



South Tyneside Council

Neighbourhood Services

Executive Director: Amanda Skelton, Town Hall & Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE33 2RL
Tel: 0191 424 7550 Fax: 0191 427 7171 E-mail: strategicpolicy@southtyneside.gov.uk
Website: www.southtyneside.info/planning/



West Boldon Conservation Area

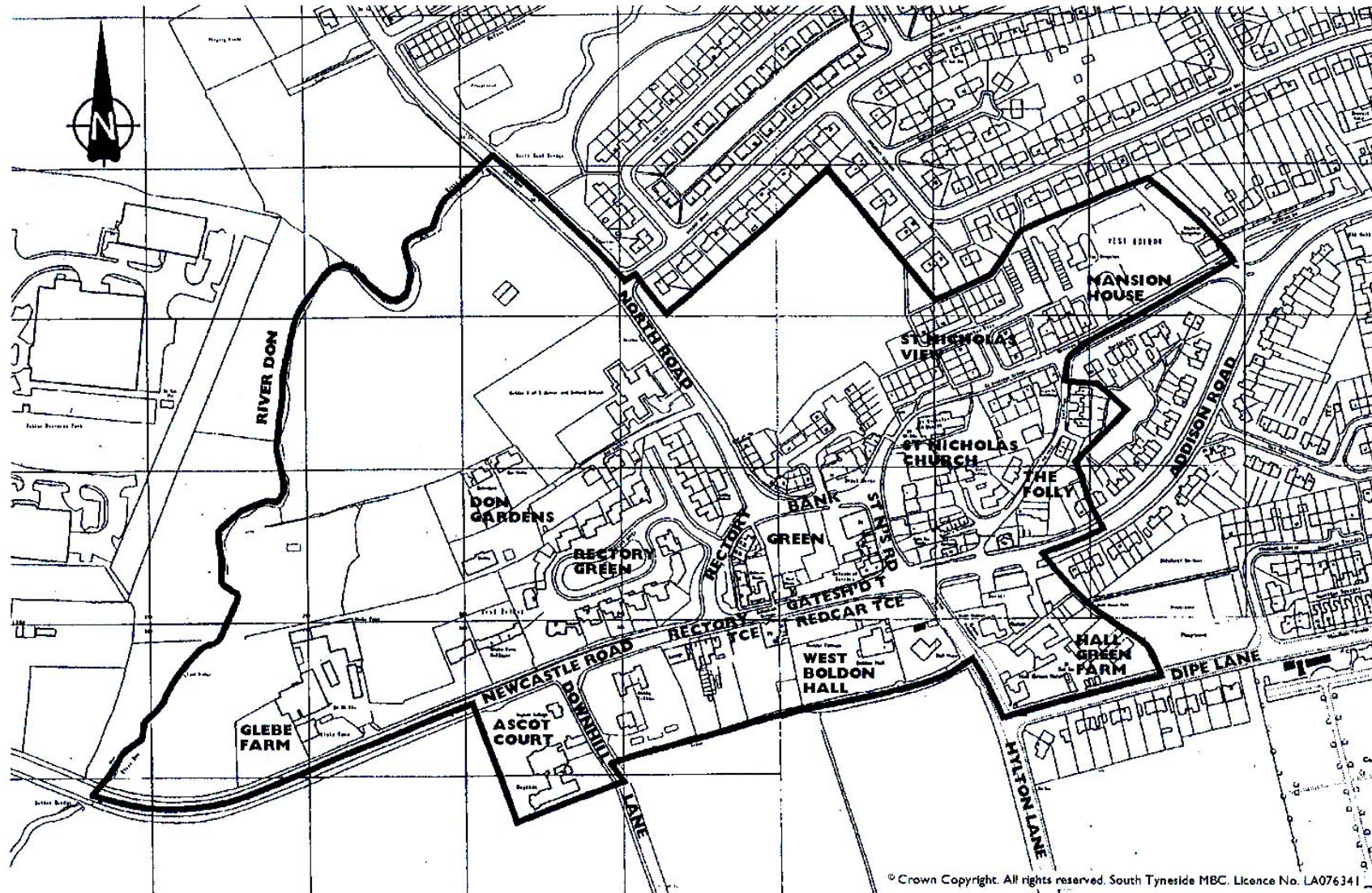
Character Appraisal
March 2006



Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	West Boldon Conservation Area	4
3	Location	4
4	Origins of the Development Pattern	5
5	Form and Materials	6
6	Use	8
7	Boundary, Setting and Views	8
8	Archaeological Significance	10
9	Newcastle Road and the South	11
10	North Road and the North-West	18
11	Rectory Bank and the Historic Core	22
12	The Folly and the East	27
13	Potential Enhancement Opportunities	34
14	Other Designations	34
15	Selected Bibliography	36
	Maps	2, 11, 18, 22, 27, 37-43

Map 1: West Boldon Conservation Area -
Boundary



West Boldon Conservation Area

1 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”

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, use of materials and street furniture. It is also common for a conservation area to include a number of Listed Buildings.

The local planning authority has a statutory duty under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate conservation areas, to keep them under review and, if appropriate brings certain duties including the formulation and publishing of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

The approach to conservation area 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 attitude towards the conservation and development opportunities and priorities within the conservation 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 Practice* (English Heritage, Oct 1995), *Conservation Area Appraisals* (English Heritage, March 1997) and *Conservation Area Management* (English Historic Towns Forum, June 1998).

2 West Boldon Conservation Area

West Boldon Conservation Area, designated in 1975, is based on a village with medieval origins – an isolated, introspective, cluster of historic and modern houses in a traditional village setting, shrouded in mature trees, and sited on a prominent hill between the Tyne and the Wear.



The village has been moulded over many centuries and bears good evidence of its development in the buildings, streets, boundaries,

spaces and trees. A variety of building styles combine to create a real sense of harmony which is most attractive, dominated by St Nicholas Church and set in open countryside with striking long-distance views.

This quiet, predominantly residential area is a valuable historic environment within South Tyneside borough, and represents a townscape of considerable interest worthy of preservation and enhancement.

3 Location

West Boldon's location is one of its principal defining characteristics. The village is on the steep western scarp of the northern most of the Boldon Hills (the northern tip of the Durham magnesian limestone plateau), one of the most topographically prominent locations in the region. St Nicholas Church is at the summit and is a major landmark for many miles to the north, with the coal-rich plains of Harton and Simonside panning out below, and the Wear valley towards Hylton to the south.

The derivation of *Boldon* (various historic spellings include Bowedon and Baldon) is 'rounded hill', with *don* either a reference to the nearby river or derived from *dun*, an Anglian word for 'hill' (Middleton A, 1983).

West Boldon, formerly in Co Durham, is 4 miles south of South Shields, 6 miles north of Sunderland, 4 miles from the coast, and 1 mile from the A19, the main trunk road through the east of the region. The River Don, a tributary of the Tyne rising at Springwell and meandering to Jarrow, flows north-eastwards at the foot of the hill. The village is built on a historic route between Newcastle and Sunderland, now the A184, a busy secondary road. Along the A184 is East Boldon (first identified separately on a 1576 map) and, to the north, Boldon Colliery.

4 Origins of the Development Pattern

Boldon began life, probably before the twelfth century, as a small, isolated hill-top village, built around a green on a highway between the Tyne and Wear valleys (Wilson M, 1935). Today it has a collection of buildings and a street layout which can appear random, even arbitrary, due to successive phases of development, clearance and changes to the roads, but the origins of the development pattern still form a firm basis for the scene today.

The Boldon Buke of 1183, the first settlement survey north of the Tees (the 'Domesday Book of the north'), gives a fairly accurate picture of land use, identifying Boldon with around 170 residents in 40 houses, a manor house, a watermill and a church, surrounded

by 900 acres of arable land split into three large fields cultivated in acre strips, with common moor pastures beyond (Middleton A, 1983). By Bishop Hatfield's survey of 1377, it had expanded considerably and, after parish registers began in 1572, the village recorded one or two marriages each year. In 1644, the Civil War Battle of Boldon Hill saw it captured by Newcastle-based Royalists, only to be re-taken two days later by Parliamentary supporters from Sunderland (Middleton A, 1983).

The medieval village had grown but very little changed until the seventeenth century when enclosure created a number of farms nearby, such as Downhill. An 1840 tithe map (see Map 8) shows a wide Rectory Bank, the rectangular green already partly built upon, the church and rectory at either end of the village, the main through-route from Newcastle Road past West Boldon Hall out by the Mansion House, The Folly as a back lane, the line of North Road slipping in from the north, with Downhill Lane, Hylton Lane and Dipe Lane heading off to the south.

It was following the opening of Downhill Quarry and then the sinking of Boldon Colliery in the 1850s that significant change in the village began and, during the last half of the nineteenth century, the medieval, rural origins were overlain to create a more built-up townscape (Wilson M, 1935). This included more

buildings on the green, short terraces for mine workers and linear development along *Newcastle Road*.

This period was perhaps climactic of West Boldon's history as, during the mid twentieth century, the development pattern was somewhat chopped at, but not enough to destroy its integrity and innate character. For example, highway engineering has made its mark, such as the cutting-off of the village's main historic route, *Rectory Bank*, at the church, and the slicing of the hill-top at *Addison Road*. Such changes to the road layout show how the consequences of modern-day life can affect the historic development pattern of a rural village.

Also, Housing Act powers led to the clearance of many eighteenth century and earlier buildings such as small, vernacular cottages on *Gateshead Terrace*, *Redcar Terrace* and *Rectory Bank*. These empty sites, now grassed over, have become part of the village's established character.

A real threat to West Boldon's past came with a major post-war comprehensive redevelopment plan which was to demolish almost everything in the village other than the church and the pubs, constructing a brand new village centre.

Only part of this was ever built (*St Nicholas View*) and, instead, individual gaps across the village have been filled in over time. Houses such as *Ashby Villas* and *Glebe Farm Cottages* had already begun the trend but, during the 1960s and early 1970s, it evolved into intrusive in-fill and backland development much of which has harmed character and appearance by increasing density and altering historic boundaries, layouts and gardens. Examples which were built before the conservation area was designated include *Wayside Cottage* (at *Ascot Court*), *Hill View* (at *West Boldon Hall*) and *The Bungalow* (at *Mansion House*), which have all weakened their neighbour's appearance and integrity, as well as being against the grain in terms of siting and design.

Few development sites now present themselves in the village. Expansion is restricted by the Green Belt to the south and the need to protect the grassy hillside setting to the north.

