

## **ASKHAM RICHARD**

### **Conservation Area No.15 (14.5 ha)**

#### **Introduction**

Askham Richard Conservation Area was designated in 1975. It embraces the whole of the village, reflecting its unity of character.

#### **History**

The name "Richard" reputedly comes from an Earl of Cornwall, who owned the land in the area, and from "Ascam" or "Ascha" possibly meaning the "enclosure of the ash-tree". In medieval times the characteristic "toft and crofts" of an agricultural settlement existed, and much of that field pattern can be traced today. By 1931 the population was still a modest 181, and Askham Richard has continued to avoid the expansion seen in many other villages.

#### **Important Buildings**

The Church of St Mary (listed grade II star) is late 12c with earlier origins, being restored in 1879. It is built in magnesium limestone ashlar and sandstone with plain tile roof and is unusual in having a continuous nave with no chancel. A Saxon doorway was discovered during the restoration and re-assembled. Of the farmhouses and cottages around the Green, five are listed buildings, mostly 18<sup>th</sup> century. Askham Grange now HM Prison, is set in extensive landscaped grounds, overlooking the Green. The little Methodist Church has a simple, appealing form and style.

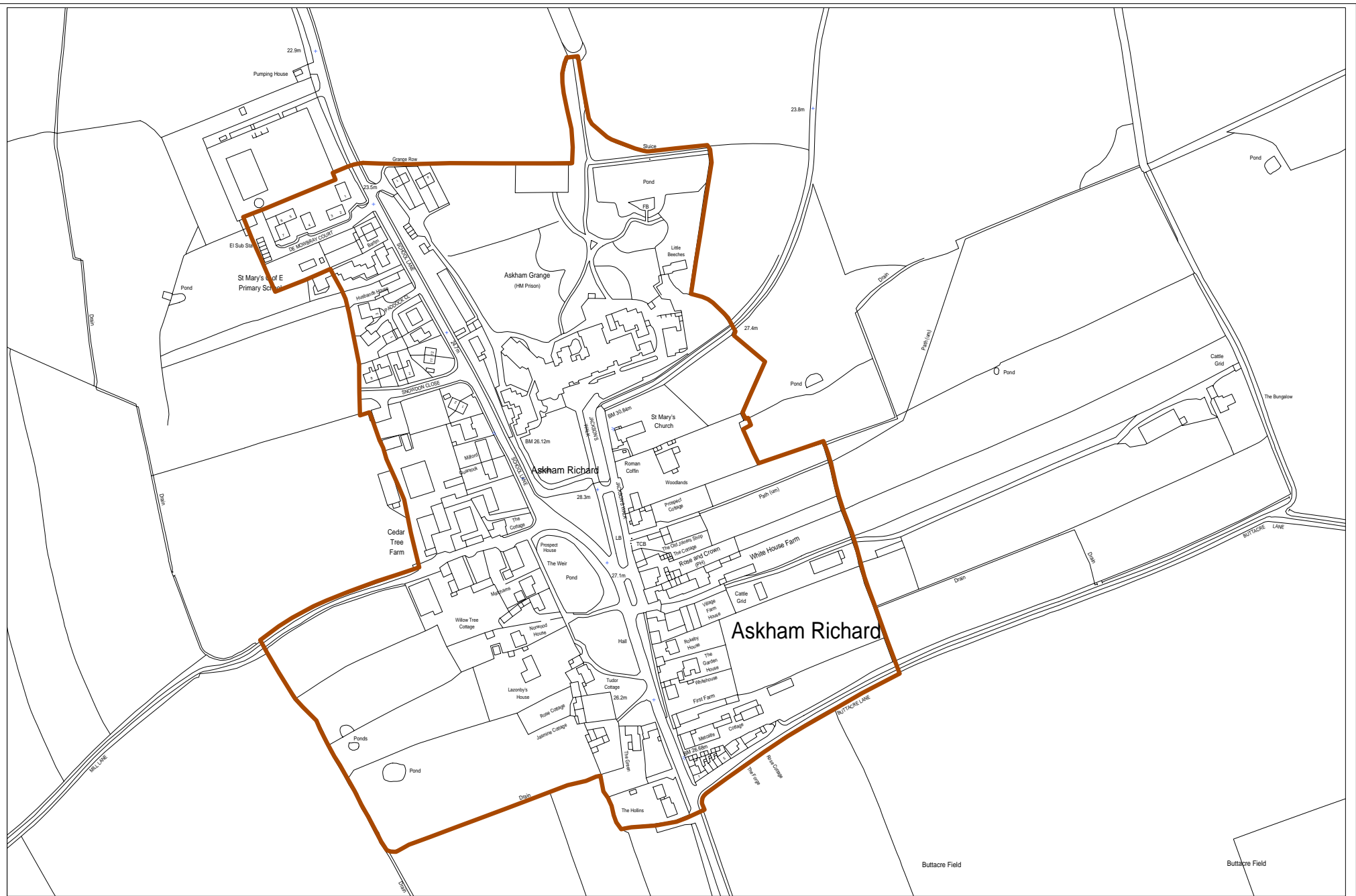
#### **Character**

Askham Richard retains a precious degree of unity, notably because the traditional relationship between the village envelope and its agricultural landscaped setting remains largely intact. Recent development has been modest and appears as a natural evolution of the village. From the surrounding countryside, the village is compact and well tucked away in a backcloth of trees with the tower of Askham Grange poking through. There is an interesting contrast between the open, almost infinite, quality of the landscape outside the village and its protected, internal space of the elongated green within. The form of buildings and trees around the Green, its subtle changes in level, the diagonal route taken by the carriageway and the focal point of the pond have the picturesque and enduring qualities of an idyllic English village. Indeed buildings and boundary walls link together to enclose the Green virtually, with the quite narrow road entrances entering at either end, and the substantial but suitably set-back building mass of Askham Grange enclosing the north-west side. The contrast between Askham Grange and the otherwise small-scale 2 storey farmhouses and cottages create the feeling of an estate village, even though this is not a reality in historical terms.

Many elements of a rural village survive: narrow plots of land extending back from the street with outbuildings behind the frontage properties reached by little lanes and yards; groups of 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses and associated farm buildings; the informal mixture of houses and smaller cottages, unified by their scale, 2-storey height and traditional materials of brick, pantile and some slate roofing. On the east side, buildings cluster along the street frontage in a tighter composition, whereas the west side has more loosely arranged buildings, though drawn together visually by the boundary walls. The wooded backcloth to Askham Grange is a strong enclosing feature on the north side. School Lane leads out of the village with the walled and wooded character of Askham Grange to one side and pleasant houses and cottages to the other. The various elements of the village, gathered and given unity around the Green, create a distinct impression of an unspoilt rural scene.

The main elements of the character and appearance are:

- (1) The unspoilt nature of the village envelope and the direct traditional relationship with its rural setting.
- (2) The picturesque qualities of the Green, arising from a relaxed, informal layout and vernacular building forms drawing together around the Green.
- (3) The wooded setting afforded by the grounds of Askham Grange and other tree groups : adding a sense of enclosure from within the village, and from outside, blending it naturally into the landscape.



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**Conservation Area No. 15**  
**ASKHAM RICHARD**

Area is 14.5ha

SCALE 1:2500

Originating Group  
 Conservation

DRAWN BY D Rowntree

DATE 17/5/1996

Drawing No.  
 CON15

