

BOLTON BY BOWLAND CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



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BOLTON BY BOWLAND CONSERVATION AREA APPRASAL

Introduction

Purpose of the appraisal

This appraisal seeks to record and analyse the various features which give the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. The area's buildings and spaces are noted and described, and marked on the Townscape Appraisal map along with listed buildings, buildings of townscape merit, significant trees and spaces, and important views into and out of the conservation area. There is a presumption that all of these features should be “preserved or enhanced”, as required by the legislation.

This appraisal builds upon national policy, as set out in PPG15, and local policy, as set out in the Local Plan 1998, and provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area can be assessed.



The Church of St Peter and St Paul (grade I) is essentially medieval but nothing remains of its Norman origins

Summary of special interest

The Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area was designated on 15th July 1974.

The special interest that justifies designation of the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area derives from the following features:

- Kirk Beck and its stone bridges;
- The Church of St Peter and St Paul (grade I) elevated above Main Street and Hellifield Road;
- Long association with the Pudsay family;
- Medieval unplanned, nucleated settlement beside Skirden Beck;

- Architectural and historic interest of the conservation area's buildings, including 21 listed buildings;
- Prevalent use of local building stone;
- Rural setting of the village;
- Two village greens, one with ancient cross and stocks;
- War Memorial and garden;
- Trees, both in the surrounding landscape and beside the road;
- Areas of historic floorscape;
- Local details such as the 'YRY IM 1716' datestone at No. 4 Main Street, well head beside Stocks House, finger post beside the bridge and a GR post box;
- Colourful summer gardens and floral displays in pots.



Sundial and entrance gate in the churchyard

The planning policy context

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as “*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. It is the quality and interest of an *area*, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a conservation area.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

This document should be read in conjunction with national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15) – Planning and the Historic Environment. The layout and content follows guidance produced by English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the English Historic Towns Forum.

Local planning policy

Local planning policies for the preservation of scheduled monuments and conservation of historic parks and gardens, listed buildings and conservation areas are set out in the Ribble Valley Local Plan which was adopted in June 1998 (Policies ENV14, ENV15, ENV16, ENV17, ENV18, ENV19, ENV20, ENV21) and the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan 2001-2016 which was adopted on 31st March 2005 (Policies 20 and 21, supported by draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) entitled ‘Landscape and Heritage’).



Old headless stone cross in Stocks Green

Location and setting

Location and context

Bolton by Bowland is a small village located on the east bank of Skirden Beck a few kilometres before its confluence with the Ribble. It lies approximately 9 kilometres north-east of Clitheroe and 9 kilometres south-east of Slaidburn in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

General character and plan form

The conservation area boundary encloses the whole of the settlement including the outlying farm buildings of Nook Laithe. The focus of the village is the village green in which stands an ancient stone cross at the junction of four roads; Main Street, entering the village over Skirden Bridge from Sawley and Clitheroe; Gisburn Road, a continuation of Main Street and part of the main thoroughfare, past SS Peter and Paul’s Church, through the village to Gisburn; Hellifield Road, a narrow minor road beside Kirk Beck and, finally, an un-named cul-de-sac lane to Nook Laithe.

Buildings, mostly two storey, are located in a loose-knit fashion individually or in short rows beside the road. Some, such as nos. 2-14 Main Street and nos. 5-13 Gisburn Road sit

close to the road but others, such as Church Gates, Gisburn Road or nos. 13-15 Hellifield Road are set back from the road behind a small private front garden, or parking. Generally speaking, buildings lie in a haphazard fashion beside highways of varying width and there is a spacious feeling with gaps between buildings and a high proportion of public and private open space.



No. 4 Main Street, an 18th century house with stone roof tiles

Landscape setting

Topography, geology, relationship to surroundings

The village sits in open countryside beside Skirden Beck. It is bisected by the much smaller Kirk Beck, a tributary of Skirden Beck. From Skirden Bridge the land rises to the east, gently at first but more steeply after Kirk Beck, with the effect that, viewed from Skirden Bridge, the church tower stands above the cottages in Main Street, a picture postcard view.

