

ELWICK CONSERVATION AREA



Visual Assessment



A INTRODUCTION.

- 1 The following report gives a short assessment and appraisal of Elwick Conservation Area which was declared in 1975. The assessment and appraisal follows the framework given by English Heritage in its advisory documents "Guidance on conservation area appraisals" The report is not intended to be an in depth analysis of Elwick Conservation Area but is intended as a short working document to identify the current strengths and weaknesses of the conservation area and what actions (if any) are required to tackle emerging issues within the area.

B. DESCRIPTION OF CONSERVATION AREA

- 1 Elwick Conservation Area is located 4 miles west of Hartlepool, just east of the A19, one of the main north/south regional trunk roads. The plan in Appendix 1 shows the relationship between Elwick and Hartlepool and the general location of Elwick. A plan can be found in Appendix 2 showing the current extent of Elwick Conservation Area. In form Elwick Conservation Area consists of a linear village running more or less east west, with buildings facing onto a village green which decreases in width to a narrow pinched opening at both the eastern and western ends.



Elwick is situated in the cleft of elevated land overlooking Hartlepool which continues to rise to the north into Durham. The eastern and western boundaries of Elwick are marked by tributaries of Claxton Beck and Char Beck respectively, which flow to the south towards Greatham. These tributaries form steep denes when approaching Elwick from the east or the west. As a result Elwick is largely concealed within the landscape. Even from the south dense tree cover largely hides the village from view. Its position makes the most of the protection offered by the land from the prevailing weather to the north and the most of the advantages offered by a southerly aspect to agriculture and solar gain to dwellings. At certain points within the village the elevated position gives extensive views across agricultural land to the immediate south and further south across the Tees Valley (with its largely industrial character) and into North Yorkshire.

- 2 A road from Hartlepool dissects Elwick into two largely equal parts, north and south of the road, with a more or less continuous frontage of buildings facing onto the road and the village green on both sides. Those properties on the north side occupy an elevated position compared to those on the south side due to the ground rising towards the north. At the rear of this built frontage are extensive garden areas which form the remains of medieval tofts (parcel of land allocated to individual houses as part of the original medieval village layout). The road within the village sub-divides to form a secondary road running along the frontages of the properties on the south side of the village with spurs running off to individual groups of properties sub-dividing the central green to some extent. The road and conservation area boundary continue to the west, passing the entrance to Elwick Hall, St Peter's Church, the former village school, the village cemetery and an agricultural workshop on the south side of the road before joining the A19. Just before the road leaves Elwick on the west side, the road divides to form North Lane which also accesses the A19. One quality of the conservation area is the number of working farms located within the village

which manage the agricultural land surrounding Elwick. The majority of these are located on the north side of the village.

3 The Appendix 2 also indicates the listed buildings within the conservation area. These are relatively few and are described below. There is also a significant listed windmill located outside the village (to the west of the A19 but highly visible) together with a Scheduled Ancient Monument site containing medieval fishponds. While outside the boundaries of the conservation area they have always formed a significant functional part of Elwick and have therefore been included in the appraisal.

4 Immediately south west of Elwick is the Church of St Peter which is grade II* listed (see photograph below). The church is largely 12th century with 14th, 15th, 17th and 19th century alterations and additions. Two sculptured stones built into the east wall of the nave are Anglo-Saxon in origin suggesting that an earlier church existed on or near the current church.



5 To the north of the church is Elwick Hall (grade II listed) which was originally built as a rectory for the church. Much of the current appearance dates from the early 1700s when the rectory was extensively altered by the then Rector, John Bowes. Parts of the building therefore pre-date this alteration and some of the internal rooms indicate an earlier building. The presence of nearby fish ponds (see below) suggests that a medieval manor house may have occupied the site of Elwick Hall or remains of such a building are contained within it. A manor house site is usually closely physically associated with the parish church in medieval villages. The former rectory is currently occupied as a single house.

6 Wilton Cottage dates from the late 17th century and was constructed in random rubble, rendered and painted white. The building externally retains Yorkshire light windows and sash windows. Internally the roof construction consists of two timber cruck frames. The listing status is grade II and is currently occupied as a single house.

7 The Forge, 29 The Green (see photograph below) dates from the mid 18th century. It is two storeys and three bays wide with a centre doorway flanked by a sash window to either side and three sash windows above. Constructed in random rubble it has also been rendered and painted. The listing status is grade II and again currently occupied as a single house.



8 To the north west of Elwick Hall (and outside the boundary of the conservation area) is the site of a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The Scheduled site contains fishponds, enclosures and ridge and furrow field systems all dating from the medieval period. The fishponds contained a variety of ponds of differing sizes for different species and ages of fish with

channels to control the flow of water. The ponds also contained islands for possible wildlife management.

9 Further west across the A19 and also outside the conservation area is Elwick Mill (see photograph to the right). Constructed in hand made bricks the circular mill tower tapers towards the top. 66 feet in height and 6 storeys, the mill was built around 1860 and is grade II listed. The mill seems to have fallen out of use sometime after the First World War when the sails were transferred to the nearby Hart Mill as replacements. The mill stood empty and in disrepair until its restoration as a dwelling relatively recently. The mill tower now forms a prominent building next to the A19 highly visible when seen from the south. Elwick Mill replaced an earlier medieval post mill located to the south east, the remains of which were still present in the 1930's.



10 Other buildings which are not listed but which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of Elwick Conservation Area are outline in the following paragraphs.

11 The Spotted Cow public house, The Green is shown in the photograph below. The name (and that of the MacOrville public house below) derives from the interests of a rural community in breeding livestock, rather than the usual practice of naming a public house after national heroes, events or royalty. The public house started as an alehouse in one of the rooms of an existing cottage in 1790. The ale house changed hands numerous times being renamed the "Dun Cow" and eventually "The Spotted Cow" in 1858, with more of the residential space converted to public house use. Two buildings adjoining the public house were purchased in the 1930's (by a local brewery) and also incorporated into the public house to give the long continuous frontage of the present building. In appearance the public house has two distinct parts. The main part of the public house from examination at the rear seems to date from the mid 19th century which would coincide with it being renamed. The front of the building has a unified appearance with timber mullioned casement windows to ground and first floor (with leaded glazing) with a timber main entrance door. From this the front of the building seems to have been modified during the 1930's to give the current appearance, coinciding with the purchase of adjoining properties. The roof is in slate. The adjoining building on the east side has a more 18th or early 19th century agricultural appearance with a clay pantile roofing material and vertical sliding sash windows. Both buildings are rendered.



12 MacOrville public house, The Green is shown in the photograph overleaf. The public house was originally named the "Fox and Hounds" but renamed to the current name sometime

after 1845. The source of the name was a stallion called MacOrville, the offspring of the winner of the St Leger in 1802, named Orville. MacOrville, advertised as a stud stallion, was owned by Thomas Potts of Sheraton Grange and George Smith of Middleton House farms located north east of Elwick. MacOrville had great notoriety and went on a weekly tour for 20 years during the summer months mostly in County Durham but also up to Newcastle until its death in February 1845 at the age of 32. The death was universally mourned with a death notice issued. The public house appears to have been constructed in the late 19th century in brick with modifications in the 1930's in the form of a ground floor bay and porch. The front elevation has been rendered and retains vertical sash windows to the first floor at the front and to the rear. The roof is in slate with various unused stables and out buildings to the rear.



