

Conservation Area Appraisal



Burnopfield

December 2009



CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL BURNOPFIELD

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Designated 1984
Boundary Amended 1992
Appraisal 2009
Boundary Amended 2009

Consultation

A successful conservation area relies on the support of the community and it is important that the local authority and the community work together to maintain and enhance the special interest of Burnopfield.

To this end, this document has been subject to a period of public consultation, which sought to raise awareness of the conservation area within the village and give the local community the opportunity to contribute to its content.

- A draft document was prepared and made available to key interest groups and local residents.
- Local residents were leafleted to ensure they were aware that the consultation was taking place.
- Comments sheets were circulated to give people the opportunity to express their opinions.
- A public meeting was held at Burnopfield Community Centre on 25th February 2009. The event was opened with a presentation highlighting the purpose of conservation areas and conservation area appraisals, and was followed by a round-table workshop session.
- The feedback received during the consultation was analysed and, where appropriate, amendments made to the document.

Introduction

Burnopfield Conservation Area

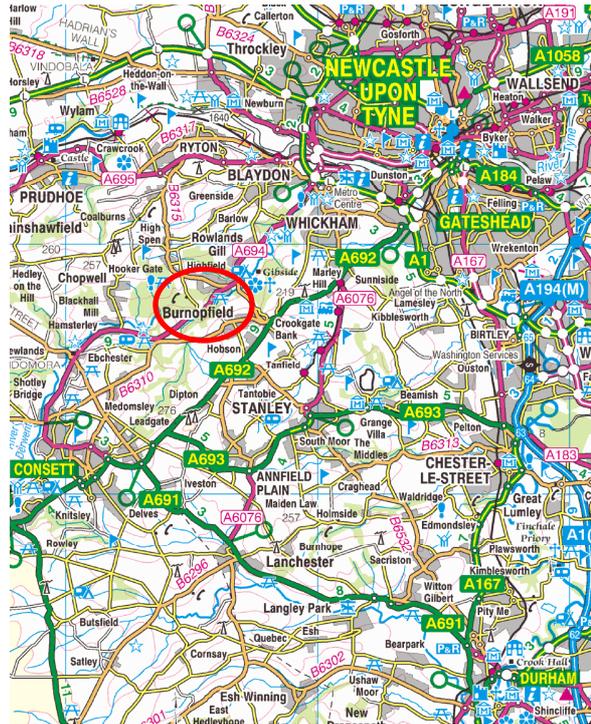
The village of Burnopfield is situated approximately 16 miles north-west of Durham, 9 miles south-west of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and 6.5 miles north-east of Consett, just off of the A692 that connects Consett and Gateshead.

Burnopfield conservation area was designated in 1984. It was the subject of a review in 1992, when the modern housing developments of Oakfields Estate and Westwood Close were removed from the designation. Today it covers approximately 26.5 hectares of the historic core of the east of the settlement. It centres on Busty Bank, Front Street and the deep wooded valleys of Leapmill Burn and Bryan's Leap Gill. The boundary extends from just west of the Pack Horse public house to the east, to The Leazes in the west, and from the former mineral railway line in the north, to the junction of New Road and Busty Bank to the South.

Burnopfield is a relatively large village and had a population of 2,791 at the time of the 2001 census. It gives its name to the local ward.



View along Front Street west from near Burnopfield Hall



Location Map

Burnopfield Conservation Area Appraisal

This conservation area appraisal has been produced by Durham County Council, to assess the features and qualities of the area that make it special and consider how it can be effectively preserved and enhanced.

The document will be used to provide a consistent and sound basis upon which to determine planning applications in the area and to raise awareness of the special character of Burnopfield. The purpose of conservation area status is not to prevent change, but to manage it in a sensitive manner that takes into account the history and character of the place.

No appraisal can be completely comprehensive and omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be assumed to imply that it is not of interest.

Planning Policy Framework

Conservation areas are “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Section 69, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

National Legislation and Guidance

Conservation Areas were first introduced into British legislation by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967.

Conservation areas are now designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (<http://www.ospi.gov.uk>). Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) (<http://www.communities.gov.uk>) offers advice on the implementation of the Act. The government published a consultation draft of Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment in July 2009.

Local authorities are responsible for designating conservation areas. They have a statutory duty to review historic areas from time to time, in order to ascertain if further designations are deemed appropriate. Designation brings with it a number of controls and duties:

- In exercising its planning function, the local authority is required to pay attention of the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- The local authority has a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.
- In conservation areas permission must be sought from the local authority for making certain changes that would not require permission elsewhere. These include certain types of cladding, inserting dormer windows, and putting up satellite dishes that are visible from the street.
- Consent must be sought from the local authority to totally or substantially

demolish any building within a conservation area.

- Notice must be given to the local authority before undertaking works to trees in conservation areas.
- Certain categories of ‘deemed consent’ advertisements which may have a significant visual impact are not permitted for display in a conservation area without the local authority’s consent.
- The local authority has the powers (under Article 4 of the General Development Order) to control development that would normally not require permission.

Regional Planning Policy

The North East of England Regional Spatial Strategy was published in July 2008. This is available from: <http://www.northeastassembly.gov.uk>. Policy 32 of the strategy relates to the historic environment and refers specifically to the preparation of conservation area appraisals.

Local Planning Policy

Local planning policy relating to conservation areas is currently contained in the *Derwentside District Local Plan, January 1997* (<http://www.durham.gov.uk>). Saved Policy EN14 of the Local Plan is particularly relevant. A Local Development Framework will replace the Local Plan. Local Government Reorganisation means the new unitary Durham County Council will prepare the Local Development Framework; it is anticipated the document will be adopted in September 2011. Conservation Area Appraisals are part of the evidence base for this document.



Busty Bank – the historic commercial core of Burnopfield

Summary of Special Interest

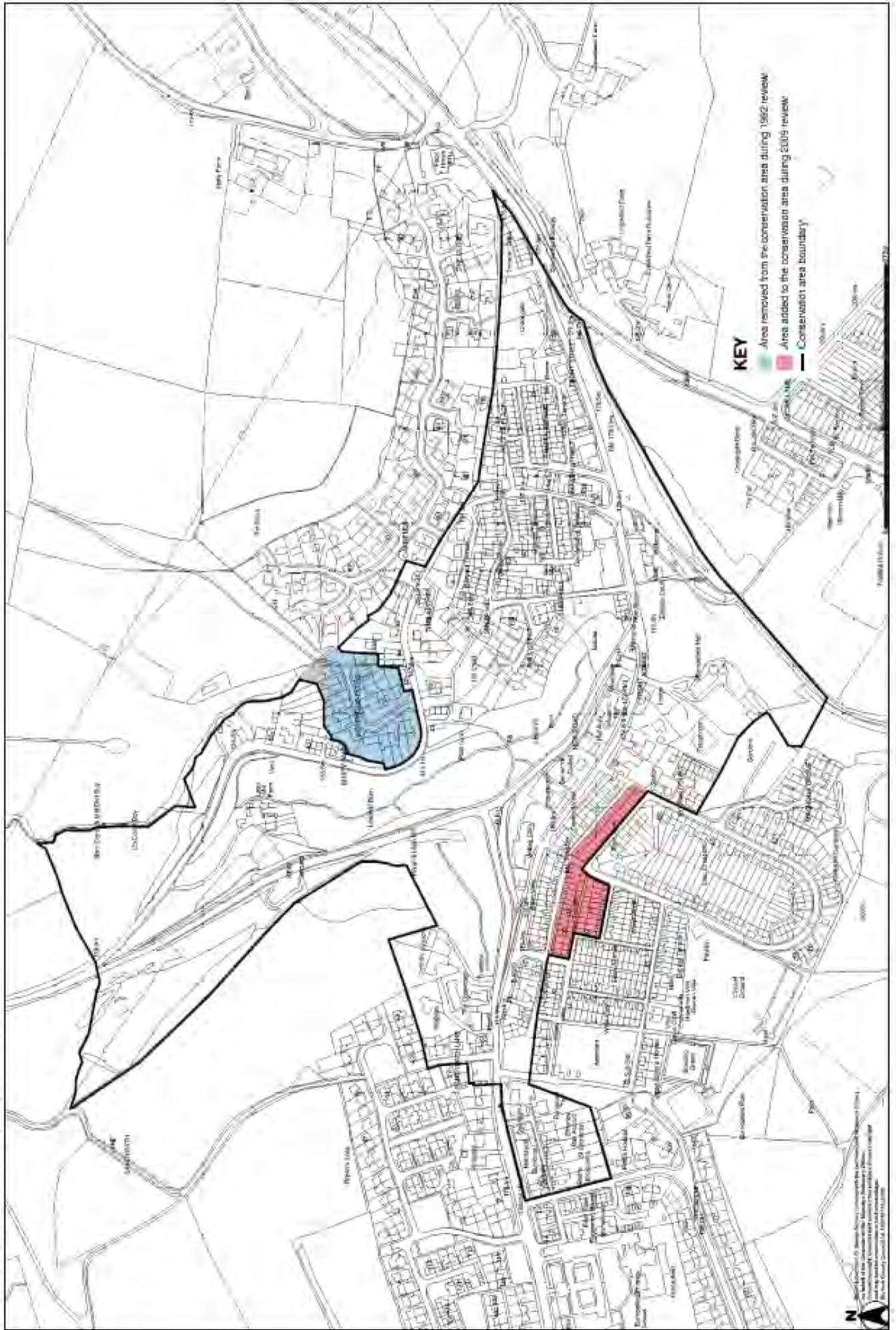
Surrounded in the most part by trees and woodland, Burnopfield is a secluded village, nestling on a ridge of land that falls away sharply to the north into the Derwent Valley. The distinct character of the place is largely derived from this unique location and the way the built form relates to its unusual topography.

