



**Heslington Village Design Statement**

# HESLINGTON VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

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### Acknowledgements

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### *Key to cover photographs (left to right):-*

Front cover: Heslington Hall; Main Street South; the Paddock; St Paul's Church; More House.

Back inside cover: details of vernacular building materials in Heslington.

Back outer cover: window, Village Meeting Room; bell-tower, Lord Deramore's School; window detail, St Paul's Church, doorway, number 10 Main Street [South]; headstone of John West-Taylor (St Paul's Church); door, Almshouses, Main Street [South]; date stone, Wesleyan Chapel (now the Village Meeting Room); chimney, Heslington Hall.

# Heslington Village Design Statement

## 1 Introduction

The production of a Village Design Statement (VDS) is a Countryside Agency initiative dating from 1996 and supported and endorsed by the then Secretary of State for the Environment.

*The objectives of a Village Design Statement are to:-*

- 1. Describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside**
- 2. Show how character can be identified at three levels:-**
  - **The landscape setting of the village**
  - **The shape of the settlement**
  - **The nature of the buildings themselves**
- 3. Work in partnership with the local planning authority in the context of existing local planning policy to influence future policies**
- 4. Draw up design principles based on the distinctive local character**

This VDS therefore aims to describe the special character of the Village of Heslington and to shape future development through its adoption as the basis for Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the Draft Local Plan. This VDS should be considered in the context of the Council's emerging Local Plan and the Development Briefs for the existing Campus and Campus 3. It should be noted that the VDS fully represents the views of local villagers and includes some aspirations that are outside current planning regulations.

With the exception of section 6, this document does not apply to the existing campus outside the conservation area or the 65 ha proposed Campus 3 site.

This document has been accepted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City of York Council's emerging draft Local Plan on 22nd April 2004.

The sequence of events for the formulation of this VDS was:-

(a) An invitation along with a preliminary

questionnaire circulated to the entire Village.

(b) A preliminary meeting involving over 100 people was held in the School.

(c) A further meeting held in the Village Meeting Room, to which those who had registered interest in the VDS were invited and a steering committee formed which oversaw the whole process. It comprised approximately 30 people from all sections of the community, including the School Headmistress, the local Vicar, members of the University living in the Village and members of both the Parish Council and Heslington Village Trust.

(d) A daylong workshop open to all villagers was held at the School with an exhibition of maps, historical documents and photographs. This was overseen by an independent professional facilitator.

(e) The output from the workshop was summarised and edited into a series of drafts by a team of about 20 people, supervised by the steering group.

(f) Seven weeks were allowed for comments by the villagers on the final draft.

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*The Paddock from Boss Lane*

(g) A further public meeting open to all villagers was held for final comment.

h) There was a concluding meeting of the full steering committee to endorse the wording of the final text.

(i) Drafts have been given to CYC and the Countryside Agency for review.

Throughout the process, villagers were kept informed of VDS events by means of door-to-door leafleting. All households were leafleted on at least four occasions. Other local publicity was achieved through posters in local shops, the school and the Church and through the parish magazine which was delivered to every household. Any students living in the community were included in the leafleting, with the exception of those in the residential block

at Halifax College, which was considered part of the University.

Although the group acted independently, consultation also took place with the Parish Council. The group worked closely with City of York Council's Planning Department to ensure that the finished VDS would be a valid tool for planning guidance when determining future planning applications for development affecting Heslington.

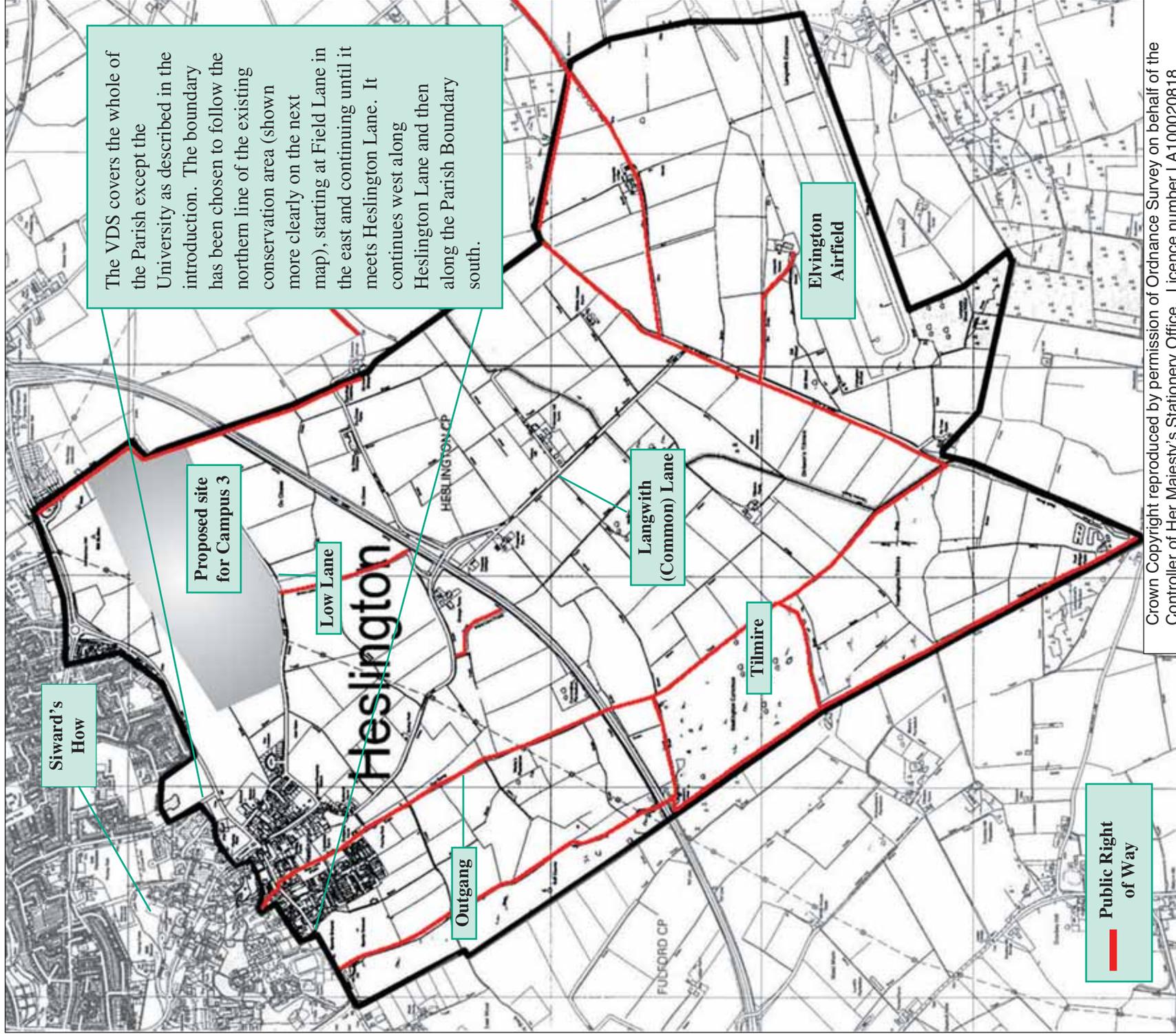
This VDS points out the features valued by residents. It is intended that its recommendations should guide statutory bodies, public authorities, planners, developers, builders, architects, designers, engineers, community groups, householders and businesses to respect the character of this uniquely preserved community close to

the heart of the historic city of York. As agreed with the University of York and the City of York Council, the area of coverage of this VDS is the Parish of Heslington, excluding;

1. The existing University where it is outside the conservation area and...
2. The proposed site of the future Campus 3 should this proceed (although section 6 of the VDS, as stated previously, applies to this area).

The future plans of the University are therefore outside the terms of reference of the VDS, although some comment is made within this document where the University has a direct impact on the Village. The University also owns some properties within the Village itself.

