

Embleton Conservation Area Character Appraisal

January 2025



Northumberland Coast AONB

**Embleton
Conservation Area
Character Appraisal
and Management
Recommendations**

Final report

Prepared by LUC
January 2022



Northumberland Coast AONB

Embleton Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Recommendations

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Embleton Conservation Area
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A photograph of Embleton Church and its churchyard. The church is a stone building with a prominent tower and a large Gothic window. The churchyard is filled with numerous gravestones of various shapes and sizes. In the foreground, there is a rusty metal fence with decorative finials. The scene is set against a clear blue sky.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Embleton Church and churchyard

Chapter 1

Introduction

Conservation area designation is about celebrating and preserving the local distinctiveness of places, but what exactly is a conservation area and what are the implications of designation? The aim of this section is to explain why we designate areas, why it is important to protect their character and appearance, and how this protection relates to Embleton.

What is a conservation area?

1.1 In 1967, the Civil Amenities Act introduced the simple concept of recognising buildings and areas of historic interest and making provisions for the protection of that special interest. Today, the spirit of that Act has been extended and incorporated into the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which makes provision for the designation of “*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”¹. Although the legislation applies nationally to England, conservation areas are identified and designated by local authorities based on criteria appropriate to their area.

¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/conservation-areas/> [accessed 15.03.2021]

1.2 Preservation of the character and appearance of conservation areas is about avoiding harm and maintaining those features of an area that make it distinctive. **Enhancement** of the character and appearance of conservation areas is concerned with the promotion of positive improvements; that is, both the removal of elements identified as harmful or detracting from the area's special interest, but also advocating and directing new development so that it responds to and reinforces the character of the area.

Conservation area designation and appraisal

1.3 The special interest of Embleton and the desire to celebrate and preserve its historical importance was recognised in 2007 when it became a designated area of special interest under the agreement of the Alnwick Operations Executive Committee. The reasons for its designation were formalised in Character Appraisal and Management Matters, undertaken by North of England Civic Trust and published in 2008.

1.4 Section 71 of the 1990 Act places a duty on local authorities to *"formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas"*², but, more than that, a conservation area appraisal is a tool to help people understand what is important about a place and manage change within it.

1.5 To facilitate the preservation or enhancement of a conservation area, as required by the 1990 Act, the designation of an area introduces some restrictions on what can and cannot be done without planning permission. These include:

- For the demolition of any building within the conservation area;
- Control over partial demolition;
- Control over works to trees;
- Limited permitted development rights;
- The option to use Article 4 directions to further restrict specific permitted development rights; and

- Limitations on the type of advertisements that do not require consent.

1.6 In the case of conservation areas, the NPPF also requires local authorities to look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal their significance³ and to recognise that historic assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that future generations are able to appreciate them too⁴.

1.7 The Northumberland Local Plan (March 2022) Policy ENV 1 - Historic and built environment (Strategic Policy) states *"The character and/or significance of Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and built environments, will be conserved, protected and enhanced by: a. Giving appropriate weight to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the hierarchy of international, national and local designated and non-designated nature and historic conservation assets or sites and their settings"*. [Policy ENV 9](#) deals specifically with Conservation Areas.

1.8 The 2020-2024 AONB Management Plan recognises that the history of human interaction and occupation of the landscape is integral to the character of the AONB. Evidence of this interaction ranges from field patterns to settlements sites, route ways to buildings and quarries to castles. Objective Two of the plan relates to the historic environment, with Policy 2.1 stating *"important heritage assets including designated and non-designated archaeological sites, the character and appearance of historic buildings, settlements and the built environment will be protected, conserved and well managed"*⁵. This updated appraisal contributes to achieving this action to ensure that the historic environment is well-managed and better protected.

What should the appraisal be used for?

Planning for change

1.9 Conservation area appraisals provide an evidence base for managing change and, by adopting a conservation area appraisal, planning authorities are better placed to give due and proportionate weight to the special interest of conservation areas. An appraisal can also be

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/section/71> [accessed 15.03.2021]

³ Ibid. Para.206.

⁴ Ibid. Para.189.

used to support potential strategic plans and policies for the area, and to promote its conservation and regeneration.

Supporting good design

1.10 A conservation area appraisal should be used to assess how well new development responds to the character of Embleton, and identify where there may be opportunities to enhance what is already present. As such, it can be used as a basis for refusing poor design that fails to respond to the character of the place.

Informing and inspiring

1.11 As publicly accessible documents, conservation area appraisals aim to widen appreciation of the special interest of the designated area and raise awareness of why it is protected. Ultimately, its overarching aim is to help people better-understand and engage with the places where they live, work and visit.

Acknowledgements

1.12 In 2021, LUC was commissioned by the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership to provide a review of existing and potential conservation areas within the AONB. This new appraisal for Embleton updates the original 2008 character appraisal to ensure its content reflects the current state of the area including a fresh presentation of character analysis and management issues.

1.13 With grateful thanks to the staff of Northumberland AONB Partnership, Northumberland County Council and Northumberland Archives for their knowledge, advice and assistance in creating this document.

1.14 NCC Front Cover, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 cover photographs and **Figure 1.1, Figure 2.1, Figure 3.1, Figure 4.4, Figure 5.1** (Sunny Brae), **Figure 5.8** (churchyard), **Figure 5.14** (Greys Inn), **Figure 5.17, Figure 5.20 and Figure 6.1** © Nick Best

Figure 1.1: Embleton Conservation Area: Stanley Terrace and Mount Pleasant



Chapter 2

Summary of Special Interest

Datestone and view to Dunstanburgh



Chapter 2

Summary of Special Interest

This section provides an overview of the special interest of Embleton Conservation Area.

Designation and appraisal

2.1 The special interest of Embleton and the desire to celebrate and preserve its historical importance was recognised in 2007 when it became a designated area of special interest under the agreement of the Alnwick Operations Executive Committee. The reasons for its designation were formalised in Character Appraisal and Management Matters, undertaken by North of England Civic Trust and published in 2008. This review of the 2008 character appraisal was undertaken in 2021 by LUC and was adopted by Northumberland County Council in 2025.

Location and context

2.2 Embleton is a historic village on the north Northumberland coastal plain in the civil parish of Embleton. The village straddles a low ridge about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile inland from the attractive sandy bay, which takes its name from the village. The ridge runs north to south and stands out from the surrounding flat plain as it is formed from hard grey whinstone, the locally occurring dolerite that has so influenced the landscape, seascape, and appearance of settlements along this part of the coast. Most of the early village settled itself on the landward side of the ridge to provide protection from inclement coastal weather. From here, there is a gentle fall westwards before the landform starts to rise again, plateauing into the sandstones and limestone of the coastal plain.

Figure 2.1: The historic agricultural setting of Embleton



Historical development

2.3 Embleton sits within a landscape of great antiquity, but the settlement we see today really began to take shape in the medieval period. Over the ensuing centuries, the village was an important trade conduit between the fertile Northumberland plains and the transport links along the coast. During this time, the village experienced cultural highs through its association with Merton College, Oxford, and economic lows during the Wars of the Roses and Border raids but

it emerged on the other side intact and diversified its agricultural economy to include industrial endeavours, with the massive development of whinstone quarrying from 1864 and into the 20th century. With the decline in traditional local employment when the quarry closed in 1961, the village has now entered a new phase in which its economic future lies in commuting and tourism, both of which capitalise on the beauty of the surrounding landscape and seascape and the historic character of the village.

Summary of defining characteristics of Embleton Conservation Area

2.4 The context and historical development of Embleton are unique to the village and it is from this that it draws its individual character. This strong sense of place comes from many facets, but the following characteristics are of particular importance to the character and appearance of Embleton:

The historic form of the layout of the village

2.5 Once a loosely grouped collection of detached houses and farm complexes that were gradually joined up with secondary routes and lined with a variety of buildings. The broad form, higher density and consistent building line of Front Street provides a natural focal point, but elsewhere this feels less concentrated and formal, as varying plot sizes, building lines, orientations and forms impart a more organic appearance.

The beautiful and at times dramatic views

2.6 These occur both within the area and toward and from its setting, above the seascape of Embleton Bay and the surrounding pastoral landscape. On the landward side, the rising form of the bucolic landscape reinforces the village's strong, enduring rural character; to the east, the village boundary gives way to the wide, open coastal landscape of fields and golf links followed by the rugged, grassy dunes and water. The changes in topography across the area are important not only in allowing long-range views out of the area, but also intermediate and glimpsed views within the area, which play with perspective by adding layers and depth to the streetscape.

The strong visual coherence across the range of built forms in the village

2.7 This is achieved principally through the consistency in materials, form and scale. This overarching harmony is punctuated by a small number of individual features and buildings that provide accents of visual and historic interest against the backdrop of the common vernacular character.

