



Conservation Area Appraisal

Middleton



This appraisal reviews the Middleton Conservation Area Assessment, which was published in 2005. The Management Proposals included in this appraisal are based on the outcomes and priorities established by the local community during the public consultation process for the Conservation Area Assessment.

The next appraisal of Middleton Conservation Area will be undertaken by February 2014.

February 2009

What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?

A Conservation Area Appraisal describes the character of a conservation area. It also describes the changes that have taken place in the conservation area over recent years.

The appraisal finishes with management proposals which will help to conserve and enhance the area's special character and improve decision making in the future.

The Government requires that all conservation areas have an up-to-date conservation area appraisal.

An up-to-date appraisal is one that has been undertaken within the past five years.

The following work has been done to deliver this conservation area appraisal:

- A photographic survey of the buildings in the conservation area.
 - The assessment of the level of authenticity of most of the historic buildings (*see 'Current Condition' on page 5*).
- An assessment of the issues facing the conservation area at present (*see pages 6 and 7*).
- The survey and update of map data relating to the conservation area (*see pages 8, 9 and 10*).
- A review of the appropriateness of the conservation area boundary (*see page 13*).
- An assessment as to whether new development has made a positive, negative or neutral impact on the character of the conservation area (*see pages 11 and 13*).
- The formulation of management proposals for the area (*see page 14*).

What is a Conservation Area?

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

Middleton Conservation Area was originally designated in 2005.

Conservation area designation brings with it extra controls. These controls cover:

- Demolition of buildings
- Minor developments such as porches, extensions, satellite dishes and boundary walls
- Works to trees

The objective of these measures is to help preserve the special character and appearance of the area and maintain or improve its environmental quality. Whilst it is recognised that conservation areas must be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands it is important that this occurs within a framework of controlled and positive management.

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Listed Buildings:
www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings



Low Hall is Grade II listed and is the oldest building in the conservation area.*

Background and Brief History

The following summarise the factors that make the area covered by the Middleton Conservation Area of historical interest:

Pre 19th Century

Middleton Conservation Area was once part of the Middleton Estate, which remained the private property of the Middleton family for almost five hundred years. All of the Conservation Area was once covered by woodland which was used by the Middleton family and their guests for hunting, fishing and recreation.

The Grade II* listed Low Hall was built in the 17th century and is one of the oldest intact houses in this part of Wharfedale. Although there is no record of when buildings first occupied this site it is known that the present day Hall contains fragments of medieval stonework.

19th Century

Prior to 1899 Low Hall was the only building within the conservation area. Middleton had avoided industrialisation, urbanisation and mining in a time when many parts

of Yorkshire, including neighbouring Ilkley, experienced rapid and considerable expansion.

Late 19th Century - early 20th Century

The sale of the area to the Wharfedale Estate Company in 1899, led to the master planning of the area as an exclusive, leafy housing estate for middle-class commuters, with large houses set in generous plots along broad avenues. The estate's road plan and its character is still evident and Middleton Conservation Area incorporates all of the dwellings built by the Wharfedale Estate Company.

Open spaces and facilities such as the lido, sports grounds and street furniture, which were designed as part of and are contemporary with the early twentieth century housing estate, have survived and are still in use today.

Key Characteristics

The following summarises the key elements of the character of the Middleton conservation area:

- Large houses, wide roads, generous landscaped gardens and mature trees and hedgerows that create a spacious, leafy and salubrious sub-urban character.
- A range of building styles and ages, including the 17th century manor house Low Hall, early 20th century Arts and Crafts and Vernacular Revival houses, limited but good examples of 1930s modernist architecture, and more recent dwellings of varying quality built between the 1960s and the present day.
- A mixture of natural and man made building materials which reflect the age and architectural styles of different buildings within the conservation area.
- Predominantly residential but with large areas of open space and sports and recreational facilities along the banks of the Wharfe.
- Middleton Woods to the north and the river to the south, provide a high quality setting.



*Top right: The Whitehouse, Curly Hill is an impressive modernist 1930s building.
Top left: Built in 1901 Oak Gyll is one of the oldest buildings in the conservation area.
Right: View down Clifford Road towards the River Wharfe.*



Summary of Important Features and Details

Features and details contribute to the essential character of Middleton conservation area:

- An abundance of hedgerows and mature trees throughout the area with denser woodland to the north of Curly Hill.
- Despite the considerable size of many houses, due to the low building to plot ratio, many houses appear subservient within their landscaped gardens.
- Vernacular Revival houses built with Ilkley Gritstone walls and slate roofs.
- Arts and Crafts houses built with a mixture of render and Ilkley Gritstone walls with red clay tile roofs.
- Traditional houses (built before 1956) retain many original features, including leaded and stained glass, timber or metal window frames, wooden doors, bay windows and chimneys with original pots.
- The 1930s Ilkley Lido and large areas of open space along the banks of the river.
- Footpaths provide alternative routes throughout the area and along the banks of the River Wharfe, with three historic bridges that provide links to Ilkley.

