

# Character Appraisal Ulverston Conservation Area

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## 1.0 Introduction and legislative background

- 1.1. Conservation Areas are “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.
- 1.2. Guidance for the management of conservation areas is provided by central Government in “Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning & the Historic Environment”, 1994 (PPG15) and in “Conservation Area Practice” published by English Heritage in 1995.
- 1.3. PPG 15 indicates that Local authorities are advised to review their Conservation Areas from time to time and to ensure that they have up to date character appraisals which set out their special interest and provide the basis for development control and enhancement proposals. In addition, English Heritage advises that:  
*‘it is essential for local authorities to regularly re-evaluate and confirm the importance of the conservation areas in their districts, to be clear about the special interest which it is sought to preserve or enhance in those areas, and to adopt a firm framework for their management in order to achieve this.’ (Conservation Area Practice, English Heritage, 1995, p 4.1).*
- 1.4. This appraisal of the Ulverston conservation area is the first to be carried out as part of strategic review of conservation areas within the district. The objectives of this appraisal are to:
  - Identify and define the exact nature of the area’s special interest;
  - To review the appropriateness of the designated area; and
  - Review the existing and conservation area boundaries and, where appropriate, recommend new boundaries to ensure that all of the special interest of the area is protected;

It is intended that a second phase of activity will look at how the area can be more positively managed. That document will seek to:

- Assess the scope of any enhancement opportunities;
- Review the need for Article 4 Direction controls;
- Provide a basis for implementing policies and making informed development control decisions;

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- Assist in the preparation of documents in the emerging Local Development Frameworks, Community Strategies and Area Action Plans.

1.5. The Ulverston Conservation Area was designated in February 1971 by The Lancashire County Council with the agreement of Ulverston Urban District Council and North Lonsdale Rural District Council. It was extended, following desk-based review, in 1982 by South Lakeland District Council. This draft character appraisal has been prepared by Graham Darlington, conservation officer in the Planning Services division of South Lakeland District Council, who are now the local planning authority for the area. This work was undertaken as part of a strategic review of those conservations areas within that district. The site appraisal was undertaken between February 2004 and June 2004 and this first draft text was completed in December 2004, following an extensive programme of public participation between July and October 2004. Details of that public involvement, and how that data was incorporated into the main appraisal, are outlined in AN Appendix below.

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal was formally adopted by South Lakeland District Council on 24 May 2006 and is a material consideration in the determination of Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent applications.

## 2.0 The location and demography of the town

- 2.1. Ulverston is located on the Furness Peninsular in Cumbria, one of two undulating peninsulas that extend from the north into the wide, sandy expanse of Morecambe Bay. The town is situated slightly inland, some 1.5 km from the coast, on gently sloping, south facing terrain, which nestles between significant rounded hills at a point where the southern extent of the high, rolling Furness Fells, merges with the flatter coastal fringe. Some parts of the conservation area have slightly elevated views over gently undulating landscape to the south west and flatter terrain to the south east and then across Morecambe Bay and towards Lancashire beyond.
- 2.2. The town sits on the A590 trunk road some 12 km from the large town of Barrow in Furness, to the southwest, and 31 km from the main administrative centre of Kendal to the east. Historically, the town was strategically positioned on the important cross-sands route from Hest Bank and Lancaster into west Cumbria, which existed prior to improvements to the road and railway transport system in the 18th and C19th centuries.
- 2.3. Ulverston is a small to medium sized market town, with a local economy now largely based on retailing and services but with some advanced electrical and engineering production, a large pharmaceuticals company on its doorstep, and a significant agricultural hinterland.

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- 2.4. The wider parish of Ulverston had a population of 11,800 at the 2001 census.

## 3.0 Geology, geomorphology and landscape character

- 3.1. Ulverston lies at the very southern edge of the Furness Fells, which slowly merge to the north into the dramatic Cumbrian Mountains. The area is drained by the valleys of the Rivers Crake and Leven, which broaden southwards into a wide meandering estuary that empties into the vast tidal sands of Morecambe Bay. The town itself is sited upon a number of small becks, which generally flow in a northwest to southeast direction, but these are now largely culverted and do not appear as key townscape features, except where they enter The Gill from the west. The wider area is essentially rural in character, although commercial mineral exploitation and stone extraction, together with iron and steel making and heavy engineering in the later 19th century, had a major impact on the area's economic prosperity and the town's urban form.
- 3.2. The town and surrounding area is located on a bed of very mixed drift deposits, deposited primarily by the late Devonian ice sheets but in places by older marine actions. These glacial tills contain sand, gravels and alluviums, while the area has been long known for a scatter of erratic rocks, such as the 'woo sta'en', quoted by Ashburner (1992, p3), which, with a sequence of drumlins to the south west of Ulverston, mark the point of the merging ice sheets of the late Devonian glaciations. The soils are generally of moderate to good quality along the coastal fringe, but are thinner and less productive to the north. Ulverston grew initially as a commercial centre exploiting the area's agricultural production with High Furness to the north producing sheep, wool, hides and skins with the Lower area providing grains, and especially barley for the brewing industry, hemp, beans, potatoes and other market vegetables.
- 3.3. The underlying solid geology consists mostly of strata belonging to the 'Windermere Supergroup' of the late Ordovician and Silurian geological eras. These rocks are primarily sedimentary and consist mostly of marine mudstones and turbidite sandstones. These rocks were severely deformed, uplifted and metamorphosed in the early Devonian period when a slaty cleavage was imposed, and then deeply eroded during the later Devonian era. Later still, in the period of the late Cretaceous, haematite mineralisation occurred as a result of further uplifting. Since then multiple glaciations have eroded much of the softer and more fractured rock strata to create the stunningly varied landscape of the Lake District and the Cumbrian Fells.

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- 3.4. This ancient geological activity has had a significant bearing on the economic development of the area, and especially the town of Ulverston. There has been mining of haematite in the south Cumbria iron ore field since mediaeval times and probably earlier. The rich deposits in the Furness area led to a very major iron making and engineering industry in the wider Ulverston area from the 18th century and later in near by Barrow in Furness. The peak of ore extraction was in the 1880's but declined steadily in the 20th century due to a depletion of viable deposits. Ulverston's last iron works closed in c.1940.
- 3.5. Slate has been commercially extracted, for regional use, for the last two centuries. The centre of local production was at Kirkby Moor, 7km to the north east of Ulverston, where the production of 'blue-grey' roofing slates (named so as to differentiate them from the 'Westmorland Green' slates of the Borrowdale volcanic group, which are also found on some roofs in the town), reached 8,100 tons in 1900, the largest production in Britain, outside Wales. The quarry is still operated on a large scale although the total of 5,000 tons reached in 1990 included 2,000 tons of architectural and structural stone. Slate stone extraction for roofing has been a significant local industry, which has had a major impact on the characteristic appearance of local towns and villages, and especially Ulverston.
- 3.6. Other geological deposits have also influenced the appearance of many of the buildings within Ulverston. Many of the earliest buildings and field enclosure walls in the area would have been constructed from clearance stone or convenient local stone outcrops. The dramatic rise in iron mining and coastal trade from the 18<sup>th</sup> century resulted in an increasing population and a growing demand for local building stone that was met by larger scale commercial quarrying, with local sites at Birkrigg, Gasgow and Plumpton and larger stone quarries near by at Askam and Dalton. The pale grey Carboniferous limestone of the Urswick or Gleaston formations was very popular for simple construction methods while a pseudobrecciated limestone 'marble' was sometimes used for decorative or rusticated styles. Dramatic use was also made in the later 19th century of the red Triassic 'St Bees sandstone', found near to Dalton and elsewhere, which was often favoured for commercial and prestige buildings in Ulverston in the 19th century, while the infrastructure of the Furness Railway combines both local limestone and St Bees sandstone in such a distinctive way, that it greatly influenced the detailing of much late C19th century building in the town.
- 3.7. Limestone was also used to manufacture quicklime for use in agriculture and in building mortars, as the many small scale, abandoned limekilns, dotted about the local countryside, testify. At Gasgow, limestone was also extracted for use in fluxing in the 19th century iron industry.
- 3.8. Small scale local brick production is documented in Ulverston in the 1760s and on a more industrial scale at Askam in the 19th century. Kiln sites are known from Brick

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Kiln Road at Sandhill and Cross Lane in Ulverston where Flandrian marine deposits were utilised while at Askham it was weathered Skiddaw mudstones. Both types of brick are likely to be found within buildings in the town.

## 4.0 Archaeological significance and potential

- 4.1. The town has recently been examined as part of the joint English Heritage/Cumbria County Council sponsored Extensive Urban Survey and this section borrows heavily from that report's analysis and strategic conclusions.
- 4.2. The archaeological significance of Ulverston is linked to its mediaeval street plan, which is typical of a mediaeval town; with many narrow burgage plots arranged at right angles to the rear of the many tightly packed street frontages. Unusually, the town possesses an isolated mediaeval church, set well away from the urban core of the town, and two market or historic public open spaces of very different character. It also has a noteworthy legacy of mediaeval and post mediaeval industrial activity and important physical evidence survives of historic transport infrastructure in the form of its canal and railway.
- 4.3. There are no scheduled Ancient Monuments located within the conservation area and no sites retaining nationally important remains are known to survive. However, a large part of the mediaeval core together with the church site have been categorised as an area of high archaeological importance. These are the most likely areas to possess building fabric and below ground deposits that might reveal Ulverston's earliest origins as a settlement and throw light on the impact of the town's development in social, economic, industrial and commercial terms. The area immediately to the south of the main historic core, including Theatre Street, Benson Street, Queen Street and Cavendish Street has been defined as having some archaeological importance which may reveal evidence about the later expansion of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries. All other areas have been categorised as having limited archaeological potential generally because these areas are likely to have been severely compromised by more modern development, which is likely to have harmed any earlier archaeological evidence. See 'Ulverston Areas of Importance' Map, prepared by EH/Cumbria County Council for a location of these defined areas of archaeological importance.

## 5.0 The origins and historic development of the town

- 5.1. This place name of Ulverston is of uncertain derivation and a number of suggestions, some perhaps more fanciful than others, have been put forward for its origins. A popular local explanation is that it refers to a place where a significant population of wolves or 'wulf-heres' were to be found. Equally it could derive from

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- the name of an Anglo-Saxon nobleman, 'Wulfhere' or 'Ulfarr' who reputedly conquered and settled the Furness area, a 'tun' being his farmstead or a settlement that he controlled. Stockdale (1978) suggests that an Earl Ulfr, a commander and chief governor, with significant land holdings in Lonsdale, had jurisdiction over much of the land in Cartmel and Furness in the pre-conquest era. Another option, again without firm evidence, is that Ulverston refers to the 'vill' of 'Hougun', the name of a local manor recorded in the Domesday Book.
- 5.2. The earliest known evidence for human activity in the immediate area comes in the form of prehistoric stone axes of the Neolithic and a Bronze Age spear head and axe hammers found at a small number of sites in the town in the 19th and early twentieth century (Ref: EUS). Activity of Mesolithic and even immediately post-glacial date is known from the Furness and north Morecambe Bay area (Young 2002), and could yet be identified in and around Ulverston. There is also a long barrow at Skelmore Heads and marked evidence of early occupation in the form of a hilltop enclosure, of probable late Bronze Age to Iron Age date, an enclosed hut circle and round cairns. There is very little evidence of Roman activity in the area, although several Roman coins were reputedly discovered in the town in the 19th century.
  - 5.3. Documentary evidence from the pre conquest era is also slight. The first reference to Ulverston appears in the Domesday Book which records that in '*Ulurestun*', both Turnulph and Gospatric held land, the latter having some '*6 carucates and gelden*', while '*the King had 6 carucates*'; there were '*4 villains tenants who did not plough*'; and that the arable land was '*1 luca or mile in length and half a mile in breadth*'.
  - 5.4. In 1127, Stephen, Count of Boulogne and Mortain, later King Stephen, gave part of his 'Forest of Furness' to a Benedictine and later Cistercian order, the Monks of Seigny, who then went on to found Furness Abbey near to Dalton in Furness. Monasticism was subsequently to have a major influence on the origins and subsequent development of both Ulverston and near by Dalton in Furness, the two most significant mediaeval settlements in the area. The growth of Ulverston as a town was probably impeded initially by the establishment of the abbot's secular court at Dalton while the early creation of a weekly market and fair there may also have further inhibited the growth of the town, despite Ulverston gaining its own market charter in 1280.
  - 5.5. However, the foundation of a religious house by the Augustinian order at Conishead, on the coast, 3 km to the south west of Ulverston, between 1154 and 1189, originally as a leper hospital and then as a priory, would no doubt have helped Ulverston's circumstances and by 1195 the settlement and its hinterland had been transferred from the estate of Furness Abbey to Gilbert Fitz-Reinhard and his wife Helwise (the daughter of Roger, Earl of Lancaster). As early as 1196 he had enfranchised its inhabitants and created the borough of Ulverston, a measure

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frequently undertaken in this period in order to encourage the creation of a more urban and permanent form of settlement. This date probably marks the establishment of a more viable community at Ulverston and, significantly, Munby (1985) suggests that the development of Soutergate may well have occurred at this time as part of a planned enlargement of the town. Its organised form of two rows of tofts and back lane fits with plans of other borough towns and planned villages in the north of England (Daniels 2002). This appears to have been appended to the rest of the town at Fountain Street and King Street, perhaps suggesting that the area to the south of Soutergate was developed before c1200. The founding charter notes the existence of a "bakehouse, dying house and fulling mill at Ulverston", which suggests that some form of local textile industry was already established by that period.

- 5.6. The foundation date for St Mary's Church in Ulverston is reputed locally to be 1111, although there is no firm supporting evidence for this. Today's church does possess a Norman doorway and while this appears neither in-situ nor complete, it would suggest origins for an original church of no later than about 1180. Certainly by 1230 churches in Ulverston, and near by Pennington, had both been brought under the control of Conishead Priory. It is noteworthy that St Mary's was located well outside the later mediaeval core of the town.
- 5.7. In 1280, Roger de Lancaster was granted a Royal Charter by Edward I, to hold 'a market on Thursday each week and every year a fair lasting 3 days'. Ashburner (1992-93) quotes the content of a dispute which reveals that in 1300 Ulverston possessed a mill, salt pit, a bakehouse, and two forges and, by the 1340's, a brewery and this throws light on the growth of the town in the early mediaeval period.
- 5.8. Documentary records reveal that the economy of the Furness area was severely harmed by Robert Bruce's raids in 1316 and 1322 with that land under the control of the parish church at Ulverston '*lying uncultivated and waste on account of the incursion of the Scots*'.
- 5.9. Following the Act of Dissolution in 1539, and the loss of Furness Abbey's direct influence, Dalton in Furness seems to have begun its slow decline as a major town in favour of Ulverston's, no doubt, more diverse and secular economy. In addition, Dalton suffered a severe outbreak of plague in 1631 when, it has been calculated, two thirds of its population succumbed to the Black Death (Walton 1981). These events may well have hastened Ulverston's emerging pre-eminence during the following centuries
- 5.10. The area that formerly contained Neville Hall was probably the manorial centre of the town before the land was confiscated by the crown in 1596 after the family were involved in a rebellion against Elizabeth I (Birkett 1949, 19). It has been suggested

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that the site of Neville Hall may have contained a fortified tower of some type (Perriam and Robinson 1998, 387), although the nature of this, if it existed, remains to be discovered. The manor is recorded as having 3 mills in c1595 (LR 14/1012) and these could well co-relate with High Mill (now known as Ure Mill on Old Hall Road, Town Mill and Low Mill.

