



South Tyneside Council

Neighbourhood Services

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Cleadon Hills Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

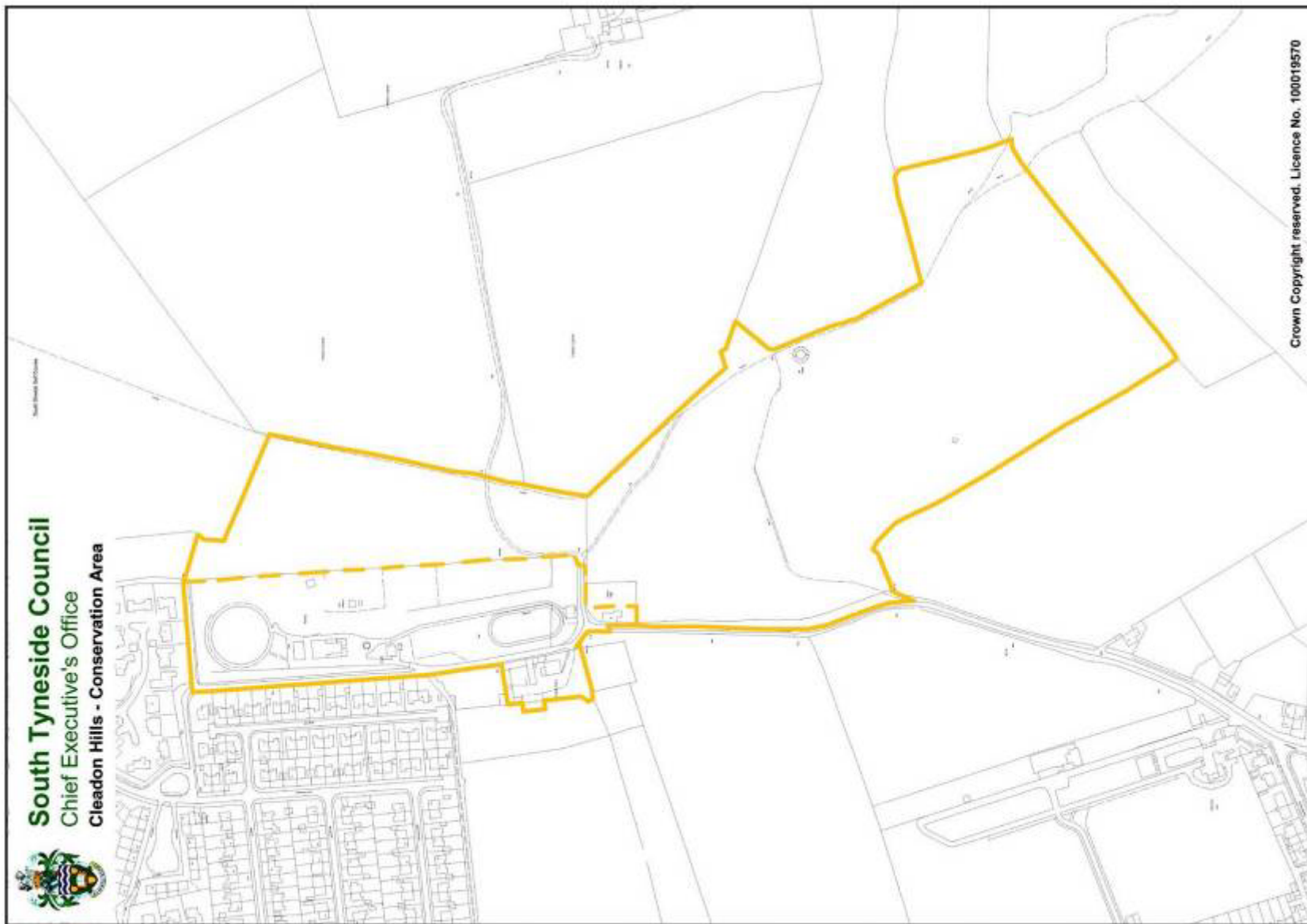
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Map 1: Cleadon Hills Conservation Area – Boundary



Character Appraisal

Cleadon Hills Conservation Area

I Introduction

Conservation Areas were first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as being:

“areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”

Local authorities have a duty in exercising planning powers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. They depend on much more than the quality of individual buildings, and take into account features such as building layout, open spaces, boundaries, thoroughfares, the mix of uses, materials and street furniture. It is also common for a number of Listed Buildings to be included.

The approach to character appraisals has altered in recent years. It is now recognised that planning policy, development control, enhancement proposals and conservation area management can be best achieved when there is a clear and sound understanding of the conservation area’s special interest. *PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment* urges local authorities to prepare detailed appraisals and states:

“the more clearly the special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation is defined and recorded, the sounder the basis for local plan policies and development control decisions, as well as for the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of an area”.

The value of the appraisal is two-fold. First, its publication will improve the understanding of the value of the built heritage, providing property owners and potential developers, with clearer guidance on planning matters and the types of development which are likely to be encouraged. Secondly, it will enable South Tyneside Council to improve its strategies, policies and approach towards conservation and development opportunities and priorities within the area. The appraisal will form a sound basis for establishing effective conservation area policies; support the effective determination of planning and listed building applications; and form relevant evidence in planning appeals.

Guidance used to complete this appraisal includes *PPG15* (DoE & DNH, Sept 1994), *Conservation Area Appraisals* (English Heritage, March 1997), *Conservation Area Management* (EHTF 1998) and *Guidance on Management of Conservation Areas* (English Heritage, 2006).

2 Cleadon Hills Conservation Area

The area has two very distinctive zones: the former Cleadon Water Pumping Station site (most now converted to private housing) together with Sunnyside Farm, and secondly the extensive elevated open grassland of the Cleadon Hills, an accessible, windswept landscape including exposed rock. Wide panoramic views, and the prominent, isolated pumping station chimney and ruined Cleadon windmill epitomise the area's exposed coastal hilltop position.

The existing boundary evolved over two years. In 1988, Cleadon Pumping Station Conservation Area was designated to cover around 3 hectares of the former water pumping station site and the adjacent farm. This was made to protect unlisted buildings (eg. the dome-covered reservoir, Sunnyside Farm, Farm Cottage), plus the site's trees, boundary walls and spaces. Designation was prompted by the imminent sale of the site and possible threat of fragmentation, and the possibility of prospective owners being able to secure of grant aid for restoration and repair.

The following year, the size of the conservation area was considerably increased to include the listed Cleadon windmill, adjacent elevated open grassland (part of the Durham Magnesian limestone plateau and a Site of Special Scientific Interest), and flatter higher grassland immediately to the east of the pumping

station site. This existing boundary covers some 15 hectares. The name was changed at the same time.

