



Conservation Area Appraisal

Silsden



This appraisal reviews the Silsden Conservation Area Assessment, which was appraised in 2003. The Management Proposals included in this appraisal are based on the outcomes and priorities established by the local community during the public consultation process.

The next appraisal of Silsden Conservation Area will be undertaken by January 2011.

April 2006

City of Bradford MDC

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 taken place in the conservation area over recent years.

The appraisal finishes with management proposals which will help to conserve and enhance the area's special character and improve decision making in the future.

The Government requires that all conservation areas have an up-to-date conservation area appraisal.

An up-to-date appraisal is one that has been undertaken within the past 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 (see 'Current Condition' on page 5).
- An assessment of the issues facing the conservation area at present (see pages 6 and 7).
- The survey and update of map data relating to the conservation area (see pages 8, 9 and 10).
- A review of the appropriateness of the conservation area boundary (see page 13).
 - An assessment as to whether new development has made a positive, negative or neutral impact on the character of the conservation area (see pages 11 and 13).
 - The formulation of management proposals for the area (see page 14).

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).

Silsden Conservation Area was originally designated in 1980. A review of the boundaries of Silsden Conservation Area was undertaken in 2003 as part of the district wide assessment of all the conservation areas in City of Bradford MDC. Local residents were consulted about the assessment and a well attended workshop was held in November 2001. The boundary of Silsden conservation area was amended following consultation and the conservation area redesignated in April 2002.

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.

Contents

Background and Brief History	3
Key Characteristics	4
Strengths	6
Weaknesses	6
Opportunities	7
Threats	7
Conservation Area Maps	8
Changes Affecting the Conservation Area	11
Negative Impacts	13
Management Proposals	14

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Silsden Beck and Kirkgate

Background and Brief History

Silsden conservation area covers the centre of the town, roughly following the line of Kirkgate, which runs through the centre of the settlement from north to south. The following timeline briefly summarises its development:

9th Century

Silsden predates the Domesday Survey and probably existed as a Saxon agricultural settlement.

17th Century

Some of the earliest surviving buildings in Silsden date from this time including Old Hall and its barn. These early vernacular buildings include farmhouses, barns and worker's cottages.

18th Century

The economic base of Silsden gradually evolved to industrial. The construction of the canal in 1772 provided effective transportation. Silsden became a major producer of flax, nails and clogs.

19th Century

By the late 19th century small scale manufacture had given way to large scale production of textiles. Waterloo Mill was built in the 1870s. The arrival of large numbers of workers necessitated the construction of terraces of workers housing and civic buildings.

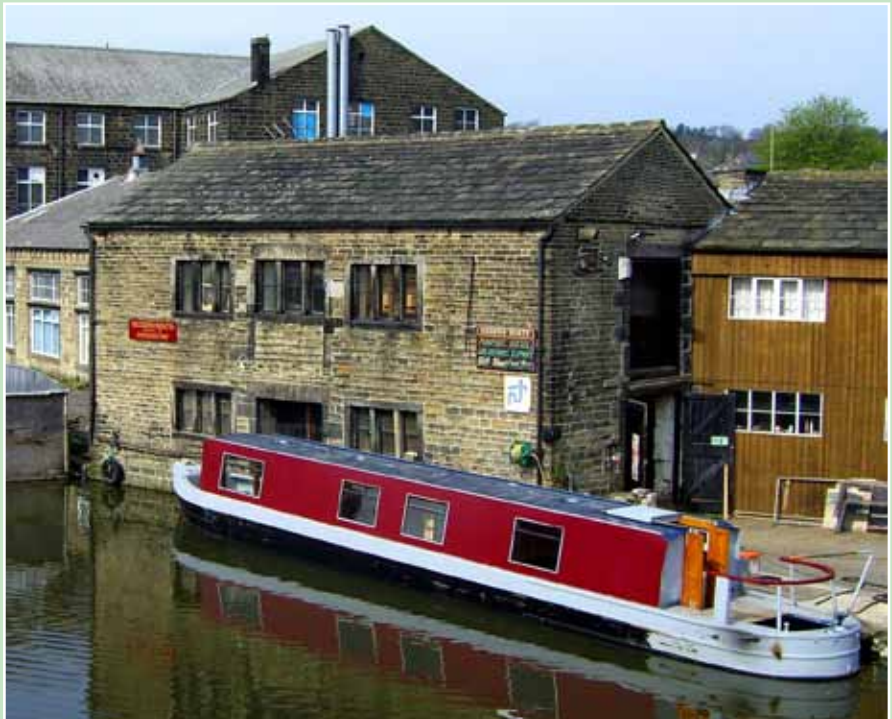


Waterloo Mills is a prominent reminder of Silsden's industrial past.

