



LOW UTLEY

CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

October 2005

Acknowledgement

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1. Introduction

1.1 What does Conservation Area Designation Mean?

A conservation area is '*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

They were first introduced into British legislation by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and are an attempt to protect the wider historic environment. An area may warrant designation if, for example, it has an historic layout of streets, or exhibits the characteristic materials, style and landscaping of the region in which it is situated or of a certain period of history. They are cohesive areas in which the interaction of buildings and spaces create unique environments which constitute irreplaceable components of our local, regional and national heritage.

Conservation areas are designated by the Council, which has a statutory duty to review its historic districts from time to time, in order to ascertain whether further conservation area designations are deemed to be appropriate. Designation confers a general control over the demolition of buildings, strengthens controls over minor development and makes special provision for the protection of trees. More detail on legislative controls in conservation areas can be found in *Appendix 3* of this document. In addition, in exercising its planning powers, the Council has a statutory duty to pay attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. Bradford Unitary Development Plan contains a number of policies which have been formulated to provide the mechanism for this objective to be realised (see *Appendix 3*). These measures aim to ensure that the interest of designated areas is retained for future generations, their environmental quality is

preserved or enhanced and local distinctiveness and sense of place is safeguarded.

1.2 What is the Purpose of Conservation Area Assessments?

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has prepared this assessment of Low Utleigh Conservation Area in order to fulfil its statutory duty to review its conservation areas from time to time, and to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. It forms part of an ongoing programme of conservation area assessment and review being undertaken by the Conservation Team, which aims to:

- Clearly define and record the special interest of all of the district's conservation areas, to ensure that there is a full understanding of what is worthy of preservation;
- Reassess current boundaries, to make certain that they accurately reflect what is now perceived to be of special interest and that they are readable on the ground;
- Increase public awareness of the aims and objectives of conservation area designation and stimulate their involvement in the protection of the character of these unique places; and
- Assess the actions that are necessary to safeguard the individual character of each conservation area and put forward proposals for their enhancement.

A summary of the draft of this assessment, a proposed boundary map, a cover letter, a comments sheet and an invitation to the conservation area workshop, were distributed to every address within and local to the conservation area in October 2003. At the same time a copy of the full draft Conservation Area Assessment,

proposed boundary maps, comments sheets and invitations to the conservation area workshop were placed on deposit at Keighley Library, Keighley Planning Office and on the Council's website.

The consultation period ran from October 2003 until January 2004. Feedback was received on completed comments sheets and at the conservation area workshop which was held at St Mark's Church Hall, Skipton Road, Low Utley on 25th November 2003. The feedback from the local community has been used:

- to redraft this assessment,
- to prioritise the preservation and enhancement proposals which set the scene for the future management of the area, and
- as the basis for a review of the proposed conservation area boundary.

This document will provide a framework for the controlled and positive management of change in Low Utley Conservation Area and form a basis on which planning decisions in the area are made. It may also provide the foundation on which the Council can make bids for funding to assist property owners with works to the fabric of their buildings, or to restore derelict structures. **It is, however, not intended to be comprehensive in**

its content and failure to mention any particular building, feature or space should not be assumed to imply that they are of no interest.

The assessment should be read in conjunction the *Bradford Unitary Development Plan* and national planning policy guidance, particularly *Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15): Planning and the Historic Environment*. These documents provide more detailed information on local and national policy relating to conservation areas.

1.3 Low Utley Conservation Area

Low Utley Conservation Area was originally designated in August 1973. The conservation area stands as a 17th century enclave, and though now surrounded by post-war housing developments, it retains much of its original character and detailing. Located between Keighley and Steeton, Low Utley is focused around Utley House and the various farm workers' cottages, linked by setted streets.

The conservation area boundary extends along Birchwood Lane from Parkers Lane through to Cemetery Lane and then extends as far north as the junction between Nursery Close and Keelham Lane. The conservation area boundary has been drawn so as to exclude the post-war housing developments and only include only the pre-20th century original heart of the settlement.



View southwards along Keelham Lane towards Birchwood Road.

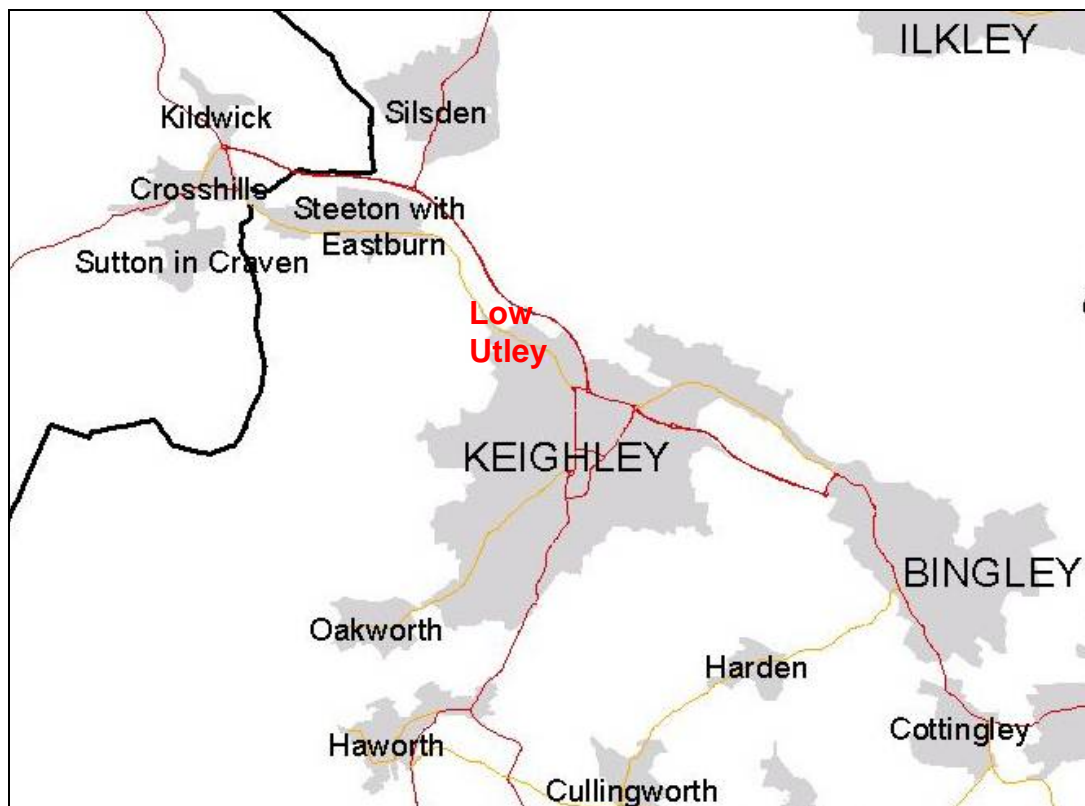
2. Location and Population

Low Utley conservation area is located about 90m above sea level on a relatively flat area of land in the floodplain of the River Aire. Low Utley stands in a relatively built up area 2.5km to the north of Keighley town centre and 3km to the south of Steeton.

Within the wider area of Bradford Metropolitan District, Low Utley is located in the northwest of the district, being about 12km from Bradford city centre.

Whilst the hamlet of Low Utley has been surrounded by 20th century housing developments,

estimates place the population of the conservation area itself at about 100. This population (taken from the Beechcliffe & Utley neighbourhood census data 1996) has a slightly higher than average proportion of residents over the age of 40 (48% compared with 40% in the district as a total). The population is mainly white (97.1%) with a small ethnic minority. The Beechcliffe & Utley neighbourhood has a lower than average percentage of households with no access to a car (32.8% compared to 40.9% district wide) and an above average level of houses which are owner occupied (82.9% compared to 71.1%).



3. Origin and Historic Development

Summary of Historical Interest

The historical significance of an area can be judged by the extent of the survival of buildings and spaces which testify to past ways of life in the hamlet. The quality of what has survived naturally has a bearing on its level of interest. The following summarise the factors which make Low Utley conservation area of historical interest:

- *Utley is mentioned in the Domesday Survey indicating its origins as a settlement of some antiquity.*
- *Little is known of the form or size of the settlement until the first reliable maps of the 18th century were drawn. However it is likely that it consisted of a cluster of farmhouses and cottages which worked the fertile lands in the vicinity.*
- *The existing hamlet of Low Utley probably developed in the 17th century following the construction of Utley House, a high status building constructed for the Smith/Clapham family.*
- *Agriculture was the principal employment in the settlement and very few of the inhabitants were purported to have supplemented their incomes through weaving or spinning.*
- *The first O.S. map of the area, surveyed c.1848, shows a small number of buildings north of the main turnpike road. The form of the settlement is remarkably similar to that of today, though the difference in the setting is notable. Prior to the construction of the surrounding residential developments, Low Utley's surroundings were of fields and woodland.*

Low Utley, a small but well-defined hamlet, is situated on the floodplain of the River Aire to the north of Keighley and on the very edge of the town's urban area.

There have been no significant archaeological finds in the vicinity of the conservation area relating specifically to Low Utley, although tools of prehistoric flint workers and Bronze Age earthworks and stone circles have been found on the surrounding moorland, indicating early habitation of the area.

The first documented reference to a settlement at Utley is written in the *Domesday survey* (1086) in which it was briefly noted: "*Manor in Utlelai, William had one carucate to be taxed*". The origin of the name is not quite certain; with some historians asserting that it is a derivative of the Old English name 'Utta', meaning the meadow of Utta (Moorman, 1910). Other interpretations take the meaning to be 'oat' or 'out field' (Keighley, 1907).

