

Conservation Area
Assessment
Easingwold

HAMBLETON

DISTRICT COUNCIL

North Yorkshire
County Council



February 2000

Introduction

Easingwold is a small town in the gently undulating Vale of York, approximately 13 miles north of York on the A19. To the north lie the Hambleton Hills, to the south, east and west is undulating valley floor with wooded copses and hedged fields.

The town centre is characterised by Georgian and Victorian buildings along densely built up frontages on Long Street, Little Lane and Chapel Lane, with similar frontage development around the edges of the irregularly shaped Market Place, up Spring Street and along the greens at Uppleby.

The Purpose of this Booklet

This booklet has been jointly prepared by Hambleton District Council and North Yorkshire County Council. Its purpose is to provide a detailed appraisal of those townscape features, buildings and spaces which make Easingwold an attractive historic town.

The booklet contains:

- 1 A map showing the main features which make Easingwold an attractive historic town.
- 2 A description of the conservation area, identifying its special character and important features which should be taken note of when new buildings are proposed.
- 3 Some ideas for improving the appearance of the historic parts of the town.

What is a Conservation Area?

A conservation area is an area of 'special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The Easingwold Conservation Area was designated on 22 March 1972.

The boundary was amended on 23 October 1990 by being cropped to the west of Long Street, and extended to take in a row of terraced houses at Church Hill and Thirsk Road, villas north of Church Hill and St John's House. The boundary includes the historic core of Easingwold while avoiding the later housing developments.

Designation is a recognition of the group value of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect not just individual buildings but the character of the area as a whole. The special character of an area derives from a combination of many things, such as trees, walls, open spaces, groups of buildings and the way they are arranged. Every area is unique.

What Controls Apply?

Within the 48 Conservation Areas in the District, a number of special controls apply. In addition the policies of the

Hambleton District-Wide Local Plan aim to ensure that any development is in accordance with the special architectural or historic interest of the area.

Further general advice on Conservation Areas is given in Planning Information Note No. 2 available from the Council.

The emphasis is always on preserving or enhancing those buildings, spaces and features which give each conservation area its special distinctive character.

A Brief History

The early history of Easingwold is poorly recorded. There are no scheduled monuments in the conservation area, and no significant archaeological excavations have taken place.

Roman mosaics, pottery and a coin were found near the town in the mid 19th century. The most important recent find has been of a 1st century AD Iron Age settlement of round houses during the building of the Easingwold bypass in 1992-3.

Easingwold is recorded in the Domesday Book, and in the Norman period, Robert de Mowbray took charge of the lands which were kept for hunting. Courts for the Forest of Galtres were held at Easingwold, Huby and York.

Farmland around the edge of the town was divided into four fields; Crayke Field lay to the east, Mill Field to the north (formerly the site of a wind mill), Church Field to the north-west and Stone Field to the south.

The Forest of Galtres was gradually cleared and converted to farmland from the 17th century. It ceased to be a royal forest in 1630, and the Crown sold estates which had been held on lease. Large tracts of forest land were enclosed in the 1640's.

In 1646, Charles I granted the market to George Hall. In return for the right to hold markets in the town, he had to build and maintain the tollbooth and maintain the pavements. The tollbooth measured only 10 feet by six feet, with a flight of stone steps. The Market Place comprised a row of houses on the north side and a double row of shambles.

Easingwold developed as a staging post during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries where travellers changed their post-horses, draught beasts or wagons.

Easingwold remained a post town, with as many as 26 inn keepers recorded during the mid eighteenth century. However the construction of the York to Darlington railway (1841) effectively bypassed the town. With consequent loss of its post town status Easingwold tried to reinvent itself as a fashionable spa retreat with little success.

More recently its status as a stopping off point was further diminished by the A19 rerouting which bypasses the town completely. Easingwold now mainly services the surrounding agricultural area and acts as a commuter town for York and surrounding area.

