

# Cowling Conservation Area Appraisal August 2016

Introduction	2
1.0 Character	5
2.0 Landscape and Open space	13
3.0 Views	20
4.0 Traffic and Movement	26
5.0 Recommendations for Further Work	27
Sources	28

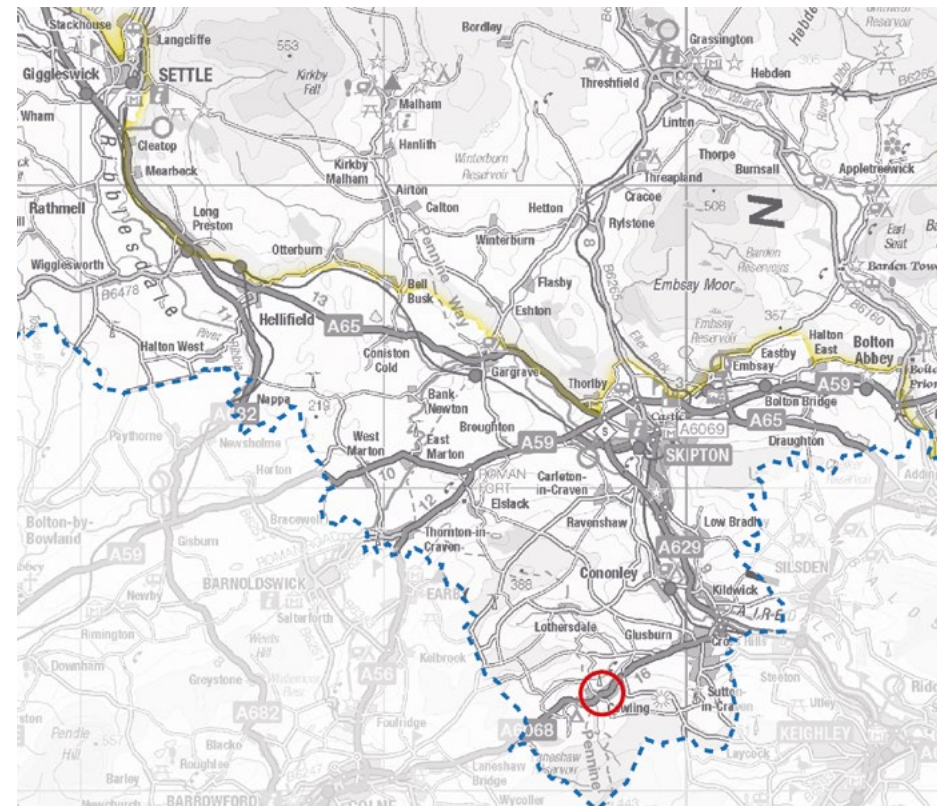


# Introduction

## How to use this document

This Conservation Area Appraisal should be read in conjunction with the document *Introduction to Craven Conservation Area Appraisals*, which can be downloaded from the Craven District Council website. This document contains an explanation of the purpose and methodology of this Appraisal, together with a general introduction to the history, landscape, buildings and settlement forms of Craven.

When viewed as a pdf document, this Appraisal includes an interactive map with a series of layers that can be activated using the menu panel that appears on the left-hand side of the report. Refer to the *Introduction* document for advice about how to reveal this menu panel. These layers, which can be turned off and on in any combination, illustrate aspects of the Appraisal that are described in the text. These elements are: the conservation area boundary, Victorian Ordnance Survey maps, listed buildings, key buildings, significant views, open space analysis and woodland. At any time the map can be found by clicking the MAP button on the bottom right corner of every page.



