



**HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION  
GROUP**

**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**



**HOLMFIRTH**

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# SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST AND ISSUES



## **Holmfirth Conservation Area and its Character Areas**

Holmfirth's special interest is based not only on individual buildings, but also on its relationship between the buildings and the environment.

The components of this special interest can be summarised as follows:

### **Topography**

- The town of Holmfirth is built in the valley bottom and on the adjacent hillsides.
- Its location provides extensive views from outside into the town, and from inside to the surrounding landscape.
- The river Holme running through it provides a focal point in its centre.

### **Parks, Open Spaces and the Riverside**

- In densely built-up valleys, parks and gardens and open spaces provide a counterpoint to the built environment. The HCA is note-worthy as it contains several such areas.
- Similarly, the river, having shaped the town over many years, can now provide a peaceful environment for all to enjoy.

### **Public Realm**

The HCA contains numerous examples of:

- stone-setted streets, stone paving and stone kerbs;
- steep and narrow footpaths, bounded by drystone walls, which provide good views and connectivity.





View from Cooper Lane

### **Built Environment**

Holmfirth is an example of a late Georgian/Victorian northern mill town. The special interest of the buildings lies in:

- its domestic architecture and civic buildings which survive, largely, intact;
- the numerous examples of weavers' windows, under and over buildings, and stone buildings, with stone-flag roofs predominating;
- domestic houses which have been turned into shops;
- the presence of a working mill, Ribbleden Mill;
- Approximately 75% of the buildings in the Conservation Area have survived from late Georgian/Victorian times.

### **Character Areas**

Although Holmfirth has a high degree of unity in its buildings, each of the Character Areas within the HCA is distinctive. The condition of the buildings and environment in each is varied, as is its make-up.

**Old Town** forms the historic core of Holmfirth with many of the oldest buildings.

It contains:

- closely built houses on the valley sides, some of which retain weavers' windows;
- under and over, stone built and stone-flag roofed buildings, used for both housing and shops;
- busy streets and adjacent quiet backwaters;
- stone flag pavements and setted tracks;
- the river Holme;
- views of the valley sides and moors beyond;
- high percentage (81%) of the buildings are late Georgian/Victorian.



Settled Street in Daisy Lane



Ginnel leading to the rear of the properties adjoining

**Hightown** is an important area because of its:

- terraces of stone-built houses separated by stone-arched ginnels;
- Victorian civic buildings which contrast with the domestic scale of properties nearby;
- views, which are some of the best in Holmfirth and epitomise the character of the town;
- high percentage (78%) of the buildings are late Georgian/Victorian.

The **St Johns** area is of particular note as it has:

- an historic church and graveyards;
- imposing houses set within substantial grounds;
- steep stone footpaths and setted hillside tracks;
- views across Holmfirth to fields and the moors beyond;
- a high proportion of buildings surviving (76%) from late Georgian/Victorian times.



View of St John's Church



**Riverside**, as the name suggests, has the river Holme flowing through it, giving the area a rural feel. Whilst containing many elements present in other parts of the Conservation Area, it contains unique features, including:

- the last remaining mill pond in HCA;
- high stone retaining walls;
- the historic Upperbridge over the river Holme;
- tall, four-storey under-and-over houses;
- A high proportion (61%) of the buildings are late Georgian/Victorian.

Riverside dwelling – Scarfold

**Cliff** area also contains many of the common features. However, it also has a number of buildings of particular note and special interest, including the:

- former railway station building;
- Druids Hall;
- Bamforth & Co. building;
- Ribbleden Mill – the last working mill in the Conservation Area;
- a high proportion (78%) of the buildings are late Georgian/Victorian.



Former Station Building



Holmside Garden

The distinctive character of **New Town** lies in its river setting and gardens. Notably, it contains the Technical Institute building and former Police Station as well as:

- numerous trees which dominate the banks of the river;
- the riverside walk where herons, kingfishers and mallards can be seen;
- Holmside Gardens;
- the supermarket and associated car park;
- a high proportion (65%) of the buildings are late Georgian/Victorian.

### Issues in the Holmfirth Conservation Area

HCA is described by Historic England as being 'at risk'. A Management Plan is needed to address the issues identified below for the benefit of the existing community of users and residents, and also to attract new businesses, residents, shoppers and tourists.

#### Built Environment

##### Existing Buildings:

Consideration needs to be given to:

- maintaining the historic features of heritage assets - Listed Buildings, Key Buildings;
- resisting the erosion of character through the cumulative effect of small-scale changes;
- maintaining and enhancing traditional shopfronts;
- encouraging the reinstatement of original architectural design features.

##### New Development: ensuring these:

- take account of the character of the HCA;
- complement the scale and form of neighbouring buildings;
- make use of locally sourced natural sandstone.



### **Parks and Open Spaces**

Consideration needs to be given to the:

- maintenance of the walls and paths;
- current limited access to the parks and graveyards;
- the maintenance of trees;
- succession of tree planting and increase in the variety of species used.

### **Riverside**

Consideration needs to be given to the:

- enhancement and improvement of access to the river;
- presence of invasive species (plant and animal life) in and near the river;
- coordination of the style, materials and painting of the footbridges;
- visual impact of utility pipes crossing the river.

### **Public Realm**

Consideration needs to be given to the:

- availability of a 'streetscape manual';
- coordination of street signs, street furniture – including streetlights, seating, railings and litter bins;
- maintenance of stone retaining walls and boundary walls;
- strengthening of controls over advertising in shop windows, fascia boards, shop lighting, security shutters, 'A'-boards and street clutter;
- proliferation and location of commercial and domestic waste-bins;
- use of stone and setts rather than tarmac repair;
- restriction of parking;
- removal of overhead wires;
- increased provision of community noticeboards;
- preservation of the spectacular views and vistas of Holmfirth.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

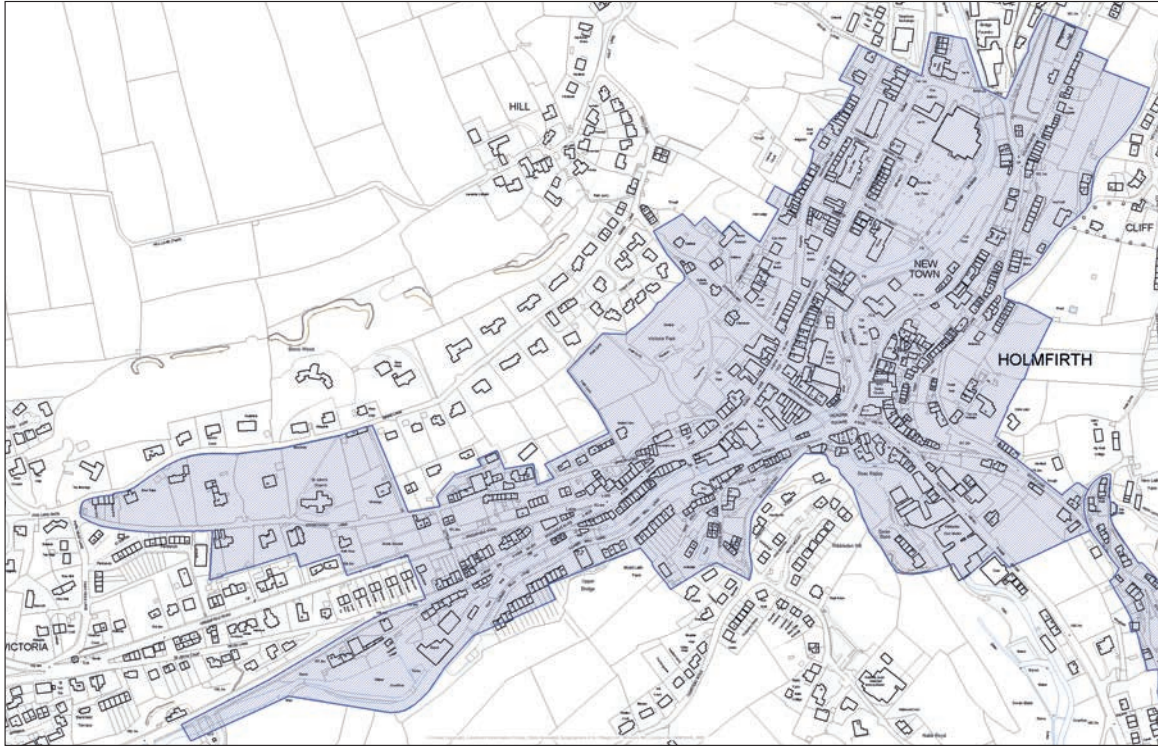


Fig 1 Holmfirth Conservation Area

## 1.1 What is a Conservation Area?

A Conservation Area is defined as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'<sup>1</sup>.

Our heritage and sense of place is closely linked to the community in which we live and work. Conservation areas were introduced to protect and enhance this sense of place. Conservation is essentially the management of change while maintaining the special interest that justifies the designation.

The main consequences of Conservation Area designation are:

- planning permission is required for the demolition of buildings;
- in considering new development, special attention must be paid to preserving or enhancing the character of the area;
- permitted development not requiring planning permission is more restrictive;
- all trees above a minimum size are protected.

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1. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – Section 69

A Conservation Area designation recognises the unique quality of 'place'. It is not just the contribution of individual buildings and monuments, but also features, such as topography, open spaces, layout of roads and paths, the street furniture and hard and soft landscaping that help define the character and appearance of an area.

*'Most of the buildings in a Conservation Area will help to shape its character. The extent to which their contribution is considered as positive depends not just on their street elevations but also on their integrity as historic structures and the impact they have in three dimensions, perhaps in an interesting roofscape or skyline. Back elevations can be important, as can side views from alleys and yards'<sup>2</sup>.*

## **1.2 What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?**

A Conservation Area Appraisal describes the Conservation Area as it is today, identifying the special architectural or historic interest of its buildings, open spaces and its setting, that justify the designation. By providing a better understanding of the physical development and significance of the area, the Appraisal can raise general awareness of what makes the area distinctive.

The Appraisal can also be used to inform local planning policies and to guide decisions on planning proposals affecting the area, enabling all to play their part in preserving and enhancing its special character. The Appraisal identifies those issues, that bear upon the character of the Conservation Area, that should be taken into account in future management.

Local Authorities have statutory duties to review their Conservation Area designations, to bring forward proposals for preservation and enhancement, and to involve local communities in those proposals<sup>3</sup>. Appraisals provide an important first step towards discharging those duties.

The purpose of this document is to help the people of Holmfirth, property owners, developers and their agents, to understand the special character of Holmfirth, in order to inform any development proposals they may wish to make. It will also help those assessing development proposals to determine their appropriateness.

Finally, it will act as an evidence base for the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan, and help to inform policies for the Plan.

Matters raised in the Appraisal will form the basis for a Management Plan, which will contain proposals and policies for the conservation and enhancement of the area.

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2. Historic England (2016), *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*, para.61  
3. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – Sections 69(2) and Section 71

### **Please Note**

This Appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive in its scope or content. The omission of any specific building, structure, site, landscape or view within or adjoining the HCA should not be taken to imply that it does not hold significance or positively contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### **1.3 Who Has Produced the Appraisal and Why?**

A Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) has been undertaken by the Holmfirth Conservation Group (HCG) which is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). HCG aims to promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the built, physical and natural environment of the Holmfirth Conservation Area.

HCG was formed in 2015 by a group of local residents investigating why Historic England had included the HCA on its Register of Heritage at Risk. This was found to be due to its poor and deteriorating condition, and its need of management. As the number of people involved in the project increased it was felt that a more formal structure was required for the organisation. As a result, in 2017, HCG became incorporated as a charity (Charity No. 1172636). Its membership is made up of local residents, supporters and volunteers, from Holmfirth and the surrounding area. These people have, cumulatively, spent thousands of hours gathering and collating information about the Conservation Area and producing this report. Without their support and effort, this Appraisal would not have been possible. Much of the background research is published separately in Appendices, and provides the evidence on which this Appraisal is based.

This report has been produced by the HCG, with the support of Kirklees Council, the local planning authority, so that they can adopt the Appraisal and develop a management plan for the Conservation Area. The writing of this Appraisal and the subsequent management plan will be the start of the process that will, with continued effort by the local community, see Holmfirth removed from Historic England's 'At Risk' register.

The Appraisal and management plan will enable Kirklees to fulfil their statutory duties to review the area and 'to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of its area which are Conservation Areas' (1990 Act – Section 71).

In addition, it will help support Kirklees' policies specified in the Draft Local Plan.

- PLP 35.1 - 'Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance'
- PLP 35.3(b) - 'Ensure that proposals within Conservation Areas conserve those elements which have been identified as contributing to its significance in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal'



This Appraisal will also provide an evidence base for the development, by Holme Valley Parish Council, of the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **1.4 Public Consultations**

Involving the community and raising public awareness is an integral part of the Appraisal process and needs to be approached in a pro-active and innovative way. Community involvement helps to bring valuable public understanding and 'ownership' to proposals for the area. HCG considered carefully all the consultation responses, and where appropriate the CAA has been amended in response to these comments.

A report, included in Appendix A, details how the local community has been involved, and the contribution it has made to this Appraisal through surveys undertaken and questionnaires completed.

Formal public consultation may be undertaken by Kirklees Council prior to the adoption of the Appraisal and writing of the Management Plan. The Appraisal will be updated in the light of responses made.

## 2. LOCATION AND SETTING

### 2.1 Location and Topography

Holmfirth lies at the southern edge of West Yorkshire, within the Kirklees Metropolitan Borough. At an elevation of 130m above Ordnance Datum (OD), it is six miles south of Huddersfield, around two miles from the boundary of the Peak District National Park and at the foot of Holme Moss, one of the highest peaks in the Pennines (524m OD).

Surrounded by high moorland, Holmfirth is set in the valleys of the Rivers Holme and Ribble, which meet in the centre of the town. Moorland pasture and a ready supply of soft water contributed to the town's historical growth as a centre for the woollen industry.

Holmfirth, the Holme Valley's principal town, lies at the junction of routes from Huddersfield to Glossop (A6024) and from Manchester to Sheffield (A635).