- 5.11. In the 17th Century, Ulverston became the birthplace of the Quaker movement as founder of the Quakers, George Fox, lived at nearby Swarthmoor Hall. In 1652 Fox was physically attacked in the town for his views, although the nonconformist movement subsequently gained quite a stronghold in the area.
- 5.12. The growth of the iron smelting industry in the neighbouring area is alluded to in an Elizabethan ordinance that refers to the planting of trees to replace those consumed by "the many puddles and bloomeries". By 1661 an iron 'shop' had reputedly been established at Well Head in Fountain Street, and a reference to the dissolution of an Iron Making partnership in 1773 mentions Well Head and iron foundry at Whitewell to south of town (DDX/379). Ashburner (1992-93) notes that numerous iron-ore foundries had been established in the area by the 1700's and Hodge Puddle, in Stockbridge Lane, was apparently a smelting site well before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century while a foundry was also established in Burlington St later in the century. Other industrial endeavours in the 18th century included tanning, rope making and corn milling, as well as bone and paper mills.
- 5.13. One other factor, which had a great impact on the town's prosperity, were the connections made by Ulverston's maritime traders with Liverpool and Lancaster, and particularly with the growth of the slavery trade in the C18th. A triangle developed with gunpowder, made in the Furness area, being exported to Africa where it was exchanged for slaves, who were taken to work in the plantations of America. Then raw cotton was brought back to supply Ulverston's new textile mills.
- 5.14. Ulverston's port had originally been located on the sands, and William Wilberforce notes in his diary of 1779 that "*it is a curious appearance to see large ships upon the dry Sand which are entirely left at low water for many miles*". In 1796 a new canal was cut that connected the town with Morecambe Bay. Bardsley, writing in 1885, looks back to an era when, following the cutting of the Ulverston canal in 1796, Ulverston had:

*"its port and harbour; it could boast its shipping trade; its Ulverston checks (a Gingham type cloth); its large dealings in iron and hoops;...its fairs were matters of fame; and its Thursday market, when there was double tide, quickened the blood of Kendal and Lancaster on the one side, and Bootle on the other"*

Whereas in 1724 Defoe had noted that some 60 boats were registered in Ulverston by 1846, after the cutting of the canal, over 900 boats are recorded as unloading their goods at Canal Head on the edge of the town, during that year. Although the

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canal was surveyed so as to enter the town centre and have a basin at the Weint, this was never completed.

- 5.15. Yates' map of 1786 reveals Ulverston to have had an intricate pattern of streets leading to its centre around the heavily built up area of Market Street, Daltongate and Queen Street. Soutergate too was lined with buildings, as were The Ellers and Ratten Row, while St Mary's Church and Church Walk continue to be isolated in amongst fields. A number of farmhouses and farm buildings were located in Soutergate and around Fountain St. An order of 1774 saw many horse stones, seats and troughs swept away as part of measures to improve traffic movement through the town's streets.
- 5.16. Many commentators have noted the inadequate size of the main Market Place but it is interesting that although the much larger space of The Gill is first noted in Parish Records in 1604, when hiring fairs took place there, the space gets surprisingly little mention in the records despite its significant size. This area, with its then open watercourse appears to have been prone to flooding, but appears to have become partly enclosed by buildings erected to service a range of industrial activities during the 18th and 19th centuries. To the east, in the part of the town known as '*betwixt the becks*', a mix of shops and farms with barns and gardens existed.
- 5.17. A number of mediaeval mills are known to have been located within the town and some of these seem to have been converted and adapted to new uses in later centuries. Most notable of these was textile milling, as a centralised factory system took over from a local cottage industry in the later 18th century. Water was extracted from the numerous becks to power a number of mills with the majority of industrial activities being located between the Weint, where a number of becks converged and The Ellers. By the early 19th century Ulverston was firmly established as a major iron-trading centre, utilising iron smelted locally from haematite ore hewn from mines scattered around the Furness area.
- 5.18. By 1800 Ulverston was described as "*The emporium of Furness*" (Bardsley 1885) while Ashton, in the Lancashire Gazetteer of 1808, notes that there were 2,937 people residing in 629 houses, and Ashburner (1992-93) quotes an unattributed account which describes the streets as:

*"...good with several excellent houses and some well appointed shops but there are also narrow thoroughfares, irregular in shape with uneven pavements and shapeless boulders illustrative of former times"*

Many well off landowners, with farms or property in the Furness area, also had grand residences and town houses built in the town, at which they would stay for events in the busy social season.

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- 5.19. After a scheme in 1838 was abandoned Ulverston finally gained a railway connection with Barrow in the 1854, in order to move iron ore, slates and other goods from the mines to the foundries in and around Ulverston, and then, with the creation of the Levens crossing in 1857, this system was connected to the wider railway network. The fine Italianate station buildings off Princes Street were built as part of the development of Ulverston's third railway station in 1873-74. However, while the railway brought with it greater access to goods and services, and an increased social mobility, it also, ultimately, led to a slow decline in the town's trading prosperity. Barrow in Furness, with its deeper and better-protected harbour, grew considerably once an efficient railway system was established and much of the area's iron production transferred to Barrow in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 5.20. However, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Ulverston had the full range of social and institutional buildings found in many prosperous Victorian towns: hospitals, ornate banks, a range of independent and national schools, an assembly hall, a court house and police station, theatres and music halls, two churches and a number of non-conformist chapels, a workhouse, two breweries, many scores of public houses and various private clubs and rooms. Extensive new 'suburbs' were created in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and very early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with large new villas and speculative 'workers housing' being laid out in separate areas. A 1905 map of the town reveals the layout to be broadly what it is today and the conservation area boundary includes mostly the pre 1900 built form of the town.
- 5.21. The construction of the County Road relief road (A 590 link) in 1965-68 and the widening of numerous other roads has truncated some of the mediaeval routes into the town and has led to an artificial separation of some areas of the settlement from each other. There has also been a notable amount of demolition of housing and other buildings, in some instances to create large areas for car parking close to the retail centre of the town. There has also been some redevelopment of essentially small scale, residential, commercial and industrial buildings within the conservation area during the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. The area immediately to the east and north east of the Coronation Hall saw the most significant redevelopment in the 1960s and here a number of large footprint buildings, of largely mediocre design, now have a negative impact on this part of the conservation area. In the mid 1980s the Leather Lane housing development was created to the west of King St.

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## 6.0 Conservation area analysis and evaluation

### 6.0.1 How the appraisal is organised

6.0.2 This section of the appraisal establishes and evaluates the spatial characteristics and particular townscape and architectural qualities of the conservation area. It is organised around three particular themes:

- **Spatial Structure** (describing the urban framework: which includes plot sizes and building density, the hierarchy of routes and the incidence and typology of public and private spaces, etc);
- A Summary of **Townscape Character** (which includes a definition of key landmarks, the identification of significant views and vistas, types of approaches, gateways, sense of enclosure, key open spaces and the impact of natural elements such as trees and any wider woodland planting, etc); and
- A **Definition of Architectural Quality** (which examines and evaluates the contribution made by listed buildings, key unlisted buildings, building forms and uses, building materials and decoration, and so on).

### 6.0.3 Character areas or zones

6.0.4 It is possible to identify six character areas or zones within the Ulverston Conservation Area, each with a differing character and appearance. **The location and extent of these character areas are shown on the attached Location of Character Zones Map (PDF: \*\*\*\*\*).**

6.0.5 This section of the character appraisal examines each of the six character zones in turn in order to establish and evaluate the special interest that warranted designation. Each character zone section is organised around the three themes identified above: Spatial Structure, Townscape Character and Architectural Quality.

Each character zone has two separate PDF files:

1. The first PDF contains the written character appraisal that defines the architectural quality and townscape quality of the conservation area; and
2. The second PDF contains two sets of coloured maps that show, in graphical form, the evaluation of each zone's architectural quality and townscape character.

Please note that both the maps and certain parts of the written appraisal contain numeric values for certain buildings and spaces with either positive (+) or negative

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(-) symbols. These figures refer to the number of positive or negative comments received at the Place Detectives public participation event held in the town in July 2004. For example (+9) would equate to nine positive comments about a particular building, space or site, while (-3) would refer to 3 adverse comments.

## 6.0.6 The Evaluation of Architectural Quality

- 6.0.7 For the purposes of this appraisal 'townscape character' is the visual appearance of the spaces, both public and private, which exist between, and are frequently defined by, the arrangement of buildings in the conservation area. Generally an area's townscape Character will have been influenced by a wide range of factors including: the nature of the topography, its underlying geology and any particular drainage patterns; the role played by any formal woodland planting or the presence of any ornamental or landmark trees; and the particular historic uses and subsequent development that the land has been put to, by a variety of landowners and building users, each with a range of differing interests. In addition, the needs and status of each building user; any longstanding patterns of ownership and tenure; the design quality, form and function of individual buildings; and, the physical relationship of the land and buildings to the historic communication and transport routes in the town will all have had a significant bearing on the town's appearance. The way that this townscape has been managed over the centuries has thus had a significant impact on the way that the settlement has developed over time and especially on how it appears to us today. Such land ownership and management would have had a major influence on when and where particular buildings were erected, on the appearance of certain streets, and on the character of all public and private spaces within the town.
- 6.0.8 Separate to this textual analysis are a set of separate Townscape Character Analysis Map PDFs that seek to show, in graphical form, the specific townscape quality of the area, i.e. the nature and quality of the spaces between the buildings as well as the importance of the wider landscape setting to the special character of the town. Factors identified include the significance of particular trees or woodland planting; the positioning of key landmarks; the role played by the main building elevations and buildings lines in defining and enclosing spaces; and the opportunities available for views and vistas along streets, between buildings, and outwards towards key landmarks. The maps also identify the locations of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders, as well as any other non-statutory categorisations that might have been made in defining the area's importance. A series of map conventions are presented in a separate Key to represent these factors.

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## 6.0.9 The evaluation of architectural quality

- 6.0.10 The Architectural Quality section of each Character Zone appraisal offers a brief summary of the architectural interest of many of the key buildings within each character zone. Each individual building description will list the key elements that combine to give that particular unlisted building its particular significance. Buildings that are considered to cause harm to the character of the conservation area are also detailed in the appraisal.
- 6.0.11 In order to easily identify the contribution made by particular buildings a set of Architectural Quality maps have been produced for each character zone. These reveal how each building has been evaluated according to their architectural quality. A traffic light system of green, amber and red has been used to place buildings within particular categories of architectural or historic quality: - green for positive, amber for neutral and red for harmful.
- 6.0.12 Listed buildings are identified with a dark green colour on the Architectural Quality maps. These are buildings or structures that have been categorised as having a specific national value due to their special architectural or historic interest. They represent a finite resource and an irreplaceable asset and, for such reasons, are given additional protection beyond that available to unlisted buildings in conservation areas. There is a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings and local planning authorities must pay special regard to protecting such buildings, any features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess, and their characteristic settings. A separate PDF lists all of the listed buildings within Ulverston parish, arranged alphabetically by street name.
- 6.0.13 In addition, there are quite a number of unlisted buildings in Ulverston that possess some notable architectural or historic importance in this local context (shown as a medium green colour on the maps). These buildings can be said to contribute positively to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area, in that they display either attractive aspects of design or distinctive ornamentation; act as key visual landmarks; share qualities of age and materials with adjacent listed buildings; or exhibit construction characteristics that are typical of their period of build. They will generally not have been subject to unsympathetic alteration and they will retain the essential aspects of their main period of construction. Such buildings can be said to add to the general architectural richness of the area and, while not possessing sufficient interest to be listed as of national importance, they still make a considerable contribution to the quality of the local scene. As such they have been deemed important enough to warrant identification and it will be important that careful attention is given in the future to any development proposals that are likely to affect such buildings. Certainly there will be a presumption that the

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demolition of such buildings will not be considered appropriate if the special interest of the conservation area is to be protected, unless specific circumstances apply.

- 6.0.14 Other buildings will make a largely neutral contribution (coloured yellow on the Architectural Quality Maps) in that they possess only slight or moderate intrinsic importance and can be seen as neither enhancing nor harming the character of the conservation area. In their physical arrangement and combination with other buildings they will almost certainly add to the richness, intricacy of form and characteristic appearance of the area, but as individual structures they can be said to be of only modest value. Nevertheless the retention of the majority of these structures will be seen as desirable if the overall character of an area is to be preserved.
- 6.0.15 However, there are also a few buildings and spaces identified on the Architectural Quality maps (coloured red) that have been categorised as having a damaging or harmful impact on the special interest of the conservation area. Such sites might consist of individual or groups of buildings that display a poor choice of construction materials or weak design characteristics. Often they will be of an inappropriate scale, have been subject to long-term neglect, or to particularly harmful alterations, which will have damaged any intrinsic importance that they might once have had. Such harm is not just applicable to buildings but might relate to a particular public or private space or to other detrimental features (see Townscape Character maps.)
- 6.0.16 In terms of future district council policy, these detrimental buildings or sites might benefit from future grant aid towards the cost of fabric repair or the reinstatement of features, or for wider environmental improvements. The most harmful of these buildings and sites should be targeted as possible locations for future change or development, so long as high quality replacement buildings are chosen which can be shown to actively enhance, through their overall design quality, the special character of the area. The identification of such sites should be subject to rigorous deliberation and debate during the drawing up of the subsequent Conservation Area Management Plan for the area. When such sites have been identified the district council should give serious consideration to the preparation of design briefs to ensure that replacement buildings of appropriate design and character are secured for such locations in the future.
- 6.0.17 Please also note that this character appraisal and its attached analysis maps should not be seen as a comprehensive audit of every single aspect of the conservation area. The omission of comments on a specific building, part of a building, space or townscape feature should not be seen as an indication that it is of no interest or value.**

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## 6.1 Character Zone: St Mary's Church, Ford Park and its Environs

### 6.1.1 Spatial structure

- 6.1.2 This area sits to the east of Soutergate, to the north east of the main commercial centre, and includes the parish church and its multi-phase graveyard, as well as those buildings and spaces which line Church Walk, Green Bank and Beech Bank, and Ainsworth and Town Streets. Significantly, the area is very self-contained with very few linkages to the outside areas. The long linear route of Church Walk provides the only direct vehicular access towards the town centre although a few narrow lanes offer pedestrian routes into surrounding areas. It also has a very well defined urban edge to the open landscape that contains the Sir John Barrow Monument on Hoad Hill, to the east.
- 6.1.3 This area consists almost entirely of residential properties, many of which are quite large ostentatious buildings of late Victorian and Edwardian date. There is a notable contrast between the area around the church, which has a fairly informal arrangement and a low density of buildings, with many being set well back behind generous front gardens that often contain mature trees; and Town Street and Ainsworth Street, which are slightly earlier, closer knit developments arranged in a finer grained grid pattern of narrow streets and small plots, with a more built up street frontage, and quite modest houses that, for the most part, abut the footways or are arranged behind quite shallow, but often attractive set backs.