Whatever the origins of the name it is probable that Low Utley came into existence as a hamlet consisting of one or two farms dependent on the Manor. In 1316 a Richard de Utley, a Norman noble, was lord of the manor and Gilbert Kyghley de Utlay, whose monument still resides in Keighley church, was probably the lord of that manor in the later part of the 14th century before it became entirely absorbed into the manor of Keighley.

Keighley, just a mile or so to the south of the hamlet, is an ancient settlement which from an early date became the principal village and then town in the area. Mentioned in the *Domesday survey* as '*Chicehla*', the settlement comprised of two manors. In the 12th century the first parish church was founded and in 1305 Edward I granted a Market Charter to Henry de Keighley, whose family reigned as Lords of the Manor for sixteen

generations. The presence of a church and the market would have given Keighley considerable status as a village and hence the expansion of the manor and absorption of a number of surrounding smaller manors including those at Laycock and Utley.

Utley is infrequently mentioned in most local history books and there is very little documented history of the village. Its diminutive size in relation to its larger neighbours appears to have resulted in it being often overlooked. However, it is known that the landscape around Utley was particularly fertile and that until the enclosure of common lands in 1612, it is most probable that a system of agricultural feudal tenancy operated on the lands around Utley.

Whilst other parish registers and tax records show the burgeoning presence of weaving and spinning as occupations during the 18th century, there is very little evidence of a similar trend in Utley. In 1730 only one pair of weavers lived in the parish. The location of both High and Low Utley on particularly fertile meadowland to the south of the River Aire meant that agriculture was by far the dominant occupation. Large areas of the surrounding countryside were under either pastoral or arable farming, with large quantities of oats and wheat produced. It is noticeable that in areas of genuine mixed farming that there were few or no textile workers, as there was little time out of the yearly timetable of sowing, reaping and harvest for secondary occupations.

Entries into tax registers show that the farmers around Utley were generally relatively wealthy. In 1720 there are records of a Christopher Lupton of Utley who held on his farm four large and four lesser steers in addition to a basic herd of six cows, three heifers and five calves. This relatively large herd of animals indicates that this farmer operated on a higher level than simply subsistence farming and had enough fodder and land to raise animals to sell at market.

Nothing is known to physically remain of the settlement prior to 17th century. John Ogilby's book of 1675 shows details of major road patterns in the region. Utley lay just off the main Skipton-Halifax road which ran through Keighley and Steeton. Information about local roads is scant, however a lane may have existed which crossed the site of the cemetery (as is) and went through Low Utley on its way from Keighley to Ingrow.



Utley House, a Grade II listed building, constructed during the late 16th century is probably the oldest house in the conservation area.

The oldest house in the conservation area is thought to be **Utley House**. It was probably built for William and Mary (or Martha as other records document her) Smith in the late 1680s, shortly after their marriage and the purchase of the estate at Utley from the Murgatroyd family (the then owners of East Riddlesden Hall). In the sale deed of 1680 the estate is documented as containing a messuage (a dwelling house), one barn, three gardens, a moiety of a decayed kiln, a laithe called Cote and nine named fields (totalling 20 acres). Though it is thought that the present Utley House was built around the late 1680's, it could well have been a rebuild of the dwelling mentioned in the sale deeds.

After the death of William Smith in 1690 his wife Martha inherited the farm and also other lands around Steeton. In 1694 she married John Clapham, a wealthy yeoman who owned land at Thwaites, just a mile or so from Utley. Over the following twenty years it appears that their fortunes prospered and John and Martha undertook additional building work at Utley House, increasing the size of the property and were counted amongst the most prosperous of Keighley's yeomen.

Tax records and inventories detail that agriculture and rental income from land was the Clapham's main source of income. A probate inventory showed that neither John nor his son Holmes owned a loom or sheep, backing up the earlier assertion that the incomes of the inhabitants of Utley during the 18th century were not supplemented through weaving or wool production.

A curious aside comes from a inventory of Holmes Clapham's will in 1743 which shows that spare pieces of agricultural equipment were kept in unused rooms in the house. The will reads "*In the Old Chamber, a gang of ffelks and speaks (cart wheels), five boards and two plough beams, two yokes and three rakes*" along with some bedding.

Eight generations of the Clapham family lived at Utley House, the last member of the family relinquishing the property in the 1940s.

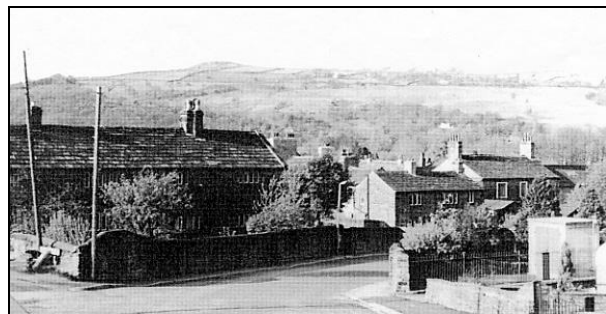


Extract from the earliest known map of the area, dated 1775. The settlement of Utley can be distinguished just to the north of Keighley.

By the late 18th century the industrial growth of Keighley and nearby villages and hamlets such as Laycock and Goose Eye, was becoming marked. By 1801 the population of Keighley Manor was 350% larger than it had been in 1700 and it continued to grow throughout the 19th century. Low Utley's location, away from the fast running streams and rivers, meant it was relatively unaffected by industrial development, which was powered by fast-flowing water. However, by the late 18th century the Clapham family, and no doubt others in the village, had some involvement in the textile industry and there are records of inhabitants moving into 'woolstapling'. This involved the manufacture of woollen cloth including the combing of the raw material. It is thought that one of the barns alongside Utley House was dedicated to this as in an 1862 Inland Revenue assessment, one building is referred to as the 'Comb Shop', though it is likely that its use as such had ceased some years earlier.

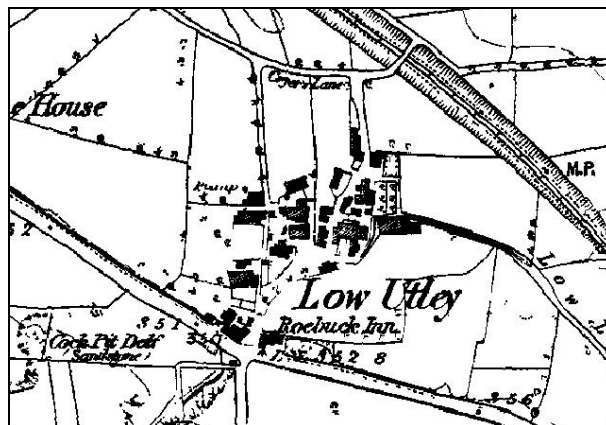
The introduction of the coal powered loom in the 1830s was a catalyst for further industrial development within towns and villages around, as this allowed the spinning and weaving of cloth to be undertaken in mill sheds. Rather than invest further in the burgeoning textile industry it appears that the inhabitants of Utley returned to agriculture as their means of income. Given the increasing populations of their more industrial neighbours the demand for food and dairy produce also increased, allowing farms in the region to expand and enter more specialised ventures. It is likely that the village expanded around this time as the farms

took on more farmhands and possibly new farms were created.



Birchwood Road, c. 1960.

Study of historical maps of the area shed some light on the gradual expansion of the village. The earliest known map showing any detail is Jeffrey's Map of Yorkshire, dated 1775. This shows Utley as consisting of around half a dozen buildings just to the north of the Keighley-Skipton turnpike road, which was constructed in the early 18th century.



The Ordnance Survey map of 1852 shows how little the form of Low Utley has changed in the last 150 years, though the setting is much altered.

By 1852, when the first Ordnance Survey map was surveyed and published, the settlement is recognisable in form as it is at the present time, though of course not yet surrounded by post-war housing developments. The O.S. maps from the late 19th and early 20th centuries show how little the historical heart of the village has changed, with few new properties appearing within the conservation area boundary. However, many of the cottages and terraces on the periphery were demolished to make way for the later housing developments which surrounded the village. Low Utley now forms part of Keighley's urban area though it still retains a distinctive character all of its own.

4. Topography and Setting

Summary of Topography and Setting

The unique location of Low Utley conservation area contributes greatly to its form and character. The most significant features of this include:

- *The development of Low Utley as a small farming community nestling at the foot of rising land in the Aire valley. The conservation area is now situated on the edge of the Keighley urban area, with residential developments to the south, east and west.*
- *To the north of the conservation area are a number of modern houses. Beyond the railway line the landscape changes, becoming greener and more rural in character. There are long distance views across the valley bottom towards the rising hills and patches of woodland beyond.*
- *To the north and west the landscape has a distinctly rural feel, emphasised by the rolling fields bounded by stone walls and farm houses. From within the conservation area, only glimpses of this setting can be had but where it can be seen it provides an important visual connection with Low Utley's agricultural roots.*
- *The topography of the surrounding landscape, means there are few long distance views in or out of the conservation area. This gives the conservation area a distinctly secluded and 'village' feel, belying its mainly urban surroundings.*

The topography and setting of Low Utley conservation area is an important defining characteristic of the area's sense of place and character. Just as important are the views within, into and out of the conservation area as these give

the area a wider context and often reaffirm historical associations.



