

# HELME

## CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Helme Conservation Area (ID No. 7) was designated on 12th December 1975. This report has considered and approved the proposed boundary changes of the Helme conservation area.

Helme is an idyllic and compact hamlet of mainly eighteenth and nineteenth century stone weavers' cottages and farm buildings in a rural setting, in which trees are an important element.

This appraisal seeks to define what is special about the Helme conservation area, and to provide information about its historic development and architectural worth. Additionally, a number of issues (the impact of traffic and new development being the most important) are identified and proposals put forward which seek the future preservation and enhancement of the area.

#### 1.1 Conservation Areas

The designation of areas (rather than individual buildings) of special architectural and historic interest was first set out in the Civic Amenities Act 1967, and since then over 9,000 conservation areas have been designated in England and Wales.



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Kirklees Metropolitan Council has 60 conservation areas and approximately 4500 listed building, 1% of all listed buildings in England.

Conservation areas are defined as ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’ (Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Conservation areas are recognised for the contribution they make to the cultural heritage and economic well being of the country and to the locality.

An area with conservation area status imposes a duty on Kirklees Council to preserve and enhance the quality and character of the conservation area. Designation as a conservation area strengthens existing development policy in the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (UDP) to preserve and enhance the appearance and character of the conservation area.

Helme is designated as a conservation area due to its special architectural and historic interest, following the recent Helme conservation area appraisal there has been a boundary extension to incorporate Helme Hall and its historic estate.

‘In considering further designations authorities should bear in mind that it is important that conservation areas are seen to justify their status and that the concept is not devalued by the designation of areas lacking any special interest.’ (Para. 4.3, PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment).

Kirklees Metropolitan Council when designating a new conservation area has a statutory duty to undertake a conservation area appraisal, which this document comprises. English Heritage has produced guidance on preparing conservation area appraisals, which has formed the basis of this document, in conjunction with local criteria and policies contained in PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment.

When designating a conservation area, there is an expectation by Central Government that supplementary guidance will be developed for each conservation area to further preserve and enhance the quality of the environment. The planning system in England is currently undergoing reform. In the future a Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the Unitary Development Plan for Kirklees. The LDF will include a core strategy to set out the key elements of the planning framework for the area. This may set criteria for identifying locations and priorities for area action plans to be prepared. Area Action Plans,

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covering conservation areas, should set out priorities and proposals for action to preserve and enhance the area, including defining areas where specific conservation measures are proposed and areas that will be subject to specific controls over development.

This conservation area appraisal could be used as a basis for an action plan in conjunction with the LDF. For the Helme conservation area, this appraisal was subject to public consultation and the views of the local amenity societies and residents were sought. The final draft was formally adopted by the Council on 7th March 2007.

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### 2. LOCATION, SETTING AND POPULATION

#### 2.1 Location and Context

Helme lies in a valley in the shadow of Meltham Cop and is approximately five miles South West of Huddersfield Town Centre. The conservation area is approximately 5 hectares and is situated 200 metres above sea level and is bordered by the reservoir at Blackmoorfoot and associated conduit. It is a rural settlement located on a south eastern slope and is largely surrounded by an enclosed field system which is predominantly agricultural land connected by a network of tracks and footpaths.

Nearby settlements include Meltham (1.9km) to the south, Linthwaite (3.5km) to the north and Honley (7.6km) to the east. Helme can be accessed from Meltham along Helme Lane and Slades Lane and culminates at the junction where a small road branches off towards the Helme Church of England Junior and Infant School and Christ Church. Local place names such as Helme Edge and Crosland Edge could signify the edge or ridge, which contributes to the setting of Helme and the place name, The Heys, would signify an enclosure or early farmstead.

The Unitary Development Plan shows Helme as located in Green Belt and is intersected by land designated as an area of High Landscape Value. It is situated near the heavily built up Highfields area of Meltham and beyond that is the dramatic backdrop of the Peak District National Park.

Helme is included in the 2001 Kirklees area settlement profile under the Meltham settlement with a total population figure of 8,079.



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### **2.2 Soils and Geology**

Helme is located on Upper Carboniferous, Lower Westphalian Coal Measures, overlain by Carboniferous and Jurassic sandstone with well-drained soils over sandstone. Its geology is therefore naturally porous, and requires the use of natural clays to retain water in the form of reservoirs. Local quarries, such as the one in the environs of Helme Hall (1893), produced stone for vernacular buildings and flagstones for tracks and paths. The enclosure of fields in the late 18th century created a demand for stone boundary walls; these are still dominant in the landscape and visually connect the built environment with the natural landscape of Helme.

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### 3. HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 Origins, development and archaeology of the Helme settlement

There are three scheduled ancient monuments within a close proximity to the Helme conservation area. There is a late prehistoric enclosure settlement (01205) to the south west of Helme, which is situated on Oldfield Hill. There is a good survival of an enclosure, with an external ditch bank, on Royd Edge (31507), where various finds have been discovered including a spindle whorl and a sandstone disc. The Scheduled Ancient Monument of Crosland Lower Hall Moated Site (13286) is situated at South Crosland. There is a large amount of Ancient Woodland to the East of the conservation area at Hall Heys Wood, Greasy Slack Wood, Honley Old Wood and Bank Wood.

The name Helme is of Saxon origin and means a shelter, or alternatively a cattleshed. The name first appears in a written document in 1421, and in 1559 there is an entry in the register of the church of Almondbury, then the parish for this area, of John Sykes, son of Barnard of Helme, being baptised at Almondbury.

There is little reference made to the village of Helme from the Middle Ages to the 18th century but it was quite possible that it was a very small agricultural community throughout this time. The village was quite self sufficient by the mid 19th century and had springs, wells, a coal pit and a number of sandstone quarries in the immediate vicinity. The community of Helme developed during the 19th century with the construction of a school and parish church, Christ Church on Slades Lane. Prior to the construction of the church in 1858 Helme formed part of the chapelry of Meltham.





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The modest development of Helme can be attributed to the population growth of Meltham during the Industrial Revolution as the textile industry changed from the domestic system to the factory system.

