Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 9**

30 September 2025

Marske Conservation Area

Purpose of the Report

1. To recommend the designation of Marske as a conservation area, and the adoption of a new Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

Recommendation

2. That the Authority:
    a. designates the area of Marske within the National Park (shown on the map in **Appendix A**) as part of the Marske Conservation Area;
    b. approves adoption of the Marske Conservation Area Character Appraisal, and
    c. approves the adoption of the associated Conservation Area Management Plan.

Strategic Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and support the strategic planning framework:
    - **Action Plan 2025-26**
      5.3 Consider the responses to the proposed extension of the Marske Conservation Area and determine whether to extend it

Background

4. Section 69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that:
    a. 'Every local planning authority 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
    b. Shall designate such areas as conservation areas.'

5. Paragraph 204 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 states that:

'When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.'

6. Marske is a village split between two local authorities, with the boundary bisecting the village along the main road. The north-western section was designated as a conservation area in 1995 by the former Richmondshire District Council (now North Yorkshire Council). A short character statement has been produced by North Yorkshire Council (**Appendix B**), which touches on the nature and extent of the area, as well as Marske Hall, within the YDNPA boundary. The part of the village within the YDNPA boundary is not designated as a conservation area.

7. In 2021, the Parish Council for Marske and New Forest requested that the YDNPA carry out a review of the current Marske Conservation Area and expand the boundary to include parts of the village within the National Park. In September 2024, the Authority appointed Purcell Architecture Ltd. to prepare a character appraisal and management plan for Marske. The existing conservation area boundary within the North Yorkshire Council area will not be affected by any proposed boundary extension.

8. The aim of this report and the Conservation Area Appraisal is to provide information that supports the designation of a single, extended conservation area boundary to include the part of the village that lies within the Yorkshire Dales National Park. As such, the appraisal identifies areas of the village that are currently outside of the present designated boundary, with a view to incorporate them within the proposed new boundary. The report also includes a general assessment of Marske village as a whole, to provide a consistent and uniform assessment of the special character of the Conservation Area across both local authority areas.

The Review and Consultation Process

9. Following correspondence between the YDNPA and North Yorkshire Council, a preliminary meeting was held between officers of both authorities in July 2024 to discuss the proposed conservation area appraisal and boundary extension. It was agreed that the YDNPA would take the lead in preparing and funding the Appraisal and carrying out the public consultation, and that North Yorkshire Council would assist in providing relevant information.

10. The review started in September 2024. A formal public consultation ran from February to April 2025. As part of this process, a copy of the draft appraisal document and feedback form was made available on the Authority's website. Written notifications were sent to a number of external consultees including the Parish Council and North Yorkshire Council. In addition, leaflets with attached feedback forms were distributed to households in Marske, and paper copies of the appraisal and feedback forms were made available at the YDNPA office in Bainbridge and St Edmunds Church, Marske.

11. A public meeting was held at St Edmunds Church, Marske on 12 March 2025, which was attended by around 30 local residents and parish members, and by YDNPA conservation officers and representatives from Purcell Architecture.

12. 34 responses were received following the public consultation, with almost all being from residents of the existing and proposed conservation area or the surrounding parish. Overall, the appraisal document was well-received but responses were more

divided with regard to the proposed inclusion of the areas of agricultural land in the immediate setting of the village. Letters of support were received from the Parish Council and Richmond Civic Society. Those who objected to the inclusion of additional farmland within the conservation area, generally raised concerns regarding perceived additional planning restrictions and bureaucracy, with a particular emphasis on the fields surrounding the Gothic Barn to the south of the village. However, some consultees argued that archaeological features within some surrounding agricultural land should be included within the conservation area boundary to afford them additional recognition and protection. There was more general support for the inclusion of Marske Hall and the associated designed landscape/gardens.

13. A summary of the suggestions and issues raised as part of the public consultation is listed in Section 6.0 on pages 70-71 of the draft Conservation Area Appraisal, which is available on the Authority's website https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about/heritage/cultural-heritage/conservation-areas/marske-conservation-area-appraisal/

14. Following the public consultation, the Authority produced an amended Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, incorporating the relevant comments and suggestions received. The proposed conservation area boundary was revised to exclude a large parcel of agricultural land surrounding the Gothic Barn to the south of the village, reflecting the weight of opinion of local residents against including this land.

