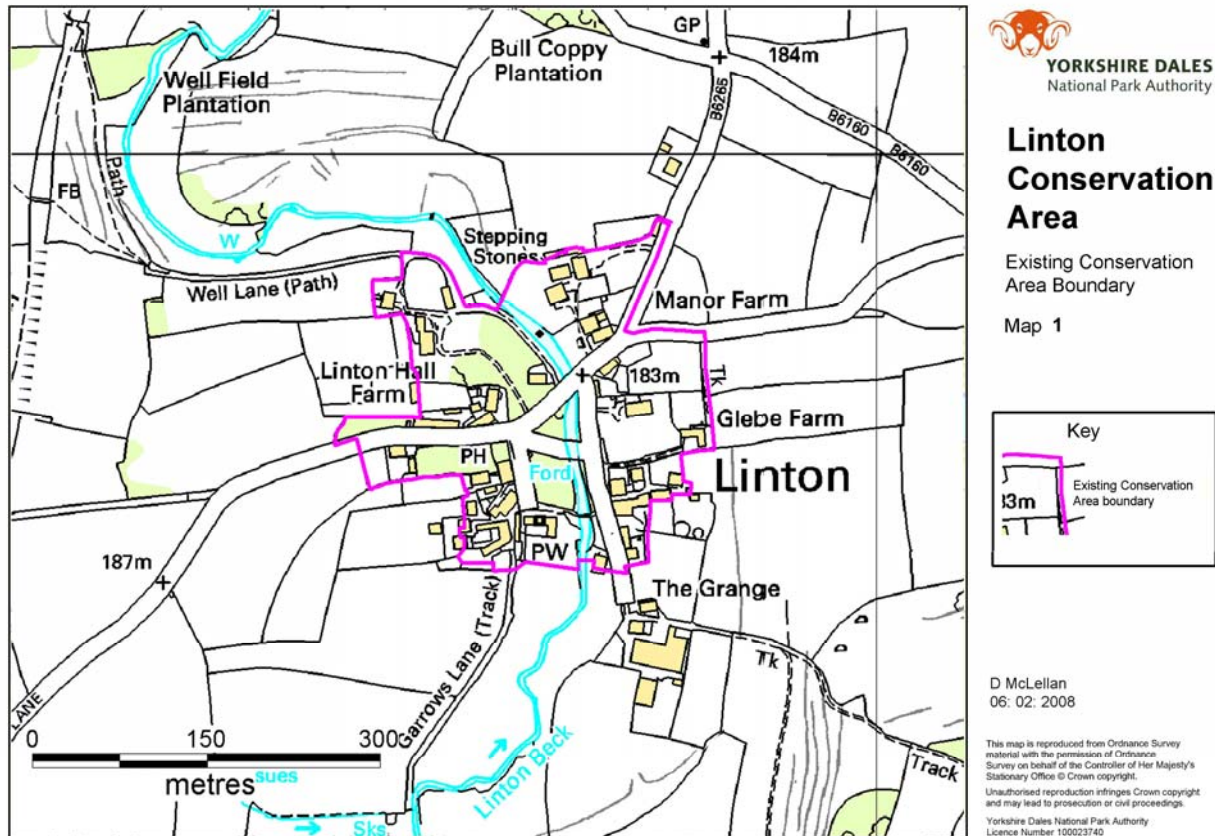


LINTON
CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND DESIGNATION STATEMENT
2008



1. Location and context

Linton is situated on the west side of Wharfedale in elevated rolling countryside, with the town of Grassington a mile to the north being the nearest centre. The village occupies an area of well treed, low lying ground astride Linton Beck. The major traffic routes bypass the village and there is only one through road, the B6265, leaving the settlement itself peaceful. The civil parish has a population of 140 (2001 census).

