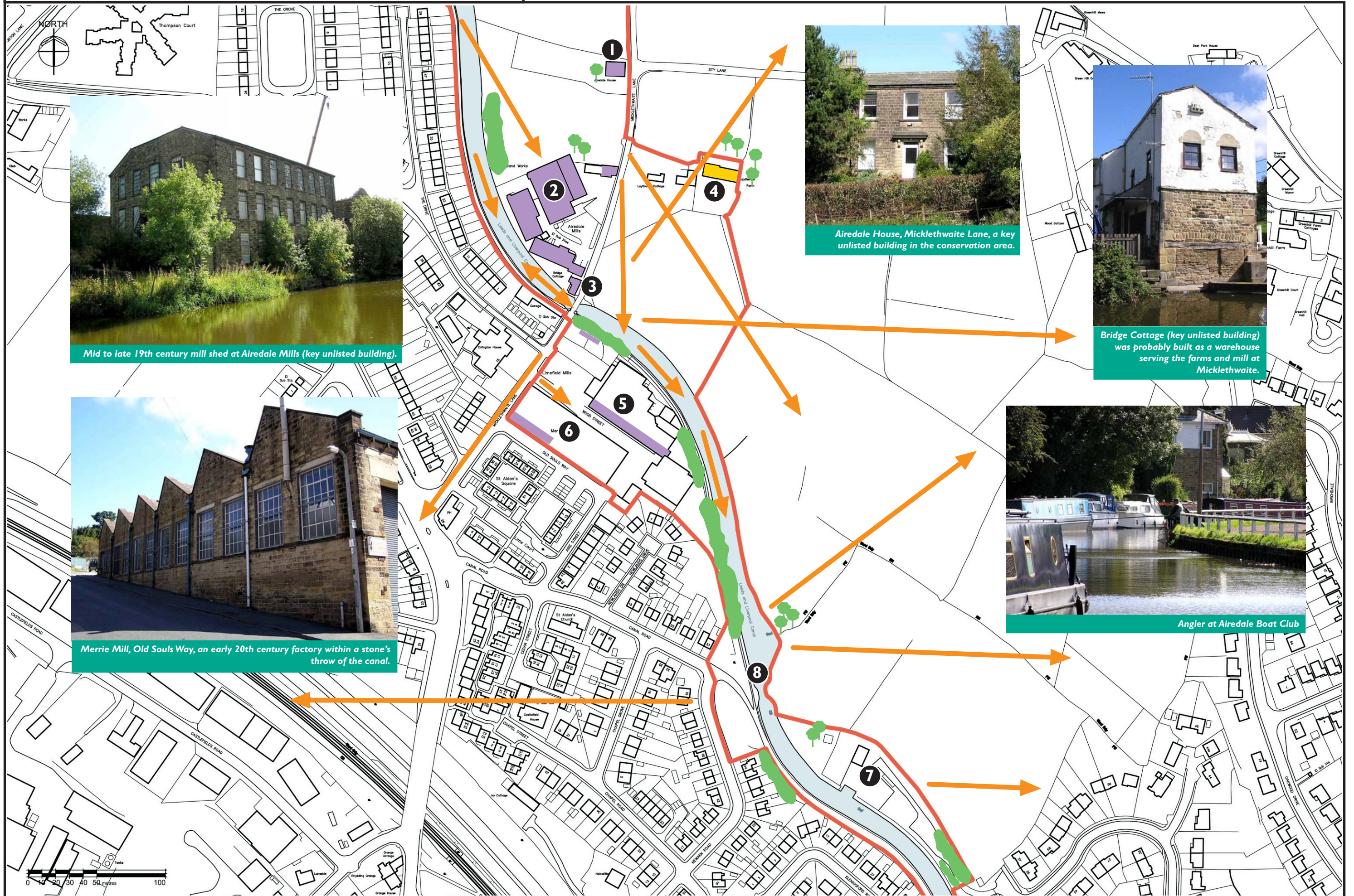
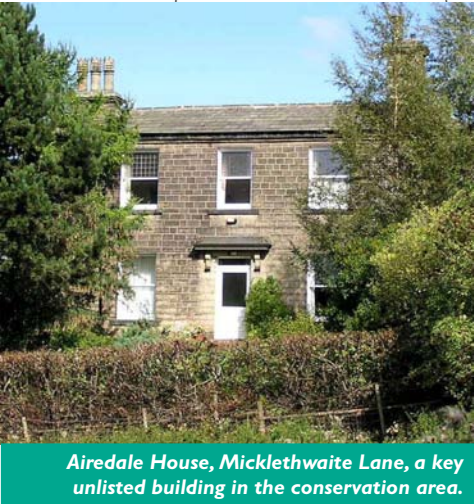


Map 13: Airedale Mills and Micklethwaite Bridge



Mid to late 19th century mill shed at Airedale Mills (key unlisted building).