Origins and Street Plan of Easingwold

Easingwold appears to have developed from two distinct areas - Uppleby in the north, and around the Market Place to the south. Long Street cuts diagonally across several blocks of former fields aligned with the Market Place, and was later built up along its frontage. This has resulted in the unusual pattern of sharply angled plots and gardens each side of Long Street.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1856 clearly shows the pattern of land subdivision. The pattern has been significantly altered recently by development on the backlands south of Long Street; however it still remains defined in the backlands elsewhere within the Conservation Area.

Given the difficulty in understanding the complex development of the town, any opportunities for archaeological investigation need to be taken in key areas within the Conservation Area, such as Uppleby, Spring Street, Market Place and Long Street.

Landscape Setting of Easingwold

The surrounding countryside from the north-west to the east of the town is gently undulating and few views of the town are possible from the north. To the east and south the land flattens out and limited views can be obtained of the town from the surrounding countryside.

Easingwold town centre is positioned on a gradual slope running down hill from north and north-west to south-east.

Uppleby to the north, is at a higher level than the Market Place and Long Street. This variation in levels and its interaction with the street pattern adds considerable interest to the unique visual and spatial characteristics of the town. Even relatively small buildings on Uppleby appear prominently against the skyline when viewed from Back

Lane, to the east of the Market Place. This is particularly true of the house called The Mount which stands high above the rest at the corner of Uppleby and Spring Street.

Besides The Mount, the principal skyline focus is the Town Hall clock in the Market Place: a later addition to the Victorian Town Hall, a landmark which dominates the area.

Townscape Analysis

The Components of Character

The character of Easingwold is provided by a handful of different elements which combine to give the town a distinctive appearance. These elements are as follows:



Bonney Croft Lane

1 The Buildings

Easingwold is overwhelmingly a brick town, with few stone buildings other than the parish church and Catholic Church. Pantiles or modern tiles along with Welsh and Westmorland slate are the main roofing materials. The more important houses are three storey, the smaller cottages are two storey, but many buildings are joined together in continuous frontages along the main streets.