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Heslington Parish and extent of the VDS showing key areas and rights of way

### 2 History

Heslington, which seems to have derived its name from “a place by the hazels”, is thought to have originated as an Anglian settlement that predates the Domesday survey of 1086. The first named person to be associated with Heslington was Siward (c.1020-1055), the huge half-legendary Danish Earl of Northumbria who is immortalised in the name Siward’s How -



*Little Hall*

the hill to the north-west of Heslington (a scheduled monument), where a watertower and telecommunications station now stand, disguised in a surreal concrete castle surrounded by mature trees.

In medieval times Heslington’s historic village layout became established, with long and narrow plots of land extending to the back lanes. Where they survive they have particular value for that reason. It is important that they are protected from subdivision as far as possible. The Village became further settled in the form that we still recognise when Heslington Hall was completed for Sir Thomas Eynns in 1568. Henrietta (aged 26), the daughter of James Yarburgh, who owned Heslington Hall from 1708, made a notable match when in 1719 she married Sir John Vanburgh (aged 54), playwright and architect of Castle Howard, who was reported as confessing “it was so bloody cold up here that he had a mind to marry to keep himself warm.”

By the late 18thC the now familiar fields, farms and hedgerows of Heslington were established - 11 of perhaps 25 farms survive today. Also in the eighteenth century further historically important buildings were added to Heslington. These include Little Hall (1734), Manor House, the hospital, (now known as the Almshouses), Village Farm, the School (1795) and the Vicarage (now known as More House). The most notable resident of the latter was the wit Sydney Smith who arrived in 1809.

The Wesleyan Chapel (now the Village Meeting Room) was built in 1844 and the new school in 1856, with handsome new Stables for Heslington Hall at about the same time. By 1858 the medieval Church of St Paul’s was replaced on the same site by one in the Victorian gothic style by Atkinson at the cost of £3,000, although the bells of 1388 and some of the wall plaques survive. There are 21 buildings listed as having outstanding architectural quality or historic interest in Heslington. They are particularly valued by the community. These are listed in Appendix 1.

In 1881 the population of Heslington was 477 and by 1901 it had risen to 506. Even in the first half of the 20thC the additions to

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Heslington were comparatively minor, notably The Crescent in 1948. This slow-paced evolution was to change with the building of Hall Park in 1960, the sale of part of the Heslington estate to the University of York in 1962 and the creation of Holmefield. All these developments have had a radical effect on the Village with a great deal of land being lost from the original farms. In social terms too the Village has changed. For example, the electoral roll for 2002 listed 757 local residents but with the addition of 2,867 resident students at the University.

No commercial development was allowed on campus when the University site was first built. This led to the lamentable demolition of a number of 18thC cottages in Main Street [South], to be replaced by a large number of commercial banks (now four) to service University needs. The new University Road adequately linked Heslington directly to the Hull Road for the first time, though the later A64 by-pass alleviated some of the traffic flow through Heslington. The grounds of the University have provided a much-commended parkland around an extensive lake and many of the University facilities, such as the Concert Hall, are clearly assets to Heslington and its residents. Holmefield, a

substantial award-winning residential development was added from 1968 onwards, originally for University use though now privately owned. The University site has itself been continuously developed and extended, with the addition of the Science Park within the original development curtilage twelve years ago. Recently completed projects include a retail area (Market Square) and Halifax College - a residential and amenity block for students.

There is currently a deposit draft of the local plan which identifies 65 ha of current Green Belt land for the development of a new campus for the University at the eastern edge of the Village (see map).

*an excellent description of the Village of Heslington, as it looks today, is presented as Appendix 2*

### 3 The Countryside and the Village

#### 3.1 The Village Setting

Heslington Village “retains a strong sense of its own identity”<sup>1</sup> despite its closeness to the City of York and the adjoining University complex, which is within the ward boundary.

<sup>1</sup> From the City of York Local Plan (deposit draft 1998), see appendix 2.



*Main Street [South]*

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Heslington Village is now unique amongst York's immediately peripheral settlements.

The integration of the Village within the original Village settlement is of great historical importance. Heslington has retained its "village" identity and rural charm because it has largely maintained its visual and physical setting and has avoided being submerged by suburban high-volume house building. This is also partly because of the continuation of farming on the high quality land in and around the Village. This land has been largely protected from development since it was allocated by the East Riding in 1967 to make provision for University expansion. The Village has handsomely repaid its neighbour by providing an attractive environment for the University and this has helped to bring to it good staff, good students and profitable conferences.

### 3.2 Open Spaces in and around the Village

The 1998 draft Local Plan (chapter 5) acknowledges that York needs to sit within open countryside, a green belt, to retain the sense of its role as an historic market City.

As a corollary to the Local Plan statements, Heslington must also sit within the

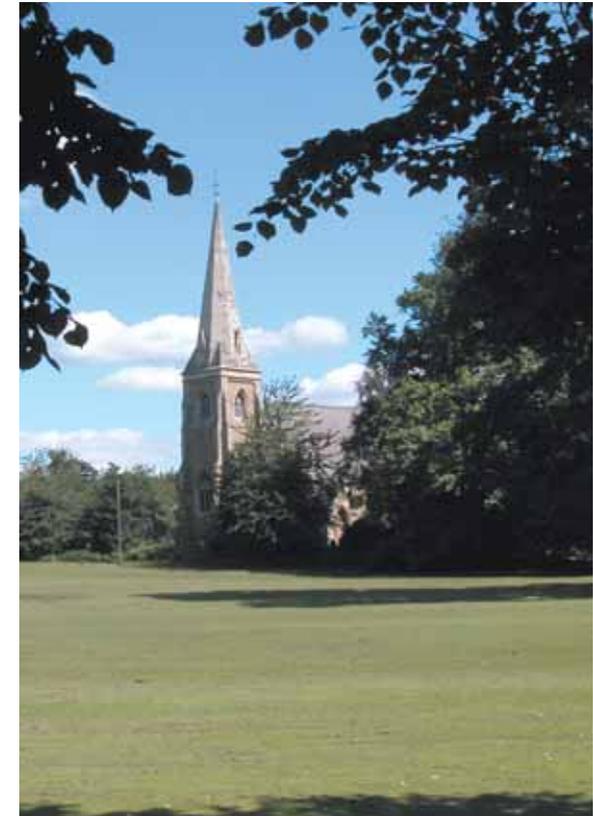
countryside if its character and the sense of its historic role as an agricultural village serving the City is to be preserved.

The green and open spaces both in and around Heslington serve to retain and enhance the rural aspect of the Village and maintain the vestiges of its medieval plan. They continue the relationship between the outlying farms and the one farm that remains in the Village itself.

The very pleasing wide verges and mature trees of Main Street [South] are typical of many Yorkshire villages and are, with the houses, an integral part of the attractive nature of this street. Similarly, the green verges throughout the remainder of the Village (particularly those seen on entering from the Fulford direction) add to the rural feel of the area.

Boss Lane, an ancient public right of way and historic route out to village pasture, follows the winding hedgerows of the old field system leading to the Sportsfield and then via the Outgang to the Tilmire. The Lane passes the remains of one of the oldest orchards in the Village and the paddock behind Little Hall (possibly the only vestige of ridge and furrow of the medieval fields). This paddock was particularly valued in the Public Enquiry of 24 January 1990 by

DoE Inspector K. Barton, who emphatically refused to pass it for development. The mixed hedgerows of Boss Lane, including several fine mature trees, together with the wide diversity of vegetation, are of great importance to wildlife. The fact that it is retained as an earth-surfaced pathway adds to its charm.



*St Paul's Church*

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This whole area, with paddocks on both sides, allotments and other fields, forms a vitally important green lung, ensuring a natural break between the Holmefield Estate, Halifax College and the houses on the west side of the Village Main Street [South].

The Outgang forms a natural corridor for the movement of wild life to and from the fields to the south of the Village. These areas and the gardens alongside Boss Lane, support a very wide variety of bird life. This natural corridor is continued across Main Street, west into Spring Lane and then to Spring Wood.

