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Ryecroft

CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

December 2005

Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

1.1 What does Conservation Area Designation Mean?

A conservation area is an 'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

They were first introduced into British legislation by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and are an attempt to protect the wider historic environment. An area may warrant designation if, for example, it has an historic layout of streets, or exhibits the characteristic materials, style and landscaping of the region in which it is situated or of a certain period of history. They are cohesive areas in which the interaction of buildings and spaces create unique environments that constitute irreplaceable components of our local, regional and national heritage.

Conservation areas are designated by the Council, which has a statutory duty to review its historic districts from time to time, in order to ascertain whether further conservation area designations are deemed to be appropriate. Designation confers a general control over the demolition of buildings, strengthens controls over minor development and makes special provision for the protection of trees. More detail on legislative controls in conservation areas can be found in *Appendix 3* of this document. In addition, in exercising its planning powers, the Council has a statutory duty to pay attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. Bradford Unitary Development Plan contains a number of policies that have been formulated to provide the mechanism for this objective to be realised (see *Appendix 3*). These measures aim to ensure that the interest of designated areas is retained for future generations, their environmental quality is

preserved or enhanced and local distinctiveness and sense of place is safeguarded.

1.2 What is the Purpose of Conservation Area Assessments?

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has prepared this assessment of Ryecroft Conservation Area in order to fulfil its statutory duty to review its conservation areas from time to time, and to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. It forms part of an ongoing programme of conservation area assessment and review being undertaken by the Conservation Team, which aims to:

- Clearly define and record the special interest of all of the district's conservation areas, to ensure that there is a full understanding of what is worthy of preservation;
- Reassess current boundaries, to make certain that they accurately reflect what is now perceived to be of special interest and that they are readable on the ground;
- Increase public awareness of the aims and objectives of conservation area designation and stimulate their involvement in the protection of the character of these unique places; and
- Assess the actions that are necessary to safeguard the individual character of each conservation area and put forward proposals for their enhancement.

A draft of this assessment document was placed on deposit for public consultation in August 2003. At the same time a summary of the draft, a comments sheet and proposed conservation area boundary map was posted to all addresses within and local to the conservation area, along with an invitation to a conservation area workshop, which

was held on 23rd September 2003. The workshop was well attended and the feedback obtained from the workshop, as well as by post, telephone and e-mail, has been used to re-draft this document and to reassess the proposals for the conservation area and its boundary.

This document will provide a framework for the controlled and positive management of change in Ryecroft Conservation Area and form a basis on which planning decisions in the area are made. It may also provide the foundation on which the Council can make bids for funding to assist property owners with works to the fabric of their buildings, or to restore derelict structures. **It is, however, not intended to be comprehensive in its content and failure to mention any particular building, feature or space should not be assumed to imply that they are of no interest.**

The assessment should be read in conjunction with the *Bradford Unitary Development Plan* and national planning policy guidance, particularly *Planning Policy Guidance 15 (PPG15): Planning and the Historic Environment*. These documents provide more detailed information on local and national policy relating to conservation areas.

1.3 Ryecroft Conservation Area

Ryecroft Conservation Area was originally designated in September 1977, following a nationwide review of buildings worthy of listing. Prior to this review, many of the buildings in Ryecroft were individually listed. The review reduced the number of listed buildings in the settlement to four, however the value of the unique setting and form of Ryecroft was recognised and the hamlet was designated as a conservation area.

The conservation area at Ryecroft is focused around a late 17th century farming development, which evolved over the following two centuries into a small but established hamlet. Several outbuildings and related fields are also included within the conservation area boundary as these are historically important to the development and subsequent setting of the hamlet.



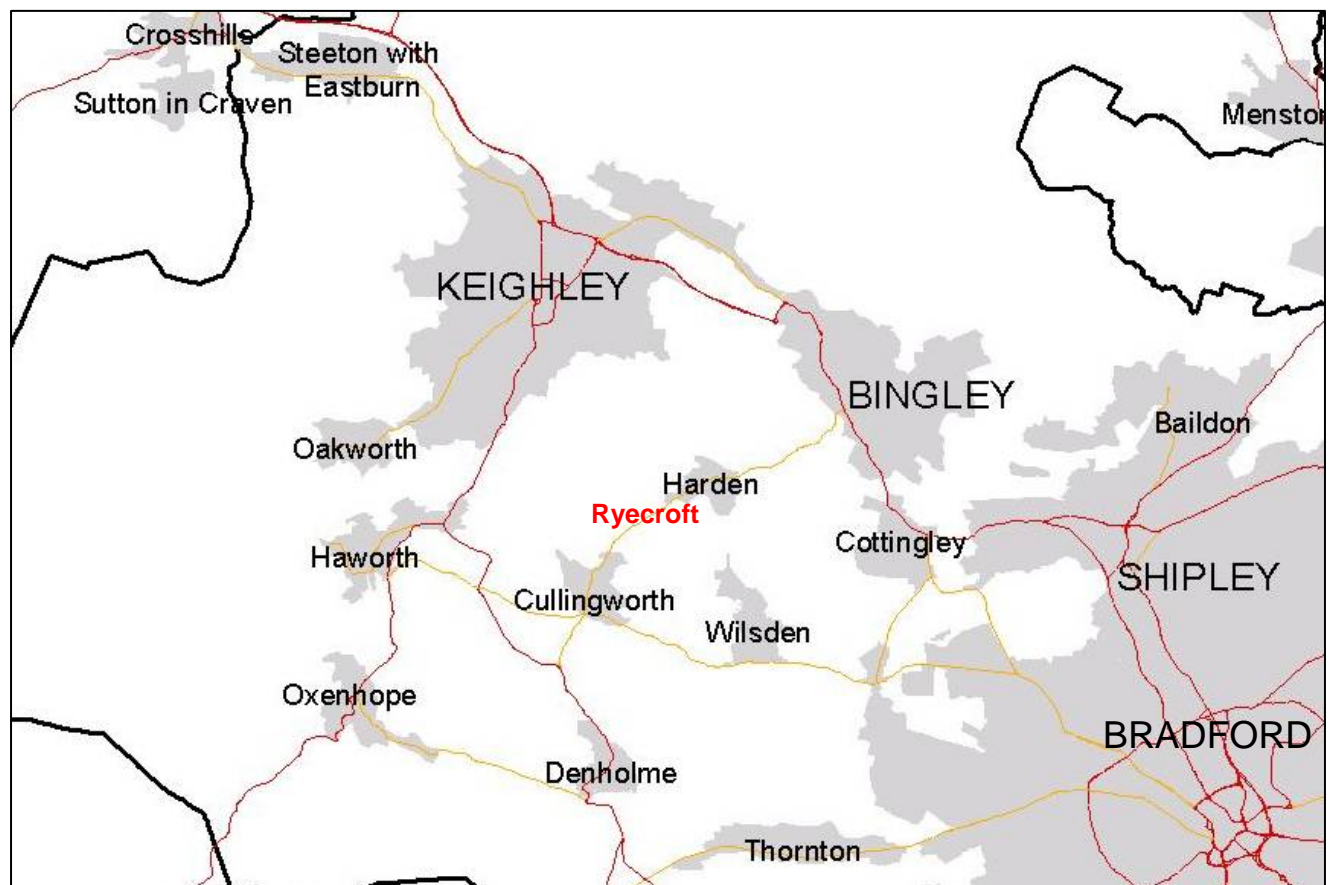
View across the green towards 10-14 Ryecroft.

