



# Skinninggrove Conservation Area Appraisal 2011



Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

**this is Redcar & Cleveland**

**Skinningrove Conservation Area Appraisal 2011**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

- 1.1 As part of its continuing duties under the Planning Acts, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council has prepared appraisals for 15 of its 17 conservation areas. (Staithes and Hutton Lowcross Conservation Areas fall within the planning jurisdiction of the North York Moors National Park Authority.)

## The designation of Skinningrove Conservation Area

- 1.2 Skinningrove Conservation Area was designated by Langbaugh Borough Council on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1991. No report was produced giving the reasons for designation, although it is clear that the conservation area boundary was tightly drawn to include the historic core of the pre-industrial hamlet.

## Other Protective Designations within the Conservation Area

- 1.3 The revised statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for Skinningrove was published in February 1987. The listed buildings are as follows:-
- Timms Coffee House, Skinningrove Road, grade II
  - 9 to 12 Stone Row, grade II
  - 18 & 19 Stone Row, grade II
- 1.4 There are no scheduled monuments in Skinningrove.
- 1.5 There are no Tree Preservation Orders within the conservation area.
- 1.6 No additional protection has been provided by Article IV Directions.

## Planning Policies affecting Skinningrove Conservation Area

- 1.7 The Redcar & Cleveland Local Development Framework (LDF)

contains several planning policies relating to the conservation area. They are set out in Appendix 1.

## Conservation Area Appraisal

- 1.8 A conservation area appraisal is the first step in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the designated area. This appraisal provides a clear and sound understanding of Skinningrove Conservation Area by recording, evaluating and presenting all of the key elements that together make up its special interest and character. It identifies negative features and opportunities for improvement and considers the need for other means of protection such as Article 4 Directions.

- 1.9 **The appropriateness of the conservation area boundary has been considered and after public consultation this appraisal and its recommendations including confirmation of the existing boundary of the conservation area, was approved by Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2007. This appraisal has been revisited to ensure it remains relevant and up to date. The present conservation area boundary is shown on the plan in Appendix 2.**

- 1.10 While the appraisal covers the topics referred to in PPG 15 and in guidance issued by English Heritage it is not intended to be comprehensive and does not provide detailed descriptions of all individual historic buildings. The omission of any particular building, feature or space should not therefore be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

- 1.11 The appraisal should not be regarded as a static document. It will be subject to periodic review and update, especially in the light of new research and as more information and knowledge becomes available. The next step of the process is the formulation of

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conservation area management proposals to provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about the conservation area's future.

## 2. HISTORIC ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

### Introduction

- 2.1 The distinctive elements that make up Skinninggrove's particular and special character today have been shaped by its historic development. The hamlet's early history is poorly documented and there has been no significant archaeological investigation of the area. We do not therefore know for certain when, or by whom, nor for what purpose Skinninggrove's site was first settled. This report consequently provides only an outline of the past to show the context of the conservation area.

### Local Historical Context

- 2.2 The Redcar and Cleveland area is a mix of industrial, urban, semi-urban and rural settlement, which gives it its distinct character. Most of the older settlements were founded or re-founded from the late 11<sup>th</sup> century and the basic settlement forms and layouts remained largely unaltered until changes in farming practice were introduced in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries or, until industrialisation and urbanisation altered them - sometimes beyond recognition.
- 2.3 While the district still retains a large rural base, most of its settlements have taken on an urban and semi-urban character under the influence and demands of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century development of the wider Tees Valley area. Skinninggrove's history shows that over the last 150 years urban and industrial developments have dramatically changed its appearance.

### Early History

- 2.4 Skinninggrove conservation area is centred on the built infrastructure remains of the medieval farming and fishing community. The name: Skinninggrove is first recorded in 1273 as 'Scinergreve'. It has various spellings in the medieval documents including 'Skynnergreve' in 1301 and Skynnyngrave in 1579. The name

derives from the Old Norse personal name of Skinnari, meaning 'tanner' implying the occupants may once have specialized in leather production.

- 2.5 The manor of Skinninggrove, having belonged to the de Brus family of Skelton Castle, passed in 1272 to the Thwengs of Kilton Castle. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Skinninggrove Estate was largely owned by the Earl of Zetland with some property in the hands of the Maynard family. The documentary history of the village is presented in full in the Victoria County History (see Bibliography and Acknowledgements below).