The settlement of Burnopfield is believed to have Anglo-Saxon origins, but its interest today lies in its connections with the local coal mining industry of the 18th and 19th centuries. Wagonways that were used to transport coal from the pits to the River Tyne passed through the village during the 18th century, and the Jarrow and Pontop railway, the embankment of which can still be seen to the south of the conservation area, was built through the area during the mid 19th century. Burnopfield developed as a commercial and entertainment centre and its population grew. It is from this period of expansion that most of the built form of interest within the village dates.

Local stone and Welsh slate was used for the construction of buildings and boundary / retaining walls throughout the conservation area, giving the place a homogenous appearance. The built form follows the course of Front Street, which is of some antiquity, and the network of turn of the 19th / 20th century streets around Sheep Hill and Busty Bank. It has a compact appearance. Terraced housing and commercial properties dominate, although there are some individual buildings of interest.

The conservation area retains its identity as a commercial centre, but also includes community, residential and farm buildings. This diversity is fundamental to the integrity and understanding of the place, and a central component of its character. In most part, Burnopfield is rustic in nature, with few formal elements of surfacing, footways or street furniture. Rural paths crisscross the area, linking different parts of the village.

BOUNDARY ALTERATIONS MAP



Boundary Review

Burnopfield conservation area incorporates the historic core of the village, which is concentrated around Sheep Hill and Busty Bank and stretches in a linear form along Front Street. This centre is now surrounded in the most part by unexceptional 20th century housing developments.

The boundary of the conservation area was reviewed as part of the appraisal process that took place to produce this document. At this time, the conservation area was extended to include the following:

Park Terrace and Park View

Park Terrace and Park View are made up of terraces of stone properties with slate roofs and distinctive regularly spaced projecting chimney stacks. Park View is a single terrace, and Park Terrace is made up of two terraces of properties that face one another, with small front garden areas and a central path.

Park View dates from the late 19th century and is contemporary with the eastern properties of Derwent Terrace. Park Terrace dates from the turn of the 19th / 20th century and is contemporary to Dene View. Park View and Park Terrace are less grand in design than those of Derwent Terrace and Dene View and were constructed as lower status houses, but they form part of the same phase of development and use the traditional building materials of the area. They largely retain their historic integrity, maintaining original openings and a distinctive roofscape. To the south, Park Terrace and Park View are surrounded by brick terraces, also dating from the turn of the 19th / 20th century, and early – mid 20th century semi-detached properties. The different use of materials offers a clear change in character, and a logical boundary for the conservation area.



Park Terrace and Park View – turn of the 19th / 20th century stone terraces that contribute to the character of the core of Burnopfield

History and Development

The village of Burnopfield is thought to have Anglo-Saxon origins and was for many centuries a small, rural, agricultural village, centring around Busty Bank and Bryan's Leap. It changed dramatically during the 18th and 19th centuries, as a result of the growth of the local coal industry, and is illustrative of the impact of this industry and its technical advances on local development, and social and economic life.

Burnopfield is believed to have origins in the Anglo-Saxon age. The name is likely to come from the Old English meaning 'open land by the valley stream'. An alternative explanation is that it refers to a 17th century Scottish invasion of the area, when the English gave the order to 'burn up the fields' to stop further advance.

The village began life as a small agricultural settlement, located in a relatively remote part of the country. Its fate changed dramatically during the 18th and 19th centuries, when it became a centre for the local coal mining industry.

In the early days, the village only extended from Busty Bank and Sheep Hill to Bryan's Leap and the Fold, where a brewery was once located. It is on this area that the conservation area now centres. At the end of the 18th century, the Old Loblely Hill Turnpike, on its way to Medomsley (now Front Street) was the only road that passed through it.

During the 18th century, Burnopfield began to expand on account of the establishment of wagonways - narrow gauges laid to transport coal from local pits to the River Tyne - and the availability of work at nearby pits. 2 wagonways passed through the village. The first, 'Main Way', which dates from about 1710, passed close to Bryan's Leap. The second was constructed between 1750 and 1763. This followed a track slightly lower than the Pontop and Jarrow Railway and then down Busty Bank, meeting the Main Way close to Leap Mill Farm.

During the opening decades of the 19th century, the Main Way closed down, and new railway networks began to be built to provide a more efficient way of transporting coal.



Postcard of Leap Mill Farm – some of the oldest surviving buildings in the village, dating from the early 18th century

Used by permission of Durham Record Office. The Durham Record Ref: DR05132



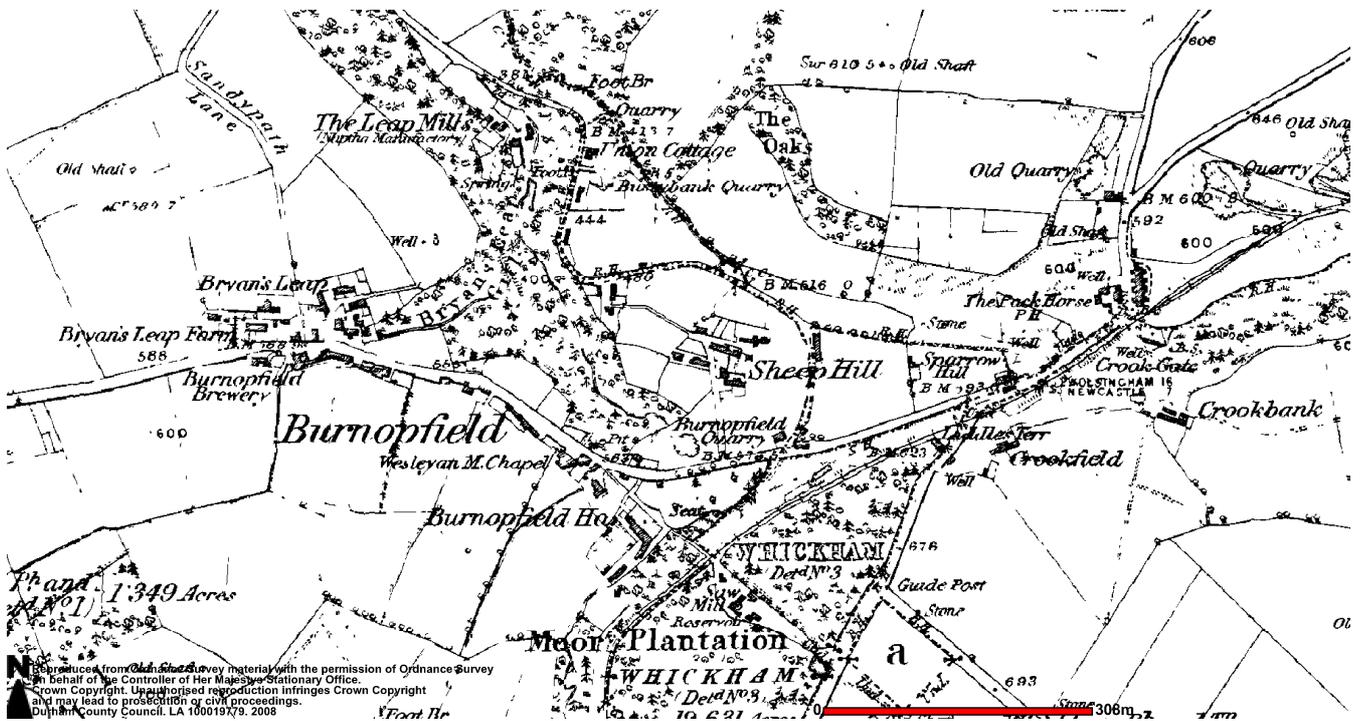
Route of an old wagonway from White le Head to Lintz Colliery – it was the establishment of such wagonways through the village that occasioned its 18th century growth