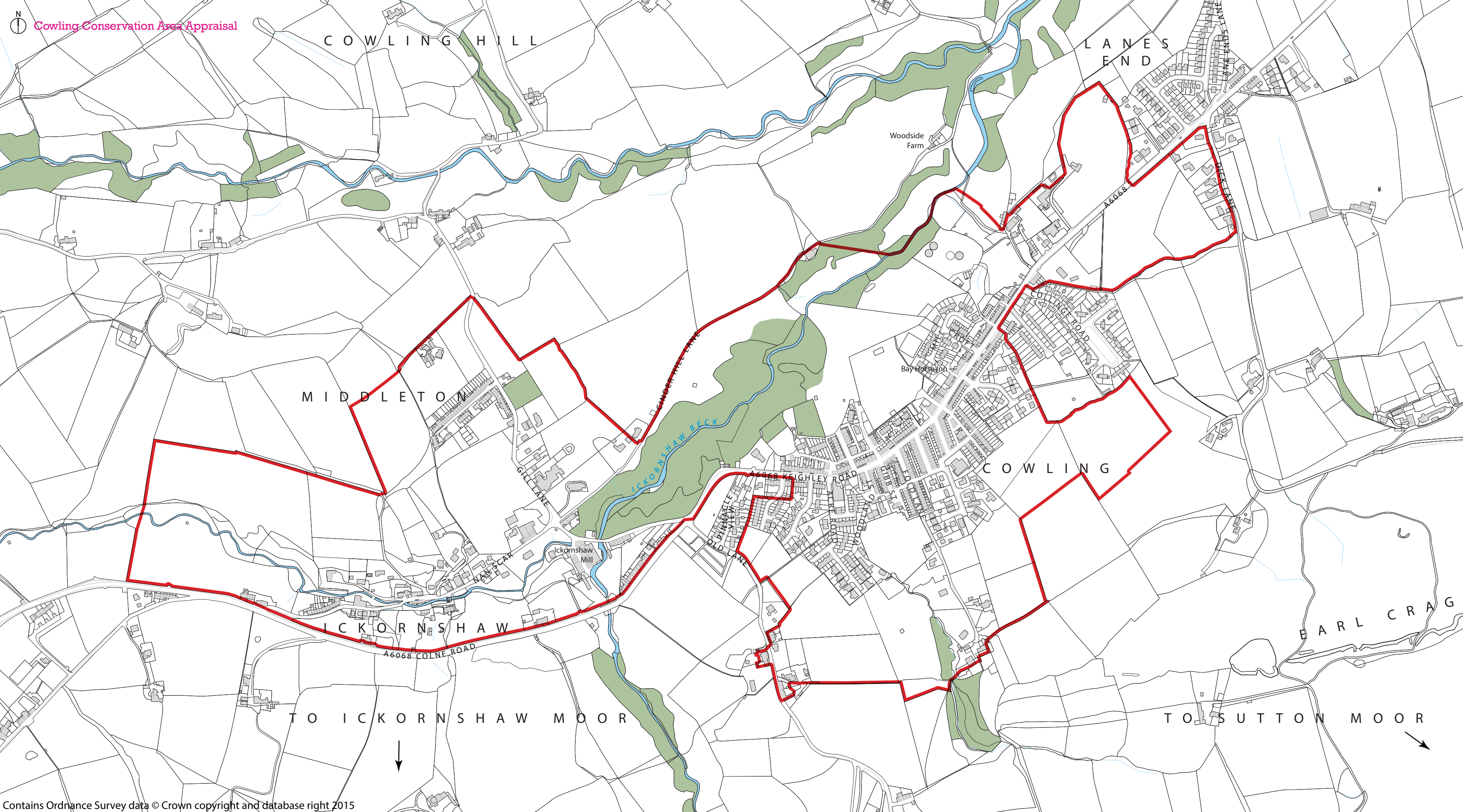
Location of Cowling

### **Overview of the conservation area**

The Conservation Area comprises three settlements, Ickornshaw, Middleton and Cowling. The settlements lie in Landscape Area 31, the Settled Industrial Valleys Landscape (1), noted for the dominance of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century textile industry. The key landscape feature is the Ickornshaw Beck Valley with high ground to the north (Cowling Hill) and south (Ickornshaw and Sutton Moors).

