones of the Northgate Conservation Area (boundary line **at the time of review**, as adopted in July 2003, in green) (Map © Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100023728. Licence Number 100023728 2024. Graphics by Gaby Rose)

**The Great North Road character zone** is of linear shape, along the north-south axis of the busy A167. Its main architectural and historic significance comprises:

- Part of the main historical highway between London and Edinburgh
- Pre-industrial country estates of wealthy Darlington residents
- Birthplace of the railways and Dobbin's View
- Early railway-related buildings
- Robert Borrowdale buildings and associations

This character zone is the most complex in the Northgate Conservation Area. It is of an urban, mixed-use nature, with two-and-three-storey buildings incorporating a variety of architectural styles (including Italianate and Art Deco) fronting the main street. Intermittent trees and other vegetation soften the channelled views along this enclosed urban space. A small public green space opens up the area to the north of Northgate Bridge (see View 7b). Much of the experience of the character zone is undermined by the high volume of vehicle traffic, which not only has a negative impact on pedestrian movement from one side of the street to the other but also creates an unpleasant atmosphere. Moreover, demolition of old buildings, loss of architectural cohesion, ongoing dilapidation, vacant units, visual clutter and insensitive modern development (sometimes resulting from a change of use) have caused significant harm to the character of the Georgian and Victorian streetscape (see 4.1).

The Great North Road character zone includes the following listed buildings:

- [8] The Railway Tavern
- [13] 138-148 Northgate
- [14] Central School Annex
- [15] [16] Northgate United Reform Church and railings [landmark]

It also has the largest amount of 'other notable' buildings:

- [A] Darlington Working Men's Club
- [B] Melville House [landmark]
- [E] Livingstone Building
- [F] 1 Leadenhall Street
- [G] Bridge Hotel [landmark]
- [H] Odeon
- [I] Elmfield House
- [N] Salvation Army Citadel
- [O] The Half Moon

The historical buildings of this character zone comprise detached and terraced houses as well as commercial/leisure town buildings with some including residential or businesses on the upper floors. A few industrial buildings survive in rear areas. Whilst [14] Central School Annex still portrays the wealth of its former inhabitants, [I] Elmfield House is now much concealed behind modern single-storey extensions of commercial nature. There are a large number of such extensions where there used to be generous front gardens in this character zone, especially in the southern part (see Views 7c&d). With the exception of North Terrace, all other terraced housing is in the northern part of this character zone (see Views 8 & 12a-c), close to the railway site. The houses which are set back behind front gardens and/or include basements and have external stairs leading to the entrances were originally of higher social status

than those without. Many terraces have been adversely affected by modern alterations, although those on the western side of High Northgate have generally retained their historical character. There is a wide range of old commercial and leisure buildings including [13] 138-148 Northgate, [15] Northgate United Reform Church, the former [A] Darlington Working Men's Club, [B] Melville House, [E] Livingstone Building, [G] Bridge Hotel, [H] Odeon, [N] Salvation Army Citadel, and [O] The Half Moon. These buildings have generally fared better than many houses in retaining their historical appearance.



*Left: Former warehouse with hoisting door along Beck Road. Right: The tall (now blocked) entrance suggests a former carpet trade connected with this building at the junction of the A167 with Westbrook (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

Although the linear building element prevails in this character zone, a few notable detached structures include gable-fronting elevations, namely [F] 1 Leadenhall Street, [14] Central School Annex, [N] Salvation Army Citadel and [13] 138-148 Northgate. Due to the enclosed nature of this character zone, the roofs, which are generally pitched or hipped and slated, are less prominent. The brick chimneys of the houses or pubs contribute to the character of this zone where they have been retained. The different roof shapes of [H] Odeon (although pitched behind a tall parapet wall, the appearance is of a flat roof), [N] Salvation Army Citadel (crenelated towers) and [15] Northgate United Reform Church (very steep pitch with multiple 'dormers) make these buildings stand out in the streetscape.

Whilst the historical buildings are often built in red brick (the earlier ones at the top end of the zone have Flemish bonds), a terrace along Melville Street and the [E] Livingstone Building are constructed in cream/buff brick. The landmark buildings [15] Northgate United Reform Church and [B] Melville House are made of facing sandstone, the former incorporating high-quality ashlar. Stone has also been used for architectural features and window and door surrounds on red-brick buildings. Single-storey bay or oriel windows and decorative stone canopies above windows and door entrances can be found throughout this character zone. Structures with more elaborate detailing include the [E] Livingstone Building, [G] Bridge Hotel, [N] Salvation Army Citadel, [F] 1 Leadenhall Street and [13] 138-148 Northgate. [8] The Railway Tavern, the former [A] Darlington Working Men's Club, [H] Odeon, [O] The Half Moon and the re-fronted [13] 138-148 Northgate would have been designed with a render to make them stand out and attract people. However, a large quantity of the old brick buildings is now rendered or painted which would originally not have been,

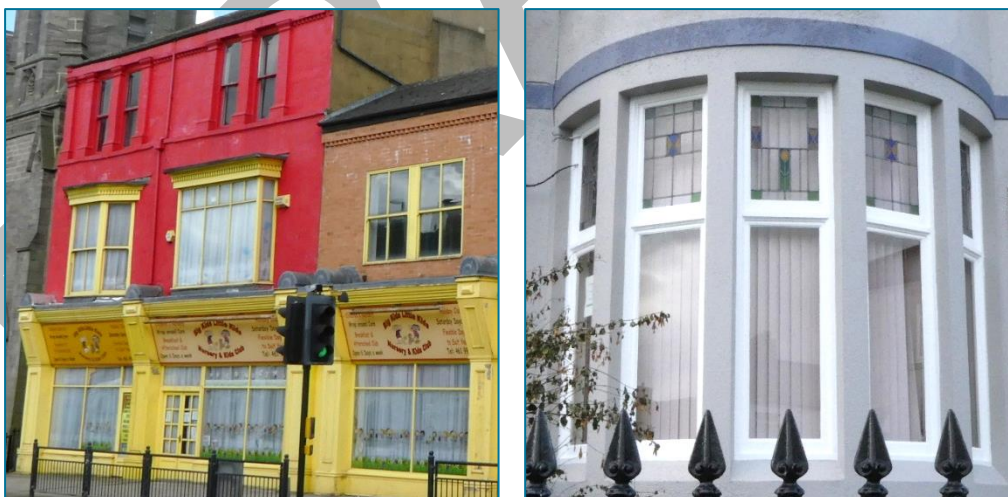


which can undermine the intended uniformity of building groups, such as terraces (see Views 8 & 12a-c).



*Left:* Brick building with Italianate stone detailing to eaves and canopy above window. *Centre:* [E] Livingstone Building – All walling and detailing in brick, later painted; decorative bay window constructed in timber. *Right:* [F] 1 Leadenhall Street – Distinctive stone carvings by Robert Borrowdale (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

Where traditional sash windows with old glazing and panelled doors survive, they can add significantly to the quality of the historical buildings. There are also examples of examples of casements including coloured and clear glass set in leaded glazing bars. However, old windows and doors have often been replaced with different designs and materials which make them stand out negatively. The same applies to modern shopfronts on old buildings, which can be very intrusive, although some historically inspired designs exist which are in keeping with the architecture. A few old shopfronts do survive (e.g. 14 & 32 High Northgate).



*Left:* Traditional windows with slim frames and glazing bars and traditional-style shop front have been provided under provided the 2002-05 Northgate HERS (see 3.6). *Right:* Coloured glass with lead glazing bars had been restored under the 2005-09 Northgate PSCA (see 3.6). (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

The modern buildings in this character zone are of commercial, leisure and residential nature and located in the southern part of the character zone with the exception of the filling station. None of these buildings contribute positively with some of them having a very harmful impact on the Conservation Area, due to their orientation, shape, materials or detailing.

The roads are generally surfaced in modern asphalt and the pavements in modern stone flags. Distinct scoria-paved back lanes and alleys do survive; they are an important element of the Conservation Area's character. A few of the back lanes to the east of the A167 also include rare survivors of sandstone block paving. Modern street furniture and traffic signage are to a standard utilitarian design. Surviving historical stone or brick boundary walling, piers and metal railings contribute positively to the public realm. Conversely, the rear yards to North Lodge Terrace have been removed, now presenting a poorly maintained open area used for car parking and dumping refuse. In addition, the large metal flues to the commercial units and raised seating area to the rear of the terrace add further visual harm (see 4.1).



*Top left:* Back lane with scoria and sandstone block surfacing. The scoria bricks were produced (possibly from 1899) by the Tees Scoria Brick Co. Ltd of Bank Top, Darlington, and were the by-product of the steelmaking industry in Middlesbrough. Their high mineral content resulted in the distinct blue colouring. Designed to combat disease-ridden back alleys, these bricks were easily washable. *Top right:* Ornate, cast-iron railings on ashlar stone/brick boundary walling between private front garden and public realm. *Bottom:* Rendered garden wall on street corner with stone copings and prominent gate piers; also note the poorly placed signage (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

**The Stockton & Darlington Railway character zone** is of roughly triangular shape and lies at the north end of the Conservation Area. It can only be accessed from the west and south, as the railway line forms a barrier (also visually) to the northeast. Whilst in the nineteenth century this zone was predominantly in industrial, transport and related administrative uses, the industrial functions have ceased to exist. The historic railway site is currently being turned into an enhanced tourist attraction which will operate next to the passenger station. This will have some impact on the character of this zone as well as its pedestrian movement (see View 13); car parking will be provided outside the present Conservation Area boundary. With the exception of the small area along High North Road, this character zone has comparatively little vehicle movement and therefore does not suffer from the implications of high traffic. Moreover, the detached buildings and bridges are spaced generously and interspersed with plenty of mature vegetation, contributing to a relaxed atmosphere.

The main architectural and historic significance of this zone lies in the railway site to the west of High Northgate, which was developed by the Stockton & Darlington Railway Company between 1831 and 1853, including the rail track across [7] Skerne Bridge, which featured in the opening day of the line in 1825, see cover image of this document. This zone was the catalyst for the rapid expansion of Darlington in the nineteenth century and contributed to the birth of the modern railway network across the world. The existing green space to the east of the former branch line reminds of the allotment gardens shown on the 1855 map.

The Stockton & Darlington Railway character zone includes the following listed buildings; there are no other notable buildings:

- [1] North Road Railway Station
- [2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works
- [3] Lime Cells
- [4] 1 & 2 McNay Street
- [5] Goods Shed [landmark]
- [6] Railway Viaduct [landmark]
- [7] Skerne Bridge [landmark]

Apart from these structures, there is another, modern building, on the junction of Station Road with McNay Street. It is constructed in a pastiche style which confuses the interpretation of this historic site.

The historic buildings in this zone are detached and of various size, ranging from quite large ([1] North Road Railway Station and [2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works) to quite small ([3] Lime Cells). All roofs are hipped and slated, and windows comprise sashes and casements incorporating multiple panes. All of the structures are of a utilitarian character with the exception of [4] 1 & 2 McNay Street, which was built as an office and could visually be mistaken for a dwelling. Whilst the S&DR structures are faced in stone or render and incorporate Italianate styles to various degrees, the [3] Lime Cells have the appearance of an outbuilding and are a rare survival of a once-common and distinctive regional building type, with their upper roadside elevation currently clad in timber boarding. Using a classical design was a marketing move, with the [5] Goods Shed being the most formal and most expensively constructed. In the 1830s, the railway's key customers were prosperous merchants receiving and despatching goods, so the building needed to impress and reassure<sup>169</sup>. The Neo-Gothic elements added later to [1] North Road Railway Station are an anomaly in this zone, although they do indicate the style direction Victorian railway architecture would take throughout the country.

The roads and cycle path to [7] Skerne Bridge are surfaced in modern asphalt and there are no known surviving historical ground finishes. Long stretches of coursed sandstone retaining walls bound the railway site, which were probably part of a landscaping scheme from between 1938 and 1950. A short, curved section abutting the north corner of the [3] Lime Cells may date from the mid-nineteenth century<sup>170</sup>. Modern gabion walls containing loose rubble stones in metal baskets line the embankment to the railway corridor on the approach to [7] Skerne Bridge.

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<sup>169</sup> Clark 2006, pages 18 & 56

<sup>170</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, pages 21 & 43





Coursed sandstone retaining wall along Hopetown Lane enclosing railway site with mature vegetation behind (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023)

The trees on the railway heritage site include mature sycamore, birch and beech. The railway embankment near [7] Skerne Bridge has (semi-) mature trees and saplings comprising ash, sycamore, buddleia and cypress. [7] Skerne Bridge offers some potential to bats for roosting. Hart's tongue ferns grow around and on the base of the bridge, and there are willows along the Skerne. The river offers habitat for waterfowl, kingfishers, and even otters in this area.

**The Station Road character zone** is the smallest and of irregular shape and lies in the northern part of the Conservation Area. The buildings in this zone are mainly rows of houses fronting the streets. It is a residential area which includes one (now) commercial building dated 1873 and a former factory (now converted and extended); a few of the terraced houses at the south end of Station Road have retail on the ground floors. This zone is a tightly knit built environment of urban character which has been degraded over the years by insensitive alterations to the buildings. In contrast, the generous public open space to the west bounded by rows of houses has a very pleasant atmosphere (see View 9). Vegetation growth is limited around the square area. There is little vehicle movement but a fair amount of roadside parking.

The main architectural and historic significance of this zone is the railway workers' housing built in the second half of the nineteenth century, sparked by the growth of the railway industry and the migration of workers into this area to find work<sup>171</sup>. Moreover, the public square used to be the location of the Stockton & Darlington railway branch line to the coal depot. Evidence of the zone's industrial past can still be found in the stone walling along the southern side of Hopetown Lane/Station Road which is associated with the former depot, as well as the stretch of Station Road coming off High Northgate which formed the northern boundary of the depot.

This zone has no listed or 'other notable' structures.

Although the rows of historical houses include design variations they do work as an ensemble. They are generally built in red brick although many now have modern renders which undermine their group value; properties constructed in facing cream brick feature at the south end of Station Road. The buildings are generally two storeys high, although some are slightly raised with a basement below. Only the houses facing the public square have front gardens. Those at the north end of Station Road were of highest status including two-storey bay windows, dormers and elaborate eaves detailing. Some of the openings have curved stone lintels, and traditional timber sashes including old glazing survive. The houses not facing the square are more basic, although one row includes detailing in cream brick and single-

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<sup>171</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, page 78

storey bay windows (Stephenson Street), and those along Arthur Street have moulded canopies above doors and ground-floor windows. In contrast to the houses facing the public open space, many of the more basic terraces have been altered by changing opening patterns, insertion of modern windows, doors, shop fronts and roofing materials, all which has been to the detriment of the area (see 4.1). In the more confined street scenes, roofs are not as visible as across the public square where grey slating (or imitation of) has been retained.