The conservation area has a very distinctive visual identity in both its immediate and distant surroundings, due mainly to the geology, topography and landscape in which a few important buildings have been added. It is characterised by a sharp contrast between the tree-filled enclosed nature of the water pumping station site, and the exposed hill-top grassland, but both sub-areas are firmly linked by the visual relationship between the dominant towers in each sub-area, both important local and sub-regional landmarks.



The Conservation area's underlying geology is the undeniable common influence of the area. The magnesian limestone rock was

quarried to build the windmill and field boundary walls; its strata is naturally water-carrying with aquifers ideal for exploitation by a major water pumping station site; and it has generated locally rare grassland with habitats of national significance.

3 Location, Setting and Views



The conservation area lies on elevated land approximately 1km north east of the ancient village of Cleadon. To the north and west of the conservation area is the Cleadon Park housing estate, and the Cleadon Hills stretch away to the south and east of the area. South Shields town centre and the mouth of the River Tyne are some 4km north. The suburban expansion of South Shields did not encroach on the vicinity until the 1930s with housing off

Sunnirise Road to the west and a school north of the pumping station being laid out by 1938. Sunnirise Lane, forming one long edge of the conservation area, originally provided access to the corn mill, quarries and farms around (including Sunnirise Farm) and later to the water pumping station as well.

The North Sea is only 2km to the east and, as land in the south and east is some 75-80m (240ft) above sea level, the coast is characterised by rugged cliffs. The conservation area is the highest point in the borough and also for many miles to the south and west. As a result, the 30m (100ft) red brick Italianate tower in the former pumping station is very prominent, sited at some 80m above sea level, giving it a combined height of over 110m above sea level.



These factors mean there are spectacular panoramic views out of and into the area, on both a local and sub-regional scale. The

chimney in particular, therefore, has high visual impact in the densely populated suburbs of South Tyneside and Sunderland (and further afield along the coast), and the extent of wider public experience of the conservation area is therefore very extensive.



4 Historical Origins

An 1862 map of the area (probably surveyed before this date as the water pumping station built 1859-62 is not shown) shows it is part of a wider, elevated grassland landscape of farms and quarries including Sunnyside Farm, Cleadon Corn Mill and (outside the conservation area but with an access across it) Cleadon Hills Farm. Such scattered farmsteads, limestone walled fields, quarries and mills characterised the early nineteenth century landscape of this,

the most northern part of the exposed Durham Magnesian limestone plateau north of the River Wear.

The Plateau is a gently undulating low upland plateau exposed to coastal influences. The landform and its underlying geology have produced a pattern of predominantly arable farmland which dips to the south and east, and is often interspersed with large active or disused earlier quarries. The greater part of the conservation area is on the higher land of this plateau with evidence of many small disused quarries and disturbed ground throughout. The Cleadon Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), designated in 1983, protects the magnesian limestone grassland which covers most of the open parts of the conservation area.

The site received a further designation, as a local Nature Reserve, in 1997. The land to the east of the former pumping station falls within the Cleadon Quarry Site of Nature Conservation Importance, designated in its current form in 1998.

The major building group is concentrated on the former pumping station site, the first 1988 conservation area designation and listed building status reflecting their significance both locally and nationally. Their origins also lie fundamentally in the geology of the area and the highly organised exploitation of the natural water-holding characteristic of the magnesian limestone rock strata

beneath the site. The pumping station was built straddling a section of the exposed west-facing scarp of this shallow rock but this critical topographical feature is now largely hidden in the northern section by tree and ground cover. All the buildings and structures on this site are on the lower western level apart from the spectacular chimney tower on the upper level to the east.



The mid nineteenth century origins for the pumping station's location, architecture and operational design were due to an urgent need, on health and economic grounds, for better provision of clean accessible water for the increasing populations of industrial

Wearside and Tyneside. An Act of Parliament created the Sunderland & South Shields Water Company in 1852 in response to local water quality problems. There was more opportunity for the area to benefit from the expertise of Thomas Hawksley (1807-1893), a nationally eminent water supply engineer who had already worked for the company on two earlier stations on the Durham Magnesian limestone Plateau, first at Humbledon (1846) and then Fulwell (1852). Hawksley's earlier career started in his home town of Nottingham, significant in that its location is at the southern end of the same geological belt of water bearing magnesian limestone rocks as the Cleadon Hills.

The pumping station was originally operated by steam from coal fired Cornish boilers, using about 470 lbs of coal per hour, powering two Cornish Beam engines which in turn drove combined Ram and Bucket pumps down into the 269.88 feet deep (12 ft diameter) well below the Engine House. The resultant vacuum produced in the shaft by the 'ram and bucket' moving up and down, drew up the water which was piped away under ground to the large circular reservoir, which held 2 million gallons of water. This reservoir was covered in 1954 by what was reputed to then be the largest unsupported concrete dome in Europe. About 1.5 million gallons of water was extracted each 12 hour day. The tall (100 feet) Italianate listed tower on the higher land above was

actually a ‘chimney’ that provided a draught for the boilers as well as dispersing waste gases from the squat Boiler House which is attached to the taller Engine House in the centre of the site. The ‘artificial’ cooling pond to the south of the site, fed by water from the well but now a shallow grass depression, was needed because the site did not have a natural surface stream, a characteristic typical of limestone areas. Water from the cooling pond was recycled after use via underground pipes back into the cooling pond. An original functional use of the fountain may have been as part of this process as well as being decorative, although further research is needed on this matter. In 1930 the steam powered plant was replaced by electrical equipment indicating that the ‘cooling’ function of the pond was already redundant well before the cessation of general water pumping operations in the early 1970’s.

The scale, grandeur and extravagance of the architecture and the operational success of the water extraction the Sunderland & South Shields Water Company buildings – especially those at Cleadon – epitomised the extremely high economic and moral importance that a plentiful supply of clean water had in a highly entrepreneurial, industrial, yet philanthropic, Victorian Britain. The pumping station closed in the 1970s after the Derwent Reservoir was brought into service.



5 Archaeological Significance

The UDP identified the former pumping station site as an Important Archaeological Site. Its industrial archaeological interest has yet to be fully assessed and, although it is likely to be quite high, will have been significantly reduced by the removal of the machinery which represented its original purpose. In addition, the open Cleadon Hills are part of an Area of Potential Archaeological Importance, and Cleadon Windmill is a Listed Building of Archaeological Importance (Policy ENV8/2).