Hellifield Road, which branches north-east from the Main Street/Gisburn Road thoroughfare, follows a fairly level course beside Kirk Beck so that, again, the church tower looms picturesquely above the cottages beside the road and tiny beck. Of note are the buildings at Jerusalem Hill which are situated on rising land beside the church, isolated from the village's thoroughfares and indicative of the unplanned, organic growth of the village.

Open fields press up against the road in the east ends of both Gisburn Road and Hellifield Road; fields along Gisburn Road are bounded by iron estate fencing beside the gates to the site of Bolton Hall (demolished) and have a more landscaped feel than the small fields and hedgerows beside Hellifield Road.

Historic development and archaeology

Origins and historic development

Bowland means ‘the land of cattle’. In early medieval times, the Forest of Bowland was essentially a cattle rearing district divided into ‘vaccaries’ or cattle farms. The name comes from the old Norse or Viking words ‘bu’ which means cattle and ‘bol’ which means a byre. The name ‘Bolton’ is an old Northumbrian word simply meaning a collection of buildings.

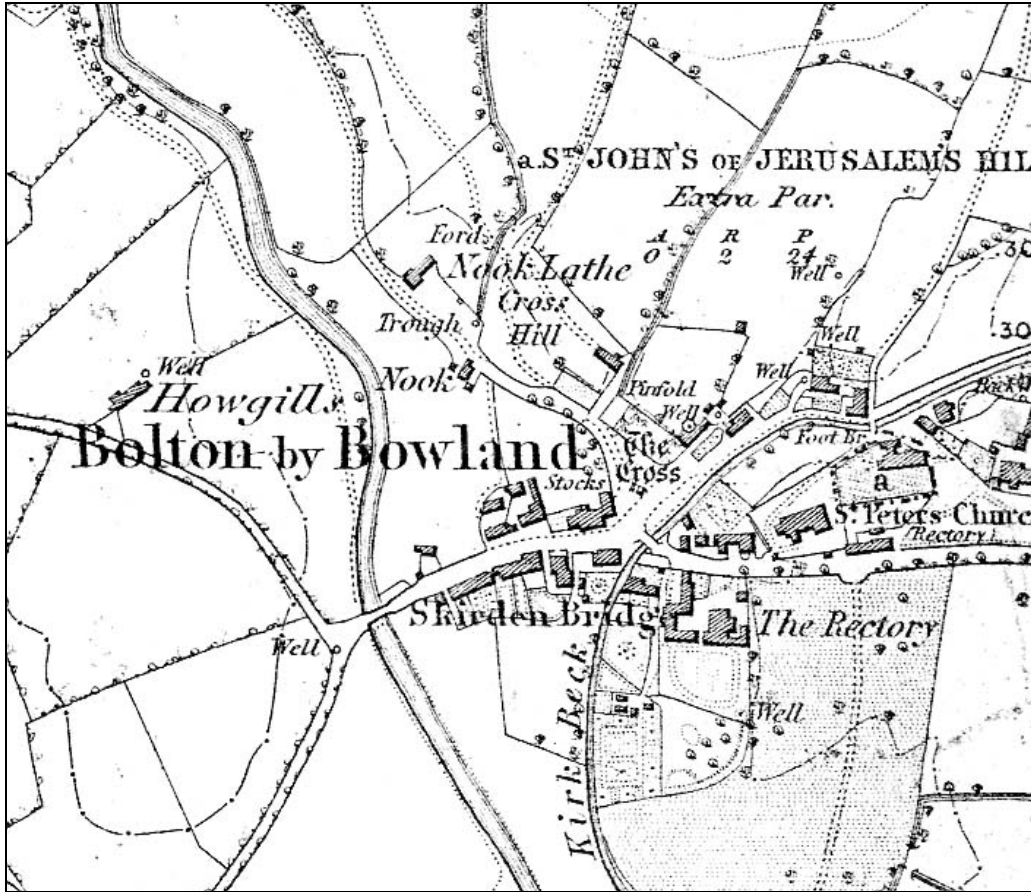
After the conquest, Bolton was part of the estates of the Percy family. At the end of the 12th century the estate was divided into two portions, probably along the line of the Skirden Beck. In 1229 it is recorded that Hugh de Leleya conveyed land to Richard de Boulton. This forty acre area of land and wood almost certainly corresponds to Bolton Park where the manor house, Bolton Hall, later stood. In 1349 the land was granted to the Pudsays who remained lords of the manor for over 400 years until the end of the line in 1771. In 1354, King Edward III granted a charter to the Abott of Sawley Abbey and John de Pudsay to hold in common a market in Bolton by Bowland for ever on a Wednesday in every week.

