

# Map 12: Ryshworth and Morton Bridge





## Map 12: Ryshworth and Morton Bridge



Top: Rural vista of the village of Micklethwaite from the canal.

Above: Intrusive and out of character 1960s flats near Morton Bridge.

Far Right: Lingcroft Wharf. Now a house, this building was originally a warehouse which stood on a wharf, serving the industry and farms of nearby East Morton. The window over the canal was originally a loading door.

### Character of the Area

This section of canal, particularly the area immediately around Morton Bridge, is especially picturesque. On the north side of the canal the setting is mostly open and pastoral with good long distance views towards the village of East Morton to the north and Micklethwaite to the east (both of which have conservation area designations of their own right). The fields slope upwards gently away from the canal and this allows interesting views and vistas across the surrounding landscape towards the wooded hills in the distance.

Immediately to the north of the bridge is an area of quite dense tree cover that follows the course of Morton Beck as it approaches the canal. This area adds much to the quality and rural character of the setting of the canal conservation area.

To the south of the canal is an area of quite dense residential development. Ryshworth Middle School stands on the bend of the canal and is a large, modern building that adds little to the setting of the canal. Trees stand around the boundary of the school, restricting views into and out of the site and channelling views across the more rural setting to the north and northeast. To the west of the bridge are a number of c.1960s red brick apartment blocks. The lack of screening and poor boundary treatment along this section of the canal renders these buildings quite visually prominent.

The area around Morton Bridge appears to be well used by walkers, joggers and cyclists and has good access from the nearby residential areas. The towpath is relatively level and wide with a gravel surface. The high numbers of geese, ducks and swans at this location indicate that the area is often used by people who perhaps come here to feed the wildfowl.

Located immediately to the west of Morton Bridge is a commercial site that comprises of a large handstanding and modern rolled metal commercial unit. The site, by virtue of its location on the edge of the canal is visually prominent and impacts negatively on the setting of the waterway. Better screening along the edge of the site would help minimise its impact.

Beyond the bridge, the canal bends quite sharply around to the south, following the contours of the land. The canal is carried over Morton Beck by way

of a stone aqueduct and there are good views to the southeast of the tall dark chimney of Airedale Mills.

### Features of the Area

**1. Aqueduct, Morton Beck:** The canal passes over Morton Beck at this point by way of a stone aqueduct. Though very much an unseen feature from the canal or the towpath, the aqueduct is a Grade II listed structure and was built contemporarily with this section of canal, c.1770-3. The aqueduct is built of coursed, dressed stone with a single segmental-headed arch with impost bands. A parapet runs along both sides of the canal and has copings along the top and a single string course beneath (on towpath side only).

**2. Morton Bridge (198):** Morton Bridge is a relatively modern metal swing bridge that operates electrically, pivoting on an axis on the north side of the waterway. The bridge is fairly wide and has a metal base with tarmaced carriageway and white painted handrails. Flashing lights and traffic barriers control the traffic at either side when the bridge is opened to allow boats through.

**3. Lingcroft Wharf, Morton Lane:** Lingcroft Wharf is a stone-built detached dwelling set at right angles to the canal. It is shown on the first O.S. map of the area published in 1852, indicating that the building was constructed prior to that date.



The gable end of the house immediately abuts the edge of the canal and it is likely that the doorway opening out over the water was previously used to load and unload goods directly from the boats. The building has a good stone slate roof but lacks chimneystacks, indicating that these have since been removed or perhaps that the building started life as a warehouse rather than a dwelling. Now in residential use, the building appears to have been substantially rebuilt over the years and has undergone a

number of alterations, including the addition of a stone porch and addition/alteration of a number of window openings.

### Issues

- ▶ Submerged and slipped stone copings adjacent to the bridge.
- ▶ Tipped rubbish accumulating down the southern side of the aqueduct.
- ▶ Poor boundary treatment along the edge of the towpath to the west of Morton Bridge.
- ▶ Overhanging tree branches and vegetation along the canal towpath.
- ▶ Unattractive HGV park and industrial building on the north side of the canal adjacent to Morton Bridge.
- ▶ Lack of suitable screening along the canal side boundary of the industrial site.
- ▶ Crumbling banks on the north side of the canal are causing slippage into the waterway.
- ▶ Encroachment of reeds and water grasses into the channel on the north side of the canal.
- ▶ Rubbish floating in the canal and accumulating on the northern edge of the waterway close to the bridge.

