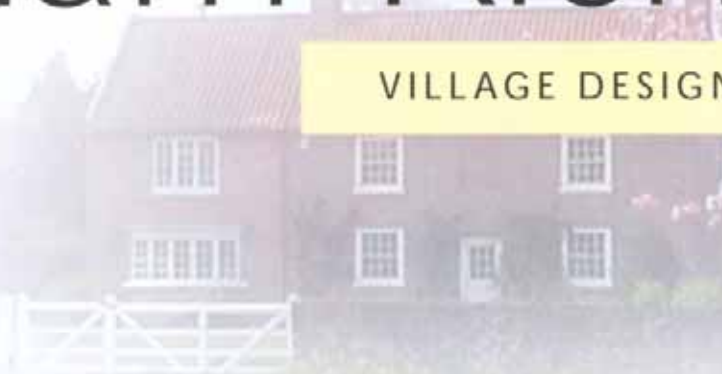


2005



Askham Richard

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT





1. The village pond and pub from the north
2. The village green from Askham Grange
3. Askham Grange from the village pond
4. A working village, School Lane
5. The village pump from the village green

Introduction

Askham Richard Village Design Statement describes what the village and surrounding countryside look like, shows how local character can be protected when new developments are planned and involves as many people as possible and is representative of village views. The boundary of the VDS is the parish boundary. The VDS is for use as a practical tool when considering any development, from a house extension or road calming measure to a change of use request. It was approved as draft supplementary planning guidance to the draft local plan (as amended) by City of York Council on 30 June 2005 and its recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are assessed. The VDS must be read alongside and consistently with the planning framework, conservation area and listed buildings policies, green belt and general planning guidelines. It is accepted that some points reflect aspirations of villagers, not all of which lie within the powers of the local planning authority to meet. The VDS was endorsed by the people of Askham Richard after exhibitions, questionnaires and public meetings in 2003. A draft was circulated to all residents and businesses in the village and its recommendations approved. It was discussed with the Planning Department of the City of York Council, circulated to other interested organisations and public notices were placed in the press.

History

There has been a settlement at Askham Richard for well over a thousand years. The name is said to be derived from Richard, an Earl of Cornwall, who owned land in the area, and Ascam or Ascha, possibly meaning the "enclosure of the ash-tree". Local Ordnance Survey maps reflect that much of the medieval field pattern can still be traced today.

The dominant building, Askham Grange, with a distinctive tower and mix of Victorian and Edwardian architectural features, was built in 1886 by Sir Andrew Fairburn, a Leeds industrialist who also built and endowed the village school and who provided the village water pump on the green. The house and grounds were further developed in the early 20th century, at its peak employing about 13 staff in service and a team of 5 gardeners and journeymen. At the outset of war in 1939 it passed to the Government and in 1947 became the country's first "open" women's prison, with a mother and baby unit.

The farms and some of the village housing are still owned by an estate land-owner, George Naden Ltd, so that a high proportion of homes are rented out. With the decline in agricultural workforces most residents now work in and around York, with some commuting further afield, but visitors remain struck by the active agricultural life of the village.

Landscape Setting

Askham Richard is situated just north of the A64 York to Leeds road, seven miles south west of York.

The land around the village is green belt and forms part of the Vale of York. The village is isolated from surrounding settlements by farmland and woodland. The fields surrounding the village are mainly arable but many hedgerows and trees remain and over 100 tree preservation orders apply in the village itself, together with 4 designated woodlands and several other groups of designated trees (a map showing details of all tree preservation orders and designated woodlands is available from City of York Council). While the elm has largely disappeared, dominant species include oak, ash, alder, willow, field maple and beech, with many other native species found in the woodlands. Under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 most hedgerows in the surrounding fields may only be removed after consultation with the local authority, but otherwise protection is weak because the hedgerows are mainly made up of hawthorn and so do not possess the required species diversity. Nevertheless they represent an important and special feature of the area which should be protected.