**Designation date:** 1989

**Extension date:** No extensions known



C O W L I N G H I L L

L A N E S  
E N D

Woodside  
Farm

M I D D L E T O N

I C K O R N S H A W B E C K

Bay Horseston

C O W L I N G

I C K O R N S H A W

E A R L C R A G

T O I C K O R N S H A W M O O R

T O S U T T O N M O O R

## 1.0 Character

### 1.1 Historic and contemporary character

Whilst Ickornshaw represents a fairly typical West Riding valley settlement with an early water-powered textile mill, Cowling itself is a roadside settlement of semi-urban character associated principally with a mid to late-nineteenth century steam-powered textile industry. Middleton is a settlement of terraced textile workers' houses. Unfortunately the only one of six mills to survive into the late twenty-first century is Ickornshaw Mill minus its chimney (The location of others, including Acre Mill, Croft Mill and Royd Mill, can be seen on the 1894 Ordnance Survey map layer). The terraced streets of Cowling consequently lack historic context. Although much character remains, inappropriate window and door replacements have contributed to an erosion of character. Early twenty-first-century development of mill sites has however, attempted to capture some of the former character.

- Originally Cowling (Collinghe in Domesday) comprised four separate settlements: Ickornshaw; Middleton; Gill; and Cowling Hill. Ickornshaw is the oldest extant

settlement with the grade II-listed Town End Farm dating to the mid to late seventeenth century.

- By the early nineteenth century there were two water-powered textile mills in the immediate area. Ickornshaw Mill late eighteenth century later converted to steam, produced candle-wick and by 1846 had become a cotton mill. Gill Bottom Mill was producing textiles by the early nineteenth century. Limestone quarrying for building stone and lime also featured. There is a large quarry by Ickornshaw Beck known today as Scar Close. The 1853 Ordnance Survey map shows the presence of several lime kilns along the Beck.
- Ickornshaw expanded with the construction of further mills and terraced cottages in the nineteenth century (eg. 2-30 Nan Scar and Middleton). The spiritual needs of this expanded community were met by the grade II-listed Holy Trinity Church (1845) and the unlisted Wesleyan Chapel (1875).

- Cowling is a later settlement that was not established until the Keighley - Colne Turnpike opened in 1815. It was known originally as New Road Side and consisted of the Bay Horse Inn and cottages flanking the turnpike (examples are 118-148 Keighley road). This early settlement form is almost complete.
- Cowling expanded in the mid to late nineteenth century with the construction of four steam-powered textile (woollen) mills, Royd, Acre, Carr and Croft. These mills were associated with the construction of textile workers' terracing at right angles to the main road (eg. Fold Lane, Gibb's Street, Woodland Street). This terraced housing is one of the settlements key characteristics. Each terrace has a back yard and outside privy/shed to the rear which survive in several streets (eg. Walton Street).
- Apart from a small post-war development around Collinge Road, the majority of recent development occurred in the late-twentieth and early twenty first century. These developments had a substantial impact on the character of Cowling resulting in the loss of key buildings including the four mills (Acre and Carr Mills demolished 2007) and a Methodist chapel. The former mill sites contain contemporary housing, multiple occupancy and semi-detached suburban and town house style.

## 1.2 Spatial and urban character

Because of its size, the Conservation Area is divided into five separate areas to help understand the character of the two settlements and their landscape setting. The key feature of both settlements is the surrounding landscape, recognised through the generous inclusion of open countryside within the Conservation Area boundary.

### ***Character area 1: Ickornshaw.***

- Ickornshaw is a scattered linear settlement in the narrow valley of the Ickornshaw Beck with generous space between dwellings and common mature trees.
- Holy Trinity Church (1845 and grade II-listed) commands high ground above the Beck and is a significant landmark viewed very widely from the surrounding landscape. The non-designated Wesleyan Chapel of three storeys now converted to multiple occupancy residential is a commanding landmark on the valley floor seen in particular from Keighley Road on the approach to Cowling.
- Rows of textile workers' cottages survive along the road and Ickornshaw Mill survives in part, although its chimney has been removed. The Mill pond and associated sluices and leats, also survive.
- Ickornshaw Beck within its narrow mature wooded steep-sided valley is a key characteristic and the Pennine Way long distance footpath runs north south through the area.
- Several farm buildings survive but only Town End Farm still operates. The others including Lingfield Farm and Bank Farm have long been converted to residential. The landscape to the north and west is enclosed farmland with the majority of boundaries present in 1853.