Key Characteristics

The following summarises the key elements of the character of Silsden conservation area:

- Early origins as an agricultural settlement and the later influence of industry and improvements in communications are reflected in the development of the settlement and its built form.
- Excellent examples of local vernacular architecture.
- Stylised Georgian and Victorian architecture evident on civic buildings.
- Traditional, natural building materials.
- The presence of moving water in the form of the beck and Leeds & Liverpool Canal.
- Natural elements such as trees and green spaces complement the fine grain of the buildings.
- Strong commercial core surrounded by quieter residential areas.
- Distinct small town character with secluded feel due to surrounding moorland.



Top: The Grade II Listed canal warehouse is still in active use and owned by Pennine Boats.

Left: Silsden Town Hall was built in an Edwardian Baroque style.

Right: The juxtaposition of the buildings on North Street emphasises Silsden's small town character.



Summary of Important Features and Details

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

- Natural stone – elevations and roofing materials.
- Traditional timber window frames, doors and guttering.
- Traditional shopfronts.
- Stone boundary walls and gateposts on residential properties.
- Lack of uniformity in the building pattern and variety of building types.
- Historic street pattern, particularly the width and orientation of Kirkgate (formerly Towngate).

Current Condition

AUTHENTICITY 71%

- The level of authenticity is based on an assessment of each property 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 have all of the above features and the scoring is adjusted to take this into account.
- Only residential properties and retail properties built prior to 1956 are scored.
- 282 properties were assessed for the purpose of the study; this is 82% of all properties within the conservation area.
- The listed buildings scored an average authenticity rating of 78%.



Clockwise from top left: Cottages on Bridge Street are characteristic examples of the local vernacular;

Original features such as these shopfronts on Bradley Street make an important contribution; Boundary wall and gateposts, such as this one on Kirkgate, enhance the streetscape; 10, Bradley Road (Grade II Listed) is an excellent example of a well maintained property.

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.

Strengths

- Silsden retains much of its essential working town character with a busy commercial core surrounded by quieter residential areas.
- A high quality built and natural environment that is generally well maintained. Most buildings retain a significant number of traditional features and details.
- Kirkgate and Briggate both retain a good range of services and shops that help maintain the conservation area's character.
- Historic street pattern that has changed very little in its form.
- Stone slate and blue/grey slate remain the principle roofing material for buildings with nearly all buildings retaining their original roofing materials. Chimneystacks make a strong contribution to the quality of the roofscape.
- Stone is the principle building material and is used on nearly buildings for elevations and boundary walls. This gives the conservation area a strong sense of identity and cohesion.
- Listed buildings have generally retained a higher degree of authenticity.

Well detailed traditional shopfront at 26 Briggate



Weaknesses

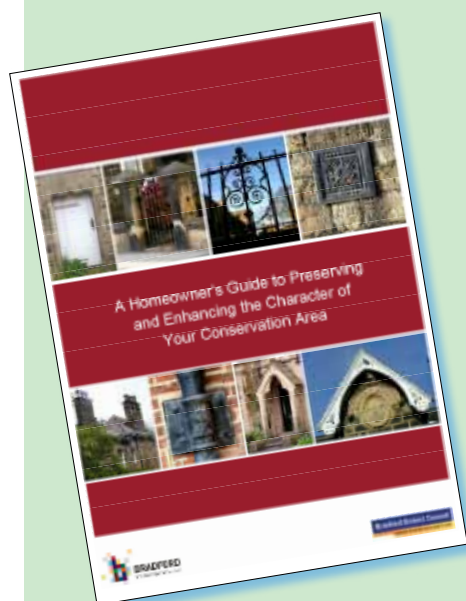
- Traditional windows and doors make an important contribution to the character and appearance of a building but most have been removed.
- There are a small number of vacant or underused buildings.
- A high proportion of shopfronts have been altered detrimentally and this has impacted on the character of the conservation area.
- A number of insensitive alterations such as stone cleaning, poor pointing, satellite dishes and other forms of clutter are diminishing the quality of the environment.

