

HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

APPENDIX D Tree and River Survey

HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION GROUP

TREE SURVEY

APPENDIX F TREE SURVEY (TPO)

TYPE Key:- G = Group, T = Tree, W = Woodland

MAP NO.	HCG Map & batch ref .	Kirklees ID	SPECIES DESCRIPTION	Grid ref X	Grid Ref Y	TYPE	COMMENTS
1	5 Riverside	19/02/g1	1x Alder, 1x Birch (twin-stemmed), 1x Sycamore(multi-stemmed)	413673.3208	407849.5435	G	Tree is there but within the building site next to the Holme. Viewed from a distance it appeared to be intact.
1	5 Riverside	10/02/t2	Norway Maple	413602.372	407851.8829	T	Leaning in towards river. Part of a group of trees along the riverside which are predominantly sycamores.
1	7 St John's 1a	05/79/t1	Elm	413645.4854	408041.0887	T	Can't locate. May have been felled.
1	7 St John's 1a	05/79/t10	Horse Chestnut	413648.2805	408011.5072	T	Now a boundary tree between Holme Hurst and newer property on Uppertong Lane.
1	7 St John's 1a	05/79/t2	Lime	413652.84	408041.9485	T	Can't locate. May have been felled.
1	7 St John's 1a	05/79/t7	Lime	413643.8199	408026.5329	T	Part of a group of boundary trees in the garden of house next to Holme Hurst. Appears to be present but viewed from a considerable distance.
1	7 St John's 1a	05/79/t8	Lime	413645.2216	408022.524	T	As above – t7.
1	7 St John's 1a	05/79/t9	Horse Chestnut	413647.4642	408014.1864	T	Now a boundary tree between Holme Hurst and newer property.
1	7 St John's 2a	05/79/g1	2x Cherry & 1x Yew	413675.1017	408023.4837	G	In the centre of Holme Hurst garden.
1	7 St John's 2a	05/79/t3	Sycamore	413667.2441	408035.6203	T	Mature tree. Lifted to a high degree. In confined space close to house (Holme Hurst).
1	7 St John's 2a	05/79/t4	Horse Chestnut	413671.309	408034.9905	T	Mature. In confined space close to house (Holme Hurst).
1	7 St John's 2a	05/79/t5	Horse Chestnut	413677.5834	408033.8008	T	Mature. In confined space in garden of Holme Hurst.
1	7 St John's 2a	05/79/t6	Sycamore	413685.3998	408032.6011	T	Mature. Mis-shaped due to electricity supply cables.
2	5 Riverside 2a	08/95/t1	Sycamore	413875.2423	407961.3315	T	Felled
2	5 Riverside 2a	08/95/t2	Sycamore	413866.8653	407949.225	T	Felled
2	5 Riverside 2a	08/95/t3	Sycamore	413860.5166	407938.9679	T	Felled
2	5 Riverside 2a	08/95/w1	Deciduous woodland of mainly Ash & Sycamore (excluding Elm)	413855.1326	407903.4481	W	It is there. Private Land. No access.
3	6 Cliff 5a	07/80/t1	Sycamore	414493.9434	408052.5254	T	Felled.
3	6 Cliff 5b	07/07/t1	Sycamore	414249.7412	408112.6882	T	Not particularly old. Part of deciduous woodland on steep bank above Ribble Beck.
3	6 Cliff 5b	07/07/t2	Sycamore	414256.1889	408103.7808	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5b	07/07/t3	Sycamore	414267.9463	408099.9918	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5b	07/07/t4	Sycamore	414274.295	408101.4614	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t1	Cherry	414418.7237	408036.2501	T	Upper branches visible. Part of dense collection of trees.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t10	Sycamore	414439.8971	408004.999	T	Fairly mature. Boundary tree.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t11	Sycamore	414447.161	408008.8979	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t12	Lime	414454.4414	408012.3069	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t13	Sycamore	414458.2671	408014.0165	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t14	Sycamore	414463.2801	408016.5857	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t15	Lime	414468.9774	408019.5249	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t16	Sycamore	414472.2095	408020.7145	T	As above
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t2	Horse Chestnut	414400.8814	408029.452	T	Pollarded at some time. Not good specimen. Part of dense grouping of boundary trees on roadside. Not been able to develop properly as individual tree but forms part of a green canopy.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t3	Horse Chestnut	414407.4033	408021.4143	T	Not good specimen. Part of dense grouping of boundary trees on roadside. Not been able to develop properly as individual tree but forms part of a green canopy.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t4	Lime	414410.2231	408018.0153	T	Felled. Evidence of a little regrowth marking the spot where it grew.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t5	Sycamore	414411.9958	408016.3958	T	Medium age. Not a good specimen. Part of dense grouping of boundary trees on roadside. Not been able to develop properly as individual tree but forms part of a green canopy.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t6	Lime	414417.1737	408010.4875	T	Pollarded. Part of dense grouping of boundary trees on roadside. Not been able to develop properly as individual tree but forms part of a green canopy.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t7	Horse Chestnut	414424.0748	408004.1693	T	Multi-stemmed at height of 2m. Fairly substantial tree. Not been able to develop properly as individual tree but forms part of a green canopy.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t8	Sycamore	414430.3905	408000.4603	T	Tree is there.
3	6 Cliff 5c	16/90/t9	Lime	414434.2822	408002.7097	T	Tree is there.

HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION GROUP

TREE SURVEY

MAP NO.	HCG Map & batch ref.	Kirklees ID	SPECIES DESCRIPTION	Grid ref X	Grid Ref Y	TYPE	COMMENTS
4	6 Cliff 1a	08/99/w1	Deciduous woodland	414443.2198	408536.6868	W	Mainly ash and sycamore with some oak, holly and birch. Unmanaged. Mixed age range, self-seeded. Between Station Road and Summervale. Forms boundary of new building plot for sale.
5	2 New Town 2a	12/11/g1	1x Sycamore & 1x multi-stemmed lime	414242.6175	408336.0343	G	Trees have been pollarded some time ago. In graveyard where other trees of similar quality are not TPO'd. Potential space for new planting.
5	4 High Town 2b	03/06/g1	2x Beech, 5x Silver Birch	414185.1082	408316.6298	G	Planted along the top of a high wall. Lower beech not significantly old. Higher beech a poor specimen.
5	4 High Town 2b	03/06/t1	Beech	414191.6465	408360.7972	T	Planted on the top of a high wall. Heavily pollarded.
5	4 High Town 2b	03/06/t2	Red Chestnut	414190.0552	408343.7421	T	Felled. Replaced with a small birch.
5	4 High Town 2b	03/06/t3	Fern Leafed Beech	414187.9445	408334.4547	T	Middle aged. Planted on the top of a high wall.
5	4 High Town 2b	36/90/t1	Pear	414180.8702	408281.14	T	Felled. Area now a car park.
5	4 High Town 2b	36/90/t2	Sycamore	414188.8102	408291.0372	T	Felled. Area now a car park.
5	4 High Town 2b	36/90/t3	Cherry	414183.5169	408296.5356	T	Felled. Area now a car park.
5	4 High Town 2b	36/90/t4	Cherry	414178.3967	408298.575	T	Felled. Area now a car park.

River Survey next page (page 4)

River Survey

River Holme and River Ribble

Introduction

As has been described within Section 3: History, Holmfirth established as a result of a water source, with the town sitting on the confluence of the River Ribble and the River Holme. The rivers are therefore the very reason the town exists, with the river Holme giving it's name to the town. Both the Ribble and the Holme contributed to the town's rich industrial heritage so it is appropriate that they form the backbone of the town's Conservation Area.

Geography

The Holme valley runs from the "dark peak" area northwards until it reaches the river Calder. The river is a tributary of the river Colne. It's origin is at Digley reservoir where it is surrounded by the South Pennine Moors, which includes the hills of Holme Moss, Cartworth Moor and Harden Moss. It is fed by the run-off stream of Brownhill reservoir then by Dobbs Dike.

