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# Introduction

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A conservation area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Silsden Conservation Area was designated in October 1980, altered as part of the revision of conservation area statements in a report to the Town and Country Planning (Policies and Plans) Sub-Committee in February 1993 and further reviewed as part of an assessment and public consultation process that culminated in the production of this report (put before the Keighley Planning Committee in April 2002). The conservation area encapsulates the character of this small industrial settlement and charts its progression from a rural farming village. Its boundary embraces the street pattern of the settlement as it was in the late sixteenth / early seventeenth century and closely follows the line of the beck as it passes through the town. The industrial area that developed to the south during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is also included.

The interaction of the buildings and spaces within conservation areas create unique environments, which constitute irreplaceable components of our local, regional and national heritage. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to designate conservation areas, which confers a general control over the demolition of unlisted properties within their confines, strengthens controls over minor development and makes special provision for the protection of trees. The objective of these measures is to provide for the preservation of the essential character and appearance of the area, in order to maintain or improve its environmental quality and safeguard local distinctiveness and sense of place, within a

framework of controlled and positive management of change.

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has prepared this assessment in order to fulfil its statutory duties under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 (2) of this act places a duty on the local authority to review its conservation areas from time to time, and Section 71 to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. The principal objectives of the document are to:

- define and record the special interest of Silsden Conservation Area; and
- assess the action that may be necessary to safeguard this special interest.

**It is, however, not intended to be comprehensive in its content and failure to mention any particular building, feature or space should not be assumed to imply that they are of no interest.**

This assessment should be read in conjunction with the Bradford Unitary Development Plan and national planning policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15): Planning and the Historic Environment. These documents provide more detailed information on local and national policy relating to conservation areas. In addition, a *Village Design Statement* is currently being prepared for Silsden. When this is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance it will provide for local policy distinctiveness.



*View of the heart of Silsden on the approach from Bolton Road*

# History & Archaeology

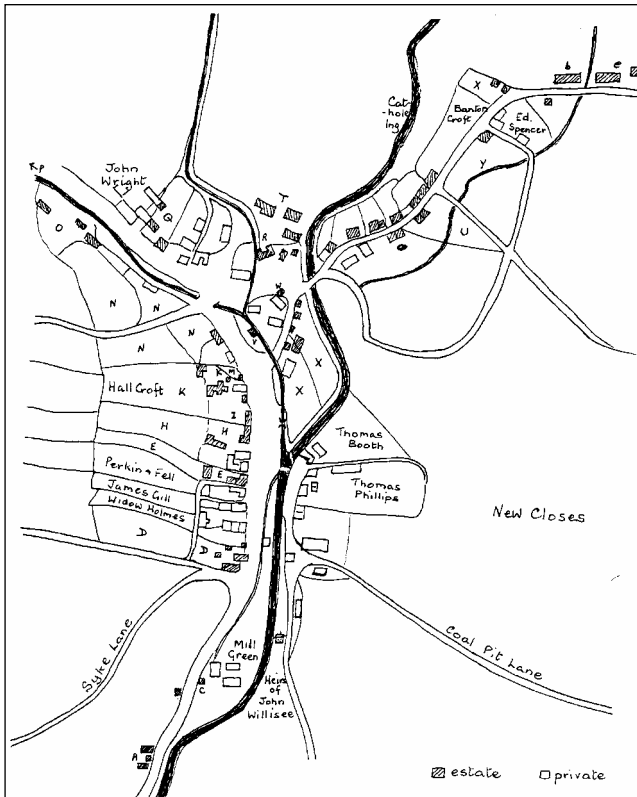
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## ***Summary of the Historical Significance of Silsden Conservation Area***

- *A record of the historic street pattern of the settlement.*
- *Archaeological significance, recording the building patterns of Anglo-Saxon times.*
- *A record of the historic development of the town from a farming community to a small industrial mill town and finally to its current form.*
- *The beck remains a visible watercourse; this is rare and is an important reminder of its influence in the development of the settlement.*
- *The canal is still an important component of Silsden. Its establishment in the 1770s was crucial to the development of the town and the whole area, providing a means of transporting goods to market.*
- *The grouping of some of the older buildings and the shape of their boundaries is a record of past agricultural methods.*
- *Documents the impact of the industrial revolution on a village on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.*
- *Its range of building types document sociological changes that occurred during the nineteenth century.*

Silsden developed as a settlement in Saxon times at the point where two streams, which form Silsden ('Cobby') Beck, meet. The flow of the streams provided the settlement with a power-source, when harnessed by the use of a waterwheel, which largely accounts for its development, primarily as an agricultural village with a corn mill and latterly as an industrial town, housing textile mills and manufacturing firms. It also served to dictate the form of the settlement, which developed linearly along its banks. The beck has therefore played a significant role in the history and shaping of the town of Silsden, which justifies its status as a central element of the conservation area. In a wider sense, it also has a rarity value, as Silsden is one of the few towns in both the District of Bradford and the County of West Yorkshire to retain a watercourse as a visible part of its form.

The boundary of Silsden Conservation Area is centred on the historic street pattern of the town, which has altered very little over the centuries and consequently is a good record of past thoroughfares. In addition, evidence of Anglo-Saxon building patterns is still manifest in its current form, so its archaeological significance is notable. The Domesday Book (1086) records Silsden as a large agricultural estate, which is without doubt the original nature of the settlement. However, the earliest evidence of its actual layout is in the form of a 1610 estate map, which documents the existence of a mill and a number of other structures. A more comprehensive map of 1757 (see map on following page) testifies to



Copy of 1757 Estate Map

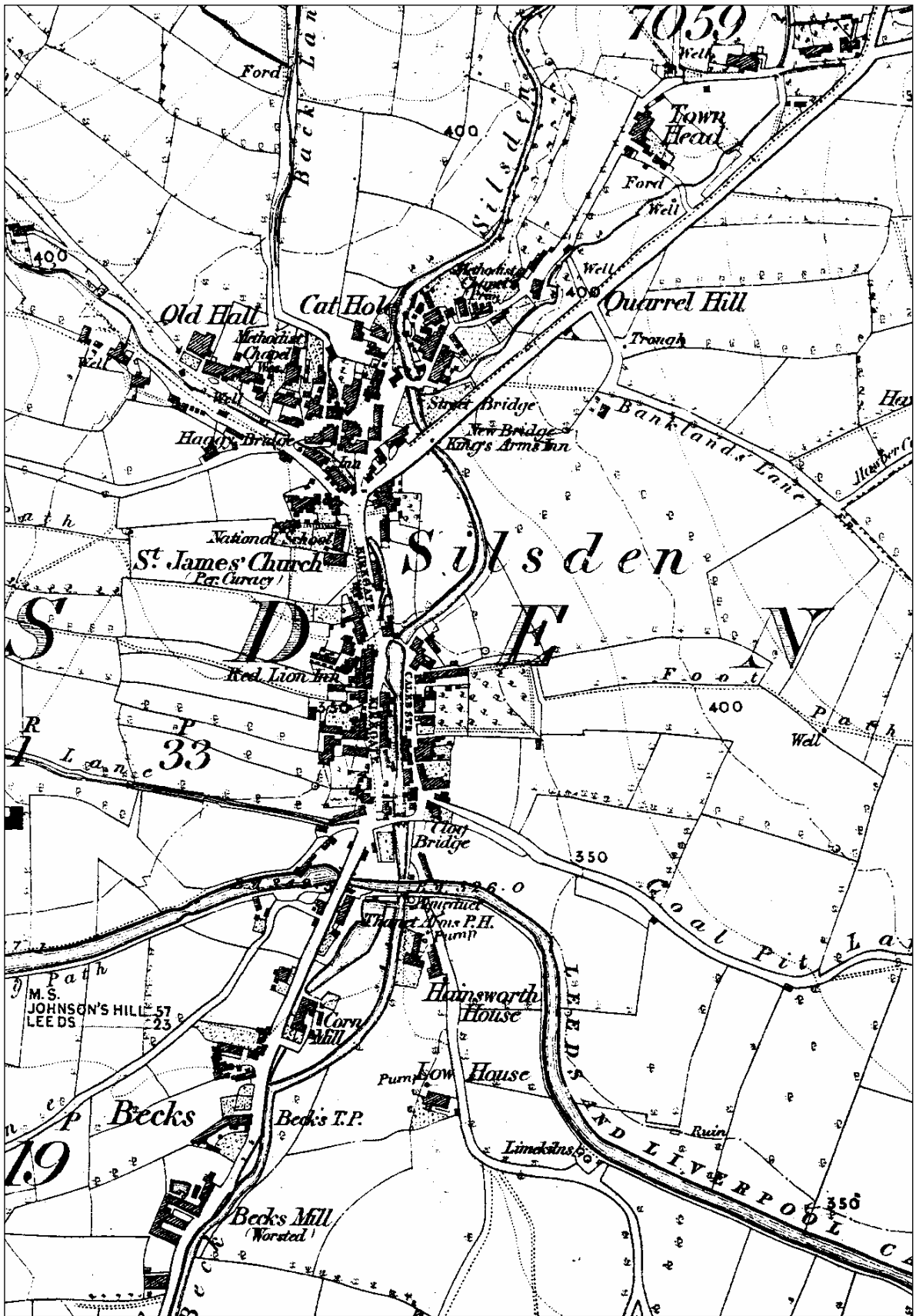
the existence of twenty-five farmsteads in Silsden at that time. The farmsteads were situated on crofts along the main routes leading through the settlement, with the majority located to the west of Silsden Beck on the road that is now known as Kirkgate (previously Towngate), which was, and continues to be, the main thoroughfare of the village. The Kirkgate farmsteads are the most interesting in archaeological terms, as the 1848 Ordnance Survey map and the 1757 map both indicate that the boundaries of the crofts are in some places sinuous, having the reversed S-shape which is characteristic of the ox-ploughed strips of land within medieval open fields. Since the sinuous boundaries run between the buildings right to the frontage, it is likely that these crofts were once part of the open fields, but were later taken out of cultivation to form the yards and crofts of a series of new farmsteads. The date of this development is unknown, but there are grounds for suggesting it took place in Anglo-Saxon times. Although many of these boundaries were erased during the expansion of industry and associated housing in the later nineteenth century, some can still be traced within the conservation area. In 1757 farms were also located along the length of roads that followed the routes of what are now Bradley Road, Chapel Street, North Street and St. John's Street. In addition, a number of roads led out of the built up area of the town to the fields; notably Coal Lane,

which later became Howden Road, and a route following the line of Hainsworth Road. The concentration of farmsteads within this form of nucleated village is indicative of the open-field system of agriculture that was practiced in much of England and Wales prior to the Enclosure Movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. After this, new farms tended to be located in the open fields in the centre of the piece of land they farmed.

The economic base of Silsden gradually evolved from agricultural to industrial. This process began with the establishment of a small 'cottage' based hand-loom wool weaving industry, which supplemented the income of local sheep farmers. However, during the course of the eighteenth century the growing and spinning of flax became the principal 'cottage' industry of the settlement. The extensive swamp-land of the Silsden area was well suited to the cultivation of this crop and its processing was particularly profitable due to the high demand for the produce, especially from the Royal Navy. Shoe making is also recorded as an early form of manufacture within Silsden. This is presumably related to the tannery at Town Head, just outside of the conservation area, where leather working is documented as early as 1740. However, it was nail and clog making that were to become the major industries of the town; they too had their roots in the 'cottage' industry tradition of the eighteenth century and were first mentioned in 1761.

In 1772 the section of the Leeds-Liverpool canal that runs through Silsden opened and was to play a fundamental role in the development of the settlement. Prior to the establishment of the railways in the mid to late nineteenth century, waterways were the most efficient method of transporting goods and the canal provided Silsden with an effective means of getting its produce to market via the busy port of Liverpool. The Leeds-Liverpool canal is the longest in Britain and its economic importance to the region as a whole is recognised by the designation of a conservation area that runs its entire length through the Bradford District.

During the first half of the nineteenth century there was a gradual change in the methods of production and the first textile mill was established in the town in the 1830s. Initially this occasioned little alteration to the main shape of the settlement (see 1848 Ordnance Survey Map on previous page), as the new buildings erected during this



1<sup>st</sup> ed. OS 6": 1mile (sheet 185, surveyed 1848, not to original scale)



*Kirkgate about 1900. Source: Urban District Council, Silsden West Riding.*

early period of change mainly followed the lines of the existing roads. However, the roads did become more established and less sprawling in nature. Kirkgate itself is a late eighteenth century road that is superimposed upon the former route known as Towngate. St. John's Street was also formally laid out at this time, but was in 1848 known as Caleb Street. The name of the road later changed to St. John's Street in recognition of the Order of St. John, that once owned property on the street and their emblem of a single cross is still evident on one of the gable apices. The major alteration to the road network during the first half of the nineteenth century was the construction of the nineteenth century turnpike road that climbs steeply to the north-east out of the town across the moors to Addingham, diverting traffic away from what are now Chapel Street and North Street. This remains the only major route that crosses the Aire and Wharfe valleys in the fifteen miles from Skipton to Shipley and as a result is particularly busy.

