Conservation Area Appraisals
in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

Farfield Mill

Adopted document
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1.0 Introduction

This document provides the first comprehensive appraisal of Farfield Mill Conservation Area within the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Throughout the text, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority will be referred to as ‘we’, or ‘the Authority’.

1.1 The Area

Farfield Mill was given conservation area status in March 1993. It is now one of thirty-seven such designations within the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

This early 19th century historic mill complex lies on the north side of the A684, beside the River Clough, about a mile to the east of Sedbergh town in the Cumbrian part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Once an industrial complex with associated dwellings, the conservation area now has a more mixed use with tourism, residential and light commercial interests. It is set within an undulating landscape hemmed in by the dominating fells to north and south.

1.2 The Appraisal

**Purpose.** Every conservation area has a distinctive character which has been shaped over time by its natural and man-made surroundings. This appraisal is an opportunity to re-assess the Farfield Mill Conservation Area, to evaluate and record its special interest (see 3.0-4.0). It will set out how the place has evolved, draw out the key elements of its character and quality as it is now, and define what is positive and negative, and opportunities for beneficial change. However, neither the designation nor appraisal must be seen as an end in itself, but as a step towards the preservation and enhancement of this area’s character and appearance, providing a basis for making sustainable decisions about its future. Inevitably, conservation areas are susceptible to incremental and dramatic change due to neglect caused by economic decline, as well as over-investment and pressure for development. Hence the appraisal aims to counteract threats which would alter what made the area attractive and unique in the first place and to help promote positive change.

The appraisal should provide useful information about the environment of the Farfield Mill Conservation Area for residents, the wider public and other stakeholders. However, it is always advisable to contact the Authority when planning to undertake any work on listed buildings or structures within the vicinity of designated heritage assets.

**Scope.** The draft appraisal has been produced by the Authority’s Historic Environment team and is based on fieldwork carried out in 2006 and 2009 and research carried out for the Sedbergh and District Buildings Preservation Trust.

The draft appraisal was available for public consultation from February 17 2010 until April 15, 2010 (see 5.0). It was formally adopted in August 2010.
2.0 Planning Policy Framework

The Authority’s policies for conservation areas, along with other related policies concerning development and the use of land, are set out in the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan 2006; the policies contained within chapter 10 – built heritage and the historic environment – are particularly relevant. This plan is in compliance with the Yorkshire and Humber Plan, the area’s regional spatial strategy until 2026, as well as national legislation and guidance.

2.1 What Is a Conservation Area?

Section 69(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation area as:

an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance

**Designation.** It is the duty of the Authority to designate such areas, preferably with input from the local community. Yet this should never be undertaken solely in response to local pressure or to secure the future of a particular building, but only if an area is of sufficient special interest. Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 points out that it is the quality and interest of areas, rather than of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration. Furthermore, designation is not likely to be appropriate as a means of protecting landscape features, except where they form an integral part of the built historic environment.

**Review.** It is also the duty of the Authority to regularly review our conservation areas and, where appropriate, designate new parts. Likewise, if the original interest is so eroded by subsequent changes that it is no longer special, boundary revisions or cancellation must be considered.

**Performance.** Further duties of the Authority comprise, in consultation with the public, formulating and publishing proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation areas in the National Park. It should also seriously consider the desirability of preserving or enhancing their character or appearance when exercising planning powers. National Park family indicators provide a tool to monitor the Authority’s performance regarding these functions.

**The public.** Conservation area designation may result in resource implications for owners, developers and residents because of the increased statutory controls and particular requirements for the repair and alteration of existing, or the construction of new, buildings. However, designation also brings considerable benefits which are outlined below.

2.2 Benefits of Designation

Conservation area status offers advantages to both the public and the Authority.

**The public.** Conservation areas can enhance economic well-being and quality of life, as well as offer a certain amount of continuity and stability in a rapidly changing world. At the same time, conservation-led change can make a positive contribution enabling communities to regenerate. When considering investment, appraisals should guide the form and content of development, enhancement of the public realm, traffic management and outdoor advertisement. This value of an area is beneficial to both owners and developers, and estate agents are likely to put increasing emphasis on such a location when advertising properties.
Conservation area appraisals are educational and informative documents about our cultural inheritance that aim to raise public awareness and support, and upon which the prosperity of an area is sustained. They are necessary if funding is sought for grant-aid, offering financial assistance for owners to encourage repairs and preventative maintenance.