The first part of the Church was built before 1190, and the local landowners, the Pudsays, supervised the improvements and extensions to the church in the 13th, 14th, 15th and early 16th centuries. In the church is the tomb of the 15th-century landowner, Sir Ralph Pudsay. Sir Ralph had three wives who between them produced 25 children, all are commemorated within the church. In the year 1464, Sir Ralph took the risk of hiding the Lancastrian King Henry VI, who was fleeing from his Yorkshire enemies after the defeat at the Battle of Hexham. King Henry's Well is located a few yards from where Bolton Hall used to stand.

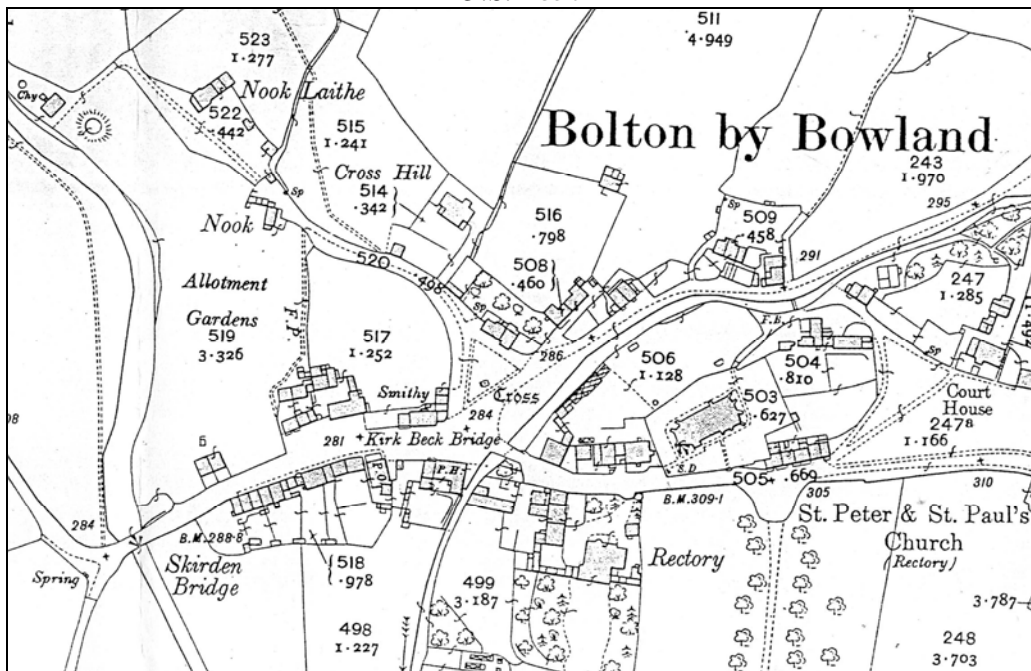
The Pudsays were succeeded at Bolton Hall by the Dawsons who sold the property to John Bolton of Liverpool who enlarged the house in 1806. The heyday of the hall came after 1866 when the estate was bought by a rich coalmine owner who kept a staff of almost 100 and lived in style. The hall fell into disrepair after the First World War and was demolished in 1959.



