



## Conservation Area Appraisal

Oxenhope

# Lower Town



This appraisal reviews the Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area Assessment, which was published in November 2005. The Management Proposals included in this appraisal are based on the outcomes and priorities established by the local community during the public consultation process for the Conservation Area Assessment.

The next appraisal of Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area will be undertaken by June 2014.

**June 2009**

**City of Bradford MDC**

[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)

# What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?

**A Conservation Area Appraisal describes the character of a conservation area. It also describes the changes that have been happening to the conservation area. The appraisal finishes with management proposals which will help to conserve and enhance the area's special character and improve decision making.**

**The Government requires that all conservation areas have an up-to-date appraisal. An up-to-date appraisal is one that has been undertaken in the last five years.**

The following work has been done to deliver this conservation area appraisal:

- A photographic survey of the buildings in the conservation area
  - The assessment of the level of authenticity of most of the historic buildings
- An assessment of the issues facing the conservation area at present
- The survey and update of map data relating to the conservation area
- A review of the appropriateness of the conservation area boundary
  - An assessment as to whether new development has made a positive, negative or neutral impact on the character of the conservation area
  - The formulation of management proposals for the area

# What is a Conservation Area?

**A conservation area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).**

Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area was originally designated in 1980. A review of the boundary was undertaken in 2005 and then adopted in November 2005.

Conservation area designation brings with it extra controls. These controls cover:

- demolition of buildings;
- minor developments such as porches, extensions, satellite dishes and boundary walls; and
- works to trees.

The objective of these measures is to help preserve the special character and appearance of the area and maintain or improve its environmental quality. Whilst it is recognised that conservation areas must be allowed to evolve to meet changing demands it is important that this occurs within a framework of controlled and positive management.

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**Conservation Area Assessments:**  
[www.bradford.gov.uk/conservationassessments](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/conservationassessments)

**Listed Buildings:**  
[www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/listedbuildings)

# Background and Brief History



*View through Lower Town*

Oxenhope was one of the many medieval or post-medieval scattered settlements established in the Pennine uplands. Originally an outlying subordinate of Bradford Manor, there is no mention of Oxenhope Manor in the 1086 Domesday Survey and it was presumably one of the unnamed berewicks of Bradford. There are mentions of an area of land referred to as Hoxenehop, Oxop(e) and Oxenehope from 1191-3 onwards. The name Oxenhope literally means 'valley of oxen', from the Old English term hop meaning valley head and probably refers to the area's original use as summer grazing by cattle brought over from Bradford.

## Pre 1086

Oxenhope was originally an outlying part of Bradford Manor and was probably originally used for summer grazing by cattle brought over from Bradford with little by way of permanent inhabitation.

## 14th Century

Permanent agricultural settlement occurred prior to the division of Haworth Township in the 14th century to form the new Townships of Near Oxenhope and Far Oxenhope. The latter contained Upper Town, Lower Town and Leeming.

## 16th Century

A major impetus for the increase in the number of farms and therefore population in Oxenhope was the sale of all land owned by Eltoft, Lord of the Manor of Oxenhope between 1589 – 92. Then land was sold to a combination of sitting tenants and a small syndicate.

## 17th Century

By 1850 there were almost 20 textile mills of varying size in the area. Competition forced the smaller mills out of business while the larger

mills expanded and prospered further through the opening of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway in 1867. The railway stimulated the expansion of Upper Town and Lower Town.

## 18th Century

The building of small worsted mills and the construction of small cottages for textiles works in the area such as Shaw and Upper town marked the beginning of the areas industrialisation between 1792 and 1820.

## 19th Century

Leeming Reservoir was constructed between 1872 - 78 to compensate the mill owners in the valley for the diversion of water to Bradford using conduits constructed across the moors.

## 20th Century

Oxenhope retained its industrial function until the latter half of the 20th century and despite later 'infill' developments, has the character and appearance of a group of distinct rural and industrial settlement.



