

North Craven Heritage Trust

A SENSE OF PLACE - FOR TODAY

Introduction

The North Craven Heritage Trust developed out of the Settle and District Civic Society which was founded in 1968. An explanatory note in the Trust's Journal of 1992, its first, makes it clear that from the very outset the Trust saw one of its primary aims as being " ... to help safeguard, the distinctive beauty, history and character of the North Craven area. (The Trust) encourages high standards of architecture and town planning." To this end the Trust has for many years appointed a Committee member with special responsibility for monitoring planning applications submitted to the local planning Authorities. Because the Trust's area of interest lies partly in Craven District and partly within the Yorkshire Dales National Park this task involves monitoring applications submitted to both Craven District Council and to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

The notes below indicate the principles which currently guide that monitoring process. These principles may change as new materials become available to builders or where changes are made in legislation or statutory regulations governing applications and building.

1. Many Trust members believe that the charm and human scale of the built heritage of the Yorkshire Dales lies a) in the densely packed jumble of stone-built cottages and grander stone houses found in their many hamlets, villages and smaller towns, b) in the closely grouped farmhouses, barns and smaller ancillary buildings of traditional farmsteads, and c) in the isolated, widely scattered field barns.

This varied texture has to be protected at all reasonable costs; it is part of what gives the Yorkshire Dales their unique sense of place, their special character. New developments, large and small, should harmonise with the earlier buildings in setting, scale, building and roofing materials, roof pitch, style and details such as quoin stones, drip moulds, stone window openings and reveals etc. Stone used should be locally sourced for vernacular buildings, with thackstone or slate roofing.

2. With Listed Buildings and older, historically interesting buildings all reasonable extra care should be taken to conserve and replicate or echo the original forms, structures, styles and materials, always taking into consideration the 'group value' and impact of the surrounding buildings whether Listed or not.
3. The best way of safeguarding a building is to keep it in use so where building conservation conflicts with modern statutory requirements then sensitive, careful and well informed compromises should be made to allow fire escapes, disability access, toilets etc.
4. Where such essential changes are significant then a detailed record of the original building should be kept in the form of photographs and accurate measured drawings which are publically available at no cost. These should include roof construction and fittings such as boskins, stalls, forking holes and ventilation openings.
5. These compromises should allow the use of low-maintenance uPVC window frames, white in the case of residential buildings, with heat-conserving double glazing. External

doors should be of painted wood, including garage doors. 'Up and Over' garage doors are problematic.

6. With later 19th.C and 20th.C buildings extensions and alterations in blockwork or brick, rendered smooth, dashed or with drawn joints, are acceptable where that is the established local style.
7. Harmony in the built environment of a locality can be destroyed by the cumulative impact of many small changes, so all planning applications for new developments however minor should be examined. Exposed red brick and blockwork are 'out' but grey concrete brick is acceptable in detailing such as window surrounds or plinthwork.
8. Conservatories, sunrooms and porches should be in keeping with the age, style and scale of the main building.
9. The unfortunate proliferation of huge anodine agricultural buildings is regarded as an unavoidable adjunct of modern farming practice in the Dales and as such it is subject to a lesser degree of planning control. Farming in the Dales today is marginal at best. so building and labour costs make the traditional Dales barn far too expensive to be a common requirement.
10. Where it is felt necessary to submit an objection to a planning application it invariably starts with the words "This comment is submitted on behalf of the North Craven Heritage Trust. The Trust considers that"". This formula gives any objection the Trust's backing whilst avoiding the need to consult widely among Trust members, which would often be impossible because of the limited time allowed by the planning Authorities for submitting any objection.

If you wish to suggest changes to these principles then please contact the Secretary John Asher or the Committee member concerned, Ken Pearce - contact details are on the Trust membership card.