The Special Character of Marske

15. The Appraisal identifies the following key values which contribute towards the special interest of Marske, demonstrating that the proposed extended conservation area is worthy of designation as per the requirements of Paragraph 204 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024:

    a. Evidential value: evidence of historical farming practices in the village, and archaeological earthworks within adjacent parcels of farmland. The Church of St Edmund has at least 12th Century origins, and its churchyard may contain evidence of an earlier chapel, burials and human remains.

    b. Historical value: development of the village as a former medieval farming settlement, and the later association with the Hutton family of Marke Hall, who were instrumental in shaping much of the present village during the 17th and 18th Centuries. The village has retained its plan form since at least the early 19th Century. Vernacular buildings are present, dating from the 18th Century origins and including traditional farm buildings which have not yet been converted.

    c. Aesthetic value: there are attractive public views of the immediate area, both from within the conservation area and when viewing from nearby hillsides, including significant landmarks such as the Gothic Barn to the south. The area contains numerous traditional 18th and 19th Century farmhouses, and a cohesive palate of building materials and local details. Many fine views of Marske Hall and its associated outbuildings and designed landscape, including mature trees.

d. Communal value: the village has a fine landscape setting, and an attractive historic environment which draws walkers, particularly those undertaking the Coast-to-Coast Walk, and other visitors into the conservation area, and provides an attractive place to live for permanent residents.

Financial Implications

16. There are no financial implications anticipated in association with the proposed extension of Marske as a Conservation Area, or the proposed adoption of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Legal Implications

17. Whilst the designation of a conservation area does affect permitted development rights within that area, as per the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, within the YDNP these changes to permitted development rights are very limited due to the existing protections within the National Park. The main change in permitted development rights to Marske would be further planning control over demolition of unlisted buildings and walls over a certain size. Conservation area status also provides additional protection to trees within that area over a certain size.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