# Key Characteristics

The following summarises the key elements of the character of Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area

- 17th, 18th, and early 19th century buildings.
- Traditional natural building materials
- Road tightly enclosed by buildings and boundary walls
- A traditional roofscape
- Self contained sense of place
- A mixture of building types from detached properties to terraced rows
- Predominantly domestic, rural development and architecture



*Above: Grade II Listed mill chimney located in the centre of Lower Town.*

*Left: 8 Farra Street has retained traditional window details*

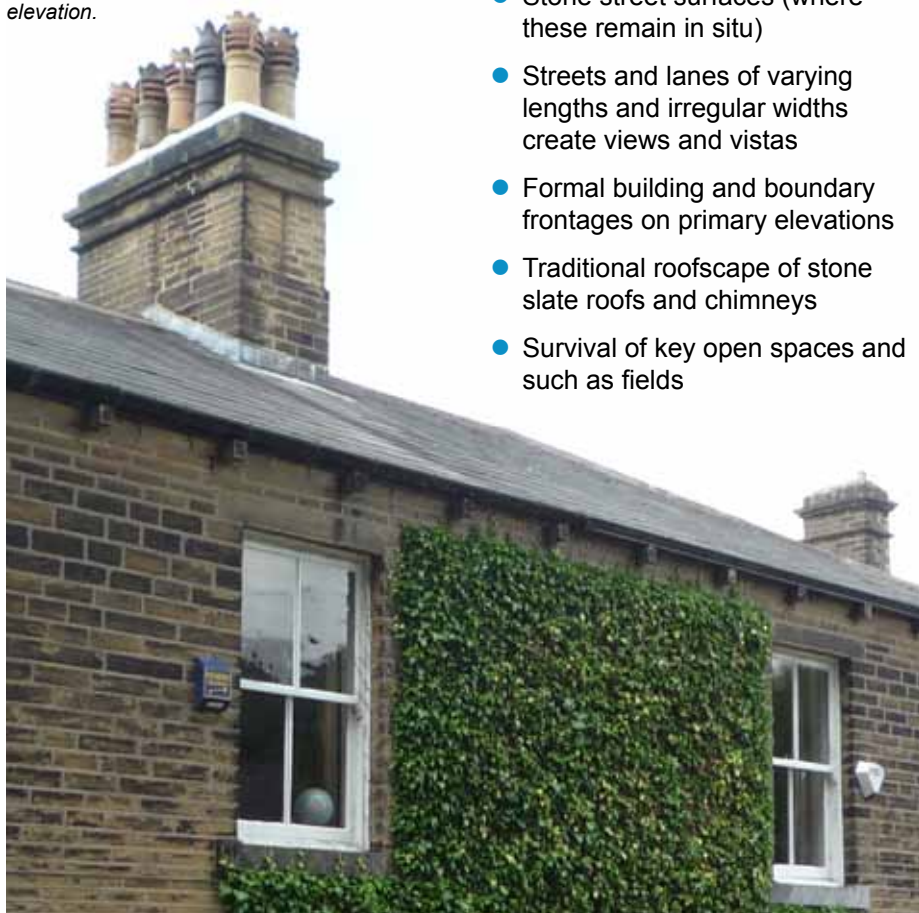




Top right: 6-8 Hill House Lane have a high group value with traditional features retained.

Top left: 10 Hill House lane is one of the Grade II Listed buildings within Lower Town.

Above: Lea Mount retains traditional style windows and minimal clutter to the principal elevation.



## Summary of Important Features and Details

Features and details contribute to the essential character of the conservation area:

- Original / traditional architectural detailing to houses reflecting past architectural styles.
- Terraced houses of high group value
- Boundary walls to most buildings
- Stone street surfaces (where these remain in situ)
- Streets and lanes of varying lengths and irregular widths create views and vistas
- Formal building and boundary frontages on primary elevations
- Traditional roofscape of stone slate roofs and chimneys
- Survival of key open spaces and such as fields

## Current Condition

### AUTHENTICITY 75%

- Each historic building in a conservation area will have originally had features and details which contribute to the character of the conservation area.
- The level of authenticity is based on an assessment of each building to ascertain the level of retention of original features.
- Features assessed are: chimneys, roofs, rainwater goods, walls, windows and doors, boundary walls, porches, bargeboards, bay windows and shopfronts. Not all buildings will have all the above features and the scoring sheet is adjusted to take this into account.
- Only residential, commercial and civic buildings built prior to 1956 are scored.
- 114 properties were assessed for the purpose of the study; this is 92% of all properties within the conservation area.
- The listed buildings had an average authenticity rating of 85%.