Inappropriate shopfront and dormer window on 70-72 Kirkgate



Opportunities

- Better decision making by stakeholders (property owners, the Planning Service, Highways and the utility companies).
- Forthcoming **'Repair and Maintenance Guidance'** which will allow property owners to make informed decisions.



- Forthcoming **'Shopfront Guidance'** which will improve the quality of new shopfronts and signage.
- Use of planning enforcement to address unauthorised works to buildings.
- Bring vacant or underused buildings back into use.

Loss of traditional details and insensitive alterations can harm not just the individual building but the conservation area as a whole



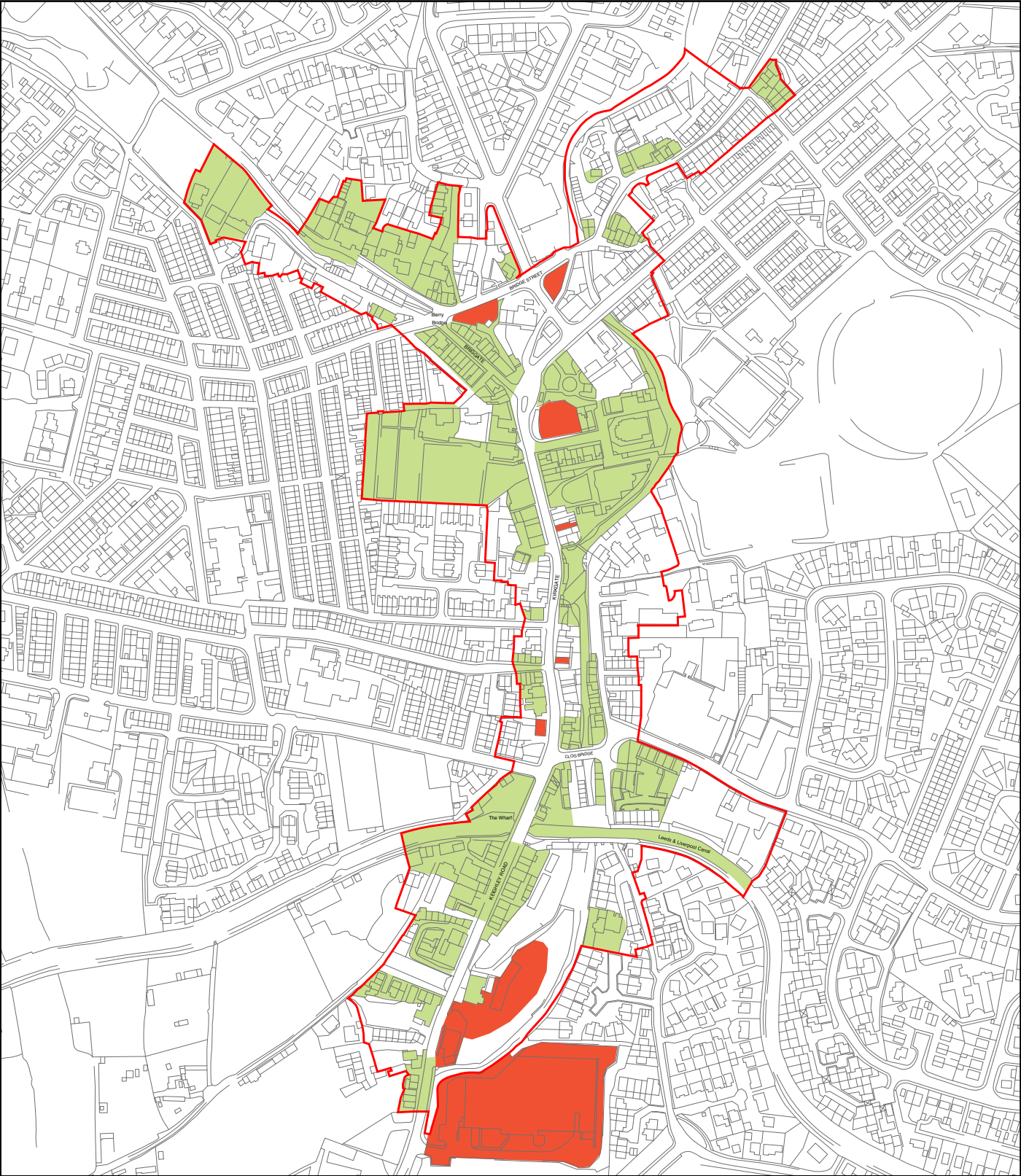
Threats

- Incremental loss of traditional features and details from buildings in the conservation area.
- Loss of character to traditional streetscapes through intrusive highways works and excessive signage.
- Uninformed decision making that detracts from the special character of the conservation area.