- 13 Elwick Women's Institute, The Green is shown in the photograph to the right. The Institute building started life as a Wesleyan Chapel as part of the Methodist movement started by John Wesley in 1729. The Chapel was built in 1867 or 1868 to accommodate a congregation of 70. The Chapel seems to have fallen into financial difficulties as early as 1905 due to low attendances. From 1921 to 1929 no services had been held and the building was sold to the Elwick Institute Trustees, representing villagers who were looking for a village hall. In 1961 the building was taken over by the Elwick Women's Institute.



In 1977 the building was extended and doubled in size. The building is constructed in a pale red brick (with a 5 stretcher to 1 header bonding pattern) with contrasting decoration to quoins, string course and around door and window openings in a buff or cream brick. Two original six over six arch top sash windows remain on the front elevation with a matching door opening but with altered doors. A date or commemorative stone is situated on the front gable but is now too eroded to make out any inscription. The roof is in a modern roofing material with the building extension to the rear (mentioned above) hidden from view.

- 14 Elwick Hall School is shown in the adjacent photograph. The school was built in 1851 using public subscription on church land near to St Peter's Church to serve Elwick village, Dalton Piercy and Elwick Hall, which was the rural Parish consisting of Amerston Hall and Newton Hanzard to the south west. The school was constructed in pale red brick



in contrasting stretcher and header bonds with a slate roof and decorative barge boards. The building consisted of a main central school hall with gabled projections to the front elevations one of which formed the entrance. Window openings consisted of stone mullioned windows with a hood mould above. A new school was opened on North Lane in 1959 replacing Elwick Hall School. The former school was left largely unused until its conversion to a house recently.

- 15 Holmlea, The Green is shown in the photograph to the right. Located on the north side of the village this house occupies a prominent position on the western side of the village. The house dates from the late 18th or very early 19th century and has a simple appearance consisting of 3 bays with a centre four panelled door and door case, flanked by two sash windows on the ground floor with three sash windows on the first floor above, to give a simple symmetrical appearance. The side elevations have single sash windows to the ground and first floor immediately on the return from the front elevation. The construction is a pale red brick with a slate roof. A set of original railings which occupied the front low wall to the house are under refurbishment.



- 16 Some Second World War defences are present in the village consisting of a concrete pill box to the east of the medieval fish ponds mentioned previously. The pill box has been included in the Scheduled Ancient Monument Site and is protected along with the fishponds.
- 17 Comparison between the earliest maps from pre-1895 and later maps dating from 1965 indicate no significant structures demolished. A name on the pre-1895 map of "Mill Hill" suggests the presence of mill at some time.

- 18 The other non listed buildings in Elwick are predominately two storeys with a domestic scale and character. Much of the appearance and character of Elwick is derived mostly from the 18th or early 19th century farm houses and farm buildings which have a horizontal architectural emphasis. As noted the majority of the farm buildings are on the north side of the village forming almost a complex of farm buildings (or former buildings), consisting of North Farm (see adjacent photograph), Potters Farm, Marindale House and 2 and 3 The Green. This gives the north side of the village a different character to the south side with on the north side a broken series of frontages, while on the south side residential or former residential properties predominant which



give a more continuous unbroken frontage to The Green. On the south side of the village, Home Farm at the eastern end is another significant farm complex. The construction used in the farmhouses is random stonework (reflecting their much earlier origin) with pitched clay pantiled roofs. In some cases stonework has been rendered or whitewashed. Windows in this part of Elwick have a horizontal emphasis with stoned mullioned windows or the use of horizontal sliding sash windows. In many cases these have been altered to other

forms of window opening with the original window openings still visible in altered stonework (as at 2 and 3 The Green). Door designs are simple with boarded or four panelled doors being evident, frequently without door cases. Later 19th buildings which are mostly residential, like The Terrace (on the south side shown in the adjacent photograph) and have a vertical emphasis with a more consciously designed appearance. Materials are slate for roofs and factory made bricks for walling. Windows are vertical sliding sash with panelled doors emphasised by detailed door surrounds.



- 19 The North East Vernacular Architecture Group (a voluntary organisation interested in traditional buildings) has undertaken work in Elwick village. In 1999 Nos. 2 and 3 The Green were investigated and identified it as a late 17th century farmhouse. The farmhouse was divided into two houses with 3 The Green retaining the original hearth passage door which was the original entrance to the farmhouse. The main two storey house had a new entrance door inserted. Home Farm on the south side of Elwick at the eastern end was also examined. The barn which now fronts The Green was identified as the original farmhouse building dating from the 1700's. 27 and 28 The Green were identified as dating from the early 18th century. Over the front door to 27 The Green a medieval mandorla was identified, depicting Christ with his hand raised in blessing (see photograph to right). The mandorla though apparently damaged by fire was dated to the 13th century and in a similar style to other sculpture from Guisborough Priory (which owned and controlled Elwick east of Char Beck up to the Dissolution). The mandorla is thought to have been relocated from another building, not necessarily a one in Elwick.



- 20 One aspect of Elwicks character is the commercial nature of the south side of the village as well as the residential character. The presence of The Spotted Cow and MacOrville public houses have already been mentioned on this side of the village, but there is also the village shop and post office (see adjacent photograph) located next to the MacCorville public house. The only shop in Elwick it has a traditionally designed and proportioned shop front consisting of a central recessed door way, two panelled partly glazed shop door (though this is a replacement door) and a shop front constructed in timber of narrow moulded sections with a fascia, corbel brackets and rendered stall riser.



- 21 Tree cover within Elwick makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Those trees within the boundary of the area are given automatic

protection and with individual Tree Preservation Orders in place at 21 The Green and a number of individual properties just outside the conservation area boundary. Substantial areas of tree cover are present in the Area consisting of mature trees on The Green, Church Bank and in the grounds of Elwick Hall. Further areas of mature trees are within the church yard of St Peter's Church and to the rear of properties on the south side of The Green along Char Beck. Just outside the conservation area further mature tree cover is present in the grounds of Elwick Hall (to the east of Elwick) and along North Lane leading up to the A19. The typical species making up the tree cover are mostly Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Beech, (*Fagus sylvatica*), Common Lime, (*Tilia x europaea*), Horse Chestnut, (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) and Yew, (*Taxus baccata*).