The strength of the visual, physical and historical relationship between the buildings and spaces

2.8 Whilst much of the charm of the area is the integrated but individual style and development of plots and buildings, the grouping of church and vicarage is notable for its concentrated medieval character. The strength of the visual, physical and historical relationship between the buildings and spaces in this part of the conservation area is particularly special, and anchors the village to its medieval roots.

Buildings are predominantly single or two-storey in height, rendered with a white or cream finish or stone built, and usually with a dual-pitched, slate roof

2.9 The use of whinstone from the quarries of the surrounding area is a particularly notable feature in Embleton, used on buildings, boundary walls and ground surfacing. Most buildings in Embleton are restrained in their use of architectural embellishments; those that do clearly illustrate a deliberate design intent are usually public facing, but also include a small number of high-status houses, such as the Old Vicarage and The Manse. This mix of building purposes and designs documents the development of the village and defines its appearance.

Pockets of public and private green spaces are found in abundance within the Conservation Area

2.10 Some of these are formally defined – the churchyard, the play park, the former quarry – but equally important are the incidental spaces – the steep, wide grass verges, the green at the junction of Front Street, views across private gardens. Along with planting and street trees, these spaces provide respite from the harder urban streetscape and visually connect the village to its rural fringes.

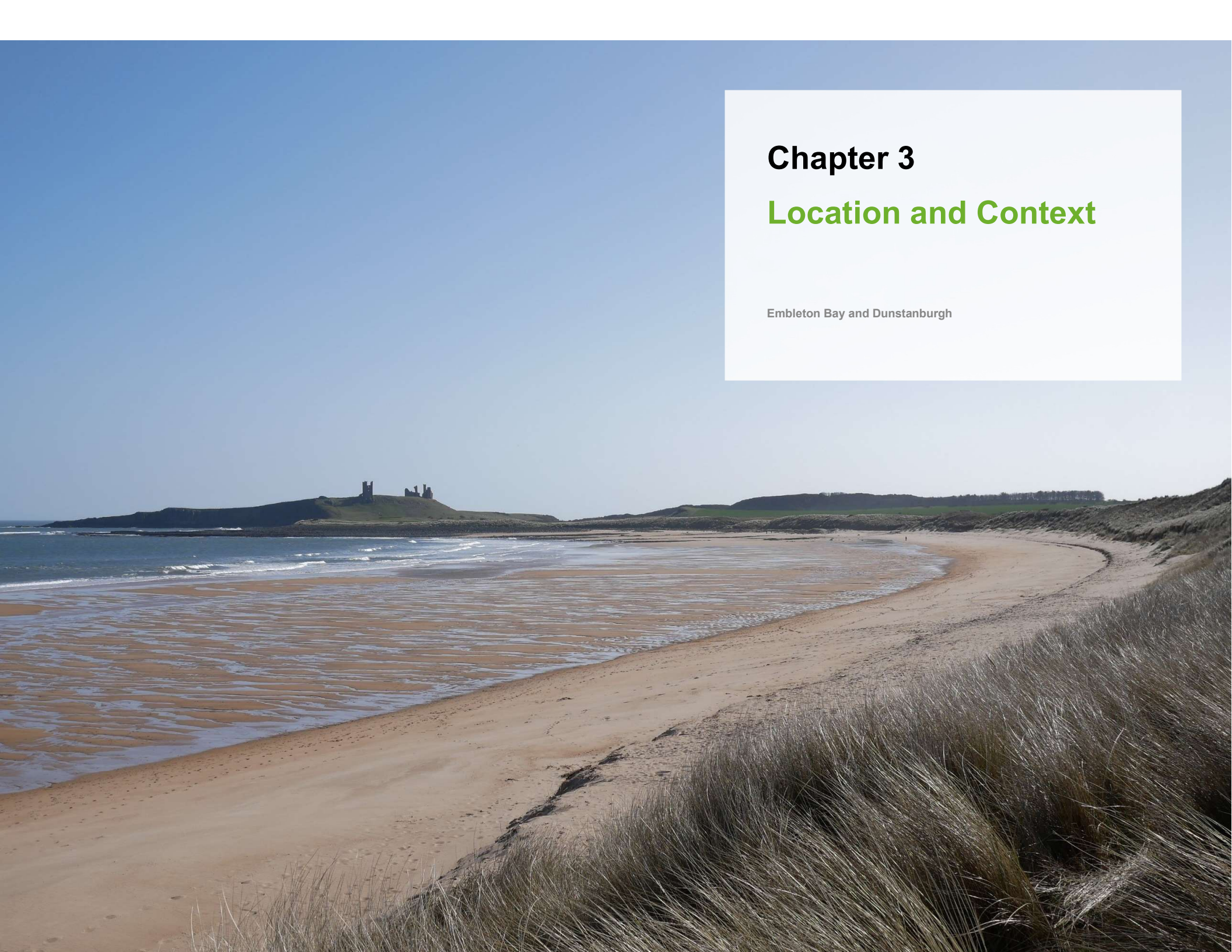
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Visual representation of the key words featured in the historical development and character analysis chapters.

Chapter 3

Location and Context

Embleton Bay and Dunstanburgh



Chapter 3

Location and Context

The character of an area starts to form long before the human interventions of buildings, streets, fields and towns are established: it starts with the geology and topography of a place. These foundations are what make some places suitable for human habitation and others not, what makes some settlements flourish whilst others fade. This section considers what it is about the location and context of Embleton that made it ripe for successful occupation.

Location

3.1 Embleton is a historic village on the north Northumberland coastal plain, the centre at grid reference NU 231 226, lying in the civil parish of Embleton and Longhoughton Ward of Northumberland County Council. It is seven miles north-east of Alnwick, 40 miles north of Newcastle upon Tyne and about 28 miles from the Scotland-England border.

3.2 Historically, Embleton's railway station on the main north-south line was at Christon Bank, about 1¼ miles to the west. The A1 is a further 2½ miles west beyond the station. The main road through the village runs north-south parallel to the coast, with a short cul-de-sac spur to Embleton Bay in the east and a secondary road to the west – Station Road – which eventually meanders to the A1.

Geology and topography

3.3 Embleton is at the southern end of the North Northumberland Coastal Plain countryside character area (no.1). The plain is underlain by sedimentary limestone, shales and sandstones of Carboniferous age, including local deposits of thin coal seams. Intruding into the Carboniferous rocks are near horizontal sheets of dense grey or black rocks created by volcanic action deep below the ground. These sheets are collectively known as the Whin Sill. This term was originally used by northern quarrymen and, in geological science, 'sill' is now applied to all similar geological formations while 'whin' has become the generic term for hard grey rock.

3.4 While the sandstones and shales are prone to weathering into bays and headlands, whinstone is especially resistant to erosion by wave and weather, forming shoreline cliffs, offshore islands and dramatic, unexpected inland escarpments. Dunstanburgh Castle takes advantage of the shoreline whin crags at Castle Point, whilst Lindisfarne Castle proudly stands atop a steep-sided crag of the Whin Sill. Inland outcrops and escarpments of the Sill, such as the ridge which runs through Embleton, form distinctive local landmarks, often forming steep and sudden rises and falls in landform, as well as supporting rare, semi-natural, whinstone grasslands.

3.5 Embleton straddles a low ridge about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile inland from the attractive sandy bay which takes its name from the village. The ridge runs north to south and stands out from the surrounding flat plain as it is formed from hard grey whinstone, the locally occurring dolerite that has so influenced the landscape, seascape, and appearance of settlements along this part of the coast. Most of early village settled itself on the landward side of the ridge to provide protection from the coast's inevitable bouts of fiercely wild weather, although the spectacular views it provides towards the coastline has tempted later residents to bravely occupy the ridge line, which rises sharply eastward from the village's historic core around the green on Front Street. From here, there is a gentle fall westwards before the landform starts to rise again, plateauing into the sandstones and limestone of the coastal plain.

Figure 3.1: Former whinstone quarry



The Conservation Area boundary

3.6 The boundary of Embleton Conservation Area is shown in **Figure 3.2**.

3.7 The non-designated buildings of local interest identified here are not designated at a national level (e.g. through listing) but are considered to be of architectural or historical interest and to make a positive contribution to the character of Embleton. A full list of these features is at **Appendix A**.

3.8 Those examples which make a particularly strong contribution have been identified here. They include candidate Local List buildings identified in the Embleton Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 and further examples identified through survey work for this appraisal. However, it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list, and that most buildings in the Conservation Area collectively contribute to its special character and appearance. The absence of a building or structure from the map does not imply it is without merit and hence more susceptible to modification or redevelopment. It is always recommended to contact your local Conservation Officer for further advice before embarking on any building project.