The large gardens of many of the houses in the Village add to its open nature as well as providing additional havens for wildlife. Those on the east side of the Main Street [South] are of particular interest and value in that they follow the boundaries of the long medieval plots running back to School Lane - formerly Back Lane. These plots are an important remnant of the historic village layout and should be protected. The open nature of the Village is again illustrated in The Crescent where the houses are well spaced with large gardens. Panoramic views of the Yorkshire Wolds can be seen across the fields from School Lane and The Crescent.

Tally Alley, another right of way following medieval boundaries and with well-developed hedgerows, leads from Main Street [South] to the Lord Deramore's School which is surrounded by its playing fields. These, together with the area formerly used as allotments and the open fields beyond, link up with those behind The Crescent and continue the green open area to the Outgang and the fields to the south.

To the north of the school is St Paul's Church, which is set back from the road, with fields to three sides. The Village's rural character, keeping it separated from the City of York, is emphasised by two green wedges - to the west by Walmgate Stray, Fulford Golf Course and the Sportsfields and to the north-east by the playing fields of York St. John College, the University fields and the fields around the Church. The loss of a large section of the north-east wedge to the Science Park and the Next Generation Sports Complex, emphasises the need to retain the rural space that remains around St Paul's Church and the rest of the Village.

The Church is of central importance to the quality of the Village. Not only is its architecture highly valued by the community, but its rural setting is also seen

as vital to the village ambiance. The large field between the Church and Heslington Hall is frequently used by the community for a variety of recreational pursuits, including informal ball games and picnics. The field is a water meadow and during winter months becomes flooded. It is home to a traditional Bonfire Night celebration and the annual Church fête. It is highly prized as a large uninterrupted open green space.

The Church is framed by many fine and mature trees which make a major contribution to the environment. The views of the Church through the trees are highly valued. These line the field to the west and, together with the those to the north, form a defined space and appropriate setting. Many of the mature trees in the Village are already the subject of tree preservation orders, although those in the large field in front of St Paul's Church and those lining Field Lane are not specifically designated. Conservation area protection is afforded to some of these trees.

Substantial sporting facilities are available in and around the Village. These include the University facilities (some of which are open to the public), Heslington Sportsfield, the Next Generation Sports Centre, a fishing lake, Fulford Golf Course and a number of bridleways.

### 3.2.1 Planning Guidelines

1. Any new development should protect the visual and physical setting of the Village in order to preserve its unique character.
2. The spaces shown on the Map, *Main land use in Heslington showing open aspects*, on page 12 as 1, 2, and 3, together with the playing field

between the Church and Heslington Hall, the fields and paddocks alongside Boss Lane are integral to the character of the Village. They should be protected from any development. There is a strong local feeling that the paddock between the Church and Windmill Lane should be similarly protected and any development proposals should be subject to full local consultation. It is, however,

recognised that the School may need to expand to meet its educational requirements.

3. The wide green verges in Heslington should be preserved and this characteristic asset extended where appropriate in existing streets and in new developments. Action should be taken both to prevent vehicles parking on them and to prohibit any other activities that damage them.
4. The distinctive rural character of Boss Lane and the bridleway along the Outgang should be preserved.
5. The gardens and open spaces behind and between the houses are of great value to the rural charm of the Village, are important for birds and wildlife and should be retained. There should be a presumption against the sub-division of gardens and open spaces when future planning applications are considered.
6. Key views and local landmarks should be maintained to help orientation and provide local distinctiveness e.g. St Paul's Church and views to the open



*Boss Lane*

**countryside (See Appendix 2 paragraph 2.3 the Consultation draft planning brief for Heslington East). The same open spaces help preserve the habitat for lapwing populations and flocks of golden plovers.**

- 7. The open space (known as the village green or Church Field) around the Church should be preserved in its entirety, uninterrupted by paths, and the mature trees specifically protected by active management. It should be allowed to continue as a place for informal recreation at the centre of the Village.**
- 8. A policy for long-term planting of trees should be encouraged to replace those which will eventually become too old and unsafe.**

### 3.3 Farming

Heslington Parish still has a strong farming community, with 11 farms and over 2,000 acres of land under cultivation. This farming activity is a very important element of the Village and has helped to give it a much valued rural character. The presence of a working farm (Lime Tree Farm) still in Main Street is considered by residents to be very important. These working farms

contribute a great deal to the quality of the conservation area.

There are two areas of important common land in the parish - the first is the Outgang, which used to be grazed and has been allowed to revert to its natural habitat (it is home to plants such as crab apple, gorse, alder and blackthorn). The second is Tilmire Common, which contains a scheduled monument (a World War II

bombing decoy) and has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by the Nature Conservancy Council because of its marshy grassland and fen plant community. This is particularly valuable for breeding birds such as lapwing, snipe, curlew, teal and pintail.

There is a network of Public Rights of Way in the Parish; see the City of York Council's Rights of Way map (and page 3).

“The farmland of the parish is of a particularly good quality, allowing a balanced rotation of winter and spring crops which encourages a wide diversity of wildlife including traditional farmland birds such as lapwings, skylarks, corn buntings, yellowhammers, owls (barn, tawny and little) even heron and kingfishers as well as foxes and roe deer. The farmsteads also provide valuable homes for bats, swallows, wrens and many other animals.

Many of the original hedgerows still exist and consist of a wide range of species such as hawthorn, hazel, holly, blackthorn, oak, ash and many others. They should be preserved for the benefit of the wildlife and future generations. Too many have been lost already to unwanted developments, which have not been sympathetic to the environment or the village itself, and it is important that the remaining hedges are protected and saved.”

*- Heslington farmer's wife*

### 3.3.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. Any future planning permissions should, wherever possible, respect the working farms of Heslington - for example, ensuring that farm traffic can be accommodated and not siting new buildings so that they might compromise farming activities.**
- 2. The common land and SSSI is recognised as a valuable wildlife habitat; any potential development should not impact on it in any way.**
- 3. Access for walkers, bird watchers, horse riders and those who appreciate the countryside should be maintained.**
- 4. All public rights of way (namely footpaths, bridleways, cyclepaths and byeways) should be clearly defined, kept free from obstruction and their distinctive character maintained.**
- 5. Any planning decision should actively encourage modern conservation principles towards plants and wildlife.**

### 3.4 The Conservation Area

Heslington Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 when the Village was still in Selby District. Conservation Area status recognises the architectural quality and historical interest of the Village, the surviving character, integrity and coherence of the built and green environment and the contribution which they make to the setting of the City of York.

