

Marton-cum-Grafton

Conservation Area

Harrigate
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MARTON CUM GRAFTON CONSERVATION AREA

Marton cum Grafton Conservation Area was first designated on 17th October 1979. Following a review of Harrogate District's conservation areas the boundary was amended on 27 October 1994 and is shown on the map in this leaflet. The essence of the Conservation Area Designation Statement is set out below.

Historic Significance

Marton-cum-Grafton consists of the two distinct settlements of Marton and Grafton. The names are derived from Old English "Mere (or Maer) tún" meaning "the homestead by the lake" ("maer" meaning "on a boundary" is a possible alternative) and "Gráftún" meaning "the homestead in or by a grove".

There has been a settlement here from early times. The hills above Grafton afford extensive views and hence provided an ideal site for the Iron Age hill fort. Excavations in 1949 unearthed wall foundations, hearths, tweezers and bronze bracelets. Unfortunately, much of the summit has been destroyed by allotments, ploughing and quarrying.

The church at Marton was mentioned in Pope Nicholas's Taxation of the 11th Century. The old church, dedicated to All Saints, and of which some fragments still exist, was erected in the 12th Century. The nave had to be rebuilt after a fire, presumably caused by the Scots during their 1318 invasion. During this period some of the lands of Marton belonged to the Priory of Nun Monkton and to Fountains Abbey. There are accounts in 1319 of rents belatedly received due to the Scottish invasion the year before which left the people destitute. The Church was disused for three quarters of a century after the Reformation and subsequently fell into ruin. During the following centuries it was repaired in a very indifferent manner and in 1875 was dismantled and a new church built using the old materials at a cost of £2,095. The Reverend John Robert Lunn was vicar and recorded the events in a small book entitled "Marton-cum-Grafton Church". (See below under Architectural Significance.) The register dates from 1648.

Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, Bart. of Kirby Hall was Lord of the Manor and principal landowner. His heirs were killed in the First World War and the family estates were split up.

The villages of Marton-cum-Grafton were thriving self-contained communities at the end of the 19th Century. Unfortunately, many of the tradesmen and their businesses have disappeared but a few remain and make a significant contribution to the community.

Setting and Layout

Marton-cum-Grafton is situated 3 miles SE of Boroughbridge and 7 miles NE of Knaresborough. It lies between the Great North Road and the Roman road from York to Aldborough. The two townships nestle either side of the high ridges of the Grafton Hills.



Grafton looking west

Both villages have open green areas at the junction of the various, roads into them. However, Grafton has a clearly defined main street which Marton lacks. In Marton none of the roads really takes precedence over any other. Development has taken place in a linear manner along the roads; any backland development is much more recent.

Spatial Qualities

The Conservation Area of Marton-cum-Grafton encompasses four areas with differing spatial qualities. Much of the area consists of gently winding roads with their interesting juxtaposition of farms and cottages, in keeping with many of the small farming townships in the District. Some farm buildings are set against the footpath with the houses set back behind small front gardens. The gaps between buildings afford views to farmyards, fields or open countryside beyond.

The principal thoroughfare of Grafton (Town Street), however, is enclosed. The street rises up from the open space outside Croft Farm and the houses and cottages are built directly off the footpath. The only view up the street to the east is of buildings and trees beyond. The view down the street to the west is of open countryside beyond the three storey Old Manor House at the bottom, which forms an important 'stop' to the road.

Grafton Hills and Wood Hills are a very important feature of the Conservation Area. The paths through them are winding and totally enclosed by mature woodland. The paths open out onto the plateau of the playing fields from which spectacular views of the surrounding countryside, especially to the north, can be enjoyed. The other area of open space is in Marton around the church which is set on one of the high points of the village opposite the open fields of Yew Tree Farm and Peacock Farm.



The Punch Bowl Inn, Marton

Architectural Significance

There are 10 listed buildings in Marton-cum-Grafton Conservation Area, all Grade II:

Christ Church, Church Lane, Marton
Orchard Cottage, Church Lane, Marton
Beck Farmhouse, Grafton Lane, Grafton
Corner House, Town Street, Grafton
Majestic House, Town Street, Grafton
Prospect Farmhouse, Town Street, Grafton
Dew House, Main Street, Marton
Front Garden Wall of Dew House, Marton
Punch Bowl Inn, Main Street Marton
Peach Tree Farmhouse, Reas Lane, Marton

Grafton Hills Iron Age hill fort is a Scheduled Ancient Monument consisting of earth and gravel ramparts.