### 2.2 Landscape

Holmfirth is situated on the eastern flank of the Pennines. It is characterised by high moorland and cloughs, and incised by rivulets flowing northwards to form the River Holme that runs through the town. Some rainwater is captured by large reservoirs above the town for distribution within West Yorkshire.

The prominent ridges around Holmfirth are of local sandstone, whilst the shallower slopes are formed by the more easily weathered inter-bedded mudstone and shale upon which settlements initially developed. The high peat and heather moorland gives way to the pastures for grazing, featuring distinctive field patterns separated by dry stone walling.

The entire HCA area can be seen from the high ground surrounding Holmfirth with dramatic views from all points of the compass. Equally the views from within the HCA are very distinctive, looking through the narrow streets to the hills beyond. These are considered in more detail in the Character Areas in Section 6.

### 2.3 Geology

The British Geological Survey shows Holmfirth to be underlain by superficial alluvial deposits associated with the Rivers Holme and Ribble. These deposits lie at depths of three to six metres below ground level along the River Holme, with a small area extending up the River Ribble valley. The underlying bedrock comprises siltstones, coarse-grained sandstones, shales and mudstones with thin coal seams of the Millstone Grit Group of the Carboniferous Period. Geological faults have determined the routes of the local rivers.

The hillsides around Holmfirth are quarried for the coarse-grained Millstone Grit Sandstone as the local building material.

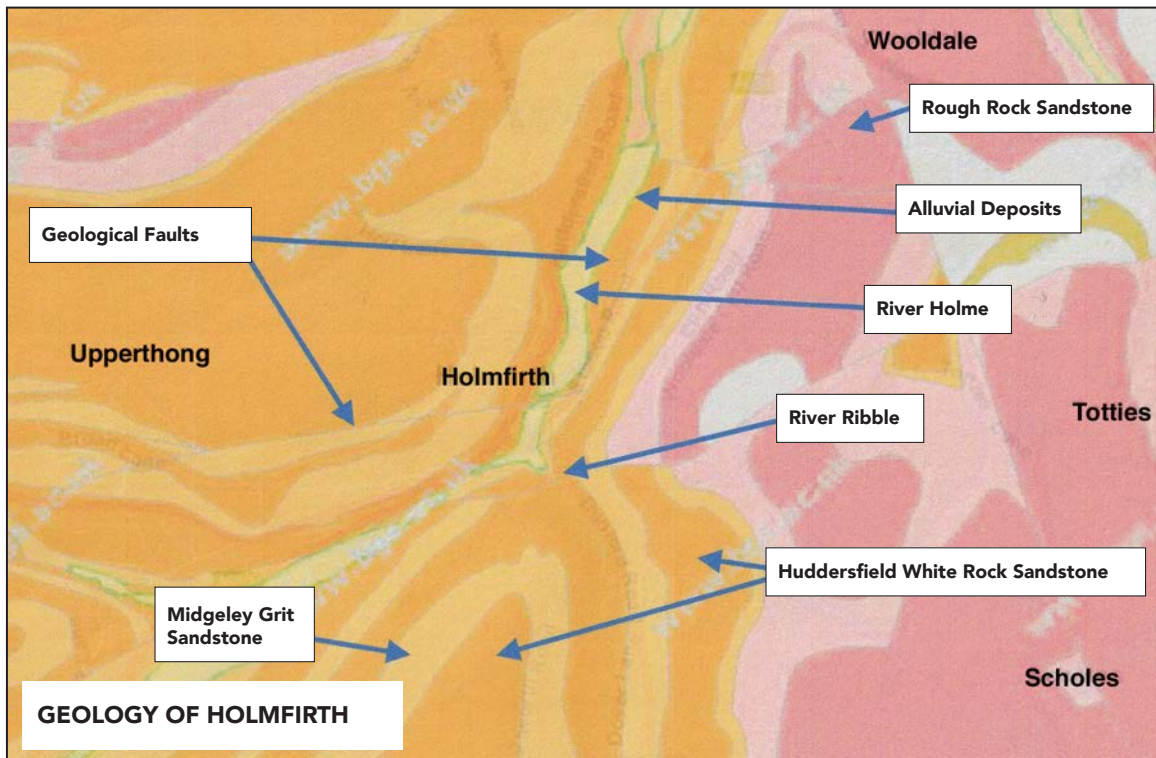


Fig 2 Geological Map of Holmfirth

The Millstone Grit Sandstone was named on account of its coarse-grained nature that proved ideal to make millstones for grinding corn. The sandstone, with its capacity to hold large volumes of water, encouraged the development of the woollen industry allowing mills to tap the water both by deep wells and by mill ponds.

## 2.4 Archaeology

Although there are no Scheduled Monuments within the HCA, there is potential for sites which may be of a considerable significance, to contain standing or buried remains. This is particularly on sites affected by the Holmfirth Floods, or where textile manufacturing, processing or storage took place.

### SUMMARY OF LOCATION AND SETTING

- **No scheduled monuments**
- **Geology of the area made it ideal for the development of the area into an industrial mill town**
- **Millstone grit provided a source for locally quarried stone for buildings**
- **Rivers Holme and Ribble provided water to power the mills**
- **Archaeological evidence may be buried underground**

### 3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Holmfirth's landscape, grazing land for sheep and soft water gave rise to the textile industry, which has determined the town's development. The production of textiles began as a small cottage industry. There is evidence of this existing from the early 14th century, with households taking on the various functions of carding, spinning, weaving and fulling.

By 1532 Holmfirth had two fulling mills using waterpower to raise heavy wooden hammers to beat the cloth. As textile production continued to be a domestic industry, many of the houses developed a third floor with the distinctive line of continuous weavers' windows.

In the late 18th century, the industry began to be concentrated into mills constructed in the valley, to take advantage of water for washing and dyeing and to power machinery. The inventions of the Flying Shuttle and the Spinning Jenny came to Holmfirth in the late 18th century, bringing with them an influx of labour.

With the introduction of steam power in the late 18th and 19th century, further mills were built such as Upper Mill, Lower Mill, Newfold Mill, Ribbleden Mill, Albert Mill and Tom Mill. Ribbleden Mill is the sole working mill in the HCA today. Lower Mill has been partly converted into apartments and the rest have been demolished – the only remnant of the former Albert Mill is the pediment located in Crown Bottom car park.

The 1771 map by Thomas Jefferys (Fig 3), illustrates five water wheels for mills in Holmfirth along the River Holme. These may well represent Perserverance Mill, Prickleden Mill, Lower Mill, the Corn Mill in Holmfirth, and Bridge Mill to the immediate north of the HCA.



Fig 3 Detail of 1771 Map by Thomas Jefferys



Whilst cleaning and dyeing was undertaken in the mills, there was still an overlap with the cottage-based processes, such as hand-loom weaving.

The map illustrates the presence of Modd Lane and Upperthong Lane joining through Upperbridge and Hollowgate to the roads known today as Station Road and South Lane. Buildings are shown around the confluence of the two rivers, including an earlier building of the Nook, which began brewing beer in Holmfirth in 1754. Further buildings are shown at the base of the road leading to Hill Top, and on both sides of the road, heading southwest along the Holme Valley. A church is illustrated close to the location of the present day Parish Church, with buildings shown along the east side of the present day Station Road from Holmfirth as far as the HCA northern boundary. Jefferys' map also shows buildings behind the church on both sides of Bunkers Hill and along the north and south sides of South Lane.

The 1802 map, (Fig 4), illustrates part of Upperthong Township within the HCA that lies north of the River Holme. Upperbridge is now annotated with two buildings in Hollowgate plus the Holmfirth Chapel. Huddersfield Road and Upperthong Lane are illustrated, although there is no evidence of Greenfield Road, which was not constructed until 1854. The Chapel and Manse on Upperthong Lane are shown, with a row of houses opposite, which still exist today. At the junction of Upperthong Lane and the Woodhead Road, the



Fig 4 Detail of 1802 Map of Upperthong Township

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buildings are shown extending back to Upperthong Lane as they do today. In addition, buildings are shown, extending to the junction of Woodhead Road and Upperthong Lane. There are further buildings on Woodhead Road. Land to the east of Upperbridge is annotated on the map as Cuttel Bottom, with several properties on Woodhead Road and Hollowgate, leading to an open area of Great Bottom, known today as Crown Bottom.

The 1836 Map of Wooldale Township (Fig 5), illustrates the development of the town south of the river. The map shows Upperbridge but nothing between here and west of the River Ribble, as this area lies in the adjacent Township of Cartworth. A second bridge is shown at Bridge Lane on the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area. The map of 1836

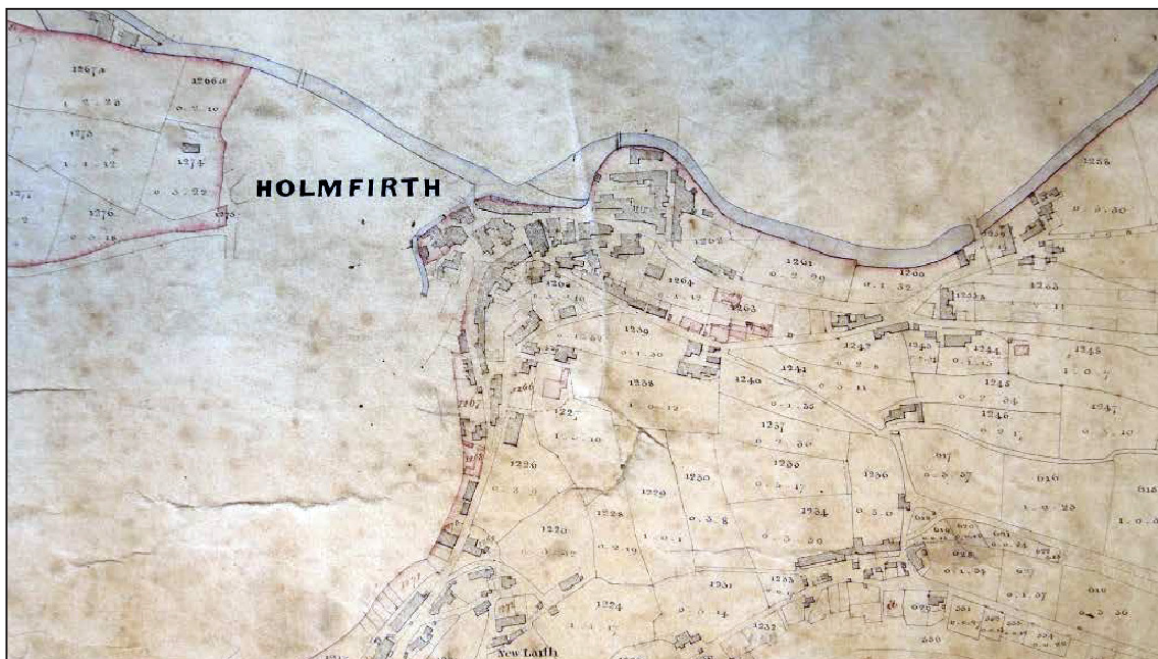


Fig 5 Detail of 1836 Map of Wooldale Township

illustrates the buildings in Holmfirth including the Parish Church, the buildings opposite and buildings in South Lane. Houses are shown backing onto the river in Towngate and there are several buildings to the east of the church. Behind the church, houses on either side of Bunkers Hill are shown, probably representing Nos.4-44, the Loom Rooms. The area between Towngate and the River Holme is shown to be occupied by a mill, a mill pond and public houses.

Administratively Holmfirth lay within the Graveship of Holme, part of the Manor of Wakefield. The Graveship was subdivided into seven townships and parts of Holmfirth lay within three of the townships, namely Wooldale, Cartworth and Upperthong. Holmfirth was eventually declared a town by the High Court in 1851: a publican in Holmfirth was taken to court for being open after permitted hours. The licensing laws granted towns with a population of 2500 or more, later opening hours. None of the three townships had a



## HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

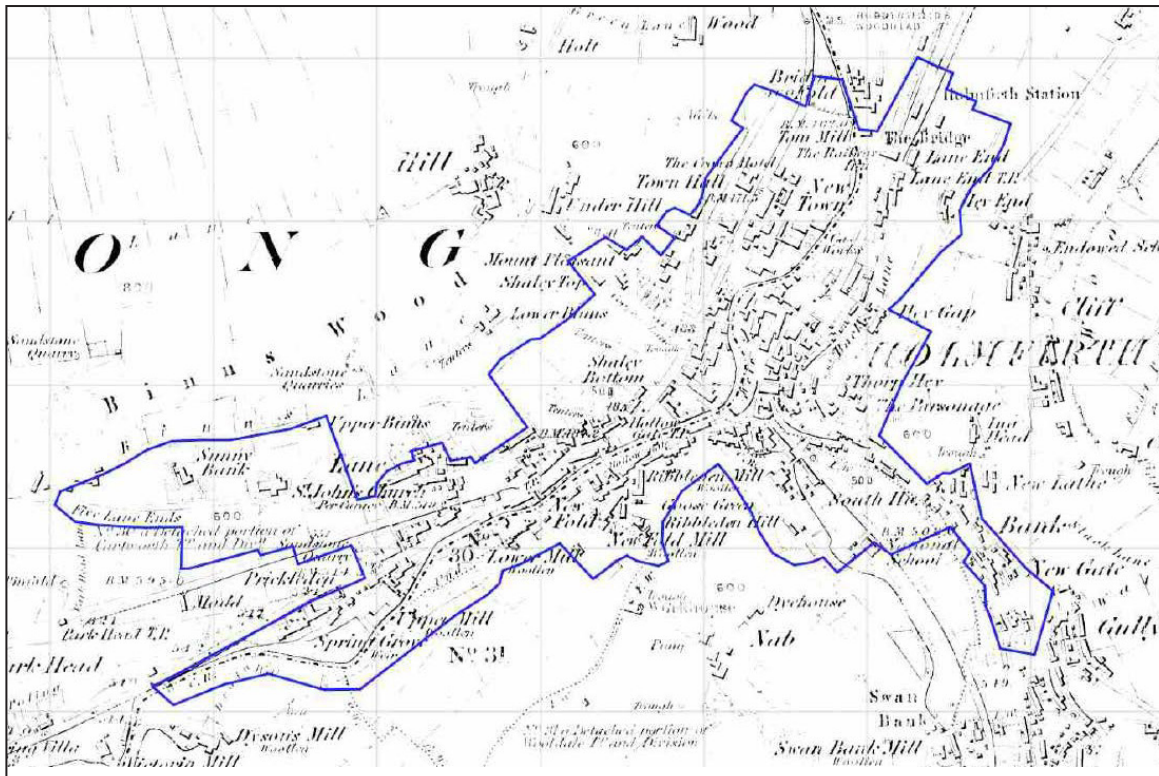


Fig 6 Detail of the Ordnance Survey Map of 1854

population of 2500 or more, but the area of Holmfirth which lay within the three townships, exceeded 2500. The prosecution lawyer maintained that, “Holmfirth was undefined and undefinable”. However the high court judge ruled that Holmfirth was indeed a town.

