

Thackley, Bradford

Potential Conservation Area Report

Introduction

Residents of Idle conservation area who participated in the workshop on the 20th August 2002, along with a number of residents from Thackley have requested that this area be considered as a potential conservation area. It was resolved that the Conservation Team would examine the architectural and historic interest to determine whether Thackley warrants conservation area designation. This report summarises the assessment of the architectural and historic interest of Thackley.

Structure of the Report

This report will assess the architectural and / or historical interest of the buildings, structures and spaces which make up this settlement in turn. The analysis of the buildings and spaces that make up Thackley will be used to conclude whether the area is of special interest and character, and whether special interest and character covers a coherent area, which could justifiably be protected through conservation area designation.

Assessment of Thackley

The area under consideration is the extent of the hamlet of Thackley as recorded on the 1890-94 Ordnance Survey maps, which encapsulates the original eighteenth century settlement development. This date has been chosen due to the fact that there was little or no development in this area until the suburban expansion and residential infill of the 1930's. Each components of the area will be considered in turn and their numbering corresponds to the plan accompanying this report.

Components of Thackley:

1. 1 – 9 North Street:

History: This terraced row of weavers' cottages appears to have been built within two phases. The earlier properties, presently numbers 5-11, were built circa 1851 and formed part of the local quarrying settlement known locally as Birk Hill. The differentiation of coursing between numbers 3 and 5 highlight that no's 1 and 2 North Street were later additions which were built by c.1890.

Present: This unusual terraced row lies at a right angle to Park Road and provides a clear boundary to the edge of this potential area. It consists of two three-storey properties to the centre with two two-storey properties to either side, creating 6 dwellings. The later additions, numbers 1 and 3 were built in a similar style to that of 9 and 11 to the north of the row. The properties are stone built with a regular fenestration of mullioned windows on all elevations. Number 5 is one of the larger properties with five pairs of mullioned windows whereas number 7 has three pairs.

This group of properties retain much of their original character. The original roofscape of stone slate roof with corniced chimneys and pots is an important feature within Thackley and contributes to the formation of a cohesive character of the area. The stone elevations remain uncleaned and stone mullions remain in the majority, apart from at number 3 where they have been removed. The character and visual amenity of these properties have been significantly altered by the insertion of modern timber top-opening casement windows and door details. The repair work carried out to number 11 to the north of the row has had a negative impact upon the appearance of the row, the inappropriate materials and style is highly prominent and provides a stark contrast to the adjoining properties.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed buildings
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

2. 71 – 75 Park Road:

History: These three cottages are clearly evident on historic maps by c.1890. They probably formed part of the settlement that sprung up as a result of the local quarrying near to the site.

Present: The properties are set back somewhat from Park Road and form a tight cluster of dwellings within this area of Thackley. These three-storey stone built properties, numbers 71-73, are highly prominent from Park Road. Whilst they retain much of their essential character, a number of incremental alterations and works carried out over the years have had an impact upon their visual amenity. The replacement of windows to unsuitable styles and design has altered the appearance of these properties, 73 has inserted top-opening casements, whereas 71 has removed the stone mullions and inserted two 12-light windows into the openings. More notably, the stone cleaning of 71 Park Road has provided a stark contrast between the adjoining properties. A positive feature of this group of properties is the retention of the stone slate roof and chimney detailing, although number 73 has part rendered the chimney.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed buildings
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

3. 59 – 67 Park Road:

History: These clusters of buildings appear on the 1851 historic maps and formed part of this early settlement of Thackley, known locally as Birk Hill.

Present: This group of approximately nine residential properties appear to form the core of the village with The Commercial Inn forming the focal point. They are set back from Park Road with the site to the front forming the car park to the public house and are enclosed by a very prominent stone boundary wall which is a strongly positive feature of the setting of these buildings and the view along Park Road.