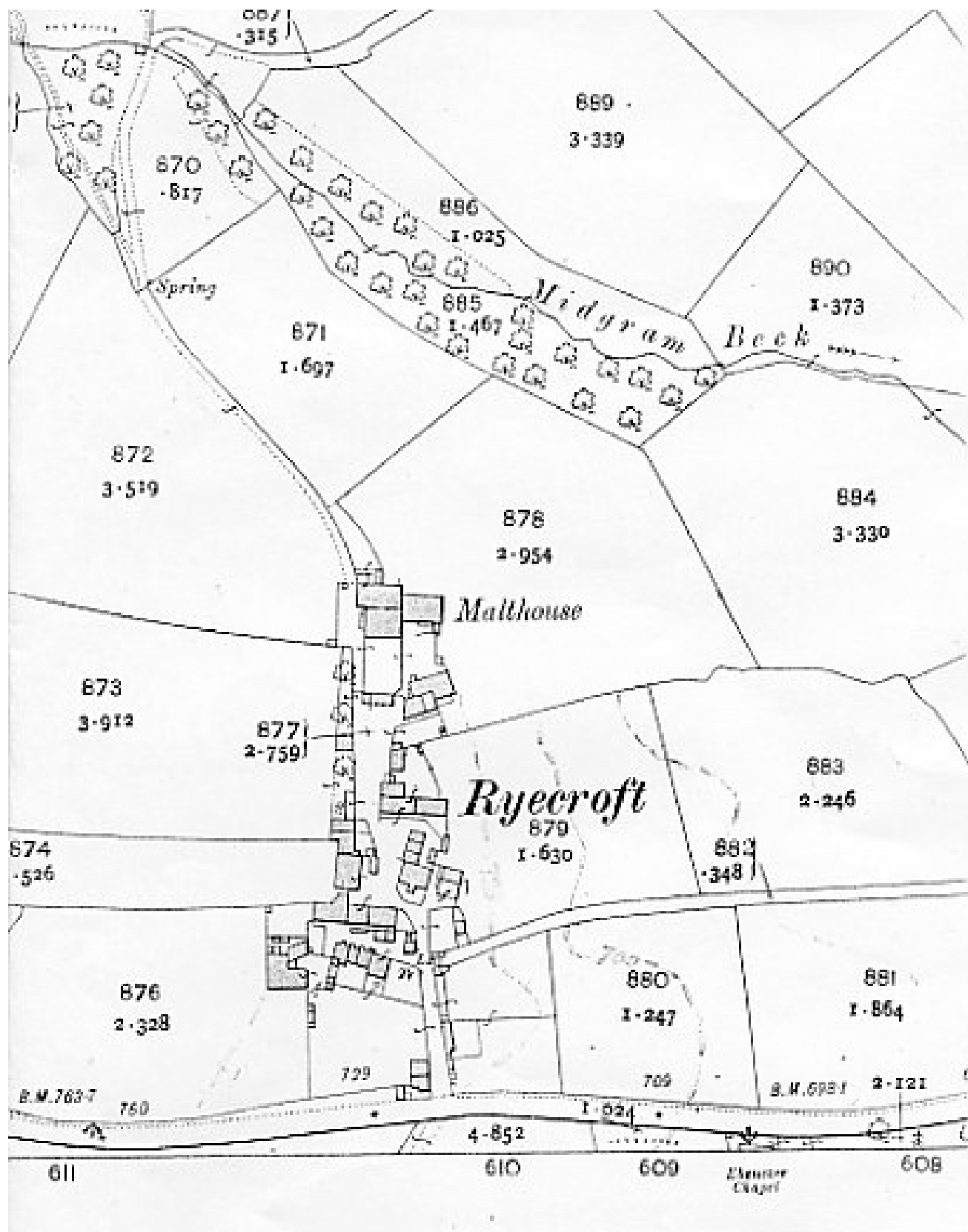
2. Location and Population

The hamlet of Ryecroft is located in a rural area of the district, approximately 1km to the west of Harden and 1.6km to the northeast of the village of Cullingworth, on the lower slopes of Harden Moor.

Within the wider area of Bradford Metropolitan District, Ryecroft (there are two such named settlements in the district, the other being located to the southeast of Bradford, near Tong) is located approximately 8 km to the northwest of Bradford city centre and 3.5km from Bingley.

The hamlet of Ryecroft has a population of approximately 40 residents. Statistics for the wider neighbourhood of Harden shows that there is a relatively high proportion of older residents living in the area (53% as opposed to 40% in the district as a whole). Indicators from a report compiled in 1993 show the area to be relatively affluent with a lower than average percentage of unemployed persons, households with no car and persons living in rented or Council accommodation.





This extract from the 1908 O.S. map demonstrates clearly how little the form of the settlement has altered over the last 100 years.

3. Origin and Historic Development

Summary of Historical Interest

The following summarise the factors that make Ryecroft conservation area of historical interest:

- The existing hamlet of Ryecroft developed in the 17th century, however documentary evidence shows that a small farming community existed on the site by the 13th century.*
- Lands around Bingley, including those at Ryecroft, were granted to the monks of Drax and Rievaulx Abbeys in the 12th and 13th centuries.*
- Little is known of the size and form of the hamlet prior to the 19th century, though it is likely that it was little more than a cluster of farmsteads and cottages.*
- The first O.S. map of the area, surveyed c.1848 shows a small number of buildings either side of Ryecroft, the lane running through the hamlet. The form of the settlement is remarkably similar to that of today, as there have been very few new buildings constructed in the last 150 years.*
- The form of the hamlet is remarkably well preserved and much of its character and historical interest is taken from the buildings within their unspoilt rural setting.*

Ryecroft, a small but established hamlet, is located on the higher northern slopes of Harden valley, at around 220m O.D. The settlement sits upon the millstone grit of the Upper Carboniferous period and was probably formed when clearances of higher valley ground occurred during the medieval period, with further development taking place in the post-medieval period.

There is evidence in the vicinity of the village of prehistoric habitation and exploitation of the area. Just under a kilometre to the north of Ryecroft, high on Harden Moor, are some Bronze-Age earthworks. These comprise of a scheduled ring barrow, in which several pieces of pottery were found and cairn-field that was probably associated with the earthworks. A 19th century source (Cudworth, 1876) suggests another earthwork, which was supposedly 'ante-Norman' existed near to 'Oxenhope Road' until the mid-19th century. This was apparently cut away during the construction of another road and nothing more is known of this structure or its purpose.

To the west of Ryecroft, at SE068380, is a scheduled ditched and banked rectilinear enclosure known as **Catstones Ring**. Though its age and intended use are unknown it has been hypothesised as being either an Iron Age promontory or Roman Marching Camp though no evidence has been found to substantiate these claims. Its location on a particularly exposed area of moorland could possibly indicate that whatever its use, it was unlikely to have ever formed a permanent settlement.

Romans were known to have been active in the region and their presence is indicated by the north-south Manchester to Ilkley Roman Road (Margary 720a), which partly follows the course of the modern Keighley route c. 100m to the west of Catstones Ring. This route may have been crossed by the conjectural northwest/southeast Bradford-Keighley Roman Road (Margary 721), which was thought to have passed immediately south of Ryecroft, prior to its crossing of Harden moor.

Ryecroft is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 indicating that it is likely to have evolved into a settlement after this time. One local historian (Butler, 1987) hypothesises that a

settlement at Ryecroft may have existed by this time but was likely to have been too small for individual mention and therefore may have been considered along with two other small hamlets in the locality, Harden and Harden Grange and may be mentioned collectively as *Hateltune*.

In the medieval period the large monastic houses of Rievaulx Abbey, Drax Priory and the Esholt and Kirklees Priors were granted land and other rights near Ryecroft. It has been suggested that Ryecroft formed part of the holdings of the monks of Rievaulx Abbey by 1230 (Bradbury quoting Speight, 1979) though the first mention of the name 'Ryecroft' was not until 1312, when it was written in a composition between the monks of Rievaulx and Drax, in which Drax Priory was granted tithes in Bingley and its vicinity including those of Ryecroft. In the late 12th and early 13th centuries the nuns of Esholt Priory and Kirklees Priory had the rights of common in Harden Wood.

An early 13th century grant allowed the monks of Rievaulx the right of dead wood (garsel) and minerals in Harden Wood, to use at their iron-smelting forges within the forest. A probable monastic iron-working site containing slag debris and medieval pottery has been recorded near Harden Hall 1.5km to the southeast of Ryecroft. The majority of woodland was probably destroyed for farming purposes or for charcoal burning in this period, but remnants appear to have survived into the 19th century in the form of narrow strips of woodland to the south and west of Harden village (shown on the O.S. map of 1852).

By the 14th century it is most likely that Ryecroft consisted of a small number of farm holdings, of enough consequence to warrant being drawn to the attention of the then king, King Edward I. Ryecroft is described in one of a number of minister's accounts prepared by John de Warrene, Earl of Surrey and Guardian of Scotland in 1330 as consisting of:

"Another cottage, in the possession of John Miller, is worth 2 shillings, along with another farm, with lands around it, held by William Midgley and called Ryecroft. Another farm in Ryecroft, with different fields attached to it is worth 20 shillings and is held by Laurence Midgley.

Interestingly the Midgley surname, represented twice in this extract, is seen in documents relating to Ryecroft all the way up to the 19th century.

Notwithstanding the documented evidence, there are no physical remains of any buildings dating to this period. The earliest surviving buildings, **Well House** and **Ivy House Farm**, probably date to the late 17th century, though rebuilding work was carried out to both in the late-18th century. The **malt house attached to Ryecroft Farm** may also date back to the 17th century, with some parts of the original malting cellars possibly even earlier.



The barn to the north of Well House is dated 1753. Now converted to a dwelling, this photograph was taken c.1970.

Jeffrey's Map of Yorkshire, one of the first scaled maps of the district, shows the village of Harden (annotated on the map as 'Harding') but not Ryecroft. The first Ordnance Survey map of 1852 records small groups of cottages and farmsteads to either side of the lane that terminates at Ryecroft Farm at the northern end of the hamlet.



The first O.S. map shows Ryecroft and though at a small scale it is clear enough to see that the size of the settlement is very similar to that of today.

Figures taken from Census records indicate a total number of 141 inhabitants living in 22 dwellings in 1841. Following this date some of these buildings may have been sub-divided into smaller dwellings to accommodate the growth in population as by 1861 the number of dwellings had increased to 30. By 1871 there were only 24 recorded homesteads and a smaller resident population of 114 people. Occupations in 1841 included a small number of farmers as by this time the majority of the inhabitants worked in the textile industry, a trend that continued until at least 1871 (Bradbury, 1979). The textile workers were mainly employed in worsted weaving, though some were cotton workers, worsted spinners and woollen weavers.

Occupations in 1861 also included a pipe maker, by the name of James Wood. A significant number of pipe wasters (the ruined or spoiled pipes) were found in a field near Ivy House farm in the 1970s and were probably related to this trade (Bradbury, 1979). Quarrymen, probably working the quarries on Harden Moor, also lived in Ryecroft by 1871.

Despite the small size of the hamlet, by the late 18th century it had its own **Primitive Methodist Chapel**, one of the earliest in the district. This was originally located in a building on the site of Ryecroft Farm. A more formal chapel (20 Ryecroft) was constructed on the same site in the late 18th century but this was replaced in 1852 by a new Primitive Methodist chapel on the south side of Ryecroft Road. A small piece of land adjoining the chapel was purchased in 1878 for burials. After the closure of the chapel, around 1945, it was used as a holiday centre for young people and various other youth purposes until around 1956. It then became a private residence and was subsequently extensively refurbished.