The Authority. Designation enables us to apply robust conservation policies to an area, with the appraisal providing a sound basis for planning decisions. Moreover, it automatically brings additional safeguards, such as the need for consent when demolishing unlisted buildings and walls or lopping and felling trees. Designation only has a very limited effect on 'permitted development' (those minor works that do not require planning permission). This is because National Park designation already imposes added restrictions on these rights granted under the General Permitted Development Order.

Under Article 4 of the same order, the Authority may impose directions to further withdraw permitted development rights. However, this is only justified where there is firm evidence to suggest that permitted development which could damage the character or appearance of a conservation area is taking place or is likely to take place, and which should therefore be brought into full planning control in the public interest.

When creating a formal appraisal such as this, the Authority produces a document designed to help safeguard, manage and improve the area within its historic context, but it is also one which will be taken into account by the First Secretary of State when considering related planning appeals.

9 Town and Country Planning Act 1990, section 211(3).
10 Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, schedule 2 part 1.

3.0 Definition of Special Interest

The purpose of this appraisal is to define the special interest of Farfield Mill Conservation Area that warrants its designation, as summarised below. A detailed analysis is provided in the next chapter (see 4.0).

3.1 General

The special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area is reflected in its character or appearance which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

When searching for the special interest of Farfield Mill Conservation Area, its significance, identity and distinctiveness is judged alongside local or regional criteria, while also recognising values attributed to the area by the local community and all those with an legitimate interest in it. The more clearly special interest is defined, the sounder will be the basis for local policies, development control decisions and management proposals. This helps reduce the potential uncertainty for owners and others when investment or development in the area is considered.

3.2 Summary of the Special Interest of Farfield Mill Conservation Area

The special interest in Farfield Mill lies in the contrast between the tightly clustered large industrial buildings, attractively sited on the banks of the River Clough, and the associated dispersed domestic buildings, and the way in which they still provide a strong indication of their original form and function. Together they provide a sense of Victorian industrialisation in juxtaposition with emerging middle class ideals. The World War Two air raid shelters are an unusual survival.

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4.0 Assessing Special Interest

This chapter at the core of the appraisal comprises a detailed analysis of the special interest of Farfield Mill Conservation Area with regard to its location and setting, historic development and archaeology, spatial issues, and character. A summary of the special interest has already been provided (see 3.2).

4.1 Location and Setting

This section describes the location and context, general character and plan form, and landscape setting of Farfield Mill Conservation Area.

a) Location and Context

The early 19th century Farfield Mill complex lies between the main road between Sedbergh and Hawes and the River Clough, about a mile to the east of Sedbergh town in the Cumbrian part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It developed as an industrial complex with associated dwellings but now has a more mixed use with tourism, residential and light commercial interests. The conservation area is set within an undulating landscape hemmed in by the dominating fells to north and south.

b) General Character and Plan Form

The physical character of the Farfield Mill conservation area derives from the location of the mill’s original power source, the river, here flowing rapidly within a shallow but steep sided gorge with the hard limestone bedrock creating a series of shallow waterfalls. While the conservation area is set within a rural context its main character and form is of large, tightly clustered, industrial buildings with dispersed domestic buildings providing a sense of Victorian industrialisation in juxtaposition with emerging middle class ideals.

c) Landscape Setting

Farfield Mill is set within open countryside with significant views to the wider landscape, in particular the Howgill Fells to the north and Frostrow Fells to the south towards Dentdale. The dominant presence of the Howgill Fells adds considerable landscape interest to the setting of this former industrial complex. The contrast between the industrial nature of the site and its wider rural setting strongly enhances the feeling of tightly packed buildings and industrious endeavour generated from this small site. The focus on the river as the formative feature for this complex, with some buildings set back only a few metres from the riverside, fixes the relationship between the conservation area and the landscape within which it is set and is fundamental to its character.

4.2 Historic Development and Archaeology

This section describes the origins, archaeology and historic development of the Farfield Mill Conservation Area.

a) Origins and Historic Development of the Area

This cluster of historic buildings is the best preserved example of the five water powered woolen textile mills which were an important part of the economy of the Sedbergh area in the 19th century.