The OS map of 1854 (Fig 6), with an overlay of the HCA, includes the Underbank Conservation Area adjoining to the southeast. It also shows the construction of buildings on the northern side of Victoria Street. Development is shown along the north side of the river with the railway station at the north end of the HCA. Tom Mill is annotated in the north, with Ribblesden Mill, New Fold Mill, Lower Mill, Upper Mill and Prickleden Mill in the south of the HCA.

The OS Map of 1891 (Fig 7) shows buildings on the south side of Victoria Street, constructed in 1852. The map indicates the presence of at least six mill ponds in the HCA. The former gas works are illustrated by a circular feature in the north of the HCA. The 1854 and 1891 OS maps indicate the further residential development of Holmfirth and these maps have been used to assist in the dating of individual buildings. By 1900 the majority of the buildings in the HCA were already constructed.

## HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

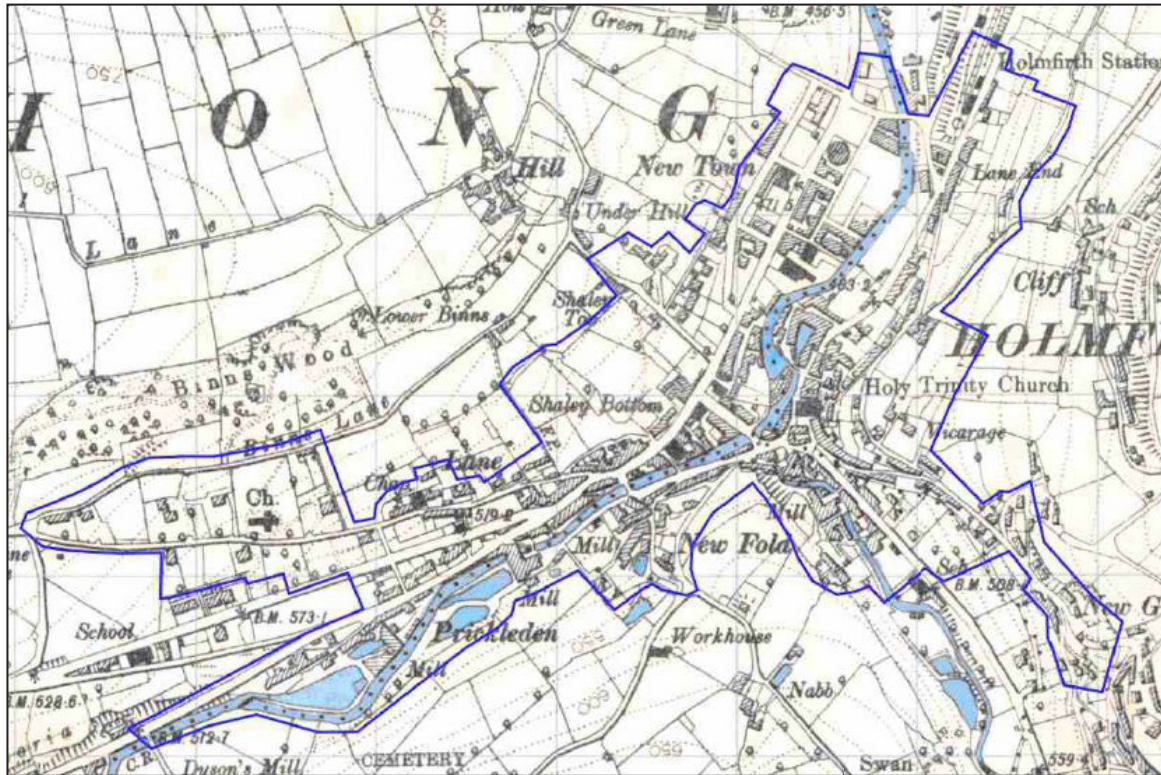


Fig 7 Detail of the Ordnance Survey Map of 1891



Towngate after demolition showing widened bridge and Victoria Square

Towngate was widened in 1921 by the demolition of properties on the river side, and Victoria Bridge was widened and strengthened. The accidental demolition of a warehouse behind Kaye's ironmongers by a coach in 1947, meant a wider junction was made at Victoria Square.

The OS map of 1949 (Fig 8), shows further development of buildings in Holmfirth, mainly in New Town. The mills and mill race in Towngate are no longer shown. The layout of



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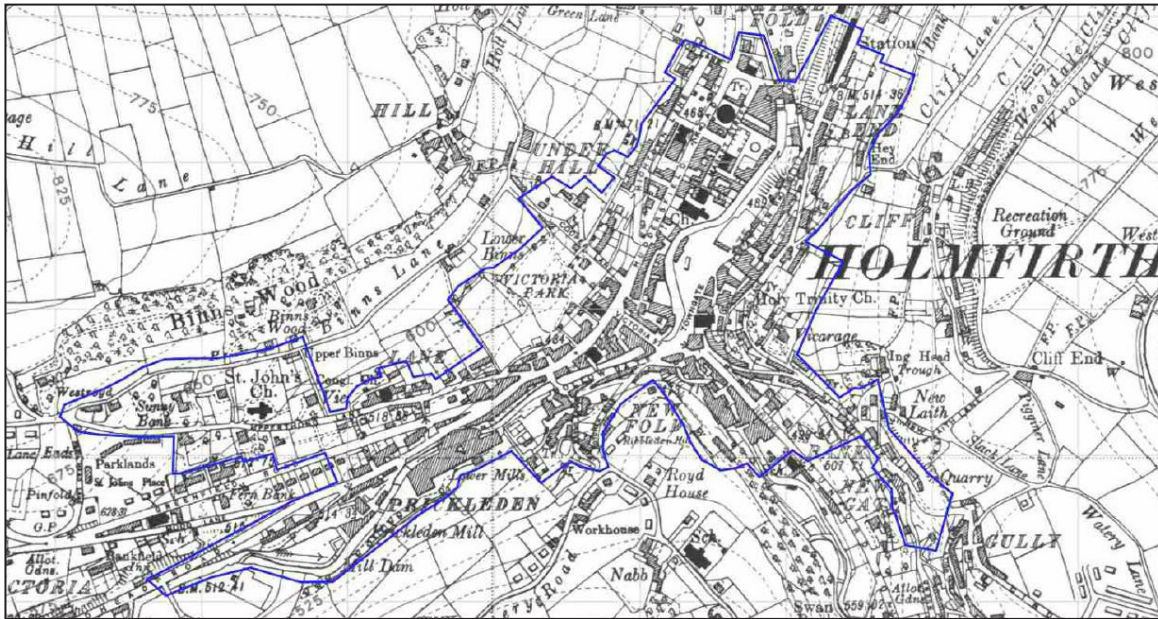


Fig 8 Detail of Ordnance Survey Map of 1949

streets and buildings did not undergo any significant changes during the 20th century, with the exception of the building of the Picturedrome (1912) and post-war buildings such as the Lower Market Hall, Post Office, Riverside Shopping Centre, Yorkshire Building Society and the Crown Bottom development.

The 2002 map (Fig 9), indicates the removal of the gas works and railway station and track, and the redevelopment of Crown Bottom for a Co-op store and car park. An additional

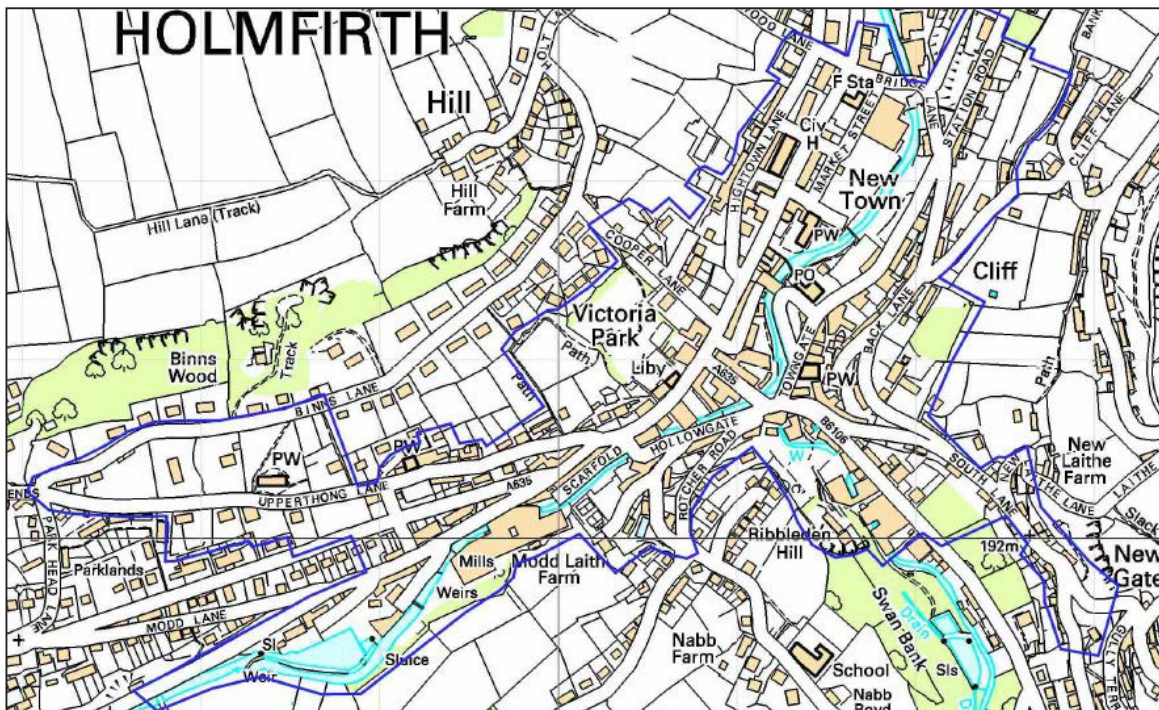


Fig 9 Detail of Ordnance Survey Map of 2002

minor road and a Post Office building are shown in Towngate. Only one mill pond is now shown in the HCA at Prickleden in the southwest of the Conservation Area. As the textile industry declined in the late 20th century, Holmfirth's heritage provided a context for the growth of tourism.

#### **SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

- **There is documentary evidence of a corn mill in 1315**
- **Evidence of fulling mills suggest the development of textile trades from the 14th century**
- **Textile production was a cottage industry until the late 18th century, this gave rise to the distinctive linear weavers' windows on upper floors**
- **Industrial processes introduced in the 18th century were first powered by water and then steam**
- **Urbanisation driven by industrialisation gave rise to distinctive hillside development including characteristic 'over and under' dwellings**
- **Early association of Holmfirth with photography and film. James Bamforth produced the first movies in the UK and then developed a significant postcard business**
- **Holmfirth Conservation Area designated in 1972 and extended in 1990**



## 4. OPEN SPACES AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### 4.1 Introduction

The rural context of the HCA and its development around the River Holme hosts a diverse ecosystem. Due to the woodlands and surrounding moorland, a variety of birds and other wildlife, can be seen in the Conservation Area.

The parks and open spaces, public footpaths, graveyards, riverscape and trees add to the special character of the Conservation Area (Fig 10).

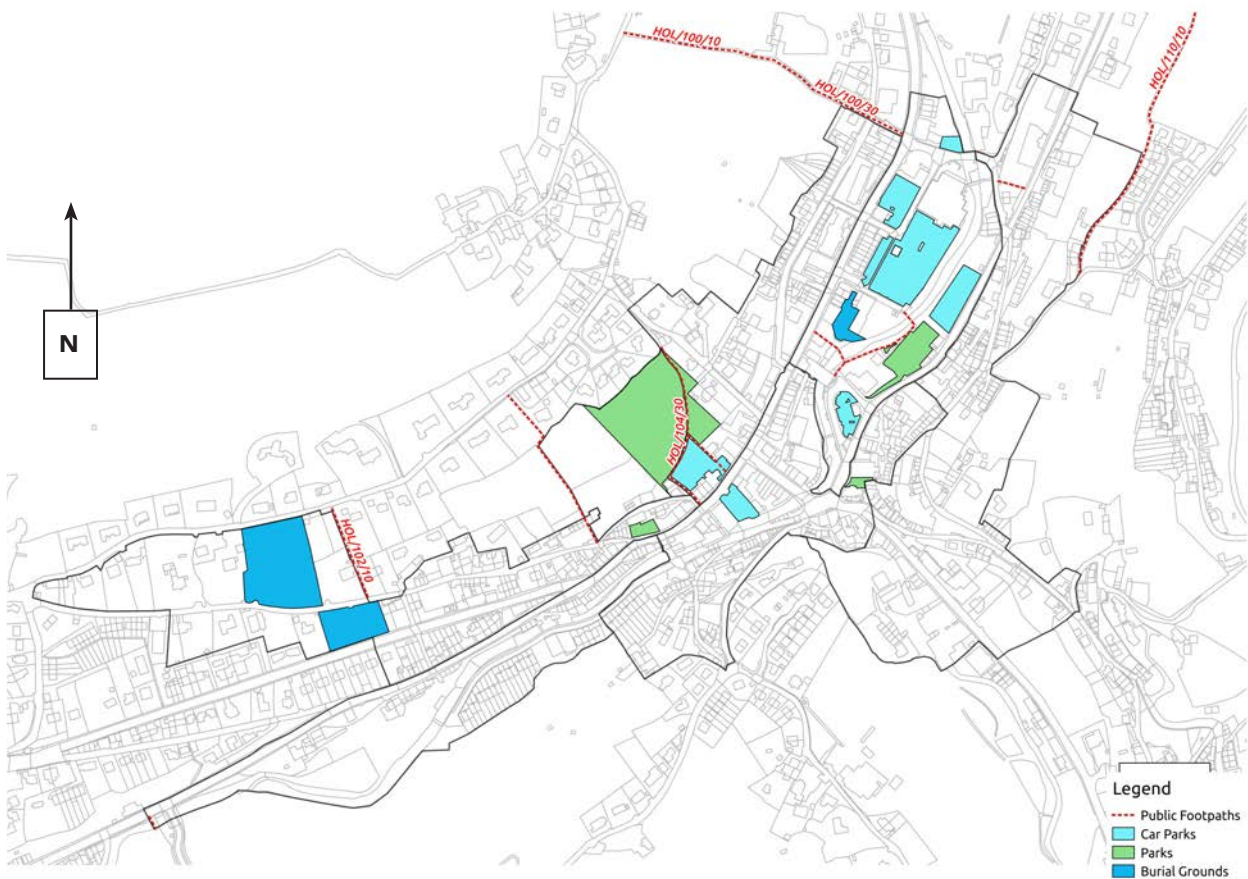


Fig 10 Map of Open Spaces and Footpaths

### 4.2 Parks and Open Spaces

The historic need for domestic housing and shops within walking distance of the local industry, based along the sides of the river, has resulted in a densely built valley. There are areas of parks and open spaces within the HCA, provided variously by philanthropy, the demolition of buildings or happenstance.





