

# Historic Darlington: Cherish or Change?

## A Conservation Management Plan for Darlington Town Centre Fringe

Volume I

Prepared for



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## **SUMMARY**

*The town centre fringe (TCF) has much that is of heritage significance; however it is an area that hides its heritage assets well. Historic bowed windows peer out from behind freezers, ornate rooftops are obscured by modern buildings, houses of international significance sit shyly behind a kebab shop, the town's much loved Bulmer stone sits trapped behind railings and renowned poets are long forgotten. It is time that the town centre fringe celebrated its rich heritage.*

*It is the railway heritage that consistently appears as the exceptional contributor to local distinctiveness and as Darlington's unique selling point. The architecture is exceptionally significant because of the contribution that it makes towards our understanding of the birth and early years of a mode of transport that was to change the face of the world. Its educational value is already exploited via the Head of Steam museum and has the potential to provide more. The railway heritage also has considerable potential to draw visitors to Darlington from across the world. However its condition and management would have to match that of the Head of Steam Museum before it was worth crossing continents for.*

*Decisions regarding the future management of the town will want to be guided by the existing historic building stock and the predominantly 19<sup>th</sup> century street pattern. It will need to consider the contribution that traditional building materials, such as red brick and the beautiful scoria blocks, will make to the Darlington of the future. New developments and the adaptation of existing development will need to recognise the importance of designed and fortuitous views towards significant skyline features and the restoration of more general*

*views which have been blighted by 20<sup>th</sup> century development. It will also need to recognise the recent loss of important physical links with the town centre and the river and important existing links to green spaces such as South Park. Throughout all of the important future management decisions, we must ask, is this proposal good enough for an area of town of international importance because of its association with the birth of the railways?*

### ***The Vision***

*By 2025, two hundred years after the birth of the railway, Darlington's town centre fringe will be transformed into a vibrant urban area with well-maintained historic buildings, exciting small scale modern development, a thriving tourism industry based on the railway heritage and a healthy accessible river cherished by the local community.*

*In order to achieve this, the Borough Council in partnership with local residents and businesses, will revitalise the town centre fringe through sustainable imaginative regeneration which recognises the historical value and embodied energy of existing pre 1919 building stock.*

*The Council will also recognise the international importance of the town centre fringe's railway heritage through conservation, restoration and celebration of its role in the birth of the railways.*

*In order to achieve this, the following broad management recommendations have been made, in addition to more detailed management recommendations for each character area. These recommendations have arisen out of the public consultation process and the first two stages of the conservation management plan which looks at our understanding of the TCF, its significance and its issues. Shaded recommendations may require the adoption of new or altered policy.*

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<b>Summary of management recommendations HE1 – loss of river</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) Restore Cocker Beck access from Northgate to Westbrook	1-3 years <sup>1</sup>
b) negotiate visual access to beck and its management (litter collection) from the Bridge Inn beer garden	1-3 years
c) Move sheds back 3-5m from the east bank of the Skerne between Russell Street and Chesnut Street	gradual over 10 years
d) Negotiate access from the side of Magnets on John Street to the Skerne Bridge then improve path facilities from the bridge to Northgate with signage to the museum	1-3 years
e) Recreate attractive footpath walks along Weir Street as part of a wider redevelopment package which will link existing riverside access beside the printing Works and Edward Pease's House.	1-15 years and as opportunities arise through the planning process
f) Ensure redevelopment of MFI site improves and enhances access to the river bank.	1-5 years
Redesign road crossing to link the river across the road.	1-15 years
Repair missing cap from listed bridge pier.	1-3 years
g) Bring the river back to the surface in the vicinity of St Cuthbert's Way and Victoria Road as part of wider landscaping scheme to reduce the visual impact of the ring road	within 15 years
h) Enhance the scoria block back lane between Victoria Embankment and Feethams through the redevelopment of Feethams to create a safer walking/cycling environment and as part of this scheme, repair the listed bridge across the Skerne.	within 7 years

<b>Summary of Management Recommendations HE2 – Streets dominated by cars</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) Create design briefs for the ring road area to encourage street fronted development with varied roof lines and detailed designed elevations facing the ring road and Parkgate (where appropriate), with gaps to create vistas towards the town centre and St. Cuthbert's spire in particular. There are plots currently available for redevelopment plus proposals to move the fire station and police station away from the ring road and so this policy should be implemented immediately.	Immediate
b) Traffic management should give priority to pedestrians and cyclists and prevent the construction of further subways or dual carriageways within the town centre fringe.	Immediate
c) the Council to explore a park and ride scheme	

<b>Summary of Management Recommendations HE3 – Car parking</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Car parking strategy to consider the following:	
a) Beaumont Street, Houndgate and Feethams to be redeveloped as mixed use development with a design brief to reflect varied roof lines, vistas to town centre and historic skyline features, yards and alleys	Production of design brief immediate
b) Garden Street to be redeveloped with mixed use, restore Weavers Yard, re-instate 'Edward Pease's garden' in part or allotment element – design brief required	Production of design brief immediate
c) Kendrew Street and King Street car parks reduced through landscaping and possibly street fronted development	up to 10 years

<sup>1</sup> Subsequent consultation has suggested that local residents would like to see this actioned sooner



<b>Summary of Management Recommendations HE4 – Skyline features (New policy is shaded)</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) New developments should seek to incorporate views towards historic skyline features	immediate adoption of policy
b) Planning applications will be assessed against the impact of the proposal against skyline features.	immediate adoption of policy

<b>Summary management recommendations: Multiple Occupancy as indicator of decline</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) The council has already decided to put a moratorium on multiple occupancy planning permissions and so no action is required	N/A
b) Enforcement needs to be improved where loss of historic character is threatened	Immediate
c) The Council need to consider how best to respond to resident's complaints regarding anti-social behaviour of its own tenants or breaches of local bye-laws	Immediate
d) The police and the council need to consider if dog fouling and fly-tipping can be targeted for a rapid response when complaints are made and the council needs to reconsider charging honest residents for the acts of dishonest ones.	Immediate
e) The council and local communities to join together to create a wardening service collecting litter until such time as the area regenerates and litter dropping becomes more difficult	Immediate
f) Consult with the local community to see if there is a demand to trial gated and landscaped back lanes.	1-5 years

<b>Summary management recommendations HE6: Inappropriate maintenance of historic buildings (new Policy is shaded)</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
6a.1 Planning permission to replace shop windows on properties pre-dating 1919 should only be granted for traditional window types in consultation with the Conservation Officer	Immediate
6a.2 Permitted development rights should be withdrawn in Victoria Embankment Conservation Area (they are already withdrawn in Northgate Conservation Area) and should be withdrawn in any future Conservation Areas that are created.	1-5 years
6a.3 The council needs to improve its enforcement procedure for Article 4 directions, listed building consents and planning conditions relating to historic buildings	Immediate
6a.4 Building regulation staff should attend a course run by Heritage Skills Initiative on the breathability of pre-1919 houses so that they can make informed decisions regarding the application of the regulations on historic buildings	1-3 years
6a.5 The council should provide free written or oral advice on home maintenance as leaflets, web pages or DVDs covering everyday maintenance, energy efficiency in older buildings, windows, doors, roofing, domestic chimneys and flues, damp, cast iron rainwater goods, painting and repointing.	1-5 years
6a.6 Create a traditional skills web site, possibly in partnership with Durham County Council and Tees Valley for home owners to source the skills necessary to properly maintain their historic buildings	1-5 years
6a.7 The council should apply for Townscape Heritage Initiative Funding for all conservation areas (once Parkgate and any others have been designated)	1-5 years
6b The council should formally create a conservation area based on Parkgate and possibly include the east side of Hargreave Terrace. A conservation area appraisal and management plan will then be required in consultation with the residents	1-5 years
c) The council should create a conservation area based on Victoria Road, to be followed by a conservation area appraisals and management plan	1-7 years
d) The town centre conservation area should be extended to include Victoria	

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Road west of South Arden Street (and possibly with a little less justification land east of South Arden Street).	
e) The Victoria Embankment conservation area could be extended to include South Terrace	

<b>Summary management recommendations HE7: Reuse of historic buildings stock (new Policy is shaded)</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) No new large scale development should take place outside the town until existing historic buildings are used and brown field sites are developed within the TCF	immediate
b) No demolition of properties should be agreed without a full planning application showing what will replace it	immediate
c) There should be a presumption against planning permission for the demolition of any property built before 1919	immediate
d) The local development framework should actively encourage the reuse of historic buildings and the need for a Statement of Significance to guide conversions. The council should favour mixed use development so that there is a residential element to all areas providing the necessary profits in redevelopment and ensuring that the area does not empty outside office hours	immediate
e) The Council also need to exert their repair and compulsory powers quickly before decline in buildings is too advanced	immediate
f) Design briefs should be prepared for the following TCF areas (where they have not already been carried out): 'Left Bank' of the Skerne between Russell Street and John Street Borough Road Waste ground in front of Skerne Bridge Land between Valley Street and East Mount Cattle Market	Immediate Immediate TBC 1-5 years TBC

<b>Summary Management Recommendations HE8– the design of new build</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) Developers should be discouraged from creating pastiches of old build, but instead use historic buildings to inform exciting new designs of high quality. Developers will be expected to outline how their build will fit into the historic environment in their design statement which must accompany their planning application.	immediate
b) Where a development does not conform to council prepared design briefs, the developer will be encouraged to discuss their designs with the conservation officer at an early stage in the application process	immediate

<b>Summary Management Recommendations HE9 – the protection of historic buildings</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) Include terrace houses with traditional windows and doors in the local list	1-2 years
b) Have the local list adopted as a material consideration in the planning process	1-2 years
c) The Borough Council should ensure that they have a Statement of Significance for each heritage asset in their care	1-7 years
d) Each planning application or listed building consent application should be accompanied by a Statement of Significance	ongoing
e) Submit the Railway Tavern and 1-5 Victoria Road for spot listing to English Heritage	



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<b>The railway heritage – HE10 Management Recommendations</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) The tourism potential of the railway heritage needs to be realised in the local development framework and TCF AAP	immediate
b) Create a heritage walk through the TCF (see also 10.3, 10.4, 10.14 and 10.15)	1-5 years
c) Work with DCC to link any rail walks with the TCF S&DR area	by 2025
d) Open up stretches of the original S&DR route as recreational trails	by 2025
e) Create welcoming display at Bank Top station – the towns where trains were born	by 2025
f) Seek the removal of ticket barriers at Bank Top or the return of free platform passes for visitors	1-5 years
g) Nominate Darlington's town centre fringe and additional outlying buildings for World Heritage Site Status, initially by inclusion on the Tentative List. There is some increasing urgency to this as other town's seek the title of the 'birth of the railways'	1-10 years (WHS status by 2025)
h) Conduct a review of scheduling of the S&DR line and associated features in Co. Durham	1-5 years
i) The railway preservation groups, the Friends of the Head of Steam and the Borough Council to work together to seek HLF support in finding sustainable uses and conservation works at the carriage works and goods station. This may be better achieved as part of implementing HE 10.7 and HE 10.10	1-3 years
j) Actively seek partners such as Haughton College to take over Engine Shed no.2 to be used for recreational purposes for college students or for sports facilities.	1-3 years
k) Explore ways of making the Goods Station part of the museum experience (this may be achieved through HE10.9 above), the removal of security fencing from between the museum and the goods station and permitting access to the café without paying an entrance fee.	by 2025
l) North Road station requires better landscaping and design to reflect its importance. It should aim to remove the security fencing between the museum and the station and replace with gated iron railings which better reflect Victorian styles and where the gate can be unlocked for targeted train services. A new platform shelter could better reflect the heritage of the site.	by 2025
m) One end of Northgate would benefit from some sort of gateway feature to mark the start of the railway heritage area	by 2025
n) Attach small S&DR type plaques to buildings marking them as railway heritage features	1-5 years
o) Improve the setting of Skerne bridge and access to it preferably as part of a heritage trail and riverside walk – instigate a study of desire lines from Haughton Road college to town centre in order to inform location of additional footpaths	1-5 years
p) Aim to have the railway heritage in a much improved more accessible condition by 2025 and prepare to celebrate	by 2025

<b>Facilities for younger people – HE11. Summary Management Recommendations</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
See HE 10.10 and HE 7	

<b>Summary Management Recommendations HE 12 Local production of materials</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
a) Encourage through strategic planning the housing of small scale science or green based businesses or research establishments within the TCF	Immediate policy creation-implementation opportunity driven

## **Acknowledgements**

*This report has been written with considerable help from a number of people. Heather Grimshaw, Tim Crashaw, Gabriella White, Peter Roberts, Phil Roxby and the staff of the Local Studies Library, all of Darlington Borough Council, have made information available on the area, offered advice and helped with the consultation process. Charles McNab, Brian Denham and Ian Dougill of the Darlington Historical Society have kindly provided additional information derived from their extensive researches and Mr Dougill has also provided a guided walk around the Skerne, old photographs, newspaper cuttings, historic maps and his own paintings of the river and its historic environment. We are particularly indebted to Dave Tetlow of the Head of Steam Museum who made the museum available for our consultation event and provided free entry to those attending so they could spend time at the museum and enjoy its delights. We are also indebted to Sarah Goldsborough and staff at the museum who provided information on visitor use and helped with the consultation event. Richard Wimbury, Chair of the Friends of the Head of Steam Museum gave us hours of his time to talk through the importance of the railway heritage and provided a guided walk around a number of railway buildings. He also delivered a group of railway enthusiasts to the consultation event for which we are very grateful. Don Whitfield provided photographs of various features of historic interest throughout Darlington and Chris Fish, a former conservation officer for the Borough shared his in depth knowledge of the railway heritage and provided books, property deeds and tea. The local historian Jean Kirkland also offered support and advice and from further afield we were delighted to receive contributions and support from Darlington enthusiasts across the world. Many residents came out to talk to us when we were conducting the fieldwork and we would like to thank all of them for their advice and for expressing their concerns.*

*The main consultation event was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010 at the Head of Steam Museum. Additional consultation meetings were held with the Friends of the Head of Steam Museum and Darlington Historical Society. A wider consultation process took place concurrently on the future of the town centre*



*fringe and this provided additional opportunities for the local community and stakeholders to become involved. Our grateful thanks go to the people who attended the consultation events, completed questionnaires or made their views known by other means.*

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*Cover Illustration: Bank Top Station*

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*'The numerous Churches, Chapels, Recreation Grounds, Public Baths, Hospitals, and other necessary Municipal Institutions, though not within the scope of this guide to severally detail, show that the town in matters religious and social is not content to stand still or even to lag behind.*

*These in conjunction with unusually low rates, with beautiful surroundings, ready facilities and easy access to still more beautiful and interesting districts, explain why Darlington is becoming so attractive and well appreciated a residential centre.'*

Darlington Half Holiday Guide 1899



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### VOLUME I

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### *What is a Conservation Management Plan?*

A conservation management plan (CMP), is a document which provides an understanding of an area's historic environment composed of buildings, landscape, culture, character and archaeology. The CMP will identify what is significant and worthwhile about that place, the issues facing it and provide policies to guide the long-term-management and conservation of the place. Through application of the CMP by local authority, statutory bodies and community, the best of the old is valued and kept, and a sustainable future for the place is delivered, inspired and enhanced by the past. This Plan is a non-statutory document. It has been prepared to supply guidance and direction for future management and decision making in relation to Darlington's town centre fringe. Figure 1 shows where the town centre fringe is in relation to the rest of Darlington.

The town centre fringe was identified as a key area of strategic importance for Darlington in 2006 as part of work commissioned to underpin Darlington's Economic Regeneration Strategy. Archaeo-Environment was commissioned by Darlington Borough Council in 2010 to prepare this Conservation Management Plan in order to inform the process of regeneration. By commissioning this work at a very early stage when no decisions have been set in stone, it will ensure that heritage and local distinctiveness are key drivers in the regeneration of the area.

*'The Vision: That the value of the historic environment is recognised by all who have the power to shape it; that Government gives it proper recognition and that it is managed intelligently and in a way that fully realises its contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the nation'.*

**The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010:  
the vision**

The role of the historic environment in the cultural, social, economic and environmental success of a place is recognised by government. It is accepted fact that the historic environment makes a very real contribution to our quality of life and the quality of our places (DCMS 2010, 1). Aside from its inherent cultural value, the historic environment also has an important role to play in helping local and national Government to achieve many of its broader goals. It can be a powerful driver for economic growth, attracting investment and tourism, and providing a focus for successful regeneration. Alongside the best in new design, it is an essential element in creating distinctive, enjoyable and successful places in which to live and work. Heritage can be a significant focus for the local community, helping to bring people together, to define local identities and to foster a new understanding of ourselves and those around us.

**North East Research Recommendation SU 21. The possibility for heritage-led urban regeneration projects should be explored, combining a drive for economic renewal with the opportunity for conservation-led research. An example of good practice is the Grainger Town Project, carried out by a partnership including One North-East, English Heritage and Newcastle City Council.**

**(Petts and Gerrard 2006, 207 )**

Darlington Borough Council is aware that successful regeneration means bringing social, economic and environmental life back, not just into the town centre fringe, but the community as a whole. Conservation-led regeneration

transforms places, strengthens a community's self image and recreates viable, attractive places which encourage sustained inward investment (English Heritage, 2005).

At a time when we are all concerned with climate change, we must also recognise and value the inherent sustainability and embodied energy of historic buildings and their surroundings and by learning from them and the other types of evidence left by the low carbon economies of the past, we can make real progress in helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change (ibid).

This historic environment is all around us. In Darlington it is not just the listed buildings and conservation areas which are the most visible signs of our heritage, but the rows of terraced houses and railway buildings which transformed the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the street names and skyline, the ground beneath our feet which covers the remains of the earliest settlements. Through the centre of it all, flows the life line of the River Skerne; once the very reason for establishing a settlement here, sometimes cruelly tamed and channelled, often neglected and inaccessible, but a constant presence with a potential central position in the heart of community life; as such, it cannot be ignored in any regeneration scheme.

Much of the historic environment has been lost in Darlington, but much more survives, sometimes cherished, sometimes under-valued and hidden. This Conservation Management Plan flags up that which is of significance to the historic environment and those elements of the town centre fringe which detract from the historic environment. It offers guidance, created through expert advice and public consultation, on how the negative can be reversed, how the valued can be enhanced and how the past can inspire, but not dictate the designs of the future.

## **The organisation of the Conservation Management Plan**

### *Understanding the town centre fringe (volume 1)*

In order to manage such changes without compromising the cultural values of the town centre fringe we need to understand what elements contribute to the significance and character of the area, and how these may be vulnerable and susceptible to any changes in the future. The following Conservation Management Plan aims to look at the area from a wide range of different perspectives including its history, the built form, the open spaces, use, community involvement and local distinctiveness.

*"These assets are unique and once they have been damaged or destroyed they cannot be recovered or be re-created. However, conservation of historic assets need not prevent development and change. English Heritage recognises that the most effective way to conserve cultural values is to manage change by prompting awareness of the values that will be affected".*

English Heritage 2006, 1

### *The Statement of Significance (volume 1)*

The Statement of Significance covers those aspects of the town centre fringe which contribute towards its significance whether that be its buildings, open spaces, street pattern, traditions or associations with notable people or events. The Planning Policy Statement issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (PPS5 2010) makes it clear that planning decisions should be based on the heritage significance of an asset and the impact of any proposals on that significance. This section of the Conservation Management Plan is therefore very important in dealing with how the town centre fringe should be developed in future.

### *Issues, Policies and Management (volume 2)*

In terms of looking at the issues affecting significance, the Plan has aimed to provide a general, unbiased assessment of the current factors influencing the



various aspects of each character area. It does not specifically set out to address the current regeneration proposals, or provide the type of detailed assessment that would be needed to support a planning application. For ease of use, the area has been divided into zones when considering management options; within each zone there are areas of distinctive character with different management issues. In order to maintain that local distinctiveness the management recommendations may be specific to individual character areas, but there are some issues which run through the whole area. These issues and management recommendations are contained within volume two.

## **The Team**

In compiling the Plan a team of key specialists were consulted including the Conservation Team of Darlington Borough Council, the Darlington Historical Society and The Friends of the Head of Steam Museum. Additional consultation has taken place with Urban Splash, English Heritage, The Environment Agency and the Department of Culture Media and Sport (re World Heritage Site status). The Conservation Management Plan was compiled by Archaeo-Environment after a wider programme of consultation open to residents and businesses in the town centre fringe.