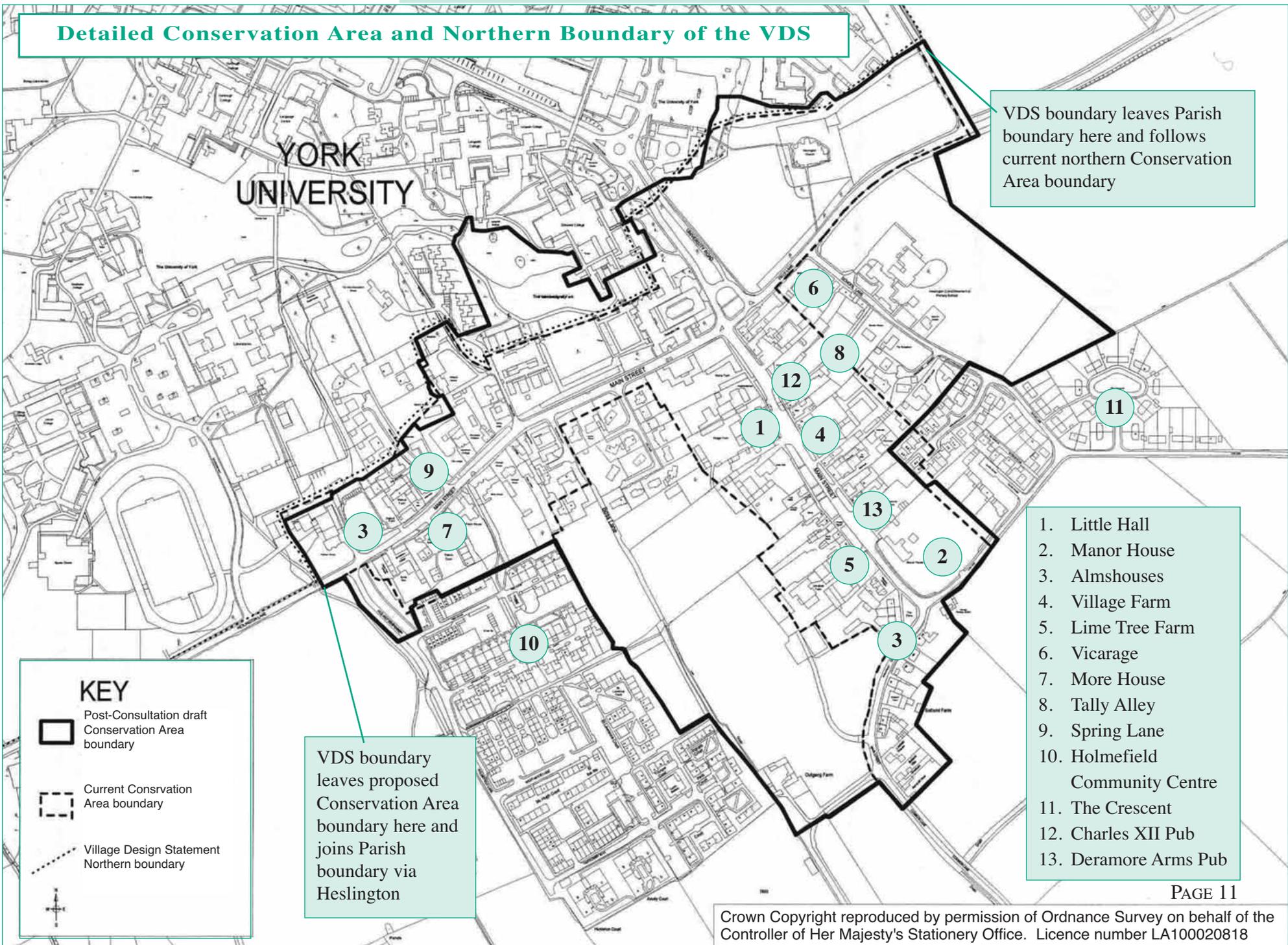
The map on page 11 shows the extent of Heslington Conservation Area, drawn quite tightly around the two sections of Main Street and taking in the Church and its immediate surroundings. The map also shows proposals made by City of York Council in 1999 to extend the boundaries and a full Conservation Area review is taking place. This is due to be completed in early 2004.

The character of the Conservation Area is a very important aspect of Heslington and is easily marred, for example by the visual intrusion of telephone and electricity cabling. Any street furniture should also be appropriate to the conservation area (see section 9.1).

### 3.4.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. The City of York Council recommendations in 1999 (map on page 12) for the changes to the boundaries of the Conservation Area are strongly supported by residents and it is hoped that it will consider a further extension to take in Holmefield and the Crescent.**
- 2. Wherever practical, overhead electricity and telephone cabling in the Conservation Area should be installed underground and every opportunity taken to re-route existing overhead services.**
- 3. Where inappropriate modern materials or other external features have been introduced to listed buildings or elsewhere in the Conservation Area, reinstatement of the original features should be encouraged.**

Detailed Conservation Area and Northern Boundary of the VDS



VDS boundary leaves Parish boundary here and follows current northern Conservation Area boundary

VDS boundary leaves proposed Conservation Area boundary here and joins Parish boundary via Heslington

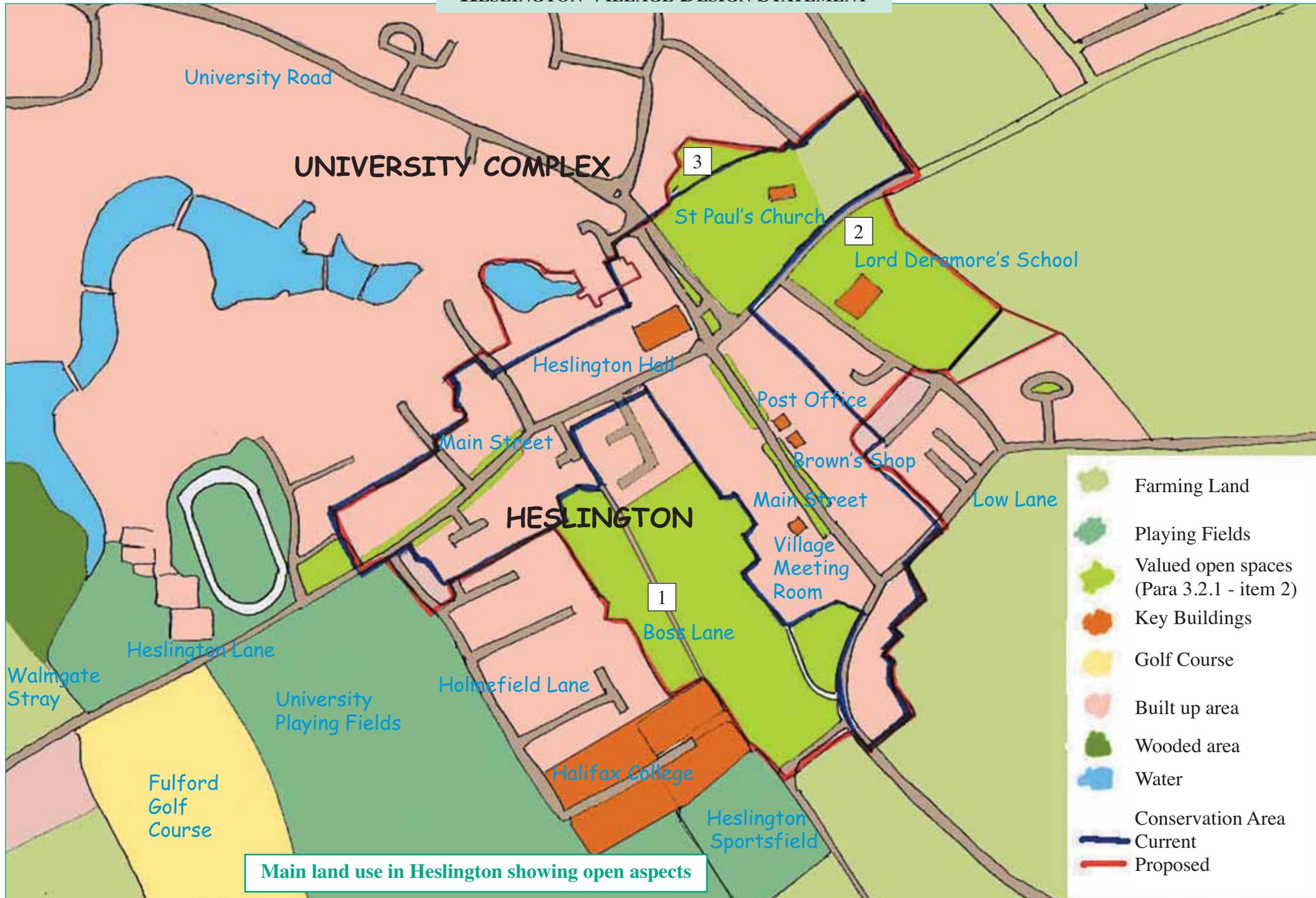
**KEY**

-  Post-Consultation draft Conservation Area boundary
-  Current Conservation Area boundary
-  Village Design Statement Northern boundary