The first mill building at Farfield Mill, Mill A, was built in 1837 for Joseph Dover to card and spin wool. Associated buildings, cottages and owner’s houses were added during the nineteenth century. According to the 1871 census the Dover’s employed 52 men, 7 boys, 2 women and 5 girls in the mill complex. The Dover family continued to run the business until 1935 when Edward and Thomas Dover both died with no direct descendants.
The complex was subsequently sold in 1937 to Thomas Histler, builders merchant and Robert Johnson, carpet manufacturer. During the Second World War it was used for the manufacture of crankcases for Airspeed Oxford Trainer planes. Three brick built air raid shelters survive near Mill A. The mill buildings were requisitioned by the Admiralty for storage after the war but returned to a West Riding based spinning company, Batty Bros, in 1953. Textile manufacture resumed in Mill A in 1965 and continued until 1992. This building, and two working Dobcross looms it contained which had been installed in the 1960s, was purchased by the then Sedbergh and District Buildings Preservation Trust in 1998 and now houses an Arts and Heritage Centre. The three other surviving industrial buildings are a two-storey building sited alongside the river and two larger finishing buildings which create a yard to the south of Mill A, dating from 1893. Four other former industrial buildings have been converted to domestic use including one known as the ‘Smithy’. A short row of mill workers cottages known as ‘The Row’ was built in 1851.

b) Archaeology

Although two areas of ridge and furrow, of medieval or post-medieval date are recorded in the field east of Farfield House and north of Oakdene these are largely ploughed out and the principle archaeological interest within the conservation area lies with the mill complex itself. The buildings are dealt with in the next two sections but the field located between the core of the mill complex and Garthside (formerly Farfield View), is named on the Tithe map of 1839 as ‘Tenter Field’. The rows of lines shown here on the 1894 first edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map are presumably tenter hooks used for drying and stretching cloth.

The remains of a weir across the Clough River and the leat that led from it to a mill pond and the mill buildings also survive. The leat is partly culverted, the first section of culvert being constructed in coursed rubble masonry, with an arched roof of rough hewn voussoirs. Much of the culvert remains intact, including the entrance by the weir, and the exit where it opens out into a mill pond. A central section has collapsed. The former open section of leat has been filled in, probably to improve access to the eastern most mill building. Its route can be partly traced by lines of red bricks in the access road.

Information about individual surveys, monuments and other features can be found on the Authority’s Historic Environment Record (HER).

4.3 Spatial Analysis

This section describes the character and interrelationship of spaces, as well as the key views and vistas of Farfield Mill Conservation Area.

a) Character and Interrelationship of Spaces within the Area

The relationships between the individual buildings and their locations are an important aspect of this conservation area. The layout can be distilled into three simple distinct character areas:

- The main cluster of industrial buildings, closely focussed around the earliest mill and mill yard and sitting hard by the river bank.
- The mill owner’s villas, away to the south west of the main cluster, and surrounding fields.
- The terrace of workers cottages, within easy reach of the workplace.

The main mill buildings are set on the edge of the rocky river bed with further buildings clustered around a yard to the south side. The buildings each have interest in their own right, but it is as a complex; from the first mill, and the early associated buildings, to the workers cottages and
owner’s villas through to the Second World War air raid shelters and an ablution block, that the conservation area derives its particular character and its historic importance. At the height of production there were six working buildings around which stand a range of residential buildings and the tenter field.

To the south and south west stand individual residences, Garthside and Cloughdale (formerly Farfield View), Farfield House and Oakdene, the latter two standing in mature formal gardens.

Located to the north-west, accessed along a shaded green lane, dug into the sloping river bank, stands The Row, a terrace of five workers dwellings fronting the pre-mill road leading to the river crossing point of Garsdale Bridge.

The mill buildings, despite being built into the steep sloping banks of the Clough River have a dominant influence over the main site. Mill A became surrounded by later mill buildings while the owner’s home, Farfield House, stood some way to the south on rising ground and with good views over the main mill complex to the north and to the Howgill Fells beyond. This simple hierarchy continued to be observed as the mill expanded; new industrial buildings were built close to Mill A, one over the existing mill pond which was channelled into a narrow leat, while a new family house and domestic staff accommodation were built on open ground south of the complex. A number of footpaths converge on the site and new workers homes were built to the north west of the complex, still within the steep sides of the valley of the Clough River and almost as close to the mills as the terrain would allow, with a direct access to the mill buildings. The relationship between working buildings, workers dwellings, domestic staff and owners homes is therefore very much at the heart of the character of this area.

b) Key Views and Vistas

From within the core of the mill complex, views and vista are limited by the topography and the trees. Even so views to the south take in the Frostrow Fells that separate Garsdale from Dentdale. From the workers houses by Garsdale Bridge fine views extend in the same southern direction and particularly fine views of the mill buildings can be enjoyed from the Garsdale Bridge itself and from the footpath from the A684. However the finest views from the site are from the owner’s residences which have dramatic views across the Garsdale valley to the Frostrow Fells in the south and the Howgill Fells to the north as well as dominating views onto the mill complex itself.

