

Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Temple Sowerby



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Eden
District Council

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October 2007

This document is also available in larger print on request.

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Designed and produced by the Planning Policy Section, Department of Policy and Performance.

Front cover aerial photograph by Simon Ledingham / www.visitcumbria.com.

Contents

	page
PART 1 CONTEXT	3
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Planning Policy Context	3
1.2.1 What is a Conservation Area?	3
1.2.2 How does this Appraisal Relate to the National, Regional and Local Planning Context?	3
PART 2 CHARACTER APPRAISAL	5
2.1 History	5
2.2 Layout and Setting	5
2.3 Buildings	6
2.4 Present Character and Appearance of the Village	8
2.5 Key Characteristics of Temple Sowerby	9
Appendix A National, Regional and Local Policies	10
1 National Planning Guidance	10
2 Regional Planning Guidance	10
3 Local Planning Guidance	10
Plan 1 Listed Buildings within Temple Sowerby Conservation Area	13

PART 1 CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

Part 1 of this document describes the planning policy background to conservation areas and how the character appraisal in Part 2 will be used. Eden District Council prepared a character appraisal of Temple Sowerby prior to declaring the village a conservation area on 20 January 2000. The appraisal includes a description of the historical, architectural and townscape importance of Temple Sowerby which is one of 22 conservation areas in Eden, outside of the Lake District National Park.

1.2 Planning Policy Context

1.2.1 What is a Conservation Area?

Conservation areas are defined in law as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Legislation to declare conservation areas has been with us for forty years and thousands have been designated across the country. Conservation areas can bring many benefits, including giving greater controls over demolition, minor development and tree felling.

Local planning authorities have a responsibility to consider the quality and interest of a conservation area as whole, rather than individual buildings within it.

1.2.2 How does this Appraisal Relate to the National, Regional and Local Planning Context?

The Government sets out national planning policy in the relevant Acts of Parliament and Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG) and their ongoing replacements, Planning Policy Statements (PPS) (Appendix A). Of most direct relevance to conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment. This national guidance has a regional dimension in the form of regional planning guidance, Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), prepared by the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) which will eventually replace the Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan.

Local and site specific policies are prepared in accordance with these national and regional policy frameworks. The system for producing local planning policy documents however changed in 2004 with the old district Local Plans being replaced by Local Development Frameworks (LDF) which are expected to be in place in Eden by 2009. At the heart of the LDF is the Core Strategy that sets out the vision, spatial objectives and core policies for the future development of the District. The Core Strategy Preferred Options Paper (Dec 2006) sets out the following principles for the built environment (Policy CS 19):

- Conserve and enhance buildings, landscapes and areas of cultural, historic or archaeological interest including conservation areas, historic

parks and gardens, areas of archaeological interest and listed buildings and their settings

- Promote the enhancement of the built environment through the use of high standards of design and the careful choice of sustainable materials for all development
- Encourage the sympathetic and appropriate re-use of existing buildings, especially those which make a contribution to the special character of their locality
- Promote design that ensures a safe and secure environment
- Promote improvements in accessibility in the built environment for all people regardless of disability, age, gender or ethnicity

One of the key LDF documents will be the Primary Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) which will be prepared in accordance with the overarching objectives of the Core Strategy. Policies relating to development within conservation areas will refer to conservation area appraisals where they exist. This appraisal will be used as supporting evidence when considering planning applications and appeals in Temple Sowerby Conservation Area.

Until the DPD has been adopted the local planning policies in the Eden Local Plan 1996 will be saved and a full list of relevant policies can be found in Appendix A.

Other LDF documents of relevance to Temple Sowerby Conservation Area are Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that provide detailed guidance on specific subjects. Currently these are:

- Shopfront and Advertisement Design (2006);
- An Accessible and Inclusive Environment (2007)

PART 2 CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The following character appraisal of Temple Sowerby was prepared in 1999 prior to declaring the village a conservation area on 20 January 2000 and there have been changes since that time. The most dramatic of these was the construction of the A66 by pass, opened in 2006. The character of the former A66 route through the village has fundamentally altered and it is no longer the divisive barrier it once was. Used now only by local traffic it is significantly quieter and its broad road layout, grass verges and buildings can now be far better appreciated.