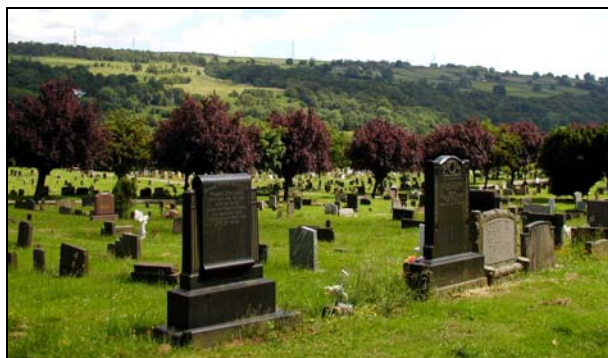
The Aire valley to the north of the railway bridge. There is a contrast between the dense development around the conservation area and the green landscape to the north.

Low Utley conservation area lies approximately 2km to the north of Keighley town centre and is situated on the south side of the Aire valley, nestling at the foot of the steeply rising valley side. From within the settlement, which is built upon relatively flat land, there are very limited views out of the conservation area towards the surrounding landscape. The best long distance views can be gained from the slightly higher land on the south side of the conservation area, around Birchwood Road. As one progresses into the area the buildings and trees as well as the surrounding topography effectively block these views. The result is a very secluded feel, belying Low Utley's location on the edge of a large urban area and the closely surrounding 20th century housing estates.

View from higher land at the southeast corner of the conservation area along the southern boundary. The slight elevation allows good views of the rural landscape to the north, an important visual connection to the settlement's past agricultural origins.



A short walk north of the conservation area boundary brings one to the flat bottom of the Aire valley. From the railway bridge (outside of the conservation area) it is possible to view the surrounding landscape, which is principally **rural** to the north and west of Low Utleigh, but urban and densely built-up to the south and east. Immediately north of the conservation area are a number of late-20th century housing developments and beyond these a thick line of trees to either side of the railway line. The railway line is crossed via an old stone bridge and beyond this the landscape opens out and there are good views across the valley.



Utleigh Cemetery, north of the conservation area.

Utleigh Cemetery lies to the northeast of the conservation area and beyond this the floodplain of the Aire valley, bisected by roads and also the canal, as it extends northwards towards the rising land of the opposite valley side. This landscape is

green and rural, the lower slopes of the valley sides densely covered by trees and the higher land interspaced with green fields and the odd house or farm building.

This landscape provides a pleasant green and rural setting to the conservation area, emphasising Low Utleigh's agricultural connections and a reminder of what Utleigh's immediate setting may have been like once, prior to the construction of the housing estates. North of the railway line the land is protected from inappropriate development by Green Belt designation and therefore the setting of the conservation area will remain open and green. Though only glimpses can be seen of this rural setting from within the conservation area, where it can be seen it creates an important visual connection which allows Low Utleigh to be considered within the context of the wider locality.

West of the conservation area the landscape is equally green and open. The line of Skipton Road winds around the bottom of the valley side towards the village of Steeton and very distantly Silsden, on the opposite side of the River Aire. Immediately to the west of the conservation area is an area of housing, some pre-20th century terraces but mainly post-war Council housing. To the northwest is an area of open recreational grounds and allotment gardens.

*View from
Green Head
Lane over the
conservation
area. Little of*



To the south of the conservation area the land rises up steeply, though little of it can be seen from the northern side of the conservation area. To the south of Birchwood Road is a small estate of brick-built semi-detached houses, probably constructed in the interwar period and a distinct contrast to the natural stone walls and roofs of the vernacular houses in the conservation area. As the land rises steeply upwards to the south of Skipton Road, lines of 19th century terraced houses run dramatically up the hillside. From the top very little can be seen of the conservation area, which is mainly hidden by interceding buildings and nestled away at the foot of the hill. From Skipton Road these views open up slightly and the tops of Utley House and the other buildings along Birchwood Road become visible.

Within the conservation area views are limited to short distances and vistas along the streets and between buildings. The settlement retains much of its quiet and agricultural character, though most of the former barns and agricultural buildings have been demolished or converted. There is a strong sense of seclusion and a feeling of being protected by the rising land to the south. Though there are few **trees** within the conservation area, which is mainly characterised by its buildings, what trees there are mainly grow within the gardens. These add valuable greenery to the conservation area, which further complements the character of the place. To the north of the conservation area the widely spaced modern housing developments are surrounded by trees. The railway track is also lined by mature deciduous trees, their dense canopies effectively blocking any views out of the conservation area and reinforcing the sense of seclusion within the place.



Within the conservation area the surrounding topography as well as buildings and trees both within and along the boundary limit views out of the area. This helps create a sense of seclusion which is important to the character of the place.

5. Traditional Building Materials

Summary of Traditional Building Materials

Traditional building materials are utilised throughout the conservation area and greatly contributes to the image of the place. These are:

- *Local stone (for buildings and boundary walls)*
- *Stone slate (for roofs);*
- *Timber (for original features such as windows, doors and gutters on the older buildings);*
- *Stone setts and flags along carriageways and pavements.*

Almost all the buildings in the conservation area are constructed from local stone, either sandstone or millstone grit. Natural stone has been used in the construction of all buildings of all eras and for boundary walls and is the unifying element which gives the conservation area its coherent feel.



Stone-built cottages on the east side of the setted Croft House Road.

Different finishes relate to the period in which the buildings were constructed: 17th century structures

tend to be built of roughly dressed rubble; 18th century and early 19th century buildings of hammer-dressed stone; and later 19th century buildings of hammer dressed stone in conjunction with ashlar stone. **Stone** is also used as a means of decorating the later buildings of the area, in the form of carving and added details such as kneelers and finials.



Utley House, built from darkened stone is probably the oldest house in the conservation area and is a Grade II listed building.

The nature of the stone used on some buildings has resulted in it becoming heavily blackened. This is part of the character of the building and the settlement and stone cleaning should be resisted, especially in rows as it can lead to a patchwork effect which can detrimentally affect the unity of the group and therefore the quality of the conservation area.

Locally quarried **stone slate** was used as the roofing material of most buildings in the conservation area. It gives the roofline its characteristic colour and distinctive chunky profile, which complements the colour and texture of the stonework. This roofing material is becoming increasingly rare, as other forms of roofing material have become available and earlier buildings lost, and should therefore be treasured. Later 19th

century buildings tended to be roofed with **blue/green slate**, which became more readily available with the improvements to the transport network.



The distinctive hue and texture of the stone slate roofs in the conservation area is an important characteristic of the conservation area.

Timber is the traditional material used for the doors, windows and gutters on the older properties of the conservation area which date from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Traditional features such as these are the most susceptible to change and some have been replaced by modern alternatives, such as plastic or stained hardwood, which often disregard the pattern of the original windows and can harm the character of not only the building but cumulatively the conservation area as a whole.



2 Croft House Lane is a good example of a vernacular building which has been carefully maintained. Where original features have been replaced (in this case the windows), it has been done in a sympathetic manner which has not affected the building's character.



An example of less sympathetic replacement windows in a listed building – the use of unnatural materials and the poor detailing to the frames has an overly dominant impact on the simple character of the house.

The glazing style of the windows is very much dependent on the age of the building and varies from the multi-paned sashes of the earlier structures to the single paned sashes of the later buildings. Utley House, being the earliest dwelling in the conservation area, probably would have had small, latticed panes of glass set into narrow metallic casements.

Untraditional materials and finishes for doors, windows and pipes generally look out of place on older buildings and are at odds with their simple character. Where possible it is better to repair rather than replace traditional features. If this is unavoidable, the use of sympathetic replacements is desirable.

The boundary treatment within the conservation area varies, demonstrative of the organic way in which the hamlet has developed. Some of the buildings front directly onto the roadside whilst others are set back a short distance behind stone boundary **walls**. These boundary walls are an important aspect of the conservation area, as they define spaces and delineate the line of the highway. Where they exist stone boundary walls should be retained as their replacement with more modern alternatives such as timber fencing or hedges would have a negative impact on the conservation area.

One of the most distinctive features of Low Utley conservation area is the setted road surface along Keelham Lane and Croft House Lane. Substantial areas of stone setts are becoming increasingly rare throughout the district and as a historical street surface, it is of interest in its own right. The colour and texture of natural stone as a surfacing material complements the stone used for building in the conservation area and helps to fuse its image.

6. Architectural and Historic Qualities of the Buildings

Summary of Architectural Interest

The architectural merit of Low Utley conservation area can be judged by the quality of the buildings within its confines. The age and rarity of the structures, whether they are good examples of a particular building type or age, and whether they are examples of fine craftsmanship and building techniques are all factors in determining their significance. The following have been deemed to contribute to the area's architectural interest:

- *The conservation area contains six Grade II listed buildings; **Utley House, 9 Birchwood Road** and the **four cottages on Croft House Lane**. These buildings are all considered to be of special historic and architectural interest and are fine examples of buildings of their type and age.*
- *Most of the buildings in the conservation area are built in the local vernacular form, which is indicative of a past way of life and traditional building techniques in the locality. This type of architecture is significant to the sense of place of the area, as it makes use of materials and techniques specific to the region. Good examples are becoming increasingly rare, due to alteration and redevelopment and it is important that the value of these buildings is recognised.*
- ***Utley House** is probably the oldest building in the conservation area, constructed in the late 17th century and home to the Clapham family for eight generations.*

The quality, siting and interest of the buildings combined with their green and leafy setting is a

crucial element accounting for the designation of Low Utley conservation area. The design, decoration and craftsmanship of the buildings are all factors in determining their significance, however buildings that are good examples of a particular age, building type, style or technique and those that are evocative of a given region are of particular merit. The finest examples of buildings of historic or architectural interest in the country are listed by English Heritage and are subject to Listed Building controls, which aim to protect them from unsympathetic alteration. However, as conservation area designation is area based, it is the group value of buildings which is significant. Therefore, although not all of the buildings in Low Utley Conservation Area are listed, most are of merit and contribute greatly to the feel of the place.