- 22 There are also significant ecological sites and wildlife sites in and around Elwick. The site of the medieval fish ponds mentioned earlier is also a Local Wildlife Site with a variety of wetland plants with the surrounding grasslands rich in grassland species. Within the agricultural land around Elwick there are pockets of unimproved and natural habitats. The most significant of these is The Howls, an ancient broadleaf woodland, dominated in parts by ground flora (dog's mercury and butterbur). With such an old landscape the hedgerows also have significant flora. In some of the marshy areas, marsh marigold and hawksbeard are prominent together with hemp agrimony and early purple orchids. In terms of fauna, water voles (an endangered species) are present in Char and Craddon Becks, with the only remaining pairs of corn bunting in Cleveland present in the fields around Elwick. Four species of bats including Piperstrelles have also been noted in Elwick.

C LOCATION AND SETTING

- 1 The location and setting of Elwick Conservation Area has been described earlier in this assessment with the main attribute being the villages location in a "cleft " between two streams of Claxton Beck and Char Beck and the slope of rising land to the north with Elwick positioned east /west within the landscape. There is extensive tree cover around the village and as a result Elwick is largely hidden from view. Views are provided to the south within parts of the village across Teesside. Much of the atmosphere and character of Elwick derives from the present and past agricultural activity within the Elwick and from the villages' relative isolation as a self contained agricultural community.

D HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

- 1 The layout and building character outlined in the appraisal so far and now evident in Elwick Conservation Area derives from its original establishment as a medieval village deliberately planned and laid out around 1100 to exploit the local agricultural resource. Agriculture has been the main influence on economic and social activities within the village to the present. Stonework within the Church of St Peter indicates a settlement at Elwick in the Anglo Saxon

period. Elwick may have been laid out as an addition to an existing Anglo Saxon settlement; however what influence this early part of Elwick's history had on its current layout and form is now difficult to determine. The name of the village is Anglo Saxon. The "wick" or "wyke" in Elwick means in Saxon "farm" or "place where food comes from". The medieval manor of Elwick consisted of Elwick village in Hart parish and Elwick Hall parish (located to the west and south consisting of Amerston Hall and Newton Hazard where other villages were located). Elwick Hall is derived from the Saxon "Ella's Hale" meaning "place of heath" or "safe place".

- 2 A plan is attached in Appendix 3 of Elwick from the period before 1895 with the conservation area boundary added. What the plan shows is the layout of a medieval village consisting of central roadways, a green, buildings facing onto the roadway with their extensive plots (or tofts) behind and a surrounding system of fields managed from within the village. The parish church and manor house are set away to the west; possibly indicating the core of the earlier Anglo Saxon settlement. This village layout was established around 900 years ago in a conscious way to systematically exploit the surrounding agricultural land and is the main influence on the current appearance and quality of Elwick.
- 3 The building plots, or tofts, were allocated to villagers by the manor owner, possibly including a dwelling and sufficient land to provide for the villagers own immediate needs to grow vegetables, fruit and keep animals within the toft. In the case of Elwick the plots are unusually deep and wide particularly on the north side of Elwick. This may be due to the manor owner (the then deBrus family) persuading largely independent farmers to come and settle in the village by allocating them more land. From the pre 1895 plan there is a suggestion of the same on the south side of Elwick at the east end, but generally the plots are smaller possibly due to subdivision when dwellings were built in the 19th century. In return for this substantial land allocation, the villager was then required to work on the surrounding agricultural land in the ownership of the manor. Access to the surrounding field system from the village was made by means of tracks and footpaths with at least three north and south of Elwick giving access to farm land. These can be seen in the plans of 1895 and 1897 and remain to the present giving footpath access to Dalton Piercy to the south for example. On the same plans many of the medieval field boundaries can still be identified consisting of long narrow plots, like fields 213 and 215. The plan accompanying Tees Archaeology Scheduled Monument Record for Elwick indicates extensive ridge and furrow field systems surrounding Elwick produced by medieval agriculture. The ridge and furrows are still very evident in the fields around Elwick.
- 4 The conservation area boundary has been tightly drawn, in most cases, to the rear of the buildings with the full extent of the original medieval plots or "tofts" excluded, particularly on the north side of Elwick but also some plots on the south side at the east end of the village are also excluded. This contrasts with Greatham village, where the medieval plots or "tofts" have been included within the boundary of Greatham Conservation Area. Otherwise the conservation area boundary includes the original village layout from the 11th century. The alteration to this layout has been in the orientation of dwellings with the originals likely to have consisted of houses set gable end on to The Green or street and replaced with the current arrangement of houses and farms with their main



elevations facing onto the street, filling the width of the plot to create a building frontage. With many of the buildings being built at different periods this has produced a varied architecture with buildings of different design and periods located side by side to give the current interesting and varied appearance.

- 5 The single influence on the character of Elwick has been agricultural activity but also the relative physical isolation of the village until comparatively recently, which either prevented or discouraged any change within Elwick. Elwick formed a more or less self contained agricultural community (in modern idiom “sustainable”) with all the necessary services within the village and with its own agriculture to support it. In 1879 the village had for example its own tailor, grocer, postmaster, joiner and blacksmith. From 1851 the village also had its own school. The following gives some idea how isolated Elwick was until very recently.



- 6 A public road did not exist between Elwick and Hartlepool until after 1925. The Stockton to Sunderland Road (the A19) ran to the west of the village and access to Hartlepool via Hart or Dalton Percy was possible, but there was no made up road between Elwick and Hartlepool to the east 4 miles away, the more direct route. A privately owned farm track to Naisberry existed, which can be seen in the pre-1895 plan going to the east. In 1913 the Parish Council (which itself only existed from 1894) made representations for a public highway but it was not until 1924 that the private track was compulsory purchased and a public highway subsequently constructed. This is the current road from Hartlepool.
- 7 In 1928 the first bus service was introduced to Elwick. The railway as a public transport link and possible cause for change has never been an influence on Elwick with no easily accessible stations near by.
- 8 No telegraph link existed to the village until 1902, the nearest before then was located at Castle Eden. In 1914 this was converted to a Telephone Office. A telephone kiosk was not installed until 1946. To some extent this form of isolation continues as there is only limited broadband internet access to Elwick.
- 9 Mains water did not arrive in Elwick until after 1948. Up till then water was supplied to the whole village via a pump located on the village green for collection, despite representations by the Parish Council to have mains water supply and public sewerage system provided for public health reasons. A sewerage and piped water system did not become available to every house in Elwick until 1950.
- 10 Mains electricity did not arrive in the village until 1947. Despite the mains supply, public lighting was not installed until 1986 with the only public light being at the bus shelter installed in 1965. A mains gas supply was established in 1991.
- 11 The physical isolation of Elwick (the lack of a direct road from Hartlepool until after 1925), the lack of water, sewerage, electricity and gas supplies and the lack of any immediate communication to the outside world would have been a discouragement to physical change in Elwick. As noted in other areas such as Seaton Carew and Greatham the economic expansion of Hartlepool and the arrival of the railway and later roads with public transport

was the cause of immediate change to some of the surrounding settlements to Hartlepool. This is apparent in Seaton Carew which was isolated in a similar way to Elwick but with improved access given by the railway and road connections, this had the affect of encouraging a residential escape of families made wealthy by the industrial and commercial success of Hartlepool by the building of individually designed homes and villas in Seaton. Without immediate road access this did not occur in Elwick as the ordnance survey plans show no discernable significant change in Elwick until the construction of houses on North Lane in 1949 (see adjacent photograph) with the possible exception of the construction of The Villa (now Elwick House) to the east of Elwick evident on the 1897 plan but not on the pre-1895 plan. Even in 1965 the ordnance survey plan for that date (see Appendix 4) still shows very little obvious physical change in Elwick.