18. None.

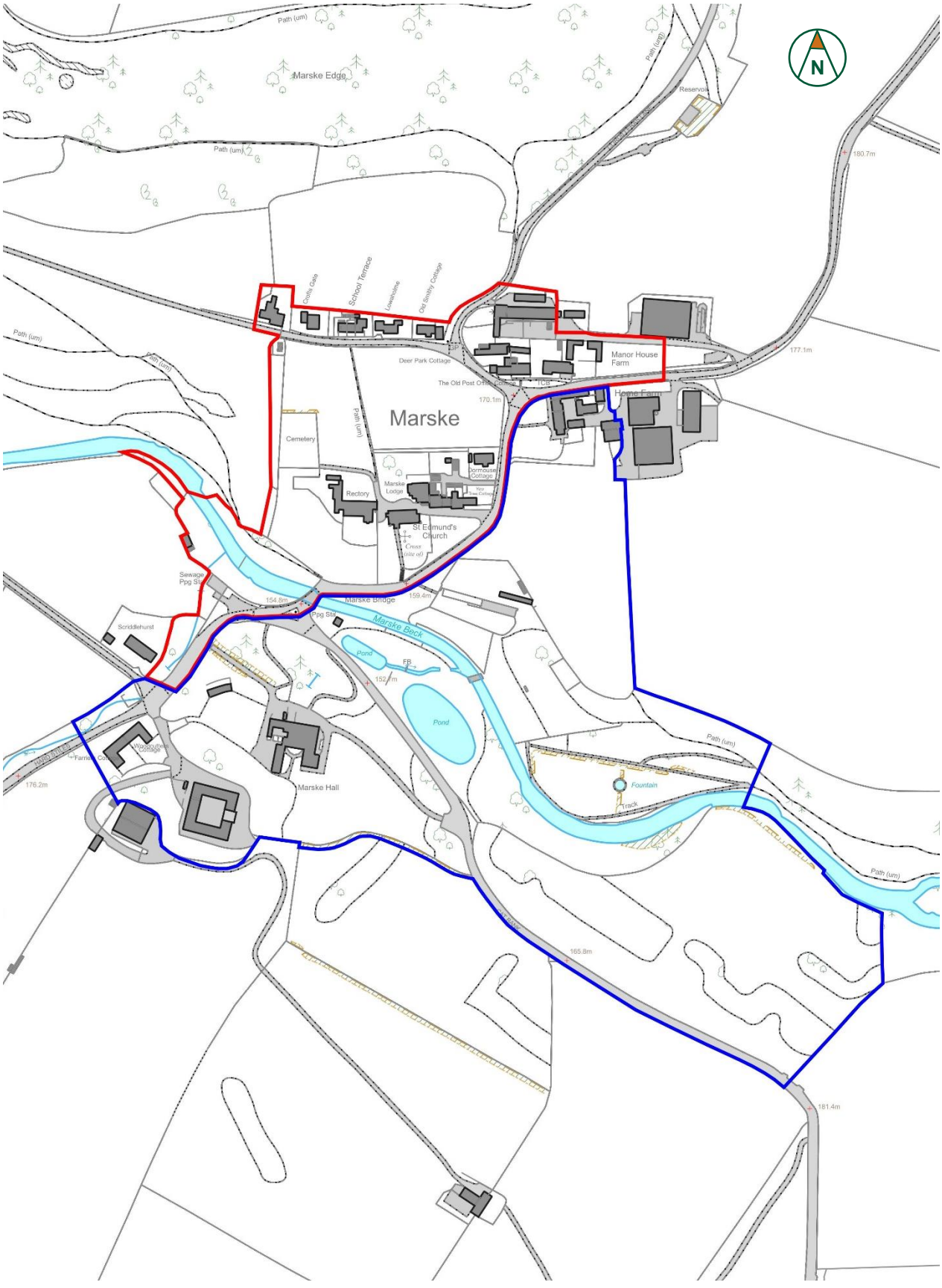
Conclusion

19. The detailed appraisal of Marske's historical and architectural character and its wider setting supports the extension of the conservation area boundary to include a part within the YDNPA boundary, and to the adoption of the Marske Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Peter Reynolds
Building Conservation Officer

Appendix A

Marske Conservation Area boundary, with existing area bounded in red, and proposed extension bounded in blue



Appendix B

Statement from North Yorkshire Council's website, extracted 11 September 2025, giving a brief character appraisal of the existing Marske Conservation Area

"Marske Conservation Area was designated in 1995. The following brief statement identifies the environmental qualities which merit designation and which the District Council consider should be preserved or enhanced as the case may be. Marske is split by the National Park boundary. Although certain aspects of the overall character of the village are covered in this profile, detailed comment is restricted to that part of the proposed Conservation Area which lies outside the National Park.

Marske lies in an area of truly outstanding landscape, though due to the topography of the area the village is not particularly prominent, nestling into a hollow, close to the junction of the narrow valley cut by Marske Beck and the Swale. Indeed there is almost a sense of surprise on entering the village. This, combined with the high quality of its buildings, form and spacious nature, produce an air of tranquillity, and create a quite distinctive sense of place. Although the settlement pre-dates Domesday, its current form and character derive from more agricultural and mining influences, together with the development of the estate centred upon Marske Hall. The Hall and grounds occupy the southern half of the settlement. Rather curiously the Hall and its fine ornamental gardens are separated by a road which links the village to the "new" Richmond - Reeth road. The reason behind this is that the main road was not authorised until 1836, prior to which Marske lay on the principal route. A corn mill was demolished to make way for the ornamental gardens, now a striking feature in its own right. The remainder of the village is represented by two distinct clusters of buildings, the first centred upon the Church, and the second around Home Farm and Manor House, with a finger of more recent development extending along the lane leading to Clints. Between these elements are a series of open paddocks.

The Conservation Area boundary has been drawn quite tightly around the building groups, though enclosed fields which are important to the overall character of Marske are incorporated, as well as the distinctive screen belt of mature trees to the south of School House, which forms a natural edge to the village.

Available information suggests that from an archaeological point of view, Marske is unlikely to be of significant interest.

Architecturally, buildings follow local vernacular traditions, with limited openings, simple detailing and a generally robust style. Cottages typically incorporate sash windows and solid doors. Stone predominates both for wall construction, which varies from good quality dressed stone to rubble, and roofing. Constant variation in scale adds considerably to the visual quality of the building groups, particularly that centred upon the Church. Outstanding buildings, include the Church of St. Edmund King and Martyr which dates from the C12th, and the Old Rectory built in c1753.

Although there are no formal "greens" within the village, the paddocks separating the central and northern groups compensate for this and are of considerable importance to Marske's quality of openness. As already mentioned, trees make a significant contribution throughout the Conservation Area. Stone walls likewise play an important role in providing strong visual and physical links.

Few buildings have suffered from ill-considered change, though where this has occurred, opportunities exist for enhancement. The problem of intrusive overhead wires will also need to be addressed.

The potential for future large farm buildings to impact upon the setting of Marske is highlighted by modern agricultural buildings to north-east of the village."

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