5 Form and Materials

West Boldon's development has resulted in a mix of styles and materials but with identifiable themes which relate to age. All buildings are two, one-and-a-half or one storey, and all the historic buildings are in a simple, traditional, local vernacular style, eg.

pitched roofs, plain eaves, vertical windows, with little ornamentation, etc.

Early buildings were local magnesian limestone rubble quarried in the village, a remarkable light golden mottled stone, heavily striated and marbled with beige and white. These would probably have been lime-rendered originally, but some such as *Mansion House*, *Hill Top House*, *Hall Green Farm* and *1-5 The Folly*, now have their rubble walls exposed. Significantly, this stone is used extensively for boundary walls, eg. *North Road*, *Dipe Lane*, *St Nicholas Road*, *Rectory Green* and *Mansion House*, creating true local distinctiveness to be proud of (see Map 7). Mid to late nineteenth century buildings introduced warm red brick across the village.

Early roofs were covered in hand-made clay pantiles like *Hall Green Farm* and *5 The Folly*, lending rich rustic character. Later roofs use Welsh slate, some thick and rough eg. *West Boldon Hall* and *Red Lion*, others more typically thin like *19-25 Rectory Bank*.

In the last 40 years, materials, colours and textures alien to these themes have been introduced, like grey brick (eg. *St Nicholas View*), smooth bright red brick (eg. *Wayside Cottage*), orange brick (*1-2 St Nicholas Road*), fake stone (*The Paddocks*), and mass-produced concrete tiles (eg. *27-29 Rectory Bank* and others).

Such materials have diluted character and appearance by being contrary to established themes.

Rendering and painting have also altered character, particularly on large buildings like the *Wheatsheaf PH*. Inappropriate use of cement-based renders can harm a building's fabric or character, and would jeopardise the prevailing stone and brick-built character of the village core. Existing render should generally be white or natural, warm, muted tones, observing the building's context.

Traditional windows were timber vertical sliding sashes of various designs depending on the building's age and use. Many survive (eg. *West Boldon Hall*, *Osborne House*) but just as many have been replaced with inappropriate modern timber ones or uPVC which can seriously harm appearance (eg. *Mayfair*).

The effect which fenestration has on a building's character and appearance should not be under-estimated. Even slight changes to detail (such as glazing bar width) can dramatically alter the way a building looks and feels. This can be true if, say, one in a set of windows is changed making it stand out, or if the change is repeated across a whole elevation. The visual effect of modern materials and inaccurate designs is invariably jarring against a well-aged building in natural materials.

The success of uPVC double-glazed windows, which attempt to copy the design and proportions of traditional windows, depends on the width and profile of the frames. It is generally the case that uPVC frames are thicker and more angular than timber ones, and can not accurately incorporate details such as horns mouldings and beading. Neither do they weather, or take on the same patina of age, like timber. The result will almost always harm character and appearance. The same is true of 'fake' sash windows (top-hung casements) which rarely reflect the building's style, have chunky proportions, and are seldom fitted in an appropriate 'reveal' (the depth at which a window is set back from the wall face).

Traditional designs painted white or off-white are nearly always more appropriate, although historically accurate colour schemes could be used for some houses (eg. *Ashby Villas, Rectory Terrace*) and some rendered buildings. The replacement of traditional doors with modern designs and materials will also invariably harm character and appearance for similar reasons. This is particularly true if glazed or partially glazed doors are used where solid panelled doors are architecturally or historically accurate.

The short terraces in West Boldon often have an inherent uniformity which can be easily damaged through loss or change to just part of the terrace. Changes such as the loss of garden walls,

rendering main elevations, and painting stone details such as lintels and cills, can destroy the harmony designed into the terrace to the detriment of the overall scene.

New development and alterations to existing buildings (whether listed or not) should pay attention to such detailed issues of design and materials to help preserve and enhance the area's special interest.

6 Use

West Boldon's principal use is private residential with its range of historic and modern houses in a mature, green setting making it a desirable place to live. The other uses – church, school, hall, post office, public houses – add to the traditional village atmosphere, but there are now only one or two shops. Only one working farm, Hall Green, remains in use to indicate rural origins with Glebe Farm recently being converted into a residential use, whilst the filling station and garages highlight the A184 as a modern busy road.

This general balance should be maintained in future planning control. Special attention should be paid to ensuring demands for residential privacy and amenity do not permit designs which are contrary to the area's architectural and historic themes.

7 Boundary, Setting and Views

The conservation area is based on the historic hilltop settlement and includes open countryside below to the north and west which is important to its setting.



The boundary runs north along the Don from Boldon Bridge to North Road, including the open fields of Glebe Farm and the Bog



Mires, but turns south to exclude inter-war housing at the foot of the steep slope below the church. It continues east to include the

Mansion House gardens then turns back along Harton View to exclude inter-war housing along Addison Road. Turning south, it takes in the historic development pattern on The Folly, crosses



Addison Road and heads south to Dipe Lane to include Hall Green Farm. The boundary heads back to the A184 along the

bridle path south of houses on Newcastle Road, excluding open fields beyond.

The inter-war housing directly adjoins the eastern side of the conservation area, but its visual impact is reduced by the topography and the curve in Addison Road. The industrial site and business park down to the west are also largely obscured from view by the thick trees on the banks of the Don, whilst Boldon Colliery's terraces are in the middle distance to the north.



Views into the area from the west and south are the best for appreciating its isolated and

clustered nature. In particular, the views along Hylton Lane or Downhill Lane illustrate the tightly-knit collection of buildings

dominated by the church and mature trees, with a distinct tree-lined boundary between the village and the open fields. From Newcastle Road and Boldon Colliery the picture is of a clustered hillside settlement in undulating rural surroundings whilst, approaching from the east, the historic extent of the village is virtually undetectable.

From the highest point, views out of the conservation area are long, wide and exciting, with landmarks to the north identifiable for many miles (eg. Cleadon's chimney, St George's church in Cullercoats, Wallsend shipyard cranes, various tower blocks, etc.). This feature-rich horizon is fascinating to study, particularly from the hill behind St Nicholas View, and marks West Boldon as one of Tyneside's best vantage points. Such views into and out of the conservation area should be protected.

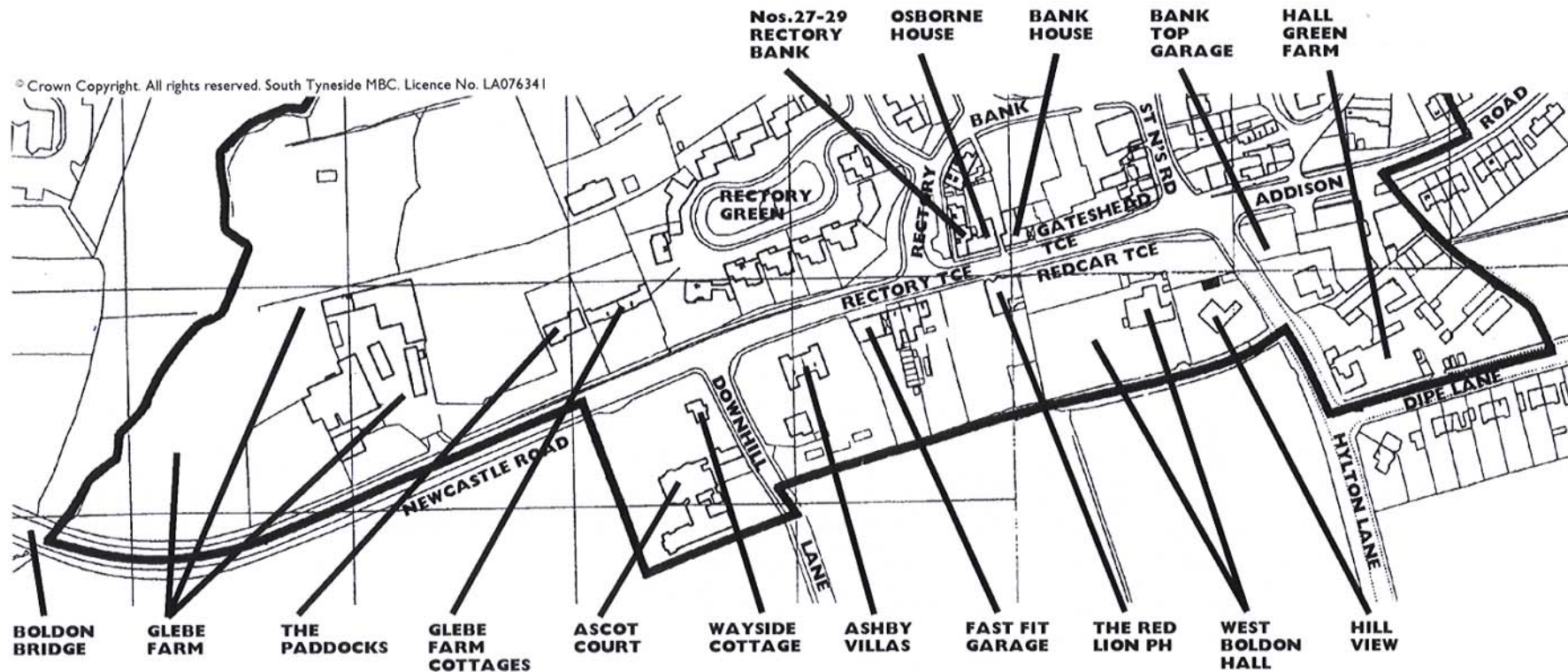
8 Archaeological Significance

West Boldon has potentially high archaeological value due to its ancient origins, indicated by designation of the central and eastern part of the conservation area (and a small strip outside it on Addison Road) as an Area of Potential Archaeological Importance in the UDP. As the site of a medieval village, the core of West Boldon could reveal much about such early settlements and

contribute to the understanding of its history and that of the county. In addition, several of the standing buildings also have potential archaeological interest including St Nicholas Church, West Boldon Hall, the barns at Hall Green Farm, and other older buildings, eg. on The Folly.

A programme of archaeological work, involving an assessment followed by on-site evaluation and/or a watching brief, would be required for any substantial development within the extent of the medieval village as shown on the UDP proposals map. This would be likely to exclude minor development such as conservatories and small domestic extensions.