6 Sub-Area I: Pumping Station & Sunnyside Farm

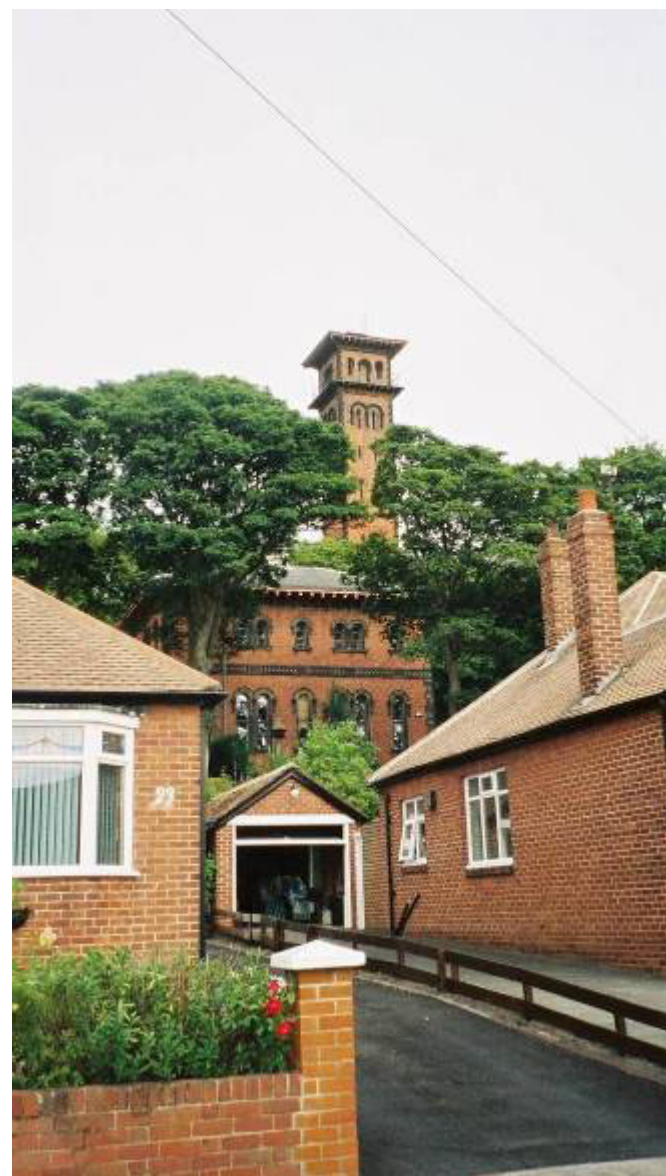
6.1 Boundaries, Setting and Views

This sub-area includes two clearly defined areas – the former pumping station and Sunnyside Farm. The conservation area boundary on its north and west edges follows very tightly around the very prominent limestone walled enclosure of the sub-area. The two sub-areas abut each other down the length of the east wall, most of which has two rows of barbed wire along its top. On the west side, the new housing is screened by a more formal and substantial version of the perimeter stonewall with rounded copes (still with barbed wire) strengthening privacy.



Extensive views out over rooftops are possible from within the site, with walled boundaries also dominating the farm group, making Sunnyside Lane a distinctly channelled route. The chimney tower is a distinctive point of orientation adding diversity

to the regional and local sense of place. It can be seen on the horizon across the region and as such it is the main signature of the Cleadon Hills, being more distinctive than the windmill, but the two work best when seen together. The chimney's prominence creates a sense of anticipation and expectation upon arrival at the site, when the collection of splendid buildings within can be glimpsed through trees walls. The squared stone entrance gateway pillars and high gates have a telecom system, but the attractive wooded site and fine buildings are visible beyond. Standard lightweight metal estate fencing and granite edged drives in a house colour add to the unifying experience.





6.2 Use

This sub-area has three identifiable uses. The former pumping station buildings and curtilages are in residential use, apart from the chimney tower and the covered reservoir, which are still in redundant industrial use. This is also true of the former cooling pond reservoir in the south west of the site and its surrounding magnesium grassland and steep wooded bank sides. The potential for further use and development of these is very sensitive to their significance, but is critical to the long-term management and stewardship of the whole site.

The buildings and land at Sunnyside Farm and House are in domestic and agricultural use, the use for which they were designed, and so will be sensitive to change (particularly due to the low number of outward-facing openings in the group). Conversion of the farm buildings to certain other uses, especially residential, is potentially problematic. Pressure, for example, for new building openings, garden land, separate access arrangements and boundaries could introduce elements, which are alien to the distinctive open setting of the farm building group and the conservation area.

6.3 *Layout*

With the exception of the tower and covered reservoir, all the former pumping station buildings are now in residential use. They form a dramatically arranged and structured group due to the original detailed planning of operational and domestic buildings and infrastructure by the water company. The buildings and remainder of the former operational site are still private and enclosed by a high stone boundary wall, now with security controlled gates.



The waterworks buildings are arranged in a clear north to south layout, only the chimney tower being on the higher level. In the north section of this zone the buildings are now linked by a new, elegant, ornamental landscape of curved lawns, low hedges, potted

shrubs, restored fountain basin, mature trees and a deliberate but subtle attention to detail through the use of surface materials. The restored curtilage-listed fountain is now unfortunately lost to general view by recent laurel hedging.



The undergrowth and self seeded trees covering the otherwise visually dominant central north-south limestone scarp, create a dense impenetrable green barrier in the summer, through which only glimpses of the chimney tower are possible from this part of the site. This makes it difficult to see the base of the tower, whilst the curved track up to it is also screened by trees, the rocks and quarry remains themselves.

The layout of the southern part of this enclosed site can only be seen from within or through the gates of the detached cottage. There is an expansive area of grassland on two distinct levels, separated by a 2m stone retaining wall and tree band that follows the natural north-south line of the scarp edge.



Sunniside Lane separates Sunniside Farm from the former pumping station. The farm group also has an enclosed operational layout, here the stone buildings themselves forming the outer walls of the space. The traditional farmstead layout of barns and byres is a typical farmstead layout, providing shelter, efficiency and security for both stock and operational activities. The squarish farmhouse stands attractively, guarding the gap through into the working courtyard.



6.4 Scale

The buildings in the main group are of differing heights, footprint and shape, defined by their operational use, but uniformity is provided by the common approach to architectural style and detail throughout, cleverly disguising them with domestic character. The large industrial scale of the engine house can be appreciated up close. The covered reservoir is the most unusual of all the structures in this zone, significant in size and historical development. Its circular shape with a smooth light grey 50m diameter concrete dome makes it difficult to appreciate in its entirety, and it is generally only glimpsed over walls, through trees and behind buildings from both within and outside the site. From

the top of the chimney, however, its vast proportions are quite dramatic. It is currently fenced off and inaccessible.