Industrialisation advanced at a steady rate in the town and the nail-making industry reached its height in 1850, when it was the town's principal employer. However, it always remained a domestic or semi-domestic industry and was eventually unable to compete with the mass production methods of other areas of the country, and as a result many smithies were driven out of business as the century proceeded. The effects of the Industrial Revolution were particularly felt in the town during the second half of the nineteenth century, changing the face of the settlement forever. The cottage-based industry gave way to the large-scale introduction of machinery and a number of mills,

factories and workshops were constructed to accommodate the new processes. For example, Waterloo Mill, the largest textile mill in the town, was constructed alongside the Leeds-Liverpool canal in the 1870s. The population of the town increased rapidly during this era, as people flocked to the town to find employment in its industries. This occasioned the construction of new dwellings on newly established roads that developed predominantly to the west of Kirkgate. The Keighley Road area of the town also opened up at this time, following the construction of a stone bridge over the canal, which replaced the earlier timber construction. The growth in the size of Silsden is a phenomenon that was occurring in most of towns in the country in the nineteenth century, as it was a period of unprecedented urbanisation and population increase.

The massive changes that the country was undergoing in the nineteenth century changed the sociological balance of society, with middle class businessmen reaping the monetary rewards of the industrial development of the country and becoming an increasingly powerful sector of society. The government of towns changed from being dominated by nobles to being the domain of middle-class businessmen. This shift in power saw a greater influence being placed on the need for community buildings and improvements in civic facilities and amenities. A number of buildings were constructed in Silsden in response to this change, amongst the most notable of which are the Town Hall and the Conservative Club, which stand as records of the development of Silsden into a self sustaining settlement. Greater religious freedom accompanied these sociological changes, as the churches of three different denominations that stand in the centre of the town bare evidence to. The scale of these new buildings added a new dimension to the area, as prior to this the buildings had predominantly been small, simple constructions.

The town remained fairly self-sufficient until the 1950s, although there was a steady decline in all of the town's major industries. The nail-making industry ceased in 1919 and the clog iron and cotton industries in about 1950. Other industries, such as artificial silk making and printing, developed to replace these industries and there is still a strong industrial presence in the town.

# Architecture and Building Materials

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## **Summary of Architectural Significance of the Conservation Area**

- *The abundance of vernacular buildings reflects a style that is distinct to the area and provides a record of past regional building patterns and techniques.*
- *The range of building types reflects the development of the town. From the early vernacular buildings, to industrial buildings and the grander, more stylish buildings of the early twentieth century.*
- *The later buildings document the stylistic architectural fashions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.*
- *The conversion schemes of the late twentieth century, offer examples of how redundant buildings can be successfully adopted to new uses and new build integrated with the old.*
- *The continuity in the use of construction materials offers a visual harmony throughout the conservation area.*

## **Architectural styles, features, building types and periods**

There are just over forty listed buildings in the confines of Silsden Conservation Area (see Appendix 2). In addition to these there are a number of other structures that stand out, either as eye catching structures, particularly historically

significant buildings or buildings that make a more than average contribution to the street scenes of the town. Nevertheless, ultimately it is the interaction of all the structures and spaces within the conservation area that give it its individual character. As the conservation area is focused around the centre of the town and the changes it has undergone, a range of building types are evident, including agricultural, industrial, ecclesiastical, public buildings and a small number of residential properties. The boundary of the conservation area excludes the majority of the residential areas of the town that are later nineteenth century and twentieth century additions. The design of the buildings within the conservation area is predominantly vernacular in nature, which is inherent of the early agricultural character of the town and its rural location. The grander structures that were designed in a certain architectural style, or combination of styles, only came into being in the town following the industrial expansion of the settlement and typify nineteenth century and early twentieth century tastes and aspirations.

Vernacular architecture can be defined as buildings that are constructed to meet simple everyday needs using locally available building materials. The structures are thus usually visually appealing, as the use of local materials produces uniformity in colour and texture that integrates sympathetically with the surrounding landscape. The style of the buildings evolved in relation to

local building techniques and climatic conditions and consequently they are particularly evocative of the region in which they are set. Vernacular architecture is thus essential to the sense of place of the settlement and its identity, in addition to being an irreplaceable record of past craftsmanship. In Silsden, the main building material is an attractive cream coloured local sandstone that weathers to a black finish and the traditional roofing material is stone slate, which has a particularly chunky profile. However, local distinctiveness is being lost in Silsden, as in much of the country, as a consequence of increasing universality in design, mass production of building components and materials and the ease of transportation.

Farm buildings and their associated dwellings, such as the farmhouse and farm workers cottages, are prime examples of vernacular architecture that were constructed to meet the functional needs of the farming community. There are a number of this building type still in existence in Silsden Conservation Area, although many have been lost and most extensively altered in the course of time, as a consequence of the change of the economic base of the settlement. The Bradley Road area accommodates a group of seventeenth and eighteenth century farms. The large number of Grade II listed buildings on this street, including 10 Bradley Road (Croft House), Old Hall Farmhouse, Old Hall Farmhouse railed forecourt with columns, the barn twelve metres to the north-west of Old Hall Farmhouse, 18,20,22,24 and 26 Bradley Road (formerly listed as Old Hall) and the barn ten metres south-east of no. 20 (Old Hall), testifies to the relative importance of this building group. However, it is not only the buildings themselves that are of high architectural quality, but their settings, with paved yards, gate-piers, boundary



*Old Hall (Grade II) – the finest vernacular structure of the settlement.*

walls, hedges and long gardens are also important. The Old Hall (now 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26 Bradley Road) is the finest vernacular building in Silsden. It is a two storey property constructed of coursed rubble with dressed quoins, mullioned and transomed windows and a stone slate roof, all characteristic features of the local vernacular. Associated with this building group, is a small residence situated on the opposite side of the beck, now numbers 5 and 7 Greengate, a particularly interesting feature of these properties is the architrave detail around the door to number 7.

There are a number of other former farm properties nestled in this part of town, around Highfield Lane, Hayhills Road and Greengate. However only 4 and 6 Greengate are listed, as Grade II listed properties. The typical form of the farm buildings of the area is akin to the old longhouse design with the barn and farmhouse under one roof, or at least sharing a common wall, with further farm structures



*Barn associated with Old Hall Farm (Grade II) – the quality of this area is outstanding.*



*Farm buildings of Greengate (Grade II)*



*27 North Street (unlisted) – a former laithe house, with characteristic wagon entrance and a stone slate roof.*

surrounding this principal building on the larger farms. There are two former laithe houses on the junction of North Street and Pickard Lane, which form the border of the conservation area. The one situated on the actual junction was the Kings Arms when the road was the old coach road through the settlement. The other is located opposite and is now 27 North Street; it is typical of the style of the area, being very simple in design with few decorative features and is constructed of local sandstone with a stone slate roof and small mullioned windows on the farmhouse section. The

wagon entrance is evident on the northern side of the property, which has smaller openings in the upper section of the wall. There is also a cluster of agricultural buildings to the north of St. John's Street. Only one of the farm buildings is listed (Grade II), that which now functions as the premises of Jackson's of Silsden Ltd. The most prominent buildings of the street are, however, without doubt those situated adjacent to the weir in the centre of the town. These are highly visible from Kirkgate and form part of an attractive focal point of the town; they are constructed of local sandstone with stone slate roofs and the form and antiquity of the building group suggests that at one time it also served in an agricultural capacity. In addition to these groups of farm buildings, there are a number of surviving farm structures and farmhouses scattered throughout the conservation area, many of which are now utilised for variant purposes .

The conservation area has an abundance of small cottages, which because of their simplicity in design and construction materials classify as vernacular structures. The dates of these buildings range from the mid-seventeenth century to the nineteenth century and were constructed to house farm workers, cottage industry workers and latterly



*Prominent cottages to the north of St. John's Street (unlisted) – constructed of local sandstone, with stone slate roofs.*

early factory workers. These cottages are typically very semi-detached or small rows of terraces, and are commonly single or two-celled properties constructed of local, usually hammer dressed stone. The windows are traditionally small and the earlier ones have stone mullions. The corners of typically have large stone quoins and tabled gables with large copingstones to the stone-slate roof. Some of these buildings have undergone alterations, either from cottages to form larger dwellings or retail establishments, or from houses to form smaller cottages. There are a number of cottages in the area that are Grade II listed, including Pear Tree Cottage 22 Bridge Street, 7 – 9 Chapel Street, 43 Kirkgate, 1,2 and 3 Nicolson's Place, 3 and 4 Stirling Street, 9, 11, 13 and 15 St. John's Street and 55 St. John's Street.



*Cottages of St. John's Street (some Grade II)*

Public houses and coach houses were also a feature of early Silsden that were built in a vernacular style. Punch Bowl Inn is the most prominent, as it is situated in a triangular space between Bridge Road, Briggate and Bridge Street and is clearly visible from the centre of the town around the junction of Kirkgate and Bolton Road.

The change in the economic base of the town is clearly documented in the architecture of the conservation area. The evolution from an agricultural society to an industrial society occasioned much demolition and the construction of new buildings, however there are enough examples of buildings that have been converted from one use to another and instances when the uses juxtapose one another to testify to the stages of development. For example, the Chapel Street area, originally known as Finkhill, accommodates an array of building types that provide evidence of its original agricultural function, then as a centre for nail making and latterly as a mill area. Cat Hole on Chapel Street, which was the centre for the nail making industry, has been subject to a Civic Trust



*The Punch Bowl Public House (unlisted)*

Award (1998) winning conversion scheme and is now Pear Tree Court. The scheme incorporates new building with listed buildings, using reclaimed materials following the vernacular style in both the design and disposition of the new houses. Immediately to the north-east of this is the conversion of North Mill and an extended residential unit to the rear that respects the scale and materials of the original mill building. These two developments viewed alongside one another testify to the change of uses the area has undergone. Evidence of the cottage industry of the town exists in the form of a number of properties: for example, 3 and 4 Stirling Street (Grade II), are relics of this cottage industry tradition, with a two storey workshop situated opposite them; as far as can be ascertained this small building is the only workshop to survive in the town. Also, two eighteenth century cottages on Briggate (10 and 16) exhibit blocked first floor taking-in-piece doorways, which are specific reminders of the importance of the handloom weaving industry to the local economy.



*Pear Tree Court – integrating Grade II listed buildings with modern development.*



*Stirling Road with its collection of cottages and a small workshop, evidence of the existence of a cottage industry in the settlement.*

The Industrial Revolution occasioned the construction of large industrial premises within the confines of the town. Although the scale and style of these buildings is completely at odds with the earlier smaller buildings, there is some continuity in the use of materials. The majority are faced in the same local stone, but have slate roofs. Slate became increasingly available due to improvements in transportation methods, such as the canal and the railway. Waterloo Mill is the largest and most significant industrial building of the settlement. It is a Grade II\* listed building situated close to the city centre on Howden Road. Due to its massiveness and the height of its chimney, it is a particularly dominating structure and the chimney has now become an integral part of the skyline of Silsden. The mill was constructed

between 1867 and 1877; it has a four-bay façade and is built of hammer-dressed gritstone and roofed in slate and glazing. The engine house is slightly later, dating from 1916. The mill engine continued to run until relatively recently, only ceasing operation in 1977. It has a rarity value as it is the sole survivor of its type and the rope race is also very rare. The chimney and attached gates and gate-piers are also Grade II listed structures in their own right, but together the group provide a record of past manufacturing techniques and the influence of the industrial revolution on Silsden.

In addition to Waterloo Mills there are a couple of other large industrial structures situated within the conservation area. North Mill on Church Street was built in 1846 and functioned as the Primitive Methodist Chapel until 1871, when it was purchased by James Boyes and turned into a textile mill. It is a four-bay structure, constructed of local stone with a slate pitch roof; its distinctive features include three large round-headed windows in the gable wall. It has subsequently been converted to residential use. Airdale shed is situated to the rear of Nicolson's Place. It is a narrow rectangular structure, three-storey, multi-bayed building, constructed of local stone with a stone slate roof. This has recently been the subject of an award winning conversion scheme.