- Traditional street furniture/ facilities, including a listed post box, a traditional red telephone box and an old iron street lamp.

Current Condition

AUTHENTICITY 87%

- Each historic building within the conservation area will have originally had features and details which contribute to the character of the area.
- The level of authenticity is based on an assessment of each building to ascertain the level of retention of original features.
- Features assessed are: chimneys, roofs, rainwater goods, walls, windows and doors, and boundary walls. Not all buildings will have all the above features and the scoring sheet is adjusted to take this into account.
- Only residential, commercial and civic buildings built prior to 1956 are scored.
- 97 buildings were assessed for the purpose of the study; this is 43% of all buildings within the conservation area.
- The listed buildings had an average authenticity rating of 86%.

**AUTHENTICITY
87%**

Top right: The New Bridge was built circa 1905.

Top: 42 Rupert Road is a good example of a Vernacular Revival, set with spacious grounds.

Middle: Footpaths are an important feature of the area.

Above: Iron street lamp close to the Old Bridge.

A breakdown of the authenticity assessment shows which features and details in particular are being retained and/or maintained and where there are the greatest threats.

Strengths

- Many buildings retain almost all of their traditional features and details, including original walling and roofing materials.
- Buildings are generally well maintained and there are no vacant or seriously neglected buildings.
- An abundance of mature trees and hedgerows which contribute to the leafy sub-urban character of the area.
- The spaces about buildings, particularly gardens, are landscaped and well maintained.
- The street pattern has changed little since it was laid out by the Whafedale Estate Company.
- The spectacular Grade II* listed Low Hall retains many of its original features and details and the ancillary buildings, which were once within the properties grounds, have been retained and sensitively converted.
- There are some good examples of new developments that uphold the character of the area.
- The high quality setting of the conservation area is well retained.

An unusual Edwardian building that retains many original features and details.



Weaknesses

- Many of the properties built post 1956 detract from the wider character of the area and disrupt the original street pattern.
- Some of buildings and structures associated with sporting and recreational facilities detract from the quality of the area.
- Some traditional buildings have been unsympathetically modernised, particularly notable is the use of modern concrete tile roofing materials and UPVC window frames.



Some modern houses detract from the character of the area.

Opportunities

- Implementation of Ilkley Rugby Clubs plans to rebuild their clubhouse and grandstand will enhance the conservation area.
- Improvement of facilities at Ilkley Lido (subject to funding) may also bring about improvements.
- Better decisions by all stakeholders (including property owners, the Planning Service, Highways) aided by reference to the Conservation Area Assessment and this review, subsequent workshops and more communication with the Design and Conservation Team.
- The recently published “**Repair and Maintenance Guidance**” should help property owners make better informed decisions.
- There is an opportunity to improve the quality of some street furniture, such as the disused telephone box.

Traditional disused telephone boxes are under threat.