The scale of the square-section chimney tower and the generous proportions of the other buildings suggest the specific functional past but the external architectural ornamentation and grandeur in a strong classical style, also suggest more refined civic or even religious overtones.

The four new hip-roofed double garages next in amongst the residential conversion of these buildings also have a common form and detailing. Together with the residential extension of the former engineer's house at the main gate, these contemporary additions give a more clear domestic scale to the group as a whole.

A former lodge building stands alone at the southern end of the former pumping station site away from the remainder. Its is domestic in scale and detail but has received a large mid to late-twentieth century flat roofed extension to the east and is severed from the rest of the site by a fence that cuts through the southern tip of one of the reservoirs.



The Sunnyside Farm group is generally a uniform, two storey domestic and agricultural scale. The visual contribution that this extensive group makes within the conservation area is relatively subdued partly because of the elevated level of Sunnyside Lane, the inward looking layout and the homogeneous stone materials blending with the boundary walls. However, when viewed from outside across open fields to the west and south, the farm group is

seen as a prominent and extensive group of vernacular stone agricultural buildings.

6.5 *Density*

This sub-area generally has a low density with few buildings in total occupying a relatively spacious area. But instead of being evenly spread, buildings are concentrated in the northern half and at Sunnyside Farm, with larger open areas of former reservoirs and open land to the south of the sub-area. Yet even in the relatively densely developed northern part there are contrasts, as the single dome covered reservoir occupies a ground area greater than the footprint of all the other structures put together.

Density at Sunnyside Farm section is higher because the boundary is drawn tightly around the footprint of the built group. Nevertheless, less than half of this section is built over with the yard itself a key open space.

6.6 *Massing*

The massing of buildings in this sub-area varies, but this too is concealed by the clever use of common Italianate architecture in the pumping station. For example, the central former Engine House appears from the front to be a generous two-storey building similar in volume to the Engineman's House opposite, but is in

fact considerably bulkier. Its volume is disguised by 'stretching' its architectural features such as the more substantial plinth and taller windows.



However, overall, the buildings are read as a single organised group, by positioning the taller engine house centrally in the group facing the entrance, with lower buildings on each side and to the rear. The detached chimney continues this theme, resembling a detached campanile tower. The new garage blocks are much smaller than the original buildings. The circular covered reservoir has squat proportions, the dome having been added to an originally open reservoir.

Sunniside Farm has simple regular forms, the stone buildings having solid, substantial massing with few external features and, instead, a considerable solid mass of stone and slate with long unbroken stretches of roof and random rubble walls. The detached two-storey hip roof house is also uncomplicated in shape. The use of indigenous natural building materials reduces the visual impact of the mass of the Sunniside Farm group.

6.7 Detailing & Materials

The basis for much of this part of the conservation area's character and appearance is accurate observation of specific architectural styles, and a comprehensive, detailed use of high quality materials with high quality craftsmanship.

The former pumping station buildings, with the exception of the later concrete dome to the reservoir, are in a robust Italianate style, referred to in the listing as 'Rundbogenstil', a German influenced version. The chimney tower, engine house, boiler house, coal house, engineman's house and cottage are all in this style.

6.7.1 Chimney Tower- Grade II* Listed Building

Resembling a classical Italianate campanile the chimney tower contains a square flue with an internal continuous flight of stairs wrapping around the central vertical chamber to reach a high-level

45cm (18inch) external cantilevered gallery below roof level some 30m from the ground. This tall tower was a chimney, built to house the flues (waste gas pipes) coming from the coal powered steam generating boilers that drove the pumping engines housed on the lower part of the site. The square metal railings on the viewing gallery are not ornamental! The roof and gallery overhangs have curved timber brackets.



The Tower is built of soft clay red brick with light-coloured lime-rich mortar, and rusticated sandstone quoins plus one high level stone string course. Each face has twelve deeply inset vertical windows in groups of three, with brickwork recessed around each group. Telecommunication aerials are visible from the ground but not overwhelmingly so, given the relative scale.

The chimney tower is on the national Buildings at Risk Register 2006 at Priority C (slow decay no solution agreed) and can be classified as being at Risk Level 4A (fair condition, not capable of beneficial occupation). The objective of the register is to raise the profile of such buildings and focus attention on finding solutions.

6.7.2 *Engine House, Boiler House, Coal House, Engineman's House and Cottage Grade II Listed Buildings*



Common features of all the converted buildings include the use of heavy rustication (deep cut chamfered joints) to sandstone masonry, highlighting the difference between the smooth faced quoins and substantial rock faced buttressed plinths. This strong detailing contrasts with the simple but warm red clay brick (English bond) used throughout. The engine house and engineman's house also have elaborate stone string courses at first floor level, with a loop or guilloche pattern.



Other notable features include shallow hipped natural grey slate roofs with lead rolled ridges and deep overhanging eaves supported by timber bow brackets springing off small stone corbels above a dentilled cornice. In the former engineman's

house and boiler house there is recent, well-executed stonework restoration and brickwork repairs.

The engine house's roof is topped with a white octagonal timber cupola (also with over hanging eaves) and a weather vane. Guttering is squared and visible above the eaves in blue painted castings that feed cast iron downpipes cutting through the overhang.



Windows are generally narrow, sometimes in pairs, with deeply inset blue painted metal frames with horizontal lights. Window and door openings have rounded stone heads with cornice details (imposts) on which the end of the arch appears to rest, and a

scrolled ribbon-like bracket beneath. The protruding stone cills have plain brackets and the remaining dressed stonework on the surrounds has restrained horizontal ribbing. Some doorways are blind. Central on the engine house's east and west elevations are recessed blind window openings, each containing a dwarf column, possibly once containing a now-lost feature.

The patina of time has not been removed by recent restoration of these historic buildings and the stonework remains richly stained, adding to its historic character.



The scheme for the conversion to residential use was designed by Jane Darbyshire and David Kendal Ltd, Chartered Architects, for Rivergreen Developments plc. It received a Hadrian Award in 2005.

6.7.3 Garages and Extension



The 4 new-build double garages and the extension to the engineman's house compliment the historic buildings in a subtle, contemporary manner. Pyramidal slate roofs with overhangs reflect the Victorian industrial buildings, and the tone of materials is generally similar. However, other than this, the garages deliberately follow their own code with a lightweight appearance from boarded timber walls, and no stonework. Exposed

metalwork and stained slatted doors further distinguish these high quality additions from their historic original buildings.