Map2: Newcastle Road and the South



9 Newcastle Road and the South



The western approach along *Newcastle Road* is the least diluted by new development. The change from rolling paddocks to tree shrouded hill (protected by a Tree Preservation Order) is sudden and dramatic creating a strong sense of arrival. *Newcastle Road* is quite straight as it enters the trees and rises steeply towards the centre of the village creating a short, narrow view, tunnelled towards the blind summit at the top of the bank. *Addison Road* curves away from the village beyond but, before this mid-twentieth century bypass was laid out, the road terminated here next to *West Boldon Hall*, drawing the traveller into the village centre and up Rectory Bank to continue eastwards.

Glebe Farm is not one of the borough's historic agricultural groups, dating from the early 20th century, but it does contribute to the area's character through its rural nature and activity. The double-fronted red brick farm house, hidden by shrubbery, appears only slightly altered and many of the farmyard buildings, with green painted joinery, retain their rural character and create an



interesting group glimpsed through the trees and fences. Recent corrugated buildings and earth moving, which should not be further expanded, detract from views across the paddocks on the banks of the Don, but the green setting to the village from the west is, in general, enhanced by *Glebe Farm*. The farm has been residentially redeveloped, with the corrugated sheds being demolished, the brick barns converted, and new build elements designed to reflect, and give the appearance of a group of farm buildings. The use of high quality materials and simple architectural detailing has produced a scheme which enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.



Beyond *Glebe Farm*, *Newcastle Road* is lined with high walls in local stone, fences, hedges and tall trees (protected by a Tree Preservation Order), largely concealing the buildings behind which are set well back from the road in large gardens. *Ascot Court* is the most successful

at this and is almost invisible from Newcastle Road, whilst later houses (the c.1950s *Glebe Farm Cottages*, the large c.1980s detached *Paddocks* next door, and the c.1970s *Rectory*) have a more open aspect, slightly diluting the road's thick green edge.



Ascot Court (originally *Ashby* and later *Wayside*) is a large detached house in grounds, typical of late Victorian suburban villas. This grand, square, richly detailed, two-storey house sits high in the middle of its modest grounds, reached by a curved drive from an imposing gateway, and once looked south across open fields. A former nursing home, this building had lost some of its detailed appeal with low extensions to the south (cropping the boundary wall), decayed outhouses to the rear, two wide dormers, and uPVC windows throughout. But, overall, its hipped slate roof, sturdy clustered chimneys, abundant greenery and abrupt boundary walls contributed greatly to the area, even if its well-kept north front is hidden from public view. The house has been converted into residential apartments, with the original timber sash windows being reinstated. The low extension block has been demolished and replaced by an apartment block designed in the same

'Italianate' style as the original house. The use of quality materials and architectural detailing ensures that the new buildings complement the original house



Ashby Villas is an interesting pair of semi-detached bungalows apparently built by the owner of the Boldon Brick Co and, appropriately, are good examples of well-detailed brick cottages from the first half of the twentieth century. They are enlivened with Dutch gables, an unusual green glazed pantile roof, and brick 'specials'. However, the long garden to *no.2* has been developed with a modern infill bungalow (*no.3*), separating the original pair from their similarly detailed and eye-catching outhouses at the southern end.



At *Downhill Lane*, the heavy tree cover (protected by a Tree Preservation Order), *Ascot Court's* tall brick wall, and *Ashby Villas's* swagged timber fence all create another distinct gateway to the conservation area, weakened on the corner by the bland detailing and



forecourt of *Wayside Cottage*, in what was part of the grounds of Ascot Court. Further east, beyond the mini-roundabout at

Rectory Bank, *Newcastle Road* appears to narrow as it climbs the bank, the tree cover thins out and groups of buildings face the street, virtually to back-of-pavement. They are well separated by cleared sites (eg. *Gateshead Terrace* and *Redcar Terrace*) which now effectively form wide grassy verges to the street and allow glimpses out of the conservation area over the hills. The brick-faced buildings to the north indicate the presence of the village behind.



At the centre of *Rectory Terrace* is a pair of Victorian houses in local stone faced with red brick. Larger than other terraces in the village, they have attractive margined sashes (well-designed double-glazed replacements) and simple classical door

surrounds (*no.7*, a replica). One chimney has been shortened. *No.5*, a shorter c.1950s house (known as the doll's house), is a simple, unassuming infill development but detracts by not echoing the proportions, materials or window openings of its neighbours.

The range of single storey *garage* buildings appear to have been in this use for some time and is, reputedly, the earliest garage in the region to have had petrol pumps installed. However, its current appearance strongly detracts from the character of the original buildings and the conservation area – the large garish signage, clumsy and patched openings, poorly painted walls, felted roof, security mesh and festive lighting all detract from the harmony of the village and form an obtrusive feature, unnecessarily spoiling this key focal point.



The clearance of the rest of *Rectory Terrace* has resulted in a large, blank gap used for parking. Although this allows

views out to the south, it has eroded the sense of enclosure along the street. The *Red Lion PH*, a turn-of-the-twentieth-century travellers inn, makes a



good contribution at this point with abundant joinery detailing, shaped dormers (front and rear) and an original slate roof.



Very little of *Gateshead Terrace* survives. A stretch of ancient single-storey vernacular cottages was demolished during the 1970s leaving the grassed-over gap between *no.2* and *no.10*. *Bank House (no.10)* is an early eighteenth century stone house with a later hand-made brick frontage and later-still garden wall and piers. The carriage arch, stone corniced chimneys and large timber scroll door hood are interesting features which enliven the house



and the street, a picture which would be crucially enhanced with the sliding sash windows restored.

Neighbouring *Osborne House*, an impressive double-fronted Georgian house in richly weathered hand-made bricks, has an original slate roof, 6-over-6 sliding sash windows, and a smart classical timber door surround with dentilled cornice and panelled pilasters. Together with *Bank*

House, 27-29 Rectory Bank and the trees around, this is one of the most authentic and charming groups in the conservation area.



Further up the bank nestles one of the oldest and grandest houses in the village, *West Boldon Hall* (listed Grade II*), a large, sturdy, five-bay, two-storey house dating from 1709 (built for a William Fawcett) and restored in 1939. It incorporates an earlier house, most evident from the stout stepped chimneys. The hipped Welsh slate roof has swept eaves and the surviving sash windows are very early, indicated by the thick glazing bars. Its south elevation is particularly atmospheric in a thickly tree-shrouded setting, bound by huge rusticated gate piers and railings (separately listed Grade II) overgrown with shrubs, and tucked away along the bridlepath from Hylton Lane – this is one of the conservation area's most evocative and best-kept secrets.



The hall's grounds have been somewhat eroded over the years (particularly by *Hill View*, an irregularly sited modern bungalow in alien materials) although a large garden survives to the west providing important historic setting, and various walls and outhouses to the east. Behind, the cleared site of *Redcar Terrace* has been partly taken for road widening and the rest grassed and laid out with shrubs, an attractive corner but a gap which dilutes the historic built-up linear development of Newcastle Road.



the slicing through of *Addison Road* blow a retaining wall. This has enabled the steep road to be brought up to modern highway standards but, in the process, has left the side of Hill Top House and the later Post Office high-and-dry with little

At the hill top, the remnant east end of *The Folly* heads off north-westwards from St Nicholas Road, but its small-scale, rustic character has been weakened at this point by



historic setting.

This is compounded by the presence of closed *Bank Top Garage* opposite. Its boxy, flat-roofed, functional buildings, strong on horizontality, are fundamentally at odds with the small-scale, traditional



character of the conservation area. The two-storey building in particular intrudes on views on Newcastle Road and forms a very weak corner on to Hylton Lane when seen from the historic core of the village, compounded by the large canopy, illuminated signage and associated clutter. The grey colour and local shop are saving graces and the group is tidily kept, but its overall mediocrity fails to create a worthy climax to the ascent up Newcastle Road and is a poor gateway from Addison Road. Nevertheless, the steep view back down Newcastle Road is deep, green and lined with buildings and walls, creating an inviting and attractive scene.

The road junction at *Hylton Lane* is the busiest in the village, now with traffic signals which add to the clutter but reinforce traffic and pedestrian safety. The approach along Hylton Lane is less defined than Downhill Lane and is spoilt by wide stretches of

tarmac, and more exposed infill development including an electricity sub-station and car-port.



Hall Green Farm, an historic agricultural group, has been notably modernised over time but the core

of historic stone and pantile barns have great character despite their disrepair and are a stimulating and evocative collection in their own right. The early twentieth century farmhouse on *Dipe Lane* has original joinery and slate roof and, together with outbuildings, creates a functional, working farm bringing life to the rural margins of the village.



Summary: Newcastle Road and the South

Special Characteristics

- *Newcastle Road* rising to blind summit; sense of arrival.
- Tall trees, thick green boundaries, walls in local stone.
- *West Boldon Hall, Osborne Hse, Bank House, Ascot Court*.

Against The Grain

- Legacy of highway engineering, especially at the hill top.
- Appearance of *Fast Fit Garage* and *Bank Top Garage*.
- Existence of gap sites, despite their pleasant green character.
- Late-twentieth century backland and infill development.

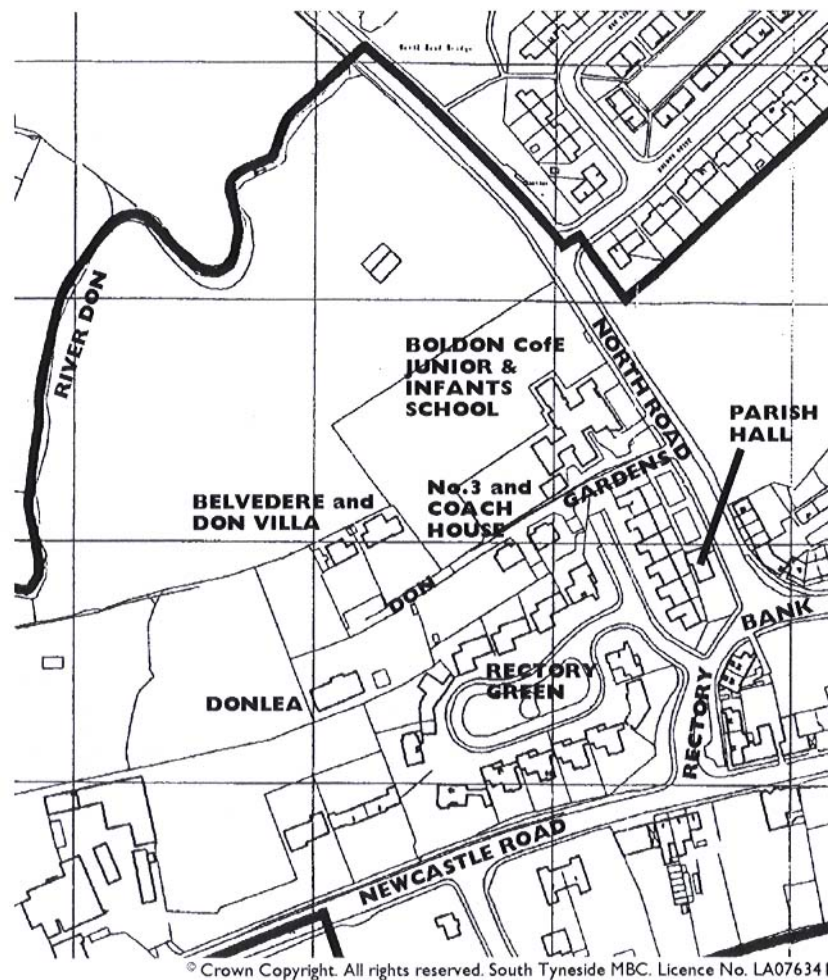
Key Issues

- Effect of traffic management on character and appearance.
- Retention and restoration of historic buildings and detail, eg. windows, doors, rainwater goods, chimneys, other features.