4.4 Character Analysis

This section is key to the appraisal. It unravels the character of Farfield Mill Conservation Area by considering its different character zones, land uses, buildings and other structures, local details and traditional materials, heritage assets, biodiversity, general condition including positive, neutral and negative factors, as well as potential problems and pressures to the area.

a) Activity and Prevailing Or Former Uses and Their Influence On Plan Form and Buildings

The Conservation Area relies heavily for its identity on its original use: wool processing and textile manufacture. The land was bought for this specific purpose and the layout of the site, the placement of industrial buildings, the weir, the lie of the leat and the location of residences etc were dictated by the needs of its original function and the topography. The use and location necessitated the type, style and size of buildings on the site and are the principle motivators in the character of the conservation area. They produced a basic plan form that has changed little despite
the expansion of the industrial complex. The introduction of new buildings simply consolidated the character of the separate elements of the site.

b) Quality of Buildings and Their Contribution To the Area

The architecture of the main buildings is typical of the period in which they were built, of the hierarchy of social structure and of their function. The various mill buildings and finishing rooms are utilitarian in nature with simple detailing, regimented rows of windows providing well-lit spaces, and floor supports and roof structures designed for both economy and space. The later dwellings, built in 1851, show a greater level of detail, but they are still simple in form with little or no ostentation. The two owners’ dwellings, however, are far more elaborate both in detail and in form. The juxtaposition of these disparate elements works well together within this self-contained complex and it is this that makes the complex of particular architectural and historical importance and of more importance than would be given to each building individually. The remaining buildings in this interesting area are the former smithy, Garsdale Bridge and the brick air raid shelters and ablution block which were developed to meet the needs of the workforce during the Second World War.

Although the principal access road and most of the yard area is tarmaced the remaining floorscapes between the core industrial buildings are a mixture of compacted materials which are functional and provide a degree of informality and permeability.

c) Unlisted Buildings

Only the Smithy, and Garsdale Bridge are listed buildings, the remainder are not listed. The complex as a whole however has significant architectural and historic importance and each building within the complex has its part to play. Individual buildings are not architecturally outstanding in their own right but it is the cumulative impact of all these functional and domestic, purpose built, structures that holds the special interest. In this way the largely unaltered buildings within the complex, Buildings A-D, The Row, The Smithy, Mill House and Fairfield Flats, the air raid shelters, Fairfield House, Oakdene and Farfield House must be considered to be key buildings.
yard, where it is some two storeys high at eaves level, to the edge of the river, where it is three storeys high with an additional attic floor. A further wing, 6 bays long and 3 bays wide, was added on the downstream side when the mill was rebuilt after a fire in 1908. It now contains about 20,000 square feet of floor space in which many of the original iron support pillars, originally by the Lound foundry of Kendal, and the oil-soaked wooden floors survive. It is not of fireproof construction. The water for the original water wheel entered the building through an arch on the upstream side. The wheel pit now contains a Gilkes turbine of 1896, currently maintained as a static display, and leads to a, now blocked, outlet flowing directly to the river. The building is constructed of coursed rubble, with a queen truss roof capped with Westmorland slate. The fenestration, between strong sandstone lintels and sandstone cills, is mixed with shallowly recessed 20 and 16 pane wooden sashes and fixed 9 pane windows predominating. In the valuation of 1911 the building was described as “Mill, 3 storeys and attic, used for scribilling, spinning, weaving, finishing etc.”