The architectural interest of Low Utley conservation area is derived principally from the range of vernacular dwellings and farm buildings dating from between the 17th century and the mid-19th century. Vernacular architecture is indicative of a past way of life and a tangible record of traditional building techniques. It is also significant to the sense of place of the area, as it makes use of materials and techniques specific to the locality. Usually built without the benefit of an architect, somehow it is often taken to imply a fairly humble or practical origin, but this is not the case and several of the vernacular buildings in Low Utley are listed due to their historic and architectural value. Good examples are becoming increasingly rare, due to alteration and redevelopment.

On approach to the conservation area from Skipton Road the Birchwood Road slopes downwards and there are good views along the frontage of properties on the southern boundary of the conservation area. The first impression of the

place is the dramatic contrast between the red brick and render of the surrounding 20th century houses and their contrast to the natural stone and traditional style of architecture of those in the conservation area.

Utley House, a Grade II listed building, commands a prominent position at what is effectively the entrance to the conservation area. The house dates from the late 17th century although it was altered in the 18th and 19th centuries. Two storeys in height and constructed from dressed stone, the original section of the house has a linear plan of three cells, still traceable despite later alterations. The main doorway, on the southern elevation, has a segmental head and broad chamfered surrounds. To the left of the doorway is a seven light mullion window with a hoodmould above and cavetto-moulded surrounds. Further left is a four-light window and to the right a six-light. It is similarly fenestrated to first floor, though the mullioned windows are slightly simpler in their decoration, being recessed into chamfered surrounds.



Utley House, Grade II listed building – front elevation.

Built onto the eastern elevation of the house is an extension, added in the 19th century. The building was completely renovated in 1953 following the death of last member of the Clapham family and the subsequent sale of the house. It is documented that the builder, while renovating the property, discarded a date stone inscribed 'IMC 1703' (John and Martha Clapham), much to the distress of the new owners. Formerly one dwelling, the house has been subdivided into two occupations.

Within the garden of the house is a small stone outbuilding; its age or original use is unknown. The property is hidden away behind a high stone

wall and very little of the building is visible from Birchwood Road.

Immediately to the east of Utley House is **9 Birchwood Road**, also a Grade II listed building. This building is a good example of the local vernacular building form, which is indicative of past ways of life. This form of architecture is significant to the sense of place of an area, as it makes use of materials and techniques which are specific to the region.



9 Birchwood Road, Grade II listed, is a good example of a vernacular building which retains many original features.

9 Birchwood Road is a late 17th century farmhouse, stone built with quoined angles and a three bay front. At ground floor there are two doors to either end of the front elevation, between which is a four-light and a five-light window, both set in recessed double chamfered mullions and surrounds. At first floor the windows are plainer, with a two, three and four light window set in flat-faced plain stone surrounds. On the eastern gable end is a corniced chimney, topped with two red pots.

Croft House Lane runs northwards between Utley House and 9 Birchwood Road. The lane is a narrow but distinctive carriageway almost entirely surfaced with stone setts and flags. Attached at right angles to the rear of 9 Birchwood Road is 3 Keelham Lane, a two-storey cottage which was probably built in the early 19th century. Its rear elevation fronts onto Croft House Lane and is relatively plain, consisting of a central door and two windows to both ground and first floor, set into plain square stone surrounds. The extended stone surrounds of the right-hand side window suggest its earlier origins as a door, indicating that this property was once two one-up-one-down cottages



and also that this elevation may have been the front at an earlier time.

Further up the lane and separated from 3 Keelham Lane by a narrow gap in the building line, is **2 and 2a Croft House Lane**. Both are attractive houses, further enhanced by the natural stone setts before them. No. 2 is a two storey cottage built from darkened stone, with plain stone window surrounds containing timber sliding sash windows painted a cream colour. These windows are recent replacements and not the original windows however, their style and pattern complements the age and character of the building and it is to the credit of the owners that such consideration has been taken. The roofing materials of 2 Croft House Lane are stone slate, as on most of the properties in the conservation area and it has a shortened chimney over the southern gable end.

2a Croft House Lane forms the end terrace in this row of houses and is notable for being half a storey taller than its neighbour. The street-facing elevation is relatively plain, the door being set out of sight on the north elevation. There are three windows at ground floor and two windows at first floor, the latter having quoins to both sides and all with plain stone heads and sills.

The west side of the lane is defined by a high stone wall, topped with rounded copingstones at the southern end. The gable end of a large unconverted **barn** fronts straight onto the lane, its heavy bulk of its two-storey height gable end casting shadow across the lane. The barn appears to be an early 19th century structure, the roof of which has been recovered with small blue

slates. The barn itself is relatively plain, its most dominating feature being the large ground-to eaves opening in the south elevation, set within which is a smaller green-painted garage door.



Barn to the east of Utley House, currently appears to be in semi-industrial/warehouse use.

This **barn** is set within the curtilage of Utley House and it is likely that historically it was one of the farm buildings, though it now appears to be in semi-industrial or warehouse use. To the front of the building is a large hard-surfaced area, the original stone cobbles visible beneath the tarmac. As a prominent area on the very edge of the conservation area, it would greatly benefit the setting of the barn and indeed Utley House if the original stone setts could be reinstated.



4b & 6 (Back) Croft House Lane, Grade II listed buildings which have been much altered over the years.

At the northern end of Croft House Lane the road curves westwards around a group of listed cottages, arranged back-to-back to one another. **4b, 6, 7 and 9 Croft House Lane** were built c.1800 and are good examples of farm workers' cottages of that period. Over the years they have been much altered though they still retain the original formation of a door and two-light window at ground floor and two two-light windows at first floor, all set within plain stone surrounds. No. 4b has a dominant two-storey gable extension, and all now have uPVC windows installed, an unfortunate alteration which has had a detrimental impact on the character of these simple cottages.



14 Croft House Lane heads off the northern end of the road, effectively blocking views out of the conservation area and contributing much to the streetscape.

At the head of Croft House Lane, facing southwards towards Birchwood Road is **14 Croft House Lane**. This large imposing house was probably built in the early-to-mid 19th century (it appears on the O.S. map of 1852), and it adds much to the streetscape of this narrow lane. Two

storeys high and built from regularly coursed sandstone, the house has a blue slate roof with tabled coping and a corniced chimney the right hand side chimney has been shortened) to both gables. Set back behind a stone wall, the south elevation has a central doorway and a window to either side and three at first floor level. These windows are simply decorated, with stone heads and sills. Though architecturally simple, this house effectively blocks views to the later residential developments to the north and is a prominent building in the streetscape.

To the east is Keelham Lane, the principal route which runs north-south through the conservation area and is surfaced with stone setts for nearly its entire length. **9 Birchwood Road** stands at the entrance to the lane, behind which is **3 Keelham Lane**, set back a short distance from the roadside behind an attractive stone wall. Originally a narrow gap separated the two houses, though the addition of a later porch to 3 Keelham Lane has physically linked the two together. This arrangement has resulted in the two properties overlooking the other's windows and garden space. This is not entirely unusual in properties of this age and is indicative of the unplanned and organic way in which the village grew.



The rear of 9 Birchwood Road and 3 Keelham Lane, partly obscured by a high timber fence are physically joined by the stone porch, of which the roof is just visible.

5 Keelham Lane, separated from no. 3 by a gap of maybe a couple of feet, is set slightly forward of its neighbour, making it more prominent in the streetscape. Dating from the early 1800s this stone built cottage has a centrally placed door with a window to either side and two windows at first floor. All are set within slightly protruding stone surrounds. An attractive stone wall, topped with rounded copingstones, surrounds the small hard

surfaced garden and defines the frontage of all the properties on this side of the road.



5 Keelham Lane stands slightly forward of no. 3 and is therefore prominent in the streetscape.

Standing at an oblique angle to the other cottages on this side of the road and facing southwards down the lane is a pair of late 18th century cottages, **7 and 7a Keelham Lane**. These cottages are particularly distinctive due to the use of white render on the southern elevation, which completely covers the stonework. The addition of the overly prominent flat-roofed dormer window extension is an unsympathetic alteration which has detrimentally affected the building, obliterating much of the earlier window details and cutting into its attractive stone slate roof. The red brick chimney, central on the roofline, is another incongruous addition.

The unrendered east gable of the house displays the stonework hidden beneath the render to the south. The cottages are built of coursed sandstone with large quoined angles. Set into the gable end are two later windows set in plain stone surrounds and to the rear a collection of 19th and 20th century outbuildings which extend back from the property a considerable distance.

Set behind a substantial stone wall which is topped with a privet hedge is **9 Keelham Lane**, a large house which was formerly a barn and farmhouse. This attractive building sits well back from the lane but there are good views across its frontage as one progresses northwards through the conservation area. Two-storeys in height and with a stone slate roof, the east-facing elevation of the building is dominated by a large segmental arched cart entry which is now glazed. To either side is a window at ground floor set in plain stone surrounds and above a square window over which is a glazed arched head, separated by a stone transom.

On the opposite side of the lane is an interesting group of buildings that make an important contribution to the conservation area. **4-8 Keelham Lane**, a group of three two-storey cottages, stands at right angles to the lane and are accessed via a narrow stone flagged path which runs off the lane and between the cottage and a series of stone outbuildings. These cottages appear to be of some antiquity, possibly dating from the mid-to-late 18th century, and despite later alterations are key unlisted buildings in the conservation area.