The development of Helme has largely been organic rather than planned, and has followed Slades Lane in a typical linear and ribbon development pattern. The oldest farm buildings date from the eighteenth century and form the historic core of the village. There are two vernacular buildings adjacent to the village centre and others built within a short distance. There are a few cottages, of various dates, which are built nearby, and were probably constructed for the farm workers.

Within the conservation area there has been little 20th century development and the character of the area has been well maintained. There has been some minor alteration and extension within the immediate environs of the conservation area but it retains its predominantly rural character.

The development at Helme Hall is part of the history and development of Helme. It is a large manor house, set in its own woodland and built for the cotton thread manufacturer, Edward Hildred Carlile. The material used to construct the Hall was quarried locally from a quarry situated on the site, which is now no longer evident from maps.

### **3.1 Historic Patronage**

The family with the greatest influence on the plan form in the Helme Conservation Area is the Brook family and in particular the construction of the parish church by Charles Brook in memory of his son Charles John Brook. Helme was particularly important to Charles John Brook who visited the people of Helme in their homes to read the bible with them.

Charles Brook (senior) was the son of William Brook, who in 1774 came from Bradford and took Thick Hollins, then the principal house in the neighbourhood. William Brook built mills for the manufacture of woollen cloth on the stream running through Meltham Mills.

Charles Brook (senior) lived at Healey House until his death in 1869 and was buried in Helme churchyard with his wife. He built a silk mill and a few cottages for the skilled workers in nearby Bent Ley in 1840 but many of the workers who had emigrated from Nottingham and the Midlands settled in Helme. This may

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explain why historical maps show the development of a well-trodden path from Helme to Bent Ley. The mill remained in the parish of Helme until 1838/9 when they were given to Meltham Mills parish marking the Huddersfield Road boundary and breaking the connection between Bent Ley and Helme.

Charles John Brook died in 1857 at the age of twenty-seven and it was his family including his brothers and sisters subscribed to build the church at Helme in his memory. His father endowed the church with £5000 and the church was consecrated in 1859.

The granddaughter of Charles John Brook, Helen Hirst, married Edward Lindsey Fisher and they came to live at Helme Hall in the late 19th century where the family remained until 1945.

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### 4. CHARACTER ANALYSIS

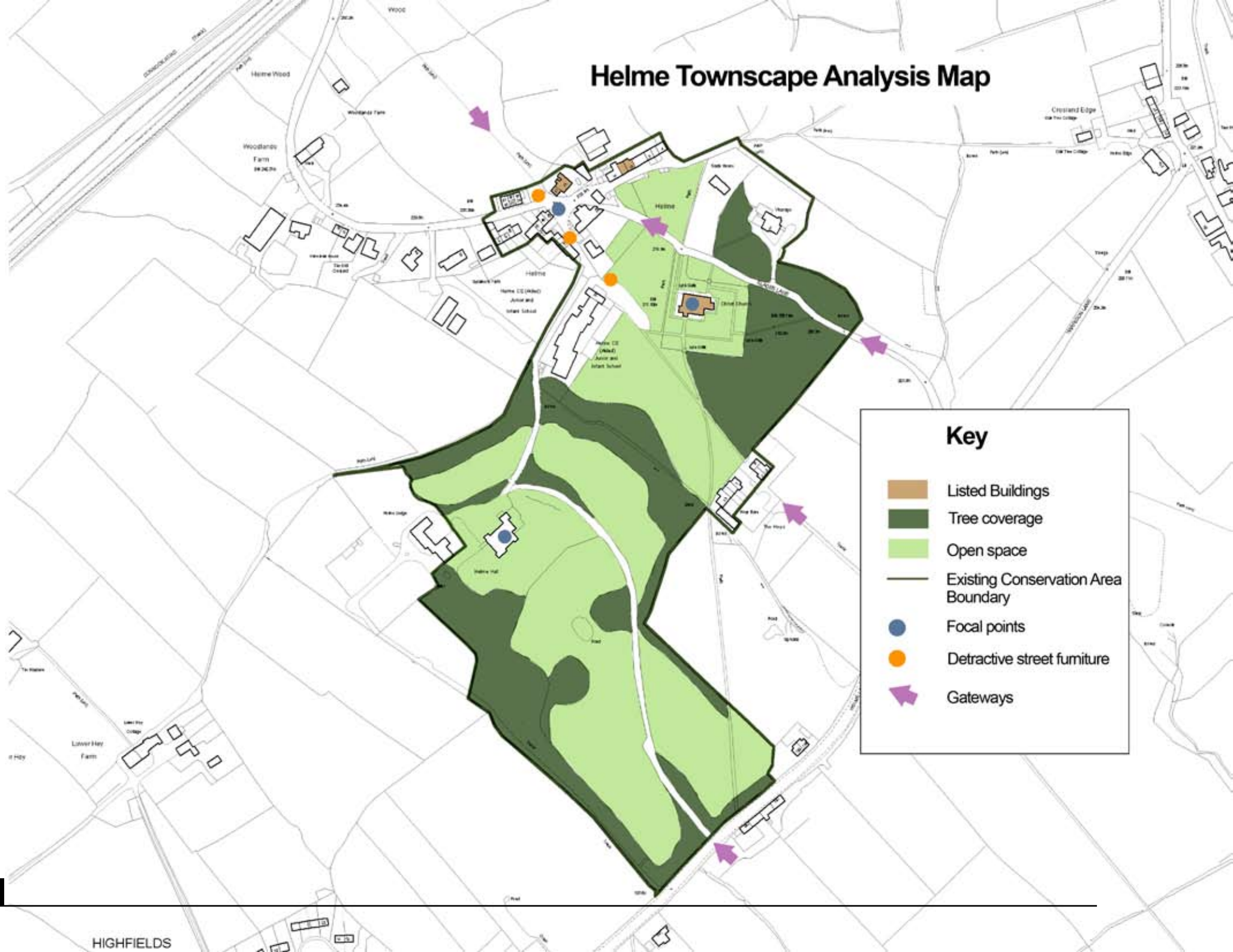
The Helme conservation area is confined to the village and the immediate area to the south, and this includes the church, vicarage and The Heys, which are all important in demonstrating the development of Helme. The overall character of the Helme conservation area is an attractive example of a former upland farming and handloom weaving settlement. The historic core of the village is compact and includes a clustered settlement of houses and farm buildings; it is predominantly residential set within a rural setting with extensive views of Meltham and Honley Moors in the backdrop.