Used by permission of Durham Record Office. The Durham Record Ref: DR05131



Front Street, Burnopfield 1951

Used by permission of Durham Record Office. The Durham Record Ref: DR03648



1st Edition (1850s) Ordnance Survey Map of Burnopfield

The Bowes railway (originally called the Jarrow and Pontop Railway), was constructed by the Grand Allies, to carry coal from pits to the River Tyne at Jarrow. The Grand Allies was a group of influential coal mining families, which was established in 1726 to develop the local industry. It was made up of the Wortley, Ord, Liddell and Bowes families. The Bowes family was a particularly influential local family, who owned the Gibside Estate close to Burnopfield. The construction of the Estate was funded by the profits of coal mining, and the family owned coal mines in the area for centuries.

The earliest section of the new railway was designed by George Stephenson and opened in 1826, making it one of the world's earliest railways. The part that passed through Burnopfield opened in 1845 providing a direct line between Pontop, Burnopfield and Marley Hill collieries. The route of this now forms the southern boundary of the conservation area in part. The line remained in full operation until the 1960s and finally closed in 1974. Part of it is preserved at the Bowes Railway Museum at Springwell and is the last surviving standard gauge rope hauled railway in the world.

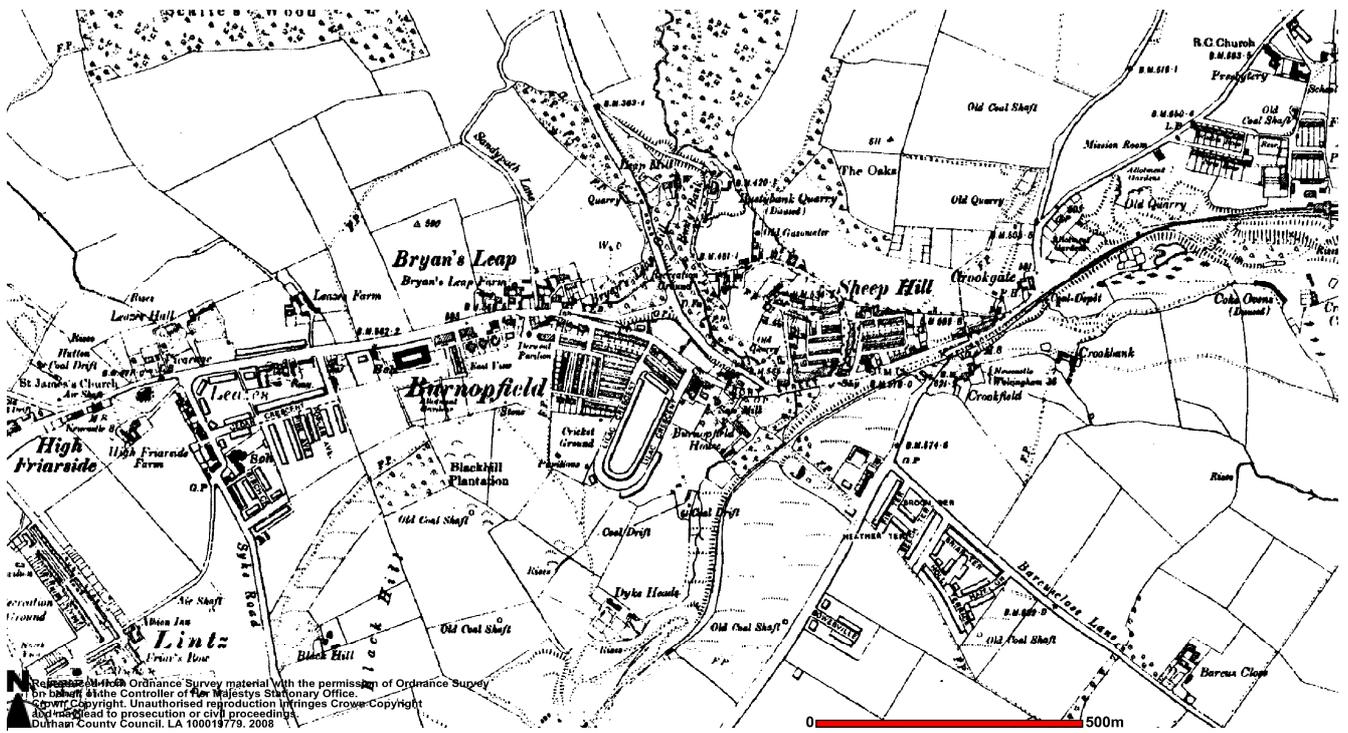
Collieries existed in the area from the 17th century and the Hobson Colliery at Burnopfield was first sunk in 1725, but it was the building of the larger collieries during the mid 19th century that really accelerated the growth of the village. It is from this age that much of its surviving form and character date.

Development concentrated on Front Street, at one time Black Hedley Road, and around Sheep Hill. The period saw much new development, but also replacement of buildings and, therefore, only a small number of earlier buildings survive. A school was built in 1872 and a Co-operative Society Store in 1889. Burnopfield became a shopping and entertainment centre for the mining families of neighbouring colliery villages. In the late 19th century, Whellan stated:

“Burnopfield is a large village, which has greatly improved during the past 20 years, and now possesses several good chapels and schools”¹

In the 1870s Burnopfield became a separate parish, and St. James Church, located to the west of the village, was consecrated in 1873.

¹ Whellan, Francis (editor) (1894), *Whellan's Directory of Durham*



3rd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1919

Burnopfield has an extensive Methodist history. John Wesley first visited the village in 1746, when he preached in a garden in Sheep Hill. Further visits resulted in the establishment of a Methodist Society and in 1775 the first chapel was built. This was rebuilt in 1880 on the same site.

New roads were constructed to accommodate the new development. New Road, that connects Burnopfield to Rowlands Gill, opened in the early years of the 20th century, creating a new thoroughfare through the village.

The village continued to develop during the 20th century, stretching along Front Street to the west and south.

The fortunes of Burnopfield remained inextricably linked to that of the local coal industry. Closure of the mines during the 1960s, along with the railways, led to a period of economic instability. Where once the population of the village was almost exclusively employed in the coal industry, they now work in local industrial estates, factories and shops or commute to nearby towns and cities.

The industrial roots of the place are no longer as obvious as they once were, but the infrastructure that developed during

this significant phase in the history of the village and the area is still in situ, telling at least part of the story. Some of the street names also have a significance that helps us understand the place. Busty Bank, for example, got its name when the bank side burst to reveal a coal seam. It is these remnants of its past and the quality of the buildings and townscape that was produced at this time that the conservation area aims to protect.

Key Dates

- Anglo-Saxon origin
- 1710 Opening of 'Main Way' wagon way
- 1725 First pit sunk at Hobson (Burnopfield) Colliery
- 1750-1763 2nd wagonway opened through the village
- 1775 Construction of first Methodist Church
- 1845 Pontop – Jarrow (Bowes) Railway opened through Burnopfield
- 1872 School opened in village
- 1889 Co-operative Society Store opened
- 1873 Burnopfield became a separate parish
- Early 20th century New Road constructed linking Burnopfield to Rowlands Gill
- 1968 Closure of Hobson (Burnopfield) pit and Pontop and Jarrow railway through the village

Architectural Interest

The built form of interest within Burnopfield conservation area dates predominantly from the mid to late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the village underwent a period of unprecedented growth. This gives the place a sense of coherence. Simple terraces dominate the area, which are typical of the age, constructed to accommodate workers in the local coal industry. Alongside these, is the urban infrastructure to support local life, including a small commercial core and a number of community buildings. Architecturally, the majority of buildings are relatively simple, but amongst them are a number of outstanding structures, including some that date from the 18th century.