### ***Character area 2: Terraced housing in Cowling***

Original roadside settlement largely intact with terraced cottages characterised by the inclusion of a small walled front garden. Two properties, now converted, also incorporated an arched entrance to rear yards (112 and 148 Keighley Road). The Bay Horse Inn dates to the early nineteenth century.

- Majority of settlement comprises semi-urban character terraced housing with back yards, access lane and rear privy/sheds. Original English Pennine sandstone paving survives in large part. And in some areas, cobbles and gritstone setts also survive.
- Generally the houses are in good condition but many of the original doors and windows have been replaced. There is variation in the style of terraces, e.g. Fold Lane terraces on the west side have small front gardens with, where they survive, cast iron railings on stone walls.

The end terrace at the junction of Fold Lane and Queen Street has a projecting ground floor bay window. Number 15 and 17 Fold Lane are slightly larger and retain ornate window and door mouldings.

- The loss of the four mills has resulted in a significant adverse impact on historic legibility and much of the infrastructure, chapels, shops and commercial premises (North End Garage) have also gone.
- The relationship between the settlement and the immediate and wider landscape is however still strong with good views along streets to open countryside. Historic 'edge of settlement' legibility is poor although the uniformity of original terracing is highly legible from elevated viewpoints.



### ***Character area 3: Modern housing***

- The majority of this late twentieth and early twenty-first-century housing has been built on the sites of four of the principal mills, Royds Mill, Croft Mill, Carr Mill and Acre Mill.
- Styles range from two-storey semi-detached single occupancy to three and four-storey multiple occupancy dwellings. Some, such as 1 and 3 Acre Road are a large town house style.
- Dwellings either have integral garages or hard standing parking to the front.
- There are no enclosed gardens.
- Mill Croft development (circa 1993) is a modest grouping of link terraces and semi-detached dwellings. Some walled front gardens such as 1-8 Mill Croft which also have small rear gardens.

- Royd Court replaced Royd Mill demolished in 2002 and comprises of two storey semi-detached properties, a three storey terrace and properties fronting the main road which are two storey at the front and three storey at the rear.

### ***Character area 4: Ickornshaw Beck Valley***

- The most significant area of open countryside within the Conservation Area is the Ickornshaw Beck Valley and its slopes.
- The northern edge of the Conservation Area is coterminous with a public footpath on Cinder Hill Lane from which there are strong panoramic views of Cowling and Sutton Moor beyond.

- To the south of the Beck are areas of enclosed pasture identified on the 1853 Ordnance Survey map and associated with the historic Woodhouse and Lane End farms. A public footpath runs through from Lane End Road past the recreation ground to Keighley Road from which are excellent views of historic 'edge of settlement'.
- Although the southern edge of the historic core of Cowling has been compromised in places by late-twentieth century residential development, the landscape helps define the relationship between the historic core and its rural hinterland. The survival of Fold Lane and the legibility of the former Fold Farm are important aspects of this landscape.

***Character Area 5: Open landscape to the south.***

- The land rises up from Keighley Road to Earls Crag with Lund's Tower providing excellent views across the valley to the north. The open landscape immediately south of the settlement consists of enclosed pasture formerly associated principally with Fold Farm on Fold Lane. The majority of surviving enclosure boundaries are shown on the 1853 Ordnance Survey Map.

### 1.3 Materials and palette

- Walls: squared gritstone ashlar and rubble for buildings and field boundaries around Cowling and Ickornshaw and limestone rubble only in Ickornshaw.
- Window reveals: tooled gritstone.
- Gateposts: tooled gritstone and occasionally decorated gritstone monoliths.
- Roofing: Westmorland slate and Yordale Sandstone slates.
- Windows: casement and sash generally painted white. Significant alterations and replacements of timber sashes with modern casement and upvc.
- Pavements: asphalt and some English Pennine Sandstone flags with gritstone kerbs.
- Surfaces: asphalt and where surviving, gritstone setts.



*Gritstone rubble*



*Gritstone setts*

#### **1.4 Key buildings**

- Ickornshaw Mill - Unlisted
- Holy Trinity Church - Grade II-listed
- Wesleyan Chapel - Unlisted

#### **1.5 Relationship with other settlements**

Cowling is one of a number of former textile villages along tributaries of the River Aire including to the east, Sutton-in-Craven and Glusburn. Cowling is almost exclusively a commuting community.