The separation of the village from other settlements is a special feature reflected in the photographs and centrefold map. The surrounding farmland is of mixed use, with arable land, dairy herds and chickens. A number of paddocks around the village are used for keeping horses and sheep. The uninterrupted views out of the village over adjacent countryside represent a special feature to be preserved. They are in their way as important as the open space of the green, which gives the centre of the village its feeling of space, peace and proportion, notwithstanding the relatively high density of building within the village envelope.

Settlement Pattern

With a reduction in agricultural employment, Askham Richard now has a population of less than 200, but many still work locally. The main local employers remain the George Naden estate and its farms, agricultural contractors, the public house, the prison and the school. A significant number of residents work or have worked for these local employers. There are no second homes or holiday homes in the village.

The village retains its church, a pub, a hall (which is used for meetings and as a polling station) and a Church of England primary school, which provides for children in this and some surrounding villages. However, a second pub, the village shop and the post office all closed many years ago. A telephone box and post box remain in their place. There is a visiting mobile library.

An infrequent local bus service provides the only public transport access to shops at Askham Bar and Tadcaster several miles away. There are no village sports facilities. The village shares its parish priest with nine other parishes. The nearest health provision is some miles away in surrounding villages and suburbs of York, none of which are easily accessible by public transport.

Architecture and Space in the Village

The entire village is a designated conservation area accessed by narrow lanes. For a village of its size it contains an unusually high number of listed buildings and structures, including its church whose origins lie in Saxon times. The listed buildings contribute greatly to the character of such a small village. Details appear in Appendix A. It retains a substantial village green and pond in the centre of the village and the majority of the buildings date from the 19th century and earlier. Newer buildings are largely individual or in small clusters. Of the farmhouses and cottages around the green, five are listed buildings, mostly dating from the 18th century. Whilst most frontages are close to the road, apart from those around the village green, there are large gardens and paddocks to the rear of several properties, especially to the south of the village which form an essential part of the character of the village and no development that would be detrimental to that character should be allowed.

By far the largest building in the village is Askham Grange, now an open prison for women, a substantial Victorian mansion with newer ancillary buildings all set in extensive landscaped parkland. This overlooks the green and is largely surrounded by a high brick wall. The village remains separated from other local populations by farmland, which entirely envelops it. Most new development has been by in-fill. Estate style development is on an insignificant scale, mostly to the northern end of the village.

General Character

The unique character of Askham Richard is succinctly summarised in its Conservation Area designation:

“Askham Richard retains an unusual degree of unity, because the traditional relationship between the village envelope and its agricultural landscaped setting remains largely intact. Recent development has been modest and appears as a natural evolution of the village. From the surrounding countryside, the village is compact and well tucked away in a backcloth of trees with the tower of Askham Grange poking through. There is an interesting contrast between the open, almost infinite, quality of the landscape outside the village and the protected, internal space of the elongated green within. The form of buildings and trees around the Green, its subtle changes in level, the diagonal route taken by the carriageway and the focal point of the pond have the picturesque and enduring qualities of an idyllic English village. Indeed buildings and boundary walls link together to enclose the Green virtually, with the quite narrow road entrances entering at either end, and the substantial but suitably set-back building mass of Askham Grange enclosing the north-west side.

“The contrast between Askham Grange and the otherwise small-scale two storey farmhouses and cottages create the feeling of an estate village, even though this is not a reality in historical terms.

“Many elements of a rural village survive: narrow plots of land extending back from the street with outbuildings behind the frontage properties reached by little lanes and yards; groups of 18th century farmhouses and associated farm buildings; the informal mixture of houses and smaller cottages unified by their scale, 2-storey height and traditional materials of brick, pantile and some slate roofing.

“On the east side, buildings cluster along the street frontage in a tighter composition, whereas the west side has more loosely arranged buildings, though drawn together visually by boundary walls. The wooded backcloth to Askham Grange is a strong enclosing feature on the north side. School Lane leads out of the village with the walled and wooded character of Askham Grange to one side and pleasant houses and cottages to the other. The various elements of the village, gathered and given unity around the Green, create a distinct impression of an unspoilt rural scene”.