The houses and farm buildings of Marton-cum-Grafton are predominantly of brick with pantiled roofs. Houses are two storey and are of simple form. Generally windows are sashes with rubbed brick heads and stone cills. Roofs have pointed verges with very little eaves overhang and the chimneys are at the ridge. Many of the cottages are rendered and some of the later houses have slate roofs. Farm buildings are generally of brick. Cobbles, however, are often commonly used as an infill material. A newly refurbished outbuilding on Grafton Lane is of cobbles and forms an attractive feature against the highway. Beck Farmhouse also has cobble walls, coursed with brick dressings.

The church, rebuilt in 1875, was designed by John Ladds and is of sandstone with a Welsh slate roof. The building incorporates much of the material of the previous church. The Norman doorway has a sunken tympanum (area between lintel of door and arch over) filled with cobble-stones and a crude cross. Leading from the chancel to the vestry is another Norman doorway, cleverly restored. There is also a Saxon window, pillars, part of another early window and a superb fragment of a late Anglo Saxon Cross. Overall the church is in the Early French Middle Pointed Style. There is a bell cot over the vestry to preserve the old bell, claimed to be the oldest but one in England.



The other stone building in Marton is the old Chapel which has been converted into a house. The former Grafton Wesleyan Methodist Church, also converted into a house, is of polychromatic brickwork with a slate roof and has fine ridge end finials.

The school, built in 1861, is of brick with a slate roof. It has the traditional Victorian features of gables formed at right angles to the main roof with decorative bargeboards.

The Punch Bowl Inn dates from the late 16th Century and is of timber frame construction. It was extended in the 18th Century as well as more recently. The dormers are a modern addition to a steeply pitched pantile roof.

The Old Manor House on Grafton Lane opposite Town Street is more imposing than most of the other houses in the village. It is of three storeys and is situated at a higher level than the road. It has a slate roof, a more regular Georgian-style facade and a pedimented doorway.

Landscape Features

The most important landscape feature of the Conservation Area is the hillside covered with mature trees. The trees, which are very prominent when viewed from the northern approaches to Grafton, form a backdrop to the buildings of the village.

There are other groups of mature trees throughout the Conservation Area, including those at Beck House Farm, the fine avenue along Limebar Bank Road, those adjacent to Town House, and those on Church Lane and around Marton Hall. There is a variety of species, the most prominent being broad leaf. However, an unusual feature south west of the Hall is a circle of coniferous trees which look out of place in the landscape.

On the edge of the Conservation Area, fields are bounded by hedgerows; as one passes into the built-up part of the village, boundaries are demarcated with walls. Generally walls are of cobble stone with brick on edge coping. The cobble wall to Orchard Cottage and the brick and cobble wall of Dew Farmhouse have stone copings, whilst the curved cobble wall on the junction of Limebar Bank Road and Grafton Lane is strengthened with brick buttresses. There are also brick boundary walls - these are often functioning as retaining walls.



Dew House, Marton

Many houses have cast iron railings (mainly with simple verticals) set into stone copings on low walls. An example of a more ornate railing is that to the Old Manor House facing up Town Street, Grafton. The church has a cast iron gate and overthrow but, unfortunately, no light.

Much of the Conservation Area consists of open green space. There is no green as such, but large grass verges at the main road junctions of each village provide an additional focus. The two villages are separated by fields and the road between is enclosed with hedgerows which accentuate its bends. This forms an important division in the Conservation Area and should be retained.

Another feature which can be seen from the south outside the Conservation Area is the water tower, sited at a high point on the edge of the woodland. At the highest point, a bench mark records a level of 75.18m in contrast to that of The Bungalow just to the NE of the Conservation Area at 31.91m. A footpath link between the villages passes along a high ridge above the playing fields from which the walker can enjoy spectacular views of the countryside beyond.

The floorscape is generally uninspired; bitmac roads and pavements with pre-cast concrete kerbs. However, some of the grass verges do not have edgings. The unmade road to Pear Tree House and Cottages, Grafton, is a pleasant back street with some cobbles.