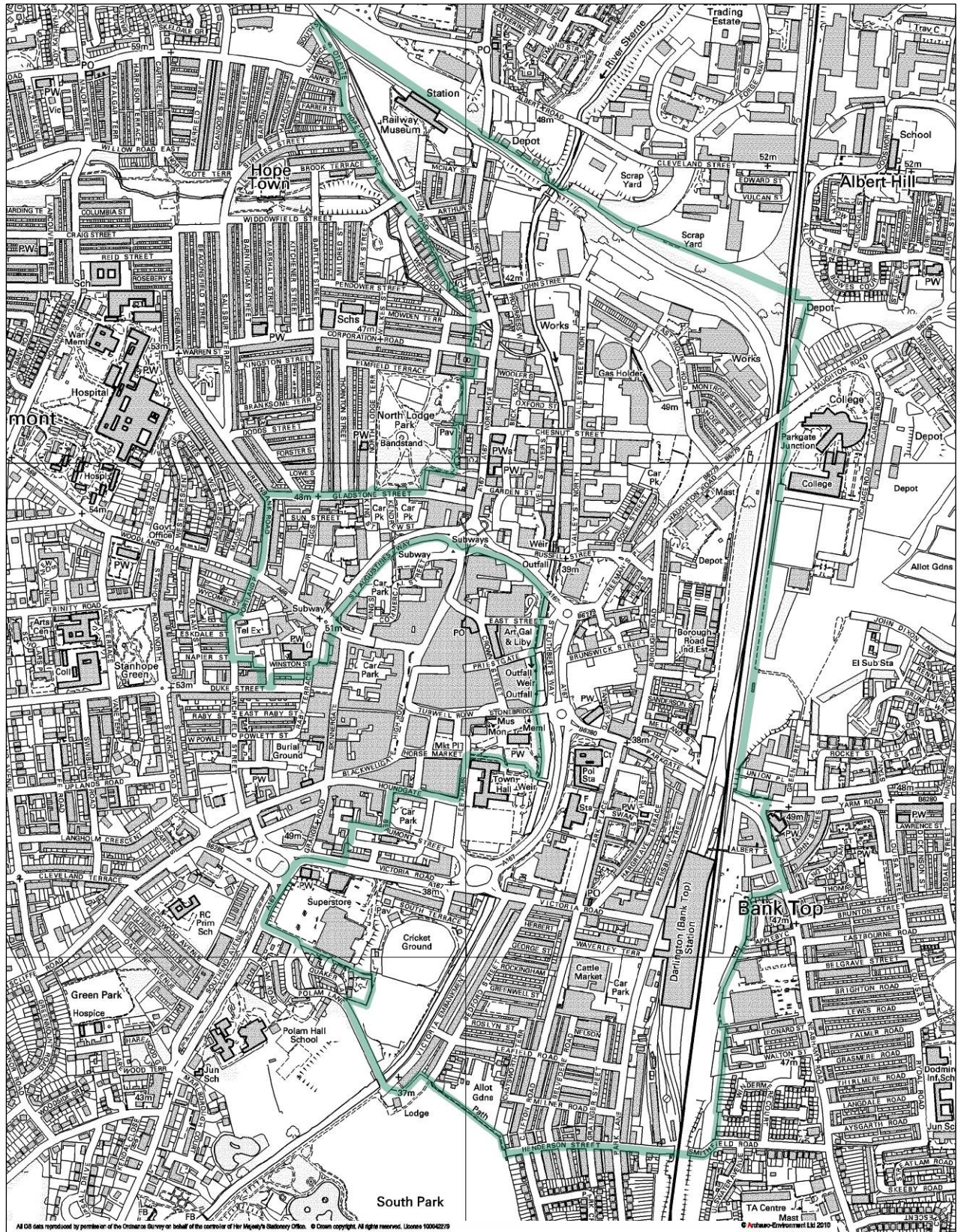


Figure 1. The town centre fringe outlined in green. This is the area covered by this conservation management plan





## **2.0 Historic Background: Understanding the Town Centre Fringe**

### *Darlington before the 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

From the end of the last ice-age around 10,000 years ago, the presence of the river Skerne was vital in establishing whether settlement here would be desirable or successful. The river provided an abundance of resources such as fish, bird life and reeds and it was later to be used as a source of power for mills in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

While the land in the wider area around the Skerne was well drained and fertile making it attractive to settlers, immediately adjacent to the river it was waterlogged and so settlement was restricted to the higher river terraces such as that excavated in the Market Place (HER 4000)<sup>2</sup> and was normally seasonally occupied. The earlier river bed was wider and a little to the east of where it is today and settlement grew up at a point where the river could be crossed and on a river terrace (equivalent to High Row, Bondgate and Skinnergate) above and to the west of the Skerne to reduce the threat from flooding (Cookson 2003, 3). Research into other early settlements (Hardie and Hammond 2007, 35-6) has shown that such positions on a terrace above a floodplain and at the junction of a tributary stream with its main river, was the most popular location for growing settlements from prehistoric times until industrialisation shifted the criteria away from the need for water.

Some evidence of early settlement has also been found in the suburbs, but evidence is not plentiful. Evidence for a more permanent form of settlement can be found at Faverdale (HER 5959) dating to about 2,000 years ago, but

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<sup>2</sup> Any HER references in this report refer to the Historic Environment Record which is a record of sites of historic environment interest held by Durham County Council. A publicly accessible version of this record can be found at [www.keystothepast.info](http://www.keystothepast.info).

the main focus of Roman settlement was probably at Piercebridge, not Darlington. However in 1903 an 'ancient bridge' was found underground in Garden Street (date unknown) and in 1904 a bronze Roman coin dating from the reign of Tiberius, was found in the same street (Lloyd, Echo Memories 5.8.1994). The bridge would have been on the route of the river before it was canalised and could be of any date before the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the Roman coin may simply be a stray find, dropped by anyone in the last 2,000 years and may not in itself be an indicator of Roman activity in this area.

The real origins of the present day town do not start until Anglo-Saxon times with a settlement known as 'Dearthingtun' in 1050 or 'Dearnington', possibly coming from 'Derning' (Watts 2002, 33), which may have been an Old English name for the River Skerne or a personal name, such as *Dēornōp*, of an early inhabitant (Ekwall 1987, 139). An Anglian cemetery dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD was found at Greenbank on the margins of the town centre fringe in 1876 supporting evidence of early medieval settlement in this area, but other early medieval evidence in the area is some centuries later.

It has been suggested that Darlington may have been an Anglian burgh – a fortified town. Wooler stated that this burgh was:

*“protected by a ditch and rampart of earth surmounted by a wooden stockade formed of one or two rows of stout palisades, pointed at the top and fixed deeply in the ground”* (Wooler & Boyd 1913, 43-45).

He maintained that these boundary defences extended west from the River Skerne (which formed the eastern boundary), along East Street, crossing Northgate and turning south at Union Street. The western boundary continued south through properties between Skinnergate and High Row, crossing Blackwellgate and Houndgate, and turning east at the rear of No 37 Blackwellgate (Post Office). The course of the ditch followed a route roughly parallel with Beaumont Street back to the river (see Figure 2).



No evidence of such a defensive system has ever been found but evidence has been found of an Anglian settlement around St Cuthbert's church. While the church did not exist in its present form, the area was the focus of a late 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century cemetery and gravestones have been found which suggest that the local populace was part Scandinavian. Indeed in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century the town of Darlington was given to the Bishop of Durham by the Viking nobleman Styr, son of Ulf, suggesting that it was the Vikings who held the power in the town at that time. Carved stone crosses have also been located here suggesting that it was some sort of spiritual centre for the settlement by the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

St Cuthbert's remained the focus of settlement throughout medieval times. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century the town had the bishop's corn mill on the west bank of the Skerne, north of the church (Cookson 2003, 29). The course of the mill race was already so well established that it was used as the boundary for the borough, suggesting that the mill pre-dated the borough's foundation. The Skerne also supported other mills at Haughton and Blackwell in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and other mills were later constructed in the town one of which was maintained by the tenants of Bondgate (ibid).

The existence of an early cloth making industry is shown by references in the Boldon Book of 1183 to the presence of dyers. It was also an important trading centre, and goods such as wine, salt and herrings were bought and sold here. All of this remained in the ownership of the Bishop who had a residence here, built in 1164, and the tenants of the Bishop's land which extended throughout the north of England and parts of Northumberland all had duties to provide both for the Bishop on his journeys and to farm his land. The borough of Darlington may have been an administrative creation by the bishops to enhance an already important settlement in the 11-12<sup>th</sup> century.

*'In Darlington there are 48 bovates<sup>3</sup> which the villeins<sup>4</sup> hold as much by old villain tenure as by new, and they pay 5s for each bovate, and they ought to mow the whole meadow of the Bishop, and make and lead the hay and to receive subsistence once, and enclose the copse and the court and do the works they were accustomed to do at the mill, and for each bovate to carry 1 cart-load of wood and carry loads on the Bishop's journeys, and in addition 3 loads a year for transporting wine, herring and salt.'* (Baldon Book)

Medieval Darlington grew out from the market place with properties on three sides and St. Cuthbert's church on the fourth. The Market Place formed the junction of the roads into and out of the town. The plan form followed a typical street pattern with burgage plots and street fronted properties. Narrow lanes ran along burgage plot boundaries to back lanes and beyond lay agricultural land and Bondgate.

Bondgate, close to the 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century Anglian cemetery discovered on Greenbank Road, may have evolved as an earlier settlement or more likely as a suburb to the main town laid out in the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and with its own administration. Bondgate grew as a two row settlement of bond holdings<sup>5</sup> facing a green which survives in the street name today. This plan form is typical of villages in the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards and has parallels in other northern towns such as West Auckland, Bishop Auckland, Staindrop and Sedgefield.

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<sup>3</sup> **Bovate** Derived from the Latin word bo, meaning ox, a bovate was a measure of land which could be ploughed by one eighth of a plough; this varied depending on the land but in Darlington was about 15 acres.

<sup>4</sup> The wealthiest class of peasant, they usually cultivated 20-40 acres of land, often in isolated strips. They were required to carry out a range of duties as part of their tenancy, such as spending a specified number of days ploughing the bishop's land or providing eggs for particular feasts

<sup>5</sup> Where bondsmen lived who were bound to the land and required to work without payment

*'This is a Little Market town, the Market day was on Munday w<sup>ch</sup> was the day I passed through it: it was a great Market of all things, a great quantety of Cattle of all sorts but mostly Beeves<sup>6</sup>- it seems once in a fortnight its much fuller.'* Celia Fiennes 1698 Tour Durham to Shropshire

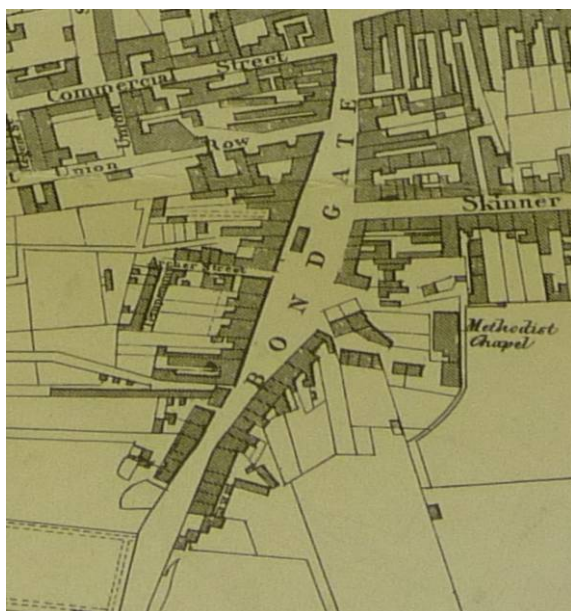


Figure 2. 1850s public health map showing the street pattern of Bondgate. This is a typically medieval street pattern of long burgage plots extending from a wide market place or village green. The long plots are still discernable running from the west of the market place and at this time Archer Street and Temperance have been developed along the plot boundaries. The plot boundaries on the east side are more complex to accommodate the widening of the market place or green and then to meet the borough boundaries at Skinnergate.

The pattern of development within Darlington rarely extended over the borough boundary before the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, development within Darlington was still almost entirely within this boundary and St Cuthbert's church spire still dominated the skyline. The streets were of 'princely width' and trees and gardens in the town centre added to the generally spacious and pleasant surroundings (Cookson 2003, 59). The Skerne may have fed a number of mills, but rushes grew 'luxuriantly' in the water and were 'harvested for conversion into matting and chair seats' and dried on a hedgerow near the road to Cockerton. Across the Skerne towards what was later to become Park Place was the Bishop's Park and Feetham's which consisted of open fields with a tithe barn in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Longstaffe 1854, ciii) where dues were collected and stored for the bishop as rent. The common fields for the mainly agricultural residents were located on the east side of the Skerne.

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<sup>6</sup> Beef cattle

*'Darnton! I think it is Darnton I't dirt.'*

James I, King of Scotland and England in 1617 on visiting Darlington

The early 19<sup>th</sup> century saw new civic buildings being constructed within the town and an Act of Parliament was obtained to improve paving, cleansing and lighting in the central area in 1823. The process of expanding beyond the borough boundary was slow and hesitant and the result of a number of factors.

The earliest development outside the borough boundary was in the form of villas, constructed from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as Polam Hall in 1780<sup>7</sup>, West Lodge at about the same time, Elmfield off Northgate in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and Greenbank. Within what was to become the town centre fringe, East Mount was built about 1832 above Freeman's Place and this was the only villa to be constructed at that time on the east side of the Skerne (ibid, 65).

The choice of Darlington for a number of Quaker families as their home in the 1700s was to have significant implications for Darlington's growth post 1800. Debarred from many professions, Quaker talents were channelled into commerce and banking where they prospered and gained an influence out of all proportion to their numbers (Flynn 1983, 1) In particular the Pease family were to become major landowners and entrepreneurs who were able to withhold or release land for development as they saw fit. Most Quaker houses were outside the town centre fringe - the Backhouses lived at Polam Hall; Joseph Pease at Feethams, close to the Market Place; his son John Beaumont Pease at North Lodge. Brinkburn, Woodburn, Elm Ridge, Hummersknott and Mowden Hall were all built for Quakers.

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<sup>7</sup> Polam was known as Polumpole in the 12<sup>th</sup> century





*Figure 3. The extent of development in Darlington in the 1850s (Public Health Map). Development is underway along Northgate and Hopetown and there is some development east of the river Skerne along Yarm Road and on the former parkland of the Bishops. However Bank Top and Polam remain rural (the land around Polam (Powlam) Hall is clearly depicted as a designed landscape showing typical 18<sup>th</sup> century layout in tree cover).*

They were also pioneers of the railway age, foremost of which was Edward Pease, born in Darlington in 1767. Like his father he joined the wool trade, and during his time buying and selling wool he realised that there was a need for a railway to carry coal from the collieries of West Durham to the port of Stockton. Pease and a group of businessmen formed the Stockton & Darlington Railway Company in 1821. On 19th April 1821 the Stockton & Darlington Railway Act was passed to allow the company to build a horse-

drawn railway that would link West Durham, Darlington and the River Tees at Stockton.

Pease's home from 1798, which was in the town centre fringe at 138-148 Northgate, was a plain three storied 18<sup>th</sup> century house with a garden running down to the Skerne where it joined the grounds of East Mount, home of his eldest son John from 1838. A rustic bridge led over the stream to an orchard (VCH 87) and this valley was nick-named the Peaceful Valley (Pease-full). The Quakers had a particular fondness for gardening and Pease's garden was renowned for its orchards, vinery and gardens. Sadly the only hint that the garden ever existed today is in the name of Garden Street which once formed the north boundary of the garden. The house of Edward Pease has survived but is hidden behind later shop fronts and additions (plate 1 and 2).

George Stephenson met with Pease at the latter's home in Northgate (see plates 1 and 2) and persuaded him to use steam powered locomotives on the railway, when all previous discussions had involved using horse-power. Stephenson also convinced Pease that the locomotive should run on rails raised above the ground rather than tram tracks set into the ground. These two factors (especially the first) separated the Stockton & Darlington Railway from all the other colliery railways and changed the history of Darlington, the North East, and the world. Pease had been so impressed with Stephenson that he gave him the post of Chief Engineer of the Stockton & Darlington Company. Following intense lobbying, a second Act of Parliament was passed to allow the company 'to make and erect locomotives or moveable engines'. This led to the world changing introduction of the railway starting with the Stockton & Darlington Railway. While the railway was to change the face of the world, it was to take a little longer to change the face of Darlington with development associated with the new railway works largely restricted to the station area and north around Albert Hill and beyond the town centre fringe.



*Plate 1. Edward Pease's home on Northgate. By the 1930s the grand classical façade had been divided up at ground level with shop fronts and a tiled façade added to one bay in 1907.*



*Plate 2. The large classical building which sits behind the shops is now barely discernible amongst the shop fronts and individual decorative schemes.*



However the presence of the station, the need to engineer and manufacture railway and locomotion goods, encouraged other industry into the area, including the iron industry. The burgeoning industries needed workers and workers needed houses, shops and entertainment and the most obvious place to start developing was the land between the borough and the railway line. This coincided with an increasing unacceptability of wealthy families living cheek by jowl with poorer families and by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the Quaker families moved out towards the countryside and the town centre fringe became dominated by yards, back to backs, back and fronts, terraces of all descriptions and civic buildings. The larger Quaker residences were divided up and the plots sold for development. Thus Elmfield was developed from 1855 with swimming baths and a new street (Kendrew Street),<sup>8</sup> followed later with Elmfield Terrace and Gladstone Street within the town centre fringe area while the remainder became North Lodge Park. It was from this period of growth that the present day character of the town centre fringe with its distinctive skyline of spires and clock towers was derived.

### **Development within the Study Area**

Development in what was to become the town centre fringe had a hesitant start. A few 18<sup>th</sup> century houses appeared in Bondgate and Northgate as part of the town's growing affluence resulting from the Quaker owned woollen and linen industries (Pevsner 1990, 140). These were large villas and John Wood's later map of 1826 shows the villas on Northgate with long gardens extending down to the river.

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<sup>8</sup> Named after John Kendrew who was a weaver who lived in this area as a child. He adapted the Spinning Jenny for the spinning of flax for linen and also invented a machine for polishing optical glasses.



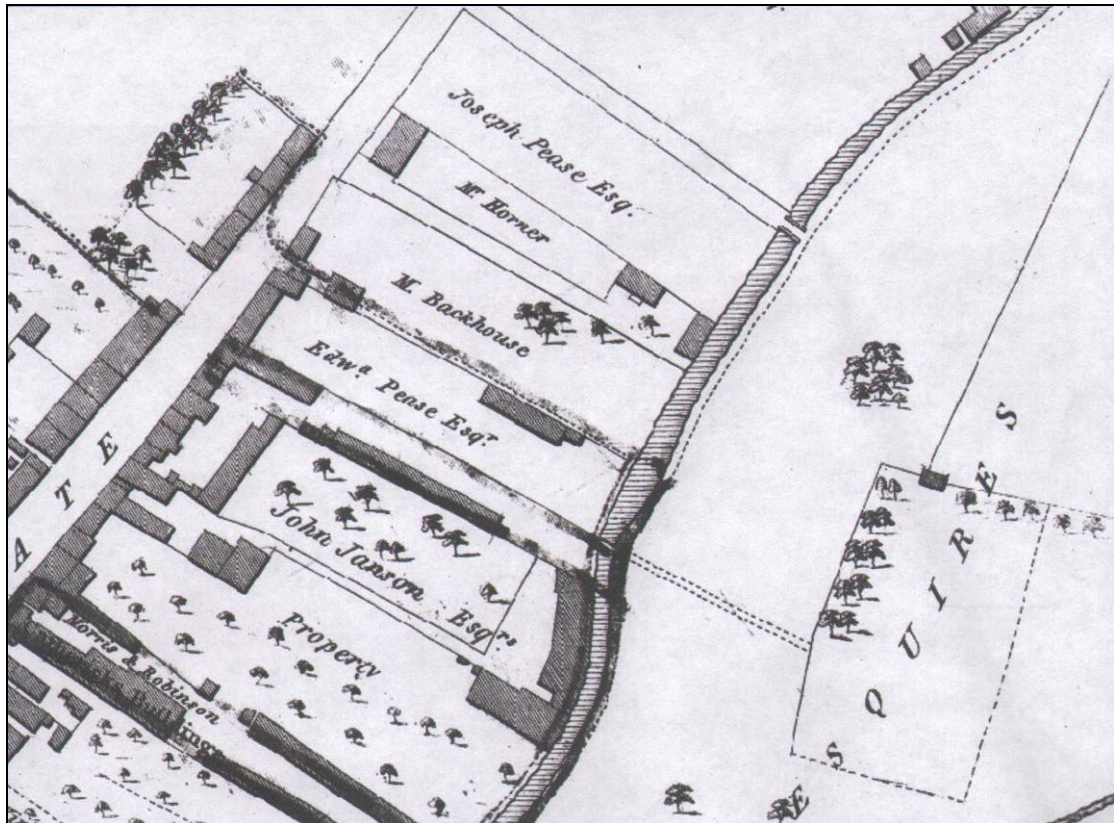


Figure 4. An extract from John Wood's map of 1826 showing Northgate and the position of villas along the main road with long gardens extending down to the river

Smaller cobble houses also grew along Northgate opposite Pease's villa; their appearance anything from 17<sup>th</sup> – early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and several old (17<sup>th</sup> century?) cottages on Bondgate with steeply pitched pantile roofs survived until the 1850s. By 1826, much of the land around Bondgate still consisted of orchards or fields. East Mount, another Pease residence, was built in 1832 (VCH 65).

