

12. Osmotherley

12.1 Location, Landscape Context and Setting

Osmotherley is tucked within the folds of the rolling Cleveland Hills, within the Western Escarpment Landscape Character Type. The historic core of the village is located on lower undulating ground set between steep-sided parallel ridges and is sited at a point where the Cod Beck cuts through the densely wooded scarp slopes which are a distinctive feature on the western boundary of the National Park. The landscape immediately surrounding the village comprises pastoral farmland with steeply rolling fields bound by dry stone walls and thick hedgerows. Some long, narrow remnant medieval strip fields border the eastern and northern edges of the village. The small water course of the Wiske has its source in Osmotherley and flows to the south and west while, in the wider setting to the village, the more major and deeply incised valley of Cod Beck forms a loop to the east and south. The dense riparian woodland which fills the Cod Beck valley merges with the extensive mixed woodlands of Big Wood and Thimbleby Bank Plantation to the south-east of the village. More uniform coniferous woodland is present to the north-east of the village near Cod Beck Reservoir. Mount Grace Priory, situated at the foot of the wooded scarp slopes on the western boundary of the National Park, lies close to Osmotherley and there are public footpaths between the village and this important cultural heritage feature.

12.2 Settlement form and character

Osmotherley is a nucleated settlement, laid out in a broad and subtly curving 'T' form with the market cross and small green surrounding it situated at the road junction at the core of the village. Buildings principally date from the 18th and 19th century and are predominantly constructed from local sandstone. Terraces of two or three storey houses largely front the streets with narrow grassy verges and elevated pavements lying adjacent to housing in many places. A parallel narrow lane, Back Lane, is aligned to the east of the main street of North End and buildings in this area are more varied in massing with single storey former farm buildings and boundary walls to rear gardens creating a less dense built form than on the main streets. There are distinctive wide cobbled and grassed verges at North End and West End, which add to the character of the settlement. Most have village green designation. Osmotherley has a strong architectural integrity, with the only exception being the line of modern houses with a suburban character perched high on Ruebury Lane to the north, and the ribbon development of small 20th century housing estates and detached bungalows aligning Clack Lane.

12.3 Key views, approaches and gateways

Three minor roads converge on the village with one of these, Clack Lane, being a key approach from the A19 from the west. The historic core of the village is largely hidden by the strongly rolling landform and dense vegetation on approach from all access roads. Later 20th century residential development along Clack Lane and, to a lesser degree, located on the upper northern fringes of the village on Ruebury Lane, are more visible from these routes and generally mar the sense of arrival to Osmotherley. Distinct gateways are experienced at the southern and northern edges of the village where high vegetated banks and groups of trees provide enclosure and framed views. There

is no sense of a gateway when travelling from the west due to the linear and piecemeal housing development aligning Clack Lane.

Key views out from Osmotherley are to the wooded Ruebury Hill to the north and the wider wooded scarp of Thimbleby Bank Plantation to the south-east seen from the higher northern parts of the village. There are also some more confined views, glimpsed through narrow lanes and alleyways between buildings, to the rolling pastures which immediately surround the village. Properties on the south-western edge of the village have elevated views over sloping pastures and the narrow valley of the Wiske. The square tower of the church stands proud above the diverse cluster of pitched pantile and slate roofs of domestic buildings within the core of the village and is most prominent in views from South End.

12.4 Settlement edges

The rolling landform of the surrounding landscape, and the location of much of the village on lower slopes, provides strong visual containment. Trees and tall hedgerows in rear gardens and on the fringes of Osmotherley also soften built edges and merge with the extensive woodlands present in the wider landscape. This gives the impression of the village being well-integrated with the surrounding landscape. This is particularly evident in elevated views from the slopes of Ruebury Hill (see photograph). More recent development along Clack Lane is less screened by landform and vegetation.

12.5 Heritage and nature conservation sites

There are numerous listed buildings within Osmotherley including the Church, the Queen Catherine Hotel and The Three Tuns Inn, but also a number of domestic buildings in North End. Of particular interest are the market cross and the surviving medieval pinfold.

The Conservation Area designation covers much of the older part of the village including the narrow linear pastures and gardens lying on the northern side of West End.

12.6 Summary of key elements and features which may be sensitive to development

- The steeply rolling pasture between Ruebery Lane and the northern edge of the Conservation Area – development in this area would be contrary to the predominant character and siting of the village which is set low in the landscape. Development on these steep slopes would additionally necessitate intrusive building platforms and retaining walls.
- Ruebury Lane and the lower slopes of Ruebury where modern housing and gardens have a suburban character out of keeping with the historic core of Osmotherley. Further development should be avoided in this area and further development along Clack Lane should also be sensitive to its landscape setting
- The narrow linear gardens and pastures extending east and north from the historic core. The distinctive pattern of these historic garden plots and their rising elevation further from the historic core of the village increases sensitivity to development which could be more visually intrusive and contrary to the general association of the village with lower ground.

