

# Bonsall

## Conservation Area Character Appraisal



DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL

**APRIL 2011**

# Bonsall

## Conservation Area Appraisal

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in conjunction with the Peak District National Park Authority

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#### *Acknowledgements:*

Bonsall – A Village and Its History (2005)

*Bonsall History Project*

*Historic photographs on p6, p7, p9 & p10 are taken from the above document*

The Lead Legacy (2004)

*English Heritage / Peak District National Park Authority / English Nature*

Bonsall – Village Design Statement (2002)

*Bonsall Community in association with*

*Derbyshire County Council/ Peak District National Park Authority/ Derbyshire Dales District Council*

## INTRODUCTION

### **The Purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

A conservation area is *an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*. Conservation Areas are designated under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Council is obliged by section 71 of the same Act to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area, which are conservation areas.

The contents of this Conservation Area Appraisal are intended both as a guide for owners and occupiers of buildings within the Conservation Area and as a guide for the Local Planning Authority. The contents are a material consideration when determining applications for development, dealing with appeals or proposing works for the preservation or enhancement of the area.

This Appraisal defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area & identifies some opportunities for enhancement. The Appraisal follows the model set out in English Heritage guidance (Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals - February 2006).

The Appraisal considers the wider setting beyond the Conservation Area boundary, by first looking at the historic development of the settlement and its immediate environs, to establish how it has changed over time. A review of the Conservation Area and its boundary is included, which is based on an understanding of the wider historic and archaeological context.

### **Bonsall Conservation Area – General Character**

Bonsall is a distinctive and unique settlement. The layout and pattern of the historic village has been determined by its topography and the village lies within a shallow fold or dip in the landscape – between these folds High Street and Yeoman Street were to evolve. This topography assisted in protecting the buildings from prevailing winds and driving rain and as a consequence the historic village (pre 1940) constricted itself within this ‘fold’ creating the pattern and form of a tightly knit development of small cottages interspersed with larger, detached, houses of the local gentleman farmers. The prevalent local building material is limestone with clay tiles for roofs and sandstone used for dressings and details. The general character of the vast majority of the cottages is plain and simple with little or no architectural pretension. It is this general plainness and simplicity and the grouping and tight-knit character of so many of the houses that gives Bonsall its distinctive and unique character. The conglomeration of cottages and outbuildings also provides an important roofscape to the village. Set within its landscape, Bonsall is approached, from several directions, by descent allowing roof-top views of the village to be seen. This ‘mosaic’ pattern of roofs of different sizes and orientations provides a further distinctive view of the village that contributes to its special character and appearance.

## SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Distinctive features of the village include:-

- A mixture of short-range views contained within the valleys and long-range panoramic views from higher vantage points.
- Water, in the form of natural springs, brooks and wells is a distinctive feature characteristic throughout the area.
- A definite contrast between areas of undeveloped landscape and 'tightly-knit' built development.
- A diverse orientation of layout, with many gables facing onto the road.
- Housing along the main streets is generally linear and embraces the road.
- An irregular form of development is evident in parts of the village, particularly where there is no distinct building line.
- A lack of uniformity of built development creates a rural rather than sub-urban layout.
- Smaller and more compact plot sizes in the main core of the village with larger plots / buildings to the edge of the village.
- A wealth of historic buildings, some 'listed'.
- Generally developments are small-scale.
- Simple, robust and in many cases, economical stone built housing.
- Limestone is the predominant building material, with sandstone used for dressings. There is some render and a limited use of brick. Roofs are usually Staffordshire blue clay tiles or slate.
- Attractive unaltered roofscape with many properties retaining their chimneys.
- A variety of functional building types and structures within the village have been retained – chapels, public houses, small retail premises, 20<sup>th</sup> century social housing, agricultural buildings, fountains etc.
- Distinctive garden areas, often steeply 'tiered'.
- A 'working' village which remains linked to agricultural activities.
- A number of small distinctive field barns lie within (and beyond) the existing Conservation Area boundary.
- Distinctive building types such as Framework Knitters workshops, field barns and chapels remain.
- Numerous limestone walls, usually of a random rubble construction with a variety of coping details.
- The retention of the pattern of small fields and meadows with their associated dry-stone walls and ancient hedgerows.
- Gardens retaining their utilitarian/functional uses, e.g. allotment use.
- Pigeon lofts and outbuildings, which are familiar structures in the landscape / streetscape.
- Some distinctive features such as K6 telephone kiosks and post boxes.
- An absence of urban features such as road markings, street lighting, street clutter.
- Enhancement of the rural character by the narrow roads and lanes without footways.

It is important to note that the Community of Bonsall in conjunction with Derbyshire Dales District Council, Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park Authority compiled a comprehensive 'Village Design Statement' in 2002 which has been made reference to, where relevant for the production of this Appraisal. This Village Design Statement and 'Bonsall A Village and Its History' produced by the Bonsall History Project demonstrates the level of commitment to the village at a local level. This is recognised and welcomed by the District Council.