3.9 Listed buildings and other assets designated at a national level can be found via the National Heritage List for England (NHLE): <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search>.

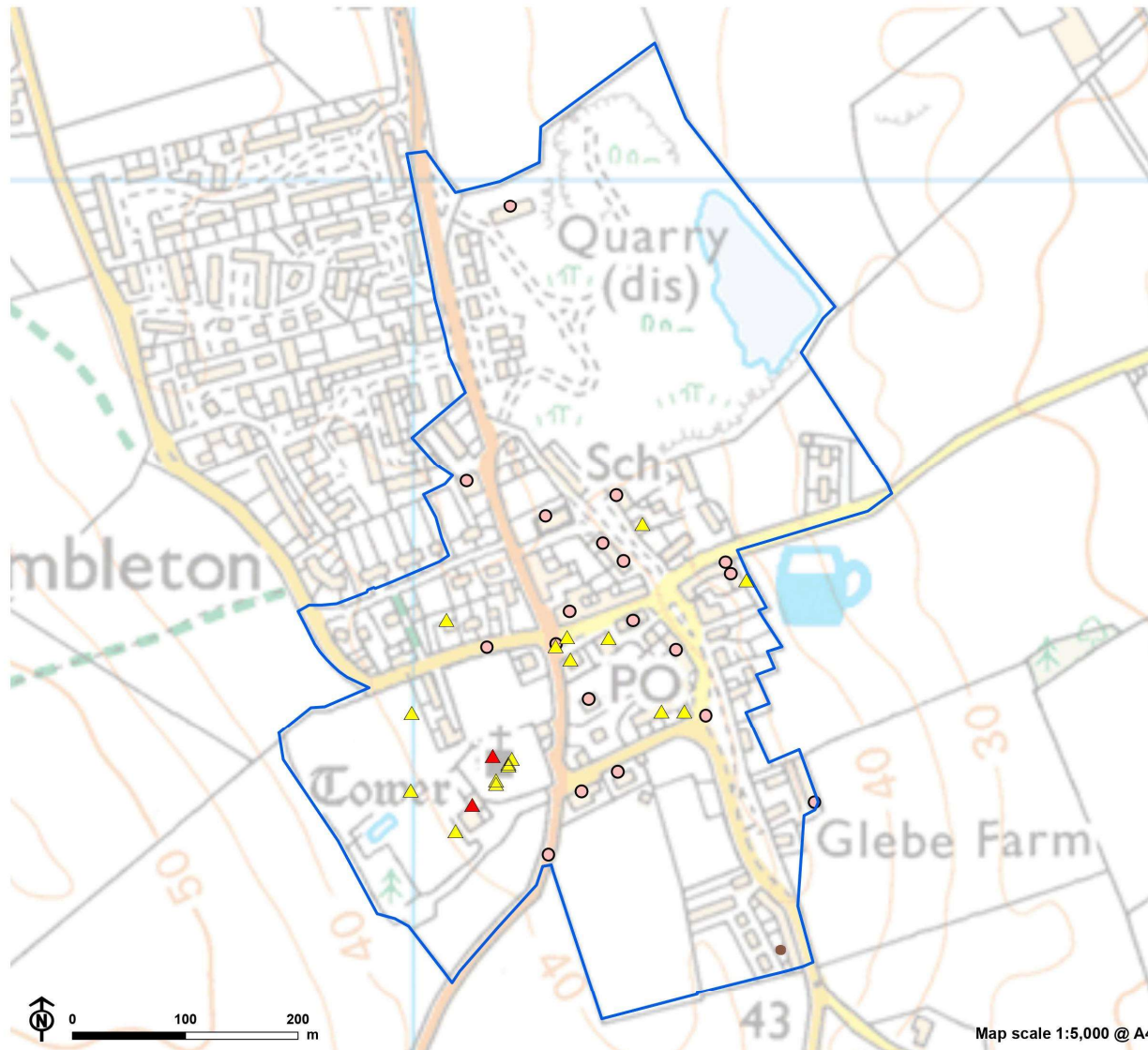


Figure 3.2: Embleton Conservation Area and features of interest

Embleton Conservation Area

Scheduled Monument

Listed Building (grade)

I

II

Non-designated buildings of local interest

Refer to Appendix A for list of non-designated buildings of local interest.

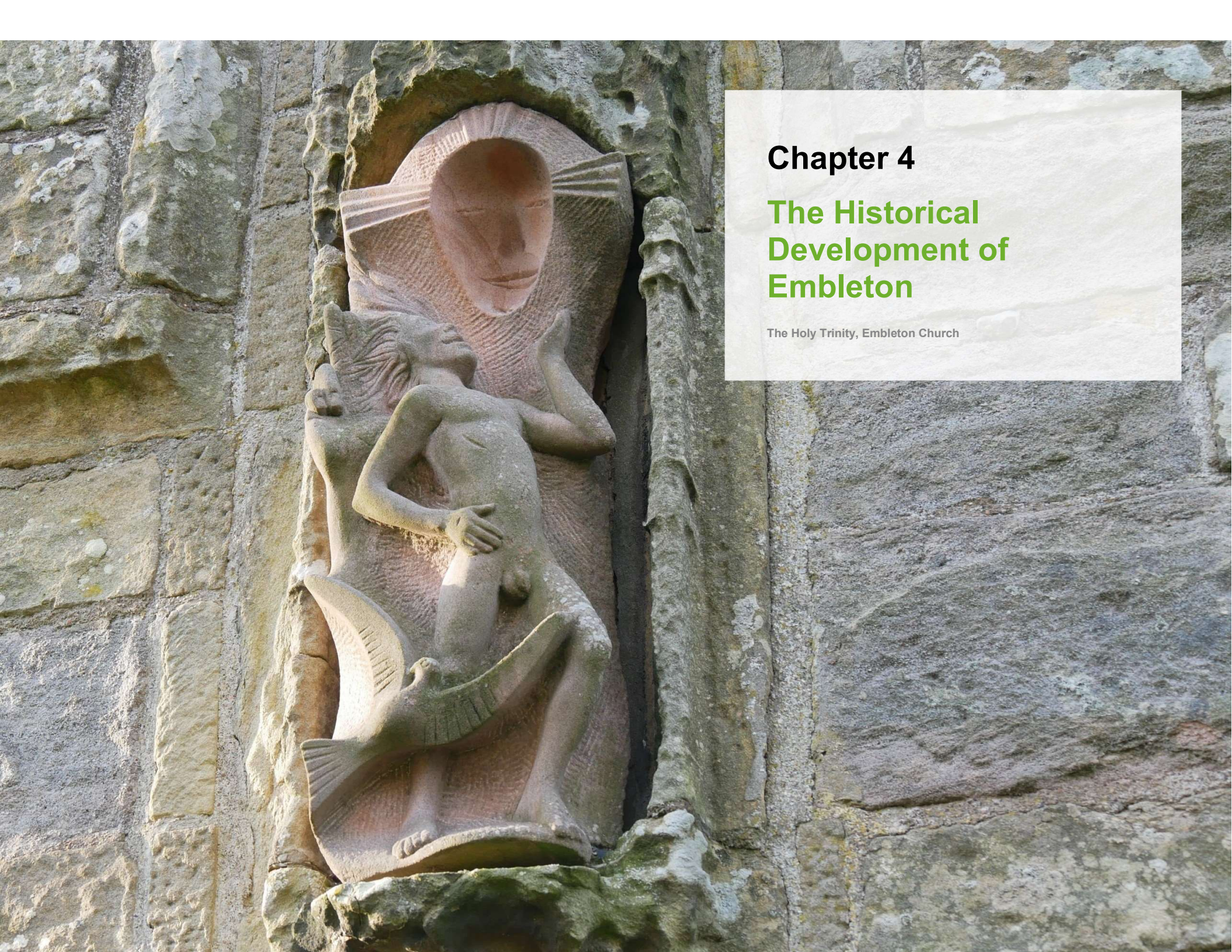
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Source: OS, NCC

Chapter 4

The Historical Development of Embleton

The Holy Trinity, Embleton Church



Chapter 4

The Historical Development of Embleton

Conservation areas did not develop in isolation, and in order to understand what is included within the boundary and why, we must look beyond to give the area context. This section considers how Embleton developed from its earliest origins into the settlement we see today.

Prehistoric and Roman periods

4.1 Evidence for activity in the area around Embleton in prehistoric times is scant, comprising a possible Bronze Age stone-lined grave and an Iron Age settlement at Cold Embleton. Possible ring ditches are recorded on Embleton Moor. However, from evidence elsewhere on the Northumberland coastal plain, settlement and activity from the last Ice Age in the Embleton area is very likely.

4.2 This appears to have remained the status quo throughout the Roman occupation and, although there are tantalising hints of pre-medieval settlement, this activity has left little imprint on the character and appearance of the village of Embleton as we see it today, which really started to establish itself in the medieval period.