*Top: Stone wall associated with former coal depot which has been repurposed to residential boundary walling along Hopetown Lane<sup>172</sup>, including coal holes and doorways. Bottom left: Higher-status terraced house at the top end of Station Road with basement and front garden with replacement metal railings. Bottom right: Houses along Stephenson Street with prominent chimney stacks including red and cream bricks, although most now have a modern render. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

The (now) commercial building at the north end of Station Road is single storey and matches some of the elements of the adjoining houses. It has very elaborate eaves in cream brick and decorative stone mullions. Its historical use is unknown to the author. The former industrial building along Stephen Street is three storeys tall with a large entrance. Its new windows detract significantly.

The modern buildings are all built in red brick with slate (or look-a-like) roofs. Pullman House, an apartment block along Hopetown Lane has uncharacteristic, large entrance porches and Juliet balconies and is three storeys tall (see 5.1). The modern house across the square fails to work with the proportions of the neighbouring properties and has a brick front garden wall instead of metal fencing. The new apartment buildings along Stephenson Street harmonise more reasonably, probably also due to the more confined environment. However, they do detract from the former industrial building which they surround by the introduction of an uncharacteristic gable feature.

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<sup>172</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 21



The roads are generally surfaced in asphalt and the pavements in modern stone flags. Scoria-paved back lanes survive, although the section off Arthur Street and smaller patches elsewhere have been replaced with asphalt. Rear yard walls have often been altered although evidence of historical openings can be found. All historical cast-iron railings to the front gardens have been lost, but some survive in front of the basements in the southern part of station road. Modern metal replacements also retain the character, but the introduction of timber fencing and brick walling has had a negative impact. The former, large front garden to the commercial building at the north end of Station Road has been lost completely to hardstanding. Modern galvanised streetlights detract from the public open space.



*Left: Scoria-paved back lane off McNay Street lined by original rear-yard walling with openings, the coal holes now blocked. Right: Original metal railings in front of basements along Station Road. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

**The Westbrook character zone** is of slightly elongated shape and follows the green corridor of Cocker Beck in the western part of the Northgate Conservation Area. The zone is of more natural character due to its lush vegetation and could be described as a green oasis in the town. The houses all date from the second half of the nineteenth century and are arranged in a linear fashion along the northeast side of Westbrook, which resembles more a lane rather than an urban road. Most of the properties have generous front gardens. There is comparatively very little vehicle and pedestrian movement apart from on Widdowfield Street where there is also access to a small public park to the west of Cocker Beck ([see View 10](#)). On balance, this zone has a very pleasant and peaceful atmosphere, with the exception of the back lanes which appear run down.



*Typical character of Westbrook, looking southeast, with lush vegetation taking the centre stage. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023)*



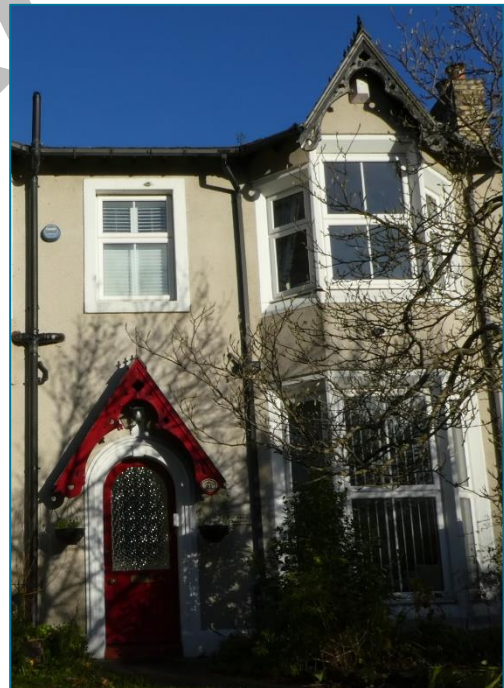
The main architectural and historic significance of this zone is that it used to be the former gardens of Henry Pease, the character of which has been retained in the existing abundant vegetation, prior to creating a high-status residential area for management staff of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in the 1860s-70s; it is the only middle-class area in the north part of the town. Sections of the boundary wall of the former Pease gardens with the former coal depot survive to the rear, including features associated with former structures abutting the gardens wall. Two of the semi-detached villas were designed by notable local architects GG Hoskins and Robert Borrowdale.

There are no listed buildings but the following 'notable' houses:

[C] 15 & 16 Westbrook Villas (Hoskins)

[D] 8 & 8a Westbrook Villas (Borrowdale)

The buildings are mostly semi-detached houses of two to three storeys; a few have a basement with the ground floor entrance accessed by an external staircase. The walls are often built in red brick, although a number are in facing cream/buff brick or rendered. A few of the houses have gable-facing elements, such as [C] 15 & 16 Westbrook Villas and [D] 8 & 8a Westbrook Villas, although generally the ridge lines are parallel with and linear to the lane. Due to the confinement of the space, roofs (mostly slated) and chimneys are less prominent. All buildings feature stone, rendered brick or timber bay windows. Many have ornate door and window surrounds of various designs, with some of them including canopies above. Other architectural elements include decorative ridge tiles and barge boards, which are probably less typical for the area, as well as dormers. Original doors and window frames including old/coloured glass survive, and those that have been replaced with upVC products can stand out negatively. Generally, however, the historical character of the houses has been well retained.



*Left: Elaborate Neo-Gothic door surround in ecclesiastical style of [D] 8 & 8a Westbrook Villas with original panelled doors and old glazing. Right: Decorative barge boards to bay window and entrance door. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

Behind the houses there are two back lanes which include a few outbuildings that do not seem to be of ancillary residential use (although those exist as well behind the yard walls). An outbuilding at the end of the shorter lane has a hoisting door possibly suggesting a former commercial (storage) use. The outbuildings along the much longer, winding back lane are built against the stone wall which is thought to be the former boundary between the former coal depot and Henry Pease's gardens. It still retains scarring created by lean-to greenhouses associated with these gardens. Unusually, one of the outbuildings has an incised rendered finish and arched window with Neo-Gothic hood mould over. It is known as Tallyman's Cabin and may have had some purpose in monitoring the waggons as they entered the coal drops<sup>173</sup>. At the north end of the lane, the depot wall includes a similarly shaped window opening which is now blocked; this is thought to date back to Henry Pease's gardens which had cottages and a bath attached to the boundary wall with the depot, all decorated in a Neo-Gothic style.<sup>174</sup>



*Left: Outbuilding with hoisting door. Right: Various brick and rendered outbuildings along the longer back lane, the central one being Tallyman's Cabin, which used to be crenelated and has a Neo-Gothic entrance behind the abutting brick garage (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

Westbrook and Widdowfield Street are surfaced in asphalt and the pavements in modern stone flags. The back lanes are covered in scoria blocks; the longer one also includes a section of stone surfacing and the small remnant of a brick floor. Rear yard walling to the houses has generally been retained although much altered. The long back lane includes railway-themed display boards which are in poor condition and add to the run-down atmosphere. At its southern end, a short stone wall which adjoins the main depot wall at a right angle incorporates a relocated head of the Green Man carved by stone mason Robert Borrowdale<sup>175</sup>. The front garden walling comprises brick, stone or rendered dwarf walls with stone copings and the original cast-iron railings now all removed, although in some places reinstated with matching metal railings, or less successfully with timber fencing. Some of the gate piers in the front walling feature prominently. Original cast-iron railings do survive between Westbrook (lane) and Cocker Beck near the bridge. North of it is a low brick wall which includes cream bricks inscribed with 'PEASE' as a pattern, behind which there are private gardens. Heritage-style streetlamps contribute very positively.

<sup>173</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 20

<sup>174</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020 pages 21 & 43

<sup>175</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 20

Along Cocker Beck and the Denes, mature and semi-mature trees are present including sycamore, elder, weeping willow, as well as veteran ash and willow. During a site visit on 9 January 2024, robin, blue tit, great tit, long tailed tit, blackbird, song thrush and redwing were observed. Cocker Beck offers opportunities for otter to commute through the landscape almost undetected.

**The North Lodge Park character zone** is in the southwestern part of the Conservation Area. Whilst it is largely a residential area which surrounds a designed public park with mature trees, it currently also includes municipal and commercial functions, as well as a mosque. The zone is of urban character with a small amount of vehicle traffic, although some of the streets are quite affected by roadside parking. Overall, the atmosphere is pleasant and quiet.

The main architectural and historic significance of this zone is that it used to be the former country estate of William Backhouse which was bit by bit sold off due to pressures to make available land for urban development following the arrival of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. A large part was eventually turned into a public town park including the former grounds of the Elmfield Estate which was the home S&DR industrialist Alfred Kitching. Essentially, North Lodge Park demonstrated the aspirations of Darlington to be seen as a modern and ‘caring’ town<sup>176</sup>.

The North Lodge Park character zone includes the following listed buildings:

- [9] Bandstand to West of Bowling Green *[landmark]*
- [10] North Lodge
- [11] Front Garden Wall to North Lodge
- [12] Central School (East Block) *[landmark]*

It also has the following ‘other notable’ buildings:

- [J] Pentecostal Church
- [K] Darlington Bottling Company
- [L] Central Secondary School
- [M] Temperance Institute

Most buildings in this zone are historical and comprise a range of styles. [10] North Lodge is a remnant of the former country estate era and enjoys a secluded location in the park; it is the only Georgian building in this character zone. In contrast, Victorian Neo-Gothic architecture features more boldly in [12] Central School (East Block) – which is the most distinct and prominent building of the Northgate Conservation Area – [L] Central Secondary School and the former [M] Temperance Institute, as well as the former [J] Pentecostal Church. Whilst the former three form a loose group displaying similar terracotta detailing and gabled designs, the latter is unusually part of a red brick terrace. All rows of housing in the zone have shallow front gardens except for those along Westbrook Terrace. Detailing around openings (in brick or stone) and eaves of these properties does exist throughout the zone but is quite basic. North Lodge Terrace includes a groceries store with a partially concealed traditional shop front on the corner with Gladstone Street. The houses in this row have two-storey bay windows and dormers, and some surviving original panelled doors and windows, including old glazing. Whilst these properties have retained their red brick appearance, many in the other streets now have modern renders as well as undergone other notable insensitive alterations (see Views 5 & 6). A building at the

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<sup>176</sup> Lawson, Gouldsborough 2010, page 3



north end of Elmfield Terrace includes an unusual, curved window with leaded glazing. The [K] Darlington Bottling Company is a small but distinct brick building with nice detailing although it is currently covered in a modern paint. Further east along Gladstone Street is a small building in facing cream brick which – like the former [M] Temperance Institute – has been much altered on the ground floor to include retail and is now completely overshadowed by the adjoining Northgate House.



*Left: Original panelled door with stone canopy over and old windows along North Lodge Terrace. Right: Curved first-floor window along Elmfield Terrace (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

The modern buildings all contribute negatively to the Conservation Area. An apartment block at the north end of this zone does not fit with the development pattern of the area. The same applies to the supermarket to the south of it, which is clad in incongruous, grey metal profiling. The restaurant along Gladstone Street is poorly designed including a variety of styles, whereas a building further to the east has a negative impact by being of 'cubic' shape on the adjoining former [M] Temperance Institute; the latter has been further negatively impacted by losing its original ground-floor facade to poor-quality modern shops.

With regards to the public realm, the park features most strongly, including its original metal railings and the [9] Bandstand (see Views 3 & 4). The roads of this zone are surfaced in asphalt and the pavements in modern stone flags. Scoria-paved back lanes survive behind the terraces. Much of the original brick dwarf walling with stone copings to the front gardens has been replaced with modern brick or blockwork. All of the original cast-iron railings to the houses have been lost, although some have been reinstated using modern railings.



*Original cast-iron railings and gate piers to North Lodge Park. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

Within North Lodge Park, there are an assemblage of mature and veteran trees including yew, cherry, beech, broad-leaved lime, pedunculate oak, holly, sycamore, horse chestnut, birch, hornbeam, ash, pine, spruce, cypress, cockspur thorn, as well as lines of poplar to southwestern and northern boundaries. Mature and veteran trees offer valuable roosting space to bats and nesting birds. During a site visit on 9 January 2024, goldfinch, long tailed tit, great tit, blue tit, robin, nuthatch and blackbird were observed inside the park.

### 3.6 Value Attributed by the Local Community and Other Stakeholders

Despite the Northgate Conservation Area being an important designated heritage asset, it is one of the most deprived areas in Darlington. When the inner ring road was built between 1969 and 1973, it cut the area off from the bustling town centre, gradually leading into social and economic decline (see 4.1). Nevertheless, the A167, which passes through the length of the Conservation Area connecting the north of Darlington (and beyond) with the inner-ring-road roundabout, has remained very important locally and regionally with some of the heaviest traffic flows in the town.

From a vehicle-drivers point, the Great North Road character zone (see 3.5) is mainly travelled through rather than being a destination, although this may change to some degree once the visitor attractions on the railway heritage site have (re-) opened to the public, see below. Driving along the A167 can be stressful due to frequent congestion and difficulties crossing the road on some of the junctions. Walking within this character zone is also very unpleasant due to the high volume of traffic (and the resulting noise and pollution), the general run-down appearance of the street scene and low quality of some modern development. Nevertheless, there is a good amount of pedestrian movement along the main street, including people who walk in and out of the nearby town centre. The streets away from the A167 are much quieter. The Harrowgate Hill Cycle Route passes through a very short section of the Stockton & Darlington Railway character zone next to the river where there is no vehicle traffic.

Names of streets which are (partly) within the present Conservation Area boundary commemorate important elements of heritage significance:

- **Weaver's Yard** (shown on the 1855 map), also formerly known as Half Moon Yard as the pub lies on its south side, used to stretch down to Weir Street on the banks of the river. It was largely demolished in the late 1960s, although the scoria-paved alley off Northgate still survives. In the past, mostly carpet makers used to live here, hence the association with the weaving industry which pre-dates the arrival of the railway. It was also the birthplace of John Dobbin (born in 1821).
- **Garden Street** (first shown and named on the 1896 map) is associated with the former extensive garden behind Edward Pease's house (now [13] 138-148 Northgate) which lay along the southern side of the current street. It was full of pagodas, vineries and orchard, stretching down to a boat house on the bank of the river Skerne<sup>177</sup>.
- **McNay Street** was developed in the 1870s and is associated with railway engineer and secretary Thomas McNay (1810-1869).
- **Stephenson Street** was developed at the same time and is associated with George Stephenson (1807-1881) who was a senior manager with the

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<sup>177</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 106 & 111-112

Stockton & Darlington Railway and later the North Eastern Railway until 1873 (not to be confused with the 'other' George Stephenson!).

- **Arthur Street** (first shown and named on the 1896 map) has been named after Joseph Pease's son<sup>178</sup>.
- **Elmfield Terrace** (first shown and named on the 1896 map) lies behind Elmfield House on land which used to be part of its grounds. In the late 1880s, Alfred Kitching's son John allowed more land of the former Backhouse estate to be built on<sup>179</sup>.