Burnopfield conservation area is dominated by 2-storey stone terraces. These were designed to accommodate workers of the local coal industry. They typically have vertically proportioned windows, stone lintels and cills to openings (some with stone quoins), and chimney stacks projecting from gabled roofs. Most have little architectural adornment, with the exception of some of the higher status properties, such as Dene View and Derwent View. These are more ornate in their design and have features, such as bay windows. The commercial properties of Busty Bank are of a similar style, with shopfronts to the ground floor.

The village core also houses a number of larger individually designed residences and a small collection of large semi-detached properties called Leazes Villas, as well as some interesting community buildings and churches. The old Masonic Hall is a particularly noteworthy structure. Most of the built form was constructed in a narrow timeframe during the mid to late 19th and early 20th centuries and consequently has a coherence of design. This coherence has been undermined in some parts by the construction of out of character modern buildings.

A small number of earlier structures survive. Of outstanding interest are Burnopfield Hall and Leap Mill Farm, both of which date from the early 18th century.

A number of buildings are recognised to be of national interest as Listed Buildings (see Appendix 1), and are therefore protected. There are also many buildings that are not outstanding in national terms, but are of local heritage interest, the loss

of which would be to the significant detriment of the village character (see Appendix 3).



Co-operative Terrace, Sheep Hill



Dene View, Front Street



Leap Mill Farm, Busty Bank



Masonic Hall, Front Street

Historic Building Materials

Locally quarried sandstone dominates the conservation area, giving it a defined character; however a small number of properties document the early 20th century shift to the use of red brick. The extensive use of Welsh slate creates a homogenous roofscape, with terracotta ridge tiles and stone coping complementing the slate on a number of properties. There are a few examples of traditional timber windows, doors and shopfronts, iron railings, and traditional surfacing materials within the village.

Walling Materials

Stone is the traditional building material of Burnopfield and dominates the old core of the village. Historic ordnance survey maps indicate that during the 19th century there were a number of local sandstone quarries, including one in the heart of the conservation area, adjacent to Woodlands on Sheep Hill. As such, it forms part of the intrinsic identity of the place.

Construction methods vary, some structures are constructed of rubble and others of coursed squared stone. Stone is also used for lintels and cills, quoins that surround some openings and define some corners, and for adornment, for example, dentil courses, stringcourses, corbels and bay windows.

During the early years of the 20th century there was a shift from using stone to using red brick for construction in the area. A number of properties constructed in this material can be found interspersed with older properties in the heart of the conservation area. It was also used extensively for rear walls.

The coherence of the conservation area has been undermined in some areas by the introduction of modern construction materials, such as render.



Some buildings are constructed of rubble (left), others of coursed squared stone (right)



Stone is used for the adornment of properties within Burnopfield conservation area

Roofing Materials

Slate creates the distinctive homogenous roofscape of Burnopfield. Typically Welsh slate was used, laid in even courses. Most of this traditional roofscape has survived and is an important feature of the village. Some properties have stone coping to the gable ends and others have terracotta ridge tiles that add interest. Historic photographs show that pantiles were historically used for roofing in the village, but they no longer form part of its character.



Slate creates the distinctive roofscape of the conservation area. In some instances, terracotta ridge tiles were used to add interest

Chimney stacks project from the ridgelines, these are constructed of either stone, red brick or buff brick and can be quite ornate and an integral part of the design of the building to which they belong. The use of a combination of buff and red brick to create designed stacks is a characteristic of some properties of the area. Terracotta pots, where they are in existence complement the chimney stacks.



Chimney stacks constructed of stone, red or buff brick are an integral part of the design of buildings

Joinery

Timber was traditionally used for windows, doors and shopfronts. Over time, many have been replaced with modern designs and materials, which have served to undermine the character of the area. However, some examples of traditional joinery have survived and where this is the case they contribute greatly to the character of the building and the area.



Busty Bank – Many of the details of this traditional shopfront have survived



Where traditional sash windows are found they form an integral part of the character of the building and the area



Dene View – Some traditional timber panelled doors have survived and others have been replaced. Where traditional details have survived they contribute greatly to the character of the terrace.

Setting and Views

Burnopfield is situated on a narrow shelf of land, below the high ground of the Hobson and on the steep slope that falls away into the Derwent Valley. The topography of the area has greatly influenced how the place has developed and is a fundamental part of the character of the conservation area. Long distance views are limited, in the most part, due to the built form and leafy setting of the village, although in places, impressive views of the open farmland to the north can be had.

Burnopfield conservation area is situated on a ridge below the high ground to the south, before it falls away steeply to the north into the Derwent Valley. The way the village has developed has largely been dictated by the fall of the land. Front Street follows the line of the ridge, whereas Sheep Hill and Busty Bank step down the gradient. The built form of the roads naturally responds to the gradient.

Seclusion is a key characteristic of the place. It is surrounded on many sides by areas of woodland that, along with the topography, serve to limit views into, out of and through the settlement and mean that it can only truly be appreciated from within its confines. The A692 runs in close proximity to the southern extent of Burnopfield, but even from here it is not possible to see into the village. To the south, the wooded Black Hill (between Burnopfield and The Hobson), grounds of Burnopfield Hall, and old railway embankment form the backdrop of the village. To the north, The Oaks to the rear of Oakfields housing development, and West Wood create a leafy barrier to long distance views.

The steep wooded valleys of Leapmill Burn and Bryan's Leap Gill continue this characteristic into the core of the settlement. They are leafy fingers that stretch from the countryside to the north through the centre of Burnopfield. They effectively cut off views between Front Street and Busty Bank area, making each feel more secluded and bringing natural elements into the core of the village, contributing to its rustic identify.

Much of the rural setting of the early village has been eroded over the years as



View up Sheephill from Busty Bank – development responds to the gradient of the land stepping up the hillside



Front Street: looking west from Derwent View – the built form that clings to the road and the wooded bank beyond secludes the village from surrounding areas



View across rooftops of Sheephill from Front street as the land falls away to the north



View down new road from Front Street, which passes alongside the leafy gorge of Leapmill Burn

the place has expanded. Early 20th century development now stretches to the south of Front Street and later 20th century housing estates stretch to the north and west. Only to the far north, does the conservation area meet the attractive farmland that stretches out in this direction. Impressive views out over the surrounding fields and woodland can be had from the bottom of Busty Bank and New Road, close to Leap Mill Farm.

Bends in the roads of the conservation area and its tight built form also limit long distance views. Terraces that front directly onto often narrow, short streets are the dominant building form within the conservation area. These create very few gaps through which views can be glimpsed, and create confined roads and spaces within the heart of the village. This is an important characteristic of the place. Even along the wider streets, such as Front Street itself, the north is lined by terraced buildings that limit views of what lies beyond.

There are a small number of places within the conservation area from where longer distance views are possible, allowing the topography and setting of the place to be appreciated. For example from the far east of Front Street and the top of Sheephill.

Summary of important aspects of the setting and views and vistas

- Situated on a ridge of land that falls away to the north
- Steep wooded gorges cut into the core of the village
- Woodland surroundings seclude the village
- Rural farmland forms the backdrop of the village to the north
- Long distance views are limited by the tight built form, which creates confined and secluded spaces.
- Where long distance views are possible, they allow an appreciation of the gradient and setting of the place.



View to the north from the bottom of Busty Bank over the open farmland and woodland that surround this side of the settlement