A Sale Plan from 1909 reveals that at this time the hamlet comprised of mainly farmsteads with associated buildings. **Ryecroft Farm**, which was the property offered for sale in this instance, consisted of a barn, a stable for three horses and a mistal for seven head of cattle (WYAS, Leeds). The adjacent malt house contained two growing floors with a cistern, drying room, barley room, two

malt chambers and sack room. By 1933 the malt house was in disuse (as annotated on the Ordnance Survey map from that year) and has since been converted into a dwelling.

Study of the series of Ordnance Survey maps running from the mid-19th century through to 1933 shows that there has been very little change to the form of the hamlet during this time and only a slight variation to the number of buildings. Well House Farm, which was built post-1963 (map evidence) is the only dwelling to have been constructed in the hamlet during the 20th century though during this time several farm buildings have been converted into houses.

Prior to the national re-survey of listed buildings in the early 1980s virtually every building and wall in the hamlet (some 14 individual items), with the exception of nos. 23 to 27, were Grade II listed structures. Following the survey this was reduced to a mere four items due to higher criteria for listing and in some cases due to inappropriate alterations to the windows of some of the cottages. Many of the items on the provisional list were listed for 'group value' which acknowledges the part that each wall and cottage plays in establishing the character of the larger whole. In recognition of the unique setting and well-preserved form of the hamlet, Ryecroft was designated as a Conservation Area. The report submitted at the time of the nation resurvey of the listed buildings did usefully provide a statement of significance and stated that:

"Ryecroft Hamlet is an interesting survival of a still relatively isolated rural group of dwellings ranging from between the 17th century and mid-19th century. Occupation of the site in the 14th century and 16th century is recorded in documents pertaining to Drax and Rievaulx Abbeys, nearby Harden Grange having been a grange of Rievaulx."

It still retains its rural character and special interest and for that reason is unique.

4. Topography and Setting

Summary of Topography and Setting

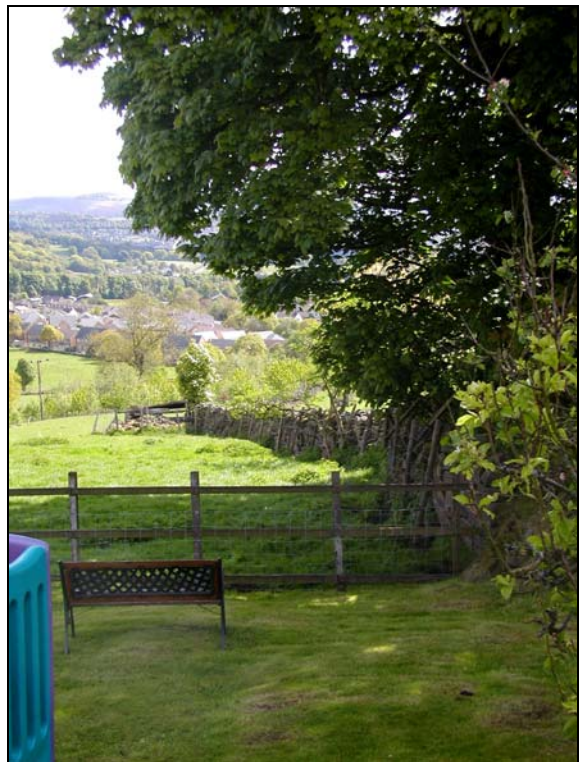
The unique location of Ryecroft conservation area contributes greatly to its form and character. The most significant features of this include:

- *The development of Ryecroft as a small farming community on a plateau of land on the slopes of Harden moor, above the village of Harden.*
- *To the north of the conservation area the green fields give way to rising moorland.*
- *East of the hamlet the open fields drop away steeply allowing good long distance views over the surrounding countryside and the rooftops of Harden.*
- *The fields to the south of Ryecroft Road slope steeply downwards to the valley bottom. The views across the Worth Valley towards Cullingworth and the railway viaduct are particularly panoramic and allow Ryecroft to be considered within the context of the wider locality.*
- *Views in and out of the conservation area, specifically from the east, north and south are important to the image of the place.*

The topography and setting of Ryecroft conservation area is an important defining characteristic of the area's sense of place and character. Just as important are the views within, into and out of the conservation area as these give the area a wider context and often reaffirm historical associations.

Ryecroft conservation area is located approximately 3.5km to the northwest of Bingley and about 1km to the west of the village of Harden, on the slopes of Harden Moor.

The topography of the surrounding landscape is dramatic and adds much to the character and interest of the conservation area. Ryecroft is set on a plateau of land high above the surrounding villages of Harden and Cullingworth, a location almost reminiscent of a Mediterranean hill village.



There are good views eastwards out of the conservation area across fields towards Harden.

The green **fields** to the east of the lane drop away steeply and allow good long distance views across the valley and towards Harden, its rooftops clearly visible along the valley bottom. Dry stone walls bound the fields between the two settlements, adding character and definition to the **rural landscape**. The linear form of the wall running alongside the ancient track that leads away from

Ryecroft eastwards towards Harden draws the eye down the valley and allows one to fully appreciate the dramatic setting of the conservation area.

This track, which is named '*Blind Lane*' on the 1909 Sale Plan, runs along the northern boundary of the field and is accessed via a wooden stile that crosses the dry stone wall between the lane and the field. Looking back at Ryecroft from the footpath there are good views to be had of the rear elevations of the buildings set along the eastern side of the lane.

To the west of the conservation area long distance views are effectively blocked the thick line of trees that run along the brow of the hill. Though not visible, the sounds of the working of the stone **quarry** beyond the hill are audible. There have been stone quarries on Harden Moor for at least three hundred years and Census figures from the 19th century show that some of the quarry workers lived in Ryecroft. As the green hillside to west rises upwards, the fields provide a measure of shelter and **seclusion** to the hamlet, the attractive but unremarkable backdrop further accentuating the dramatic and far reaching views to the east and south.

The southern boundary of the conservation area is delineated by the substantial stone wall alongside Ryecroft Road. The road is elevated above the field level on the opposite side, which drops away steeply down the valley sides affording good long

distance views towards Cullingworth and the Worth Valley. The valley bottom is green and substantial areas of woodland are visible. The green fields are defined by stone walls that enhance the traditional rural scene further. The regular arches of **Hewenden Viaduct** (Grade II listed) are visible as they cut across the valley bottom. The viaduct, which was built around 1880, formerly carried the Great Northern railway line from Bradford to Keighley and is a local landmark of great importance.

To the north of the hamlet the green fields give way to the purple haze of heather and **moorland**. Beyond Ryecroft Farm, the lane running through Ryecroft tapers away into a narrow (public) footpath that winds upwards towards the moor. The eastern side of the footpath is bound by a dry stone wall of some age, on the other side of which the land drops away into a deep clough divided by Midgram Beck.

Within the hamlet, the land slopes gently downwards from north to south, allowing interesting views into the conservation area from the footpath to the north. The form of the settlement is simple; most of the buildings are located to either side of the single street that bisects the hamlet. The lane doglegs around Ivy House Farm, which effectively blocks the views up the length of the lane.



The panoramic view southwards out of the conservation area towards Cullingworth and the railway viaduct is particularly important as it allows Ryecroft to be considered in the wider context of the surrounding settlements and reaffirms the value of the settlement's unique location.

5. Traditional Building Materials

Summary of Traditional Building Materials

Traditional building materials are utilised throughout Ryecroft conservation area and this contributes greatly to the image of the place. These are:

- *Local stone (for buildings and boundary walls)*
- *Stone slate (for roofs);*
- *Timber (for features such as windows, doors and some gutters);*
- *Stone setts and flags (in small areas to the front of some buildings).*

Local **stone** dominates the conservation area and is a fundamental part of its image. It has been used in the construction of all eras of building and for boundary walls and is a unifying element that gives the conservation area its coherent feel.



14 Ryecroft is an early to mid-19th century house constructed of local stone with a stone slate roof.

Different finishes relate to the period in which the buildings were constructed: 17th century structures tend to be built of roughly dressed rubble; 18th century and early 19th century buildings of hammer dressed stone; and later 19th century buildings of hammer dressed stone in conjunction with ashlar stone. Stone is also used as a means of decorating the later buildings of the area, in the form of carving and added details such as kneelers, quoins and finials.



The stone corniced door case of 3 Ryecroft is a good example of where stone has been used for the decoration of buildings.

The 1852 Ordnance Survey map shows several sandstone quarries in the vicinity of the settlement and it is most likely that the stone used to construct the buildings and walls in the village came from these. Most of the buildings in the conservation area are constructed from sandstone, which has a distinctive yellowy-brown hue and a tendency to darken to an almost black finish after prolonged exposure to polluted air.

The **pointing** of traditional stone buildings can have a dramatic impact on the appearance and character of the building. Traditionally stonework would have been pointed with a slightly lighter colour of mortar than the stone itself and recessed between the courses.

Much of the visual interest and character of the streetscape is derived from groups of buildings and their relationship to one another. The cleaning of stonework is generally inappropriate in such

instances as this can create a 'patchwork' effect that can detrimentally affect the unity of the group.