The main residential zones comprising North Lodge Park, Westbrook and Station Road include important, green 'breathing spaces' for the locals. Station Road is the least desirable zone to live in (along with the Great North Road character zone), probably due to the lack of a more substantial green space as well as its proximity to the A167. In contrast, the North Lodge Park and Westbrook zones are far more secluded from the unpleasant environment along the main street and surrounded by mature vegetation, providing desirable places to live within walking distance of the town centre. The Conservation Area includes good green pockets which encourage wildlife, mostly in the Westbrook zone, where the green space has a wilder feel, with mature trees bordering the site and Cocker Beck running through the area. The beck also offers an important corridor for rare and protected species such as otter to move through the landscape almost undetected. The Westbrook zone is particularly good for bird watching, with resident birds such as nuthatch, song thrush, robin, and long tailed tit being frequently observed, and overwintering birds such as redwings and siskins using the area to forage in preparation of migrating to breed in the spring. These habitats provide opportunities for wildlife, which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the residents.

Facilities for socialising within the Conservation Area are North Lodge Park (which includes a bowling green, playground and sports court), the former [A] Darlington Working Men's Club (which now has both male and female members<sup>180</sup>), the former [J] Pentecostal Church (now a mosque), [15] Northgate United Reform Church, [8] the Railway Tavern, [O] The Half Moon and a small number of further seated food/drink places. Shopping opportunities are mainly around the A167 including [13] 138-148 Northgate and [E] Livingstone Building. Customers visiting these amenities will be mainly local people, from within the Conservation Area and its immediate surroundings.

Whilst North Road Station also provides a destination point (albeit outside the historic building), it is only a secondary railway station for Darlington and inconveniently located outside the town centre. It therefore does not attract the same number of passengers like Bank Top. When in 1965 [1] North Road Railway Station was closed, decay rapidly set in, hastened by vandalism. Its significance had however been recognised by a number of local people, Darlington Borough Council, museum and tourist board staff who grouped together to rescue the building and create a museum, as well as rescue the associated [2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works and [5] Goods Shed, all in the nick of time before the 150-year commemorations in 1975<sup>181</sup>.

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<sup>178</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 55

<sup>179</sup> Lloyd 2005, page 144

<sup>180</sup> Lloyd 2001, pages 129-132

<sup>181</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2014, page 21



The communal value of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) inside the Northgate Conservation Area is of considerable significance to the heritage sector, and there is a growing interest in early railway infrastructure from specialist societies and the wider public<sup>182</sup>. Darlington Borough Council considers the S&DR pivotal in reinforcing the identity of the town. However, there are also groups of local people who appear not to value it, or perhaps are even unaware of it. Those who appreciate or actively promote it are in effect an international community, as well as the following local groups which are based in and around the heart of the S&DR<sup>183</sup>:

- Darlington Model Railway Club
- Darlington Railway Museum Trust
- Darlington Railway Preservation Society
- Friends of Darlington Railway Centre
- Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway
- the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust
- the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Society
- the North Eastern Railway Association

The Darlington group of the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway meets regularly at [8] the Railway Tavern.

Between 1990 and 2002, the significance of the S&DR within the Northgate Conservation Area received national attention with the Bank of England including an illustration featuring Locomotion No.1's maiden journey across [7] Skerne Bridge in 1825 on the rear of the £5 note, next to a portrait of George Stephenson<sup>184</sup>. From then on, the bridge got the nickname the Five-Pound-Note Bridge.



Specimen of former five-pound note. The locomotive in the foreground is Stephenson's Rocket of 1829 which he built for the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

In 1992 the collection of Ken Hoole, a renowned railway enthusiast, was transferred from Durham County Council to Darlington Borough Council's Head of Steam Museum at [1] North Road Railway Station so that the museum could open a

<sup>182</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2021, page 70

<sup>183</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2013, pages 33-34

<sup>184</sup> <https://drps.synthasite.com/darlington-railway-historic-flashbacks/-3-the-olde-five-pound-note>

research room called the **Ken Hoole Study Centre**<sup>185</sup>. The collection is a unique resource devoted to the railways of North East England. The Study Centre also houses the John Mallon collection, part of the North Eastern Railway Association and the museum archive collections. Prior to the present redevelopment of the railway heritage site (see below), the Study Centre was open to the public on set days via appointment, along with an online enquiry service. The Council is currently working on how the Study Centre will operate on the redeveloped site.

In 2001, the **Friends of North Lodge Park** were formed as a registered charity. They initially focussed on restoring, promoting and using the [9] Bandstand, which was re-opened in September 2010 after long-term dereliction. Over the years, they have run many hundreds of events in North Lodge Park and got involved in local projects (see below). They also look after the park through litter picking and bulb planting.

In 2002, Darlington Borough Council received a total of £321,725 funding from One North East and English Heritage (now Historic England) for improvement works to an area which roughly matched the Great North Road character zone, as part of the five-year **Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme** (HERS). This scheme had been set up by English Heritage to help property owners carry out repairs and reinstatements to their buildings, providing that these would sustain local employment, create new homes and encourage inward investment within conservation areas. Under the Northgate HERS twelve building projects were carried out, as well as environmental enhancement works.

In 2004, Darlington Borough Council secured funding to regenerate Lodge Park under the **Transforming Your Space** scheme, which the Friends of North Lodge Park also engaged in. They were particularly key to the success of a community art project which involved writer in residence Maureen Almond, who worked with a wide range of groups and individuals from the local community, and artist Andrew McKeown. They created a series of cast-iron leaves placed into the grass throughout the park including text from the community. In addition, a book called *Our North Lodge Park: A Dedication by the Community Surrounding North Lodge Park, Darlington* was published featuring the locals' poems about the park, as well as a book of personal poems by Almond, *Tongues in Trees*, about the fourteen trees that had to be felled following the assessment by Houghall College. The project also boarded up and made safe the [9] Bandstand (prior to restoration and re-opening in 2010) including words from the poems on each of the eight boarded sides. Furthermore, path lighting was provided as well as resurfacing of most of the paths, and a quilt comprising patches embroidered by many different members of the community was made and displayed at park events, and later in Corporation Road primary school.

In 2005, Darlington Borough Council secured match funding of £103,631 (total public funding: £207,262) from English Heritage again for improvement works to the same area of the HERS as part of the four-year **Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas** (PSCA), to help restore business and residential premises. Under this scheme seven properties were improved including a similar range of building works as for the previous HERS. As a result of both the Northgate HERS and PSCA, other owners invested in the area without any grant funding. Overall, the works carried out as a direct or indirect result of the two schemes significantly improved the Northgate Conservation Area.

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<sup>185</sup> <https://www.head-of-steam.co.uk/media/1922/hos-collections-development-policy-2016-2021.pdf>



*Top:* No.s 105 (grey) and 109 (end property) High Northgate **prior to** works. No. 105 including its boundary wall was improved under the 2002-05 HERS, and No. 105 under the 2005-09 PSCA, including new metal railings. (Photo © DBC, before July 2001). *Bottom:* The properties are still standing out positively today. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023).

In 2006, Darlington Borough Council imposed an **article 4 direction** on the whole of the Northgate Conservation Area to restrict permitted development rights (see 2.3). for **dwellinghouses (use class C3)** with regards to works affecting:

- (a) their enlargement, improvement or other alteration
- (b) alteration to their roof slopes
- (c) erection or construction of a porch outside their external doors
- (d) provision of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool within their curtilage
- (e) provision of hard surfacing incidental to their enjoyment
- (f) installation, alteration or replacement of an antenna on them or within their curtilage
- (g) erection, alteration or removal of their chimneys
- (h) erection, construction, maintenance improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within their curtilage
- (i) painting of their exterior or any building/enclosure within their curtilage
- (j) demolition of the whole or any part of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within their curtilage



The direction had been a condition of obtaining the grant for the PSCA. Its purpose was to protect the investment made by English Heritage and the Council, so that changes made reinstating or restoring historic features under the scheme were not subsequently changed back without the requirement of planning permission.

The next funding opportunity for the Northgate Conservation Area came in 2017 when Historic England accepted the whole of the S&DR as a **Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)**, following an application by the Stockton & Darlington Railway Heritage Board which included Darlington Borough Council. The HAZ initiative is working with local people and partners to breathe new life into places that are rich in heritage, to unlock their potential and make them more attractive to residents, businesses, tourists and investors. Launched in May 2018 and running for five years, the S&DR HAZ aimed to better manage, preserve and utilise the heritage assets with a view to stimulating economic growth, especially in the build-up to the railway's bicentenary in 2025<sup>186</sup>. The works inside the Northgate Conservation Area have a project value of £35m and include the refurbishment of the listed buildings on the railway heritage site, a new live engineering shed and an 'immersive experience' which will feature holograms of trains<sup>187</sup>. This major new family attraction in the Stockton & Darlington Railway character zone is expected to draw in over 300,000 visits per year, including 80,000 visitors from outside of the local area<sup>188</sup>.

Environmental works were carried out by **Discover Brightwater**, which was a National Lottery Heritage Fund supported partnership that enabled projects including river habitat improvements, wetland creation, heritage and archaeology involving local communities around the river Skerne, which ran from 2018 to 2021<sup>189</sup>. Under this project access to [7] Skerne Bridge was improved, and pedestrian-and-cyclist route provided from the Northgate Conservation Area (Skerne Bridge Entrance off High Northgate) to the river, joining the Harrowgate Hill route.

In 2020/21, Darlington Borough Council secured £23.3m from the **Towns Fund**, which has been made available by central government for levelling up the UK economy following the impacts of COVID-19. The overarching aim is to drive sustainable regeneration to deliver long-term economic and productivity growth. A large part of the Northgate Conservation Area has been identified as one of three priority areas in Darlington where these funds will be focused to enhance, support and supplement existing schemes. The railway heritage site, which also is part of the S&DR HAZ (see above), and [13] 138-148 Northgate have already been assigned budgets. Further sites within and just outside the Conservation Area that have been allocated grants from the Towns Fund are currently being considered for improvement works.

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<sup>186</sup> Knight 2019, page 4

<sup>187</sup> <https://www.willmottdixon.co.uk/projects/darlington-railway-heritage-quarter>

<sup>188</sup> <https://www.head-of-steam.co.uk/future-plans/news-and-updates/next-stop-hopetown-darlington/>

<sup>189</sup> <https://www.durhamwt.com/discover-brightwater>

## 4.0 Condition, Threats and Opportunities

This chapter is intended to inform future management plans for the Northgate Conservation Area, which would be subject to public consultation.

### 4.1 Condition and Current Issues

*This section should be read in conjunction with the spatial analysis (see 3.4), character analysis (see 3.5) and value attributed by the community and other stakeholders (see 3.6), which provide further information or examples on most of the issues raised below.*

The Northgate Conservation Area is currently in **'very bad' condition**, with deteriorating trajectory<sup>190</sup>; the Westbrook character zone when seen in isolation is considered to be in fair condition. Out of the seventeen conservation areas within Darlington Borough, Northgate is currently the one which is in worst condition. Despite the significant improvement works carried out between 2002 and 2009 and an article 4 direction imposed in 2006 (see 3.6), the Conservation Northgate Area has been on the national Heritage at Risk Register since 2010. The main issues are summarised as follows, with those in bold **detracting the most**:

Social and economic decline:

- Vacant buildings/business units (e.g. [B] Melville House)
- **Lack of building maintenance**
- **Lack of investment from private landlords**
- Anti-social behaviour including vandalism, graffiti, litter and fly-tipping
- Population financially stretched in southern part of Northgate Conservation Area (i.e. less married couples / more single parent, single, separated and divorced people; incomes well below average; lower paid administrative, clerical, semi-skilled and manual jobs; less likely to engage with financial services; use internet socially)
- **Urban adversity** in northern part of Northgate Conservation Area (i.e. rent small homes in deprived area; significant debt/credit issues; high rates of benefit claimants; low qualifications; semi-skilled/unskilled jobs; many single-adult households; health problems)<sup>191</sup>

Traffic and public realm issues:

- **High volume of vehicle traffic along A167 resulting in noise, pollution, congestion, and potentially unsafe environment for pedestrians/cyclists**
- **Clutter of traffic-management measures (e.g. pedestrian barriers, speed bumps) and ill-chosen signage locations, in particular along the A167**
- Roadside car parking in residential streets
- **Galvanised streetlights and other utilitarian street furniture**
- Telegraph poles and overhead wires (back lanes)
- Wheelie bins cluttering back lanes

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<sup>190</sup> Historic England 2023, page 31

<sup>191</sup> Darlington Borough Council 2021, pages 15, 17 & 92



The rear yards to North Lodge Terrace have been removed, although the scoria-paved back lane is still in place. The area is now used for ad-hoc parking and rubbish disposal. The tall metal flues against the rear façade belong to the commercial units on the ground floor, with further flues along the main street, all of which detract. Modern replacement windows and a double garage (?) with raised seating area above are not in keeping with the character of the historical environment. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023)

#### Damage to historical environment:

- Loss of historical buildings; some of them were of considerable significance
- Loss of original scoria paving
- **Loss of traditional doors and windows including old glazing**
- **Loss of traditional slate roofing**
- **Loss of historical boundary walling/metal fencing (front and rear)**
- Loss of historical front gardens and rear yards
- **Replacement of all of the above with unsympathetic products/designs**
- **Use of unsympathetic/incompatible materials (e.g. cement pointing)**
- Lowering of historical chimney stacks
- **Changes to historical opening patterns to buildings and rear yard walling (including insertion of modern garage doors)**
- **Other unsympathetic alterations to buildings such as modern (front) extensions and loss of historical ground-floor elevations (change of use)**
- **Application of modern renders and paints to traditional brick buildings (which, besides the visual harm, can also cause long-term damp problems)**
- Addition of satellite dishes, burglar alarms (to front walls) and TV aerials (to chimneys) to houses
- Addition of modern dormers, roof lights and solar panels to terraces
- Addition of extractor fans and flues to commercial units

#### Harmful modern development:

- Modern buildings not in keeping with development pattern of the area (building type, scale, planform and massing)
- **Modern development incorporating poor or uncharacteristic/inappropriate designs (e.g. pastiche style), detailing (e.g. Juliet balconies) and materials (e.g. tall timber-boarded fencing)**
- **Modern shopfronts, metal roller shutters (also in back lanes) and signage/advertisement (including digital board at filling station)**
- **Modern development including demolition of historical planform and creation of surface-level car parks just outside the Conservation Area**





*Top:* The right-hand house shows what the other two used to look like, with the exception of its modern windows. The re-fronting works to the left and middle houses have resulted in a complete loss of the historical character and appearance of these properties. Also note the lowered chimney stacks. *Middle left:* A characterful historical arrangement has been spoiled by uPVC windows. *Middle right:* Prior to the application of a modern render, addition of a porch, changes to the windows openings and loss of corbelled canopies in 2023, the left-hand property used to be almost identical to the one next door. Its historical character and appearance as well as the group value with its neighbour have been lost completely. *Bottom:* The Machine Mart building is an eyesore in the Conservation Area due to its bold colouring, the use of vertical profile cladding and 'cubic' shape (industrial character). Whilst the apartment block next door fits in better with regard to the use of brick, its overall elevation design (window proportions, etc.) incl. set-back upper floor undermine the surrounding historical environment. Note the roller shutter to the shopfront. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

In summary, the positive aspects of the Northgate Conservation Area are heavily undermined by the loss of architectural cohesion and historical character, dilapidation and a high volume of traffic, creating an unpleasant environment, which, naturally, does not inspire significant private investment. Factors which contribute to the issues within the Northgate Conservation Area have often been the result of past Planning decisions, causing cumulative harm in the long term:

- The construction of the inner ring road
- Other harmful or insensitive development in and around the Conservation Area (e.g. Northgate House)
- Lack of enforcement

Concerning the last point, the 2017 Conservation Areas at Risk returns spreadsheet sent to Historic England claims that unauthorised works had been carried out in the previous three years which harmed the special interest, significance and/or character of the Conservation Area and that the Council took no enforcement action against these. In addition, it mentions *[w]idespread use of uPVC windows and doors and satellite dishes in Victorian terraces despite Article 4 Direction (some pre-direction and some as a result of lack of enforcement / unwillingness to implement Article 4)* and that *[m]ost applications as a result of the Article 4 Direction are retrospective and it is difficult to gain support to refuse these. There has been a problem with a lack of enforcement in previous years.*

An investigation into the enforcement inquiries raised in the last five years (since 2019) reveals fifty cases on file. Around 70% of the inquiries turned out not to be of a planning enforcement nature (e.g. advice requests, permitted development). Out of the remaining (i.e. unauthorised) cases five were not resolved in a satisfactory manner from a conservation point-of-view due to lack of enforcement action or approval of the harmful works in retrospective planning applications. Whilst this number seems low, the cumulative impact of such outcomes needs to be considered in the long term, as well as the setting of negative precedents. As the very poor condition of the Conservation Area is largely due to harmful development carried out over the years, any opportunity for undoing harm should be used. This will set positive precedents which can open the door for further beneficial change.