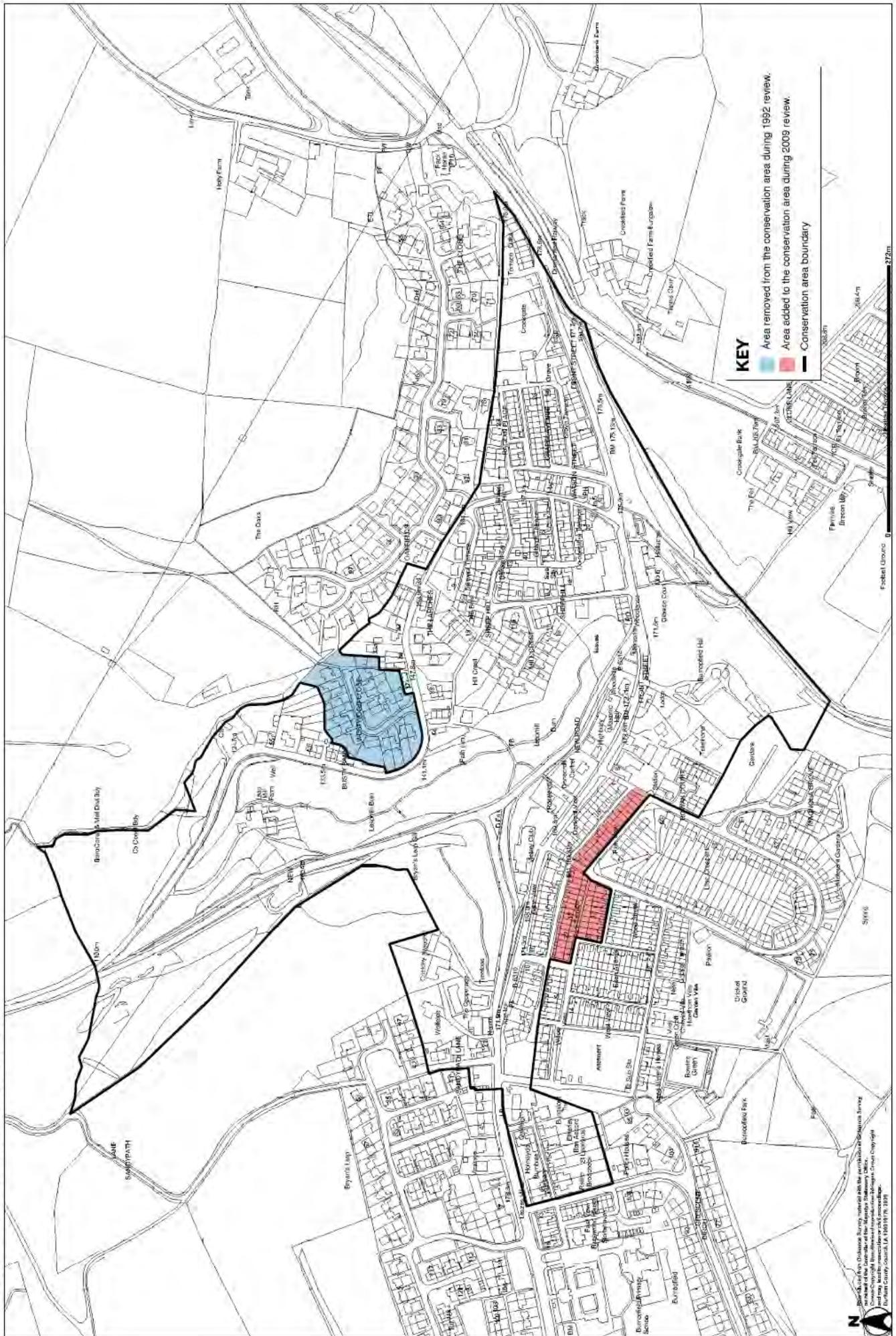


View down Busty Bank - the tight built form and winding nature of the road restrict any long distance views through the area



View from the top of Sheep Hill (next to no. 19) showing how the ground falls away and offering perspectives of the farmland and woodland beyond the settlement

BOUNDARY ALTERATIONS MAP



Character Areas

Burnopfield has a number of different character areas, which are defined by their topography, the age, status and use of the buildings, and how the built form relates to its setting. Although there are shared characteristics that define the conservation area, such as the use of stone, there are also marked variations between each character area.

Character Area 1: The Wooded Valleys

This character area centres on the steep valleys of Leapmill Burn and Bryan's Leap Gill and is dominated by woodland. It stretches from the open farmland to the north of Burnopfield, as far as the leafy embankment of the old Pontop and Jarrow railway (now demolished) to the south. It is of significant historic interest, including the parts of the village through which the old 18th century wagonways passed, and incorporates its oldest surviving buildings.

Buildings

This area of Burnopfield is relatively sparsely populated. However, it contains some of the village's most interesting structures, including the listed 18th century Leap Mill Farm and Burnopfield Hall. Buildings in this area tend to be rustic, 2 storeys in height, and of individual design, reflecting their purpose. These sit adjacent to some of the grander residences of the village. A number of modern properties, constructed in a range of materials, stand adjacent to the traditional stone buildings and serve to undermine the rustic character of the area.

Layout

The orientations of the three roads that pass through this character area reflect the gradient of the land. Front Street follows the level ridge of land to the south. New Road follows the course of Leapmill Burn and falls into the valley. The narrower Busty Bank winds its way down the slope to join New Road to the north of the village.

The built form of the area is characterised by irregularity and also responds to the lie of the land. Development has evolved rather than being planned. Some buildings face the street, others stand perpendicular to it, some buildings are set

in their own grounds and others front directly onto the road. On Busty Bank, buildings tend to be set back slightly from the street above the line of the road and have boundary walls.



6 Front Street – an example of a simple vernacular structure that characterise this part of Burnopfield



Busty Bank – the road winds down the gradient of the land. Its built form overlooks the wooded valley



View into the valley of Bryan's Leap Gill from Front Street. Wooded valleys are a unique part of the character of the village



Leap Mill Farm continues in agricultural use and retains a rural aspect to this part of the village



Burnopfield war memorial – an important public space on the junction of New Road and Front Street



Busty Bank – drystone walls are a key feature of this area



Walled footpath that leads up from Busty Bank to Sheephill – rustic in identity and adding to the permeability of the area

Spaces and natural elements

The wooded valleys of Leapmill Burn and Bryan's Leap Gill are dominant features of this part of the village. They are unique to Burnopfield and bring woodland to its core, effectively dissecting it into two.

To the north, Leapmill Burn runs down to the open farmland that surrounds Leap Mill Farm. This part of the character area is open and rural, which contrasts with the leafy character of the grounds of Burnopfield Hall and the embankment of the old Pontop and Jarrow railway to the south. The abundance of trees in this area effectively hides the village from surrounding areas, making it feel quite secluded. The contrast is central to the character of Burnopfield.

Two small public spaces of interest can be found amongst the trees. The first is the landscaped space around the war memorial on the junction of New Road and Front Street, and the second a seating area around the Rippon fountain.

Public Realm

This character area is rustic and very few formal elements can be found. New Road and much of Busty Bank only have footpaths on one side of the road. Surfacing is simple and in most part steep sided woodlands with craggy rocks come right down to the roadside. In some areas, the boundary between the road and surrounding spaces is more clearly defined by traditional boundary walls and stone retaining walls. On Busty Bank and New Road these tend to be of drystone or rubble construction, continuing the rural tradition of the area. However, the more regular building methods and formal copings used for these on Front Street are reflective of its more urban nature. The wall surrounding Burnopfield Hall is a particularly prominent feature.

A number of footpaths wind through the valleys, converging at a bridge over Leap Mill Burn. These link Front Street to Busty Bank and Sheep Hill and are important to the permeability of the village. They open up unusual perspectives of the place. The walled footpath that leads up from Busty

Bank to Sheep Hill has a very distinctive character, flanked as it is by high stone walls, climbing steeply out of the valley.

Activity

The buildings of the area are now predominantly residential, although Leap Mill Farm continues to be operational and retains its agricultural character. The footpaths that pass through the wooded valleys provide for the recreational use of the area.

Key Characteristics

- Wooded valleys, wooded Burnopfield House estate and the wooded railway embankment
- Footpaths through Leap Mill Burn valley
- Stone walls line some of the roads
- Simple rural surfacing
- Vernacular buildings
- Irregular built form
- Some of oldest buildings in village – Burnopfield Hall and Leapmill Farm
- War memorial and Rippon Fountain
- Residential and agricultural use

Character Area 2: Commercial core

This area is characterised by late 19th century / early 20th century design laid over the earlier street pattern. The commercial core itself developed around Front Street and Busty Bank during the mid to late 19th century, serving Burnopfield itself and surrounding pit villages. Rows of residential terraces were constructed alongside the shops.

Buildings

The prominent building type in this part of the village is terraced, although there are a few detached and semi-detached properties of interest. Most date from the turn of the 19th / 20th century, with a small number of earlier properties interspersed. Rows of two-storey terraced residential properties stand perpendicular to the commercial street of Busty Bank, which accommodates terraces of shops. The commercial identity of the area continues on Front Street where the grand co-

operative building can be found, along with the impressive United Methodist Free Church. Other individual buildings of note include Woodlands, Crookgate and a small collection of residences at the top of Sheep Hill. The modern Hillcrest development contributes little to the interest of the village.