Building B. This two-storey mill, nine bays long and built parallel to the river, is constructed of roughly coursed limestone rubble with a Westmorland slate roof and partly occupies the site of the original mill pond. A retaining wall, now a light well extended the length of the south side of the building. There is a mixture of windows – originally alternating fixed 36 pane windows and top two row opening 36 pane windows on the main elevations. The window openings, especially those on the upper courses, have less pronounced lintels and sills than building A. It has a wooden queen truss roof. There is evidence for chimneys, now missing, at both gable ends. The mill stream was originally directed at right angles to serve a waterwheel at the west end of the building and part of the entrance arch remains. This was replaced by a now demolished steam power unit which stood at the west end of the building. It has been suggested that the south west corner was partly demolished and remodelled in the second half of the twentieth century but the chamfered alignment of the south west corner is shown on the 1911 valuation plan. In 1911 the buildings were described as Old Mill, 2 storeys and attics, used for scribbling, spinning, scouring and milling and Boiler House, Firing Place and economizer place with drying stove. A scheme to convert the building into 4 live/work units has been commenced but work has currently stopped.
Building C. The main building was described in 1911 as Building 7 - Stone built warehouse, 2 storeys and attic containing a waste sorting room, small pattern room, piece warehouse & packing room, twisting and reeling room with, on the west elevation, No. 25 Building, 2 storeys, with a cutting room on top floor and machine knitting room on ground floor and No 24 Willey shed. It was used as a dairy in the latter half of the twentieth century. The main building is believed to have been erected in 1893 and encloses the west side of a yard to the south of the main mill building. It is 8 bays long with a chimney, or possibly a former bell cote, on the east elevation between the third and fourth bays. This elevation has mainly 36 pane windows with the top row opening on the first floor. A photograph of Building A, shortly after the fire which destroyed its roof, shows Building C with a chimney, now missing, on the north gable. Cast iron rooflights on both main roof slope. The roof, rooflights and windows are not watertight and the main building and stone extensions are in generally poor condition and unused although the brick and sheet lean to vehicle workshop attached to the rear is still in use. Self seeded sycamores are growing out of the ground immediately adjacent to the south and east elevations.
Building D

On the opposite side of the yard is Building D, described in 1911 as “No 8 2 storey Warehouse and handloom weaving room. First floor with hand-weaving room containing 7 handlooms.” It is also believed to have been built in c1893 and is of 5 bays with three fixed 36 pane lights on the west elevation ground floor, one blocked window and one replaced by double doors. Two fixed and one opening 36 pane lights and two modified windows on the ground floor of the east elevation. 2 fixed and one opening. There is a chimney on the south gable. Protruding through stones are more prominent than in other buildings of the complex. It is currently used a joiners workshop and the first floor has been replaced by a ceiling and the window openings on both main elevations bricked up. The slate roof appears to be in fair condition and the external walls have been maintained. There is a roofless single storey extension on the south side and a slate roofed lean-to garage block on the north side.
**Mill House and Farfield Flats** A row of houses and flats; two storeyed on the south side, and three storeyed on the north side. The eastern end of this building, now Farfield Flats, of roughly coursed rubble is shown on the 1839 tithe map. The more regular coursing on the west gable represents partial shortening of the building to improve access to what is now Farfield Cottages. The original building was added onto at the west end by what is now Mill House. The four windows on the upper floor on the north side of Mill House have fixed 16 pane lights, the middle floor originally nine lights. The group was described as Building, 2-storey office and Making up room in 1911. The east end of Mill House with its, now rendered and cream painted south and east elevation and chimney stacks, is the most domestic looking of the former industrial buildings, an impression accentuated by the large bowed, horizontal emphasis uPVC windows which contrast with the vertical emphasis of the other industrial buildings.

**Farfield Cottages.** This was described as a 2 storey building for Hot air tentering in 1911 and had a now demolished dyehouse on the west end, a cooling shed on the east end and 2 sulphur stores on the stream side. Conversion into a row of four cottages in c1985 involved extensive demolition and rebuilding and the installation of additional windows, now a mixture of wood and uPVC, but the building maintains some industrial character.
The mill weir and leat. The weir, constructed above a natural fall in the river, is believed to have been partly breached during the Second World War. Much of the mill race to the main mill is believed to have been filled in to facilitate the Farfield Cottages development. A culverted section, the remains of overflow sluices, and a largely silted up mill pond partly remain at the upstream end of the leat while lines of brickwork in the roughly surfaced track between Farfield Cottages and Farfield Mill House indicate the line of the western part of the leat, through what had been the original mill pond.

The Smithy. Listed Grade II. A former Blacksmith and Joiner’s Shop with store room and one of two listed buildings in the conservation area. The list entry describes it as “Small house. Probably early C19. White-washed rubble with quoins, stone slate roof. Small double-depth double-fronted plan plus a large projecting lean-to at the right hand end. Two low storeys, 2 windows; central doorway protected by C20 glazed porch, flanked on each floor by small rectangular 2-light casements. Two-stage chimney at right-hand gable. The lean-to at the right-hand end, overlapping this corner, has a doorway in the front wall and 3 small windows in its return side. Rear and interior not inspected”. A building is shown in this location on the 1852 1st ed. 6” map but not on the 1839 tithe map. It is now a private house.
A brick built **ablution block**, now a store, probably of Second World War origin and contemporary with the air raid shelters.