Improvements are planned to give Ilkley Rugby Club a lift

Threats

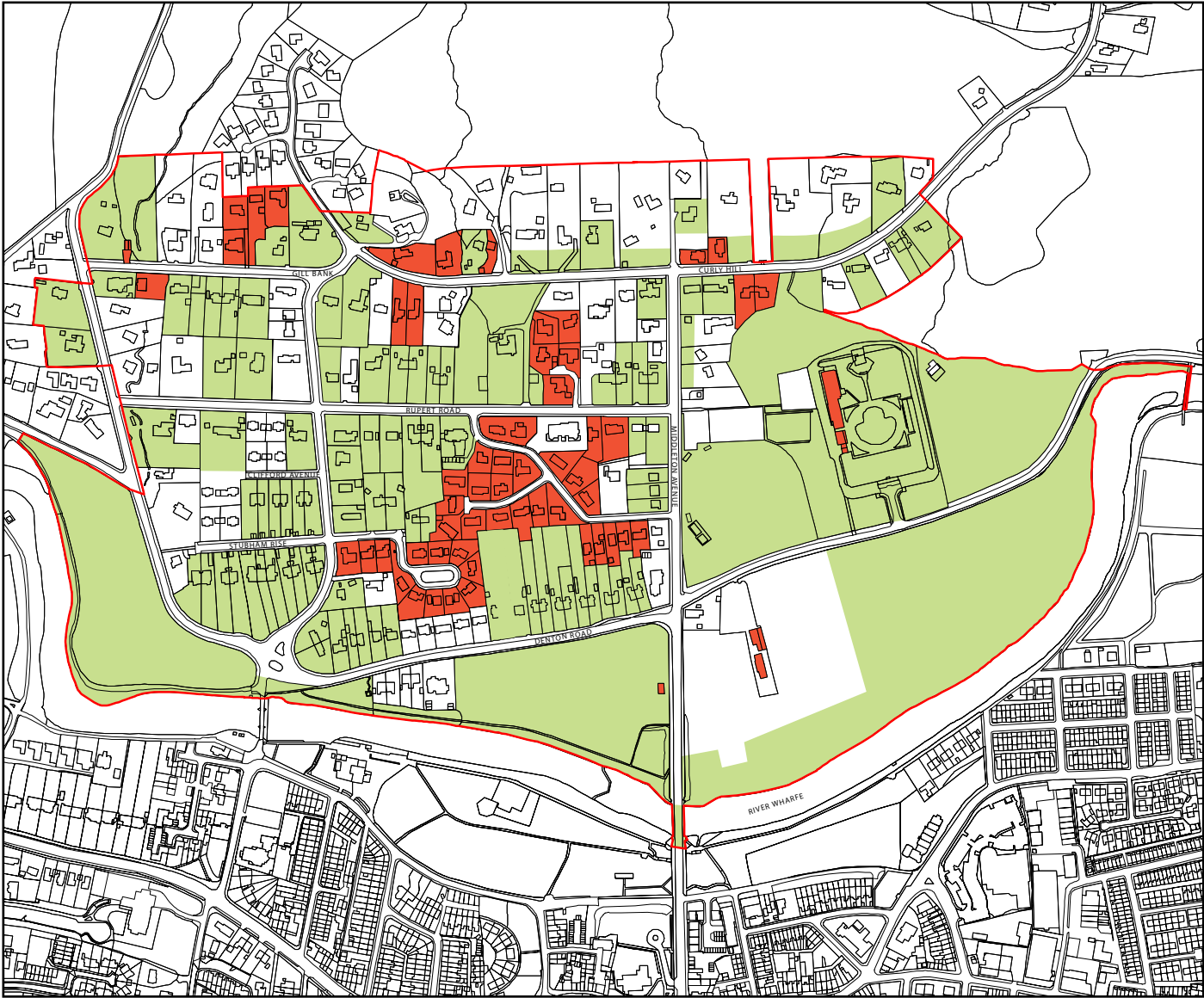
- Continued pressure to build new houses on open spaces and within gardens may erode the spatial character of the area.
- Loss of important trees and hedgerows.
- The gradual loss of traditional features and details from buildings.
- Poor decisions concerning planning applications, enforcement cases, listed buildings, highway management, and trees.
- Potential loss of traditional street furniture.

Concrete roofing materials can damage the character of traditional buildings



Middleton Conservation Area

Character Contributions

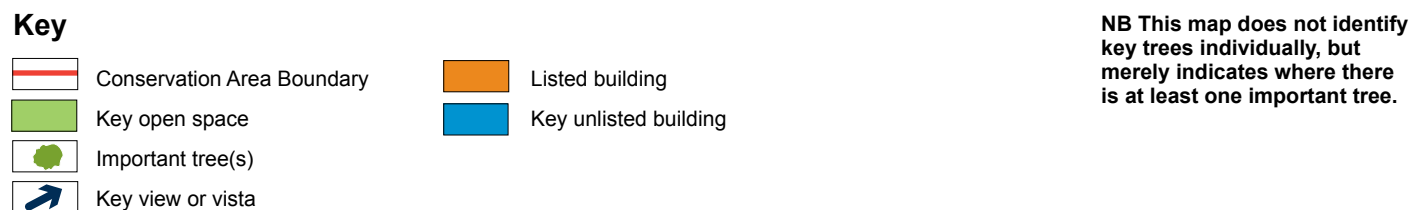


Key

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Areas providing a **positive** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **negative** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **neutral** contribution to character

NB The 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral' areas relate to the contribution the site/building currently makes to the character of the Conservation Area. The classification in no way means that the site/building has no special architectural, historic or archaeological interest.