The area around **Ford park** is substantially open and Arcadian in character, being dominated by large, detached and semi-detached houses set within generous garden plots, with numerous mature trees, all at very low, suburban densities. The spatial framework of the area is dominated by two interlinked components: the very large, green open space of Ford Park and the surrounding informal 'crescent' of substantial late C19th housing. On the higher ground to the north, Greenbank continues seamlessly into Belmont, where the houses to the north of the road share a similar pattern and layout. There are a number of footpath links to the wider town but only one short narrow road connecting with Hart St. The urban edges to this area are strongly defined and give way onto dramatic open countryside to the north and east and onto informal allotment gardens to the south.

### 6.1.4 Townscape character

- 6.1.5 The area is one of the most elevated parts of the conservation area and this provides for a number of very important viewpoints over much of the town and outwards, towards Morecambe Bay to the south; and internally, along vistas

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created by the buildings in Church Walk and Greenbank, towards Hoard Hill and its iconic Sir John Barrow monument, outside the conservation area to the east.

- 6.1.6 The key landmark in the area is St Mary's Church. It has a strong physical presence and is visible as a significant landmark in many important views and vistas along streets in the immediate area. In addition, the church is greatly enhanced by the immediate and wider setting of the surrounding churchyard and its fine collection of often-high quality, and in-situ, ancient and modern gravestones (+1). The churchyard is of two distinct phases, the latter of 1849, each of which retains original iron railing boundaries, with a formal entrance located at the southwest corner through an unusual but distinctive arrangement of two, almost adjacent, sets of gateways. The earlier northern gateway has cast iron octagonal gate piers and simple double gates with cross bracing and dog-sticks while the later set have moulded stone gateposts and modern mild steel rails in a loosely gothic style.
- 6.1.7 Adding considerable further interest to this attractive setting are the numerous mature trees dotted informally around the two churchyards. Of particular note are the two large oaks, which act like 'sentinels' framing the gateway area (+4). Other groups of cedars and cypresses cluster together along Ladies Walk while a stately yew nestles against the south wall of the nave and further yews, scotch pines, smaller oaks and mature sycamores form distinctive mixed groups at the corners of the churchyard. The roads outside the churchyard tend to be quite wide and tree lined and this creates a notable sense of spaciousness. As a result of these factors this area is one of the most verdant and tranquil parts of the conservation area.
- 6.1.8 **Church Walk** provides a very important visual axis as it approaches St Mary's Church in a broadly straight line from the southwest, upwards along a consistent, shallow gradient. The southern part is largely undistinguished in terms of buildings while on the north side of the road, an irregular shaped bowling green is defined by high rubble walls and the negative space between buildings. However, a street possessing more visual interest begins once the junction with Back Lane is reached. Building forms and height becomes more varied but there is a fairly common building line with slightly deeper gardens being notable on the south than to those properties to the north side of the road.
- 6.1.9 A perceptible pinch point is formed between No's 6-14, which sit further forward towards the street edge, and an octagonal summerhouse (+4) in the garden of Ashlands, which pops its head up above the tall garden wall to reveal small gothic windows and a hipped roof. The pleasing form and scale of this building create a very important local landmark when approaching from either side of Church Walk, and this, and an adjacent, ornamental, weeping ash tree, add significantly to the character of this part of the conservation area.

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- 6.1.10 The east end of Church Walk seems to open up considerably beyond the junction with Ainsworth St. due to the deep front gardens to the terraced row of No's 11-31, which is one of the key groups of buildings in this area, and the broad sweep of the road as it turns northwards and steepens towards Green Bank.
- 6.1.11 The area to the west of the church has a very open character, which is softened by the attractive but now ageing trees that line both the distinctive earth bank which separates Church Fields and the road up to Green Bank (+3), as well as those that front the very long front gardens to the north side of **Beech Bank**. These trees are important townscape features and, while they have the slight disadvantage of obscuring the very ornate terraced row of four houses behind, they do help to create very private gardens for the residents of those houses.
- 6.1.12 The houses on **Green Bank** (+1), to the north of the Church, have a strong physical presence aided by their elevated position and the deep, raised front gardens set behind attractive stone boundary walls and gate piers. As the road progresses to the east, out of the conservation area, an important group of tall mature trees, set on either side of the road, frame a very fine vista of Hoad Hill and the Barrow Monument. Unfortunately, the area immediately opposite Green Bank to the south has been harmed by the removal of boundary walls to the long detached gardens and the erection of an intermittent row of poorly designed garden sheds and garages.
- 6.1.13 To the south west the pattern of large houses in generous plots gives way to the more uniformly built up frontages in **Ainsworth St, Town Street and Sea View** which form a medium sized, informal perimeter block, with very narrow streets and houses that mostly come right up to the street edge. This creates a much more enclosed feel, especially at the east end of Town St. and to Ainsworth St., where three storey houses predominate.
- 6.1.14 The west edge of this zone is formed by the winding **Backlane**, a historically important but now somewhat neglected and forlorn backwater containing much altered or dilapidated buildings and spaces and parking and modern garaging for cars. This area generally has a detrimental impact on the special character of the conservation area.

The north eastern edge of the conservation area is dominated by the considerable open space of **Ford Park**, a broad, irregular shaped but well-defined open grassed space, distinguished to the north by a distinctly curved edge bounded by tall, mature trees, while to the south the edge is longer, firmly linear, and partly flanked by moderately large detached houses that create strongly silhouetted forms in views outwards to the south. The large space is bisected by the narrow tarmaced approach to Ford Park House which is mostly hidden from view within the attractive broadleaf woodland at the tapered east end of the area.

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As a very valuable open space within the context of Ulverston's otherwise generally dense urban morphology Ford Park suffers slightly from being given over almost entirely to mown grass, with only the occasional tree to lift the character of the space. However, it does provide a distinctive setting to the surrounding houses and gardens and allows for unrestricted outward views from these premises towards the south east.

Mature trees have a significant impact on the visual appearance of the area. They surround much of Ford Park either in deliberate formal belts or as informal garden features, and help define its form and character. They are also an important element in the gardens that front the houses in Belmont and in so doing they help to make this area an important interface between the urban fringe of the town and the wider open countryside.

**Belmont** is a leafy cul-de-sac extension to Green Bank, with large tall houses on the north side only, set back from the road in thin elevated gardens. To the south the terrain drops away quite steeply and offers panoramic views over the woodland and buildings that surround Ford Park, while Hoad Hill and the Barrow Monument provide an iconic terminus to views outwards to the east.

### 6.1.15 Architectural quality

- 6.1.16 The key building, and the only listed building in this area, is the Grade II\* parish **Church of St Mary**. The present church reveals fabric no earlier than the 16<sup>th</sup> century, except for the south doorway, which re-uses a 12th century Norman surround, and the building was extensively restored and enlarged in 1804 and partly rebuilt in 1864-6, while the Chancel was extended in 1903-4, by the important regional architectural practise of Austin and Paley. Despite these significant later works, the church's prominent tower, gothic detailing, sandstone and limestone rubble walls and red sandstone dressings, under a prominent slate roof, give it an aura of graceful antiquity.
- 6.1.17 To the north of the church on **Green Bank** is a row of tall, three storied, similarly proportioned, late 19th century semi-detached villas, built speculatively and to individual designs, but all having vertically emphasised and rhythmically balanced elevations. Nos 15 and 16 are a slightly larger, plain but still handsome pair in ashlar limestone with attractive eaves and entrance details. Because of their conspicuous position on an elevated site these buildings act as a distant landmark in views into the conservation area from the south. They have a positive impact on the special character of the area.
- 6.1.18 Nos 1-5 **Beech Bank** is a row of four houses in dark brown rock-faced sandstone and a richly modelled, symmetrical frontage of projecting and recessed bays and an intricate roof of large and small gables, each with elaborate cusped and pierced

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barge boards to the verges and sandstone finials, with roofs of Burlington blue/grey slates and decorative moulded yellow brick chimney-stacks. This row makes a significant contribution to the special architectural interest of the conservation area and is of definite local importance. To the east end of the row is a more modern detached house with white rendered walls and a hipped roof which is of negligible design merit and which makes an uncomfortably combination with such high quality neighbours.

- 6.1.19 Nos 11 – 31 **Church Walk** is a long terraced row, built in three phases, in both limestone and sandstone with red sandstone detailing to windows, under blue/grey slate roofs. A strongly rhythmical frontage possesses both canted bay and oriel windows, prominent gables to the roof with bargeboards and open timber framing, while simply moulded tall brick stacks dominate the roofs. Although a few of these houses now have replacement windows, some in PVCu, this group still retains its essential character and makes a very positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.
- 6.1.20 West of the above row is Town View a very fine mid to late Victorian, double fronted house, with a rusticated base and colour-washed upper and stone surrounds to the upper windows and a tall central doorway. The lower windows have canted bays with very good quality, low ornamental metal balconies over. The house sits in its own narrow grounds, which contain a very fine walnut tree. Both house and tree make a very positive contribution to the special interest of the area.
- 6.1.21 The buildings to the south side of Beech Bank are generally much less interesting and it is unfortunate that the vista to the west here is terminated by the rather gaunt appearance of the over modernised Orchard House which occupies the corner site at the junction with Sea View.
- 6.1.22 Beech Bank gives way to **Town Street**, a narrow road where the houses generally come right up to the street edge and create a much more enclosed feeling, especially at the east end where three storey houses predominate. The architecture here, and in the short Sea View, to the south, is of very mixed quality with much of the later housing detracting from the distinctive overall character of the area.
- 6.1.23 **Ainsworth St** fares much better. Here, nearly all the houses are three stories high and all take their cue from the design of the very fine, double-fronted house, of c.1870, at the west end, sharing similar rhythms and consistent door and window detailing to the lower floors. The building line here is very uniform and all of the properties sit behind very shallow front gardens, originally bounded by low limestone walls with iron railings and now all heavily planted. These houses overlook the rear gardens to the larger detached houses on Church Walk. It is particularly unfortunate, however, that the architecture of the houses at the east end

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of the street is of infinitely poorer quality as they are much more conspicuous in the views from Church Walk.

- 6.1.24 At the east end of Church walk is an eclectic group of four mid 19th century buildings associated with St Mary's (?) Infants School. While the small single storey school room (?) of 1852, at the east end, is a rather attractive building, and the tall school hall, in limestone, suggests the involvement or influence of the Webster family in its design, in combination the group creates a slightly awkward and unsuccessful arrangement of forms, scales, styles and materials, but reinforces the general feeling of variety and mix evident near in this part of the conservation area.
- 6.1.25 Further west, along **Church Walk**, is an even greater assortment. Inter war semidetached houses, with weak art-deco styling, keep company with robust Edwardian villa architecture, complete with catalogue detailing and low-key embellishment and a small scale suburban Arts and Crafts influenced house. On the north side is Brittain Place, a late Georgian, double pile house (now two dwellings) of noteworthy architectural quality, with rendered and colour washed walls and a very well conceived, Doric influenced, rectangular bay window. It is one of the more significant buildings in this area and makes a very valuable contribution to the special interest of the conservation area.

The area around **Ford Park** contains only one listed building – the Grade II listed Ford Park House itself - but this area has a significant architectural character due to the many fine unlisted buildings that surround Ford Park and line Belmont.

The following unlisted buildings, set around Ford Park, make a particularly positive contribution, both individually and as a group, to the special architectural or historic interest of the area. Stanyan Lodge, of c. 1880, has very good quality limestone masonry and sandstone detailing to its two principle storeys, an energetically asymmetrical form and a marvellously complex green slate roofscape, which includes a slender three-floor side tower to the south end. It is a well conceived and finely executed design that is a major focal point in views across Ford Park. The neighbouring No 15 is a little later in date (1888) and slightly smaller and more restrained in conception but a similar asymmetrical design, choice of materials and use of detailing is utilised, while Nos 5&7, a semidetached pair, utilise the same materials, plus perforated bargeboards, in a much sparser, but still satisfying arrangement. Nos 1&3, in limestone, are much plainer still (and neutral in their impact) while Nos 9&11, of c.1900, in a pale yellow sandstone, are improved by projecting end bays, geometric bargeboards and a neo-vernacular door head. Nos 17&19 uses a much more pronounced vertical emphasis in a two and a half storey symmetrical arrangement that incorporates gables and dormers with plain barge boards, two storey canted timber bay windows in front of stone faced pale sandstone masonry and, unusually, limestone detailing. It looks similar in style to some of the houses on Green Bank above. Nos 21 – 25 are a three-storey row

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containing a double fronted house and a pair of symmetrical, single fronted houses, in snecked limestone with sandstone detailing, including sill bands.

The small triangular plot of buildings by the junction with Hart St is designed with a strong corner emphasis that creates a valuable visual focus in views along Hart St from the south west.

At the far end, and in more capacious and formally laid out grounds, is St Mary's Hospice (formerly Lynedene) which displays a clustered organisation of differentiated forms and includes detailing in sandstone such as Palladian and lancet windows, and deeply oversailing verges. Although its modern institutional use has resulted in a series of modern accretions, none of which are particularly sensitive in design terms, the quality of the original build remains clearly visible.

**Belmont** contains houses of similar date and architectural quality to Ford Park. The most imposing house on this road is St Mary's Mount, a large limestone house of c. 1870, with sash windows and chamfered stone surrounds with hood moulds, well proportioned dormer windows and pronounced gables enriched with bargeboards that are decorated with running scrolls. The house is set well back from the road and mostly hidden from view within a substantial and verdant garden.

To the east is a very eclectic mix of houses of various architectural styles with the majority possessing some clear architectural merit. Pendlehurst, also set within extensive grounds, displays a sub arts and crafts form, marked asymmetry, with runs of four and five light horizontal windows, set in a dark, uncoloured roughcast. Kelfleet also has roughcast walls, painted buff/cream, with a distinctive gable roof form which contains fleur-de-lis motifs, and an unusual arrangement of flush modern window designs. Rowans is the most recent and weakest design of the group, while 1&2 Belmont is a narrower version of Nos 1&2 Green Bank and 17&19 Ford park Crescent. Set slightly apart in a triangular plot is Belcroft, a house dated to 1934, of modest quality apart from a distinctive arts and crafts, inset arcaded porch with short bulbous columns. All but Rowans contribute positively to the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

- 6.1.26 Opposite the **bowling green** is a square building with Georgian detailing, including small semi-circular vents with sills to the loft, all of good quality but now unfortunately rather decayed.