*Waterloo Mill – The only Grade II\* building in the conservation area and Airedale Mews (unlisted).*



*Pennine Boats warehouse (Grade II)*

The sole surviving building of the clog-iron industry in the town is situated with its rear to Sykes Lane and is a Grade II listed building. It is L-shaped in plan, constructed of hammer dressed stone with stone slate roof and many of its features, including the forge chimneys, are still visible. The building was constructed in 1874 for Thomas Green, specialising in thick Colne clog irons and was the last smithy in the country to do so when it closed its doors in 1950. The canal warehouse belonging to Pennine Boats of Silsden (Grade II) is similar to this. It is a late eighteenth / early nineteenth century two-storey canal warehouse constructed of hammer-dressed stone with a stone slate roof. Corn Mill House is situated almost immediately opposite Pennine Boats of Silsden. It stands on the site of the original corn mill of the settlement, but has interesting architectural features in its own right. It is essentially rectangular in plan and constructed of local stone with a slate roof. Its interesting features include a simple classical style portico on its southern elevation and large round-headed windows on the street elevation. The final industrial type structure worthy of mention is the aqueduct under the canal on Hainsworth Road. It demonstrates advances in engineering and is itself a Grade II listed building.

Nineteenth century and early twentieth century terraced buildings were established in Silsden to house those that were attracted to the area to work in the mills and manufacturing firms. The majority of these are situated outside of the conservation area boundary, but there are a number within the designated area. These range from the simple structures with little architectural detailing to the more ornate with moulding around the door and window architraves and bay windows. The construction materials remain constant. Detached residential properties of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century are situated along the length of Kirkgate. Some of these were originally farmhouses and the later ones acted as middle-class industrialist residences. 33 Keighley Road is



*Terrace buildings of Wesley Place (unlisted) – they are typical of the area being constructed of local stone with slate roofs.*

an example of such a property. It is a Grade II listed two-story building of a simple rectangular plan constructed of hammer dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

Three ecclesiastical buildings of different denominations huddle around the Wesley Place area in the centre of the conservation area. Two of the buildings are listed as Grade II structures: the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches. The Roman Catholic Church of Wesley Place was constructed in about 1870 as a Wesleyan Methodist Church, but was later adopted by the Roman Catholic religion. It is Gothic Revival in style and built to a cruciform plan. Its most prominent features are the set five-light arched window with geometrical tracery on the west elevation and the doorway with triangular hood. The Anglican Church was constructed on Kirkgate in about 1816, although the tower, which contributes greatly to the skyline of the settlement, was raised later by George Jacques in 1896. The gates to the church are also listed Grade II



*St. John's Church (Grade II)*



*The Roman Catholic Church (Grade II) of Wesley Place (originally Wesleyan) –Has a clear Gothic style.*

structures in their own right; these are richly moulded in an Art Nouveau style with a butterfly motif. Finally the Methodist Church, although of little architectural merit in its own right, is worthy of mention due to its size and prominent positioning within the heart of Silsden.

The civic buildings that were constructed in the opening decades of the twentieth century offer a break from the vernacular tradition of the town and are reflective of the architectural fashions in this part of the country at the time that they were built. The most dominant is the Town Hall; it is Edwardian Baroque in style and has an impressive Venetian window flanked by vertical oval windows



*The Town Hall (unlisted) – Edwardian Baroque in style*

to the street. The Conservative Club building is also a particularly impressive structure and due to its prominent positioning on the junction of Briggate, Kirkgate and Bolton Road, has become a focal point of the town. It is a three-storey, stone structure with a hipped slate roof, broken by one small gable on the Briggate elevation and another on the Kirkgate elevation. It has mullioned windows and a canted turret with a conical metal roof. The Co-operative Society building, built in 1908, on the junction of Kirkgate, Keighley Road and Clog Bridge is also a very dominant structure due to its positioning, offering a terminal point of vision from the twisting Kirkgate. It is constructed of local stone and has a slated roof and mullion windows, typical of buildings in Silsden of this era.



*The Co-operative Society building (unlisted) – unusual in design and situated at a prominent terminal point of Kirkgate*

Its gable to Clog Street is by far the most ornate part of the building and the rest is relatively plain. The war memorial is a structure of the early twentieth century and was unveiled on its original site in 1921; it is now a symbol of community pride. The stylish Co-op shop of 1936 completes the image of early twentieth century development within the town and being clearly Art Deco in style documents the progression in architectural styles of this time. The building is situated on the junction of Clog Bridge, Hainsworth Street and Howden Road and perhaps its most prominent feature is its sweeping curved façade that integrates so well with the street pattern of the area.

## Building Materials

Throughout Silsden, houses, cottages and mills are built from the local stone, which has distinctive orange and brown staining, indicating that the stone has been quarried from shallower local quarries where the iron minerals in the stone have oxidised. The stone has been hammer finished on most of the older vernacular structures, but to confer a certain status on the buildings, the turn-of-the-century (nineteenth – twentieth) buildings were constructed of smooth faced ashlar stone arranged in large dominant blocks and the rougher uncoursed rubble was utilised for the retaining walls. This continuity in use of local stone has created uniformity in colour and texture throughout the conservation area. Historically, most of the roofs in Silsden were constructed of natural stone slates, but from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, as a result of the improvements in transport, Welsh blue slates were brought in by railway. Over time the



*The Co-op building (unlisted) – constructed in the 1930s and Art Deco in style.*

combination of slate and stone has blended sympathetically.

The brick used in the construction of chimneys and internal walls of the industrial properties contrasts with the local stone, but together they serve to remind the onlooker of Silsden's manufacturing past and rural ties. Iron, although less dominant than the other materials mentioned, has come to be an integral material of the conservation area, most notably for gates around a number of the different properties. Windows in the area would have traditionally been timber framed and doors either simple timber boarded varieties for the more vernacular structures and panelled for the more elaborate designs. However many of these have subsequently been replaced with more modern alternatives.

# Setting and Landscape Qualities, Views and Vistas

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## ***Main Features of the Setting that Contribute to the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area***

- *Topography of the area and the existence of moorland and agricultural land around the town contributes to the seclusion of the town and offers a backdrop of green hills to many of the views through the settlement.*
  - *The conservation area is bounded by late nineteenth century / early twentieth century terraces to the west and mid to late twentieth century properties and parkland to the east. The terraces offer a visual continuity in colour and texture with the buildings of the conservation area and the parkland provides an attractive backdrop to the buildings on the east of the conservation area.*
  - *Green spaces that border the conservation area –the small park to the north-east and extensive Victorian parkland to the east – add to the openness of these parts of the town as opposed to the cluster of building in the centre.*
- *The differential nature of the perspective of the town when entered from the north and south, rural / market town versus industrial settlement.*
  - *Green spaces within the conservation area – the memorial gardens, the garden in front of the Methodist Church and St. James' Cemetery add an attractive green dimension to the conservation area.*
  - *Silsden Beck and the Leeds – Liverpool Canal run through the conservation area, these are attractive elements, the reflective nature of which contrasts agreeably with the surrounding structures. The beck contributes to the rural feel of areas of the settlement and the canal to the industrial nature of other parts.*
  - *The hard surfacing of the settlement in some areas dramatically adds to its character, particularly where it is setted or surfaced in stone flags.*

PPG15 states that: "it is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas" (para 4.2). This means that the setting and the treatment and interaction of spaces within the area are as important as the buildings themselves.

The settlement now known as Silsden, or 'Cobbydale' is situated in the heart of Airedale, between the moorland of Silsden, Rombalds Moors and the flood plain of the River Aire. It nestles in the trough created where the otherwise steep-sided valley of the Aire widens out into an area that is gently sloping and south-west facing. Its setting is therefore discreet and secluded. The town is surrounded by moorland and arable farmland that is protected under Green Belt policy, which provide an attractive backdrop to the streetscape of the town. The conservation area itself is situated on relatively flat land following the valley of the beck, but the ground rises gently to the west, north-east and more steeply to the east out of the conservation area. As a result of this topography, distant views into and out of the conservation area are greatly limited and its character can only truly be appreciated internally. The only clear vistas appear when one is at the centre of the conservation area looking along Bolton Road to the north-east, looking into the conservation area from Bolton Road or in and out along Keighley Road. Apart from this, Silsden orientates itself through a series of twists and bends revealing itself when explored further. The village has clear



*The twists and turns of Kirkgate limit vistas down the street and contribute to the intricacy of form.*

boundaries created by the River Aire to the south and the bend in the road to the north of Bolton Road.

The conservation area has been designated to incorporate the historic core of the town and is bounded by late nineteenth century and early twentieth century terraces to the west, mid to late twentieth century residential properties and parkland to the north and east and the village edge to the south. The boundary clearly follows the line of demarcation between the old street pattern and the later deviations from the pattern. The eastern boundary is at points formed by the line of the beck, which played such an important role in the



*View out of Silsden Conservation Area down Keighley Road. The moors that can be seen beyond the settlement are central to the town's character.*

development of the settlement and now forms a central focal point of the whole conservation area. Nineteenth century terraced properties extend to the west of the conservation area and offer a visual continuity with the properties within the conservation area, as they are constructed of the same materials and of similar heights. The twentieth century houses on the other hand are rarely glimpsed from within the conservation area, only to the far north-west and south-east. These are also predominantly constructed of stone, which is paler and less weathered than the older stone. However, there is a clear distinction in the building pattern, as they are built on larger plots and typically have their own garden areas.

Entering the village from the Bolton Road boundary offers a very different image of the town than if it is entered from the southern Keighley Road approach. Views from Bolton Road incorporate the rows of nineteenth century and early twentieth century terraces that flank the road, down to the retail properties of Briggate, the tower of St. James' Church, which is a landmark of the town, and out to the hills beyond. The impression is of a small rural village with its amenities. Conversely from Keighley Road the first impression is of the modern petrol station, building



*View into the conservation area from Bolton Road, encapsulating the image of a rural village.*

yards and evidence of the town's industrial nature, in the form of terraced housing, and areas of wasteland. As a result of the undulation in topography, the roofscape of the town, with its slate and stone slate roofs and combination of the uniformity in form of the terraced areas and the intricacy of the roofline of Kirkgate, forms an important part of its character. The rows of chimney stacks are an integral part of this scene. The most significant vantage points of the structures of the town against the hills are south-eastward from the junction of Chapel Street and



*Image across the rooftops of the town to the moorland beyond from the junction of Chapel Street and North Street*

North Street, from the bridge over the Leeds-Liverpool Canal southwards, south east from St. James' Cemetery and entering the conservation area from Skipton Road.

There are relatively few green spaces within the conservation area, as the buildings are characteristically small and closely packed with small back yards. The public green spaces are congregated around the central, civic area of the conservation area. The largest green space is the parkland to the west of the conservation area. Although it is not situated within the confines of the conservation area itself, it does provide the backdrop for many of the buildings situated on this side of the town. The view down Wesley Place of the church with the parkland behind is particularly attractive and the open perspective of this space also serves to enhance the rural dimension of the properties of Mitchell Lane and The Paddock. There is a second area of open parkland beyond the north-western boundary of the conservation area. This is essentially two small fields,



*View into the conservation area from Skipton Road, which emphasises the rural aspect of the settlement.*



*View from Kirkgate of the northern part of St. John's Road, which offers a clearly rural image of the settlement with the roads leading out to the greenery beyond.*

separated by a central footpath and adds a feel of openness to this end of the site.

The memorial garden is a formally laid out garden in the centre of the town, which forms a focal point of local activity. The space became available for this use due to the slum clearances that took place during the 1960s. It is fairly simple in design, comprising a number of small grass spaces with flowerbeds, the centre one of which is circular. A



*The memorial gardens, an amenable public space in the centre of the settlement.*

row of trees lines the periphery of the garden adjacent to the low stone wall, which marks its border. The trees have the effect of increasing the seclusion of the site and making it a separate entity to the busy street that passes to the west. The war memorial is the focus of the garden and is situated to the rear on a raised pedestal reached by a small number of steps. A second garden area is located in front of the Methodist chapel. This is basically an area of lawn with a small flowerbed to the north and is shielded from the street by the existence of a low stone wall. The final area of green in this section of the town is St. James' Church cemetery, which covers a relatively large area of the rising ground to the rear of the church. The space is not only attractive in its own right, with its rows of stone headstones and small monuments, but also offers impressive views beyond the church tower and the streetscape of the town to the open farmland beyond. A number of properties on Bradley Road have private garden spaces, which contribute to the differentiation in the atmosphere of this part of the town and the denser areas of the centre.