Locally quarried **stone slate** was used as the principal roofing material of the earlier buildings of the conservation area. This material gives the roofline its characteristic colour and distinctive profile, which complements the colour and texture of the stonework. This roofing material is becoming increasingly rare, as other forms of roofing material have become available and earlier buildings lost, and should therefore be treasured.

The lane running through Ryecroft is mainly unsurfaced, however some natural **stone** surfacing is evident at the very edge of the highway. Small sections of stone flag surfacing exist around the cottages alongside the 'green' and in front of numbers 3, 5, 7 and 13 Ryecroft.



A small area of stone paved path alongside 5 Ryecroft.

The colour and texture of this surface material complements the stone used for buildings and walls in the conservation area and helps to fuse its image. It adds quality to the area and as a historical street surface is of interest in its own right.

Timber is the traditional material used for the doors, windows and gutters on the older properties of the conservation area that date from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Traditional features such as these are the most susceptible to change and some have been replaced by modern alternatives, such as plastic or stained hardwood.

The glazing style of the windows is very much dependent on the age of the building and varies from the multi-paned sashes of the earlier structures to the single paned sashes of the later buildings. Unfortunately some of the traditional timber window frames and doors of the unlisted buildings in the conservation area have been replaced with less sympathetic and more modern versions. Untraditional materials and finishes generally look out of place on older buildings and are at odds with their simple character. Where possible it is better to repair rather than replace traditional features. If this is unavoidable, the use of sympathetic replacements is desirable.

The boundary treatment around the buildings varies. Some of the cottages front directly onto the lane and have a small garden area to the rear whilst others are set back a short distance behind stone **boundary walls**. Where boundary walls exist they play an important role in defining public and private space and can often be of historic interest in their own right.

6. Architectural and Historic Qualities of the Buildings

Summary of Architectural Interest

The architectural merit of Ryecroft conservation area can be judged by the quality of the buildings within its confines. The age and rarity of the structures, whether they are good examples of a particular building type or age, and whether they are examples of fine craftsmanship and building techniques are all factors in determining their significance. The following have been deemed to contribute to the area's architectural interest and justify its conservation area status:

- It contains four listed buildings that are deemed to be of special architectural and historic interest. These are Ivy House Farm, Well House, the barn to the north of Well House and Ryecroft Farm (including the malthouse and former chapel).*
- The conservation area contains some fine examples of the local vernacular building form, which is indicative of a past way of life and traditional building techniques in the village. This form of architecture is significant to the sense of place of the area, as it makes use of materials and techniques specific to the region. Good examples are becoming increasingly rare, due to alteration and redevelopment and within Ryecroft the best examples are listed.*
- Within the conservation area there is a small number of more stylised former chapels. The more formal style of architecture of the former Primitive Methodist chapels makes an interesting contrast to the local vernacular.*

The quality, siting and interest of the buildings combined with their green and leafy setting is a crucial element accounting for the designation of Ryecroft conservation area. The design, decoration and craftsmanship of the buildings are all factors in determining their significance, however buildings that are good examples of a particular age, building type, style or technique and those that are evocative of a given region are of particular merit. The finest examples of buildings of historic or architectural interest in the country are listed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and are subject to Listed Building controls, which aim to protect them from unsympathetic alteration. However, as conservation area designation is area based, it is the group value of buildings that is significant. Therefore, although not all of the buildings in Ryecroft Conservation Area are listed, most are of merit and contribute greatly to the feel of the place.

The architectural interest of Ryecroft conservation area is derived principally from the range of vernacular dwellings and farm buildings dating from between the 17th century and the mid-19th century. Vernacular architecture is indicative of a past way of life and a tangible record of traditional building techniques. It is also significant to the sense of place of the area, as it makes use of materials and techniques specific to the locality. Usually built without the benefit of an architect, somehow it is often taken to imply a fairly humble or practical origin, but this is not the case and several of the vernacular buildings in Ryecroft are listed due to their historic and architectural value. Good examples are becoming increasingly rare, due to alteration and redevelopment.

On approach to the conservation area along Ryecroft Road, very little can be seen of the

hamlet, which is mostly tucked away behind dry stone walls and hidden by the surrounding topography. From the Keighley side, the approach is downhill and the wall on the northside of the road is suddenly backed by a tall beech hedge. Behind this hedge is the well tended vegetable plot belonging to **Well House Farm**. Set back from the road are a group of farm buildings that includes an 18th century L-shaped stone building with quoined angles. A tumbled buttress supports its southwest corner.

To the rear of this L-shaped range is a barn with a semi-circular stone arch and rough stone jambs to its cart entry. Sadly, metal girders have replaced the original timber beams in the roof structure. Further east and set well back from the road is **Well House Farmhouse** (11 Ryecroft), a relatively modern dwelling built or at least faced with randomly coursed stone and with a stone slate roof. Map evidence shows that this building was constructed after 1963 and it is the latest dwelling to be built in the hamlet. Within the garden are a number of tall evergreen conifers, which add a suburban touch to this otherwise rural setting that is surrounded by open fields on all sides. The farmhouse faces south across Ryecroft Road, with impressive views over the valley towards Cullingworth.

Further east along Ryecroft Road, the conservation area boundary dips southwards in order to include the isolated former *Ebenezer Chapel* belonging to the Primitive Methodists (**Chapel House**). Though the chapel was built in 1852, the adjoining land used as the graveyard was not purchased until 1878. The chapel closed in 1945 and reopened in 1947 as a youth hostel. After 1951 it was used as a centre for the local Scout and Guide movement. In 1956 the chapel was sold again and subsequently converted into a dwelling. The burial ground to the east of the chapel still remains in use and forms part of the curtilage of the chapel.



Chapel House, the former Primitive Methodist chapel, built in 1852 but now converted into a dwelling.

The chapel itself is set back from the carriageway behind a low stone wall topped with rounded copingstones. It has a wide gable to the road and a three bay return. Up until recently the windows in this elevation were glazed with two pane sashes, but these have been replaced with single panes of glass. The building has undergone substantial alteration over the course of the years. Inserted into the original windows on the gable front are two modern style openings. The arched window heads have been blocked up with stonework, but the original outlines are still clearly visible.

The steep pitch of the gable end is topped with flat copingstones and the roof covered with stone slates. Attached to one side of the building is a small single storey cottage, with a stone covered roof and corniced chimneystack. The cottage now forms part of Chapel House, its north facing windows and door blocked up.



The graveyard to the east of Chapel House still forms part of the curtilage of the former chapel.

The small graveyard to the east is set behind a low wall and wrought iron railings. The graveyard itself contains a number of stone monuments, some of which are leaning or in poor condition. The names on the monuments are those of local families, including an ornately carved stone monument in memory of Jubal Barrett, the local quarry owner who lived at 14 Ryecroft in the late 19th century.

Further back up the road to the west is a red **K2 telephone box** which stands sentinel at the entrance to the lane up to the hamlet. This unmade lane, which runs off Ryecroft Road at right angles, is known only as 'Ryecroft'. Standing on the corner of these two roads is a pair of 19th century cottages, now converted into a single house (**3 Ryecroft**). The southern most cottage has a considerably higher roofline than the adjoining dwelling and both are roofed in local stone slates. The principal doorcase on the eastern elevation has stone surrounds with a cornice on bold brackets.



The red telephone box and the stone cottage that stand to either side of the lane mark the edge of the hamlet.

small gabled porch with a four-light double chamfered mullioned window and a small blocked fire-window to the right of it that formerly lit an inglenook fireplace in the housebody.

To the north of 3 Ryecroft is a short terrace of cottages leading off the lane at an oblique angle. The eastern most cottage, **5 Ryecroft**, has a stone trough built into its garden wall. An older 18th century gable fronted cottage, it has a coped gable and a distinctive Venetian window set in its apex that is crowned with a pear-shaped stone finial. It has garden wall with triangular ramped coping that rises alongside its stone flagged path that runs down to meet the lane. The north facing elevation is unremarkable, the stone surrounds of a number of former windows indicating that these have been since blocked up.

Attached to the rear of no. 5 are two fairly undistinguished cottages (**7** and **9 Ryecroft**). Opposite them is an earlier white-painted stone farmhouse and Grade II listed building, 13 **'Well House'**. The building, which dates from the late-17th century, has a rubble stone plinth that suggests even earlier origins as a timbered structure. The building is a good example of a local vernacular farmhouse, having a 2-cell plan with a rear outshut set behind its housebody to the east. This has a gable end chimneystack that replaced an earlier fire hood with a parlour to the west heated by an external gable chimneystack with shouldered offsets. This gable alone retains its stone coping and a shaped kneeler.

In the past the building has been converted into two cottages with separate doorways next to each other (both modern). The one to the east has a

This at one time had a transverse beam called a bressumer which has been removed but the scarf joints on the two spine-beams indicate its former presence. The parlour has stop-chamfered spine-beams and joists and it is heated by a fireplace with an unusual decorative lintel with three round-arched panels.



13 Ryecroft (Well House) is thought to be the oldest building in the hamlet, dating back to the late 17th century.

Originally the house appears to have been entered via a doorway in the east gable end, which is rendered and partially obscured by a glazed conservatory. However, the shadow of the door is still visible indicating its former location. A straight joint in the stonework indicates that the outshut is a slightly later addition to the farmhouse, for it also has a small two-light chamfered window in its east

face and a long sloping roof over its single storey rear. Internally there is a connecting doorway in the north wall between the house and the outshut that is of 17th century character. This has a square head and a broad chamfered surround and just possibly may be a residual aisle from an earlier timbered structure.