**AUTHENTICITY  
75%**

Left: West View has retained a set of traditional chimney pots and window details

# Strengths

A breakdown of the authenticity assessment shows which features and details in particular are being retained and/or maintained and where there are the greatest threats

- A significant number of the buildings have retained many of their traditional features and details
- The street pattern has changed very little which is irregular and unique
- Significant areas of traditional streetscape materials are still in situ
- Key open spaces maintain their traditional character
- Traditional roofscape and skyline due to retention of chimneys and original roofing materials
- Traditional views and vistas have been maintained where the gaps between the houses that have not been in filled
- The large majority of the boundary walls are traditional
- Rural hamlet with definite sense of place
- The settlement has a distinctive and unique value
- Mature trees contribute to townscape
- Peaceful and secluded roads and avenues

*Cragg Royd is set amongst a group of mature trees that contribute to the townscape*



# Weaknesses

- Inappropriate porches are detracting from the areas character
- Most traditional windows and doors have been lost
- Alteration and removal of chimneys is harming the skyline
- Inappropriate mortar, pointing, stonecleaning and clutter are undermining the group value of buildings
- Altered, replaced or removed boundary walls and bargeboards are harming the area's character and the group value of buildings

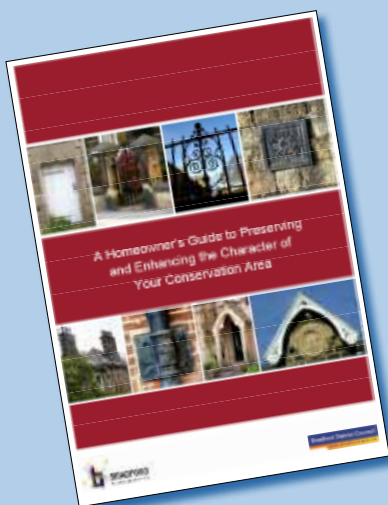
*14 Station Road traditionally had a shop front but the conversion to a house could have been completed more sympathetically*





# Opportunities

- Better decisions by all stakeholders (property owners, the Planning Service, Highways) through reference to the Conservation Area Assessment and this review and subsequent workshops and more communication with the Design and Conservation Team.



- The **"Repair and Maintenance Guide"** should help property owners make better informed decisions. This document is available on the Council's website at [www.bradford.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/repairs).
- Enforcement action against unauthorised development and works to trees.
- Bringing vacant and underused buildings and sites back into full use.
- Redevelopment of buildings and sites currently detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area