## 4.2 Threats and Potential Future Issues

There is no doubt that the construction of the **inner ring road** between 1969 and 1973 was a key contributor to the decline of the Northgate Conservation Area. Moreover, it will remain a barrier for improvement and financial investment, despite the area being well connected to facilities and transport links in the town centre. Traffic volumes and congestion along the A167 are unlikely to ease in the foreseeable future and present another (east-west) barrier. Consequently, it is challenging to regenerate the Conservation Area as a separate, sustainable entity next to the thriving town centre.

Whilst the HERS and PSCA schemes in the 2000s did valuable work in restoring some of the historical character that has been lost and inspired others to carry out similar works (see 3.6), the initial local enthusiasm to make improvements was short lived, probably as **public funding for homes and small businesses within conservation areas has become very rare**. Although there are currently funding opportunities for various improvement works (see 4.3), their immediate impact and long-term effect

are difficult to foresee. It is possible that without future schemes setting further positive precedents, private investment in the area may stagnate.

**Salespeople and building contractors** often lead property owners to believe that elements of their old buildings need a modern makeover in order to make them more energy efficient, such by replacing traditional windows and doors with uPVC substitutes or applying modern renders to solid walling. However, there are major opportunities for improving the thermal performance of windows by employing relatively simple methods (e.g. heavy curtains, blinds and shutters) as well as further improvement by installing secondary glazing<sup>192</sup>. Moreover, using timber products has the advantage of (re-) using more eco-friendly and sustainable resources. In the long-term, the costs of maintaining them will often be cheaper because they can be repaired – contrary to uPVC products which normally need replacing as a whole – thus reducing the amount of building materials, energy and waste. With regards to impermeable materials such as modern renders, cement pointing and silicon paints, these are incompatible with traditional construction (which relies on moisture movement). Such applications are likely to trap water in solid walling and create long-term damp problems, resulting in cold and mouldy indoor environments. Moreover, the negative visual impact such interventions have can be significant, as evident throughout the Northgate Conservation Area. Removing or concealing traditional features from a historic property can reduce its market value.

**Development pressures** keep presenting a threat to the Conservation Area, in particular for sites to the south and east outside the designated boundary. Northgate House has already set negative precedent for the future development of the site. Any new building on this plot would need to be scaled down significantly in order to harmonise with the Conservation Area, especially in this key/gateway location. Whilst scale may not be so much of an issue for the other potential development sites, planform, massing, materials, detailing as well as loss of historic fabric and features are likely to be, judging from more recent development in the area (see 4.1). Old buildings and other structures (e.g. boundary walling) within the Conservation Area remain at risk of being lost or further disfigured, possibly to make plots more economically viable (e.g. change of use from residential to commercial). All of the above could further deteriorate the Northgate Conservation Area and, in the long run, jeopardise its designation status.

### 4.3 Opportunities for Enhancement

It is hoped that this document will help residents, local businesses, investors, planners and highways/utility authorities understand how heritage significance is embodied in the area and provide them with knowledge to prevent future harm and enable positive change. In addition, based on the appraisal, a **Conservation-Area-specific design guide** could be produced, providing clear guidelines and details for sensitive development within the area, including works within the public realm. The design guide could be adopted as a supplementary planning document and provide a helpful tool for applicants, agents and planners, as well as homeowners, businesses and highways/utility authorities who wish to carry out works under permitted development rights. Whilst the design guide would not create instant change it would enable smaller steps in the right direction at a time and therefore be beneficial long-term tool.

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<sup>192</sup> Wood, Bordass, Baker 2009, page vii



In terms of planning, it would be also useful to provide a **new/revised article 4 direction** (see 2.3) which also restricts permitted development rights for other elements than dwelling houses. Other use classes like houses in multiple ownerships and mixed uses (residential/retail) should be included as well as the public highway, to protect the surviving scoria and stone paved surfaces.

**Grant moneys** have been made available for the regeneration of the railway heritage site, and it is hoped that this new visitor attraction will not only increase public (including local) awareness and interest in the Stockton & Darlington Railway but also be a catalyst for improvements to the wider area. In order to kick-start investment in the southern end of the Conservation Area, Darlington Borough Council is intending to establish a railway-themed 'gateway' in one of the ground-floor units of [13] 138-148 Northgate by 2025, with money made available from the Towns Fund. It is anticipated that further (non-railway-related) properties and larger areas between the two sites can be improved or regenerated in line with the **Northgate Masterplan** drawn up by Land Use Consultants Ltd in 2021, which provides the strategic vision for a large part of the Conservation Area. Moneys to achieve this have already been secured from the Towns Fund. In addition, there are currently (January 2024) talks between Darlington Borough Council and Historic England about a possible Partnership Scheme Grant. This would involve willing third parties taking individual grants provided by Historic England as well as investing their own money in 'cosmetic' external works or structural repairs to homes and small businesses, similar to the HERS and PSCA schemes (see 3.6).

Further grants are currently (April 2024) being applied for the installation of sixteen **interpretation boards** as well as a **digital heritage trail** along the entire length of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, from the Lottery Fund. Two of the interpretation boards would be located in Darlington Borough: one at [7] Skerne Bridge and the other at Middleton St George. The digital heritage trail would be in the form of a mobile app which would incorporate augmented reality, visualising what certain locations looked like in the past, as well as a virtual avatar. It has been suggested that the trail could deviate from the railway line and incorporate other S&DR-related locations, such as [13] 138-148 Northgate by 2025. Further heritage trails (e.g. 'gardens and parklands') could be created in the Northgate Conservation Area using the Council's existing *Darlington Town Centre Trails* app.

There are opportunities to gain further understanding of the heritage significance of the Northgate Conservation Area by **archaeological investigation**, possibly with community involvement. Areas that may yield further information are:

- The high ground to the rear and sides of the [3] Lime Cells and the grassed traffic island on the public open space immediately to the south may contain buried remains of the former sidings in these locations. It is not clear how the landscaping of 1938 affected the original ground levels and to what extent below-ground remains might still survive here<sup>193</sup>.
- The site of the former Kitching Ironworks and Foundry (see 3.3), which is located between [1] North Road Railway Station and [2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works and now grassed over, was partially demolished in 1870-1895 to make room for more sidings, possibly for the Royal Agricultural Show of 1895. The remainder of the buildings were removed in 1975<sup>194</sup>.

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<sup>193</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2020, page 55

<sup>194</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2019b, page 9

- Evidence of the former coal depot opposite [8] the Railway Tavern may survive in any of the subsequent buildings constructed on the site and along the banks of the Cocker Beck.
- The site of the first Merchandise Station, which lies within the enclosed railway corridor, has had relatively little development following its demolition in 1864; the plot therefore is of extremely high archaeological potential. The wider area has been through a number of topographical changes including road lowering and possibly embankment heightening in order to accommodate the 1857 [6] Railway Viaduct. Therefore, evidence from the building footprint and railway embankment elevation may provide data on the functioning of the building and how it was altered.
- The former extensive gardens behind the Edward Pease House, now [13] 138-148 Northgate, are currently under a surface car park, although garden archaeology may well survive below.<sup>195</sup>

There are also opportunities to **improve the public realm**, for example by:

- Carrying out an audit of all street/park furniture and traffic signs with a view of removing those that are no longer needed (de-cluttering) and reconfiguring others in better locations, where applicable, or exchanging them for more sympathetic designs.
- Identifying locations which could be turned into more engaging public spaces; for example, the traffic island in the Station Road character zone could include benches for people to rest on as well as interpretation boards or artwork (sculpture) relating to the historical function of the space (former branch line to coal depot).

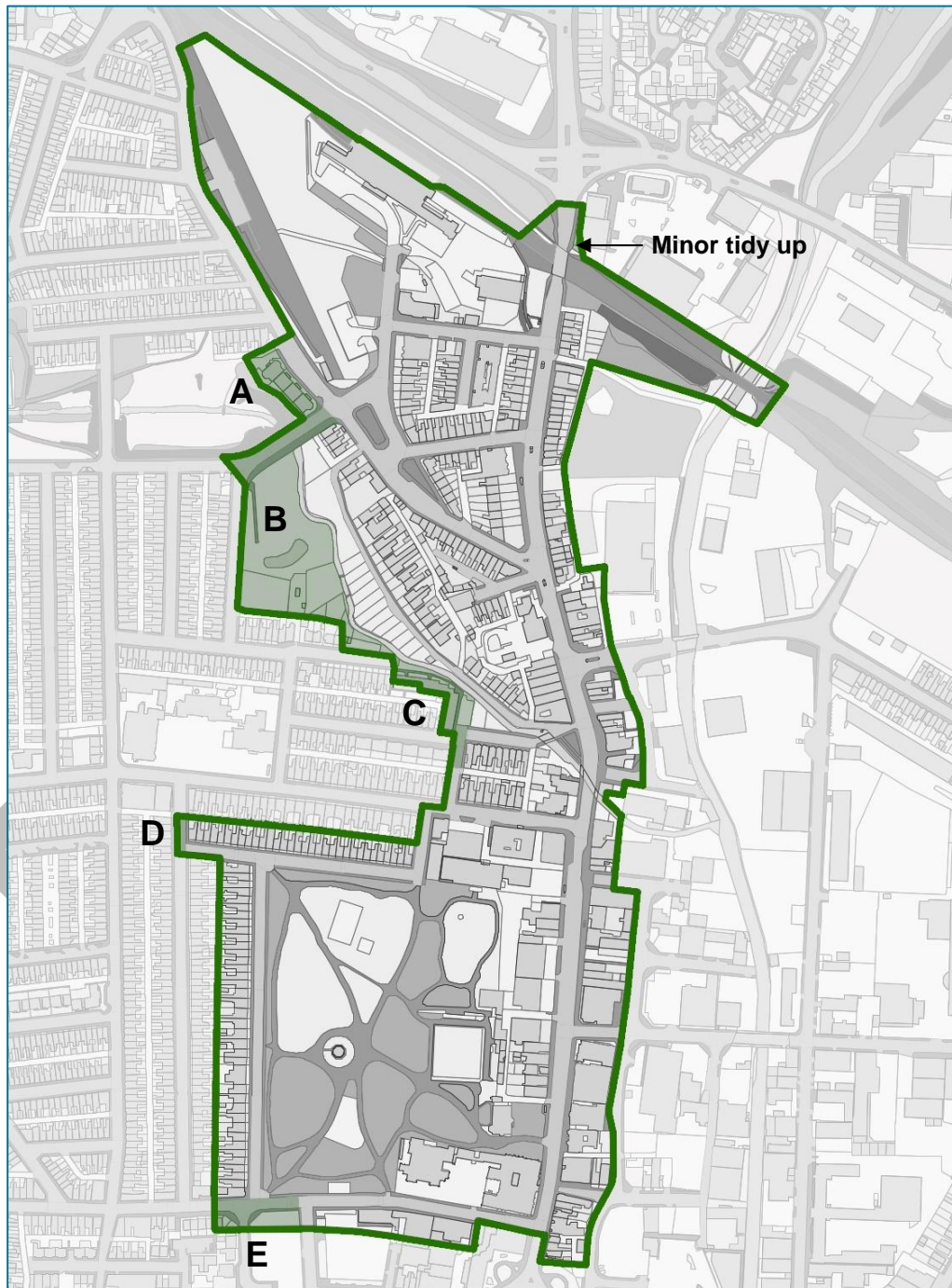
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<sup>195</sup> Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2019a, pages 51 & 54-56

## 5.0 Suggested Boundary Changes

This chapter offers suggestions how the present Northgate Conservation Area boundary could be improved. **Members of the public and other stakeholders are invited to submit their comments on the proposed boundary changes during the public consultation period (see 1.2).** Information on other areas of potential significance/relevance that have not been mentioned here will also be welcome.