## 2.0 Landscape and Open space

### 2.1 Overview

The Cowling Conservation Area is large, taking in areas of substantial open countryside and two distinct settlements, Cowling and Ickornshaw. Cowling itself is a nineteenth-century roadside rural industrial village centred around four textile mills straddling a late-eighteenth century turnpike road. Ickornshaw, the older settlement is situated largely in the Ickornshaw Beck valley and more rural in identity. The Pennine Way long distance footpath runs through Ickornshaw.

The key feature of both settlements is the surrounding landscape, recognised through the generous inclusion of open countryside within the Conservation Area Boundary.

To the south is Earl Crag and the landmark of Lund's Tower, and to the north are the heights above the Ickornshaw Beck Valley and Cowling Hill. The landscape is open with hillside farms and a mix of hedges and drystone walls around rectilinear enclosures of moderate to large size.

## 2.2 Methodology

The following categories have been used to assess the contribution of open space to the Conservation Area and are shown as a layer on the map at the front of this Appraisal:

**Purple:** Open space that makes a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

**Yellow:** Open space that makes some contribution to character and appearance of the Conservation Area

**Brown:** Open space that makes no or negligible contribution to character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Areas of open space and individual fields that need particular comment or have been identified as making a less than strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area have been numbered for reference in the descriptions below. Refer to the 'open space analysis' layer on the Appraisal map that can be accessed from the button on the bottom right corner of the page.

## 2.3 Open space assessment

### Character Area 1: Ickornshaw

#### *Land to the north of Ickornshaw Beck*

*Predominantly makes a **strong contribution** to character and appearance*

- The settlement is principally on the valley floor with large and traditional farms of which only one survives as a working farm – the grade II-listed Town End Farm.
  - Gardens, mature trees and twentieth-century dwellings inhibit views to the north from the valley floor. The landscape is visible from Nan Scar (**MF5**).
  - Views from Gill Lane (**MF6**) south across this landscape are dramatic with the grade II-listed Holy Trinity Church tower rising above Cowling Community Primary School and Ickornshaw Moor and foothills in the middle and far distance.
- The large enclosed fields above the valley make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of Ickornshaw through retaining the historic relationship between settlement and the rural hinterland. The visibility of Town End Farm reinforces this.
  - The fields also have an important role in separating Ickornshaw from the terraces of Middleton, a separate settlement within the Conservation Area and retaining its individual identity.

### ***Land between Ickornshaw Beck and the A6068***

*Predominantly makes a **strong contribution** to character and appearance*

- The landscape is steeply sloped down from the A6068 to Ickornshaw Beck and consists of small enclosures, the boundaries of which pre-date the late eighteenth-century Addingham and Colne End Turnpike Road (A6068).
- There are significant gateway views (**HD2**) down into Ickornshaw from the A6068
- This landscape is significant in conserving the legibility of the historic settlement of Ickornshaw.



### 2.3 Character Area 4: Ickornshaw Beck Valley

#### ***Land to the south of Cinder Hill Lane between Ickornshaw Beck and Cowling***

*Predominantly makes a **strong contribution** to character and appearance*

- This area of enclosed pasture, drystone walls and mature woodland incorporates a disused eighteenth-century limestone quarry (Ned Scars) and a former sewage works sloping down to the valley floor. It forms an important buffer between the historic core of Cowling and the Ickornshaw Beck.
- The majority of enclosure boundaries are shown on the 1851 Ordnance Survey map and almost certainly pre-date the late-eighteenth century turnpike road.
- Many of the fields are associated with the present working Woodside Farm.
- Views from public footpaths (**HD3**) and the A6068 (**HF2**) both into and outwith the Conservation Area are significant. Views from Cinder Hill Lane, a well-used public footpath into and across this area highlight the northern limits of the historic core and its relationship with the rural landscape. This provides dramatic dynamic views of the rural industrial settlement of Cowling across to Earl Crag, Sutton and Ickornshaw Moors.
- The absence of development outwith the historic core is a significant contributor to conserving the legibility of the historic core. F3 lies within an existing built environment which includes Woodside Farm and plays a less significant role in contributing to character and significance.
- Views from within the settlement and from the A6068 in particular take in this area which includes hillside farms and medium to large hedged and drystone walled enclosures. The slopes create a significant backdrop to Cowling.