The farmhouse is an interesting structure and probably the oldest surviving dwelling in the hamlet. Its setting and traditional character is further enhanced by a small area of stone setts and flags to the front.



This interesting building appears to have had many uses in the past, such as a workshop, garage and possibly even a shop.

At the entrance to the short lane that leads to Well House is a small single-storey **stone building** with a chimneystack that indicates its former use as a workshop. It also has a large doorway with a dressed stone surround on its western elevation that suggests it may have been used as a cartshed at some point. On the south side is a shop window and doorway. Set in its east wall facing the lane is a red-painted ER letterbox. Though it is impossible to trace all its past uses, this stone structure most probably has an interesting history of former activities.

On the opposite side of the lane is a field bound by a dry stone wall with a distinctive hollow-way on its northern edge. On the 1909 sale map this is named 'Blind Lane' and follows on to form a public footpath that skirts the edge of the field, suggestive of centuries of usage. The field (which is also included in the conservation area) currently houses a rare breed of black Hebridean sheep and a local farmer is often seen training his sheep dog for trials.

The lane carries on northwards through the hamlet and then does a dogleg around **Ivy House Farm** (listed Grade II). The building is a late-17th century farmhouse largely rebuilt in the mid to late-19th century when its large single storey gabled porch with prominent kneelers was added on to the front. It has quoined angles and a three-bay frontage with a central arched recess set into the wall above the porch and its entrance. The building has a stone slate roof and gabled ashlar-faced chimneystacks. The chimneystacks have a fairly heavy cornice, above which the stack has been raised slightly. A number of tall and distinctive red clay chimney pots sit on top.



Ivy House Farm, a Grade II listed farmhouse, dates from the late 17th century.



A stone arched recess above the main entrance.



Projecting ledges on the west elevation indicate pigeons were once housed in the loft space.

At its rear is a small 17th century two-light chamfered mullioned window and a small round-headed window at the first floor that indicates the building's early origins. The western gable end is white-painted and has three tiers of projecting ledges set in its apex suggesting that it once

housed pigeons in its loft space. By the mid-19th century James Woods, a clay-pipe maker from Norwich lived here and is listed along with his wife and two sons in the 1851 census. His means of work was described as 'Tobacco Pipe Maker' and it is recorded that a number of spoilt pipes (known as wasters) have been found in the fields immediately adjacent to the farmhouse. It is possible that they were made in the small stone workshop a little further down the lane (see above).

Directly opposite Ivy House Farm and on the west side of the lane is a fine 18th century stone **barn** (listed Grade II) which has a quoined lintel above its former entrance to the cow mistal that is initialled and dated *IM 1743*. These initials stand for John Midgley who died in 1746 at the age of 82 (Speight, 1904). The Midgley family are mentioned in the Bingley Parish Registers as living in Ryecroft from 1588 onwards, and indeed the name was used as early as 1330 by the Lord of the Manor. The Midgley's were the most prominent family living in the hamlet and remained as such until the 19th century.



The barn (Grade II listed) has been converted into a dwelling in recent years. To the north are two cottages, 23 & 25 Ryecroft.

The barn has a segmental-arched cart entry with quoined angles and dressed voussoirs with doorways set within its re-entrant angle. The building is now in use as a dwelling, the relatively sensitive conversion retaining much of its agricultural character.

At the heart of the hamlet is a cluster of cottages closely set on either side of the lane and arranged round a small triangular green. **6, 8 and 10 Ryecroft** are a row of three mid-19th century terraced cottages that are set along the east side of the green. Above the door of the central cottage is an interesting arrangement of date stones, one plaque is inscribed *RM WM 1693* (presumably another member of the Midgley family) and the

other states *WA Rebuilt 1851* with some curious antique carved stone heads set in the wall on either side. Each of the cottages has a single-bay of windows with lintels and projecting sills and a doorway with monolithic jambs and ogee-arched recesses for boot scrapers set to one side. Set before the cottages is a stone flagged path that lies above the roofs of its stone-arched cellars which apparently project out beyond the terrace and partly into the 'green'.



6-10 Ryecroft. Above the doorway to no. 8 are two stone carved heads to either side of date panels.

At the southern end of the path is a vertically set large slab of stone that acts as a wind-brake. The north side of the 'green' is closed off by **12 and 14 Ryecroft**. No. 12 was originally a row of three terraced cottages but has been converted into a single dwelling. Built in the first half of the 19th century, it features door cases with distinctive large carved console brackets supporting a cornice, the windows having a continuous sillband.



12 and 14 Ryecroft close off the northern side of the 'green'.

No. 12 is partly built over its neighbour, **no. 14 (Spring House)** which is attached to the western gable. Spring House appears to be an older 18th century house that was re-fenestrated with three bays of tall sash windows with tie-stone jambs. Its roof was raised in the mid-19th century when it was the substantial home of the local quarry owner, Jubal Barrett, who is identified in the 1881 census as living here. Its wide west gable end was extended and raised when it was completely rebuilt in 1989 using snecked masonry and a tall arched stair window was traditionally glazed with Y-tracery glazing bars. The large gabled stone porch was built on to its front around this time and crowned by a reused ecclesiastical finial brought over from Whitby.

The rear of the house is linked to an adjacent small, detached 1½ storey stone building, which is now used as a garage, by an added lean-to with a mono-pitched roof and a linking wall in which is set a gateway.



The outbuilding to the north of 14 Ryecroft has prominent white garage doors that overpower its simple character.

The 'green' is closed off on the east side by a pair of 19th century cottages on the opposite side of the unmade lane. **23 and 25 Ryecroft** are built from local stone and have tie-stone jambs and added storm porches to their fronts. A Victorian VR post box has been set into the garden wall of no. 25 as a decorative feature.

Moving northwards beyond the cluster of cottages around the 'green', the settlement gives way to open fields to west side of the lane. The remaining cottages are set some distance apart on the east side of the lane. **No. 18 (Edge House)**, a former pair of cottages now converted to one, has an unusual cutback corner gable on its west lane side with coping and a chimney stack on the gable end. Its doorways have the typical corniced hoods seen

elsewhere in the hamlet indicating it was probably built in the 19th century. Its former sashed windows have been re-fenestrated in recent years by the insertion of a stone mullion into the centre of each window. This has created two-light mullioned windows, resulting in a bulky appearance that is not an entirely appropriate alteration. Attached to the rear of Edge House are two built-on stables with lean-to roofs.



18 Ryecroft (Edge House) has an interesting chamfered elevation to the lane.

To the north of Edge House is a group of buildings principally made up of the former **chapel, malthouse** and **Ryecroft Farm**. On approach to the buildings from the south, the gable fronted former chapel building is the most prominent, being elevated slightly above the level of the lane. Attached to the east elevation at a lower level is the former malthouse and integral to the rear is Ryecroft Farm.

The former **malthouse**, now a dwelling, has a segmental-arched cart-entry in its south face and a scattered fenestration of four-paned windows with flush lintels and sills that contrast with the formal symmetry of its three-bay neighbour to the east. The malting cellars are recorded as dating from the 17th century and it is possible that some partly burned sections may be of an even earlier date (Provisional List of Buildings, 1976). The same source states that the old stone barn (or a building on the site) attached to the farmhouse to the west was used as one of the earliest Primitive Methodist Chapels in the district. This in turn was replaced around 1800 by the large gable-fronted former chapel (**20 Ryecroft**, now a house). This was built in a Classical architectural style with continuous stone bands across its front and has a full height recessed arch set in the centre of the gable in which are set simple Venetian windows at three floor levels.

20 Ryecroft is the former Primitive Methodist chapel, built in the late 18th century. Attached to its eastern side is the malthouse. The cellars of the malthouse are thought to date back to Tudor times.

Both buildings, which are Grade II listed, have been converted into dwellings.



Set before the front of the building is a south facing long garden bounded by a dry stone wall, backed by a tall hedge. The garden has a coffin-shaped end to the lane, which splits to either side of the garden, to the right to the malt house and to the left to the fields and quarry. The complete group of farmhouse, barn, chapel and malthouse form a single Grade II listing.



Ryecroft Farm barn, attached to the north of the former chapel, has also been converted into a dwelling and is included in the Grade II listing of the chapel and malthouse.

The lane continues northwards and is set at a lower level than the adjacent field on the west. Close to the boundary of the field are two unusual vertically set stone flags that appear to be markers for some unknown purpose.

As the lane passes the side of the former chapel it is possible to examine closely the stonework on this elevation. It has two blocked doorways that feature dressed stonework with margin tooling and shaped gutter brackets, typical of late Georgian architecture in this region. The lane then continues past the former barn that has a full height square headed recessed cart-entry on its west side that still retains its old timber double barn doors. Though it has been converted to a dwelling, it has been sensitively done and its agricultural character successfully maintained. In its stone slate roof are a number of discretely positioned roof-lights.

Beyond the barn the hamlet ceases and the lane tapers into a public footpath that continues to the north beyond the conservation area boundary. The path follows the stone walled field boundaries for some way. The topography and restricted access to this area may have helped prevent development within its fields thus retaining Ryecroft's remoteness and hamlet-like character.