The Church Yard – a Popular Open Space – courtesy Andrew Whittaker

Victoria Park comprises two acres of land known as Burton’s Field. It was purchased from John Burton, a local school master, by the town council, aided by public subscription in 1896, “for the use of the public.” It was landscaped in 1897 to commemorate Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee and became a popular venue for the Whit Sunday Holmfirth Sing, an annual musical festival. The park lies on a steep slope surrounded by stone walls. There is a level area on which a bandstand once stood. It is now used for public events. Pathways are a mix of stone setts, concrete and tarmac. Despite having mature trees on all four sides, the hillside position affords extensive views of the town and the countryside beyond. A survey of the Victoria Park by young people engaged in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, noted inadequacies such as signage, access, slippery surfaces, graffiti and the lack of stimulation for users of all ages.

The King’s Head Garden was formerly the site of the King’s Head public house, which was built in 1702 and demolished in 1969. The garden was designed to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and includes a high stone wall inset with ceramic tile murals depicting local life. Carved stone flags at the entrance make reference to the Last of the Summer Wine TV series, Bamforth & Co’s seaside postcards, the annual duck race and words from the Holmfirth anthem “Pratty Flowers”. The attraction of the garden is impacted by traffic noise.

Holmside Garden was the burial ground of Holmfirth Parish Church from at least the mid-18th century until it closed in 1860. Now a public garden, it is an important quiet

space away from the roads. Headstones have been placed along two of the perimeter walls and laid flat to form part of the footpath. Adjacent to the graveyard is a sensory garden planted with herbs, shrubs and trees in raised beds with integrated wooden seating. In the stone walls of the raised beds are ceramic sculptures of fish and other creatures created by Holmfirth High School pupils in early 1990s. The garden is used during festivals for small exhibitions.

The Church Yard is a paved urban space between Holy Trinity Church and No.4 Towngate, which includes JW Kaye's ironmongers, with a fine bow window, and Sid's Café, immortalised in former TV series 'Last of the Summer Wine'. The square opens onto Towngate and the riverside while, to the rear, steps lead up the steep hillside. The space has pavement cafés and is used for exhibitions and festivals.

There are eight public car parks in Holmfirth, and there may be opportunities to soften their impact by planting and landscaping. The car park survey is presented in Appendix B.

.....  
**Issues in Parks and Open Spaces:**

- **Maintenance of walls**
  - **Varied and slippery path surfaces**
  - **Different styles of waste bins**
  - **Poor access to Victoria Park for pushchairs and wheelchairs**
  - **Inadequate signage**
  - **Graffiti**
- .....

**4.3 Public Footpaths**

Footpaths are often reminders of routes taken by workers from their homes to the mills and most of the definitive paths within the HCA appear on the 1854 or 1891 Ordnance Survey maps. Accordingly, these routes are an important feature in the historic townscape of Holmfirth. The footpaths are generally narrow and are often bounded by drystone walls, but they provide good views and useful connectivity. The Footpaths Survey is presented in Appendix C.

.....  
**Issues in Footpaths:**

- **Maintenance of walls, paths and vegetation**
  - **Poor signage**
  - **Inadequate lighting in places**
- .....

**4.4 Graveyards**

In addition to the former parish graveyard, now Holmside Gardens, there are three graveyards within the HCA boundary at St John's Church in Upperthong, Lane Independent Chapel and Holmfirth Methodist Church.

The graveyard at St John’s Church, built in 1846, is still in use today. Notable graves include the Shackleton family, some of whom died in the 1852 Holmfirth flood, Thomas Kaye, the famous huntsman who died in the 19th century and Eli Collins, founder of the Holmfirth Express newspaper. The actors Bill Owen and Peter Sallis, both from the TV series Last of the Summer Wine, are also buried here. The entrance from Upperthong Lane is through a tall Gothic stone-arched gateway alongside which is a memorial plaque to those who died in the Second World War. This large graveyard occupies a prominent site on the hillside for views across the town.

The Lane Independent Chapel graveyard straddles Upperthong Lane and Greenfield Road with gateways to both. This attractive open space is largely hidden from view by the screening effect of trees at the perimeter and is kept locked, restricting public access.

The Holmfirth Methodist Church was originally built in 1810, with graves dating back to the 1813, but the current building dates from the 1980s. Three plaques on the church wall commemorate those lost in the First World War. The churchyard was overgrown until it was cleared by the Holmepride Community Group in 2017.

Maintenance is an issue with all graveyards as they are a source of information for those interested in genealogy.

.....  
**Issues in Graveyards:**

- **Maintenance of walls, paths and vegetation**
  - **Lack of access to Lane Graveyard**
  - **Public safety – gravestone instability**
- .....

**4.5 Riverscape**

The river should be a focal point of the CA. However the deep culverts and vegetation often obscure the view of the river. The lack of access to the river is an issue identified by a significant number of respondents to the questionnaire.

The River Holme runs through the Conservation Area from Perseverance Place in the south-west to Bridge Lane in the north-east. The river is in good biological and chemical condition supporting brown trout and bullhead.

The River Ribble, one of the smallest rivers in England, at just 3km in length, originates at the outflow of Holme Styes Reservoir flowing northwards to join the River Holme in Holmfirth centre.



Grade II listed “Upperbridge”– showing invasive species



The rivers were fundamental to Holmfirth's emergence as a centre for the wool industry and evidence of this heritage still exists e.g. the millpond downstream from Perseverance Place, and the retaining structural remains on the river's banks.

Whilst water has been essential to Holmfirth's development, the destructive force of water by flooding has shaped the town's history.

Holmfirth has been subject to major flooding. In 1476 the parish church was washed away, and high rainfall and dam bursts caused floods in 1738, 1777, 1852 and 1944. The most catastrophic flood was in 1852, when the embankment of Bilberry Reservoir, about two miles south of Holmfirth, burst and 81 people died. Buildings were badly damaged including four mills and 50 houses, mainly in Scar Fold, Upperbridge, Hollowgate and Rotcher. Bodies were washed out of graveyards and the tops of Upperbridge and Victoria Bridge were destroyed. A total of 7088 adults and children lost their jobs as a consequence. The tragedy led to a national outpouring of grief and a flood relief fund raised around £70,000. Considerable damage and three fatalities occurred in 1944 as a result of a massive cloudburst.

Markers signifying the level of the flood waters in 1852 are found on the Peace of Amiens Column and on the shop at the corner of Victoria Street and Market Walk. The 1944 flood is commemorated with a plaque, indicating the high water level, on the wall of the Elephant and Castle public house in Hollowgate. Nearby a modern tribute to those who lost their lives in the four floods is found on three sculpted panels on the riverside railings in Hollowgate. An official memorial plaque is found on Victoria Street.

In the 20th century, flood management has resulted in large underground storage tanks being installed by Yorkshire Water at intervals alongside the River Holme.

Accessed from Crown Bottom, the riverside area is being enhanced by River Holme Connections, an independent charity. The River Survey is presented in Appendix D.

.....  
**Issues in Riverscape:**

- **Maintenance of vegetation**
  - **Public and disabled access**
  - **Invasive species, including plant life, fish and animals  
eg crayfish and mink**
  - **Rubbish and litter in the water**
  - **Unattractive pipework**
  - **Maintenance of buildings along the riverside in order to remove any  
invasive plants from seeding in the structure.**
  - **Concrete cladding to Market Walk**
- .....

#### 4.6 Trees

In contrast with the lack of trees on the surrounding moorland, the HCA includes numerous trees, presenting a distinctive greening of the town.

Conservation areas provide protection for all trees of more than 75mm measured at 1.5m above ground level. The local authority must be notified of proposed works to such trees and this may result in a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). There are forty- eight TPOs within the HCA. In addition, there are a significant number of trees with TPOs north of Upperthong Lane which, although not in the Conservation Area, add greatly to its amenity. The Kirklees list of TPOs is presented in Appendix D.

Many of the trees are self-seeded and tree stock is of limited variety with a predominance of sycamore and with oak, silver birch and ash, which make a consistent visual impact. This is apparent in aerial views of Holmfirth.

.....

#### Issues in Trees:

- **Maintenance and monitoring of trees**
  - **Limited variety of trees**
  - **No succession tree planting**
- .....

#### 4.7 Public Realm

Traffic and on-road parking impact on the town and pose a challenge for maintaining the Conservation Area. Holme Valley Parish Council is addressing issues concerned with the volume of traffic, HGVs and on-road parking in the draft Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan.

Evidence from traffic surveys undertaken by groups including Kirklees Urban Traffic Management Control in 2016, and research sponsored by Holme Valley Vision, provide evidence of issues concerning the flow of traffic at specific times. The opinions of the community, as evidenced by the Public Consultation questionnaire, support the view that Holmfirth has a number of traffic issues which need addressing. (see Appendix A2).

Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) traffic will damage the fabric of the buildings by causing vibrations which undermine their stability.

On road parking is an issue in residential areas of the HCA as most of the domestic properties



Traditional setted street of Daisy Lane

were built before the advent of the car. This makes this issue difficult to resolve. Roadside parking in the CA during the day by non-residents and frequent violation of parking restrictions are also issues.

A management programme to deal with the issues presented by traffic, HGVs and on-road parking, is vital in order to protect the historic assets of the Holmfirth Conservation Area.

.....  
**Issues in Public Realm:**

- **Lack of Management of the public realm**
  - **Proliferation of overhead wires**
  - **Lack of road signage and markings to Conservation Area standard**
  - **The impact of traffic and parking on the CA**
  - **Air pollution affecting the stonework of buildings**
  - **Traffic vibrations affecting the stability of historic buildings**
  - **Lack of enforcement of traffic regulations**
  - **Inappropriate repair of stone setts and kerbs**
  - **Street clutter and overuse of signage**
  - **Inconsistent street furniture and street lighting**
  - **Use of A Boards on pavements and fly posting**
  - **Commercial and domestic waste-bins restricting the use of pavements**
- .....

**4.8 Views**

Views both into and out of a Conservation Area make an important contribution to its special character. These include staggered rooftops up the valley sides, framed by the



View from Cliff toward the Greenfield Road with moorland beyond



fields, woods and high moors. Key views in Holmfirth include those along the riverside, to landmark buildings and of the roovescape from higher ground. It is the cumulative combination of views, and sequential views as one moves through ginnels and spaces, that are particularly important.

A selection of views is identified within each of the character areas in Section 6 and presented on Figs 11 and 12.

.....  
**Issues of Views:**

- **Maintenance of vegetation to retain views**
  - **Inappropriate roofing tiles**
  - **Installation of solar panels and satellite dishes within CA**
- .....