7 and 7a Keelham Lane, the white cottage in the centre of the photograph, is a prominent building in the streetscape. The flat roof dormer window is an unfortunate addition.



All the cottages are two-storeys in height and set back a short distance from the footpath behind a low stone wall. At the eastern end of the row is no. 4, which appears to be a later addition to the terrace, being built of smaller and more even stone courses and with larger windows (which may have been altered) and a 20th century porch. No. 6 is of particular interest, having a four-light recessed window with cavetto-moulded mullions at ground floor level which displays considerable quality of craftsmanship. To the left is a doorway with a triangular stone segmental head. At first floor the windows are much simpler, having flat faced stone mullions and surrounds. No. 8 displays a similar agricultural character, whilst being more simply fenestrated.



and one to the left. Unfortunately, these windows have a rather suburban appearance which is at odds with the agricultural character of the barn.

The large quoined angles of the barn indicate that it was built earlier than the adjoining cottage (**10 Keelham Lane**), which appears somewhat incongruously sandwiched between the barn and the row of cottages to the south. Set back from the road slightly, the cottage has a small garden enclosed behind a stone wall topped with rounded copingstones. The frontage of the cottage has simple square windows set in stone surrounds and separated by flat-faced mullions beneath a stone slate roof. The use of uPVC windows and the addition of a timber and stone porch have had a detrimental impact on the character of the building, but these could be easily rectified in the future if the residents desired.



10-14 Keelham Lane consists of a converted barn and a cottage, probably mid-18th century.

Attached to the rear of these cottages is a converted barn (nos. **12** and **14**) and an attached cottage/farmhouse (**10 Keelham Lane**) which stands at an oblique angle to the lane. The corner of the barn protrudes a short distance into the carriageway, which narrows at this point as it curves around the stone wall of 9 Keelham Lane. This bottleneck appears to have caused more than one vehicle to scrape the corner of the barn, as demonstrated by the grooves in the stonework.

The barn is two-storeys in height and dominated by a large segmental-arched cart entrance located centrally in the front elevation. Recessed into the cart entry is a wall with narrow picture windows inserted and two domestic-style doorways to either side. To the right of the cart entrance are two large 20th century windows, with another above the entry



Gable end of Keelham Barn (no. 14) retains the small arched openings which acted as ventilators and as a dovecote.

Progressing further up the lane, there are two stone-built garages adjacent to the gable end of the barn. This gable end is notable for the arrangement of four small arch-headed openings, which probably functioned as a dovecote.

At the northern end of the conservation area is large mid-19th century house which is unusual in having two parallel pitched stone roofs. The house is divided into three dwellings; **16 and 18 Keelham Lane** are located on the southern elevation with the main body of the house forming **20 Keelham Lane**. Set back slightly from the road, the sheer bulk and size of the structure dominates the northern boundary of the conservation area.



16-20 Keelham Lane is a large property, now divided into three separate dwellings.

Though it is a large building, the variation in hue and type of stonework indicates that it may have originated as a smaller dwelling but with two more similar sized buildings added to either side of the original two-bay structure. The building itself is fairly plain in decoration to the roadside and south elevation, giving the building an austere character. One notable feature is the retention of a number of two-pane timber sash windows to the central portion of the building, though to either side are uPVC replacements.



11 & 13 Keelham Lane were probably four smaller houses originally, before being converted into two.

On opposite side of the lane is an attractive pair of early-mid 19th century cottages, **11 and 13 Keelham Lane**. Originally built as a row of four one-up one-down cottages, they have since been converted into two larger dwellings. Both cottages front directly onto the stone flagged pavement, and would have originally had a single window at ground and first floor to the left of the doorway and two-light mullioned windows to the right at ground and first floor. Some of the windows have been altered and the mullions removed, however no. 11 partly retains the original fenestration, having attractive leaded and stained glazing set into timber sash frames. Features such as these are important as they add interest not only to the individual building but also to the character of the area on a wider scale.



Returning to the eastern most corner of the conservation area, the boundary runs along the eastern edge of the gardens of properties along Keelham Lane, excluding the residential developments which developed around the settlement in the 20th century.

Front elevation of Tudor Cottage (ivy covered) and the rear elevations of 4 & 6 Syke Side (white painted) from Birchwood Road.

Running off Birchwood Road is Syke Side, a narrow and partly unsurfaced track which leads around the back of a terrace of early 19th century cottages before doubling back to Birchwood Road. These cottages, **4-6 Syke Side** and **Tudor Cottage** are an interesting group, which curiously seem to switch frontages half way down the terrace, the front of Tudor Cottage being onto Birchwood Road and nos. 4-6 onto Syke Side.



Tudor Cottage is located on the corner of Syke Side and Birchwood Road, set back behind the brick-built electricity substation. The cottage has an almost L-shaped plan due to an extension and stone outbuilding attached to the west elevation and as a result curves back round towards Birchwood Road. The south elevation is almost obscured by ivy but what can be seen of the stonework indicates that it was built from randomly coursed sandstone with a series of flat-faced mullioned windows at ground and first floor. These windows consist of a row of three four-light windows at first floor and at ground floor, along with a pitched roof porch added during the 20th century. The rear elevation is of comparatively simple construction, consisting of unadorned stonework in which two windows have been inserted at ground and at first floor, both of which are divided by plain flat-faced mullions.



Rear of 4-6 Syke Side and Tudor Cottage.

4-6 Syke Side are simple vernacular cottages which have been much altered over the years. The front of these houses appears to be onto Syke Side, a narrow unsurfaced lane overshadowed by the cottages and trees in the gardens above. A narrow stone path runs immediately to the front of the building line and they are simply fenestrated with two-light mullioned windows to either side of the low door cases. The south-facing elevations of nos. 4 and 5 have been painted white and that of no. 6 covered in a gritty render, which detracts somewhat from the character of the cottages.



Front elevation of 15 Birchwood Road, a converted barn, set back behind a high stone wall.

To the east of Tudor Cottage and Syke Side is a pair of interesting buildings. **15 Birchwood Road** is a stone-built barn, probably early-to-mid 19th century which has been converted into a dwelling.



The rear elevation of 15 Birchwood Road and beyond the stone dividing wall is 13 Birchwood Road, a former farmhouse.

The segmental arched cart entry on the rear elevation has been retained, being glazed to form a large fixed window. A number of flat-faced mullion windows have been inserted into the front and rear elevations of the building, the cumulative effect of which overpowers the building's simple agricultural character somewhat. However, the retention of the long low stone slate roof, which is uninterrupted by roof lights, makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Adjoining the gable end of the barn is **13 Keelham Lane**. Very little can be seen of this property from the road due to the high stone wall which surrounds the garden on all sides. Once within the wall it is apparent that it is an interesting building. Originally a farmhouse, it was probably built in the early-to-mid 19th century, around the same time as the adjoining barn.



The house itself is an imposing building, the roofline being slightly higher than that of the barn and the high walls to around the garden giving a strong sense of seclusion. The doorway is placed centrally in the south elevation, recessed slightly between white-painted stone surrounds. To both sides of the doorway is a three-light flat-faced mullion window and at first floor is a row of three windows set within simple stone surrounds. The roof is stone slate with dentil courses supporting the gutter and a corniced chimney to both gable ends.



The rear elevation, which is visible from Keelham Lane, has a series of stone windows set in flat-faced surrounds which protrude slightly from the stonework. Its most interesting feature is the long arched stair window infilled with gothic style glazed tracery.

13 Birchwood Road, tucked away behind a high stone wall, is an interesting early 19th century structure which retains some of its original timber sash windows.

7. Open Spaces and Natural Elements

Summary of Open Spaces and Natural Elements

The spaces between and around the buildings are an important contributing characteristic of the conservation area in Low Utley:

- *The hamlet of Low Utley developed in an organic and unplanned manner, typical of small farming communities in the 17th and 18th centuries.*
- *The farmhouses and cottages have been built very close to one another, leaving little space for garden areas or any form of public open space.*
- *Most of the smaller properties lack gardens of any size or have only a small hard surfaced yard. The larger dwellings, such as Utley House and 13 Birchwood Road have more substantial gardens enclosed within high stone walls. The trees within these gardens enhance the conservation area and complement the natural stone of the surrounding buildings.*

The interrelationship of the built form with space in the conservation area is a fundamental component of the character of the place. The size, shape and treatment of these spaces are all factors in determining whether, for example, the area takes on a domestic, rural, urban, industrial or civic aspect.

Low Utley conservation area is not characterised by large areas of open space, either hard surfaced or green. However, the small spaces between the buildings and the spatial relationship of the structures within the conservation area make a vital contribution to its historical interest.

The settlement at Low Utley developed in an **organic** and unplanned fashion, typical of small farming hamlets in the 17th century. Buildings were often constructed at very close range to one another, with gable ends backing onto rear elevations and windows of one property often overlooking their neighbour. Historically gardens were an expensive luxury and hence only the wealthier members of society would have had the time and money to set aside land for recreational purposes. As a result the workers cottages were built very closely together and have little or even no private land around them. The larger houses, such as Utley House, 20 Keelham Lane and 13 Birchwood Road have relatively large gardens, though historically these may have been used as farming land and not necessarily cultivated in the same way as they are now.



The houses along Keelham Lane were built closely to one another, and in some cases across the front of each other.

As a result the conservation area is characterised by the manner in which the buildings have been built alongside one another, with little or no space between them and often at oblique angles to one another, even built over their neighbours.