2. Summary of general character and form

Linton is a striking village which is focussed around a large trapezium shaped green, located in a hollow sloping down to Linton Beck. The green is bisected by a track leading

down to the ford and the packhorse bridge, a focal feature and one of three bridges over the beck. The centre of the village is dominated by a sense of comfortable enclosure, due to the presence of mature trees along the beck and at the northern end of the green, and also the closely grouped vernacular buildings on the western side of the green. The unusual mix of formal and informal building styles within the village, along with the mature trees, softens the impact of the village, creating a mixture of rooflines and heights which add interest and character. The important green spaces within the settlement give the sense of fingers of countryside extending into the village. There are no significant views to the surrounding landscape from the centre of the village. The scene is dominated by the polite architectural influence of Fountaine's Hospital; a large building in the Palladian style. The buildings on the eastern side of the green are more loosely arranged, vernacular in character and generally facing south. The oldest houses in the village date from the seventeenth century, with the rest being mainly eighteenth and nineteenth century. On the north side of the village, two particularly fine early buildings are Linton Old Hall and White Abbey with the polite in style, later eighteenth century Linton House nestled in secluded private wooded land bounded by Well Lane. The south western corner of the village, leading to Garrows Lane, has a tightly knit feeling, with narrow lanes meandering between buildings. Once onto Garrows Lane, the edge of the village gives way to views over open countryside and to the hills beyond. Twentieth century development within the village has been confined to the outskirts, and consists mainly of functional agricultural buildings, with only a few new dwellings and several barn conversions.

3. The landscape setting

Linton is located in the Wharfedale-Craven Fault Area, as identified in the 2005 YNDPA Landscape Character Assessment, which is characterised by a broad dale with rolling farmland of fields and occasional woodlands, surrounded by limestone and gritstone uplands. The village is set within the local topography and is inconspicuous in the wider scene. The approaches to the village are not direct and involve winding rural roads, ancient track ways and footpaths. South of the village the landscape opens to broad river meadow wetlands, with the local topography closing to the north, the beck cutting into drumlin forms.

The village is smaller than the presence of the green and buildings initially suggests, and the transition from and contrast between the nucleated and well wooded village and its wider more open countryside setting is abrupt. There are glimpse views only out of the village to the surroundings, but on exiting along the roads, tracks and footpaths the views quickly open out to the undulations of Wharfedale, with limestone fells above Grassington

and Threshfield to the north and gritstone fells, fringed with distinctive limestone reef knolls, above Thorpe.

A strong sense of history is continuous between the village and surroundings, with the concentration of old buildings, bridges and trees, (particularly the yews), within the village centre giving way to a traditional farmed landscape, with stepped medieval lynchets a feature to the south.

4. Origins and historic development (Map 3)

Place name evidence points to an Anglian origin for the village, with 'Linton' meaning 'Flax Farm'. Though the current settlement has an ostensibly medieval village plan, it probably owes its location to an earlier Anglian farm or small settlement, which may also have had a green. Flax was an important local product for many centuries and though farming remains the principal surviving economic activity, flax is no longer grown at Linton. Generally, production of flax in upland areas declined markedly in the post medieval period, although, flax was still being cultivated in the Linton locality in 1812 for spinning and weaving, and two of the stone troughs for 'retting' the flax survive. Flax was grown on marshland at Linton Tarn, an area which was subsequently drained during formal enclosure of the open fields in the parish in the mid nineteenth century (Fountaine's Hospital, Village History Leaflet and Walk). Cotton and textile manufacture developed in the vicinity from the 1780's and lasted until the 1950's, with a worsted mill being constructed in 1793, outside the Conservation Area, near Linton Church on the River Wharfe. Prior to this building, a corn mill had stood on this site, probably from medieval times. In addition to farming, lead mining and small scale coal working were carried out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and limestone quarrying and burning was also concentrated in the Linton area. It is likely that many of the smaller nineteenth century cottages in the village were built to accommodate a mixed population of mill workers for the local textile industry and agricultural workers.

One of the earliest of the bridges in the village, the clapper bridge, is not in its original location. The 1844 Tithe Map shows the clapper bridge on the site of the road bridge. Local sources in the village state that it was moved in 1892 to the site of some early stepping stones, adjacent to Fountaine's Hospital, in order to make way for the present road bridge which is dated 1893. The route of the new road also necessitated the demolition of two buildings shown on the 1844 Tithe Map in a roughly circular plot between Linton House and the green. Previously, the first barn on Well Lane had also been included in this circular plot.