### Economic Development

- 2.6 Over the centuries the principal occupations of the locality gradually expanded from fishing, agriculture and sandstone quarrying for building stone, to include the manufacture of alum, smuggling and ironstone gathering. All of these trades and occupations used the sea as their main mode of transport and communication, until the coming of the railway in 1865. This economic activity led to the gradual and incremental development and redevelopment of village properties throughout the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 2.7 In 1846 John Walker Ord described the isolated hamlet of Skinninggrove as "a small village lying in a deep low creek of the sea (which) presents many charms to the admirer of the romantic and picturesque." However this was to change suddenly and dramatically after 1848 when the mining of ironstone was commenced in the valley.

- 2.8 Skinninggrove appears to have been in the forefront of the ironstone and ironworking boom that engulfed East Cleveland and the banks of the River Tees in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the early 1800s, long before the discovery of ironstone in the hills above Eston, ironstone nodules

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eroded from the outcrops of the ironstone seams in the cliff faces, had been gathered from the rocky foreshore, loaded by hand into small boats beached between the tides, and shipped to Tyneside's blast furnaces. However, in 1848 Messrs Roseby Brothers (followed by Messrs Bolckow & Vaughan and Pease and Partners) opened the Loftus drift mines on the east side of the valley and began shipping ironstone to ironworks in County Durham and Middlesbrough.

2.9 In 1865 the extension of the railway network to Skinningrove opened up ironstone production to much broader markets, but it was not until 1874 that the first local blast furnaces were 'blown in' high above the village at the new settlement of Carlin How. In the 1880s the construction of a substantial jetty at Skinningrove allowed larger ships to handle heavier sea-going cargoes.

2.10 Except for the inevitable periodic slump in the iron trade, mining continued unabated until 1958 and the manufacture of iron and steel until the 1970s. However, the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been marked by Skinningrove's economic decline.

2.11 The closure of the ironstone mines and contraction of the steelworks have caused economic, environmental and social problems which still continue. The settlement therefore has problems associated with industrial and rural decline which are also manifest in the historic infrastructure. Today, the surface remains of Loftus Mines now hosts the country's only ironstone mining museum while the fishing tradition continues only as a leisure activity.

### Historic infrastructure

2.12 The medieval plan of the village is not properly understood owing to the absence of early written records and the obliteration of archaeological evidence by 19<sup>th</sup> century

industrialization. However, clues to the medieval layout lie in the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1857. It shows the village almost ten years after Loftus ironstone mines started production. The settlement was then centered on The Square and the buildings in the village included the Old Hall (9-12 Stone Row), Nos. 13-19 Stone Row, Timms Coffee House and on the west side of The Square, a group of buildings whose layout suggests a possible farmstead.

2.13 It is assumed that this mid-19<sup>th</sup> century plan form was at least in part inherited from a medieval layout, having a central square or green with buildings fronting at least two of its edges.

2.14 There is no evidence of burgage strips behind the properties as was usually the case with settlements dating from medieval period; but this could be accounted for by Skinningrove's constricted location on the floor of the narrow Kilton Beck valley. Early photographs show long rectangular strips or tofts, synonymous with burgage strips, located to the west on Skinningrove Bank.

2.15 The "Skenninggreve Hall" shown in Samuel Buck's sketchbook of 1720 shows a 2-storey, double-depth house with a 2-span roof, 3 bays to the front elevation and two 2-bay gable ends. While this could have been the altered 12<sup>th</sup> century manor house, there is conjecture about its location. On the one hand Timms Coffee House (so named in the 1860s) is reputed to have been built on the site of the Hall, while the roughly cruciform-plan Old Hall (now Nos. 9-12 Stone Row) clearly shows evidence of a 17<sup>th</sup> century date and is thought, to contain some elements from a medieval building.

2.16 The sudden boost to Skinningrove's economy after 1848, brought about by ironstone mining and subsequently iron smelting, caused its rapid transformation to an industrial township,



drawing workers from East Anglia, Cornwall and the London area. The number of dwellings consequently increased markedly, from a meagre 13 in 1841, to 85 in 1871 and 348 ten years later. These were mostly humble, 2-storey terraced cottages, the first probably being Nos. 1 to 8 Stone Row, erected around 1860. There were also schools, chapels an institute and hospital, of which only the schools and a chapel now survive.