Historically any remaining open space would have been put to practical use, whether it be for building, grazing or agriculture.



The large hard surfaced area to the front of the barn adjacent to Utley House is the largest area of visually prominent open space in the conservation area.

Though there may be a lack of public open space, there are a number of private open spaces, namely gardens or curtilages in the conservation area and these vary in size and appearance. To the rear and side of Utley House is a considerable area of **hard surfacing**. This appears to service the barn / warehouse which is set slightly behind the house and is prominent in the conservation area. The original stone setts and cobbles are still visible beneath thinning patches of tarmac and if these were to be recovered, it could enhance the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area greatly.

Along Birchwood Road some of the larger buildings are set back a distance from the roadside and hidden behind **high stone walls**. The garden areas to both Utley House and 13 Birchwood Road are **green** and attractive but are effectively hidden from public eye, creating an area of seclusion and peacefulness. Within these gardens are a number of trees and tall shrubs which are visible over the garden walls and add valuable greenery to the conservation area, softening the hard lines of the stone walls and buildings.



13 Birchwood Road has a substantial green garden, tucked away behind a high stone wall. The trees in this garden are visible from the lane and add greenery to the conservation area.

Elsewhere in the conservation area there is little in the way of greenery, as most of the cottages have little or no garden space. Where the buildings are set back from the road side these areas tend to be hard surfaced with stone flags, almost a continuation of the stone surfaced carriageways.



The trees within and around the boundary of the conservation area complement the natural stone of the buildings and the carriageway.

Towards the northern end of the conservation area there is more of a sense of greenery and the influence of natural elements become more obvious. **Trees** on the boundary of the conservation area contribute to the sense of greenery and leafiness, which complements the stonework of the buildings.

8. Permeability and Streetscape

Summary of Permeability and Streetscape

The form, width and orientation of streets and paths determine the permeability and ease of movement through conservation areas. The small size of the hamlet means there are limited ways of moving across the conservation area however:

- *The streetscape is one of the most important elements of Low Utley's character and historic interest. The survival of relatively large areas of traditional stone surfacing adds much to the conservation area, complementing the buildings which line the roadside and creating a unique sense of place.*
- *Keelham Lane is a route of some antiquity. The variation of width and orientation along its route, dictated by the way the buildings have been constructed along it creates a varied streetscape.*
- *The routes through the conservation area have a general north-south delineation, though narrow paths and alleys do link them. These paths are not always publicly accessible.*

The streetscape in Low Utley conservation area is one of the most important elements of its character and interest. The conservation area is unusual in the retention of a high proportion of **stone setts and flags** along the carriageways and pavements. These traditional surfacing materials are becoming rare and as a historic material is of interest in its own right. The distinctiveness of the hue and texture of natural stone is complementary to the stone of the buildings and boundary walls and this creates a natural and attractive streetscape with a unique sense of place.



Keelham Lane is the principal route through the conservation area. The stone setts are an important element of its character.

Keelham Lane, where the use of **stone setts** extends for almost the entire length of the road (from its junction with Birchwood Road to outside 20 Keelham Lane) is the principal route running through the conservation area. Reputably the running along the line of a Roman road, Keelham Lane widens and narrows, twists and turns around the buildings which line its route. The organic route which the road takes through the settlement is its predominate characteristic and creates an interesting and varied streetscape. The distinction between the properties which are set straight onto the roadside and those which are set back a short distance behind **stone walls** is important and the traditional boundary treatments should be maintained. However, this variety in the streetscape is unified by the continuation of the natural stone of the street surface onto the stone of the boundary wall or building.

The stone setts along Keelham Lane are showing signs of damage and excessive wear and tear. Many of the setts are loose and in patches are sunken into dips in the street. Survey of the area

during daytime has indicated that the lane receives a disproportionately high volume of traffic, including larger vans, than one would expect of a carriageway of its width. It appears that the lane is used by through traffic not only accessing the



residential areas just to the north but also the golf club and cemetery on the opposite side of the railway line. The lane is obviously not capable of supporting high volumes of traffic

and the damage that this is inflicting upon the traditional surfacing of the conservation area is undeniable.



The entrance to Croft House Lane from Birchwood Road. The hard line of the cottages on one side and the high stone wall to the other gives this lane an enclosed feel.

Croft House Lane runs parallel to Keelham Lane for a short distance before turning sharply around the four listed cottages at its head and exiting the conservation area at its western side. It is not known when the road first came into use, though it is shown on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1852 and is likely to have first come into use during the late 18th century when building work along its length was undertaken. Croft House Lane is also **setted** and a short length of stone flagged pavement runs to the front of the houses along the east side of the carriageway. This lane has a dark and somewhat secluded feel, compounded by the high stone wall of the barn to the west and the situation of the houses backing immediately onto the carriageway. The lane opens out somewhat at the northern end, where it turns sharply around the stone workers cottages. Back Croft House

Lane runs around the rear of the nos. 4b and 6, which are listed, continuing the stone surfacing materials along this narrow alleyway. On the north side of Croft House Lane is a property of some age (currently outside of the conservation area) which effectively heads off any views up the lane from Birchwood Road. This stone built property contributes much to the streetscape but sadly is surrounded by relatively characterless mid-20th century housing developments.



The slender gap between 2 Croft House Lane and 3 Keelham Lane is an interesting feature which allows a visual link across the conservation area.

Syke Side is a dark and narrow lane which runs off Birchwood Road for a short distance, allowing access to a short row of stone cottages before rejoining the main road as it exits the conservation area.



Syke Side, a narrow and mainly unsurfaced lane, allows access to the rear the cottages which front onto Birchwood Road.

Syke Side is unsurfaced (for the main part) and heavily overshadowed by the cottages which form a hard line on its south side and the canopies of

the trees which overhang the lane on its north side. As a result, the streetscape and feel of this lane is much more quiet and rural and it has a more informal character which provides an interesting contrast to Keelham Lane and Birchwood Road.

To the north of Syke Side, and roughly parallel to it is a small lane, no more than a verged footpath, which links Keelham Lane with Birchwood Avenue to the east. This right of way is closely bounded by rustic dry stone walls, though much of the vegetation beyond the walls is suburban in character. The footpath is grassy and unmade, with flowers planted along its edges.

The conservation area has relatively good permeability and there is a choice of routes across it due to the relatively high proportion of roads in comparison to the small size of the area. Narrow paths and alleys link the roads together and though these paths are not necessarily open to members of the public, they do afford glimpses of buildings and views and vistas which help the visitor orientate themselves.

9. Conclusion: Character Specification and Guidance



To safeguard the special interest of an area, the Conservation Area designation aims to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the place. Many features interact to form the unique qualities of Low Utley Conservation Area, such as:




- the style, form, orientation, massing, height and scale of buildings;
- the way the built structure interfaces with the spaces created;
- the width and orientation of streets;
- the colour and texture of the materials used;
- the topography and setting of the area;
- the roofscape and streetscape;
- how the area interacts with the surrounding environment;
- natural elements; and
- local detailing.

However, less physical features, such as the current uses of buildings and spaces, their condition and intangible ingredients such as sounds and smells, are all factors in creating the identity of Low Utley conservation area. This section highlights the elements that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area, summarising the information contained in the body of this document, and puts forwards policies which will provide the framework of the protection of these features. Owners and occupiers of sites within the conservation area, prospective developers and the Council should use this to determine what constitutes appropriate change and as a basis for the future management of the area. It should be read in conjunction with the policies set out in Bradford Unitary Development Plan (see *Appendix 3*).

Characteristics Common to the Entire Conservation Area

Common Characteristics	Guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topography and setting – Low Utley developed as a small farming community on the south side of the Aire valley and at the foot of rising land. Now located on the northern edge of the Keighley urban area, the conservation area is surrounded to the south and east by residential areas but to the north the landscape becomes more open and green and has a distinctive rural character. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is essential that the significant views and vistas into, out of and through the conservation area are respected in any development within the conservation area or affecting its setting. Applicants will be requested to provide evidence that this has been considered as part of the evaluation of the site (see Policy BH10 of Unitary Development Plan (UDP)). 2. New development which will impact the setting of the conservation area, as being either immediately within the vicinity or clearly visible from within its confines, should echo the principles of good design set out for new build and not over dominate its form or buildings and respect important areas of green space and woodland (see Policy BH7 of the UDP).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional building materials – The buildings within the conservation area are almost entirely constructed of local stone, which serves to unify the built form of settlement and create a harmonious whole. Stone slate is the principal roofing material and natural stone has been used for boundary walls. Timber was traditionally used for window frames, doors and guttering though these elements are most susceptible to change and many have been replaced with less sympathetic modern alternatives. <div data-bbox="215 1304 821 1722" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><i>Local stone, which has been used for buildings, walls, roofs and even road surfaces, is a crucial element of the character of the conservation area.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. There should be a presumption in favour of retaining original materials, such as stone slate. Where the replacement of features is necessary and the traditional has survived this should be done on a like-for-like basis. Where features have been replaced by modern alternatives, the reinstatement of traditional style features constructed in traditional materials will be encouraged (see Policy BH7 of the UDP). 4. Stone cleaning should be resisted where it would interfere with the uniformity of the colour of the stone, particularly in regard to terraced properties. Advice should be sought from the conservation team before cleaning any of the stone buildings of the conservation area (See Policy BH7 of the UDP). 5. Repair and maintenance work to stone buildings within the conservation area (e.g. repointing, repairs to the roof, etc.) should be carried out in an appropriate manner. The conservation team can advise (see Policy BH7 of the UDP). 6. Any new development should make use of quality materials which reflect the interest of the area and sit harmoniously with the existing fabric and respect the uniformity in the colour and texture of the built form of the conservation area (see Policy BH7 of the UDP).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setted and flagged carriageways and footpaths. The relatively large areas of stone setts and flags that surface the carriageways and footpaths in the conservation area are one of its most prevailing and unique characteristics. Stone surfacing is now rare in many areas and as a historic material is of interest in its own right. 	<p>7. There should be a presumption in favour of preserving the areas of setted and flagged surfaces of the conservation area (see Policy BH11 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p> <p><i>The large extent of surviving stone surfacing in Low Utley is an important defining element of the conservation area's character.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary walls – some of the cottages are set back behind stone boundary walls, some topped with rounded copingstones. Traditional forms of boundary treatment such as this adds interest and variety to the streetscape and should be preserved and maintained. 	<p>8. Existing boundary walls should be retained and restored. Boundary walls constructed of stone that matches the existing should be incorporated into the design of any new development within the conservation area (see Policy BH9 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p> <p><i>The boundaries of many of the houses in Low Utley are defined by stone walls. The use of traditional materials in this manner enhances the stone of the buildings and road surfaces.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeability – the principal route across the area is Keelham Lane with Croft House Lane running to the west and narrow Syke Side to the east. These routes are linked by a few narrow paths, which may not be publicly accessible but do allow glimpses of views and vistas of other buildings within the conservation area. 	<p>9. The road layout of the conservation area is important to its character and its historic interest. Therefore the width direction and orientation of roads and paths through the area should be preserved (see Policy BH7 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p>