Enhancement Potential

- Appearance of *Fast Fit Garage* and *Bank Top Garage*.
- Relocation of *Bank Top Garage*.
- Sensitive infill on *Rectory Terrace* next to *Red Lion PH*.
- *Hylton Lane* townscape at *Hall Green Farm*.

Map 3: North Road and the North-West



10 North Road and the North-West



As one of the lowest points in the area, the winding valley of the *River Don* rightly forms the area's boundary,

allowing the grassy and tree scattered banks to provide the setting to the conservation area by framing the picture of the village above. It also means that these banks can be one of the wettest parts of the surrounding area, living up to their occasional name of the Bog Mires. The river itself is quite shallow though often fast-flowing, and contributes to the attractive landscape with many different species of trees along its banks. The paddocks here provide an important green ribbon between the village and Boldon Colliery, though a flat-roofed stableblock intrudes on the hillside scene. A swathe of trees planted on the opposite bank (outside the conservation area) helps mask industry beyond increasing the



potential for public enjoyment of the riverbanks, providing this can be accommodated without spoiling their countryside character and nature conservation interests.



North Road (formerly *Lane*) became more important as Boldon Colliery grew, and was widened on its

west side from the bridge (much less rustic than Boldon Bridge) to its junction with Rectory Bank. This approach towards the village is less picturesque than Newcastle Road, with inter-war housing intruding on the view up the steep hillside east of the road. But the imposing domed hillside (partially reclaimed from a quarry), with only the church spire visible high up on the horizon, is a striking and memorable scene, enhanced by the rich texture of the local stone wall and the tall hedgerow opposite.



Although with an overall negative impact, the flat, geometric shapes of the *Boldon C of E Junior & Infants School* intrude

less on the scene than might be expected, as their low position compensates for the sprawling layout. The tall trees and local stone walls around the boundaries help tie it back into the local scene.

Just before the village centre, a narrow junction off North Road turns on to *Don Gardens*, apparently once more developed than it is now with various small buildings and a quarry almost down to the river banks by Glebe Farm. Today, it is a quiet, tree-lined, lane with a handful of detached houses overlooking the school grounds and the banks of the Don – the pristinely planned, one-and-a-half storey *no.3* and *Coach House*, the larger, modernised early twentieth century *Don Villa* and *Belvedere*, and the modern *Donlea* bungalow, all but the first two in large, often forgotten gardens. Intensification of



development here would be likely to intrude on hillside views

from the riverbanks and could dilute its secluded, private character.



An inviting gateway to the village is created at the top of *North Road* where the view is closed by the green and its trees. The *Sunday School / Parish Hall* on the west side is a small,

low red-brick building with a shaped roof in original slates, surrounded by a lawn, hedge and several large trees which create an attractive corner at the village centre. Next door, two single storey houses have replaced the old Parish Hall, successfully contributing to conservation area through their height, materials and design. The view back down *North Road* is less rich and attractive than *Newcastle Road*.



Around the corner is the entrance to *Rectory Green*, a 1970s executive estate of 12 detached and 6 terraced houses in the grounds of the Rectory, one of the oldest and most significant



buildings in the village which created the development pattern and tree-lined boundary along Newcastle Road

(demolished 1970, a salvaged door is set in the boundary wall, listed Grade II).

Built before the conservation area was designated, the houses are good quality but fundamentally conflict



with the character and appearance of the rest of the village in form, layout, materials and detailing, detracting from its historic feel and architectural themes. The estate is, however, largely hidden from the village core by the tall, impressive surviving (but partially realigned) local stone boundary wall and large trees (protected by a Tree Preservation Order) which create an inviting entrance at Rectory Bank. The estate is also neatly kept and is maturing well in its rich green setting (another of the Rectory's legacies), but a repeat of such dramatic intensification of development and out-of-context design would be bound to cause further irreparable harm.

Summary: North Road and the North-West

Special Characteristics

- Green, open countryside banks of *River Don* valley.
- ‘Signature’ view of domed hillside with church spire above.
- Magnesian Limestone boundary walls.
- Entrance to village core at top of *North Road*.

Against The Grain

- Buildings at *Boldon C of E Junior & Infants School*.
- Buildings at *Rectory Green*.

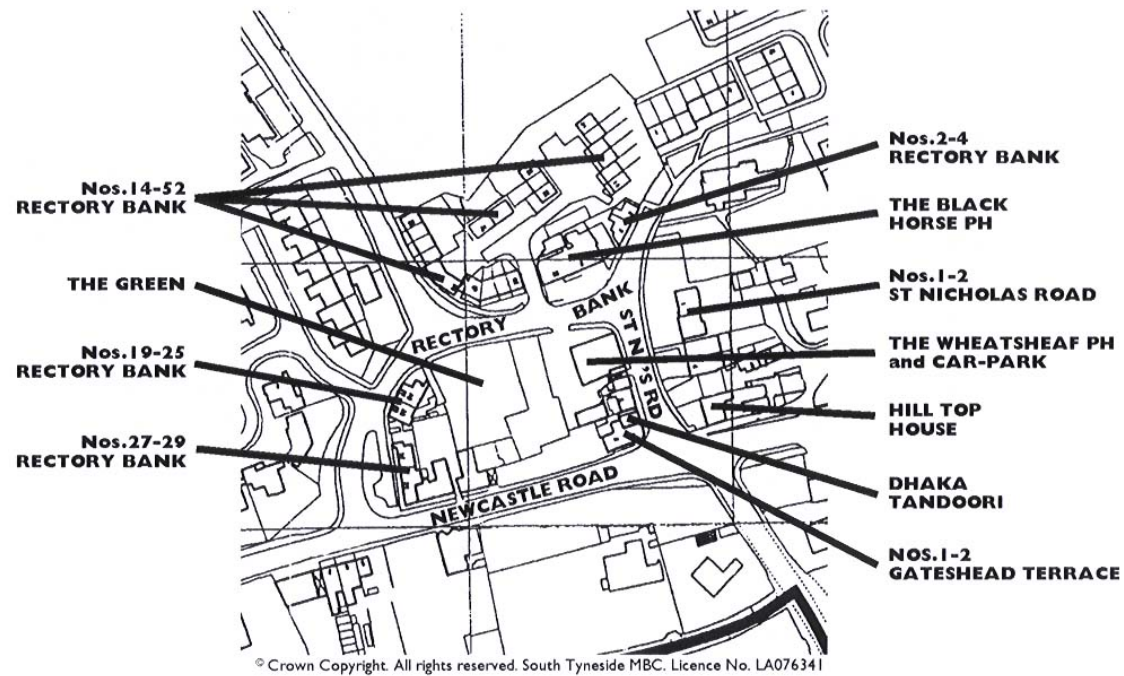
Key Issues

- Protection of open hillside, especially at *Don Gardens*.
- Protection of natural setting whilst encouraging public use.
- Protection of views into the village from the north.
- Retention and restoration of historic buildings and detail, eg. windows, doors, rainwater goods, chimneys, other features.

Enhancement Potential

- Removal of random buildings and enclosures from hillside.
- Potential undergrounding of telephone wires.

Map 4: Rectory Bank and the Historic Core



11 Rectory Bank and the Historic Core



Rectory Bank is the other main historic route through West Boldon rising up the contours from Newcastle Road past the site of the Rectory, the pubs and the church – the wide street at the heart of the village where so much activity was acted out over many centuries. Today it is quieter and has lost some historic character through alterations to its line, width and priorities.



The original narrow line of the street, off *Newcastle Road*, is now used for parking in front of the houses on the corner. The existing mini-roundabout junction, widened from a corner of the former Rectory's grounds, has prominent tall trees. Although 27-29 *Rectory Bank* have suffered slight inappropriate change (eg. the windows to *no.27*), this pair of three-bay Georgian houses, with unusual two-leaf outer doors to the classical timber

door cases and an early remnant of railings to *no.29*, still form part of an attractive group which would be improved by reinstating a slate roof and replica front railings.



The small group of Tyneside flats at 19-25 *Rectory Bank*, and its walls, outhouses and original chimney pots, also make an attractive contribution, tucked in the corner of the green. But the uPVC windows and painted stonework are neither accurate nor fitting.

Round the corner, the change in traffic priorities allows vehicles to glide through the village from *North Road* to *St Nicholas Road* (a bus route). This confuses the impression of historic *Rectory Bank* rising through the village towards the church.



The cleared site on *the green* has more potential than is currently realised. The trees are an important backdrop but the scrub and rubble are unsightly remains which could be enhanced to create a simple, green focal space. As an open site, archaeological evaluation

would be easier here than other parts of the village. A well reportedly survives on the green, filled and covered in the 1950s.

The corner of *Rectory Bank* and *North Road* has seen considerable change. This old quarry has gouged the hillside out to the same



level as Rectory Bank, the site of a series of buildings successively built and cleared (including the village's earlier schools, the first here erected 1808, the second in 1926). The existing development of 20 two-storey terraced houses makes a positive contribution by responding to the site's shape, building almost to back-of-pavement, stepping down the road, and using local features such as chimneys, classical door cases, and a 'carriage' arch. A darker, rougher brick and real Welsh slate could have been a better response to prevailing local materials, whilst the render on the north gable is perhaps too visible in long distance views. Within the site, the difference in levels creates a dramatic scene enhanced by tall trees and the rough quarry walls.