The form of the settlement is mainly nucleated with more recent development forming a minor linear offshoot towards the north of the settlement. Many of the buildings of Helme boldly project onto Slades Lane, which provides an attractive streetscape through the length of the village. This gives the appearance of the road and the houses forming one landscape and interrelating comfortably with each other. It also demonstrates the importance of the rural landscape to the inhabitants in terms of agriculture and economics. They are slightly recessed behind one another and it creates an attractive rhythm as the road descends. The construction material is natural stone with stone slate roofs and the roof pitch varies, the church, school and vicarage have a steep pitch but the vernacular buildings and farmhouses have a shallow pitch.

It is important to recognise that Helme illustrates the typical development of a West Yorkshire Pennine hamlet. The plan form has mainly been influenced by agriculture, textile production, and the philanthropy of the Victorians. The first impressions appear to be an ordinary, quiet and modest vernacular village with later infill. However, within Helme the vernacular contrasts with the stylistic and polite architecture, especially at the church, Helme Hall and the school. The pointed arch is apparent throughout the village, and is found on gables, boundary walls, lych gates, gatepiers and on numerous buildings.

The village culminates at an informal point, whereby a composition of buildings within the centre of the village, display an outward orientation facing onto the buildings which line Slades Lane and the approach to the church. The church sits within an enclosed space in an open green space, and is linked to the southern part of the conservation area by a small tarmac path. The church, and the tall spire, sits in the landscape as a mark of punctuation, and the change of level on the ascending approach from The Heys gives the church a position of command, superiority and exposure. This local landmark identifies the village from the surrounding villages and landscape. The Heys appear to be guarding the conservation area from this

# Helme Townscape Analysis Map



### Key

- Listed Buildings
- Tree coverage
- Open space
- Existing Conservation Area Boundary
- Focal points
- Detractive street furniture
- Gateways

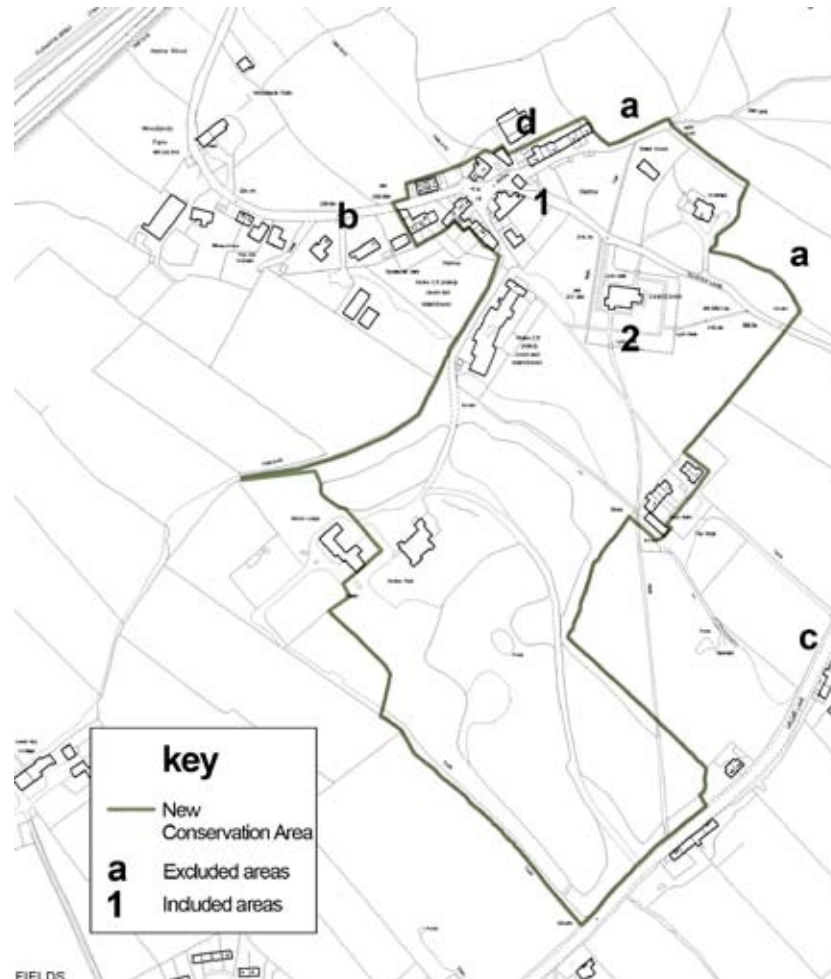
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southern prospect. The Heys are a mix of substantial residential and agricultural buildings with interesting architectural details, including barge boarding.

Slades Lane is the most important access point into the settlement; this is a narrow road, offset by a number of trees, which line the winding approach into the village. The road narrows to a pinch point and culminates in a detracted view before entering the settlement. The trees and woodland areas are predominantly situated at the East and West of the village but provide both seclusion and enclosure from the high density housing at Highfield.

There is a framework of paths and footpaths within and leading away from the conservation area, connecting it to local areas and leading through an established field pattern. The rural backdrop of enclosed agricultural fields marks the boundary of the conservation area and sufficiently frames the settlement.



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To the east of the church are a couple of houses, which are neo-vernacular and are set in their own grounds. There is evidence of 20th century development and modern infill within the boundaries of the conservation area and within the immediate environs, particularly to the north, but this does not detract from the character of the conservation area and includes aspects of vernacular architectural detail.

### 4.1 Activities and Uses

The principal activity within the Helme conservation area is residential although educational activity is also a major element due to the size and position of Helme Church of England Junior and Infant School. There appears to be a low level of vehicular through traffic and although there is a pinch point in the narrow highway this does not appear to create any major traffic hazard. There is agricultural activity within Helme and commercial interest in the form of the Helme Hall Nursing Home and stables to the north.