## 6.2 Character Zone: Soutergate and Fountain Street

### 6.2.1 Spatial Structure

- 6.2.2 This character area includes the two long streets known as Soutergate and Fountain Street as well as the small triangular group of buildings at Tarnside.

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- 6.2.3 These two streets were originally important historic routes into the centre of the town and both are flanked by largely continuous frontages containing two or three storey town houses, which are generally of good architectural quality. To the rear flanks of Soutergate and to the north of Fountain St are 'backlanes' - narrow passageways set to the rear of the linear yards and tofts, which allowed for access and the servicing of the rear yards.
- 6.2.4 The junction of the bottom of Soutergate is an important node not only in terms of the modern one way traffic system that operates within the town but also in terms of marking the distinct point where the commercial and retail part of the town begins.

## 6.2.5 Townscape Character

- 6.2.6 The relatively steep descent down **Soutergate** creates perhaps one of the most distinguished entrances into the town along a street that possesses a very distinctive and memorable architectural character. Its main features are the long inclined and slightly curving street form; a relatively narrow street width, with almost every building located close up to the pavement; a markedly varied range of building heights and plot widths to adjoining, individually built structures, which together create a very strong continuity of frontages; and the contrast between the more consistent building line on the east side and a more irregular line on the west side. The nature of the rising gradient results in a characteristically stepped arrangement of differing floor levels between buildings, a corresponding randomness in the heights of windows, and a lively variation in roofline along the course of the street, such that the buildings appear almost to cascade down the slope. The gradient also necessitates the use of short flights of stone steps to access many of the entrances, the treatment of these varying from property to property and so adding richness to the streetscape.
- 6.2.7 The row of frontages on the west side is broken at No 23 where the building line is significantly indented and a small forecourt is created in front of the rather elegant elevation of the former Bugle Horn Pub (whose façade has been retained in a recent re-development scheme). This small, intimate space is one of the major interests of the streetscape in Soutergate.
- 6.2.8 Further along the same side at No 33 the street appears to narrow perceptibly as the end gable wall, with its massive projecting chimneybreast, sits closer to the road edge, and the wide, low vernacular form of the building creates significant visual interest in the street.
- 6.2.9 **Fountain Street** also possesses a narrow street width in relation to a general loftiness in its buildings and this creates a well-defined linear space, a marked sense of enclosure and an attractive pedestrian scale. Building lines on each side of the street are mostly continuous but noticeably irregular, with fluctuating building

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widths and heights, due to the differing plot sizes on each side of the street and a markedly vertical emphasis to many of the elevations. The intricacy created by this juxtaposition of tall buildings with pronounced gables, some with accentuated verge treatments, which face towards the street, and other, lower buildings that possess more conventional, axial roof lines, helps to fashion a distinctly complex roofscape, in which the use of local blue/grey slates, laid in diminishing courses, is also a significant factor.

- 6.2.10 The two **Backlanes** behind Soutergate and Fountain St are now somewhat neglected backwaters with many poorly adapted and inadequately maintained buildings sitting alongside newer buildings of generally inadequate design.

### 6.2.11 Architectural quality

- 6.2.12 **Soutergate** gives an initial impression of being a Georgian street with some Victorian infill, but in fact many of the houses, especially on the east side, may well be refrontings of much earlier buildings. On the east side is a particularly fine group of grade II listed, 18th and early C19th century town houses (Nos 22 – 34 inclusive), of two and three stories, possessing mostly classically balanced elevations, with period detailing such as sill and storey bands, accentuate quoins and elaborately moulded door surrounds and door hoods. On the opposite side are more modest but still handsome buildings, mostly of two storeys, where vernacular asymmetry is a more noticeable characteristic. The best of these is No 33 & 35, listed grade II, with an early C19th bay window, a fine stone porch hood on carved brackets and a substantial projecting gable chimneystack on the south end. The near by Bugle Horn Pub (+1) has been substantially rebuilt but the fine, unbalanced frontage has, fortunately, been retained. A unifying element in the street is the almost consistent use of naturally coloured or whitewashed roughcasts and renders to the façades, although a significant number of owners have recently abandoned this tradition and some houses now display brightly painted, and occasionally garish, synthetic colour schemes.
- 6.2.13 Although the strong sense of enclosure formed by the flanking rows of buildings continues up to the top of Soutergate, with the exception of the rather decayed Grade II listed Nos 78 & 82 (+2), the quality of the architecture tends to wane as more uniform artisan's cottages, many of them now modernised, take over from the larger town houses. At the very boundary of the conservation area and set on a slightly elevated site, is the eye catching, but now slightly neglected former Congregational Chapel, listed Grade II. The porch is dated 1777 (the chapel's founding) but the building was refronted in 1847 in a flamboyant Tudorbethan style that includes very good quality stone ornamentation. The iron-arched gateway to the front was cast at Briggs Foundry in Ulverston and is a worthy part of the local scene.

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- 6.2.14 The lower end of the street sits on the commercial and retail edge of the town centre, at what is a highly conspicuous and very critical junction with King Street, Fountain Street and Church Walk. Unfortunately, many of the buildings here have been subject to poorly thought out alterations that have damaged not only the architectural quality of the individual buildings but, collectively, the exceptional character of the streetscape. Particularly harmful is the dilapidated roughcast building with the plywood double doors situated immediately behind the Kings Arms (-5), although ill-conceived shop fronts and unfortunate window patterns are also very evident nearby. These changes have had a seriously detrimental impact on the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.2.15 Vital buildings on **Fountain St** include the Grade II listed house known as Church Walk House, set on a strategically important corner site opposite the south end of Soutergate. With an elegant symmetrical front, a dramatic pattern of windows on its south end, and a pleasant collection of topiary set within a very shallow set back enclosed by cast iron railings, this is the best of the buildings that enclose this complex, staggered road junction (+7).
- 6.2.16 No 27 is a house, now flats, of two tall stories with parapets and banding that has been painted and is now looking a little neglected. It is fronted by parallel double flight steps, which are now unfortunately enclosed by brick walls. East is a pair of low two storey cottages with differing sized fenestration and uneven floor heights.
- 6.2.17 No 13 is a very fine early C19th 3 storey house, possibly by Websters of Kendal, with irregular bays and a roofline with flattish gables of unequal size at each end of the front. The entrance, with Tuscan columns and pediment is in bay 2 while the 5th bay has a yard entrance with elliptical stone arch and moulded imposts. Nos 15 – 19A is a row of 2 storey houses with good quality shopfronts with decorative console brackets in Nos 17 and 19.
- 6.2.18 Wellhead accesses a recent courtyard development of varied, but generally successful design quality, which is partly screened behind the former Liberal Club. The latter building was subject to an over-zealous ‘restoration’ in the 1980’s when it was converted to flats, an event that has tarnished its well proportioned, Palladian inspired composition. A small single storey shop, under a hipped roof, projects slightly forward from the building line into the street and helps enclose a narrow entrance to a small, undistinguished private forecourt in front of a modernised house. Neither building has obvious intrinsic value, other than in the contrast of scales they provide.
- 6.2.19 Numbers 25 – 31, at the east end, are well conceived 3 storey town houses with early 19th century details, including very good engaged Tuscan columns to the entrances. These houses act to partly terminate a key axial vista along Brewery Street, one of the main arterial routes though the town, but, due to the slightly

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oblique angle of the road here, they tend to deflect visual expectations further westwards along Fountain Street.

- 6.2.20 There are no listed buildings on the south side of Fountain St but there are buildings that display significant architectural interest and which contribute positively to the specialness of the conservation area. The Conservative Club, on the south side towards the west end of Fountain Street is an unlisted building of some architectural interest. It has a complex, accreted form, a rich scheme of Italianate decoration and some very fine architectural features. Due to the offset alignment of the neighbouring building row, the west elevation offers a very prominent and welcome point of partial closure in views eastwards from the junction with Soutergate.
- 6.2.21 As with the lower end of Soutergate, commercial pressures have resulted in a number of adverse changes to shop fronts and to the fenestration in the upper floors of properties at the very west end of Fountain Street, which tend to undermine the special interest of the conservation area here.
- 6.2.22 Further east on the south side, the unlisted row of Numbers 22 – 32, with its strong rhythm of windows and doors, and basement openings set behind cast iron railings, creates a consistent frontage. A little further east is a retained façade to the former Baptist Church, which masks a newer development behind. The façade's orange local brick and assorted brown sandstone detailing produce a marked contrast to all the other buildings in Fountain street, which are protected by painted or natural stuccos and roughcasts. No 36 is a shallow two storey, double fronted house in a white render with sill courses, good quoins, a fine porch and attractive gates to the entrance.
- 6.2.23 **Tarnside** is a narrow lane which threads it's way through a triangular group of mainly small, two storey, terraced artisan's cottages and former workshops, often now modernised, that are of some historic interest but generally modest architectural quality. In this category is a small group of buildings associated with the former Catholic Church and school at the junction with Backlane, a evidenced by a datestone in the front of No 13 Backlane and a crenellated wall head to the tall wing behind which borders Tarnside. Further south and the junction with Fountain Street and Hart Street is distinguished by a grouping of corner buildings that are provided with very narrow end elevations and enthusiastic detailing to quoins and windows (+1), which, together with the tall, slender gothic tower of the former Catholic Church (+2), produces a extremely pronounced juxtaposition of scales and a very important landmark focus in views from Union Street.

## 6.3 Character Zone: The Gill and Neighbouring Area

### 6.3.1 Spatial Structure

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- 6.3.2 The area is dominated by The Gill, a very large, polygonal open space that acts as a valuable contrast to the finer grain and denser morphology of the residential and commercial areas near by and is one of the most important social spaces in the conservation area. Although enclosed by buildings on three sides the largely open internal character of the space allows for glimpses of the surrounding hills and important views into the partly wooded, narrow steep sided valley of Gillbanks, which penetrates into the townscape while forming a distinctive edge between the urban form and the surrounding countryside.
- 6.3.3 One aspect of the spatial framework that helps to establish an identifiable townscape in this character zone, and which distinguishes it from other parts of the town, is the common configuration of gently curving streets and complementary building lines to frontages. This is particularly apparent in the plan form of The Gill itself where convex rows of buildings merge to form obtuse corners which taper into the connecting secondary streets of Stanley Street to the north and Mill St to the east, while to the south east, the very narrow and distinctive form of Upper Brook Street meanders, unassumingly, towards the centre of the town.
- 6.3.4 Between the houses on Stanley St and Soutergate is a partly open, but now mostly culverted Millrace. A narrow alleyway follows the race for part of its length while at Bugle Hall Hill another narrow 'ginnel' traverses between various outbuildings and houses in the backlands area here, creating a series of intimate and attractive passageways (+2) and providing important connectivity with Soutergate.

Sun Street and Star street are connected in a physically small and self-contained 'T' shaped cul-de-sac layout that is flanked by rows of mostly single-fronted terraced houses set against the backs of shallow pavements, and with irregular plot widths and narrow back lanes to the rear, which give way onto well defined edges: open garden allotments to the north and the historically important boundary wall to the large former Workhouse/Hospital site to the south. At the west end Star St has broader, more substantial buildings, although the row is less continuous, while behind, on higher ground, are more spacious plots with large detached suburban houses. The junction of Sun St with Stanley St and Garden Terrace is quite wide and, because few buildings enclose it, it appears quite expansive in character.

### 6.3.5 Townscape Character

- 6.3.6 The Gill, which slopes appreciably from north west to south east, is more or less completely enclosed by curved or angled rows of buildings of mostly good design quality along its north and south west edges, but of noticeably poorer form to the south, and minor appearance to the east.
- 6.3.7 A major feature of the townscape here is the way that the open space of The Gill narrows appreciably to the north and east as the building lines taper gracefully into

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**Stanley St** and Mill St. The former street adds little by way of a memorable urban character, although the narrowing street does help form an attractive vista towards Mill Dam. The quality of the street here is further weakened by a pair of very conspicuous showroom buildings at the south end: one a modern building with large plate glass windows and the other a poorly conceived conversion of an earlier house.

- 6.3.8 Another characteristic aspect of The Gill is the way that a small block of buildings appears to have encroached into the open space from the east side at some time before the early nineteenth century. While none of the houses in this small block now appear in any way distinguished in architectural terms, their general massing and the way that they help to define the irregular space is a noteworthy aspect of the townscape here. Another significant trait is the almost complete absence of any set backs or gardens fronting properties in the Gill, as almost every building sits right up against the heel of the pavement or the road edge.
- 6.3.9 Although a sizeable part of the internal space of The Gill now functions as a public car park, it has been the subject of an extensive programme of environmental enhancement, completed in 1999 that has made significant improvements to the quality of the hard landscaping and footways (+2). The new 'obelisk' sculpture located towards the west side, which marks the start of the 'Cumbrian Way' long distance footpath, and its associated paving, now provides a high quality public entrance to the town from the footpath which enters from the west alongside Gill Banks Beck.
- 6.3.10 One of the most important aspects of this character area is the abrupt contrast formed between the well-defined urban edge surrounding the space of The Gill and the steep sided valley containing the Gill Banks Beck to the west. The sight and sound of running water permeating into The Gill has a significant affect on the character of the west end of this large space and contributes greatly to the special interest of this part of the conservation area. Also noteworthy is the way that the bridge over the beck and the new 'obelisk' sculpture near by provide important foreground interest in an important view out westwards, which follows the graceful curve of the valley, with its flat horizon formed by a dense canopy of mixed broadleaf woodland, as it disappears out of sight to the north. A number of buildings on the sides and in the bottom of the valley add visual interest to what is otherwise a scene of great natural beauty, particularly where the valley exits the conservation area boundary to the north. However, some parts of this woodland are now quite aged and are in need of positive future management if this aspect of the area's distinctive character is to be maintained.
- 6.3.11 **Sun Street** is a relatively narrow and strongly linear street that is well defined by flanking terraces of domestic buildings that display a wide range of colourwashed renders. The south side has three storey houses with a mostly regular eaves height

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and a very consistent building line set right up to the shallow pavement, while the north side is appreciably less regular in both building height and line. The street frames a striking vista that is terminated, at the east end, by the well conceived elevation of No 4 Star St, with its bold storied bays and gabled subroofs. **Star Street**, like the very west end of Sun St, is slightly more fragmented, with more spacious garden plots to later houses set at the extremes.