Silsden Conservation Area

Character Contributions



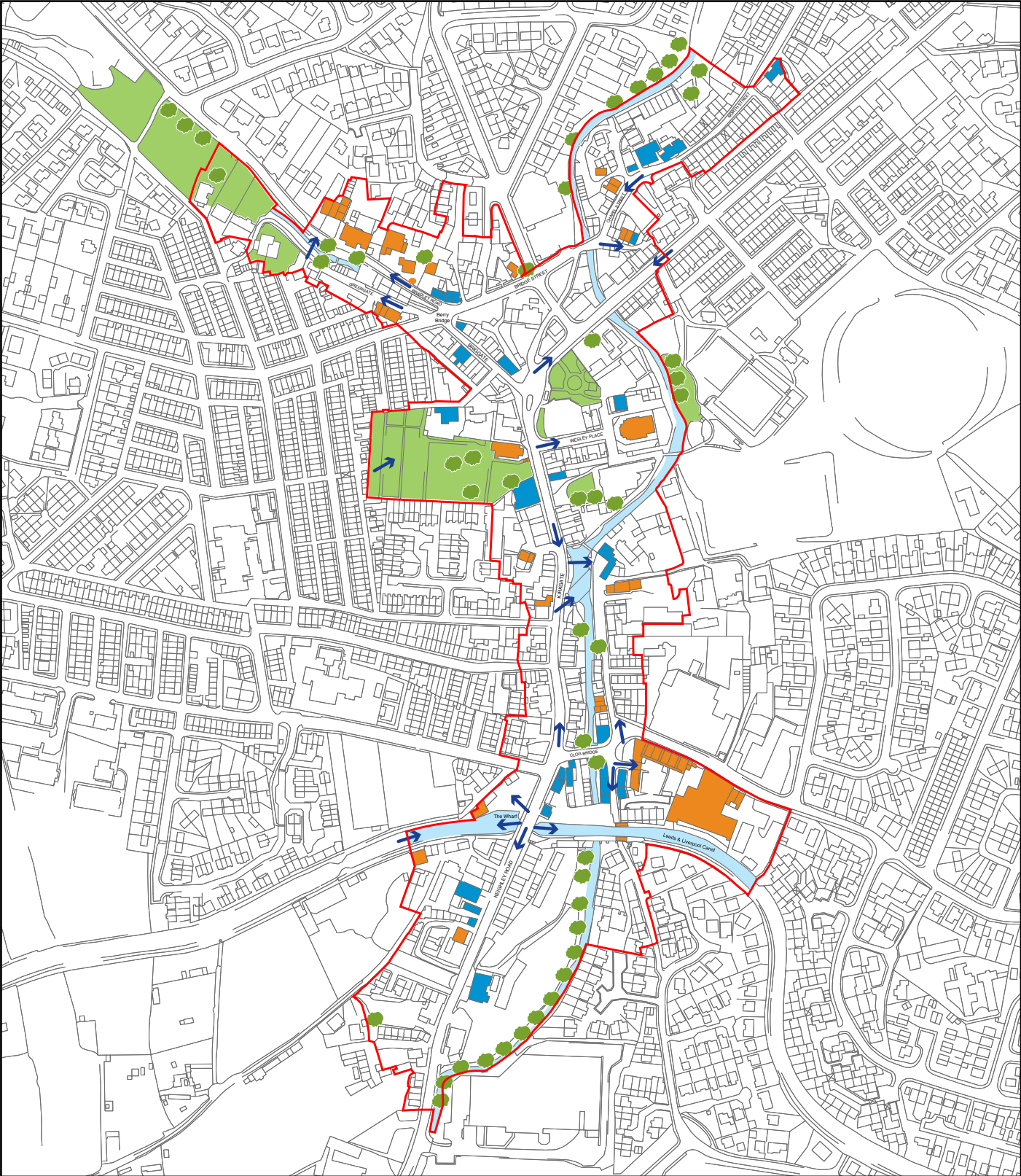
Key

- 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.