2 Tofts, Crofts and Garths

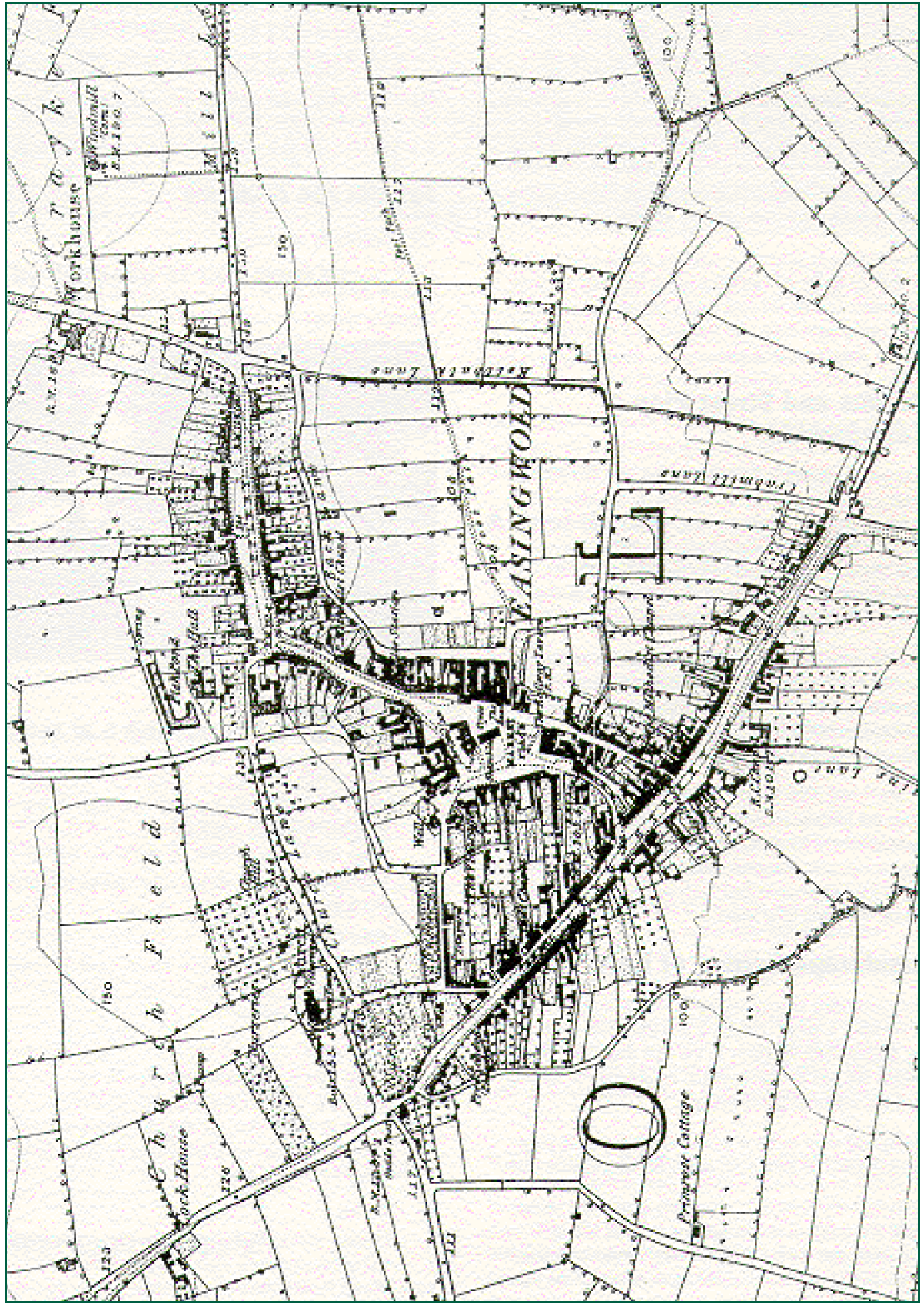
Behind the buildings are long narrow gardens, called garths, tofts or crofts, some bounded by tall brick walls, or thick hedges.

3 Back Lanes

A long back lane survives on the south side of Uppleby to Crabmill Lane and other back lanes survive at Tanpit Lane, Bonney Croft Lane and Manor Road. These lanes are characterised by dense holly hedges with holly trees.

4 Greens

Uppleby retains a ribbon of greens along both sides, giving this part of the town a village character. The Market Place is the main open space in the town centre, with greens on its west and south sides.



Easingwold in 1856

North Yorkshire County Record Office. © Crown Copyright

These four elements combine to make up a number of distinct sub areas in the conservation area as follows:

- A. The Parish Church and Church Hill.
 - B. Long Street
 - C. Uppleby
 - D. Market Place
- A. The Parish Church and Church Hill



Church Avenue

The Parish Church and the site of the Archdeanery Manor House are on elevated sites north of the town centre, and are connected by Church Hill. A church may have been in existence from around the seventh century and the Manor House by the end of the thirteenth century.

The densely built up frontage of Long Street continues into Church Street to end at Tanpit Lane. Between here and the church is modern housing set in large hedged and secluded gardens, with an avenue of trees along Church Avenue.

The Churchyard is bounded by a wall and yew hedges and trees, with other mature trees along the north side of Church Hill. East of the Church, Church Hill is bounded by holly hedges with holly trees. Holly hedges and trees are a characteristic planted feature of Church Hill, Tanpit Lane and Bonney Croft Lane.

The square towered largely fifteenth century stone church is the principal building in the area, set in a well treed churchyard. The nearby houses range from late Victorian terraces to modern detached houses set in large gardens.

B. Long Street

Early Ordnance Survey maps show that the field boundaries cut across Long Street which suggests that Long Street was probably laid out over these fields at a later date.