The engineman's house extension, replacing earlier outhouses, copies the basic form and tones of its host building by using a chamfered dry stone plinth and shallow roof, but overall is a contemporary solution. Its protruding plain glass box window, wrap around corner glazing, and flat roofed link dug into the embankment create an unusual and distinctive addition to the area.

6.7.4 Covered Reservoir



This is an unusual large circular domed structure with no above-ground sidewalls. Historic photographs show it is about 6m deep,

sunken into the ground and lined with irregular coursed rubble stone, originally with a stone set floor and ornate railings around its rim. This is all now concealed by the stark light grey concrete dome, added in 1954. Its smooth tones and profile contrast dramatically with the warm tones and detailing of the adjacent buildings but the dome may have significance in its own right.

6.7.5 *Sunniside Farm*

The use of natural limestone and slate construction coupled with a minimal number of external openings makes this farm group a very discreet private group of functional buildings. In good condition with recent lime-rich pointing, the whole vernacular farm group type is simple and functional. The single high brick arched entrance into the courtyard through the north side is a notable detail. The farmhouse is a simple square hip roofed building with formal regular traditional fenestration details.

6.8 *Biodiversity and Land Management*

The former pumping station site contains a number of valuable habitats. Of particular interest is the former cooling pond, which now contains shallow soils that have developed a particularly varied and valuable flora. Many of the species, such as glaucous sedge (*Carex flacca*), wild thyme (*Thymus drucei*), hoary plantain (*Plantago media*) and purging flax (*Linum catharticum*) are typical

of older, high quality Magnesium Limestone grasslands. In addition, the raised grassland area, to the south of the tower, contains calcicolous species (favouring limestone-derived soils) such as greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*) and rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*) though it is heavily dominated by the coarse, upright brome (*Bromus erectus*).

In order to maintain the site in favourable condition and thereby preserve its visual and nature conservation contribution to the character of the conservation area it is essential that a biodiversity management plan is produced and implemented. This should feature a cutting/grazing regime to maintain/enhance the floristic diversity of the grasslands and prevent them from scrubbing over as well as a suitable woodland management regime.

The nature of the buildings in Sub-area 1, combined with the range of good habitat, make this area potentially attractive to roosting and foraging bats.

Summary: Sub-Area 1 Former Pumping Station & Sunnyside Farm

Special Characteristics

- Fine, unified group of classical historic and new buildings.
- Quality conversion scheme and re-use of most buildings.
- Good attention to detail, eg. fencing, setts, colour scheme
- Attractive vernacular stone farm building group
- Strong senses of enclosure providing different identities
- Quiet, lack of traffic.
- Attractive mature tree cover with far reaching visual impact
- Tower structure, a sub-regional point of orientation,
- Link between geology and historic engineering/architecture

Against The Grain

- Long term unmanaged vegetation, mainly on limestone scarp
- Lack of access to and interpretation of the chimney and other non-residential parts of site.
- Obscuring restored water fountain by internal hedging.
- Barbed wire on perimeter walls of pumping station site
- Sub-division of historic landscape in pumping station.
- Formal black tarmac drives.

Key Issues

- Long-term holistic conservation of geological, architectural and nature conservation interests.
- Removal of chimney tower from Buildings at Risk register.
- Control over long-term effects of fragmented ownership.
- Securing a Management Plan, especially for vulnerable areas, through coordinated stakeholder approach.
- Protection of distinctive architectural form and detail.
- Better public understanding of geology and architecture.
- Maintaining secluded, introverted character.
- Protecting openness of setting of building groups.
- Clarity over significance of covered reservoir and dome.
- Secure and implement a biodiversity management plan for the former pumping station site.

Enhancement Potential

- Ecological management of magnesian limestone grassland and historic landscaping, including trees on scarp.
- Re-use of covered reservoir.
- Long-term management of chimney tower including controlled public access, interpretation, stewardship and funding.

7 Sub-Area 2: Cleadon Hills and Windmill

7.1 *Boundary, Setting and Views*

Sub-Area 2 is a special informal landscape characterised by its elevation, exposed and windswept treeless grassed groundcover, and the monotone, natural colours of stone and grass. Extensive limestone walls of the east boundaries separate this largely publicly accessible landscape from arable or pasture farmland on the coastal side. Ground levels are similar on both sides of the boundary.



The south and west edges of this sub-area are notable because of either the sudden change from natural grass to farmed land, or the steep drop in levels to pasture fields below Sunnyside Lane.

Boundaries are of mixed traditional hedging, sometimes sparse, plus one stretch of lower local stone wall. These all appear to be historic boundaries, shown on the 1862 map.

Views from the south and west boundaries are exceptional across many miles and, when clear, other notable features on the horizon such as Penshaw monument, the Sunderland cityscape, and coastal geography are all distinguishable. The north boundary is typified by more dense scrub hiding disturbed, uninviting ground falling away to the north, and by the high stone rubble wall of the former pumping station site. Owned by the adjacent Golf Club, the nature conservation interests of this area are currently unmanaged.

The junction of the two sub-areas is a very secluded pathway junction and immediately beyond this to the north is a modern housing estate of large detached brick houses. This juxtaposition provides sharp contrasts of open and built forms, as well as between public and private accessibility.

7.2 *Use*

Sub-Area 2 is principally freely accessible public open space used for informal recreational. It is semi-natural and is managed in a low-key manner which respects its various scientific, habitat and heritage designations, about which various signs and markers

across the area give informative details. Pathways and routes are also marked for guidance. At the notional point of arrival to the windmill, an information board gives useful interpretational material including contextual, historic, and habitat information. The character and appearance of this sub-area is very sensitive to changes in this informal use and management.

7.3 *Landform and Layout*



This is an expansive, exposed sub-area of the conservation area, containing only one significant structure, the sub-conical shell of an early nineteenth century corn mill. This light coloured rubble limestone vernacular structure stands alone with a shallow stone skirt as a retaining wall around its base (known as a reefing stage) from where the windmill sails were attended. It is seen against the

skyline amidst a wide, bare but highly accessible undulating grassed landscape, crossed by both informal grass tracks and designated pathways. The sub-area also contains many spots of disturbed ground, previously worked as ad hoc shallow rock face quarries, particularly around the south-west and north edges. These points are colonised by scrub plants and longer grasses.

The characteristic open and undeveloped landscape is informal and semi-natural, but notably delineated by strongly defined stone walled field boundaries along the eastern edges, with hedges and ditches to the west and south.

Landform describes a gently undulating, low upland plateau with a defined western scarp exposed as limestone rock outcrops, or staggered grassed slopes with gorse and scrub. These define the sudden rise above the greener arable fields immediately outside the conservation area to the south and to urban areas beyond.

