



Skircoat Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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1 Why designate a conservation area?

Our heritage and our sense of place is closely linked to the communities where we live and work. Without controls over change and development the character of these places may alter unacceptably over the years. Conservation areas were introduced to protect this sense of place. They form the basis for policies to preserve or enhance areas and provide a basic control over demolition of unlisted buildings and over some changes to existing properties, thus safeguarding the historic and architectural character and quality of places and neighbourhoods.

Designation of a conservation area does not preclude development, but it requires a recognition of the area's historical value when planning and making decisions about development. It is a way of flagging up the special qualities of an area and the fact that care and thought are needed to ensure that any work carried out preserves existing buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area, wherever possible, and that new development or alterations also preserve or enhance the area's character. This is in accordance with Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which defines a conservation area as an *'area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*.

It is important to remember that it is not just buildings that create an area's special interest, but also the spaces between buildings and the relationship of buildings to each other. In addition, development proposals outside a Conservation Area can also affect the setting of a conservation area. They can impact substantially on its character or appearance and will, therefore, need to be considered carefully, particularly if they are large in scale or high.

Any new development should respect the scale, layout and materials of the existing architecture as well as open spaces, trees and views and it is important that buildings of character and quality, in their own right or which are of townscape value, are retained in Conservation Areas.

2 What controls apply?

Within conservation areas there is normally a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Planning controls, both from central government and through local plan policies, are more extensive than normal, permitted development rights are more limited and demolition and works to trees are controlled.

Specific details of additional controls in Conservation Areas are set out at the end of this document in **Appendix II**.

Policies relating to Conservation Areas are currently included in Calderdale's adopted Unitary Development Plan and draft replacement Unitary Development Plan. Those in the draft replacement plan are set out in **Appendix III**. However it should be noted that the planning system has changed and in the longer term the Unitary Development Plan will be replaced by the Local Development Framework for Calderdale, linked to the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber.

3 Why are controls necessary ?

Even small scale changes such as dormer windows, converting part of a garden for car parking and minor extensions can affect the character and integrity of an area if done without careful design and good quality materials. At the least, the carrying out of works of poor quality or bad design will damage the appearance of what may be unspoilt buildings or areas. At the worst, it could set a precedent for poor quality work by other owners, setting in progress a downgrading in the appearance of the area. Trees are also an important element of conservation areas. They can have both visual and historic value as well as contributing to the character of the local environment and should be retained wherever possible.

It is important to remember that conservation area status is designed to preserve something special and to protect local distinctiveness and character.

4 What is a Conservation Area Character Appraisal?

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal defines and records what makes the area around Skircoat Green an "area of special architectural or historic interest". This is important in providing a sound basis for local plan policies and development control decisions, so ensuring that these decisions can be defended if there is an appeal against a refusal of planning permission. The appraisal will also guide the formulation of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the appearance of the area. The clear definition of what makes this area special, and therefore of what it is important to retain, also helps to reduce uncertainty for those considering investment or development.



Cottages near the green, Skircoat Green

5 Location of the Skircoat Green Conservation Area

The Skircoat Green Conservation Area is defined by development adjacent to the following key roads:

Skircoat Green Road

Dudwell Lane

Godfrey Road

St Alban's Road

The boundary of the proposed conservation area is shown on the accompanying plan. Where the proposed boundary follows a wall or the edge of a pavement, these shall be taken to be included in the conservation area.

6 Historical background

Every conservation area has a distinct character, history, built environment and townscape quality based on its landscape and development history.

Historically the proposed conservation area lies in the township of Skircoat. Skircoat is not included in the Domesday Book, but subsequently formed part of the manor of Wakefield. There is little evidence of human habitation and settlement before the Norman Conquest, however an inquisition of 1276 found that William, sixth earl Warenne, lord of the manor of Wakefield, had appropriated all Skircoat into his forest between 1216 and 1240.

Various spellings of Skircoat can be found in the 1270's including Sckyrecote in 1274, Shirekotes in 1276, Skycote in 1277 and Scircotes in 1286 - which are given in *The Place Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire* as meaning "the bright cottage(s)".

Geographical remoteness, poor topsoil and rough inhospitable terrain, with fast flowing streams in narrow valleys, ensured that Halifax remained a relatively insignificant rural backwater in the period up to 1500 and at the time of his death in 1505 the manor of Skircoat was held by John Savile.

These geographical and environmental features, which could not support extensive arable farming, stimulated the development of the textile industry as a supplementary economic activity to subsistence farming. In the later medieval period Halifax rose to become a dominant commercial and urban centre for its locality and rose to regional prominence in the early modern period as a manufacturing and marketing centre for wool and cloth.

Reference is made to Kingcross in 1573 as Kingcrosse. It is probably named from the family of King, well known in the Skircoat area from the sixteenth century. The remains of a stone cross by the main roads to Lancashire were known in 1775.

Heath is mentioned as le Hethehill in 1439. Skircoat Green in 1775 and Spring Hall in 1616.