2.1 History

Temple Sowerby lies along the Roman route through the Eden valley with the fort at Kirkby Thore only two miles away. The Eden valley in general was populated in Roman times with many small scattered settlements and farmsteads consisting of stone huts and enclosures, often found on the higher land. Nothing is known of a settlement at Temple Sowerby at this time. The name of the village comes from the Danish word 'Saurby' meaning farm or settlement with muddy or poor soil, but the origins of the settlement itself are not clear.

The manor of 'Soureby' was given to the Knights Templar sometime in the twelfth or thirteenth century and the prefix of Temple was evident in documentation from 1279. When this order was dissolved in 1312, the manor passed in 1323 to the Knights Hospitallers who in their turn were dissolved in 1545. The manor was sold by the Crown to the Dalston family in 1544. Acorn Bank, the former Manor House, dates from at least the late sixteenth century, but there may be some earlier medieval fabric dating from the times of the Templars. This house lies away from the main village.

There are buildings in the village of seventeenth century and possibly earlier fabric and form - notably the previously cruck-roofed Swan Cottage and House (formerly the Black Swan Inn) and Lowthian Cottage, both of which were thatched. The form of the village also suggests medieval origins. A church existed in Temple Sowerby in the fourteenth century and in 1323 there were known to be eight cottages in the manor and a water mill at Acorn Bank. Until 1880 Temple Sowerby formed part of the neighbouring parish of Kirkby Thore. The present church in the village, St James's, formerly the Parochial Chapel was rebuilt and greatly enlarged in the eighteenth century and restored in 1873. The village maypole which has existed at least since 1817 (the timber upright has been replaced) is possibly on the site of an earlier cross.

2.2 Layout and Setting

The village lies within the broad and relatively flat floor of the Eden valley close to the river Eden. The landscape is one of lush green agriculturally improved pastures enclosed by hedgerows and stone walls, combined with woodland and mature trees.

The village lies in a slight depression and the approaches to the village give prominent views of its roofscape, particularly the approach from the south.

The village has two distinct areas. The area along the A66 is relatively flat and consists of some fairly grand buildings facing onto the remains of a once wide green. Its western half has disappeared under the widened road through the village, now the A66. The central village green area slopes downwards towards the east. This area has a tight-knit building form around a wide spacious green with a large number of mature trees. These greens, particularly the one away from the A66, give open aspects from which wide views of the village can be obtained. The mature trees partly obscure some of these views, particularly in summer. This open aspect renders the village very sensitive to the impact of development in its central areas.

The layout of the main body of the village displays some of the typical characteristics of a medieval village with a broadly rectilinear layout with buildings facing the village street with crofts and strip fields. The A66 however has provided an additional focus for development and there is no clear evidence of the back lanes so typical of other Eden villages, possibly due to the position of the Roman road or the large scale post medieval building/rebuilding.

2.3 Buildings

The present buildings in the central area of the village date principally from the seventeenth century onwards and are predominantly eighteenth and nineteenth century. They are constructed almost exclusively of red sandstone under graduated Westmorland Green slate roofs with sandstone ridges. A small, but significant, number of nineteenth century buildings along the south-west side of the A66 are faced with a soft deep-red hand-made brick.

Many of the present buildings have replaced or incorporated earlier more humble buildings. These original structures are likely to have had thatched roofs and may have been cruck-framed with walls of wattle and daub, clay or roughly piled stone. The local traditional form and style were developed and refined during the major rebuilding in stone that took place in the mid to late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries following the increased peace and prosperity of this period. A number of buildings from this time survive, including a small number of cross passage houses such as Rose Cottage and the older part of Temple Sowerby House.

The later introduction of formal architectural detailing in the new building and remodelling of the late eighteenth century through to the late nineteenth century respected the local traditional use of materials and detailing. This has now become an established part of the character of the area.

Although no thatch remains, the roof structures at Lowthian Cottage and Swan Cottage and House retain the steep pitch and roof structure associated with thatch. Many buildings will have been heightened and the roof pitch reduced to a still steep 35° to accommodate Westmorland Green slate roofing, a thick slate laid in diminishing courses giving roofs a distinctive colour and texture. A small amount of red sandstone slab roofing is also found. This is a thick heavy material of large unit size allowing a rather shallower roof pitch of about 30°. Some stone roofs have been replaced with slate, but still feature a sandstone flag eaves course. Some later roofs have Welsh or blue slate and some twentieth century buildings have concrete tile.