There are a number of car parks grouped around the town centre, which were again created by the slum clearances and add to the openness of the upper end of the town. The largest are situated around the memorial gardens, both on Kirkgate



*View of the moorland on the edge of the settlement past the church. The colours of the elements complement one another.*

and one nestled to the rear, and small spaces are located in front of the Punch Bowl public house, behind the King's Arms, on Bridge Street to the west of the gable of the Punch Bowl public house and up Chapel Street. Currently these car parks are grey, uninteresting open spaces in the town that contrast with the warmth of the local stone and contribute little to the visual integrity of the site. The surface treatment of the areas is poor and only the Kirkgate car park has an area of flowerbeds to improve its aesthetic nature. In contrast, the surface treatment of a number of streets within the conservation area adds dramatically to both the character and appearance of the conservation area. A number of the back streets and closes are laid with setts, the traditional surfacing materials of industrial areas and streets, which contribute to the character of the place. These are notable on Sykes Lane, Nicolson's Close and under the aqueduct on Hainsworth Road. Some of the footpaths of the main street have been laid with stone flags, the warm colour of which nicely complements the colour of the stone of the buildings. However the back streets are predominantly laid with patched up tar macadam, which where it is poorly maintained becomes somewhat of an eyesore. Many of the industrial areas to the south have no proper surface treatments and become muddy expanses, creating unpleasant spaces. Modern tile patterns have also crept into the conservation area, particularly along Kirkgate. These are certainly more visually attractive than the poorly maintained tar macadam, and reflect the changing nature of the settlement, however, they can be too domestic for the rural feel of parts of the settlement.

Water is an integral part of the character of the settlement. The beck has both historical and aesthetic worth and runs the entire length and

breadth of the conservation area. Visually it is most dramatic at the steep weir, where its attractiveness has been recognised and Yorkshire stone flags and benches have been installed to create a focal point to the high street. Although the beck is a visual element of much of the conservation area, it disappears underground at some points. It is particularly atmospheric where it can be viewed from the bridges of Bolton Road and Bridge Street / Stirling Street, as from here it is possible to take in views of the flow of the water and the greenery of the banks. It also offers an important perspective to the Bradley Road / Greengate area of the town, running between the two. The flow of the beck emphasises the rural



feel of various parts of the town.

*The weir of Cobbydale Beck in the centre of the town*

The Leeds – Liverpool Canal adds another dimension to the town. The bulk of the water itself has a shimmering reflective quality that functionally and visually relates to the industrial warehouses that line its banks. A narrow grassed, muddy towpath runs to the south of the canal, providing a visual break between the water and the buildings and allows access to the banks of the canal. The Leeds – Liverpool canal conservation area borders Silsden conservation area to both the east and west, incorporating the industrial and residential areas immediately to the north of the canal to the west, and the residential areas that line the south of the canal to the east. The canal conservation area was designated to preserve and enhance the character of the canal, but at this point will have a direct impact on the character of Silsden conservation area, as there are clear visual links between the two.



*View westward along the canal*

# Character and Appearance

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## **Summary of the Character and Appearance of Silsden Conservation Area**

- *The character of the town is of a small industrial town, which retains pockets of its agricultural past.*
- *It is secluded, protected by the topography of the surrounding moorland.*
- *The town has four distinct types of area: those that are agricultural in scale, industrial areas, retail areas and a civic area.*
- *There is a lack of uniformity in the building pattern and the variety of styles, forms and periods of the buildings create a visual intricacy.*
- *Small closes that lead off from the main thoroughfares create further intricacy and add to the small town feel of the settlement.*
- *Due to the continual evolution of the town centre, the overlying of time is evident, but this has meant that the pressure for change is great and many of the properties have lost their original door and window details.*
- *The town has always been very self-sufficient, but there has been a move away from this character recently as it has evolved into a centre for commuters.*
- *Quality retailing has become a characteristic of the settlement.*

- *Stone walls are the predominant boundary treatments.*

It is the character and appearance of the area that designation as a conservation area aims to protect and enhance; this is created by the interaction of a wide array of factors in addition to those already discussed in the previous sections. These include how the buildings and spaces are now used, their condition, the influence of modern accretions and the effect of intangible ingredients such as sounds and smells. The overall character of Silsden Conservation Area is one of a small West Yorkshire industrial town, although in some areas its former character as a rural Dales settlement is still evident in both the surviving architecture, the rural nature of the landscaping and the presence of rural artefacts.

The character of the town as a whole has changed dramatically since World War II. In the 1950s it was still essentially a self-sufficient industrial town, with most of the population employed in the local mills and workshops. However, during the latter half of the twentieth century there was a gradual decline in the industry of the town and it has become instead a dormitory for people who work in Keighley, Bradford, Leeds and other towns in West Yorkshire and north-east Lancashire. This means that there are people from a much wider variety of professions living in the town than was ever formally the case, which supports a greater array of services, particularly shops. The increase in population has occasioned the construction of twentieth century housing estates on the periphery

of the town. However, the positioning of the majority of these estates has meant that the centre has retained much of its older fabric.

The conservation area, as has been established, does not encompass the residential districts of Silsden, but hones in on the town centre. The area can effectively be subdivided into four distinct character areas: those that continue to be agricultural in scale, industrial areas, retail areas and civic areas, although there is inevitably some overlap.

### **Areas that are Predominantly Agricultural in Character**

Two areas of Silsden have retained their essential rural qualities and are still Dales village like in nature. One is located to the far north of the conservation area, around Bradley Road, Chapel Street and North Street, and the other in the centre of the conservation area, around the weir and along the length of St. John's Street. Kirkgate would at one time have fallen into this category, as is evident from the 1757 map, which shows a number of farms located on crofts along its length. However, being the principal thoroughfare of the town, it has been subjected to greater pressures for change and development than the other areas defined. This has engendered the replacement of many of the older properties in order to satisfy new demands. For example, it is known that the construction of the Town Hall in 1883 necessitated the destruction of a thatch cottage that stood on the site previously.

The reason that the areas around Bradley Road, Chapel Street, North Street and St. John's Street have been able to retain much of their small village character is largely due to the diversion of traffic and development along the main thoroughfares of Kirkgate, Skipton Road and Bolton Road.

The area around Bradley Road, Hayhills Road, Highfield Lane and Greengate is quiet and the roads are narrow. Bradley Road is the only thoroughfare, leading from Bridge Street past the older agricultural properties, through the suburbs to the moors beyond and is the widest and most domestic of the roads in this part of the conservation area. The remaining roads are poorly surfaced with tar macadam that is breaking up in areas. The forms of the farmhouses, cottages and barns of the area still exist, although they have



*Old Hall and its garden, Bradley Road - through the wall and hedge, which seclude the house from the road.*

subsequently undergone alterations to accommodate diverse uses, such as industrial and residential. A few new buildings have been constructed in the spaces between the older structures and a twentieth century housing estate has been built to the north, which envelopes the area and eradicates much of its open aspect. However, the area remains an intriguing combination of the agricultural Silsden, overlaid with the industrial Silsden.

Many of Bradley Road's agricultural buildings have undergone a change of use: the tithe barn for example now functions as an engineer's workshop and further along, on the south of the road, is a barn that has been converted to residential use. The changes of use have altered the nature of the buildings, but the fact that their form remains enables the history of the area to be read. Old Hall Farm, on the north side of Bradley Road, is fairly secluded, being hidden by a stone wall and can only be glimpsed through a hedge archway leading to substantial garden area and ultimately the house, and a gateway leading to the adjacent barn. The stone wall boundaries are particularly characteristic of this area and as the road has taken on an increasingly domestic nature, large garden areas have also become a feature. The beck is visible at the junction of the two roads, where it is presently largely overgrown and then disappears under the former cinema buildings, re-emerges for a short distance, before disappearing again under the gardens of the three large properties that form the north-west border of this part of the conservation area. The presence of the beck adds a rural feel, as it peacefully ripples through the area.

Greengate runs parallel to Bradley Road and there is a clear visual connection between the two, incorporating the beck. The route of Greengate follows the line of the beck to the south and disappears along its banks with no clear indication of where it leads offering no views of what is beyond; this serves to increase the country like appeal of this part of the town. There are two points to cross the beck between the two roads. A simple clapper bridge sits on the beck; it is formed of two large stones and is thought to be more than six hundred years old and as such is evidence of past routes through the settlement .

This bridge is very atmospheric of the simplicity of the area, however to the east, a wide, plain unattractive concrete bridge, which now serves as a car park, towers over the clapper bridge detracting from its charms. A former cinema spans the beck immediately adjacent to the car park; this was converted to housing in the 1990s and is a good example of imaginative re-use of redundant buildings within a conservation area. Greengate becomes more industrial towards the junction with Bridge Road, but the agricultural dimension of the street is preserved by the existence of an old farmhouse, which now serves as two cottages.



*Clapper Bridge – historic bridge crossing the beck.*



*Agricultural scale property on Highfield Lane – the lane is now predominantly industrial.*

Hayhills and Highfields Road have also retained many of their agricultural buildings and are therefore agricultural in scale, but the predominant use of the buildings is now industrial, charting the change in emphasis of the settlement. Neither of the roads form major thoroughfares, but serve as access roads for the few people who live and work there. To the south the roads join the bustling Bridge Street and to the north lead to a twentieth century housing estate, which offers a stark contrast to the agricultural, come industrial nature of the roads themselves.

Chapel Street, North Street and Stirling Street form the north-eastern part of the conservation area and like the Bradley Road area visually document the transformation of the town during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This relatively quiet backwater is entered across a narrow, stone walled bridge marking the beginnings of an area that is quite distinct from the wider Bridge Street and the large co-op building. The beck forms an integral part of the scene, as its steep-sided wooded valley cuts through the area, and provides an attractive green space. This has been integrated into the design of the new developments of Pear Tree Court and Weaver's Walk. The twisting road of Chapel Street to North Street retains many of its eighteenth century houses and farms, in addition to evidence of the nailmaking industry and the subsequent mill development. Despite remnants of these past uses, the residential nature of this area is now manifest, ranging from the cottages of Stirling Street and Chapel Street, to the new buildings and conversions of Pear Tree Court and Weaver's Walk, to the early terraced buildings of North Street. A bland, twentieth century housing estate, which forms the conservation area boundary,

impinges on the road as it climbs to the north-east. The domestic nature of the area is emphasised by the existence of satellite dishes on the front of North Street Mill, which is not complementary in character to the form of the building. There is one retail outlet in this part of the town, situated on the junction of Stirling Street and Chapel Street; it is currently a 'new and old' shop and serves to add vibrancy to this part of the town. In addition a small modern industrial unit nestles in next to the beck, to the rear of the cottages on Chapel Street and those of Pear Tree Court. The design of the unit is not complementary to the surrounding cottages and the sheet metal used in its construction conflicts with the uniformity of the stone throughout the rest of the area.

Stirling Street is more closed in than the rest of the area, as it is a cul-de-sac that leads to the rear of a number of the Bolton Road terraces. The rear of the terraces, which from this perspective have retained many of their original window and gutter details, dominate over the smaller scale cottages of Stirling Street. This is characteristic of the lack of uniformity in form of the buildings throughout the conservation area. The south of the street accommodates an open parking area for the

residences of the terraces and a medley of small stone garages and workshops. A further car parking area is huddled to the rear of the Stirling Street cottages, the Bolton Street terraces and the twentieth century development outside the conservation area, so from this vantage point evidence of the stages of the history of the town are evident. The car park is surrounded by low stone walls and is currently largely overgrown to the rear, but is nevertheless an important space.

St. John's Street houses many of the oldest buildings of the town and can now be reached either from the industrial clog bridge area to the south, or more prominently via a stone footbridge over the weir from Kirkgate. The footbridge was constructed in 1830 to replace the former packhorse bridge. The northern most end of the street is highly visible from Kirkgate and forms a focal point of the town; the L-shaped cottages with setted front area and hedge are particularly prominent. The buildings of the road are characteristically small stone cottages with a number of farm buildings to the north. The street itself has three distinct areas: the cottages on the south-western side of the street, these are particularly old and are now rendered in a variety



*Agricultural style properties of Mitchell Lane off St. John's Road (Grade II) – illustrative of the rural character of parts of the settlement.*

of finishes; a row of back to back terraces lead out to the west; and to the north a collection of farm buildings are situated. Many of the farm buildings, which constitute a mixture of farmhouses and working buildings have undergone fairly extensive alterations, including in one instance a breeze block extension. These buildings have mostly been adapted to form industrial or business premises, including Jackson's of Silsden Ltd, again charting the development of the town. The erection of a number of large, modern, industrial sheds and some very ordinary twentieth century housing undermines the character of the area. However, the narrow nature of St. John's Street, the arrangement of many of the buildings and the existence of the lanes that lead out to the open hills beyond, for example Mitchell Lane, have served to retain some of the rural, agricultural nature of the area. A small car park is located adjacent to the beck, which increases the openness of the northern end of the street and offers views across the beck. The amount of vehicular traffic that passes down the street is minimal, but it is utilised as a pedestrian route into the town centre from the new housing estates to the south and east.