*'The old cottages opposite the house of Edward Pease esq., in Northgate, close to the great boulder stone, were known as "Darlington House," ending the town to the north. Now in that and all directions, handsome villas and spreading gardens extend themselves, stretching from Bondgate to Northgate, and from Northgate to Haughton Road: a belt of countrified farm land intervenes: but near the church they again begin, covering the Skerne's deep holmes, and insinuating themselves to its bank tops'.*

Longstaffe 1909, 338 (originally printed in 1854)

In 1826, streets between Northgate and Bondgate were developed for commercial use. Commercial Street (just outside the study area) developed from what had been Kendrew's market gardens and became a mixture of business and residential uses from 1826 and is one of the town centre fringe's earliest streets. Kendrew was developed on a former market garden by John Kendrew and was a combined business and residential area from the start. It had a different character from the older shops and houses on the Market Place and main road (VCH 65). King, Queen and Union Streets were laid out before 1820.

*'Between King Street and Queen Street, where the houses stood back-to-back, were open middens which served the houses on either side; into these middens went everything that wasn't wanted'.*

Cookson 2003, 66 (Nicolson Boys o' Bondgate)

The growth of the railway facilities was hesitant and carried out through a process of trial and error at a time where there was no precedence and no acquired knowledge to guide the process. The town's first station was established on farm land along Northgate, east of where the railway crossed the main road from Darlington to Durham in 1827. It was primarily a goods station and continued to function as such until 1833 when it was adapted for passenger use and partially converted into a house and a shop. Until then, passengers were expected to stand by the line and wait on trains in the same way that they would wait on a carriage. Goods traffic was then directed to a new building from 1833 called the 'Merchandise Station' along with new offices built in 1840. A new station was constructed in 1841 as the passenger station at Northgate was considered inadequate and it was this station that became North Road station and is now the Head of Steam Museum. Its original approach was along what is now called McNay Street (after Thomas McNay the S&DR's Engineer and Secretary). The large open green spaces between North Road station and the Hopetown Carriageworks built in 1853

were allotments in the 1850s adding some continuity to its function as open green space today.

Development of the wider North Road area instigated by the presence of the railway began in 1831 when Kitching's relocated their iron foundry from Tubwell Row in the town centre to the station area and acquired the role as the S&DRs locomotive works for Darlington (Darlington Borough Council 2006, 6). The foundry was partially demolished in 1870-1895 to make room for more sidings possibly as part of the Royal Agricultural Show held in Darlington in 1895 (DBC 2006, 11)

No.s 69-81 High Northgate were the first railway properties to be built in the town c.1825. The construction of the lime cells, sometime between 1840-55, on Hopetown Lane on the coal yard branch line (now fossilised as part of Station Road and Hopetown Lane) may have been indicative of the development boom which was about to take place around the station. The lime cells stored lime imported by train and made available for collection from Hopetown Lane for builders requiring it to provide lime mortar for the many new houses that were being constructed.

The Cocker Beck Valley was initially developed sometime before 1835 as large and beautiful gardens with intersecting walks, a pond and a temple by Henry Pease (unkindly known as Henry's folly' by his father, but more kindly, if less imaginatively as Westbrook gardens).

The creation of Bank Top station in 1842, albeit rather badly served by sheds rather than a station proper, triggered development of streets of houses all around the station. Longstaffe in 1854 saw Bank Top as a new town 'gradually arising on the east of the Skerne'. Initially it was a railway colony, its church first established in a converted railway warehouse.

**Then and Now...**



*Plate 3. Bank Top station in the 1950s*



*Plate 4. Bank Top station in 2010*

After the discovery of new mineral deposits in Cleveland in 1851 came a major expansion of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. A decision was taken to enlarge and relocate the railway's locomotive works, from Shildon,



where they had been established in 1826, to Darlington. The new works, north of the old station, opened in 1862. This decision in turn attracted a number of iron related firms including the Darlington Forge; the first of four businesses to locate at Albert Hill (outside the study area) between 1854 and 1864. The demand for workers was to encourage inward migration and an explosion in house building leading to the creation of the industrial suburbs, part of which form the town centre fringe today. In the 20 years to 1881 the population more than doubled and the townscape was transformed by industrial suburbs, many of which were within the town centre fringe. By 1898 North Road station had become surrounded by terraced housing, largely associated with the North Road Shops (outside the town centre fringe). However the green space between the station and the carriage works was only ever developed as allotments and then sidings and has never been used for housing. By 1901 there were more than 42,000 people living in the town, nine times the number of a century earlier (Cookson 2003,102).



### **3.0 The Built Form**

#### *Early Days*

Evidence suggests that one of the earliest buildings in the town centre fringe was the Bishop's Manor House, described by Leland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a 'pretty place' (Flynn 1994, pl 115). This stood on the site of the present day town hall car park. It was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and had become ruinous by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but was restored by Bishop Cosin. It was neglected again and became the town's poor house in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The town bought the building in 1806 and added two wings and a pediment to the centre, creating a more classical façade to the front in keeping with architectural fashions of the time. With such a long history, it represented a number of changing architectural traditions and by 1834 the building was said to retain 'many traces of antiquity in its low arches, thick walls and long passages' (ibid). It was a long building with windows of all periods from medieval to the 18<sup>th</sup> century including three lancets on the street front, possibly the location of the bishop's chapel. Ironically the Gothic arches were to become fashionable again in the mid Victorian period with architects such as Waterhouse and GG Hoskins designing new buildings with similar arched windows and doorways.

Next to the Palace was The Deanery which stood at the corner of Horsemarket and Feetham's. This was a half timbered structure and represents a more typical building form of medieval urban areas. It was demolished in 1876.



*Plate 5. The Bishop's Manor House in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Darlington Centre for Local Studies)*

Early photographs of the town centre fringe area, often featuring the Bulmer Stone, depict old two storey cobblestone buildings on the site of what is now the technical college on Northgate, known at the time collectively as Darlington House. Such buildings were commonly built in the 17<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries of river cobbles or random rubble stonework, the surface whitewashed which helped to weatherproof the structure and acted as a fungicide and pesticide. They had thatched roofs, the thatch perhaps being obtained locally from the riverbanks of the Skerne. Windows appeared to be small multi pane sashes, possibly Yorkshire sliding sashes and doors of simple batten and ledge type.

Small 16<sup>th</sup> century cottages also existed on Bondgate and were shown on postcards in 1853 (Flynn 1994, pl 62). These two storied buildings had steeply pitched pantiled roofs, which may have been thatched in the past, with the upper windows tucked immediately below them. They were demolished in 1854.



*Plate 6. Weavers' cottages which belonged to Edward Pease. They were demolished in 1895 to make way for the Technical College. Although they are referred to as Weaver's Cottages, they lack the distinctive row of windows which allowed as much natural light in as possible.*

The earliest buildings within the town centre fringe which are still extant are the early 19<sup>th</sup> century late Georgian edge-of-town villas such as 138-148 Northgate. These early villas display neo-classical styles of architecture based on the Georgian ideal of ancient civilisation and learning; ideas on architecture originally brought back to this country by architects such as Inigo Jones in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and popularised in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the wealthy classes returning from their Grand Tour of Europe and adapting the styles for domestic and civic architecture; the style remained popular until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. This can be seen in the simple facades with pediments such as that found at Edward Peases house on Northgate (see plates 1 and 2), but this particular pediment may be a later addition of 1866 (C. McNab pers comm. 11.7.10). However at its peak, this style was 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century and so is for the most part associated with the earlier historic core of Darlington and not the town centre fringe.

A small enclave of early development took place at High Northgate on both sides of the road. The terraced houses now known as no.s 69-81 were built c.1820 and are now much altered with modern replacement windows and a mixture of property boundaries to the street front. The end terrace on the



corner of Station Road is perhaps the best not having been masked under a layer of render and still retaining its kneeler on its southern gable. By 1850 when the first edition Ordnance Survey map was published, another row of terraces were in place opposite what is now Station Road. These buildings today have been recently improved with replacement render and paintwork, but still retain inappropriate modern windows. Their render is probably not part of the original design.

There are some surprising survivals; 12 High Northgate is a little shop with two 12 pane bow windows. Such windows often date to about 1830, but this row of terraces were not built until after 1850, but before the 1890s. The windows may have been moved here from another building, simply be a late example or are more recently built using old fashioned styles (the glazing bars are quite crude and thick for the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century). Whatever their date they are quite a rarity in the town, albeit hidden behind fridges and freezers with massive metal shutters to protect them at night. From 1825 onwards, homes of the senior railway management and skilled railway workers were constructed at North Lodge and at Westbrook Villas, both middle class enclaves now outside the study area.



*Plate 7. Darlington hides its historic assets well. Edward Pease's house should be celebrated for its role in changing the face of the world, but instead its tawdry appearance and poor shop fronts contribute towards the general decline of Northgate. Delightful little early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century bow windows with rather crude glazing bars hide behind fridges and freezers on High Northgate.*

The pendulum of fashion swung away from such foreign styles of architecture in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century in favour of design which was inspired by the British historic traditions of medieval, Tudor and Jacobean times. This was to give rise to the neo-Gothic style of architecture, with increasing ornamentation which was a reaction to the plain symmetrical facades of the Georgian period and so door lintels and jambs were carved, shop fronts ornamented, barge boards and tall gables created to produce a Gothic appearance made possible by the lighter Welsh slate which found favour over the stone slate roof.



*Plate 8. A neo-Gothic extravaganza at Westbrook Gardens*

The Westbrook Villas just outside the study area are an excellent example of this neo Gothic style of architecture which was promoted by at least two of Darlington's finest talents – GG Hoskins (responsible for what is now Barclays Bank on High Row) and Robert Borrowdale, responsible for some of the Westbrook Villas, Melville House and 1 Leadenhall Street. Tall chimneys and steeply pitched gables with vents and stone leaf finials combined with the ornate stonework, such as flower stops

to hood moulding over windows and cast iron rain water goods were the ultimate rejection of classical styles and a Victorian celebration of English Tudor and Jacobean architectural traditions. Such ornate styles can be seen on Victoria Road opposite Sainsbury's and in a more restrained way on High Northgate where otherwise plain buildings (as much as one can tell given that they are plastered beneath cement render), have windows with pointed arches rather than the earlier classical arch or the simpler rectangular sash window.



*Plate 9. Tile detail from the Black Swan pub on Parkgate*

### *Shop Fronts*

Many 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings along the major thoroughfares such as Northgate and Bondgate are predominantly shops or offices today. Some of these may have had ornate Victorian shop fronts, but areas such as Parkgate and Victoria Road may have had more early 20<sup>th</sup> century shop fronts reflecting their later development. For areas of Victorian expansion, a shop front may have had little to distinguish it from adjacent homes. Windows at ground floor level at least, may have had bay windows originally, and a greater commercialisation of businesses through prominent window displays, welcoming doorways and trade signs. Improved glass-making allowed larger windows mainly from the 1830s in Darlington, and so a number of multi-paned windows were replaced with larger plate glass windows. The 1830s also saw the introduction of retractable blinds and gas lighting to shop fronts. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, only fresh food shops had open fronts. By 1860 every shop front on High Row had large plate glass windows, but these fashions did not necessarily extend to the outer reaches of Northgate where shops were likely to be more modest affairs.

*'In this summer [of 1834] a great change took place in the shops in Darlington. Large windows became all the fashion. A number of new shops were opened out this year in consequence of the sale of Allan's houses; and no sooner had one shopkeeper put out a large elegant window than his neighbour did likewise' (Cookson, 71, quoting Mewburn, Larchfield Diary, 35)*

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, shop front styles became more eclectic introducing new materials, such as terracotta and tiling and these styles can be seen in a variety of buildings on Victoria Road and Parkgate. Signage became more flamboyant with cut-out letters, gilding and colourful sign writing. The

Edwardian fashion for transom lights allowed for ventilation grilles and coloured glass to conceal gas light fittings and in Parkgate green glazed tiles adorned the Black Swan and the Cricketers Arms. Entrances were recessed to increase window display areas. As shop fronts became an everyday part of the high street in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a range of pattern books were published to provide advice for joiners on their design, construction and installation. However, they tended to avoid standardised detail in order to



*Plate 10. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century shop front detail on Parkgate*

allow for local variations. Shops became a more integral part of new buildings in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1920s, the use of bronze in window frames allowed the structural elements to become elegantly more slender often accompanied by the sophistication of polished granite or marble. Art deco styles in the 1930s

introduced features, such as sunbursts and stepped fascias, and new materials, such as chrome and vitrolite.



*Plate 11. A surviving corner shop on Northgate*

The town centre fringe is perhaps better associated with the corner shop. These have evolved from end of terrace houses and served the local community; the terraced houses were once well served by these enterprises with every few streets having one.

However they have since gone out of fashion as local residents obtain their purchases from larger supermarkets. Many now stand empty or have been returned to residential use. Those that survive have shop front designs popular since the 1920s and 30s with the distinctive corner doorway.



Since the mid-20th century, modern architecture has minimised the design detail of shop fronts. Float glass became available in large sheets from 1959 and frameless jointing techniques have made most of the structural elements unnecessary, leading to large glass fronts such as can be found in Northgate. In the 1970s air curtain technology imported from America enabled some shops to operate without a shopfront other than folding doors for the night-time, but none of these have been used in the town centre fringe. However, there are signs nationally that sustainability issues and rising fuel cost are forcing a return to more traditional forms of shop front.

### *19<sup>th</sup> century Domestic Architecture*



*Plate 12. The yards behind Archer Street in the 1930s*

Most of the surviving housing in the town centre fringe takes the form of the Victorian and Edwardian terraced house, but there were other forms, mostly now demolished. Housing was crammed into small plots around a

courtyard such as Catterick Yard (now below the ring road) and George's Square in Bridge Street (True North Books 1998, 76) and the back to backs, only one room deep and backing on to an identical row behind. These were where some of the poorest families lived, often in overcrowded conditions. A stand pipe in the centre of the yard provided a water supply and privies and wash houses were located in the yard, but with overcrowding the privies overflowed and seeped back into the fresh water supply. These yards were mostly demolished after World War II and alternative housing provided in council houses, prefabs and high rises and remaining examples were demolished when the ring road was built.

When the Greenbank Estates were developed (Greenbank Road forms a western boundary to the town centre fringe) a new style of house was designed thought to be unique to Darlington; this was the 'back and front

house'. They differed from back to backs in having both a back and front door linked by a long passage (Cookson 2003, 90). However for many people the standard of living improved between the beginning of Victoria's reign and the end with an expectation not of a family in one room, but of a two up two down terraced house.

**The term 'jerry-built' appears in Victorian times from 1869 and describes poor quality housing put up too quickly, with too few materials and not built to last examples of which in the town centre fringe have long been demolished.**

The external design of the domestic terrace house relies on the relinquishing of individual expressions of taste in return for a uniformity of window and door styles which create pleasing lines and harmonious facades. Much of this has been lost throughout the town centre fringe today, even though some planning restrictions were imposed at an early stage. Just to the north of the study area, former Allen Estates land around Albert Hill was sold with a covenant requiring some uniformity in size, quality and use of buildings including the use of Westmoreland slate on roofs (Cookson, 76).

The basic terraced house was a successful design which has proven its worth many times over. For the most part it was high density housing using mostly local materials; a possible template for today. Most houses started as two up and two down, although most have been extended to the rear since their original construction. A small back yard contained a privy and a coal shed. Two doors in the back wall led to a back lane, floored with scoria blocks from Middlesbrough. One door was for the coalman to deliver coal through from his cart (straight from the railway depot near Northgate) and the other was so that the night soil could be collected, also by cart. The back lane was also a meeting place, a chance to stop and chat and a place to hang out the washing on wash day (not the same as coal day!). Being out of sight, the back lane was presumably also used for activities that required some discretion. It is also from this back lane that the backs of the houses can still be observed.

Often without the ornamentation of the fronts, the backs still display tall arched stair light windows where they were fitted, or a jumble of roof lines where houses were extended into the rear in later years and the occasional forgotten sash window.



*Plate 13. The back views of terraces provide an eclectic mix of roof lines and extensions which display the archaeology of development*

The northern end of Northgate and along High Northgate includes railway related housing including the earliest examples at 69-81 High Northgate, and the tightly-packed terraces on Stephenson Street. 69-81 High Northgate, set well back from the road, display architectural styles which are transitional between late Georgian and Victorian periods with kneelers, small hand made bricks with stone lintels over windows, 12 pane sash windows, wide doorways and rectangular overlights with glazing bars, mostly now gone. Opposite, humbler terraced houses were laid out before 1850 and these were street fronted and very plain. Further along Northgate, terraces reflect the next stage of Victorian middle class designs. Doorways are set up a flight of steps (this allows for cellar room too) and are surrounded by ornate designs; in this case Ionic columns or ornate consoles. The houses are set a little back from the road with small gardens and boundaries are formed by dwarf stone walls and railings.

A later infill at the north end of this terrace is reputedly the former location of a railway signal, possibly a crossing point associated with the very early days of train travel where a branch line met the main line (C. Fish pers comm.). On the first edition map dating to 1850 there is no development here but there is a guide post<sup>9</sup> just to the north where McNay Street was laid out. The gap between the houses<sup>10</sup> is clearly discernable on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map dating to the 1890s, but no railway line is apparent.

The status of the residents was displayed through a variety of means. An ornate doorway and window lintels could attract a higher rent. A small patch of garden, bounded by a dwarf wall and railings, no matter how small distinguished these houses from straight forward street fronted properties. Steps leading up to the front door displayed additional wealth and superiority.

The overall effect was mostly pleasing, but in some rows of terraces the levels of ornamentation today appears rather ostentatious for the humble dwelling



*Plate 14. Mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced houses on High Northgate; the pink infill building reputedly marks the site of a former railway signal*

behind it, for example a row of terraces on Haughton Road. The reason for this can be found in the way that houses were built. Property developers were often builders, stonemasons or joiners who could only afford to buy a few plots for development. Their profit

margins were tight and so they played safe with their borrowed funds and chose well-established and popular

forms and ordered period features often of inappropriate proportions, with little understanding of the style they sought to imitate. However with the addition of a couple of highly ornate door consoles, even if they did not quite fit, the builder could attract more potential customers and a higher rent. This

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<sup>9</sup> NGR 428999 515589

<sup>10</sup> NGR 429011 515576



speculative build can be seen on streets such as East Mount Road and throughout the Bank Top area where part of the row conforms to one design, then the ornamentation alters for a group of houses creating a new style, then it alters again, but always based on the two storeyed terrace house of brick. Each group represents a particular speculative enterprise by a small scale developer.



*Plate 15. 101 High Northgate with a six panel door and classical style which reflects earlier Georgian fashions*

Middle class terraces had a number of distinguishing features that raised them architecturally above the worker's housing. Park Place, Model Place (now demolished) and Swan Street in the Bank Top area housed skilled manual workers such as textile factory mechanics, a master builder and a railway inspector in the 1871 census.

Hargreave Terrace, still under developed by 1871 housed a railway clerk, a master stonemason and master hatter (Cookson 2003, 82). A row of terraces along East Mount Road (dating to the opening years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) have fantastically ornate doorways with Corinthian columns, a stone plaque proudly boasting the street name, glazed brick detailing and entrances set back from the road with a few steps to the front door, just enough to create an imposing, but nevertheless welcoming entrance for the visitor. Similar styles are also to be found along part of Haughton Road.



*Plate 16. Ostentatious doorways: East Mount Road (left and second left), Haughton Road (centre right) and Montrose Terrace (right). These doorways all display the appearance of having off-the-peg decorative additions designed to attract 'better class' customers by a speculative builder. Sadly few of the doors themselves are original designs and now detract from the fine surrounds*

Such signs of ostentation were rarely included in the lower status houses such as those to be found along Dundee Street or Stephenson Street for example. Here the door fronted directly on to the road, doorways and windows were simple, but still displayed a degree of off-the-peg craftsmanship with ornate window mullions carved with pretty designs, and brickwork which picked out some detailing at the very least at below eaves level, but often using coloured or glazed brick to pick out patterns which lightened the elevations and drew the eye along the terrace.

Around Bank Top Station rows of brick terraces were constructed for workers housing with the end terraces offering more space and privacy designed for the foremen. Brick detailing below eaves level matched that to be found on the railway buildings themselves bringing a coherent whole to the area.

Much of this detailing has been lost in the town centre fringe through the use of pebble dash coating and replacement windows in a variety of styles leading to a loss of uniformity which was key to their design. Where railings were used in those houses which were set back even a modest distance from the street, the metal work has now disappeared, presumably due to the war effort, but original examples can still be found in most areas, particularly in the boundary wall between the properties.



