



## Map 22: East of Shipley



### Character of the Area

The character of the canal area changes markedly when passing under the railway bridge. To the west the towpath is a narrow rut between broad grass verges in a built-up primarily industrial area. Emerging from under the bridge to the east, the towpath broadens out considerably and is surfaced with sandy brown gravel. To the north is a large factory, but this is more or less concealed by a line of trees, while to the south there is a mixture of open pasture and allotment gardens. The railway bridge and its embankments form a visual barrier between the two contrasting areas. Save the railway bridge and Oddie's Swing Bridge, there are few features and no buildings in the conservation area along this section. The northern bank of the canal by the swing bridge is lined for some distance with copingstones to some of which mooring posts have been attached. The rest of the north bank and all of the opposite bank have a natural, overgrown edge. The towpath changes to a white compacted gravel where the copings end. Further east and beyond the factory premises, the towpath adjoins a self sown woodland with areas of shrubbery and undergrowth which screens the canal from the built up area to the north. In addition, this area feels quite secluded due to the perceived lack of nearby development and the barriers formed by the railway embankments to the south and east.

### Features of the Area

**1. Railway bridge (209a?):** This railway was built in the 1850s as the Shipley & Guiseley branch line, which links through to Ilkley. The iron bridge carried on rusticated stone piers is a later construction.

**2. Oddie's Swing Bridge or Metal Box Swing Bridge (210):** This modernised manual swing bridge is of an iron construction with modern steel railings and a tarmac surface. Attached to the southern end is a steel balance beam over bare earth. The area under the bridge is concrete, but the banks and walls are made of stone and retain copings. On top of the northern wall is a diamond timber handrail on square timber posts with iron feet and a square guardrail. There was once a small wharf to the southeast of this bridge, complete with crane, but no trace of this remains, save the raised stone bank of the canal. It appears that the bridge was originally access only to a farmstead called Cinder Ovens and a pub called the Canal Tavern (which are both long demolished) from the Wood End area of Windhill. Today, the bridge enables access to the allotments to the south and the various industrial premises to the north.

### Issues

- ▶ Unsurfaced and rutted towpath to the west of the railway bridge.
- ▶ The poor condition of the track to the south of the swing bridge.
- ▶ The appearance and character of the metallic palisade fencing to the southeast of the swing bridge.

Railway bridge and Oddie's Swing Bridge