Map evidence shows another significant building within the village which has been lost. The 1844 Tithe Map demonstrates that the large plot around the Rectory previously accommodated another rectory building. The missing building, south of the existing rectory, is labelled as "1st Mediety", while the existing rectory is labelled as "2nd Mediety". The surviving building has been significantly extended on the north side during the twentieth century. It appears from this evidence that the rectorship was at some time in the past split into two parts. Whitaker's 1878 History of Craven mentions this, and states that the tithes were shared, making the living not particularly rich for either rector. In addition to the rectories, there was a large building, probably a barn, on the west of this plot. These buildings were both shown on the 1853 Ordnance Survey 6 inch map but had both been removed by the 1909 edition. It is interesting to note that although the large open green space around the Rectory contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area, it has not always been an open garden plot.

5. The archaeological significance

Looking at the form of the boundary wall running south from the Memorial Institute, and the line continuing down the track past Glebe Farm and along the footpath to the Grange, it is apparent that this may well represent the line of the boundary to medieval tofts, with the footpath being the remains of a back lane. It is believed locally that the area of green in front of the Fountaine's Hospital was once the location of one of Linton's earliest medieval buildings, though no archaeological assessment exists for this area. On the north western and south eastern fringes of this essentially medieval settlement there are well defined medieval field systems, and many of the boundary walls around the village include massive boulders, or orthostats.

The evocatively named 'White Abbey' was in fact known as 'Troutbeck' until the early twentieth century. The writer, Halliwell Sutcliffe, who was the owner at the time, decided that the house must be a grange of Fountains Abbey and so gave the building a name he thought more suitable. Romantic though it may be, we have no evidence that this assumption is correct. There is, however, an enigmatic feature near to this building. The 1844 Tithe Map shows a leat which begins just north of the road bridge and follows the eastern side of the beck alongside White Abbey, then runs north towards a large earthwork which shows on aerial photography as a dry pond. This may be post medieval in date.

In his book "Fieldwork in Local History", W.G. Hoskins mentions a large circular enclosure just clipping the south side of Linton. Modern maps and aerial photography show that two long sections of curved boundary wall survive but further research is necessary to ascertain a date or purpose for this feature. One possibility is that it may have been a walled deer park, though documentary evidence would be needed to back up this supposition. Whitaker's 1878 "History of Craven" mentions a deer park at nearby Threshfield, but nothing is mentioned regarding Linton.

Further information on specific archaeological sites is available from the Historic Environment Record held by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

6. The character and relationship of spaces within the area (Map 4)

The village is characterised by an unusual mixture of formal and less formal built and landscape elements. The main landscape focus of the village is the river, with its historic bridges and stepping stones, set within the green. The river appears to have been locally widened through the green, and an arrangement of grand buildings is orientated around this open space. Towards the edge of the village there are farm buildings, accessed along narrow tracks. Smaller vernacular terraces, cottages and barns are tucked in around these larger groupings creating a rural character and with matured hedges, a variety of drystone and more formal dressed stone walls, give a sense of enclosure. Throughout the public open spaces, along the roads and track ways and within private gardens there are many mature trees, both semi-natural and self-seeded, as well as more formally laid out and planted specimens. These further strengthen the enclosed nature and are an attractive backdrop, foil and frame to the buildings, providing a sense of overall cohesion and harmony to the variety of architectural styles.

It is the richness of attractive features, the river, the green, trees and surrounding buildings, and the combination of designed with more vernacular styles that give Linton village centre its particularly picturesque qualities.

7. Key views and vistas

There are no significant views out of the village from the centre, however, within the village itself there are many key views; from the footbridge, across the green to the Hospital; from the road bridge to White Abbey; from the Hospital looking north to the foot bridge; from

alongside Sunny Bank, down the lane towards White Abbey. On the outskirts of the village the views from Garrows Lane looking south to the hills beyond and east to the Grange and the nearby medieval field systems, and the view from Garrows Lane looking into the village reinforce the enclosed sense of this area.