Airedale House, Micklethwaite Lane, a key unlisted building in the conservation area.



Bridge Cottage (key unlisted building) was probably built as a warehouse serving the farms and mill at Micklethwaite.



Merrie Mill, Old Souls Way, an early 20th century factory within a stone's throw of the canal.



Angler at Airedale Boat Club

0 10 20 30 40 50 100 meters

Map 13: Airedale Mills and Micklethwaite Bridge



Far Right: Airedale Mills is a more or less complete canalside worsted mill. Contrasting with both the rural and suburban setting provided by the north and south sides of the canal respectively, the mills are an important industrial landmark with a direct association with the canal.

Character of the Area

This section of the canal passes through a varied landscape. The north side of the canal is mostly open, consisting of an attractive rural setting of open fields and distant stone-built farmhouses. The fields rise gently up the slope of the valley side away from the canal and there are good, unhindered views across this pleasant landscape towards the village of Micklethwaite (see below) and to a number of scattered farmsteads.

Standing around Micklethwaite Bridge are two distinctive groups of industrial buildings. Airedale Mills on the north side of the canal is an attractive group of stone buildings that make a characterful contribution to the setting of the canal. The tall mill chimney is a highly visible landmark that can be seen on a number of occasions on the approach to Micklethwaite.

On the south side of the canal, with the exception of the industrial buildings at Limefields Mill, the setting of the conservation area is mostly residential, comprising of mostly mid-20th century suburban semi-detached developments. The almost continuous line of buildings and trees standing along the edge of the towpath blocks many of the views southwards and so the feel of this section of canal is rural and peaceful.

The Airedale Boat Club makes a colourful contribution to the character of the canal conservation area and there are generally a dozen or so boats moored along the water's edge at any one time. The boats are mostly brightly painted and add to the visual interest and traditional character of this section of the waterway.

As the canal progresses towards Bingley the setting of the conservation area becomes more urban in character, with houses lining both sides of the canal. Trees standing in gardens on both sides of the waterway make an important contribution along this section of the conservation area.

The towpath is mostly wide and level along this section of the canal and appears well used by both local residents and tourists visiting the Five Rise Locks a little further south. Low timber fences between the towpath and the channel provide an added safety measure.

Features of the Area

1. Airedale House, Micklethwaite Lane: Airedale House is a substantial late 19th century villa, built in coursed, dressed stone with a hipped slate mansard roof and corniced chimneystacks. The principal frontage to the house faces east onto Micklethwaite Lane and has a three bay elevation with a central doorway mounted by a hooded cornice on carved brackets. The windows to ground and first floor have ashlar stone heads and sills and retain their original, part leaded sash window frames. The west elevation faces onto the canal and due to the sloping land is three stories in height, having windows to the basement level and large bay windows to the ground floor. Sadly this elevation has been much altered, the original window pattern having been altered with the replacement of the traditional timber frames with white uPVC. The house was originally built for the owner of Airedale Mills and so has a strong historical and visual link with the canal and its industry.