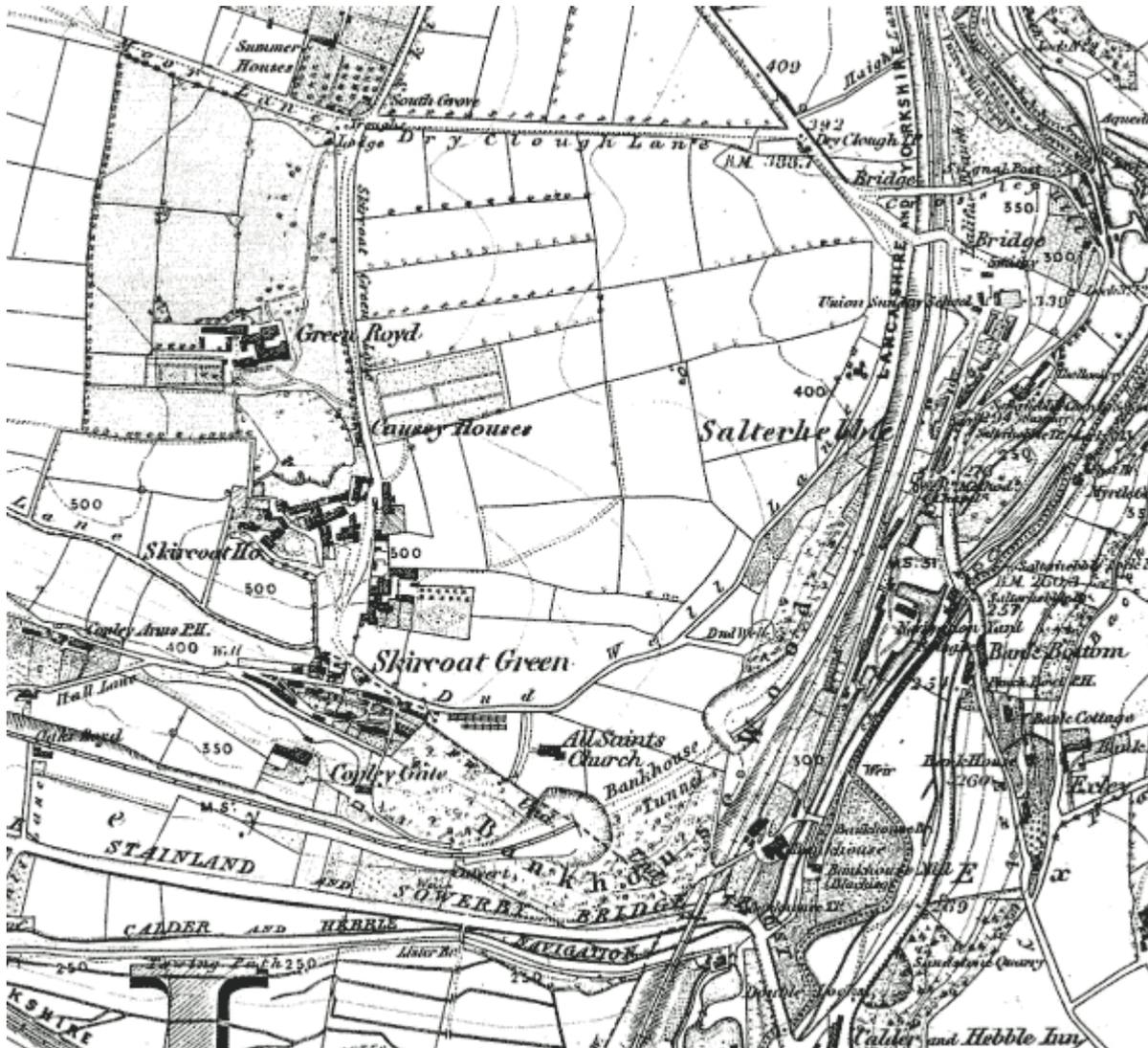
Industrial development in and around Halifax was concentrated along the Hebble Valley and the steep slopes that constrained physical development into a pattern of predominantly westward expansion in the 18th century and 19th century also set limits on the town's growth in the 20th century. Halifax became a County Borough in 1848 and the Borough's boundaries were extended in 1865 to include Skircoat, however, these steep gradients and the rugged physical terrain meant that Halifax remained a predominantly pedestrian town until the development of electric tramways and motorised transport post 1898.



Thomas Jefferys's map of 1775

Thomas Jefferys's map of 1775 names 'Skircoates Green', and shows a small scatter of properties on the valley side to the west of what is now Huddersfield Road. It is impossible to identify their exact location, although one may represent the cottages at Skircoat Green village, as Dean House, one of the oldest properties facing the green, is inscribed with the letters IML and 1645.

The 1854 First Edition OS map shows much more clearly the clusters of vernacular cottages at the Skircoat Green and names Skircoat House, which was demolished in the 1860's.



Ordnance Survey First Edition, 1853

Some cottages on the steep south facing slope between Copley Lane and Cow Green (Lower Skircoat Green) date to the late 18th century and early 19th century and again can be clearly seen on the 1854 map.

Historic information on the early history of Skircoat is scarce but it seems reasonable to surmise that it grew up as a small settlement with a dual economic system based on agriculture and textiles. Before the 18th century, even though the textile industry was of great significance, the principal occupation over much of Yorkshire was agriculture, and industry was organised on a modest scale, generally in a rural setting. Evidence from date stones in the upper Calder valley suggests that there was a particularly active period of rebuilding in the early 17th century, when the wealthy yeoman clothiers encased timber framed houses in more durable stone, reflecting the status of their owners. This ties in with the date stone on Dean House, Skircoat Green of 1645. More evidence for an active domestic textile industry comes from the 1854 Ordnance Survey map which shows tenter frames for stretching cloth below Dudwell Lane in the then open field to the west of All Saints' Church.

Skircoat Green was active in laying the foundations of local Wesleyan Methodism. The first Methodist sermon there was preached in 1741 by John Nelson, at the Skircoat Green house of Abraham Kershaw, and five years later John Wesley preached there, visiting Skircoat Green again in 1747. A Methodist chapel was built on New Lane in 1870 but was demolished in the late 20th century.

There was also a strong local chartist movement in Skircoat Green. In the years between 1836 and 1854 the Chartists campaigned throughout the country for electoral reform based on a six point 'People's Charter'. This was aimed at allowing working men to vote and take an active part in national politics, as through the parliamentary process it was hoped to address food shortages, poor pay and working conditions. The movement generated many protest meetings nation-wide and local meetings were held on Skircoat Moor, now known as Savile Park. The Standard of Freedom public house, originally known as the Wagoners, allegedly had its name changed in support of the local chartists and their aims.