The *Black Horse PH* and the *Wheatsheaf PH* former coaching inns dominate the village centre, even at night-time when they are both



floodlit. Their render inevitably masks many alterations but they still have considerable historic appeal (eg. the first floor bays to the *Wheatsheaf*) despite the number of modern windows and the open parking which is only partially softened by planting.



The view down Rectory Bank is filled with trees whilst the view up the bank is closed by the church's retaining walls and tall hedges.



However, *1-2 St Nicholas Road*, built before the conservation area was designated, sit uncomfortably with their neighbours by

failing to echo them in orientation, building line, detailing and materials.



The rest of *St Nicholas Road*, however, is more authentic in character with early limestone cottages and Victorian red-brick

terraces creating a short, intimate street across the contours of the hillside which has great townscape appeal. The close-at-hand west side has two eighteenth century cottages (one is part of the



Wheatsheaf PH range and has large quoins, perhaps evidence of an earlier building) with timber replacement windows

and other alterations, but otherwise intact and attractive. The top end of *Gateshead Terrace* is quite simple with an altered shopfront on the canted corner but original roofs, chimneys and a short section of railings. The signage and re-pointing at Dhaka Tandoori are prominent. The two carriage arches at this point indicate the earlier density of development at the village core, necessitating service access from the front.



The raised-up east side has gardens behind local stone retaining walls, those to the

Victorian houses rebuilt in brick and the others re-laid or poorly re-pointed. *Hill Top House* is a large impressive house built 1701 for the overseer of Newcastle Road when it was a toll road (Middleton A, 1983). It is well restored with 6-over-6 sash windows and a small, well-designed extension, but the concrete pantile roof does not reflect prevailing historic materials. Two tall trees and a well maintained garden complete the attractive corner. The red-brick terrace unfortunately has replacement windows and rebuilt bays.



At the other end, past the green edge to the churchyard, the route of *Rectory Bank* to the east is very disappointing. The

blocking-off of the highway with a large 1960s brick planter has obliterated this historic road and turned the end of Rectory Bank



into an overgrown and cluttered dead-end, the view blocked by thick planting. This historic highway

has therefore been reduced to a narrow path, the setting not helped by the replacement windows and roller shutter to *nos.2-4*.

Summary: Rectory Bank and the Historic Core

Special Characteristics

- Historic through-road of *Rectory Bank*.
- Wide *Rectory Bank* and more intimate *St Nicholas Road*.
- Views short and enclosed by walls, trees and hedges.
- *27-29 Rectory Bank, Hill Top House, Black Horse PH.*

Against The Grain

- Stopping up of *Rectory Bank* at the church.
- *1-2 St Nicholas Road* and signage at the corner retail premises.
- Modern replacement windows, especially stained ones.

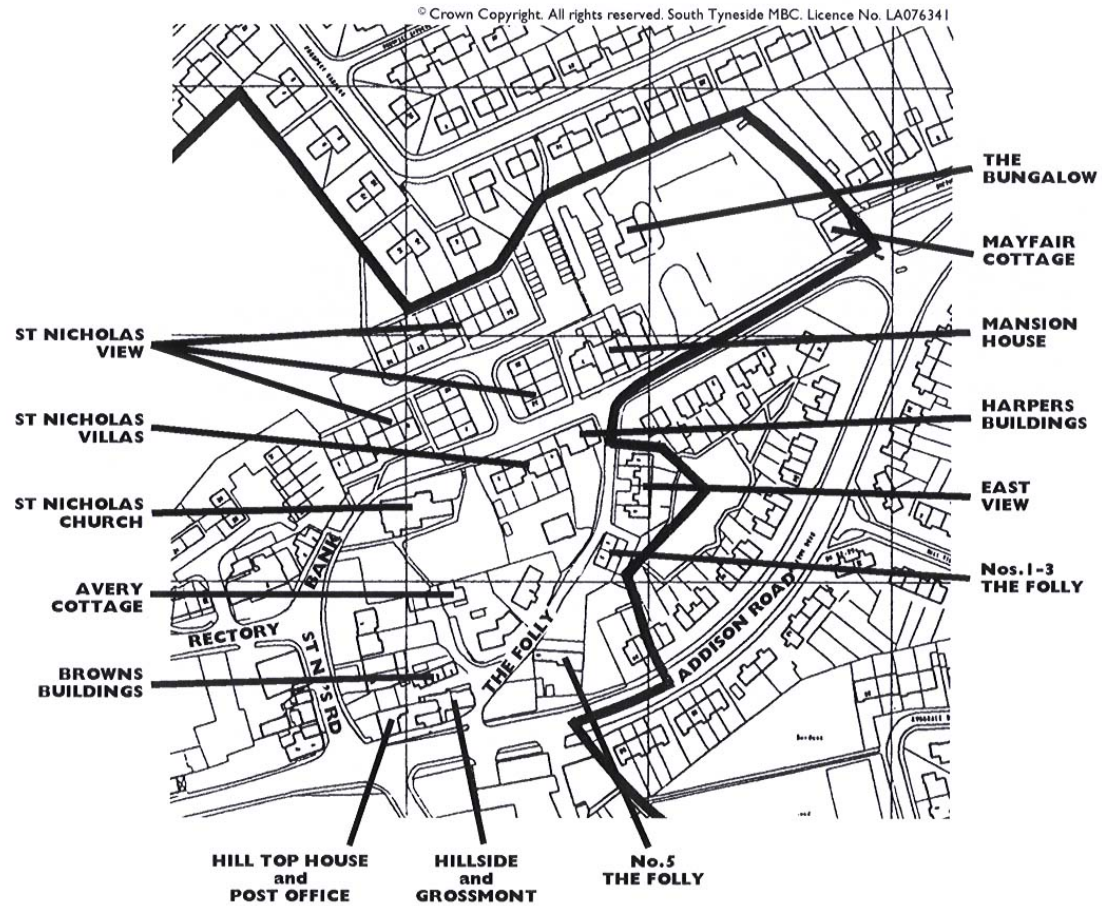
Key Issues

- Emphasising historic route of *Rectory Bank* as village core.
- Retention and restoration of historic buildings and detail, eg. windows, doors, rainwater goods, chimneys, other features.

Enhancement Potential

- Appearance and interpretation of *The Green*.
- Open parking in front of and to the side of the two pubs.
- The route of *Rectory Bank* at the church, including *Nos.2-4*.

Map 5: The Folly and the East



12 The Folly and the East



The former council housing at *St Nicholas View* is a generally poor addition to the conservation area – dull, featureless terraces in grey

brick with meagre windows and unbound gardens. The layout is contrary to the theme of an historic through-route because the new terraces are set back from or perpendicular to the street, replacing the linear, burgage plot layout on St Nicholas Terrace (eighteenth century cottages, now gone) with corners, culs-de-sac, turning-heads and garage blocks.



There is obvious pride in the way these houses and gardens are neatly kept, but this small

estate could be anywhere, and it is left to the dominant church and the long-distance views to the rear to give it any a sense of place. Ironically, some of the later alterations like pitched porches and

bow windows have actually added character to the terraces. Following their design and proportions in the future would enhance uniformity.



The set back position of *St Nicholas Villas*, which also fills-in a gap left by clearance of tightly-packed eighteenth century buildings, has actually enhanced some views of the church from the west, although their design, like that of nearby *1-4 East View*, has no special interest.





The street heads west in a straight line towards *Addison Road*. The only eighteenth century houses remaining here, *Harper's Buildings*, anchor this

now disjointed street with their strong back-of-pavement presence, hefty roof, early sash windows, panelled doors and porch canopies. Despite the later rendering, this building has real character on three prominent elevations.



Further down the street, one of the largest original houses in the West Boldon, *Mansion House* (listed Grade II), stands somewhat isolated by later



development. Its grandeur is still seen in the south and east elevations (despite sub-division into 5

dwelling, early and quite sensitively handled), and the deep eaves, impressive porch and rich Tuscan doorcase and fanlight add interest and intricacy to the street. The rear elevation also has original windows and features.



Its grounds and setting have not fared so well. The various outhouses and the gated drive to the west went with the clearance of *St Nicholas Terrace*, the garage block behind chopping away its thickly shrouded gardens. A modern bungalow to the north east of *Mansion House* is a relatively recent addition to the Conservation Area.

The dwelling is set well back from the road, vehicle and pedestrian access has been provided through a wide opening in the historic boundary wall.



The limestone walls all around *Mansion House* positively contribute to local distinctiveness, that down to *Mayfair Cottage*



being one of the most attractive in the area. This small hipped-roof house has lost some of its original details and

windows, but its charming estate cottage proportions are fitting for its location. Trees here are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.



Back to the west, *The Folly* slopes gently to the south. This historic route passed through the backland of

the medieval village, its rural, vernacular characteristics still evident on the east side where grass verges separate squat cottages. Unlike the rest of the village, nineteenth century terraces were not introduced here. Instead a successive series of irregular, small-scale buildings filled the spaces around the street, with mid-late twentieth century infill housing completing the picture.



Nos.1-2 (with original and later matching clay pantiles), *no.5* and *Avery Cottage* (guarding the now blocked entrance to the churchyard, windows modernised) are the oldest and most evocative of the village's



early origins. In particular, *no.5*, with its collection of agricultural outhouses, trees, walls and five-bar

gate, has a strong pastoral feel in contrast to the planned sweep of Addison Road.

At the south end, the original tight entrance off *Newcastle Road* has been opened out, leaving *Hillside*, *Grossmont* and the outhouses to *Hill Top House* (nicely converted to incorporate the village *Post Office*, with an attractive bay window) facing Addison Road. The cottages are rendered and altered (eg. windows) but still contribute to *The Folly's* rustic feel, whilst the triangular green



opposite (the site of an early chapel and later public WCs) adds to the attractive scene.



The core of *The Folly* was always an open space but later infill here has created a new frontage along its west side (eg. *no.3*

and *The Bungalow*). These houses mostly add to the scene whilst the choice of materials for some of the earlier ones has not been totally successful – but the more eclectic and irregular nature of development on *The Folly* prevents this from intruding too much.