Medieval period

4.3 Embleton is known from records to have existed before the 13th century, when it was the centre of the barony and liberty of Embleton, although the name itself is Old English, dating

from sometime between the 5th and 12th centuries AD⁵. At this time, Embleton and Stamford was held by the Viscount family who, in 1255, conveyed the barony to Simon de Montford, Earl of Leicester. After his death in 1265 at the Battle of Evesham, the barony was given to the Earl of Lancaster who built Dunstanburgh Castle as a bolthole for himself; the castle would later be used as a stronghold for the Earls in the Wars of the Roses, a period that would bring disruption and uncertainty to those living in its shadow. In 1274, the Earl of Lancaster gave the lucrative rectorship of Embleton Church to Merton College, Oxford. Although the College's rights were contested on occasions, its interests in the village survive to the present day and Merton Cottages, a street in the modern village, commemorate this unlikely relationship with a distant seat of learning.

The real value of this relationship for the village was the steady supply of well-educated vicars, of whom most – but not all – were a credit to their calling. For example, in Vincent Edwards (1680-1712) the village had a farsighted education benefactor who provided Embleton with one of the first village schools in the country (the current First School still bears his name) and in Mandell Creighton (1875-1884), a history don, a conscientious pastoral visitor and a future Bishop of London, after whom the village hall (built 1903) is named.

4.4 The other major thread running through the story of Embleton is warfare. In the second quarter of the 12th century, Northumberland was won and controlled by three successive kings of Scotland, to the great disadvantage of the local people and the local economy. Henry II of England restored English control in 1157 but worse was to come in 1298, which saw the beginning of 300 years of conflict across the border, with raids and reprisals involving death, destruction and wholesale theft.

4.5 Despite this almost constant upheaval, the village today still very much bears the legacy of its medieval forebears: evidence of deserted medieval buildings lies in the fields – which also contain extensive ridge-and-furrow field systems dating to this period – just south of the present settlement, not far from the two most ancient buildings in the village, Trinity Church (late 11th or

early 12th century) and the fortified tower-cum-polite country residence of the Old Vicarage (early 14th century). A hospital, possibly for lepers, founded before 1314 is known to have existed at Embleton, and the splendid circular, tun-bellied dovecote behind now hidden behind Sunny Brae also potentially dates from this period when the rearing of doves was an important part of the medieval food economy, particularly as doves could provide a supply of fresh meat during winter months. Embleton was granted a licence to hold a market in 1257 and the broad span of Front Street and its prime location – the point where the route inland from the sea and the principal north-south route meet – certainly hints at early origins.

Figure 4.1: Medieval buildings – Church of the Holy Trinity and the Old Vicarage



⁵ The earliest recorded spelling, Elmesdun, is from 1200. The dun element is straightforward Old English for hill, reflecting the elevated site of the village on the coastal plain. But the elmes part is less certain: it could mean either caterpillar (emel), making Embleton into caterpillar hill, or, more likely, Aemele's hill, where

Aemele is an Anglo-Saxon family name. So the name commemorates both the coming of Aemele's people and the hill they settled on or near.

Post-medieval peacetime

4.6 The post-medieval period brought a growing peacefulness to Northumberland and renewed prosperity. It was during this period that the fortified vicarage was remodelled into a more comfortable dwelling, and agriculture and fishing began to recover. In the village, this is marked by the development of the Old Hall on Station Road and new farms such as East Farm at the head of Sea Lane, which survives today as a private house.

4.7 Embleton was never destined to compete with larger Northumberland towns such as Berwick, Belford or Alnwick, which prospered from their location on the Great North Road, or even Seahouses, Alnmouth and Amble with their easier access to the North Sea. However, its steady recovery and expansion in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries illustrates the important role it continued to play as a local economic centre for both agricultural and industry. Significant surviving buildings of the 18th century are the handsome, two-storey Gothick summerhouse on the seaward terrace of the former Sportsman pub and the brick and pantile dovecote north of the Old Vicarage.

4.8 A Tithe Map of 1841 provides the earliest detailed representation of the layout and principal buildings of Embleton. At this time, the village was broadly divided into two distinct parts by the rugged west-facing slopes ('rocks and waste') of the whinstone ridge. The western part, containing the earliest buildings and all of Front Street, lies sheltered under the lee of the ridge, while the eastern part is only narrow and runs along the highest, most exposed edge of the ridge. A second church also appears on this plan for the first time – the 1833 United Presbyterian Chapel and manse – which was to be the birthplace in 1849 of William Thomas Stead, social reformer and campaigning journalist who lost his life in the Titanic disaster of 1912. He is commemorated in the village by a modern street name.

4.9 The 1861 First Edition OS map shows that development of the village remained steady and proportionate to the surrounding industrial activity of the area. The band of 'rocks and waste' still divided the village into east and west, but both active and disused quarries are recorded at north and south ends of the ridge and in the surrounding landscape. Sunny Brae (reputed to be quarrymen's cottages but possibly pre-dating major quarrying in Embleton) and Dene View House had appeared at the south end of the village. Glebe Farm had been further developed by the addition of a horse-driven gingang (wheelhouse) and Stanley Terrace and others had been built around The Grey's Inn. A group of buildings, including Embleton Cottage (c.1840) and a smithy had been built around the Blue Bell Public House (also c.1840), the parish hall had

become a girls' school and the Vincent Edwards School (1825) occupied an isolated and exposed location on the edge of the ridge. Apart from these few changes, the basic road pattern and density of development had not changed between 1841 and 1861.

Figure 4.2: 18th century buildings in Embleton



The Gothick summerhouse adjacent to the former Sportsman pub.



The dovecote to the north of the church and Old Vicarage.

4.10 However, by the time the survey for the Second Edition OS map was carried out in 1896, a major change had taken place. The north quarry, which only occupied a tiny area of the whinstone ridge in 1861, had grown to cover an area about half the size of the village at the time. It had also begun to threaten the future of the school on the ridge, which was replaced

in 1897 and still serves the village today. In addition, scattered buildings had appeared just north of the Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel; a police station had appeared at the bottom end of Front Street; the larger manse for the United Presbyterian Church had been built next to the old one and a post office had opened next to Jubilee House.

Figure 4.3: 19th century development



The former United Reformed Church.



The southern extent of the northern quarry, the buildings of East Farm visible standing atop the quarry wall.

Recent history

4.11 Within 20 years, by the time the Third Edition OS map was published in 1922, Quarry Houses had appeared and the school had disappeared, swallowed up by the advancing quarry face which had reached the old schoolhouse by this time. Although the quarry continued in business until the 1960s, this 1920s face was never advanced any further south into the village; excavations extended east instead. The one dramatic change recorded on the 1922 map is the existence of a tramway to take whinstone to the Christon Bank sidings. Rails began in the heart of the quarry and took a convoluted route following field boundaries and public roads to the station.

4.12 At the southern end of the village, Derwent Bank and Dene View had been built and the village had received a splendid new pant (a regional term for a drinking fountain) at the bottom of Front Street, designed by George Reavill of Alnwick to commemorate the coronation of King George V in 1911. This map also records the first appearance of the Creighton Memorial Hall, opened in 1903 to celebrate the life and work of that notable vicar discussed above. Before the end of the 1950s, Embleton had acquired two wartime concrete pillboxes, a pair of innovative prefabricated houses re-erected from Newcastle's great North East Coast Exhibition of 1927, and the beginnings of a large suburb to the north between Station Road and the quarry.

4.13 Many individual sites throughout the village have been replaced or infilled with undistinguished detached houses or single-storey terraces in the late 20th century, with the exceptions of the quality modern designs such as the row of two-storey houses at the end of High Dales. Of particular note for their historic interest, however, are the single-storey cottages on Quaker's Row. A plaque on one commemorates their construction in 1963 by the William Robertson Homes Association, founded by the late William Robertson Esq. of Stamford for the purpose of providing homes for retired farm workers – a touching reminder of how important the agricultural economy has been for the survival and prosperity of the village throughout its history, even well into the 20th century.