- 6.3.12 Situated on elevated ground behind Star St are the well wooded and very private grounds belonging to Oakland's, a detached house, set end on to the street, with a strong masonry form. The northern periphery of the area has a well-defined edge with views outwards over a large area of garden allotments. The east end of Sun St connects with a broad space formed at the convergence of a number of minor town streets. Although only weakly enclosed by buildings and given over largely to the movement of vehicular traffic, the space feels nevertheless well defined and its broadness has the benefit of showing off the well conceived end buildings to Sun St to good effect.
- 6.3.13 **Union Lane** branches off eastwards along a flat contour above the Gill. It contains buildings of generally poor design but the north edge to the road is formed by a tall rubblestone wall which was previously the boundary to the Workhouse complex and which has some historic interest (+2), while views outwards from the conservation area, across pasture fields to the north west, towards Gill Banks, are attractive and worthy of protection. At the north end of Stanley Street, the recent cluster of new buildings at Mill Dam, which are well conceived and possess a distinctive roof form and attractive detailing, effectively terminates views towards the north end of the street.
- 6.3.14 **Upper Brook Street**, which exits from the southern corner of The Gill, is a narrow, winding street, lined mainly with low, three storey buildings and very tight pavements which combine to create a very intimate pedestrian scale (+3). A noticeable characteristic of the street is the significant number of buildings that still retain visual evidence of earlier warehouse or industrial uses, such as upper storey loading doors, oversailing hoist catsheads and arched entranceways into small rear yards. However, this area of significant historic interest has been somewhat undermined by a series of poor quality adaptations to some elevations and the incorporation of shopfronts with weak design characteristics.

### 6.3.15 Architectural Quality

- 6.3.16 In **The Gill** the north row contains a number of important listed and unlisted buildings whose essential characteristics are balanced elevations of two and three stories and regular patterns of windows but with noticeably differing proportions and roof heights. Many of these properties front directly on to the paved areas of the square, which at the west end, are very deep in plan following recent environmental

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improvements, which have provided a positive enhancement of these attractive townhouses (+1).

- 6.3.17 Elsewhere around The Gill the buildings are often less distinctive in architectural terms. The east side of The Gill continues into Mill St where most of the houses are of two bays and three stories, with regular patterns of windows and consistent roof heights and pitches. Some of these buildings have been affected by small incremental changes to doors and windows, while some traditional renders and roughcasts have been painted with rather brash, synthetic colour schemes, which often jar with their more traditional neighbours. However, far greater damage has resulted from the insensitive adaptation of a small number of townhouses into light-industrial buildings. The significant changes made to the frontages have harmed the architectural interest of the individual buildings and had a correspondingly negative impact upon the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.3.18 On the south west side of The Gill only the former Sunday School displays any real architectural assurance with its contrasting red sandstone detailing and squared limestone masonry. Most of the other buildings here are quite modestly designed and detailed and are largely neutral in their impact. However, at the south edge of The Gill with the junction with Upper Brook St, the erection of a number of large footprint buildings in the later 20th century, of bulky form and poor design quality has seriously compromised the area's distinctive townscape interest (-1) and caused harm to the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.3.19 **Stanley Street** runs broadly parallel with Soutergate to the east but generally contains buildings of later date and humbler design, which are of much less importance in architectural terms. All of its buildings are evaluated as making a neutral contribution to the special character of the conservation area.
- 6.3.20 **Sun Street** consists entirely of narrow, single fronted buildings, mostly to three stories and generally with simple, thin cement door and window surrounds, which reinforce a strongly rhythmical sequence of elevations. All of the buildings are rendered and are generally coloured in creams and off-whites although somewhat more astringent colours have been given to a small number of properties on the south side. The north side shows more variation in building height and line and the ends of the row are anchored by buildings with more complex roof forms, while numbers 2 – 6 are given additional architectural interest through the use of sill bands, decorative window heads (No 2 & 4), a datestone (1857 – No 2) and cut ends to the exposed purlins in the gable end.
- 6.3.21 The buildings on **Star Street** are more mixed in treatment being generally wider or double fronted. No 4 is the best realised in design terms, with its broad, storied, timber bays containing wide coupled windows with transom lights under hipped roofs, and a simple hooded porch to the centrally placed entrance.

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- 6.3.22 Of the detached houses to the west of Sun St, only Oaklands has any architectural sophistication, with a T shaped plan, limestone walls (part rendered) and sandstone quoins, a series of small gables to the front roof, and a and a series of well conceived extensions, the building makes a very positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area, despite the recent introduction of PVCu windows.

## 6.4 Character Zone: Queen Street, Daltongate and Stonecross Area

### 6.4.1 Spatial Structure

- 6.4.2 This character zone includes the western edge of the urban core as well as the extensive but informal private grounds to Stonecross Mansion, which sit behind a tall stone boundary wall lined with mature trees. The key streets are Daltongate, the historically important but now somewhat minor route that drops downhill into the town from the west, and Queen Street, which runs at a right angle in a southwards direction from the west end of the Market place. Other secondary routes such as Stockbridge Lane and the finely grained, short residential streets that connect with Queen Street are also included in this zone.
- 6.4.3 Queen St has an almost continuous building frontage of tall two and three storey buildings of markedly different heights while Daltongate has a similar pattern at the narrow east end, and a much more open aspect on its north side as the hill is climbed. The shorter streets of Benson St and Cavendish St have more uniform terraced rows of three storey houses while Theatre St has much more winding form as it follows a historic route whose shape was dictated by the grounds of the former Lightburn House.
- 6.4.4 The area to the west of Queen street retains important historic remnants of a former 'backland' character in the form of long but quite broad rear plots extending westwards and some of the frontages retain covered entrances between buildings to access these rear yards. Unfortunately, some of these boundary divisions appear to have been lost to a recent cul-de-sac development in the south west of the area.

### 6.4.5 Townscape Character

- 6.4.6 The lower part of Daltongate rises quite steeply away from the west end of the Market Place and has a noticeably constricted feel due to the very narrow street width and shallow pavements, and the relatively tall commercial buildings which line it. The gradient becomes shallower and the street widens by the Lonsdale House Hotel, and the buildings on the north side of the street give way to a large area of car parking of distinctly weak urban character, although some individual mature

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trees and hedges around the edges do help ameliorate the more unfavourable aspects.

- 6.4.7 The view along the street, back down towards the Market Place provides a key viewpoint in the town (+6). A narrowing vista is deflected by the canted out, emphatically vertical form of No 1 King Street, which provides a dramatic and significant architectural termination to the street.
- 6.4.8 To the north west of the junction with Stockbridge Lane, on a prominent elevated site, is a group of mature, predominantly broadleaf woodland planting, contained within the very large garden of Stockbridge House. Despite the detrimental foreground presence of the 'Meat and Game Shop', this woodland creates a very positive backcloth to the townscape and creates a dramatic skyline feature from lower Daltongate that is of considerable importance to this part of the conservation area.
- 6.4.9 New development adjacent to the junction with Stockbridge Lane gives way to a further narrowing of the road between buildings tight up to the pavement before it reaches flatter terrain beyond Number 39, where the former Tollhouse (+2) has a major landmark presence in views along the street.
- 6.4.10 Beyond this, to the south west, the area assumes a broader grained character with a number of sizeable, detached properties set within more spacious gardens that are often screened from the road by tall stone boundary walls. This is especially true on the north side of the street where an important, long, serpentine masonry wall and belt of perimeter trees encloses the informal but extensively wooded and private grounds that surround the substantial country house of **Stonecross Mansion** (+7). The continuous canopy of trees in this area helps to create a distinctly tranquil and verdant feel, which, with its noticeable lack of buildings, is a welcome contrast to the near by bustle and activity associated with the commercial part of the town. The screened vista along the street means that the mansion itself is largely obscured from view but distant glimpses of its complex roofscape are possible at a number of points along its length. This narrow, tree fringed 'lane' continues towards the edge of the conservation area alongside a mixture of older and newer development, the majority of which displays generally good form and positive design character.
- 6.4.11 **Stockbridge Lane** leaves the town, uphill to the north west, alongside the deeply incised, wooded valley of Gill Becks to the north, over which at has a number of important views. This is one of the least developed parts of the conservation area. It is dominated by a rural landscape character that is relatively broad in scale and open in character and defined by pasture fields and extensive garden plots enclosed by a series of distinctive pattern of drystone walls, low hedges and individual mature trees. Views of the surrounding undulating countryside and the

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significant woodland planting in Gill Becks are an almost ever present and contribute significantly to the special appearance of the conservation area. Such outward views are often curtailed by the undulating form of the landscape beyond the boundary of the conservation area, which act as strong skyline features. Buildings are few and mainly aligned close to the lane but they do help to punctuate the landscape and add to its variety and vital character. The modern cul-de-sac development at Stonecross Gardens is set amongst the well-wooded and secluded former grounds and gardens of Stonecross Mansion. The tall boundary walls and woodland planting help to screen the development and allow it to be concealed within the wider landscape setting without causing undue harm.

- 6.4.12 **Queen Street** is a solidly built up street distinguished by high quality, mainly Georgian townhouses and retail buildings. There is considerable architectural merit as a result of the many intricately modelled frontages, a wide variation to building widths and eaves heights, and a notably erratic building line, especially on the west side, which displays significant projection and recession. These factors combine to create a distinctly staccato effect in the streetscape. No 13 projects so far forward that it provides a marked 'pinch point' in the street and welcome visual incident. Two later, larger footprint buildings are visible on the east side but both the Town Council building and the former Temperance Hotel of 1851 (again by M Thompson) harmonise well in the street through the use of sensitively designed frontages and complementary eaves heights. The south west corner has an inset limestone fountain to encourage temperance. Unfortunately, the southern part of Queen St has been disrupted by the path of the modern County Road.
- 6.4.13 The emergence, at the north end of Queen St, into the Market place offers a major strategic viewpoint within the conservation area which takes in the long tapering vista east towards Market Street while the eye enjoys the competing attractions of the very fine offset form of the tall No 1 King Street by George Webster (now the Oxfam charity shop); Nos 9 & 9A Market Place with its formerly open, arcaded base and boldly modelled windows; and the lower, more vernacular form of Hewitt's Chemists with its complex roof, gothic gable window and a pair of fine shopfronts of 1837, with associated historically important insignia and signage. This viewpoint, with a glimpse of green hills and the Hoad Monument beyond, is one of the most striking and important in the conservation area.
- 6.4.14 **Theatre St, Benson St and Cavendish St (+1)** join Queen St from the east. The latter two are short linear streets defined by mostly unadorned, three storey terraced rows with very consistent building lines. Both streets have westward vistas terminated by handsome buildings on Queen St, while the east end of Cavendish St frames a very fine view of the classical fronted Coronation Hall.

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Theatre St provides a welcome contrast through its more meandering form although the lack of high quality buildings here and the leakage of space that occurs to the north as a result of the large car park mean that it's potential is significantly diluted.

- 6.4.15 The **Theatre St car park** (-2) and the private parking area beyond, has been formed from the demolition of a number of backland buildings situated in the former linear yards behind Market Place, and the loss of some buildings which fronted directly onto Theatre St. A negative consequence of this clearance is that the space is now largely defined by the backs of commercial buildings where design quality is frequently poor, where modern services have been routed and housed, and where little has been spent on actively maintaining fabric. The unadorned blank rear wall of the Theatre and Assembly Rooms is particularly scarring in views along Theatre St and Benson St from the west. As a result of these factors the car park is an ill-defined and amorphous space on two levels, of very poor urban form and character, that is one of the major detractors in the townscape of the conservation area.
- 6.4.16 **Queens Court**, which connects with Market Place to the north, is a somewhat neglected and awkwardly shaped passage that has benefited only slightly from modern, small-scale enhancement works to the floorscape. Its south end is now broad and open-ended following building demolition in the mid C20th but along its northern half it narrows to a passage where it is routed through brick buildings which are mostly of poor design and construction quality.

## 6.4.17 Architectural Quality

6.4.18 **Queen St** is a street with a very significant architectural presence. It consists predominantly of buildings of Grade II listed status and there are no buildings that have a negative impact on the special character or appearance of the area. All of the following buildings are listed unless otherwise indicated.

6.4.19 The National Westminster Bank and attached house (+2) is probably by Thompson or Websters of Kendal. It has two large, separate, classically inspired facades built of superior ashlar limestone. Both have rusticated bases while the house has a deeply moulded pediment and the bank a modillion cornice and a massive central pedestal, inscribed 'Bank', with flanking scrolls, and a main entrance, which has Tuscan columns in-antis. The juxtaposition of scales and architectural refinement between these two elevations and the much more unassuming group in the neighbouring 1-3 Market Place creates one of the most visually arresting arrangements of buildings in the town.

The Globe Inn and The Kings Head are adjoining public houses in contrasting forms – the former in a simple, regular Georgian style with fine sash-windows with glazing bars, the latter being more vernacular in composition, but somewhat weakened by C20th casements.

6.4.20 Town House is stuccoed with a symmetrical elevation that is enlivened by windows with individual label moulds, and a doorcase with engaged ionic columns and a moulded pediment, approached via steps with attractive iron rails. Beyond this are three more modest houses – Nos 18-22 – but with yard entrances and a shopfront surround to No 18 that contains good quality carved scrolled brackets.

6.4.21 The Virginia House Hotel is a former townhouse of handsome proportions, which is given further emphasis by being slightly set back behind the line of the neighbouring buildings. Of three stories, with an attic and a basement, and coloured roughcast walls, the house has a formal arrangement of windows and a high, off-centred entrance, reached via steps, containing an original nine, raised and fielded panel door under an overlight with diagonal glazing, and a doorcase with a reeded architrave and roundels flanked by elongated scrolls supporting a cornice. This building makes a major contribution to the architectural interest of Queen St and provides an important termination to the view westwards along Benson St. Sefton House is a narrower version of Virginia House but with a pedimented doorcase and engaged Tuscan columns in the end bay. The steps and rails are modern and detract slightly but the six-panel door looks convincing.

6.4.22 On the east side, at the north end, are a number of retail buildings with flats above, of two, three and four stories with painted rendered walls. All have shopfronts though only Nos 5, 7 and 17 are of good quality. House No 13 projects towards the

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street and has white stucco walls and a modern shopfront. No 15 has been recently restored. It has pink-stuccoed walls and a fine mid C19th stone shopfront, architraved windows and a bracketed eaves. No 19 is a corner building now provided with a harmful modern shop fascia.

- 6.4.23 Of the unlisted buildings, the Town Council Offices, possibly by Francis Webster and formerly part used as a bank, is of two phases, and has a classical inspired frontage with rusticated ground floor, an accentuated cornice, moulded roundheaded doorways and plain corner pilasters. It may be a refronting of an earlier building. The former Temperance Hall (now the GSK Social Club) also has classically symmetrical form and some good quality stonework detailing but it has undoubtedly suffered from some poorly conceived alterations, especially on the Cavendish St side, that are associated with its modern institutional use. Neither building is listed but the principle elevations have a largely positive impact upon the special architectural interest of the town.
- 6.4.24 The backland plots behind Queen St to the west have been affected by pockets of mundane C20th development, as well as an extensive recent cul-de-sac development in Fallowfield Lane. This estate contains mostly standardized housing solutions and an introverted road pattern that is primarily influenced by car use and highway design standards, with poor permeability into the surrounding network of streets. It relates poorly to the specific density, grain and pattern of the adjacent historic core of the town and generally fails to respond adequately to the sense of local distinctiveness visible near by. This new development cannot be said to have made a positive addition to the special character of the conservation area.
- 6.4.25 **Cavendish Street** is lined by mostly continuous frontages with the south side providing the more consistent architectural quality. Here, at the east end, a phased row of Grade II listed terraced houses display a regular rhythm of windows, good doorway details and some appropriate shopfronts, in what are now assertively coloured rendered frontages. Towards the west end of the row, a flat roofed infill building with a lower eaves line and flatter form, and fenestration of noticeably weaker design, has a detrimental impact on the character of the street. Its long blank sidewall encloses a deep, stark parking forecourt that fronts a heavily restored, cream colour-washed office building of uncertain date. At the very west end is a row of four small cottages whose architectural character has been eroded by the insertion of modern, poorly detailed, doors windows.
- 6.4.26 The north side of Cavendish Street is generally less successful in design terms, with an assortment of rendered and pebble-dashed fronts with some, like Nos 1 and 5 retaining elements of moderately good quality, while others are further diminished by a variety of modern changes to doors and windows. Numbers 1A, 5 and 7 contain successfully modified traditional shopfronts but other shopfronts along this side are marred by ill-considered modern details.