Many farm buildings of the town have been lost in the course of time, as other uses have superseded them. Recently the farm buildings that were associated with Hainsworth farmhouse, which stands on Hainsworth Road to the far south of the conservation area, have been lost and the area is gradually being developed with new residential properties. This is out of the way of the main centre of the town, but nevertheless has caused further erosion of the agricultural nature of the settlement.

## Civic Areas

The civic buildings of the town are clustered around the upper Kirkgate area, which is now very open in nature, due to the slum clearances of the 1960s. The memorial gardens are the focal point of this end of town and around them, at varying distances, are the library, police station, Town Hall, Silsden Senior Citizen's Social Club, the Conservative Club and three churches, representing three different denominations. This is a particularly bustling area of town, situated as it is on the main thoroughfare through Silsden and adjacent to a number of public houses, restaurants and the retail establishments of Briggate. Punch Bowl Hill, where the Punch Bowl Public House is situated, forms a particular focal point and is situated on what was an old triangular green,

where cattle fairs were held twice weekly until the twentieth century. The orientation of the buildings of this area creates an intricate visual interaction of buildings, narrow lanes and spaces: the older properties on the north side of Bridge Street, such as Pear Tree Cottage, are aligned differently to face these roads suggesting the antiquity of the green.

Kirkgate and Keighley road form part of the A6034, which is the main route from Keighley to Addingham, and are consequently constantly humming to the sound of passing traffic. But even in the heart of the town, the rural location of the settlement can be sensed from the tractors that regularly pass by. The northern end of Kirkgate is a nucleus of local activity with people making use of the wooden benches in the memorial gardens and on the opposite side of Kirkgate to sit and converse during the summer months. The existence of the central car park of the town next to the memorial gardens also serves to increase the number of pedestrians passing through this area. Due to its municipal nature, this area of Kirkgate has an abundant amount of street furniture, in the form of benches, litter bins, lamp posts, bus stops and copious amounts of sign posts, to an extent that they clutter the line of vision of the street. The white railings that provide wheel chair access to the library are also plain in design and could be made more interesting. The car park to the rear of the memorial gardens is also a concern, again being predominantly grey with no distinctive features.

It is evident that the civic nature of this part of town



*Street scene of Kirkgate – tractors regularly pass through the town linking it to its rural roots.*

is something that has developed relatively recently.

A number of buildings in the vicinity have been converted from large detached residences to serve their current uses, including the library and Bai Tong Thai restaurant opposite. This suggests the area was at one time the enclave of the wealthier members of the industrial society. These properties have retained their stone boundary walls, which form an important characteristic of this area of the town, also surrounding the memorial garden, the church and run some distance along the length of Kirkgate.

The police station is situated adjacent to the library and although its function fits in with those of the other buildings in the vicinity, it is a late twentieth century building and its design, construction materials and orientation is at odds with surrounding properties. In addition it is bounded by railings, as opposed to the traditional stone walls. The character of Kirkgate changes where Bolton Road (a 1820s turnpike road) begins; this is a wider road that rises up a hill lined with regular rows of Victorian terraced houses and forms a natural boundary to the conservation area. The beck is visible from the bridge and is surrounded by trees and other forms of foliage. The view of the beck to the south west of the bridge has been damaged by its surroundings. A small bland garage has been constructed immediately adjacent to the beck and on the opposite side it is bounded by a small breeze block shed and garden fencing.

## Retail Areas

The quality of the retailing in Silsden has come to form part of its identity. Kirkgate and Briggate have become the home of an array of retail establishments, as a result of their proximity to the focal points of the town and the amount of passing trade they receive. Kirkgate is the most extensive shopping area. The road itself is surfaced with tar macadam and is flanked by pavements, which separate the road from the line of the buildings. The pavements have been laid with a variety of paving patterns, which has been used to clarify the



*Varying roof heights of the retail premises of Kirkgate, creating an intricacy of form.*

the elements are too extreme they can detract from the visual intricacy of the street and individual properties.

Architecturally Kirkgate is a mix of small cottages and larger farmhouses that have been converted to dwellings and a variety of small shops and businesses that hug the relatively narrow main street. The older properties are gable-on to the street and the later ones run parallel to it. This, together with the differing roof heights creates a visual intricacy and richness of form and a strong feeling of enclosure. The diversity of the street scene is enhanced by the fact that properties from the nineteenth century are set further back from the eighteenth century properties, encompassing stone external stairs. Some of the frontages of the shops have succumbed to modernisation in materials and styles, detracting from the character of the area, nevertheless a substantial number have original styled shop fronts. The street is in a continuous mode of evolution and many of the original features of the buildings, particularly windows, have been lost in the course of time. Equally additions have taken place. One particularly poor addition is the extension of the building that houses William & Lodge estate agents. A red-tiled flat roof structure has been added to the roofline, which is inappropriate in style and colour to the surroundings. Another particularly sad example is the frontage of the building at the junction of Kirkgate and Mitchell Square. The character of the road is, however, not uniform and it is the variety of style and periods that adds to its interest.



*Example of a poorly detailed shop front on Kirkgate, the materials, scale and detail of which is not complementary to the building on which it is situated or the character of the street.*

Road to the north-east via the bridge over the beck. The hustle and bustle of the village centre is softened by occasional glimpses of the surrounding hillside and water; the weir is a particular focal point of the road with a cluster of benches situated at the point where this meets Kirkgate. The sheer nature of running water creates an emphasis for the village centre and keeps the village in touch with the surrounding natural environment. To the south, the beck is shielded from the road by the existence of low stone walls. A number of small squares and closes lead off from the main route of Kirkgate itself, including Nicolson's Place and Mitchell Square. These form small sanctuaries from the bustle of the main street and remind the passer by instantly of the settlements historical development. Both are now used for residential purpose and serve to increase the variation in alignment of buildings, which is so characteristic of the centre of Silsden.

*Example of a well designed traditional style timber shop front, with its characteristic cornice, consoles, transoms, pilasters and stall riser. The detail is complementary to the building on which it is situated and adds interest to the street*



Briggate the second retail road of the conservation area leads to the north-west of Kirkgate, joining the main road in the heart of what has been classified as the civic area of the town. The road is narrower than Kirkgate and car parking is allowed down one side, adding vibrancy. Like Kirkgate, Briggate consists of a variety of buildings that now act as retail outlets and other businesses and there is very little uniformity in form, although they do all follow the building line of the road. The majority of the shop fronts of the street are timber, original in style, and are consequently positive elements of the area. A number of the signs are too large for the front of the building on which they are situated or too many are squashed onto the façade, particularly the property on the junction of Briggate and Kirkgate. The conversion of the conservative club into an insurance company completes the business feel of the area. The retail nature of this street now spreads into Bridge Street: the row of terraced properties on the corner of Bradley Road and Bridge Street are retail establishments and a modern co-op building has been constructed on the street just north of the conservation area boundary.

*Steps down from the canal to Hainsworth Road*





*View down Hainsworth Road to the Aqueduct (Grade II) – an attractive street, although part of it is in a semi-derelict state. This is a traditionally industrial part of the settlement: a forge has been on the site of one of these buildings for over five hundred years.*

## Industrial Areas

The industrial development of Silsden centred to the south of the town, around the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, although evidence of the industrial nature of the settlement is scattered throughout the town. Many of the past industrial quarters to the south remain in operation today. These provide employment for locals and have helped Silsden to retain some of its economic independence, which has been such a significant part of its history. The main industrial quarter of the town starts at the junction of Clog Bridge and Elliot Street and incorporates all of the conservation area south of this point. Clog Bridge leads away from the main street into the industrial heart of the town. Howden Road intercepts two extensive mill complexes, New Close Mills and Waterloo Mills. New Close Mills have undergone extensive alteration, which accounts for its exclusion from the conservation area; it nevertheless contributes to the continuation of the industrial nature of this area of the town. The bridge over the canal offers impressive views of Waterloo Mills and as both the canal and the mill are remnants of the development of industry within

Britain, they together form an effective illustration of this part of history. Hainsworth Road leads to the south of the junction of Clog Bridge and Hainsworth Street. The road is very narrow and dark and leads down to the aqueduct under the canal. A number of small workshops line the street, some of which are currently vacant, with breeze-blocks in the window recess and falling into a state of dereliction. One is marked with a plaque which testifies to a forge being on the site since 1487. The perspective through the aqueduct, with its setted surfacing, and the associated s-shaped twisting steps that lead up to the canal from the south side are particularly atmospheric. Unfortunately the installation of concrete bollards at its entrance interrupts the view. The twentieth century housing estate that surrounds the part of the conservation area to the south of the aqueduct now encroaches right up to the boundary.

Keighley Road is the main industrial area of the town. Few of the clog-iron buildings have survived, but there are a number of nineteenth century terraces that testify to the former use of the area between Main Road and Sykes Lane.



*View into Sykes Lane of the small-scale warehouses situated on a setted street.*

A number of rows of these terraces stand perpendicular to the main street and others run parallel to it; there is little uniformity in the orientation, continuing the character of Kirkgate. Larger residences such as that dated 1838, which forms part of Albert Square are also evident. The orientation and spacing of the buildings has produced open spaces, which are often unsurfaced and without a use, many become muddy tracks during the winter months. The car park to the rear of the Grouse Inn is poorly surfaced, but does have a function as a car park. It also offers attractive views of the rears of the terraced buildings and due to its proximity to the fields its atmosphere is rural. The main concern is the site opposite Mill Banks, which is a fenced concrete space with no evident use.

The west side of Keighley Road has maintained more of its industrial heritage, particularly along the banks of the canal. It is characterised by small stone, gabled workshops, which not only retain the original character of the area, but also give it a visual intricacy. The entrance to Sykes Lane offers particularly informative views of the area. The lane itself is setted, which contributes positively to its atmosphere and the small workshops are set against the large Harwel Works, situated on the opposite bank of the canal. The manufacturing past is being rekindled in this area by the production of narrow boats for leisure purposes on the Leeds-Liverpool canal; such activity serves to keep the area alive as a working part of the town.

Modern development has taken over the area to the east, between Keighley Road and the Beck, which is not always complementary to the character of the conservation area, but testifies to the needs of modern living. A petrol station, a builders yard and a caravan park predominate. The builder's yard has no merit with the exception of corn mill house, which was constructed on the site of the original corn mill and is now utilised by the firm. The architectural quality of this building is now overshadowed by the outside storage of materials and the unattractive perimeter fencing. To the north of this a caravan site is situated on the site of an old mill race; this is largely hidden from view by the row of nineteenth century terraced housing that front Keighley Road. The area is important for its historical association with the beck and the mill as opposed to its current architectural significance.



*Entrance to Albert Square – typical lack of uniformity in the orientation of buildings in Silsden.*



*The skyline of Silsden, from the playing fields to the east*

# Conclusion

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## The Special Interest of Silsden Conservation Area

Silsden Conservation Area is of both historic and architectural interest. Silsden has an extensive history, dating back at least as far as Anglo-Saxon times and evidence of this era is still apparent in the building pattern of the current settlement. Silsden is now the image of a small industrial town, but many elements of the former agricultural village are still evident in the present form of the town, including the beck, the street pattern and a few agricultural scale structures. The beck has played a significant role in the development of the town and contributes greatly to the attractiveness of the settlement. It is however rare for a watercourse to remain a visual component of modern towns and consequently the beck has historic, aesthetic and rarity value. The conservation area designation is focussed on the town centre, incorporating the old street pattern as it was at the end of the sixteenth / beginning of the seventeenth century. As the main roads of the settlement have altered very little from this time, they testify to past thoroughfares through the region. The town developed from this core and therefore the conservation area incorporates the oldest properties of the settlement. Being the centre, it has also been subjected to pressures for change and the evolution of the economic base of the settlement from agricultural, to cottage industry, to industrial can be read from its structures. Architecturally the conservation area boasts a mix of vernacular structures, which are exemplary of local building techniques and use of local materials, and later more stylised buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which record the changes in architectural fashions of this period. Sociological changes of the era are also recorded in the new building types that were constructed, such as the town hall.