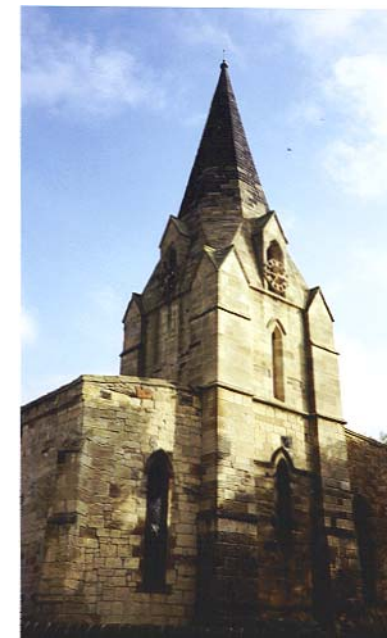


The Folly has suffered intensification of use and incremental change, such as railings, fences and walls, which have partially erased its rustic character and



sanitised its setting. No development sites remain, and care must now be taken to protect what features, detail and character survives.

The most dominant feature of West Boldon is the *Church of St Nicholas* (listed Grade I). Its pivotal role is crucial to the village – it is not only the oldest, tallest, and most conspicuous building here, it is a landmark which defines the signature image of West Boldon for many miles in all directions. It is one of only a handful of ‘public’ buildings in the village and is fundamental to the traditional village atmosphere. It is also one of the most architecturally interesting ecclesiastical monuments in the Co Durham area, indicated by its Grade I listed status.



The church was built in the early-mid thirteenth century (in two or three phases probably around 1220) and its stumpy tower and spire are its most unusual features. Spires of this type, called broach spires (an octagonal spire on a square tower with flanking broaches of stone filling the corners), are a rarity on thirteenth century churches (Pevsner N, 1953).



Other features are typical of the period such as lancet windows, dogtooth carving, heavy clasping buttresses. The south porch is also

entirely thirteenth century though the roof has been lowered. The nave windows and larger north porch are nineteenth century alterations.

Although the church is a key landmark on the horizon, this is more to do with its siting than its actual height. From within the village, it sits comfortably with the surrounding development, piercing several choice scenes, and the mature trees in the churchyard (in which there is a Grade II listed tomb) actually shroud it from clear

view from some angles. The boundary walls are prominent at pedestrian level, particularly along *St Nicholas View* and at *Rectory Bank*.



Summary: The Folly and the East

Special Characteristics

- *St Nicholas Church*, churchyard, boundary walls and gates.
- *Mansion House, Harper's Buildings, Nos.1, 2 and 5 The Folly, Avery Cottage, Hillside, Grosmont.*
- The vernacular, rural lane feel on the east side of *The Folly*.

Against The Grain

- *St Nicholas View.*
- Highway engineering at *1-6 St Nicholas View & Addison Rd.*
- Changes which have modernised or sanitised rural character.

Key Issues

- Continued conservation of Grade I listed *church*.
- Protection of rural character and buildings on *The Folly*.
- Ensuring residential privacy demands do not erode character.
- Retention and restoration of historic buildings and detail, eg. windows, doors, rainwater goods, chimneys, other features.

Enhancement Potential

- Re-establishing the historic route past *St Nicholas View*.
- Railings on Addison Road outside the *Post Office*.

13 Potential Enhancement Opportunities

As well as those set out in the summary boxes in each section, some further ideas for potential enhancement are considered below:

Newcastle Road and the South

- Enhancement of the sense of enclosure along *Newcastle Road* at the *Red Lion PH*, and strengthening of the thick green edge to the south.
- Comprehensive enhancement of appearance of single storey *garage* buildings on *Newcastle Road* to reflect the established themes of the area at a prominent location.

Rectory Bank and the Historic Core

- Re-emphasis of the historic route of *Rectory Bank* to overcome the changed priorities and realignment. This could be done by laying natural setts from the narrow stretch outside *nos.27-29* up to the top at *nos.2-4*, which would be a simple visual enhancement at a focal point which could also calm traffic.
- Re-opening the historic route of *Rectory Bank*, not as a road, but reinstating a notional street-width to the path, removing the ill-maintained planters near *nos.1* and *7*, and laying out a

width of natural setts in front of *nos.1-6*, from *Rectory Bank* past the church, keeping most of the grass. This could add character, foster a sense of place and enhance the church's setting. Bollards could prevent vehicular access.

- A replica shopfront fascia and sign at *Dhaka Tandoori*.
- Reinstating the wrought-iron overthrow and lantern holder to *St Nicholas Church*, mentioned in the listing

The Folly and the East

- Further measures to control vehicular flow and speed.

14 Other Designations

West Boldon Conservation Area has other heritage and townscape designations, as set out below, including relevant extracts from South Tyneside's 'local list' (UDP Appendix ENV(B): Other Buildings of Acknowledged Architectural Quality or Historic Significance). In addition, Hall Green Farm is identified as having a group of historic agricultural buildings, and the South Tyneside Green Belt adjoins the conservation area along the southern boundary. See Maps 6 and 7.

14.1 Listed Buildings

Grade	Listed Building
I	Church of St Nicholas
II*	West Boldon Hall
II	Mansion House (no.s.1-5 consecutive)
II	Tomb 22m south of south porch of Church of St Nicholas
II	Walls, gates and gate piers to south of West Boldon Hall
II	Doorway to south of Rectory Green

14.2 Article 4 Directions

Class	Buildings Covered by an Article 4 Direction
-------	---

I (1 & 2)	Addison Road	Grosmont, Hillside
	Dipe Lane	Hall Green Farm
	The Folly	1, 3, 5, Avery Cottage
	Gateshead Terrace	Osborne House, Bank House
	Rectory Bank	2, 4, 21, 27, 29
	Rectory Terrace	5, 6, 7
	St Nicholas Road	3, 4, 7, 9, Hill Top House
II (1)	-	1, 2 Harper's Buildings
	Addison Road	Grosmont, Hillside
	Gateshead Terrace	Osborne House, Bank House
	Rectory Bank	21, 23, 25, 27, 29
	The Folly	1, 2, 3 Brown's Buildings, Avery Cottage, The Bungalow, 1, 2 Harper's Buildings, 5
	St Nicholas Road	Mansion House Bungalow, Hill Top House, 3, 4
	Rectory Terrace	5, 6, 7
VI	Dipe Lane	Hall Green Farm
A pt 24	Downhill Lane	

14.3 Local List

Local List (Extract from UDP Appendix ENV(B): Other Buildings of Acknowledged Architectural Quality or Historic Significance)
27-29 Rectory Bank
Osborne House
Bank House
Wall and railings to Mansion House
Wayside [now called Ascot Court]
Boundary wall to Rectory Green
Boldon Bridge
Hall Green Farm and farm buildings

14.4 Tree Preservation Orders

No.	Tree Preservation Order
12	Mayfair Bungalow
23	Glebe Farm / Rectory Green: Glebe Farm, Wayside [now Ascot Court], 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 Rectory Green, 1 and 2 Glebe Cottages.

15 Selected Bibliography

Middleton A, 'Boldon's Witness in Church & Community', 1983.

Pevsner N, 'The Buildings of England: County Durham', 1953.

Wilson W, 'A Short History of Boldon', 1935.

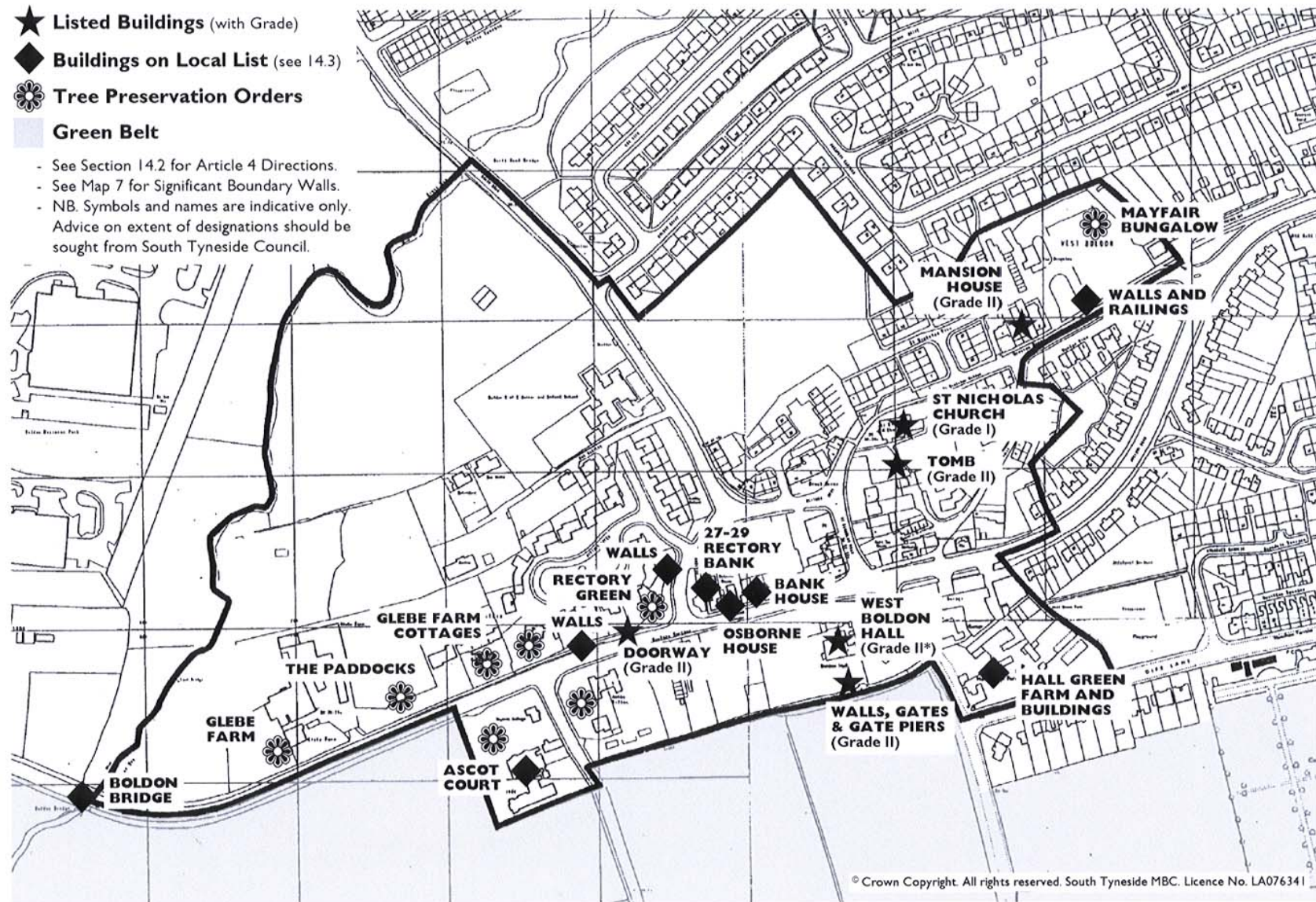
Tyne & Wear SMR, 'West Boldon Village', no.254