- 1. Little Hall
- 2. Manor House
- 3. Almshouses
- 4. Village Farm
- 5. Lime Tree Farm
- 6. Vicarage
- 7. More House
- 8. Tally Alley
- 9. Spring Lane
- 10. Holmefield Community Centre
- 11. The Crescent
- 12. Charles XII Pub
- 13. Deramore Arms Pub

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Main land use in Heslington showing open aspects

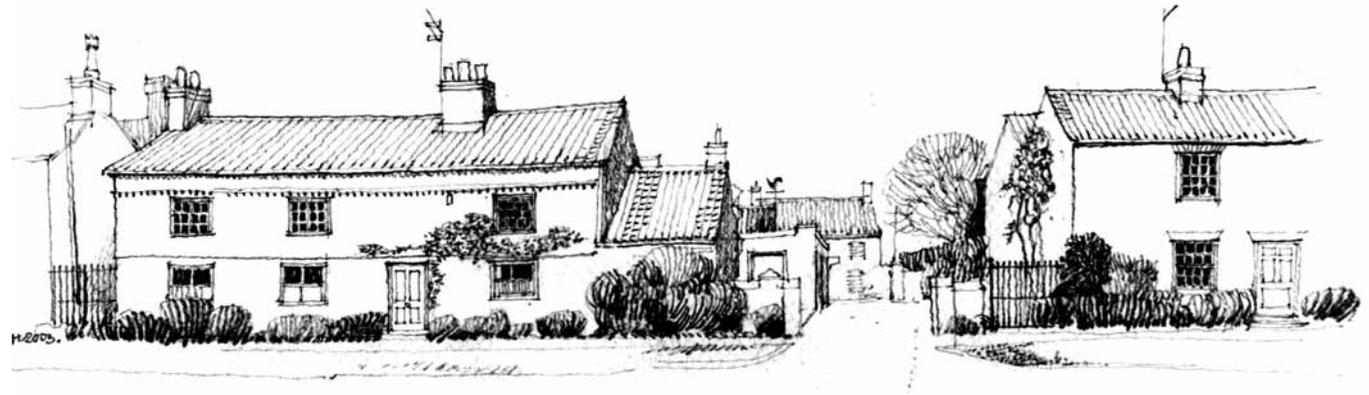
### 4 The Built Environment

This Village Design Statement does not wish to be proscriptive about the design of new buildings or the alteration and extension to existing buildings. It aims to reflect what the local community admires and values in the existing fabric and pattern of the Village and to draw together themes and principles that potential developers should understand and relate directly to their proposals.

Heslington has a strong sense of place, deeply rooted in its historic pattern of development. The broad Main Street [South] with its strong line of building frontages, and its medieval pattern of long narrow plots broken only by farmyard entrances, having survived hundreds of years, provides a memory and link with the past, much valued locally. The Village as a whole has largely retained its age-old pattern of roads, footpaths and farm tracks, reinforcing this memory.

Scale, density and material is remarkably consistent in the Village, with only a few unfortunate exceptions. Amongst those are the flat-roofed University building (The

*see photographs of vernacular building materials and styles on the inside back page*



*Village Farm and cottages on Main Street [South]*

New Building) at the north end of Main Street [South], several of the banks and the second phase of Halifax College - all of which introduced inappropriate and ill-considered forms and materials.

By way of contrast, the Village buildings in their consistency of materials and details, reflect strong local and vernacular traditions. Walls are of clamp-fired dark red/brown brickwork, often embellished with dentil work at eaves level supporting cast iron gutters. Roofs are pitched with clay pantiles, some plain tile and Welsh slate. Joinery work is invariably painted softwood, with small pane double hung sash windows. There are also examples of

small pane traditional sliding Yorkshire lights. Doors are of four, occasionally six, panels of traditional design, all set in a regular symmetrical elevation pattern. This architectural consistency runs throughout the Village, from small cottages, to farms to the “polite” Georgian of Little Hall and the Dower House.

There are also 20thC developments that have enhanced the Village. Local authority housing, completed as The Crescent in 1948, is a scheme outstanding for its layout and design. For this reason, infill here would be disastrous. Holmefield, to the south-west of the Village, is a Housing Association development of the 1970s that is unashamedly modern and is successful because it is sensitive to vernacular forms,

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scale and materials in a pattern that provide a strong sense of place. They are compact dwellings in a well-planned and attractive layout. More recent additions by the University, culminating in Halifax College (considered by many of the residents of Heslington to be un-neighbourly and brutal) serve to emphasise the need for vigilance and planning control.

The objective is to encourage developments that show an appropriate regard for the historic context of Heslington and enrich its character. Simply to copy the architecture of existing buildings will usually lead to a superficial echoing of historic features. Sensitivity to context and use of traditional materials are not incompatible with contemporary architecture.

For example, the development of redundant farms and farmyards should retain the history and memory of that farm and place, reusing existing buildings if at all possible. New building should be sensitively designed, respecting and reflecting the previous scale and pattern of development. They should retain or create views through to the fields beyond.

In any planning applications it should be incumbent upon the developer to demonstrate his understanding of the

context in which his proposals are set and to explain, in an accompanying design statement, how his proposals meet the objectives of this Village Design Statement as expressed both in the description and recommendation for each section.

### 4.1 Planning Guidelines

Any new development or conversions of existing buildings should:

- 1. Respect the setting and character of Heslington, and the lie of the land and in particular, preserve where established, the medieval pattern of long, narrow burgage plots, e.g. Main Street.**
- 2. Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it.**
- 3. Respect, maintain, or provide views through to the open countryside.**
- 4. Respect and reflect the predominantly domestic scale of buildings in the Village. In particular, extensions should neither be larger nor more dominant than the parent building.**

- 5. Provide adequate parking within the curtilage of the building.**
- 6. Use materials and building methods that are of the highest quality. They should respect and be sympathetic to the context and building traditions of the Village.**
- 7. Maintain variety in size and scale as seen in historic buildings while avoiding pastiche.**



*Almshouses, Main Street [South]*

8. **Contemporary design will be considered where it respects the context and the quality of the site and conforms to the above recommendations.**

### 5 Crime Prevention

The built environment has a major impact on crime and community safety.

Full guidelines are available in CYC's Local Development Plan Guidance on Crime Prevention and in the Police "Secured by Design" Award Scheme.

#### 5.1 Planning Guidelines

Using the guidelines above, all new development proposals need to be able to demonstrate that due account has been taken of:

1. **The best design advice, incorporating community based action to inhibit and remedy the causes and consequences of criminal, intimidatory and anti-social behaviour.**

2. **Adequate prevention measures to inhibit burglary and thus be made secure by design.**
3. **The views of the local community about safe neighbourhood proposals.**

### 6 Campus 3 Development

There are substantial proposals going through the planning process for the University of York to expand to reach a target of 15,000 students with a new campus (Campus 3) on 65 ha of farmland 250 metres to the East of the built edge of the Village. A CYC Planning Brief has been approved for this site. If this development takes place it will clearly have a major effect on Heslington. The current characteristics of the Village, which make it attractive to both the villagers, the residents of York and the University itself, should be maintained.

In considering the development plans the following need to be addressed:

*[References: CYC Local Plan Third set of changes policy ED9 change number 512. Heslington East University of York Planning Brief, Sections 6.1 (a) (f) (g) (h)]*

### 6.1 Planning Guidelines

1. **Any development should seek to minimise:**
  - (i) **any impact on the Village built form, its setting or its infrastructure**
  - (ii) **vehicular and pedestrian traffic generated by the University through the Village**
  - (iii) **any impact on views into and out of the village.**
2. **Any proposals should include measures to overcome villagers' concerns about disturbance from existing University developments within the Village, particularly with regard to late night noise and location of commercial outlets.**
3. **Representatives from all communities that will be affected by the development should be included in extensive consultation through, for example, the "community forum" as stated in the CYC Campus 3 Development Brief.**

### 7 Elvington Airfield

Approximately half of Elvington airfield lies within Heslington Parish. Recent applications made by the owners of Elvington Airfield indicate possibilities of higher levels of activity on this site.