Three brick built, concrete roofed **air raid shelters** survive to the south west of the main mill building. They are believed to be the only surviving purpose built air raid shelters in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

**Garsdale Bridge.** Listed Grade II. The list entry describes it as “Public road bridge over Clough River. Probably C17, partly rebuilt and altered in C19. Coursed sandstone rubble. Single span in Tudor-arched shape, with...
double rows of rubble voussoirs; flanked by battered buttresses. Re-built parapets, continued westwards as boundary walls.”

The Row. Five three-storey workers cottages, built in 1851 next to Garsdale Bridge with small gardens and a short set of stone built outhouses, former privies, on the opposite side of the road. The windows on the main elevation have been replaced, no. 1 with top hung casements, no. 2 with well matched wooden 4 light casements and uPVC windows in nos. 3-5. Two have later porches. The buildings are not shown on the 1st ed. 6” map.

Figure 14: The Row. (photo © YDNPA, 2009)

Figure 15: Garthside. (photo © YDNPA, 2007)
Garthside and Cloughdale, formerly Farfield View. The cottage was built in the 1890s for one of the mill owner's domestic employees and attached to an earlier coach house and warehouse dating from the 1870s. This has since been converted and the group divided into two properties. The building has lost much of its industrial character.

Farfield House: This Victorian villa was built in the 1840’s for the owners of the mill complex, John and James Dover. It retains its original windows. An access to the mill from the Sedbergh-Hawes road originally ran through the landscaped gardens immediately to the west of the house.
Oakdene; a later villa built in the 1880’s for the Dover family, directors and owners of the mill in a restrained Gothic style with pronounced finials, ridge tiles and barge boards, a stone slate roof laid in diminishing courses and original windows. Like Farfield House it is set within mature formal landscaped gardens.

d) Prevalent Local and Traditional Building Materials and the Public Realm

The individual buildings have been described in some detail above. The majority of the buildings have common traits that when taken on mass are significant contributors to the character and appearance of the area. These can be distilled down into the following four essential points which contribute strongly to the character of the buildings;

- Walls constructed of local stone rubble with Westmorland slate roofs.
- Cast iron support pillars within industrial buildings.
- Repetitive patterns of small pane sash windows with sandstone lintels and sills
- Robust simplicity and regularity of design.

The association of industrial and domestic buildings in a dynamic rural setting gives the complex much of its character.

e) Contribution Made To the Character of the Area By Green Spaces and Its Biodiversity Value

The green open spaces between the main complex of industrial buildings and the mature landscaped grounds surrounding the owner’s villas holds significant importance in the overall layout of the site. The siting of the villas away from the mill buildings while maintaining a view of and over them is an indicator of superiority, control and watchfulness. This space is therefore significant in its contribution to the character of the site. One open space in particular is important, the field in which the cloth was hung to dry, the tenter field, lies close to the mill buildings and is a very significant open green space. The woodland between the industrial mill buildings and the workers dwellings with its shaded green lane acts as a buffer between the workers homes and the noise and commotion of industrial process while the green lane maintains the physical connection between the two areas. The river as the major natural feature of this site, whose relationship with the mill complex is fundamental to its character,
is also an important area of open space within the context of the site and its original use. Boundaries within the site are mainly drystone walls.

f) Extent of Intrusion Or Damage (Negative Factors)

The complex as a whole and the important relationship between the individual buildings, as well as the relationship between the complex and the landscape remain remarkably intact.

The most significant physical losses to the site have been the area of open leat that originally ran along the south of buildings B and Gs, infilled to allow conversion of building G, the boiler house and chimney attached to building B and the dyehouse and cooling shed attached to building G, all of which predate designation of the conservation area.

Buildings C and D are the first structures seen on the approach to the mill cluster, and as such have a significantly detrimental impact to the conservation area due to the poor condition and continued disuse of building C and the underuse suggested by the walled up windows of Building D. The currently partially converted building B also has a significantly detrimental impact in its present state. A further area of concern is the culverted section of leat, the condition of which has not been determined due to the predominance of brambles that limit access.