7. Open Spaces and Natural Elements

Summary of Open Spaces and Natural Elements

The number, size, shape and treatment of open spaces within the conservation area are an integral part of its form and interest and contribute greatly to the variation in character throughout:

- *Many of the fields immediately around the hamlet are included within the conservation area. These fields, which are also protected by Green Belt designation, are important to the setting and character of the hamlet.*
- *The field to the east of the settlement drops away steeply allowing good views across to Harden. A footpath runs along the field boundary and from here there are interesting vistas back towards the buildings in the hamlet.*
- *Most of the cottages and farmhouses in the conservation area have very little private garden space. They line the lane closely, creating a sense of seclusion and intimacy.*
- *The 'green' is an area of interesting open space that, despite its small size adds much to the character and setting of the cottages surrounding it.*

The interrelationship of the built form with space in the conservation area is a fundamental component of the character of the place. The size, shape and treatment of these spaces are all factors in determining whether, for example, the area takes on a domestic, rural, urban, industrial or civic aspect.

The conservation area includes not only the buildings within the hamlet but a considerable number of fields to either side of the lane. These fields are incredibly important to the character and setting of the conservation area. They not only provide a green and natural backdrop that complements the local stone of the buildings but they also serve to remind the resident and visitor of Ryecroft's agricultural links and historical associations.



The open fields and woodland to the northeast of the conservation area give way to moorland on the higher ground.

Ryecroft retains an unspoilt and open setting, that is principally unadulterated by modern development. Whilst there were probably once numerous small rural hamlets like Ryecroft, over time most have been swallowed up by expanding neighbouring settlements or surrounded by modern housing and industrial developments. The topography and remoteness of Ryecroft goes some way to explain why this hamlet remains little touched by 20th century development and its green and open setting is an integral part of its character and heritage.

The fields that make up the western portion of the conservation area are open and mainly devoid of trees. From the lane running through the hamlet, these fields are only visible as glimpses between the gaps in the building line. Only when one reaches the northern extreme of the conservation area is it possible to look back across these fields.



The view eastwards over the open fields is dramatic. The dry stone walls draw the eye down the hillside towards the rooftops of Harden village below.

On the eastern side of the lane a dry stone wall runs along the field boundary, allowing panoramic views across the field and down towards Harden. Standing in the fields are a number of fine mature trees that add to the character and feel of the place, further compounding its natural charm.

Within the hamlet the buildings have been built in an organic fashion, typical of 17th and 18th century built form. The cottages are built closely to one another, often at oblique angles, overlooking the windows and gable ends of their neighbours at short distances. There is little in the way of private garden space around most of the cottages. Some front straight onto the lane or are set back a short distance behind low walls.

The 'green' is an interesting open space and despite its diminutive size adds much to the character and setting of the cottages immediately around it. The 'green', which is actually a small triangular-shaped piece of grassy land, is bordered by stone paths and scattered stones. It is entirely open, allowing the cottages around it to be viewed in an uninterrupted fashion in a manner that complements the rural-village feel of the place.



The small triangular piece of grass to the front of 6-14 Ryecroft forms a small 'village green' at the heart of the conservation area.

Isolated from the settlement is **Chapel House**, the former Primitive Methodist chapel that is located on the south side of Ryecroft Road. To the east of the chapel building (now a dwelling) is a small graveyard in which there are a number of stone standing memorials surrounded by a stone wall and iron railings.



The small graveyard alongside Chapel House is historically important as it contains memorials to several of Ryecroft's past residents.

The graveyard is overgrown and the iron gate at the entrance is rusted and detached from its hinges, giving the area a slightly uncared for feel. The memorials themselves are mainly in good condition, though a few are leaving. Despite its diminutive size, the graveyard is an important open space in the conservation area. It is historically linked to the conservation area and some of the graves within it are substantial memorials to past inhabitants of Ryecroft.

8. Permeability and Streetscape

Summary of Permeability and Streetscape

The form, width and orientation of streets and paths determine the permeability and ease of movement through conservation areas. The small size of the hamlet means there are limited ways of moving across the conservation area:

- *Ryecroft Road and 'Ryecroft', the lane that runs north-south through the settlement, offer the only means of vehicular access to the hamlet.*
- *The path that crosses the fields from Ryecroft towards Harden is a route of some antiquity and is indicated on the first O.S. map of the area in 1852.*

It is not known when the lane running through the hamlet of Ryecroft first came into use, though it is likely to be a route of some antiquity, predating the built form of the hamlet.



The view past 14 Ryecroft to Ivy House Farm.

The lane, which is only known as 'Ryecroft' leads off Ryecroft Road at right angles and runs northwards through the settlement. Unsurfaced and narrow, the lane winds around the buildings creating interesting vistas along its length. North of Ryecroft Farm the lane narrows into public footpath as it follows the dry stone walls of the fields.



Ryecroft, the unsurfaced lane through the conservation area, as it doglegs around Ivy House Farm.

A small offshoot leads obliquely off the lane to the west as far as Well House. The south side of the offshoot (unnamed) is bound by a narrow stone setted path and the north facing elevations of **5 to 9 Ryecroft**. On the opposite side of the lane this offshoot appears to continue eastwards as a footpath across the field towards the village of Harden. On the 1909 map this path is named *Blind Lane* and it is a well-established public footpath.

The views and vistas along the lane running through the hamlet and those along Ryecroft Road are very different. **Ryecroft Road**, which falls into the conservation area boundary for only a short distance, has the distinctive feel of a country lane. Bounded on one side by a hedge and grass verge

and the other by a field wall, it has a distinctly rural feel to it that complements the character of the conservation area.



Ryecroft Road winds down the hillside towards Harden. On the left is the entrance to the hamlet and in the distance on the right is Chapel House.

The tarmacadam that surfaces Ryecroft Road stops at the entrance to Ryecroft. Though the carriageway of the lane running through the hamlet is unsurfaced (for the main part), there is a limited amount of stone surfacing on footpaths alongside the lane and in front of the cottages. Natural stone is a historic surfacing material which is becoming increasingly rare. Its colour and distinctive texture enhance the streetscape and even in such limited quantity it adds to the character and quality of the conservation area.


9. Conclusion: Character Specification and Guidance



To safeguard the special interest of an area, the Conservation Area designation aims to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the place. Many features interact to form the unique qualities of Ryecroft Conservation Area, such as:

- the style, form, orientation, massing, height and scale of buildings;
- the way the built structure interfaces with the spaces created;
- the width and orientation of streets;
- the colour and texture of the materials used;
- the topography and setting of the area;
- the roofscape and streetscape;
- how the area interacts with the surrounding environment;
- natural elements; and
- local detailing.

However, less physical features, such as the current uses of buildings and spaces, their condition and intangible ingredients such as sounds and smells, are all factors in creating the identity of Ryecroft conservation area. This section highlights the elements that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area, summarising the information contained in the body of this document, and puts forwards policies that will provide the framework of the protection of these features. Owners and occupiers of sites within the conservation area, prospective developers and the Council should use this to determine what constitutes appropriate change and as a basis for the future management of the area. It should be read in conjunction with the policies set out in Bradford Unitary Development Plan (see *Appendix 3*).

Characteristics Common to the Entire Conservation Area

Common Characteristics	Guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topography and setting – Ryecroft developed as a small farming community on a plateau of land at the foot of the slopes of Harden moor and above the village of Harden. To the south and east are open fields that drop away steeply and allow panoramic views over the surrounding countryside. The moorland above is ever visible and contributes to the green and rural setting of the conservation area. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is essential that the significant views and vistas into, out of and through the conservation area are respected in any development within the conservation area or affecting its setting. Applicants will be requested to provide evidence that this has been considered as part of the evaluation of the site (see Policy BH10 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP)). 2. New development that will impact the setting of the conservation area, as being either immediately within the vicinity or clearly visible from within its confines, should echo the principles of good design set out for new build and not over dominate its form or buildings and respect important areas of green space and woodland (see Policy BH7 of the UDP).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual connections towards Harden to the east and Cullingworth to the south are important visual links that allow the hamlet to be viewed in context with surrounding settlements. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. There should be a presumption in favour of retaining original materials, such as stone slate. Where the replacement of features is necessary and the traditional has survived this should be done on a like-for-like basis. Where features have been replaced by modern alternatives, the reinstatement of traditional style features constructed in traditional materials will be encouraged (see Policy BH7 of the UDP). 4. Stone cleaning should be resisted where it would interfere with the uniformity of the colour of the stone, particularly in regard to terraced properties. Advice should be sought from the conservation team before cleaning any of the stone buildings of the conservation area (See Policy BH7 of the UDP). 5. Repair and maintenance work to stone buildings within the conservation area (e.g. repointing, repairs to the roof, etc.) should be carried out in an appropriate manner. The conservation team can advise (see Policy BH7 of the UDP). 6. Any new development should make use of quality materials that reflect the interest of the area and sit harmoniously with the existing fabric and respect the uniformity in the colour and texture of the built form of the conservation area (see Policy BH7 of the UDP).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional building materials – The buildings within the conservation area are almost entirely constructed of local stone, which serves to unify the built form of settlement and create a harmonious whole. Stone slate is the principal roofing material and natural stone has been used for boundary and field walls. Timber was traditionally used for window frames, doors and guttering.  <p><i>Natural stone has been used for roofs as well as buildings and boundary walls, unifying the buildings and complementing the natural setting of the conservation area.</i></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setted and flagged carriageways and footpaths. There is very little natural stone surfacing in the conservation area. Small areas of stone setts and flags exist in front of Well House and in the form of narrow paths in front of 5 and 9-14 Ryecroft. Even in such limited quantities, natural surfacing enhances the streetscape.  <p><i>Stone flags alongside the garden of 5 Ryecroft.</i></p>	<p>7. There should be a presumption in favour of preserving the small areas of setted and flagged surfaces of the conservation area (see Policy BH11 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundary walls and Field Walls – the natural stone walls in the conservation area are an important characteristic that adds interest to the streetscape and define spaces.  <p><i>Traditional stone walls enhance the rural character of the conservation area and are historic features in their own right.</i></p>	<p>8. Existing boundary walls should be retained and restored. Boundary walls constructed of stone that matches the existing should be incorporated into the design of any new development within the conservation area (see Policy BH9 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeability – the main routes across the area are Ryecroft Road and the lane through the settlement. 	<p>9. The road layout of the conservation area is important to its character and its historic interest. Therefore the width direction and orientation of roads and paths through the area should be preserved (see Policy BH7 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p>