## Summary of Characteristics of the Conservation Area

Silsden conservation area has four distinct character areas that are based on current and past major land uses: areas that are agricultural in scale, industrial areas, retail areas and a civic area. This however is not to imply that these areas are employed exclusively for the use identified; it is often the mixed use nature of the areas that maintains their vibrancy. The agricultural scale areas have typically evolved to serve either residential or industrial purposes, as agricultural activity is now focussed beyond the realms of the settlement, and the specific character of each is



*View encapsulating the village atmosphere of Silsden from Bridge Road*

greatly dependent on which of these uses it has taken on. North Street, Chapel Street and areas of Bradley Road have become particularly domestic and neat, whereas Greengate, Highfield Lane and Hayhills are gritty and less well kept industrial areas. St. John's Street has become a mixture of the two. The industrial area to the south has retained much of its identity continuing in industrial use, it is poorly surfaced and has a distinct working nature. In contrast, Kirkgate, where the main retail and civic areas of the town are situated, is far more amenable, having a collection of well kept spaces and streets. A variety of characteristics contribute to the distinct character of the conservation area:

- Topography of the settlement and the existence of surrounding moorland and agricultural land that contributes to the seclusion of the town and offers a backdrop of green hills to many views through the town, as well as providing a connection with the settlements agricultural past.
  - Mix of building types juxtaposing one another and a lack of conformity in the orientation of the buildings, creating an intricacy of form.
  - Existence of small closes, which add to the visual interest of the conservation area and provide quiet backwaters away from the main thoroughfares.
  - Grouping of the buildings into distinct areas and the existence of exemplary examples of each age e.g. farms of Bradley Road and Waterloo Mills.
  - Uniformity in colour and texture of the sandstone used for the construction of the majority of the buildings.
  - Setted streets, where these have survived or been re-laid.
  - The beck, which forms a focal point to the town, and creates interesting rural images by disappearing underground and then reappearing.
  - The canal, which forms both a visual component of the south of the town and has played a crucial role in the towns industrial development. The Leeds-Liverpool Canal Conservation Area meets with Silsden Conservation area, each directly impacting the other.
- A number of green spaces around the centre of the conservation area, including the Memorial Gardens and the parkland to the east and west, create a feeling of openness in this part of the town.
  - The conservation area is bounded by late nineteenth century terraces to the west, these offer a visual conformity in colour, form and function with the structures of the conservation area.
  - A number of properties within the conservation area have been successfully developed - both in themselves and their surroundings to serve other uses, Weaver Walk and Pear Tree Court are particularly notable.
  - Many of the shop fronts are good quality and well proportioned timber, it is important that this be retained.
  - High quality retailing and small scale industrial production are characteristic activities of the conservation area.
  - Chimney stacks of both the mills and the terraces contribute to the skyline of the settlement.
  - Where boundary treatments are used, stone is the predominant material. This harmonises with surrounding building creating a harmonious image.



*Silsden Beck with St. John's Street in the background*

# Preservation and Enhancement

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As conservation areas are identified as areas of importance to our local and national heritage, it is essential that the components of these areas that are deemed to contribute positively to their character and appearance are retained and protected from unsympathetic alteration, and components that detract from their character and appearance are improved. However, the intent of conservation area designation is not to stifle change in the area; it is recognised that to survive conservation areas must be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands and commercial pressures, and that modern additions can be just as interesting as the existing fabric, if implemented in a complementary manner. It is nevertheless essential that change in these special areas is managed in a positive way and that new development does not impinge upon, and



*Kirkgate – some of the problems of poor quality signage and shop fronts, street sign clutter and loss of original detail is evident.*

preferably has a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area in question. The preservation and enhancement of Silsden conservation area is important to maintain the sense of place of Silsden, encourage civic pride in its environment and retain the value of the area both as a heritage asset and a place in which to live and work.

## Proposals for the Preservation and Enhancement of Silsden Conservation Area

As Silsden Conservation Area is focussed on the centre of the town it has been subject to pressures for change. Some of these pressures have helped to create the interest of the place, but others undermine its inherent qualities. The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council will make use of powers given to it under national legislation and apply the policies set out in the Bradford *Unitary Development Plan* to control further change and protect the heritage value of the area (see Appendix 3). Certain elements of the conservation area have been identified as specific problem areas that either detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area, or could be enhanced to add to its interest; the following are proposed as means of tackling these issues.

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Actions / Enhancement Proposals</b>
<p><b>Erosion of economic activity</b></p> <p>Industrial activity in Silsden is diminishing, which is contributing to the loss of its self-contained identity. The industrial and commercial quarters of the village need to become viable once again, in order for them to be sustainable.</p>	<p><b>Application to English Heritage to establish the viability of a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) in the Conservation Area</b></p> <p>To tackle the negative influence of this diminishing activity on the character and appearance of Silsden, an application should be made to English Heritage to establish the viability of running a HERS in the conservation area. This would provide grant assistance for the heritage led regeneration of the area, with the emphasis placed on employment-generating activities and general environmental improvements. Partnership funding from English Heritage, the Council and possibly other major stakeholders would provide the resources for such a scheme.</p>
<p><b>Erosion of characteristic features of buildings</b></p> <p>The character of the conservation area is being undermined by unsympathetic alterations to properties, including the insertion of modern windows and doors, the loss of traditional shop fronts, rendering and stone cleaning that breaks the uniformity of the colour and texture of the place, and the loss of stone slate roofing.</p>	<p><b>Use of Council powers to control development and the introduction of an Article 4(2) Direction to increase planning powers over certain forms of development of dwellings.</b></p> <p>The Council has powers under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 to control development which would normally be allowed without the need for planning permission, but which could lead to the erosion of the character and appearance of the conservation area. These only apply to dwelling houses within the conservation area, as other premises do not have the same permitted development rights and necessarily must apply for planning permission to carry out such alterations. In making decisions on these applications special attention will be paid to the desirability of preserving its character and appearance. To combat the loss of characteristics of dwelling houses, it is suggested that an Article 4(2) Direction be implemented to cover the following classes of permitted development in Schedule 2 to the Order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part 1, Class C: Any other alteration to the roof of a dwelling house fronting onto a highway, waterway or open space.</li> <li>• Part 2, Class C: The painting of the exterior of any building or work, where the building fronts the highway, waterway or open space.</li> </ul> <p>This would mean that in future planning permission for these alterations would need to be made to the Council.</p>

<p><b>Poor repair, maintenance and upkeep of buildings</b></p> <p>If buildings within the conservation area are not maintained in an appropriate manner, they can become an eyesore and undermine the quality of the conservation area. Repairs and alterations can equally be detrimental to the fabric of individual structures, both aesthetically and structurally. The re-pointing of stonework with cement mortar is a particular concern as this contributes to the erosion of the softer stone of the building. Another issue is the prevalence of poorly detailed replacement features, such as windows, doors, shop fronts and roof covering.</p>	<p><b>Production of guidance on repairs to historic properties</b></p> <p>Any work that affects the character of a listed building will require Listed Building Consent (LBC) and the Council will make use of its powers to ensure that the work undertaken is appropriate to the building. However, in relation to other historic properties, the production of guidance on the repair and maintenance of historic buildings would increase public awareness of accepted best practice in this field and encourage better future work. Generally replacement features should follow the premise of replacing like for like (where traditional features have survived) or be based on historical information. R-pointing of stone elevations should be done in a lime based mortar, matching the original, and the finish should be slightly recessed.</p> <p>The Conservation Team of the Council are pleased to give advice on any proposed works and repair techniques relating to historic properties.</p>
<p><b>Poor Quality Modern Development</b></p> <p>A number of buildings, notably on the main street of Kirkgate, have had extensions or dormer windows added, some of which are particularly unsightly and do not relate to the colour, style or scale of the original building. In addition, new development, particularly industrial development around Chapel Street, Greengate and St. John's Street has been constructed in styles that do not relate to the surroundings.</p>	<p><b>Design guidance to ensure that future development (buildings and extensions) is of the highest design standards and respects the context of the place</b></p> <p>Policy BH7 of the Replacement <i>Unitary Development Plan</i> (see Appendix 3) (if adopted) will ensure that future development in the conservation area or that would affect its setting is of the highest design standards and respects the character and appearance of the conservation area. The production of design guidance on appropriate intervention in the conservation area would assist future developers understand the special interest of Silsden.</p>
<p><b>Underused, poorly maintained areas</b></p> <p>A number of areas within the conservation area are underused and consequently poorly maintained, detracting from the quality of the area. Notable examples are the rough land areas of Keighley Road and the canal towpaths. The attractiveness of the beck is also impaired by the accumulation of rubbish.</p>	<p><b>Enhancement schemes and maintenance</b></p> <p>These undefined areas offer opportunities for future development within the conservation areas and should be appraised for beneficial use or landscaping schemes. There is a particular potential to improve the canal area and towpath and develop a visitor destination. The beck area particularly would benefit from a reappraisal of its maintenance and some refurbishment.</p>

<p><b>Poorly detailed streetscape</b></p> <p>The nature of the surfacing of roads and spaces within the conservation area is an integral part of the image of the place. Poor surfacing can detract from the quality of the buildings and the area. Currently the unmade surfaces of unadopted roads do not contribute to the character of the area. In addition, the large expanses of tar macadam that cover the car parking areas, particularly around the civic area of the town, conflict with the warm stone of the surrounding buildings and the concrete bollards of the Wesley Place car park do little to improve the aesthetic of the space. Traffic signs and street furniture clutter the line of vision through parts of the conservation area, particularly on Kirkgate, near the memorial garden.</p> 	<p><b>Aesthetic improvements to the streetscape</b></p> <p>A co-ordinated approach to the use of materials for the highways and footpaths of the area and a rationalisation of the needs and positioning of the signs and furniture along the length of streets would give the town a more cohesive image and improve its aesthetic. In addition, consideration could be given to the need for the number of car parks around the civic core of the town: the landscaping of some to create public spaces may be more beneficial. The use of natural elements and more interesting furniture designs would also enhance the amenity of the areas. Policy BH12 of the Replacement <i>Unitary Development Plan</i> (if adopted) will be applied to ensure that any new or replacement street elements is well designed and positioned.</p>
<p><b>Poorly detailed shop fronts</b></p> <p>Aluminium and uPVC shop fronts have been inserted into some of the properties of the conservation area; these are poor alternatives to the attractive, well-proportioned timber examples. In addition, in some instances security blinds and shutters have been installed, which are not in keeping with the building on which they are situated and have a negative impact on the overall image of the commercial heart of the town.</p>	<p><b>Design guidance to ensure that future shop fronts complement the buildings on which they are situated and the character of the area</b></p> <p>Policy BH8 of the Replacement <i>Unitary Development Plan</i> (if adopted) will be applied to ensure that shop fronts are appropriate in scale, style and design to the buildings and the area. The production of guidance on principles of good practice in the design of shop fronts.</p>
<p><b>Advertisements that do not respect their location</b></p> <p>The erection of insensitive advertisement and signage is a particular problem along Kirkgate, as often the scale, colour and proportion are incompatible with that of the building on which they are situated and can dominate views through the site. Advertisements are nevertheless important to commercial vibrancy, which is such an integral part of the character of the conservation area.</p>	<p><b>Improvement of the design and positioning of advertisements</b></p> <p>Policy BH13 of the Replacement <i>Unitary Development Plan</i> (if adopted) will be applied to planning applications for the erection of advertisements within the conservation area.</p>

## Design Guidance

The general design guidance to achieve the successful juxtaposition of old and new buildings in Silsden Conservation Area is that in any new development the character and appearance of the settlement should be preserved and enhanced. However, this does not necessarily mean that development should replicate what is already there. It is imperative that there is scope for the inclusion of architectural invention and initiative, provided that it echoes principles of good design and reflects the proportions, scale and massing of existing buildings. The following basic principles apply:

- New development should relate to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land and should be based on a careful evaluation of the site. All applications for planning permission in the area should be accompanied by evidence of this site analysis.
- New buildings or extensions should be located on their site in a similar way to the general pattern of building in the area, which is usually irregular, although differs from area to area.
- Important views and vistas should be respected.

- New buildings should not impinge on areas of open space that have been identified as contributing to the character and interest of the conservation area.
- High quality materials and building techniques should be used.

## Shop Front Design

- Where possible should be based on historical evidence of original details.
- Be constructed in timber.
- Use timber or natural stone stallrisers; tiled stallrisers are inappropriate and should be removed.
- Retain all existing traditional detailing to window frames and doors.
- Existing recesses, where traditional, should be retained.
- Care should be taken with the incorporation of shop front security features. Shutters will generally only be permitted inside the display window or in traditional timber form.