From Digley, the river flows north east through Holmbridge and Holmfirth, before continuing in this direction to Thongbridge and Brockholes, then turning north to pass Honley, Berry Brow and Lockwood. Continuing in a northwards direction, it then joins the River Colne, south of Huddersfield town centre at Folley Hall.

In contrast, the River Ribble, is a minor river (not to be confused with the more significant one in Lancashire). At only 3 km in length, it is one of the smallest rivers in England. The Ribble's origin is at the outflow of Holme Styes Reservoir. As it flows northwards, it collects Fox Clough and Beaver Clough from the west, before joining the River Holme by Towngate and Hollowgate in Holmfirth.

Town's Origins

As can be read within the History section (Section 3), the town's origins are intrinsically linked to the presence of the two rivers. Today, the river's significance to the everyday functioning of the town is less tangible.

Bank Terminology

Within this chapter, the naming of the river banks will follow the principles of river bank terminology. The right and left bank are relative to the observer when looking downstream. In this instance, the River Holme flows downstream in a north easterly direction.

The river's journey through the Conservation Area

The river Holme runs the full width of the Conservation Area from Perseverance Place in the south west to Bridge Lane in the north east. The river Ribble feeds into the Conservation Area from a south easterly direction, running almost parallel to Dunford Road, until it meets the river Holme at Towngate and Hollowgate, in Holmfirth town centre. Along the River Holme's journey through the conservation area, the character of the riverscape changes.

At the south westerly edge of the Conservation Area at Perserverence Place, the left bank of the River Holme is quite heavily vegetated. The river corridor in this location is quite narrow and is lower than the adjacent Woodhead road, on the left side, and the newly constructed dwellings that line the right bank. Glimpses of a

more rural context are possible owing to the elevated nature of the agricultural land that lies to the south. The river's contribution to the overall quality of the townscape, within this stretch, is minimal owing to the level change.

Beyond this short stretch, there is a pronounced meander and a large Mill pond which collectively create an open character and help to draw the river into the more rural landscape that lies to the south. Despite the semi-rural feel to this stretch, there is evidence of past industrial heritage through not only the existence of the Mill pond but the presence of derelict retaining structures and man-made river edges.

The land surrounding the river in this location is derelict and is proposed for redevelopment as a retirement village. This section of river is very significant to the townscape as it is the widest and most open part of the whole river corridor within the conservation area and as such has great scope to positively contribute to the town's character and the future leisure and access opportunities of the river.

If the retirement village development proceeds as proposed, it will include a new footbridge over the river which will improve access and create greater cohesion between the urban (left bank) and rural (right bank) landscape within this area. There is significant scope to make this area an attractive, semi-rural space which could positively contribute to the town and draw on the heritage of the town itself. However, this will be subject to the sensitive design and management of the redevelopment.

As the river flows northwards towards the town centre, the river edge becomes more formalised and the difference in level change to the adjacent higher land is more pronounced, creating a channel effect. The retained river edge is faced in natural stone which is in-keeping with the local vernacular. However, much of this structure has become overgrown with self-seeded vegetation, potentially undermining its structural integrity.

In places, the overgrown vegetation obscures views into the river corridor. Within this river section, the properties on the left bank are significantly higher than the river. The northern retaining wall that defines the river's edge is very dominant and is between 5-8m higher than the river. On the right bank, the adjacent ground level is 2-3 m higher than the river. In this location there is a low (300mm high) parapet wall above pavement level with a cast iron balustrade, permitting views down to the river through the vegetation. The positive contribution of the river to the overall townscape is limited, in this location, as a result of the change in level and the overgrown nature of the corridor.

Beyond this, there is a section of river, approximately 50m in length, where the river is not visible owing to a car park and electrical sub-station which straddle the river. This is not only out of character and scale with the conservation area, but reduces the significance of the river within the townscape.