*2 Beatrice Street has lost its traditional windows and door*

# Threats

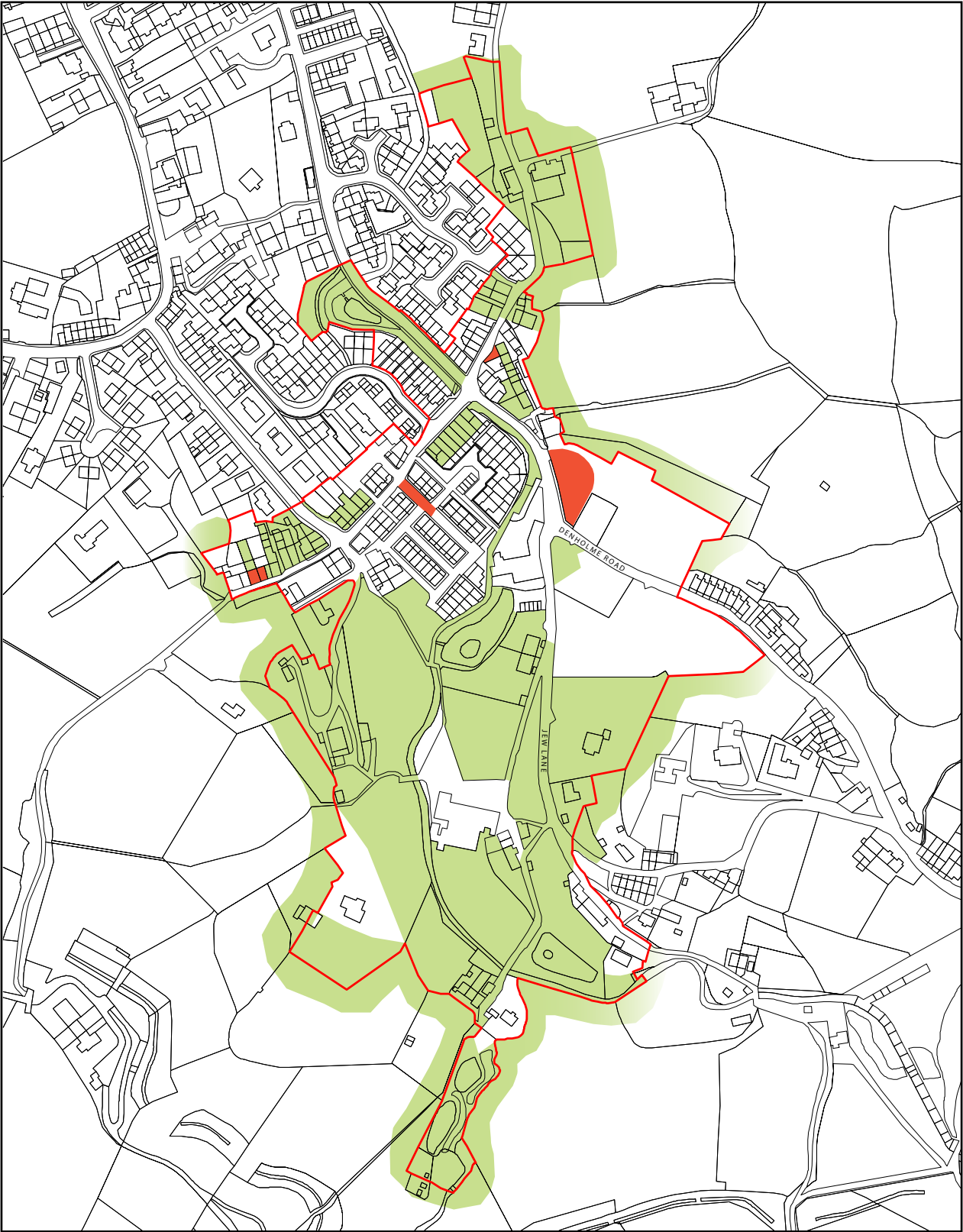
- Continued removal of traditional features and details from buildings.
- Poor decisions concerning planning applications, enforcement cases, listed buildings, highway management, and trees.
- Development of key open spaces (including private gardens) and loss of mature trees
- Loss of historic street surfaces and traditional character of public realm.
- Continued vacancy and underuse of buildings and sites.