Sunniside Cottages on the east side of the bend in Sunniside Lane are geographically part of the lower slopes of this grassland plateau. These buildings face the lane, have little land associated with them and, as a small relatively inconsequential group of indistinctive residential buildings, have little impact in their present form on the overall layout or landscape character of the sub-area.

7.4 Scale



In landscape terms the scale is expansive and visually far-reaching with only one or two key tangible features. The sub-area itself has no trees or internal boundaries so the expanse of land appears vast with the isolated windmill a strong marker at some 14m (42ft) high. In this exposed and elevated position with extensive views, the walker can feel very small and isolated, dwarfed by the expanse of landscape and buildings. This exciting blankness also encourages close examination of the rocks and flora as well as wider appreciation of the views.

A rare touch of human scale is given by the piece of public art in the north part of the sub-area, a metal sculpture and bench depicting a split grass seed head, entitled “Grist to the Mill”. Even

here, though, the scale of stylised seed head is enlarged significantly, echoing the giant scale of landscape and the key buildings within it. It marks the route of the Linnet Way, a promoted footpath which links the River Don to the Coast at Marsden Old Quarry.



7.5 Architectural Character

There is, of course, almost zero density in this sub-area with only one structure, the windmill. The network of Magnesian limestone c1.2m high boundary walls does provide definition to the space. The absence of other built forms gives these two quite different built features a distinctive contribution to the open landscape.

The shell of the former windmill (which appears in good condition) is roughly coursed rubble limestone to three-unequal storeys, with a door and two window openings facing both north and south. This stripped, functional simplicity is key to its character. Made of material probably from the ground around, its style and appearance are vernacular and indigenous to this location.



Sunniside Cottages are architecturally undistinguished workers dwellings near the farm group, but not part of it, being separated by topography, access and design. They appear more part of the wider landscape of this sub-area, but in a low-key way.

Peripheral stone field boundary walls have a tapered profile and varied methods of construction. Some are in roughly coursed rubble with deep recessed mortar and spaced copes, other stretches are squarer coursed rubble with more tightly packed, regular copes. There is variety in both types.

7.6 *Biodiversity and Land Management*

Cleadon Hill SSSI is a nationally important example of Magnesium Limestone grassland. As such there is a requirement in law that it is managed by the land owner, the Council, to maintain its favourable condition in relation to features such as the grassland flora and fauna, gorse scrub and limestone walls. In addition it is managed to promote public access and provide interpretation.





Cleadon Quarry SNCI, to the north, has comparable habitats but of regional importance. The site is privately owned but is crossed by a public footpath and is largely open to public access. The landowner currently takes a hay crop, which is a suitable management for the grassland, although additional works may be required to prevent excessive spread of upright brome. To the north there are areas with rocky outcrops which are becoming dominated by gorse scrub – clearance works are required to maintain a favourable balance between the gorse and open habitats within.



*Summary: Sub-Area 2 Cleadon Hills and Windmill***Special Characteristics**

- Elevated, undulating, exposed semi-natural landscape with open grassland
- Views of Cleadon windmill and pumping station chimney tower juxtaposed
- National status habitat designation
- Extensive sub-regional views from ground level.
- Dramatic isolated Cleadon windmill
- Limestone boundary walls
- Free public access and interpretation, peaceful location, grassed footpaths.
- Naturally exposed limestone rock and areas of old quarries.

Against The Grain

- Erosion of steep ground at north junction of both sub-areas.
- Inconsistent condition of boundary walls, and some too formal and suburban in appearance.
- Visibility of residential use at Sunnyside Cottages.
- Potential conflict working farm and informal public users.
- Fly tipping, burnt-out cars and theft of limestone from walls within the Cleadon Quarry SSSI.
- Unauthorised car parking adjacent to the SSSI field gate.

Key Issues

- Long-term holistic conservation of geological, architectural and nature conservation interests.
- Securing a Management Plan, especially for vulnerable areas, through coordinated stakeholder approach.
- Protection of quiet, isolated character.
- Protection of semi-natural appearance through discreet long-term management
- Repair and maintenance of boundary walling windmill
- Encourage use of two iconic towers as sub-regional identity

Enhancement Potential

- Interpretational board before entrance to the grassland site
- Specification for boundary wall works
- Opportunity for training, skills and education in built and natural conservation topics
- Agreement of possible enhancement works and management of north route into sub-area

8 Other Designations



Cleadon Hills Conservation Area has other heritage, landscape and nature conservation designations as set out below. There are no Article 4 Directions, Tree Preservation Orders, or Local List entries in the conservation area. See Maps 2-6.

- Sub-Area 2, with the exception of the cottages and northern extension east of the former pumping station, was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1983. This is a national designation made because Cleadon Hill is of interest for its Magnesian limestone grassland communities, which are associated with shallow soils, rock outcrops and old earthworks on the flanks of the hill. The

herb-rich turf holds species of grass and wild flower, which are near the northern edge of their range in Britain. Dense patches of gorse scrub provide nesting cover for yellow hammer, linnet and common whitethroat whilst the grasslands provide nesting areas for breeding skylark. Dry-stone walls surrounding the grassland are inhabited by several species of molluscs at their most northern station on the east coast. They also host the common lizard at its only known location in South Tyneside.

- The same area was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 1997.
- The former pumping station site is designated as the Cleadon Pumping Station Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), a local designation principally recognising it as a Magnesian limestone grassland habitat with additional valuable woodland, wall and rock habitats. A second SNCI, Cleadon Quarry, covers the northern part of Sub-Area 2 (ie. the section not owned by the Council) because of its value as part of the same magnesium grassland habitat as is recognised in the SSSI.
- All of the conservation area bar Sunnyside Farm is within the Cleadon Hills Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV),

designated to conserve the intrinsic attractiveness, quality and character of the landscape

- The whole area is in the Tyne & Wear Green Belt where there is a presumption against ‘inappropriate development’, other than in ‘very special circumstances’ which may include the re-use of redundant listed buildings.