Beyond this section, the river re-appears and the river corridor becomes slightly more open, owing to the properties on the left (northern) side being set at a more even level to those on the right (southern) side, with the adjacent ground level on both sides of the river being approximately 2m higher than the river. This gives the properties a greater affinity with the river and leads to a more tranquil feel for pedestrians who can appreciate the presence of the river more readily. However, the overgrown nature of the river corridor does detract from the potential views.

On approaching Hollowgate, the balustrade gives way to a stone parapet wall on the right bank side. This is an attractive feature, however it (in conjunction with the overgrown vegetation) reduces the ability to see the river. The river corridor narrows, with the properties on the left bank side becoming closer to the river's edge, as it approaches the Grade II Listed Hollowgate Bridge. The scale, materials and humpback nature of the bridge makes it an attractive feature that positively contributes to the overall townscape. However, it is unfortunate that views from this slight vantage point both upstream and downstream are hindered by the

overgrown vegetation.

Further downstream, Holmfirth Mills and the Market Hall define the left bank to the river. The scale and materials used for the buildings, in conjunction with the associated access that straddle the river, dominate the river corridor, undermining both the local vernacular and tranquil setting of the conservation area and riverscape.

Between Holmfirth Mills and the Market hall, there has been an attempt to welcome the river into the public realm through the use of railings in lieu of the parapet wall. This not only offers views down to the river below but the story of the river is told through some artwork incorporated into the railings. Seating and an information board also help to create a sense of occasion and raise awareness of this historic part of the town and the river, positively contributing to the heritage appeal of the town.

As the river flows further downstream, the self-seeded vegetation continues to litter the retaining structures to each side of the river, creating an unkempt appearance to the river corridor. However, it should be noted that there have been attempts by some local businesses to respond to their river setting and improve their outlook through the planting of ornamental vegetation. This creates a positive outlook and an attractive view from their business. Within this area, the clearance of vegetation, along the river corridor, would greatly improve views and connectivity within the town.

Further along Hollowgate, access to the riverside, and the ability to see the river, is compromised by the parked vehicles that line the right bank (southern) side. On approaching Victoria Square, there are buildings to both sides of the river.

Views upstream from Victoria Bridge are characterised by a backdrop of the surrounding hills, however the quality of the view is compromised by the overgrown vegetation, the presence of the Market Hall and the sight of the many utility pipes that zig zag through the river in the foreground. In the past, weirs raised the level of the water in this location to help conceal the presence of the pipes, however such structures have since been undermined and are no longer present. Greater connectivity between the river, the town and the wider rural context could be achieved through the clearance of the overgrown vegetation.

Victoria Bridge is significant as it is not only at the very centre of the town, being a significant road junction and pedestrian crossing but it is within the vicinity of this bridge / Towngate / Hollowgate that the river Ribble joins the Holme. Unfortunately, all this happens underneath the road so the significance cannot be appreciated. Within this location, the presence of the river within the streetscape is very much secondary to the wider transport related functions of the town.

A town plaque on Victoria bridge commemorates the significant flood events of the past and a flood marker is carved onto the façade of the nearby Butcher's shop. The presence of both features helps to tell the story of the town and reinforces the presence of the river as a powerful force of nature.

There are several bridges within the town centre which offer viewing opportunities upstream and downstream, creating important visual connections between the town and river. However, the quality of the views could be greatly enhanced by the clearance of the overgrown vegetation, and the removal or reassignment of the various utilities and statutory services such as the sewer units which are prominent features within the river. There is also an "island" within the river in this town centre stretch which could be improved by better management of the vegetation.

Within this town centre location, the river is approximately 4m below street level. This makes the

appreciation of the river limited. It is evident that the natural path of the river has been engineered to accommodate the built environment, as such the direction of the river changes within Towngate to flow in a northerly direction.

The scale and use of concrete for the retaining structure on the left bank (western side) of the river is not sensitive to the historic context of the conservation area and creates a utilitarian feel. Flood storage has also been incorporated into this structure, beneath the adjacent road and footway, further contributing to the engineered feel. Community artwork banners have been hung on the blank façade of the concrete retaining walls. These not only help to soften the appearance of the large structure but to draw the eye down to the water.