- 2.17 Between The Square and the sea there were four rows of tightly packed, brick built cottages, laid out to a regular grid (i.e. Cliff Terrace, High Street, Chapel Street and Marine Terrace.) Other terraces built to the south of The Square were dispersed haphazardly along the sides of the valley (i.e. Ridley Terrace, Hutton Street, New Company Row, Grove Road, Primrose Hill, Zetland Row, Albion Place and Grove Hill).
- 2.18 Some of the terraces, particularly those to the north of The Square, with the exception of Marine Terrace, fell victim to slum clearance in the 1970s and were replaced by the existing terraced public housing. Most of the surviving industrial cottages have been modernized, loosing most of their original character and appearance.

### **Summary**

- 2.19 It is surprising that, despite the overwhelming industrialisation of Skinningrove in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the pre-industrial village layout and so many of its buildings have survived - even through the depression of the last 30 years. This is perhaps testimony to the true Yorkshire tradition of thrift and “waste not want not” and that most of the earlier structures were better built than their Victorian and later counterparts.
- 2.20 The oldest building in the village: Nos. 9 to 12 Stone Row, formerly the Old Hall, appears to date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

No evidence has come to light of the survival of buildings dating from earlier times although it is possible that some older buildings conceal much earlier cores and historic building analysis could reveal structural elements from earlier periods than their external appearance might suggest. It is therefore very important that opportunities provided by the Planning Acts and other legislation and advice, to investigate, record and conserve historic fabric and particularly the interiors of buildings, are pursued at every opportunity.

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### 3. CHARACTER APPRAISAL

3.1 In the context of the 17 other conservation areas in the Redcar and Cleveland area, Skinningrove is unique, comprising the core of the remains of a medieval farming and fishing village. Redevelopment took place incrementally throughout the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries before being virtually submerged beneath mushrooming industrial development and activity, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While other urbanised villages survive at Brotton, Marske, Redcar and Saltburn, their present character is quite different from that found at Skinningrove.

#### Physical Setting and Topography

3.2 Skinningrove is a small coastal village with a population of approximately 460 people. It lies just to the north-east of Loftus and is approximately 21-Km (13 miles) east of Middlesbrough and 12-Km (7½ miles) south-east of Redcar and 11-Km (6¾ miles) north-east of Guisborough. Historically it was linked to the highway (A174) connecting the ancient ports of Yarm and Whitby, but was otherwise physically secluded by the topography of its setting.

3.3 Sandwiched between magnificent, towering sea cliffs (over 203m (666 feet) high at Boulby) the settlement sits at the seaward end of the narrow valley formed by Kilton Beck and is the natural entrance to a network of deep valleys and ravines populated by ancient woodland, cut into the North York Moors. It is also the point of convergence of a network of public footpaths including the Cleveland Way and is on the edge of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast.

3.4 The local geology and geomorphology have had a significant influence on human activity and the character of Skinningrove, particularly through exploitation of the building sandstones, the jet and alum of the Upper Lias

shales and the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrialisation of the valley based on the exploitation the ironstone of the Middle Lias. The steelworks, sitting on top of the valley side at Carlin How are a poignant reminder of Skinningrove's heavy industrial past.

3.5 While the nearby moors and ancient indigenous forests doubtless provided the earliest building and roofing materials such as timber, heather, thatch and sods, the accessible orange/brown sandstone quarried from the cliff faces and from inland outcrops would have been used from the earliest times (e.g. Kilton Castle).

3.6 From the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century bricks and tiles were at first imported from the low countries and then later manufactured locally from the indigenous clays that made the orange/red bricks and pantiles that are now so characteristic of the broader local area. Development of the national railway network in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century gave access to a more eclectic range of building materials from diverse and distant sources, including roofing slates from Cumbria and North Wales.

#### Building Form, Character and Materials

3.7 Above all else, it is the buildings of a conservation area and the ways in which the spaces between them are used that determine its character. These two aspects of character are considered here separately and are then brought together in the 'Perambulation' that follows.