Layout

A turn of the 19th / 20th century gridiron pattern of development overlays the earlier street pattern of Front Street, Sheep Hill and Busty Bank, creating an interesting and highly permeable network of compact narrow roads. Buildings tend to either front directly onto the streets or have small front garden areas with central access paths. The terraces of Chapel Avenue have particularly attractive walled front gardens. The gradient of the land in this part of the village is particularly steep, and the built form responds to this, with the rooflines of buildings stepping down the slope.



Busty Bank – the commercial core of the village. Terraced properties of varying design step down the hill



Co-operative Terrace – typical of the terraces that stand perpendicular to the commercial Busty Bank



The grand Co-operative building on Front Street is a landmark of the village



Evergreen trees that flank the footpath linking Sheephill to Busty Bank make a significant contribution to views up from the valley



Chapel Avenue – the terraces have small front gardens with a central path



Granite setts and stone kerbs on Co-operative Terrace

Spaces and natural elements

This is a built up part of the conservation area and consequently there are few open spaces of note. However, trees continue to be an important part of its interest. The Oaks to the east forms the backdrop to many views through the area and is important to its setting. Equally, the mature trees that flank the walled footpath that leads up from Busty Bank to Sheep Hill serve to create a link between the more rural and built up parts of Burnopfield.

Small front gardens are a feature of some of Gibside Terrace and Chapel Avenue.

Public Realm

The narrow streets and tight built form of the centre of this area give it a very enclosed urban feel. All spaces are well defined either by the front elevation of buildings or boundaries surrounding private spaces. Stone is the traditional boundary treatment where spaces meet the main streets, but brick (sometimes buff, sometimes red) is often used for rear boundaries. Stone retaining walls are a particular feature. On New Road, steep steps lead up through the high stone retaining wall allowing access to the street above. Where traditional boundaries survive they are important to the sense of place, but all too often these have been replaced by modern blocks or fencing, or removed altogether. This has undermined the coherence of the appearance of the area. Particularly prominent stone walls can be found around the Wesleyan Methodist Church and along Sheep Hill.

Pockets of historic surfacing are visible amidst the predominantly modern street surfacing. Along Co-operative Terrace, its urban paving pattern of the setted entrance and stone kerbs complement its stone buildings and built up nature of the area. Pockets of setted surfacing can also be found on Watson Street and scoria blocks line the gutter of Busty Bank. Remnants of a more rural pattern of hard surfacing, where stones have been laid in a random pattern, can be found at the top

of Sheep Hill, where the path leading up from Busty Bank meets the road.

Activity

Busty Bank and Front Street form the commercial core of the village and, at one time, were also its centre of entertainment. These activities have declined since its turn of 19th / 20th century heyday, but the area retains its commercial identity and is a centre for local life, accommodating shops, a public house and a church. The small commercial core is surrounded by residential properties.

Key Characteristics

- Stone terraced buildings
- Buildings that front directly onto rear of footpaths or have small front garden areas.
- Buildings to the west of the area are constructed to step up the gradient of the land.
- Lack of open space
- Narrow streets
- Stone and brick boundaries
- Pockets of historic street surfacing
- Trees on the hill
- Commercial and residential area

Character Area 3: Front Street

Front Street is the main road through the village and is of some antiquity. Early development along its length focused on two cores, one around Sandypath Lane and the other around Burnopfield Hall. These became linked by new residential development during the late 19th and early 20th century.

Buildings

Distinguished turn of the 19th / 20th century stone terraced houses dominate Front Street. Derwent View and Dene View, with their regular pattern of bay windows, gatepiers and projecting chimney stacks, draw the eye through the centre of the conservation area. Further to the east, Grove Terrace and Oaks Terrace continue this pattern of development. Park View and Park Terrace, to the south of Front Street, are contemporary to Derwent View and Dene View and of stone construction,

but are smaller and simpler in design, akin to those in the Busty Bank area.



Dene View, Front Street – the regular pattern of distinguished turn of the 19th / 20th century terraces characterise the area



Masonic Hall, Front Street – a landmark building



The new Methodist Church, Front Street – a good example of modern design in an historic setting



Leazes Villas – early 20th century large semi-detached properties. Continuing the grand tradition of Front Street and illustrating the evolution in design styles

The uniformity of the terraces is interrupted by a number of detached and semi-detached buildings of interest. These include Stonewall (30-32 Front Street), the old Masonic Hall, 13-14 Front Street and the new Methodist Church, which is a good example of modern design in an historic setting.

Leazes Villas, a group of large semi-detached residences dating from the early 20th century are located to the far west of the conservation area. These illustrate the impact of new design influences of the day on development in Burnopfield, but continue the tradition of grand residences along Front Street and utilise the traditional palette of materials.

On the north of Front Street, a number of late 20th century buildings have been built that are alien to the village in terms of design and materials.

Layout

Front Street is a relatively wide road that follows the gentle curvature of the flat ridge of land upon which the village is built. This means that the extent of views along its length is limited. In most part, it is only built up on one side and has a relatively open aspect, as the ground falls away sharply to the north. The grass verges, that separate the built form from the road along some of its length, serve to further soften the appearance of this part of the conservation area.

Historically, the built form developed in a linear fashion, which is reflected in the conservation area boundary. During the 20th century, building occurred to the north and south and now surrounds the earlier properties.

Buildings tend to be set slightly back from Front Street and have small front garden areas, complementing the slightly grander style of architecture in this character area. The only deviations from this are the fold pattern of development around Sandypath, and Leazes Villas, which are two rows of villas accessed from a central rear alley.



The natural curvature of Front Street limits the extent of views. It is generally only built up on one side and has a relatively open aspect



Derwent View, Front Street – the grass verge and trees soften the image of the road

Park Terrace and Park View are situated on narrow roads that run parallel to the main street. Park Terrace is made up of 2 rows of terraces with front gardens accessed by a central pathway, similar to Chapel Avenue and Gibside Terrace.

Spaces and natural elements

This is an urban part of the conservation area and there are hardly any open spaces of note. A small public space can be found adjacent to 18 Front Street, but this is of no historical value and until recently was built upon.

The gardens of properties in the area are significant. The small front gardens of most of the terraced buildings and the larger grounds of the Leazes Villas are all integral to the design and character of the properties.

Trees make a valuable contribution. The wooded valley of Bryan's Leap Gill encroaches right up to the roadside of Front Street, as does the wooded embankment of the old railway. These give the buildings a leafy setting.

Public Realm

Surfacing in this area is simple, and historic surfacing of worth is not evident. Some scoria blocks to guttering can be seen along parts of Front Street.

The interface between public and private areas is defined by boundary walls. These vary in design, reflecting the age and status of the properties to which they relate. Typically the terraced properties of this area have low stone walls that once had railings on top; stone gatepiers allow access. Few original railings have survived. Grove Terrace is a rare exception, where traditional railings can be seen. Where they exist they are an important element of the place.

Higher stone walls are characteristic of the older individual properties. A listed wall surrounds Stonewall (30-32) Front Street, set within this is a traditional red postbox, which contributes to the interest of the street. The rear yards of properties are also defined by walls, usually brick walls sometimes incorporating outbuildings. Many have now been greatly altered and modern boundary treatments introduced, undermining their coherence. However, the stone wall and gatepiers to the rear of 13 Front Street are particularly interesting features.

Activity

This area is predominantly residential, with a number of commercial and community buildings interspersed, which help to retain its central village identity.



Grove Terrace – traditional railings on top of low boundary walls, typical of this character zone



Rear boundary and gatepiers of 13 Front Street – interesting features of the area



The postbox built into the wall of 30-32 Front Street, an asset to the streetscene

Key Characteristics

- Regular pattern of distinguished turn of 19th / 20th century terraced houses
- Leazes Villas
- Key buildings – Methodist Church, 30-32 Front Street, 13-14 Front Street and Masonic Hall.
- Predominantly residential with some commercial and community buildings
- Development follows the gentle curvature of a flat ridge of land
- Linear form of historic development
- Quite open in aspect with land falling away to north
- Grass verges
- Buildings set back from street with gardens
- Surrounded by trees / woodland
- Simple surfacing
- Boundary walls, sometimes with railings
- Traditional red letterbox

Issues and Potential for Improvement

Burnopfield conservation area is illustrative of the impact of the coal industry on local development. It has a unique character defined by its topography, the unusual wooded valleys of Leapmill Burn and Bryan's Leap Gill that come into its core and its built form. There is potential to further protect and strengthen this character and appearance.