Many chartists went on to be early members of the Co-operative movement and in 1850 the Halifax Working Men's Co-operative & Provident Society was established. This became the Halifax Industrial Society in 1861 and a Skircoat branch was opened in 1862.



Above the former 'Co-op' shop, Skircoat Green Road

Before the 20th century the largest property in the proposed Skircoat Green Conservation Area was Green Royd, lived in during the mid 19th century by Colonel William Irving Holdsworth of Shaw Lodge Mills. It can be clearly seen on the 1854 Ordnance Survey map but apart from this property, the early cottages and All Saints' Church, the map shows the remainder of the proposed conservation area as open fields with trees along the field boundaries.

By the end of the 19th century little had changed. The 1894 Ordnance Survey map shows an area little affected by the massive rise in urban population generated by the late 19th century expansion of business and trade in Halifax. At the Junction of Skircoat Green Road and Dry Clough Lane was a large detached property in substantial grounds called Oakleigh (demolished 20th century), there was another, un-named large property on the west side of Skircoat Green Road, and finally Bermerside, built by Edward Crossley on the estate of the former Skircoat House but excluded from the conservation area because the grounds have been subdivided and

developed with late 20th century residential properties. All Saints' Church school had been built but it was not until the early 20th century that development pressure moved further south beyond Savile Park.

The striking cutting with high stone retaining walls, known as Dudwell Cutting was excavated around 1898, the work being undertaken as an unemployment relief scheme. This changed the face of Skircoat Green and created a link with Dudwell Lane.



17th Century houses perched above Dudwell Cutting

By 1907 the northern part of the Green Royd estate had been sold off and laid out as Lawrence Road, Lea Avenue, Rawson Avenue and Greenroyd Avenue, with a number of substantial detached and semi-detached Edwardian villas in a range of styles. A terrace of smaller properties had also been built at St Alban's Avenue.

Further developments of terraced properties followed off St Alban's Road and the remainder of the Green Royd estate was developed as terraced properties along St Anne's Road, St Bevan's Road, St Ives Road and St Ives Gardens.

Development continued apace, helped by the tram link in to the centre of Halifax. Originally the tram terminus was opposite what was then known as the New Inn but is now the Murgatroyd Arms, the name having been changed after the transfer of the full licence from the old Murgatroyd Arms in Luddenden in 1939. In 1925 the track was extended through the cutting and the tram shelter was built. The route was abandoned in 1932. In 1983 there was public pressure to remove the tram shelter but public protest led to it being repaired and retained. It was finally removed in 2005.

The first purpose built public library in Halifax was built in Skircoat Green in 1926.

Because the rent controls introduced during World War I remained in force after the war, the construction of houses to rent lost its attraction. Encouraged by tax concessions, capital instead went to building societies which provided the mortgages that enabled people to buy their own homes. Before World War I less than 10% of all houses in the United Kingdom were owner occupied. By 1939 this proportion had increased to nearly 30% and it was in the 1930s that the Green Park Estate was

developed. The houses cost £535 for a three bedroom house and £435 for a two bedroom house, when new. A sales brochure of the time states that £10.00 was needed to secure one of the homes, with £46 4s payable on completion for the larger three bedroom version. The amount advanced by a building society was £478 16s, leaving the purchaser to find 14s 3d (71p) per week in repayments. The two bedroom houses had weekly repayments of 11s 9d (58p).



Green Park Estate

With a variety of housing types and sizes together with local shops and facilities, Skircoat Green still remains a popular residential area of Halifax today and some residents still refer to it as "the village".

7 Significance in the national context

With residential properties ranging from the early vernacular houses to Edwardian villas and terraces and the planned 1930s Green Park estate, the area demonstrates how a northern industrial town expanded along one of its main transport routes, between 1850 and 1939, to embrace what was once a separate village settlement.

8 Local significance

The large villa properties between Lawrence Road and Skircoat Green Road were mainly designed by local architects in the early 20th century for wealthy clients and are a showcase for their skills. In addition, the Green Park estate is perhaps the best example in Halifax of a private sector planned layout designed in the 1930s.

i. Street Pattern and streetscape

The earlier vernacular properties cluster together at the Green, some served by setted access ways. Some setted edges to roads also remain.

The cottages at Lower Skircoat Green built down below *Copley Lane* are served by lanes, some setted, some tarmaced and some unsurfaced, all running parallel with the slope and linked by several sets of stone steps up to *Dudwell Lane*. Gardens are bounded by drystone walls.



Lower Skircoat Green

Dryclough (Dry Clough) Lane, Skircoat Green Road (Skircoat Green Lane) and Dudwell Lane (Dud Well Lane) are clearly shown on the 1853 map and form the framework for the 20th century development pattern.

Lawrence Road, Lea Avenue, Rawson Avenue and Greenroyd Avenue all follow field boundaries of the former Green Royd Estate.

Godfrey Road also follows the line of a former field boundary.

St Anne's Road, St Bevan's Road and St Ives Road all run at right angles to *Skircoat Green Road*, giving a grid iron layout of terraced properties with small front gardens, rear yards and linking back lanes and through cuts.

Off *St Alban's Road* terraced properties with small front gardens and rear yards run parallel to *Skircoat Green Road*. The area was also originally laid out with a tennis ground and a bowling green off *Haddon Avenue*.

The *Green Park Estate* is bounded by *Godfrey Road, Skircoat Green Road and Dudwell Lane* and is laid out in the form of a teardrop shaped inner road with a central circular green and two culs-de-sac with circular greens.