Looking east from the approach to the village



O.S. 1850



O.S. 1896

Spatial analysis

Key views and vistas

As SS Peter and Paul's Church stands on elevated ground, it is often glimpsed in upward views from Main Street and Hellifield Road. Another fine view of the church can be gained along the avenue to Bolton House, from where the tall trees and low two-storey cottages give a sense of scale and grandeur to the church tower. The Coach and Horses and The Court House are two other landmark buildings which stand out in the streetscene, one in each of the village's two greens.

Views of the immediately surrounding countryside, glimpsed between buildings, testify to the village's agricultural and rural background. Looking westward along Main Street and from the lane to Nook Laithe, there are more distant views to Beacon Hill (305m)

Curves in the roads and the slight change in level within the conservation area result in ever-changing views of the historic buildings, trees and open spaces that make up the village.



Local stone is the prevalent building material

The character of spaces within the area

Bolton by Bowland's two 'village greens' are one of the main characteristics of the conservation area and one of the distinctive attributes of the village. Stocks Green, opposite the Coach and Horses, is the most traditional green, a public open space at the meeting of several roads on which stands the cross and stocks. This well-tended grassed area provides a fine setting for Stocks House, no. 23 main Street, the Coach and Horses and, on its fourth side, the modest War Memorial which stands in a segment of open space beside Kirk Beck in front of a backdrop of tall trees and, in summer, a colourful display of flowers.

The second village green lies to the east of the church and was the site of the Hungrill Boys School which existed in the 17th century but was demolished for the new school (1874).

This green was used for the annual village fair. It has a more rustic feel than Stocks Green and it provides a setting for the Court House and the primary school, both listed buildings of note.

A third open space that contributes to the conservation area's special interest is the meadow to the north of, and below, the church. This provides a green 'breathing space' in the centre of the village and adds to the spacious feeling of the churchyard.

The boundaries of the conservation area have been drawn widely north of Hellifield Road and south of Gisburn Road to include land important to the rural setting of the village. In the north-west of the conservation area, the conservation area boundary encloses farm buildings at Nook Laithe and land next to Skirden Beck to ensure that the old track and traditional farm buildings are included within the conservation area.



The Coach and Horses Inn with the War Memorial in shadow in the foreground

Definition of the special interest of the conservation area

Activities/uses

Bolton by Bowland is primarily a residential village. Its population today is smaller than it was in the past when many of its residents would have been employed in agriculture or in Bolton Hall. Within the conservation area are an inn, a post office and tearoom, an antique shop, church, modern village hall and small primary school. The Forest of Bowland is popular with walkers and cyclists and beside the post office, but outside the conservation area, is a public car park and information centre with toilets.

Architectural and historic character

Today, buildings in the conservation area are primarily residential though there is evidence that several were once in agricultural use as stables, smithy or the manufacture of clogs. Buildings encompass a range of age and architectural style from the church, parts of which are 12th century, to the modern village hall.

The historic cottages of Bolton by Bowland are mainly built in the rural vernacular tradition of the 18th and 19th century. There is very little 20th century development. In this small conservation area there are only a few higher status buildings e.g. Church Gates, the Old Rectory and Stocks House plus the village's church, inn, school and village hall.

There are 21 listed buildings in the conservation area ranging in scale and prestige from the Church of St Peter and St Paul to the village stocks. The Church of St Peter and St Paul (grade I) is essentially medieval but nothing remains of its Norman origins. It was largely rebuilt and enlarged in the 15th century by Sir Ralph Pudsay whose tomb inside features representations of Sir Ralph, his three wives and his twenty five children.

The Old Court House (grade II) was built in 1859 with much earlier remains. The left hand gable has a shaped lintel set over a doorway, inscribed '1704 HMR'. The house name reflects the fact that the magistrate sat here; the outside staircase led to the courtroom. The Old Rectory was built about 1830 by John Bolton. Its walls are rendered reflecting the national taste of the time. These two buildings are representative of the building and rebuilding that took place in the village in the 19th century.