Figure 4.4: Smaller-scale features: late C20th and C19th



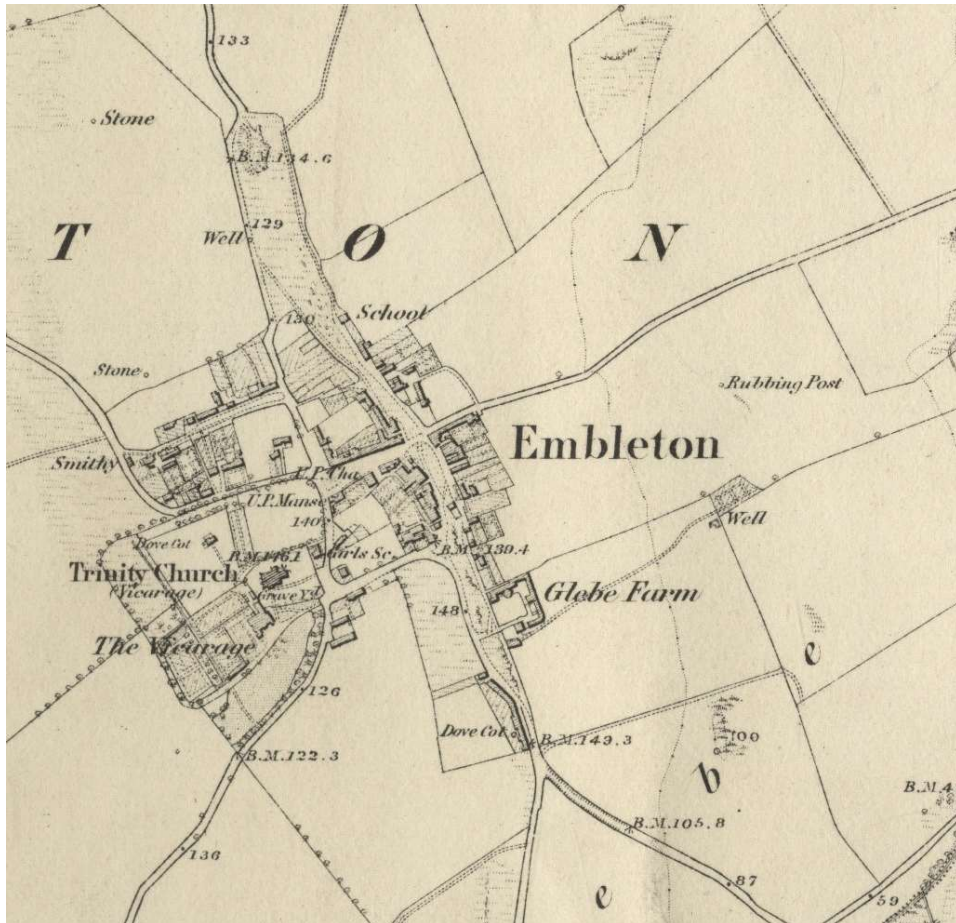
Sculpture of the Holy Trinity by Chris Hall at Embleton Church.



Hand pump and stone block base with drain, Stanley Terrace.

4.14 In the 21st century, a new terrace of four stone houses has been built north of Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel, and the former police station at the bottom of Front Street has had a terrace of three houses added onto its south side, unfortunately blocking the view of the fields and handsome parish church tower from Front Street. But, more significantly, two new streets – Dovecote Close and Whinstone View – were added, the first to appear in the historic part of the village for hundreds of years.

Figure 4.5: Embleton historical mapping



Embleton 1st edition OS, 6" to 1 mile, surveyed 1861, published 1867. Supplied courtesy of Northumberland Archives.



OS 1:10,000, published 1957. Supplied courtesy of Northumberland Archives.

Chapter 5

Conservation Area Character Analysis

Front Street



Chapter 5

Conservation Area Character Analysis

This section considers how the historical development of the area, as outlined above, is evidenced in the historic environment that is included within the boundary of the Conservation Area.

Spatial qualities

Development pattern and layout

5.1 The statement about Embleton's development pattern in the 1827 Parson & White Trade Directory is perhaps the truest and most pithy: *"it is irregularly built, and lies chiefly under the ridge of a hill, which intercepts the prospect of the sea"*. This irregular pattern of 1827, which goes back at least to the 18th century, is the result of the village's development from a loosely grouped collection of detached houses and farm complexes. These were gradually joined up and infilled with longer terraces of dwellings to form the current layout.

5.2 The broad, splayed form of Front Street and its role as the intersection between the principal north-south and east-west routes through the settlement has promoted this junction to an inadvertent 'centre' of sorts, its continuous building frontage containing and defining the space. Secondary routes curve, wind and climb from this point, providing cut throughs and links along which later buildings have naturally congregated, resulting in informal perimeter block development with private spaces at their core.

Grain and density

5.3 Between the 17th century and the start of the 20th, Embleton grew from a protected settlement in the shelter of the local whinstone ridge to one that straddles the ridge, with residents prepared to live with the easterly gales but with the considerable compensation of the wonderful seascape of Embleton Bay. Of the old village, properties and spaces along the western flank of the ridge have an open aspect across the rooftops and church tower towards a rural landscape, while those on the eastern side face towards the splendid open seascape.

5.4 Frontages are a mixture of back of pavement – like Front Street, Stanley Terrace and Sunny Brae – or set back behind irregularly sized private gardens, determined by the building

Figure 5.1: Grain and density



Front Street – eaves fronting buildings set back of pavement. Note the roofline, punctuated by chimney stacks and stepping down from the brow of the ridge, and the hinterland of green fields in the far distance.

placement within the plot. Adding to the mix, some are gable-end on, others display their principal elevations with long-eaves fronting the roadside. All of this reinforces the organic feel of the village layout, a character that is serendipitous rather than planned but charming, nonetheless. The irregularity also means a lack of common aspect and grain for rows and terraces, with buildings tending to follow the direction of the road they line, rather than following other rows in the village. Although the density of development in the Front Street and Sunny Brae areas is high, the rest of the conservation area, with its many and ample gardens and views towards open fields, is much lower.



Mount Pleasant – a variant roofscape animated by chimney stacks again, but a stepped building line that takes in gardens and grass verges, and a combination of eaves and gable fronting buildings. Note too the rougher surface finish of this secondary route.

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Towards the centre of the settlement, buildings get progressively more tightly grained.



On the periphery of the settlement, plots and street open up again, emphasised by views of surrounding fields.



The smaller, denser, liner layout of Sunny Brae.



Heading towards the periphery of the historic core on W.T. Stead Road, plots are more generous.

Activity and movement

5.5 With the closure of the huge whinstone quarry to the north in the 1960s and Christon Bank Station in 1965, the village lost all links with industry. Despite this, the village remains busy and buoyant, having settled into a new role as a retirement and commuter village as well as a holiday destination. As such, most of the activity within the area is related to the comings and goings of residents and visitors to the local shop, garage, church and pubs, and people passing through on their way to the golf club and the coast. The school too is a real focal point: even when it cannot be seen its noise and activity can be heard, bringing an added dimension to the area and a reminder of Embleton's role as a home to an active community, as well as an historic one.

5.6 The modern development of the village is responsible for this activity as many of the smaller, more characterful properties in the historic core of the conservation area have become holiday homes or second homes. Whilst this keeps the buildings in use and maintained, it means the amount of activity in the area is tied to the seasons.

Figure 5.2: Activity – the village shop and school



Setting

5.7 Embleton enjoys a dramatic setting elevated above the seascape of Embleton Bay and the surrounding pastoral landscape. On the landward side, the bucolic and rising form of the landscape contains views, reinforcing the fact that Embleton is, first and foremost, a rural village that is situated close to the coast, not a seaside town; indeed, the ridge has such a strong influence in curtailing views within the area that awareness of the sea is completely absent until over the brow of Mount Pleasant. This rural character is accentuated by the lack of intervisibility with other built development in these views: although Christon Bank is only a kilometre or so away it is not visible from the village; neither too the Embleton Mill and North Farm complexes,

nor the later 20th century suburban expansion to the north side of the village. This makes the interface between settlement and surroundings all the more vivid and gives the village a feeling of self-containment.

5.8 Similarly, to the east the village boundary gives way to the wide, open coastal landscape: fields and the golf links, then grassy dunes, and beyond that the seascape of the bay. From here, a view of the rugged outline of the ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle is also revealed, an undoubtedly picturesque composition, but also a reminder of the necessity of coastal defense in the North – a theme that continues inland with the defensible tower at the Old Vicarage and the pillboxes still dotted about within and outwith the conservation area.

Figure 5.3: Setting – views out of and into the conservation area from the west



Function and form

Scale and hierarchy

5.9 The usual height of buildings in Embleton both old and new is domestic single and two-storey, although the perceived scale of those along the ridge line is often enhanced by their elevated location. This creates subtle variations in roofline and a layering of roofscapes that ensures visual harmony, depth and intrigue to the streetscene. Even the public buildings – the village hall, the pubs, school and former police station – are distinguished more by architectural detailing and footprint than height, and so stand quite comfortably side-by-side with domestic buildings.

Figure 5.4: Scale and hierarchy



Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel adjacent to smaller, humbler outbuildings. In the far distance, the glimpsed view of a house on the ridge adds layers and depth to the streetscene.



The wide form, green verges and space around Mount Pleasant, lined with two-storey domestic properties, a mixture of whinstone and render finished.