*New development with vernacular details*

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### 5. THE BUILDINGS OF HELME

#### 5.1 Introduction

The buildings of Helme conservation area are varied in terms of age and architectural style. The buildings display a local domestic style and date from the 18th and 19th century. There are a number of interesting weavers' cottages, some with three storeys, and are built in terracing although there is no evident standard size. There are a number of buildings within irregular groupings, and these have produced a chaotic roofscape, which is considered to be one of the most noticeable characteristics of buildings within the area.

There are a number of Victorian buildings, which enhance the village scene, and these include the church, the vicarage, and the school. These are all considered as key elements within the conservation area. The plot size of the older cottages is fairly consistent except those buildings, such as 33 Slades Lane, which has had to fit the curvature of the road at the rear of the plot.

#### 5.2 Listed Buildings

There are a number of listed buildings in the Helme conservation area, and these range from houses built from the 17th century to those of the 19th century. Their location tends to be within the center of the conservation area and they are all listed grade II.

A focal point of the village is the spire of Christ Church on Slades Lane, which is a Grade II listed building. It is an appealing building set within an attractive open space and was built in 1859 to commemorate the life of Charles John Brook of Thick Hollins. It is a Gothic Revival church built in the Decorated Style and is constructed of rock faced stone and has a steeply pitched red plain tiled roof. The roof has an unusual arrangement; the steep pitch leads into a cat slide arrangement, which is mirrored in the roof of the adjacent school.

Christ Church is set within a graveyard, which has been recently extended, and at each of the four compass points there is an attractive lych gate (which is quite unusual) leading off towards tracks and paths to other parts of the conservation area. Within the interior of the church are a number of double chamfered arches



Christ Church



Entrance to Christ Church

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and a gilded eagle lectern of 1908 with an Art Nouveau stem. There are also two bells recorded by the UCL but these are identified as 'unringable'.

The church was dedicated to the people of Helme to serve their religious needs and its geographical position represents it as a community building. It is located within a central site in relation to all the buildings within the village and all paths lead to its lych gates. The Sunday morning church walk therefore has a defined beginning and end, with everyone coming together in a uniform procession to the heart of the village.

Numbers 14-16 Slades Lane are 18th century weavers' cottages with a multiple of mullioned windows, quoins, kneelers and a low pitch roof. The building includes a large lintel with a datestone inscription of R W M 1753.

Numbers 10-12 Slades Lane is a handed pair of weavers' cottages where the building dates from the 17th century but has 19th century alterations. Number 10 has a large lintel over the door with a datestone but the date is illegible, both buildings are of 3 storey and incorporate transom windows on the ground floor with interesting hood mouldings.

### 5.3 Key Unlisted buildings/Buildings of Merit

There are a number of buildings within the conservation area which contribute to the townscape and overall character of the area and are buildings of townscape merit. No appraisal can be completely comprehensive and any omission does not imply that a building has no interest. The buildings of townscape merit include:

- The dwelling attached to Helme C of E Junior and Infant School (excluding alterations) – This building has a number of architectural details and a Gothic influence. These include the pointed arches, transom windows, stone window surrounds, tall chimneys, and steep pitched roof.
- The Barn opposite Number 33 Slades Lane – This barn has a low-pitched roof, large and wide, central cart entrance and a blocked door to the right. It has a central position within the conservation area and interesting vernacular details. It is reflective of the agricultural history of Helme and its gable end is significant as it forms part of the Gateway view.



14 - 16 Slades Lane



10 - 12 Slades Lane



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- Number 39 Slades Lane – An 18th century farmhouse with a built on barn and architectural details including a Venetian window, a large lintel, a datestone, pad stones and quoins.
- The Vicarage Slades Lane – Is a large stone building dating to the 19th century with a steep pitched roof and Gothic influence.
- Number 33 Slades Lane – House within the village nucleus at a strategic point at the Gateway of the conservation area. It is a building where parts date from the 17th and 18th century and it displays interesting architectural details.
- Number 17 Slades Lane – Also known as Elmfield House and includes a datestone of 1861. It has the characteristic pointed gable with a low pitch roof and sash windows.



*Barn opposite number 33*



*39 Slades Lane*



*The Vicarage*

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### 5.3 Key Vistas/Views and Focal Points

There are a number of extensive panoramic views from almost all parts of the village; some of these include the following:

- Views from Helme Wood looking towards the conservation area show the village within its geographical context. The topography of the land falls towards Helme Lane with the church spire and moorlands in the far distance.
- The view of the church and The Heys from Helme Lane looking up towards the conservation area is also noteworthy.
- The view from Slades Lane looking down towards the school and the church is a detracted view provides a glimpse of the rural background below.
- The view of the pinch point looking from Slades Lane on the approach at the entrance and exit from the conservation area. The view from the entrance into the conservation area follows the dynamic curve and continues throughout the journey into the village core. The road is the focus of the streetscape and traverses the landscape in a fluid motion.
- The glimpse through the gatepiers of Christ Church from Slades Lane
- The spatial relationship of buildings within the conservation area allows glimpses through to the landscape and buildings beyond.

#### Focal point

The focal point is the position at the junction of Slades Lane and the small road in the direction of the church, which marks the centre of the village.

Focal Buildings Include:

- The Christ Church, particularly the spire
- 14-16 Slades Lane
- The Helme C of E Junior and Infant School
- The Vicarage

These are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map



*Glimpse through Christ Church gatepiers*



*15 Slades Lane*

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### 6. BOUNDARY DEFINITION

#### 6.1 Gateways

Gateway views within the Helme conservation area are located at the following positions:

- At the entrance to the conservation area at Slades Lane. The road narrows to a pinch point and culminates in a detracted view before entering the settlement.
- The view from Helme Wood looking downwards at the conservation area below
- At the boundary of the conservation area at Slades Lane. The tree lined road winds as it ascends the hill towards the conservation area.
- The view of The Heys from Helme Lane. These buildings appear to be guarding the southern entrance to the village. As you approach The Heys there is a glimpse of the village behind and the appearance of the church spire landmark.