8. Activities and prevailing uses and their influence on the plan form and the buildings.

The development of the village layout has not altered significantly from its probable medieval core. Pressures from later industries such as lead mining and textiles have all left their mark in terms of smaller cottages to accommodate workers, but the industries themselves have been located well outside the village boundary. Probably the single largest development impact on Linton was the construction of Fountains Hospital in 1721, which is now the keynote and dominating feature of the village. Large houses of significant quality are located to the north of the village surrounded by large barns, several of which are now converted to residential use, while the simple pattern of development in the south of the village reflects its long agricultural associations.

9. The architectural and historic qualities of the buildings, and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area (Map 5)

The dominating building, and keynote within the village, is the Grade II* listed Fountains Hospital. This is a flamboyant Palladian building, which has more of a civic note to its design than one would expect in an almshouse built to house six poor parishioners. It was commissioned by Richard Fountaine, as part of his will in 1721. The architect is not known. The style is similar to that of Vanbrugh but it has also been ascribed to Hawksmoor and to Wakefield. The building, in millstone grit ashlar, consists of a central block housing a chapel, with a tower and bell cote surmounted by a lead cupola, and two projecting wings. The main entrance has a moulded doorway with a niche and panelled pilasters, and is given scale by huge pilasters supporting a giant entablature. The open space of the green in front provides the necessary balance and foil for a building of such a strong polite style.

There are four crossings across Linton Beck, each of which has significance for the character of the village. The earliest of these (though not in its original location) is the clapper bridge to the south. It is of very simple slab and pier construction and probably dates from the early seventeenth century. It was given a handrail and an inappropriate tarmac surface in the twentieth century but, more recently, water damage to the piers has been restored sympathetically with lime mortar. Moving north, the foot bridge or packhorse

bridge by the ford is constructed of gritstone and has parapets with rounded copings. The main span is a single shallow arch and there is a smaller flood arch to the east. The bridge ostensibly dates from the late seventeenth century, though it is reputed to have been constructed in the fourteenth century by two local ladies to provide access to the church when Linton Beck was in flood. Local rumour has it that the bridge was built too narrow to take carts so that local farmers, who had refused to contribute to its construction, would not be able to benefit from its use. The northernmost of the bridges is the road bridge, constructed in 1893, which is on the original site of the clapper bridge. This single arched bridge carries the road across the hollow at a higher level than that of the green, and further serves to enhance the sense of enclosure of the green area. In between the foot bridge and the road bridge are a set of stepping stones which are shown on the 1853 first edition Ordnance Survey 6" map.

Linton House and Linton Hall are grand vernacular buildings with varying touches of polite architecture influence. Linton House, built in the late eighteenth century has pleasing Georgian dimensions and balance, a designed façade with plate glass sashes in architraves, a central 6-panel door with fanlight, with pilastered entablature and a corniced open pediment above. Linton Hall is a mid to late seventeenth century farmhouse, with eighteenth and nineteenth century extensions and alterations. Significant features are its two storey porch with heavily moulded doorway architrave, and the distinctive tapering wall chimney at the west end. Its windows are a mixture of varied pane sashes and casements with seventeenth and eighteenth century surrounds, suggesting it is more of a crossover vernacular building with classical elements.

There are several fine buildings within the village which also have seventeenth century origins. In particular White Abbey and its surrounding gardens create a picturesque vista to the north of the village. This building is constructed of millstone grit with mullioned windows of various designs both stone and wooden, the rear projecting service wings having 4 pane sashes. Taking an overview of the northern section of the village, it appears that this area was historically the location of the majority of higher status dwellings within the village.

To the south of the village is Grange Farmhouse, formerly known as "Sheepshanks", after the family who lived there in the nineteenth century. The house was built in the early to mid-nineteenth century, and is a typical higher status vernacular farmhouse of this date.

In addition to these dwellings, the smaller vernacular terraces and cottages which are scattered around the village and act as infill between the higher status buildings serve to

create a broad spectrum of status in dwellings, further adding to the interest and special character of the village.

The Fountaine Inn, on the western edge of the green, holds a focal position in the centre of the village. This eighteenth century building, with later alterations, is important not only in its vernacular architecture, but in its function as one of the few public buildings within the village.