5.10 The only exceptions in the whole village include some of its oldest buildings: the three storeys of the Old Vicarage tower and the former Sportsman pub that terminates Dunstanburgh Terrace, and the taller accents of the parish church tower and adjacent dovecote. The church tower especially is something of a focal point, visible from many parts of the village and surrounding fields; even when hidden from view its bell can be heard tolling the hour, a constant that firmly anchors the area to its past.

Figure 5.5: Scale and hierarchy



The church tower provides an accent in the streetscape – an important, landmark building. Set back into its churchyard, it stands next to the much smaller, more modest, single-storey cottage without dominating.

5.11 Within this relatively narrow range of forms and function, there is some hierarchical distinction to be seen. Dwellings gradual increase in status from the single-storey, linear footprint of smaller workers' cottages, such as those on Sunny Brae and Quaker's Row, up to

the later middle class, polite houses on Front Street, Mount Pleasant and Station Road, and finally the most imposing form of the Old Vicarage. Aside from the discrete grouping of the Old Vicarage and church, these various forms stand side-by-side, so although architecturally distinct from each other their status appears to have had little influence on their placement and the development patten of the village. This gives it an attractively varied and organic appearance.

Figure 5.6: Scale and hierarchy



Although the scale of buildings changes frequently along streets in Embleton, the range is limited and so small cottages and the more prominent façades of public buildings – here the Blue Bell Inn – stand comfortably side by side.

Contribution of spaces

5.12 Due to Embleton's incremental development history, there is little formally laid out public space in the village. The closest to a designed space is the churchyard: its walled and gated boundary, hard, linear paths and the more manicured appearance of the internal space stands in contrast to the informality of the rest of the village and the bucolic character of the surrounding landscape, reflecting the solemnity of its purpose. Its mature trees and planting reinforce the sense of antiquity of this part of the conservation area, as well as providing movement, texture and privacy.

Figure 5.7: Contribution of spaces



The steep, grassy bank between Sunny Brae and Glebe Farm provides valuable amenity space and a softer break to the adjacent hard surfaces and structures.

5.13 The village does not lack for public space, which can be found in abundance throughout the conservation area: the playing fields and playground at the south end of the area, the tracks and grassy banks that follow the western edge of the ridge along Mount Pleasant, and the small green at the termination of Front Street. The open character of these spaces allows us to read the historic form of the settlement – the church tower, the varied roofline, the form of plots.

5.14 Most notable is the reuse of the former quarry as a wildlife site. Whilst it undoubtedly provides valuable amenity space, its hollowed form and tall cliff edges also still tell of its exploitation and previous function, now itself an important part of the more recent history of Embleton.

5.15 These pockets of green space provide relief from the harder urban environs of adjacent streets, whilst the informal character of the spaces allows the character of the surrounding countryside to gently permeate into the village itself. They are connected through a network of roads, lanes and tracks, many lined with grassy verges and steep banks. Their meanderings among buildings and changes in level present an endless variety that animates the streetscapes as much as the buildings that line them. All the roads and lanes in the village are tarmacked except for secondary tracks servicing buildings along the top of the ridge, a difference in treatment that reflects the hierarchy of routes in the village. Pavements are often edged with whinstone curbs, a trait common across many Northumberland villages and a feature to be protected and repaired in matching materials.

5.16 Aside from public space, virtually every property in the village has some form of garden space attached to it. Most of these, even the smaller ones, incorporate some form of planting – trees, shrubberies or ornamental. This helps to contain the spatial integrity of the roads and lanes in the village. Although technically private, their visibility from public highways means they make an important contribution to the overall character of the area.

Figure 5.8: Contribution of spaces



The old quarry to the north of the village, now a local wildlife site.



Private gardens fronting public highways add colour, variety and depth to the streetscape.



The churchyard and Vicarage.



The play park on W.T. Stead Road.

Features and design

Architectural style and features

5.17 Embleton's architecture covers a long development period but, aside from a few obvious exceptions, architectural aspirations in the village are relatively restrained regardless of age. In addition, what subtle variations there would have been to help distinguish and date buildings – such as window and door designs – have also been widely replaced. That said, there remains a strong visual coherence across the range of built forms in the village, achieved principally through the consistency in materials, form and scale. Most present as modest 19th century buildings in character now, even if, hidden behind the render, an older structure lies. This overarching character is punctuated by individual features and buildings that typify a range of building styles; as such, they are notable for their discrete contribution to the village's individual appearance, providing accents of visual and historic interest against the backdrop of the common vernacular character.

5.18 Most buildings within the area are residential in use and style. Even those that have been subdivided into flats maintain the appearance of a single residence, as have those buildings converted from their original use, such as the former United Reformed Church on Front Street; the unadorned appearance and simple form of this building – as was often the case with Nonconformist chapels – means that there has been no obvious interventions externally as a result of its conversion to two dwellings in 1999, although its height and the elongated, round-headed windows on the west façade hint at its former use and distinguish it from other residential buildings in the area. Similarly, although the tower of the Old Vicarage has been gentrified, the politely applied decoration and small windows cannot disguise its earlier, defensive origins, its solid, exposed stone walls and robust yet high-status appearance making a unique contribution to the character of the village.

5.19 Although most buildings in Embleton are restrained in their use of architectural embellishments, there are a number that illustrate a deliberate design intent, elevating their appearance beyond the purely functional. Unsurprisingly, this includes those with a public-facing purpose and so there is an element of self-promotion designed into their appearance: the church, the pubs, the memorial hall. They also tend to be more prominent in the streetscape through their larger footprints and height, as generally befits buildings in leisure, commercial,

community and religious use, with historic features such as windows, doors, chimneys and guttering more often intact.

Figure 5.9: Residential buildings



The sizeable, solid, stone form of the Old Vicarage.



A vernacular cottage along Sunny Brae.

5.20 Architecturally distinct houses were the preserve of the wealthier residents of the village – purpose built, usually detached, one-offs as opposed to the rows of polite, speculatively-built town houses of a more metropolitan settlement during this period. These buildings illustrate an awareness and conscious adoption of architectural fashions in a desire to create attractive, polite, contemporary residences. Most incorporate details common to houses of their period – and at a greater survival rate than their humbler neighbours – such as sash windows, fan lights, panelled or part-glazed timber doors, moulded door surrounds and windows, barge boards, and

rainwater goods (still supported on spikes rather than the more modern technique of attaching to timber facias); for more complete examples see in particular Jubilee House (on Stanley Terrace), the former Sportsman pub (to the end of Dunstanburgh Terrace) and the Manse and Old Manse around Front Street, but examples can be found dotted throughout the area.

Figure 5.10: Architectural style and features



Jubilee House.



The Manse.

Figure 5.11: Architectural style and features



A range of historic 2-over-2 and 6-over-6 timber sash windows. Note the horns to the windows with the large panes but not the small 6-over-6; as the size of panes grew, horns were added to provide strength to frames that had fewer glazing bars to help hold their shape, so the presence of horns on a sash is not ubiquitous but directly related to the age, size and style of the window.

Figure 5.12: Doors



Tongue and groove door to a cottage on Sunny Brae, a romantically stylised interpretation of a medieval door, with oversized hinges and studs.



A classically inspired doorway, with pilasters and console brackets supporting a triangular pediment, and a five panelled door.



Another tongue and groove door, this one simpler as it provides access to the rear of the cottage.



The split, timber panelled door to porch of the former United Reformed Church.

Materials and detailing

5.21 The principal walling material throughout the traditional buildings of Embleton is natural whinstone, most of it laid as uncoursed rubble with a few laid in courses of squared blocks. All is sourced locally from nearby quarries, if not from the village itself. About 75% of Embleton's old buildings are whinstone and there could be more, but render makes it impossible to judge the underlying material. Render is generally found on humbler buildings or those in exposed locations to protect stonework and/or conceal poorer finished materials. These rendered and painted finishes are subtle, in shades of white or cream, giving visual unity to the streetscape and ensuring no one building dominates.

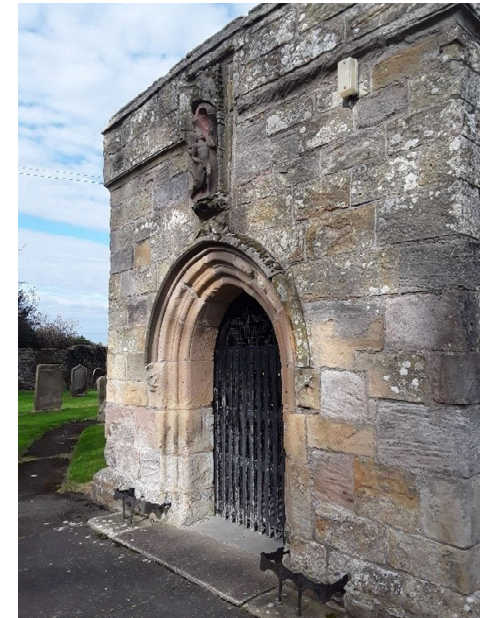
5.22 More expensive buildings are also distinguishable through their use of squared, finished sandstone for detailing such as door and window surrounds (or sills and lintels), and quoin (corner) stones; these often stand proud of face of the elevation, enlivening what are otherwise fairly plain finishes. Sandstone is also easier to work into finer finishes and precise shapes than the harder whinstone and so, for similar reasons, is used and left exposed on the older and higher status buildings, such as the church and the Old Vicarage.