#### 6.2 Included Areas

There are a number of included areas within the conservation area of different character and these are described below:

##### 1) The Village Nucleus

This sub area is the most built up part of the conservation area, although it remains rural in character. It has the majority of earlier buildings and is an enclosed area.

##### 2) The Southern section

This part of the settlement includes the later community buildings, the vicarage and a large modern building to the east. It represents the later development of the conservation area and the planned rather than organic growth. This is an attractive area of open space and wooded areas.



*Gateway at the entrance*



*Gateway from Helme Wood*



*Gateway to the Heys*

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### 6.3 PROPOSED BOUNDARY EXTENSION

Proposals to extend the existing conservation area boundary was carefully assessed, considered and approved by the Conservation and Design Department, this includes adding the following extensions:

#### Helme Hall

An extension to the west of Helme conservation area to include Helme Hall and the existing estate boundary. Helme Hall is described in George Sheeran's Brass Castles as a large Manor House constructed in ashlar in 1887 for Edward Hildred Carlile, a cotton thread manufacturer, and the architect is unknown. It continues by describing the plan form as a simple hall and cross wing with a good standard of craftsmanship and internal detail including painted glass in naturalistic patterns reminiscent of Malins.

The design of the house is noted as being successful in its attempt not to reproduce an earlier style but to reinterpret it. It has a number of vernacular details and is constructed from a mellow, grey stone. It has a steep pitch roof, kneelers, ball finials, tall chimneys and transom windows. The gardens are quite extensive, the wooded areas are impressive and a formal approach, gate piers and iron railings mark the access from Helme Lane.

The development of the Hall and grounds occurred sometime between 1851 and 1892. A quarry to the west of the site supplied the local natural sandstone to construct the Hall together with a building to the west. Between 1892 and 1906 the adjacent woodland to the south was created and between 1856 and 1865 the marshland and pond appear to the east of the site at the location of the old quarry. There has been little change between 1965 and 1997 apart from the creation of a pond in the middle of the site and a water hole to the southwest.

Helme Hall is now a Nursing Home offering a high standard of care to the elderly, and is, socially and economically, an extremely important part of the local community.

Consideration should extend to the possibility of including the properties which currently continue along Slades Lane to Helme Wood. This should be a consideration for the proposed extension at the review in five years time.



*Helme Hall*

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### 6.4 EXCLUDED AREAS

- a. The boundary to the East and West consists of agricultural land within an area designated as High Landscape Value whereby policies in the Local Development Framework should preserve its contribution. This land is therefore outside of the historic built environment and is an effective cut off point but continues to enhance the setting of the conservation area.
- b. To the northwest are a number of modern buildings, which, despite having vernacular qualities, possess a different character and do not enhance the character of the conservation area, and these should therefore remain excluded.
- c. To the south of the conservation area are a number of buildings which run adjacent to Helme Lane, and these are later developments with a number of extensions to those within the village. Craddin Cottage is an interesting 18th century building and is a listed building; this building is therefore afforded statutory protection as part of the listed building status. It does not therefore need additional protection by including it in the conservation area.
- d. To the north of the conservation area is a large modern agricultural building to the rear of the terrace at 10-12 Slades Lane. This detracts from the conservation area and should remain excluded.



*Excluded areas*



*Excluded areas*



*Craddin Cottage*

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### 7. URBAN GRAIN, PUBLIC REALM AND STREET FURNITURE

The urban grain of Helme is distinguished by the use of natural stone for buildings and walls, gatepiers and kerbstones. Historically the main roads and pavements would have been paved with York stones, setts and cobbles, with less important alleys in simple rammed earth and crushed stone dressing. There are few examples remaining and most of the roads and pavements are surfaced with tarmac. However, there are some good examples of traditional streetscape and these include:

- The boundary walls, hedges and dry stone walls throughout the village, many of which have pointed arched coping stones.
- Pointed arched gatepiers at the entrance to Christ Church and associated wooden gates

There are items of notable historic street features and street furniture which add character to the conservation area including:

- Wall mounted post box in 'pillar-box red'.
- An iconic K6 telephone kiosk
- Four lych gates at Christ Church
- Steps leading from the east lych gate towards the vicarage
- Historic Iron gates at the entrance to the car park at The Green
- Small wooden gate at the entrance from the car park through the church.

There is potential to improve existing elements of street furniture such as street lighting, seating, road signage, utilities service equipment and a scheme to reintroduce traditional street surfaces could be beneficial.



*Lych gate*



*Lych gate*



*Historic gate*

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### 8. BUILDING TYPES, ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS, BUILDING STYLES AND MATERIALS

#### 8.1 Dwellings

The age of the dwellings within the conservation area date from the 17th century to the 20th century. A number of the earlier buildings are large and have attached barns, and there are a couple of modern dwellings, which are the same size towards the southern end of the conservation area.

The buildings tend to be residential dwellings and converted farm buildings. Building materials are exclusively of millstone grit and hammer dressed coursed stone with stone slate roofs. The stone has a traditional millstone grit rough textured finish and appearance. The buildings are generally domestic in scale, just two and occasionally three storeys high. There are also examples of back-to-back terrace housing on 18-28 Slades Lane with a blocked piece door on the second storey. These piece doors were essentially used to provide a level through which raw materials for textile production were taken to and from the work floor. Another piece door is located at Number 33 Slades Lane.

There are a number of vernacular details and reoccurring architectural details, which are generally respected and included in the new developments, these include:

- Low and steep pitched roofs
- Hipped roofs and Cat Slide roofs
- Kneelers and large quoin stones



*Terrace at 18 - 28 Slades Lane*



*Terrace at 4 - 8 Slades Lane*



*Blocked window and kneelers*

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- Multiple recessed mullion windows in a continual line with stone window surrounds, sash windows and transom windows
- Blocked taking-in doors and windows
- Venetian windows
- Cart Entrances, Loft doors and Ventilation holes such as at the barn opposite number 33 Slades Lane
- Pointed arches at porches and gable ends.
- Barge Boarding and stone gutter brackets
- Coping stone roof details
- Date stones and Pad stones

The village also includes a good example of new infill development south of number 33. This is a house, which has vernacular details, including mullion windows. Despite the fact that there are a number of minor outbuildings within the village there is no intrusive development within the central core of the village.