A significant intrusion into the site is the vehicle workshop attached to the rear of Building C. This structure and the accumulated debris associated with it significantly intrude upon the quality of the site. While it is accepted that the character of the conservation area is industrial in nature, the workshop does not fit due to its materials, and the accumulated debris, while considerably reduced recently, is intrusive.

A twentieth century electricity substation nestles close to the main entrance of Mill A. Visually this detracts from the largely C19th building complex but it is also a reminder of the industrial nature of the complex.

To the west of mill A are a small single-storey brick ablution block, presumably dating from the use of the complex during the Second World War and three brick-built air raid shelters on the terrace above. Visually these also detract from the largely nineteenth century building complex but, they, especially the air raid shelters, are increasingly rare survivals and evidence for Second World War industrial dispersion and evidence for developing ideas about workforce welfare are therefore add significantly to the history of the complex.

Overhead lines are prominent, particularly on the access road to the complex.

g) Existence of Any Neutral Areas

The conservation area, although small, is quite complex in that the importance of the area is not necessarily in the individual buildings, spaces or styles of architecture but with the complex itself as an entity.

The car parking areas, essential to the functioning of the complex, could be considered as neutral areas: their impact has been minimised by appropriate surfacing and planting.

h) General Condition

The condition of the conservation area in relation to the preservation of the original character of the mill complex is remarkably good and the domestic buildings are largely maintained in good order by the residents. However, the same can not be said of some of the features within the area.
• Two buildings (B, C) are in a very poor state of repair both internally and externally. Building D appears underused but structurally sound.
• The retaining wall that runs along the green way between The Row and the mill complex is in a poor condition and a partial collapse has already occurred.
• The Old Smithy, is a listed building of considerable charm and character. While the run down appearance of this building has something of a timeless quality, the apparent lack of routine maintenance will inevitably lead to its decline.
• While the semi mature trees growing alongside Building C soften the industrial appearance of the complex their root systems and windsway will be undermining and damaging the building. The trees should be carefully felled and the stumps and root systems treated before significant damage occurs.
• The breached weir and culverted leat. While these could be considered as industrial monuments in their present condition they have potential for being brought back into productive use.

i) Problems, Pressures and Capacity For Change

A significant pressure within the conservation area is the capacity to cope with the tourist appeal of the Arts and Heritage Centre. Access to this and to private residential properties within the mill complex is naturally restricted by the compact layout of the site. The demand for visitor parking within the site has led to pressure on the access and vehicle circulation, particularly at peak periods.

Although the weir has been breached, the site offers considerable potential for the reintroduction of hydro-electric power through reinstating the weir and piping water along the line of the original leat. This could be an added attraction to visitors while at the same time reducing the carbon footprint of the complex.

The three mill buildings that are currently in poor condition are in need of significant investment which is only likely to be financed by new uses. While their reuse should be encouraged, the potential for further traffic and parking requirements will be a major issue within this compact conservation area.

While some planting and landscaping adds to the biodiversity and appearance of the area the extent of coniferous planting close to the industrial core, the creation of new gardens and location of garden infrastructure, greenhouses, play paraphernalia such as trampolines, especially around the former industrial buildings needs to be carefully considered and limited to avoid destroying the industrial character of the core of the conservation area.

The compact nature of the site itself and the fundamental value of the relationship of space and buildings to the character of the conservation area means that changes within the site are going to have a disproportionately high impact on its character. This fact will limit the capacity for change.

This conservation area however is significantly at risk as the condition of a number of buildings, particularly B, C and D dictates that change must happen for them to be conserved, yet the very nature of the complex restricts the level of change that could occur with causing significant harm to its character and appearance.
5.0 Community Involvement

**Purpose.** There is no statutory requirement to consult prior to designation or cancellation of designation, but it will be highly desirable that there should be consultation with local residents, businesses and other local interests (e.g. amenity bodies)\(^1\), and the Authority made the decision to consult. It is also required by law to publish any proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas, and submit these for consideration to a public meeting\(^2\). We appreciate that what is valued by the community may add a new perspective to what is considered special by the Authority. The greater the public support and ‘ownership’ that can be enlisted the more likely it is that property owners are encouraged to take the right sort of action for themselves\(^3\) and that conservation policies succeed.

**Scope.** As part of the consultation process, a copy of this document was made available on the Authority’s website, together with a feedback form. The formal consultation period ran from February 17 until April 15, 2010.

In addition a hard copy of the report was delivered by hand to individual properties within Farfield Mill Conservation Area.

The draft appraisal has been amended in the light of corrections and comments made as a result of this consultation.