“The main elements of the character and appearance of the area are:-

- 1. The unspoilt nature of the village envelope and the direct, traditional relationship with its rural setting.*
- 2. The picturesque qualities of the Green, arising from a relaxed, informal layout and vernacular building forms drawing together around the Green.*
- 3. The wooded setting afforded by the grounds of Askham Grange and other tree groups adding a sense of enclosure from within the village and from outside blending it naturally into the landscape”.*

(Source: City of York Council)

Modern Village Developments

Generally, developments and modifications to the village, which have followed changing lifestyles, have not impinged significantly on the distinctive character of the village, although numerous planning applications have been made which have required amendment before acceptance. Development of Askham Grange by the Home Office has not, however, respected traditional building styles or materials.

As modern agricultural practice changes it is conceivable that the existing farms and farmhouses may not all continue in their present form in the long term. New buildings may be needed to service different farming needs, leaving older buildings redundant. It is essential that redevelopment of any redundant farm buildings and land should respect the scale, proportion, rooflines and, where possible, materials of the existing buildings along with the architectural character of the adjoining buildings. The open feel of the village inside the envelope and its outward open views need to be retained together with its unity and sense of scale.

Askham Grange, which is designated as a park or garden of historic interest in the council's draft local plan, has made a significant contribution to the landscape quality of the area.

Characteristic Building Styles and Materials

See the centre fold for illustrative photographs

The task of providing a description and design guidelines is made more difficult because of the diversity of the village, which is part of its charm.

Scale and layout

The buildings are mostly smaller scale, of mixed pattern, and open aspect. There are no courtyard or estate pattern developments apart from small developments in Paddock Close and Snowdon Close and a development of mixed two and single storey dwellings in de Mowbray Court, all off School Lane.

Rooflines

Most buildings are two storey, terraced or individual houses, of traditional cottage or farmhouse style with a few more modern single storey dwellings and extensions. Pitched 35 degree roofs with end gable stacks predominate. Tall brick chimneys often feature a distinctive drip design. Roofing is mostly of traditional vernacular clay pantile and Victorian grey slate.

Walls and building materials

Most buildings are of a dark pinkish clamp brick pointed in a plain mid grey weathered mortar with some older buildings rendered and white-washed. A simple projecting string course or band of brick at ground or first floor level is a common feature. Some walls are made in part from cobbles, a distinctive feature of the area.

Windows and doors

Windows are varied, but the majority are of typical cottage proportions, with white painted timber frames and Georgian small glazed panes or Victorian sash designs. Typically windows are small, symmetrically disposed and of the same size in a facade, rather than of mixed size and asymmetric disposition. Generally styles in place remain true to the period in which the building was erected.

Boundaries

The village is characterised by numerous brick wall boundaries, many with distinctive locally quarried limestone or Leeds quarried gritstone coping stones. Some good new examples have been built in recent years. Fields and paddocks are divided by hedgerows and ditches and in some cases paddocks by open two or three rail and post fencing. Wooden panelled fencing is very uncommon. Most houses have an open rear aspect and relatively narrow plots, with views to the fields between them.

Village artefacts

The village pump house, drinking trough, entrances to Askham Grange and some interesting monuments in the churchyard are noteworthy.

There are a few discreet road signs and street names. The overwhelming impression is of a space free from clutter and modern street furniture, traffic calming devices, bus shelters and the like. There is very limited modern street lighting in de Mowbray Court and Snowdon Close and some limited forecourt lighting outside the Rose & Crown public house but otherwise the village remains free of light pollution at night. The village envelope has been kept free of telegraph poles and overhead power lines and elsewhere some overhead lines and cables have recently been brought underground.

Highways, paths and bridleways

Access is by narrow, unclassified metalled roads which have changed little over the past 200 years and which were designed to serve local agricultural traffic. They are an important feature of the village and form a natural traffic calming measure. In most places within the village there are pavements on one side of the road. There is virtually no street lighting, retaining a rural feel. There is little roadside parking.

The lanes provide a possible future "rat run" for traffic from the A64 Leeds-York dual carriageway to the B1224 York-Wetherby Road for those seeking to avoid using the ring road. Since heavy farm vehicles need to be able to use the road, this poses a problem in terms of safety.