Objectives

1. The primary objective is to protect, restore and enhance the character of Marton-cum-Grafton Conservation Area.
2. Regard will be had to maintaining the historic relationship of the village with its landscape setting.
3. The Council will seek the use of traditional materials and the adoption of traditional proportions, styles and details when considering proposals for the restoration or alteration of existing buildings or the erection of new buildings within the Conservation Area.
4. Landscape features such as walls, hedges, trees and traditional floorscape materials which are important to the Conservation Area should be retained and the Council will exercise its powers to protect these. Hedges and trees have a finite life and consideration will be given to the need for their replacement.
5. Bearing in mind that Marton-cum-Grafton has changed and evolved over the centuries, its economic well being and development needs will be fully considered.

It is hoped that these objectives and the identified enhancements can be progressed in liaison with owners, the Parish Council, amenity groups and other interested parties.

Policies

Current statutory policies in respect of the Conservation Area are contained in the Harrogate District Local Plan which was adopted on 19 February 2001. For further details on Local Plan policies please contact the Local Plan Policy Section on 01423 556581.



Prospect House, Grafton

ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

There are a few obvious detractors from the character and appearance of Marton-cum-Grafton but the following would help to enhance the Conservation Area:

1. Long term undergrounding of overhead wires with removal of poles and the replacement of street lamps with traditional fittings.
2. Appropriate repairs and enhancements to the floorscape, using traditional materials. Protection and edging of the grassed areas, where necessary.
3. Repairs and enhancements to the untidy corner at the junction of Reas Lane and Main Street, Marton.
4. Making up of the road to Pear Tree Cottages using cobbles, setts or kidney stones in conjunction with York stone paving.
5. The management of the woodland at Grafton Hills and enhancement of the disused pit area at Wood Hills.
6. Dissuading householders from the installation of UPVC windows.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES & CONSERVATION AREAS

A conservation area is defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) gives further guidance on policy and practice in conservation areas.

Local authorities have a duty to:-

- (i) identify, designate and periodically review conservation areas.
- (ii) prepare proposals for their preservation and enhancement, submit them for consideration at a public meeting and have regard to the views expressed.
- (iii) have regard to their preservation and enhancement in carrying out their general planning functions.
- (iv) publicise applications affecting their character or appearance.

ADDITIONAL CONTROLS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Broadly, the main additional controls which apply in a conservation area (and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) are as follows:

1. DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS

The total or substantial demolition of any building exceeding 115m³ requires conservation area consent. (However, the total demolition of dwelling houses, buildings adjoining them and other buildings exceeding 50m³, both within and outside conservation areas, requires prior approval by the local planning authority.)

2. DEMOLITION OF WALLS

The demolition of any wall exceeding 1m in height (if abutting a highway or public open space) or 2m in height elsewhere requires conservation area consent.

3. WORKS TO TREES

Six weeks notice must be given to the local planning authority of the intention to fell, top or lop any tree with a trunk in excess of 75mm in diameter measured at a height of 1m above ground level.

EXTENSIONS TO DWELLING HOUSES

Domestic extensions which do not require planning consent are limited to 50m³ or 10%, whichever is the greater, compared with 70m³ or 15% for non-terraced houses outside conservation areas.

5. CURTILAGE BUILDINGS

Any curtilage building greater than 10m³ requires planning consent and is treated as an enlargement of the dwelling house. (Less stringent controls apply outside conservation areas.)

6. DORMERS

All dormers require planning consent. (Less stringent controls apply outside conservation areas.)

7. SATELLITE DISHES

Satellite dishes on chimneys, front walls or on front roof slopes require planning consent. (Less stringent controls apply outside conservation areas.)

8. EXTERNAL CLADDING

External cladding of a dwelling with stone, tiles, artificial stone, plastic or timber requires planning consent.

GRANTS FOR WORKS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

To complement these additional controls, grants may be available from the Council for the repair of listed buildings or for projects which will enhance the character of conservation areas. In specific areas of the District, e.g. Ripon, Knaresborough and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a wider range of grants may be available. For more information, contact Customer Services at the Department of Technical Services (01423 500600) for an explanatory leaflet.