*Plate 17. Montrose Terrace gently curves to form a crescent but it has lost its original harmony created by matching brick facades with the same brick detailing and the same window and door styles now hidden behind render and pebble-dash (colours would always have varied).*

The predominant street pattern for the terraced houses was based on a grid which complimented the rows of terraces and allowed a high density of buildings to be fitted into a small area and allowed

the best use of space through shared access to the rear. Some rows such as at Hargreave Terrace and Montrose Terrace were based on a crescent, but they were very much in a minority.

The design of the terraced house was adaptable, with many being converted into corner shops serving the local community. In such cases, the ground floor windows were opened up (this may have been part of the original design in many cases) in order to create a shop front suitable for displaying wares. Terraces could be extended to the rear or knocked together. Attics could have dormer windows added, often with decorative barge boarding and additional accommodation thus provided.

### *Railway Architecture*

The character of the built form associated with the railway was of course very different to the domestic architecture which housed its workers. The first station, now demolished, was on two storeys as all early goods stations were (see Liverpool Road in Manchester). This arrangement was impractical and so the new station, designed by Thomas Storey, was built on one level. North Road Railway Station and related infrastructure from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century included rail sheds, workshops and bridges some of which survives today. The stone station was designed in a neo-classical style still favoured in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and also apparent at Edward Pease's house on Northgate. This formal and expensive style was designed to reflect the station's main users; prosperous merchants (DBC 2006, 18). Harris designed an even more flamboyant Goods Agent's Offices in 1840 reflecting the continued importance of that sector to the economic prosperity of the railway company. Like the North Road station, it was built in stone and was ornamented with stone ashlar pilasters at the corners and dressed stone door and window surrounds. The pyramidal roof with central chimney stack, the openings with segmental heads and over hanging eaves all give a slightly Italianate flavour (DBC 2006, 25).

Kitching's Foundry has long been demolished but was designed in a later style with point arched windows of the neo Gothic fashions. However much of the original railway architecture is under threat from neglect or from the difficulty of finding new uses for the old buildings. North Road railway station is in excellent condition having the been the subject of conservation and renovation, however the carriage works sheds associated with it are in poor condition, while much of the railway infrastructure has been lost. The lime cells are relatively intact, with only the timber façade having been added. The basic layout and the evidence for how they functioned can still be discerned. The tall archways show where the trains arrived and exited with their lime ready to deposit it through trap doors to the floor below and inside the timbers which supported the rails are still extant (Wimbury pers comm.).



*Plate 18. The lime cells on Hopetown Lane*

Clocks became an important part of the street scene once the rail network was established. Time keeping had previously been localised with as much as half an hour between east and west England and as long as mail coaches were relatively slow, the driver could simply make adjustments to his time



piece as he travelled from one town to the next. From the start, some railway companies used "London" time, while others used local time. Trains travelling east to west appeared to be travelling slower than the return journey, west to east, which caused many problems with timetabling. At the stations of railway companies that used London time, the railway time could be quite different to local time, with all sorts of problems of missed trains and connections, in some places, there were even two minute hands on the public clocks, one showing local, the other showing London time.<sup>11</sup> The process of nationalising time started in 1836 in Greenwich and between 1840 and 1848, all train companies gradually moved towards using Greenwich time with the use of national time not being made compulsory by law until 1880. Since 1838, the S&DR board debated the need for a master clock and so a prominent clock tower was designed by John Harris when extending North Road station in 1839-40 (DBC 2006, 19). Harris's clock has long gone, but the clock tower over the merchandise station can still be seen from considerable distances. Darlington's Bank Top Railway Station Tower and the Market Hall with their clocks still form the iconic image of Darlington today, with the more recent use of a clock on the Sure Start building next to Northgate Station very much in this tradition. Just outside the area the clock which timed workers in and out of the railway works has been reused on Morrison's supermarket whose Northgate elevation maintains the appearance of the works. (Wimbury pers comm.).



Plate 19. The 'imprisoned' Bulmer Stone (photo courtesy of Don Whitfield)

### *Civic Architecture*

In contrast to the small scale domestic architecture of the town centre fringe, the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a number of large civic buildings constructed. These adopted more flamboyant styles and imported building materials. At

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.greenwichmeantime.com/info/railway.htm> [accessed 15.4.10]

the time there was much local opposition to the building of the Technical College at the foot of Northgate and even more opposition to the 'imprisonment' of the Bulmer Stone behind its railings in 1923. The college was designed by G.G.Hoskins reflecting earlier styles from Tudor England. It was made of local red brick with layers of Staffordshire purple brick (McNab pers comm.) and yellow terracotta decoration. The gables were decorated with female figures representing the arts and sciences. In 1919 the Higher Grade School was opened on Gladstone Street with similar Tudor influences, but without the flamboyant materials. The Darlington Temperance Institute (designed to provide meeting rooms away from the temptations of drink) also on Gladstone Street was in a similar style. At the opening ceremony the Earl of Carlisle reflected what the Institute still partially provides today in terms of townscape when he said he was glad to see before him 'a building which will beautify your town physically as well as morally'.



*Plate 20. The former Technical College*

The pendulum of architectural fashion swung once again in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; this time rejecting the ornate fussiness of Victorian neo-Gothic in favour of more delicately ornamented 1900s (such as the Temperance Hall and numerous Parkgate buildings) and subsequently towards the stark simplicity of the 1930s.

#### *Twentieth Century Architecture*

In the 1920s-30s tastes reacted against this high degree of ornamentation to produce simpler designs again. New styles of architecture in Darlington generally lacked local distinctiveness and increasingly less attention to detail so that by the 1920s and 30s, the buildings constructed could have been from anywhere in the country. While a lack of local distinctiveness is regrettable, some of these buildings are of good quality

and distinctive of their period and so can make a positive contribution to the townscape. Most bungalows dating to the 1920s and 30s were located in the leafy suburbs and these are mostly outside the study area. In 1937 the council built 10 houses for the aged in Hilda Street and these were little bungalows built of brick and render, set around a cul-de-sac, rather than the traditional grid pattern of earlier housing. In Lodge Street, Dun and Dunwells purchased land from the North of England School Furnishing Company (land which had been in the ownership of the Brown's, the Fry's and John Pease before) in order to build a row of 1930s semi detached houses with sunburst bay windows and gardens. Their size and layout was different to what had gone before and required more land than was generally available in areas already developed in Victorian times, but the materials used still concentrated on brick with the addition of pebble dashing and render to break up the façade and railings on dwarf walls to provide a boundary.



*Plate 21. Bungalows for the 'aged' were built by the council in 1937 on St Hilda's Street and were part of a move away from terraced housing towards larger plots with gardens, based around a cul-de-sac. The 1930s saw semi detached houses springing up throughout the suburbs but here on Lodge Road they were used as infill amongst existing terraced development. These houses were built by Dunwell who bought a tract of land between here and East Mount for development (C. Fish pers comm.)*

The 1930s also produced a style of architecture found in offices, cinemas and industrial units throughout the study area. These brick built blocks usually had wide shallow windows with horizontal metal glazing bars with glass doors to match. Examples can be found along Valley Street and Haughton Road. Darlington boasted more cinema seats per head of population in 1939 than any other town in the country (Lloyd undated, 31). Of those, the old Regal on



Northgate (now the Odeon) reflects the styles of the 1930s and the former Majestic (now a snooker club) on Bondgate, designed by Joshua Clayton of Darlington in 1932, still harbours 1930s fashions beneath its 1970s facade. Its interior, (plaster work made by Davidsons of Sunderland), is largely intact and the façade, with the exception of the ground floor, remains beneath the 1970's grill including the stained glass windows with their metal frames. The cinema is the largest and showiest Art Deco building in Darlington by far and deserves some effort to restore the original features (I. Dougill pers comm. (12.7.10)) including its cleverly designed interior lighting which included a coved ceiling over the balcony with flame effect flounce lighting, the organ grilles shown in silhouette against a gold background and concealed main roof lighting which could alter colour and intensity (Darlington & Stockton Times 24.12.1932).

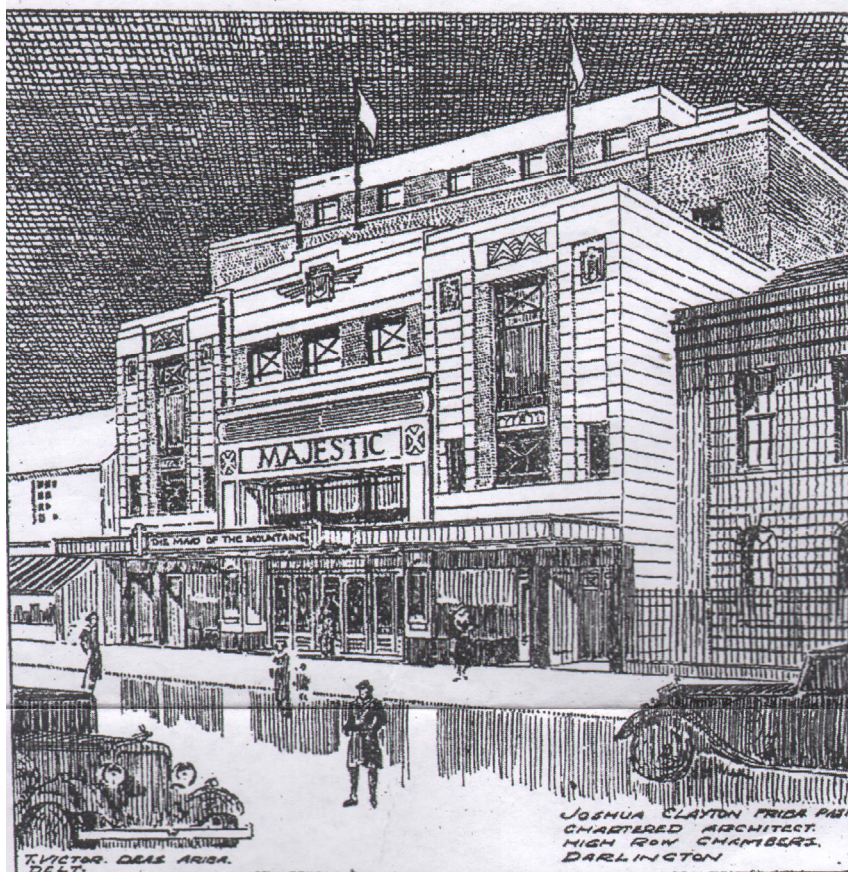


Plate 22. The Majestic on Bondgate ready for its opening night on Boxing Day 1932

The 1930s also saw the loss of significant historic buildings such as the cornmill on the Skerne in what is now South Park; a superb assembly of



buildings going back to medieval times and often painted by artists – perhaps reflecting its similarity to Constable's Mill on the Stour! (I.Dougill pers comm. 12.7.10).

### Then and Now....



*Plate 23. A 1930s building (Darlington Electricity in the 1930s) on Haughton Road with its typical low wide windows with horizontal metal glazing bars which contrast with earlier Edwardian and Victorian styles of tall narrow windows in timber. It retains the use of brick with stone detailing however. The old coat of arms pictured in the black and white photo remains boxed-in behind the modern sign and is a splendid piece of coloured tile or faience (I. Dougill pers comm. (12.7.10))*

Inevitably the war limited the amount of development that could take place in Darlington, although air raid shelters were constructed at the railway works and at schools. A large concrete shelter can still be found on Weavers Yard, off Weir Street but it has been blocked up to prevent anti-social behaviour and is now reduced to little more than an eyesore. As a quick and cheap solution to the post war building problem, Nissen Huts were constructed to house services, such as cafes and shops on the market place and prefabs used for houses. They were also used at the Borough Road Industrial Estate where they can still be seen. It was in the 1950s that construction for housing picked up again. The styles of housing between the 1930s and 50s did not vary much due to the general lack of development at that time and post 1940s development concentrated on 3,000 council houses and homes for heroes.

Nissen Huts were developed by Major Peter Norman Nissen of the 29th Company Royal Engineers in 1916 with additional help from Lieutenant Colonels Shelly, Sewell and McDonald, and General Liddell. They went on to

be used in both World Wars and during the post war period. The semi-circular huts were designed to be economical and portable and one Nissen hut could be packed in a standard Army wagon and erected by six men in four hours.<sup>12</sup>



*Plate 24. Nissen Huts on the Borough Road Industrial Estate*

Development within the town centre fringe in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century did little to enhance its historic character and much to divorce the area from the historic core. The construction of the

ring road created a barrier between the town centre and the rest of Darlington. This barrier was physical – pedestrians could not easily cross it, and also perhaps economic and psychological in divorcing town centre and areas of 19<sup>th</sup> century growth, perhaps ultimately confirmed by the area being referred to as 'fringe'.

Large scale development was attracted to the ring road such as the showrooms of Skippers, later Sanderson Ford, designed by Darlington architects H B Richardson and completed in 1966. A plaque within the building identified the precise location as the site of Darlington's very first Methodist meeting in 1753. It too has now been demolished; 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture appears to have a faster turnover than what went before.

Most of the large scale buildings along the ring road had no design detail which presented dull uniform facades to the outside world, while the attractive leafy terraces of Victoria Road were demolished to make way for it. The police station was built in 1962, the fire station 10 years later and the Royal Mail house in 1981. A large office block was also constructed next to the ring road at the foot of Northgate and completed in 1975 from which date it has spent much of its life empty. These large blocks of monotony also prevented views

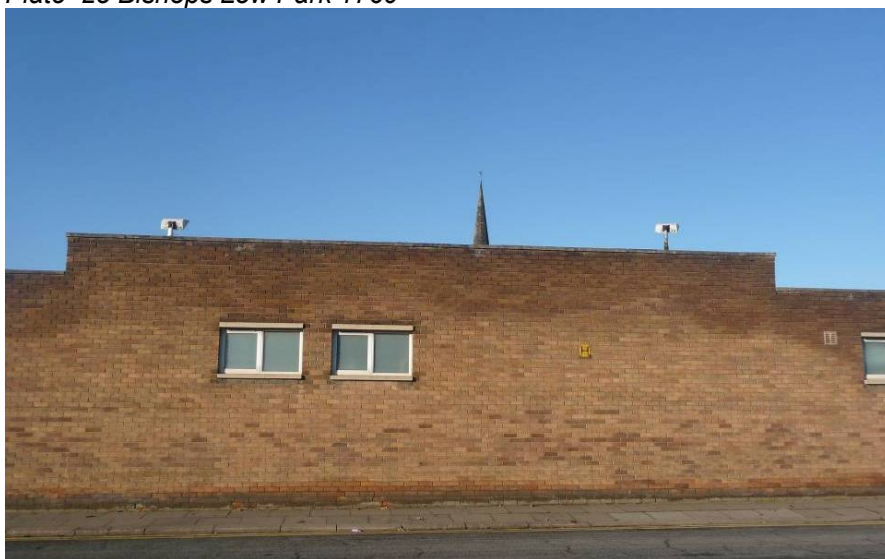
<sup>12</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nissen\\_hut#History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nissen_hut#History)

across to the historic core so that St Cuthbert's spire and the Market Hall tower both of which had been visible throughout the town were now hidden from view. The river which had flowed through the town was at worst buried beneath concrete and a major roundabout, and at best canalised like a drain, while the windy open spaces created by ring road, roundabouts, car parks and large buildings heralded a new era where the car ruled and pedestrians were channelled underground just like their river.

**Then and Now...**



**Plate 25** *Bishops Low Park 1760*



**Plate 26** *Bishop's Low Park 2010 (Park Lane). The large massing of 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings with no design detail create a physical barrier between the town centre and the town centre fringe*

The new Town Hall was officially opened in 1970, designed by Williamson, Faulkner-Brown of Newcastle upon Tyne and is typical of civic architecture of its time. The stark simplicity of the main block (or 'uninviting and monolithic' (Pevsner 1990, 144)) is in contrast to the ornate Victorian styles of much of the town centre fringe. However internally expensive materials were used in the foyer and the council chamber was designed to be relatively luxurious. The main block was built of grey aggregate with dark grey tinted windows, apparently intending to compliment the church; indeed the design was a result of consultation with the Royal Fine Art Commission (VCH 143). Instead it overwhelms the church and blocks views to it from the south. Its large scale massing adds to the visual barrier created by a number of mid 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings along St Cuthbert's Way.

It was conceived to be part of a much larger development which would have included covered shopping malls and a multi-storey car park necessitating the demolition of the north side of the market place, the demolition of the whole of Bakehouse Hill and Chantry Lane with only the clock tower being left as a gesture to the past. The plans were aborted after a change in political control and a public inquiry call-in over local residents' vocal concerns. Another similar plan followed designed by the Borough Architect but these plans were also dropped after another public inquiry and a review of the listed buildings in the town centre. The resulting development was the Cornmill Centre where shops were built behind the retained facades leaving the spatial identity of the town intact (I.Dougill pers comm. 12.7.10).

The process of reversing these mistakes started in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The construction of street fronted housing on Victoria Road reintroduced a domestic scale of architecture and partially shielded from view the open spaces of Sainsbury's car park. Developments were encouraged to be smaller in scale along the ring road with more architectural detailing. Shop fronts which had been lost along Northgate were replaced with support from English Heritage, One North East and Darlington Borough Council.



## **Building materials**

The majority of buildings in the town centre fringe were constructed of brick. It is not clear when brick replaced stone as the main building material – Clay Row was known as such by the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but there is little evidence of brick buildings of that date. Bricks were apparently used for decorative purposes in cottages in Bondgate which were reputedly 16<sup>th</sup> century (Cookson 2003, 124). By the 17<sup>th</sup> century bricks were being used on higher status buildings and bricks from Brankin Moor were used for repairs to the Bishop's Palace. Late 18<sup>th</sup> century insurance policies for Darlington houses and workshops suggest that brick had become the main building type. These bricks were made locally – one location was the Bishop's Low Park, another Clay Row. Other brick production sites were just outside the town.

Tiles for roofing were also manufactured in the town at Brankin Moor in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Stone continued to be used for high status houses and a stonemason's yard existed on the east side of Stone Bridge, facing St Cuthbert's, where the stonemason Andrew Lockie was accused of encroaching upon the river with his stone cutting (Cookson 2003, 127-8). By the 19<sup>th</sup> century brickworks had also been established at Bank Top, Freeman's Place (also a tile works), Tubwell Row, on land between Stockton and Yarm Road, on land behind Victoria Embankment and behind St John's church. Indeed any major new development was accompanied by the need to find a local source of clay for brick making which was subsequently infilled by new development. By the 1860s Pease brick was becoming popular, a buff coloured ceramic which was a by-product of mining elsewhere in the county, mainly Crook, and was used for a number of buildings on Victoria Road.

As brick making became increasingly mechanised, brickworks became more settled, especially around Bank Top, Whessoe Lane and Albert Hill and by the 1870s there were 10 brick and tile makers in the town. This number reduced in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as clay pits were exhausted and developed for housing and by the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the only brick works left were on Haughton Road, Firth Moor, Whessoe and Harrowgate; all given a new lease

of life by the construction of the Patons and Baldwins' factory and the council's ambitious housing programme.



*Plate 27. Distinctive building materials in the town centre fringe: red brick for boundary walls and buildings, often with detailing, scoria blocks for back lanes and drains, and stone blocks for back lanes – all locally sourced*

Another distinctive material used in the town was supplied by the Tees Scoria Brick Co. Ltd from their office in Station Street (now demolished) at Bank Top. Scoria Blocks have an interesting history and were distinctive to the streets of south Durham until the car came to dominate the road. The name comes from the Greek word *skōr* meaning excrement. However the shiny blue/grey bricks are not to be sniffed at. They were a product of the creative Victorian minds who sought to find a use for the huge amounts of waste slag generated by iron production. One ton of iron produced one ton of slag and in Cleveland 2.5million tons of pig iron were being produced a year by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An early attempt was made to turn it into insulating material called slag wool. It is interesting to speculate whether it might have been a safer alternative to asbestos? However it was a Darlington man, Joseph Woodward who in 1872, discovered that the slag could make an extremely robust, waterproof, chemical proof, easy to clean brick and he formed the Tees Scoria Brick Company. The bricks were produced in moulds so they were identical and easy to lie flat on a bed of sand and compressed. The bricks proved so popular they were exported from Teesmouth to Canada, the West Indies, Europe, the US, South America and Africa.<sup>13</sup> They fell out of favour when motor cars became faster in the 1960s and 70s; the journey was too bumpy on the scoria brick roads and tarmac was favoured instead. However they still line most of the back lanes and gutters where fast car travel is not

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<sup>13</sup> Lloyd Echo Memories 8.7.06

possible. In some instances they are combined with rows of large rectangular stone slabs where they provided a less slippery surface for horse drawn traffic (Weavers Yard, off Weir Street and the back lane to the rear of Westbrook Villas).

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw Darlington as the manufacturing base for metal windows a popular style for houses in the 1930s onwards and supplying 95% of the UK market (VCH 131). Such windows can still be seen on the 1930s Darlington Electricity building on Haughton Road (see p54) and were used in council housing throughout the north east at that time. They too have become a relative rarity with many having been replaced by plastic substitutes.