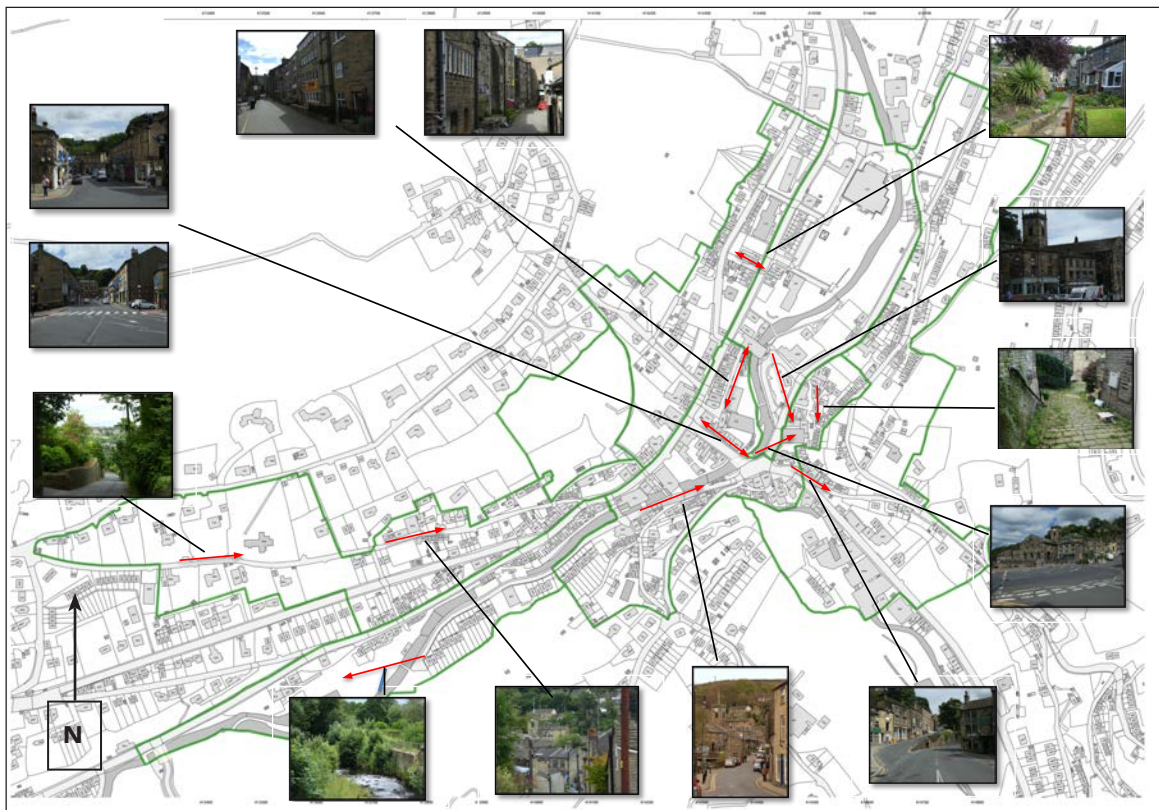


Fig 11 Street Views

## HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

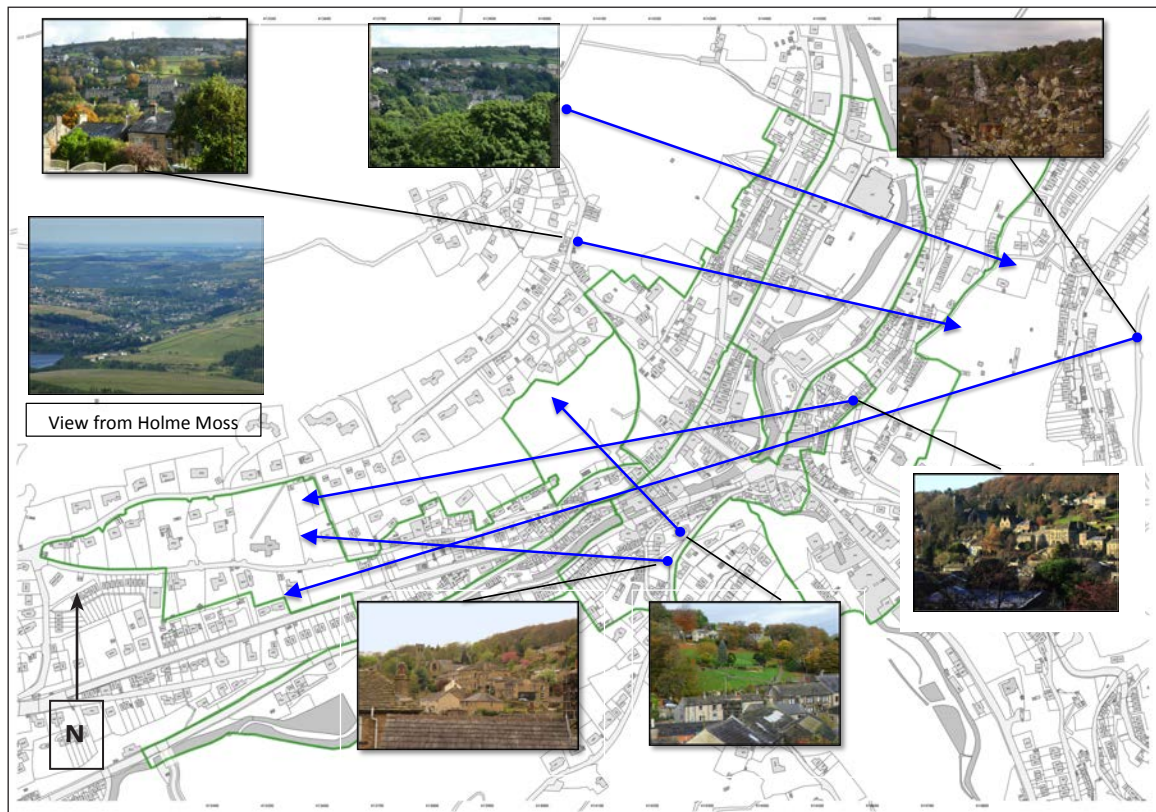


Fig 12 Views overlooking Holmfirth

### SUMMARY OF OPEN SPACES, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC REALM AND VIEWS

- The natural environment is brought into the centre of the town by the river corridor
- The parks and open spaces provide areas for relaxation, recreation and community events
- Public footpaths are still in use
- The graveyards add an historical element of importance to the town
- The riverside encourages wildlife for the enjoyment of the community and allows significant views
- Trees make a major contribution to the character of the HCA and add an important feel of well-being
- Views looking out from and into the Conservation Area contribute to its character
- The river and its views provide for public enjoyment and make an important contribution to a sense of wellbeing
- The streetscape comprises numerous stone buildings, walkways and features related to the town's history



## 5. THE BUILDINGS

### 5.1 Understanding

A buildings survey of the 919 structures in the HCA was undertaken by HCG volunteers to gain a better understanding of our built heritage and to provide an audit of building condition and the survival of original features. The survey was based on Historic England guidance and is presented in detail in Appendix H. The survey discounted a number of buildings that were inaccessible or of little consequence, such as garages and outbuildings. 622 buildings were included in the building analysis. (see Appendix F).

The movement of workers from the hillside settlements to the mills in the valley during the 19th century, created the need for houses. Dwellings were constructed in tight clusters following the steep gradient of the hillsides, which created the distinctive array of rooflines. Characteristic 'under and over' houses were constructed, which comprise a house built against the hillside with another on top accessed from a higher level.

The style of buildings in Holmfirth continued to evolve into the early 20th century. As prosperity increased, the earlier vernacular gave way to more formal styles and detailing. The buildings are unified by the consistent use of local sandstone, which has determined the appearance of the Conservation Area.



Roofscape of Holmfirth



HOLMFIRTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

SAMPLE OF ANALYSIS OF BUILDING SURVEY DATA								
	CHARACTER AREA							
	Old Town	New Town	High Town	Riverside	Cliff	St John's	TOTAL	% of all buildings (622)
<b>BUILDING CHARACTERISTIC</b>								
Stone Roof Material	88	22	49	29	84	79	351	56.4
Cast Iron Rainwater Goods	41	12	38	7	49	36	183	29.4
Stone Walls	134	45	89	56	111	110	545	87.6
Door uPVC	18	3	32	16	36	46	151	24.3
Window uPVC	44	14	47	26	55	57	243	39.1
Satellite dish	36	11	30	5	30	26	138	22.2
Refuse Bins visible	47	18	42	20	46	45	218	35.0
<b>AUTHENTICITY RANGE</b>								
Less than 50%	55	7	20	21	22	27	152	24.4
50% - 74%	69	20	44	23	68	55	279	44.9
75% - 84%	18	15	14	3	22	12	84	13.5
Over 85%	15	9	19	19	19	26	107	17.2
TOTAL	157	51	97	66	131	120	622	
<b>CONDITION RANGE</b>								
Less than 50%	8	1	2	3	5	11	30	4.8
50% - 74%	76	15	40	24	60	46	261	42.0
75% - 84%	33	24	32	9	41	35	174	28.0
Over 85%	36	8	21	39	21	32	157	25.2
TOTAL	153	48	95	75	127	124	622	

Fig 13 Sample of Analysis of Building Survey Data

## 5.2 Condition and Authenticity

Buildings surveyed within the HCA were scored on authenticity and condition and were also dated. Authenticity was gauged on the extent to which a building showed respect to its original form and materials. The total scores for authenticity and condition take into account the individual scores for elements such as walls, roof, windows, chimneys, doors, gutters and rainwater pipes and other features of the buildings.

It should be noted the authenticity and condition scores do not necessarily reflect an 'absolute value' and should be viewed in the context of their relative value to all the buildings surveyed. The dating of the buildings are within a tolerable margin of error.

The Survey Methodology, Training Manual and Statistical Analysis relate to the scoring process and results are explained fully in Appendices F, G and H.

### **5.3 Building Materials**

Domestic and industrial buildings were constructed with locally quarried stone and lime mortar. Early stone buildings were of narrow-coursed sandstone with larger stones reserved for quoins and lintels. Later buildings were constructed with deeper-coursed sandstone dressed by hand, using chisels to form punched or pitched surfaces. For finer work, stones were sawn to form smooth ashlar faces. These were usually restricted to front elevations.

While the local sandstone is known as Millstone Grit, it varies from coarse stone to the fine-grained ashlar used for architectural details. In addition, the area around Elland and Brighouse, produces a fissile Coal Measures Sandstone that can be split to form roofing flags.

Rainwater goods were of square timber sections until they were succeeded by cast-iron. There is still a foundry in Holmfirth that holds the patterns for local cast-iron architectural details. Chimneys are generally sandstone with clay pots. Doors to vernacular buildings tend to be made of vertical planks, while later buildings have four or six panelled doors that became increasingly ornate with status.

Early windows were limited by the size of glass that could be made. Initially, leaded glazing was bedded directly to the stone work and opening lights had narrow iron frames. Timber windows, from the early 18th century, were side-hung casements particularly for vernacular buildings. As glass-making evolved to produce larger sizes in the 19th century, fewer glazing bars were necessary.

Modern alterations have seen the introduction of plastics for doors, windows frames and rainwater goods, the use of hard cement mortars for pointing, bricks and non-traditional fenestration including top-hung quarter lights.

### **5.4 Mid-to-late 18th century**

There are about 90 buildings in the HCA which are considered to date from around the turn of the 19th century. (Fig 14) These buildings are generally in the older part of the town around the Parish Church including, 8-10 and 16-18 Towngate, the Shoulder of Mutton and Nook public houses, and some of the houses in Daisy Lane, Back Lane and Bunkers Hill.

They are built of natural hand-dressed sandstone with stone flag roofs, and tend to have six-panelled doors and multi-pane sash windows. The survey scoring indicated that nearly all buildings scored as 50% or above for both authenticity and condition (Fig 13).

### 5.5 Late Georgian to Early Victorian

About 160 buildings in the HCA date from this period. These include St John's Church, No.86 Huddersfield Road, No.27 Hollowgate and Nos.12-14 Towngate (Fig 14).

In 1844 a new line of shops, with domestic quarters above, was constructed on the north side of Victoria Street. These shops were built to a late Georgian design with the introduction of ashlar façades with projecting cornices and cill-bands. The shops were divided by heavy stone pilasters, although the ground and first floors of the former bank at Nos.28/30 were remodelled in the 1920s or '30s. The south side of Victoria Street was constructed in 1852 to a similar, but less formal, style as that on the north side.

The bow-fronted gentleman's residence at Nos.2-4 Towngate fronts the square on the south side of the parish church. The tall townhouses with wide ranges of mullioned, weavers' windows also date from this period, for instance, the over and under buildings of the



Fig 14 Map showing Building Periods



terrace between Huddersfield Road and Norridge Bottom. Of the buildings within this period, three quarters scored 50% or above for both authenticity and condition, with a quarter scoring 75% or above (Fig 13).

### 5.6 Mid-to-Late Victorian

This is the period in which the town centre was consolidated into the form that is recognisable today, with the survival of around 225 Victorian buildings. While the vernacular tradition persisted for humbler dwellings, the scale of size and decoration increased for commercial buildings, such as Nos.57/59 Huddersfield Road, and the introduction of plate glass allowed for larger windows.



Victoria Street early 20th Century – still recognisable today

With local government came civic buildings, such as the Drill Hall, the Civic Hall and the Fire Station along Huddersfield Road. The railway enabled Welsh slate to be imported and, while this is accepted as part of the roofscape character of Holmfirth, it started the erosion of local distinctiveness. Of buildings from this period, three quarters scored more than 50% for authenticity and more than half scored above 75% for condition (Fig 13).

### 5.7 Post Victorian to Modern

These buildings include the former Castle's Garage, in the Woodhead Road now converted to the Holmfirth Mill shop, as well as the Picturedrome Cinema which was built in 1912, of brick and render. The cinema is a legacy of James Bamforth's pioneering film-making in the town.

In contrast, two national banks added impressive fronts to older buildings in the 20th century at Victoria Square and Nos.28/30 Victoria Street.

There are around 48 buildings built within this period and the majority of these scored more than 50% for condition. Over 70% scored more than 75% for condition. Authenticity of design was difficult to judge and not attempted (Fig 13).

Changes in style, scale and building materials of Mid to late 20th Century buildings in Holmfirth have impacted on the character of the Conservation Area. Where artificial stone, which weathers differently from natural stone has been used, the buildings do not blend in with the historic feel of the Conservation Area.

### 5.8 Shops

Early shops were converted from houses, which is why there is a domestic scale to shops, for instance in Huddersfield Road, whereas shops in Victoria Street were purpose-built in 1844 and 1852. Appraisal of the shops surveyed 154 trading premises, 18 of which are Grade II Listed.

While Holmfirth no longer has some of the trades recorded in 19th century census data, such as cordwainers, clog-makers, milliners and umbrella-makers, new businesses have



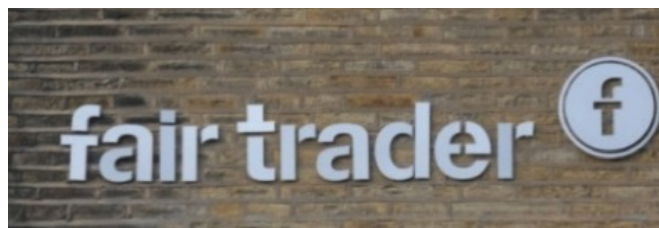
Historic Shopfronts dating from 1852. Impact spoiled by clashing colours.



Large fascia and adverts covering three windows.



Example of reinstatement of historic-style shopfront.



Example of where fascias board is not in place, lettering mounted on stonework is in keeping.