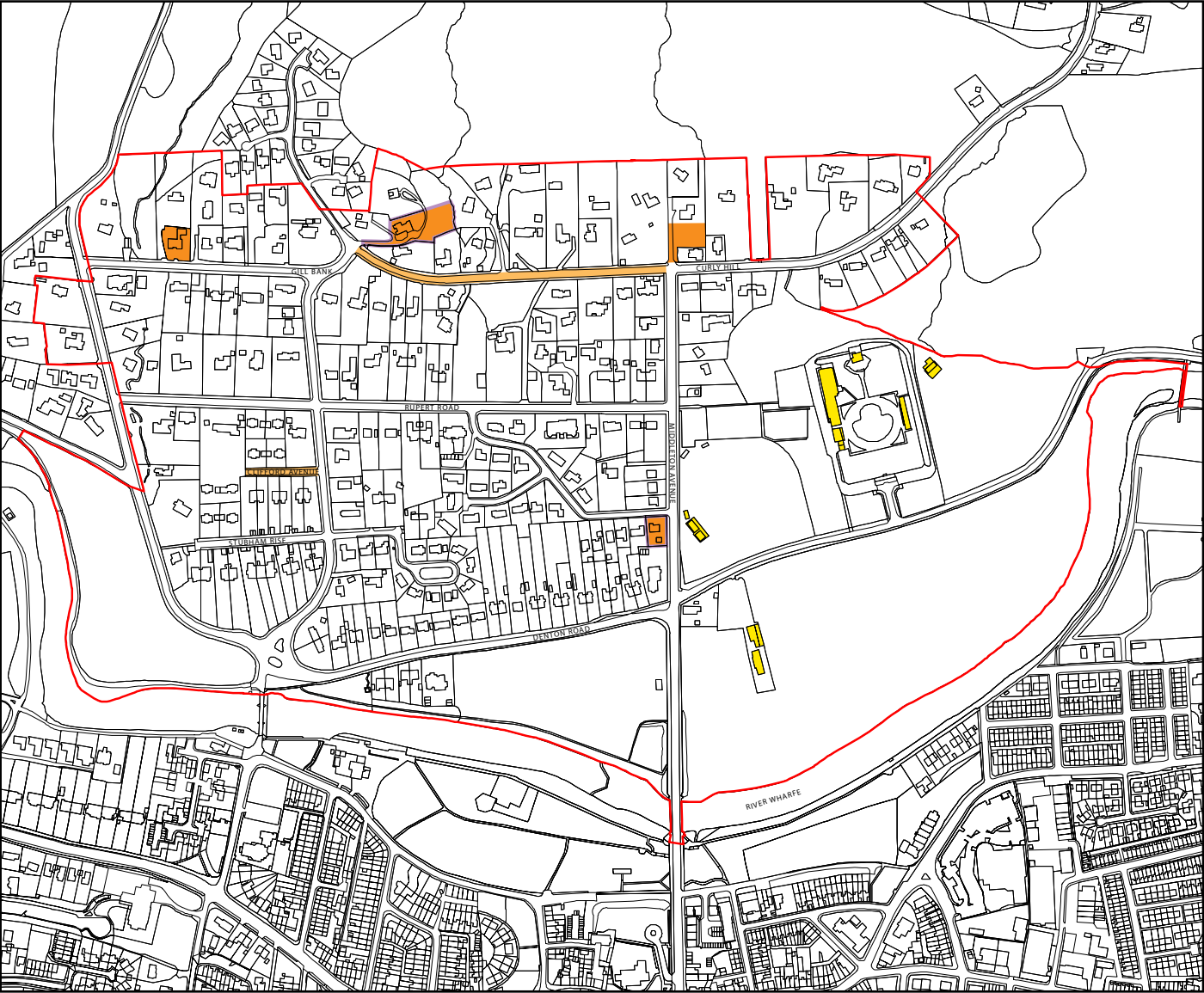
Open Spaces, Trees, Views, Listed and Key Unlisted Buildings









NB This map does not identify key trees individually, but merely indicates where there is at least one important tree.

Middleton Conservation Area

Land Use and Highway Materials



Key

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
|  | Conservation Area Boundary |  | Un-surfaced / Partially surfaced |
|  | Public building |  | Tarmac / Concrete |
|  | Demolition then redevelopment | | |
|  | New development | | |

Any changes that have had a significant impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area since the previous assessment in 2005 are detailed below.

Changes affecting the Conservation Area

New Development

55b Curly Hill has been built in an unobtrusive position on the disused tennis court of Wythburn, 55 Curly Hill. The contemporary design of the building is of high quality and incorporates sustainable design principles. Although some openness has been lost, the impact has not been detrimental to mature trees or the streetscene.