St Alban's Road

Throughout the proposed conservation areas property boundaries are typically defined by walls. They divide the building plots from the street and are one of the distinctive characteristics of this area. Front boundary walls vary in height in relation to the size of the property. The smaller terraced properties have lower walls, typically less than 1 metre high, and there is evidence that many of these walls were formerly finished with railings, many of which were removed during the 1940s as part of the war effort. The larger properties have higher front boundary walls, typically around 2 metres in height, to maintain privacy. In most cases rear boundary walls are also around 2 metres high. Trees and shrubs are often planted against the front walls of properties and the containment which results from this and the associated enclosure of the street scene emphasises the separation between public and private space. In the area to the north of Lawrence Road high garden walls turn the corners from road to road and while in almost every case the original boundary gates have been removed or replaced, a considerable number of original gate piers remain.

Boundary walls of the smaller terraced properties are built of stone, while larger semi-detached and villa properties have walls built of either stone or brick to match the materials of the house. On the Green Park estate a variety of materials have been used to define front boundaries, and this detracts from the unity of the street scene.

Throughout the area there are a variety of paving materials ranging from stone setts to tarmac but many pavements retain stone kerbs. Most street lights are on modern concrete posts.

ii. Key buildings of townscape and historical importance

- a) *Calderdale Royal Hospital - formerly known as the Halifax Union Poor Law Hospital, St Luke's Hospital and latterly the Halifax General Hospital*

With its prominent site at the junction of Huddersfield Road and Dryclough Lane the original hospital building makes a significant contribution to the townscape quality of the area and is particularly prominent on approaching Halifax from the south. The site boundary is marked by a stone wall which retains its original wrought iron railings and mature trees. To the north east of the original block is a late 20th century building which is less finely detailed.



Calderdale Royal Hospital

Built at a cost of £98,000 by the Halifax Board of Guardians, who had previously dealt with the sick poor at the union workhouse premises in Gibbet Street, the new purpose built 400 bed hospital at Salterhebble was designed by W Clement Williams. Work started on site in 1897 and the hospital was opened by Mr J W Tillotson, the Chairman of the Infirmary Building Committee, on 9th April 1901. During the First World War it was used as a military hospital with temporary marquees in the grounds. In the early 1940's, after coming under the care of the Halifax Borough Council, St Luke's was re-named the Halifax General Hospital. A new maternity unit (now demolished) was opened at the hospital in 1971 and in the 1990s rationalisation of the Health Services led to new facilities being built. The hospital was merged with the former Royal Halifax Infirmary and the original long wards to the north and south of the administration block were demolished to make way for major redevelopment. The distinctive round wards still remain and their design is echoed in that of the new building. The Halifax General Infirmary was again renamed and is now known as the Calderdale Royal Hospital.

b) *All Saints' Salterhebble Church of England Church*

Sir Robert Peel's New Parishes Act of 1843 allowed new parishes to be created to serve the rapidly growing industrial areas. Large existing parishes such as Halifax were subdivided and a new parish was created here covering Salterhebble, Skircoat Green and Copley. No financial provision was made by Peel's Act and the first incumbent in 1846, (John Henry Warneford) spent the 12 years before the buildings were opened writing over 14,000 circular letters to secure support for the church building fund. He was also persistent in tackling mill owners about some of the appalling conditions in which his parishioners lived. Designed by Mallinson and Healy in the Decorated style, the foundation stone was laid in 1857 by Col. William Irving Holdsworth who then lived at Green Royd. Built between 1857-58, the church was extended in 1874. John Mackintosh, the founder of the toffee firm, is buried in the churchyard.



All Saints' Church of England Church

iii. Key buildings of historical importance

Local architect Joseph Frederick Walsh began his professional career in 1877, articulated to his uncle Richard Horsfall, whose practice at that time was one of the most important in Halifax. In 1885 he set up his own practice and in 1899/1900, with a growing workload, he went into partnership with Graham S. Walsh. The practice was renamed Walsh and Nicholas and was based at the then Lancashire and Yorkshire Bank Chambers on Commercial Street. Nicholas was a man of high artistic ability and he was a member, and later Vice President, of the Arts and Crafts Society. Walsh's practice already had a reputation for high quality vernacular style architecture and the influence of Nicholas, in particular in the designs of domestic buildings led to some of the most outstanding 20th century buildings in the Halifax area. In 1910 Nicholas was forced to move to the south of England for health reasons but Walsh continued to practice and after World War I he took on his former trainee, George Maddock, as a partner. Maddock died in 1939 but other partners were admitted to the firm and Walsh continued to visit his office regularly right up to August 1950 when he died the day after his 89th birthday. Further details about J F Walsh and his practice can be found in the Transactions Of the Halifax Antiquarian Society, together with a list of the buildings designed by the practice, which include three properties in the proposed Skircoat Green conservation area.

a) *The Croft, Rawson Avenue*



The Croft, designed by the architectural practice of Walsh and Nicholas

Designed in 1901 by Walsh and Nicholas for John Bairstow. The Croft has been described as a perfect example of the linear layout adopted by the practice of Walsh and Nicholas for most of their larger houses during this period. It shows a strong Arts and Crafts influence and uses distinctive brown/rust coloured local stone known as 'Insides' - a trend set by Walsh and widely copied by almost every Halifax architect between the wars. Attention to detail even went as far as the boundary wall to Rawson Avenue, which is built of stone, with expressed pillars topped with ball finials.

b) *All Saints' Church of England School*

Designed by Walsh and Nicholas in 1904. Many local vernacular details are featured including coped gables with kneelers, prominent keystones and quoins, and stone slate roof. The clock turret is probably a later addition. There are interesting stained glass windows showing sports activities. Unfortunately late 20th century additions, while in keeping with the massing of the building, are not of the same architectural quality.