*Venetian window*



*Barge boarding at the Heys*



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### 9. OPEN SPACES AND TREE COVERAGE

Woodland, trees, open spaces and landscape play an important role in the character of the Helme Conservation Area and it provides an attractive setting. The trees and the walls provide an element of connectivity and cohesion to the conservation area. The open space around the school and the church is a peaceful and quiet area. It is currently used as a small car parking area and is informally surfaced with tarmac. There is potential for enhancement and improvement to the hard and soft landscaping in this area as the tarmac is beginning to fail. Traditional surfaces, planting, seating and setts could be an alternative and could be expanded to the area opposite the bus stop. This could also be used to formalise the path from Christ Church to The Heys, which is currently a narrow tarmac path.

The graveyard is a pleasant open space and is well maintained, it also incorporates a number of established and healthy trees, which will provide shelter and solitude for visitors. The approach along Slades Lane at the entrance to the conservation area is wooded and also very attractive. There are a number of streams and a watercourse running parallel to Slades Lane, which are an enhancement to the conservation area.

Helme Hall is situated within enclosed woodland and gardens, which provides a quiet retreat and insulates against the noise from the vehicular traffic on Helme Lane and the housing estates at Highfields. The approach through the trees is reminiscent of a grand and formal approach, a characteristic of great estates in a bygone era.

Due to the fact that the built environment and street layout has remained undisturbed for a significant period, mature trees have integrated within the paths and roofscape. These provide both ecological and aesthetic benefits and also shelter open spaces from the elements. The open spaces of the moorland and agricultural fields are an important buffer to the conservation area and enhance its setting, maintaining the historic rural character of the area. There are a number of well-tended gardens and lawn areas throughout the conservation area.



*Woodland*



*Open space and view to the heys*



*Graveyard*

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### 10. AREAS OF RISK

#### 10.1 Buildings at Risk

Most of the buildings in Helme are in good condition. There is one building, which appears to be falling into disrepair and requires a minimum amount of maintenance. This is number 27 Slade Lane, which is a pleasant building and is not detracting from the conservation area but will require attention to maintain the overall appearance.



*27 Slades Lane*

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### 11. NEGATIVE FACTORS

Within this attractive area, there appear to be notable negative factors. Negative factors include anything which does not enhance or preserve the character of the conservation area, and as well as large scale developments can include incremental changes such as the installation of uPVC windows and doors, satellite dishes, plastic guttering and unsympathetic alteration and extension.

In order to control this incremental change the local authority can introduce an Article 4 (2) Direction and in effect remove any permitted development rights to ensure that the character of the conservation area is preserved.

There are a number of extensions and alterations, brown stained window frames, uPVC windows, inappropriately designed windows, large aerals and rooflights which do not enhance the area and will contribute to a loss of the architectural integrity.

The bus stop is constructed of concrete and is not locally distinctive, if this is replaced more thought should be given to an appropriate natural stone appearance. There is no evidence of graffiti nor is there any litter and the area has a generally well maintained appearance, although some of the dry stone walls may require attention and there are a noticeable amount of overhead wires, especially emulating from the pole outside the school.

At the time of the appraisal a number of trees had been cut down on Slades Lane and some tipping and dumped material was evident. This should be avoided in the future and if this continues will detract from the conservation area.

The position of the buildings within the historic core and chaotic nature of their arrangement has lead to a lack of on street parking and loading space. This has led to informal car parking at the point where the street pattern converges. There is no obvious solution to this problem and this deserves further consideration.



*Bus stop*



*Negative factors*



*Haphazard arrangement at the historic core*

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### **12. ECONOMIC NEED**

There are a number of commercial interests in Helme, including stables but the emphasis is on the number of modern large dwellings recently erected within the conservation area and in the immediate environs. This gives an impression of an economically prosperous village. Regular maintenance of street furniture and the built environment through incremental improvements, such as the replacement of unsympathetic windows and minor additions, will contribute to increased house prices and retain the image of a popular residential location.

### **13. POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE**

Designation as a conservation area imposes a duty on Kirklees Council to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, it does not imply that change is not permitted but enables the Local Authority to manage such change.

In Helme there has been some modern infill development, but this has been kept to a minimum and is a good standard. A number of the older properties were modernised by the 1970's and further major changes are not expected. It is hoped that additional, large, temporary farm buildings such as the one behind 10-12 Slades Lane will not be required as this may be detrimental to the conservation area.

New buildings, extensions and alterations should respect the height, plot size, massing, materials and details of the existing vernacular buildings and infill developments should be limited. Further information on the design of the built environment in conservation areas can be found in the Local Development Framework.

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### **14. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

This appraisal seeks to explain what is important and precious about the Helme conservation area and to suggest ways in which its character and appearance can be best preserved and enhanced for future generations. Whilst the Council can initiate improvements and control new development, the co-operation and enthusiasm of local residents provides a vital constituent to the future successful management of the conservation area. This means that local residents and other property owners need to work with the Council and agree common aims and objectives. Hopefully, this appraisal will provide a framework for a positive partnership for mutual benefit.

#### **14.1 Feedback from the Public Consultation**

The residents of Helme received a leaflet, a questionnaire and a map with details of the proposed extension. In addition, a public meeting was held on Thursday 15th February 2007. It was not possible to hold a separate unmanned exhibition as the chosen venue was the local school.

94 leaflets have been distributed to residents of Helme and its immediate environs and 18 questionnaires were returned, which is a 19% return rate. Of the reply's received 55% were in favour of the proposed extension and a further 33% suggested additional boundary extensions. The remaining replies could not see the benefit of the proposed extension and this included the residents of Helme Lodge who accompanied their questionnaire with a strong letter of objection.

The public meeting was held on the 15th February 2007. There was no consensus about the proposed boundary extensions, the resident of Helme Lodge voiced objections concerning the timescale for response and the inclusion of his property in the proposed boundary. Other members of the public, such as the owner of Helme Hall were more positive once a justification had been given for the proposal. Members of Meltham Parish Council also voiced concerns about the timescale for replies but did not object to the proposed extension.