The Coach and Horses dates from the late 18th or early 19th century. It was originally known as the Windmill Inn but was changed probably due to the arrival of a new squire and keen horseman at Bolton Hall. The building is constructed from squared watershot limestone. Watershot masonry is a technique whereby each stone is tilted downwards to reduce rainwater penetration as the water will drip vertically from the top of each block.



Large tree in front of nos. 13 and 15 Hellifield Road

Key unlisted buildings - Buildings of Townscape Merit

Marked on the Townscape Appraisal map for the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area are a number of *unlisted* buildings which have been judged as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. This follows advice provided in English Heritage guidance on conservation area character appraisals, and within

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15), both of which stress the importance of identifying and protecting such buildings.

Amongst unlisted buildings of note are Stocks House, a 19th century building which once contained a public reading room and used to be run as a shop and café, and a stone shed dated 1890 on the lane to Nook Laithe which was built to house the village hearse.



Kirk Beck in summer

Building methods, materials and local details

The village is almost exclusively built of local stone. There is a variety in type of stone, coursing and finish. The Old Court House is mainly limestone with sandstone dressings as is No. 8 Main Street, a much humbler building. Church Gates is sandstone ashlar.

High status buildings are generally coursed whilst humble cottages tend to be constructed with uncoursed rubblestone, sometimes ‘slobbered’ with an uneven render to make them weatherproof. Some slobbered stone buildings have been overpainted to cover up their rough and unfinished appearance e.g. Fernside, Yew Tree Farm and 14 Main Street.

Stone roofs would once have been more prevalent but only a few examples remain notably 4 and 6 Main Street, the Old Court House, Yew Tree Cottage, 8 and 10 Hellifield Road and the Coach House. Much more common is slate, sometimes laid in diminishing courses e.g. Church Gates.

Fenestration varies according to the original date of the building. Window openings, and windows, in the oldest buildings (and later ones) have often been altered, some to the detriment of the host building. The village’s earliest buildings, such as the 17th century Old Court House (rebuilt 1859) and no. 4 Main Street, have mullioned windows with side-hung casements. Later, as glass manufacture improved, window openings are larger, generally rectilinear with surrounds made from single pieces of stone e.g. no. 8 Main Street.

In the 18th century and later vertical sliding sash windows became popular. The Coach and Horses displays a symmetrical façade of five 8x8 sliding sashes in plain surrounds and a

central door with typical late 18th century half round fanlight above the main entrance door. In nos 13 and 15 Hellifield Road there are stone mullioned windows at ground floor and sliding sash windows at first floor. The Old Court House has 17th century stone mullioned windows to the left and tall 19th century sash windows to the right. No. 8 Main Street has double sashed windows with central square mullion.

Historically, window joinery was timber and the prevalent colour in the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area is white. Similarly, doors are typically planked timber, painted white with black ironmongery. Some 19th century doors e.g. Stocks House and No. 21 Main Street are studded and hung by ornate hinges. No 10 Main Street is one of a number of buildings in which the walls are white and the window surround picked out in black.

The Coach House and Church Gates have eaves-level stone brackets supporting the front rainwater gutter, a common detail in Ribble Valley.



Stone cobbles beside the Coach and Horses

Floorscape and boundary walls

The conservation area is notable for small areas of historic stone paving which together with the area's buildings contribute to the village's special historic character and appearance.

The path to the church door is paved with large slabs of stone and narrow upright stone kerbs. Elsewhere there are patches of cobbles, for instance, beside the Coach and Horses, leading to Fernside, beside Stocks Green and outside nos. 4-14 Main Street. These surfaces should be protected and repaired as necessary, using traditional techniques and materials.

Boundary walls are invariably constructed with local stone, with a triangular or rounded capping, and the conservation area contains several stone gate piers ranging in design from plain pillars at Bridge Barn Cottage, inscribed rectangular piers at Church Gates and the grade II listed gates to Bolton Hall.