All Saints' School

c) *Highlands, Lawrence Road*

Designed by Walsh and Nicholas for George Edward Mallet, a partner of Sharp and Mallet of Copley Chemical Works, in 1909. Highlands has similar arts and crafts detailing and materials to The Croft but has a rectangular plan form.

d) *Skircoat Green Library*



Skircoat Green Library, Skircoat Green Road

Built in 1926 of coursed stone, with a parapet surrounding a blue slate hipped roof with terra cotta ridge tiles and finials, this was the first purpose built library building in Halifax.

e) *Dean House, Skircoat Green (1645)*

One of the oldest remaining houses in Skircoat Green, with a date stone of 1645. There is little recorded history relating to this property but the date probably relates to the date of building or the rebuilding of an earlier timber framed house. Typical vernacular building features include chamfered mullioned windows, some with drip moulding and label stops, coped gables with kneelers and finials, and stone roofing slates.

iv. Key townscape features

a) *Dudwell Cutting and former tram terminus*

With its towering stone retaining walls, this man made feature is a striking contrast to the more gently sloping land to the east.

v) Key landscape features

a) allotments north of Godfrey Road

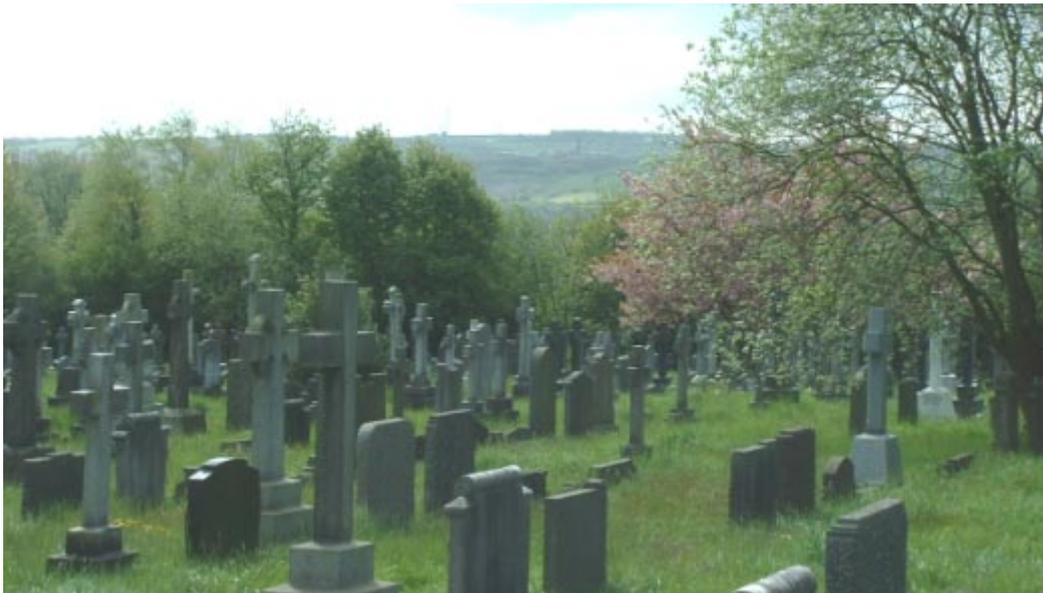
The 1907 Allotment Act which imposed a responsibility on councils to provide allotments and those at Godfrey Road date from the early 20th century.



View over the allotments towards Haddon Avenue and Belvoir Gardens

b) All Saints' burial ground

The burials ground lies to the east of the All Saints' Church and to the south of Dudwell Lane. Entrance is from Dudwell Lane with a linking path from the church. The main drives are set out in a cruciform pattern, with a circular bed at their crossing point. Lesser paths run parallel and at right angles to these. A further drive sweeps informally around near to the eastern boundary. Of particular interest is the Holdsworth family mausoleum.



View to distant hill side from All Saints' Burial Ground

c) Greenroyd Bowling Club, St Alban's Road

Opened 1909, the development of the club appears to be contemporary with the new housing off St Alban's Road.

v) Key trees

Street trees play an important part in defining the character of the proposed Skircoat Green Conservation area, together with mature trees within grounds. The location of key trees is set out below.



Huddersfield Road - trees in the grounds of the hospital

- within the grounds of the Calderdale Royal Hospital, particularly fronting Huddersfield Road and Dudwell Lane and Godfrey Road
- along Greenroyd Avenue
- along Rawson Avenue
- along Lea Avenue
- along Lawrence Road
- along St. Alban's Road
- along St. Alban's Avenue
- along Bayswater Terrace
- along Haddon Avenue
- along St. Ives Road
- along St. Bevan's Road

- along St. Anne's Road
- along Godfrey Road
- along Dudwell Lane



Street trees - St. Anne's Road

10 Key views and vistas

- along Skircoat Green Road, north and south
- view south through the deep cutting to former tram terminus
- along Dudwell Lane north east towards Bank Top
- along Dudwell Lane looking south west towards spire of All Saints' Church
- looking east down Godfrey Road towards Bank Top



View from Godfrey Road looking east over the hospital

11 Characteristics of distinctive character zones

Skircoat Green - the green

While individual properties in this group of early vernacular properties retain many of their original features, the character of the area has been affected by the painting of the external walls of properties on the north east side of the green and the development of a large block of flats within the former grounds of Bermerside, which is out of scale and too close to the estate boundary. This forms a dominant element in the street scene. Pressure to find off road parking spaces is also affecting the grassed areas leading to loss of visual quality.



Looking north east over the green

The special characteristics of this area include:

- vernacular properties- two storey cottages and houses
- natural stone with stone slate roofs
- two storeys
- chimneys
- properties set back behind grass with access tracks
- some stone boundary walls with metal railings
- tall boundary wall to Bermerside with setted lane along boundary
- views over rooftops to south from the highest point of the green

Lower Skircoat Green

This area of vernacular cottages retains much of its original form and detailing. Built at different levels with attractive setted lanes, stone pedestrian paths and steps it is characterised by a random arrangement of buildings with small garden areas fitted in between, unified by use of common materials and simple detailing of elevations.