The widespread use of sandstone for buildings and boundary walls gives the whole area an immediate and distinct character. This is reflected not only in the colour of the buildings, but also in their architectural detailing. The sandstone is readily worked when first quarried. As a consequence it is widely used in finely dressed form for quoins and window surrounds, even on humble buildings where the walls may be of coursed rubble. On finer and more substantial buildings, the stone is frequently dressed and used as ashlar (dressed blocks of stone), and finely carved door cases with stone pediments are a particular feature of Temple Sowerby.



**Pedimented stone door surround, dressed window surrounds and quoins
stone copings, boundary walls and railings - Beech House**

In addition to the use of sandstone as an exterior finish, some buildings have been lime washed (now painted) or rendered. Where render appears, it is either a wet-dash or roughcast finish, or a smooth surface marked to mimic ashlar (stucco), with walls painted white or in bright pastel shades and window surrounds picked out in a contrasting colour.

In terms of form the earlier buildings are likely to have been low single storey or one and a half storey buildings with upper floor accommodation in the roof space. Most buildings are now two storeys mainly two and three bay houses of largely symmetrical design. Those of three bays usually feature a central doorway flanked by windows on either side while those with two bays are sometimes paired and handed to produce a similar symmetry.

The older window detailing in the village includes small, square or narrow, two or three light casements with stone surrounds and mullions, with small-paned timber casement windows. Frequently these openings have been adapted and the mullions removed to take horizontal ("Yorkshire lights") or vertical sliding sash windows with twelve, sixteen or even 20 small panes. The majority of the present buildings however now display classic Georgian sash windows of 12 or 16 panes most with full stone surrounds. Some later Victorian detailing includes plainer two, four or six-paned sliding sash windows. More recently some sash windows have been replaced with timber casements and plastic, usually within the existing opening, although some openings have been enlarged and the surrounds removed. Whatever their form, windows usually have a vertical emphasis, either in the shape of their openings or in the proportion of individual panes. White paint is commonly found as the final surface treatment for timber windows.

Gable walls tend to be blank and the proportion of window to wall is low giving buildings a sturdy appearance. Roofs are usually unbroken and dormer windows are rare. Eaves, and particularly verges of roofs, are set almost flush with the faces of the supporting walls. Stone copings along verges, and kneelers are a common and attractive feature of roofs in Temple Sowerby as are the large number of ashlar chimney stacks. Guttering is generally of cast-iron fixed directly to the wall face by hangers and brackets, but some buildings, particularly the larger houses from the Georgian period, feature carved stone cornice gutters. Some Victorian buildings have overhanging eaves and carved timber bargeboards.

The older doors were often of wide oak planks, but few of these survive. The most common pattern is the six panelled doors with or without fanlights, and also later four panelled doors. Many of these have been lost to modern panelled and glazed doors.

Of considerable importance to the traditional character and appearance of settlements is the simple, informal nature of the roads, farmyards and verges. The carriageways of roads and accesses (other than the A66) are generally narrow and the extensive areas of village green are generally un-kerbed. Although the majority of public roads are now tarmacked, many access lanes and farmyards are still finished in hard-core or in rough cobbles rather than formal setts.

Boundaries in the village are almost exclusively marked by red sandstone walls of rubble or ashlar construction. Those to the property frontages are often low walls with elegant spiked iron railings, and a number of the larger properties have imposing stone gate piers. Most properties have small front gardens with gated pedestrian and sometimes vehicular accesses. Some gardens and boundary walls have been lost to make way for parking areas.

2.4 Present Character and Appearance of the Village

A small number of later twentieth century buildings exist. Most of these are not in keeping in terms of their design or materials with the traditional development of the village. Fortunately however these are few in number in the central area and are either sited out of view from the centre of the village or are flanked by sandstone boundary walls. Along the former A66 there are more modern buildings of alien design and/or materials found mostly on the outskirts of the village, but unfortunately also on the prominent sites approaching it. There are two housing estates that have a layout and form untypical of the established pattern of the village.

The village still retains a public house, hotels, a church, a primary school and a number of active farms. The main area of the village, despite some inappropriate alterations to existing buildings such as domestic extensions, dormer windows and other window and door alterations, still retains a very attractive and relatively unspoilt character. In general the buildings of Temple Sowerby are very attractive and possess considerable architectural and historic interest both individually and particularly as a group. The village has an impressive range of classically detailed Georgian buildings giving the village a very elegant and distinctive character, somewhat grander than most Eden villages.

Crucial to its attractiveness and character are the mature trees, the informal areas of village green and the stone boundary walls and railings.