*Good quality new development within the conservation area, which is clearly modern, yet integrates well with the adjacent listed buildings*

## **Glossary of Terms**

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**Coping:** Sloping course of masonry **Croft:** Small piece of arable land.

**Gritstone:** A courser stone often used for bolder detailing characterised by grains of shiny quartz.

**Portico:** Projecting porch consisting of columns and nearly always a pediment.

**Quoin:** Stone or brick forming the corner of a building.

**Tracery:** Ornamental stone work in the head of a Gothic window.

**Venetian Window:** A triple window consisting of a round-headed light flanked by two slightly lower flat-headed ones.

**Vernacular:** A form of architecture particular to a certain area – essentially local.

## **Further Reading**

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### **Historical Resources**

Cathey W. N. (1979): *A Pictorial History of Old Cobbydale*. Fretwell & Brian Ltd., Silsden.

Silsden – Official Guide (1976). Issued by the Urban District Council, J. Burrow & Co. Ltd.

Chief Executive's Research Section, City of Bradford Metropolitan Council (1991): *Bradford District Ward Profiles – 8. Craven*.

### **Planning Policy**

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (1998): *Bradford Unitary Development Plan*.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (2001): *Bradford Replacement Unitary Development Plan* (First Deposit).

Department of the Environment (1990): *Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15) – Planning and the Historic Environment*. HMSO, London.

This document can be accessed on the website of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council: <http://www.bradford.gov.uk>.

The information provided by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service can be accessed from its website: <http://www.arch.wyjs.org.uk>

# Contacts

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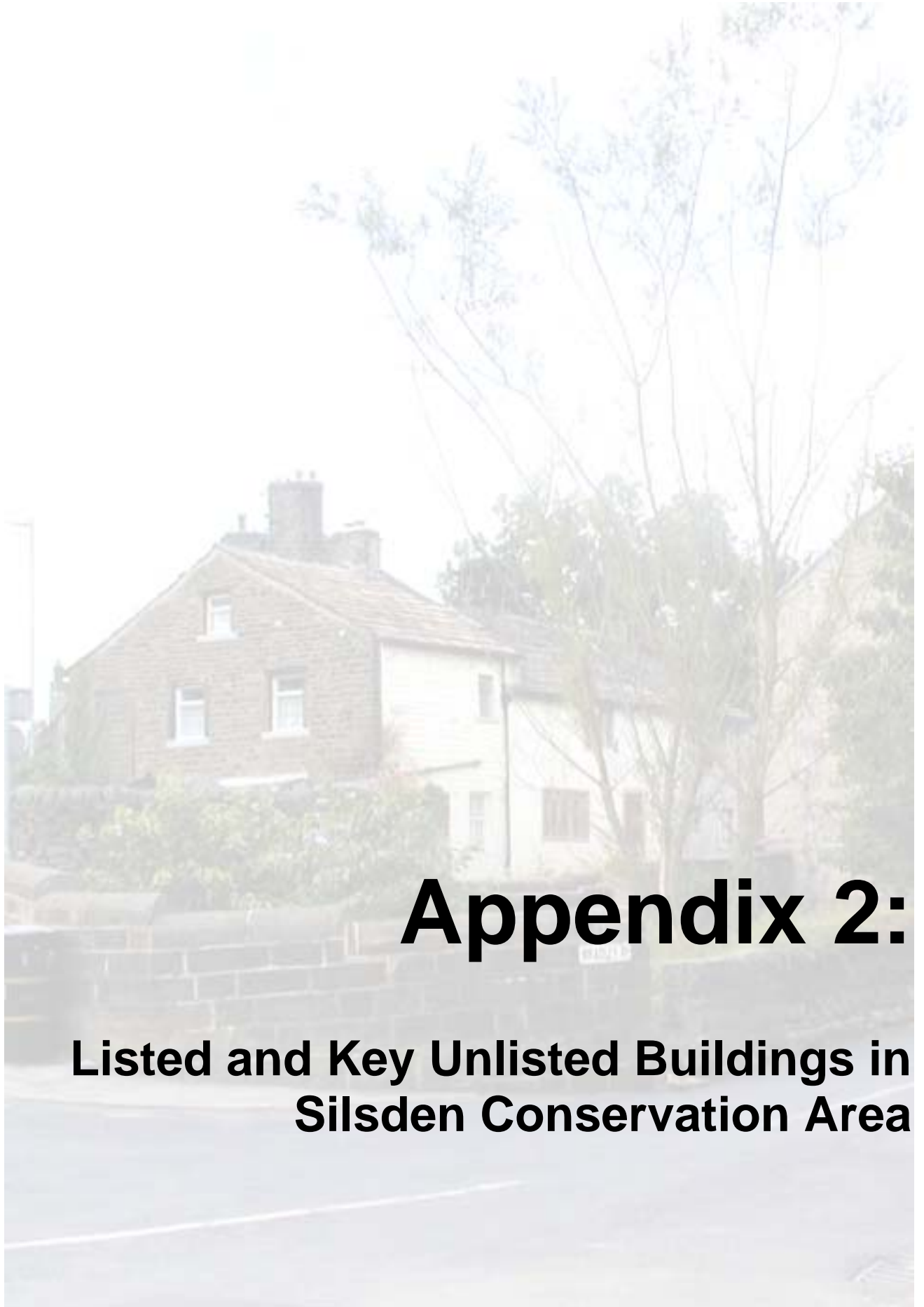
# Appendix 1:

Summary Map









# **Appendix 2:**

**Listed and Key Unlisted Buildings in  
Silsden Conservation Area**



## Appendix 2: Listed Buildings and Key Unlisted Buildings in Silsden Conservation Area

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### Vernacular Listed Buildings

**10 Bradley Road (Croft House).** Grade II house. 1787. A two-storey, three-bay property of hammer-dressed stone, dressed quoins and a stone slate roof.

**Old Hall Farmhouse** including (formerly listed as Old Hall Farmhouse). Grade II house and wall. 1793. A two-bay property of hammer-dressed stone to front and rubble to sides and rear, dressed quoins and a stone slate roof. A rubble wall is attached to the south-west corner of the house at right angles, which joins an ashlar front wall with four tall columns surmounted by ball finials.

**Old Hall Farmhouse railed forecourt** with columns. Grade II wall. 1793.

**Barn twelve metres to the north-west of Old Hall Farmhouse** (formerly listed with Tithe barn and outbuildings at Old Hall. Grade II. Mid eighteenth century. Rubble brought to course construction with dressed quoins and a stone slate roof. Other important features include: a segmental-arched cart-entry protected by a porch with a cat-slide roof, hayloft and rectangular ventilators.

**18,20,22,24 and 26 Bradley Road** (formerly listed as Old Hall). Grade II listed house (now five dwellings). 1682. A two-storey property with a three-cell linear plan under three parallel ranges of coursed rubble with dressed quoins and a stone slate roof.

**Barn ten metres south-east of no. 20** (Old Hall). (Formerly listed as Tithe barn and outbuildings (Old Hall). Grade II barn. Late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. A five bay aisled building of hammer-dressed stone and stone slate roof.

**22 Bridge Street** (Pear Tree Cottage). Grade II house. Late seventeenth century but mainly late eighteenth century. A pair of cottages that are now one house. A single storey, single cell property attached to a two storey single cell property constructed in hammer-dressed stone with rubble sides and rear and stone slate roofs.

**8 Pear Tree Court** (Chapel Street). Grade II house. Late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. A Pair of cottages attached to Driver Brothers, North Street Mills. A two storey property of hammer-dressed stone, dressed quoins and a stone slate roof.

**7 and 9 Chapel Street.** Grade II house. 1760. A two-storey, three-bay façade property constructed in hammer-dressed stone, rubble sides and rear with a modern tile roof.

**43 Kirkgate.** Grade II cottage. 1755. A two-storey single cell property constructed of hammer-dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

**1,2 & 3 Nicolson's Place.** Grade II house. Mainly mid-nineteenth century retaining some seventeenth century elements. A two-storey house converted to three cottages constructed of thin coursed rubble with dressed quoins and a stone slate roof.

**4 & 6 Greengate** (Skipton Road). Grade II house. Mid seventeenth century re-fronted mid eighteenth century. A two-storey, two-cell building altered to two cottages constructed of hammer-dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

**3 & 4 Stirling Street.** Grade II house. 1762. Two storey property now two cottages constructed of thin coursed rubble and a stone slate roof.

**9, 11, 13 & 15 St. John's Street.** Grade II cottages. Late eighteenth century. T-shaped with two-storeys to the street and three to the stream at

the rear. Constructed of hammer-dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

**52, 53 & 54 St. John's Street** (Jackson's of Silsden Ltd). Grade II house. Early eighteenth century altered mid twentieth century. Two storey property now used as a house and offices constructed of rubble brought to course, partly rendered with a stone slate roof brought to course with a stone slate roof.

**55 St. John's Street** (Jackson's of Silsden Ltd). Grade II House. 1646. A two storey, two-cell property that is now an office constructed of rubble.

33 Keighley Road. Grade II house. 1838. A two storey building of hammer dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

### **Civic Listed Buildings:**

**Church of St. James the Great. Grade II church.** c.1816. A simple Gothic Revival Style building constructed of Hammer-dressed stone with ashlar dressings and a stone slate roof, tile ridge and a lead spire. The tower was raised in 1896 by George Jacques.

**Gates and gate-piers the front of Church of St. James the Great.** Grade II gate and gate-piers. c.1896. Richly decorated Art Nouveau gates with a butterfly motif constructed of ashlar, wrought and cast-iron.

**Catholic Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.** Grade II Wesleyan Methodist Church. c.1870. Constructed of hammer-dressed stone, ashlar dressings with a Welsh and Westmorland green slate roof in a cruciform plan in a Gothic Revival style.

### **Industrial Listed Buildings:**

**Canal warehouse belonging to Pennine Boats of Silsden.** Grade II canal warehouse. Late eighteenth / early nineteenth century. A two-storeyed building constructed of hammer-dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

**Aqueduct over Hainsworth Road and Silsden Beck.** Grade II canal aqueduct. Late eighteenth century. Constructed of hammer-dressed stone.

**Canal warehouse, Sykes Lane** (T. W. Shuttleworth & Son, Joiner's Workshop). Grade II canal warehouses. 1852. Three-storey, two bay building constructed of hammer-dressed stone with a stone slate roof.

**Chimney and entrance gates of Waterloo Mill,** Howden Road. Grade II mill chimney, entrance gates and gate-piers. Constructed of hammer-dressed stone with cast and wrought iron gates.

**Waterloo Mill and attached engine house,** Howden Road. Grade II\* mill and engine house. Mill c.1850 & engine house c.1917. The mill is four storeys and fourteen bays and is constructed of hammer-dressed stone with slate and glass two-span roof.

### **Key Unlisted Buildings**

**58-61 St. John's Street.** The most prominent buildings of St. John's Street. They are constructed of stone with stone slate roofs. The form and antiquity of this building group suggests that they at one time served in an agricultural capacity.

**27 North Street and the property on the corner of Pickard Lane and Browfield Terrace.** A pair of stone laithe houses with stone slated roofs. The one situated at the junction was the former Kings Arms when the road was the old coach road.

**Pear Tree Court.** A Civic Trust Award (1998) winning scheme, incorporates new buildings with the listed buildings, using reclaimed materials following the vernacular style in both the design and disposition of the new buildings.

**North Mill.** Built in 1846 and functioned as the Primitive Methodist Chapel until 1871, when it was purchased by James Boyes and turned into a textile mill. Constructed of local stone with a slate roof. Its engine house stands adjacent.

**10 and 16 Briggate.** Eighteenth century cottages that have retained their blocked first floor taking-in-piece doorways.

**2 to 6 Briggate.** Former cinema that has undergone a successful conversion to residential use.

**The Conservative Club building, Briggate.** Prominently positioned on the junction of Briggate, Kirkgate and Bolton Road and has become a focal point of the town. Three-storey stone structure with a hipped roof. It has mullioned windows and a canted turret with a conical metal roof.