The majority of building materials in the town centre fringe were therefore produced locally – in today's terms they had a low carbon footprint. Only specialist decorative elements were brought in from afar such as the purple bricks used on the Technical College built 1896-7, which came from Staffordshire (McNab pers comm.) and gradually, as the rail network improved, Welsh slate replaced locally produced tiles. The Victorian drive to find a use for waste products, resulting in the invention of the scoria brick, is an exemplar for today.



#### 4.0 Statement of Significance – The Town Centre Fringe

The following Statement of Significance explores the different values which the town centre fringe possesses. These values are divided according to a series of criteria set out by English Heritage (2008) which recommends assessing significance under historical value, aesthetic value, communal value and evidential value (see appendix G for definitions).

*'Even now hardly a single country the wide world over is without its railway, and wherever a railway and railway engineers push their way there is known the historic Stockton and Darlington, and the names at least of Darlington, Stephenson, and Edward Pease....*

*We must not claim too much for the Stockton and Darlington. "It was not the first railway – it was not the first public railway – it was not the first railway worked by locomotives. What then was it? In each of these essentials, but nowhere all combined, had it predecessors. But it was the first public railway on which locomotives did the haulage. It was the true germ of our present railway systems. It was the first railway of the kind now known as railways. It was the first complete and successful venture in which all the conditions of the modern railway system were combined." This was recognised by the railway world and the country generally by the truly national way in which the Railway Jubilee in 1875 was celebrated.'*

Darlington Half Holiday Guide 1899, 154-5



## 4.1 Historical Value and Significance

This section addresses associations with notable individuals and events.

### Associations with George Hoskins 1837-1911<sup>14</sup>



George Gordon ("Gee-Gee") Hoskins was an English architect responsible for the design of several public buildings in the North East of England. His works include many large and important buildings - mansions, banks, hotels, hospitals, libraries, and schools.

Hoskins was the eldest son of Francis Hoskins, an army officer, and his wife Julia Brooks and was born in Birmingham at the end of 1837. He was the grandson of Abraham Hoskins who built the folly of Bladon Castle at Newton Solney and was brother-in law to the brewer Michael Bass. Hoskins' godmother was the Duchess of Gordon.

Hoskins studied Architecture in London and Paris and was a pupil of W. D. Haskoll of Westminster. In 1864 he moved to Darlington, and his first domestic commission that year was probably 15 and 16 Westbrook Villas (just outside the study area). He became ARIBA on the 3rd June 1867, proposed by P C Hardwick, A Waterhouse and J P Pritchett and was based at Russell Street Buildings from 1867 to 1870. In 1870 on the 2nd May Hoskins became an FRIBA proposed by T Oliver, J P Pritchett and J Ross. He made useful contacts with Quaker families which lead to many commissions including Quaker houses at Woodburn and Elm Ridge, for John Pease in 1867. Extended Quaker connections outside the town led to commissions at the Temperance Hall at Hurworth, (1864), and the Victoria Hall in Sunderland, (1870), which was largely funded by the Backhouse family. He gained the role

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<sup>14</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Gordon\\_Hoskins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Gordon_Hoskins) [accessed 5.4.10]

of architect to the banking house of Backhouse after designing a manager's house added to the Backhouse Bank in 1867. Following this he designed branches in Sunderland (1868), Bishop Auckland (1870), Middlesbrough (1875), Thirsk (1877) and Barnard Castle (1878). His major work was the Middlesbrough Town Hall and Municipal Buildings won in open competition in 1882. Alfred Waterhouse, R.A. acted as assessor, and the Prince and Princess of Wales opened the building in 1889.

In Darlington, major works include the Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (1875-6), Bank Top board school (1882), the Pease Public Library (1884), rebuilding of the King's Head Hotel (1890-3), Greenbank Hospital (1885), Poor Law Offices (1896), the Technical College (1896-7), North of England School Furnishing Company, Blackwellgate (1897), and Rise Carr Board School (1902). He may have also worked with William Hope of Newcastle and G. F. Ward of Birmingham on the designs for the Civic Theatre (Cookson p123). He was for two years successively President of the Darlington School of Art and President of the Northern Architectural Association from 1886 to 1887. He was for some years a Conservative member of the Darlington Town Council and was also a Justice of the Peace. He was injured when the gumaker's shop of Joseph Smythe exploded on 9 October 1894, destroying a substantial part of the town centre. Hoskins retired in 1907, passing the practice to his brother Walter Hoskins. GG Hoskins was almost entirely responsible for Victorian Darlington and his funeral was a solemn public occasion in the town. He was buried in the town's West Cemetery.

He is widely associated with Darlington where he lived and where he practiced, however some of his best examples of work are from outside the study area with only the Technical College of note within the study area. Therefore his association with Darlington as a whole is exceptional, but only of some significance within the study area.

### **Associations with Alfred Waterhouse**

Waterhouse (1830-1905) was based in Manchester and London, but his Quaker connections brought his work to Darlington. The majority of his works are outside the study area (the market hall and public offices, Blackwell House, Backhouses Bank (Barclays), but the market hall is a prominent landmark visible from the town centre fringe. His association with the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance.

### **Associations with William Bell, Architect**



William Bell was born in Darlington in 1846 and with wife Fanny and son Robert (born in 1879) lived in Elton Terrace. His office was in West End Buildings, Skinnergate, outside the town centre fringe area. He started as architect in the North East Railway Company in 1857 and became Chief Architect in 1877 - 1914. He was the architect of railway buildings in Darlington and throughout the country. In 1887 he built Darlington Bank Top Station notable for its majestic high arched roof with twin spans and the pyramid-topped Italianate Clock Tower set in a well-proportioned arcaded frontage with Dutch gables. He also added various elements to the North Road engineering works between 1884 and 1910 (Cookson 2003, 121). Besides the prize-winning Head Office in York he also designed the stations at Alwick, Stockton, Hull, West Hartlepool, Whitley Bay, Tynemouth, Thornaby and many others. A piece de resistance was the first class refreshment room at Newcastle Central Station, designed in 1892. In 1893 he persuaded the NER directors to clad the refreshment room in faience from Burmantofts in Leeds which provided a durable washable surface. In 1887 William Bell sold up his premises in Darlington. The contents, auctioned off at Watsons were impressive and included several paintings of the Westbrook Villas (just outside the study area) by artist Samuel Elton.

William Bell died in Whitby in 1919. His association with the town centre fringe is exceptional.

### **Associations with John Green Junior**

Green (1807-1868) was related to the better known Greens the architects and was Darlington's first professional architect. He had offices in Bondgate and Northgate, both in the study area, between 1839-1844, but most of his best known buildings are outside the town (Cookson 2003, 107). He carried out projects for the North of England Railway Company including in 1840-1, workshops, coal depots and warehouses and a coach station and repair shop at Bank Top. As North Road station was built on its present site in 1842 it raises the possibility that Green was the architect of that too, although no firm evidence has been found (ibid). His association with the town centre fringe is considerable.

### **Associations with Robert Borrowdale, stonemason**

Robert Borrowdale was born in 1833 at Barnard Castle and died in 1908. He was a skilled stonemason and cut the stonework for many buildings in Darlington, such as the Cocoa Palace in Northgate (currently empty) and Westbrook Hall (demolished) and the chapels and lodges at North Cemetery. Westbrook Hall was a particularly ornate building constructed by Borrowdale in 1873 and located on Northgate next to the Cocker Beck bridge. The building had at least 25 gargoyles and carved around the tower were the words 'Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth and goodwill to all men'. The angel of nativity perched on top of the building's dome. The building was demolished to make way for road widening in 1951 and one can't help but think that Northgate is less fun without it. Borrowdale was particularly well known for his monumental sculptures and had a sculpture and stone yard premises at Bridge Close, Northgate. Most of his work is outside the study area such as at Westbrook Villas, but no. 1 Leadenhall Street is a prominent if neglected example of his work. Much of his stock ('...costly, artistic, valuable and current...') appears to have been sold off when he changed his business



in 1869 and has presumably found its way into a number of buildings in the region. His association with the town centre fringe is considerable.

**BY AUCTION**  
AT HIS SCULPTURE ARENA,  
**Bridge Close, Northgate,**  
**ON FRIDAY, NOV. 5th, 1869,**  
THE WHOLE OF HIS CHOICE, COSTLY, ARTISTIC, VALUABLE, AND CURRENT

# STOCK-IN-TRADE

## OF MONUMENTS, TABLETS, & MEMORIALS,

### In Marble, Granite, and Selected Stone,

COMPRISING THE FOLLOWING COSTLY AND BEAUTIFUL LAPIDARIAN PRODUCTIONS, VIZ:—

**4 RICH CREETOWN GRANITE MONUMENTS IN SILVER GREY;**

No. 1, Pyramid with 2 Bases, Shaft, Cap and Obelisk, 15 feet high.	No. 14, Hard Yorkshire Headstone, with Foliage-carved Centre, and Base complete.
No. 2, do. do., 2 Bases, Shaft and Obelisk, 12 feet high.	No. 15, Circular-top hard Yorkshire Headstone with Monogram and Base complete.
No. 3, do. do., 2 Bases, Shaft, Cap and Cross, 10 feet 6 in. high.	No. 16, Hard Yorkshire Gothic Headstone, with the Initials "I H S" and Base complete.
No. 4, do. do., 2 Bases, Shaft, Cap and Vase, 8 feet 6 in. high. And following these:—	No. 17, Hard Yorkshire Headstone and Base with Sculptured Cross & Wreathed-foliage enrichments.
No. 5, Stone Monument, with Base, Shaft, Column, and finished with a finely Sculptured Stone Figure, entire height 11 feet.	No. 18, Quatrefoil Carved Headstone and Block complete.
No. 6, Peterhead Red Granite-pointed Headstone and Bases, height 6 feet 6 in.	No. 19, Gothic Headstone, with Foliage Carved Centre, and Block complete.
No. 7, do. Red Granite-pointed Headstone, with 2 Bases, 5 feet 4 in. high.	No. 20, Pointed and Carved Medallion Headstone and Block complete.
No. 8, White Sicilian Marble Gothic Headstone, with Base complete.	No. 21, Circular Carved Headstone and Block complete.
No. 9, do. do. Headstone, with circular top & Base complete	No. 22, Headstone with Cross and Monogram "I H S," and Base complete.
No. 10, Yorkshire Park Spring Headstone, with circular White Sicilian Marble Wreath in centre.	No. 23, Circular top Headstone with Cross & Base complete
No. 11, do. do. Headstone, with oval Sicilian Marble centre, carved in Rose and Sickle emblem.	No. 24, Large Headstone, "sans" Base.
No. 12, Hard Yorkshire Headstone, with carved "Volume" centre in Sicilian Marble.	No. 25, Gothic Headstone, with Central Carved Figure, and Base complete
No. 13, Oval top hard Yorkshire Headstone with Sculpture, central Shield and Monogram.	No. 26, Circular top Headstone, with Base complete
	No. 27, Pointed Headstone and Base complete
	Nos. 28 & 29, Pair of Circular top'd Headstones and Bases complete

Also, an array of Footstones, Vases and Settings, &c.

## ALLEGORICAL FIGURES,

In hard Stone, emblematical of "Literature," and the "Fine Arts" with Stone Bases, Shafts and Caps, in unique entirety; height including accompaniments 8ft. each.

Likewise, a thoroughly good and powerful WINCH with ROPE & fittings complete: pair of BLACKSMITH'S BELLOWS: about 200 ROPES: Sundry PLANKS, TOOLS, and IMPLEMENTS of Service in the above, or Building Occupations.

The above Valuables are to be disposed of, in consequence of the owner having entered into other Business engagements, and termination of Tenancy of the Sculpture and Stone Yard and Premises.

**SALE APPOINTMENT FOR ONE O'CLOCK P.M.**

ROBERT SWALES, PRINTER, HIGH ROW, DARLINGTON.

40708  
7480

Plate 28. A poster advertising the auction of Robert Borrowdale's sculptures at Bridge Close, Northgate in 1869.

### Associations with Edward Pease and the growth of the railways<sup>15</sup>



Edward Pease, the son of a wool merchant, was born in Darlington on 31st May, 1767 and worked in the family woollen business until he was fifty when he retired and began to concentrate on his idea of starting a public railway. On his travels buying and selling wool, Pease has come to the conclusion that there was a great need for a railroad with waggons drawn by horses to carry coal from the collieries of West Durham to the port of Stockton. In 1821 Pease and a group of businessmen from the area formed the Stockton & Darlington Railway Company.

#### Edward Pease – a good head for railways

*"I think, sir, that I have some knowledge of craniology, and from what I see of your head I feel sure that, if you will fairly buckle to this railway, you are the man to carry it through."*

*"I think so too and I may observe to thee that if thou succeed in making a good railway thou may consider thy fortune as good as made."*

An extract of the conversation as later retold between George Stephenson and Edward Pease at their meeting in the Northgate house, quoted in the Darlington Half Holiday Guide 1899, 158

On 19th April 1821 an Act of Parliament was passed that authorised the company to build a horse railway that would link the collieries in West Durham, Darlington and the River Tees at Stockton. Nicholas Wood, the manager of Killingworth Colliery, and his enginewright, George Stephenson, met Pease at 138-148 Northgate, and suggested that he should consider building a locomotive railway. Stephenson told Pease that "a horse on an iron road would draw ten tons for one ton on a common road". Stephenson added

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/RApease.htm> [accessed 5.4.10] and [http://www.thisisstockton.co.uk/history/The\\_Stockton\\_and\\_Darlington\\_Railway.asp](http://www.thisisstockton.co.uk/history/The_Stockton_and_Darlington_Railway.asp) [accessed 5.4.10]

that the *Blutcher* locomotive that he had built at Killingworth was "worth fifty horses".

That summer Pease took up Stephenson's invitation to visit Killingworth Colliery. When Pease saw the *Blutcher* at work he realised George Stephenson was right and offered him the post as the chief engineer of the Stockton & Darlington Company. It was now necessary for Pease to apply for a further Act of Parliament. This time a clause was added that stated that Parliament gave permission for the company "to make and erect locomotive or moveable engines".

In 1823 Edward Pease joined with Michael Longdridge, George Stephenson and his son Robert Stephenson, to form a company to make the locomotives. The Robert Stephenson & Company, at Forth Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, became the world's first locomotive builder. Stephenson recruited Timothy Hackworth, one of the engineers who had helped William Hedley to produce *Puffing Billy*, to work for the company. The first railway locomotive, *Locomotion*, was finished in September 1825.

The Stockton & Darlington Railroad was opened on 27th September, 1825. Edward Pease missed the opening day celebrations as his son Isaac had died the previous night. Large crowds saw George Stephenson at the controls of the *Locomotion* as it pulled a series of wagons filled with sacks of coal and flour. The train also included a purpose built railway passenger coach called the *Experiment*. All told, over 500 people travelled in the train that reached speeds of 15 mph (24 kph). This meant that for the first time in history, a steam locomotive had hauled passengers on a public railway.

The Stockton & Darlington Railway was to grow and develop. Steam engines were adapted and improved and the use of horse power declined, timetables developed and methods of operation established which are still used today.

The S&DR proved a huge financial success, and paved the way for modern



rail transport. The expertise that Stephenson and his apprentice Joseph Locke gained in railway construction and locomotive building on the S&DR enabled them a few years later to construct the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the first purpose-built steam railway, and also his revolutionary Rocket locomotive. The company also proved a successful training ground for other engineers: in 1833 Daniel Adamson was apprenticed to Timothy Hackworth, and later established his own successful boiler-making business in Manchester.

The S&DR was absorbed into the North Eastern Railway in 1863, which merged into the London and North Eastern Railway in 1922. Much but not all of the original S&DR line is still operating today.

When Pease retired he was replaced by his son Joseph Pease. He expanded the business and by 1830 had bought up enough local collieries to become the largest colliery owner in the whole of the South Durham coalfield. In 1832 Pease became Britain's first Quaker MP when he was elected to represent South Durham.

Edward Pease also made an impact on the built form of the town. A number of buildings have been constructed of the pale cream brick known locally as Pease's Brick. These bricks were manufactured at Pease's brickworks in Crook and are a locally distinctive element to the town. They were created from a layer of clay below the coal which had no iron in it, leaving it a pale cream colour rather than the traditional red of other town bricks. It appears within the town centre fringe mostly in Victoria Road.

Pease, a member of the Society of Friends, supported the Anti-Slavery movement. He also supported Elizabeth Fry (also a Quaker) in her campaign for prison reform. Pease lived until he was 92 and so he outlived George Stephenson. When he attended his funeral in Chesterfield, he mused on his 'first acquaintance with him and the resulting consequences my mind seems almost lost in doubt as to the beneficial results – that humanity has been



benefited in the diminished use of horses and by the lessened cruelty to them, that much ease, safety, speed and lessened expense in travelling is obtained' (taken from Pease's diary for Wed Aug 16 1848 and quoted in Wall 2001, 176-7) Pease died on 31st July, 1858 and is buried in a simple grave in the Quakers' cemetery in Darlington. In many respects he is the unsung hero of the railways and recent attempts have been made to revive interest in him by naming a room after him at the Head of Steam museum. His association with the town centre fringe is exceptional.

### **Associations with Ignatius Bonomi<sup>16</sup>**

Ignatius Bonomi (1787-1870) was an English architect and surveyor, with Italian origins by his father, strongly associated with the north-east. He was the son of an architect and draughtsman, Joseph Bonomi (1739-1808), who had worked with Robert and James Adam, the famous Scottish architects, while his brother Joseph Bonomi the Younger was a noted artist, sculptor and Egyptologist.

Ignatius's work (he was Surveyor of Bridges for the County of Durham) included one of the first railway bridges in the UK over the River Skerne for the Stockton and Darlington Railway in 1824 (hence he is sometimes referred to as 'the first railway architect'). He was also responsible for a number of church buildings (including commissions at Durham Cathedral). Other historic buildings, in Gothic and neo-classical styles, included parts of Durham Castle, Lambton Castle (continuing the work started by his father), Durham Prison, Elvet Hill House (1820), Burn Hall and Eggleston Hall, all in County Durham. In Derbyshire he designed Christ Church King Sterndale near Buxton, built in 1848/1849 for the Pickford family, founders of the Pickfords Removals business. He and his friend John Dobson were the only professional architects, as opposed to builder-architects between York and Edinburgh. Between them they dominated the architectural scene in the first half of the nineteenth century, working in all manner of styles and on all types of

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<sup>16</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignatius\\_Bonomi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignatius_Bonomi) [accessed 15.4.10]

building.<sup>17</sup> His associations with Darlington's town centre fringe is restricted to the 'Five Pound Note' Bridge and so he is only of some significance to the town centre fringe.

### **Associations with John Middleton**

Middleton was appointed as architect to the S&DR in 1840, but most of his work was outside Darlington. He did however design Central Hall and the National Provincial Bank on High Row (outside the study area) and St John's Church on Neasham Road – a prominent landmark building on an elevated site in the fork of a road within the study area. St John's known as the Railwayman's Church, was a consolatory commission after Middleton ceased working as the GNER's architect in 1847. It became known as the Railwayman's Church because it was built in response to the growing population around the station which led to the creation of a new parish in 1853. Before the church was built, the railway company had set aside one of their own buildings for services of worship. The foundation stone of the church was laid by George Hudson, the 'railway king' when Lord Mayor of York on September 10, 1847 (Darlington District Civic Society 1975, 65). Middleton's practice was taken over by his partner James Pigott Pritchett junior after Middleton left to tour Europe. His association with the town centre fringe is of some significance.

### **Associations with James Pigott Pritchett junior**

Pritchett was a founder of the Northern Architectural Association in 1859 and designed almost exclusively in the neo-Gothic style. He was renowned for his churches and chapels in the north and in Yorkshire. He designed the Darlington Bicentenary Memorial Congregational Chapel in Union Street in 1861-2 and its later Sunday School. His practice designed 35 buildings, mostly houses, in Darlington and mostly outside the study area. Three of the churches he designed were in the study area, but have been demolished: St Paul's in North Road, St Luke's in Leadenhall Street and the Northlands Wesleyan Chapel in North Road. He undertook commissions for the offices of

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.seaham.i12.com/myers/bonomi.htm> [accessed 15.4.10]

the S&DR in Northgate which he enlarged in 1856 and 1863. Overall his contribution to the town and the study area in particular is only of some significance.

### **Associations with Joseph Sparkes**

Sparkes (1817-1855) practiced briefly in the 1850s. His best work is the Mechanic's Institute on Skinnergate outside the study area, but he also designed the extensions to North Road Station and carriage repair shops in 1853. His association with the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance.

### **Associations with John Loughborough Pearson**

Pearson designed St Hilda's church on Parkgate in 1886. He was born in Durham and was trained by Bonomi, but did little else in the town. His association with the town centre fringe is therefore only of some significance.

