

Kirkby Lonsdale & District Civic Society

Newsletter - Winter 2014-15

3) The final design proposals for the dwellings must be of a very high quality and we strongly support the suggestions about materials, and massing, and the need to acknowledge but not ape the local vernacular, and so on. There can be a range of individual styles, but the whole site must be of a piece architecturally, and herein lies a problem. With three different landowners, and different developers possibly making proposals at different times, there exists the possibility of an unharmonious, disconnected development that looks to have grown 'like Topsy'. We feel there is a strong case for a strong single vision for the built environment on the site, and would like to see SLDC finding a way to achieve this, even if there is more than one developer involved.

Other Planning Matters

We commented on only two other Planning Applications since the last newsletter.

CU/2014/0030 - Barn to west of Hying House, Low Biggins. We objected on the basis of visual intrusion, which we felt was contrary to the aims and objectives of the South Lakeland Core Strategy.

SL/2014/0998 - Agricultural Storage Shed, Low Biggins. No objection in principle but we asked if the location could be moved slightly, still in the same field, in order to reduce visual impact.

News from Lancaster University Regional Heritage Centre

On January 17th there is a full study day 'Exploring the smaller towns of North West England from the Middle Ages to the Victorian period', which may be of interest to any members who enjoyed our own course on the history of the towns around Kirkby Lonsdale in 2012. Full details can be found on their website <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/users/rhc/event/5106/>.

Forthcoming Winter Talks

Monday January 12th.

'Local Surgeons in the Nineteenth Century'. Consultant surgeon Brian Rhodes will delight us with tales of body snatchers, blood-letting and other practices of local surgeons.

Monday February 9th

'Folklore, Traditions and Customs of Cumbria'. Jean Scott-Smith, who describes herself as a 'Westmorland Lass' will draw on her wealth of local knowledge for this talk, including some vernacular dialect!

Monday March 9th

'An Archaeological Study of Sizergh Parkland'. Jamie Quartermaine of Oxford Archaeology North will describe a recent study at Sizergh, which revealed amongst other things the remains of ancient barns, boundaries and burnt mounds.

Volunteer Found

In the summer edition we asked for help with local matters from members living in those areas of the Rainbow Parish where no committee member currently resides - Hutton Roof, Lupton and Middleton. We are pleased to report that Mr Peter Yorke has kindly volunteered to look after Middleton Parish, and he will be our eyes and

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ears on the ground, helping the committee with any matters pertaining to his Parish. He is currently trying to establish when and where the Roman milestone, that was moved from its resting place in a field adjacent to the A683, will be re-instated. Volunteers, whose role can be as formal or informal as the individual may wish, are still sought for Hutton Roof and Middleton parishes.

Editor: Dr Ken Humphris

The views expressed are those of the Editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the Civic Society Committee as a whole. The Editor would be delighted to receive comments or articles from members of the Society for inclusion in the newsletter

Committee

Chairman
Dr Ken Humphris
Lowgill, High Casterton
LA6 2SD
Tel: 015242 71983

Mr Mike Marcznski
Tel: 015242 73318

Mrs Audrey Phillips
Tel: 015242 72514

Registered Charity No. 502315

Secretary

Mrs Sue Pelter
Rigmaden Farm House
Mansergh
LA6 2ET
Tel: 015242 76216

Miss Pat France
Tel: 015242 71740

Membership Secretary

Mrs Judith Manifold
Tel: 015242 73457

Treasurer

Mr David Dalgoutte
Delph cottage
Jingling Lane
Kirkby Lonsdale
LA6 2AW

Peter Stockdale
Tel: 015242 76443

Mr Mike Kingsbury
Tel: 015242 76434

Mr Tom Felix
Tel: 015242 72248

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Warkworth Bridge, Northumberland by Mike Kingsbury

In September of this year I was visiting the Northumberland coast for a few days and during this time I saw Warkworth Bridge which bears a remarkable similarity to our own Devil's Bridge in Kirkby Lonsdale. The size and method of construction are so alike that there is a remote possibility that they were constructed by the same stonemasons. There possible dates of construction are also similar – 1365 for Devil's Bridge (when a grant of pontage or repair order was granted) and within 2 years of 1378-9 for Warkworth (Documentary evidence records that John Cook of Newcastle, who died in 1378-9, left 20 marks towards the building



Warkworth Bridge



Defensive gateway

of Warkworth Bridge on the condition it was built within two years).