The Commercial Inn has undergone a number of changes, which has altered its appearance somewhat. The retention of the stone slate roof reinforces the character of the surrounding

buildings, however the part removal and rendering of the chimneys has had a negative impact on the roofscape of the buildings. The window details have also been altered to include modern top-opening casement windows within the mullioned openings. The local authority granted planning permission in 1979 for the front porch; it is gable fronted built with hammer dressed stone and a slate roof; this has had a neutral impact on the building. The volume of clutter that has been added to the front elevation creates a negative appearance.

Collectively this group provides a positive contribution to the character of this area, and appears to be the essential core of this historic area. The retention of the stone slate roof and some full height chimneys with pots is a strong feature, and the insertion of modern velux roof lights to the centre are sensitive to the character and are of an appropriate size for the properties. The choice of replacement windows, top opening mock sash windows to 63 and 63 are of an appropriate proportion and size for the openings, however the detailing is deemed inappropriate within a listed building.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed buildings
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

4. 47 – 53 Park Road:

History: The buildings and the enclosed site of this development were built by c.1851, and were situated to the south of the sandstone quarry. Historic maps indicate small outbuildings located at the bottom of the sites fronting onto Park Road, these are presumably outside toilets or storehouses.

Present: This row of four, through-by-light, stone built cottages are set back from Park Road at an angle. Collectively, they retain a stone slate roof, although there is only one remaining chimney with pots to number 51, the rest have been shortened or even removed. These alterations have a negative impact on the roofscape of these buildings. The window details are similar to other properties within this area, mullioned windows to the ground and first floor elevations. The window details have been altered considerably in this row, with each property

having varying inappropriate styles; this detracts somewhat from the character of the properties.

The retention of the stone boundary feature provides a positive feature and contributes to the wider character of the area. It appears that some of the stone outhouses have been demolished at some point in time; however number 51 appears to have retained this structure, which is currently shrouded by ivy.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed buildings
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

5. 29 – 45 Park Road:

History: A stone plaque placed centrally on the front first floor elevation indicates that this group of properties were built in 1876 and entitled 'South View'. There are ten properties in total within this back-to-back terraced development.

Present: Despite being unlisted, this terraced row retains many of its original features to the front such as a stone slate roof, full height chimneys with some pots and stone boundary walls. As would be expected in properties of this age, the window detailing has been altered and contains top opening timber casements. Number 31 has an enlarged window opening with the insertion of a bay window which is out of character with the rest of the row and disrupts the visual appearance of the properties.

Existing Designations: None
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

6. 23 – 27 Park Road:

History: The Ordnance Survey maps appear to indicate a row of cottages situated on this site that lay in line with 1-19 Park Road, built c1851. It is assumed that these were demolished as the present terraced row, on the same site, contains a carved stone plaque placed on the front elevation highlights that this group of properties were built 1890 and titled 'Park Crescent'.

Present: These properties have undergone a number of changes that have not been entirely sympathetic to the character of the properties. The

re-roofing of number 25 with modern tiles disrupts the roofline of these properties as well as the wider area. The insertion of a sympathetic velux roof light to number 23 indicates how modern methods can be integrated into the historic environment in a sensitive manner. Retention of the chimney details provides a positive element to these properties and reinforces this as a positive feature of the area. Number 23 provides a good example of how modern windows can complement the style of a property; the timber top opening casements with a central glazing bar is the correct proportion for the mullioned windows. The remaining properties have had the mullions removed to allow for modern alternative window designs, although these are not appropriate for the building, it is evident that top opening windows are predominant throughout Thackley.

Existing Designations: None
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

7. 1 – 19 Park Road:

History: These clusters of terraced properties were built circa 1850.

Present: Lying at an angle from Park Road, these three and two-storey dwellings have undergone minor incremental changes. The replacement of windows and doors throughout to modern alternatives such as timber top opening casements has a negative impact on the visual amenity of these properties. The majority of these properties retain the mullioned window opening, stone slate roof and full height chimneys with some remaining pots; each of these are important features within a conservation area and provide an invaluable contribution to the character and sense of place.

The small, single storey building lying at a right angle to this row of properties retains much of its essential character. It appears to have had extensive structural works carried out in recent years, this highlighted by the re-pointing works carried out to the gable end of the building.