**7-9 Briggate.** Shop that is situated in a highly prominent position.

**Town Hall, Kirkgate.** Edwardian Baroque in style and has an impressive Venetian window.

**Airdale Shed.** Large shed to the rear of Nicolson's Place now used for residential purposes.

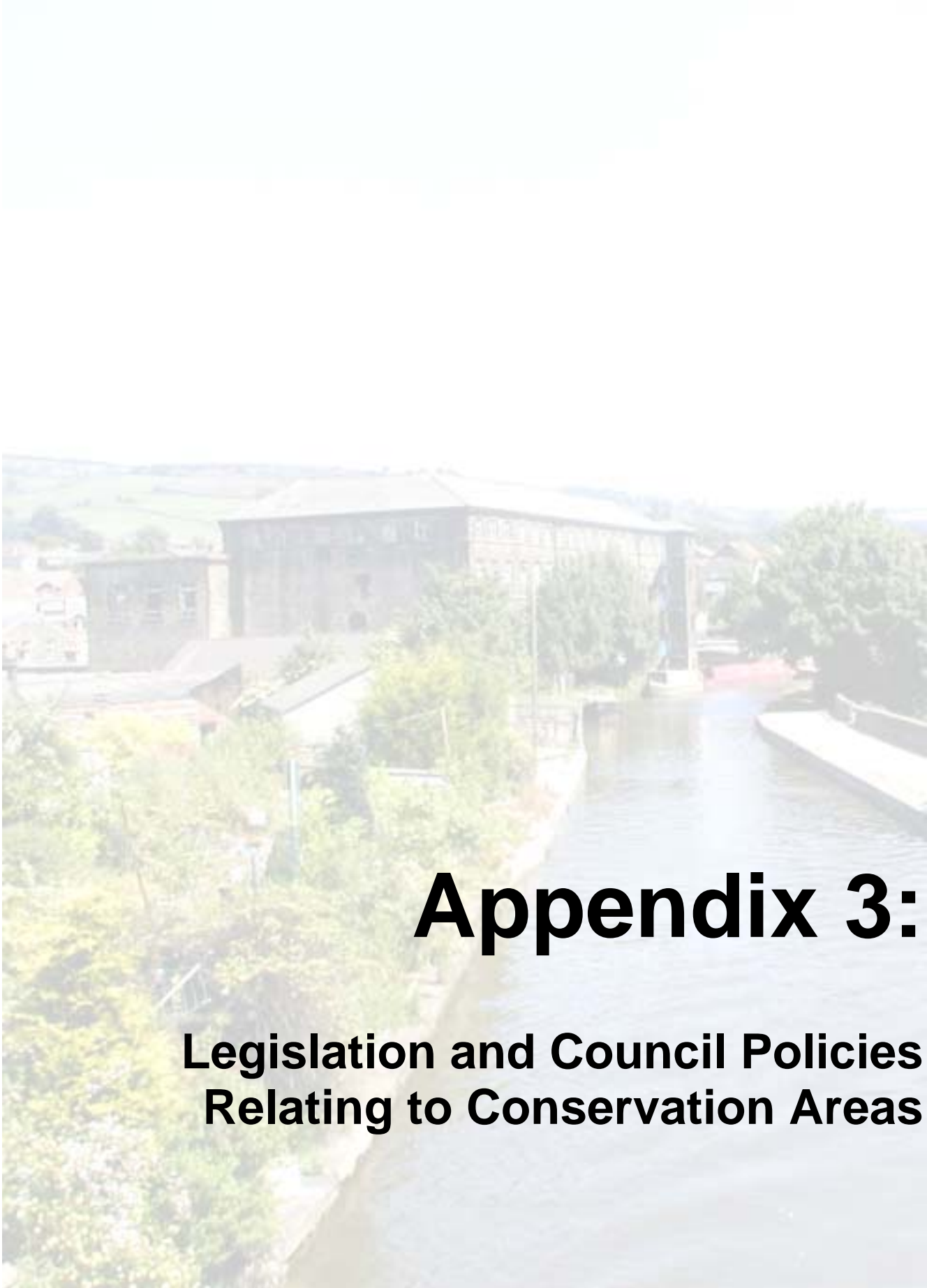
**Silsden Methodist Church.** Completes the set of three denomination churches in this area of town.

**Co-operative Building, Keighley Road.** Built in 1908 and prominently positioned on the junction of Kirkgate, Keighley Road and Clog Bridge. Ornate gable to Clog Bridge.

**Co-op shop, 1-3 St. John's Street.** 1937 art deco style property.

**Corn Mill House, Keighley Road.** Stands on the site of the old corn mill. Late nineteenth century stone and slate building.





# **Appendix 3:**

**Legislation and Council Policies  
Relating to Conservation Areas**



# Appendix 3: Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas

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This is a brief summary of the legislation and policies relating to conservation areas at the time of the issue of this report. These will be subject to constant review.

## Legislation to Protect the Character and Appearance of Conservation Areas

Conservation area designation intrinsically brings with it a certain number of additional controls to protect the existing character of the area:

- Removal of certain permitted development rights including various types of cladding; the insertion of dormer windows into roof slopes; the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway; the installation of radio masts, antennae or radio equipment. Applications for planning permission for these alterations must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- Control over the demolition of buildings: applications for consent must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- The Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those which relate directly to historic buildings. It should also be a consideration for proposals that affect the setting of the conservation area.
- The local authority has powers (under Article 4 of the General Development Order and under the Advertisement Regulations) to control development which would normally be allowed without the need for permission, but which could lead to the deterioration of the character and appearance of the conservation area. (For further details of these controls see PPG15)

Listed buildings, which usually form an integral part of a conservation area, are afforded more stringent protection. The Local Planning Authority must give listed building consent before any work that would affect the character or interest of the building can be carried out, be they internal or external alterations. Tight control restricts the nature of any alteration to which consent will be given.

## City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Policies Concerning Conservation Areas

Structure, local and unitary development plans are the main vehicle that local authorities have to establish policies that can be utilised to protect the historic environment. The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has recently (June 2001) published the first deposit of the 'Replacement Unitary Development Plan', which will ultimately, following a period of consultation and amendment, form the basis of decision making on planning applications in the district. The adopted **Unitary Development Plan** has only two policies relating to conservation areas:

### **Policy EN23**

*Development within conservation areas shown on the proposals map or subsequently designated, including extensions or alterations to existing buildings, should be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area by satisfying all the following criteria:*

- 1) *Be built of materials which are sympathetic to the conservation area;*
- 2) *Incorporate appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping;*

- 3) Be of a scale and massing appropriate to the immediate locality;
- 4) Must not result in the loss of open space which contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Development close to the conservation areas which is highly visible from within or has a significant impact on their setting should ensure that the scale, massing and materials are appropriate to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

**Policy EN24**

Planning applications for the reuse or conversion of large historic buildings in conservation areas will be granted, provided that their important characteristic features are retained, proposals for the demolition of large historic buildings in conservation areas will not normally be permitted.

The first deposit of the **Replacement Unitary Development Plan** increases the number of policies pertaining to conservation areas, which are listed below. **These are likely to be subject to alteration in the course of the consultation process.** The intention of increasing the number of policies is to provide a more consistent and effective control to ensure the conservation of our local heritage.

**Policy BH7: Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas**

Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas will be expected to be of the highest standards of design and to respect the character and appearance of the conservation area. The council will actively support the use of new designs and materials for infill schemes as an alternative to traditional building methods where the applicant can demonstrate the highest standards of design and detailing whilst respecting the scale of development setting and historic value of the conservation area.

**Policy BH8: Shop fronts in conservation areas**

Within conservation areas proposals affecting existing shop fronts or proposals for new shop fronts must demonstrate a high standard of design and be sympathetic in scale, style and detail to the original building. Proposed external shutters sun blinds and canopies must be sympathetic in style, colour and materials to the buildings to which they are attached and their architectural style. Blinds will not normally be permitted on buildings without a shop front or fascia.

**Policy BH9: Demolition within a conservation area**

Within conservation areas, permission will not be granted for the demolition of buildings, walls or features which make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the area.

**Policy BH10: Open spaces within or adjacent to conservation areas**

Planning permission for the development of any open area of land or garden within or adjacent to a conservation area will not be granted if the land:

- 1) Makes a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.
- 2) Provides an attractive setting for the buildings within it.
- 3) Is important to the historical form and layout of the settlement.
- 4) Affords the opportunity for vistas in or out of the conservation area which are historically or visually significant.
- 5) Contains natural water features, tree and hedgerows which the development proposals propose to destroy.

**Policy BH11: Space about buildings**

Proposals maintaining traditional townscape within designated conservation areas will be favoured and consideration may be given to relaxing approved policies and standards if by doing so features of particular townscape merit under threat in the conservation area can be retained.

New developments seeking to integrate into an existing built form will be encouraged by relaxing approved policies and standards.

**Policy BH12: Conservation area environment**

The visual impact of traffic management schemes, parking, provision of street furniture, the reintroduction of historic features and the introduction of new features into a conservation area.

- 1) The design, materials and layout of traffic management and parking areas must minimise the adverse visual impact which may arise from such development.
- 2) New and replacement street furniture should be appropriate design and materials that preserve or enhance the character of the surrounding street scene.
- 3) Proposals for resiting an historic feature or for the introduction of a well designed new piece of public art or street furniture will be encouraged where it can be shown that enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area will result.

**Policy BH13: Advertisements in conservation areas**

Within conservation areas the council will require the design of advertisements to be of a high standard, therefore:

- 1) Consent will be granted only where the proposal is in scale and character with the building on which it is located and with surrounding buildings. In principle, all new shop fronts, fascias, signs and letters should be made of natural / sympathetic materials.
- 2) Within conservation areas internally illuminated box signs will not be permitted. Sensitively designed fascias or signs incorporating individually illuminated mounted letters on a suitable background may be acceptable in town centres where the scale, colour, design and intensity of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 3) Where unacceptable advertisements already exist in conservation areas, the council will where appropriate take discontinuance action to secure their removal.

In addition to these there are separate policies relating to the **listed buildings** within the confines of the conservation area:

**Adopted Unitary Development Plan**

**Policy EN20: Alterations to Listed Buildings**

Planning permission for the alteration or extension of listed buildings will normally be granted provided all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- i. The essential character of the building is preserved;
- ii. Features of special interest are preserved;
- iii. Materials sympathetic to the listed building are used;
- iv. The development would be of appropriate scale and massing.

**Policy EN21: Setting of Listed Buildings**

Planning permission for development close to listed buildings will be granted provided it does not adversely affect the setting of listed buildings.

**Policy EN22: Listed Agricultural Buildings**

Planning permission for the conversion of listed agricultural buildings to residential use will not be granted unless the developer can clearly demonstrate that the character and essential features of the building will not be harmed.

**First Deposit Replacement Unitary Development Plan**

**Policy BH1: Change of Use of Listed Buildings**

Where possible the original use of a building should be retained or continued. Change of use will only be supported where the applicant can demonstrate that the original use is no longer viable and without an alternative use the building will be seriously at risk.

The Council will not grant planning permission for an alternative use unless it can be shown that:

- 1) The alternative use is compatible with and will preserve the character of the building and its setting.
- 2) No other reasonable alternative exists which would safeguard the character of the building in its setting.

**Policy BH2: Demolition of a Listed Building**

The demolition of a listed building will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Before permission is granted for the demolition of a listed building, applicants will have to submit convincing evidence to show that:

- 1) Every possible effort has been made to repair and restore the building and to continue the present or past use;
- 2) It has been impossible to find a suitable viable alternative use for the buildings; and
- 3) That there is clear evidence that redevelopment would produce substantial planning benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from the building's demolition.

**Policy BH3: Archaeology Recording of Listed Buildings**

Where alterations or demolition of a listed building would result in the loss of features of special interest, a programme of recording agreed with the Local Planning Authority and where appropriate, archaeological investigation will be required before the commencement of development.

**Policy BH4: Conversion and Alteration of Listed Buildings**

The alteration, extension or substantial demolition of listed buildings will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- 1) Would not have any adverse effect upon the special architectural or historic interest of the building or its setting;
- 2) Is appropriate in terms of design, scale, detailing and materials;
- 3) Would minimise the loss of historic fabric of the building.

**Policy BH5: Shop Front Policy For Listed Buildings**

*Proposals for the repair or alteration of existing shop fronts or installation of new shop fronts on a listed building should be a high standard of design and respect the character and appearance of the listed building. External roller shutters will not be granted consent on a listed building shop front unless there is clear evidence of an original shutter housing and the shutter is traditionally detailed and in timber and/or metal of a traditional section.*

**Policy BH6: Display of Advertisements on Listed Buildings**

*Consent for the display of advertisements on listed buildings or which would affect the setting of a listed building will be permitted only where:*

- 1) The advertisement is appropriate in terms of its scale, design and materials and would not detract from the character or appearance of the buildings.*
- 2) The advert is not an internally illuminated box.*
- 3) If the proposed advertisement is to be externally illuminated, the design of the method of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the building.*
- 4) Plastic fascia signs whether or not illuminated will not be granted consent on a listed building.*