## 2.4 Character Area 5: South of Cowling

### ***Land between Lane Ends and Cowling***

*Predominantly makes a **strong contribution** to character and appearance*

- Fields between the two settlements play an important role in conserving the legibility of Cowling's historic core and inhibiting the merging of the two settlements. A merger of the two would result in a significant impact on legibility.
- There are important dynamic views of Cowling and the landscape beyond from Dick Lane (**MD1**).

### ***Land to the south of the historic core***

*Predominantly makes a **strong contribution** to character and appearance*

- The landscape consists of large pasture enclosures that slope up to Earl Crag. A number of farms nestle in the shadow of the Crag.
- The southern edge of the historic core of Cowling has been compromised in places by late-twentieth century residential development but early-twenty first-century development of the former Croft and Acre Mills has kept to the original footprint.
- The landscape continues to define the relationship between the historic core and its rural hinterland. The survival of Fold lane and the legibility of the former Fold Farm are important aspects of this landscape.

- Land between the former Croft Mill and Fold Lane (F5) makes a **contribution** the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by continuing to define the Croft Mill site and Fold Lane. Development along the Lane to the east and the late-twentieth century nature of housing on the Mill site lessen its overall contribution.
- There are significant views of this landscape from a number of locations including Earl Crag and Fold Lane (**HF3**)
- Land between the former mill sites and Old Lane has been compromised through late twentieth and early-twenty first century development to the extent that these fields make **no contribution** to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### ***Land to the north of Colne Road***

*Predominantly makes a **strong contribution** to character and appearance*

Land north of the road has never been built on and has always been enclosed farmland. The open aspect approaching Cowling from the west is significant with strong dynamic views (**HD2**) to the north, south and east.

## 3.0 Views

Refer to the map at the front of this Appraisal.

Cowling Conservation Area is dominated by strong landscape views both outwith and into the two main settlements. Within Cowling, there are many glimpsed views up terraced streets to open countryside and through spaces between buildings. These views connect the semi-urban industrial terraces very strongly to the landscape. The demolition of all four mills in Cowling has transformed the skyline of the settlement principally through the loss of the tall chimneys.

### 3.1 Highly significant fixed views (HF)

**HF1:** Landscape view from Holy Trinity Church

- Dramatic view from seating across the Ickornshaw Beck valley framed by mature trees in the foreground.
- View of Lunds Tower.

**HF2:** Elevated view of the Ickornshaw Beck Valley from Keighley Road

- Panoramic view to the north taking in Holy Trinity Church, Cinder Lane and Cowling Hill beyond.
- Contextual view of landscape and the visual dominance of Holy Trinity Church.
- Glimpsed views of Ickornshaw nesting on valley floor.

**HF3:** Elevated view from Fold Farm

- Dramatic view from public footpath of southern 'edge of settlement' of Cowling with Fold Farm in the foreground and Glusburn Moor and the Dales National Park beyond.
- Contextual view of settlement within its landscape setting.



HF3

**HF4:** Views from Keighley Road eastern gateway

- Important gateway views to the north and south of Keighley Road that help define the eastern 'edge of settlement' of the historic core.
- Views to the south include Earl Crag and Lund Tower.
- Views to the north include Cowling Hill.

**3.2 Highly significant dynamic views (HD)**

**HD1:** Views from Cinder Hill Lane

- Views from Cinder Hill Lane to the south highlight the northern limits of the historic core and its relationship with the rural landscape.
- Elevated views into the Ickornshaw Beck Valley.
- Cinder Hill Lane forms part of the Conservation Area boundary.

**HD2:** Gateway views from the west

- Sweeping landscape views to the east and north with distant views of Skipton and Bradley Moors beyond.
- Dynamic views down to the valley floor of the historic core of Ickornshaw with pasture enclosures between road and settlement and strong view of Holy Trinity Church and its setting as well as the height and mass of the non-designated Wesleyan Chapel.
- Clear panoramic views across to Cowling Hill.