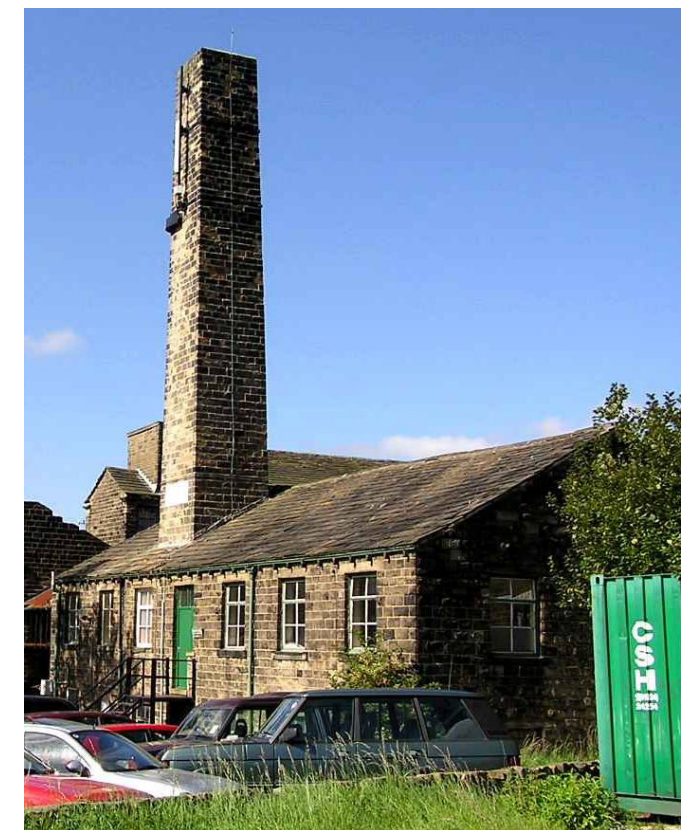
2. Airedale Mills, Micklethwaite Lane: Airedale Mills comprises of a number of separate buildings located to the northwest of the canal bridge. The largest building is the mill/warehouse that stands immediately adjacent to the waterway and was probably built around the middle/end of the 19th century. The mill is three storeys in height and has a long, seven bay elevation facing onto the canal. Set into each of the bays on each floor is a tall window opening that once contained multiple-pane glazed lights. At present most of these windows are boarded up and missing glass and timber frames. Located on the southern gable end of the building is a shortened square mill chimney and from the north the traditional stone slate roof can be seen.

To the southeast of this building is a long single storey shed adjoining a larger two-storey stone building. The south (canal-facing) elevations of both of these buildings are sparsely fenestrated in contrast to their north elevations, which display a series of openings set in stone surrounds that include a taking in door in the gable of the two-storey warehouse. Both buildings are stone built with a stone slate roof and were probably built around the middle of the 19th century. Sadly the north-facing stone roof of the single storey shed has been replaced with a modern (artificial) blue slate tile that looks incongruous alongside the traditional roofing materials of the rest of the group.

In the northwest corner of the site is a long south-facing single storey range that is distinguished by the tall, square chimney extending from its stone slate roof. The chimney is a local landmark and is visible when approaching the group via the canal and from Micklethwaite Lane. The front elevation of the building has a centrally located doorway accessed via a series of steps and to either side are three bays of windows with stone heads and sills beneath a row of gutter brackets.

3. Bridge Cottage, Micklethwaite Lane: Bridge Cottage stands on the northern banks of the canal overlooking the waterway and fields to the east. The cottage may date to the start/middle of the 19th century as it displays some typical vernacular architectural features, as well as a number of later alterations. The building is two-storeys in height but is sparsely fenestrated to the lower floor, indicating a possible previous industrial/warehousing use. The upper storey of the house has been rendered with concrete and a number of windows have been inserted. The stonework to the bottom half of the building has been left exposed and displays the roughly coursed rubble stone construction of the building. Just above the water level on the canal-facing elevation is a blocked in opening that still retains its dressed voussoirs to the arched opening and old timber lintel. The house retains its original stone slate roof.

4. Laythorpe Farm, Micklethwaite Lane: Located to the east of Micklethwaite Lane is Laythorpe Farm, a group of vernacular farm buildings that date back to the early 18th century. The farmhouse and barn are Grade II listed buildings, the farmhouse being dated 1737. Both are built from dressed stone with quoins, kneelers and stone slate roofs. The barn was a slightly later addition to the farm. It has a central arched cart entry and is now partially converted into residential use. Both buildings face southwest towards the canal and from their position on slightly elevated land have a strong visual connection with the waterway, forming an important part of its setting.





5. Limefield Mills, Wood Street: The group of industrial buildings, warehouses and sheds that comprise Limefields Mills appear to have been constructed in a number of different phases over the last 100 years or so. The lime kilns located at the northern end of the site in the banks of the canal are probably the earliest surviving indication of industrial processes on the site as it is likely that they were built around the same time as the canal.