### 5.1 Proposed Exclusions



Proposed exclusions from the Northgate Conservation Area shaded in green (boundary line at the time of review, as adopted in July 2003, also in green). (Map © Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100023728. Licence Number 100023728 2024. Graphics by Gaby Rose)



Conservation areas are designated for their *special architectural and historic interest* (see 2.1). It is considered that the areas marked in red above do not meet those criteria:

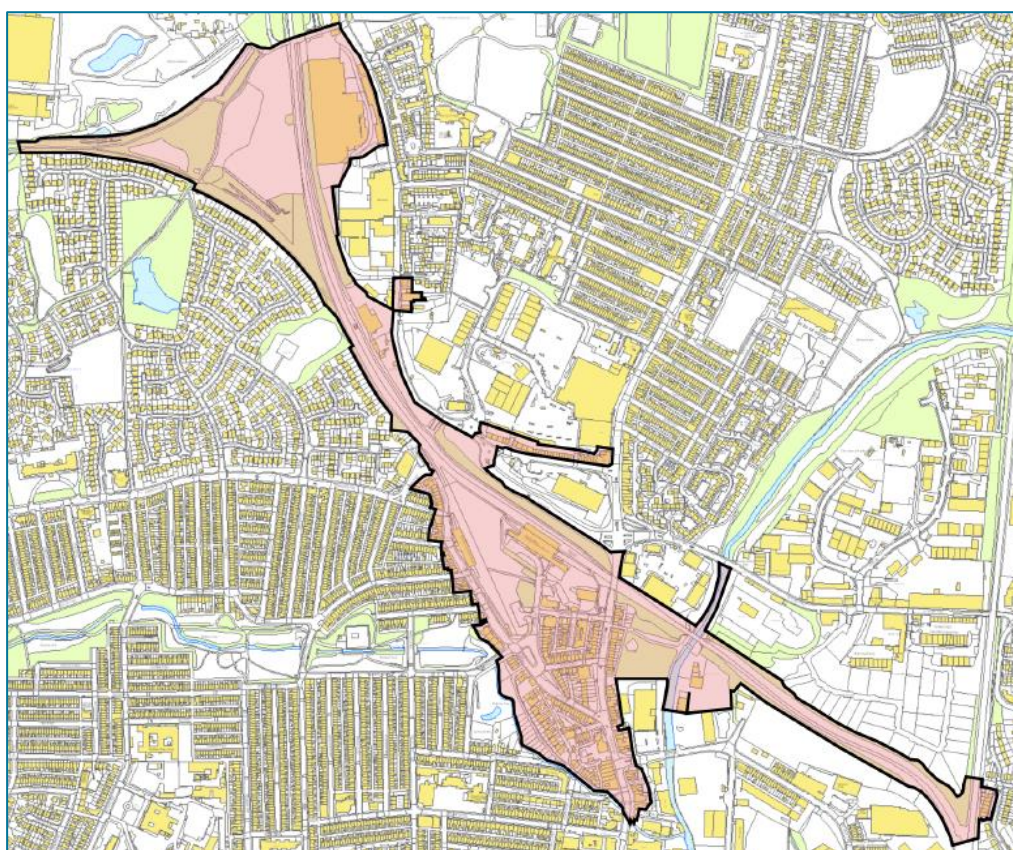
- A. **Pullman House:** This apartment block along Hopetown Lane replaces former buildings first shown on the 25" OS map of 1939. It is not clear what these were and what their significance to the area was, but they do not appear to have been of residential types. The existing apartment block is not in keeping with the development pattern in this location by being three stores tall (as opposed to the two-storey old houses to either side of it) and including architectural features (e.g. entrance porches, Juliet balconies) which detract from the historic buildings. Its location opposite [3] Lime Cells is most unfortunate.
- B. **Paddy Dene:** Whilst this small park provides a pleasant public space (see View 10) it seems to be lacking any heritage significance which would tie it in with rest of the Conservation Area. Moreover, geographically, it is separated from the main part of the Conservation Area by Cocker Beck and belongs to 'The Denes', six interconnected green spaces that extend for some 1.5km mostly outside the Conservation Area.
- C. **Deanery Court:** This apartment block at the north end of Mowden Street replaces former buildings first shown on the 25" OS map of 1939. It is not clear what these were and what their significance to the area was, but they do not appear to have been of residential types. The existing apartment block is not in keeping with the development pattern in this location by being three stores tall (as opposed to the two-storey houses on this side of Cocker Beck) and including architectural features (e.g. Juliet balconies, prominent gable-facing element) which detract from the historic buildings.
- D. **Thornton Steet:** This very short stretch of road is not fronted by any of the terraces that are included in the Conservation Area boundary.
- E. **Undefined space at Kendrew Street carpark:** This small patch comprises a street corner, a small area of the Kendrew Street West Car Park and fragments of modern houses.



*Top:* Pullman House three storeys tall, with [3] Lime Cells to far right. *Bottom left:* Deanery Court, again three storeys in a two-storey residential area. *Bottom right:* Street corner and modern houses at Kendrew Street West carpark. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

## 5.2 Proposed Inclusions

In July 2022, Durham County Council (DCC) came up with a proposal to split the Northgate Conservation Area in half (without providing a supporting detailed assessment for justification); the northern part would be a new conservation area and extended, whilst the southern part would remain unchanged and presumably still be called Northgate. **This is no longer proposed.** The detailed analysis provided in this appraisal (see 3.0) should make it clear that subdivision of the present Conservation Area is neither justifiable nor desirable.



Durham County Council's proposal of 2022 for creating a new conservation. Splitting the present Northgate Conservation Area in half is **no longer proposed**. Moreover, their suggested boundary extensions to the northern part are re-examined in the text below. (Map © Crown Copyright and database right 2022. Ordnance Survey LA 100049055. Landmark Information Group Copyright © 2022)

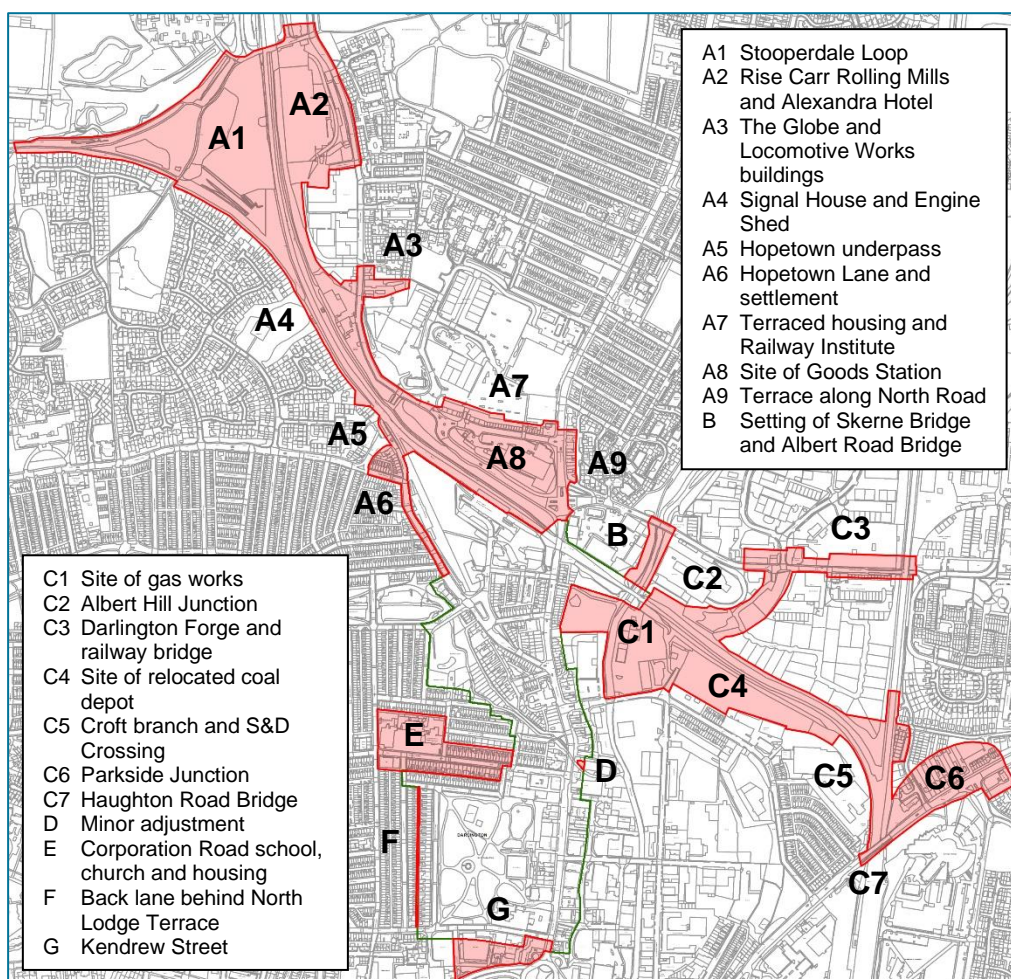
DCC's suggested boundary extensions (for the northern part) are discussed below and amended where deemed justified. Further boundary extensions elsewhere are also being proposed. In order to qualify for inclusion, the proposed new areas must relate to the elements of significance which define the Northgate Conservation Area (see 3.1). In addition, any proposed new area will have to meet the following tests<sup>196</sup>:

- a) The proposed new area has sufficient architectural or historic interest for it to be considered 'special'.
- b) That special interest is experienced through the proposed new area's character or appearance.
- c) It is desirable for that character or appearance to be preserved or enhanced, also considering any problems that designation may help solve.

<sup>196</sup> Historic England 2019, page 5



The map below shows the currently proposed extensions to the Northgate Conservation Area.



Proposed extensions to the Northgate Conservation Area shaded in red (boundary line at the time of review, as adopted in July 2003, in green). (Map© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100023728. Licence Number 100023728 2024. Graphics by Gaby Rose)

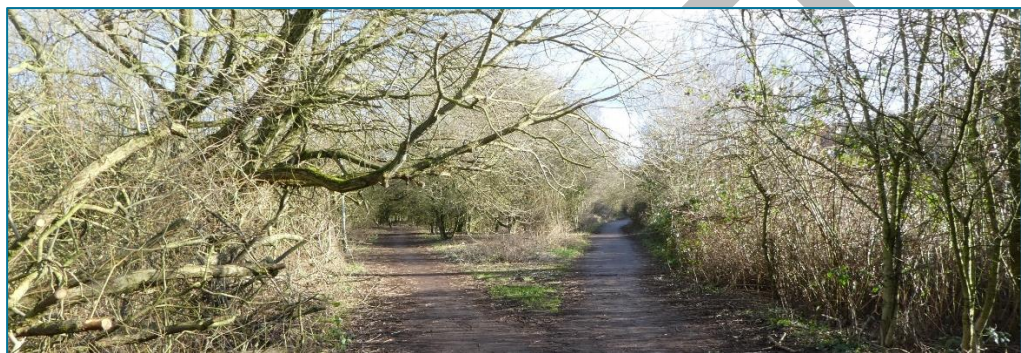
*NB: Areas A1 – A8 and C1 – C5 also include the corresponding railway corridor of the former Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR), which is still a live line. Its proposed inclusion will not be further analysed below unless there are certain features within the corridor, which will be discussed.*

**A1 – Stooperdale Loop.** The proposed extension area is identical with DCC’s proposal of 2022. The proposed new boundary follows the directions of the former rail tracks which have been retained as a public foot/cycle-paths and bridleways within this area which is now a nature reserve, as well as the live railway line.

The Stooperdale Loop (named after what appears to have been a farmstead called ‘Stooperdales’ on the 1855 map) was the three-way junction of the S&DR with the Darlington & Barnard Castle Railway; the latter was established in 1856 and subsumed by the S&DR in 1858. The distinct triangular layout is first shown on the 1898 map. Today only the live line of the former S&DR route survives, bordering the area along its eastern side. The tracks of the branch line to Barnard Castle were removed shortly after its closure in 1965 (see 3.3). Nevertheless, the triangular layout is still evident on aerial photographs as well as in the present path arrangement.



Various man-made features survive within the undergrowth, such as brickwork, cast-concrete, substantial timbers (former railway sleepers?) and metal rail tracks. The old (pre-railway) route of Honeypot Lane cuts through this area. From the eastern part there are good views onto the former Rise Carr Rolling Mills across the railway line (see below: A2).



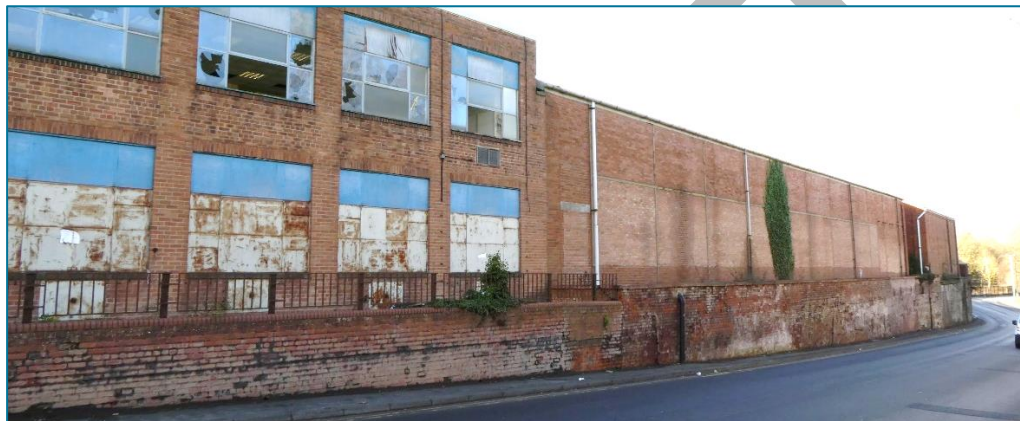
*Top:* View from centre of the Stooperdale Loop onto the former Rise Carr Rolling Mills across the railway line. *Middle:* Location where the Barnard Castle line branched off north (left) and southeast (right) into Darlington. *Bottom left:* Abandoned metal rail tracks at the southern junction of the branch line with the S&DR (not accessible to the public), with the former Engine Shed (see below: A4) visible in the background to the left. *Bottom right:* Remains of brick walling with iron brackets to the rear of the housing plots along Hensfield Grove. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)

This area justifies inclusion as it clearly demonstrates early railway development that was directly linked to the S&DR (historic interest). Its special interest is experienced and enjoyed by the public. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area.

**A2 – Rise Carr Rolling Mills and Alexandra Hotel.** The proposed extension area includes DCC’s proposal of 2022 as well as further pieces of land to the north and south which appear relevant to the historical site’s context, and part of Whessoe



Road. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the railway corridor, Elmtree Street (including the railway bridge), the former Alexandra Hotel, the Rise Carr Rolling Mills site, the level car park adjoining to the south, Prospect Place and the corresponding stretch of Whessoe Road.



*Top left:* Stone-and-metal railway bridge over Elmtree Street, west elevation. *Top right:* Former Alexandra Hotel, now the St Georges Bridge Centre. *Middle:* Prominent buildings and retaining wall of Rise Carr Rolling Mills site along Whessoe Road. *Bottom:* Level car park and Prospect Way (left) at entrance to Rolling Mills site. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024 & 2023 for top right only)

The Rise Carr Rolling Mills opened in 1868<sup>197</sup> and, over the years, became a major employer in Darlington. In 1998, the complex (by then taken over by British Steel) closed<sup>198</sup>. In 1864, Theodore Fry (newly-married into the Pease family) and Charles l’Anson (founder of the Whessoe foundry (see 3.3)) had bought five acres of land next to the railway line and formed the Rise Carr Rolling Mills. For their workers they built terraces on the opposite side of Whessoe Road, the first ones called Fry Street and l’Anson Street; these no longer exist. The name ‘Rise Carr’ implies boggy land where brushwood grew. The 1855 map shows a farmstead of the same name some distance to the west of the S&DR. At that time, the later Rolling Mills plot to the east of the line was yet undeveloped, although Honeypot Lane bordering the north of the

<sup>197</sup> Flynn 1987, page 49

<sup>198</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/18590098.day-rolling-mills-labourer-mangled-horrible-manner-roof-blew-off-factory/>

site (now called Elmtree Street in this location) already existed. Before Honeypot Lane turns southwest through the Stooperdale Loop (see above: A1) it used to cross the rail tracks on the same level<sup>199</sup>; by 1896 (OS map), the level crossing had been replaced by the existing railway bridge.