The backland garden plots meet Long Street at an acute angle. This results in a complex pattern of angled outbuildings at the rear of buildings fronting the street, and is due to the early ownership structure which has influenced later development.

Clear views are to be had along Long Street, terminated by mature trees at each end, which help make the transition between town and country.



Long Street looking South East

Long Street falls gently from north west to south east and widens out between Little Lane and Chapel Lane. At the north west end, the built up street frontage ends along a raised pavement behind white timber rails, with a grassy bank opposite.

Southwards from Church Street, the road is bounded by two storey brick buildings, grouped into terraces which mostly have pantiled roofs. Around the junctions with Little Lane and Chapel Lane, buildings rise to three stories, and are generally of a larger scale. The grass verges and trees of this area provide some visual relief in this densely built up area. Approaching St. Monica's Hospital, the mostly nineteenth century pairs of villas are well set back from the road behind front gardens.

Along the south side of Long Street beyond Crawford House, development becomes disjointed with wide gaps between buildings and the setting back of the listed St John's Roman Catholic Church.

Long Street is characterised by almost continuously built-up frontages of buildings along both sides. Rooflines rise and fall, and buildings step in and out, particularly on the south side of the street. Buildings are mainly of brick with pantile roofs, and mostly date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some buildings have dentilled or corniced eaves, and many have painted window lintels and sills or gauged brick window heads. Most traditional window openings have vertical sash windows, smaller cottages have Yorkshire sliding windows, particularly in rear elevations.

C. Easingwold Hall and Uppleby

Easingwold Hall stood where Church Hill and Uppleby meet. Its proximity to the parish church suggests that this area may be one of the oldest parts of the town. Uppleby may be an early extension to Easingwold; its former name of High Street suggests an early origin.

A manor house is thought to have existed as early as the thirteenth century, but it later fell into disrepair and ruin. The remains were demolished in 1835 and farm buildings erected on the site.



Uppleby looking East

Uppleby has a distinctive village green character quite unlike any of the other sub areas of Easingwold. The main street sits in a hollow, formed by substantial grass banks planted with mature trees. The grass banks rise to footways giving access to the houses which line each side of the street in densely built up frontages. Uppleby climbs steeply from Spring Street, then levels out to fall slightly towards Oulston Road, where the greens end.

Back Lane snakes its way downhill to the south of Uppleby to end near the Market Place, terminating the backland plots. South of back lane, beyond the conservation area are modern houses, built on what would have been open fields, and beyond lies the cricket field.

Most buildings in Uppleby are of apparent late 18th to mid 19th century date, with later houses built in gap sites. Some of the older houses may be remodelled refronted timber framed buildings, although here is little external evidence of this.

Older houses have 12 or 16 paned vertical sliding sash windows set within openings with gauged brick heads. Later 19th century buildings have two or four pane windows typical of that date.

Buildings along Uppleby face the street and keep to a consistent building line each side of the road. They are grouped into short terraces or pairs, all of brick

with pantile or slate roofs. A small number of houses along the north side of the road have narrow front gardens enclosed by low walls and cast iron railings.

One detail to be noted is the practice of picking out door and window returns and margins in white paint, giving a contrast to the orange brown brickwork. It is the consistency of building materials which helps to give the street elevations a unity, despite the diversity of building periods and styles.

D. Market Place and Spring Street

Although the origins of the Market Place are unclear, it has been the centre of life in Easingwold for at least 300 years. The largest houses are to be found on the west and north sides of the Market Place, with other large houses near the top of Spring Street.

Long narrow backland plots extend beyond the west side of the Market Place and across Long Street, to terminate at a back lane.

Business was centred round the two rows of shambles towards the north of the Market Place. By the mid nineteenth century, the area was surrounded by houses, small businesses and public houses. Since then, there has been very little redevelopment or infilling, except in the centre of the Market Place.