Stone steps are also a feature, particularly the two flights leading to the church from Gisburn Road and down the little-used ‘back lane’ from Hellifield Road.

Green spaces, trees and other natural elements

Open green space is one of the defining characteristics of the village. The two village greens and the meadow below the church have been described elsewhere. In addition, trees are a major feature of the area especially yew trees in the churchyard and in the vicinity of Yew Tree Farm. Beside the green in Gisburn Road is a row of mature trees planted in 1888 by Richard Milne-Redhead of Holden. The old oak tree on the right hand side of the Coach and Horses is apparently the only one left out of four oak trees which once stood on the site occupied by the pub.

These, and other significant trees or tree groups, are marked on the Townscape Appraisal map. Lack of a specific reference does not imply that a tree or group is not of value.

In addition to the greens, trees and well tended private gardens, Kirk Beck is an equally special environmental feature, providing a haven for wildlife and abundant summer greenery. Though not prominent in the streetscene, being concealed behind a retaining stone wall for much of its course through the village, Kirk Beck, and the highly visible Skirden Beck which lies outside the conservation area, are an important part of the village’s distinct local identity. The stone bridge in the centre of the village is dated 1897, rebuilt in 1977.



Ornate gate piers and old iron gate at Church Gates, Gisburn Road

Local details and features

Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area’s local identity is enhanced by a number of small details and features that cumulatively help to give the conservation area a sense of place. In addition to the obvious features such as ancient cross, stocks and churchyard sundial, whose importance is signified by grade II listing, the following are some of the small but not insignificant elements that contribute to the conservation area’s special interest: the wellhead beside Stocks House, the red GR post box outside the Post office, the pedestrian bridges over Kirk Beck, stone kerbs along Hellifield Road. These features should be

preserved. The old mileage finger post on the corner beside Stocks Green is topped by a marker on which is written ‘Bolton by Bowland’ making it a feature that is unique to the village.

Issues

This section provides a summary of the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) identified during the appraisal process

Strengths: The most important *positive* features of the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area are:

- Historic character and appearance including 21 listed buildings;
- Picturesque small English village;
- Well nurtured by residents;
- Location in Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Local amenities e.g. inn, school, church, village hall, post office, shop and adjacent car park and toilets;



Site of old spring beside Stocks House

Weaknesses: The principal *negative* features of the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area are:

- Insensitive alterations to historic buildings spoiling the conservation area’s strong historic character and appearance;
- Neglected appearance of the empty building north-west of the Old Rectory and the stone shed below Middle Barn;
- Ruinous barn on Cross Hill;
- Unsightly electricity cables and equipment in field west of Stocks Green;
- Inappropriate use of stained hardwood timber instead of white painted softwood joinery;
- Use of cypress trees as a form of boundary screening;

Opportunities within the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area

- An iron finger post (Gisburn 3, Clitheroe 61/2, Slaidburn 6) is a particularly attractive feature in the conservation area that is in need of maintenance and re-painting;
- A small area of floor surface east of the Coach and Horses beside the beck is uneven and unkempt;

Threats to the Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area

- Continuing loss of original architectural details.

Many of the unlisted, and some of the listed, buildings in the conservation have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials or details. Common faults include the replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC or aluminium and the loss of original panelled front doors and their replacement with stained hardwood, uPVC or aluminium doors.



The Old Court House (grade II) was built in 1859 with much earlier remains

Recommendations

Bolton by Bowland Conservation Area boundary review

It is recommended that no changes are made to the existing conservation area boundary.

Article 4 Direction

None recommended.

Monitoring and review.

This document should be reviewed every five years in the light of the Local Development Framework and emerging government policy. A review should include the following:

- An evaluation of changes that have taken place in the conservation area, ideally by means of an updated photographic record;
- An assessment of whether the various recommendations detailed in this document have been acted upon, including opportunities for enhancement;
- A building condition survey;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and any necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising.



School House, Gisburn Road

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August 2005, revised 20.09.05, final revision 26.10.05

Bolton by Bowland - List of photographs

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