I am indebted to a number of published and online sources for the following information and in particular the website <http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/English%20sites/2878.html>

Warkworth Bridge and defensive gateway are well-preserved, having been by-passed for vehicular traffic by the construction of the modern bridge immediately downstream. The bridge is believed to be the only surviving fortified bridge in England. As one of several medieval monuments which survive in Warkworth, its importance is enhanced by its relationship to these, and to the preserved layout of the medieval town.

Warkworth flourished in the medieval period when it was a harbour and market town. It lies on a loop of the River Coquet and still retains an essentially medieval layout, with the medieval bridge and gatehouse at the north, leading up to the castle (which is now opened to the public by English Heritage) on the highest point at the south end of the village. The Church of St. Lawrence is a fairly complete Norman church and quite unique in Northumberland.

The monument includes the above and below ground remains of Warkworth Bridge, a multi-span bridge of late 14th century date over the River Coquet, and the remains of a defensive gateway. The bridge has been closed to vehicular traffic since the 1960s but is open to pedestrians. The bridge and defensive tower are Listed Grade II. The bridge measures 43m long between land piers, with an overall length of 61m, by 3.5m wide between the parapet walls (by comparison Devil's Bridge is 3.7m wide). The bridge, built of squared and coursed sandstone, has two segmental ribbed arches, each with a span of 18.4m. The central pier has a triple chamfered plinth, and the north and south abutments have a single chamfered plinth. To counteract the abrasive action around the bridge foundations the river bed beneath the southern arch is paved with stone blocks set between lines of timber piles. The addition of upstream and downstream cutwaters, or triangular projections, to the central pier also aids the flow of water. The cutwaters are carried up to parapet level and form niches into which pedestrians

could retreat. The angles between the faces of the cutwater and the bridge parapets are spanned by short intermediate sections of wall, overhanging the angle below, and carrying drains with stone spouts. The parapets have been rebuilt in the 20th century. At the south end of the bridge two wing walls extend for several metres: the eastern wall measures 19m long and ends in a stone pier; the western wall measures 18m long and links to the defensive gateway. The riverbed beneath the bridge is paved with stone to prevent erosion of the bridge foundations.

At the south end of the bridge is a defensive gateway of 14th century date, constructed of large squared stone with cut dressings. It is rectangular in plan and measures 8.3m by 5.5m externally and stands about 8m tall. The entrance is through an archway opening into the gate passage, 3.5m wide, covered with a stone vault. On the west side of the gate passage there is an arched opening, with a studded door, into a guard chamber. The chamber, which measures 3.7m by 1.9m, has a stone bench at the north end, is lit by a slit at each end, and is covered by a stone vault. On the east side of the gate passage is a similar arched opening, with a door, to a spiral staircase for access to an upper room; here the wall is 1.5m thick, elsewhere the walls are about 0.7m thick. The upper floor, which measures 6.85m by 4.7m, was lit by windows in all four walls and, although partly restored in the 19th century, remains roofless. Traces of the windows can be seen on the north and south external elevations. On each of the east and west external elevations is a square headed chamfered narrow window, with a stone spout below that on the east. The room is said to have had a fireplace and three roof corbels but these are not visible today. Originally all traffic using the bridge was funnelled through the arch in its lower storey, which was also gated.

Documentary evidence records that John Cook of Newcastle, who died in 1378-9, left 20 marks towards the building of Warkworth Bridge on the condition it was built within two years. 20 marks is about £14 which equates to about £90,000 in today's money. This is unlikely to have been enough to have paid for the whole of the structure. It seems possible that the local landowner, Henry Percy, 1st Earl of Northumberland, who was building a new great tower at Warkworth Castle at the time, also provided some of the funding.