8.1 *Listed Buildings*

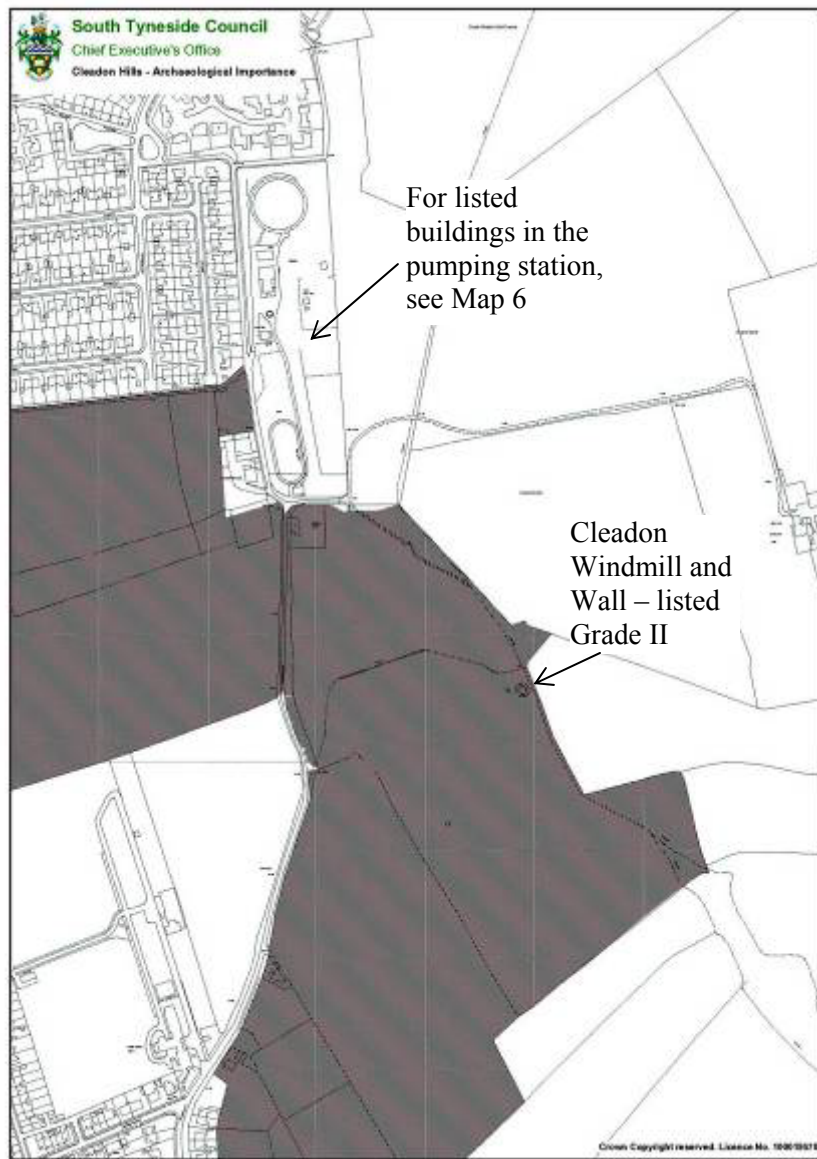
Grade	Listed Building
II (chimney tower is II*)	Combined engine and boiler houses. adjacent coal store. detached chimney. engineman’s house and cottage at Cleadon pumping station
II	Cleadon Mill and surrounding wall