There are several significant, high quality barns which remain in agricultural use. In addition to this, some of the dwelling houses within the village were previously barns, such as Holme Croft, Linbeck and Stoneycroft, as well as the more recently converted Tarn Laithe and the impressive Tythe Barn. This legacy contributes to the agricultural feel of the village; the high proportion of barns or farm buildings to houses in itself being an essential part of the character. There are now only two working farms in the village, both on the edge of the Conservation Area.

Local distinctiveness is further enhanced by the listed guide post and two milestones on the eastern side of the village, by the red K6 telephone box, red cast-iron post box, sundial and Holiday Fellowship plaque on the the green.

10. Key buildings or structures

There are 15 listed buildings in the Linton Conservation Area. The listing name may cover several structures and should not therefore be relied upon to refer only to the main building. It should be noted that other related structures such as boundary walls, outbuildings, enclosures, garden features, gates etc. may also be protected by the listing. It is always advisable to contact the National Park Authority for advice when planning to undertake any work to a listed building or to any structures near a listed building or scheduled monument .

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|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Tythe Barn | Grade II |
| 2. Linton Hall | Grade II |
| 3. Linton House | Grade II |
| 4. White Abbey | Grade II |
| 5. Guide Post at SD9979 6285 | Grade II |
| 6. Packhorse Bridge (Linton Beck) | Grade II |
| 7. Sunnybank & Post Office | Grade II |
| 8. Troutbeck & Becksides Cottage | Grade II |
| 9. Brows View | Grade II |

10. Grange Farmhouse	Grade II
11. Clapper Bridge	Grade II
12. Fountaine's Hospital	Grade II*
13. Yew Tree Cottage & Fell View	Grade II
14. Fountaine Inn	Grade II
15. K6 Telephone Kiosk	Grade II

In addition to these listed buildings, the packhorse bridge is also designated as a scheduled monument - Redmayne Packhorse Bridge.

Two inscriptions in the village are worthy of note. The stone and bronze sundial on the village green includes a commemorative inscription "A tribute to Linton-In-Craven on being adjudged first in the News Chronicle Loveliest Village in the North Contest 1949". A cast plaque outside the former Youth Hostel versifies a request from the Holiday Fellowship to respect the landscape and is probably a link with Arthur Raistrick. Raistrick lived in Linton for nearly 50 years and was involved with both organisations.

11. Prevalent traditional building materials, textures, colours and detailing

The prevalent traditional building materials are gritstone and limestone, both locally sourced, and used as either rubble and dressed stone. Roofs are of sandstone, locally referred to as slate. Walls of buildings consist of a double skin of stone with rubble filled core.

Most of the houses fronting the green have quoins and window surrounds which are usually plain. Chimneys are usually of traditional stone construction with a single over-sailing course. These were generally taller and narrower in the nineteenth century, however, chimneys on earlier buildings have shorter and squatter dimensions. Many of the grander buildings have kneeler stones at the eaves.

Windows within the village are mainly of timber in traditional sash or casement style. UPVC windows and conservatories have begun to encroach into the village, but are not yet of such a high number to seriously damage the character of the Conservation Area.

Houses in Linton tend not to have front gardens, with the exception of a handful of grander houses set back from the road. Most buildings front directly onto the road or lane. Drystone walls contribute largely to the character of the Conservation Area, both as boundaries to

areas of the green and garden walls, as well as agricultural field boundaries and features such as the pinfold opposite Linbeck.

12. The contributions made by green spaces, trees, hedges, and other natural or cultivated elements of the character of the area

In addition to the centrally located green, there are two main biodiversity features which contribute to the character of the Linton Conservation Area. These are rivers and streams and woodland. Linton Beck, a tributary of Captain Beck and then the River Wharfe, flows through the centre of the village. Rivers and streams are a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat. Small areas of broadleaved and mixed woodland and scattered trees mainly within domestic gardens or along the beck are a feature of the village. Six of these trees currently have tree preservation orders.

