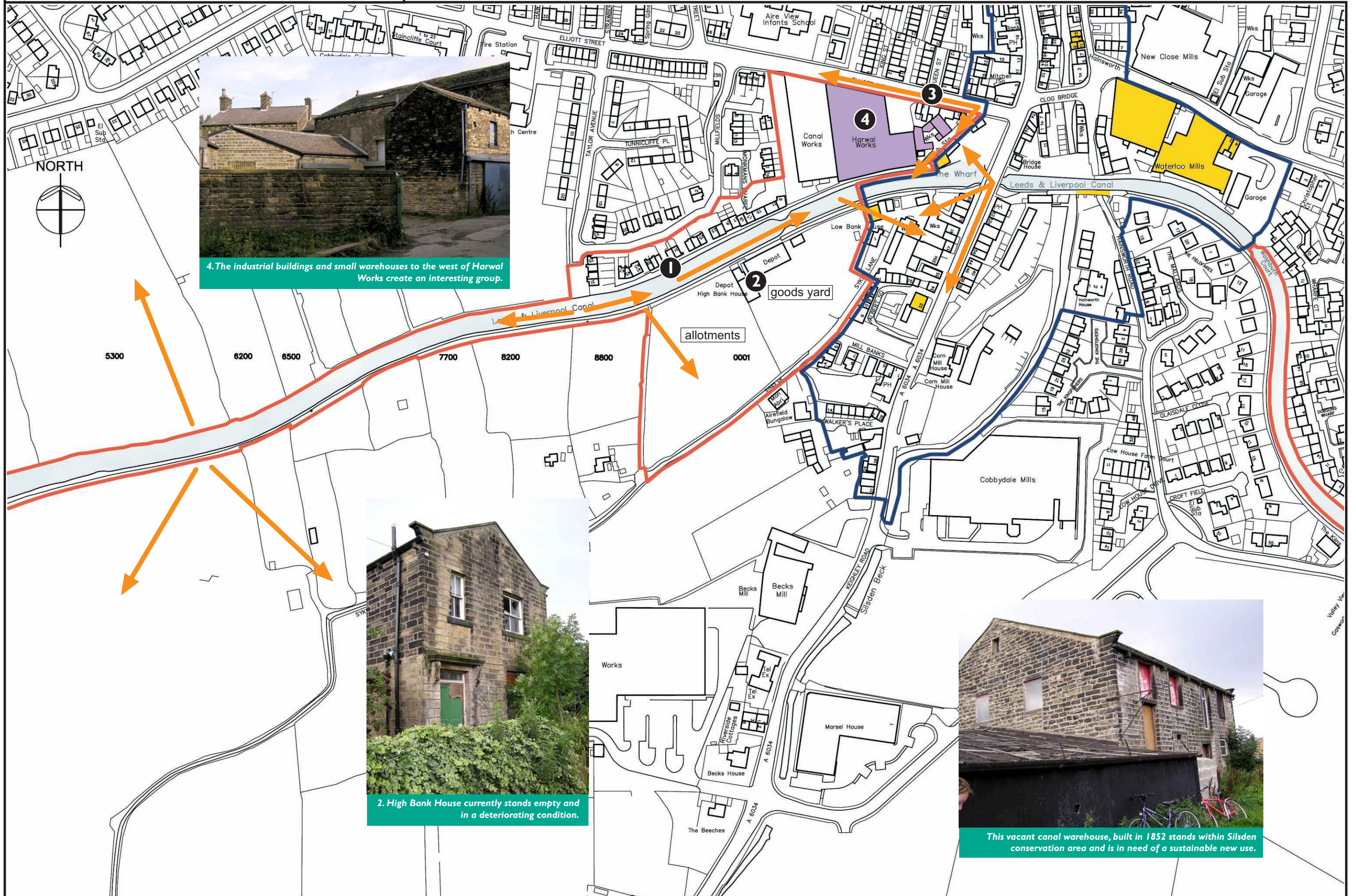


Map 02: Silsden - West of The Wharf



4. The industrial buildings and small warehouses to the west of Harwal Works create an interesting group.



2. High Bank House currently stands empty and in a deteriorating condition.



This vacant canal warehouse, built in 1852 stands within Silsden conservation area and is in need of a sustainable new use.

Map 02: Silsden - West of The Wharf

Character of the Area

To the west of Millfields the immediate setting of the canal remains very rural, with open pastoral countryside lining the canal on both sides. To the north of the waterway, the open fields give way to a line of houses that stand on the brow of the hill and provide an urban context to the vistas. To the south of the canal the fields drop away quite steeply and there are some good views across the valley towards Steeton. Set into the canal towpath on the south side of the waterway is a weathered stone marker that may have been intended as a mile marker or possibly as a mooring stone.

As the canal approaches Silsden the buildings begin to close in on both sides of the canal. On the north side is a relatively recent development of houses set around Monkman's Wharf, Canal Works and Harwal Works. On the south side of the canal is an area of allotment gardens that provides a green and complementary setting to the conservation area. Adjoining this is an industrial depot, accessed from Sykes Lane which is principally hard surfaced and used as parking for various Heavy Goods Vehicles. Though not of historical interest in itself, the depot does contain some interesting structures, such as the empty 19th century house (see below).

The towpath at this point runs along the south side of the canal. As in the previous section the path is fairly rough, being principally grassed and with little to differentiate between the bank of the canal and the path. The surface is uneven with rocks and rutted sections of grass making progress by foot or by bicycle difficult. On the north side of the canal the treatment of the banks vary from shrubby trees standing along the water's edge through to well manicured gardens.