Working in a hot environment is 'thirsty work' so the street outside the gates of Rise Carr Rolling Mills was lined with public houses. The Alexandra Hotel on the corner of Whessoe Road and Elmtree Street must have been built around the same time as the Rolling Mills as it bears the name of Princess Alexandra of Denmark who married the Prince of Wales in 1863 (Denmark Street and Wales Street nearby are also named after the couple). Whilst many of the former pubs along this stretch of Whessoe Road are no longer extant, the Alexandra survives because when the Rolling Mills closed, the bridge club that met in the factory offices took over the building<sup>200</sup>.

This area justifies inclusion as the Rise Carr Rolling Mills were established in this location due to the presence of the railway line (although by that point no longer the S&DR) and had their own rail access (sidings) to the main line. They are one of the few survivors of Darlington's significant industrial expansion in the mid-nineteenth century. The 1896 map suggests that non-rail access to the site was gained from Prospect Place and that the present car park used to be part of the original Rolling Mills site. Elmtree Street experienced development resulting from the railway such as the bridge and resulting lowered road levels. Whilst the former Alexandra Hotel has changed in appearance, the building is clearly connected to the Rolling Mills. Along with the prominent retaining wall and roadside buildings of the Rise Carr site, it has a strong visual presence alongside the road (landmark building). Much of the special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Whessoe Road. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

**A3 – The Globe and Locomotive Works buildings.** The proposed extension area includes DCC's proposal of 2022 as well as well as further land to the east which appears relevant to the historical site's context. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the former Globe pub, buildings believed to be associated with the former Locomotive Works (North Road Shops) – which were opened by the S&DR in 1863 and passed on to the North Eastern Railway later that year (see 3.3) – and the corresponding stretch of Whessoe Road.

Like the Alexandra Hotel (see above: A2), the Globe was another public house which was established due to the presence of the heavy industry in the area, and likewise, located on a street corner. The building seems to be shown on the 25-inch OS maps of 1896 and 1913/14, but unlike the Alexandra, it is not named or identified as a pub. It is first marked 'P.H.' on the 1939 map suggesting it may have had a different use previously. It closed in c.2000 and has been converted into flats<sup>201</sup>. To the south are two brick buildings which feature recessed panelled walling, an architectural style which can be seen on other local railway structures. The southern brick building is first shown on the 25-inch map of 1896 next to the sidings leading from the main line to the Locomotive Works. On the 1913-14 map, it is marked as 'Tank' identifying it as a water tower. It may date from around the 1870s, judging from its detailing. The

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<sup>199</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/9982703.getting-bottom-rise-carr/>

<sup>200</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/18514191.day-margaret-thatcher-visited-darlington-pub-renowned-whippet-racing/>

<sup>201</sup> [https://www.closedpubs.co.uk/durham/darlington\\_globe.html](https://www.closedpubs.co.uk/durham/darlington_globe.html)



other surviving brick building and two timber structures (one is attached to the water tower and the other to the east of it) are first shown on the 25-inch map of 1939 and also appear to be part of the Locomotive Works. The Locomotive Works played an important part in the economy of Darlington and in their heyday employed over 2,200 workers<sup>202</sup>.



*Top:* The former Globe pub, now flats; the attached building is modern. *Bottom:* The former water tower is the brick building on the right, the tank now removed and a new roof provided. Attached to it is one of the timber structures shown on the 1939 map. The brick building on the left marks the northwest corner of the former Locomotive Works and, like the water tower, has recessed panelled brick walling. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)

This area justifies inclusion as it contains surviving structures of the former Locomotive Works, which were largely demolished following their closure in 1966. The southern side of this area is defined by the curved line of the former sidings into the Locomotive Works. Whilst the former Globe pub has changed in appearance, the building is clearly connected to the former heavy industry in this area (Rise Carr Rolling Mills and Locomotive Works). As an ensemble, this area is an isolated survivor along the east side of Whessoe Road with most of the historical buildings and road layouts now lost to modern development. Much of the special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Whessoe Road. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

<sup>202</sup> Flynn 1989, page 107

**A4 – Signal House and Engine Shed.** The proposed extension area includes DCC’s proposal of 2022 as well as Signal House. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the railway corridor, the plots including the former Signal House and Engine Shed buildings, and the corresponding stretch of Whessoe Road.

Signal House is first shown on the 25-inch OS map of 1896 with its angled southern elevation following the sidings from the main railway line to the Locomotive Works, and its eastern elevation along Whessoe Road. Its location suggests that it controlled the railway crossing as well as the switches in the surrounding area. To the southwest is the former S&DR Engine Shed built in 1861, which could accommodate twelve locomotives (see 3.3). Sited in the angle between the main railway line and the sidings serving Locomotive Works, it was soon absorbed into the latter and served a variety of roles<sup>203</sup>.



*Top:* The Engine Shed designed by William Peachey, which has just been restored for the 2025 S&DR bicentennial. The live railway line goes past behind the building to the left. *Bottom:* Signal house along Whessoe Road with the line of the former sidings along the left-hand gable wall (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)

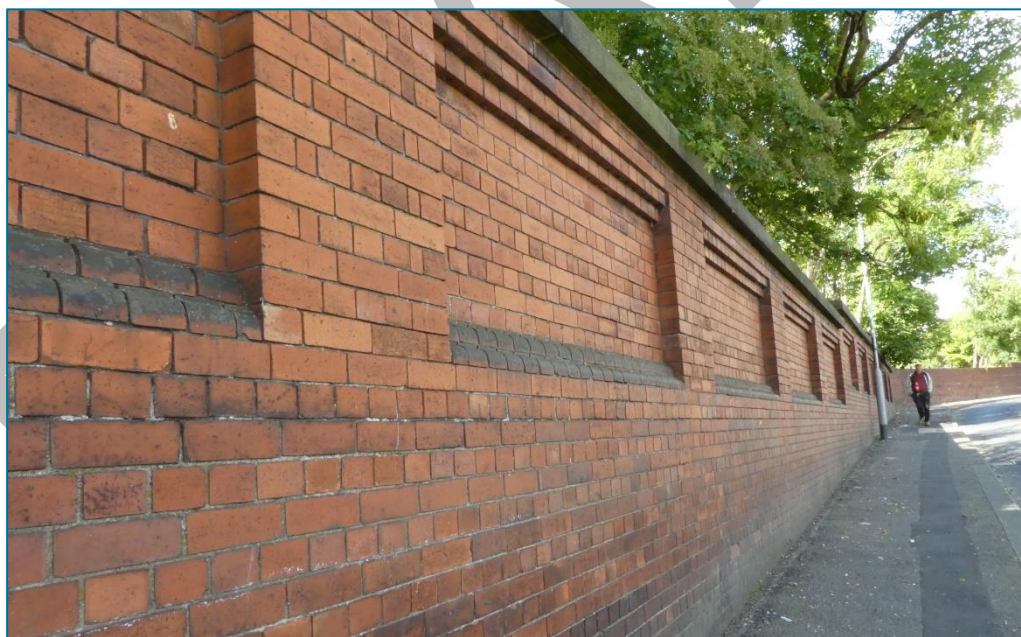
This area justifies inclusion as it contains the 1861 Engine Shed, which was one of the last major structures built by the S&DR. Whilst Signal House post-dates the S&DR, it portrays clear evidence of a railway building as well as the line of the former sidings

<sup>203</sup> <http://www.railwayarchitecture.org.uk/Location/Darlington/Darlington.htm>



to the Locomotive Works along its southern gable. Much of the special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Whessoe Road, with Signal House being a landmark structure when approaching from the south. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

**A5 – Hopetown underpass.** The proposed extension area includes DCC’s proposal of 2022 as well as a stretch of main road. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the railway corridor, Hopetown underpass including its short approach roads, a plot of land bordering the east of the railway line, and the corresponding stretch of Whessoe Road.



*Top: Hopetown underpass when approaching from Otley Terrace (Hopetown side). The low walling to the left is also traditional brickwork with stone copings. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024)*  
*Bottom: Distinct boundary walling along Whessoe Road with typical railway-construction-style recessed panels (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023)*

The S&DR had originally provided a level crossing across their line at Hopetown for road traffic. However, as seen elsewhere along the main line, increasing use made this inconvenient so an underpass was dug out to connect Hopetown with Whessoe Road. A possibly late-Victorian photo shows a rubblestone retaining and parapet wall along the western side of the railway corridor, lined by a stone pavement, and what



looks to be a narrower underpass opening. These structures no longer exist as the corner was extremely acute and caused problems for traffic<sup>204</sup>. The improved underpass and road widening is first shown on the 25-inch OS map of 1913-14, which had required the demolition of early terraced housing along Alliance Street and at the top end of Hopetown Lane (now Otley Terrace). The date of the rebuilt pub in this location implies that these works had been carried out by 1909 (see below: A6). The plot of land to the east of the railway line, which is currently a salvage yard, belonged historically to the original engine house (1855 map) and then was part of the wider railway sidings complex (1896 map).

Although the surviving fabric and features mainly date from the early-twentieth century, this area justifies inclusion as it is clearly connected to the use of the historic railway and has largely retained its nineteenth-century layout. Much of the special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Whessoe Road, Otley Terrace and South Street. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

**A6 – Hopetown Lane and settlement.** The proposed extension area differs from DCC’s proposal of 2022; the omission of buildings along the western side of Hopetown Lane is explained at the end of this section. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the triangular settlement planform at the top end of Hopetown Lane (now Otley Terrace) as well as the road stretch of Hopetown Lane/Otley Terrace, up to where it meets the existing Conservation Area boundary.



*Top:* Hopetown Lane looking north with [2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works being a focal point to centre right. *Bottom left:* Early railway settlement planform along Anns Terrace (right) and Alliance Street with panelled brick boundary walling. The stone outbuilding along the back lane is visible on the left. *Bottom right:* The Railway Hotel of 1909 at the corner of Alliance Street (far right) with Otley Terrace. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)

<sup>204</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 136

The 1855 map shows the origins of the Hope Town settlement at the top end of Hopetown Lane and along what is now Alliance Street. The buildings depicted fell victim to the road widening works in the early-twentieth century and no longer exist (see above: A5). However, the triangular layout formed between Hopetown Lane (Otley Terrace), Alliance Street and Bell Lane (now Brickburn Road) still survives. It is reasonable to assume that this triangular plot had been built up before further development was carried out in the surrounding area, and if so, these houses would be the earliest surviving ones of the Hope Town settlement. Besides the two terraces, the triangle also comprises the Railway Hotel of 1909 (i.e. the rebuilding of the pub shown on the 25-inch OS map of 1896, slightly projecting towards the road), an angled, scoria-paved back lane (pre-1896), brick boundary walling with recessed panelling along the northwestern side (built between 1896 and 1913/14), and, unusually, a two-storey stone outbuilding (built between 1896 and 1913/14).

Although the historical buildings are not of special architectural quality and have been subject to detrimental works, this area justifies inclusion as the triangular planform of the original settlement of Hope Town survives (historic interest). Moreover, the panelled brick boundary walling and rebuilt pub are associated with the improvement works to the railway underpass in c.1909. The full length of Hopetown Lane justifies inclusion as it gave access from Darlington to the early settlement as well as the Hope Town Foundry – all of which are the result of the arrival of the S&DR – and as it provides views onto the [2] Stockton & Darlington Railway Carriage Works. The special (architectural and) historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Hopetown Lane/Otley Terrace, Alliance Street, Brickburn Road and the back lane behind the terraces. Conservation area designation would help protect and enhance the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to further harmful development.

**A7 – Terraced housing and Railway Institute.** The proposed extension area includes DCC's proposal of 2022 as well as additional land to the north and south. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the terraced properties of no.s 1-27 Whessoe Road as well as the street in front and back lane behind, the sheds to the rear/north (accessible from the retail park), and the Railway Institute on the junction with North Road.

The Railway Institute was designed by local architect John Ross and built by the S&DR in 1861<sup>205</sup>. It provided education and training for the railway workers, as well as a social function. A drawing from 1863 suggests that the terrace adjoining the Institute had existed by then, making it some of the earlier railway housing in Darlington (see 3.3). Today all the houses have been converted into small businesses. To the rear, a long back lane paved in scoria blocks ties the terraces together. The rear yards to the houses have all been demolished. To the north, the back lane is bounded by tall brick walling incorporating structures which are shown on the 25-inch OS map of 1913/14. These belonged to the Locomotive Works established in 1863 (see above: A3). The map suggests that the sheds were mainly accessed from the rail track next to it.

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<sup>205</sup> <http://www.railwayarchitecture.org.uk/Location/Darlington/Darlington.htm>





*Top: Sheds originally belonging to the Locomotive Works, west end. Centre top: Scoria-paved back lane with sheds to the left and terraces to the right; note the loss of the rear yards. Centre bottom: The terraces have all been converted into small businesses, as evident by the use of roller shutters throughout. Bottom: The Railway Institute of 1861 is a landmark building at the corner Whessoe Road with North Road; contemporary terraces are attached to the left. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024 & 2023 for centre top)*



This area justifies inclusion as it contains surviving structures of the former Locomotive Works, which were largely demolished following their closure in 1966. Despite harmful modern alterations, the terraces are important representing some of the pre-1870 housing provided for railway workers. The Railway Institute is both of architectural and historic significance, as well as a landmark on a busy road junction. The special interest of this area is experienced by the public from the retail park's car park, Whessoe Road, North Road, the back lane behind the terraces and from inside the Institute, which has retained its social function. Conservation area designation would help protect and enhance the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development.

**A8 – Site of goods station.** The proposed extension area includes DCC's proposal of 2022 (railway corridor only) as well as further land to the north. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the railway corridor to north of the station, Bonomi Way, and the triangular plot bounded by North Road, Whessoe Road and Bonomi Way.

The 1896 OS map shows the location of the triangular plot and Bonomi Way (the latter did not exist back then and has been named after the [7] Skerne Bridge's architect) to be the site of the Hoptown Goods Station (see 3.3). There was no railway corridor at the time but a multitude of tracks forming the main line and sidings. The recent construction of the Darlington Locomotive Works along the main line has just been completed and is accessible to the public for free. The new building also houses the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust.



Bonomi Way, looking west, with the new Darlington Locomotive Works to the left. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024)

Despite the construction of Bonomi Way, which dissected the historical site, this area justifies inclusion as the shape of the former Goods Station plot has been retained (historic interest). The site, which currently includes a vacant, modern industrial building, may still contain archaeological interest with regards to its former Goods Station use. The railway corridor including the new building are directly linked to the live main line. The special historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from inside the new Darlington Locomotive Works, as well as Bonomi Way, Whessoe Road and North Road. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

**A9 – Terrace along North Road.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC's proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises nos 38-108 North Road as well as the corresponding stretch of street in front (west side) and the

short lane to the north, and the northern section of the curved stone retaining wall leading to [6] Railway Viaduct on its eastern side (retail park).