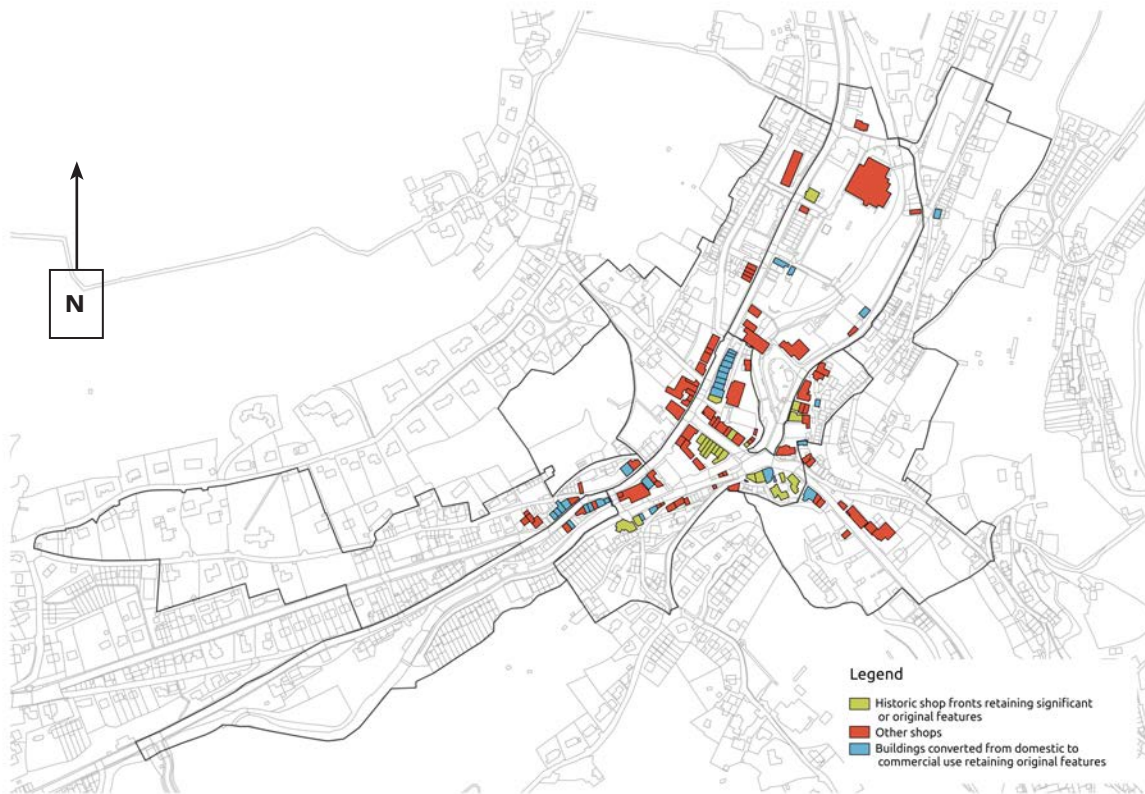


Fig 15 Map showing Historic Shop Fronts

evolved to take their place. Holmfirth prides itself on the high proportion of independent traders, which adds vibrancy to the town's character. The small size of retail units, often determined by the constraints of the historic buildings, are an asset, as their quirkiness contributes to their attraction.

A number of historic shopfronts survive in Towngate and Victoria Street (Fig 15). However, there are examples of others that have over-deep fascias; where modern materials have been used to replace the original; advertising that obscures shop windows; as well as A-boards on pavements.

#### SUMMARY OF BUILDINGS IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

- **62% of the 622 surveyed buildings have stone walls and stone flagged or slate roofs**
- **Stone walls, stone flagged roofs and chimneys**
- **Domestic dwellings with weavers' windows evidence cottage industry**
- **Under and Over houses to accommodate buildings in the landscape**
- **Ribbleden Mill which retains its chimney is the last working mill In the HCA**
- **High stone buttressed retaining walls**
- **Neo-classical style architectural frontage of former bank (1920s)**
- **Early twentieth century cinema constructed of brick and render**



- **Survival of seventeen ginnels that were built to give access to the rear of a property**
- **Closely built houses climbing up the valley sides**
- **Weavers' windows**
- **Under and over buildings used for housing and shops**
- **Stone houses and stone flag roofs predominate**
- **Late Georgian/Victorian architecture of a northern mill town predominates**
- **Domestic scale and purpose-built shop**

.....

**Issues of Buildings:**

- **Lack of understanding of the responsibilities of owning a buildings in CA**
  - **Loss of historic features**
  - **Lack of maintenance and poor condition of some buildings**
  - **Replacement of window frames, doors and rainwater goods using modern materials**
  - **Installation of satellite dishes and solar panels**
  - **Use of external steel security doors**
  - **Large fascia boards on shops**
  - **Clashing colour choices to adjacent premises**
  - **Bright lighting – window displays on building**
  - **The number of vacant and underused buildings in the CA**
- .....

**5.9 Listed Buildings**

Listing began in 1944 to identify 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest'. Protection for these buildings and monuments was not introduced until 1968. The HCA includes 38 Grade II listed buildings and a schedule is provided in Appendix I. Most are houses and public buildings, but they also include structures, such as the Upperbridge on Hollowgate, the adjacent milepost, the church lockup, Goose Green Trough and the Peace of Amiens Column.

Other notable listed buildings include the Civic Hall, the north side of Victoria Street, buildings between Huddersfield Road and Norridge Bottom and Nos.2-4 Towngate.

A survey of the listed buildings by HCG revealed that only 4 of the 38 remain as recorded in the list description including 27 Hollowgate, the former HSBC bank and 81 to 83 Huddersfield Road. The survey indicated an average authenticity score of 73%, with the lowest level of authenticity of less than 50% recorded on 18% of the buildings. The condition survey found one building in immaculate condition with the majority falling within 50% to 74% condition range and only 5% falling below 50% score for condition (Fig 13). The schedule of listed buildings can be found in Appendix I.

Overleaf are examples of listed buildings and monuments.



### **Th'Owd Towser**

The building with the oldest history in Holmfirth is said to be the Th'Owd Towser, originally dating from 1594 when Justices of the Peace were appointed and were required to provide Houses of Correction. Lockups fell out of use following the County Police Act of 1839. This building dating from the 19th Century, has in its lifetime been a lock up, a fire station, an ambulance depot and a mortuary.



### **The Parish Church, Holy Trinity, Towngate**

The earliest church in Holmfirth was a Chapel of Ease constructed in 1422, and rebuilt several times. The present Holy Trinity Church was constructed to a design by Joseph Jaggar, in 1782 with the tower added later.



## 27 Hollowgate

This building is one of the oldest in Holmfirth and has retained weavers' windows.



## Monument to the Peace of Amiens

The Peace of Amiens Column known locally as O'wd Genn is a column erected in 1802 to celebrate peace with France which proved to be temporary. Believed to be the only public monument to a brief period of peace during the Napoleonic wars.



## 5.10 Conservation Area Character Buildings

HCA includes a significant number of “Conservation Area Character Buildings”. These are buildings which are to be considered as non-designated heritage assets, as provided for in paras 131 and 135 of the NPPF Glossary. These have been divided into two categories, Key Buildings and Positive Buildings.

### 5.10.1 Key Buildings

Key buildings are those which, although not listed, are considered to make a particularly strong contribution to the character of the Conservation Area (Fig 10). This may be for a number of reasons, such as age or landmark qualities. These would merit inclusion on Kirklees’ Local List and the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan, as they rank as important non-designated heritage assets for planning purposes. It may be that some of the key buildings identified should also be considered for statutory listing. A complete list of key buildings can be found in Appendix J.

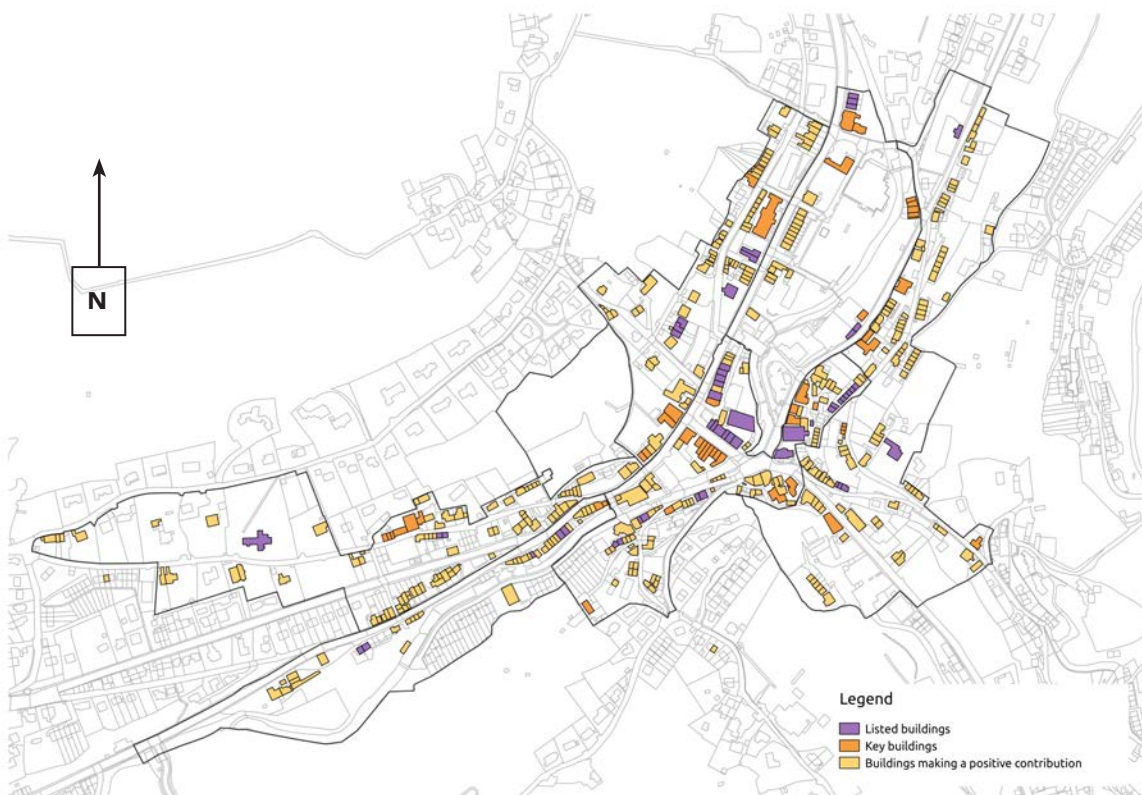


Fig 16 Map of Listed, Key and Positive Buildings

A Schedule of Key Buildings is presented in Appendix J. Several of the more significant buildings in Holmfirth have been marked with explanatory blue plaques.

Overleaf are examples of Key Buildings.



**Bamforth & Co.**

This iconic building is currently being renovated. In 1870 James Bamforth established a photography and lantern slide making business and later diversified into film – James Bamforth was one of the early makers of black and white moving picture films in the UK.

**Druids Hall**

Built by the Order of the Druids Friendly Society in the middle of the 19th century at a cost of £1800. Used as a Drill Hall, free Methodists and Entertainments Hall, meeting venue and home of the Masonic Lodge.







### **Ribbleden Mill**

The date of this mill is circa 1865. The present building stands on the site of an earlier mill. There is a strong case for further protection measures as it is the only surviving working mill existing in the HCA. It has retained its Georgian style windows and multi-panelled glass, band course and shallow pitched roof. It also has the last mill chimney in the HCA.



### **The Nook**

The Nook brewed beer in 1754, and possibly earlier. Although called the Rose and Crown, it has reverted to its nickname of The Nook. The existing building dates from 1818 and brewing was resumed here in 2009.





### **The Technical Institute**

This building housed evening classes for apprentices from 1894 and became the first secondary school in Holmfirth between 1907 and 1932.

### **5.10.2 Positive Buildings**

Positive buildings are those that make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area without necessarily being 'key'. These nevertheless are considered to be of sufficient quality to be included on the "Kirklees Local List" and any schedule of "Local Character Buildings" in the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan. In their guidance on Conservation Area Appraisal, Historic England provides a series of indicators to identify such buildings. These include, reflecting prevalent elements such as age, style, materials or form, group value with designated assets or contribution to the quality of spaces.

Inevitably, most of the buildings in the Conservation Area that are not already listed, or key buildings should be considered 'positive'. There are a few remaining buildings that make a neutral or negative contribution to the Conservation Area. Positive buildings can also include less-conventional structures, such as gravestones or stone boundary walls.

The positive buildings are shown in Fig 16. Like the key buildings, they are regarded as 'non-designated heritage assets' and their heritage significance should be taken into account in planning considerations.

**SUMMARY OF LISTED, KEY AND POSITIVE BUILDINGS**

- **38 Grade II Listed Buildings**
- **Authenticity score of 72% for Listed buildings**
- **Condition score of 50% to 74% for Listed buildings**
- **Listed buildings reflect the history of Holmfirth from lock ups, weavers' cottages and industrial buildings, to churches, banks and a cinema**
- **Key buildings include all buildings prior to 1850 and a large number of later buildings that add to the architectural significance of Holmfirth**
- **Positive buildings include the majority of the remaining buildings in the Conservation Area**

.....  
**Issues of Listed, Key and Positive Buildings:**

- **Lack of appropriate maintenance**
  - **Loss of original features**
  - **Inappropriate signage, lighting, fascia and advertising**
  - **Lack of planning enforcement where necessary**
- .....

## 6. THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

### 6.1 Character Areas

Although Holmfirth has a high degree of unity in its built form because of consistent building materials, architecture, scale and design, there are, nonetheless subtle differences in the character that this generates. Fieldwork suggests that the Conservation Area can be divided into seven areas, each with a distinct character. Six are discussed below and the seventh, Victoria Park, being a major open space, was considered at 4.2 above.

The following account of the character areas is based on surveys carried out by the HCG to provide a descriptive analysis of the street character, views and vistas, street furniture, traffic management, road and pavement surfacing and heritage features.

### 6.2 Old Town

The Old Town forms the central core of Holmfirth and is characterised by the oldest buildings, the weavers' cottages, under and over houses and shops, and by the Georgian-style buildings of Victoria Street and Victoria Square. The roads are busy with people and traffic, whereas the web of intriguing setted streets, rising invitingly from the town to the hills, lead to quiet squares and narrow, steep winding lanes. The use of local natural stone for buildings, paving and steps gives a unifying character that complements an effective diversity in the height and scale of buildings.



Fig 17 Map of Character Areas



Victoria Street is a purpose-built shopping development comprising a well-preserved, listed 19th century terrace of shops, with ashlar facings, on the north side. A further three-storey terrace of shops, of dressed stone, is found on the south side. Church Yard on the south side of Holy Trinity Church and fronted by Nos.2-4 Towngate is a stone flagged area used by cafés and festivals. Elsewhere, the old town is constructed of three and four storey, under and over buildings. Some are domestic, others are combined domestic and retail premises, selling a large variety of goods and services. There are a few smaller domestic houses.