Market Place

The irregularly shaped Market Place funnels into Spring Street and Tanpit Lane at its northern end, and is interrupted by several groups of buildings at its centre, the Tollbooth, Town Hall and Market Cross.

The character of the Market Place has changed in the past century, with open grassed areas around the Town Hall being replaced by cobbled or tarmac areas used for car parking. Areas of grass remain on the west side of the Market Place, and to the south where tree planting softens the impact of the buildings. To the east is Galtres House, now the Community Centre, designed by W H Brierley, an important York architect.

Buildings around the Market Place are mostly two or three storey, dating from the late 17th to the late 19th centuries. It is probable that some of these buildings will contain older features.

Behind the Market Place lie backland plots and gardens, many enclosed by high brick walls. These plots extend back to Back Lane to the east, to Bonney Croft Lane to the north and to Long Street to the south. Although some of these backlands have been encroached on by recent housing development, in general their historic character is retained.

On the east side of Market Place, the York Hotel projects into the street, and beyond a small crescent of houses has been built, behind recently reinstated iron railings. The backlands to the east of the Market Place have been extensively built over, and new development is infilling the plot ends in Back Lane. Barns and cart sheds which previously occupied the ends of plots are being displaced by new development, and the character of this area is being changed.

At its north western corner, Market Place funnels into Tanpit Lane. The cobbled areas of Market Place extend along Tanpit Lane as cobbled gutters, extending up to Church Street and Church Avenue. These cobbled areas are a characteristic feature of Easingwold.



Spring Street looking towards Uppleby

The open character of the Market Place contrasts greatly with the highly defined Little and Chapel Lanes, entering from Long Street to the south. These lanes are densely packed with shops and houses, with workshops and outbuildings grouped on the backlands.

To the north, the Market Place funnels past the War Memorial into Spring Street, where the pavement starts to rise above street level. Midway up Spring Street is the spring, issuing from a stone structure. Beyond the spring, the pavements are carried on substantial raised causeways, edged with white painted rails on the east side of the road.



West side of Market Place

Buildings

The most important listed buildings in the town are the Parish Church of St. John (Grade II*), Crawford House and Old Coach Yard (former St Joseph's Convent) both in Long Street (Grade II) and Tudor House at Uppleby (Grade II).

The most important unlisted building is the Galtres Centre just off the Market Place. This former house was designed by W H Brierley around 1895, and has been successfully extended in recent years to form a community centre.

Church of St. John

This is one of the very few stone buildings in the town, dating from the fifteenth century in its present form. The church stands in a well treed churchyard, a little distant from the town centre.



Crawford House

Crawford House, Long Street

This early 19th century house with its recently restored fanlight over the front door is one of the most impressive houses in Long Street, occupying a commanding location in the street. It was the home of Thomas Crawford, and next door where the petrol station now stands, is the site of his heavy horse stables for his carriers business.

Old Coach Yard, Long Street

This mid to late 18th century house was formerly St Joseph's Convent, and previously an Inn. It is notable for its tiers of Venetian windows at each end of the building, and occupies a key position in the street at the entrance to Little Lane.

Tudor House, Uppleby

This early to mid 17th century building is notable as being the only visible timber framed house in the town. Internally, it retains its timbered smoke hood, a predecessor to the brick chimney.

Building Materials

Two and three storey brick buildings with pantile roofs provide the built context for the conservation area. Many older eighteenth century houses have had nineteenth century bay windows and door cases added.

Brick detailing is largely confined to dentilled or cogged eaves, with brick string courses at intermediate floor levels. Many buildings have painted stone or gauged brick window lintels and sills.

There is a wide variety of window and door styles, with a mixture of 16, 12, 4 and 2 pane vertical sliding sashes.

Six paned Yorkshire sliding sash windows are found in some of the cottages.

A small number of traditional timber framed buildings survived into the twentieth century in Spring Street, at Shepherd's Garth in Long Street and in Uppleby.