The insensitive development of two-single adjoining garages to the front of the site, accessed from Park Road creates a visual disruption to these characterful properties. The modern flat roof

design with harsh materials and colouring and concrete paving to front is a visual barrier and significantly affects their setting.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed Buildings (except 1 Park Lane – none)

Overall Townscape Value: Positive

8. 4 – 20 Park Road:

History: These properties are clearly evident on the 1894 historic maps, however there appears to have been some form of development on this site prior to this date, however it is unknown as to whether it is these properties.

Present: Generally, these properties retain much of their original character with numbers 4 to 12 Park Road emulating the style of the terraced rows opposite. The elaborate corniced hood above the doorway has scrolled brackets detailing, a unique feature to the plain elevations of these properties. The enlargement of the ground floor windows to numbers 6 and 10 alters the general fenestrations of this group. The insertion of modern windows of varying designs does not provide a cohesive character.

To the north, property numbers 14 to 18 are plain in comparison with the previous row and contribute little architectural interest to this area. Number 14 is stepped slightly higher than the adjoining properties; all are stone built and would have had a stone slate roof. Unfortunately number 16 presently has artificial slates and number 18 has a tarred roof, both of which have a negative impact on the roofscape. Number 18 Park Road is one of few properties to retain timber sash windows to the front, the adjoining properties have opted for modern alternatives with the removal of the mullion feature.

Existing Designations: None

Overall Townscape Value: Positive / Neutral

9. 2 Park Road, Thackley Methodist Church & Nialls Court:

History: Situated at the junction of Park Road and Thackley Road, the church building was built C.1851 and later augmented by a new hall, which

is approximately 35 years old. (Woodhouse Grove Circuit, 2006).

Present: The church makes a positive contribution to the area; it remains much the same as when it was built, bar an extension to the rear which joins the church and hall. The church hall, now a community centre, is stone built with a large modern window to its south elevation. Planning permission was granted in 1997 to erect a pitched roof which replaced the former flat roof. It is considered that this has improved the appearance of the building and is a sensitive development in old Thackley.

Nialls Court is a relatively modern development, which was built within the boundary of the church site in 1997. This large irregular block of flats faces onto Thackley Road with the majority of the building lying out of view to the rear of 2-12 Park Road. Built using pale hammer dressed stone with a simple tile roof to top, it has a regular fenestration incorporating two three-light windows to the sides with two two-light windows to centre at either side of the central doorway. Unattractive detailing on this building, along with its general design does not allow it to sensitively adapt into the wider area. The mock hood mould, used as a detailing feature above the ground floor windows is prominent and has no function. The inclusion of an elaborate wooden hooded porch draws attention to a plain, modern, stained wooden panelled door with a single square light. Neither feature links successfully to the character and/or style of the building. Generally, this block is very large in comparison to the surrounding properties and does not sit well with the prevailing character of the surrounding properties.

Existing Designations: None

Overall Townscape Value: Positive / Nialls Court - Neutral

10. Cricket Ground:

History: Ordnance survey maps of 1890 name this site as a 'cricket pitch'. Prior to this, it is unknown if this was recreational ground, or if it formed part of the sandstone quarry site. It remains a recreational open space to this day.

Present: Whilst enclosed by a high stone boundary wall, this site makes a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area. The land retains many of its original characteristics in terms of the size and shape. The boundary wall is an important feature of the streetscape and vistas along Thackley Road around to Ainsbury Avenue. In addition, the setting is substantially enhanced by the large variety of mature trees enclosing the site to the north and east.

Situated to the south-eastern corner of this recreation ground is a clubhouse which is a modern, flat roofed structure. The car park that forms the boundary to the pitch is simply a tarmac covered area of land that provides a harsh setting alongside the expanse of green space of the cricket pitch. It is considered that neither of these facilities contributes positively to the character or setting of this open space.

Existing Designations: Recreation Ground

Overall Townscape Value: Positive, Car park – negative.