Tyne & Wear SMR, 'Boldon, Church of St Nicholas', no.956

Map 6: Other Designations

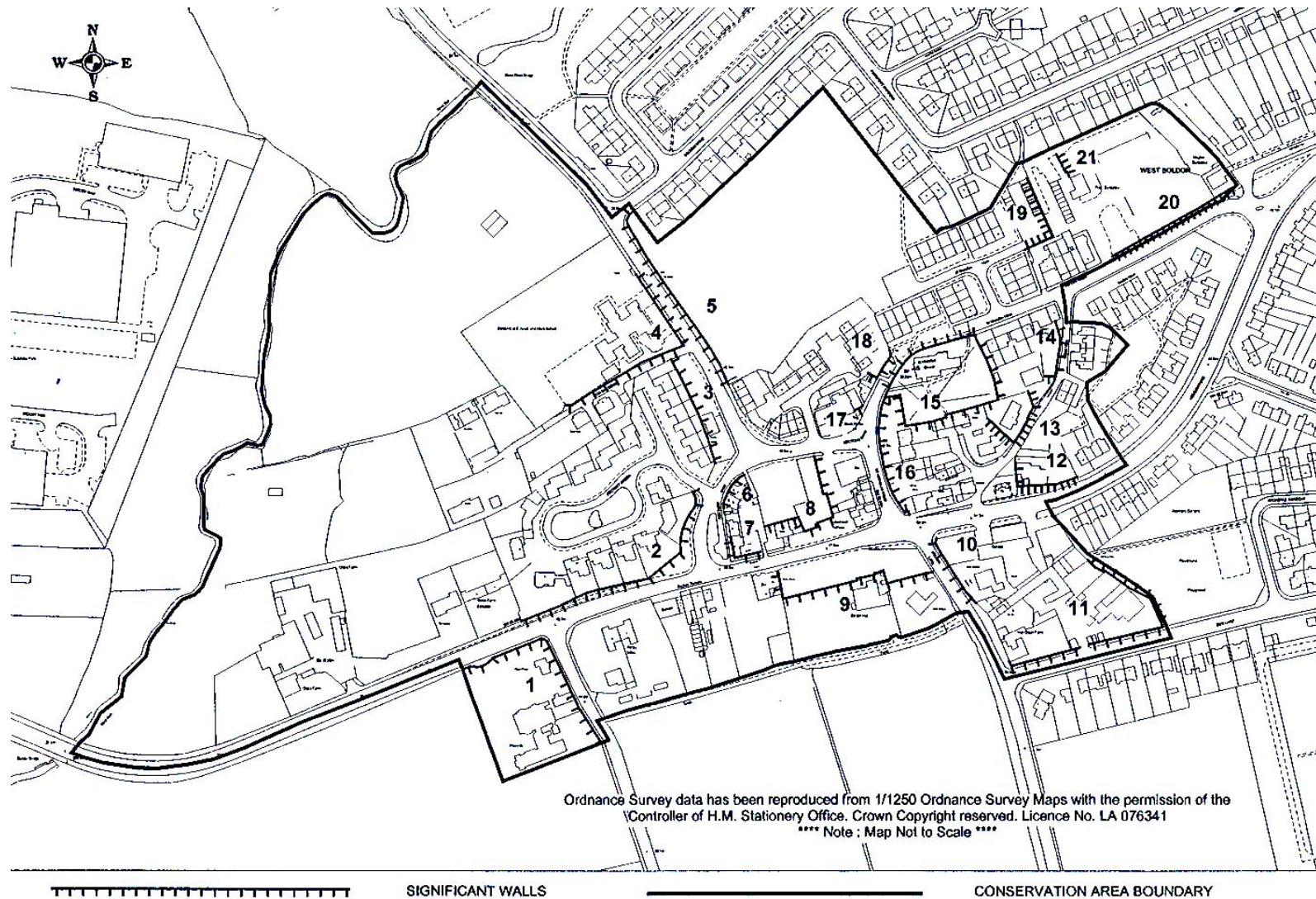
- ★ **Listed Buildings** (with Grade)
- ◆ **Buildings on Local List** (see 14.3)
- ✿ **Tree Preservation Orders**
- **Green Belt**

- See Section 14.2 for Article 4 Directions.
- See Map 7 for Significant Boundary Walls.
- NB. Symbols and names are indicative only. Advice on extent of designations should be sought from South Tyneside Council.

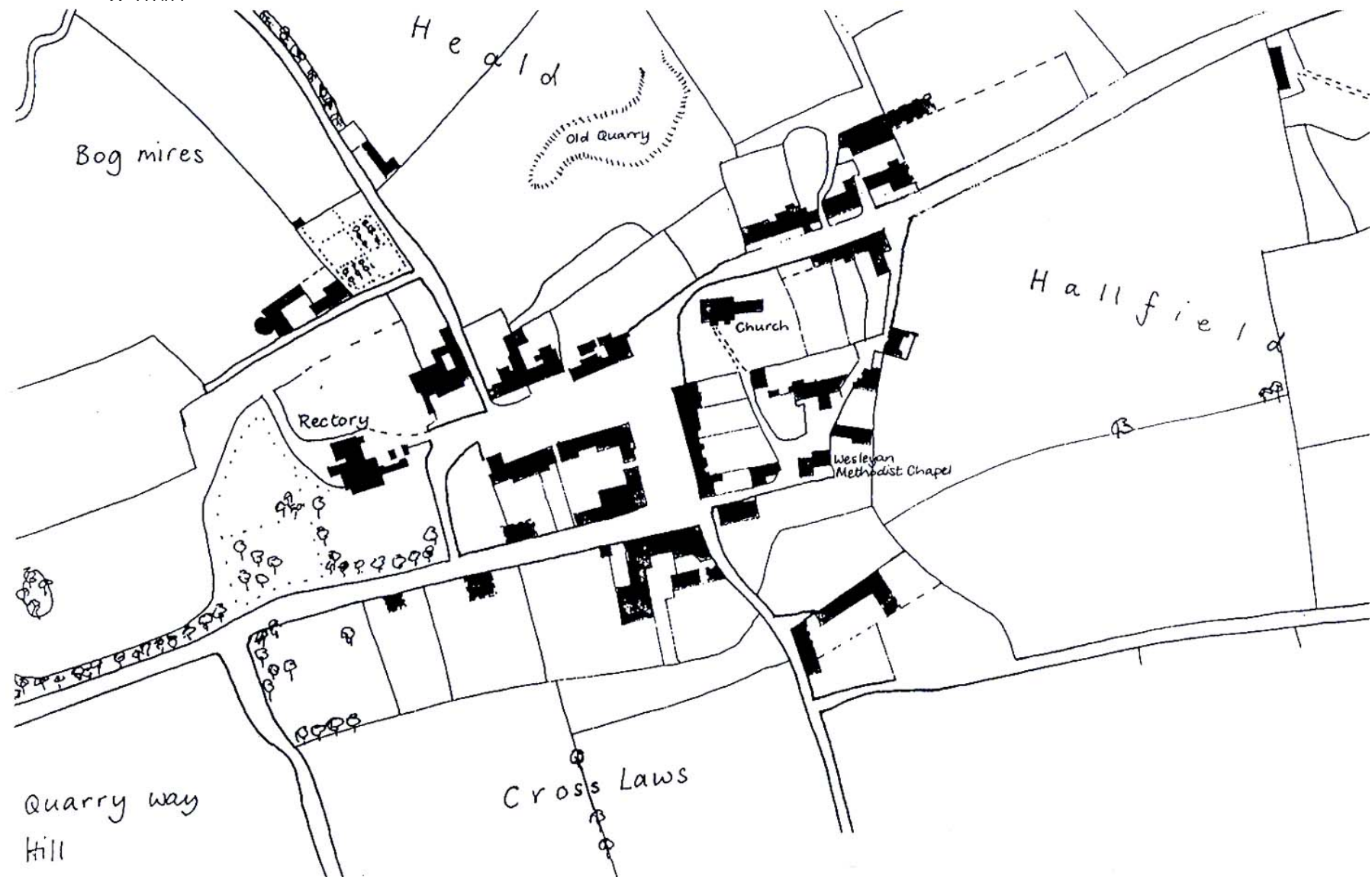


© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. South Tyneside MBC. Licence No. LA076341

Map 7: Significant Boundary Walls
 (extract from South Tyneside UDP, Map ENV(E)a)