On the right bank (eastern) side, stone parapet walls with railing infills provide an attractive edge to the pavement, permitting views down to the river. Artwork has been incorporated into the railings which helps to create a sense of identity and provide a positive contribution to the public realm.

The river's flow is faster along this stretch and there is significant vegetation, creating an untidy appearance. A footbridge crosses from east to west, connecting the Old Bridge pub and Picturedrome with Holmfirth bus station. The footbridge is functional but not in-keeping with the conservation area in terms of materials.

The river corridor is urbanised along this stretch with the bus station and Riverside shopping mall dominating the streetscape. This, in conjunction with the overgrown nature of the river corridor makes it difficult to appreciate the river as it meanders under the shopping centre, offering limited access and viewing opportunities.

At the Royal Mail depot, there is a footpath along the right bank of the river edge. This path offers the closest access to the river for some time. The path is steep, rising up to meet another footbridge that permits access over the river to connect up to Huddersfield road. From the high point, the path drops back down to continue in an easterly direction, about 2m above the water. The graded nature of the path is not compliant with current access standards.

Along this stretch of the river, the river banks are heavily vegetated, reducing views to the water. However the fast flowing nature of the river and the fact that the path is closer to the water level, makes the presence of the river, which lies about 2m lower than the path, more apparent.

On the right bank, there is an area with seating and ornamental planting which connects to the adjacent Holmside gardens. Despite the space contributing positively to the experience of the river, there is scope to further improve the space to make it more accessible and inviting with better connectivity to the adjacent gardens, river and wider town centre.

The footpath then turns to the left (north westerly direction) to meet a footbridge that takes pedestrians over the river to the left bank and the Co-op car park. At this turning point, access along the right bank ceases as it is heavily vegetated.

From the vantage point of the footbridge, there are attractive views back towards Holmside gardens, up and downstream as well as towards the Methodist Church. Management of the existing vegetation in this location would enhance the viewing opportunities, better linking the river to the wider urban context.

The footbridge is functional but not in-keeping with the conservation area. A wider bridge would be more practical to facilitate access for a greater number of users, whilst the use of natural materials for the bridge's construction would respond more sensitively to the historic, riverside setting.

Stepped access is provided from the Co-op car park (approximately 2m) down to the left bank . The steps and railings are in poor condition and do not meet current safety access standards. Further downstream there is graded access down from the car park to the river footpath, however it appears to be designed as a service route for vehicles and is subsequently quite steep with no handrail. Access for wheelchair users within this area could therefore be improved.

The left bank within this stretch is colonised by ducks. It is flat and wide (up to 3m in places), and is only about 500mm above the water, making it possible to experience the river in close proximity. There is no balustrade to the water's edge and the edge is not consistent, with large gaps, making it a potential danger. In addition, the existing path surfacing is uneven with numerous trip hazards from tree roots.

Seating is provided on this bank , however there is scope for taking greater advantage of this wide, flat section for the creation of a more significant leisure opportunity.

The right bank is defined by a high stone retaining wall that is partially obscured by vegetation. The backs of properties located on Station road and Bridge Lane are visible on the right bank, however they are significantly higher than the river so do not offer any surveillance. Within this area of the river, there is limited natural surveillance due to both banks being overgrown.

The terminus to the Conservation area is adjacent to the rear of the Co-op at Bridge Lane where there is a modern footbridge leading to stepped access up to Bridge Lane. The bridge has not been sensitively designed to be in-keeping with the conservation area and has been poorly configured alongside the adjacent service yard which straddles the river. There is evidence of anti-social behaviour within this area, creating a negative end to an otherwise important and strategic point within the town.

Views

As described above, there are numerous places within the river corridor that offer attractive views to and from the town, however many of them are restricted or hindered by the overgrown vegetation. The opening up of key views would welcome the river back into the townscape, reaffirming it's position at the centre of the town's industrial heritage and potential as a future leisure resource.

Access

The natural topography of the land in relation to the river corridor make access to the river a challenge. However, improvements could be made to enable greater access to the river for all. Upgrading the surfacing of the footpaths could be undertaken to remove existing trip hazards and create all-weather routes.