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- 6.4.27 Although there are no listed buildings on the short length of **Benson St**, most of the continuous row that forms the south side retain many mid - late C19th features such as panelled entrance doors with diagonally glazed fanlights; sash windows, with glazing bars, which diminish in height towards the eaves; and a number of blind windows in the upper floors. Although some of these three storey houses are now painted in brash synthetic colours the row nevertheless makes a very worthy contribution to the special character of the area. The north side is mostly taken up with the rear part of, and later annexes to, the town council offices, which are of poor form and visual character. The south east junction with Theatre Street is formed by the single storey shop premises with tall multi-light windows, that, but for its apsidal end and swept roof, is of modest architectural interest.
- 6.4.28 **Theatre St** feels narrow and enclosed only at its west end, by the north side of the Town Council offices, with its unfortunate mishmash of window designs, and the opposite row containing the side of No 19 Queen St and Nos 1 and 3 Theatre St where rear extensions formed around formerly open rear yards and various alterations probably conceal a building with much earlier origins. To the south east is No 5, a recently restored building that was probably built as a coach house to serve an inn on Market St.
- 6.4.29 **Daltongate** contains many fine buildings at its lower end, the majority of which are listed Grade II. On the north side are a group of mainly C18th public houses and shops, with flats over, which share similar construction characteristics – gabled roofs in slate and uncoloured rendered fronts with balanced or symmetrical arrangements of simple sashed windows, some with coupled ground floor windows and some with wide yard entrances. The Hope and Anchor bucks the trend slightly by having a markedly asymmetrical pattern of windows distributed about its front and a bright blue colour scheme. Nos 2 and 6 are currently showing signs of neglect to their render and joinery elements.
- 6.4.30 On the opposite side The Lonsdale House Hotel and Old Daltongate House have both been sensitively repaired in recent years and display a range of typical early and mid Georgian detailing to their well proportioned fronts and local slate roofs. The two houses behind share a grade II listed, rock faced, garden wall in a gothic style, of great quality and charm. No 15 – 21 is a row of early C19th rendered houses, listed but now much altered. At the bottom of the street are a number of rendered, two bay, three storey cottages of positive form; and a contrasting, richly decorated, late C19th building with lateral chimney stacks and lavish polychromatic brickwork, with mouldings and a fretwork impost band in terracotta. Although unlisted, and with a poorly utilised coupled shopfront, the latter building still makes a positive addition to the streetscape here.
- 6.4.31 Further up beyond Stockbridge Lane is Nos 31 – 43, a trio of plain early C19th houses with sash windows with small panes. Beyond is the hexagonal sided former

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Tollhouse (+2), which from the south west approach appears to almost jut out into the road. Opposite is Linden side, an unlisted rendered house of c.1870 possessing bold bracketed eaves and verges, stone window surrounds – those at upper floor and gable with small coupled, round headed lights, and good quality ashlar chimneys. A pair of cottages is attached to the east, of plain form but with attractive simple open porches with cast iron brackets. Adjacent are cobbled pavements with limestone edging that are now neglected but of some import. Fair View, to the south west, and presently beyond the conservation area boundary, is a large, classically proportioned, Grade II listed house in rock faced limestone with a pedimented centre and Tuscan columned porch, reputedly by Websters of Kendal, that is mostly hidden behind tall walls to the roadside. It's unlisted single storey lodge, by the entrance, is now neglected but of some architectural interest.

- 6.4.32 Stonecross Mansion is the largest traditional building within the conservation area. Probably by JW Grundy of Ulverston it is partly Gothic and partly Scottish Baronial in style – a typically eclectic mix for a new country mansion set in its own, modest grounds, for a successful industrialist in the 1870s. It is distinguished by a purposefully asymmetrical and complex design to wall surfaces and roofscape with gothic detailing, such as machicolations and crenulations to the porch, gables and chimneys and baronial style elements like the tower and oriel windows. It is a lavish and extravagant house which has been subject to partial restoration after a serious fire to the south east corner of the house in March 2004.
- 6.4.33 Immediately on the left of **Stockbridge Lane**, and in prominent view from lower Daltongate, is the 'meat and Game shop', a large converted building now in commercial use, which has walls painted light-pink and modern fenestration, a cluttered curtilage and panel boundary fencing. The building is important in historic terms, having probably seen use as a congregational chapel in the mid C18th as well as one of the town's first theatres, but the modern changes and the condition of the front yard combine to create significant visual harm in this part of the conservation area.
- 6.4.34 Stockbridge House, listed Grade II, is possible of two phases, with a rear reputedly dated to 1740 and an early C19th detached, rendered front, of two stories plus attic, with a symmetrical composition with sill and cornice bands, tripartite sashed windows and a central door with Tuscan porch. The roadside end is dominated by a tall, slender, round-headed stair light that rises through the main floors. Beyond are parallel rows of small terraced cottages and outbuildings, with small openings, uncoloured rendered walls and a positive appearance, that flank, at this point, the very narrow, un-paved lane.

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## 6.5 Character Zone: The Town Centre

### 6.5.1 Spatial Structure

- 6.5.2 This character area focuses on the densely built-up historic core of the town that is located between the modern A590 County Road and the north side of the Buxton Place car park and which extends eastwards to include the lower part of Hart Street and Burlington Street and all those parts in between.
- 6.5.3 The spatial framework in this character area is greatly influenced by the configuration and hierarchy of medieval streets that is centred on the historically important and highly characteristic Market Place and the streets that radiate from it, although Brogden St and New Market St are much later, being created as new commercial streets in the Victorian period on the site of formal gardens, following the disintegration of the Lightburn House estate in c1870.
- 6.5.4 The Market Place is a curiously short and very narrow public space that is given additional interest through the distinctive form of it's west end, where the pattern of three converging streets is arranged in a noticeably staggered fashion so that there is no clear principal route outwards from what appears, initially, to be a contained and closed end to the space. To the east, the Market Place narrows, more conventionally, into the slender and appreciably curving form of Lower Market Street. Today, the lower end of this street is brutally truncated by the modern County Road dual carriageway and its associated roundabout to the south east, but previously it gave way into the long, broad, meandering form of The Ellers and the parallel Back Ellers (now Neville St) roads, which early C19th maps suggest had clear mediaeval antecedents and a likely greater significance to the urban character of the town than either possesses today.
- 6.5.5 The clearance of a significant part of the formerly tight-knit, very finely grained backlands area immediately to the north of Market Place and Market Street to form much needed car parking in the modern era, has greatly impaired the historic integrity and visual character of the town. Earlier maps show this area to have had an unusual spatial organisation, which was influenced by the route of the then open beck, and which possessed a complex labyrinth of buildings, interweaving alleyways and thin and often tapering rear plots or yards. Traces of this area's former intricacy and some suggestion of the lack of the clear separation between private and public elements is still evident around the margins of the otherwise very open car park, and is well preserved in places such as Buxton Mews and Smith's Court.
- 6.5.6 The loss of the majority of houses lining Brewery St in the mid C20th assisted in the creation of the partly open sided and weakly defined Union Place car park and then allowed this former secondary street to assume greater importance as a part of the

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one way system through the town in the late C20th. Hart St (formerly Canal St) was the chief route into the town from the east throughout the post mediaeval era, a role it lost after the County Road was created in the 1960s. Burlington St and the dense grid of residential streets to the east were created in the second half of the C19th.

## 6.5.7 Townscape Character

- 6.5.8 Although surprisingly small in scale, the narrow, triangular **Market Place** is one of two visually memorable and historically important public open spaces in the centre of the town. It is distinguished by a rising gradient towards the broader west end, where the vista is fixed by the strong vertical form of the market cross/war memorial and is closed by a dramatic juxtaposition of buildings of differing heights and formal and informal compositions. In the corners are a series of very important surprise entry points from narrow side streets that are largely hidden from view from the majority of the Market Place, while the positioning of Nos 9/9A with No 10 Market Place articulates a small corner space of great significance. The view from the east, along this 'closed vista', is one of the most distinctive in the conservation area and of tremendous importance to any appreciation of the area's special character and appearance.
- 6.5.9 The other edges to the space have well defined and broadly consistent building lines with busy facades to buildings of markedly different heights but a largely similar architectural character. The broad floorscape here, of simply laid, very dark setts is a distinctive and important part of the space and contributes significantly to its special character and appearance. There is a very marked sense of enclosure, which continues as the space tapers eastwards into the very narrow **Market St (+1)** and then curves away out of sight before broadening again slightly by Union St. It then flares out appreciably towards the modern roundabout where the building lines still respect the original alignment formed by the merging of the two Ellers streets. As a result of the occasionally indented nature of the building lines and the particular arrangement of the junctions with Brogden St and Union Street a number buildings, such as Nos 34, 46 and 51 provide significant punctuation or focus points and valuable visual incident in the townscape. There are also a number of strategically important vistas formed along Market St towards buildings or structures with landmark significance: from both ends of Market St towards the outstanding architecture of the TSB Bank; and towards the south, out beyond the conservation area boundary, towards the recent Lantern House development and the tall limestone chimney stack to the rear of Rachel's Court.
- 6.5.10 It is also significant that the very dark setts, that form such a distinctive and visually important surface to the highway in the Market Place, continue into the very narrow lower part of Market St to create a welcome and harmonious appearance to the floorscape throughout the main part of the area. A further memorable and characteristic aspect of lower Market St is the way that the street becomes so

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narrow that the southern footway disappears completely to leave the buildings set right up against the dark setts at the road edge.

- 6.5.11 At the very end of Market St the barrier created by the narrow corridor of the dual carriageway requires the creation of a traffic crossing and an associated plethora of highway furniture, which combine to create an uninviting and intimidating pedestrian experience.
- 6.5.12 The other key open space, the **County Square** (+8), has mid-Victorian origins and appears much more formal in composition, partly as a result of the manifestly civic or public character of most of the buildings which enclose it. This irregular space is dominated by the muted yellow/pale blue stucco of the large, highly modelled, classically fronted Coronation Hall and is further enlivened by the powerful contrast formed with the very flamboyant, Jacobean styled Barclays Bank, opposite, with its rich red sandstone walls. The neighbouring buildings have some value in the way that their scale and form helps to organise and define the square as a public space but they tend to be less remarkable in intrinsic design terms while the choice of materials chosen for their construction and decoration makes for a rather insipid combination of colours in the group as a whole. Although there is pedestrian access around the edges of the square the public realm is dominated by the needs of the motorcar and the provision of a central roundabout, and consequently there is little desire for people to congregate or to dwell and enjoy the character of the space, while the adjacent, noisy dual carriageway provides a further disincentive to linger.
- 6.5.13 However, the positive impact of these two vital spaces in the centre of the town is significantly offset by the visual harm caused by the large, irregular expanse of the **Buxton Place car park** (-5), set along the northern edge of this character zone. This heavily used facility is formed as a negative or left over space, carved out from the former dense urban fabric. The lasting impression is of a shapeless and featureless area of tarmac enclosed by a random assortment of mostly bland or poorly maintained backs to buildings and gable ends that were never intended to be seen. Except for the two important listed buildings near the centre of the space there are no other formal elevations or distinctive landmarks to navigate by and very little clear permeability with the retail centre of the town.
- 6.5.14 Some evidence of the former complexity formed by the pattern of public and/or private yards and alleyways remains along the west edge of the car park, of which the best example is Buxton Mews, where a narrow, linear yard and distinctive grouping of buildings helps to define a space of significant character and appearance. Unfortunately, there are a number of other alleys and passageways here, that provide important links with the town, and which are of great historic importance and possess significant visual potential, which are generally run down and enclosed by buildings of poor design quality. Examples include The Weint (- 3) and Bolton's Place, which are damaged by poor, bland building interfaces and so

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offer very poor public environments for pedestrians, while other passages, such as Smiths Court and Lower Brook St, have recently seen some of their poorer aspects partly ameliorated by improved paving and lighting schemes.

- 6.5.15 **Union Street car park** suffers from similar, but less damaging problems. Again there are a number of buildings 'left over' from earlier clearances, although these generally possess greater visual interest than those in Buxton Place, but the main issue here is the way that the large space lacks strong definition and dissipates into the adjoining area of the large roundabout and the corridor of the dual carriageway, although recent environment improvements have now begun to alleviate the worst effects.
- 6.5.16 **Brewery St** marks the east side of the car park although the loss of buildings to its west edge means that it lacks sufficient definition at this point. The east side is dominated by attractive, domestic scaled buildings belonging to the Hartley's Brewery complex, which come right up to the very narrow pavement back and which, with their distinctive yellow rendered walls, give the street a positive image, while the contrasting form of the brick built 'Bird in the Hand' public house gives a valuable corner emphasis to the important junction with Hart St/Fountain St. The small open area that is formed to the south of No 11 and which is fronted by an elevation which contains exposed stonework to the ground floor with an oriel window above, provides an important variation to the building line that adds character to the street. Behind this row is the large mass of the orange brick brewery tower (\*), which figures in important views across the area, providing an important visual counterpoint to the onion domed clock tower of the TSB Bank on Market St, while firmly marking the eastern extent of the retail part of the town centre. Only the very bottom part of Hart St is included within the conservation area and despite a few attractive buildings the street here lacks a significant sense of enclosure and continuity.
- 6.5.17 **Union St** is a short street that is positively enclosed by rendered and brightly colourwashed buildings of two and a half and three storeys, of generally consistent height and regular alignment. The vista to the north east is agreeably terminated by the very slender, battlemented gothic tower of the former Catholic Church on Tarnside, and is a noteworthy view within the conservation area.
- 6.5.18 **King St** is a very busy commercial street flanked by almost continuous rows of shops and retail outlets. The west row consists almost entirely of grade II listed buildings with rendered and stuccoed walls now painted in various colours, which mostly share a common eaves line and an ordered rhythm of window openings but with very irregular frontage widths. The east side forms a marked contrast as here building heights and elevational treatment vary considerably and there is some progression and recession to the alignment of buildings. The west row is anchored at the north end by the dominant taller, double-fronted form of the former Queens

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Hotel, while the east row has the distinctively curving form of No 38 King St as it turns into Fountain St. The south end of the street narrows very dramatically a short way before its connection with the Market Place between buildings, which, with one exception, are of high architectural quality. The short, pinched passage that is created is a memorable and important one, not so much because of the vista that is formed into the Market Place, but rather because of the way it contributes to the sudden and dramatic opening out into the upper level of that dramatic enclosed space.