12 In the subsequent post war period residential development has occurred in Elwick following on from the initial council house construction on North Lane and therefore mostly outside the boundaries of the conservation area, extending further north either side of North Lane but also to the east of North Lane resulting in the development of over half of the medieval plots or “tofts” on the north side of the village, evident on plans from pre 1895 and 1897. While this latter development has been outside the conservation area boundary, it has been within the identifiable historic core of Elwick. Some of this housing development i.e. Hillcrest Avenue is well separated from Elwick village and has little or no effect upon the quality of Elwick Conservation Area. Some of the housing design just outside the conservation area boundary sits well with the area, with those houses at The Walk for example in their use of render finishes, pantile roofs and variable roof heights and staggered elevations has picked up successfully on the details apparent in the conservation area. The housing developed within the identifiable historic core of Elwick (the medieval plots or “tofts”) has arguably not been designed for a context on the edge of a conservation area.

13 An initial examination of Ordnance Survey plans for 1965 would possibly indicate that no real change has occurred within Elwick village. However a walk round Elwick indicates that there has been substantial change. On the south side of the village west of the Women’s Institute a group of bungalows have been constructed (i.e. The Croft, Hillcroft and Greenways). Further modern individual houses have been introduced east of Home Farm. Some of these dwellings pre-date the declaration of the conservation area, but have from photographs replaced buildings of a more agricultural appearance and introduced a suburban character to the this part of Elwick. On the north side of Elwick this has not occurred with the exception of a bungalow introduced next to Potters Farm which replaced a two storey farmhouse (Clangan’s Farm) of 18th century appearance from photographs that are available. On the



north side of the village further change has occurred by the removal of period details to existing buildings with the loss of original windows and doors for example. This has introduced a further suburban feel to Elwick with removal of the agricultural appearance and origins of buildings. However in contrast, buildings with an appearance possibly very typical of Elwick's earlier agricultural origins are to be seen at Home Farm, North Farm, Oakdene Cottage, Wilton Cottage, Holmlea and to a degree at Potters Farm and 2 and 3 The Green. The two public houses, The Spotted Cow and The MacOrville and much of The Terrace also retain either all or a substantial part of their original 19th century character and appearance. An Article 4 Direction applies to Elwick which allows the Local Authority to control detailed changes to residential properties and agricultural activity to protect the character and appearance of the conservation area.



14 The appearance of the public realm, by which is meant The Green within Elwick, detracts from the potential quality of Elwick as a conservation area.

Reference to early photographs shows a simple Green with gravelled or at least roads without tarmac, bounded by trees and white painted timber fencing. This informal quality has largely been lost with a central tarmac road with the majority of those roads off The Green also finished in tarmac. This gives the centre of Elwick a suburban feel (reinforced by some of the dwellings as indicated above). Some of the original informal quality however has survived in the form of a gravel road to the front of Potters Farm up to the front of Holmlea, reinforced by simple box hedging to properties. The potential simplicity of the centre of Elwick is further compromised by the amount of visual clutter introduced by road and parking restriction signs, timber poles (for overhead telephone connections), painted white boulders, planting tubs and planting beds (the latter three introduced for understandable reasons). The



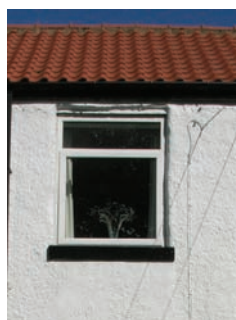
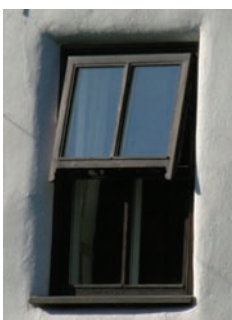
The appearance is the result of piecemeal initiatives by various organisations, all of which tend instead of improving the appearance of Elwick village, work against each other and overall produce an incoherent appearance. One other detrimental factor is the use of Elwick (most likely by local Hartlepool residents) as a short cut to the A19, making the centre of Elwick busy with traffic and detrimental to its character. The current appearance of Elwick is to some extent a response to this traffic.

E PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN ELWICK

- 1 Unlike Greatham Conservation Area where the Hospital of God is a significant property owner all of the buildings in Elwick are in individual ownership. Public investment in Elwick has been very modest with grants to individual private owners, funded by the Council's conservation grant budget concentrated on building repair and restoration. There has been no public investment in environmental improvements. Unlike other conservation areas such as Church Street and Seaton, Elwick has not been subject to the economic pressures which have resulted in problems such as empty properties and has therefore not been a candidate for conservation based programmes of public investment aimed at economic regeneration.

F REVIEW OF CURRENT POSITION AND ISSUES

- 1 The assessment of the condition of Elwick Conservation Area in terms of its strengths and weaknesses is that there is an almost equal split between positive aspects which support Elwick being a conservation area and those negative aspects which would not support it being so. The conservation area status is finely balanced. As described above the quality of Elwick and its status as a conservation area comes from why it was established around 1100, which was agriculture and the influence this activity has had since on the character and appearance of Elwick in terms of its buildings, The Green and surrounding countryside, together with the relative isolation until comparatively recently. As described there are positive aspects with buildings well preserved indicating Elwicks earlier agricultural history and quality, like Home Farm, North Farm, Wilton Cottage, Oakdene Cottage, Holmlea and later 19th century developments like the two public houses and dwellings at The Terrace. However negative aspect have been introduced in terms of a suburban feel either by farm buildings and houses being removed and replaced with houses of a suburban design or the removal of original details to remaining former farm buildings resulting in a similar suburban character. This negative aspect has been reinforced by a loss of quality to The Green with visual clutter introduced as a result of uncoordinated interventions and a similar suburban quality introduced to the road surfaces, though again quality aspects of the original Green at Elwick remain.
- 2 The appraisal has identified potential negative aspects which can undermine the positive qualities of Elwick Conservation Area. These can be identified as:
 - inappropriate alterations to farm houses and buildings which have resulted in the removal or alteration of doors, windows and roofing materials for example (see photographs below), which could make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.
 - poor detailing and design of housing within the identifiable historic core of Elwick (both inside and outside the conservation area) which could also make a positive contribution to the quality of Elwick as a village and as a conservation area.
 - The visual clutter and inappropriate use of materials at The Green (see photograph below)



3 The issues for consideration in Elwick Conservation Area are how the character and appearance can be managed to reinforce the positive aspects and reduce those negative influences. Measures that could be taken to achieve this goal could be a village design statement (similar to that carried out in Greatham village). A more careful application of the existing Article 4 Direction which applies to mostly residential properties facing The Green. The Article 4 Direction was made in 1979 and is now dated with subsequent revisions of the General Development Order (on which Article 4 Directions are based) since 1979. Other issues for consideration could include investment in the environment particularly at The Green and an extension of the Conservation Area boundary to take in the identifiable historic core of Elwick, mostly to the north of the village and to the west to include the Scheduled Ancient Monuments site. A final issue would be the proposed inclusion of a number of buildings within Elwick in a Local List of significant buildings.