Features of the Area

1. Millfields: The Millfields development around Monkman's Wharf consists of a relatively small housing development that was built around the end of the 20th century. The houses that front onto the waterside are more imaginatively detailed than those behind and comprise of a mix of two and three storey houses, built of stone that open out onto small gardens running down to the canal. The rather plain elevations of the houses have a repetitive rhythm of openings with ashlar stone heads and sills and stained timber mock-sash window frames. The staggered building lines and varying roof heights add some visual interest, though the sparse use of chimneys lets down an otherwise pleasing roofscape.

2. High Bank House, Sykes Lane: Standing alongside Bankside Motors and on the very edge of the canal towpath, this impressive but semi-derelict house makes a characterful contribution to the conservation area. Probably built around the middle/end of the 19th century, the building displays some typical Victorian architectural features that indicate it was probably built as a house for a wealthy mill manager or such like. The house faces northwards onto the canal and is constructed of deeply coursed hammer-dressed stone. The projecting gable frontage has a doorway set beneath a bracketed cornice. The original four-panel door is still in situ but suffering badly from ingress of damp. Above the door is a pair of four-pane sash windows with broken glass standing in the frames. The roofscape of the house is another attractive feature, comprising of a blue slate roof with prominent copings to each gable and three tall, corniced chimneystacks that still retain some of their traditional clay pots. The building is currently standing empty and appears to have been so for some time. A new use is desperately needed to halt the loss of any more of the building's original fabric.

3. 1-11 Elliott Street: Though not visible from the canal itself, it is likely that these houses were developed in association with the Canal and Harwal Works, most probably to house workers. The houses are architecturally simple, having elevations con-

structed of hammer-dressed stone and blue slate roofs. The houses are double-fronted with a central doorway and ashlar headed windows to either side at both ground and first floor. The two easternmost houses have larger ground floor windows and the doorway to no. 1a is set in the chamfered corner of the block, indicating that these properties may have been used as shops in the past. Though not of particular architectural significance these properties, which were probably built around the end of the 19th/start of the 20th century are important to the historical development and integrity of the surrounding group of industrial buildings and boatyard.

4. Canal Works & Harwal Works, Elliott Street: Standing prominently on the north side of the canal are two late 19th/early 20th century industrial buildings, Canal Works and Harwal Works. Canal Works is comprised of a low, single storey building that is partially built of red-brick and stone with north light sheds at the rear of the site. The brick built section consists of an eclectic assortment of buildings and structures while the stone section, which has darkened to an almost black finish, retains more of its traditional industrial character. Adjoining the single storey building is a three-storey range that faces gable end onto the canal. Set into the gable are a series of long openings at ground and first floor that are now glazed but may once have operated as loading doors. The gable end of the building has an unusual, almost capped finish to the apex and the blue slate roof now lacks any chimneys of any size or note. This section of the building follows a roughly 'L' shaped plan that wraps around the northern end of the site to enclose a lower, single storey addition to the eastern end of the group. This building is also stone-built but of a lighter hue (indicating that it may have been stone cleaned in recent years) than the darkened stone of the adjoining works. The building has a four-bay frontage onto the canal that has a series of large openings set into each bay. Beneath the corrugated roof are a series of dentil brackets indicating that the building is of some age, probably late 19th century. Set further into the site, behind the houses on Elliott Street are several stone buildings of varying size and age that are associated with the industrial use of the works. Though now mostly unused and varying states of condition, these buildings display a number of traditional features such as stone slate roofs, coursed stone elevations and loading doors. Their almost unplanned, organic form makes an important contribution to the character and sense of place in this part of the conservation area.

SILSDEN CONSERVATION AREA

Silsden Conservation Area was designated in 1980 and covers the centre of the village, incorporating much of the old street layout of the settlement (which pre-dates the Norman Conquest) and extending along Kirkgate to include part of Keighley Road. The conservation area includes the Wharf and boatyard alongside the canal as well as the



buildings associated with the yard, Canal Wharf and Waterloo Mills.

As it is not possible to have an area overlaid with two conservation areas, the canal conservation area boundary halts adjacent to Harwal Works and restarts alongside Washburn Court. Within Silsden conservation area there is a number of important buildings associated with the canal. On the west side of Clog Bridge is the Wharf, a boatyard that has traditionally been used as a stopping point on the canal and now operates as a letting company, renting pleasure craft for holidays on the canal. At most times there are several boats moored in the Wharf and these make a colourful and characterful contribution to the sense of place. The canal warehouse standing in the yard is testament to a long history of canal-related industry on the site. The warehouse is a Grade II listed building and dates to the late 18th/early 19th century. Built in a typical vernacular style, the building has a stone slate roof, tie-stone jambs to the door and flat-faced mullioned windows.

To the south of the Wharf and west of Keighley Road are a number of interesting buildings, many of which are set above the level of the canal and are therefore little visible. Immediately to the south of the canal towpath is another warehouse, this one built and dated 1852. Now standing empty, this building has previously been used as a joiners workshop but is now in need of a new use and lease of life to halt the further deterioration of its historic fabric. An attractive mid/late 19th century house, standing alongside Sykes Lane, is visible from the bridge.

Issues

- ▶ The poor condition of the grassed surface of the towpath.
- ▶ High Bank House stands empty - a new use needs to be found to stop any further loss of historic fabric in this interesting unlisted building.
- ▶ The visually unattractive depot and temporary buildings to the south of the canal.
- ▶ Underused industrial buildings, Harwal Works and Canal Works alongside the boatyard in Silsden.
- ▶ Dog fouling on the towpath and southern banks of the canal.

Top Right: Silsden Wharf is still in use as a boatyard, renting pleasure craft for canal holidays.

Right: No's 1-11 Elliott Street was probably built to house employees of Canal Works and Harwal Works.