Documents also indicate that the bridge was in the charge of wardens from at least the 15th century; a 'custodes pontis' was recorded in 1498 and Edward Cook was appointed bridge master in 1726. There is said to have been a cross on the east refuge of the bridge until about 1830, with the coat of arms of the Percy family, but this is now lost.

Warkworth Bridge, like Devil's Bridge, is in a remarkably good condition. It is possible that this is because of later repair or reconstruction but it may also be because the bridges were extremely well designed and constructed. They demonstrate that often medieval masons, though bold, knew what they were doing.

2014 Course - "Aspects of Ingleborough"

This course, expertly led by local archaeologist Dr David Johnson, comprised eight evening sessions and 4 field trips exploring the entire history of the Ingleborough massif (comprising Chapel-le-dale, Kingsdale, Crummockdale, Ribblesdale, and Clapdale) and a total of

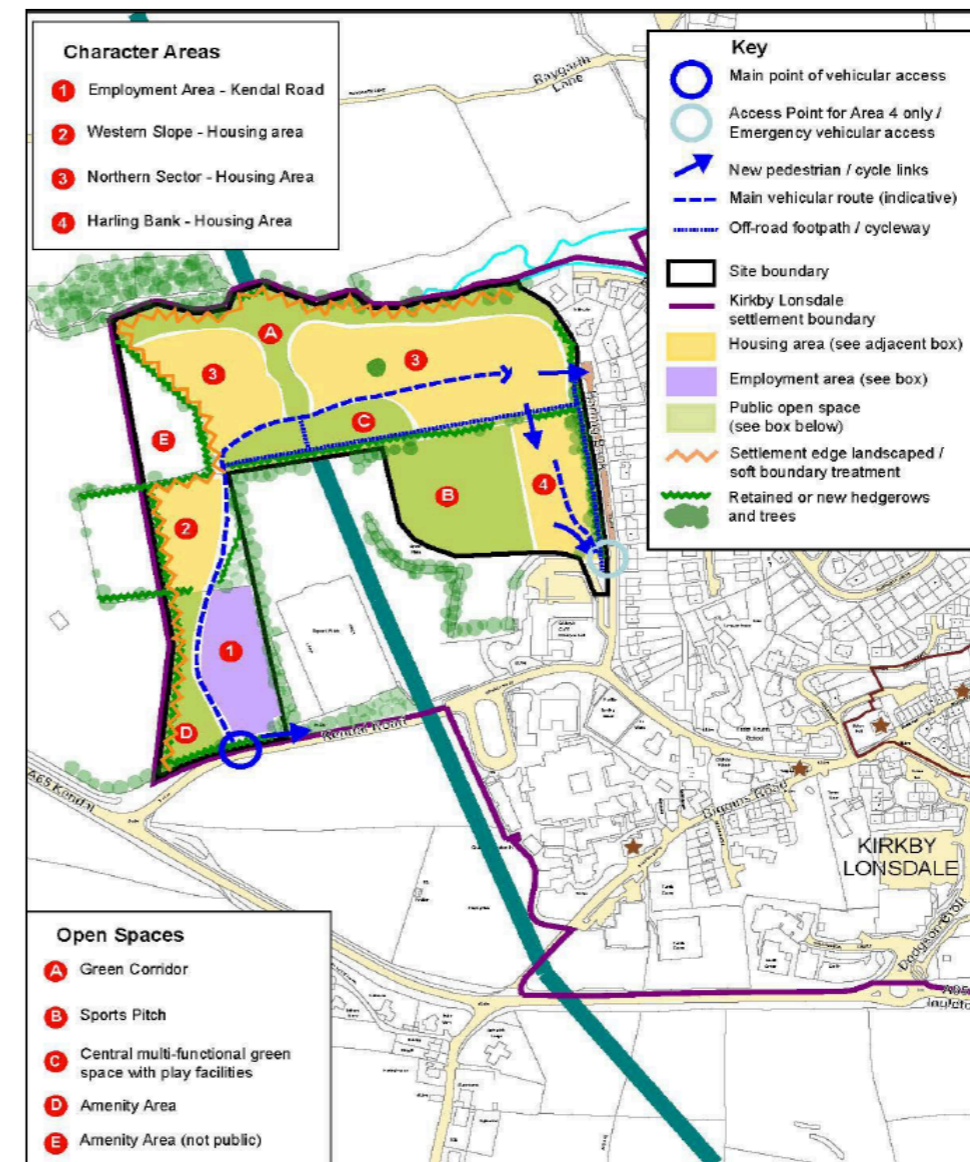


23 Members took part. It began with an understanding of the very complex geology, since this underpins much of the subsequent human exploitation of the area, and went on to explore how the area was occupied and settled from the Mesolithic age, through the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Romano-British period, and early- and post-mediaeval periods. David Johnson's classic tome ("Ingleborough - Landscape and History") is a 'must-read' for anyone who loves this part of the northwest, but the dynamic nature of current fieldwork was demonstrated by the numerous instances pointed out by the author where his 5-year old book is out of date due to recent discoveries. He, and the Ingleborough Archaeology Group

which he chairs, together with other groups in and around north Craven continue to make major advances in our understanding of how, when, and by whom the area was occupied during the last 1000 years or so, all underpinned by rigorous research, excavation, and the use of advanced scientific methodology. Our leader really brought the past to life, never more so than during the field trips to the glorious countryside of the Ingleborough massif.

Development Brief - North of Kendal Road, Kirkby Lonsdale

SLDC's Development Brief for the site alongside Harling Bank was published in October, and provides site-specific planning guidance for this rather large (for Kirkby Lonsdale) development. It summarises the constraints and opportunities presented by a site and the type of development expected or encouraged on the site by the SLDC. There was a display of the details in Lunesdale Hall on November 25th, and the Brief was open for public