The town centre is characterised by extensive areas of small round cobbles laid over much of the Market Place, and areas of compacted pebbles in front of houses near the War Memorial.



Tanpit Lane

Cobbled channels run alongside Spring Street, Tanpit Lane, Church Avenue and Church Street, with blue scoria blocks used to delimit the edges of cobbled areas. It is important that areas of traditional paving are maintained.

Shopfronts

Many shop fronts are later additions to houses, and some houses with projecting bay windows have been converted to small offices and shops. In most cases signage is contained on or behind the window with some having, in addition, projecting signs and brass name plaques. Less successfully, some former houses have had small squared bays added, in a way which detracts from the appearance of the building .



Shopfront in Little Lane

Purpose designed shop fronts are found on the north, east and south sides of the Market Place, in Chapel Lane, and Long Street. These probably date from the latter half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. Most are of simple form, comprising plain timber pilasters, fascias and cornices. Better examples have dentils and console brackets. Stall risers are generally of brick. Projecting signs are, not surprisingly, a particular feature of commercial frontages in the narrow environs of Chapel Lane.

A few shop fronts have built in canvas canopies. 'Dutch canopies' or purpose built hoods have been added to some shopfronts.

Negative Features in the Conservation Area

Most of the conservation area is of high visual quality, and the main streets in the town centre present an attractive and varied scene of brick buildings with varied roof pitches and skylines.

There are some changes which are a cause for concern as they are having a negative impact on the conservation area as noted below:

- **Minor alterations to buildings.**

A small number of shop fronts have been modified in ways which do not relate to the building, resulting in an adverse impact on the street scene.

The use of permanent fixed 'Dutch canopies' on shop fronts introduces an inappropriate feature which is usually poorly related to the building.

There has been a gradual process of window replacement in residential properties, with original windows being replaced by timber windows in the 1950s and 1960s. These inferior windows in turn have been replaced by inappropriately designed pvcU windows.

Where original doors and windows survive, it is important that these are retained so that the character and appearance of the conservation area is maintained.

- **Street lighting and street furniture**

Long Street is marred by the tall lighting columns which tower over the two storey cottages lining the street. With the detrunking of the A19, there may be an opportunity, to reduce the size of the lighting columns to a more appropriate scale.

Street furniture, signs, bollards, bins and notice boards add to the clutter in the town centre, and an audit to identify redundant street furniture would benefit the appearance of the area.

- **Problem buildings**

The row of four shops on the north side of the centre of the Market Place are partially occupied and in a poor state of repair. These buildings are known as The Toll Booth and were rebuilt in the early 19th century following a fire. Measures are now required to ensure that the building is repaired and fully occupied.

- **Backland Development**

On the edge of the conservation area, areas of backland have become separated from building frontages and fallen into disuse. Developers have taken the opportunity to assemble backland sites on which housing estates have been built. These developments do not relate to the plot pattern and underlying grain of the historic town, and introduce an inappropriate form of suburban development, out of place in the fringes of a historic market town.

The established pattern of frontage buildings, giving way to rear outbuildings to gardens and open fields is being eroded by the introduction of new estates.

The layout and design of such developments can affect views into and out of the conservation area, as has happened along the south side of Long Street.

The need to provide adequate vehicular access to new backland development has created gaps in building frontages and the widening of historic paths.

Neutral Features in the Conservation Area

Neutral areas neither enhance nor do they significantly detract from the quality of the area. They contain modern buildings in good condition but built in styles which fail to reflect local traditions of building. Some of these developments fail to respect the area in terms of style, design, materials and location, and in their siting, they frequently disrupt the traditional plot pattern of the area.

In this century a small number of larger institutional buildings have been erected in the town. Elsewhere, small housing schemes have erased the underlying plot pattern

and introduced a suburban form of development close to the town centre.

These areas are few in number, as follows:

- Sheltered housing, Tanpit Lane.
- Long Street Motors.
- The Spinney.
- Chase Garth Road.
- New Inn Lane.