11. 33 Thackley Road:

History: Built circa 1890, this large house was a mill master's house named 'Bowling Green House' due to its association with Bowling Green Mills to the south east of this site. The boundary to this site has changed several times over the course of the years; in 1908 it was square to the rear of the dwelling, and by 1919 encompassed an area of trees to the west. By 1972, housing developments to the west reduced the site to its present size.

Present: This building retains almost all of its original features and details making it an important building in this area. It retains the essential features, such as a stone slate roof, timber sash windows and a prominent boundary feature, which encloses the site.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed Building

Overall Townscape Value: Positive

12. 11a – 31 Thackley Road:

History: This collections of sandstone 'brick' buildings were built at various stages between

c.1820-1850. The earliest properties, built circa 1820-30, appear to be the three-storey range of housing (numbers 25-31 - odd), which according to the listing description are linked and contemporary with Bowling Green Mills – number 23 Thackley Road. These were followed by numbers 13, 15 and 17 Thackley Road, three two-storey cottages, and similarly 9 and 11 which adjoined later, circa 1950.

Present: This compact row retains a fairly strong sense of unity even though there have been a number of unsympathetic alterations carried out.

The chimneys have been retained although most of the original pots have since been removed. Approximately half of the properties have had modern windows inserted, whereas the rest either retain a traditional style and/or design of a sash window. Some original panelled doors remain, specifically to numbers 27 and 29.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed Buildings

Overall Townscape Value: Positive

13. 9 – 11b Thackley Road:

History: There are indications on the 1850 maps that there was some development on the site, however the present day buildings are not clearly evident until 1890. At this stage, 11b was small in size in comparison with the adjoining properties.

Present: Situated on a triangular corner plot linking Thackley Road with Crag Hill Road, these properties provide a positive contribution to the character of this area. Fronting onto Thackley Road, numbers 9 and 11 retain many significant features. The dwellings are stone built with corniced chimneys; two sets of mullioned windows are set within a slightly irregular fenestration elevation with an additional single light window to number 11. The window and door details have been replaced at some point in recent years, number 9 has timber top opening casements with a 9-light timber door. The replacement windows to number 11 retain the proportions of a sash window, although the design is a top opening casement which when open significantly alters the appearance of the property. The stone boundary wall enclosing the land is an important feature and

contributes to the wider character of the townscape.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed Buildings
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

14. 1 – 5 Thackley Road & 1 – 9 Crag Hill Road, including shop adjoining no. 9:

History: The 1890 map clearly shows these buildings on this site situated within a rectangular plot. Prior to this date, the 1851 map indicates that this land had been developed; therefore it is assumed that these dwellings were built towards the end of the 19th century.

Present: This 'L' shaped row consists of residential and some commercial properties. Each fronts directly onto the highway without a boundary feature. Numbers 1 to 5 Thackley Road are relatively plain dwellings with regular fenestrations and retaining a stone slate roof. Number 1 is the largest of the group occupying a corner position, however this is in poor condition at present, and is in need of general maintenance to improve its appearance. The replacement of window detailing is not uncommon and within this row the window details vary considerably and do not create a cohesive character within this prominent position.

1 to 9 Crag Hill Road forms a continuation of the previous properties, each are dwellings that are plain in comparison with other properties in Thackley. Each retains a stone slate roof with chimneys, some of which have been altered to some degree. The first three properties (no.1-5) are stepped slightly higher than the rest with a regular fenestration. Each of the properties have replacement windows, some of which do not complement the design of the house, however the 'T' bar insertions at number 1 and 7 are considered to be a sensitive replacement design for these properties.

The garage adjoining number 9 is a single storey commercial building with a flat roof. From the 1894 maps, this originally was a small building, which was extended or rebuilt by 1933 to its current form. Although not a typical building of Thackley, it provides an almost quirky addition with its painted shutters and sliding door, however when open

these features tend to clutter the front elevation somewhat.