As with most villages the main detracting feature is the impact of the motor car. This has influenced not only on the design of some of the newer housing developments, but also the loss of some attractive boundaries walls, railings and front gardens. The noise and visual impact of the A66 is pervasive, but its existence can also be seen to reflect the history of the settlement lying alongside this 2000 year-old strategic route.

2.5 Key Characteristics of Temple Sowerby

- Tight knit building form around village green
- Buildings facing the street
- Strip fields
- Simple, informal nature of roads, farmyards and verges
- Mature trees
- Small front gardens with low sandstone boundary walls and gated pedestrian accesses
- Low proportion of window to wall
- Blank gable walls
- Sandstone buildings and boundary walls
- Finely dressed sandstone quoins and full window surrounds usually flat tooled dressed stone even on humble buildings
- Carved stone door-cases, some with stone pediments
- Window openings with a vertical emphasis
- Timber windows painted white
- Sandstone roofing ridges, stone coping and kneelers
- Unbroken Westmorland green slate roofs laid in traditional diminishing courses
- Ashlar chimney stacks
- Maypole

Appendix A National, Regional and Local Policies

1 National Planning Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 69 requires that local planning authorities shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas. The Act therefore places a duty on the local planning authority to designate conservation areas in areas which they consider meet the criteria.

Section 72 of the Act places a duty on the local planning authority in the exercise of their planning functions, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

Section 71 of the Act requires that from time to time, local planning authorities shall formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

Section 73 of the Act requires the local planning authority to publicise proposals which would in their opinion affect the character and appearance of a conservation area. Such proposals need not be within the conservation area and PPG 15 (Paragraph 4.14) further advises that in the Secretary of State's view, the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area should also be a material consideration when considering proposals which are outside the area, but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area.

Planning Policy Guidance

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment - September 1994

2 Regional Planning Guidance

Draft Submitted Regional Spatial Strategy North West

See documents at North West Regional Assembly website: www.nwra.gov.uk

Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan

See document at Cumbria County Council's structure plan website: www.planningcumbria.org

3 Local Planning Guidance

Eden Local Plan 1996 (saved policies)

- Policy BE3 - New Development in Conservation Areas New development within a conservation area should not adversely affect the character or appearance of the area. It must also respect the scale, form, orientation,

- Policy BE4 - Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas

Proposals to alter or replace shop fronts and property facades within conservation areas must wherever possible conserve original features and material, reflect traditional design features and be constructed in traditional materials.

- Policy BE5 - Advertisements in Conservation Areas

Within conservation areas, advertisements should not adversely affect the character or appearance of the area.

- Policy BE13 - Development Affecting Listed Buildings

Development proposals which would adversely affect the character or setting of a listed building or result in the loss of important features will not be permitted.

- Policy BE14 - Alteration of Listed Buildings

Minor alterations which are necessary to facilitate the appropriate change of use of listed buildings or to improve accessibility will be supported provided they are judged acceptable in relation to Policy BE13.

- Policy BE19 - Quality of Design

In considering development proposals the Council will have regard to the quality of the design submitted. It will be expected in all cases that this will be such as will maintain the quality of the landscape or built environment within which the proposal is located. Where development is proposed in juxtaposition to existing development which is traditional in character the Council will require designs to have particular regard to the scale, massing, character, architectural features and materials of that existing development. Regard must be had in all proposals not only to the design of buildings but also to the provision and proper layout of open spaces and landscaped areas.

- Policy BE21 - Light Pollution

Applications for development requiring or likely to require external lighting shall include details of lighting schemes. Such schemes will be assessed against the following criteria:

- i) that the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum to undertake the task;
- ii) that light spillage is minimised;

- iii) in edge of town or village locations, or in rural areas, that landscaping measures will be provided to screen the lighting installation from neighbouring countryside areas; and
- iv) that road safety will not be compromised as a result of dazzling or distraction.

- Policy BE23 - Display of Advertisements

Applications for consent to display advertisements will be permitted where the size of the sign and the materials to be used are appropriate to the location and will not have an adverse effect on either the visual amenity of the locality or on highway safety.

- Policy SH6 - Village Shops

Proposals for small retail outlets and post offices within existing settlements, but outside established shopping areas, will be permitted provided that:

- i) the proposal is of a design and scale suited to its location;
- ii) access and parking arrangements are satisfactory;
- iii) impact on the amenity of other occupiers in the locality is of an acceptable level; and
- iv) the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impact on the local built form, landscape, and conservation interests.