### **Associations with John Dobbin**



*Plate 29. The Opening of the S&DR by John Dobbin, painted 50 years after it was witnessed by a ten year old Dobbin.*

John Dobbin's (1815 - 1888) painting of the opening of the first public railway on 27 September 1825 hangs in the Head of Steam Museum. Dobbin was just ten years old when the S&DR officially opened on September 27, 1825. He did witness the scenes, but it wasn't until

the 50th anniversary celebrations that he committed them to paper – probably referring to a sketch either he or his father had done in 1825. It is little wonder, then, that Dobbin's view is a highly romanticised one. He also painted Bank Top meadows looking towards St Cuthbert's Church (Wall 2001, 155). A

mosaic reredos<sup>18</sup> by John Dobbin can be seen in St Cuthbert's Church (outside the study area). A small lane is named after him within the town centre fringe area. His association with the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance.

### **Associations with J M Dent, publisher**



*Plate 30. The Britannia – birthplace of J M Dent*

The Britannia public house in Archer Street (within the study area) was the birthplace of J. M. Dent who left Darlington after serving an apprenticeship with a printer in the town, and went to London where he set up the famous Everyman Library publishing house, now renowned nationally. Dent's association with

the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance.

### **Associations with the 1983 by-election and general election<sup>19</sup>**

'In 1983 a by-election was called in Darlington following the death of the sitting Labour MP Ted Fletcher. It was a very high profile event that did, quite literally, draw the eyes of the world to Darlington. The general tenor in politics throughout the western world was a shift to the right, with Margaret Thatcher in No 10 since 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the White House since 1981. Both had won power from relatively left wing predecessors, and the left was going through a painful reappraisal. Thatcher had gone to war the previous year over the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. There were riots in London and Liverpool, women had been camping outside Greenham Common since 1981, CND was at its height - pretty revolutionary times, all-in-all.'

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<sup>18</sup> Altarpiece

<sup>19</sup> This information has kindly been provided by Peter Roberts of Darlington Borough Council and is an extract of his account of the events



'The Darlington seat had been a safe Labour seat for many years, but was going to provide a barometer of the state of the confrontation between right and left. This was more than a matter of domestic politics; it had a global (or at least western) context. The Labour candidate was Ossie O'Brien, a local lad who wanted to serve his home town in Parliament. The Conservative was Michael Fallon, a rising Tory career politician. The other bit of political spice was that the Social Democratic Party (SDP) had been formed in 1981 by disaffected Labour right wingers (David Owen, Shirley Williams, etc) and since 1981 were in an alliance with the Liberals - the Liberal Democrats were formed later out of the rubble when the Alliance imploded in 1988. They chose a local TV journalist, Tony Cook, as their candidate - and that was also a first, going for a high profile local figure rather than a career politician. All of this - right v left, the SDP and its alliance with the Liberals, the high profile local TV personality, the justification for war - was getting its first electoral run-out...in Darlington and in particular from a building on Victoria Road in the town centre fringe.'



*Plate 31. The labour party offices on Victoria Road in 1983, now the home of Groundwork*

'In 1983, the white building on Victoria Road that is now the Groundwork office was then the Labour rooms, and the venue every morning for about four weeks for the Labour press conference. Leading figures like Dennis Healy, Peter Shore, Barbara Castle, Michael Foot, Jack Straw, James Callaghan and the new kid on the block, Neil Kinnock, all took their turn at the morning press conference. Dennis Healey was to make the notable remark that 'If you can sell anything in Darlington you can sell it anywhere' (I. Dougill pers comm.). The town was heaving with journalists



and TV crews from all over the world - Japan, Scandinavia and America. It was amazing how many times we heard the rather patronising view expressed (usually from the bar of the Kings Head) that, actually, Darlington was rather a pleasant place, not at all what everyone had expected. I went along to all three party press conferences each morning, with friends from Darlington Media Group, to photograph proceedings.'

Ossie O'Brien won by a much reduced majority of 2,400 votes. Roy Hattersley described him as the best by-election candidate of the decade.<sup>20</sup> 'Sadly for Ossie, the by-election in March was followed by a general election in June, and Fallon came back and took the seat off him with a 3,000 majority. Ossie had been MP for just 77 days, the shortest tenancy in Parliamentary history, and he never stood again. Instead he went on to work for Alcohol Concern and participated in the growing debate about drugs'.

'Being such a high profile event the by-election attracted a number of colourful fringe candidates. Screaming Lord Such himself stood for the Monster Raving Loony Party, there was a Yoga candidate, a Republican and a couple of angry disaffected ex Labour Party members.' (Roberts pers comm.). The association of the town centre fringe with this brief political event was exceptional at the time, but is probably only now of some significance as time passes.

### **Associations with John Kendrew.**

Kendrew Street is named after John Kendrew. Kendrew was a weaver who lived in this area as a child. He adapted the Spinning Jenny for the spinning of flax for linen and also invented a machine for polishing optical glasses (Flynn

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-ossie-obrien-1272607.html> [accessed 20.4.10]

1983, pl 54). His association with the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance.

### **Associations with Quakers**

The Quakers have a long association with Darlington. The arrival of the first Quaker families in the 1700s was to have significant implications for Darlington's growth post 1800. They were debarred from many professions, and so they were channelled into commerce and banking (the Backhouse family) where they prospered and gained an influence out of all proportion to their numbers (Flynn 1983, 1). The majority of large Quaker villas initially established in the town or just outside in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were to be sold off as Victorian fashions dictated that the wealthy should live in the countryside and not cheek by jowl with their poorer neighbours. In particular the Pease family were to become major landowners and entrepreneurs who were able to withhold or release land for development as they saw fit. In the town centre, Barclays Bank, originally Backhouse's Bank, was built and ran by the Backhouse family, another of Darlington's prominent Quaker families. The bank was designed by Alfred Waterhouse, a local Quaker architect who also designed Darlington's splendid covered Market and Clock Tower. Edward Pease was the father of the railways and a founder of the Stockton and Darlington Railway; the Stockton and Darlington Railway was known as the Quaker Line (Wall 2001, 155). His son, Joseph Pease, the world's first Quaker MP, was a businessman and philanthropist who supported many Darlington and international causes including the abolition of slavery. Most Quaker houses were outside the town centre fringe - the Backhouses lived at Polam Hall; Joseph Pease at Feethams, close to the Market Place and inside the study area; his son John Beaumont Pease at North Lodge and East Mount, also inside the study area. Edward Pease lived on Northgate inside the study area; the Quakers had a particular fondness for gardening and Pease's garden was renowned for its orchards and vinery and survives in name only in Garden Street. The Quakers opened their gardens for their workers at least on an annual basis in order to encourage their education and well-being (I. Dougill pers comm. 12.7.10). Brinkburn, Woodburn, Elm Ridge,

Hummersknott and Mowden Hall were all built for Quakers and they went on to be developed a suburbs, but they also owned additional properties within the town centre fringe which were presumably rented out. The local football club, once located in the town centre fringe, but now on the outskirts of the town, is known as the Quakers and the Quakers feature on the club crest. There is also a more recent Quakers Running Club and a number of local business use the Quaker name. Their association with Darlington and the town centre fringe is therefore exceptional.

### **Associations with Ralph Hodgson<sup>21</sup>**

Probably Darlington's greatest poet, he was born in 1871 in Garden Street. His works were much admired by TS Eliot and Siegfried Sassoon. From about 1890 he worked for a number of London publications. He was a comic artist, signing himself 'Yorick', and became art editor on *C. B. Fry's Weekly Magazine of Sports and Out-of-Door Life*. His first poetry collection, *The Last Blackbird and Other Lines*, appeared in 1907. In 1912 he founded a small press, 'At the Sign of the Flying Fame', with the illustrator Claud Lovat Fraser (1890–1921) and the writer and journalist Holbrook Jackson (1874–1948). It published his collection *The Mystery* (1913). Hodgson received the Edmond de Polignac Prize in 1914, for a musical setting of *The Song of Honour*, and was included in the *Georgian Poetry* anthologies. He served in the war and in 1917 his reputation was established by *Poems*. He taught English at Tohoku University in Japan and while in Japan Hodgson worked, almost anonymously, as part of the committee that translated the great collection of Japanese classical poetry, the *Manyoshu*, into English. The high quality of the published translations is almost certainly the result of his "final revision" of the texts and could arguably be considered Hodgson's major accomplishment as a poet. In 1938 Hodgson left Japan, visited friends in the UK including Siegfried Sassoon (they had met 1919) and then settled permanently with his second wife in Minerva, Ohio. He was involved there in publishing, under the *Flying Scroll* imprint, and some academic contacts. In 1954, he was awarded the King's Gold Medal for Poetry. He died in Minerva in 1962. His privacy was

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<sup>21</sup> Information mostly from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph\\_Hodgson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Hodgson) [accessed 22.6.10]



important to him and he shied away from publicity; it is perhaps because of this that he is so unrecognised and unappreciated in Darlington today, although his works are to be found in Darlington library which has done much to revive interest in him. His association with the town centre fringe is therefore only of some significance.

### **Association with Joseph Woodward**

Very little is known about Joseph Woodward, but as the founder of the Tees Scoriae Brick Company in 1872 he was responsible for creating the distinctive blue/grey bricks which floor the back lanes and gutters of the town and once floored the main thoroughfares too. His bricks were exported across the world, many of them originally being stamped with 'Woodward patent'.<sup>22</sup> Even if little is known about him, his association with the town centre fringe has to be exceptional because his invention literally lines the streets.

<b>Historical Associations with notable people</b>	<b>Values: with</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>
GG Hoskins		<b>SOME</b>	Responsible for Darlington's technical college – a landmark building and prominent skyline feature. He may also have had a hand in the design of the Civic Theatre.
Alfred Waterhouse		<b>SOME</b>	
William Bell		<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Responsible for the iconic Bank Top railway tower and associated with the town's railway architecture
John Green Junior		<b>CONSIDERABLE</b>	Darlington's first professional architect; he had offices in Bondgate and Northgate, both in the study area, between 1839-1844, but most of his best known buildings

<sup>22</sup> Lloyd's Echo Memories 8.7.06

		are outside the town. He carried out work for the North of England Railway Company and there is some speculation that he may have been involved in the designed North Road Station
Robert Borrowdale	<b>CONSIDERABLE</b>	Responsible for 1 Leadenhall Street and Westbrook Gardens, just outside the study area. Brought a fun and quirky style to the architecture of the town, but much has been lost
Associations with Edward Pease and the earliest days of the railways	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Responsible with Robert Stephenson for the introduction of passenger railways to the world
Ignatius Bonomi	<b>SOME</b>	Responsible for the world's first railway bridge and he was the world's first railway architect
John Middleton	<b>SOME</b>	Designer of St John's Church on Neasham Road – a prominent landmark building on an elevated site within the study area and also known as the Railwayman's Church
James Pigott Pritchett junior	<b>SOME</b>	Designed alterations to offices of the S&DR in Northgate which he enlarged in 1856 and 1863
John Loughborough Pearson	<b>SOME</b>	designer of St Hilda's church on Parkgate a prominent landmark with dramatic massing and simple ornament
Joseph Sparkes	<b>SOME</b>	Only briefly operated in Darlington – his best work is outside the study area, but he did design the Hopetown

		carriage works, now of international importance
John Loughborough Pearson	<b>SOME</b>	Designer of St Hilda's Church in a prominent position in Parkgate
John Dobbin	<b>SOME</b>	Depicted the opening of the S&DR
J.M Dent	<b>SOME</b>	From Darlington and went on to create a national publishing house
Darlington's by election in 1983	<b>SOME</b>	National spotlight on Victoria Road in 1983
John Kendrew	<b>SOME</b>	Weaver and inventor
Associations with Quakers	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	A long association with the town since the 1700s; their property boundaries went on to shape the town centre fringe
Associations with Ralph Hodgson	<b>SOME</b>	A poet, born in the town centre fringe but lived and worked away from the town and is under appreciated today. Of national and international renown.
Association with Joseph Woodward	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Inventor of the scoria brick which lines the back lanes of Darlington

## 4.2 Aesthetic Value and Significance

### *Associations with neo-Classical architecture*

Neo-Classical architecture was particularly fashionable in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. As most of the town centre fringe originates after the 1820s, there is very little neo-Classical architecture in the town centre fringe and it is therefore not particularly distinctive of the area. Two notable exceptions are both railway related. Edward Pease's house on Northgate although neo-classical in design is currently in poor condition and obscured by later early 20<sup>th</sup> century additions and late 20<sup>th</sup> century shop fronts. The original architect's plans have recently been acquired by the County Durham Records Office (I. Dougill pers comm. 12.7.10) and could guide any restoration works. (Any restoration scheme would need to be guided by a Statement of

Significance to help decide whether the 1866 alterations and 1907 additions on one bay should be retained). The North Road railway and merchandising station are both in a classical style reflecting their early date before the neo-Gothic styles became associated with railway architecture. Its association with the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance.

**Then and Now...**



*Plate 32. North Road station in 1936*



*Plate 33. North Road station (Head of Steam Museum) in 2010; its role as a museum and its listed status is clearly benefitting the conservation of the building*



*Associations with Victorian architecture*



*Plate 34. Brunswick Street Board School, built 1881*

The town centre fringe originated for the most part in the Victorian period (1837-1901), although the architectural styles continued in use up to and around 1910 and in that respect it is Victorian architecture which makes the area particularly

distinctive. Victorian architecture takes a number of different forms (see Built Form section) ranging from rows of terraced houses to the ornate G.G. Hoskins designed Technical College. The architects and builders used as their inspiration England's past and so their architectural designs incorporated Tudor, Gothic and Jacobean styles, often in the same building. Their designs were also ornate. Even in the simplest worker's housing, the window mullions would have a small carved detail to lighten the effect and perhaps some below eaves brick detailing which is widespread throughout the town, while higher status terraces would be embellished with ornate doorways, railings and window lintels.

Nationally, much of the Victorian housing stock has been demolished. The larger houses proved too expensive to maintain and were sub-divided or demolished. The plain simpler styles of the 20<sup>th</sup> century made the Victorian ostentation look fussy and out of date and so more houses were demolished. The back-to-backs were too tightly laid out and were associated with disease and deprivation. Those that survived the health board clean ups were taken out by the ring road. However what was left was of good quality, sufficiently spacious and versatile with lively facades and colourful detailing. It is Victorian architecture which provides the historic skyline and Victorian architecture which is now in decline due to inappropriate management of those buildings not protected through listing. The key to the vitality of the town centre fringe is

therefore in the condition and successful reuse of the Victorian architecture. Its association with the town centre fringe is therefore exceptional.






Plate 35. Borough Road next to the Fire Station, built 1904

*Associations with Edwardian architecture*

Victorian styles continued in use particularly for terraced houses, but new styles of architecture gradually appeared. The town centre fringe has a fine collection of Edwardian buildings particularly around Parkgate, Victoria Road and the south end of Northgate and Gladstone Street. These buildings tend to have terracotta tiled facades providing a more delicate and finished façade than plain brick, although glazed tiles were also used on shop fronts

and inns. Ball finials were popular to the gable ends as were decorated doorways and window lintels, often in the form of draped floral arrangements. Stained glass, also in floral styles, was also popular and survives in Parkgate at the Greyhound Inn. Its association with the town centre fringe is therefore considerable.

Associations with neo-Classical architecture	<b>SOME</b>	
Associations with Victorian architecture	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	

<p>Associations with Edwardian Architecture</p>	<p><b>CONSIDERABLE</b></p>	
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*Associations with artistic views*

Significant buildings and picturesque landscapes have been the focus of the British artist and the inspiration of poets since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the exploration and depiction of the British countryside became an alternative to the Grand Tour in Europe. However Darlington never really met the early criteria for picturesque landscapes as defined by the likes of Gilpin and so was not depicted by nationally renowned artists such as Turner. However the picturesque traditions gradually moved towards architecture and in particular Gothic architecture and so buildings with a long history of portraying picturesque ideals soon became the focus of attention. A trawl through depictions of Darlington curated by the Palace Green Library and in secondary antiquarian publications shows quite clearly that the main focus of artistic attention in Darlington has been St Cuthbert's church. Of forty four prints, sketches and architects' drawings in the Palace Green collection for Darlington, eighteen have St Cuthbert's as its focus. While St Cuthbert's is outside the town centre fringe area, views towards it remain important and the recent demolition of the bus station has restored a much valued view of the church from what was Feetham's Field.

The other main subjects of artistic attention are the market place, the old town hall, the manor house, the Deanery and the old bridge, all outside or peripheral to the town centre fringe.

Within the town centre fringe there are depictions of Northgate's United Reform Church in 1861 by an unknown artist and Thomas Allom's view of Yarm Road dating to 1830. Allom's painting and some of those which depict

St Cuthbert's from a distance also show rural scenes before they were developed as part of the town's Victorian expansion and can show the evolution of the town from a medieval borough to a Victorian industrial town.



*Plate 36. Thomas Allom's view of Yarm Road 1830 with the beginnings of terraced housing in the distance and St Cuthbert's Church*

Other depictions which relate to the town centre fringe include the railway as the main theme. Prints of Locomotion No. 1 dating to 1857 by an unknown artist and the first railway coach dating to sometime after 1825, again by an unknown artist concentrate on the machinery, but other depictions focus on the opening of the railway line in 1825. The depiction of the bridge designed by Ignatius Bonomi also featured on the five pound note from 1990 to 2003 to be replaced by Elizabeth Fry (a Quaker, prison reformer and part of the family which founded Barclay's Bank). The design of the banknote drew heavily on Dobbin's (q.v.) view for the illustration. Curiously, the Bank embellished Bonomi's simple bridge even further by adding a couple of decorative stone

slabs just beneath the parapet. These slabs were only on the north side of the bridge and disappeared when it was widened at the turn of the last century. However, the view on the bank note is from the south so, once more, artistic



*Plate 37. The five pound note with the Skerne bridge, Stephenson and Locomotion*



licence has been taken with the bridge.

There are therefore two significant themes to artistic depictions in Darlington, St Cuthbert's Church and the railway.

<b>Artistic Associations:</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Railway depictions	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
Views of St Cuthbert's from the town centre fringe area	<b>CONSIDERABLE</b>
Views of the town centre fringe before development	<b>SOME</b>
Views of buildings within the town centre fringe	<b>MARGINAL</b>

*Historic skylines*

***'The grand old spire they did admire  
When to my roost I flew  
And I've kept my stand high above the land  
With my weather eye in view.  
I've looked o'er my wings at wondrous things  
Since George the Fourth did reign.  
I saw from my nest a wondrous guest  
They called a railway train.'***<sup>23</sup>

Darlington has a number of iconic skyline features which can be seen from the town centre and the town centre fringe. Many of these are important views from residential areas and provide a visual link with the historic core of the town, or terminate views from main streets. The view along Victoria Road to Bank Top Station is no accident. When the North Eastern Railway opened its new station at Bank Top in 1887, the Council went to great expense in purchasing Feetham's Road to enable a direct route to be made to the front of the entrance of the station (Flynn 1983, pl102).

The Methodist New Connexion Church opened in 1884 and while it still contributes something to the historic skyline, the loss of its spire top has given the church a stunted appearance. If the old spire top no longer exists, a new

<sup>23</sup> (Extract from a poem written by J Horsley, February 1873 on the view of the town from the weather vane of St Cuthbert's.)

lightweight one could be designed by the local community or the owners with funding from the heritage lottery fund. The Spire of St Cuthbert's church and Northgate United Reform church and the market hall clock tower are particularly significant to the character of the area. Other rooflines also make some contribution to the historic skyline, such as the technical college with its female figures representing Art and Science and the civic theatre's lacy crown. The church of St John the Evangelist has no spire – the congregation of railway workers could not afford one (Flynn 1983, pl 121), but it occupies such a prominent position on high ground, that its chunky tower still makes an exceptional contribution to the skyline when seen from the Town Hall, Parkgate and Victoria Road. The historic skyline has been incorporated into the Borough Council's logos and is now therefore the trademark of Darlington.