**HD3:** Views of historic landscape setting from public footpath

- Strong views of the southern 'edge of settlement' of Cowling historic core.
- Enclosure boundaries associated with the historic Woodside Farm shown on 1851 Ordnance Survey map.
- Views of enclosed pasture, drystone walls and mature woodland incorporates a disused eighteenth-century limestone quarry (Ned Scars) and a former sewage works sloping down to the valley floor.

**HD4:** Views of Ickornshaw from Wink Holme to Wink Holme Bridge

- Outstanding dynamic views of Ickornshaw Beck Valley with Holy Trinity church, the mill and millworkers' terracing in their landscape setting.
- Historic west gateway into the settlement.



HD4

### **3.3 Moderately significant fixed views (MF)**

#### **MF1:** View from Lydgate Terrace

- Well preserved back gardens with drystone walls enclosing, forming historic 'edge of settlement' feature with pasture beyond.
- Glimpsed view of historic Woodside Farm.
- Mature trees screening former sewage works.
- Glimpses of landscape beyond.

#### **MF2:** Glimpsed view off Gill Lane

- Typical glimpsed view of distant landscapes

#### **MF3:** View from public footpath to Keighley Road

- Important contextual view from open countryside across the eastern gateway to Cowling.

#### **MF4:** View from War Memorial

- Panoramic views across the playing field to Cowling Hill, the Ickornshaw Beck Valley and landscape beyond.

#### **MF5:** View of Ickornshaw from Nan Scar

- View of roofscape and landscape setting of the historic core of Ickornshaw passing terraced housing on Nan Scar forming the historic western gateway into the settlement.
- View of landmark Wesleyan Chapel.
- Strong view of settlement nestling in valley floor.
- Views of landscape setting to the north.



**MF6:** 360 degree view from Gill Lane

- Views of Holy Trinity Church tower with Cowling Community Primary School in the foreground.
- Views across fields to Town End Farm and Croft House with Ickornshaw Moor and foothills beyond. Mature trees behind the farm reveal the location of the valley settlement.
- Views back to Middleton terraces.
- Important view revealing the spatial distinction between Ickornshaw and Middleton.

**MF7:** View to Woodhead Farm and Cowling Hill from Keighley Road

- Important 'edge of settlement' view with pasture enclosures associated with the historic Woodhead farm.
- Mature trees enclosing the former sewage works with the wooded Ickornshaw Beck Valley and Cowling Hill beyond.

**MF8:** View from Fold Lane

- View across to the former Croft Mill site developed in the early-twenty first century with converted former Wheel House and Coach House. Extent of historic settlement still retained.

**3.4 Moderately significant dynamic views (MD)**

**MD1:** Views from Dick Lane

- Views from Dick Lane moving from Earl Crag down to Lane Ends take in a variety of open landscape along the southern and eastern edges of Cowling settlement. This helps to define the historic limits of settlement despite the 1950s development around Collinge Road.

## 4.0 Traffic and Movement

### 4.1 Pedestrian

There are a number of well-used public footpaths giving access to open country from all three settlements, notably, Fold Lane, the Pennine Way long distance foot path and Cinder Hill Lane. In Cowling, pavements are in good condition.

### 4.2 Vehicle

Keighley Road is a very busy through route with significant HGV traffic that has an impact on the character of Cowling settlement. There is only one pedestrian controlled crossing by Gibb Street. Traffic through Ickornshaw and Middleton is very light and rural in character.

### 4.3 Parking

Parking is a mixture of on-street and off-street but predominantly on-street. There are some designated parking bays on Keighley Road but the majority of parking is on the residential streets usually on both sides in front of properties. A number of notices were seen in windows urging people not to park in front suggesting parking is a problem in Cowling.

On-street parking also occurs in Middleton and Ickornshaw but seems less of a problem.

## 5.0 Recommendations for Further Work

- Further study of opportunities and detractors.
- Assessment of streetscape.
- Article 4 direction and guidance on external appearance of dwellings in the Conservation Area.
- Traffic calming on Keighley Road and further crossing opportunities.

## Sources

1. Chris Blandford Associates, 2011, North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project.  
<http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/25431/Landscape-character-assessment>

# Alan Baxter

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