No.s 38-108 North Road are first shown on the 1896 maps. There used to be further terraces to the east and south of it which no longer survive; only those to the north of it do. The back lane to no.s 38-108 does not exist anymore either, but a short scoria-paved lane with stone kerbing along the northern gable wall remains. The curved stone retaining wall leading to [6] Railway Viaduct is not shown on the historic maps and post-dates the demolition of the former terraced housing in this location.



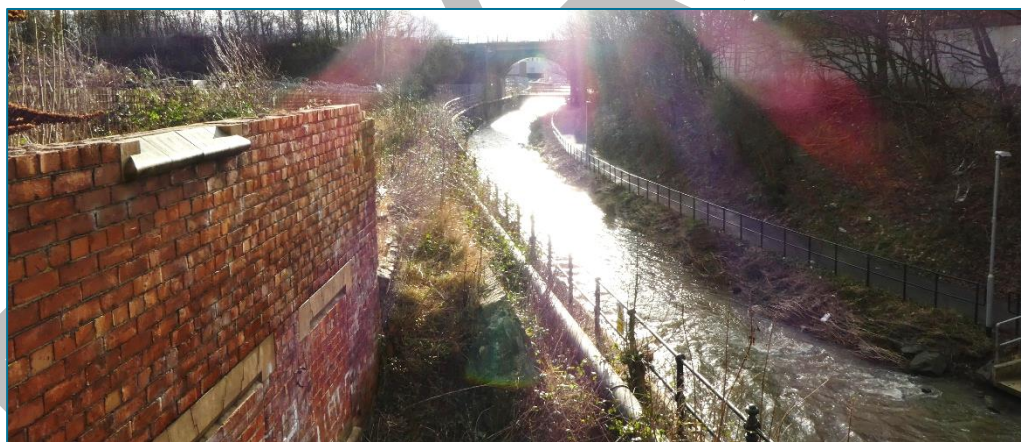
*Top: Terrace along North Road viewed from the south. Centre: Terrace viewed from the north. Bottom: Scoria-paved lane with stone kerbing; also note historical door surround to the right. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)*

Although the terrace is not of special architectural quality and has been subject to detrimental works, this area justifies inclusion due to the spatial relationship that it forms with the row on Whessoe Road (see above: A7) and the former Goods Station site (see above: A8) (historic interest). Some original details do survive on the building as well as the scoria-paved lane to the north. The terrace is one of the few



survivors in the immediate station area in this location, where much of the historical grain has been erased by modern development. Whilst the retaining wall is of no historical merit, most of it is already part of the Northgate Conservation Area. Moreover, it matches the ashlar stonework of the [6] Railway Viaduct and channels the view onto the listed bridge. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is mainly experienced by the public from North Road. Conservation area designation would help protect and enhance the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to further harmful development.

**B – Setting of [7] Skerne Bridge and Albert Road Bridge.** The proposed extension area includes DCC’s proposal of 2022 as well as further land to the east and west, and the road bridge to the north. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the river Skerne and its embankments up to Albert Road, including the ruin of an old building, and the Albert Road Bridge.



*Top: View from footpath along the river Skerne to Albert Road Bridge, with the original structure partially concealed behind the later one. The ruined brick building can be seen on the right. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023) Bottom: View from Albert Road Bridge (through mesh panelling) onto the proposed extension area, with the brick building on the left and [7] Skerne Bridge in the background (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024)*

Albert Road Bridge is first shown on the 1896 OS map, providing an essential link between North Road and the steel and iron works along Cleveland Street (see below: C3). The historical bridge has been extended by the addition of a later structure to the south. To the southeast of the bridge is a small brick building with stone lintels, now ruined, which is first shown on the 1913/14 OS map. It may have had some sort of weighing function, judging from the ‘W.M.’ (Weighing Machine) on the map. A photo of [7] Skerne Bridge taken in August 1948 shows the later bridge and the small building (intact) in the background.



This area justifies inclusion as it contains the immediate setting of [7] Skerne Bridge (already within the Northgate Conservation Area) and the original bridge which connected the heavy industrial area, which settled due to the arrival of the railway, with Darlington town by road. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from the foot/cycle-path along the west side of the Skerne and Albert Road Bridge. Conservation area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area.

**C1 – Site of gas works.** The proposed extension area includes DCC’s proposal of 2022 as well as further land to the south. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the brownfield site between John Dobbin’s View and the river Skerne (see 3.4: view 14), which is currently under construction for a surface carpark, and sites to the north of John Street: the Skerne, the foot/cycle-path along its western bank and the commercial plot to the east of the river.

On the 1855 OS map, the site between John Dobbin’s View and the Skerne depicts Darlington’s original gas works; the land to the east of the river appears to have been in agricultural use. The 1896 map shows the gas works extending into the current commercial site to the east of the Skerne and north of John Street. Today, besides a large modern industrial shed and office cabin, the site includes a traditionally constructed brick building with round-headed brick arches and is bounded by brick walling with recessed panels. The foot/cycle-path along the west of the Skerne is not shown on any historical maps; it was probably created following the demolition of the terrace along John Street, the Railway Mills and the gas works.



*Top: Stepped brick walling with recessed panels along south (John Street) and east boundaries of the commercial site. Bottom: View from John Street Bridge onto proposed extension area including traditional brick building in the background; [7] Skerne Bridge can just be glimpsed to the left of it. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)*

This area justifies inclusion as it contains the immediate setting of [7] Skerne Bridge (already within the Northgate Conservation Area), including the brownfield site between John Dobbin’s View and the river, which used to be the original gas works location. The southern-most boundary line cutting through the former gas works site as proposed by DCC in 2022 does not exist on the ground or on historic maps and has therefore been discarded; instead, the whole former gas works site should be

included. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is mainly experienced by the public from John Street, the foot/cycle-path along the river, the commercial business, and Skerne Bridge Entrance, which is already inside the Northgate Conservation Area. Designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings). It is important that Dobbin's View (see 3.4: view 11) is not blocked by future development.

**C2 – Albert Hill Junction.** The proposed extension area includes DCC's proposal of 2022 (railway corridor only) as well as further land to the north. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the former site of the sidings from the main line to Cleveland Street, which is currently in commercial use.

The 1855 OS map shows curved sidings departing from the S&DR main line to the South Durham Iron Works; at the time, Cleveland Street (originally a farm track) was not yet connected to North Road. The 1896 map shows more extensive sidings in this location serving the Albert Hill Foundry to the south of Cleveland Street and Darlington Forge to the north (see below: C3), which had taken over the South Durham Iron Works<sup>206</sup>. The term 'Albert Hill Junction' is given on the 1913/14 map.



View from Cleveland Street onto the former site of Albert Hill Junction; many of the sidings would have stopped short of the road, although others did cross it to serve the Darlington Forge. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024)

This area justifies inclusion as it is a historical site which is directly linked to the S&DR and the industrial expansion that followed it. On aerial photographs, the curved outline of the sidings is still evident. It is also possible that the site still contains archaeological interest. The special historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Cleveland Street and the commercial business. Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development.

**C3 – Darlington Forge and railway bridge.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC's proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the buildings lining Cleveland Street to the north, the entrance to York Street, the former house at the street corner (currently a takeaway) and its rear building line (which cuts through the modern building to the east as it does not quite associate with the historical line of the former row), the railway bridge and associated walling, railings and steps, and the corresponding stretch of road.

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<sup>206</sup> Flynn 1989, page 109





*Top: Darlington Forge buildings along Cleveland Street, looking east. Centre left: Former house which was once part of a building row. Centre right: Brick retaining wall with stone copings and original iron railings on western approach to railway bridge. Bottom: Railway bridge looking west, with stone steps and Darlington Forge building in the background. Note the reduced track width of the bridge. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)*

The 25-inch OS map of 1896 indicates that the railway bridge and associated walling, metal railings and steps to the west, and the former house at the corner of Cleveland Street and York Street are now the oldest surviving structures in this area. Prior to the construction of the railway bridge, there used to be a level crossing (as seen elsewhere in Darlington). As the area developed into a heavy iron and steel industrial site and Albert Hill (to the east) became a residential area, a bridge was required. The 1896 map depicts a wider structure than today due to the larger amount of track lines. The now detached house to the south of Cleveland Street is shown on the map



to be part of a building row. It is not quite clear whether these were in residential use due to their location directly opposite the industrial works, but the back lane to the rear (which is no longer extant) suggests so. There used to be further building rows in this area, of which no physical evidence seems to survive.

The 1913/14 map shows what may have been an office building for the Darlington Forge to the north of Cleveland Street, adjacent to the east of the sidings just over the road from Albert Hill Junction (see above: C2). It is constructed in brick and includes fine stone detailing. It is not clear whether the small building shown on the map to the west of the sidings is the current one in this location. All the surviving buildings along the north side Cleveland Street seem to be depicted on the 1939 map and were part of the Darlington Forge complex, which closed in 1963<sup>207</sup>.

This area justifies inclusion as it is clearly a very important remnant of the industrial expansion that followed the arrival of the railway, which was ideally located at a major rail cross junction (see below: C5 & C6). The former office building and large industrial building have additional architectural interest, with the latter also having a significant road-side presence and landmark function. The house to the south is the sole survivor of one of the building rows that used to be in this area and includes original features. The special historic interest of this area is experienced by the public mainly from Cleveland Street. Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

**C4 – Site of relocated coal depot.** The proposed extension area includes DCC's proposal of 2022 (railway corridor only) as well as further land to the south. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises a largely empty plot of land to the north of East Mount Road.

By the time the coal and lime depot at Northgate Bridge closed in 1873 (see 3.3), a much larger coal depot had been provided to the north of Upper John Street (now East Mount Street). The 25-inch OS map of 1896 shows extensive sidings from/to the major railway cross junction as well as a weighing machine (W.M.).

This area justifies inclusion as it is the direct successor to the original coal depot at Northgate Bridge, the location of which is already inside the present Conservation area. The distinct boundaries of the historical site are still clearly readable, and there is likely to be some archaeological interest, as the land seems to have been largely undeveloped following the removal of the depot's tracks and buildings in the second half of the twentieth century (only a small part is currently occupied a car wash and valeting centre). The special historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from the north of the junction of John Street and East Mount Road, the car wash and the back lane behind no.s 112-126 East Mount Road, which includes a tall brick retaining wall to the former depot site. Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future.

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<sup>207</sup> Flynn 1989, page 109



Top: View from north of junction of John Street and East Mount Road, looking east. Bottom: Retaining wall behind no.s 112-126 East Mount Road, with former depot site behind the fence (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)

**C5 – Croft branch and S&D Crossing.** The proposed extension area includes DCC’s proposal of 2022 as well as further land to the north and south. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the location of the former track bed of the S&DR immediately to the west of the S&D Crossing (no longer extant), a stretch of railway corridor to the north including the grade-II-listed sign that marks the former crossing, the curved live railway line of the former Croft branch, and the grade-II-listed, now converted engine shed to the southeast of the former crossing.

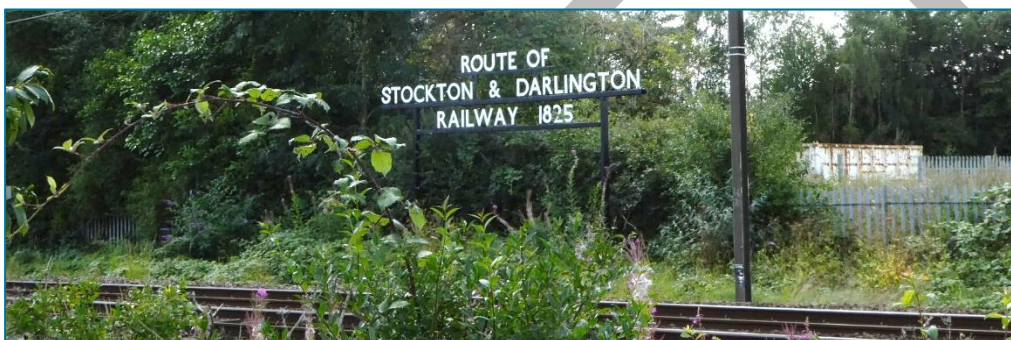
The Great North of England Railway (GNER) operated the route between York and Darlington between 1841-46; the line included the former Croft branch of 1829 which they had purchased from the S&DR (see 3.3). The opening of the Newcastle & Darlington Joint Railway in 1844 included a level, perpendicular crossing of the S&DR to the north-northeast of Darlington, known as S&D Crossing<sup>208</sup>. The GNER built an engine shed designed by George Townsend Andrews in this location in the same year<sup>209</sup>. The 1855 OS map depicts the building in the southeastern quarter of the crossing, with the curved track of the former Croft branch to the west. It also shows a curved, two-point junction between the York-to-Berwick line (from Bank Top) and the S&DR (heading towards Fighting Cocks), to the east of the engine shed (see below: C6). The 25-inch OS map of 1896 depicts a signal box between the engine shed and the crossing, which is no longer extant. By that time, the crossing had been expanded into a major junction. In 1937, the London North Eastern Railway installed a trackside sign in celebration of their connection to the S&DR to the north of the S&D Crossing, marking the progress for south-bound passengers along their

<sup>208</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, ‘S&D Crossing’

<sup>209</sup> <http://www.railwayarchitecture.org.uk/Location/Darlington/Darlington.htm>



journeys<sup>210</sup>. By 1988, S&DR line had been completely removed from the crossing<sup>211</sup>. Today, the converted engine shed is surrounded by a more recent housing development, which confuses the interpretation of its historical setting.



*Top:* Former GNER engine shed, now converted into flats and located within a residential area. *Bottom:* 'Route of the Stockton & Darlington Railway' trackside sign next to live tracks of the former Darlington-to-Newcastle line. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2023)

This area justifies inclusion as it marks – no longer by track lines but by a historical sign – the approximate location of the historic S&D Crossing. It is possible that the land to the west, which seems largely undeveloped, has some archaeological value. The area also includes the former Croft branch where it departed from the main S&DR line, which is still a live railway track. Whilst the engine shed does not form part of the history of the S&DR, it should be included due to its location at the former S&D Crossing. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from The Sidings and Houghton Road Bridge (see below: C7). Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to harmful future development (as seen elsewhere in the surroundings).

**C6 – Parkside junction.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC's proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises no.s 123-165 Houghton Road, the former Vicarage to the south of Houghton Road (B6279), a few modern properties in the angle between The Sidings and Houghton Road, and the corresponding road stretch along the B6279.