- 6.5.19 **Brogden St** was formed from an earlier access to Lightburn House, which was then extended to the south in c.1875 to provide direct connection with planned development in Lightburn Park, which took place sporadically during the last few decades of the C19th. The street retains both its historically narrow junction with Market Street as well as a notable eastwards curve where the building skirts the Coronation Hall and the adjacent Post Office building. Kent Place, an early C19th house pleasantly set back from the road within its own gardens, is the only building to survive from the period before the area was developed into a shopping street.
- 6.5.20 The informal space formed between Cross St and the modern Glynis House building is a weakly defined, very poor urban environment. The area contains a cluster of tall C20th century buildings of uncharacteristically large mass and very mixed design quality. The rear of the Coronation Hall has blank and uninspiring walls while the modern extensions and curtilage to the rear of the post office are extremely ill conceived in design terms. Glynis House (-14), opposite, is a lacklustre monolithic 1960's structure that is inappropriate in scale, design and material terms. The tall Roxy Cinema (+3) of 1936-7 has an art deco inspired frontage but the short cul-de-sac space in front of the entrance is too shallow to show off its modest decoration to good affect. The floorscape here and next to the unappealingly designed public toilets is poorly detailed and maintained and unattractive to users (-2).
- 6.5.21 **New Market St** (+2) was created c.1880-90 as a deliberate attempt to introduce a modern, fashionable shopping environment to Ulverston. It is very straight thoroughfare with completely regular building lines and a width that is appreciably narrow in relation to the generally tall buildings that flank it. The buildings along the west side are individually built with, unusually for the town, regular plot widths and similar building heights. Many of these buildings utilise expensive facing materials and employ highly decorative surfaces including polychromatic brickwork, machine cut sandstone and terracotta. Because of these factors the street presents a noteworthy and very positive contrast to the adjacent retail area and to the town as a whole. The one limitation of the street is that despite having such a strikingly enclosed linear space it unfortunately lacks strong termination at either end in the form of a high quality building or other visual focus.

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## 6.5.22 Architectural Quality

- 6.5.23 The **Market Place** consists entirely of Grade II listed buildings on all sides, whose combined quality make it probably the most important of architectural spaces within the conservation area. No 9 & 9A (+2) with a lead rainwater hopper dated to 1736, is certainly the most eye-catching and unusual in the group, with its bold black and cream paint scheme, which emphasises the formerly open ground floor arcade and its rectangular piers with alternating rustication, the moulded semicircular arches, quoins, cornices and window architraves. Also distinctive is the asymmetrical arrangement of windows on the south side and the roof form, with its tall chimneys. This building is almost certainly an early market building, which could well have contained a manorial court above. The neighbouring Hewitt's Chemists Shop (+2) (marked on OS Maps as No 1 King St), is important not only because of its lower and more complicated form and street front, which contains a gothic gable window, fine shopfronts and historically important signage, but also because of its rear elevation, which retains uncommon C17th and Georgian fenestration and, even more remarkably, a timber framed gable. The architectural contrast established between these two prominent buildings is one of the major pleasures in the conservation area.
- 6.5.24 To the west end is the Farmers' Arms, a rendered Georgian inn with C19th alterations, which is flanked by projecting buildings (all Grade II listed) with gabled ends, bracketed verges and decent shopfronts facing the street, which help to form an important small private courtyard in front of the public house that opens out onto the street. Another listed public house, The Braddylls Arms, on the north side has cream painted rendered walls and a prominent inset yard entrance with elliptical arched head. On the south side of the Market Place the group of listed buildings are slightly taller and wider and, between Nos 4 and 8, share shared eaves heights and patterns of openings, with shopfronts possessing ample design merit.
- 6.5.25 The two main shopping streets contain a large number of listed buildings as well as a significant number of unlisted buildings that make a very positive contribution to the special architectural interest of the conservation area. **Market St** has a few grade II listed buildings at its west end, the most dominant of which is the large cream coloured Sun Hotel, modernised in the mid C20th, but retaining an earlier bay window at the west end and a fine engaged Tuscan columned doorcase in the 3rd bay. The building has been marred by an undistinguished 3 storey 1980s extension to the east end, at the turn into New Market St. On the opposite side of New Market St are a pair of three storey, early C19th shops with ill matching decorative schemes to roughcast walls. The shopfronts have been altered but a good quality timber modillioned gutter cornice spans both parts. At the junction with Brogden St is No 34 Market St/No 2 Brogden St, a very fine three storey shop premises in a cream and green colour scheme, dated to 1879, with a pair of

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excellent, original, shopfronts and good quality moulded decoration to the windows and to the gable verge on Brogden St (+2). Unfortunately, the composition as a whole has been weakened by the extension of the next door chemist's store into the right hand bay and the resulting modification to the colour scheme.

- 6.5.26 Nos 46 – 68 Market St is a continuous row of separately built, low 3 storey, grade II listed buildings, sharing the same eaves with single or occasionally double fronted elevations and modest upper stories, and all possessing shopfronts, some of which, such as Nos 46-50, 54 and 56 (+2), are of very good design quality, and incorporate distinctive rock faced stallrisers. All have rendered or stuccoed fronts, generally painted in appropriately subdued colours although one or two of the shopfronts now have aggressively bright colour schemes, which jar in the context of the street. Further south are two adjoining Grade II listed houses apparently of c.1800, but almost certainly having C17th or earlier origins as evidenced by a steep roof pitch, now covered in local blue/grey slates, long timber mullioned window to the rear and a round chimney stack set at the junction with the neighbouring Ellers House, which possess a pedimented Tuscan doorcase to its front.
- 6.5.27 The former TSB Bank (+1), Listed Grade II, was completed in 1838 and is one of the major buildings by George Webster of Kendal. In limestone, with rock-faced rustication to the ground floor base and fine ashlar to the upper floor, with eaves and storey bands. The building is symmetrical on the front facing Union St, in three bays with a central bay which projects slightly under a pediment and contains a porch with plain Doric columns in antis, and a balcony over with excellent cast iron railings with anthemion and pendent motifs. The eaves and pediment have deeply modelled modillions and the roof is further embellished by a well-conceived clock tower, added in 1844. The south end is based on the central bay to the front. Pevsner has called this “the best building in the town” and it is certainly one of its major architectural highlights.
- 6.5.28 On the north side, at the west end, is a sequence of narrow grade II listed houses with C20th shopfronts, some of which have been altered or are now inadequately maintained, while No 11& 11A has a broader front with a symmetrical arrangement of windows and twin shopfronts. On the east side of the junction with Union St are a pair of listed houses that turn the corner, with rusticated bases and roughcast upper stories, and a faceted ground floor corner.
- 6.5.29 Of the unlisted buildings in Market St Nos 13, 15, 23 and 39 stand out as having noteworthy architectural value in this local context largely as a result of the positive incorporation of details such as brick or masonry pilasters, or moulded cornices, while No 41 is of greater interest due to the unusual but pleasing detailing to the upper floors, which Pevsner describes as “very weird (sic)...pilasters with bases that are no bases and capitals that are no capitals”. The overall positive effect is somewhat spoiled however, by the very poor modern ground floor shopfront. The

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Cooperative Society buildings at Nos 36 - 44, the bulk of which lie on Brogden St, also has animated upper stories of rock faced limestone with cut sandstone detailing and a very lively, steep roofline incorporating gables, but again the ground floor has been subjected to very poor shopfront adaptations imposed onto older, now concealed, elements. The building nevertheless has a largely positive influence on the character of the streetscape here.

- 6.5.30 The west side of **King Street** consists almost wholly of grade II listed buildings displaying late C18th and EC19th details. No 1 King St (+4), by George Webster of c.1840, on a very conspicuous corner site at the junction with Market St, is perhaps the most visually arresting and important, with its finely judged balancing of vertical and horizontal elements, high quality decorative details and attractive shopfront. Also listed grade II is the long, continuous, but individually built row containing Nos 7 – 31 (No 7=+4). This possess an almost consistent eaves line above walls with rendered and colourwashed finishes, but with frontages that are marked by a randomness in the vertical positioning and size of window openings to the upper floors and enlivened by the use of moulded window cornices, pediments or architraves, and bracketed cornices in some of the properties. The best preserved and most sophisticated in design terms are Nos 7, 15 and 17. The quality of the shopfronts varies considerably and while a few, such as Nos 7, 11 and especially No 13, with its attached columns, bold cornice and limestone stallrisers, retain some pre C20th fabric, sadly none are anywhere near complete.
- 6.5.31 The buildings on the east side of King St vary much more in terms of form and architectural character. There are only three listed buildings: The Rose and Crown public house, of C17th date, with unusual triangulated window heads to the ground floor and retaining a low form typical of that period, but now much altered; and No 20, with a datestone suggesting origins in 1654 but also much altered in the C20th, with a disagreeable colour scheme to its rendered front but retaining parts of a late C19th double shopfront. At the south end of the street Nos 2&4, listed grade II also have C17th origins with C19th remodelling and a modified shopfront. Of the unlisted buildings, most of note and making a worthwhile contribution to the special architectural interest of the street are No34, with its rounded form but now spoiled by poor fenestration and a long, poorly conceived modern shopfront; No 30 of three floors with a full height rusticated pilaster, storey banding, elaborate window moulding and a sensitive new shopfront; No 28 with its fine Victorian shopfront complete with console brackets; the fine sandstone dormers to Nos 16&18; the window surrounds in No 14; and the scale and quality of materials in No 10 – 12.
- 6.5.32 There are also two modern buildings that have a very damaging impact on the special architectural interest of King St. No 8 King St (-25), is a mean spirited and coarse, grey brick and exposed concrete framed building from the 1960s (?) that is completely out of scale with its neighbours. It has a bland, utilitarian design, which

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includes a flush plate glass shopfront, and so sits extremely uncomfortably in the wider streetscape. It causes further harm by also blighting the appeal and potential charm of the adjoining passageways that connect with the Buxton Place car park. No 3 King St (-9), on the west side, is a low two-storey structure in the same charmless grey brick, windowless to the upper floor and with a long, nondescript, continuous shopfront.

- 6.5.33 The buildings that line the **County Square** all date from the later C19th or early C20th and have a characteristic 'fin-de-siecle' exuberance. In terms of physical mass the Coronation Hall, of c.1913 has the greatest presence (+3). Its chief elevation is in five bays, articulated by rusticated pilasters, with the end two projecting, and with a rusticated base. The central entrance bay is framed by debased columns that support a balcony, from which further taller columns, with pedestals but without capitals, rise to meet a simple pediment, whose deeply moulded entablature continues around the eaves. Architraved windows diminish in size and number up the building and there are oculi in the end bays. Notwithstanding its mannerist styling the building has a largely positive impact on the special character and appearance of the conservation area. Attached at the north end, and forming an awkward juxtaposition of scales with the Coronation Hall, is the Post Office of 1914. A simple building with a subdued colour scheme, its is partly enlivened on the west side by an ornate entrance bay with pilasters, which form a tall, doorcase with crowning scrolls, and then continue upwards to frame a small recessed bay window. It retains in its limestone plinth a small cupped foothold used by police to check the security of the interior.
- 6.5.34 Opposite is the Grade II listed Barclays Bank (+7), originally the Bank of Liverpool of C.1902, as evidenced by the carved Liver Bird set in the Dutch gable. It has an expressively asymmetrical form in Triassic red sandstone with ornate Jacobean Revival detailing such as grid pattern and storied bay windows, turrets, intricate gables and tall chimneys. This building is one of the major delights in the town and it adds special interest not only to the appearance of the County Square but also to views along the County Road. At the junction with Cavendish St is the unlisted The Old Library (+1). Probably of two phases, with the north part that fronts Theatre Street dated to 1882, it has a typical Ulverston mix of squared limestone masonry and sandstone detailing to the quoins and to many of the window reveals and door heads, and a complex roofscape, with coved and cusped barge and eaves boards to gables and dormers, and crested ridge tiles. It emphasises the corner turn through the use of a faceted form and an ornate moulded doorway with hood on scrolled brackets. It has a beneficial impact on the special architectural interest of the conservation area and subtly compliments the other public buildings in County Square.

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- 6.5.35 On the north side, between Theatre St and New Market St, is a tall two and a half storey building with a circular front dated to 1887. Although possessing elaborately bracketed banding above the first floor windows, cut sandstone lintels and a pair of large, coupled dormer windows, the building is somewhat flawed by the use of a steep mansard roof and nondescript ground floor shop openings with a continuous fascia over, the latter tending to over-emphasise the building's already top-heavy appearance.
- 6.5.36 **New Market St** contains mostly late C19th and early C20th buildings, of three and a half stories at the north end and two and a half or three stories towards the south end. Only the former Midland, now HSBC Bank is of national importance, being listed Grade II. Built in a very light coloured sandstone the rather severe, asymmetrical front is enlivened with plain sill bands, an ornate over-door with incised foliage decoration, and a name panel above the cornice enriched with volutes and a cartouche.
- 6.5.37 Other unlisted buildings on the west side of the street generally use less expensive materials but often in a more exuberant way. No 8, of c.1880, utilizes red brick and pale sandstone to door and window surrounds, impost bands and to the cornice, which sits on ornately carved brackets. The three and a half storeys diminish in both size and the degree of decoration as they ascend the building and are marked by sandstone banding, while the roof has a brick parapet with geometric panels set within. Attached to the south is a later three-storey extension (Nos 10&12), without parapets, which uses similar materials but in a far more restrained fashion. No 14 is a steel framed building with wide window openings to the upper floors, dating to c.1900, which is clad with glazed white bricks and terracotta detailing. Like its neighbour no 12, the ground floor is now fitted with a very unsympathetic plate glass shopfront. No 16, The Victoria Building of 1887, has a freely gothic gabled front with sandstone detailing to squared limestone walls, and it retains its fine original tall shopfront, one of the best on this side of the street. All of these buildings have a largely positive influence on the special interest of the conservation area.
- 6.5.38 Nos 18&20 share almost contemporaneous construction dates, elevational proportions and similar modes of polychromatic orange and yellow brick with terracotta decoration. No 18 has a full width first floor window and a modern faux shopfront with an insensitive colour scheme to No 20. No 26 has been given a rich scheme of ornamentation in the form of moulded cornices and architraves, panelled pilasters and a pedimented head to the central window opening on the first floor. It also possesses a well-proportioned shopfront whereas No 22&24 is now badly disfigured by a modern plate glass ground floor opening. Nos 22&24 are narrower premises in the same bay and they share with No 26 matching construction materials – squared limestone blocks with buff sandstone detailing although the arrangement of windows about the elevations differ and the decoration is simpler.