Cottages at Lower Skircoat Green

The special characteristics of this area include:

- two and three storey cottages - running parallel to the hillside
- stone with stone slate roofs
- setted lanes, stone steps linking levels, some unmade areas
- small gardens with stone boundary walls
- views over the valley to the south, restricted by trees on the hillside below

Skircoat Green - the former tram terminus

The urban form of this area changed significantly with the construction of the deep cutting and there is a poorly resolved relationship between built form and open space. Visual quality is also compromised by the significant number of properties have been subject to alterations to their roof lines in the form of box dormers.

Particularly prominent are the late 20th century dormer bungalow built as infill in the garden of 33, Dudwell Lane, the end gable of the restaurant at the junction of New Lane and Copley Lane, and the north facing elevations of properties at Cliffe Terrace and Dudwell Terrace, facing on to Dudwell Lane. At the west end of Dudwell terrace is an unusual property which has been re-fronted in light sand coloured bricks and partly painted white which, together with the lack of first floor windows on part of the frontage and a large dormer, draws attention to this incongruous building in the street scene.



Former tram terminus – the shelter was removed May 2005

The special characteristics of this area include:

- high stone retaining walls to the deep cutting
- one and two storey domestic properties with eaves and ridge lines at differing heights
- mix of building materials, mainly natural stone with stone slate roofs, some brick
- a large area of tarmac road surface
- view of All Saints' church spire above rooftops to east

Skircoat Green - village centre

The local shopping area at the south end of Skircoat Green Road features a range of properties some purpose built as shops some converted from terraced houses with inserted shop fronts.



The former Halifax Industrial Society shop and terraced houses, Skircoat Green Road

The special characteristics of this area include:

363-369 Skircoat Green Road

A pair of two storey semi-detached blocks of shops probably contemporary with the Green Park estate. The shop fronts have been rendered and altered.

- red brick
- small rosemary red tiles

353-359 Skircoat Green Road

Early 20th century, two storey building with purpose built corner shop. The shop fronts have been altered.

- projecting gables with ball finial detail and coping
- stone stall risers

346-350 Skircoat Green Road

The former Halifax Industrial Society (Co-op) shop, part altered with late 20th century shop front and blind.

- stone
- hipped roof with small red clay tiles
- end bays raised to curved upstands
- central bay raised with carved panel 'Halifax Industrial Society' finished with two pilasters with ball finials.
- two round windows at first floor level
- shop sign with curved central section
- inset doorway
- low stall riser

Adjacent residential properties have stone front boundary walls, gates and hedges.

Greenroyd Avenue / Rawson Avenue / Lea Avenue

With its wide roads and large properties behind high boundary walls this quiet residential area is characterised by individual buildings of quality, built in a variety of styles and materials, and an air of privacy. Some properties front onto the road and some have their principal elevation at right angles to the road. Plot sizes are small for the size of property giving little scope for further infill development.



The Croft, Rawson Avenue

The special characteristics of this area include:

- substantial residential properties, many architect designed
- two storey or two storey with attic detached and semi-detached properties with a variety of roof heights and gable details
- some low modern bungalows, which although not of particular architectural quality do not dominate the street scene
- variety of building materials and constructional details - coursed stone, sneck and jumper stone, red brick, timber detailing, natural green slate, natural blue slate
- properties set within comparatively small plots
- high boundary walls to roadside with entrance gates, mostly stone, one red brick, some lowered, some topped with timber fencing or concrete blocks. on top
- wide roads with street trees
- views down roads over rooftops to distant hillside

St Alban's Road / St Alban's Avenue / Bayswater Terrace / Haddon Avenue / Belvoir Gardens

A formally laid out area of relatively high density terraced properties. Wide roads with natural stone paving and street trees, together with communal recreation areas give this area its individual character.



Haddon Avenue

The special characteristics of this area include:

- two storey houses, larger terraced properties on St Alban's Avenue built of natural stone and render with red roof tiles, smaller terraced properties built of natural stone with blue slate roofs, some canopied bays, some projecting bays
- small front gardens with stone boundary walls, railings removed, some hedges, small rear yards
- communal area, formerly laid out as a tennis court
- attractive garden terrace overlooking private bowling green
- natural stone paving and kerbs
- rear accessways, with some alterations to walls to create parking areas
- street trees
- views to the east over the hospital to Bank Top

St Annes Road, St Bevans Road and St Ives Road

Mainly terraced properties, with stone front boundary walls creating a unified street scene.



St Anne's Road

The special characteristics of this area include:

- two storey terraced properties, built of stone with blue slate roofs
- semi-detached properties on the north side of St Ives Road have red brick and render to the first floor
- small front gardens with stone boundary walls
- small back yards and gardens
- street trees
- rear access ways

The Green Park Estate

Lying between Godfrey Road, Skircoat Green Road and Dudwell Lane this planned development of semi-detached properties with front and rear gardens retains its original road and plot layout and building line. While the variety of materials and styles of wall and fencing used to mark front boundaries detracts from the visual character of the area, the wall and roof materials, roofscape and massing of the houses remains much as original. However care needs to be taken to ensure that character is not eroded by inappropriate infill, particularly where this means subdivision of gardens.



Green Park - the house on the right still has its original door and windows

The special characteristics of this area include:

- two storey semi-detached properties
- red brick and render
- hipped roofs
- red 'rosemary' tiles
- regularly spaced houses set back from road with front and rear gardens
- substantially unaltered layout

Variety of materials for front boundary walls detracts from visual quality. Very few properties retain original doors and windows.