- Policy SH7 - Village Shops and Post Offices

Proposals which assist in the provision or retention of village shops or post offices will be supported.

- Policy PT8 - Access to Buildings

Through negotiation the Council will seek to ensure that all new development to which the general public have access makes provision for access by people with physical disabilities.

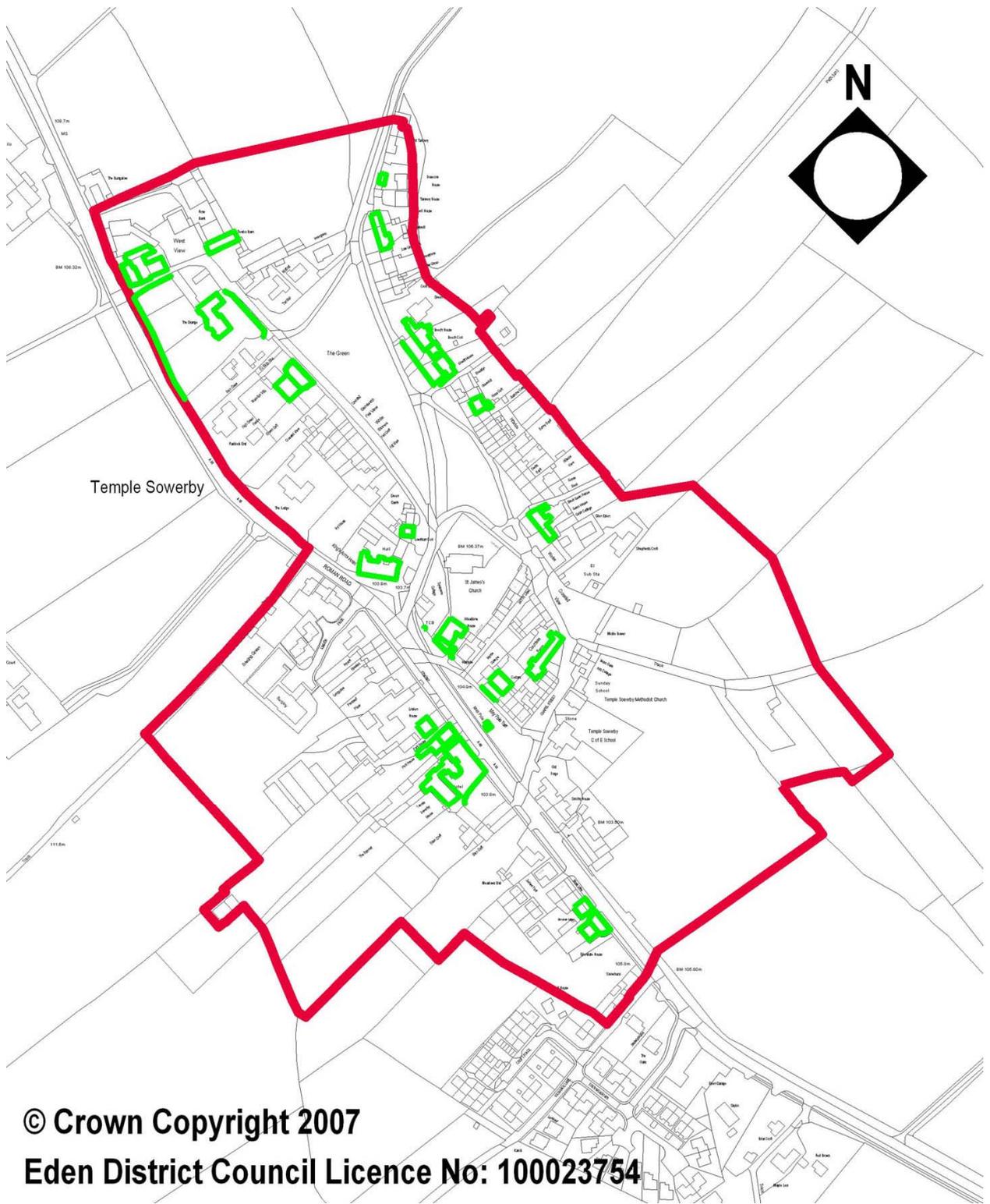
Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents

- Shopfront and Advertisement Design (2006)
- An Accessible and Inclusive Environment (2007)

Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Eden Design Summary (1999)

Plan 1 **Listed Buildings within Temple Sowerby Conservation Area**



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