Lord Deramore's School and Tally Alley

The impact on local villages, including Heslington, in terms of noise, traffic and pollution, is likely to be profound. It is of major concern, particularly in the light of the Report; *The Environmental Effects of Civil Aircraft in Flight*, produced by The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, and the arguments it makes against the proliferation of small airports, and short-haul flights.

#### 7.1 Planning Guidelines

1. **No further significant development of Elvington airfield should be consented to by the City Council, or even considered, without there first being in place a Masterplan or design statement for the development of the airfield. This should set the airfield in its wider context and identify its long-term objectives so that it can be subjected to a public consultation process.**
2. **This Masterplan should identify and anticipate all future development of the infrastructure of the site, together with anticipated growth of commercial, leisure and freight traffic over, say, the next 15 to 20 years, and**

**provide full supporting economic, transport and environmental impact assessments.**

3. **It should undergo a full series of public consultations in accordance with Government policy guidance, which would include formal consultation with all impacted surrounding communities likely to be affected by the noise footprint and traffic growth, including Heslington.**

### 8 Social Aspects of Heslington Today - Implications for Development

Heslington is a visibly mixed community. At the Village Design Statement workshop people welcomed this: “it breeds tolerance and enhances the Village.”

It is home to farmers and agricultural workers, retired people, families with young children, University students, people who work locally, academics and other staff. People who have spent all their lives in Heslington live alongside people from overseas. Lord Deramore’s School, with 200 pupils, is the most multi-cultural school in York. The school has a breakfast club

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and an afternoon club. A pre-school community nursery uses the school buildings and a community junior football club uses the school grounds on Sundays.

The ecumenical Parish Church, St Paul's, fosters close links between the Village and University communities and there is considerable student involvement in Church affairs. The University owns and manages the green in front of the Church where the annual Church fête is held. Brownies meet in the Church rooms and Scouts have their own hut on University land next to the Vicarage.

The Sportsfield, donated by a local landowner in the 1930s, has good facilities for league cricket and football. Community fundraising has provided new children's play equipment which gets a great deal of use. There are two further community facilities: the Village Meeting Room, a chapel converted to community use in the 1970s and Holmefield Community Centre which provided accommodation for play groups and now provides a service for the community. There is a nursing home and respite care home in the Village, as well as three groups of historic almshouses and a more recent development by the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust for elderly people.

Rising property values are pushing house prices beyond the reach of many young people with families. New housing in the Village on the sites of redundant farm buildings is aimed at the 'executive' market. The introduction of the right-to-buy removed much of the Village council and housing association stock from the rental market. Larger ex-council and housing association houses are being bought by property companies who let them



*one of the local pubs*

to undergraduate students in short-term multi-occupation tenancies. Private houses are also now being bought up for this purpose. When this occurs to excess, it distorts the social mix and often causes local problems, such as noise and lack of property maintenance.

The Village needs a strong core of permanent residents across the full age range to maintain its sense of community.

This issue of imbalance has been tackled in Leeds with a programme of Student Housing Restraint, which will be backed up by the new legislation on Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Housing Bill currently going through Parliament.

### 8.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. Planners should take into account the need for affordable housing for local people which should be a priority for new applications.**
- 2. New planning applications for housing should provide a scale and variety of housing that reflects and encourages a diverse social mix.**

- 3. The percentage of housing that is occupied by multi-let student housing should be kept in balance so that the profile of the present good social mix is not distorted and the Village does not become predominantly a home for a transitory population. To tackle this problem CYC should consider the solutions offered by the forthcoming legislation on HMOs and the Leeds' experience.**

### 9 Commercial

Brown's shop (a grocery, bakery and sandwich shop, with hairdresser above) and the Post Office (selling cards, newspapers, confectionary and cigarettes) in the Village are much valued for providing daily shopping needs and as a social hub and meeting-place for the villagers. The two public houses, while heavily student dominated in term time, are further assets to the Village.

It is, however, important to maintain a balance between commercial activities which meet the needs of the community and reduce those which lead to additional traffic generation. The four banks already disturb this balance - one would be useful to the

community but four is excessive. They attract large numbers of people visiting Heslington simply to use the bank. They have little interaction with the community and make little contribution other than noise and pollution. The recent addition of an estate agent is also viewed with some concern.

The expansion of commercial activities on Main Street [South] leads to increase in pressure for development to the rear of properties and the concreting over of gardens for commercial parking and deliveries - both of which contradict the spirit of the Conservation Area.

Additional excellent shopping facilities are available nearby (York centre is only 2 miles away and there are major out-of-town centres within 10 minutes drive). There are several mini-markets, fast food outlets, a chemist, butchers and other shops within 10 - 20 minutes walking distance.

A very recent appeal for an extension of commercial use in Main Street was refused on the grounds, that, had it been granted, the "relatively peaceful character" of the historic core would have been compromised and that it "would conflict with policy S6 of the emerging Local Plan" and be "at odds with the rural and residential nature of the

street." The same inspector also made the point that care should be taken with proposed changes to listed buildings since "minor works of indifferent quality which may seem individually to be of little importance, can cumulatively be very destructive of a building's special interest." *DoE Inspector Dannie Onn, 16 June 2003.*

### 9.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. The current residential nature of Main Street [South] should be preserved and any commercial development, while being sensitive to the needs of local farmers, should not reduce the amenity value for residents. Main Street should not be allowed to become High Street.**

"...The appeal site is on a charming village street with a quiet semi-rural character .... The character of the street is still predominately residential but would be threatened by any significant extensions of commercial development." *DoE Inspector G. Arrowsmith's report on a planning appeal for a development in Heslington Main Street in July 1987.*

- 2. Change of use for buildings in the Conservation Area should only be**

**granted where the domestic scale and character of the original is retained and where alterations will not harm historic features and fabric.**

**3. Any future planning should consider encouraging the banks to occupy a more suitable location (they are heavily used by students and the campus of the University might be a more suitable location). If the banks do vacate their premises then they should be redeveloped in a sympathetic way, preferably back to private houses.**

**4. The concreting of gardens should be discouraged.**

### 10 Roads, Paths and Traffic

The roads of Heslington add to its charm. From the west, Heslington Lane runs between two University playing fields and the Village approach has mature roadside trees and grassy verges between the highway and footpaths. From the east, Field Lane runs past scenic open country to the south and the first views of the Village are of mature trees and the Church spire. From the north, University Road joins the Village

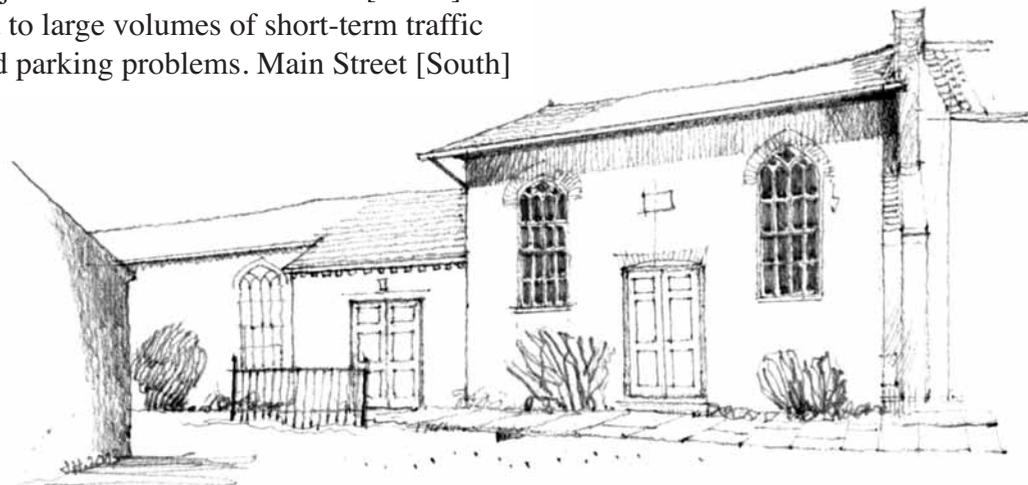
with fine mature trees and a grassed central reservation and roundabout where all roads meet. The Main Street [South] is also characterised by wide grassy verges with mature trees between the highway and the footpaths. The two narrow roads (Langwith Lane and Low Lane [East]) out of the Village to the south lead immediately to open countryside and local farms with no through traffic.