12 Character summary

The main features which characterise the Skircoat Green Conservation Area are:

- stone terraced properties, having small front gardens with stone boundary walls and pedestrian gates, and rear yards or gardens
- semi-detached properties built of red brick and render with uniform sized front gardens together with rear gardens, many with separate garages
- large properties, both detached and semi-detached, built of a variety of materials including natural stone, brick and timber, set in garden plots behind high stone boundary walls



St Alban's Road

- consistency of height and massing of residential properties, generally two storey or two storey with attics
- an uninterrupted roofscape with high chimneys, many chimney pots retained, often with a backdrop of trees
- street trees and trees within gardens, which often form a backdrop to views
- few modern additions to properties, few modern dormers, few conservatories
- views east along streets to opposite hillside at Bank Top



View along Belvoir Gardens towards the rooftops of the Green Park estate and All Saints' church spire

13 Issues

- erosion of street scene quality by raising the height of front boundary walls by adding a variety of fencing types and in a few cases decorative concrete blockwork
- loss of character of the Green Park estate due to alterations to windows and doors, variety of front boundary treatments and pressure to develop within gardens



Dudwell Lane

- pressure to redevelop large villa plots with groups of smaller properties or blocks of flats leading to loss of landscape setting and erosion of skyline

- need to retain buildings with their associated garden setting and avoid development extending to plot boundaries
- alteration of rear boundary walls to insert garages and parking spaces
- unsightly garage site off Godfrey Road
- loss of original railings and gates.
- altered window and door details
- introduction of modern paving materials
- standard design modern street lights
- parking on the Green

14 Objectives

The overall objectives are to:-

- **Maintain the essential character of the Skircoat Green Conservation area as a low density, late 19th century/early 20th century residential area and, in particular, to resist pressures for the over-intensification of development which would unbalance the present relationship between landscape features, gardens and building mass. Such intensification could result from inappropriately bulky new buildings, from extensions to existing buildings or from the subdivision of plots.**
- **Maintain and enhance the appearance of 19th century and 20th century buildings by discouraging the replacement of original doors and windows with uPVC or other unsuitable modern substitutes, the insertion of unsuitably designed dormer windows, re-roofing with unsympathetic materials and where development pre-dates the car and is not specifically designed to accommodate it, the use of gardens fronting on to traffic routes for car parking with the consequent loss of boundary walls, gates, railings and in some cases hedges and associated planting.**

To achieve this the following should be observed: -

- existing landscaped areas and large grounds should be retained as open spaces
- existing landscape features such as front boundary walls, gates, gate piers, hedges and trees should be preserved. However, the replacement of poorly designed fences to front boundaries is to be encouraged
- the character of buildings and their landscape setting should be retained and original features reinstated if the opportunity arises
- existing houses typical of the Skircoat Green area will be expected to be retained. Any proposals for demolition and redevelopment will require the strongest justification
- any new development should reflect the existing character of the area and that of adjacent properties. It should harmonise with existing traditional buildings in terms of density, massing, proportions, materials, space around the principal building and building lines and achieve the highest standards of design
- alterations or extensions to houses should respect the existing building in terms of scale, materials and details
- traditional paving materials should be retained and they should be reinstated when and where the opportunity arises
- any new street furniture should be of high standards of design



Cow Lane - note stone slate roofs, stone setts and original metal railings

15 Enhancement opportunities



Dudwell Lane near the junction with Skircoat Green Road

There is the potential to upgrade the environment of the area by :-

- improving the quality of older street furniture, including railings and street lighting
- encouraging the use of traditionally detailed windows, doors and gates
- encouraging the reinstatement of stone walls to original heights and the removal of added features such as concrete blocks
- encouraging the re-instatement of traditional roofscape in the area around the junction of Skircoat Green Lane and Dudwell Road
- improving backland sites off Godfrey Road
- rationalisation of road signage

However it must be noted that these are long term aims as no financial resources are currently allocated.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~peter/workhouse/Halifax/Halifax.shtml>

Information related to people buried in Lister Lane Cemetery
<http://hdell.fsnet.co.uk/people.htm>

APPENDIX I

Geology and Topography

In West Yorkshire the Pennines slope gently to the east, dissected by steep sided valleys. The underlying geology is millstone grit (formed of coarse sand particles naturally cemented together), beds of more finely grained sandstone, together with shale (formed of the finest, clay size rock particles), which occurs in narrow layers and can be split. The overlying brown earth soil is well drained but slightly acidic. The Skircoat Green area lies on the mid valley terrace of the Hebble Brook, sloping down from 200m above sea level to the north of the Crossley Heath School to 100m above sea level at Salterhebble. The gentle slope down to the east resulted in the overlying rocks both eroding and sliding down into the stream to be swept away. The rocks on the eastern side of the valley, dipping away from the stream did not slip so readily as it was protected from erosion by sandstone overlying the shale and grit layers. This resulted in a steep scarp slope on the eastern side of the valley of the Hebble Brook facing the gently sloping shoulder to the west.

Archaeology

There are no scheduled monuments in the area.

APPENDIX II

Additional controls in conservation areas

Please note that this is a brief summary and when considering works it is always advisable to contact Planning Services first.

Broadly, the main additional controls which apply in conservation areas are as follows:

Demolition of buildings - the total or substantial demolition of any building exceeding 115 cubic metres requires conservation area consent.

Demolition of walls - the demolition of any wall exceeding 1m in height (if abutting a highway or public open space) or 2m in height elsewhere requires conservation area consent.

Works to trees - six weeks' notice must be given to the local planning authority of the intention to fell, top or lop any tree with a trunk in excess of 75mm diameter measured at a height of 1m above ground level.

Extensions to dwelling houses - Domestic extensions which do not require planning consent are limited to a total size of 50 cubic metres or 10%, whichever is the greater (compared with 70 cubic metres or 15% for non terraced houses outside conservation areas). If a house is listed, Listed Building Consent will be needed for alterations and extensions irrespective of size.

Curtilage buildings - any curtilage building greater than 10 cubic metres is treated as an enlargement of the dwelling house (see 4. above). (Less stringent controls apply outside conservation areas.)

Dormers - all dormer windows require planning consent. (Less stringent controls apply outside conservation areas.)

Satellite dishes - Satellite dishes on chimneys, front walls or on front roof slopes require planning consent. (Less stringent controls apply outside conservation areas.)