The provision of lighting at key points would make the river more accessible at night and in the winter.

Wider strategic thinking in relation to traffic management within the town centre could provide opportunities to further welcome the river into the public realm which would not only enrich the town centre but help celebrate the town's unique character and industrial heritage.

Social and community

River 2015

River 2015 is an independent charity with the aim of improving the river Holme from Holme to Huddersfield both environmentally and for greater accessibility. The project has involved the community on many clean-up operations as well as through public consultation exercises to determine what people want from the river.

A key objective is to create a green riverside route which will connect up existing footpath networks and open up new ones. Local volunteers have been involved clearing and maintain riverside paths to improve access to the water's edge. Another important objective is the management of the invasive species that have colonised stretches of the river.

Holmfirth Duck Race

The river is used for the annual Holmfirth Duck Race which takes place in the summer. It is a charity event whereby hundreds of plastic ducks are launched into the river. The community can get involved by sponsoring a duck with the chance of winning a cash prize. The event has been extremely popular and has grown over the years.

Ecology

The river has a healthy population of fish, including wild trout. Heron and kingfishers are also present within the river corridor. Within the Co-op area, there is a large population of ducks.

Within the conservation area, the presence of invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed is evident. During the autumn of 2016, the River 2015 charity is working with the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to manage the Japanese Knotweed.

The self-seeded vegetation within the river corridor needs management to not only open up views but to safeguard the structural integrity of the existing retaining walls and maximise the opportunities for native flora and fauna to thrive.

Scope for Future Improvements

There are many ways the river could be improved within the conservation area The charity organisation **River Holme Connections**. Is working to make River Holme a better place for people, businesses and wildlife. It is addressing some of the issues raised here.

No.	Title	Purpose and benefits
1	Management of existing vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard and promote existing desirable flora and fauna populations. • Open up views – greater visual connectivity between town and river and wider rural context. • Open up views – improve natural surveillance. • Eradicate invasive species. • Protect structural integrity of existing retaining walls etc. • Create a tidier appearance/ reduce opportunity for litter to get trapped in overgrown vegetation.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve accessibility along river's edge.
2	Repair existing retaining structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard the structural integrity of the features to ensure maximum safety • Reduce opportunity for vegetation to self-seed within cracks etc. • Remove graffiti on Co-op bridge (Bridge Lane)
3	Improve access for pedestrians and cyclists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve surfacing of footpaths to create an even all-weather surface suitable for wheelchairs/pushchairs • Remove trip hazards • Repair steps and associated handrails. Install tactile paving at top and bottom of level changes. • Improve gradients and footpath widths, where possible, or provide handrails etc. to meet current access requirements • Improve water's edge next to Co-op car park to make it safe • Introduce lighting along key routes to encourage use at night and in winter • Improve / introduce way-finding signage to encourage greater connectivity between the river and the town • Improve appearance and comfort of footbridges to better reflect historic context and make more convenient for people with reduced mobility e.g. the footbridges at Co-op and the Old Bridge • Wider traffic management within the town centre could bring benefits to how pedestrians and cyclists access the river
4	Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve seating opportunities (provide litter and dog waste bins) • Potential to create picnic / seating area on left bank next to Co-op car park

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve relationship between the river and Holmbridge gardens. Current arrangement of raised planters off the footpath could be improved • Introduce informal, creative play opportunities along the footway to engage children’s imagination
5	Heritage / Artwork /Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce interpretation panels at key points to tell the story of the river and the town. Educate and enhance the river’s presence. • Ecology interpretation panels to inform people of flora and fauna along river • Community artwork would enhance the river experience
6	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove litter • Weirs – explore potential of re-introducing them • Sewage and other statutory service structures and apparatus within the river– screen or relocate

References:

- <https://www.riverholmeconnections.org/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/HolmfirthDuckRace/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_Holme
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_Ribble,_West_Yorkshire
- <http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/751386>
- <http://www.holmfirth.org/holmfirth-floods/>