3.8 Although of different dates and styles the buildings in Skinningrove Conservation Area collectively possess a number of common characteristics that help to make up its special architectural and historic qualities. They are as follows:-

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- Rows of buildings opening directly onto the street - a common characteristic of many historic settlements.
  - Buildings varying in height from one, through two-and-a half, to three storeys.
  - The restrained architecture of domestic buildings, owing more to the local vernacular tradition of building than the more formal styles of architecture, these being found in the later buildings: the chapel, schools and former Co-operative store.
  - Employment of the indigenous building stone in its diverse hues of orange, brown, grey and yellow tones, used as stone blocks with a diversity of surface dressings, as coursed and random rubble and as smooth ashlar for dressings around windows, doors, etc. Many examples of stonework have now weathered to an attractive mature patina.
  - The diverse types and uses of brick, from the early handmade bricks of Timms Coffee House, doubtless imported from the low countries, to the red engineering bricks of the Co-op building and the machine-made bricks used to construct the schools and the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century terraced housing on New Grove Terrace and The Square.
  - Traditional roofing materials including traditional orange/red clay pantiles and grey/blue/black and green slates brought here from Wales and Cumbria. In the last 50 years man-made slates and tiles have been used to repair older properties, but they lack the enduring subtleties of patina and colour manifest in their more natural counterparts.
  - Wooden, vertically-sliding, sash windows, the earliest having multiple panes with glazing bars. No horizontally-sliding sash windows have been found in Skinningrove, although they would doubtless have existed in some of the older buildings.
  - Some windows with rounded or pointed heads, in keeping with the style of the building's architecture, but most having plain stone lintels, or, arches of stone or brick, and stone sills.
  - The older traditional doors are of the cottage type with broad, vertical timber boards; however most historic doors here have two, four, or more panels.
- 3.9 Employment of any one or more of the materials or components referred to above, when it has been used honestly, is usually indicative of the period of the structure in which it is used – a language that speaks the age and status of the building.
- 3.10 Most buildings have sadly lost some of their authentic features, particularly windows and doors. Many historically authentic roofing materials such as pantiles and slates, have also been replaced with modern concrete tiles while a plethora of satellite dishes now adorn the front walls of many cottages. Such changes not only detract from the character of individual buildings but also spoil the look of the entire area.
- 3.11 The few examples of rendering and painting appear to be modern improvised remedies for dampness, masonry decay, or have been used to hide the scars of past alterations.
- 3.12 Boundary treatments that enhance the character of the area include the characterful and robust, random rubble sandstone boundary walls, enclosing the front gardens of Nos. 1-8 Stone Row and the back yard of Nos. 9-12 Stone Row; and the attractive, painted picket fence in front of 9 & 10 Stone

Row. Other garden fences and railings tend to have a benign impact.

### **The Spaces Between the Buildings**

- 3.13 The ways in which the spaces between the buildings are treated can significantly affect the special character of an area.
- 3.14 For the most part hard surfaces in the conservation area comprise modern concrete unit paving and tarmac. However, historically, Yorkstone flags and cobbles from the beach and the beck, would probably have been used around some of the more important buildings such as Timms Coffee House and the Old Hall. None of these now survive. Elsewhere, surfacing would have consisted of compacted earth, sand, gravel and roadstone. Patterned scoria blocks manufactured as a by-product of blast furnace slag first made their appearance in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some of these still survive, e.g. the footpath between Nos. 9/12 Stone Row and Stone Row Cottage and in the back lane behind Nos. 1 to 12 Stone Row.
- 3.15 The visual amenity of any area is enhanced by its soft landscaping. Within Skinningrove Conservation Area, soft landscaping is restricted to those properties having front gardens which act as an attractive and visually enriching foil to predominance of hard surfaces. There are no significant trees, but the semi-wild vegetation on the valley sides, together with the recent attractive landscaping scheme on the east side of the beck, close to the bridge, collectively enhance the setting of the conservation area.
- 3.16 The principal items of street furniture in the conservation area are the unsightly utilitarian, metal electricity distribution poles. They 'march' with their 'canopies' of overhead wires, right through the village core from Skinningrove Road, turning east through The Square, past Stone Row and along Beach Road to

the shore. Their only redeeming feature is their multiple use for street lighting and for bus stop signs, a practice that should be encouraged in order to reduce the visual clutter of having separate poles for separate functions.