A further letter of objection from the owner of Helme Lodge was received from Mr Marney. In response to this subsequent objection it is the opinion of the Conservation and Design team that Mr Marney's property is excluded from the proposed boundary extension. The current Helme Hall estate will remain in the

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proposed boundary extension as there has been public support for its inclusion from the public meeting and the questionnaire replies. The new site boundary in this area has been determined using the land ownership boundary included in a recent planning application. Any further extensions will be reviewed at the next appraisal, due in five years time.

### **15 CONCLUSION**

Helme Conservation Area retains the special architectural and historic interest as identified from the initial designation in 1975; there is some scope for enhancement, especially in terms of improvement to the streetscape, public realm and traffic issues. The appraisal of Helme conservation area within this document will form the basis of an effective management plan. The appraisal of Helme conservation area within this document has formed the basis of an effective management plan.

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### APPENDIX 1: LISTED STRUCTURES IN HELME

#### 14 and 16 Slades Lane, Helme (Grade II)

II House with adjoining small cottage. Dated 1753. The cottage, No. 16 is C19. Hammer dressed stone. Quoins to No. 14. Stone slate roof, No. 16 bitumen covered. Two storeys. Door to right with chamfered reveals and deep lintel inscribed: R W M 1753 To left is 4-light window with 2 mullions removed. One 5-light window to 1st floor. The cottage to left has entrance to right, and one 3-light window to both floors. The windows are in the style of the late C18 or early C19.

#### Christ Church, Slades Lane, Helme (Grade II)

Gothic Revival church in Decorated style. Built 1859. Endowed by Charles Brook of Healey House, in memory of Charles John Brook of Thickhollins. Rock faced stone. Steeply pitched red plain tiled roof which becomes more shallow over aisles. Square tower in south-west corner. 4-bay buttressed nave. 2-bay chancel. Aisle windows are 3-light some with intersecting and some with reticulated tracery. 5-light east window and 4-light west window, both with Decorated tracery. South porch of timber on dwarf walls. 2-tier square tower with angle buttresses with off-sets. Small 2-light traceried, louvred bell chamber openings and round clock'faces, all, with hood moulds. Eaves cornice to tower which is surmounted by slender splay-footed shingled spire. Interior: 4-bay arcade to north and south, on short octagonal piers. Arches are double chamfered. Long, light chancel with carved stone reredos, in form of blind arcade, with carved foliage in spandrels. Painted texts on walls including the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments. Good gilded eagle lect of 1908 with Art Nouveau stem. No stained glass. Arched braced collar beam roof on corbel brackets.

#### 10 and 12 Helme (Grade II)

(Formerly listed as No 10) II Handed pair of weaver's houses. Ground floor is C17, the upper floors early C19. Deeply coursed rubble to ground floor, hammer dressed stone to upper floors. Quoins to all floors. Stone slate roof to No. 10, blue slate roof to No. 12. Three storeys. Two good, double (hollow) chamfered mullioned and transomed windows each of 10 lights and each with hood mould. To right is original doorway with chamfered reveals and Tudor arched lintel which is inscribed with initials and date but these are not decipherable. Hood mould over. C19 doorway to left. Each dwelling has one 6-light window to 1st and 2nd floors.



### APPENDIX 2: UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

BE1: All development should be of good quality design such that it contributes to a built environment which:

1. Creates or retains a sense of local identity;
2. Is visually attractive;
3. Promotes safety, including crime prevention and reduction of hazards to highway users;
4. Promotes a healthy environment, including space and landscaping about buildings and avoidance of exposure to excessive noise or pollution;
5. Is energy efficient in terms of building design and orientation and conducive to energy efficient modes of travel, in particular walking, cycling and use of public transport.

BE2: New development should be designed so that:

1. It is in keeping with any surrounding development in respect of design, materials, scale, density, layout, building height or mass;
2. The topography of the site (particularly changes in level) is taken into account;
3. Satisfactory access to existing highways can be achieved; and
4. Existing and proposed landscape features (including trees) are incorporated as an integral part of the Proposal.

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BE4: Demolition of listed buildings will not normally be considered acceptable unless:

1. It can be demonstrated that the building has no beneficial use and no potential viable use; and
2. The structure of the building cannot be made sound.

BE5: Proposals for new development within conservation areas, including extensions or changes of use to existing buildings, should respect the architectural qualities of surrounding buildings and their materials of construction, and contribute to the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the area.

BE11 New development should be constructed in natural stone of a similar colour and texture to that prevailing in the area where the proposal is located:

1. In areas within which stone has been the predominant material of construction;
2. Within conservation areas; and
3. Within town and local centres.

Outside such areas, proposed materials of construction should reflect the predominant materials adjacent to and surrounding the site, provided that such materials are not detrimental to visual amenity.

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BE13 Extensions to dwellings should respect the design features of the existing house and adjacent buildings, including:

Materials of construction;

1. Window openings;
2. Roof styles; and
3. Architectural detailing.

Extensions to dwellings in conservation areas, or dwellings which are listed as being of architectural or historic interest should, where the proposals already comply with policy be3 or be5, be designed so that the intrinsic value of the host building and its surroundings is retained and the original building remains the dominant element.

BE14 Unless the proposal would have a detrimental effect on visual amenity, adjoining dwellings or any occupier of adjacent land, extensions to terraced, semi-detached or closely spaced detached dwellings will normally be permitted where the proposal:

1. Is to the front or main elevation of the premises and is relatively small in scale;
2. is to the rear and does not exceed 3.0m in overall projection; or
3. Does not result in an undesirable terracing effect being established in relation to adjoining dwellings.

BE15 Dormer extensions to the front or main elevations of dwellings will normally be permitted provided that:

1. The original roof form and covering remains the predominant feature;
2. The extension does not exceed more than 50% of the width of the original roof, and is centrally placed;
3. When measured in the vertical plane a distance of 1.0m approximately is achieved between the gutter line of the dwelling and the base of the front wall of the dormer and 0.5m approximately is achieved between the ridge of the dwelling and the junction of the dormer; and
4. The extension does not project above the ridge of the dwelling or (in the case of a hipped roof) beyond the slope of each change in roof direction, unless the roof is redesigned to eliminate any resultant box effect.