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No 28 of c.1900 retains a very fine original tall shopfront and a full width first floor window (possibly altered) with an added top storey. All of these buildings generally have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.

- 6.5.39 On the east side the Market Hall was rebuilt in 1935 following fire in a low horizontal form, of orange brick with pale, cement composite detailing. In design terms it is quite well realised but its low form offers little sense of enclosure to a street that is otherwise strongly characterised by tall buildings. At the north end is a two-storey row of three shop premises in four bays, with good brickwork, fine cut sandstone, mullioned windows, a decorative cornice with parapet and, except for Nos 1&3, decent shopfronts. No 17 – 33 is a 1960s, large footprint, office block with shops below. It has Westmoreland green slate elements but is otherwise a very inferiorly designed modern building with very poorly detailed shopfronts and a rigid horizontal emphasis that acts against the very vertical form of the taller buildings opposite. In its detailing, form and scale it represents a very poor piece of architecture in this otherwise good quality street (-14).
- 6.5.40 **Brogden St** has a greater variation in building form and appearance and generally fewer buildings of architectural significance. The two most important are the unlisted, late Victorian row of three-storey shops opposite the market hall, which has good quality, narrowly coursed, squared limestone masonry walls with contrasting cut sandstone mullioned windows, which match the neighbouring Cooperative Society Buildings on Market St, and well designed shopfronts that share consistent characteristics such as reeded pilasters and Corinthian capitals. Further to the south is Kent Place, an irregular shaped C18th detached house of two or more phases, set back within in its own garden, that displays moulded window architraves, regular ashlar quoins, broken pedimented gable and a later Victorian storied bay window and moulded yellow brick chimney stacks. However, its pedigree has been significantly weakened by a modern pebbledash finish and concrete tiled roof. Nevertheless its architectural interest is still detectable and it is felt that it still makes a valuable contribution to the special character and appearance of the street.
- 6.5.41 Other buildings in Brogden St are of mixed quality with only the former Lancs. CC Offices and the front of the Ritz Cinema (+6), with its Art Deco influenced design, now possessing any worthwhile design merit, although other buildings may possess hidden value concealed beneath modern external renders.
- 6.5.42 On **Union St** only No 2 is protected by listing, at Grade II status because of its early C19th origins, symmetrical, roughcast frontage and simple Doric pilastered doorcase. Other unlisted buildings in the street share some of the same design characteristics and introduce elements such as storey banding and solid window surrounds while also introducing a range of coloured renders and roughcasts, although the architectural quality of many of the buildings has been weakened by

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well meaning but ill-considered changes to doors, windows and roofing materials. The best of the unlisted buildings are all on the west side: Nos 5&7, has shouldered architraves to the first floor windows and good shopfronts; the former church at no 9 (+2), with its excellent Gothicised front in painted terracotta and brick; and No 11-13, which despite a non traditional coloured stucco, still retains significant architectural interest through the use of a heavily moulded cornice to a series of now removed former shopfronts, a bracketed eaves and bold stone window surrounds.

- 6.5.43 **Brewery St** contains buildings associated with the former Hartleys brewery, which ceased brewing in 1991 and now acts only as a distribution depot. Alongside the north end of the street are offices and former houses, restored in the 1980s, but dated to 1757, which possess single and double fronted elevations with roughcast walls painted in an ochre/yellow colour, and a simple Doric door surround. The recessed frontage to No 11 is a key elevation in the row, not only for the architectural interest in its stone base, the stepped voussoirs to the door head and the well proportioned oriel window to the first floor, but also because of its historic associations as an entrance to the Brewery complex behind (+1). Likewise, the much later elevation at the south west corner of the site that displays a taller doorway, now poorly adapted, with rusticated sandstone surrounds in a wall of snecked limestone masonry.
- 6.5.44 The **Buxton Place** car park retains two important listed buildings at Grade II, which survived the clearances in the mid C20th. These are the No 1 Buxton Place, a tall, three storey, and roughcast house of c.1825 that was re-windowed in c1880. Attached is an almost contemporaneous Warehouse, which has a very distinctive appearance, that is founded on a balanced elevation containing a full height central loading bay with timber doors and loading platforms set on shallow corbels, under a catshead, and to the ground floor right, a cart entrance under an elliptical arch. The building reveals evidence of being formerly rendered but now displays its random rubble stonework and limestone dressings. This building has additional significance associated with its rare complete survival, acting as a reminder of the former industrial character of this part of the town.
- 6.5.45 Because of the way that they have been altered or extended, or as a result of ongoing poor maintenance, few of the other buildings in this large car park appear to have any great architectural or historic significance, although evidence of such interest may be concealed behind surface renders and roughcasts.
- 6.5.46 The part of **Hart St** within the conservation area is small and there are few buildings of any architectural value here. Two of some interest are Laurel Cottage (+1), a house probably of the early C19th but now spoiled by modern cement roughcast walls and later enlargement, but retaining intricately carved and perforated bargeboards and simple dropped finials. The other building is the terraced row of

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Nos 8 – 16 opposite, which has suffered from a confusion of new window fittings and porches of meagre design, but retains plain sill bands and, at No 14, a fine LC19th timber porch.

## 6.6 Character Zone: South of County Road

### 6.6.1 Spatial Structure

6.6.2 This character area consists of all that part of the conservation area that sits to the south of the A590 - County Road. Prince's St is a broadly linear continuation of Queen St but the latter's townhouses give way here to a pattern of larger detached and semi-detached properties set within quite spacious plots. On the east side of the street a modern infill development is kept back behind shallow set backs while Hazlecroft and Trinity Gardens to the west are recent cul-de-sac developments linked to Lightburn Road.

This area also contains land developed after the arrival of the railway and the dissolution of the Lightburn House estate around 1870. It contains a varied mix of civic, religious and commercial buildings around Victoria Road and an extensive grid of urban workers housing to the south and east.

The northern part of Victoria Road consists of a significant, broadly rectangular civic space, attractively enclosed by mature trees and well defined by medium/large detached buildings of mostly good architectural quality but which still possesses considerable potential for enhancement. It retains a distinctly open feel and a notable civic quality that, prior to the creation of the County Road, linked it directly with the similarly scaled County Square, whose grouping of buildings acted as a northern visual terminus. To the south and east is a slightly irregular grid pattern of terraced industrial workers housing, which, in the mid – late C19th, was inserted into an existing arrangement of roads and rural lanes, and which also had to take account of the tall embankment of the Victorian railway.

6.6.3 At the south west edge of this area railway infrastructure assumes an even greater presence through the station and it's ancillary buildings, the area of the former goods yard and the engineering associated with the railway cutting and access to the railway station forecourt. In addition one of the better examples in the town of late C19th terraced housing is included in the form of Richmond Terrace.

### 6.6.4 Townscape Character

6.6.5 The very urban enclosed form of Queen St, with its terraces and townhouses, changes immediately beyond the County Road into an area of more pronounced suburban form, with a series of large detached and semi-detached C19th houses on the west side being set well back within moderately sized gardens. These

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properties on **Prince's St** are often fronted by good quality stonewalls and iron railings and the houses are further screened by small trees and hedges which give this part of the street a noticeably leafy and luxuriant appearance.

- 6.6.6 Beyond the junction with Lightburn Road, in front of the substantial former goods station building, which is well set back from the road on a broad, elevated site, Prince's Street appears to open out significantly, and rises slightly to bridge the railway cutting, before passing the attractive, tree lined, ramped cul-de-sac approach that drops down to the forecourt outside Ulverston railway station, and exiting the conservation area. The railway bridge marks a distinctive gateway into the town with views of the diverse range of buildings that flank the street, including the crenellated, landmark form of No 33 Prince's St; a mature sycamore tree set in the pavement on the east side; and the rolling hills to the south of the town visible as a distant backdrop.
- 6.6.7 To the west of Prince's St, before the railway bridge, is the broad area of the former goods yard. Retaining a number of important but unlisted railway buildings, now mostly converted, with typical limestone walls and sandstone detailing, this yard contains a partly formalised trading estate set within what is otherwise a somewhat unkempt former depot. The area generally has an adverse bearing on the special character of the area despite being mostly set behind tall stone boundary walls. To the north off New Church Lane are two small, modern housing developments of mixed design quality, that are set in a former orchard and farmland behind Trinity Church and which are still surrounded by many mature trees which although outside the boundary of the conservation area, add positively to it's special character and appearance.
- 6.6.8 The parcel of land between Prince's St and King's Road was only developed in the mid and late C20th and now contains recent housing, positioned slightly below the level of the street, behind very shallow, stone walled set backs. These houses seek to follow the dynamic building line set by the linear form of Lightburn House, whose side veranda actually abuts the road edge. Behind the modern housing is a substantial plot containing small light-industrial units whose design and material appearance creates a poor urban character that has an adverse affect on the special appearance of the area (-1).
- 6.6.9 Further on, on the east side, are parallel rows of ornate, 3 storey terraces in limestone, one facing onto Prince's St and the other, separated by a narrow yard, Richmond Terrace has an elevated easterly prospect overlooking a grid pattern of late C19th and early C20th workers housing set beyond the current boundary of the conservation area.

Victoria Road and the streets to the east are arranged in a rigid grid pattern containing mostly Victorian housing as well as the vestiges of an informal public

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square that is set to west side of the purposely broad thoroughfare of Victoria Road. The latter is enclosed and attractively defined by medium to large detached buildings of notable architectural significance and it still retains vestiges of a notable civic or processional quality. It was formerly physically connected to the smaller County Square, whose grouping of buildings acted as a northern visual terminus, while to the south the road narrows beyond Lightburn Road, where the street assumes a more industrious and commercial feel. The mature trees that line part of this area are a distinctive and important aspect of the area's visual character.

The streets that flank Victoria Road are very mixed in building design quality and physical form but most share similar characteristics of a general linearity and a strong sense of confinement as a result of the long unbroken runs of terraced housing. This is especially true of those streets between Brogden St and Chapel Street and also beyond the segregating physical mass of the railway embankment, in Lightburn Avenue. The only area where this pattern is not followed is at Neville House where detached buildings, including the Methodist Church, are more obviously free standing within their own grounds.

Most of the better streets are distinguished by small set-backs in front of the housing that are enclosed by low stone walls topped with cut stone copings or naturally weathered pieces of limestone.

### 6.6.10 Architectural Quality

- 6.6.11 All of the buildings on the west side of **Prince's St** make a very positive contribution to the special architectural interest of the conservation area. The majority of these buildings are listed Grade II with the design of three of them attributable to the Webster family of Kendal. The majority retain original sash windows, panel doors and door furniture and, in combination, form one of the key groups of good quality suburban housing in the town.
- 6.6.12 Trinity House (+1) is the former Vicarage, probably by Websters, of c1820, and is distinguished by an ashlar limestone front to four bays, with moulded cornice, six over six sash windows and an offset door with a limestone doorcase, consisting of baseless, engaged Tuscan columns with a pulvinated entablature and triangulated pediment.
- 6.6.13 Bellevue (+3), possibly by Francis Webster, of c.1816, has five symmetrical bays with end pilaster strips in a smooth painted roughcast, and a moulded stone gutter cornice. Windows are unbalanced six over nine paned sashes on the ground floor and six over six sashes on the first floor. The central door has a decorative overlight and a porch made up of Ionic columns with pilaster responds. The roof has two small, round headed, decorated dormers of unknown material but probable with

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lead covers. Mayfield, on the left, is a single bay addition of c.1900. It is set back with a lower eaves but utilises similar details to Bellevue.

- 6.6.14 Nos 12 and 14, of c.1860, are a pair of semi-detached two storey houses possibly by Websters. Good quality limestone ashlar stonework to four bays with the end two projecting and a rusticated plinth, sill and eaves bands are important elements along with coupled doors with Doric pilaster surrounds, canted timber bay windows to the ground floor and moulded architraves to the first floor.
- 6.6.15 No 13 – 17 Prince's St, shown as Lightburn on C19th maps, is of two or more phases and dates from C.1800. It has a central bay with a gabled and bracketed pediment and decorative quoins and sill course. The street elevation is given further refinement through the provision of a later full-length timber veranda. The building is, surprisingly, unlisted but makes a very positive contribution to the special architectural interest of the area.
- 6.6.16 Nos 21 – 33 Princes St is a terraced row of similarly designed, single fronted dwellings, built in phases with stucco walls and stressed limestone quoins and sill bands, that rises up the hill in a slightly stepped fashion. Many of these houses have been badly affected by changes to doors and windows exercised through permitted development rights, but the architectural interest of the building is still just about discernable. No 33 at the south end has a different form and appearance, being of two stories, double fronted, with a central, 3 storey crenellated tower and exposed rock faced squared sandstone walls and limestone dressings. It has a very significant landmark presence in views into the conservation area from the south.
- 6.6.17 The former Railway Hotel has been extensively modernised but the very fine rusticated base and entrance surround is still clearly visible on the front elevation.
- 6.6.18 Richmond Terrace is a very fine example of high quality urban housing, built for middle class families in c.1870. The greater part of the row is of one build and constructed from good quality snecked limestone masonry with limestone detailing to bay windows, door surrounds hood moulds and dormer cheeks. No's 2 and 3 appear to be later infill or rebuilding as they possess some sandstone elements and timber bay windows, while Nos 9 and 10 are C20th, smaller imitations with much poorer detailing and materials. The earlier parts of the row make a positive contribution the special architectural interest of the conservation area.
- 6.6.19 The former Telephone Exchange building by Lightburn Cottage is one of the most detrimental buildings in the conservation area. Due to it's scale, massing and the choice of a system built, concrete panelled exterior it is completely out of keeping with the traditional character and appearance of the area.

Lightburn Road is flanked by good quality terraced housing, built in phases and often single fronted to two and three stories, and mostly in squared limestone with

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distinctive sandstone banding and local blue/grey slates. The buildings are distinguished by the quality of the detailing and features such as flush roof gables, rusticated window surrounds and bold sandstone bay windows, many of which are combined with porches under slate pentice roofs. Lightburn Avenue has some housing in a similar style and quality, although much more of this has been disfigured by insensitive alterations or later infill development.

Hartley St contains houses with a slightly less ambitious architectural vocabulary that has been further weakened by changes that have affected integrity of the individual houses, such as the introduction of PVCu bay windows. However, the street's character is significantly enhanced by being attractively terminated at each end by good quality buildings: the red sandstone church hall to the west and the paler sandstone of the landmark tower of the Methodist Church to the east.

Braddyll Terrace is a short, narrow street that is conspicuously arranged at an angle away from the railway embankment. It is lined by a terraced row of individually built, mid to late C19th houses of very good design quality on the north side, and a school playing field belonging to Ulverston Victoria High School to the south side. The presence of numerous young and more mature trees on either side of the street give it a particular verdant appearance. At the top end is Holmnook a mid C19th double fronted house with white painted render and notable period detailing that adds positively to the character of the area.