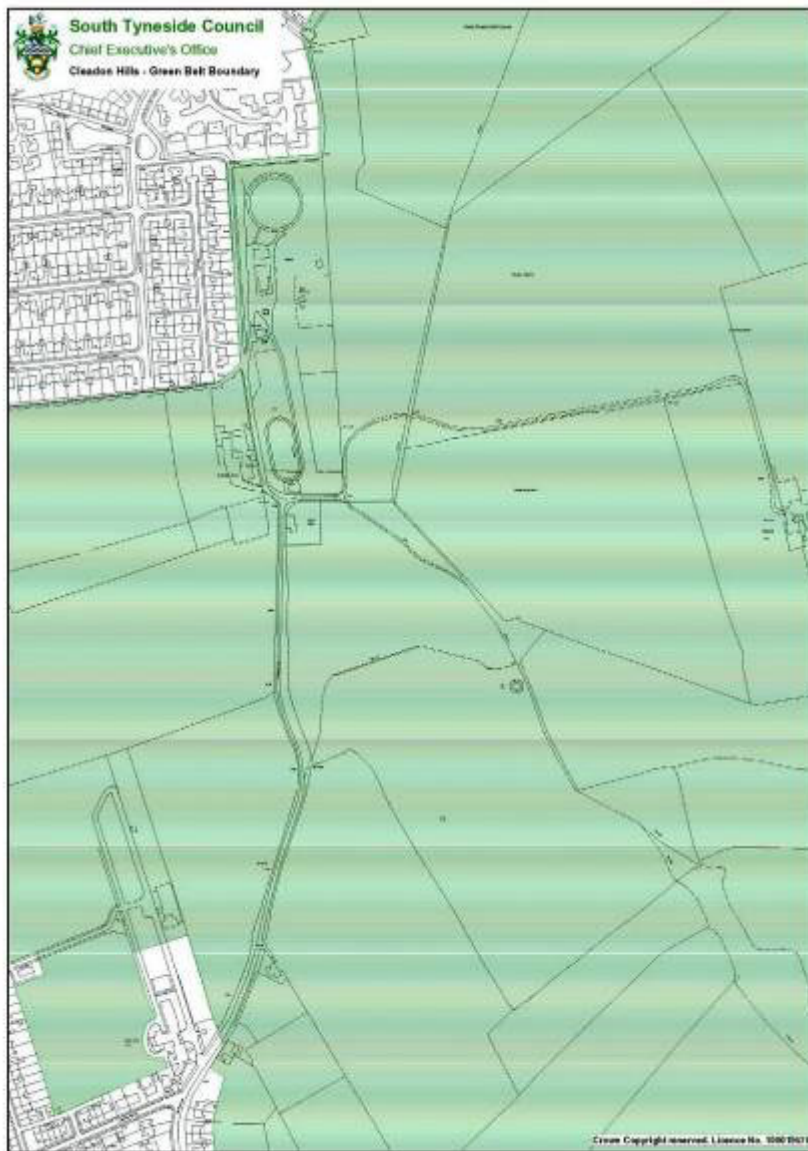
Map 2: Area of High Landscape Value



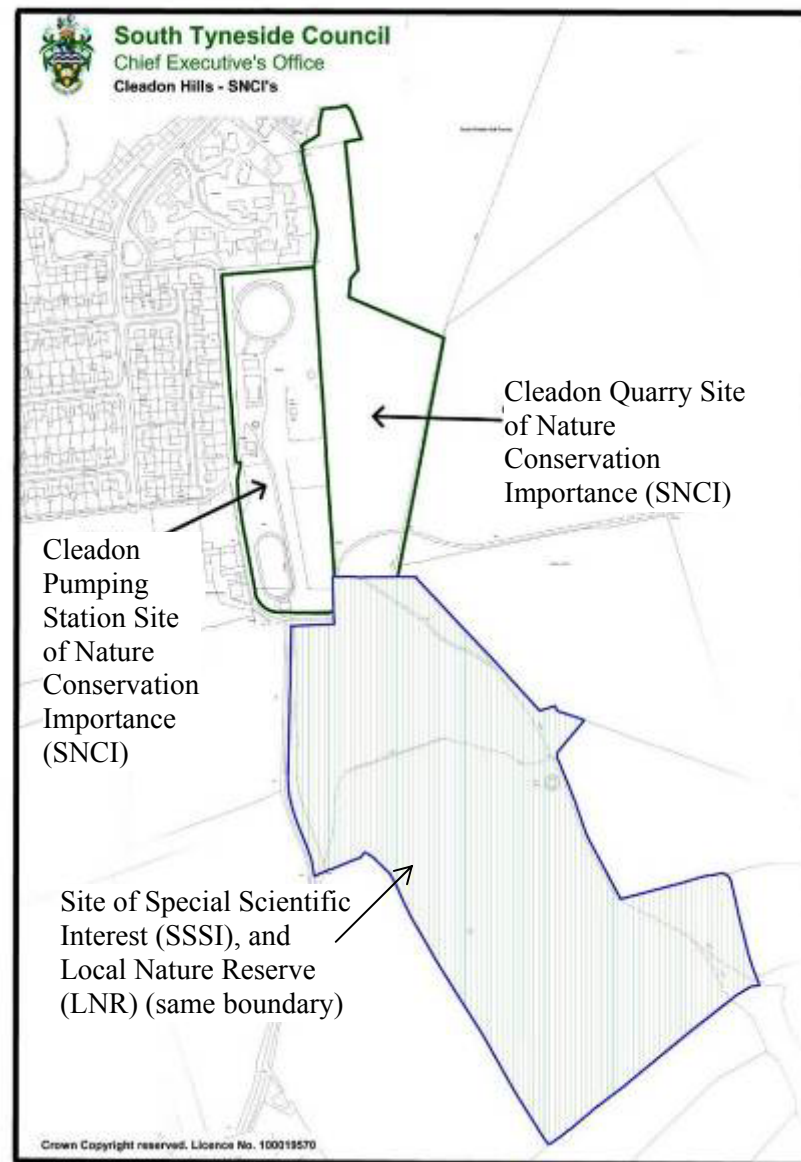
Map 3: Area of Archaeological Importance and Listed Buildings



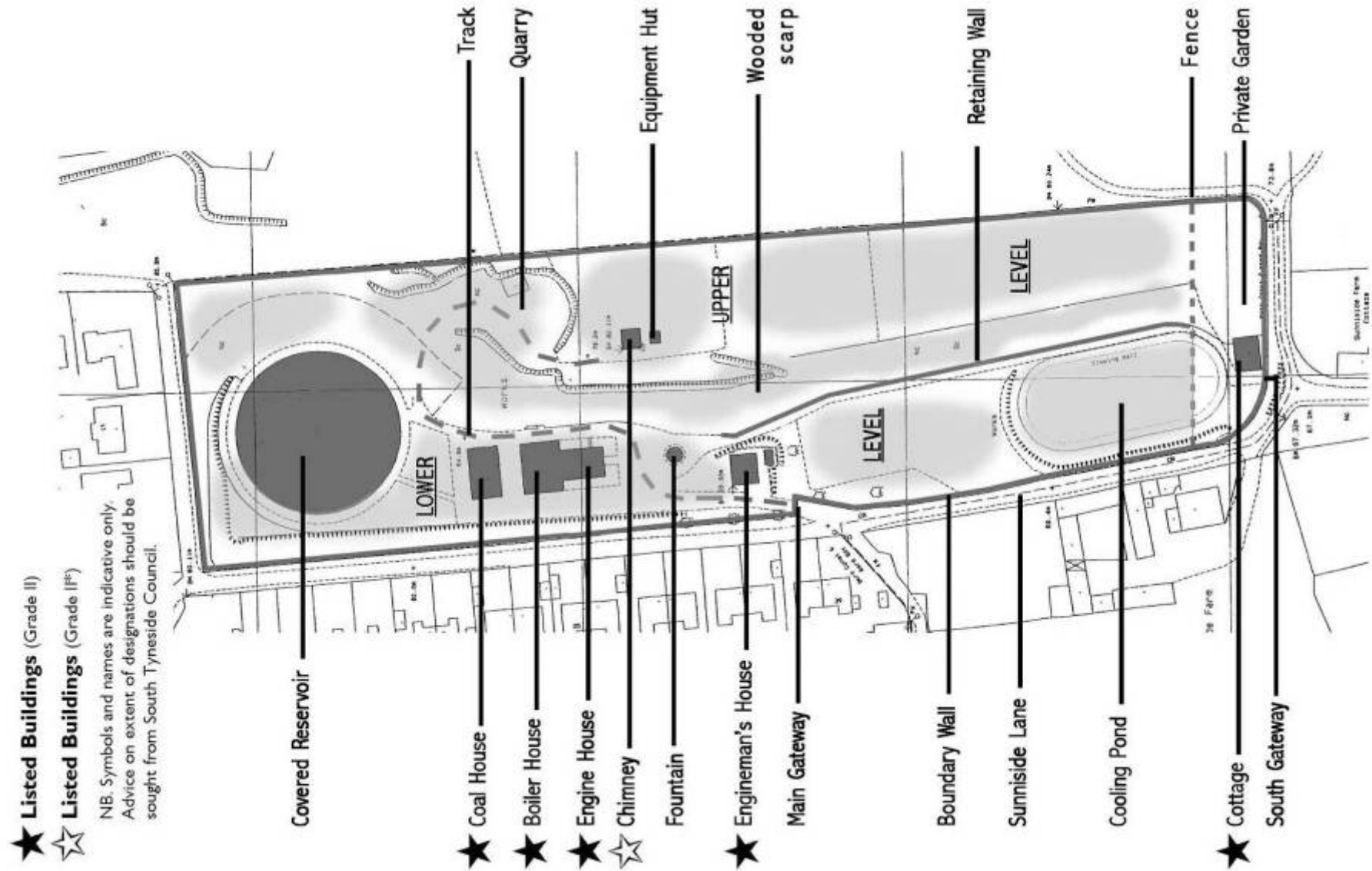
Map 4: Green Belt



Map 5: SNCI, SSSI and LNR



Map 6: Cleadon Pumping Station Site Plan and Listed Buildings





South Tyneside Council

Neighbourhood Services

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