Road widening would destroy the character of the village and even be detrimental to some buildings. Protection from both heavy traffic and commuters is desirable. Weight restrictions, except for agricultural or milk collection vehicles, would help, along with resident-only parking restrictions near the village school. Successful "soft" surface off street parking was provided for the recent terraced development in Snowdon Close in place of garages.

A number of well sign-posted footpaths and bridleways cross the fields to link Askham Richard to the neighbouring villages. The standard and maintenance of these paths and ways varies, as does the respect of local landowners for them. Fly tipping outside the village is a nuisance and an environmental issue.

Walls with limestone coping



Walls with limestone coping

Wall and brick texture and colour



Wall and brick texture and colour

Wooden gate in Askham Grange wall

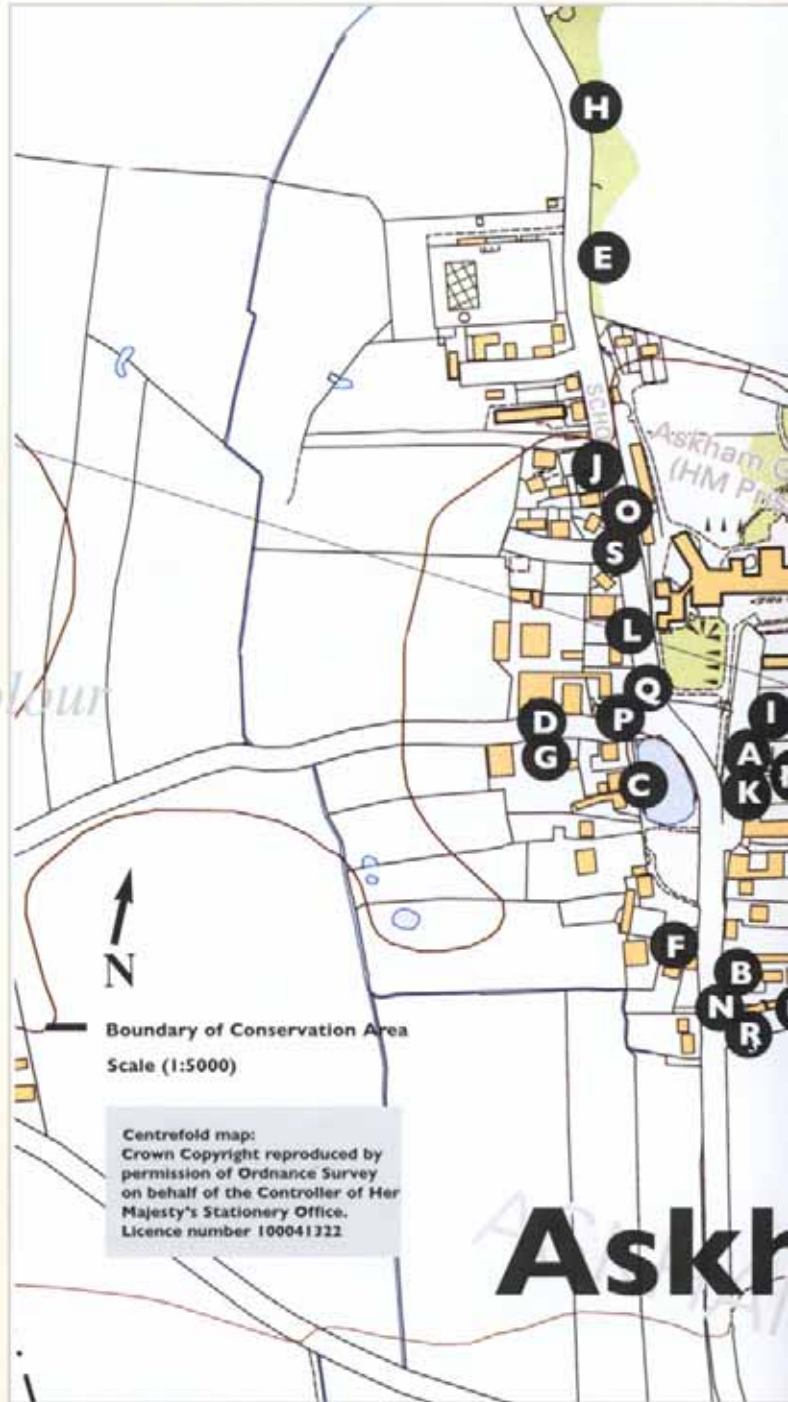


Wooden gate in Askham Grange wall

Brick band detail



Brick band detail



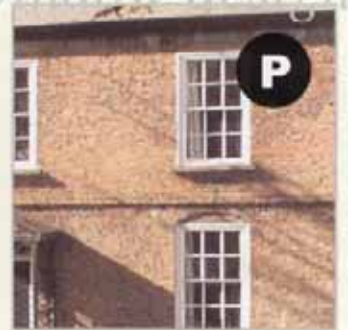
Askham



Roofline details

Roofline details

Typical window designs



Typical window designs



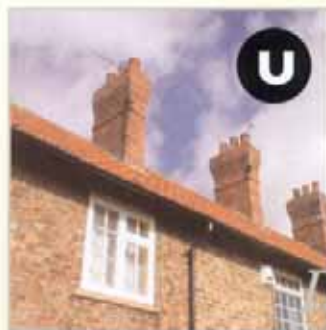
Typical farm house

Typical house



Door canopy

Door canopy



Drip chimney

Drip chimney

Askham Richard Village Design Guidelines

A VDS is not intended to be an obstacle to development. It recognises that change will always happen in a village. Its aim is to ensure that any change through development both respects the legacy of the past and maintains the quality of life of those living in the present, through good village design.

1. Settlement patterns and landscapes

1.1 The village should remain clearly separate from adjacent communities such as Askham Bryan, with its boundaries clearly identified.

1.2 Key views outward from the village (South from Buttacre Lane, South from Main Street, West from Mill Lane and North from School Lane) are special features and any development of the edge of the village should respect, maintain or provide views through to the open countryside.

1.3 The land and houses surrounding the village green and pond (being the centre of the village) is a special feature and must be preserved from any development at all.

1.4 The village church and churchyard should be protected from the impact of any local development to preserve their peaceful environment and special role in village life.

