

Bonsall

Conservation Area Appraisal

9. General Condition

- Problems, Pressures & Capacity for Change



GENERAL CONDITION

Problems, Pressures & Capacity for Change

Buildings

Overall the general condition of building stock in the village is good. In the main buildings present a well maintained appearance, as do associated gardens and integral spaces.

Historic buildings in the area, both listed and un-listed are also generally in good condition. The exceptions to this in the past have been the Framework Knitters Workshops, both the listed workshop adjacent to Yew Tree Farm and the unlisted workshop to the rear of No 4 High Street. More recently both these buildings have had repair works undertaken to make them wind and weatherproof and which have resulted in preserving their character. The Bonsall Framework Knitters Group, the Bonsall Field Barn Project, the owners and the District Council, have worked together and managed to retain these historic buildings for future posterity.



Before

Framework Knitters Workshop The Dale



After



Framework Knitters Workshop, The Cross.

The Workshops are a unique feature of Bonsall's existing character and appearance as well as a record and depiction of the social history of the village and the industries they represented. Buildings which cannot easily be utilized for a viable end-use are more likely to become a burden for the owner and small buildings such as these, are difficult to find an end-use which can protect their long-term future. The loss of these buildings to the special character and appearance of the village, would be significant and it is important that these buildings are still considered as 'vulnerable' despite the recent efforts to preserve and protect them.

None of the historic buildings in the village have been formally designated as 'at risk' although the District Council has been made aware of the current situation regarding No. 1 High Street. This building is currently being monitored by the District Council and it will be added to the local 'Heritage at Risk' Register in 2011 if a scheme has not been brought forward for its repair / re-use.



No. 1 High Street

Field Barns

A further building type, which is prevalent in the landscape around Bonsall and where there is issue with disrepair and re-use, is field barns. Whilst there

are a high number of these small structures located across the Bonsall Moor, a number of them are contained within the Conservation Area. Again this is a highly vulnerable building type. These buildings are by their nature small scale and often situated in non-sustainable locations. Owners often do not wish to expend funds on maintaining a building which has no defined end-use. However, like the framework knitters workshops these structures are significant to the history and working origins of the area and their significance in the landscape should, where possible, be maintained and preserved (*See Appendix 3*).

Alterations to building details.

As in most conservation areas, where residential property has permitted development rights, alterations to windows and doors are the most common alterations, which cumulatively and significantly affect the character and appearance of the conservation area. Certain works are not permitted in a conservation area and require planning permission, but without a specific Direction (Article 4 Direction) which restricts minor works, inappropriate changes to window and door design/materials cannot be controlled. Hence, conservation areas, without an Article 4 Direction in place are under pressure from inappropriate changes. Appropriate designs and traditional materials enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area and can also help to increase the desirability of property as well as maintain / increase property values.

Public realm

Generally, structures in the public realm appear in good repair. Wells, watercourses, footpaths, stiles and retaining walls appear to be in reasonable / good condition. There is very little historic surfacing remaining in the village, other than isolated examples around Puddle Hill and St. James Church.

Features such as wells provide a unique part of the village character and as such should be protected against loss. Similarly water-courses, which provide sound, movement, vegetation and colour within the area, should also be protected from pressures such as unnecessary culverting.

Unfortunately, walls, particularly frontage walls to domestic properties, face pressure for loss due to the desire to provide off-road parking areas. The continued erosion of these walls will cumulatively lead to the loss of important components of the village and of structures that provide a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The 'pushing back' of

boundaries also leads to loss of garden areas. However, it is also recognized that street parking itself, presents a problem visually and physically within the village.

Sites

As mentioned in 'Negative Factors' some commercial buildings and associated land would benefit from improvements. The lorry park on Clatterway, whilst relatively well-screened from a number of public vantage points, nevertheless utilises an open piece of land for a relatively intensive use. As such the area shows signs of 'wear and tear' with resulting uneven surfacing. Large vehicles using both the access carriageway and parking area have an impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Lorry park on Clatterway

The majority of inappropriate development in terms of building styles and materials is located beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area. Within the village there are few sites remaining for development. Where infill is proposed this should follow the 'grain' of traditional development patterns of the village. Built structures should also incorporate the correct traditional building materials, designs and details for the homogeneity of the character of the village to continue.