4 **Potential Design Statement for Elwick** – A Village Design Statement for Greatham was completed in August 1999. The Statement was undertaken by local residents, with support from the Countryside Agency and Hartlepool Council. Consultation of village residents was undertaken to ensure the document was as representative of views as possible. The Design Statement was intended to assist the local planning authority in determining planning applications and was adopted as supplementary guidance to planning policies contained in the Hartlepool Local Plan. The Design Statement assessed the quality of Greatham Conservation Area and provided detailed advice on the design of items like doors and window and use of materials to assist building owners on the most appropriate ways to undertake alterations to their properties.



A similar Village Design Statement could be undertaken for Elwick and address two separate issues. The Design Statement could address alterations to historic buildings and provide advice on the most appropriate way to undertake any work, to reinforce the character, appearance and quality of Elwick Village as a conservation area. Although not an immediate issue, a Design Statement could address a second concern which is the design and appearance of any replacement buildings or any buildings on infill sites in the village previously undeveloped. The Statement could also include the design of housing areas already added to the village but outside the immediate conservation area but within the historic core of Elwick, if in the future these were to also change. A further advantage of a Design Statement is that it could provide a foundation for the application of planning policies through the exiting Article 4 Direction.

5 **Existing Article 4 Direction at Elwick.** An Article 4 Direction already exists at Elwick. The Article 4 Direction covers all the residential buildings and some of the farm buildings facing onto The Green. A plan attached at Appendix 2 shows the extent of the Article 4 Direction. Location within a conservation area does not remove any rights that a homeowner has to alter their property unless an Article 4 Direction is in place which removes homeowners permitted development rights to alter and extend their dwelling. In Elwick the current Article 4 Direction requires a planning application to be submitted for any alteration to a dwelling which includes alteration to doors and windows, alteration to the roof and extensions to the dwelling. The Article 4 Direction also applies to alterations to boundary walls and fences and exterior painting on dwellings and the use of agricultural land and

buildings. The submission of planning applications then allows consideration to be given as to whether any proposed development or change fits the character of the individual building and the character of the conservation area. If not then consent can be refused and the character of the conservation area protected and incremental improvements to the appearance and character of the conservation area achieved. As noted in the appraisal there is creeping change in the character of Elwick particularly to the western end of the village.

A more careful and considered application of the existing Article 4 Direction could be combined with the Councils conservation grant budget to target those dwellings where inappropriate alterations have occurred and go some way to reverse the effects of these works on the appearance, character and quality of the conservation area. The majority of properties are located on the north west side of The Green.


6 Potential Environmental Investment – As noted at paragraph D 14 the appearance of The Green detracts from the potential quality of the conservation area at Elwick. Substantial mature tree cover within The Green (given automatic protection by their location in the Conservation Area) are a positive aspect of The Green's appearance but a suburban quality introduced by tarmac roads and negative visual clutter introduced by road and parking signs, telegraph poles and planting detract from the potential quality of The Green and the Conservation Area. The amount of traffic through Elwick was also noted. Historically The Green had a simple informal appearance with gravel surfaced roads with an uncluttered Green. Some of this original quality is still to be found outside Potters Farm up to Holmlea. Investment in the environment of Elwick could make a positive impact on the quality of the Conservation Area and also support the approach (indicated immediately above) of a careful application of the existing Article 4 Direction or conservation grant budget (or a combination of these) to bring back the quality of some of the buildings in Elwick

7 Environmental improvements in Elwick Conservation Area based on a comprehensive design would produce a positive impact. The piecemeal approach so far has produced an incoherent appearance. The appraisal therefore indicates that a village environmental design (to include traffic measures) is needed, which can be adopted and implemented over a period when resources allow. A comprehensive design could include the resurfacing of roads within The Green to reintroduce the informal feel noted earlier. Resin bonded gravel surfaces are frequently used in conservation areas, applied to existing tarmac surfaces to give a more informal feel. This could be the approach to the lesser roads within Elwick around The Green but also to the main road through Elwick. There is already a concern with automatic speed signs at the entrance to the village to reduce drivers speed to 30mph. Changes in surfacing and other measures as part of an overall design could address the traffic concerns as well. Other aspects of a comprehensive design could include the undergrounding of telephone connection, making timber poles and their wiring redundant, the rationalisation of traffic and parking signs with their reduction to a minimum and a common design approach to the appearance of signage. The treatment of boundaries to properties in terms of walls, fences or simple hedging could be part of an overall design and implemented via a small grant scheme to owners or by use of the Article 4 Direction.



- 8 Alteration to the Conservation Area Boundary** – Reference to the historic plans of Elwick village show a typical medieval village layout consisting of a central green with buildings around the green, set in building plots or “tofts” which extend a substantial distance to the rear of the buildings. At Elwick on the north side of the village these plots are unusually wide and deep. Also typical of a medieval village is a manor house, Elwick Hall, immediately to the west of the village and a parish church, St Peter’s, to the south west. The conservation area boundary is tightly drawn around the rear of the buildings on both sides of the village green but excludes the plots or “tofts” to the rear which also form the historic core. This contrasts with Greatham (another conservation area) which is a local village of a very similar age and origin where the historic plots to the rear of properties have been included in the conservation area boundary. Another part of the original historic core of Elwick is the fish ponds located to the north west of Elwick Hall which are likely to have been associated with an earlier manor house and therefore form part of the historic core of the village. The fish ponds were declared a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1997 after the conservation area declaration in 1975.
- 9 As one outcome of the appraisal of Elwick Conservation Area it is proposed that the conservation area boundary be re-aligned to include the identifiable historic core of Elwick on the following basis:
- that the Scheduled Ancient Monument site consisting of the fish ponds north west of Elwick Hall be included within the boundary ,
 - that consideration be given to the boundary being realigned to include the historic plots or “tofts” to the rear of properties on The Green. On the south side of the village this would possibly be only a minor re-alignment but on the north side the potential re-alignment would be more extensive including areas of relatively recent housing development. Much of this development was prior to any planning legislation and to that relating to conservation areas. Realignment on the north side of the village would recognise the historic core of Elwick, and raise for future consideration the issue of design and layout, if change subsequently occurs within these housing areas to achieve a higher standard of design more appropriate to the quality of an historic village like Elwick.
 - that the boundary be re-aligned to exclude those houses at High Garth, High Lodge and Carlton on the eastern approach to Elwick on the basis that this area lies outside historic core village core. Historically the village boundary did not extend beyond North Farm on the north side of the village. The only historic building is Elwick House (named The Villa on historic plans and built around 1895) which is not within the conservation area boundary.
- 10 Potential Properties for a Local List** – Besides the identified listed buildings there are a number of significant other buildings identified at the beginning of the assessment which add to the overall quality of Elwick Conservation Area, due to their individual architecture and materials used. Their quality would not be sufficient to justify listed status in their own right but inclusion on a Local List of significant buildings would be a material consideration if there were a proposal to demolish. A Local List of significant buildings is currently being considered. A potential building at Elwick for inclusion in a Local List of significant buildings is proposed to include:
- Spotted Cow public house, The Green.
 - MacOrville public house The Green.
 - Elwick Women’s Institute, The Green.
 - Elwick Hall School (now a house to the A19).
 - Holmlea, The Green.

G CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Overall the conservation area appraisal report concluded that the character of Elwick was finely balanced between the positive aspects which support Elwick being a conservation area and those negative aspects which would not support it being so. The quality of Elwick and its status as a conservation area comes from why it was established around 1100, which was agriculture and the influence this activity has had since on the character and appearance of Elwick in terms of its buildings, The Green and surrounding countryside, together with the relative isolation until comparatively recently. However negative aspects have been introduced in terms of a suburban feel either by farm buildings and houses being removed and replaced with houses of a suburban design or the removal of original details to remaining original properties.
2. The issue for consideration in Elwick Conservation Area is how the character and appearance can be managed to reinforce the positive aspects of the area and reduce those negative influences. Outlined below are a number of methods which could be used to address this issue.
3. **Design Statement for Elwick** – A Village Design Statement for Greatham was completed in August 1999. It is proposed that a similar statement is prepared for Elwick to address two separate issues, firstly the design and alterations of properties in the conservation area and the second being the treatment of both hard and soft landscaping within the conservation area.
4. **Existing Article 4 Direction** – An Article 4 Direction already exists at Elwick covering all the residential buildings and some of the farm buildings facing onto The Green. There is creeping change in the character of the conservation area, particularly to the western end of the village. In response to this it is proposed that the Article 4 Direction is re-considered and consideration is given to targeting Council Conservation Grant, if available, at properties covered by the Direction to try and reverse the changes that have occurred.
5. **Environmental Investment** – There has been limited investment in the environment of Elwick village. Substantial mature tree cover within The Green is a positive aspect of its appearance but a suburban quality introduced by tarmac roads and negative visual clutter introduced by road and parking signs detract from potential quality of The Green. The amount of traffic through the area was also noted in the appraisal and by residents during consultation on the appraisal. Investment in the environment of Elwick is proposed, subject to the availability of budgets, to bring back some of the quality of the public realm and consider the traffic movement through the area.

6. **Alteration to the Conservation Area Boundary** – The conservation boundary is tightly drawn around the rear of the buildings on both sides of the village green but excludes the plots to the rear which also form the historic core. A further part of the historic core of Elwick is the fish ponds located to the north west of Elwick Hall which are likely to have been associated with an earlier manor house. It is proposed that consideration be given to the conservation area boundary being re-aligned to include the identifiable historic core of Elwick on the following basis:

- The scheduled ancient monument site consisting of the fish ponds north west of Elwick Hall be included within the boundary.
- Consideration is given to re-aligning the boundary to include the historic plots to the rear of properties on The Green. On the south side this would be a minor amendment but on the north side of the village this would include extensive areas of housing infill.
- The boundary is re-aligned to exclude those houses on the eastern approach to Elwick on the basis that this area lies outside the historic village core.

7. **Inclusion of Properties in a Local List** – The Appraisal report suggested the following buildings for inclusion in a Local List of significant buildings (shown in photographs below):

(a) Spotted Cow public house, The Green; (b) MacOrville public house The Green.

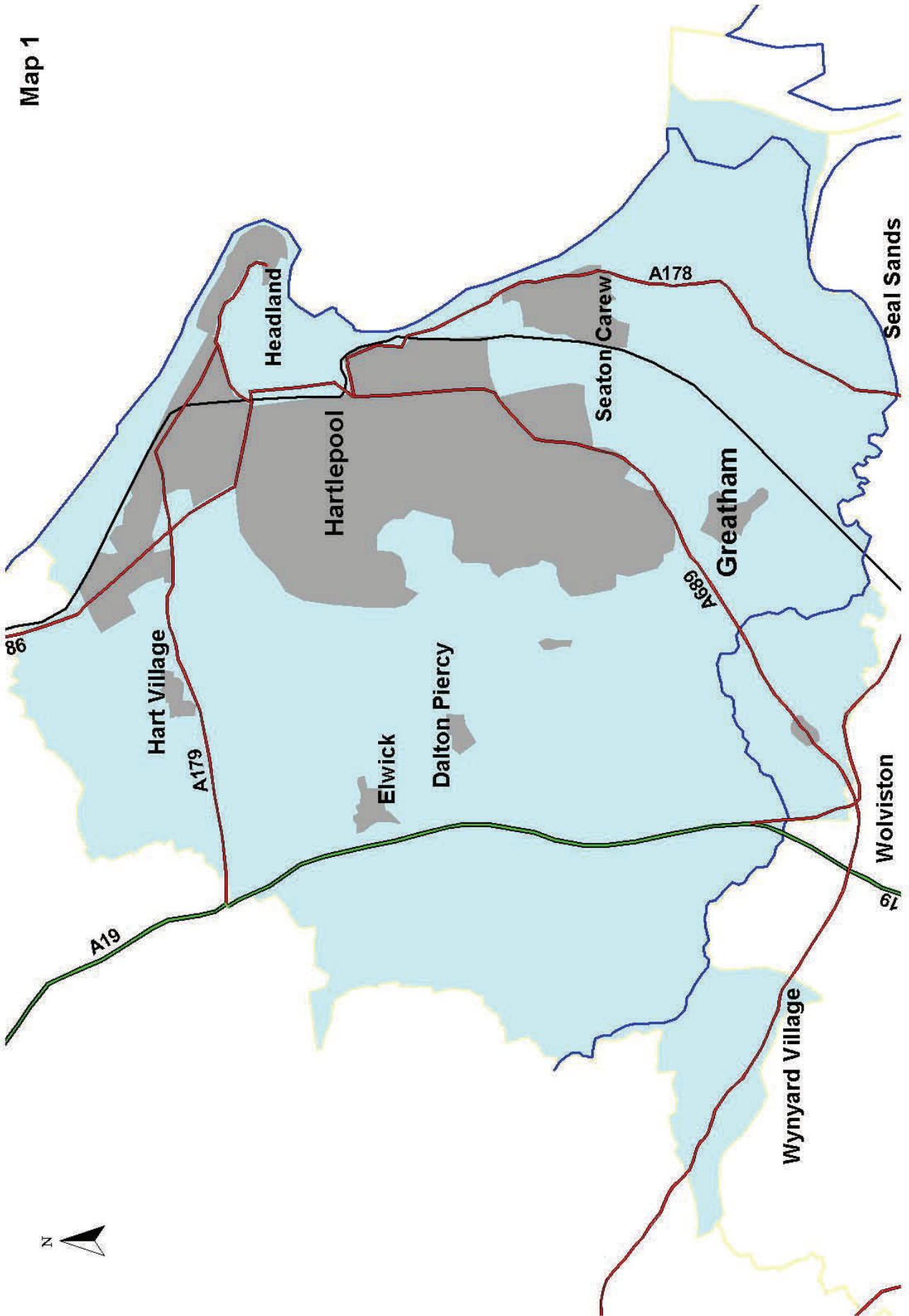
(c) Elwick Women’s Institute, The Green; (d) Elwick Hall School; (e) Holmlea, The Green