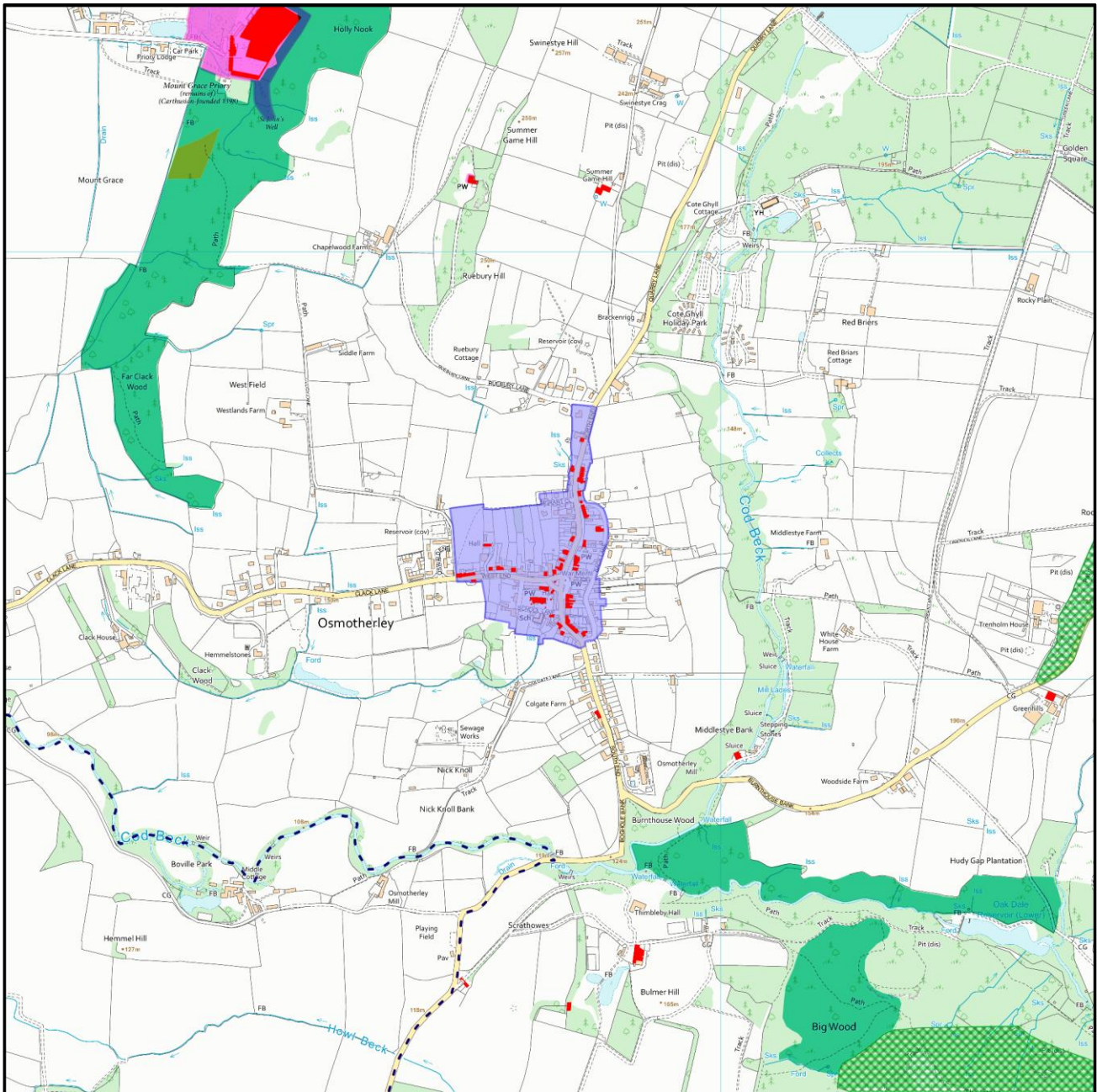
- The wide cobbled and grassed areas, under pressures for off-street parking.
- Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and their settings.



View over Osmotherley from Ruebury Lane with the wooded scarp of Thimbleby Bank seen in the distance



North End within the Osmotherley Conservation Area



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North York Moors Landscape Character Assessment Update 2021

Settlement Sensitivity Study
Osmotherley



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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| - - National Park Boundary | Conservation Areas | Sites of Special Scientific Interest |
| Scheduled Monuments | Special Areas of Conservation | Ancient Semi-natural Woodlands |
| Listed Buildings | Special Protection Areas | Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites |

Map showing designated sites in Osmotherley and its environs