At the top of the site is a two/three storey mill building that faces south onto a series of northlight sheds. The mill building is constructed of dressed stone with two gabled and coped breaks in the blue slate roof to incorporate the lifting gear. Some of the winching joists above the loading bay doors still remain in situ. The long frontage of the building is interspaced with a regular rhythm of tall windows and at ground floor is a partially blocked arched opening. The building is currently standing empty, having previously been used as a print works and before that a worsted mill. At the western end of the road is a mid-20th century flat-roofed, two-storey building that probably formed part of the group but is also now empty.

6. Merrie Mill, Old Souls Way: This works is comprised of a single storey structure with several later additions and alterations. The oldest section of the building appears to the south-facing elevation, which incorporates a 9-bay frontage with large windows (now boarded) under a long slate roof. The sheds to the rear have a distinctive saw tooth profile with north-facing glazing to allow light to the workshops below. This complex was not built until after 1892 (map evidence) as the site was occupied by a row of back-to-back houses until at least this date.

7. Hainsworth's Boatyard, Fairfax Road, Bingley: The boatyard occupies a prominent location on the north side of the canal and comprises of a tarmaced slipway access into the canal surrounded by a small group of redbrick and corrugated metal buildings. Several boats stand in the yard or are moored alongside the boatyard in the canal indicating that the yard is still operating commercially. The boatyard is one of the few traditional canal industries still operating locally and makes an important contribution to the character and interest of the canal conservation area.

8. Airedale Boat Club, Bingley: The Boat Club comprises of an area of permanent moorings on the northern approach to the Five Rise Locks. The moorings seem fully occupied and consist of an area on the northern side of the canal where boats are moored alongside small cultivated gardens. A secure compound, surrounded by an unattractive mesh and barbed wire fence provides storage for gas canisters etc.

MICKLETHWAITE CONSERVATION AREA

Micklethwaite conservation area sits alongside the Leeds-Liverpool Canal conservation area and covers the historic core of the village of Micklethwaite along with several fields that are of value to its setting immediately around the edge.

Micklethwaite is a small village that originally developed as an agricultural farming hamlet and then later experienced limited industrial expansion during the 19th century. The village has a close-knit mixture of barns, cottages, houses and industrial dwellings as well as a small, characterful chapel. Micklethwaite remains much of its original character and though separated from the canal by a number of open, pastoral fields, provides a complementary setting to the canal conservation area.

Issues

- ▶ Airedale Mill - Though still partially in use, the larger mill buildings are currently standing empty. Many of the windows are missing and boarded up. These buildings make an important contribution to the sense of place of this part of the conservation area and a new sensitive use is needed urgently.
- ▶ Limefield Mills - The buildings on this site are also mostly empty and require a new use if the historic fabric is to be preserved. The original two/three-storey stone mill building is of particular merit. Some of the more modern sheds and additions to the site do not contribute to the character of the group and could be redeveloped in a sensitive manner.
- ▶ Untidy and poorly surfaced car park adjacent to Micklethwaite Lane.
- ▶ Deteriorating condition of limekilns at Limefield Mills.
- ▶ Micklethwaite swing bridge - rusting metal work, unattractive traffic barriers and insensitive traffic signage.
- ▶ Tipped rubbish e.g. car tyres in the water and accumulating on the northern banks of the canal near to Micklethwaite Bridge.
- ▶ Deterioration and slippage of the northern banks of the canal near to Micklethwaite Bridge.
- ▶ Weak boundary treatments along section of towpath to north of Micklethwaite Bridge.
- ▶ Insensitive alterations and loss of traditional details to Bridge Cottage, Micklethwaite.
- ▶ Loss of traditional roofing materials to some buildings in the Airedale Mills group.
- ▶ Loss of traditional window details to Airedale House, Micklethwaite.
- ▶ Unattractive gravelled car park and access on the south side of the canal, near to Airedale Boat Club.
- ▶ Unattractive mesh and barbed wire security fence at Airedale Boat Club.
- ▶ Unattractive modern sheds and untidy yard at Hainsworth's Boatyard.



Opposite Page: Airedale Boat Club - note the traditional timber 'diamond' railings.

Left: Probably first established in the mid 20th century, Hainsworth's Boatyard adds to the variety of activity in the conservation area and relates directly to the canal's present-day use by pleasurecraft.