1.5 Development should reduce its visual impact by using a suitable boundary treatment and landscaping. Planting of appropriate species such as trees and low growing hedgerows which encourage wildlife and the use of native species should be encouraged where practicable. Boundary treatments should reflect traditional local materials and design. Hedgerows represent an important and special feature of the area and should be protected wherever possible.

1.6 Any development must enhance the approaches to the village and (by appropriate use of materials, scale and design) sit comfortably with the existing village envelope and respect both the density and mass of adjacent buildings.

2. Land and building use

2.1 Working farms in the village are fundamental to the character and the current form of these buildings of traditional character should be retained. Development should respect agricultural activity in the area. Surrounding land should be used for suitable agricultural or leisure use consistent with residential amenities in the village.

2.2 All development should make proper provision for sustainable forms of land drainage by ensuring that existing sewers are not stretched beyond their capacity, and that drainage does not have a detrimental impact on local wildlife.

2.3 Non-residential development should encourage local amenities such as a village store and local employment. Consideration should be given to change of use of suitable redundant farm buildings to small business use of a scale and operational intensity commensurate with the village setting to encourage local employment. Commercial developments should use equally high quality building design and reduce visual impact by proper landscaping using native broadleaf species and hedgerow shrubs.

2.4 All development should be of a density, mass and pattern consistent with the balance of the traditional village environment as described in this document. Development should respect existing building lines, spacing and rooflines and be set back appropriately from the road.

2.5 New planning applications for housing should encourage a scale and variety of housing that reflects and encourages a diverse social mix; they should ensure that any development adequately compensates for the enhanced demands of services as a condition of planning permission.

2.6 Residential development should avoid "executive" or "pattern book" estates or large-scale developments. Provision should be made for leaving land around development proportionate to its size. Brick walls of traditional village design and hedgerows rather than fences should define boundaries but post and rail and stock fences are appropriate in paddock and field boundaries.