<p>Architecture and building details</p>  	<p>The buildings within Low Utley conservation area have mainly been constructed in the local vernacular style. The majority of the buildings are two storey farmhouses and cottages, constructed and roofed in local stone as well as including a number of converted barns.</p> <p>Typical features of these buildings include stone corniced chimneystacks and stone door and window surrounds. Some of the older properties have mullions dividing the windows. Some have additional details such as prominent kneelers, dentil courses and quoins. Traditionally the dwellings would have had timber doors and window frames as well as squared timber gutters. Despite being individually designed they have a pleasing uniformity which adds much to the character and image of the place.</p> <p>Utley House, one of the oldest buildings in the conservation area, was built in the late 17th century for a wealthy local yeoman family. As a consequence this building displays greater architectural detail and craftsmanship, befitting the relative high status of the Clapham family in the settlement.</p> <p>Within the conservation area boundary there are several Grade II listed buildings. The listing descriptions are given in Appendix 2.</p>	<p>10. There should be a presumption in favour of preserving all buildings within the conservation area that have been identified as contributing to the interest of the place. In addition, in any work carried out to the buildings, every effort should be made to ensure that the features that form an integral part of their design, including materials, proportions, windows, doors, stone details and timber details, or interesting features which testify to the evolution of the structures and are good quality in their own right, are preserved (see Policy BH9 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p> <p>11. The reinstatement of traditional features will be actively encouraged, but should be based on a historical understanding of the structure and where possible evidence of the original detail (see Policy BH8 of the UDP).</p> <p>12. New development within the conservation area should reflect the predominant building form of the area in which it is situated. This relates to height, scale and siting. It should not over dominate the existing fabric (see Policy BH7 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p>
<p>Open spaces</p> 	<p>Low Utley is typified by its lack of open or public space. The organic way in which this tiny settlement developed has resulted in the building's crowding one another along the line of the lanes. Any spaces between the buildings were generally infilled during the 19th century with additional cottages.</p> <p>The buildings tend to have little in the way of private garden space around them. The larger dwellings, such as Utley House and 13 Birchwood Road have substantial gardens tucked away from view behind high walls.</p>	<p>13. There should be a presumption against building in open areas which have been identified as contributing the character of the conservation area (see Policy BH10 of the UDP).</p> <p>14. The identity of the spaces, where they have been identified as significant should be respected. This means that the treatment of the spaces should be preserved, in that green spaces should remain green and hard surfaced spaces should remain hard surfaced.</p>

10. Proposals

10.1 Conservation Area Boundary

The conservation area boundary covers the original hamlet of Low Utley, excluding the 20th century residential development which surrounds the settlement, and includes only those areas of special architectural or historic interest.

In preparing this assessment, the boundary of the conservation area was assessed by the Conservation Team in order to determine whether it was appropriate and readable on the ground. The resultant boundary became the proposed conservation area boundary, which was distributed among the local community for consultation. All of the community's suggested boundary changes were visited by the Conservation Team in order to determine whether it would be appropriate to amend the conservation area boundary. The following change to Low Utley Conservation Area boundary are the result of this process and represent all of the changes to the original (1973) Low Utley Conservation Area boundary:

- Include 14 Croft House Lane, an early-to-mid 19th century house which makes a positive contribution to the townscape and interest of the area.
- Include the gardens to the east of 16-20 Keelham Lane and the walled footpath to the south. The gardens form part of the properties at 16-20 Keelham Lane, which were included within the original conservation area boundary, therefore it is logical and practical to include the gardens. The footpath to the south branches off Keelham Lane and was similarly partially in the original conservation area. It is an unmade footpath flanked by traditional dry stone walls and is complementary to the rural hamlet character of the conservation area.

A handful of minor alterations have been made to the conservation area boundary in order to ensure that the boundary is logical and is readable on the ground.

10.2 New Development

There is limited scope for new development in the conservation area due to limited space and the built-up nature of the immediately surrounding area. However, there may be some scope for conversion of the remaining barn. Any such proposals must respect the form and agricultural character of the building as well as the impact it may have on the setting of the adjacent listed Utley House. Materials, scale and setting must make a positive contribution to the settlement.

Development within the curtilage of existing dwellings such as garages, conservatories, extensions, fencing etc. should be considered carefully not only in isolation but also for its multiple effect. The cumulative effect of these additions can be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

10.3 Enhancement and Preservation Proposals

Naturally there are some elements of the conservation area that are not conducive to the predominant character of the area and do not contribute to an understanding of its historical development. These may detract from its character and appearance or may simply not contribute to it in a positive way. The following are proposals as to how the quality and identity of the place could be strengthened by the active co-operation of the Council, developers and the local community.

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- **Guidance on the Repair and Maintenance of Traditional Highway Surfaces.** An important characteristic of Low Utleigh conservation area is the extent of surviving stone surfacing to the highways and pavements. On Keelham Lane high volumes of through traffic has caused damage to the surface, loosening setts and causing dips and sinkage in the road surface. The replacement of broken setts like-for-like would improve the immediate problem but in the long term the restriction of traffic and improved maintenance along this unadopted lane would help protect the historic surface.
 - **Guidance on the Retention of Original Features.** In many unlisted buildings traditional timber windows and doors have been replaced with uPVC or modern frames with dark stained finishes. The resulting appearance is at odds with the character of the building and consequently this has harmed the appearance and character of the area on a wider scale. Advice on good practice for dealing with traditional properties in the conservation area will be produced.
 - **Planning Applications.** Planning Applications for development within and immediately around the conservation area will be monitored more closely in line with the guidance given in the previous section of this document. This guidance complements and expands upon policies set out in the Unitary Development Plan and applies them to the special circumstances of Low Utleigh.
 - **Guidance Notes on the Repair and Maintenance of Properties.** Some of the traditional stone buildings of the area have unsympathetic replacement features and have undergone well intentioned but on occasions inappropriate repair. The production of a guidance note on the repair and maintenance of stone buildings, particularly vernacular style properties, of the region would increase awareness of fitting repair techniques.

Glossary of Architectural Terms

Ashlar: Dressed stonework of any type, where the blocks have squared sides, carefully squared corners, and are laid in regular courses, usually with fine joints. The faces of the stones, called ashlar, are generally smooth and polished, but can be tooled or have a decorative treatment.

Bracket: Any projection from the face of a wall whose purpose is to support a structure or object.

Chamfer: Narrow face created when stone is cut at an angle, usually at 45 degrees.

Cornice: In Classic Architecture the top, projecting, horizontal division of the beam between columns.

Gable: The vertical part of the end wall of a building contained within the roof slope, usually triangular but can be any "roof" shape.

Finial: Topmost-featured ornament on a building, freestanding above spire gable etc.

Hoodmould: The projecting moulding over an arch or lintel designed to throw off water, also known as dripstones.

Jamb: Usually taken to simply describe the vertical sides to a window or door opening. Properly used, it only relates to those vertical parts which support the lintel.

Kneeler: The sloping tabling which caps a gable and is upstanding above the plane of the roof. The skew end is the larger, usually square bottom stone of a skew and projects over the wallhead, and is usually moulded or carved.

Light: The framed part of a window opening. In a medieval timber framed building, a window would be formed by several lights separated by mullions.

Mullion: Upright member dividing the lights of a window.

Quoin: Stones larger or better shaped, than those of which a wall is composed, used to form the corners of walls or door and window openings. Laid in an arrangement of headers and stretchers on alternate courses, this gives strength to the build, and allows the facework of the walling to tooth into the corner.

Sash: A form of window in which two sashes, separated by parting beads, slides within a frame, the case, counterbalanced by weights hung on ropes, the sash cords. The glazing slides in two parallel frames within the case, the upper sliding outward of the lower. The projection of the top sash beyond the bottom sash traps a certain amount of shadow which gives the sash and case window a very satisfying 3-D effect.