<p>Architecture and building details</p>   	<p>The buildings within Ryecroft conservation area have mainly been constructed in the local vernacular style. The majority of the buildings are 1½ or two storey farmhouses and cottages, constructed and roofed in local stone. Typical features include, stone corniced chimney stacks, stone door and window surrounds accommodating recessed timber windows, timber doors and squared timber gutters. Some have additional details such as prominent kneelers, dentil courses and quoins. Despite being individually designed they have a pleasing uniformity that adds much to the character and image of the place.</p> <p>There is a small number of buildings in the settlement that were built as Primitive Methodist chapels, but have since been converted to dwellings. 20 Ryecroft was once used as a chapel, as was Chapel House on Ryecroft Road. These buildings have been constructed in a more stylised architectural form, befitting their perceived higher status in the community. Stone built, they have greater detailing in the form of stringcourses, sill bands and more ornate Venetian and arch-headed windows.</p> <p>Within the conservation area boundary there are several Grade II listed buildings. The listing descriptions are given in <i>Appendix 2</i>.</p>	<p>10. There should be a presumption in favour of preserving all buildings within the conservation area that have been identified as contributing to the interest of the place. In addition, in any work carried out to the buildings, every effort should be made to ensure that the features that form an integral part of their design, including materials, proportions, windows, doors, stone details and timber details, or interesting features that testify to the evolution of the structures and are good quality in their own right, are preserved (see Policy BH9 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p> <p>11. The reinstatement of traditional features will be actively encouraged, but should be based on a historical understanding of the structure and where possible evidence of the original detail (see Policy BH8 of the UDP).</p> <p>12. New development within the conservation area should reflect the predominant building form of the area in which it is situated. This relates to height, scale and siting. It should not over dominate the existing fabric (see Policy BH7 of the Unitary Development Plan).</p>
<p>Open spaces</p>  	<p>Many of the fields surrounding Ryecroft have been included within the conservation area boundary in recognition of the important contribution that these make to the setting and character of the place.</p> <p>The cottages have little in the way of private garden space but the 'green' is an interesting space that adds much to the setting and appreciation of the houses around it. The graveyard is a historically important, if somewhat untended space.</p>	<p>13. There should be a presumption against building in open areas that have been identified as contributing the character of the conservation area (see Policy BH10 of the UDP).</p> <p>14. The identity of the spaces, where they have been identified as significant should be respected. This means that the treatment of the spaces should be preserved, in that green spaces should remain green and hard surfaced spaces should remain hard surfaced.</p>

10. Proposals

10.1 Conservation Area Boundary

In preparing this Conservation Area Assessment document, the boundary of the conservation area was assessed by the Conservation Team in order to determine whether it covered a cohesive area of architectural or historic interest and follows property boundaries and physical features. All boundary suggestions received during consultation were visited by the Conservation Team in order to determine whether it would be appropriate to amend the conservation area boundary.

This process has resulted in no changes to the original conservation area boundary, which was designated in 1977, as this boundary is deemed to cover a cohesive area of special architectural and historic interest.

10.2 Enhancement and Preservation Proposals

Naturally there are some elements of the conservation area that are not conducive to the predominant character of the area and do not contribute to an understanding of its historical development. These may detract from its character and appearance or may simply not contribute to it in a positive way. The following are proposals as to how the quality and identity of the place could be strengthened by the active co-operation of the Council, developers and the local community. They are listed in order of priority (most important first) as identified by the local community:

- **Guidance Notes on the Repair and Maintenance of Properties.** Some of the traditional stone buildings of the area have unsympathetic replacement features and have undergone well intentioned but on occasions inappropriate repair. The production of a guidance note on the repair and maintenance

of stone buildings, particularly vernacular style properties, of the region would increase awareness of fitting repair techniques.

- **Guidance for New Development:** There is limited opportunity for new development within the village as the whole area is washed over with Green Belt protection. This will protect the open setting around Ryecroft from inappropriate development.

However, there may be some scope for conversion of existing agricultural buildings. Any such proposals must respect the form and character of the buildings. Materials, scale and setting must make a positive contribution to the settlement.

Development within the curtilage of existing dwellings such as garages, conservatories, extensions, fencing etc should be considered carefully not only in isolation but also for its multiple effect. The cumulative effect of these additions can be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- **Retention of Original Features.** Some of the buildings in Ryecroft are listed and therefore permission is required to alter the buildings. In some of the unlisted buildings traditional features such as timber windows and doors have been replaced with unsympathetic modern alternatives. The resulting appearance is at odds with the character and age of the buildings and consequently this has harmed the appearance and character of the conservation area on a wider scale. Other features such as natural roofing materials, chimneystacks and stone boundary walls also contribute much to the interest of the conservation area. In order to protect these

features the Council may consider implementing an Article 4 (2) direction. This would remove some of the permitted development rights available to householders, meaning that planning permission would be required to replace important features and ensuring that sympathetic replacements are used.

- **Environmental Enhancement.** The care of the natural elements of the conservation area, such as trees, as well as general maintenance of areas such as the graveyard is important in maintaining the special character and appearance of the place.

The small areas of natural stone surfacing make a valuable contribution to the image of the conservation area. The stone flags and setts are generally located immediately in front of properties and therefore may be in private ownership. Some flags are broken or loose and it is important that these areas be maintained and protected; as historic surfacing materials they are of interest in their own right.

Glossary of Architectural Terms

Ashlar: Dressed stonework of any type, where the blocks have squared sides, carefully squared corners, and are laid in regular courses, usually with fine joints. The faces of the stones, called ashlar, are generally smooth and polished, but can be tooled or have a decorative treatment.

Bracket: Any projection from the face of a wall whose purpose is to support a structure or object.

Bressumer: The main beam in a timber construction, usually carved. Now generally taken to mean a large horizontal beam, usually timber, spanning a wide opening.

Broached: A tooling on the face of masonry which both levels off the surface of the stone, and provides a decorative effect, most often found on doors. Broaching consists of parallel grooves which run virtually the full length of the stone.

Buttress: A mass of masonry built against or projecting from a wall either to stabilise, from the lateral thrust of an arch roof or vault, or to enable the wall to be thinner.

Chamfer: Narrow face created when stone is cut at an angle, usually at 45 degrees.

Cornice: In Classic Architecture the top, projecting, horizontal division of the beam between columns.

Gable: The vertical part of the end wall of a building contained within the roof slope, usually triangular but can be any "roof" shape.

Finial: Topmost-featured ornament on a building, freestanding above spire gable etc.

Hammer-dressed: Stonework, hammered to a projecting rock-faced finish, sometimes also known as bull-faced.

Jamb: The vertical sides to a window or door opening.

Kneeler: The sloping tabling which caps a gable and is upstanding above the plane of the roof. The skew end is the larger, usually square bottom stone of a skew and projects over the wallhead, and is usually moulded or carved.

Light: The framed part of a window opening. In a medieval timber framed building, a window would be formed by several lights separated by mullions.

Mullion: Upright member dividing the lights of a window.

Quoin: Stones larger or better shaped, than those of which a wall is composed, used to form the corners of walls or door and window openings. Laid in an arrangement of headers and stretchers on alternate courses, this gives strength to the build, and allows the facework of the walling to tooth into the corner.

Sash: A form of window in which two sashes, separated by parting beads, slides within a frame, the case, counterbalanced by weights hung on ropes, the sash cords. The glazing slides in two parallel frames within the case, the upper sliding outward of the lower. The projection of the top sash beyond the bottom sash traps a certain amount of shadow which gives the sash and case window a very satisfying 3-D effect.

Setts: Square blocks, usually of granite but sometimes of hardwood for silence, forming a street surface. Setts were set on edge, close together, and they tapered slightly towards the bottom. Sides were never quite smooth, and laying them to achieve a tight joint, is a very skilful business.

Snecked: Form of rubble construction composed of squared stones in which the coursing is varied by small filler stones or snecks.

Venetian window: A tripartite arrangement where the central opening is arched and taller than the two flanking openings which are flat topped.

Vernacular: An indigenous building constructed of locally available materials, to local detail, usually without the benefit of an architect. Somehow it is now taken to imply a fairly humble or practical origin, but this is not the case.

Vista: A distant view through or along an avenue or opening.

Vousoirs: The radiating wedge-shaped blocks forming the arch.

Further Reading

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City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (2005): 'Bradford Unitary Development Plan'.