6.0 Suggested Boundary Changes

Assessment of the current boundary and of the areas located within and without the current designated boundary has come to the following conclusions:

- No area currently located within the boundary has been found to have lost its merit or to have been harmed by development, to such a degree that the conservation area, or any part therein, has lost the architectural or historic merit that warranted its inclusion at the time of designation.

- No area currently located outside the current boundary has been found to have increased in merit to such a degree that any part not previously included within the boundary would now be considered to have sufficient architectural or historic merit to warrant inclusion at the time of this review.

No changes in legislation or guidance have occurred that have redefined what would or would not have architectural or historic merit since the designation of the conservation area.
7.0 Local Generic Guidance

The Authority has issued the following policy guides which also address general issues concerning the development within conservation areas:

- Summary Guide for Property Owners and Developers ¹
- Advice Note 1: Replacement Windows & Doors ²

Further guidance will be issued by the Authority and published in form of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). There will also be design guides including advice on the repair and alteration of historic buildings. All information will be available on the Authority’s website.

8.0 Summary of Issues

The following specific issues have been identified within this document:

- Planning permission has been granted for conversion of Building B into four dwelling units with workshops. Development has commenced but work has currently lapsed, presumably for economic reasons.

- Building C is in an advanced state of dereliction and also suffering from uncontrolled vegetation. It would greatly benefit from an appropriate scheme of repair, reinstatement and reuse.

- Building D is underutilised and while its current state of maintenance is not a major cause for concern it occupies a focal position at the entrance to the industrial complex and would benefit from a more intensive use which reopened the first floor windows.

- The area to the rear of building C is currently partly used as a dumping ground for old machinery and rubbish. Redundant materials could be removed.

- The Old Smithy, adjacent to the main mill building (A), is a listed building of considerable charm and character. While the run down appearance of this building has something of a timeless quality, any lack of routine maintenance will inevitably lead to its decline, and so have a detrimental impact on the conservation area.

- Parking and access relating to the Arts and Heritage Centre and the centrally located residential buildings is a potential source of conflict.

- The weir and its associated leat are in a very poor state of repair with the latter also partially infilled but represent an opportunity for reinstatement of hydro power.

These issues have the potential to be resolved and their resolution would benefit/enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

¹ YDNPA (date?).
² YDNPA (2005).
Useful Information and Contact Details

This section comprises references to principal sources of information, a short glossary of architectural and geological terms, as well as useful names and addresses of both national and local organisations for enquiries and comments.

9.1 References and Further Reading

Note: All internet sources were accessed at the time of writing the appraisal in 2009, unless stated otherwise.

a) General Publications


b) Topic-specific Publications


c) Publications by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority


d) Government Guidance and Legislation


9.2 Glossary

Designation The way of marking that a building, monument or landscape has special interest in the national context, and protecting it by law. In the United Kingdom, there are currently seven categories: listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered historic battlefields, protected wreck sites, and World Heritage Sites.

Grade I, II*, II Within the listed buildings designation, there are three rankings. The highest is grade I, which applies to buildings with exceptional interest, followed by grade II*, which are particularly important buildings of more than special interest. However, the vast majority of listed buildings are grade II, which are of special interest.

Heritage asset Building, monument, site or landscape of historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest, whether designated or not. Conservation areas are groups of heritage assets where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

9.3 Contacts

English Heritage (North West regional office)
Address: Canada House, 3 Chepstow Street, Manchester, M1 5FW
Phone: 0161 242 1400
Email: northwest@english-heritage.org.uk
Web: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk

English Heritage (Yorkshire regional office)
Address: 37 Tanner Row, York, North Yorkshire, YO1 6WP
Phone: 01904 601 901
Email: yorkshire@english-heritage.org.uk
Web: http://www.english-heritage.org.uk

North of England Civic Trust
Address: Blackfriars, Monk Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4XN
Phone: 0191 232 9279
Email: admin@nect.org.uk
Web: http://www.nect.org.uk

The Victorian Society
Address: 1 Priory Gardens, London, W4 1TT
Phone: 020 8994 1019
Email: admin@victoriansociety.org.uk
Web: http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Address: Conservation & Policy, Yoredale, Bainbridge, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 3EL
Phone: 0300 456 0030
Email: info@yorkshiredales.org.uk
Figure 19: The Farfield Mill Conservation Area. © Crown Copyright, All rights reserved 100023740 (2010)

Figure 20: Farfield Mill as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, 1894