5.23 On rare occasions, quoins are also cut from whinstone. Another whinstone variation, used uniquely on the Creighton Memorial Hall, is the use of whinstone blocks in regular courses with window and door surrounds in polished red brick; this is the exception to the rule, however, as brick is not a material that is representative of buildings within the conservation area boundary, used only on historic buildings to replace deteriorated stone chimneys and on later 20th century builds. Doors are normally set straight into front elevations without porches, hoods or canopies.

Figure 5.13: Materials and detailing



Coursed whinstone with red brick quoins on the memorial hall.



Squared, tooled and coursed sandstone with detailed carvings to the church's south entrance porch.

5.24 Traditional dual-pitch roofs are used almost exclusively throughout Embleton, most commonly covered in natural slate, with a few later pantiled roofs adding intermittent pops of colour. Slates vary in colour from deep grey to greens and blues and light heather, which brings subtle texture and complementary variety to the roofscape. A few slated roofs have stone watertabling and kneelers to gable ends, which has been copied on more recent housing, but traditionally these are an exceptional feature in the village. Dormers and rooflights are rare, and not a characteristic feature of Embleton's roofs.

5.25 Most of the historic buildings in Embleton retain their chimneys and pots, a feature that has also been incorporated into more recent developments in the area. Because of the difficulties of working whinstone and the susceptibility of softer sandstones to decay from the heat and impurities of smoke, there are only four or five buildings with stone chimneys in Embleton. Instead brick was used (or replaced sandstone, as brick can withstand higher temperatures) sometimes in the pale-yellow colour produced as a by-product of local collieries.

Figure 5.14: Materials and detailing



Original timber sash windows and panelled and studded door to The Greys Inn.



A rendered elevation but with stone window and door surrounds.



Cottages on Stanley Terrace – architecturally ambitious for their size, incorporating stone quoins, window and door surrounds, finials, kneelers and watertabling and chimneys.



A more modest whinstone cottage on Station Road.

Figure 5.15: Materials and detailing



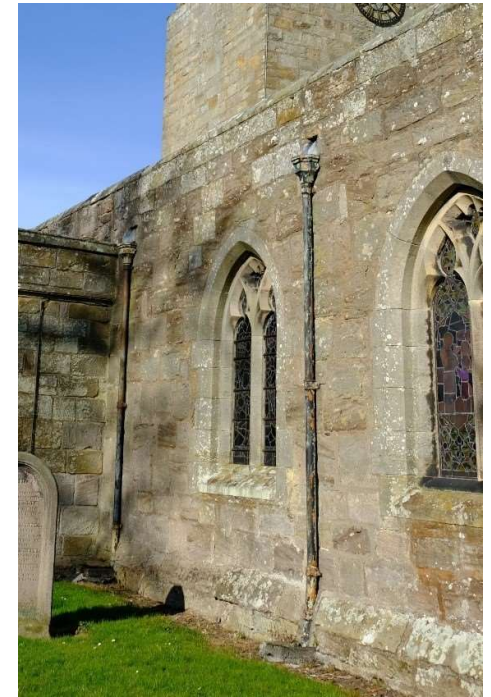
Detailing on the Manse – timber sashes, panelled and glazed door with fanlight, slate roof, stone window and door surrounds, chimneys, squared and coursed whinstone walls.



Projecting, painted 'long and short' quoin stones against a smooth rendered and painted finish on the former Sportsman pub on Dunstanburgh Terrace.



Randomly sized, uncoursed whinstone elevation; the windows are replacements but very sympathetically done.



The coursed finely finished stonework of the church, but also historic cast iron guttering with canted hoppers.

Boundary treatments, street furniture and floorscape

5.26 Whinstone boundary walls are a common, distinctive and influential feature in the conservation area. Their textured surfaces and dark grey tones are a visually stark and robust addition to the domestic boundaries along streets, but they are also notable for their use as field boundaries in the surrounding landscape. This physically and visually links the village to its rural fringes and ties the settlement back to the natural landscape within which it sits.

Figure 5.16: Boundary treatments, street furniture and streetscape



One of the town pumps, this one on Front Street.



A lone bollard outside the church.



A serpent bench on Front Street – a style found across villages along the Northumberland coast.



Stone boundary wall and kerb detailing.

Views

Types of views

5.28 Whilst all senses are engaged in our experience of place, human reliance on the visual does mean that views play a major role in our understanding and perception of character, and Embleton is no exception. Views come in different shapes and forms depending on whether they are designed or fortuitous; framed, contained or open; fleeting or enduring. Broadly, however, they tend to belong to one of three categories:

- **Static views** – These types of views tend to be – although not always – designed or intentional, or at least self-aware. They are a specific, fixed point from which an individual feature or particular aspect of the area's character can be best appreciated.
- **Glimpsed views** – These types of views are often enclosed and fleeting, and principally incite intrigue or surprise in those that notice them that add to the experience of an area.
- **Dynamic views** – These are views that steadily reveal different aspects of a place's character and continually evolve as we experience them. These may be panoramic views from a fixed point or kinetic views that are revealed as the observer moves through the area. These views are influenced by both constant features (not necessarily dominant features but those that remain present throughout) and transient features (accents in the view that come in and pass out of views at different points).

Examples of views in Embleton Conservation Area

5.29 As a result of the informal layout, there are no composed vistas, formal squares or sweeping crescents, but there are many serendipitous, informal views down narrow lanes, across open gardens and fields, into paved yards, and of informal building groups of all kinds. Views out from most parts of the village – especially north and south – are generally limited, but views inland and out to sea from the village's whinstone ridge are both panoramic and beautiful.

5.30 Inland, the foreground of the view is enlivened by the roofscape and church tower of the village itself and terminated in the far distance by the Cheviot Hills, the topographical backbone of Northumberland. The splendid seascape view that presents itself from the eastern edge of the ridge stretches over 180° from the iconic Dunstanburgh Castle in the south, around the

whole of Embleton Bay, terminating at the diminutive village of Newton-by-the-Sea in the north. The anticipation of this sea view dramatically builds in the climb up from Front Street, an unexpected but defining experience of the character of Embleton.

5.31 Although Embleton is blessed with a range of animated and, at times, striking views, the seemingly mundane have their role to play too in conveying the character of the place. Below are some examples of the more obvious and noteworthy views in the area – in that they are the ones that clearly embody important characteristics of the conservation area. However, there will be many more that are not noted here that portray the sense of place equally well.

Figure 5.17: View into the Conservation Area from W.T. Stead Road



Static

5.32 The view from the street towards the Church of the Holy Trinity. Designed to be a prominent feature in the landscape, the fine architectural detailing and landmark status of the church can both be appreciated from this vantage point. The enclosed space with paths and well-kempt grounds illustrates the importance of the space and provides contrast and quiet from the street.

Figure 5.18: Static view



Glimpsed

5.33 On the left, a fleeting view of the sea between houses on the ridge, a surprising and beautiful view and a reminder of the proximity of the village to the sea – a fact that is all too easily forgotten when in the core of the village; and on the right, a slice of the façade of the Moot Hall can be seen through its dense boundary vegetation, a tantalising hint of the house that stands behind.

Figure 5.19: Glimpsed views



Dynamic

5.34 Embleton is particularly blessed with dynamic views, for example, a panoramic view out towards the bay and Dunstanburgh Castle from the steep grassy bank opposite Sunny Brae. Similarly expansive views towards the Cheviots can be had inland from the top of the ridge, and also back towards the village from the hills. These contrasting but interdependent views illustrate the role that Embleton plays as the meeting point between the Northumberland coast and the fertile Northumberland plains. Similarly, on the next page, the journey from the historic core of a rural village on Front Street up and over the ridge to reveal dramatic and beautiful views towards the coast and castle.

Figure 5.20: Dynamic view: Dunstanburgh coming into view



Figure 5.21: Dynamic views – moving through the spaces of the Conservation Area



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5.35 Static, glimpsed and dynamic cover the types of views you might find, but their relevance to the significance of the conservation area lies firmly in what those views contain; that is, what they can tell us about the history of the settlement or the area, or how they influence our experience of its character. And, of course, all of these views have their own, varying degrees of aesthetic appeal, degrees that are dependent on the time of day, the time of year and, above all, the viewer and what they find pleasing as much as established criteria of visual aesthetic or artistic appeal.