2.7 Development should encourage proper provision for off road parking and access.

2.8 The Green Belt setting of the village, with its historic plot boundaries and rear gardens, should be protected with no form of inappropriate development or legal agreement allowed.

3. Planning consultation transparency

3.1 With applications for new buildings, the inclusion of 3D representations should be encouraged which accurately depict how buildings will appear in relation to adjoining buildings and their surroundings, particularly in terms of mass and landscaping.

3.2 Specific attention should be paid to particulars of materials: these should respect traditional materials, building techniques and detailing. These should weather consistently with existing mortar lines. Sample brick and mortar panels should be submitted where appropriate. Adequate opportunity should be given for inspection by those seeking access to the plans.

4. Architectural design features

General principles

4.1 Building styles and materials should be consistent with the traditional architecture and materials of current older village buildings and in keeping with the scale and density of existing buildings described in this document (see section entitled Characteristic Building Styles and Materials). Traditional local details should be acknowledged. Materials should be of high quality and of a colour to blend in without obvious discontinuity, making skilful use of spaces between buildings to assimilate new development and retain existing building lines.

4.2 Buildings subject to a change of use and therefore undergoing adaptation should not lose their traditional character and design.

4.3 Satellite dishes and similar appendages including oil tanks, waste bin housings and garden sheds should be installed away from the main building facade, opening or frontage, wherever practical.

4.4 Around the village green all new building must be of traditional vernacular construction to blend in with the immediate surrounding buildings. Particular attention should be given to the scale and detail of windows, pitches, gable ends, chimneys and porches as described in this document.

4.5 Elsewhere within the village more modern materials may be used with discretion provided they are of the highest quality, but should reflect the prevailing design and uses of existing materials in the locality. Insensitive rendering and masonry paint as an alternative to replacement of worn brickwork is discouraged. Chimneys should be renovated or repointed rather than being shortened or removed.

4.6 Any extensions or alterations to existing buildings should be governed by the same principles as new buildings both as to impact and design but in addition should make use of the same or complementary materials and finishes as the original building.

5. Detailed guidance

Simple village farmhouse designs in the village fronting the green and main street illustrate that there is ample opportunity to employ a variety of simple, unfussy designs complementary to the village without unnecessarily elaborate or expensive decoration, reflecting the diversity of the existing building stock but without resorting to pastiche. However, designs should demonstrate stylistic coherence and not “pick and mix” from the different building styles in the village. Features to take note of include:

Density, mass, form and scale

5.1 New buildings should be of a density and mass that is appropriate to the location. Within the development envelope, building designs should be particularly sensitive to the need to complement buildings immediately adjacent to the site, especially in terms of mass and boundary aspects.

5.2 Form and scale of development should be appropriate to the location and complement the cohesive character of the village.

5.3 Backland development should be well integrated into the existing village structure and community.

Overall plan and construction pattern

5.4 Developers should avoid monotonous designs and rooflines. Varying the position of features adds to the variety of roofscape or streetscape.

Examples of appropriate structures to take note of include:

- Two storey buildings with symmetrically disposed windows, windows on the same storey of the same size
- Straight Georgian panel or simple Victorian hung sashes in wooden casements.
- Chimneys set over middle or the ends of gables, not off-set.
- Chimney stacks rise from the ridge of the roof and are not shown outside the gable walls.
- 35 degree roof pitches using open eaves, not barge boards and fascias.
- Guttering applied by wall brackets built into walls.
- Mass, not just density, consistent with existing and in particular adjacent buildings

5.5 New buildings should be designed in such a way as to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and ideally meet the security requirements of the police 'secure by design' scheme, but only provided these requirements can be implemented in a manner sympathetic to and consistent with the character of the Conservation Area.

Materials

5.6 New buildings should use high quality materials in a manner sympathetic to the adjacent buildings.

Examples of traditionally used materials in the village to take note of include:

- Rough faced brick and mortar mixed to weather to match existing colours and textures. Use reclaimed brick where possible.
- Roof tiling of straight pantile or grey slates, with straight slate or other traditional material undercloaks on verges.
- Boundaries defined by simple limestone or gritstone rounded copings on brick boundary walls or (for paddocks) post and 2 or 3 rail boundary markers, not panelled fencing.
- Doors and window frames and casements are of traditional moulded wood or high quality facsimiles consistent with conservation area and listed building standards.
- Listed or relatively unaltered older houses use traditional style and design rainwater goods wherever possible.