*Plate 38. St Cuthbert's church spire and the market hall tower offer an historic skyline throughout the town centre fringe.*

Historic Skyline building	Significance	
Bank Top Station Tower	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Inside the town centre fringe with views

		throughout the town. The tower also terminates views along Victoria Road. Built 1887 and designed by William Bell 'one of his best efforts' (Pevsner 1990, 149). The bell no longer rings now being displayed on a station platform.
St Cuthbert's church	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Outside the study area
United Reformed Church, Northgate	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Within the study area, prominent spire in dark stone built 1861-2 and designed by J.P.Pritchett and Son.
Market Hall clock tower	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	A prominent tower and clock visible as an equal partner to St Cuthbert's spire throughout the town centre fringe.
Technical College	<b>SOME</b>	The top of the technical college offers a modest contribution to the historic skyline only seen from parts of Valley Street, East Mount and Borough Road.
Civic Theatre	<b>SOME</b>	The lacy crown of the roof can be seen from Brunswick Street, Parkgate and Park Lane.
Church on Victoria Road	<b>SOME</b>	Tower has lost its top in the past and so it presents a decapitated head rather than the lantern it once supported.
Clock Tower, North Road Merchandising Station	<b>SOME</b>	The tower has lost its clock, but can still be discerned from parts of the Valley Street area on the approach to the Five Pound Note Bridge.
St John's Church,	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>	Designed by John Middleton, the church

Neasham Road		has no spire but a large square tower. Because the building sits on an elevated position, it can be seen in many places throughout the town centre fringe, although the site itself is immediately outside the study area boundary.
Bellcote, Brunswick Street school	SOME	Add interest to Borough Road and terminates views from Middleton Street.
Kings Head Hotel	MARGINAL	The top of the hotel is visible over the Cornmill multi-storey car park and JJB Sports; it is an interesting roofline which would benefit from being seen from further afield



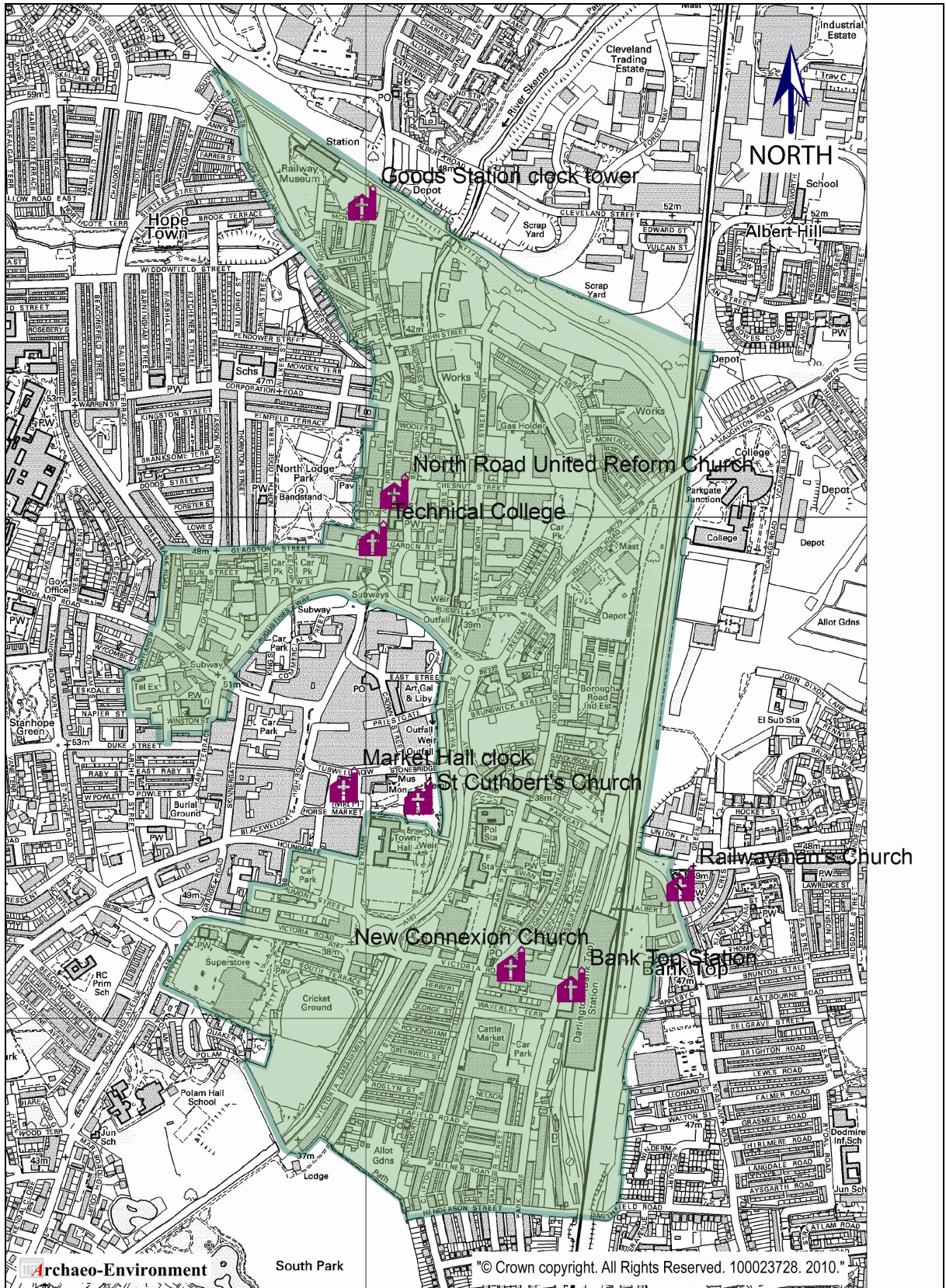


Figure 5. Location of buildings which are prominent historic skyline features in views from or within the town centre fringe



### **Associations with early railway architecture**

Darlington's collection of railway related buildings around the Head of Steam Museum has been described as the world's most important group of surviving early railway buildings. Since the 1830s it has been known as North Road and was developed by the S&DR as its base in Darlington. The focus of the railway heritage is located around the stations in a triangle of land between



*Plate 39. When this postcard was produced in 1912, they knew that the town's connections with the railway were worth promoting (picture from Flynn 1994, pl 140)*

extended to meet the needs of growing traffic (Dean 1984, pl 48). After 1853, the S&DR replaced two elements of the site with larger facilities elsewhere because there was insufficient space at North Road. In 1863 the S&DR merged with the North Eastern Railway and North Road became a minor satellite site for a large railway company rather than the hub of a small railway company. This shift of the main functions off-site may well have been responsible for the preservation of the North Road buildings as they were no

what was the S&DR main line (now the railway to Bishop Auckland to Darlington), the former branch line to the S&DR coal yard in Darlington (now a road linking Hopetown Lane to Station Road) and the main road north from Darlington to Durham. All the key buildings on the site were from the first generation of the railway age, when the form and function of railway buildings was still being developed by trial and error. When the S&DR first opened in 1825 it owned no station buildings – the concept of a railway station had not been invented yet. The first station was a converted warehouse to which were

added a booking office and waiting room in 1833. North Road Station replaced these in 1842 and was

longer adapted to meet new needs, or indeed demolished to make way for larger buildings. Kitching's foundry which moved here in 1831 from the town centre in order to build locomotives is now demolished. The Goods Station, the Goods Agent's Offices, North Road Station, the Lime Cells and Hopetown Carriage works all survive. In addition there are remnant remains of the first station, the coal drops and the branch line. Collectively this group represents great diversity of form and function with only the locomotive works now absent (DBC 2006, 56).

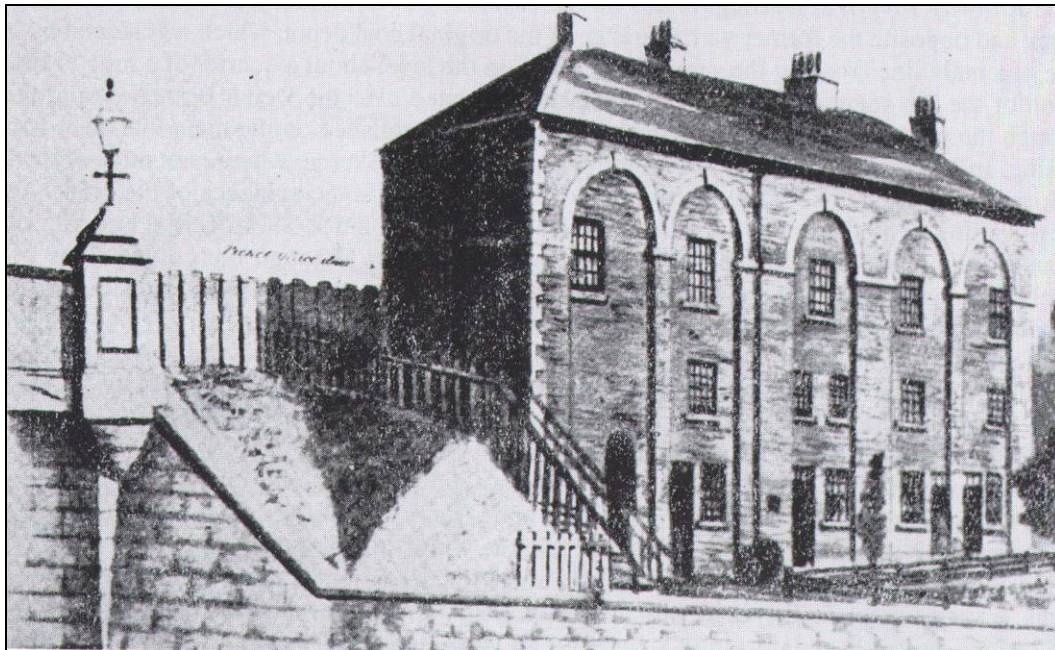
Beyond this collection of North Road buildings there are other railway related buildings – Edward Pease's house on Northgate, The Railway Inn, the Ignatius Bonomi Bridge, the viaduct and more ephemeral evidence such as street names. Worker's housing also abounds, and outside the study area there is one of a very few original cow tunnels which passed through the first S&DR line. Collectively, these structures represent the birth of the railway network which was to change the face of the world and are therefore of exceptional significance and internationally important.

The international importance of Darlington and the birth of the railways was recognised in 1925 when railway companies sent representatives to the centenary celebrations and an International Railway Congress was held at Faverdale. At the presentations, Alipo Chiarugi, the leader of the Italian delegation, spoke of the admiration felt by all Italian railwaymen for George Stephenson, the 'first railwayman of the world' and reminded his audience that Italy's first railway line had been constructed under the supervision of George's son, Robert Stephenson. (Flynn 1994, pls 58-9)

#### *Remnant remains*

The world's first railway station consisted of a large warehouse building which initially at least, had a waiting room, offices and a shop, suggesting even at the outset, waiting for a train involved perusing in a shop! The rooms were rented by Mary Simpson at £5 p.a. in return for which she was to 'keep the coach office clean and afford every necessary accommodation to coach

passengers' (Fawcett 2001, 18). Her duties appear to have consisted of keeping a fire burning in the waiting room. Parts of the building were under-used and were gradually converted into cottages. After its replacement by a new passenger station in 1842, part of the station was used as offices for the companies for the lime trade, but its position very close to the railway line became an obstruction and demolition was ordered in 1864 (ibid). There are remains of a large stone wall along the railway embankment to the east of High Northgate which represent the lower walls of the back of the station building. It is astonishing that these remnant remains of the world's first railway station are unprotected from demolition.



*Plate 40. The 1827 S&DR warehouse which was used as a passenger station from 1833 with the ticket office on the upper floor – access was from the level crossing, but this picture was drawn after 1856/7 when the bridge over North Road was built (picture from Fawcett 2001, 18). This now survives as a large piece of retaining wall against the rail embankment and carries no form of statutory protection.*

### *Hopetown Carriage Works*

The buildings were designed by the local architect Joseph Sparkes (1817-1855). The original design may have been more elaborate but there was no need to impress customers and so the design was stripped of some of Sparkes' ornamental features and overall supervision of the project placed in the hands of Thomas McNay. The building materials are of poor quality and



the workmanship is not much better. Originally the building may have been covered with a lime based rough cast render.

*'Darlington and its Friends have set in motion a vast motive power, and what shall the end be?*

*"From what small causes do great matters spring!"*

Longstaffe 1909, 374, originally published in 1854

These former carriage works are Grade II listed and therefore nationally important. It is still used by two locomotive preservation trusts for the building and restoration of locomotives, reputedly the oldest such association in the world giving it international significance. It is the oldest purpose built railway carriage manufactory to survive in the British Isles, and perhaps the second oldest in the world. It contains an early example of a travelling crane. It was explicitly designed to handle the short, four-wheeled carriages that made up the first generation of railway rolling stock and became obsolete when carriages increased in length (DBC 2006, 56). Its design is radically different to later railway carriage manufactories and it is one of a handful of world survivors able to show how the first generation of railway carriages were built and handled. In that respect, the design features that brought about its early obsolescence – critically, the central, transverse, access using turntables rather than gable end doors – come into prominence and support arguments about its importance in the evolution of the railway building design. The carriage works are therefore of exceptional significance.

*About 1848, Mr Heslegrave, land surveyor, Darlington, patented a very superior spring for railway carriages which was soon in constant operation on the Stockton and Darlington line. In 1848 also, Mr W. Froude, of Darlington, obtained a patent for a valve to cover the longitudinal opening of an atmospheric railway tube. Mr. Stephen Carlton, coachmaker, Northgate, is proprietor of a very simple and comfortable carriage-spring, which is registered.'*

Longstaffe 1909, 336

*Good's Agents Offices*



*Plate 41. The Goods Agent's Offices on McNay Street*

These are located on McNay Street and visible from the station. They are important because they are an unusual survival of an ancillary office block on a multi-use site

developed by a single owner and are one of a very few from the early years of the railway age. They must be seen alongside the Goods Station which was contemporary and its function intertwined (DBC 2006, 25). McNay Street is one of the earliest streets in the area having been laid out as the access to the station presumably in the 1830s. This building is of exceptional significance.

*North Road Station and Goods Station*

The Goods Station or Merchandising Station was the first major building to be erected by the S&DR on what later became a very extensive railway site to the west of North Road. It was built in 1832/3 and designed by Thomas Storey and was considerably extended in 1839/40 under the direction of John Harris (Fawcett 2001, 19). The Goods Station is highly significant in terms of design. Other railway goods sheds were on two levels, and this was probably the first in the world to be built with the single-level arrangement that became, and



remained, the norm for railway goods handling until the move to containers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (DBC 2006, 57).

*Plate 42. The Goods/Merchandising Station with clock tower. Some of the arched openings were lost when it was used as a fire station (Fawcett 2001, 20)*

Although the buildings have been extended five times and modified internally on an almost constant basis from the 1840s to the 1920s, the design approach by John Harris in 1842 was always maintained. As such, their Italianate form belongs to a period before railway companies had established the fully blown High Victorian styles which were associated with later railway architecture. The survival of the North Road buildings in substantially the original form is exceptionally significant. Today, North Road Station has one of only two timber trainshed roofs to survive from the first generation of the railway age. The good survival of the buildings at North Road is largely because Bank Top became the principal station for Darlington and so it was Bank Top which had to absorb the changes required with improving train technology. Although North Road Station is not the only station building of the period in existence, it is probably the most complete, with a station building and train shed of the same date (DBC 2006, 46). They are therefore of exceptional significance.

### *The Lime Cells*

The lime cells represent a once common but now rare building type designed for the bulk unloading of materials from rail to road. They are intact with only a shaky set of timber doors having been added to the structure. They were built between 1840 and 1855, but probably around 1840 when urban expansion offered a ready market for the lime. Their significance is also because of their association with the rest of the group of S&DR buildings at North Road and because of their association with the expansion of Darlington. They are also one of a small number of well-preserved examples of a once significant and very distinctive regional building type associated with the railways (DBC 2006, 53-4). They fell out of use as lime cells by about 1870 and since then have found alternative uses that have left the structure relatively intact. They are currently empty and for sale. They are listed buildings grade II. They are therefore of exceptional significance.





*Plate 43. The Skerne Bridge, also known as the five pound note bridge. The setting of this scheduled monument has been marred by the gas pipes, railings and poor access which limits the experience of the bridge*

### *The Skerne bridge (Five pound note bridge)*

This is the only architect designed bridge on the Stockton Darlington Railway and featured on the five pound note between 07-06-1990 and 21-11-2003. George Stephenson had designed the first iron railway bridge, which crossed the Gaunless River, and it was his proposal to build an iron bridge on brick piers over the Skerne. The nature of the ground on the river bank made this a difficult proposition. Delays by Stephenson in deciding on the basis of the structure resulted in the Railway Committee approaching the eminent architect, Ignatius Bonomi. The foundation stone was laid by Francis Newburn on 6th July, 1824. The Company wanted it to be made of stone and be impressive, which it was.<sup>24</sup> It is now a scheduled ancient monument and therefore considered to be nationally important. The bridge terminates the north end of the study area and footpath access to it from the north has recently been improved. It featured in John Dobbin's painting of the opening

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.railcentre.co.uk/stockton/opening2.htm>



of the railway and now in the Pease room of the Head of Steam Museum. It also features in another painting by an unknown artist of the 'inaugural train crossing Skerne Bridge, Darlington' (Wall 2001, 116-7). It is of exceptional significance.

*"There is at present a great probability that locomotive carriages will speedily be brought to run on rail-roads for public accommodation. Should this be the case, and should the advantages of such a mode of conveyance be as great as described, they must supersede common roads, and all vehicles moved by animal power. The changes this will effect in the face of the country, and in the moral relations of its inhabitants, seem likely to be very extensive. Places will be brought nearer to each other, and communication between them will be more rapid and frequent. Nobody will consent, we presume, to be jolted along a rough road, 10 or 12 miles an hour, when he can be whirled along a smooth and pleasant one with twice the velocity."*

**The Observer 25<sup>th</sup> April 1830**

### *Viaduct*

The viaduct over North Road was built in 1856 for the Stockton and Darlington Railway and was altered in 1935, although plans for the bridge were underway by the 1840s. Before 1856 the railway crossed the road by means of a level crossing. Early photographs show that it had a plaque with the date MDCCCLVI on the side. It has solid iron parapets which flank the track, supported by a pair of rusticated piers with cornices and rounded low caps. The abutments have become banked up with earth but were probably originally exposed. The viaduct is listed Grade II\* because of its association with the S&DR (DCMS 1977) and is therefore nationally important and of exceptional significance.

**Then and Now...**



*Plate 44. The Viaduct in High Northgate and the northern boundary of the town centre fringe. Date unknown, but possibly 1930s?*



*Plate 45. The viaduct in 2010*

*First railway inn*

Nos. 6 to 16 High Northgate includes The Railway Tavern, built by John Carter in 1827 who was the Stockton & Darlington Railway's first architect-cum-builder. It was apparently built by the Quakers, as a place for the carters to wait for trains, ready to load their wagons from the lime cells and was also used by passengers up until 1833. The Tavern was originally owned by the Stockton and Darlington Railway and was called 'The Blue Bell Inn' (first mentioned in 1791), but this was presumably an earlier version of the building on the same site. With the arrival of the railways the inn was renamed and provided accommodation and hospitality for rail travellers. The inn remained in railway ownership until 1870 when it was put up for auction (HER 7301). It is reputed to be the first ever inn built specifically for a railway in the world. The ground floor windows have been enlarged, but the distinctive glazing of the upper lights is also found in the door fanlights of the company's relatively unaltered Stockton tavern (Fawcett 2001, 10). Its association with the S&DR makes it exceptionally significant and if it is indeed the earliest railway inn in the world, then it is internationally important. It is also worthy of listing given its national significance.

*Edward Pease's house, 138- 148 Northgate*

Edward Pease's house on Northgate is where Pease met with Robert Stephenson to discuss the formation of a railway and agreed to use steam locomotion. Although the town centre fringe as a whole represents the birth place of the railways, it is in this house that the plan appears to have been fleshed out and made real. Its setting has altered dramatically. At the time of the meeting it was a large street fronted classical villa with a long garden extending down to the river. The street elevation is now divided up so that the façade has lost its uniformity. Research currently being carried out by Charles McNab of the Darlington Historical Society has uncovered the original ground plans of the house as it was when the meeting took place between Stephenson and Pease in his kitchen. He has also uncovered plans showing the house being subdivided into four properties in 1866 (it consisted of the main residence plus an additional apartment to the south even in 1825) and

further plans showing proposals to add the classical cladding to one bay in 1909, designed by the architect G. Walesby Davis. The main significance of the building is its association with Edward Pease and the birth of the railways, but the classical façade added in 1909 is now somewhat of a rarity. The house is therefore of exceptional significance because of its association with the birth of the railways and its wealth of documentary evidence and of some significance because of its 1909 partial cladding which includes a commemorative plaque referring to the house's role in the birth of the railways.

*Engine Shed, Haughton Road*



*Plate 46. The Engine Shed*

This engine shed was built in the 1840s and is the oldest engine shed in the country; it is a listed building grade II and is therefore nationally important. It was probably designed for the Newcastle & Darlington Junction Railway by George Townsend Andrews (Fawcett undated.<sup>25</sup>), who

was particularly noted for his railway work for George Hudson between 1839 and 1849. This is based on the shed's appearance which looks like a typical GT Andrews' two-road shed with brick walls which rise from a stone plinth and on the side walls, the windows are recessed into shallow panels, allowing a small reduction in the volume of brick required, with no loss of strength. This feature, with the stone window cill carried right across the panel, occurs in a number of Andrews' buildings, but is apparently less common among his engine sheds (ibid). However, there is also documentary support which suggests that this may be a building of his design. The NDJ Board on 16 August 1844 instructed Andrews to plan workshops at Gateshead, an engine shed at Brockley Whins, and an engine shed and two cottages at Darlington. It is of exceptional significance because of its listed status, its association with

<sup>25</sup> Darlington's 'GNE Shed' available from <http://www.staff.ncl.ac.uk/m.h.ellison/nera/gneshed.pdf> [accessed 16.7.10]



G.T. Andrews and its relative rarity. There are few engine sheds of this date left in the country (ibid).