External cladding - external cladding, for example with stone, tiles artificial stone or plastic timber requires planning consent. (Consent is only required for cladding non-domestic buildings outside a conservation area).

APPENDIX III

Local Plan Policies in the Draft Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (2005)

The following is an extract from the Draft Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan. The public Inquiry into this document is currently drawing to a close. Representations have been received on some of these policies and there may be minor changes when the Inspector's report is received. For updated or further information please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01422 392206

8.71

While individual historic buildings contribute to the character of many settlements in Calderdale, lesser buildings and structures, open spaces, trees and landscape can all combine to give an area special character. Designation of Conservation Areas by the Local Authority is an important means of retaining and enhancing the character of areas of special architectural or historical interest. Conservation Areas are defined in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as, "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Conservation Area status is valuable in that it allows the Council to apply stricter control over design and siting of new buildings and small scale changes and additions. Additionally, it gives control over demolition of structures and the cutting down or lopping of trees.

8.74

An important consideration in assessing development proposals is the effect new development would have on the character or appearance of a Conservation Area and particularly, whether it would assist in the preservation or enhancement of the area. Development proposals outside a Conservation Area can also affect its setting and impact substantially on its character or appearance and will therefore, need to be considered carefully. Any new development should respect the scale, layout and materials of the existing architecture as well as open spaces, trees and views which can be as important as the buildings themselves. It is important that buildings of character and quality, in their own right or which are of townscape value, are retained in Conservation Areas. The alteration, extension or change of use of listed buildings is covered in Policies BE16, BE17 and BE18. Alteration or change of use of unlisted buildings can also assist in securing the future of buildings and revitalise a Conservation Area.

8.75

The character of a Conservation Area is not determined solely by buildings. For instance, boundary walls, paving materials and street furniture can all contribute to the preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance, as can advertisements. In all cases, natural materials and the use of traditional construction techniques will be preferred. Where traditional materials exist, these should be retained and reused. When they do not exist, opportunity should be taken to introduce them when roads and footpaths are resurfaced and new boundary walls are constructed. Detailed control over these aspects is dealt with in policies BE4, BE14 and NE25.

8.76

Trees can also make an important contribution to the character of Conservation Areas and are protected from removal or surgery by existing legislation. The Council will normally resist proposals for the removal or inappropriate cutting back of trees of amenity value and has given further recognition of their importance by making areas or individual specimens the subject of Tree Preservation Orders. Such orders will be extended to other trees where it is considered necessary. Where possible and appropriate, schemes for additional planting of suitable tree species will be encouraged and implemented in accordance with Policy NE20.

8.77

In addition, open spaces often add considerably to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and it is therefore important to protect these wherever possible and appropriate, in accordance with Policy OS1. Therefore, any proposal will be considered against the criteria set out in the policy below:-

POLICY BE20: Development within Conservation Areas

The character or appearance of Conservation Areas, defined on the Proposals Map, will be preserved or enhanced. New development and proposals involving the alteration or extension of a building in or within the setting of a Conservation Area will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met:-

i)

the form, design, scale, methods of construction and materials respect the characteristics of the buildings in the area, the townscape and landscape setting;

ii)

the siting of proposals respects existing open spaces, nature conservation, trees and townscape / roofscape features;

iii)

it does not result in the loss of any open space which makes an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area or features of historic value such as boundary walls and street furniture; and

iv)

important views within, into and out of the area are preserved or enhanced.

8.78

In order to ensure that development proposals are in keeping with the character of a Conservation Area, all planning applications which affect the character and/or appearance of a building or space in a Conservation Area must be for full planning permission. In considering applications within Conservation Areas, the Council will have regard to the advice contained in PPG15.

8.79

Developers are encouraged to enter into early negotiations with the Council to ensure that any development proposals within or which would affect the setting of a Conservation Area are acceptable. Detailed matters may be controlled through conditions attached to planning permissions.

8.80

Demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Advice on the demolition of listed buildings is covered in paragraphs 8.68 and 8.69 and Policy BE19 applies. In considering applications for unlisted buildings, applicants will be asked to provide an assessment of the contribution the existing building makes to the character and appearance of the area, the condition of

the building and whether viable alternative uses can be found. Buildings should be retained where they make a positive contribution to the area. However, there may be circumstances where the removal or replacement of a building would be beneficial to the appearance or character of an area and bring about substantial community benefits. All proposals for demolition and redevelopment will need to include full and detailed plans outlining what is proposed for the site after demolition. Conditions may be attached to planning approvals securing the timescales for redevelopment and requiring an appropriate record of the building prior to demolition. Accordingly:-

POLICY BE21: Demolition within a Conservation Area

Development involving the demolition of an unlisted building or feature within a Conservation Area will only be permitted if:-

- i) the structure makes no material contribution to the character or appearance of the area;***
- ii) no other reasonable beneficial uses can be found for a building; and***
- iii) detailed proposals for the reuse of the site have been approved, where appropriate.***

Where demolition is permitted, redevelopment should be undertaken within an agreed timescale, secured by condition on a planning approval. Wherever appropriate, it will be conditional upon a programme of recording being agreed and implemented prior to demolition.

8.81

The Council may seek the withdrawal of permitted development rights for certain forms of development in Conservation Areas or parts of Conservation Areas where these would detract from the character of an area or where it would assist a positive policy for preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Rights will also be removed to protect investment made in Conservation Areas using public funds. This will be carried out through the use of Article 4(1) Directions. The Council will utilise the powers available to it under Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 where specific permitted developments are likely to threaten the Conservation Area's character or appearance.

8.82

Development control policies can prevent undesirable development or demolition and may encourage enhancement. Government advice indicates that, "local authorities should adopt a positive scheme for each area at an early stage". Therefore, the Council will, as resources permit, carry out schemes of enhancement in Conservation Areas both in its own right and in partnership with appropriate conservation and funding agencies.



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