The River Holme flows through the centre of the old town and although access is restricted, it is an attraction for locals and visitors alike, bringing an air of freshness and a feel of the countryside into the town, with regular sightings of heron fishing in its shallow waters. The narrow streets that rise to the rear of the Holy Trinity Parish Church, include Daisy Lane with its attractive setts and stone steps, where a double-canyon effect is created by three-storey buildings topped by more towering houses that mount up the hill to the east. Uniquely, this area is enclosed by buildings that block views creating a sense of enclosure where the houses, shops and cafés feel unchanged since the 19th century. The Daisy Lane area feels distinctly quiet, compared to the town centre.

Hollowgate, radiating south west from Victoria Square, is open to the river on one side and lined with multi-storeyed terraced buildings. There are shops, roads curling up steeply around corners to the south and a pedestrian footbridge across the river. However, the predominance of stone buildings with a distinctive skyline, is eroded by the redbrick of the rear of Holmfirth Mills, the unattractive glass and sheet metal of the Lower Market Hall building, and busy traffic.

Rotcher Road, Goose Green and New Row rise as steeply curved roads from Hollowgate, and benefit from stone setts. Snaking paths or snickets with fine stone steps and stone walling give rise to views of the town, and of roofscapes, chimneys and views to Victoria Park. Along this road is Modd Laithe Farm. Whilst its acreage sits outside the CA its farmhouse is within the CA boundary . The property may, therefore, be considered to be the last remaining working farm in the HCA.

Norridge Bottom runs parallel to Huddersfield Road and is making a successful transition into a pedestrianised shopping street. The enclosure of towering four storey shops and ginnels to Huddersfield Road contrasts with views to the river. The setted roadway, and uniform streetlamps enhance a sense of place.

### **Views**

From the centre of Holmfirth, in Victoria Square, there are views in most directions: south west along the old buildings and riverscape of Hollowgate, through the wooded river valley, to Victoria Mill and towards the chimney of Bottoms Mill and the hills of Holme Moss. To the north there are views past the historic 19th century buildings on Victoria Street through to those on the Huddersfield Road with Victoria Park rising behind and the hills beyond.

To the east the view up Dunford Road is of some of the oldest buildings of Holmfirth with a dramatic roofscape rising up the hillside, including Ribbleden Mill and its chimney. The ginnels and narrow lanes in the Old Town create restricted views of the rear of old buildings opening out into courtyards and back streets.

Views up Rotcher Road, Goose Green and New Fold are enclosed by the closely packed buildings. The views down these lanes from the boundary of the HCA emphasise the character of Holmfirth.

The view of Holmfirth looking from Hollowgate towards Holy Trinity Parish Church, with layered houses rising up the wooded hills behind the church, the church clock hanging orb-like at night, and framed by well-preserved Georgian style buildings, is one of the best views of Holmfirth.

#### **SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OLD TOWN**

- **Forms the historic core of Holmfirth with many of the oldest buildings**
- **Closely built houses built on the valley sides**
- **Weavers' windows**
- **Under and over buildings used for housing and shops**
- **Busy streets and adjacent quiet backwaters**
- **Stone flag pavements and setted tracks**
- **Stone houses and stone flag roofs predominate**
- **The river**
- **Views of the valley sides and moors beyond**

.....

#### **Issues of Old Town:**

- **Maintenance of stone walls**
  - **Restricted access to the river**
  - **Commercial waste bins hindering pedestrians**
  - **Poor regard for stone setts and stone flags**
  - **Road markings not in Conservation Area standard**
  - **Un-coordinated and cluttered street signage**
  - **Un-coordinated styles of street lamps**
  - **Shops frontages painted in unsympathetic colours**
  - **Advertising and lighting of shop fronts**
  - **Incongruous materials of the Market Hall and rear of Holmfirth Mills**
  - **Parking and loading in contravention of traffic regulation orders**
- .....

### **6.3 Hightown**

Hightown Lane is important because of its double fronted properties and terraces of stone houses separated by stone arched ginnels allowing access to rear gardens. The lane

bends and slopes downwards towards its southern end, bounded by high stone walls and hedges, hiding a substantial Georgian style town house and garden.

Wood Lane is a steep hill which quickly becomes a narrowing grit lane with bulging hedges and then open-walled fields, such is the immediate connection of Holmfirth with its rural setting.

Victorian civic buildings on Huddersfield Road contrast with the domestic scale of properties in Beech Street.

Cooper Lane also rises steeply from the Huddersfield Road, bounded by early high stone walls on both sides for much of its length and short streets either side. A pathway into Victoria Park has a good example of creative, new, domestic architecture in scale and keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. Carr House Road, opposite, has imposing detached houses with attractive individual changes of scale.

### **Views**

Hightown is mostly elevated above Holmfirth, being on the bank which rises westwards from the Huddersfield Road. It affords dramatic views of Holmfirth rooftops over the New Town towards the houses and woods of Cliff. Some of the best views in Holmfirth are from various points along Cooper Lane looking south-east across hedges, stone walls and roofscapes towards the Holy Trinity Parish Church and the wooded hills beyond. These views epitomise the character of Holmfirth.

### **SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGHTOWN**

- **Historic houses along the valley side backing onto fields**
- **Civic Hall and Drill Hall**
- **Substantial Georgian-style houses along Carr Lane**
- **Views across Holmfirth to Cliff and moors beyond**
- **Ginnels**
- **Stone pavements and setted tracks**
- **Stone houses and stone flag roofs predominate**

.....

### **Issues in Hightown:**

- **Use of inappropriate materials used in the maintenance of the buildings**
  - **Inappropriate signage and advertising**
  - **Prominent waste bins**
  - **Obtrusive satellite dishes and solar panels**
  - **Inadequate street lighting**
  - **On road parking by non-residents**
- .....



## 6.4 St John's

Binns Lane, Upperthong Lane and Greenfield Road form a roughly parallel backbone of roads in this area. Binns Lane forms the northern boundary of the HCA.

Upperthong Lane is narrow and rises steeply from the town. There are steep steps leading to narrow public footpaths. The changes of level of height, styles of building and construction methods add to the character of the lane. Small terraced houses predominate below the former Independent Lane Chapel, which has now been renovated. There are grander houses with large gardens above.

High dry-stone walls, raised gardens, mature hedging, grand gates, driveways and facades of older properties contrast with the newer houses and apartments higher up. St John's Church and churchyard provide important open space.

By contrast Greenfield and Woodhead Roads are busy arterial roads with splendid views to the east along the valley over the roofscapes, and to the south across the valley to Cinderhills, Cliff and Cemetery Road. The predominating pastoral scenes of fields, trees and drystone walls are quintessential Holmfirth.

### Views

There are good views along Upperthong Lane of old buildings, gardens and trees, and the impressive entrance to the church of St John. Views are offered from the higher ground of Binns Lane, stretching across the valley to the fields and woods south of the River Holme, to Cemetery Road and the high moors beyond. Views of the buildings and roofscape of Holmfirth on the opposite side of the valley can glimpsed from the lane.

### SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ST JOHNS

- **Historic church and graveyards**
- **Imposing houses set within substantial grounds**
- **Historic terraced housing**
- **Narrow lane rising uphill with high retaining walls**
- **Views across Holmfirth and the river to fields and the moors beyond**
- **Steep stone footpaths connecting roadways and footpaths**
- **Stone pavements and setted tracks up the hills**
- **Significant presence of large gardens and trees**

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### Issues of St John's

- **Badly maintained garages**
  - **Stone walls requiring maintenance**
  - **Obtrusive waste bins**
  - **Lack of maintenance of graveyards**
- .....

## **6.5 Riverside**

Woodhead Road is a significant gateway to the town with the Riverside area lying either side of the River Holme to the south. Houses on the south side of the road are predominantly under-and-over domestic properties with some utilised as shops where they front the Woodhead Road. The old laundry building is now apartments, and the former school and the former Toll House at the east end of the terrace at Upperbridge are now in commercial use. As Woodhead Road heads out of Holmfirth there are larger 19th century houses built over several storeys between the road and the river. These are interspersed with trees, many of which appear to be Victorian specimen planting.

The rear of the houses fronting onto the Huddersfield Road are under dwellings fronting onto Scarfold. Steps lead to upper level doors as the street bends and blends with the river. Trees and shrubs, sometimes overgrown, add to the character together with the sounds of the fast-flowing river. In places, there is a high dry-stone retaining wall supporting the houses on Woodhead Road.

Lower Mill Lane on the south side of the river once led to the Lower Mill itself and is now fronted by modern style stone houses and a remaining mill building transformed into flats at right angles to the river. The new three-storey town houses have the classic problems of new buildings in a traditional town centre, as they match the scale, materials and style of existing houses, yet have to accommodate cars in integral garages and front driveways. These buildings do not complement the Conservation Area. The river here is both in a deep cut and also partly culverted to facilitate parking. The housing site at the far end of New Mill Lane, yet to be developed, presents opportunity for a pedestrian bridge that would invite exploration from both sides of the river and open the river to better access.

The only remaining mill pond in the HCA lies at the west end of Lower Mill Lane. It should be preserved as a heritage asset as well as to encourage wildlife and the rural appeal of the town. The far west end of the HCA is formed by an historic bridge over the River Holme, which once led to several, now demolished mills.

### **Views**

The Riverside area is low lying along the valley bottom of the River Holme. The main views are south west looking to the mill pond of Prickleden or north east along the valley to the old mill building respectively. The views north-west are across the houses and gardens of St John's character area with the hills rising steeply beyond and to the south east are the fields and hills rising to Cemetery Road with the moors beyond.

Views along the Riverside include glimpses of the River Holme around each bend of the lanes, hemmed in by the mill buildings, high retaining walls and under-houses: a rare quiet backwater close to the town centre.

**SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RIVERSIDE**

- **Last remaining mill pond in Holmfirth Conservation Area**
- **River Holme flowing through the area giving a rural feel**
- **Converted Victorian buildings**
- **High stone retaining walls**
- **Historic Upperbridge over the River Holme**
- **Tall four-storey under-and-over houses and shops**
- **Narrow lanes running parallel to the river**

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**Issues in Riverside:**

- **Invasive species including Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam along the river and its banks**
  - **Invasive species eg buddleia and sycamore saplings which threaten the fabric of the buildings along the river**
  - **Overgrown mill pond**
  - **Lack of river access**
  - **Inappropriate use of modern materials which do not complement the CA**
  - **Inappropriate changes to properties eg porches**
  - **Poor property maintenance**
- .....

**6.6 Cliff**

Cliff character area includes part of the settlement of Cliff plus the Dunford Road area of Holmfirth.

Cliff is a large area forming the eastern and south-eastern high ground of the town. It has many characteristic steep streets with fine views over the town and beyond. Dunford Road forms a gateway into the town through the valley of the River Ribble. It has the Ribbleden Mill Dye Works, commercial premises and shops on either side as well as the retaining wall to South Lane before emerging at Victoria Square. Hardly noticed and much neglected is the Pump 'Ole in the retaining wall; a water trough now in poor condition, littered and overgrown.

South Lane has characterful three-storey houses mounting the hill on one side and emerging views over the dyeworks and beyond on the other side. The terraced houses bend with the road in a variety of styles.

The steep climb up South Lane reveals the tall taking-in doors of Henry Mitchell's, which is situated on the stone setts at the lower part of the lane. The cat-head hoist for raising wool bales is still evident. The former use of buildings is illustrated by blocked doorways, the mullions of former windows, a fireplace and steps rising to nowhere, in the retaining



walls. South Lane has fine new houses and an old terrace merging from two storeys to one as the street rises in height. The descent towards Station Road is punctuated by double-storey and single-storey houses. There is also a terrace on Back Lane of four-storey houses and with original sash windows. Cliff Lane forms part of the eastern boundary of the HCA with large gardens and fields between properties.

Entering the town from Station Road, notable buildings are the former railway stationmaster's house and goods office, now a residential house, the distinctive Druids Hall and the Bamforth & Co. building that is presently undergoing restoration.

### **Views**

From Dunford Road the view into the town predominates, terminated by the attractive rear of the tall three-storey ironmongers' shop and the buildings across the river. Due to the bends in the road and tall buildings, there are only restricted views looking up Dunford Road. From Back Lane the view is of Holmfirth centre and the houses and trees on the valley sides beyond. From Cliff Lane the spectacular view is across the New Town and River Holme valley to Hightown and the hills beyond.

On South Lane, views are restricted, but looking back from a height higher than the chimney of the Ribbleden Mill Dyeworks, the view is of rooftops on Dunford Road, and green carpets of treetops with moorland beyond. Back Lane offers views of cottages with small front gardens until tall stone garden walls, driveways and trees hide the houses and afford glimpses over the town between the changing house styles. Here the flagpole on top of the church and the top of Victoria Park on the opposite side of the valley, are at eye level with a mosaic of roofscapes below.

From the short stretch of Cliff Lane which is within the Conservation Area, there are dramatic views to the south. The Holme Moss mast is visible on the horizon, bringing moorland, the Holme Valley and the town within the view. The industrial heritage of Bottom's Mill and chimneys, Lower Mill in the town, the river and roofscapes form one of the best views in Holmfirth. A north-west view takes in Hightown across the valley with fields and woods beyond, and towards New Mill.

### **SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CLIFF**

- **Tall under and over houses rising up the hillside**
- **Historic terraced housing with weavers' windows**
- **Setted lanes winding up the hillside to quiet setted squares**
- **High stone retaining walls,**
- **Former railway station building**
- **Historic Druids Hall**
- **Historic Bamforth & Co. building now being restored**
- **Spectacular views of Holmfirth.**

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**Issues:**

- **Overgrown water troughs**
  - **Buildings and stone boundary walls requiring maintenance**
  - **Inappropriate building materials used during building maintenance**
  - **Poorly maintained pathways**
  - **Street lighting in Station Road**
  - **Traffic flow and road access at the junction of Bridge Lane/Back Lane/Station Road**
  - **Road marking not to Conservation Area standard**
- .....