Silsden Conservation Area

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



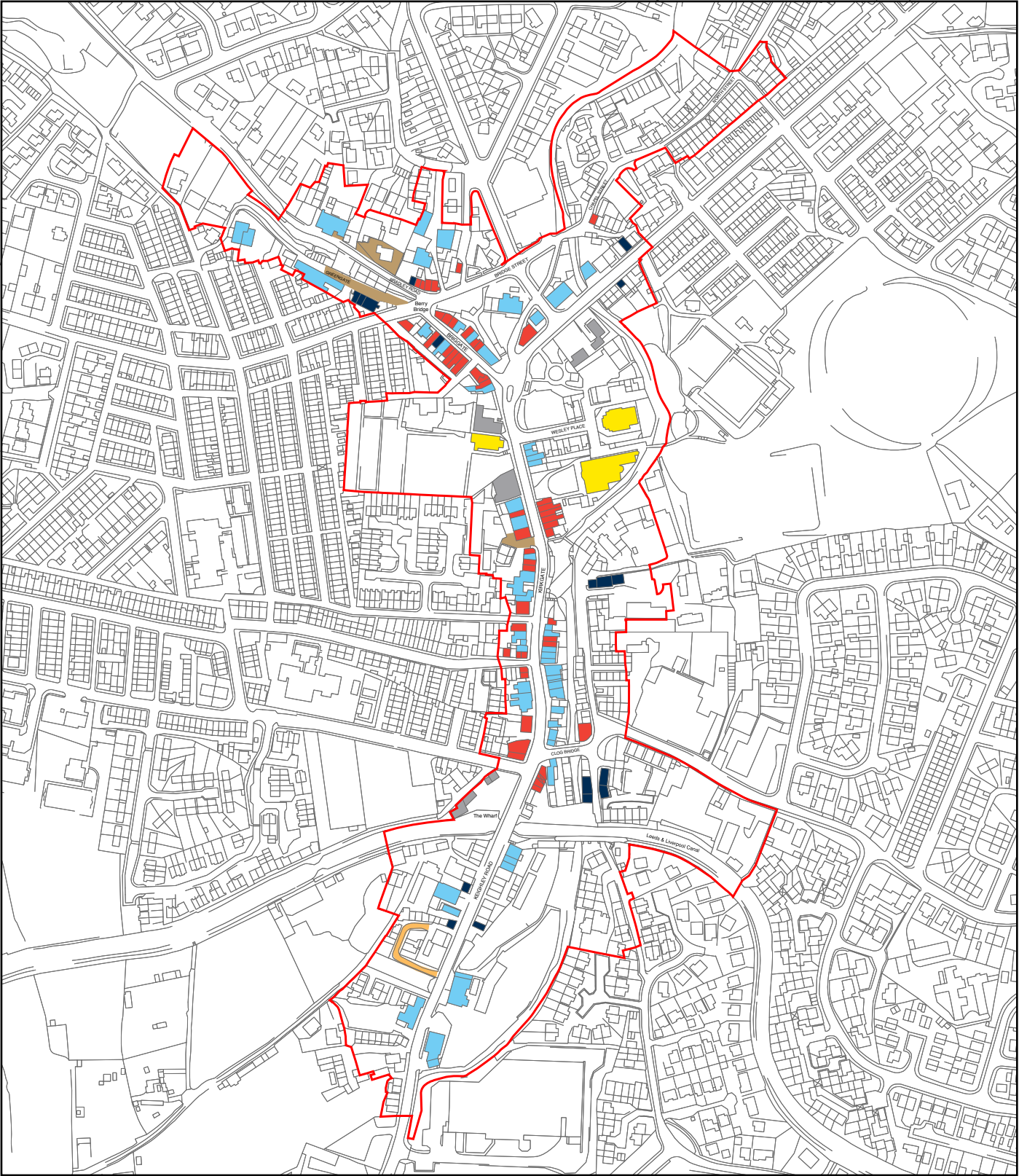
Key

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Conservation Area Boundary |  Listed building |
|  Key open space |  Key unlisted building |
|  Important tree(s) | |
|  Key view or vista | |

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

Silsden Conservation Area

Land Use and Highway Materials



Key

	Conservation Area Boundary		Residential		Stone setts / Flags
	Retail / Mixed use building		Other building		Un-surfaced / Partially surfaced
	Commercial building		Vacant building / Floor space		Tarmac / Concrete
	Ecclesiastical building		New development		

Any changes that have had a significant impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area since the previous assessment in 2002 are detailed below.