Opportunities for Enhancement

There are a number of specific environmental enhancements which might be carried out, as follows:

- Cobbling/setting of side roads around the junction of Little and Chapel Lanes with Long Street. Surfacing in these areas are at present in a poor state of repair.
- Repositioning and painting or renewal of lamp posts in Long Street would significantly improve the appearance of the street. To the north west of the street (beyond Church Street) relocating lamp posts to the rear of the footpath would open up views of the buildings and lose the lamp posts against the grass and trees.
- In the Market Place area rationalisation of street furniture would cut down the clutter. Timber bollards and fewer signs would help to retain the informality of this area, and the repositioning of bins and planters would reduce the present cluttered appearance.
- Tidying of the area around the spring and replacement of wire mesh with a purpose designed grill.
- Edging of road and removal of illegal parking at Uppleby.

Every opportunity should be taken to ensure that in advance of future works a co-ordinated approach between County Highways and Hambleton District Council is adopted, with early negotiations on questions of design.

Enhancement Schemes

The Council wishes to encourage schemes to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Under the Conservation Areas Preservation and Enhancement Scheme (CAPE) grants of 50% are offered toward the repair and retention of features of interest and to reinforce the special attraction of the area.

Eligible items include:

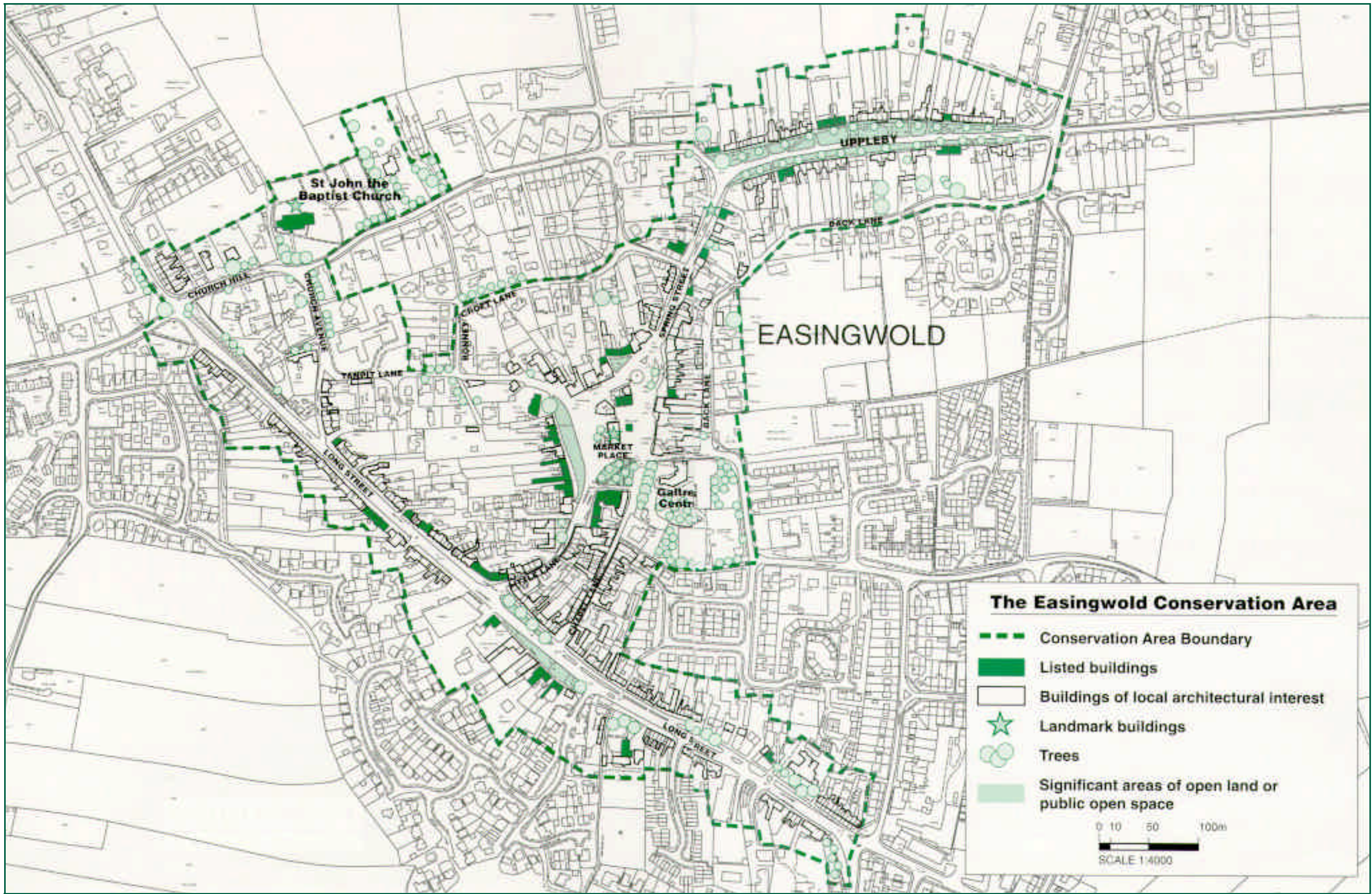
- the repair of brick and stone walls
- the relaying of natural stone paving
- the undergrounding of wires
- the removal of intrusive signs.