5.36 Furthermore, these views are not mutually exclusive: one asset or feature may contribute to the character and appearance of the area in different ways in different views, and views may transition, interrupt and develop concurrently with one another.

Chapter 6

Management Recommendations

Quarry House prior to stabilisation



Chapter 6

Management Recommendations

This section considers the conservation issues and opportunities facing Embleton Conservation Area and makes recommendations for their management.

Management issues in Embleton Conservation Area

Condition and vacancy

6.1 The collapsed roofs of Quarry House and outbuildings have been removed as part of management of the nature reserve now established in the former quarry. The wall heads have topped with turf to stabilise the buildings as a ruin. Options are being explored for the long-term retention of ruins as their loss will be detrimental to the historic legibility and character of Embleton.

6.2 The condition of the brick dovecote north of the church has deteriorated since the last appraisal. Several ridge and roof tiles have slipped or are missing, putting the structure at risk of water ingress which will eventually lead to decay of historic fabric and eventual loss of the roof structure, followed by the walls. The building needs to be made watertight again to secure its future and significance as both a listed building and the contribution it makes to the conservation area.

6.3 The condition of the scheduled and listed dovecote to the rear of Sunny Brae remains vulnerable, with clear vegetation growth that could undermine its structural stability as root growth prises joints apart and opens up a route for water ingress. Previous repair work looks to be poorly executed, which may exacerbate deterioration of its historic stonework.

6.4 The pillbox on the south-western approach to the conservation area is overgrown with vegetation, with several large trees in the vicinity. Whilst some camouflage could be said to be appropriate considering the structure's original purpose, it should be ensured that this is not contributing to the premature deterioration of the fabric of the building.

6.5 The sandstone buildings on the south edge of the Old Vicarage garden seem to be under-used and decaying. Because of their character and historic value as part of the Old Vicarage pleasure gardens, they should be repaired. They are also very visible as part of the first impression of the village from the south.

Figure 6.1: Condition and vacancy



Vegetation growth on scheduled dovecote.



Quarry House prior to stabilisation.

Loss and replacement of architectural details

6.6 The extensive loss of historic windows, doors and rainwater goods has had a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Without an Article 4 Direction in place to control permitted development rights, there is a constant threat that those that do remain on non-designated buildings will be replaced. Their replacement is often in uPVC, which has had a damaging effect on the appearance of individual buildings and cumulatively across the area by changing:

- The width, depth, profile and proportions of frames, panels, mouldings and glazing bars;

- The grain, texture and character of the surface finish;
- The window opening method (casement in place of sash, for example);
- Alteration of detailing such as horns and beading;
- The size and positioning in the opening or on the façade;
- The uniform, unbroken plane of the roof through insertion of rooflights; and
- Historic detailing such as letter boxes, knockers, door knobs, hinges, gutter spikes, handles and locks.

Boundary treatments

6.7 On the whole, the historic whinstone wall boundary treatments survive well in Embleton. However, some inappropriate use of fencing – including tall, close boarded fencing to domestic properties – is creeping in. Whilst the desire for privacy is understandable, glimpsed views of buildings and garden spaces is an important characteristic of the area, and the two can be more sensitivity balanced through the use of stone walls and vegetation – or a combination of the two.

6.8 That said, large, fast-growing, dense planting to some boundaries can be equally detrimental to the appearance of the area, for example in front of the Moot Hall. Again, the desire for privacy is understandable, but in terms of the conservation area such planting dominates the streetscape and obscures historic layout, plot form and features. This is not to say that individual or small groups of trees are detrimental to character – quite the contrary – but visibility through and underneath the crown and between specimens gives a sense of scale, permeability and privacy without creating an impenetrable and dominating barrier.

New development and design

6.9 Aside from loss of historic detail, the biggest threat to the character and appearance of Embleton is new development. This is borne out in two principal ways:

- **Siting:** The partially redeveloped quarry site on its western edge has unfortunately relegated this historic feature in the streetscape and diminished what was once a pronounced and defining relationship with the village; the same can be said of Dovecote

Close, which regrettably encroaches onto previously undeveloped glebe land, breaking a boundary that had survived around the church for hundreds of years. Further development of this size in open or previously undeveloped spaces within the conservation area boundary should be resisted for the detrimental impact it has on the appearance and historic form of the area.

- **Design:** The standard modern suburban layout, building lines, orientations and materiality of new developments such as Dovecote Close and Whinstone View are contrary to the historic precedent set by the village. The Whinstone View development especially is stylistically incongruous: the adoption of painted weatherboarding gives the development a seaside aesthetic – more in tune with the beach huts to the north of Embleton Bay, for example. Embleton is not a seaside town, though, and the character of the historic village is very much rooted in its history as a rural, agricultural and industrial working village and its role as a conduit between sea and land. Similarly, the horizontal emphasis and proportions of some of the windows, the gablets and inclusion of porches do not serve to reinforce character; as with the sandstone watertabling and kneelers adopted on some other new builds. Whilst examples can be found in the conservation area, they are historically the exception rather than the norm. Excessive or misplaced reproduction of such details on new builds changes the architectural nuances of the area, flipping the balance so that they become perceived as the overriding character instead.

Recommendations and opportunities for enhancement

Recommendation 1

6.10 An Article 4 Direction would help stem further loss of features that front public highways or important spaces, as well as provide additional protection for those features that survive well and make an important contribution of the character of the conservation area. It is recommended that any Article 4 Direction for Embleton should include:

- Any alterations to roofs, including changes to the design, profile or materials, or installation of rooflights;
- The construction of porches or other extensions;
- Rendering or painting of previously non-rendered and unpainted elevations;

- The alteration of guttering or rainwater goods and installation of fascia boards;
- The construction, alteration or demolition of a chimney;
- Alterations to the finish, material, style, sizing, proportions, positioning and method of opening of doors and windows; and
- The erection, alteration or removal of boundary treatments and gates.

Recommendation 2

6.11 Place-specific design guidance for different features would help inform changes and also help people understand and meet the requirements of an Article 4 Direction; if people follow the options and detailing illustrated in the design guide then this would limit the number of additional planning applications that might otherwise be necessary with the introduction of the Direction. They may include addressing the design and materials of windows, doors, boundary treatments, guttering and façades. This would complement and enrich area-wide design guidance in Northumberland Coast AONB Design Guide for Built Development.

Recommendation 3

6.12 A survey of public realm to establish the extent of survival and potential areas for reinstatement or enhancement of floorscape and infrastructure. An inventory of street furniture – modern and historic – could help inform monitoring, maintenance and conservation of those of historic interest, and provide principles for replacement or introduction of new furniture or signage.

Recommendation 4

6.13 Similarly, a tree survey to establish the current condition, range of species and expected life spans could inform the development of a strategy for succession planting and management of existing trees, including where removal is appropriate and potentially desirable (for example, where they are self-seeded and potentially damaging to built features of historic interest, such as the pillbox).

Recommendation 5

6.14 A guidance note on what works do not require permission, for example what constitutes like for like change.

Appendix A

Non-Designated Buildings of Local Interest

A.1 The buildings, structures or features listed below and at Figure 3.2 are not designated at a national level (e.g. through listing) but are considered to be of architectural or historical interest and to make a positive contribution to the character of Embleton. Those examples which make a particularly strong contribution have been identified here. They include candidate Local List buildings identified in the Embleton Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 and further examples identified through survey work for this appraisal. However, it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list, and that most buildings in the conservation area collectively contribute to its special character and appearance. The absence of a building or structure from this list does not imply it is without merit and hence more susceptible to modification or redevelopment. It is always recommended to contact your local Conservation Officer for further advice before embarking on any building project.

A.2 Listed buildings and other assets designated at a national level can be found via the National Heritage List for England (NHLE): <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search>.

- Quarry House
- Filling Station (including garage and shop), B1339
- Vincent Edwards Primary School, Quakers Row
- Old School House, Quakers Row
- Two bungalows, Quakers Row
- Pillboxes, Station Road, Glebe Farm and south end of B1339
- Cast iron serpent-ended bench adjacent to pant, Front Street
- Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel, Front Street
- Village shop, Front Street
- Pair of villas, Dunstanburgh Terrace/Sea Lane
- New Presbyterian Manse, B1339
- Greys Inn public house, Stanley Terrace
- Pump adjacent to Blue Bell Inn
- Creighton Memorial Hall, W.T.Stead Road

Appendix A
Non-Designated Buildings of Local Interest

Embleton Conservation Area
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- Nos. 1 and 2 Sycamore Cottages, W.T.Stead Road