- 3.17 The only other items that detract from the attractive townscape qualities of the conservation area are the utilitarian finger posts near the bridge and the ugly pedestrian barrier in front of the Post Office. The bus shelter in the square is innocuous but the vandalised glazing is an eyesore.

### **Perambulation**

- 3.18 Approaching Skinningrove Conservation Area from the south, one passes New Company Row on the left-hand side. This is a long 2-storey terrace of mineworkers' cottages, their original character so comprehensively altered by modernisation that they possess little of their original character.
- 3.19 On the opposite side of the road, set back behind substantial brick and stone piers and steel railings are the mid-Victorian, gable fronted, former primary school and School House. The character of the School House has been impaired by the rendering and painting of the brickwork, replacement of the windows and the use of modern artificial slates to re-clad the roof. The school, now used for community projects and small businesses, still retains its red brick with white brick bands, white painted wood windows and steeply pitched Welsh slate roof.
- 3.20 North of the School House and on the site of the former Miners' Institute, stand four mid-20<sup>th</sup> century pensioners' bungalows. They are set back behind front gardens and the village War Memorial, a tall Celtic cross of rockfaced granite, set upon a plinth carrying the names of the fallen.
- 3.21 The variable quality of this group of buildings and the loss of the original character of New Company Row, mean



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that they are excluded from the conservation area. However, it does include the Edwardian former Co-op building adjoining the north end of the terrace. This is richly decorated with moulded, red engineering brick, attractive elliptical-arched shop windows and round-headed first-floor windows with unusual, decorative, cast-iron mullions, transoms and sills. It is a worthy tribute to the Co-operative movement, but has been disused and neglected for many years and is now boarded up and stripped of its roofing slates and gables. Adjoining the rear are nondescript wings and outbuildings in similar condition.

3.22 On Skinningrove Road, the eye is drawn by the grade II listed, Timms Coffee House. South facing and standing within its own space, on the corner of Skinningrove Road and The Square, within the conservation area, it is a key focal point and visual anchor. Built in 1704, of handmade brick and with a Welsh slate roof, it is the only three-storey building in the conservation area and its most imposing one. However, its forlorn Victorian gatepiers and the roughly surfaced car park now occupying the once attractive front garden, only serve to enhance the neglected appearance of the building itself, which is further injured by its modern extensions, boundary walls and railings facing New Grove Terrace.

3.23 Just beyond Timms Coffee House, the vista unfolds into The Square at its south-west corner. This is a wide, roughly rectangular-shaped open space enclosed by buildings on three sides, with Kilton Beck forming the third. It is the historic heart of the settlement into which the surrounding streets open. Historically it would have served as a gathering place for events, markets and the like. Today it is a bland and featureless 'sea' of tarmac and concrete and very much a part of the public highway, an ambience that discourages its potential role as a public

open space for the enjoyment of the community.

3.24 The west side of the space is flanked by plain, mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, brick-and-tile, terraced houses with small front gardens: Nos. 1-3 New Grove Terrace and Nos. 1-8 The Square. They are included in the conservation area only because they contribute to the sense of enclosure around The Square.

3.25 On the north side of this space, the early-to-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, 2-storey, stone-built cottages with brick chimney stacks, form an attractive, continuous frontage. At the left end of the terrace, the last pair of cottages are set back and placed at 45° to the gable end of their neighbour, thus defining the narrow, funnel-shaped opening off The Square into the High Street. Here, on the left-hand-side, the Victorian Gothic, single-storey, former village school, has been converted to flats.

3.26 This is an attractive, 'H-plan,' red brick building with white brick and sandstone dressings, in the typical form and style of elementary schools. In the middle of each tall gabled wing, tripartite pointed-arched windows under stone hoodmoulds complete the harmonious architectural composition, while steel hoop-topped boundary railings enclose its narrow front garden.

3.27 On passing through the opening into the High Street, one finds the mid-Victorian Methodist Chapel. This small, undistinguished building with its polychrome brick gable end and round-headed windows, compliments the former school across the road. North of these two buildings lies the public housing developed in the 1970s. The conservation area boundary is consequently drawn tightly around the older infrastructure.