Buildings

- **Redundancy**

Redundancy is an issue that affects a small number of buildings of interest in Burnopfield conservation area. The effect of long term redundancy is neglect and deterioration. This creates an eyesore within the village and risks the loss of irreplaceable historic buildings. The co-operative building (which is currently being restored and developed) is currently boarded up and a prominent example of this issue.



The old Co-operative building is redundant in part. This is a landmark building of Burnopfield

- **Inappropriate alterations to buildings**

Properties in Burnopfield conservation area have undergone quite extensive alterations, which have served to undermine their historic character. There is a need to ensure that historic features and materials of interest are protected. Alterations include:

- Replacement of traditional style windows

- Replacement of traditional style doors
- Alterations to window size and proportions
- Replacement of traditional shopfront details
- Rendering of elevations
- Insertion of dormer windows
- Inappropriately scaled and detailed extensions (particularly on rear elevations)
- Replacement of roof coverings



The rear elevations of Chapel Avenue have a mismatch of extensions and alterations



Some properties have been rendered, which serves to undermine the uniformity of the use of stone



Many of the traditional door and window details have been lost. No. 4 has a traditional door, which is part of the design of the building and contributes to its interest

- **Inappropriate repairs**

The use of inappropriate materials or methods to repair traditional stone buildings can be harmful to the buildings, both to their appearance and potentially their structure. For example, the use of cement pointing and render can be particularly damaging, as it traps water into the stone and speeds erosion. Equally an incorrect finish on the pointing has a negative visual impact.



An example of inappropriate cement pointing that stands proud of the stone

- **Inappropriate modern development**

A lot of 20th century development has taken place within and around the historic core of Burnopfield. Often this has been constructed using a range of modern materials and designs that fail to respond to the unique characteristics of the place. These include some prominent buildings, such as the Burnopfield Victory Club.

- **Condition / upkeep of buildings**

There are a number of buildings within the conservation area that are suffering from neglect. The prime example is the old Masonic Hall, which is currently boarded up and a visual blight to the village.

- **Cluttered elevations**

Modern paraphernalia, such as prominently located alarm boxes and satellite dishes, adversely affect the appearance of many elevations within Burnopfield.



Chapel Avenue – the front elevations are cluttered with alarm boxes and satellite dishes

- **Inappropriate signage**

The commercial heart of the village is along part of Front Street and down Busty Bank. Some of the commercial premises in these areas display signage that is not appropriate in this historic setting. For example, internally illuminated box signs.

Street Scene

- **Loss of traditional boundary treatments**

Boundary treatments are very important to the experience of the place. Many traditional boundary treatments have been lost. For example, the loss of railings along Front Street alters the definition of space in this area. Equally, the loss of coping stones on some walls has a detrimental impact on their character and appearance.

- **Installation of inappropriate boundary treatments**

Throughout the conservation area, examples of inappropriate boundary treatments can be found. These can be inappropriate in terms of design, materials and height. The proliferation of fencing is a particular concern, especially when it is high fencing to front elevations. Also of concern is the mismatch of boundaries that is appearing in some areas.



Gibside Terrace – the high fence boundaries to front gardens of these properties makes the central path uninviting



Oaks Terrace, Front Street – the mismatch of boundary treatments contrasts with the uniformity of the architecture

- Condition of barriers to woodland**
 Concrete and steel barriers form the boundary between the roads through the area and the woodland. These are of no historic value and their design does not reflect the interest of the area. The condition of these is poor in some areas.



Barriers between the roads and woodland – some are in need of repair

- Condition of roads / footpaths / bridleways**
 The poor condition of some of the roads, footpaths and bridleways

through the area was highlighted as a concern by local citizens.

- Street Clutter / Furniture**
 Modern street signage and street furniture is a necessary part of modern life in the village. However, there is scope to better integrate this into the historic environment than is currently the case. A rationalisation of street signage would reduce disruption of the line of vision along the streets of the village. The design of street furniture could be better integrated into the streetscene to improve the appearance of the area.



Bus stop, Front Street – the design and location of this could be improved to enhance the appearance of the street.

- Historic street surfacing**
 Small pockets of street surfacing survive within the village and where they do they contribute greatly to the historic integrity of the area. They should be protected.

Uses

- Decline of the traditional commercial core**
 A number of previous commercial properties on Busty Bank and Front Street have been converted to residential use, indicating a downturn in the commercial use of the area. Equally parts of the co-operative building, which was once the centre of shopping and entertainment, stand empty. The commercial identity of the area is a crucial element of its identity.

Lack of the availability of car parking in the area has been partly blamed for this decline.

Trees and Woodland

Trees and woodland need to be carefully managed to ensure that they are not damaged and their lives extended.



Leapmill Burn and its wooded embankment are a central feature of Burnopfield conservation area

Management Proposals

Change is inevitable within Burnopfield conservation area. The challenge is to manage it in ways that maintain and reinforce the special qualities of the place.

The management proposals outlined below are intended to address some of the issues identified in the conservation area appraisal and to set a framework for the preservation and enhancement of its character and appearance that could form the basis of a management plan for the area. It is designed to fulfil the duty of the local authorities, under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas.

The proposals included in this section will provide a long-term management tool for the conservation of the area. Some of them are relatively straight forward to implement and can be realised quite quickly, but in many instances, they are medium to long term aspirations, the delivery of which will depend on the availability of resources.

Summary of issues

The last chapter identified a number of issues that are affecting the character and appearance of the conservation area. These are summarised below:

- Redundant buildings
- Inappropriate alterations to buildings
- Inappropriate repairs to buildings
- Inappropriate modern development
- Condition / upkeep of buildings
- Cluttered elevations
- Inappropriate signage
- Loss of traditional boundary treatments
- Installation of inappropriate boundary treatments
- Condition of barriers to woodland
- Street clutter and design of street furniture
- Need to protect historic street surfacing
- Decline of the traditional commercial core of conservation area

- Management of trees and woodland

Objectives

The overall objective of managing change in the conservation area is to ensure that the historic and architectural interest of the place is safeguarded and its character and appearance preserved and enhanced. To this end, the Council aims to:

- Protect buildings and details of buildings that contribute to the character of the area
- Protect important open spaces within the conservation area
- Protect trees that contribute to the interest of the conservation area
- Ensure that new development responds to the character of the place
- Work to conserve historic boundary walls
- Work to improve the appearance of the street scene.
- Retain a mix of uses in the commercial core
- Increase community understanding and involvement in the conservation area.

Recommendations

Short Term Proposals

- Re-designate the conservation area in line with the proposed boundary alterations, following consultation on the document. Advertise this widely to inform all interested parties.
- Produce a guidance leaflet for residents and distribute, in order to increase awareness of conservation area designation and what this means.
- Advertise the availability of advice and guidance on the repair of historic buildings and trees and produce guidance notes as required.
- Produce design briefs for any key development sites in the conservation area or its setting.

Medium / Long Term Proposals

- Undertake a buildings at risk survey of the conservation area and develop a

programme to tackle buildings at risk and those in a poor condition.

- Repairs / replacement of barriers to woodland.
- Seek to reduce the amount of clutter on front elevations, by advertising the requirement for planning permission for satellite dishes and the potential use of enforcement powers.
- Seek to bring certain alterations under planning control by the use of an Article 4 direction: e.g. all boundary treatments and roof coverings.
- Work to improve boundary treatments within the conservation area – including the repair and reinstatement of stone walls and railings wherever possible.
- Environmental improvement scheme to improve signage and street furniture on Front Street and Busty Bank.
- Repair and maintenance of footpaths / roads/ bridleways.

Ongoing management

- Use policies in development plan documents and national and regional guidance to protect the character and appearance of the area and its setting.
- In the development of new policy documents ensure that the desire to protect the character, appearance and setting of Burnopfield conservation area is clearly stated, as well as the desire to protect the commercial

character of Busty Bank and Front Street.

- Use enforcement powers to curb unauthorised development in the conservation area.
- Provide verbal and written guidance and advice to those considering undertaking work in the conservation area.
- Seek to work with local community groups to encourage the participation of the local community in the planning process, e.g. the Burnopfield partnership.

Monitoring and Review

- Undertake photographic reviews of the buildings and spaces of the conservation area to allow change to be monitored effectively and problems to be highlighted.
- Undertake a regular review of the conservation area boundary, appraisal and management.

Resources

There is currently no grant funding available in Burnopfield for the repair / restoration of properties.

This document has identified what is special about Burnopfield conservation area and some of the issues it is facing. It can be used to apply for grant schemes when the opportunity arises.