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### MANAGEMENT PLAN

#### Preservation

This section sets out a possible management plan for the Helme Conservation Area. It includes issues and possible strategies to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment within the Conservation Area.

Relevant UDP Policies relating to general design, listed buildings and conservation areas: BE1, BE2, BE3, BE4, BE5, BE6, BE7, BE8, BE11, BE13, BE14, BE15 (Further details in Appendix 2)

#### Built Environment

Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides for control over the demolition of buildings in conservation areas (subject to various exceptions). Paragraph 4.27 of PPG 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment indicates that, “The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area.”

Section 5.3 of this appraisal identifies a number of key unlisted buildings and buildings of local significance. There should be a presumption against the demolition of any of these buildings. There are a number of buildings, within clusters or individual grounds, which form part of the historic settlement patterns and development of Helme, some dating from the 17th century. As a consequence of this the area is sensitive to change. Further infill development should be presumed against, or carefully considered.

The Conservation Area includes a number of listed buildings, the demolition and alteration of which is controlled by the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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### **Land Use**

The character of the conservation area relies upon the existing pattern of land uses. Any major changes to these land uses will affect this character. The existing land use of the area is predominantly residential but there are a number of other uses in the designated area. There is a strong presumption against infill development within the designated area. Infill development will only be permitted where it would not harm the setting of a listed building or a building that makes a positive contribution.

### **Development Opportunities and Minor Alterations**

New developments and extensions can be detrimental to the appearance of buildings either because of their location, size or design. Extensions on the front of principal elevations of buildings should be avoided as these elevations have usually been carefully designed. Extensions at the side or rear are generally to be preferred, except where these elevations have also been carefully designed or are open to public view. Extensions should be subordinate to the building to which they are attached, should use similar or complimentary materials, and should reflect or compliment its style and appearance.

The council will expect any proposal for a development within the conservation area to be supported by a Design and Access Statement which should include a full analysis of the surrounding area. Proposals should respond to the surrounding development in terms of scale, height, massing, alignment and materials. All proposals should enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Further works to the school should ensure that the character of the area is enhanced as the modern extension has been criticised as detracting from the local character.

### **Trees**

Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, requires that anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area must give six weeks notice to the local planning authority. The purpose of this requirement is to give the authority an opportunity to make a tree preservation order.

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A number of the returned questionnaires considered trees and open spaces to be important within the conservation area in Helme. Some are covered by tree preservation orders but it is recommended that a further survey should be undertaken in the future to determine whether additional tree preservation orders are required.

### **Open Spaces and Gardens**

Open spaces within the conservation area include large gardens, the graveyard and the Green. The surrounding agricultural fields are an important buffer and contribute to the setting of the conservation area. The open rural character of these areas is important to maintain. Any proposed development, which prejudices this openness, should be presumed against, or considered very carefully, along with the design and building materials, to ensure that they respect the historic character of the area. Policies, which affect the Green Belt, Areas of High Landscape Value and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, should provide additional protection to the Helme Conservation Area. Conservation and Design should work with local residents to improve the quality of public open spaces and improve overall management and visual amenity.

### **Monitoring and Enforcement**

To ensure that unauthorised works are not undertaken in the future it is suggested that a systematic timetable of review should be implemented for the conservation area. This review could be utilised to ensure consistency and assess works to trees, listed buildings and the other aspects of the built and natural environment.

This may involve a photographic and written record, and could be undertaken when assessing planning applications as they arise, during the five yearly conservation area appraisal cycle, or using a separately implemented timetable. Following the identification of any unauthorised work, swift and appropriate action should be undertaken to ensure that work is retracted, or enforcement action is conducted.

Guidance notes will be produced to inform prospective buyers and existing inhabitants of Helme Conservation Area the implications and responsibilities of living in a conservation area.

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### **Article 4 Directions**

The feedback from the consultation suggests the possible introduction of an Article 4 (2) Direction in the Helme Conservation Area. Current “permitted development” rights for the unlisted buildings allow changes to windows, doors and roof materials, along with other changes that would have a negative impact upon the character and appearance of the area. It is suggested that Article 4 Directions are considered carefully for the Helme conservation area, with a detailed assessment of what impact any current permitted development may have upon the character and appearance.

### **Public Realm and Street Furniture**

Most of the historic floorscape and street furniture within the designated area has been lost. It is therefore important that where original stone flags, boundary walls, street furniture, setts, or kerbs exist that these are retained and not replaced or repaired with modern materials when highways or statutory authorities undertake any work.

The public realm is therefore suffering from neglect and exhibiting evidence of a lack of an integrated approach to its management. An enhancement scheme for street lighting, resurfacing, footpaths and bridleways should be agreed in association with Highways Department and Conservation & Design. This should include removal of litter and detritus, which collects at the kerb edges.

The bus stop is out of character with the conservation area and should be replaced in a more appropriate material at the next opportunity. In addition, consideration should be given to the improvement of overhead cables which are prominent at the car parking area by the school.

### **Gate Piers and Boundary Walls**

Gate piers and boundary walls are also features of the conservation area. Therefore every opportunity should be made to provide or restore walls and/or hedges to property boundaries. It is recommended that the council produce a design guide for boundary walls and fences in the conservation area.

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### **Signage**

Feedback from the questionnaire identified the clutter of signage as a problem within the conservation area. Audits of existing assets in the public realm, including nameplates, should be completed in conjunction with the Highways Department and Conservation & Design.

### **Excessive Traffic and Speeding Traffic**

The public consultation highlighted the issue of excessive and speeding traffic along the main roads in the conservation area. A traffic management scheme could be completed in conjunction with Highways and Conservation & Design. This should identify traffic calming measures; consider parking provision possible enhancement of the parking space by the Church.

### **Green Policy**

An interesting point was raised at the meeting regarding the need to accommodate a Green Policy within the conservation area. This should consider how to incorporate solar panels and photo voltaic cells into the historic environment without detracting from the historic character of the area.



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