3.28 Returning to The Square, the south side of the space is disappointing with only the back and side elevations of Timms Coffee House, and the single-storey, gable fronted club building which

possesses no redeeming aesthetic qualities. In the south-east corner of The Square is a small, modern, flat-roofed brick structure. This is unsightly and intrudes into the openness of the space, but old photographs show that it seems to have been built on the site of a much older building. These two modern buildings are included in the conservation area so that due regard may be had to any changes that might affect the character of The Square and the settings of adjacent buildings, particularly the listed buildings.

- 3.29 Set well back from The Square and built hard up against the beck retaining wall is Institute House of 1875, around which the conservation area boundary is wrapped. It is built of red brick with stone quoins, window surrounds and mullions. Its most prominent visual features are the tall twin chimney stacks.
- 3.30 The east side of The Square is open with views up the semi-wild slopes of the valley side, but the conservation area boundary at this point is drawn to include only part of the beck and its recently constructed brick-and-concrete flood defence wall. The wall visually excludes the beck from the conservation area.
- 3.31 From the Square views are also to be had of Skinningrove Bank towards the pretty, late Victorian, eyecatcher spirelet of St Helen's Church in Carlin How.
- 3.32 Turning the corner at Stone Row Cottage the vista gradually opens to the seaward end of the valley, but is first punctuated by Skinningrove's oldest building, Nos. 9-11 Stone Row. Visually prominent and on its own island site, this well-weathered, cruciform-plan, 2½ storey building, shows all the marks of great age, but is one of the best preserved historic buildings in the conservation area. In stepping forward of the building line it creates a sense of anticipation as one passes towards the

last block of buildings in the conservation area, Nos. 1-8 Stone Row.

- 3.33 Although much altered and adorned with wires, cables and satellite dishes, this architecturally distinctive row retains much of its historic character. The principal feature is the curious crowstepped finish given to the gable ends and to the row of dormers and projecting front gabled bays. Complimenting them are the brick chimney stacks, some of which retain their stone copings. Also of strong character is the front boundary wall of random sandstone rubble, enclosing the front gardens. The next block of houses and the huts and cabins on the opposite side of the road are relatively modern and are therefore excluded from the conservation area.
- 3.34 The conservation area boundary includes some of the back lanes behind Stone Row where a strong sense of enclosure is created by the high stone walls enclosing the back yards.

## Conclusions

- 3.35 Skinningrove Conservation Area embraces the core of the historic settlement, a coherent group of buildings and open space, possessing a harmony of different building styles, materials and detailing. The area's character emanates from this harmony and the juxtapositions of terraces and individual buildings forming the streets and the square. Sadly, there are very few well preserved examples of buildings representing the period of Skinningrove's industrialisation owing to extensive demolition, modernisation and refurbishment in recent times.

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## 4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 4.1 The erosion of authentic architectural and historic features of buildings, particularly windows and doors, the introduction of modern man-made building materials lacking the enduring qualities of their traditional counterparts, and the accumulation of wires, cables and satellite dishes, are all particularly damaging. They detract from the historic integrity of the individual buildings and from the character and appearance of the area as a whole.
- 4.2 Some boundaries of properties have attractive fences or walls that contribute to the character of the area. However, most have a benign impact and opportunities exist for future improvements when such structures are being considered for replacement.
- 4.3 The neglect and disuse of buildings such as the former Co-op building and Timms Coffee House, undermines their future survival and gives the area a down-at heel appearance. It is important however, when considering proposals affecting their future, to recognize and respect the architectural qualities of the buildings and the positive contributions they have to make to the appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.4 The negative aesthetic qualities of the adjacent club building and the unsightly intrusiveness of the flat-roofed brick structure in the corner of the Square present opportunities for the kind of improvements that will lead to the future enhancement of the conservation area.
- 4.5 There is a clear need to identify and embrace opportunities for improvements and developments that will revitalize individual properties and Skinningrove as a whole, while respecting and enhancing the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.6 The highway infrastructure tends to have a negative impact on the character of the conservation area. Particular issues are the universal use of tarmac and concrete as surfacing materials and the 'monopolization' of The Square by motor vehicles. A sensitive design, respecting the area's historic integrity, could transform this space, creating a more attractive and pedestrian-friendly environment.
- 4.8 Street furniture that detracts from the character and attractiveness of Skinningrove's streetscape qualities includes the unsightly overhead wires and their distribution poles, the utilitarian finger posts near the bridge, the pedestrian barrier in front of the Post Office and the glazing of the bus shelter in The Square. A coherent and rational approach to civic design and management is clearly called for. However, the practice of using the same pole or column for lighting, signs, etc, should be encouraged in order to minimise visual clutter.