NEUTRAL IMPACT

Homewood, 7 Curly Hill has been demolished and replaced. Although the two replacement dwellings are larger and more prominent, their contemporary chalet like design complements the wooded character of the area.



NEUTRAL IMPACT

Beckfoot, Gill Bank Road, has been built in the gardens of Oakfield. There has been planning permission for the development of a house in the gardens of Oakfield, Gill Bank Road, since the 1970s. The convincing Georgian style design of Beckfoot would suggest it was built between 1714 and 1830, a period when the only standing property in the area was Low Hall!



NEUTRAL IMPACT

Lesson: Although the property has been built to a high standard, a sensitive yet contemporary design may have been more appropriate and honest option resulting in less confusion with respect to its period of authenticity.

Gilstead Way has been demolished and replaced with a block of three apartments. The red clay tiles, natural stone and render used in the construction of the new building clearly reflect traditional materials used by the Wharfedale Estate Company.

NEUTRAL IMPACT

Lesson: Greater attention should have been given to the fenestration details and to the quality of the rainwater goods. A more appropriate boundary treatment would also have helped the building contribute positively to the conservation area.



Trees and Open Space

There are 43 statutory Tree Preservation Orders which protect trees within the Middleton Conservation Area over and above the protection afforded by conservation area status. These 43 orders contain 461 individual trees, 74 groups of trees, 11 areas and 5 woodlands. Since April 2005, there have been approximately 120 applications for works to trees within Middleton and 85 of these applications were approved. All tree works approved were in accordance with good arboricultural practice and where tree removal has been necessary the Council has conditioned the replanting of new trees.

NEUTRAL CHANGE



Buildings

There were no vacant buildings in 2005 and there are presently no vacant buildings known to the Design and Conservation Team.

Works to Highways

There have been no significant works to the highways of the conservation area since 2005.



Boundary

The boundary of the conservation area has been reviewed as part of this Appraisal and it is deemed to be appropriate.

Negative Impacts

As part of the review of the conservation area a number of properties displaying inappropriate alterations and additions have been noted.

Whilst none are considered to have a severely negative impact on the character of the area, there are a number of properties displaying relatively minor visual detractors, such as inappropriate doors and windows, removed chimneys and modern concrete tile roof coverings.

The Council will look to ways of mitigating these works and will actively discourage the occurrence of similar situations arising within the conservation area in the future. Design guidance on the repair and maintenance of historic properties has recently been published by the Council.

The untidy appearance of this building on West Holmes Field detracts from the quality of the area.



Management Proposals

The overall aim of the Conservation Area Management Proposals is to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area, by ensuring that the Council and the community work together to maintain historic features and details and limit the loss of character.

The objectives aim to:

- improve service delivery
- raise awareness and understanding about the special character of the conservation area
- improve decision making so that all repair, development and alteration result in a positive contribution to the character of the place

The objectives of the Management Proposals are based on the issues identified in the Middleton Conservation Area Assessment and prioritised by members of the community who took part in the Middleton Conservation Area Assessment public consultation.

	Objective	Actions	Timescale
1	Design and Conservation Team to maintain contact with the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly newsletter about conservation area issues • Design and Conservation website to be made as informative, user friendly and as up-to-date as possible 	Yearly 2008-2014
2	Improved communication between Council officers and key partners in the conservation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of a conservation area forum • Workshops 	Monthly As required
3	Improve the quality and amenity value of the public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer working relationship between Design and Conservation and other Council Departments • Production of design guidance for the enhancement of the public realm 	Continual As resources permit
4	Preserve and enhance features and details that contribute to the character of Middleton Conservation Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings was published by the Design and Conservation Team in 2007. 	Review guidance periodically
5	Maintenance of footpaths and boundary walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer working between the Design and Conservation Team, property owners, Highways, and the Rights of Way Team 	Continual
6	Promote good quality new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of guidance on appropriate sympathetic design to suit the character of the Conservation Area • Production of design briefs where appropriate and as resources permit 	2008-2014 as resources permit
7	Monitor Planning Applications to add value to the historic environment	Design and Conservation Team to work more effectively within the wider planning service	continual
8	Preserve the spatial and landscape qualities within the Middleton Conservation Area	Produce a Landscape Strategy to preserve and enhance the character of Middleton, as resources permit	2008-2014 (as resources permit)
9	Address any illegal works to listed buildings and unauthorised development	Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Planning Enforcement Team	continual
10	Retain important trees	Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Trees Team	continual
11	Monitor Change loss/gain and feedback to local community and Council officers working in the conservation area.	Design and Conservation Team to review Middleton Conservation Area every five years in line with Best value Indicators 219a,b and c.	Review by February 2014