*Poorly maintained road surfaces*

# Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area

## Character Contributions and Key Views



### Key

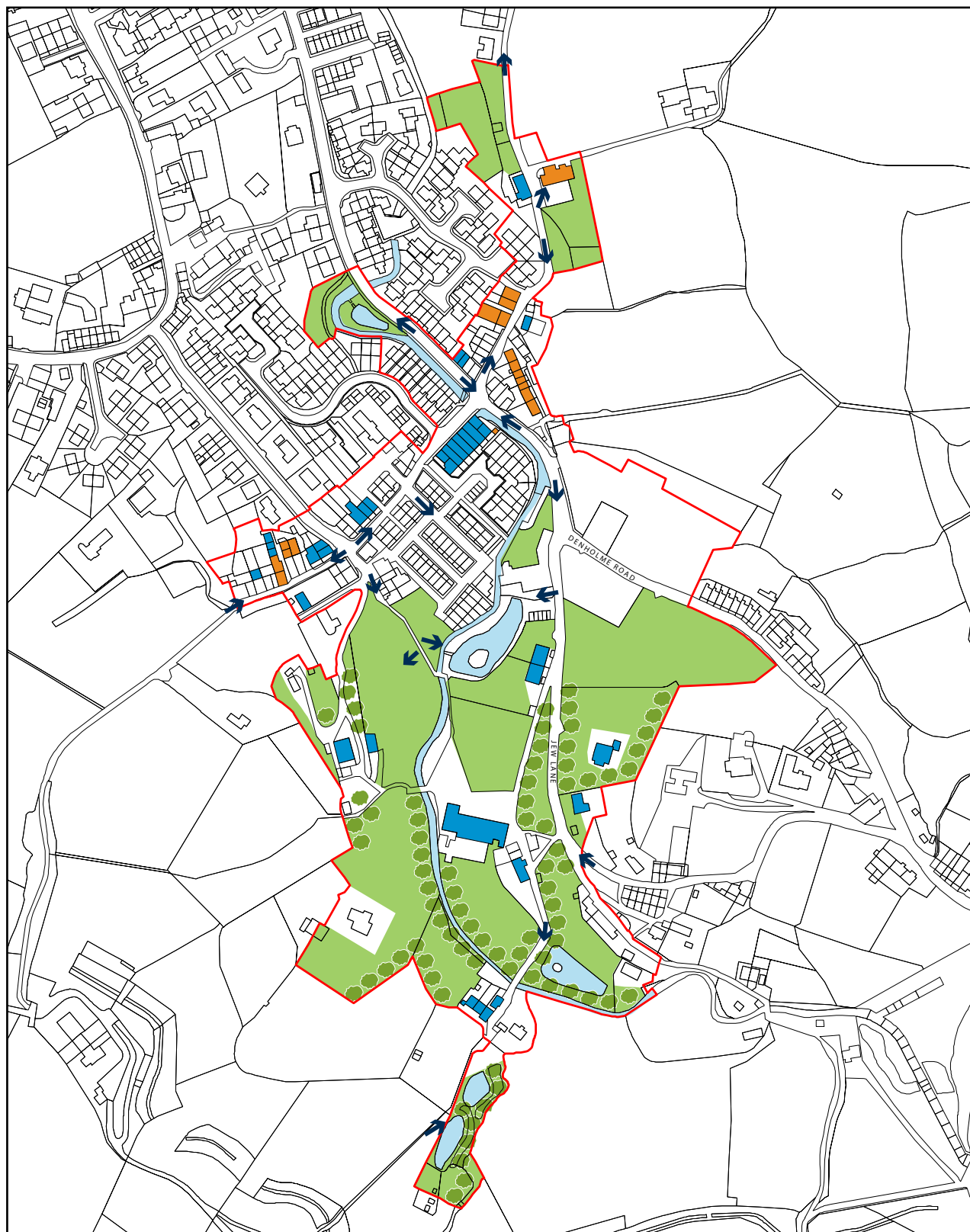
- Conservation Area Boundary
- Areas providing a **positive** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **negative** contribution to character
- Areas providing a **neutral** contribution to character

NB The 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral' areas relate to the contribution the site/building currently makes to the character of the Conservation Area. The classification in no way means that the site/building has no special architectural, historic or archaeological interest.









# Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area

## Listed and Key Unlisted Buildings, Open Spaces, Trees and Views



### Key

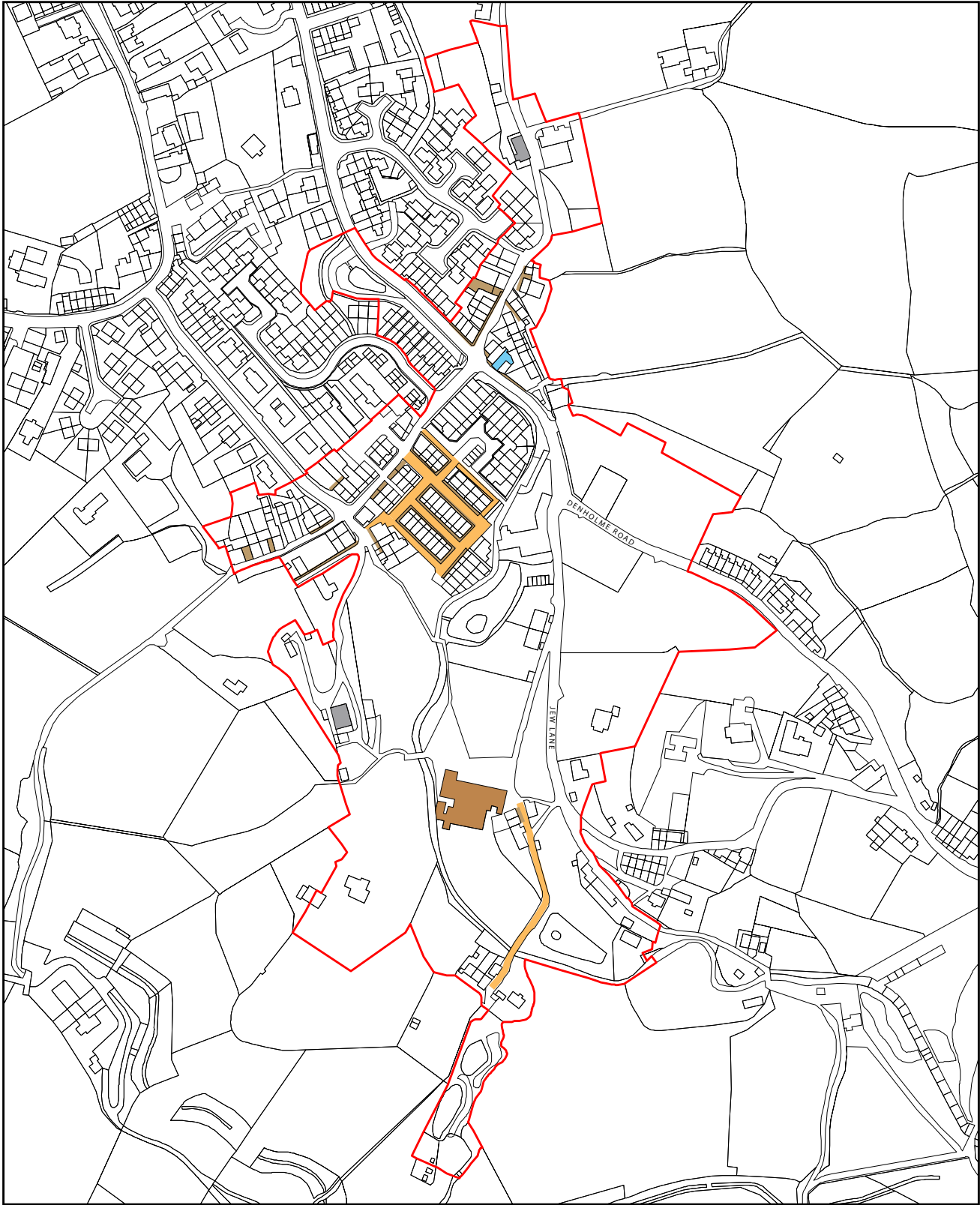
-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Listed building
-  Key unlisted building
-  Key open space

-  Important tree(s) / Woodland
-  Key view or vista

**NB** This map does not identify key trees individually, but merely indicates where there is at least one important tree.

# Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area

## Land Use and Highway Materials



### Key

	Conservation Area Boundary		Stone setts / Flags
	Retail / Commercial building		Tarmac / Concrete
	Demolition		Gravel
	Educational		
	Residential		



Any changes that have had a significant impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area since the previous assessment in 2005 are detailed below.