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## 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 This appraisal of Skinningrove Conservation Area summarises the key elements that make up the special characteristics and qualities that justify its designation. It also identifies the negative aspects of the area that undermine its special quality and suggests opportunities for improvement.
- 5.2 The survey of the conservation area undertaken in connection with this appraisal concluded that there was no scope to extend or amend the boundary as designated in 1991. It was considered to be coherent, cohesive and consistent with those parts of the settlement's historic core still possessing significant special architectural and historic interest, being tightly drawn to include the historic core of the pre-industrial hamlet. After full consideration and public consultation Council resolved on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2007 to retain the existing boundary.
- 5.3 The erosion of special character by the unsympathetic alteration and extension of historic buildings and the erection of inappropriate forms of enclosure, under permitted development rights, has been addressed in other conservation areas through the use of Article IV Directions. These have withdrawn such rights for domestic, commercial and agricultural properties throughout the conservation areas. It is therefore considered appropriate that similar directions should be applied to Skinningrove Conservation Area, in order to address the further erosion of character and to achieve consistency and coherence in the level of controls and protection afforded to conservation areas throughout the Borough.
- 5.4 Regarding the negative elements that undermine the special qualities of the conservation area, further work is required to develop practical, coherent solutions and opportunities for improvement. This should be addressed in the context of a Conservation Area Management Plan.



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# APPENDIX 1: Planning Policies

## Local Development Framework (LDF) Policies affecting Skinningrove Conservation Area

- 1 The Redcar & Cleveland Local Development Framework (LDF), which includes policies in the adopted Core Strategy and Development Policies Documents (DPDs) as well as saved policies of the adopted Local Plan, set out several policies relating to this conservation area. Those current at the time of writing are set out below; for future updates please visit the Council's website: [www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/ldf)
- 2 Policy CS25 of the Core Strategy indicates that development proposals will be expected to contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment of the Borough, and that the character of the built and historic environment will be protected, preserved or enhanced.
- 3 The whole of the conservation area is located within the 'Limits to Development'. Policy DP1 of the Development Policies DPD indicates that development within the limits will generally be acceptable, subject to other development plan policies and designations. The limits to development are indicated on the Proposals Map.
- 4 Skinningrove generally is highlighted in the spatial strategy for East Cleveland and the Villages (Policy CS6 of the LDF Core Strategy) as a location where the Council and its partners aim to improve tourism and active leisure initiatives, and a location where the development of small-scale businesses will be supported.
- 5 General criteria around site selection, sustainable design and the matters that the Council may seek developer contributions for are set out policies DP2, DP3 and DP4 of the Development Policies DPD. Policies DP9, 10 and 11 set out development control criteria for conservation areas, listed buildings and archaeological sites and monuments respectively.
- 6 Local Plan Policy ENV 2 (new conservation areas and reviewing existing conservation areas) and Appendices 2 to 4 (providing detailed design guidance for conservation areas, listed buildings, shop fronts and advertisements) are relevant.