Existing Designations: None
Overall Townscape Value: Neutral

15. 12 Crag Hill Road:

History: This site is historically linked to Bowling Green Mills and has changed dramatically within the last century due to the development and then demise of the mill complex. A small terraced row of approximately 8 mill worker's houses was situated on this site by 1890, which lay to the rear of the mill. By 1956 it appears that due to the expansion of the mill all the houses except number 12 were demolished. It is unknown as to when the mill building was demolished.

Present: The existing building is a tall three-storey stone-built dwelling fronting directly onto Crag Hill Road with the main entrance on the 2nd floor. This property generally provides a positive contribution to the streetscape as it has a distinct relationship with the properties on the opposite side of the road. It retains many of its original features which are considered to be an important element of the character in this area. The insertion of modern timber top opening casements do, to a certain extent, blend into the openings of the property.

Existing Designations: None
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

16. 11 – 35 Crag Hill Road

History: This group of properties were built c.1851 and were locally known as Crag Hill. At this time, open fields surrounded the houses, however by 1890 the development of Bowling Green Mills to the northeast significantly altered the setting of this area.

Present: The irregular design of the properties within this row is due to the stark variations in the heights of the properties throughout the row. A narrow path separates the front door from the road. Overall this group of properties provides a contribution to Thackley and creates a sense of separation from the rest of the village due to their close relationship to one another. However, the extent to which the windows have been altered

dramatically affects the appearances of individual properties, many of the houses have inappropriate windows with some consisting of modern uPVC alternatives which is a stark contrast to the dark stone surfaces.

Existing Designations: Grade II Listed Buildings
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

17. The Old Station & Rail Bridge, Crag Hill Road:

History: The construction of the railway began in 1845 when the first tunnel was excavated at Thackley; by 1878 the Great Northern Railway Company opened Thackley railway station. This development transformed this southern section of Thackley.

The Old Station (as it is now known) was a later addition built circa 1890-94.

Present: Since the closure of the railway in Thackley many of its associated buildings fell into disuse. The former railway line and its tight confines have been disregarded, allowing vegetation to take over. The present leafiness of the former railway track provides a delightful setting for this industrial component, making it an interesting feature of the area. In addition, the survival of the railway bridge is an important historical feature within Thackley, whilst providing a significant focal point. The bridge is a narrow hump back bridge with a high stonewalls to either side with an original cobbled surface.

The one and a half storey station building has been converted into residential use. The significant amount of alteration has negatively impacted upon the visual amenity of this property and does not emulate the prevailing character of the wider area. The mismatch of materials including an artificial slate roof, flanked by a red brick chimney, with the addition of a stone porch does not provide any overall cohesion. The insertion of uPVC windows is offset by the white rendering of the elevations of this property.

Existing Designations: Tree Preservation Order (0822: Designated 16th May 2002) former railway line including bridge.

Overall Townscape Value: Positive

18. 16 – 18 Crag Hill Road:

History: These adjoining cottages were built c.1851 to the southern part of Crag Hill Road, which joined Thackley Road with Leeds Road. The boundary to the rear of the properties has been altered a number of times. By 1919 the boundary was set.

Present: These delightful cottages retain many of their original features and details; the surrounding leafy setting created by the overgrown railway site enhances their character.

Existing Designations: None
Overall Townscape Value: Positive

19. Crag Hill Road

History: Crag Hill Road was laid down by 1851 and formed the link road from Thackley Road to Leeds Road to the south. The majority of the land surrounding the small section of Crag Hill Road remained vacant until the development of Beech Close to the south circa 1960, and the more recent development of Weavers Croft to the north, formally part of the Bowling Green Mills site.

Present: The lack of any architectural or historical interest to either side of this road has created a void within the boundary of the survey area. Modern infill residential developments to either side of the site do not provide a significant contribution to the general character of Thackley to warrant inclusion into the survey area.