<sup>210</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1476475>

<sup>211</sup> Darsley, Lovett 2023, 'S&D Crossing'





*Top: Semi-detached houses possibly dating from the 1930s, with unusual front extensions. Centre: The terrace of former railway housing appears little altered. The modern building to the right is of no interest. Note the former higher road level. Bottom: Vicarage to St James church now derelict with tall retaining wall due to former lower road levels. Incongruous modern development in its immediate surroundings. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)*

The surviving curved line of the housing plot represents the former two-point junction between the York-to-Berwick line (from Bank Top) and the S&DR (heading towards Fighting Cocks) to the east of the former S&D Crossing (see above: C5), as depicted on the 1855 OS map. Haughton Road is shown too and pre-exists the railway. The 25-inch OS map of 1896 shows the terraced properties (now no.s 145-

157) built on the curved piece of land between the railway junction and Haughton Road as well as the Vicarage (to St James to the northeast) across the road. It is understood that these had been built prior to the lowering of the road levels to accommodate an underpass under the railway line to Fighting Cocks (no longer extant). The semi-detached houses, which have unusual front-facing gabled extensions, are first shown on the 1939 map. All other buildings are modern and of no interest. The development along The Sidings has erased the curved boundary of the former railway junction in this location.

This area justifies inclusion as much of the line the former two-point junction between the York-to-Berwick line (from Bank Top) and the S&DR (heading towards Fighting Cocks) still survives. Moreover, the railway terrace and Vicarage are also of architectural interest. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from The Sidings and Haughton Road. Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to further harmful development.

**C7 – Haughton Road Bridge.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC’s proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises Haughton Road Bridge.

Haughton Road would have originally crossed the Croft branch of the S&DR in 1829 (see 3.3), probably with a level crossing. It is unknown to the author when a bridge was provided over the railway line. The road levels on the 1855 map suggest that it was already in place by then, at that time crossing the York-to-Berwick line. The parapet is constructed in ashlar sandstone with (later?) triangular copings. The bridge structure was not inspected by the author. A later pedestrian-and-cyclist bridge has been added to the southeast of the historical bridge.



Haughton Road Bridge, looking southwest. The curved metal structure of the later bridge can be seen on the left. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2023)

This area justifies inclusion as it marks the crossing of Haughton Road over the former Croft branch. The bridge may be an early railway structure and include features of interest. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public mainly from the bridge. There are no views from the old



bridge, and no public views onto it. Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the character and appearance of this area.

**D – Minor adjustment.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC’s proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises a small piece of land to the east of 2 High Northgate (already inside the Northgate Conservation Area) which is part of the property, as shown on the 25-inch OS map of 1896. This area justifies inclusion as it completes the historical plot and tidies up the boundary line in this location. There are generally no public views of this area, which is concealed behind tall gates and a building extension. Conservation Area designation would help protect (or even enhance) the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to further harmful development.



The proposed new area is concealed behind the tall timber gates and single-storey extension, and is part of the historical plot of 2 High Northgate, which is the rendered building to the right. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024)

**E – Corporation Road school, church and housing.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC’s proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the remainder of Corporation Road with the terraced housing to either side and their corresponding back lanes, the school including its outbuildings and back lane, and the Darlington Baptist Church including its side lane.

The 1896 map shows Corporation Road and some of its terraced properties (presumably under construction at the time) and the main/central school building as well as outbuildings to the rear. The foundation stone of the Baptist church was laid in November 1904. The 1913/14 map shows the planform of the area very similar to today, although there have been some new buildings/extensions to the church and school as well as the loss of some smaller buildings since then. When on site, it is apparent that the church and school are fine examples of architecture, with much of their original character and appearance retained, as well as their scoria-paved back/side lanes. The school still has some of its historical brick boundary walling with stone copings and iron fencing to the front and outbuildings along the tall boundary wall to the rear. The two brick terraces have shallow front gardens (although much altered) and scoria-paved back lanes. Although many properties have been negatively impacted by harmful development (e.g. modern renders, uPVC windows and doors), much architectural interest survives, such as the use of polychromatic brickwork, prominent chimney stacks, original dormer windows with finials, elaborate eaves detailing, and moulded stone lintels including hood moulds to the doors.





*Top left:* Darlington Baptist Church of 1904 including polychromatic brickwork and fine architectural detailing. *Top right:* Scoria-paved side lane with church to the right. *Centre top:* Main school building and east wing with distinct curved gable designs and landmark central 'tower'. *Centre bottom:* Scoria-paved back lane to school bounded by brick outbuildings along tall walling; east wing to the left. *Bottom:* Terraced houses with shallow front gardens along Corporation Road, looking west. Note the rhythm created by the bay windows, original dormers and chimney stacks. (Photos © Gaby Rose, 2024)

This area justifies inclusion as it forms part of the nineteenth-century, residential development around Lodge Park (which is already inside the Northgate Conservation Area). Moreover, the church and school buildings are clearly of architectural interest. The terraces also retain elements of interest and complete the remainder of Corporation Road which is already inside the Conservation Area boundary. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public mainly from Corporation Road, Thornton Street, Easson Road, Bartlett Street, Wilkes Street and the back/side lanes. Conservation Area designation would help protect and enhance the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to further harmful development.

**F – Back lane behind North Lodge Terrace.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC’s proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises the missing western half of the scoria-paved back lane behind North Lodge Terrace. This area justifies inclusion as currently only the eastern part of the lane is included within the Northgate Conservation Area. However, this lane needs to be treated as ‘a whole’ in order to retain its character and appearance. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public from Gladstone Street, Elmfield Terrace and the back lane itself. Conservation Area designation would help protect and enhance the historical character and appearance of this area, which is vulnerable to further harmful development.



Back lane to rear of North Lodge Terrace, looking north; note the original shuttered openings to both sides. The rendered wall further on to the right has a harmful impact on the historic character of this lane. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024)

**G – Kendrew Street.** The proposed extension area is not included in DCC’s proposal of 2022. The new boundary which is being proposed comprises land between St Augustines Way (A68, inner ring road), Kendrew Street West carpark, Gladstone Street and Northgate.

John Kendrew (1748-1800), after whom the street was named, was a weaver who had lived around here as a child. He adapted the Spinning Jenny for the spinning of flax for linen. The 1855 OS map shows the land north of Kendrew Street including the open-air swimming baths built in 1851, in the location of the current Kendrew Street East surface carpark. They were roofed over in 1889 and demolished in 1983<sup>212</sup>. To

<sup>212</sup> Flynn 1988, photo 54



the east of the baths is a corner building which still survives (now Holly Street and no.s 8-9 Kendal Street); it is the oldest surviving heritage asset in this area. The map depicts further buildings of similar scale to the east up to Northgate and gardens to the north. By 1896 (25-inch OS map), the gardens had been lost and the area further built up. The (now commercial) building range to the north of the corner building still survives and includes a carved stone plaque 'D.B.Q.C. 1879' of the Darlington Quoit Club (visible from the north end of Holly Street). The inscription may have been relocated here as the map shows a club along Northgate, in the current location of Northgate House. To the west of the public baths, Queen Street had been completed; this is now the access lane into the carpark. The 1913/14 map shows the newly constructed Gladstone Street and further building up of the area. The construction of the dual-carriageway inner ring road in the approximate location of Kendrew Street between 1969 and 1973 (see 3.3), the demolition of the swimming baths and other old buildings, and the construction of Northgate House caused major harm to this historical area and wider surroundings.



View across ring road looking northeast. The corner building (Holly Street and nos 8-9 Kendal Street) is the oldest surviving heritage asset in this area. The grey building to the left includes the 1879 Quoit Club inscription, in the location of the yellow van. Behind it, [L] Central Secondary School can be glimpsed. Northgate House, to the right, is completely out of scale and not in keeping with the surrounding architectural language. (Photo © Gaby Rose, 2024).

This area justifies inclusion due to its association with the pre-railway textile industry (John Kendrew). It also retains a pre-1855 building and another nineteenth-century complex. The historical road layout is still fairly readable, despite the damage caused by the ring road and car park. The special architectural and historic interest of this area is experienced by the public mainly from St Augustines Way (A68, inner ring road), Kendrew Street West carpark, Gladstone Street and Northgate. Conservation Area designation would help protect and enhance the historical character and appearance of this area, which is very vulnerable to further harmful development.

**Areas that had been considered for inclusion but have been omitted for the following reasons:**

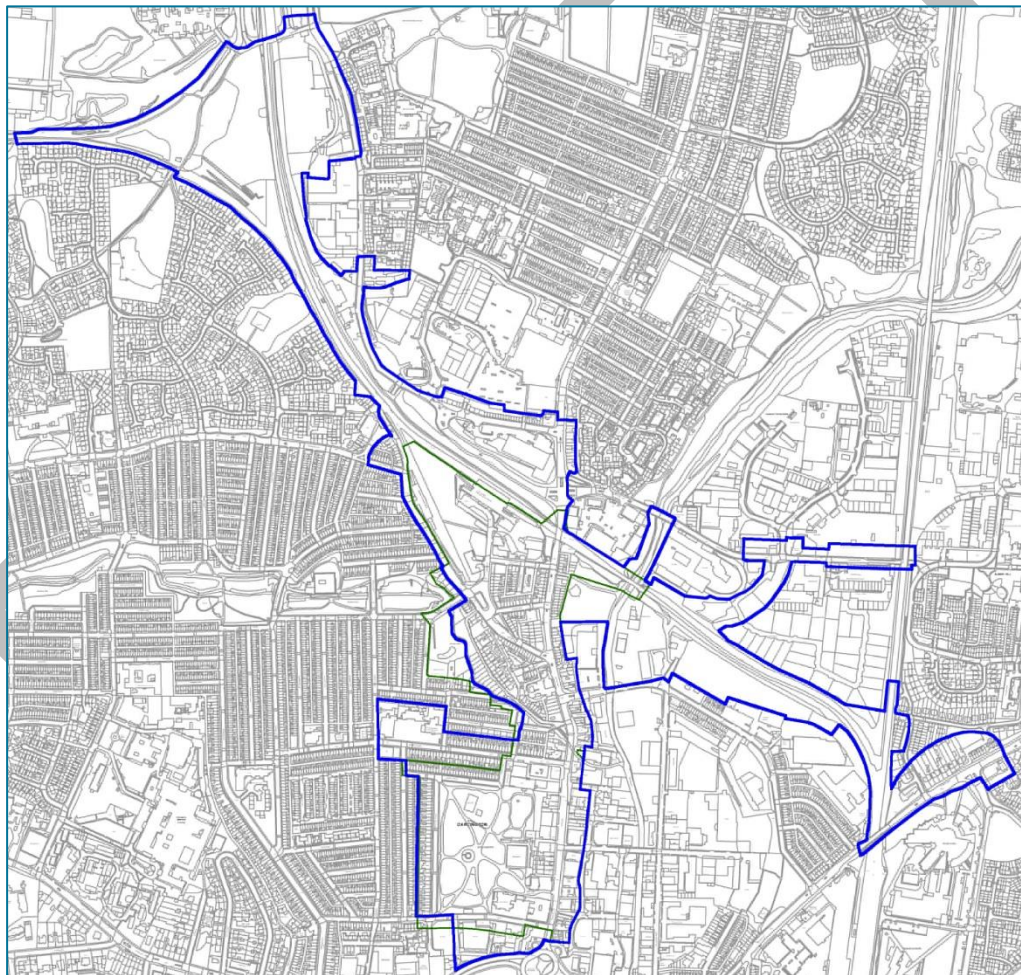
- Buildings along Hopetown Lane to the south of the early triangular settlement (see above: A6), as proposed by DCC: The development pattern along Hopetown Lane is not linear but in blocks, so if any further plots were included, it would need to be the entire blocks (historical grain). However, it has been considered that too much of the architectural interest has been eroded in these parts, and that they are not as historically significant as the triangular plot to the north.



- Weaver’s Way and Dobbin John Dobbin Road: Whilst both road names are associated with the artist, the routes are modern and not in keeping with the historical grain in this area. Note that the historical route of Weaver’s Yard (to the east of Weaver’s Way), where John Dobbin was born, has largely been demolished (see 3.6).
- Garden Street carpark: Garden Street, first shown on the 1896 OS map, was named after the gardens of Edward Pease which were located here, behind [13] 138-148 Northgate. They ran down to the river Skerne where they joined the grounds of East Mount, home of Edward’s eldest son John. A rustic bridge led over the watercourse to an orchard, and this valley was nick-named Pease-full Valley<sup>213</sup>. Unfortunately, the historical grain in this area has been largely destroyed by modern development (see 3.2).

### 5.3 Proposed New Boundary

The map shows the proposed new boundary for the Conservation Area, which will be renamed to: **Stockton & Darlington Railway: Northgate Conservation Area**.



Proposed Stockton & Darlington Railway: Northgate Conservation Area boundary in blue (Northgate Conservation Area boundary line **at the time of review**, as adopted in July 2003, in green). (Map© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 0100023728. Licence Number 100023728 2024. Graphics by Gaby Rose)

<sup>213</sup> Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway & Archaeo-Environment Ltd 2016, page 16

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## 6.0 Adopted New Boundary

This section will be provided following the public consultation period.

On DATE Darlington Borough Council adopted the amended boundary for the renamed *Stockton & Darlington Railway: Northgate Conservation Area*, as shown below.

Evaluation of feedback from public consultation

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### 7.3 Websites

Darlington Borough Council – Conservation Areas:  
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/conservation-historical-environment/conservation-areas/>

Darlington Borough Council – Listed Buildings:  
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/conservation-historical-environment/listed-buildings/>

Darlington Borough Council – Non-designated heritage assets:  
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/conservation-historical-environment/non-designated-heritage-assets/>

Darlington Borough Council – Planning: <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-application-and-permission/>

Darlington Borough Council – Stockton & Darlington Railway:  
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/conservation-historical-environment/stockton-darlington-railway/>

Darlington Borough Council – Towns Fund: <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/business-and-licensing/business/town-centre/the-towns-fund/>

Darlington Model Railway Club: <https://www.facebook.com/p/Darlington-Model-Railway-Club-100041630905166/>

Darlington Railway Museum Trust:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Darlington.Railway.Museum.Trust/>

Darlington Railway Preservation Society: <https://drps.synthasite.com/>

Friends of Darlington Railway Centre: <https://www.friendsofdrfm.org/>

Friends of North Lodge Park: <https://northlodgeparkdarlington.weebly.com/friends-group.html>

Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway: <https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/>

Historic England – National Heritage List for England:  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>

Historic England – Heritage at Risk Registers:  
<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/>

Hopetown Darlington (former Head of Steam Darlington Railway Museum):

<https://www.head-of-steam.co.uk/>

Locomotion museum: <https://www.locomotion.org.uk/home>

National Library of Scotland – Maps: <https://maps.nls.uk/>

North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group: <https://www.nelpg.org.uk/>

North Eastern Railway Association: <https://ner.org.uk/>

Planning Portal: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission>

The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust: <https://www.a1steam.com/>

The North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Society: <https://nelpg.org/>

The Northern Echo: <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/>

Whessoe Engineering Limited: <https://whessoe.co.uk/>

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