H. Action Plan

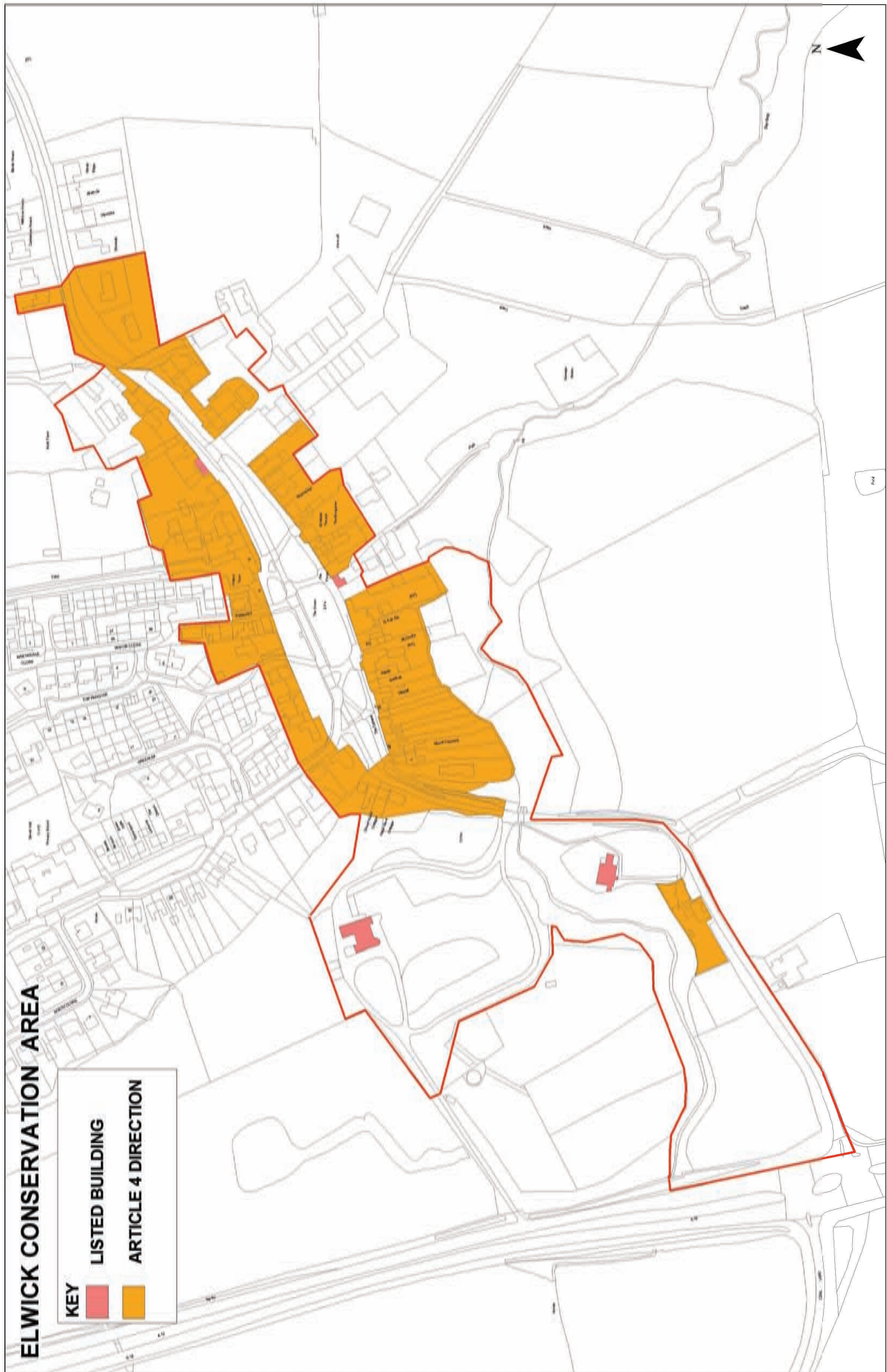
1. An action plan can be found in Appendix 5 outlining the issues for consideration in the conservation area and the way that these can be addressed.