Existing Designations: None
Overall Townscape Value: Neutral

Streetscape: The survey area includes parts of Park Road, Thackley Road and Crag Hill Road, all of which join at a wide junction to the south of Ainsbury Avenue. There is a distinct lack of original streetscape materials within this survey area, which provides insufficient qualities to link the place together. Modern engineering methods dominate the road and footway surfaces, with tarred road surfaces, concrete curbs and tarmac footways. There are pockets of originality, such as

to the corner of Crag Hill Road leading onto Thackley Road where there are some remaining stone flags and curbs, however the quality has been reduced by the extension of the pavement and the in fill of its edges with tarmac.

The area surrounding the railway bridge to the south west of Crag Hill Road provides a visual reminder of what the road surfaces were like in Thackley. The retention of the stone cobbles covering the surface bridge is a unique and interesting feature.

Existing Designations: Park Road; Thackley Road; Town Lane and Leeds Road form part of the Local and National Cycle Network.

Overall Townscape Value: Negative

Conclusion

For a conservation area designation to be a useful planning tool, the area within its confines must create a distinct sense of place or 'character area' with buildings and spaces consistent architectural and heritage values. Conservation Area designation cannot be used to manage change in an area effectively if the designation is based on the interest of a few key buildings or spaces rather than the interest of the area as a whole. The same is true for areas which, although attractive and pleasant, lack cohesiveness in their built form, architecture and historic features and details.

In the opinion of the Design and Conservation Team the designation of a Conservation Area in Thackley would be inappropriate for the following reasons:

- The architectural and historical interests of the majority of the buildings are already protected through Listed Building status, which offers stronger protection than Conservation Area status. These properties are: 3-19 (odd) Park Road, 47-53 (odd) Park Road, 57-67 (odd) Park Road, 71-75 Park Road (odd), 1-11 (odd) North Street, 9-33 (odd) Thackley Road and 11-35 (odd) Crag Hill Road.
- There are a number of unlisted properties within this survey area that have been identified as providing a positive contribution to the visual

amenity of the area. However, their weak historic and architectural details and qualities do not provide a significant justification for these to warrant additional protection.

- There has been an abundance of piecemeal alterations that have occurred to both listed and unlisted buildings, which has impacted architectural and historic interest. These include the replacement of windows and doors with modern alternatives and the alteration of chimney details.
- The mixture of historical and modern buildings means there is no strong 'core' of historic buildings and character. Modern developments in and around Thackley have not taken into consideration the general character of the area within their designs. Niall Court included in the survey area does not emulate the prevailing character of Thackley and appears alien with its design and form. Development at Weavers Croft, neighbouring the survey area has some positive elements in terms of the use of stone however, it is let down by materials and detailing of the roof. The boundary feature does not provide a continuation of the strong boundary walls found elsewhere in Thackley.
- The open and green character of the cricket ground off Thackley Road is protected through its designation as Open Recreation Grounds in the Unitary Development Plan.
- All of the trees along the former railway line are already protected through a Tree Preservation Order.
- The loss of the majority of original footway and carriageway details means that the streetscape is modern and is of no special architectural or historic interest.

Actions

Although it would be inappropriate to designate Thackley as a conservation area, there are nonetheless a number of actions which will contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the area.

1. Property owners should ensure that any works carried out are in keeping with the character of this area. Changes such as the replacement of windows and doors should take into account the size and proportion of openings, along with the design and features of materials used. Piecemeal and unsympathetic alterations in time will contribute to the dilution of the character of Thackley
2. There should be a strong presumption in favour of ensuring the continuous survival of the stone roofscape and stone boundary walls which are key features of Thackley. The loss of these details would be detrimental to its character and appearance.
3. The Council can make use of controls afforded to it to ensure that illegal works to listed buildings are rectified. Enforcement controls can be used to take action against property owners that have made inappropriate changes to a building without obtaining permission from the authority prior to works being carried out. This action by the local planning authority will ensure the survival of all the listed properties within the area, and that there character and appearance is of the highest quality.
4. The mature trees, which line Ainsbury Avenue, should be considered for Tree Preservation Order status due to their age, group value and positive contribution to the street scene and setting of Thackley.
5. Thackley Church and Thackley Primary School are added to the local list of buildings of architectural and historic interest. This would mean that the local importance of these buildings would be consideration in future planning decisions.