Decorative details

5.7 New buildings should incorporate traditional decorative detailing as appropriate. Examples of simple decorative features in the village to take note of include:

- Simple string courses to first floor and plinth courses to ground floor.
- Corbelled brickwork on junctions of verges and eaves.
- Drips on chimneys.
- Segmental arches over openings.
- Dentilled eaves bands.
- Limestone coping on boundary walls, partial cobbling.

6. Village artefacts and street furniture

6.1 Local artefacts such as the water pump house, the drinking trough and the walls and side entry gates to Askham Grange gardens and to St Mary's church should be preserved and maintained.

6.2 Existing traditionally built walls, hedgerows and roadside verges should be retained and restored to a good condition whenever possible.

6.3 Artefacts surrounding the village green such as benches and rubbish bins should not be erected unless discreet, of high design and material quality, complementing existing building styles and subject to properly funded maintenance regimes.

6.4 The village green and pond should be maintained as a high quality, peaceful and car-free open space for general use by villagers and visiting public, with minimal intervention by artefacts and structures of any kind.

6.5 Any proposals for power lines, telecommunications towers and similar high impact equipment should take into account the environmental impact on the village. Power lines and telecommunications lines should be underground where practicable.

7. Highways and footpaths

7.1 Existing narrow, twisting lanes and roads, their hedgerows and natural verges are recognised as important features which should be retained and reflect the extensive recreational use made of them by walkers and cyclists.

7.2 Steps should be taken to inhibit use of the village as a "rat run" from the A64 to the Wetherby Road (B1224), especially by heavy traffic e.g. by weight restrictions. Further development of the A64 should include measures to protect the village from further through traffic.

7.3 Any advertising or signage should respect the context of the village; it should be low key (colour, size and lighting) and in keeping with a rural village.

7.4 Street signage and furniture should be kept to a minimum consistent with safety and the law. Any such material should be sympathetic to the village and of traditional design and colours. Light pollution should be avoided. Security lighting should be muted and directional in character. Public street lighting should be restricted to minimum levels and avoid urban and suburban models inappropriate to a rural environment.

7.5 Existing grass verges should be protected and maintained. Pedestrian pavements should be kept to a safe minimum and use of concrete kerbs and other urban elements minimised. Any traffic calming measures should be visually and aurally unobtrusive and should respect the needs of local agricultural activity e.g. livestock movements, milk collection, tractor and harvest traffic and its associated road use.

7.6 Existing footpaths should be maintained and any new ones put in using materials sympathetic to the existing village paths which are simple and discreet stone and tarmacadam.

Appendix A - Listed Buildings

1. *Church of Saint Mary, Jacksons Walk (east side) - Grade II**
2. *Coffin, 4m south of south door of St Mary's Church, Jacksons Walk (east side)- Grade II*
3. *Monument adjacent to exterior of east end of St Mary's Church, Jacksons Walk (east side) - Grade II*
4. *Prospect House, Main Street (west side) - Grade II*
5. *Rose Cottage, Main Street (west side) - Grade II*
6. *Jasmine Cottage, Main Street (west side) - Grade II*
7. *White House Farm, Main Street (east side) - Grade II*
8. *Cedar Tree Farm, School Lane (west side) - Grade II*

Acknowledgements

Research and editorial

Mary Baldwin, Gill Charlton, Val Croston, Jean Julian, Mike Hampshire, Keith Hodkinson, Pav Nawrocki, Joan Phillips, Jane Steward, Maureen Yeatman

Photography

Gill Charlton, Bob Maclean and Ken Croston

Architectural and planning consultant

Mark Savege

Financial Support

Challenge Fund
Rural West York Ward Committee

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*The three roads into Askham Richard,
(1) Main Street (2) Mill Lane (3) School Lane*