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Contacts

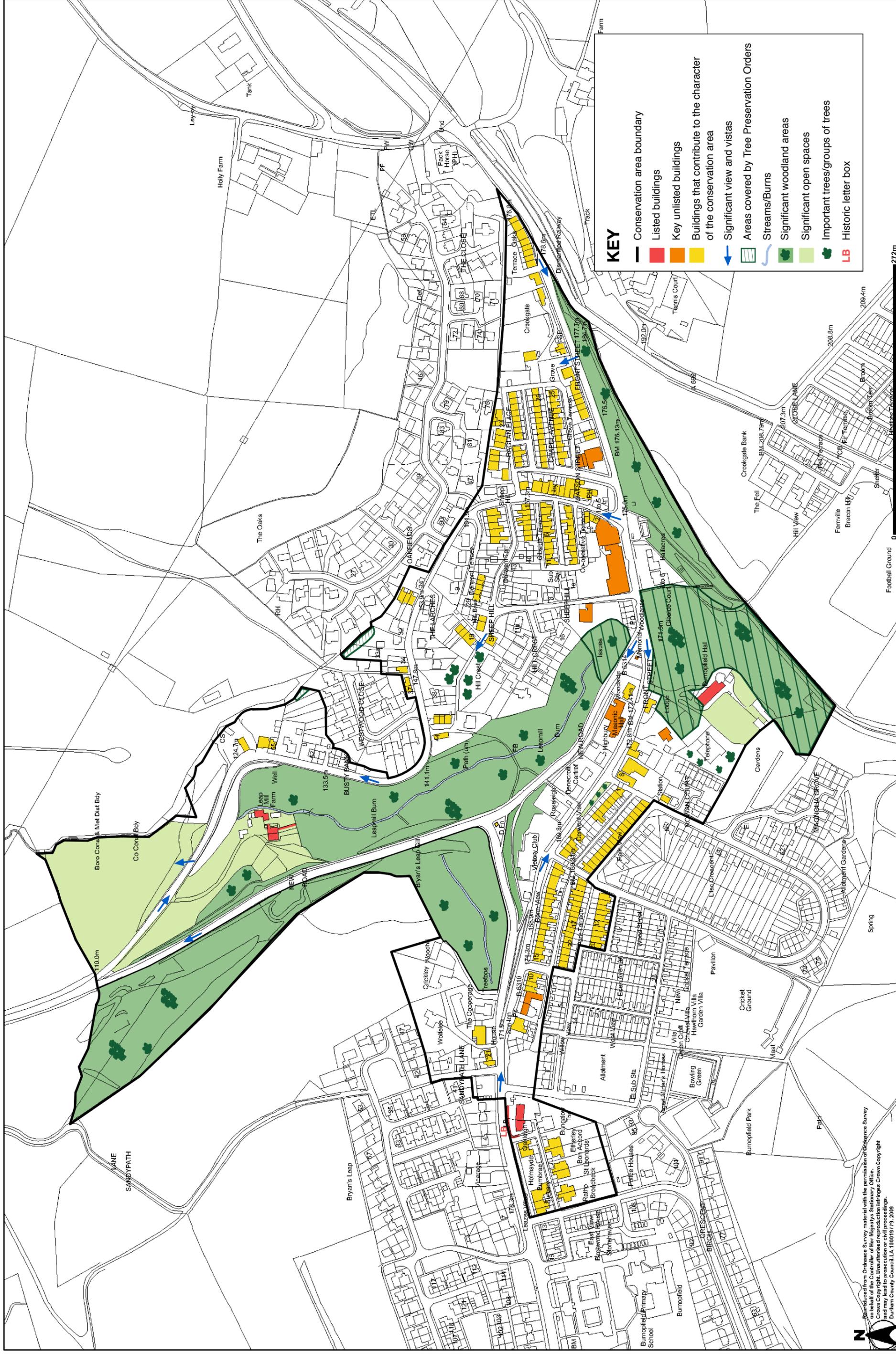
Design and Historic Environment Team

Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UQ

Telephone: 0191 3833000

Email: design.conservation@durham.gov.uk

CHARACTER ANALYSIS MAP



KEY

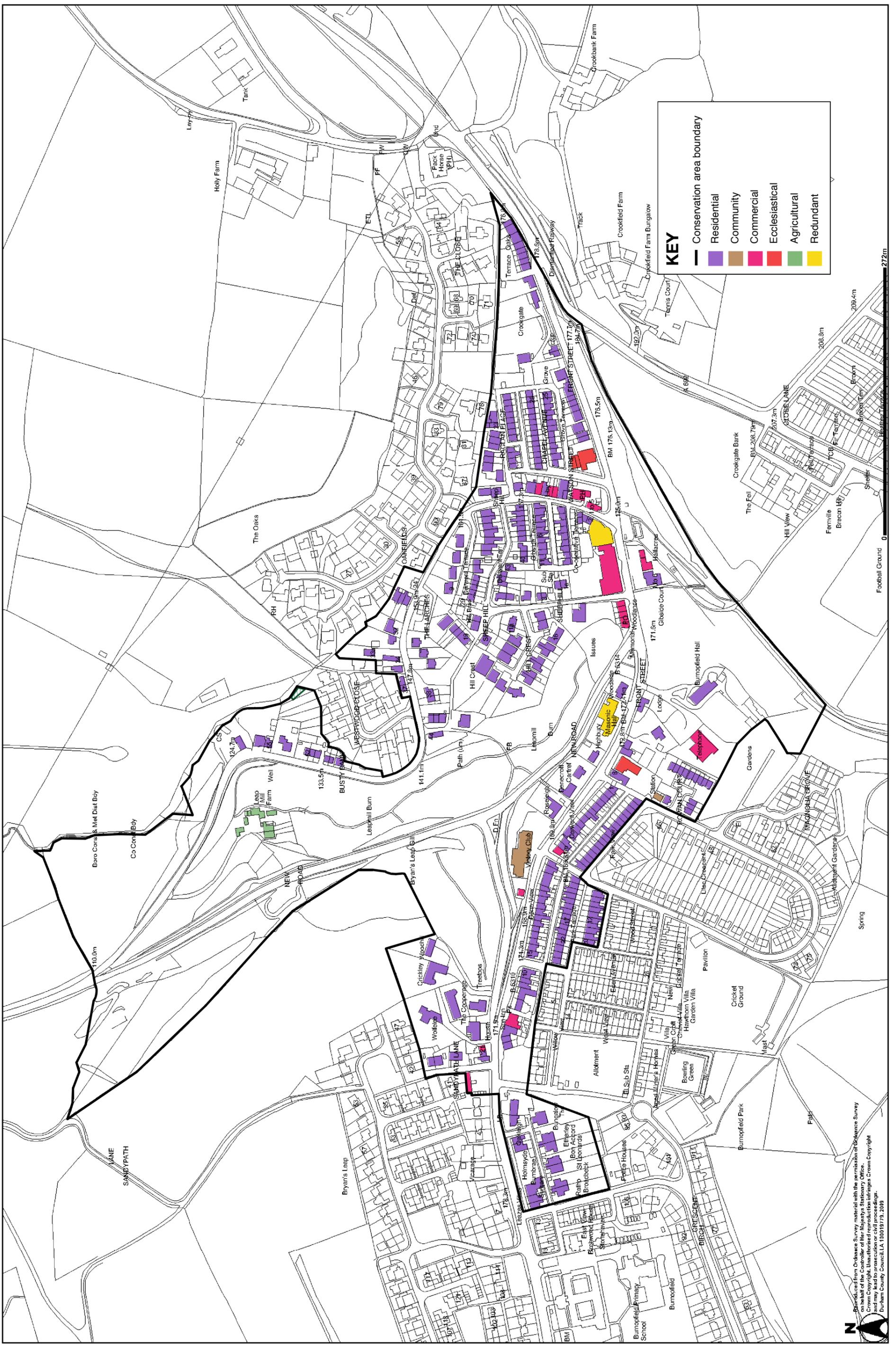
- Conservation area boundary
- Listed buildings
- Key unlisted buildings
- Buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area
- ↔ Significant view and vistas
- Areas covered by Tree Preservation Orders
- Streams/Burns
- Significant woodland areas
- Significant open spaces
- Important trees/groups of trees
- LB Historic letter box

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**Design & Historic Environment
Durham County Council
County Hall
Durham
County Durham
DH1 5UL**

Tel: 0191 383 4196 Fax: 0191 383 4096

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