Traffic is a major issue. Field Lane, University Road and Heslington Lane have developed into “rat-runs” for York commuters. Enlargement of the University and Science Park has also led to significantly increased traffic. This causes severe queuing at the roundabout and adjoining roads, particularly during school term-times. Moreover the siting of the four major banks in the Main Street [South] has led to large volumes of short-term traffic and parking problems. Main Street [South]

is also used by large farm and commercial vehicles. There is concern that the proposals for further developments at Germany Beck, Osbaldwick and Campus 3 will result in even more intolerable traffic conditions. More than 10,000 cars a day use Heslington Lane/Main Street [North].

The lack of a school off-street drop-off point causes dangerous problems in term time in both Field Lane and School Lane. It is a busy road with heavy traffic, particularly at the key drop-off times. The Church has no parking facilities of its own and churchgoers park along Field Lane adding to traffic hazard.

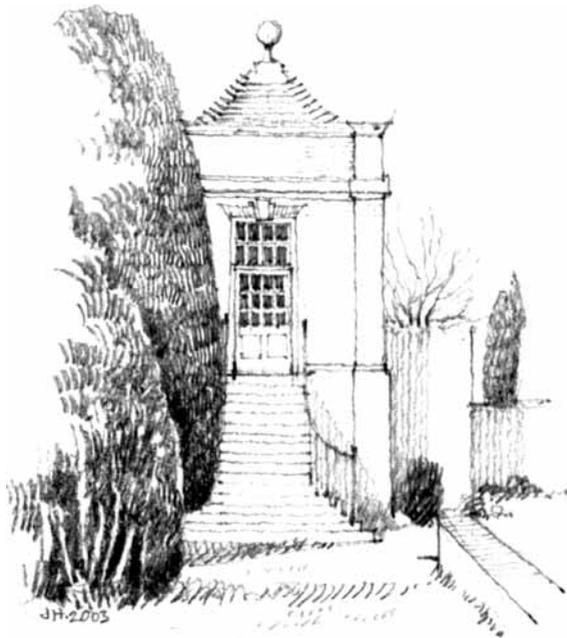
Traffic calming measures in Heslington Lane and Main Street [North] currently consist of chicanes, pedestrian refuges and



*The Village Meeting Room (formerly Wesleyan Chapel)*

a zebra crossing. From survey figures<sup>2</sup> this has led to a welcome reduction from 11,769 to 10,701 cars per day and a reduction in maximum speeds from over 50mph to 38mph while the average speed has reduced from 37mph to 30mph. However, it does cause blockages and pollution from queuing vehicles at peak times and has provoked some dangerous driving. The current bollards are visually intrusive and, in the

<sup>2</sup> Faber Maunsell, *Heslington Traffic Calming Study for City of York Council*, (Draft Report Rev. 2, June 2002)



Gazebo in the garden of  
Heslington Hall

opinion of many residents, out of keeping in a conservation area.

Lack of off-street parking causes widespread problems throughout the Village. The current Main Street [South] layout results in visual domination of the street scene by parked cars and careless parking in this location.

Cyclists have problems of insufficient safe routes particularly on Heslington Lane, Field Lane and University Road.

It has been the policy of CYC and, indeed, central government, in the name of environmental sustainability (recognising global warming, pollution, etc.) to encourage people out of their cars and on to public transport. It is widely acknowledged that there is no realistic alternative to this policy. In this, York has been a major innovator, with extensive pedestrianisation, traffic calming and Park and Ride schemes. The traffic calming in Heslington was initiated a few years back and it has had some positive results. The scheme deliberately restricted parking levels and cut speeds and car-accessibility. These may have seemed, in the short term, to be inconvenient to residents, but are in fact part of a welcome effort to restrict dependency on car use. Pedestrianisation

of York has increased the flow of traffic into Heslington. It is therefore the case that the more controls there are on car use in York, and on the University campus, the more traffic will be deflected to Heslington. This will be particularly exacerbated if congestion charges are imposed in the historic heart of York.

### 10.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. Less visually intrusive and safer alternatives to the current traffic calming chicanes should be considered - for example those set out in the Faber Maunsell, *Heslington Traffic Calming Study for City of York Council*, (Draft Report Rev. 2, June 2002).**
- 2. Traffic calming should take into account the needs of the disabled.**
- 3. The pressure on the main Village roundabout by Heslington Hall should be curtailed. Heavy vehicles throughout the Village should be restricted to access only; for example, farm vehicles and buses.**
- 4. A safe school drop-off point should be created off Field Lane.**

5. **Improvements should be made along the directions of Heslington Lane, Field Lane and University Road to provide safe cycleways.**
6. **Any further traffic resulting from University and other developments should be routed to avoid impacting on the Village itself or any residential streets close to the boundary of the Village.**
7. **Development which generates major traffic should not be allowed in the Conservation Area.**
8. **Park and Ride should be extended or re-routed to include frequent journeys from Grimston Bar to the University and the Village.**
9. **Heslington should be considered as part of a citywide traffic scheme including safe cycle routes.**
10. **Opportunities should be taken to use existing areas for car parking where possible.**

### 11 Visual Intrusion and Noise

The historic quiet rural setting of Heslington has been inevitably changed by the arrival of the University 40 years ago. The landscaped campus is widely appreciated, as are many of its facilities which are open to the public.

#### 11.1 Signs and Street Furniture

Whilst it is recognised that highway signs have to be intrusive for reasons of public safety, others should be of a type that blend into the environment. An increase in traffic has led to the proliferation of visually intrusive signs and bollards associated with traffic calming measures. These disrupt views of the traditional wide verges and sweep of the roads. There has also been a growth of signage and street furniture in the Village that is out of character.

Some street lamps on Main Street have been replaced with an “historical” design, but others are still of the concrete “hockey-stick” type.

Some commercial activities in Main Street [South] attract custom by obtrusive advertising in a style not in keeping with

the conservation area (e.g. large canvas banners).

There is concern that inappropriately designed bus shelters will be imposed in the Conservation Area causing more visual clutter.

#### 11.1.1 Planning Guidelines

1. **All road signage should be of a type that blends into the environment and sensitive to the conservation area, consistent with statutory requirements.**
2. **A consistent and high quality design theme for street lamps should be maintained throughout the Village.**
3. **Any advertising or signage should respect the context of the Village. It should be low key (colour, size and lighting) and in keeping with a rural Conservation Area.**
4. **Care should be taken in the siting and design of bus shelters to ensure that they are appropriate to the historic setting.**

### 11.2 Lighting and Security

Recent developments in Heslington have led to the introduction of security lighting. This has changed the rural character of the Village at night in some areas from soft darkness to glaring light. While there is a need to increase security in order to reduce burglary, theft and vandalism, this should be achieved without increasing obtrusive lighting. Local consensus from previous consultations indicates resistance to the introduction of any new public through-routes in the Village. This was strongly expressed during the public consultation for the VDS and when the application for the development of the paddock alongside Boss Lane was refused. There are two reasons for this; new routes would introduce a higher level of security risk and they could introduce new sources of late-night disturbance for residents.

#### 11.2.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. Lighting should respect the rural area and particularly the Conservation Area.**
- 2. Obtrusive and excessive security lighting should be controlled.**

- 3. If possible, there should be a strong presumption against new through routes in the Village. If they are unavoidable they should address the issues of security and potential noise.**

### 11.3 Noise and Disruption

Two recent developments have adversely impacted on the Village. First; the Science Park has been located adjacent to the Village. Second; provision of undergraduate student accommodation (Halifax College) has been considerably increased within the Village itself. Both of these developments have led to a marked increase in traffic and noise. These negative effects need to be countered in order to maintain the character of the Village as a whole and the Conservation Area in particular.