Map 8: West Boldon, Copy of Tithe Map,
c. 1840

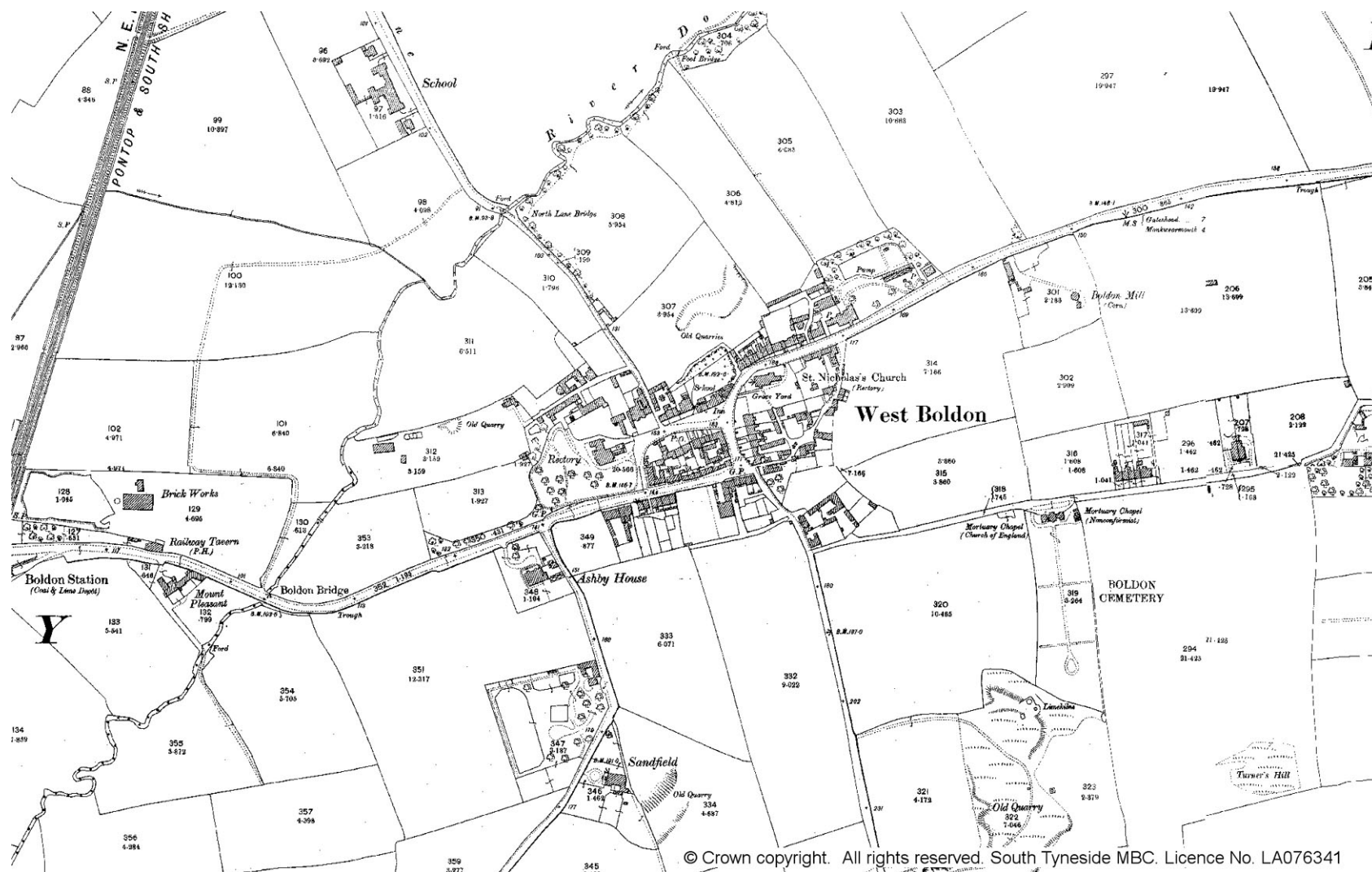


Map 9: West Boldon, c.1862

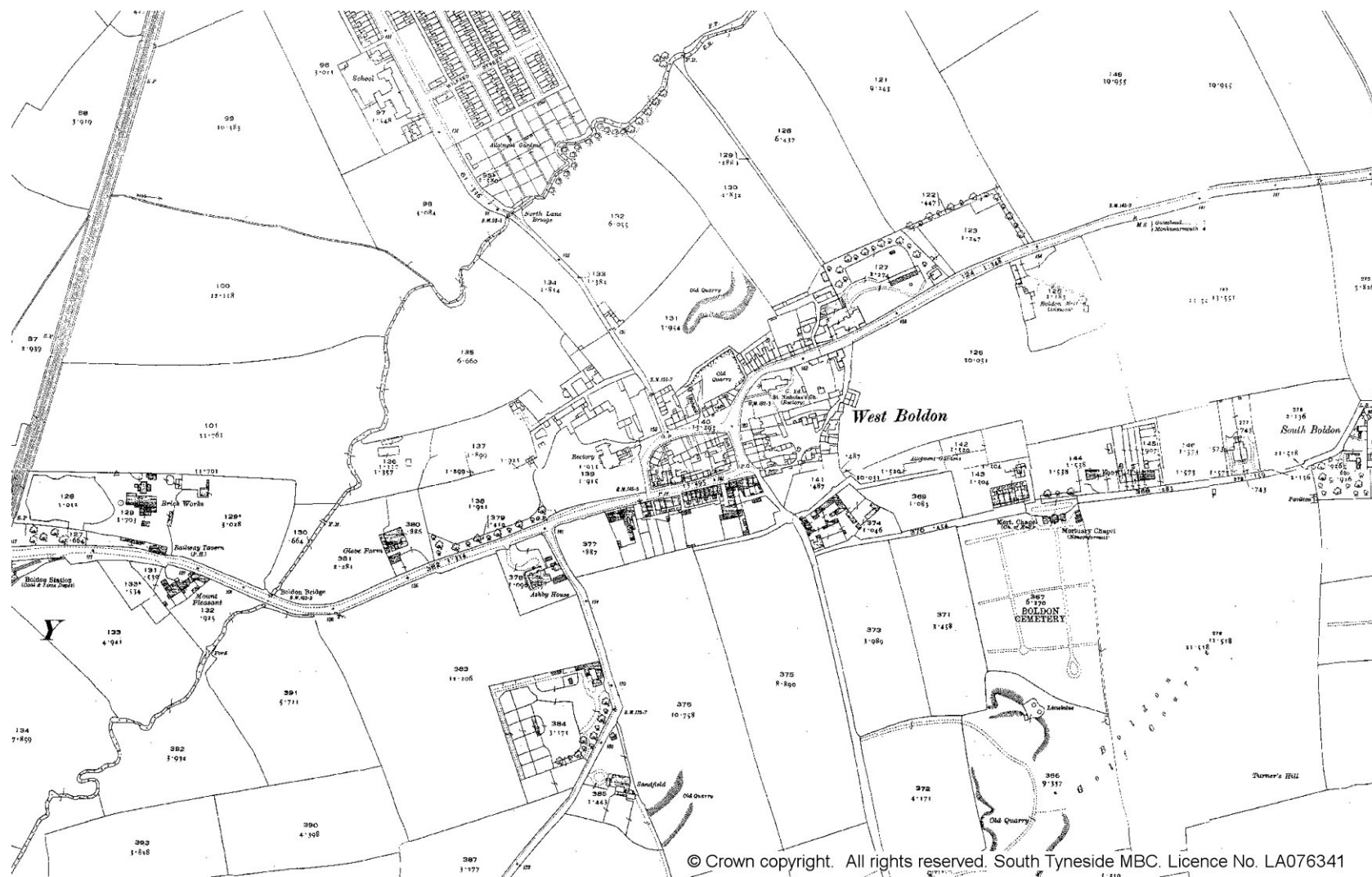


© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. South Tyneside MBC. Licence No. LA076341

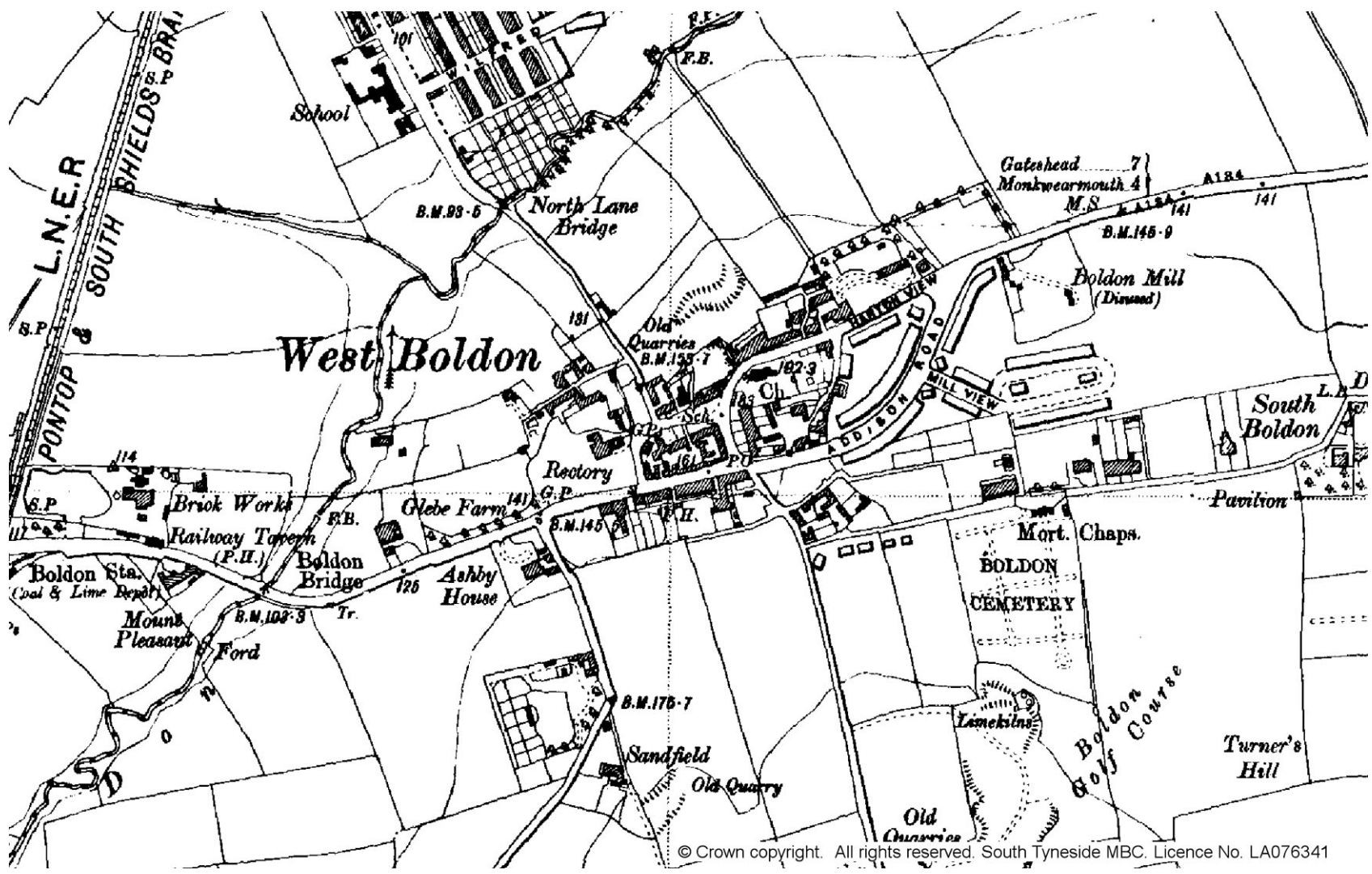
Map 10: West Boldon, c.1896



Map 11: West Boldon, c.1919



Map 12: West Boldon, c.1938



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. South Tyneside MBC. Licence No. LA076341



South Tyneside Council

Neighbourhood Services

Executive Director: Amanda Skelton, Town Hall &
Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne &
Wear, NE33 2RL

Tel: 0191 424 6654 Fax: 0191 427 7171

Website: www.southtyneside.info/planning/