13. Neutral areas

Neutral areas are areas which neither enhance nor detract from the character or appearance of a conservation area but which might have potential for improvement. The only neutral areas within the village are some twentieth century houses and a handful of modern functional farm buildings,

14. General condition

In general the condition of houses and barns within the Conservation Area is good, with some restoration and conversion (Old Rectory and the Grange Barn) ongoing as this review takes place. The barn west of Brows View may benefit from some roof repairs, and the barn on the corner of Well Lane would also benefit from some roof maintenance to prevent vegetation growth causing damage. The small outbuilding in the paddock opposite Linton Hall, would greatly benefit from some repair and maintenance to its walls and roof if it is not to deteriorate.

15. Problems, pressures and capacity for change

The major pressure on Linton is likely to be from conversion of the remaining agricultural buildings as there are no redundant dwellings now within the Conservation Area. Although the village has a history of nineteenth century infill development, there are few infill sites left

which would not compromise the important green spaces within the village. Any future conversions of the few remaining redundant barns need to be dealt with very carefully in order to minimise damage to the character of the buildings themselves and to the Conservation Area. There are several buildings which appear still to be in agricultural use and which would benefit from some more regular care and maintenance.

The gradual encroachment of UPVC windows and conservatories into the village has the potential to seriously detract from the character of the area, and with the drive towards more energy efficient homes, it is understandable that homeowners have assumed that UPVC is the best way forward. In fact there are many other options which would not only contribute to the character of the area, but would also increase the value and appeal of the property. There is a need for better information about the options for improving energy efficiency in historic buildings, while conserving their character and that of the surrounding area. There is also the potential to introduce statutory control in respect of some permitted development rights such as window types.

As with many Yorkshire Dales villages' car parking is an issue, with the picturesque green area being inundated with parked vehicles even on quiet winter days. This has two principal effects, one being the detrimental effect on the visual aesthetic of the green area, and the second being the physical effect on the verges around the village, particularly those beside the B6265. This problem is not easily solved and is likely to worsen in the coming years.

There are discreet areas of hard surfacing through the village which are perhaps not as sympathetic to their surroundings as they may be and show evidence for periodic patching. Future resurfacing would be an opportunity to improve these areas. In addition, some of the detailing of inharmonious boundaries and fences within the village could be improved in future when they are replaced.

16. Community involvement

There is no evidence of any community involvement at the time of designation by the West Riding County Council in 1969.

The review process for Linton included a public meeting held on the evening of 4th February 2008 at Linton Memorial Institute to enable the community to view the findings of the review and discuss the potential boundary change. Further minor boundary changes were

identified as desirable following this meeting to ensure that the proposed boundary followed current property boundaries. These additional changes have been discussed with the owners/occupiers of the properties affected. Linton Parish Council and Craven District Council have been kept informed and consulted on both the appraisal and the proposed boundary changes.

17. Suggested boundary changes (Map 2)

A reassessment of the current boundary and of the areas located within and without the current designated boundary has come to the following conclusions:

- No area currently located within the boundary has been found to have lost its merit or to have been harmed by development, to such a degree that the conservation area, or any part there in, has lost the architectural or historic merit that warranted its inclusion at the time of designation.
- Certain areas located outside the current boundary have sufficient merit to warrant inclusion at the time of this review and are now deemed to be worthy of consideration for inclusion due to changes in guidance since the initial designation of the conservation area.

18. Summary of issues

- Barns and field shelters require maintenance
- Potential agricultural conversions need to be done sensitively
- Car parking – the presence of cars and also the effects of informal parking over verges around the village
- Consideration of energy efficiency options to avoid inappropriate UPVC windows
- Some of the detailing of surfacing, boundaries and fences

Most of these issues have the potential to be resolved and their resolution would benefit / enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

19. Potential for additional statutory action

Some types of permitted development, such as the replacement of windows, can, if carried out insensitively, have a detrimental effect upon the character and appearance of a conservation area. In such cases, the authority, in consultation with the community, may consider introducing additional statutory controls in respect of the particular feature which may be at risk. This can be done through the use of an article 4(2) direction. An article 4(2) direction does not prevent any change to the particular feature, but does require that planning permission is sought for the change. This means that details of the proposed change and its impact can be carefully considered under the planning system. There is no planning application charge where planning permission is required for changes to a building as a result of an article 4(2) direction.