Within the last few years the development of Halifax College, which locates large numbers of undergraduates in accommodation located within the Village, has caused a considerable increase in late night noise and has brought a high level of distress to many villagers. Noise at unsociable hours comes from a variety of sources; people leaving the pubs, students returning from clubs in the early hours and

deliveries to shops in the early morning. An increase in privately-owned student rented accommodation in the Village has also resulted in a rise in complaints about noise.

#### 11.3.1 Planning Guidelines

- 1. New developments should not adversely impact on the quality of life in the Village by increasing the noise profile.**
- 2. Future plans should take every opportunity to reduce noise problems.**

Heslington has survived as a distinct community for the best part of a thousand years and this Village Design Statement will perhaps give those who come after us a snapshot of what it was like to live here in 2004 and what we wished for in the future. We live in Heslington because we enjoy its ambience, its strong sense of history and place, its architecture, its amenities, its wildlife, its green spaces and a generously inclusive community. It is our hope that this Village Design Statement will help these continue for the enjoyment of future generations.

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### Appendix 1: **Heslington Listed Buildings, from the DoE, *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest, 1986.***

1/54 The Church – Grade II – built in 1857/58 to replace a medieval church on the same site. Designed by J. B. and W. Atkinson and remodelled in 1971/73 by R. G. Sims.

1/56 Nos 1-5 Hesketh Cottages - Grade II – Originally built as alms houses by Sir Thomas Hesketh in 1605, removed and rebuilt in the present location by Henry Yarburgh in 1795.

1/57 The Lodge – Grade II – Early C19. French windows with decorative glazing bars.

1/58 More House – Grade II – Formerly the Vicarage, built in the late C18 and home to the Rev Sydney Smith, “The Smith of Smiths” from 1809 to 1814, whilst he was rebuilding the rectory at Foston. Its stables housed Charles XII, winner of the St Leger at Doncaster for Major Yarburgh in 1839.

1/59 No 5 Main Street – Grade II – Early to mid C18 with later additions and alterations.

1/60 Tolley House, now a pair of houses Nos 9 & 10 Main Street – Grade II - Mid to late C18. C18 lead rainwaterhead and fallpipe.

1/61 House, now a pair of houses Nos 15 & 16 Main Street – Grade II - Late C18 with C19 extension.

1/62 House No 18 Main Street – Grade II - Late C18 early C19.

1/63 Village Farm No 19 Main Street – Grade II – Early to mid C18 with later additions and alterations. First floor has 12 pane sliding sashes.

1/64 Chapel House No 21 Main Street (formerly listed as Nos 20, 21 & 22) – Grade II – 16 pane sashes throughout.

1/65 House, now a pair of houses, Nos 23 & 24. Grade II. Early C19 with later additions and alterations. 16 pane sashes throughout.

1/66 The Manor House – Grade II – Mid to late C18 with later additions and alterations.

1/67 Little Hall – Grade II\* - Ceiling inscribed and dated 'JY 1734', built for John Yarburgh.

1/68 Little Hall coach house.

1/69 Village meeting room – Grade II – Former Wesleyan Chapel of 1844.

1/70 Lime Tree Farm, No 33 Main Street – Grade II – Mid to late C18 with later additions and alterations. 12 pane sashes throughout.

1/71 Village School, School Lane – Grade II – built in 1856 to replace the old School House across the road.

1/72 Old School House, No 7 School Lane – Grade II – built by subscription in 1795 on land given by Henry Yarburgh.

1/73 Heslington Hall – Grade II\* - built 1565-68 for the Secretary to the newly established Council in the North. The Hall was remodelled in C19 and most of the interior is by Brierley (1903), though the splendid pendant plaster ceiling is an Elizabethan original. Part of the historic garden survives.

1/76 The Gazebo at Heslington Hall – Grade II – early C18 with later additions. Now used as a quiet space by the University.

1/78 The Orangery at Heslington Hall – Grade II – Mid C18, with C19 heightening and alterations.

### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

Monument number 26623

Siward's How, south east of the water tower, Heslington Hill.

Monument number 34828

World War II bombing decoy 500m east of Bland's Plantation.

## HESLINGTON VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

### Appendix 2: Description of Heslington excerpted from the City of York Council draft Local Plan (1998):-

The Conservation Area has a richly varied character, with Heslington Hall as its centrepiece. The University Complex is adjoining, yet the village retains a strong sense of its own identity. The rural parkland character of the land alongside Field Lane is not only important as the setting for **Heslington Church**, but also for the Hall. Visually, the intrusion of the busy road junction is offset by the mature trees alongside the road and within the grassed central reservation.

**Heslington Lane** enters the village from the open fields which maintain the separate identity of the west side of Heslington from York's suburbs. The lane has a distinct linear character: front boundary walls and buildings, in turn, forming its frontage. After curving gently, with grass verges, the lane straightens and leads unerringly to the hub of the village with the side wall of Heslington Hall's grounds a strong feature. The view ahead is enclosed by the trees at the road junction. Along the lane is an attractive mixture of 18thC and 19thC houses and cottages, including the farm buildings of

Walnut Farm and the Hesketh Almshouses (1795). Spring Lane reveals enticing glimpses of the grounds of Heslington Hall. On the opposite side of Spring Lane is a quiet enclave of houses tucked amongst trees. Here the University complex is close at hand, yet is not really apparent because of the landscaped and walled character of the area.

**Main Street** also leads from the countryside to the hub of the village, via Common Lane. The latter is lined by houses and cottages on just one side and gives views over the still traditional outer edge of the village. Paddocks and meadows are the setting for an informal cluster of farm outbuildings and barns, with the larger houses of the Main Street seen beyond. Main Street has many of the attributes of a complete village street in itself. Each end of the street narrows as buildings are set forward. This creates a pleasing entry to the more open character of the main section of the street, with its grass verges and several mature trees. Main Street retains a distinctly period atmosphere, because nearly all the buildings are 18thC or early 19thC, a high proportion of them being listed. Many front directly onto the street, forming its subtle curve and slight variations in width. Buildings are two-storey, usually detached or in short terraces, and closely spaced with narrow gated entrances or side lanes

running between them. The subtle variations in frontage width and architectural detail of buildings is typical of a rural village. The traditional multi-paned or four-paned sash windows are intact in most properties. The predominant building materials are pinkish brown brick with roofing of pantile and some plain tile and Welsh slate. A red detail brick is often found. Manor House and Little Hall are set in spacious grounds, with their front garden walls maintaining the continuity of the street frontage.

The main elements of the character and appearance of the area are:-

- (1) The magnificence of Heslington Hall at the hub of the village; in both a physical and social sense the bond between the traditional village and the new University complex.
- (2) The way in which Heslington retains its own identity, with a rich heritage of streets, vernacular buildings, trees and open spaces.
- (3) The linear street qualities of Heslington Lane and Main Street, each individual in its own way.
- (4) The charm of the rural setting of the south-west outer edge of Main Street. The visual unity of the street itself, in having retained so much of its traditional form and building fabric.

#### Update:

Since this document was approved by City of York Council Planning Committee on 22 April 2004 the Heslington conservation area review has been completed and the post-consultation draft conservation area boundary shown on page 11 was approved at City of York Council Planning and Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee on 13 May 2004.

#### Architectural details

*Key to inside back cover - left to right, top to bottom*

Cast iron downspout; Front door; 3 sash 30 pane horizontal sliding window; Round window with roof line detail; 2 sash 12 pane horizontal sliding window; Roof detail; Ventilation pipe pattern; Slate roof; Chimney detail; Meeting Room window detail; Clamp bricks; Pantiles; 2 Sash 4 pane vertical sliding window; Chimney detail; 2 sash 12 pane vertical sliding window; Front door.



