

Introduction

PDP Associates have been instructed by Morland Neighbourhood Plan Group to undertake an appraisal of open land to the east of Water Street. The appraisal will be used to inform future recommendations in the Heritage Assessment and local designations within the village.

Appraisal

The field to the east of Water Street was originally part of Hall Farm. Historic Ordnance Survey maps from the mid- C19th show that the field boundary originally joined the curtilage of the main farmhouse and cottage, both Listed Buildings.

The land is an integral part of the settlement pattern, located within the historic settlement limits defined by Well Lane, Lower Gate and Water Street. It is unique among the grounds and gardens around the village in that it has never been planted with trees, whereas most of the land around the village was extensively planted with orchard and woodland. It is uncertain whether this characteristic was simply a result of farm management or whether it was deliberately maintained as an open field to enhance the setting of Hall Farm, however, it is clear that the open character of the land allows important views across Morland and, moreover, provides views to the wider landscape from Water Street located in the historic core of the village. The importance of the view is acknowledged in the Heritage Assessment where it is described as one of the key views in the settlement. Its significance to the setting of the village is further reinforced by visual connectivity to surrounding landscape features such as Hagg Wood. These local landmarks contribute to the sense of place which is unique to Morland.

The buildings and land around Hall Farm were redeveloped around fifteen years ago as a small residential development. The development maintained the field to the south which safeguarded the open land and key views. Retention of this open land maintains the historic linear pattern of the village, with development clustered tightly along principle routes and gardens overlooking open countryside. Equally importantly, retention of the open space has maintained the attractive landscape backdrop along Water Street and around Morland Beck. The landscape setting of this part of the beck is one of defining features of the village and contributes significantly to the visual amenity and character of Morland.

Piers Palmer April 2020.