### NB

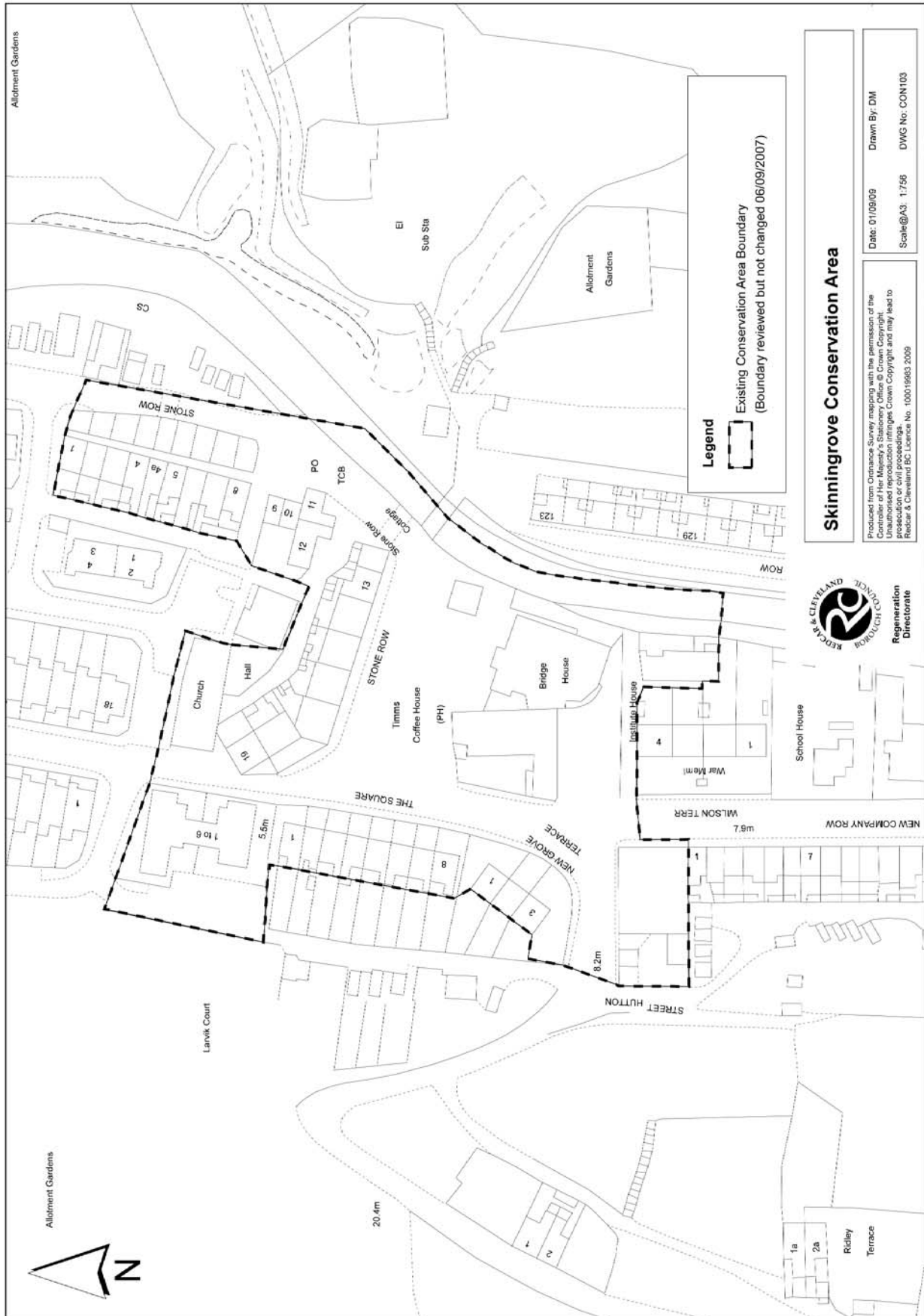
The planning policies referred to above are current at the time of writing; for an up to date list of extant policies, please visit the Council's website, [www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/ldf) or contact: 01287 612356.



# Skinningrove Conservation Area Appraisal 2011

# APPENDIX 2: Skinningrove Conservation Area Boundary

NB Plan is available as a more detailed separate download at:  
<http://www.redcarcleland.gov.uk/conservationareas>



**This document is available in alternative formats and in different languages on request. If you need support or assistance to help you read and/or understand this document, please contact the Council on 01642 774774.**



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Allotment Gardens

Allotment Gardens

Larvik Court

20.4m

1 to 6

5.5m

NEW GROVE TERRACE

8.2m

STREET HUTTON

THE SQUARE

Church

Hall

19

Timms Coffee House (PH)

STONE ROW

Bridge House

Institute House

War Meml

School House

STONE ROW

Stone Row Cottage

PO

TCB

STONE ROW

EI Sub Sta

Allotment Gardens

**Legend**



Existing Conservation Area Boundary  
(Boundary reviewed but not changed 06/09/2007)



# Skinningrove Conservation Area

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Date: 01/09/09      Drawn By: DM  
Scale@A3: 1:756      DWG No: CON103

2 1

1a 2a

Ridley Terrace

WILSON TERR

NEW COMPANY ROW

ROW

129 123

CS