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Contacts

This document is publicly accessible at the Shipley Planning Office, Bingley Library and on the Council's website at:

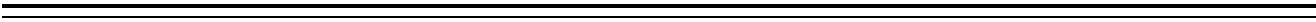
www.bradford.gov.uk/council/planning/heritage/cons_assess.asp

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Appendix 1:

Map of Ryecroft Conservation Area



Appendix 2:

List Descriptions of the Listed Buildings in Ryecroft Conservation Area

Appendix 2: List Descriptions of the Listed Buildings in Ryecroft Conservation Area

Ryecroft
No 13 (formerly listed as Well House Farmhouse)
5.11.76 5/215
II

Farmhouse. Late C17 with late C18 rebuilding. Stone slate roof. 2 storeys, 3 1st floor windows, with rear outshut. Ground floor, from left to right: 2-light flat-faced mullion window; C18 gabled porch with pointed side lights; 4-light, now 2-light, chamfered mullion window in splayed reveal window; all under continuous drip mould. 1st floor: single-light window; 2 former 3-light flat-faced mullion windows each with one light blocked. Kneelers, coping. End stacks, that to left external with offsets. Small segmental-arched gateway in rubble wall continuing elevation to left. Rear: quoins; 2-light chamfered mullion windows some altered to single lights.

Ryecroft
Barn immediately to north of No 13 (formerly listed as north of Well House Farmhouse)
5.11.76 5/216
GV II

Barn. Dated "I M 1743". Coursed stone, stone slate roof. 2 storeys, bays. Central segmental cart-entry partly blocked with small door and window inserted. On left, doorway with plain stone surround and large lintel, dated. To right, 2 single-light windows. Rear: doorway with quoined jambs and large stone lintel to ground floor and 1st floor door with plain stone surround.

Ryecroft

Ivy House Farmhouse
5.11.76 5/217
GV II

Farmhouse. Late C17, rebuilt late C18. Coursed dressed stone, stone slate roof. 2 storeys, 3-bay symmetrical facade. Quoins. Central, gabled, C18 porch with shaped kneelers and coping. Round-headed niche above porch. C20 shallow box windows with glazing bars inserted in 2- and 3-light flat-faced mullion windows. Coping to right. Corniced end stacks. Rear: a 2-light chamfered mullion window to ground floor and a small round-headed window on 1st floor.

Ryecroft
No 20 (Ryecroft Farmhouse)
(formerly listed with attached Barn and Malthouse)
5.11.76 5/218
II

Probably chapel, now house. Late C18. Coursed, dressed stone, stone slate roof. 2 storeys, 3 bays. Gable front: doorway with plain stone surround. Central, shallow, arched recess containing 3-light flat-faced mullion windows to ground and 1st floors and Venetian window to 2nd floor. Single-light windows to flanking bays. Continuous 1st floor cill band and eaves band. Left and right returns. Left return: 2 storeys.

Both have quoins and doorways and 1- and 2-light windows with plain stone surrounds. One of the earliest Primitive Methodist Chapels in the district was located in a building at this site.

Appendix 3:

Legislation and Council Policies Relating to Conservation Areas

This is a brief summary of the legislation and policies relating to conservation areas at the time of the issue of this report. These will be subject to periodic review.

Legislation to Protect the Character and Appearance of Conservation Areas

Conservation area designation intrinsically brings with it a certain number of additional controls to protect the existing character of the area:

- Removal of certain permitted development rights including various types of cladding; the insertion of dormer windows into roof slopes; the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway; the installation of radio masts, antennae or radio equipment. Applications for planning permission for these alterations must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- Control over the demolition of buildings: applications for consent must be made to the Local Planning Authority.
- The Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts, not only those which relate directly to historic buildings. It should also be a consideration for proposals that affect the setting of the conservation area.
- The local authority has powers (under Article 4 of the General Development Order) to control development which would normally be allowed without the need for permission, but which could lead to the deterioration of the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Before works can be carried out to trees of more than 7.5cm in diameter across the trunk (measured 1.5m from the ground) which are standing in a conservation area, 6 weeks' written notice must be given to the Local Planning Authority. No works should be carried out during this 6-week period unless consent has been granted by the Local Planning Authority.

(For further details of these controls see PPG15)

Listed buildings, which usually form an integral part of a conservation area, are afforded more stringent protection. The Local Planning Authority must give listed building consent before any work that would affect the character or interest of the

building can be carried out, be they internal or external alterations. Tight control restricts the nature of any alteration to which consent will be given.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Policies Concerning Conservation Areas

Structure, local and unitary development plans are the main vehicle that local authorities have to establish policies that can be utilised to protect the historic environment. The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has recently adopted its **Unitary Development Plan** (2005) which forms the basis of decision making on planning applications in the district. The UDP has the following policies relating to conservation areas:

Policy BH7: Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas
Development within or which would affect the setting of conservation areas will be expected to be of the highest standards of design and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Policy BH8: Shop fronts in conservation areas
Within conservation areas proposals affecting existing shop fronts or proposals for new shop fronts must demonstrate a high standard of design and be sympathetic in scale, style and detail to the original building. Proposed external shutters sun blinds and canopies must be sympathetic in style, colour and materials to the buildings to which they are attached and their architectural style. Blinds will not be permitted on buildings without a shop front or fascia.

Policy BH9: Demolition within a conservation area
Within conservation areas, permission will not be granted for the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the area unless the development would result in benefits to the community that would justify the demolition.

Policy BH10: Open spaces within or adjacent to conservation areas
Planning permission for the development of important open areas of land or garden within or adjacent to a conservation area will not be granted if the land:

- 1) *Makes a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.*
- 2) *Provides an attractive setting for the buildings within it.*

-
-
- 3) *Is important to the historical form and layout of the settlement.*
 - 4) *Affords the opportunity for vistas in or out of the conservation area which are historically or visually significant.*
 - 5) *Contains natural water features, tree and hedgerows which the development proposals propose to destroy.*

Policy BH11: Space about buildings

Proposals maintaining traditional townscape within designated conservation areas will be favoured and consideration given to relaxing approved policies and standards if by doing so features of particular townscape merit under threat in the conservation area can be retained.

New developments seeking to integrate into an existing built form will be encouraged by relaxing approved policies and standards.

Policy BH12: Conservation area environment

Changes to the public realm within conservation areas must demonstrate that:

- 1) *The design, materials and layout of traffic management and parking areas minimise the adverse visual impact which may arise from such development.*
- 2) *New and replacement street furniture is of an appropriate design and material that preserve or enhance the character of the surrounding street scene.*
- 3) *Proposals for the introduction of public art will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. In certain conservation areas the introduction of public art and street furniture will be encouraged.*

Policy BH13: Advertisements in conservation areas

Within conservation areas the council will require the design of advertisements to be of a high standard, therefore:

- 1) *Consent will be granted only where the proposal is in scale and character with the building on which it is located and with surrounding buildings. Where possible, all new shop fronts, fascias, signs and letters should be made of natural / sympathetic materials.*
- 2) *Within conservation areas internally illuminated box signs will not be permitted. Sensitively designed fascias or signs incorporating individually illuminated mounted letters on a suitable background may be acceptable in town centres where the scale, colour, design and intensity of illumination*

would not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area.

- 3) *Where unacceptable advertisements already exist in conservation areas, the council will where appropriate take discontinuance action to secure their removal.*

In addition to these there are separate policies relating to the **listed buildings** within the confines of the conservation areas:

Policy BH1: Change of Use of Listed Buildings

Where possible the original use of a building should be retained or continued. Change of use will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that the original use is no longer viable or appropriate and without an alternative use the building will be seriously at risk.

The Council will not grant planning permission for an alternative use unless it can be shown that:

- 1) *The alternative use is compatible with and will preserve the character of the building and its setting.*
- 2) *No other reasonable alternative exists which would safeguard the character of the building and its setting.*

Policy BH2: Demolition of a Listed Building

The demolition of a listed building will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Before permission is granted for the demolition of a listed building, applicants will have to submit convincing evidence to show that:

- 1) *Every possible effort has been made to repair and restore the building and to continue the present or past use;*
- 2) *It has been impossible to find a suitable viable alternative use for the buildings; and*
- 3) *That there is clear evidence that redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from the building's demolition.*

Policy BH3: Archaeology Recording of Listed Buildings

Where alterations or demolition of a listed building would result in the loss of features of special interest, a programme of recording agreed with the Local Planning Authority and where appropriate, archaeological investigation will be required before the commencement of development.

Policy BH4: Conversion and Alteration of Listed Buildings

The alteration, extension or substantial demolition of listed buildings will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- 1) Would not have any adverse effect upon the special architectural or historic interest of the building or its setting;*
- 2) Is appropriate in terms of design, scale, detailing and materials;*
- 3) Would minimise the loss of historic fabric of the building.*

Policy BH4A: Setting of Listed Buildings

Proposals for development will not be permitted if they would harm the setting of a listed building.

Policy BH5: Shop Front Policy For Listed Buildings

Where possible existing traditional shopfronts should be retained and repaired. Proposals for the alteration of existing shop fronts or installation of new shop fronts on a listed building should be a high standard of design and respect the character and appearance of the listed building. External roller shutters will not be granted permission on a listed building shop front unless there is clear evidence of an original shutter housing and the shutter is traditionally detailed and in timber and/or metal of a traditional section.

Policy BH6: Display of Advertisements on Listed Buildings

Consent for the display of advertisements on listed buildings or which would affect the setting of a listed building will be permitted only where:

- 1) The advertisement is appropriate in terms of its scale, design and materials and would not detract from the character or appearance of the buildings.*
- 2) The advert is not an internally illuminated box.*
- 3) If the proposed advertisement is to be externally illuminated, the design of the method of illumination would not detract from the character or appearance of the building.*
- 4) Plastic fascia signs whether or not illuminated will not be granted consent on a listed building.*