Setts: Square blocks, usually of granite but sometimes of hardwood for silence, forming a street surface. Setts were set on edge, close together, and they tapered slightly towards the bottom. Sides were never quite smooth, and laying them to achieve a tight joint, is a very skilful business.

Transom: A horizontal member dividing a window opening into separate lights. Sometimes in stone linked to vertical mullions.

Vernacular: An indigenous building constructed of locally available materials, to local detail, usually without the benefit of an architect. Somehow it is now taken to imply a fairly humble or practical origin, but this is not the case.

Vista: A distant view through or along an avenue or opening.

Voussoir: The radiating wedge-shaped blocks forming the arch.

Further Reading

Historical Resources

Baumber, M.L. (1977): 'A Pennine Community on the Eve of the Industrial Revolution'

Dewhirst, Ian (1974): 'A History of Keighley'.

Holmes, Peter (2000): 'Eight Generation of a Keighley Family' Yorkshire Archaeological Journal. Vol 72, 2000

Keighley, William (1858): 'Keighley, Past and Present'

Speight, Harry (1904): Old Bingley.

Planning Policy

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (2005): 'Bradford Unitary Development Plan'.

Department of the Environment (1990): 'Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG 15) – Planning and Historic Environment'. – HMSO, London.

Contacts

This document is publicly accessible at Keighley Planning Office, Keighley Library and on the Council's website at:

www.bradford.gov.uk/council/planning/heritage/cons_sessions.asp

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Appendix 1:

Map of Low Utley Conservation Area

Appendix 2:

List Descriptions of the Listed Buildings in Low Utley Conservation Area

Appendix 2: List Descriptions of the Listed Buildings in Low Utley Conservation Area

Birchwood Road (north side)

Low Utley

Utley House

23.2.55 5/8

II

House. C17 with early C18 and C19 additions. Dressed stone, stone slate roof. 2 storeys, 3 first-floor windows. Segmental-arched doorway. Mullioned windows, of 4 and 7 lights to left of door, of 6 lights to right, and of 3, 4 and 5 lights above. To east, a C19 extension in similar style.

Rear: 2-storey addition, dated 1705 on keystone to door, has stair window with Gothic glazing. Interior: kitchen in rear addition has arched fireplace.

Birchwood Road (north side)

Low Utley

No 9

5/9

GV II

House. C17. Stone, stone slate roof. 2 storeys, 2 first-floor windows, rear entry. 2 double-chamfered mullion windows of 4 and 5 lights to ground floor, with 2 later, flat-faced mullion windows of 3 and 4 lights above.

Rear: C17 doorway converted to a window.

Croft House Lane (south side)

Low Utley

Nos 4B, 6, 7 and 9

5/42

GV II

4 back-to-back cottages. C1800. Stone, stone roof. 2 storeys, 2 first-floor windows each. Quoins. Each cottage has to ground floor a C20 door, a single-light and a 2-light window, and to first floor two 2-light windows, the windows with plain stone surrounds and flat-faced mullions. No 4B has added C20 porch. End stacks.

Appendix 3:

Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas

Appendix 3: Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas

This is a brief summary of the legislation and policies relating to conservation areas at the time of the issue of this report. These will be subject to periodic review.

Legislation to Protect the Character and Appearance of Conservation Areas

Conservation area designation intrinsically brings with it a certain number of additional controls to protect the existing character of the area:

- Removal of certain permitted development rights including various types of cladding; the insertion of dormer windows into roof slopes; the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway; the installation of radio masts, antennae or radio equipment. Applications for planning permission for these alterations must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- Control over the demolition of buildings: applications for consent must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- The Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those which relate directly to historic buildings. It should also be a consideration for proposals that affect the setting of the conservation area.
- The local authority has powers (under Article 4 of the General Development Order) to control development which would normally be allowed without the need for permission, but which could lead to the deterioration of the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Before works can be carried out to trees of more than 7.5cm in diameter across the trunk (measured 1.5m from the ground) which are standing in a conservation area, 6 weeks' written notice must be given to the Local Planning Authority. No works should be carried out during this 6-week period unless consent has been granted by the Local Planning Authority.

(For further details of these controls see PPG15)

Listed buildings, which usually form an integral part of a conservation area, are afforded more

stringent protection. The Local Planning Authority must give listed building consent before any work that would affect the character or interest of the building can be carried out, be they internal or external alterations. Tight control restricts the nature of any alteration to which consent will be given.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Policies Concerning Conservation Areas

Structure, local and unitary development plans are the main vehicle that local authorities have to establish policies that can be utilised to protect the historic environment. The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has recently adopted its **Unitary Development Plan** (2005) which forms the basis of decision making on planning applications in the district. The UDP has the following policies relating to conservation areas:

Policy BH7: Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas
Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas will be expected to be of the highest standards of design and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Policy BH8: Shop fronts in conservation areas
Within conservation areas proposals affecting existing shop fronts or proposals for new shop fronts must demonstrate a high standard of design and be sympathetic in scale, style and detail to the original building. Proposed external shutters sun blinds and canopies must be sympathetic in style, colour and materials to the buildings to which they are attached and their architectural style. Blinds will not be permitted on buildings without a shop front or fascia.

Policy BH9: Demolition within a conservation area
Within conservation areas, permission will not be granted for the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the area unless the development would result in benefits to the community that would justify the demolition.

Policy BH10: Open spaces within or adjacent to conservation areas

Planning permission for the development of important open areas of land or garden within or adjacent to a conservation area will not be granted if the land:

- 1) Makes a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.
- 2) Provides an attractive setting for the buildings within it.
- 3) Is important to the historical form and layout of the settlement.
- 4) Affords the opportunity for vistas in or out of the conservation area which are historically or visually significant.
- 5) Contains natural water features, tree and hedgerows which the development proposals propose to destroy.

Policy BH11: Space about buildings

Proposals maintaining traditional townscape within designated conservation areas will be favoured and consideration given to relaxing approved policies and standards if by doing so features of particular townscape merit under threat in the conservation area can be retained.

New developments seeking to integrate into an existing built form will be encouraged by relaxing approved policies and standards.

Policy BH12: Conservation area environment

Changes to the public realm within conservation areas must demonstrate that:

- 1) The design, materials and layout of traffic management and parking areas minimise the adverse visual impact which may arise from such development.
- 2) New and replacement street furniture is of an appropriate design and material that preserve or enhance the character of the surrounding street scene.
- 3) Proposals for the introduction of public art will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. In certain conservation areas the introduction of public art and street furniture will be encouraged.

Policy BH13: Advertisements in conservation areas

Within conservation areas the council will require the design of advertisements to be of a high standard, therefore:

- 1) Consent will be granted only where the proposal is in scale and character with the building on which it is located and with surrounding buildings. Where possible, all new shop fronts, fascias, signs and letters

should be made of natural / sympathetic materials.

- 2) Within conservation areas internally illuminated box signs will not be permitted. Sensitively designed fascias or signs incorporating individually illuminated mounted letters on a suitable background may be acceptable in town centres where the scale, colour, design and intensity of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 3) Where unacceptable advertisements already exist in conservation areas, the council will where appropriate take discontinuance action to secure their removal.

In addition to these there are separate policies relating to the **listed buildings** within the confines of the conservation areas:

Policy BH1: Change of Use of Listed Buildings

Where possible the original use of a building should be retained or continued. Change of use will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that the original use is no longer viable or appropriate and without an alternative use the building will be seriously at risk.

The Council will not grant planning permission for an alternative use unless it can be shown that:

- 1) The alternative use is compatible with and will preserve the character of the building and its setting.
- 2) No other reasonable alternative exists which would safeguard the character of the building and its setting.

Policy BH2: Demolition of a Listed Building

The demolition of a listed building will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Before permission is granted for the demolition of a listed building, applicants will have to submit convincing evidence to show that:

- 1) Every possible effort has been made to repair and restore the building and to continue the present or past use;
- 2) It has been impossible to find a suitable viable alternative use for the buildings; and
- 3) That there is clear evidence that redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from the building's demolition.

Policy BH3: Archaeology Recording of Listed Buildings

Where alterations or demolition of a listed building would result in the loss of features of special interest, a programme of recording agreed with the Local Planning Authority and where appropriate, archaeological investigation will be required before the commencement of development.

Policy BH4: Conversion and Alteration of Listed Buildings

The alteration, extension or substantial demolition of listed buildings will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- 1) Would not have any adverse effect upon the special architectural or historic interest of the building or its setting;
- 2) Is appropriate in terms of design, scale, detailing and materials;
- 3) Would minimise the loss of historic fabric of the building.

Policy BH4A: Setting of Listed Buildings

Proposals for development will not be permitted if they would harm the setting of a listed building.

Policy BH5: Shop Front Policy For Listed Buildings

Where possible existing traditional shopfronts should be retained and repaired. Proposals for

the alteration of existing shop fronts or installation of new shop fronts on a listed building should be a high standard of design and respect the character and appearance of the listed building. External roller shutters will not be granted permission on a listed building shop front unless there is clear evidence of an original shutter housing and the shutter is traditionally detailed and in timber and/or metal of a traditional section.

Policy BH6: Display of Advertisements on Listed Buildings

Consent for the display of advertisements on listed buildings or which would affect the setting of a listed building will be permitted only where:

- 1) The advertisement is appropriate in terms of its scale, design and materials and would not detract from the character or appearance of the buildings.
- 2) The advert is not an internally illuminated box.
- 3) If the proposed advertisement is to be externally illuminated, the design of the method of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the building.
- 4) Plastic fascia signs whether or not illuminated will not be granted consent on a listed building.