**6.7 New Town**

New Town includes two major gateways into Holmfirth, through Station Road and Huddersfield Road. The entrance to the town from Huddersfield passes the Victorian municipal architecture of the former Technical Institute and the Fire Station, terraced houses and shops, and a former stable yard converted to shops, restaurants and physiotherapy rooms. At the west end of this area is the Riverside Centre complex. Constructed in the 1970s across the river this building has a negative impact on the character of the area. It was voted one of the worst buildings in the UK by the TV programme 'Demolition' in 2005.

Hidden behind the restored terrace of houses west of the Fire Station and the Postcard Public House, is Market Street and the Co-op store, with its large car park planted with trees. While the Co-op has been constructed of stone, as a single storey replacement of the six storey Albert Mill, it is considered to be out of character with Holmfirth's heritage.

Bridge Lane crosses the River Holme at the northern end of New Town. Apart from Upperbridge this was once the only river crossing to take traffic from South Lane and Hollowgate, up Berry Bank (now Station Road) and on to Huddersfield and Halifax. Rear views across Bridge Lane are of the industrial premises of the Bridge Foundry, which will celebrate its centenary in 2019. The Foundry holds moulds for casting cast iron works for the houses in Holmfirth and elsewhere in the UK and is the only business allowed to burn coal in the smokeless zone of Holmfirth.

The entrance to the HCA from Bridge Lane, passes Georgian buildings on the steep access to Station Road and on the site of the former Tom Mill. The land between Station Road and the river is occupied by a car park and trees that restrict views to the west, before reaching the well-preserved building of Wagstaffs shoe shop and a Grade II listed terrace of small houses and shops. Holmside Gardens, to the rear of Wagstaffs, and the walkway along the riverside between the Riverside Centre building and the Co-op store, are assets for the Conservation Area.

**Views**

New Town lies in the valley bottom immediately adjacent to the River Holme and views are mainly along the wooded riverside or up the valley sides through the roofscapes to the hills beyond. Views to the north-west and south-east are of houses and trees with fields and moors beyond. To the north and south views are restricted by the Co-op store and the Methodist Church.

**SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW TOWN**

- **Trees dominate the banks of the river**
- **Technical Institute and former Police Station on the northern boundary**
- **Holmside Gardens**
- **River flows along the eastern boundary**
- **Riverside Walk**

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**Issues:**

- **The incongruous building known as the Riverside Shopping Centre**
  - **Lack of access to the River Holme**
  - **Footpaths requiring maintenance**
  - **Footbridges that do not meet the criteria for disability access.**
  - **Railings requiring maintenance**
  - **Excessive signage**
  - **Dominance of car parking**
  - **Buildings that make a negative contribution to the CA**
- .....



## 7. POSITIVE, NEUTRAL AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

### 7.1 Positive Aspects

Holmfirth has a very strong character that derives from the river running through the town, its dramatic rural setting, and the views in and out of the Conservation Area. The consistent use of local sandstone visually unites a variety of building types.

The most significant buildings are considered in Section 5 above. Listed Buildings are particularly significant because they are selected at the national level. Most of the Key Buildings stand out for their special detailing or landmark qualities. However, they would not alone, create the sense of place without the context provided by the Positive Buildings. Together, listed, key and positive buildings comprise the large majority of property in the Conservation Area. Open spaces and trees, considered in Section 4 above are also important to the positive aspects of the Conservation Area.

#### SUMMARY OF POSITIVE ASPECTS

- **Wooded valley setting**
- **Views in and out of the CA**
- **High percentage of listed, key and positive buildings**
- **Houses built on valley sides**
- **River running through the centre of the town**
- **Roofscape of stone and slate roofs and chimneys**

### 7.2 Neutral Aspects

The neutral aspects in Holmfirth include the small number of buildings, constructed in the 20th century of reconstituted stone or other materials, which do not enhance their surroundings and do not form a positive aspect.

These include:

- the single storey Co-op store in Crown Bottom, which replaced a six - storey mill building. Although it is constructed of stone, it is isolated from the fabric of the town and does not, therefore contribute to its townscape.
- The dwellings in Lower Mill Lane where proportions and lack of detail do not add character to the town, despite the use of stone.

The neutral aspects comprise a small number of buildings considering the size of the town.

#### SUMMARY OF NEUTRAL ASPECTS

- **Late 20th century new-builds using natural materials but not in keeping with the character of the area**

- **Royal Mail sorting office – scale and materials not in character**
- **Crown bottom car park and supermarket – scale not in character – built in natural stone**

However these areas offer scope for future development

### 7.3 Negative Aspects

Negative aspects are those that detract from the historic spatial layout, the style and materials of buildings and the attractiveness of the streetscape, parks and riverside.



Riverside Shopping Centre

The Riverside Shopping Centre has been considerably under-used for many years. The Royal Mail sorting office lies behind the Post Office/W H Smith. Together this largish parcel of land on which they stand could provide possibilities for future development.

The negative aspects of Holmfirth include neglected buildings, some of which have stood empty for many years. The telephone exchange in Huddersfield Road lies outside the HCA adjacent to its northern boundary. However, its poor design spoils the entrance to the HCA from Huddersfield.

Houses in the HCA were mostly constructed before the advent of the car and in the 20th century numerous badly-constructed and badly-designed garages have been built that are detrimental to the streetscene, although necessary to the owners.



Post Office & W H Smith

Other negative aspects are the loss of traditional building details in a relatively small proportions of the built environment.

In the public realm, there are concerns about the proliferation and variety of signage, the intrusive commercial waste bins, and street furniture, such as the large number of variously painted litter bins and un-coordinated planters. Cracked stone paving flags, tarmac replacement of stone flags and low maintenance are negative aspects to the visitor experience and economic development of Holmfirth. Additionally, removal of the visible pipes crossing the river and the eradication of invasive species would enhance the riverscape.

#### SUMMARY OF NEGATIVE ASPECTS

- **Commercial and Domestic Wastebins**
- **Garages**
- **Tarmac infill of stone slabs**
- **Concrete kerbstones**
- **Utility pipes in river**
- **Street clutter**
- **Unco-ordinated street signs and lighting**

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#### Issues of Positive, Neutral and Negative Aspects

- **Maintenance and repair of all aspects of the Public realm**
  - **Maintenance and repair of buildings**
  - **Management of development within the Conservation Area**
- .....



## 8. BOUNDARY REVIEW

### 8.1 Review of HCA Boundary

As part of the Appraisal process, the boundary to Holmfirth Conservation Area was reviewed for the first time since its initial designation in 1972 and the designation extension of 1990.

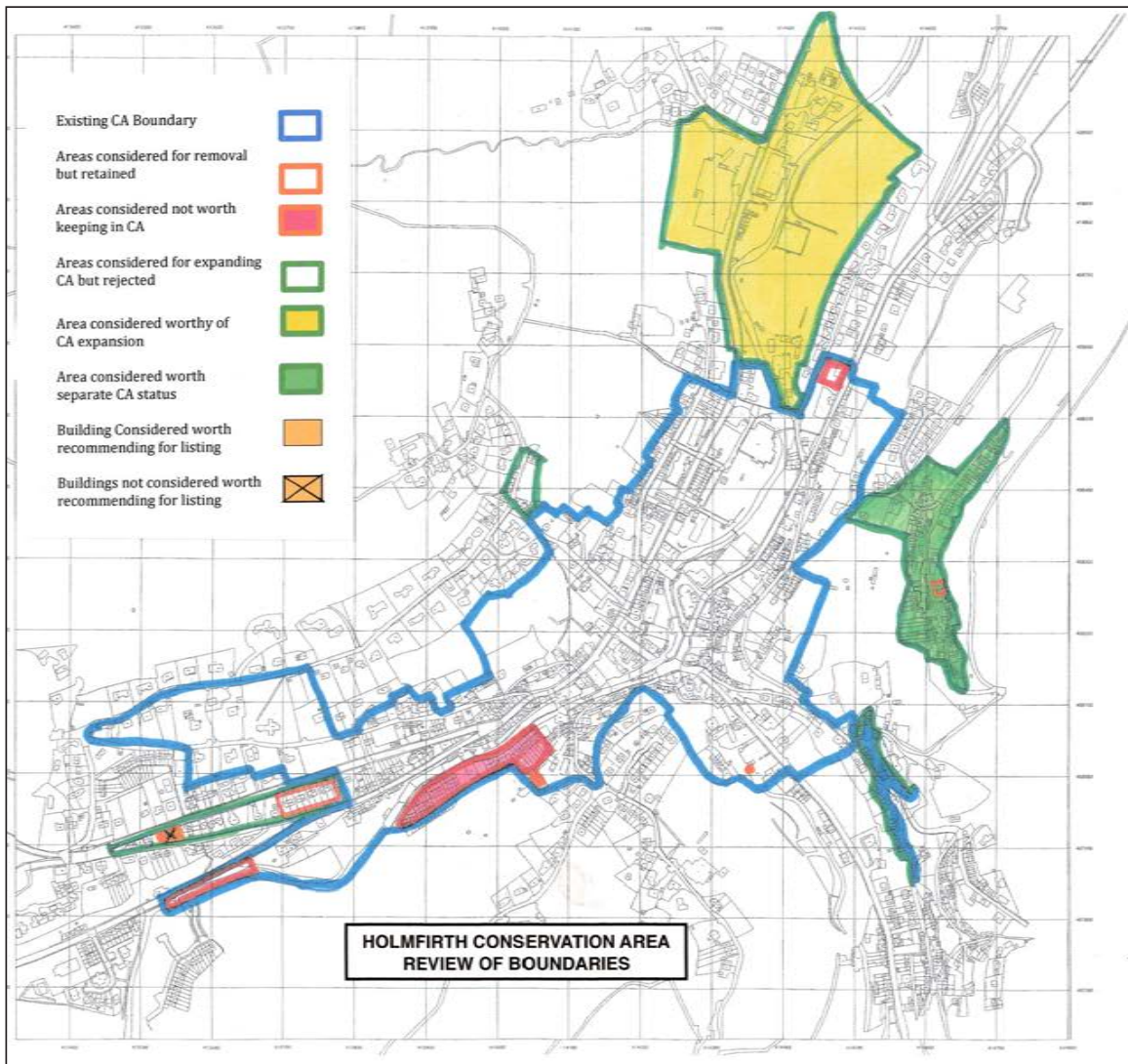


Fig 18 Review of Boundaries

### Proposed Boundary Changes

Three areas for the extension of the Conservation Area are proposed for consideration:

1. The area around the junction of Cooper Lane and Holt Lane. Although containing a small number of historical buildings, they have been subject to significant alterations and are considered not to be worthy to be included within the CA. There is, however,

a case for a small extension to include Nos.6-18 Cooper Lane. These under-and-over houses are very much part of the local character and they provide a gateway to the Conservation Area for approaches from the north.

2. The area to the east of Back Lane & Cliff Lane: Cliff contains a majority of buildings from the late 18th to the mid-19th century, and also a significant number of relatively modern properties, some of which have been well- designed to take account of the constraints of the site. However, the area is detached from Holmfirth and, if designation was to be considered, it should be as a separate Conservation Area.
3. The northern approach to Holmfirth: This is the area to the north of Bridge Lane, east of Huddersfield Road and west of Summervale, extending to Sands. The area includes, Bridge Foundry fronting Bridge Lane, which links back directly to the rise of the textile industry in the Holme Valley; and Holmfirth Cricket Club which, was founded on its present site in 1850, and used for the Holmfirth Sing and agricultural shows for Holmfirth residents. In the north-west part of the suggested extension is Bridge Mills. Although not listed, it is one of the last mills still active in industrial use and it has a commanding presence on the approach along Huddersfield Road.

### **Rejected Boundary Changes**

The area between Greenfield Road and Modd Lane: While this area contains a cohesive group of Victorian buildings around the former school at the west, they are isolated from the existing Conservation Area by 20th century housing of little architectural merit.

### **Proposed Exclusion**

One area is recommended for deletion from the designated area.

The modern development of Lower Mill Lane, to the west of The Elephant and Castle PH on Hollowgate is not considered to have sufficient architectural interest to meet the criteria for inclusion in the Conservation Area.

## 9. ISSUES IN THE CONSERVATION AREA

Holmfirth has been a Conservation Area since 1972 and is described by Historic England as being 'at risk'. A Management Plan is needed to address the issues in the Conservation Area, and to create an environment which will attract new businesses, residents, shoppers and tourists.

The main issues in Holmfirth, derived from the analysis of this Appraisal, lie in the following areas:

### **Open Spaces, Natural Environment and Views:**

- Maintaining the walls and paths
- Improve access to the parks, graveyards and river
- Improve provision of amenities
- Maintenance of trees and increase variety of species
- Consideration of succession tree planting

### **Existing Buildings:**

- Maintaining the historic features of heritage assets - Listed Buildings, Key Buildings and other positive buildings
- Resisting the erosion of character through the cumulative effect of small-scale change
- Kirklees to use existing legislation more often, and more rigorously, to protect Listed Buildings and the fabric of the Conservation Area
- Maintaining and enhancing traditional shopfronts
- Strengthening controls over advertising in shop windows, fascia boards, shop lighting, security shutters and 'A'-boards
- Encouraging reinstatement of original architectural design features

### **New Development:**

- Taking consideration of the duty to preserve and enhance character of the Conservation Area
- Complement the scale and form of neighbouring buildings
- Making use of locally sourced natural sandstone

### **The Riverside:**

- Maintain the views
- Enhance and improve access to the river
- Removal or control of invasive species in the river, along its banks and adjoining structures
- Improving the style, materials and painting of the footbridges



**Public Realm:**

- Maintain the stone steps, setts and flags
- Maintenance of pavements and kerbs, to use stone and setts as appropriate
- Reduce and standardise street signage
- Coordinate street furniture, including streetlights, seating, railings and litter bin
- Lack of streetscape manual
- Maintain stone retaining walls and boundary walls
- Minimise parking in the main streets and particularly in narrow streets
- Reduce impact of traffic on buildings and environment in the HCA
- Find suitable locations for commercial bins
- Remove overhead wires
- Improve provision for community noticeboards
- Preserve spectacular views and vistas of Holmfirth

It is important that these issues are taken forward into a Conservation Area Management Plan for Holmfirth.

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