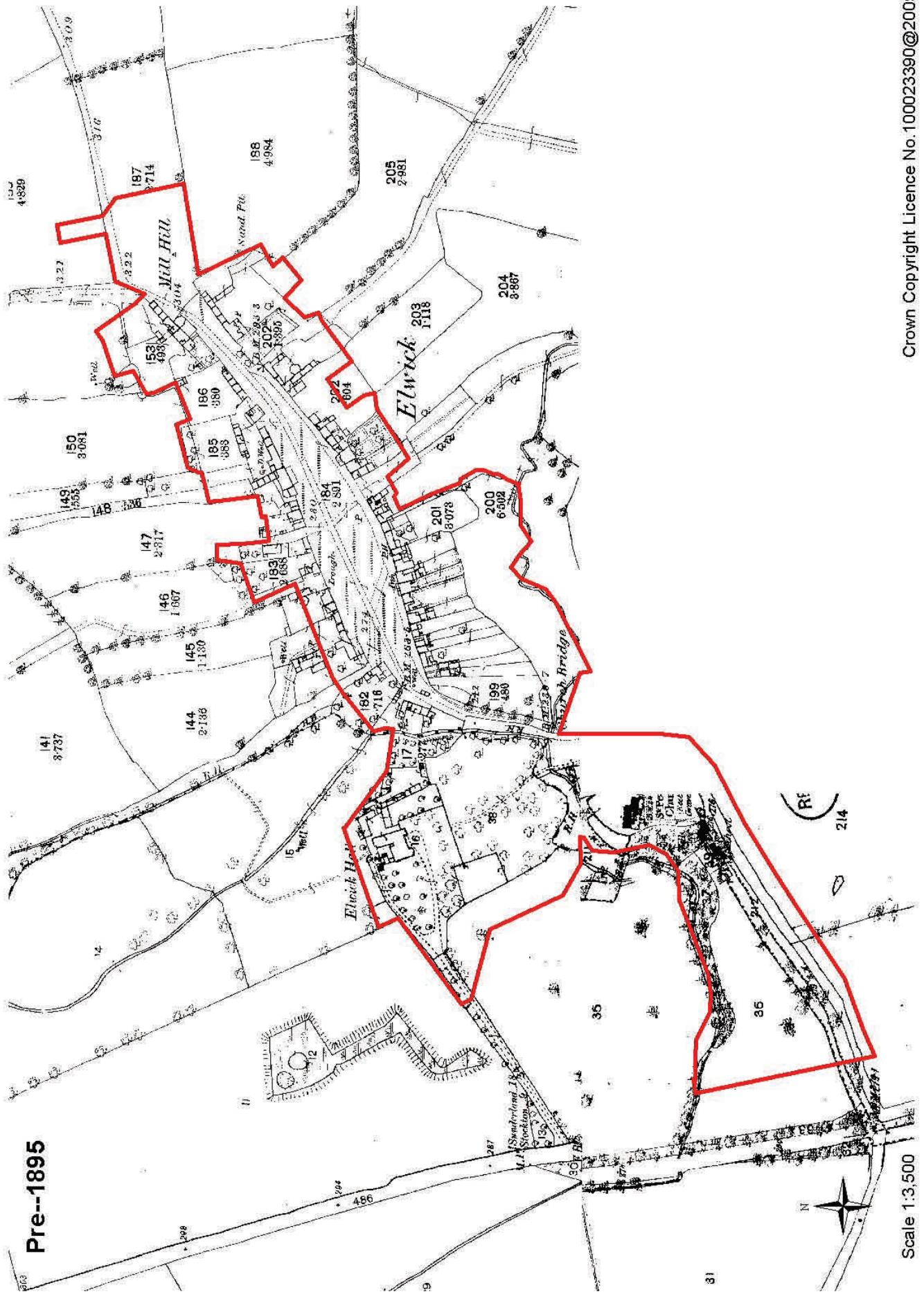
Map 1

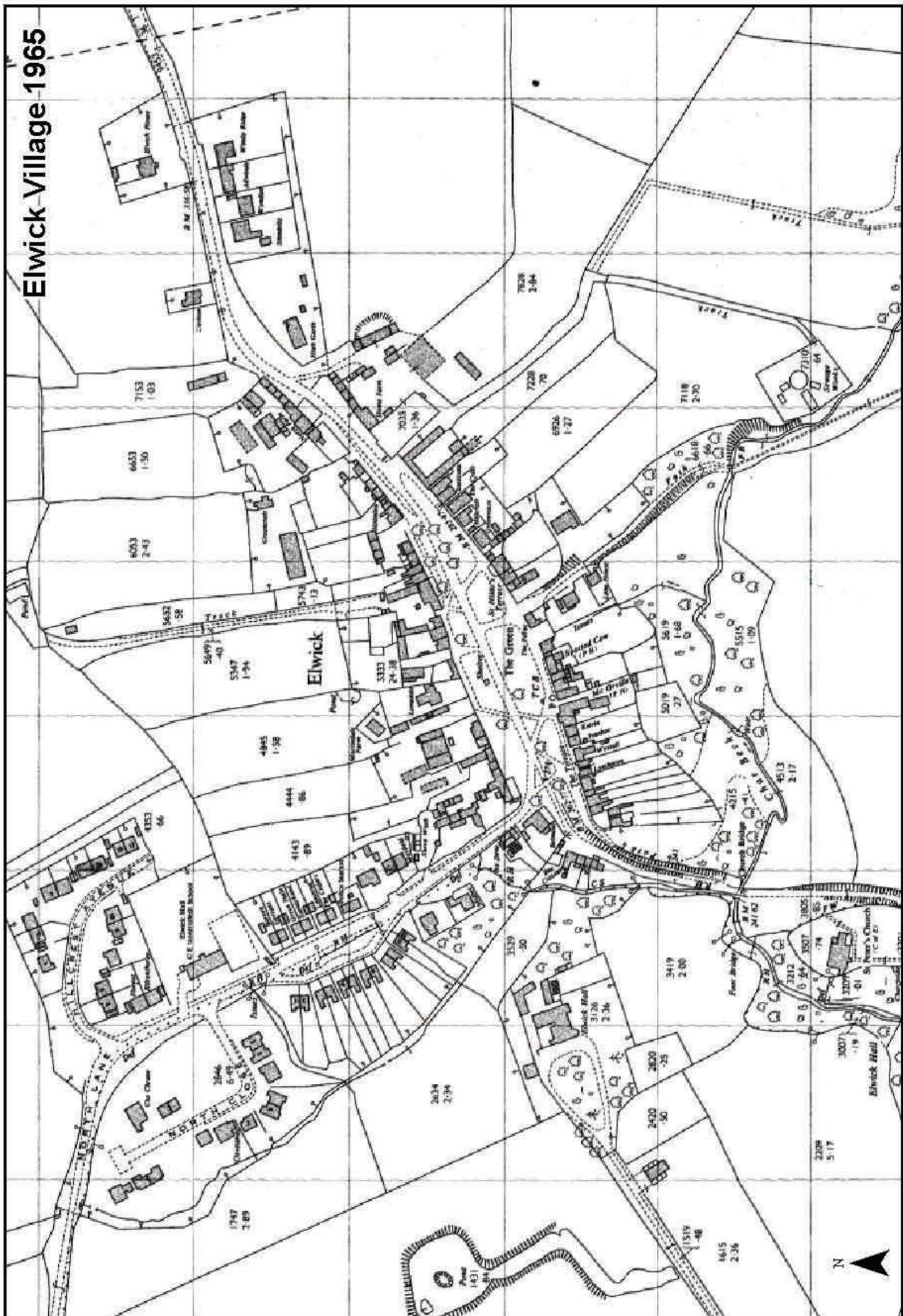


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APPENDIX 2







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Action Plan

Issue	Potential Action
<p>Poor design detailing and detailing to existing properties and infill sites within the village.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify budgets to appoint an environmental design consultant to undertake an environmental design study for Elwick covering alterations to properties and new development within the village. • Appropriate pre-application negotiations using existing planning policies and a village design statement (if available) to achieve building designs which contribute to the character of the conservation area. • Use development control powers to refuse consent to inappropriately design buildings. • Encourage appropriate reinstatement of traditional architectural details in future development negotiations. • Take enforcement action against unauthorised removal of traditional architectural details where a breach of planning control has occurred.
<p>Article 4 Direction and potential amendments to conservation area boundary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a re-survey to establish boundaries and properties to be included in the Article 4 Direction. • Consider the existing boundary of the conservation area and carry out further investigate and consultation on potential extensions and retractions to the boundary.
<p>Investment in the environment of Elwick.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify budgets to appoint an environmental design consultant to undertake an environmental design study for Elwick covering traffic movement through the village along with the treatment of public spaces. • Identify budgets to implement the recommendations of an environmental design study.

The above table provides a list of issues relating specifically to the conclusions drawn in the Elwick Conservation Area Appraisal. The implementation of the potential actions may depend on the existing and future financial and staff resources that Hartlepool Borough Council departments work within.