# Changes affecting the Conservation Area

## New Development

No significant development has taken place in the Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area since 2005

## Trees & Open Space

No trees of amenity or townscape value have been lost in the conservation area since the publication of the conservation area assessment.

**NO CHANGE/POSITIVE**

## Works to Highways

There have been no major works to highways or replacement of street lighting or street furniture in the conservation area since 2005.

**NO CHANGE**

## Buildings

There are no buildings that have become vacant since the publication of the Conservation Area Assessment

**NEUTRAL CHANGE**

There are no buildings that still remains vacant since the publication of the Conservation Area Assessment

**NEUTRAL CHANGE**

There are no buildings that have returned to use since the publication of the Conservation Area Assessment

**NEUTRAL CHANGE**

## Boundary

The appropriateness of the Oxenhope Lower Town conservation area boundary is deemed to be appropriate at present.

# Negative Impacts

As part of the review of the conservation area a number of properties displaying inappropriate alterations and additions have been noted.

Whilst a minority are considered to have a severely negative impact on the character of the conservation area, there are a number of properties displaying relatively minor visual detractors, such as reduced or removed chimneys, inappropriate rainwater goods, inappropriately pointed elevations and modern windows and doors. The Council will look to ways of mitigating these works and will actively discourage the occurrence of similar situations arising within the conservation area in the future. Design guidance on the repair and maintenance of historic properties has recently been published and is available on the Council's website at [www.bradford.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/repairs).



*Neglected piece of land in a prominent location within Oxenhope Lower Town*



# Management Proposals

**The overall aim of the Conservation Area Management Proposals is to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area, by ensuring that the Council and the community work together to maintain historic features and details and limit the loss of character.**

The objectives aim to:

- improve service delivery.
- raise awareness and understanding about the special character of the conservation area.
- improve decision making so that all repair, development and alteration result in a positive contribution to the character of the place.

The objectives of the Management Proposals are based on the issues identified in the Oxenhope and Leeming Conservation Area Assessment and prioritised by members of the community who took part in the Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area Assessment public consultation.

	Objective	Actions	Timescale
1	Design and Conservation Team maintain contact with the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yearly newsletter about conservation</li> <li>• Design and Conservation website to be made as informative, user friendly and up-to-date as possible</li> </ul>	Yearly 2009-2014
2	Improved communication between Council Officers and key partners in the conservation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of a conservation area forum</li> <li>• Workshops</li> </ul>	Monthly As required
3	Improve the quality and amenity value of the public realm, open spaces, highway materials and water courses in Oxenhope Lower Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer working relationship between Design and Conservation and other Council Departments</li> <li>• Production of design guidance for the enhancement of the public realm</li> </ul>	Continual  As resources permit
4	Maintain footpaths and boundary walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer working between the Design and Conservation Team, property owners, Highways and the Rights of Way Team</li> </ul>	Continual
5	Preserve and enhance features and details that contribute to the character of Oxenhope Lower Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings will be published by the Design and Conservation Team in 2007</li> </ul>	Review guidance periodically
6	Promote good quality new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of guidance on appropriate sympathetic design to suit the character of the conservation area</li> <li>• Production of design briefs were appropriate</li> </ul>	2009-2014  As resources permit
7	Ensure all investment is contributing to the character of the conservation area and its activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance of links and discussions between Design and Conservation Team and partners outside of and within the Council</li> </ul>	Continual
8	Monitor Planning Applications to add value to the historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and Conservation Team to work more effectively within the wider planning service</li> </ul>	Continual
9	Address illegal works to listed buildings and unauthorised development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Planning Enforcement Team</li> </ul>	Continual
10	Retain important trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Trees Team</li> </ul>	Continual
11	Monitor Change loss/gain and feedback to local community and officers working in the conservation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and Conservation Team to review Oxenhope Lower Town Conservation Area every five years in line with Best Value indicators 219a, b and c</li> </ul>	Review by May 2014