*The Railwayman's Church (outside the study area)*

The parish of St John the Evangelist was formed in July 1845 and the church designed by John Middleton built in 1847. The foundation stone was laid by George Hudson, the Lord Mayor of York; 'The Railway King' who also partly funded its construction (Wall 2001, 156). The directors and shareholders of the railway company had provided a warehouse for use as a church before the building was completed (Flynn 1983, pl 120). The church is also known as the Railwayman's Church because its congregation was mainly railway workers, however they were not appreciative of its peal of six bells especially if on a nightshift (Wall 2001, 156). Its significance in terms of railway heritage is some.

*Cow Tunnel (outside the study area)*



*Plate 47. The cow tunnel today is encapsulated in a modern tunnel (left) but the join where it becomes the original S&DR cow tunnel can still be seen inside (right)*

This represents one of the only concessions to local farmers when the S&DR line was put through farming land in 1825 (Wimbury pers comm.). The road above it has since been widened so the original cow tunnel has become encased within a larger tunnel. However it can still clearly be seen from inside the tunnel. Its significance is therefore considerable.

*Morrison's Clock (outside the study area)*

This is a clock rescued from the railway works now demolished and is close to its original location but no longer in situ. It is outside the study area, but adds to the general collection of railway related assets. Its significance in terms of railway related architecture is some.

*The importance, magnitude and impact of the birth of the Stockton & Darlington Railway on the transport systems of the world cannot be measured.<sup>26</sup>*

*Bank Top*



*Plate 48. Bank Top's clock tower*

This station was designed by William Bell for the North Eastern Railway Company and opened in 1887. It replaced 'a mean shed' which had been used since the 1840s (Flynn 1994, pl 8) and which had left Queen Victoria distinctly unamused when she alighted the train in 1849. She pointed out that for the main line station of the very place in which the railway had been born to look so down-at-heel was just not good enough (Emett 2007, 22).

The development of this station triggered the growth of the wider area, creating a railway colony. The station is largely unaltered since its construction. Its two immensely high and wide arches were designed to permit the passage of carriages of the wealthiest first class passengers, with their coachmen sitting aloft. These arches opened into a porte cochere, four bays deep and large enough to enable carriages to enter by one arch, swing round and depart by another. The vestibule is protected by the train shed style roof, in imitation of those above the station proper. On either side of the arches are two smaller arches for foot passengers. In between a soaring Italianate clock tower over 27m high which is Bank Top's crowning glory. It can be seen from every part

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.railcentre.co.uk/>

of town with its windows and galleries opening to Victoria Road surmounted by a pyramidal roof with a round window in each gable and crowned by a gilded fleche. Historically the clock was set to run five minutes fast to ensure passengers always caught their trains. The main down line is one third of a mile long and is one of the longest in Britain. The train shed roofs are supported on parallel rows of 80 massive cast iron Corinthian columns. Each spandrel of the arches is decorated with painted and gilded shields of arms amounting to 158 spandrels in total containing 948 coats of arms (Wall 2001, 157-9). Its association with the railway heritage and the town centre fringe is exceptional.

*'In the incomparable railway enterprise, Darlington was then, and therefore will always remain – FIRST IN THE WORLD'. Wall 2001, 177*

*North Eastern Hotel, Victoria Road*

This was built in the early 1880s on land which had been part of the Bishop's High Park. Its name was derived from the North Eastern Railway who had built Bank Top Station next door. The hotel, whose registered address was 'Comfort, Darlington', had twenty six bedrooms, public rooms and lavatories 'of the most improved description'. There were sufficient stables to house twenty-five to thirty horses and a large lock up coach house (Flynn 1983, pl104). It contributed towards a positive first impression for the late Victorian visitor and its association with the railway heritage is therefore considerable.



*Plate 49. The North Eastern Hotel in 1880*

### *Housing*

The main residential building type throughout the town centre fringe is the terraced house. Many of these were built for railway workers or workers in railway related industries. The earliest terraces to be built close to North Road station were built in the 1820s and are now in the Conservation Area. However many more terraces are outside the town centre fringe around Albert Hill. Longstaffe in 1854 saw Bank Top as a new town 'gradually arising on the east of the Skerne'. Initially it was a railway colony, its church first established in a converted railway warehouse. As the town expanded to the north towards North Road Station and to the east to Bank Top station, it was the terraced house that was constructed, often interspersed with non conformist places of worship. The distinctive railway terraces around the stations were not constructed by the railway companies however, but by speculators for rent and profit. By 1849 the Stockton and Darlington Railway owned only 19 cottages and one public house (Wall 2001, 155). Terraced housing is of exceptional significance to the character of the town centre fringe, and while it is less directly connected to the railway heritage, it has, especially around Bank Top, strong railway connections. The significance of terraced housing in relation to the railway heritage is therefore considerable.

### *Railway influence on decorative elements in landscaping*



The railway heritage features in some design details in buildings and street furniture in Darlington. In the town centre, the old Town Hall designed by Waterhouse and paid for by Joseph Pease, has balconies and a clock tower embellished with reproductions of railway engine plug wheels. The design has been copied on the walls of the Dolphin Centre (opened in 1983) and on bus shelters (Wall 2001, 176). Rails have been set into the entrance of the market place. However these features and their significance is easily missed and they are outside the study area. Seating which has used the locomotive wheel has been replaced as part of the recent town centre landscaping along High Row but it can still be found on the Market Place. The large roundabout on Victoria Road (within the study area) has a floral display based on the railway, but no other indicators of the importance of the railway heritage were identified. The railway heritage was used as a design reference in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century where the spandrels of Bank Top Station were decorated with references to Locomotion and Locomotion was featured on the town coat of arms and appears on civic buildings and railway bridges. However the international importance of the town centre fringe (and the town) is easily missed. The significance of the railway heritage in the landscaping and street furniture of the modern day town centre fringe is therefore marginal.

*'Thus Darlington has had much to associate it with that wondrous system which threatens to annihilate time and space.'* (Longstaffe 1909, 376 originally published in 1854)

### *Street names*

A number of the streets take their names from railway pioneers and figure heads (Stephenson Street, McNay Street) or relate to the railway (Station Street). A relatively recent lane in the town centre fringe is named after John Dobbin who painted the opening of the S&DR. Their association with the town centre fringe is therefore of some significance. Street names around Bank Top are more associated with royalty such as Victoria Road, Albert Street, Adelaide Street, King William Street and Princes Street (Wall 2001, 156) and

other street names in the area reflect landowners and property developers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Overall associations with early railway architecture and technology	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
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### **4.3 Communal Values and Significance**

#### *Local History and Railway Heritage:*

The history, civic pride and built heritage of Darlington are important to a significant number of people within the town and region. In particular the Darlington Historical Society has a wide membership to whom the heritage of the area has both personal and family meaning, as well as longer term cultural significance.

In addition to community interest in the broad history of Darlington, the area is of exceptional importance to the community of those interested in railway heritage. This is in effect an international community, but specific note needs to be made of the Friends of The Head of Steam Museum, the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust and the North East Locomotive Preservation Society, all based in and around the historic heart of the S&DR and whose presence makes the area more than just a heritage site, especially with the recent successful new build of the A1 pacific class locomotive Tornado. The communal value of the railway heritage to the town centre fringe is therefore exceptional.



*Plate 50. Tornado. Newly built A1 Pacific Class locomotive, constructed at the former Hopetown Lane carriage works by the A1 Preservation Trust, and emblematic of the railway community passion and interest in the area.*

*Local myths and legends:*

**Bulmer stone**

The Bulmer Stone is a boulder of red granite, carried down from Shap Fell, in Westmorland, during the Ice Age. This stood in Northgate, marking what was once the northern boundary of the town. It was located opposite the old cobblestone cottages which were known collectively as Darlington House. These cottages were demolished to make way for the technical college. For centuries the boulder was a significant local landmark, occupying a prominent position on Northgate's pavement in close proximity to the road. In the nineteenth century Willy Bulmer, Darlington's unofficial town crier, read the London news standing on the boulder and it is probably from him that it derives its name. It is also said that George Stephenson and Nicholas Wood (a colliery manager from Northumberland) sat on the stone to re-tie their boots, having walked from Stockton to Darlington to see Edward Pease and to convince him of the benefits of steam locomotives. An alternative and more likely explanation is that both Stephenson and Wood had to remove their muddy boots having walked from Stockton, to replace them with clean shoes

ready for their important visit (McNab pers comm.). It was as a result of this meeting that Pease chose to appoint Stephenson as the Chief Engineer of the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

Local legend states that when the boulder hears the clock strike twelve the Bulmer Stone turns around nine times. The stone remained in position until 1923 when it was removed and placed behind the college railings, where it still stands. This might explain why no-one has seen it move since.



*Plate 51. The Bulmer Stone on Northgate before it was moved behind railings*

The significance of the Bulmer Stone is therefore exceptional, it having several associations from the ice age to the birth of the railways and its associations with myth and legend. There are few such features in the town centre fringe and it therefore has added rarity value.

#### *Other local myths and legends*

Part of the Skerne, or possibly the Cocker Beck, off Northgate was used as a ducking pond. Records from the 17<sup>th</sup> century recount a number of legal cases where women accused of 'scolding' were ducked as punishment. These traditions are not well known now and have little local resonance. Their significance is therefore some.



The area has a few associations with ghosts including Lady Jarratt who once stalked the Bishop's Palace where she had an arm cruelly cut off during a robbery in the Civil War. She apparently continued to make an appearance in the Palace when it was turned into a workhouse and the silky swish off her skirts has been heard along the corridors of the Town Hall which sits on the site of the Palace (Lloyd undated, 108). The ghost of North Road Station has at least managed to retain his haunting ground. A porter named Winter committed suicide in the cellars below the station in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and he has reputedly been seen walking along the platform with his black dog since the 1850s (ibid). The dog has mysteriously turned white in the museum's most recent display of the cellars, but is undoubtedly a star attraction nevertheless.

<b>COMMUNAL VALUES</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Community Interest in heritage of Darlington	<b>CONSIDERABLE</b>
Railway Heritage	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
The Bulmer Stone	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
Local myths and legends	<b>SOME</b>

#### **4.4 Evidential Value and Significance**

##### *Archaeological potential of below ground*

Existing records on the buried archaeology of the town centre fringe are sparse. Early settlements are often to be found at the junction of a tributary stream with its main river course. Evidence has been found of Mesolithic<sup>27</sup> occupation along the river terrace which is now occupied by High Row and this conforms to that pattern. The original route of the Skerne can be partly discerned at Russell Street via Valley Street where a semi-circular brick tunnel was built in 1900 to accommodate the river. This was smashed through a few years ago by a utility company in Valley Street (I.Dougill pers comm.

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<sup>27</sup> 10,000 years ago

12.7.10), but it marks the route of the river and therefore the river terraces nearby which are in effect the areas of highest archaeological potential.

To the east of the river there is a potential for post medieval archaeological deposits to survive along Parkgate and Freeman's Place, and also along St. Cuthbert's Way between these two streets, although construction of St. Cuthbert's Way is likely to have severely truncated deposits in this latter area. Elsewhere on this side of the river, the archaeological potential is low (ASUD 2009, 1).

An Anglian cemetery has been found at Greenbank, suggesting a settlement of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD not far away, which could be uncovered in any development works in that area. Those areas with the highest potential are nearest the medieval core around Houndgate, the Town Hall, Feethams and Bondgate. However these areas have also been through considerable redevelopment and archaeological work previously carried out has often been disappointing because of the damage done to the ground by cellars, especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and by modern development. In Bondgate the highest potential is likely to be in the areas of the medieval property boundaries running back from Bondgate, but these areas are often just as damaged and developed often resulting in a limited picture of earlier occupation consisting of hearths and post holes, but dating evidence is often too disturbed to be useful. Garden Street has already produced 'an ancient bridge' of unknown date, found in 1903 and a Roman coin, found in 1904. The former route of the river and the land to either side of it may be of some archaeological potential particularly at crossing points. Perhaps of more interest in this area is the potential for the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century layout of Edward Pease's renowned gardens to be preserved below the Garden Street car park.

The railway heritage is an area of higher potential. Early maps such as the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map dating to the 1850s show a number of buildings such as the Railway Worsted Mill in the town centre fringe which are no longer in

existence but for which there might be below ground evidence. Further the layout of the earliest buildings at the top of Northgate and their relationship to early branch lines is not clearly understood. The excavation of buried railway deposits has the potential to throw additional light on these exciting times between the 1820s and the 1890s. Overall, there is therefore some potential in the area for below ground archaeological remains.

*Potential of buildings to contain archaeological information*

The majority of buildings in the town centre fringe post date 1825. Earlier buildings have long since been demolished. The potential for the buildings to contain evidence relating to earlier buildings is therefore limited. Those buildings at the top of High Northgate and south of the viaduct are most likely to incorporate evidence relating to the earliest station.

Other buildings containing archaeological evidence include all the railway buildings such as the lime cells and the carriage works which will help us to understand the evolution of the railway and the growth of the town. Evidence can be sparse and fragmentary. The coal drops to the rear of Westbrook Villas along with the tallyman's house are easily overlooked being along a back lane and their function is not understood. For example what was the purpose of the now blocked neo-Gothic arch in the coal drops? Could it be part of Westbrook Cottage shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map? Other coal drops off Northgate are evidenced only in walling behind houses facing the Cocker Beck (HER 7302) and coal drops on John Street are in perilous condition requiring urgent recording.

At the foot of Northgate behind Edward Pease's house is the only remaining Weavers Cottage which merits recording so that a record exists for this building type now so nearly extinct. The rest of the row was demolished possibly to make way for the Lily Laundry, also now demolished and much of Garden Street was demolished in the 1960s (I.Dougill pers comm. 12.7.10).

Edward Pease's house has been through a number of alterations but plans exist showing how it looked in 1825 and how it was altered in 1903, although it is not always clear what alterations were actually made. Any future alterations to this building should be accompanied by additional recording enforced through listed building consent so that further light on the form and evolution of the building can help to make decisions regarding its future uses.

The origins of the Railway Tavern are confused. Was the Blue Bell Inn an earlier building on the same site which was renamed when the S&DR decided to use it for carters and passengers, or was the old Blue Bell demolished and a new railway tavern built? The answers may lie in the fabric of the building.

The shop at 112 High Northgate may contain evidence of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century shop and the Skerne Bridge is likely to contain evidence relating to the first railway bridges and the engineering solutions that were used at that time. The tannery buildings off Parkgate on Tannery Row also represent a near extinct building type and recording could expose information relating to these small scale industries.

Buildings dating to WW2 are now rare and so a record should be made of the air raid shelter on Weir Street. Air raid shelters took a number of forms but this example appears to be a one-off, possibly a commission for a local works. This information could perhaps be supplemented by oral history accounts and wartime records in the local studies library.

Structures are also associated with the management of the Skerne. The weir at Russell Street has evidence of a sluice system and the arch which carried the mill race across to what is now Crown Street and down to Pease's Mill. The effective management of the river was critical to the success of Darlington given the poor water supply that it was renowned for. Through this management sufficient power was obtained to run a number of water powered mills (I. Dougill pers comm. 12.7.10).



The role of urban archaeology in understanding settlement and urbanism has been flagged up in the region's Research Agenda and Strategy (Petts and Gerrard 2006, 205-7). Of particular relevance is the need to routinely record urban industrial structures (SU 19), the targeting of back plots which has relevance around Pease's house and adjacent buildings which pre-date the expansion associated with increasing industrialisation (SU18). Collectively the potential of the buildings in the town centre fringe to contain valuable archaeological information is limited by the date range, but significant because it can contribute towards our understanding of the railway heritage (exceptional) and the 19<sup>th</sup> century development of the town (some). Proposals to alter or demolish buildings which pre-date the 1930s should be accompanied by a Statement of Significance so that it is clear to the decision maker what will be preserved reused or lost that is of significance.

#### **Educational value of railway heritage through extant remains**

The town centre fringe area is already an educational resource based on the growth of the railways. In addition to the more obvious resources such as the Head of Steam Museum where the station and historic engines and railway displays can be explored (free for educational visits), free teachers packs are available including walks to Bank Top Station and railway related buildings such as Edward Pease's house and the Railway Tavern on Northgate, railway buildings on McNay Street, the identification of railway names and the use of the locomotion wheel in the design of seating in the town centre and the use of rails in floorscaping in the market place. The majority of the schools using the museum teacher's packs are local; indeed no schools are using either from the wider area. The post of Learning Officer in the Museum was only established in September 2006 having been unfilled for a while and since then educational use of the museum has grown from 2203 to 3326. However a pattern of growth is not yet possible to identify as the museum has also been closed for refurbishment. Consultation with teachers and the museum would suggest that Darlington is less attractive to use as an educational resource because of its environment. School teachers have little desire to walk children passed a sex shop on the way to Bank Top or to peer at the world's earliest

railway bridge through razor wire fencing. It would take considerable imagination to see passed the pizza and kebab shops to imagine Edward Pease meeting George Stephenson in his kitchen on Northgate (one suspects that they might picture Pease tucking into a kebab!)

Looking at the wider educational value of the museum, statistics on the Head of Steam's visitor numbers suggest in the region of 25 to 28, 000 visitors per year, of which between a third and a half are non-paying visitors.<sup>28</sup> Again, it is too soon after the museum's recent refurbishment and new reduced winter opening hours to have an accurate picture of the likely future trend. Much of the site is under used; there is no public access to the Merchandising Station and the land around it is surrounded by Darlington's distinctive security fencing. Further there is ironically no access to the museum from North Road station; instead anyone alighting a train here has to walk a considerable distance to access the museum or simply peer through more security fencing. Overall the potential of the area to provide an educational resource through its extant railway remains is exceptional, but it is currently only of some significance due to a lack of positive management of the railway heritage beyond the museum and due to the under-use of the museum site as a whole.

<b>Evidential Value Summary</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Potential of the town centre fringe for below ground remains	<b>SOME</b>
Potential for the town centre fringe for buildings to contain archaeological information relating to the railway heritage	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
Potential for the town centre fringe for buildings to contain archaeological information relating to other building types	<b>SOME</b>
Potential educational value of railway heritage through extant remains	<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>

<sup>28</sup> With thanks to Sarah Goldsborough from the Head of Steam Museum for these statistics which I have summarised here



## **5.0 Statement of Significance Conclusion**

The town centre fringe has much that is of significance; however it is an area that hides its heritage assets well. Historic bowed windows peer out from behind freezers, ornate rooftops are obscured by modern buildings, houses of international significance sit shyly behind a kebab shop, the towns much loved Bulmer stone sits trapped behind railings and renowned poets are long forgotten. It is time that the town centre fringe celebrated its distinctive heritage and its worthy residents past and present.

It is the railway heritage that consistently appears as the exceptional contributor to local distinctiveness and as Darlington's unique selling point. The architecture is exceptionally significant because of the contribution that it makes towards our understanding of the birth and early years of a mode of transport that was to change the face of the world. Its educational value is already exploited via the Head of Steam museum and has the potential to provide more. The railway heritage also has considerable potential to draw visitors to Darlington from across the world. However its condition and management would have to match that of the Head of Steam Museum before it was worth crossing continents for.

Decisions regarding the future management of the town will want to be guided by the existing historic building stock and the predominantly 19<sup>th</sup> century street pattern. It will need to consider the contribution that traditional building materials, such as red brick and the beautiful scoria blocks, will make to the Darlington of the future. New developments and the adaptation of existing development will need to recognise the importance of designed and fortuitous views towards significant skyline features and the restoration of more general views which have been blighted by 20<sup>th</sup> century development. It will also need to recognise the recent loss of important physical links with the town centre

and the river and important existing links to green spaces such as South Park. Throughout all of the important future management decisions, we must ask, is this proposal good enough for an area of town of international importance because of its association with the birth of the railways?

*'The historic environment provides a tangible link with our past and contributes to our sense of national, local and community identity. It also provides the character and distinctiveness that is so important to a positive sense of place. It can support the regeneration and sustainable economic and social development of our communities. It can assist in the delivery of housing, education and community cohesion aims. It is a key part of England's tourism offer. Through all this it enhances the quality of our daily lives.'*

PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide 2010, Para 5

The management guidance which follows arises from a set of issues identified through historic research and consultation with the local community. It covers the whole of the town centre fringe first, before making more specific management recommendations for each character area. These are broad based recommendations; some are relatively easy to implement and are quick fixes. Others are aspirational and longer term. Turning around the decline that has set into parts of the town centre fringe cannot happen quickly and will be hindered by the current economic decline, but short term solutions are not always appropriate for the longer term benefit of the town centre fringe.