comment up until December 5th. The plan below shows that there are three areas of housing and a one hectare area of employment land. Access to the residential areas would be from Kendal Road only, although it is suggested that the smaller housing area number four may have access from Harling Bank. It is also suggested that Kendal Road might be closed at QES so the route into the town centre would be via a modified junction on the A65. It is expected that the full council will adopt the plan, including any modifications arising from the consultation process, on March 25th 2015. What happens next is that one or more developers are likely to submit planning application(s) for the site in the normal way, but these must be in accordance with the key principles and overall framework set out in the Development Brief. Your Committee has commented as follows: 1) Inclusion of employment land within the site is in our view a mistake, since all residential traffic in areas two and three can only gain access through the employment area, and this will diminish the attractiveness of the dwellings to potential occupiers. Although screening and an amenity area are proposed, in practice there will be little control over what businesses in the SW part of the



site look like. The nearby section of the A65 already has a number of employment sites, and more could be accommodated, and with easier access. We believe this is a major deficiency of the proposal. 2) Preventing access to the main part of the site from Harling Bank is sensible, as is finding a way to eliminate traffic passing QES. With such a difficult site, we would also support the proposed main vehicle access point near the SW corner, but the potential impact on other roads must be carefully thought through. Some type of traffic management at the A65/Kendal Road junction will be needed, although we have reservations about the desirability of a roundabout, and the impact on traffic using Dodgson Croft must be considered. Most residents of the new site will access the town centre this way, and we wonder whether some kind of modelling can be done,

based on existing traffic flows, and taking into account the closure of Kendal Rd as a route to the town centre for traffic travelling SW along the A65, and the likely impact of additional traffic from the new development. At the very least a safe pedestrian crossing of Dodgson Croft may be indicated and perhaps other improvements too. We believe that resolving the means of easy, safe entry and exit to the site, and managing the knock-on effect on traffic flows elsewhere in the town whatever solution is proposed, is probably the major challenge of this development.