Further details of the grant are available from the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Stone Cross, Northallerton DL6 2UU.

Grants for Building Repair

Market Towns Grant

Under the Market Towns Grant, grants may be offered towards the repair of historic buildings within the Conservation area. These will be either listed buildings or older unlisted buildings. Modern buildings are not eligible. The level of grant is 50%, and further details of the Scheme are available from the District Council at Stone Cross.



Listed Buildings in the Easingwold Conservation Area

Church Lane	Church of St John	II*		Rowntree House	II
Long Street	No 30 and Bay Horse Inn	II		Mr Wass' House (now Windross House)	II
	Pamela Davies Shop and House (Nos. 56-58)	II		Orchard House and Prospect House	II
	The New Inn	II		Rocliffe House	II
	Old Coach Yard	II		Croft House	II
	Milestone outside No 104	II		Scaife House	II
	Nos. 190, 192 and 194	II		Normandene & Driffield House	II
	St John the Evangelist RC Church	II		The Old Vicarage	II
	No 81	II	Oulston Road	Claypenny Hospital (2-13 Cedar Place)	II
	Nos. 83, 85 and 87	II			
	No 121 Crawford House	II	Spring Street	The Mount and Cottage to left	II
	No 135 (Beckwith's Shop)	II		Springhead House	II
Nos. 137 and 139	II		Allonville and Elderslie	II	
Nos. 141 and 143	II		Blayds House	II	
Market Place	Row of 4 shops including The Clothes Peg (The Tollbooth)	II	Uppleby	Nos. 11 and 13 Hey House	II
	Market Cross and House	II		Pair of Gates to No 47 (The Villa)	II
	The Commercial Public House	II		Nos. 47 and 49 (The Villa)	II
	Corner Cottage	II		Tudor House and Tudor Cottage	II
	White House Cottage	II		No 34 (Allerton House)	II
	The White House	II		No 36,	II
	Chapman, Medd & Sons	II		No 38,	II
	Mace and Greenways (now A B Hutchinson)	II		Nos. 56 and 58 Rose Mount,	II
	John Clayton (now Della and Clarks Tearooms)	II		K6 Telephone Kiosk,	II

Further Advice

If you need further advice, please contact:

Hambleton District Council, Department of Planning and Environmental Services, Civic Centre, Stone Cross Northallerton DL6 2UU

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Fax: 01609 767228

e-mail: info@hambleton.gov.uk

Website: www.hambleton.gov.uk

Or

Heritage Unit, Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AH

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