Changes affecting the Conservation Area

New Development

Waterloo Mill, a key listed building in the conservation is currently subject to a major residential scheme involving the conversion of the mill and associated cottages to residential and the construction of a terrace of six dwellings alongside the canal. The scheme is in its final stages of completion and maintains the industrial character of the mill.



POSITIVE CHANGE

The renovation and conversion of **Grade II listed agricultural worker's cottages on St John's Street** is underway at time of writing. The scheme involves extensive internal alterations, new windows and repair works to the roofs. Works are in the early stages but have the potential to have a positive impact.



The land to the rear of St John's Street has approval for the construction of 11 eleven houses. These will necessitate the loss of some older farm buildings that have been extensively altered and the demolition of several modern industrial units. The scheme looks well detailed and has the potential to make a positive impact on the conservation area.



An application for an illuminated sign on nos. **8-10 Kirkgate** was approved on appeal in 2005. The sign is untraditional in appearance and does not maintain the character of the conservation area.



NEGATIVE IMPACT

Lesson: The earlier adoption of Design Guidance for Shopfronts may have strengthened the Council's position at appeal.

Boundary

The boundary has been reassessed and there are no changes proposed at this time.

Works to Highways

There do not appear to have been any additional works to the highways above and beyond general maintenance since the last assessment.

Buildings

The following buildings are vacant at present:

- 19 Bolton Road;
- 32 Bolton Road;
- 8 Bradley Road;
- 19 Briggate;
- 6 and 6a Greengate;
- 2-4 Waterloo Mills, Hainsworth Road;
- Workshop, Hainsworth Forge;
- 34 Keighley Road;
- 36 Keighley Road;
- 37 Keighley Road;
- 52-54 St Johns Street.

CONCERN



Vacant shop at 19 Bolton Road

Trees & Open Space

There has been no significant loss of open space or trees within the conservation area.



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 inappropriate fascia signage, poorly detailed shopfronts, small extensions to dwellings and satellite dishes. 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 repair and maintenance of historic properties will be made available.



Negative Impacts



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 Bingley Conservation Area Assessment and prioritised by members of the community who took part in the Silsden Conservation Area Assessment public consultation.

	Objective	Actions	Timescale
1	Design and Conservation Team to maintain contact with the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly newsletter about conservation area issues • Design and Conservation website to be made as informative, user friendly and up-to-date as possible 	Yearly 2006 - 2012
2	Improved communication between Council officers and key external partners with an interest in the conservation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of a conservation area forum • Workshops 	Monthly As required
3	Improve the quality and amenity value of the public realm, open spaces and highway materials in Silsden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer working relationship between Design and Conservation and other Council Departments • Production of design guidance for the enhancement of the public realm 	Continual As resources permit
4	Retain the traditional scale, proportion and character of the shopping/business areas in Silsden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft shopfront design guidance to be consulted on in early 2007 and adopted during 2007. • Planning policy 	Publish in 2007 and review periodically
5	Preserve and enhance features and details that contribute to the character of Silsden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings to be published by the design and Conservation Team in 2007. 	Publish in 2007 and review periodically
6	Enhance the appearance and quality of Silsden Beck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form links with other Council departments regarding their maintenance programmes. 	Continual
7	Retain the commercial activity and ensure all investment is contributing to the character of the conservation area and its activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of links and discussions between Design and Conservation Team and partners outside of and within the Council. 	Continual
8	Promote good quality new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of guidance notes on appropriate sympathetic design to suit the character of the conservation area. • Publish design briefs where appropriate 	2006 -2012 as resources permit
9	Monitor planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Conservation Team to work more efficiently within the wider planning service. 	Continual
10	Address illegal works to listed buildings and unauthorised development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison between Design and Conservation Team and Planning Enforcement Team 	Continual
11	Retain important trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liason between Design and Conservation Team and Trees Team 	Continual
12	Monitor Change loss/gain and feedback to local community and Council officers working in the conservation area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Conservation Team to review Silsden Conservation Area every five years in line with Best value indicator 219a 	Review by April 2012

