

# Settle– Carlisle Railway Conservation Area Appraisal August 2016

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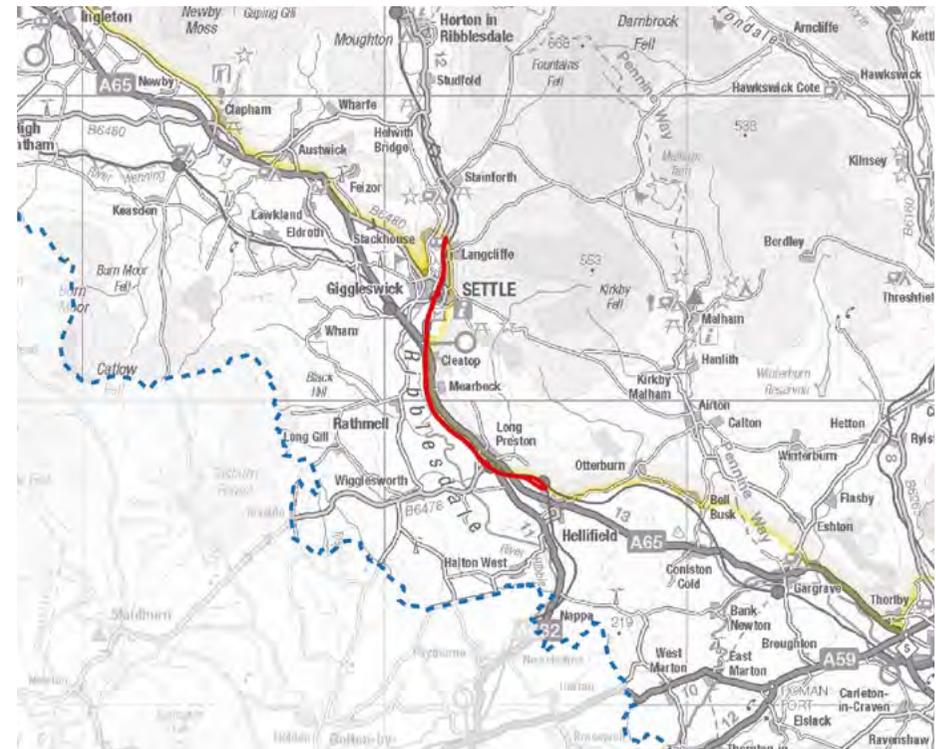


# Introduction

## 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 Settle–Carlisle Railway Conservation Area

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

The Settle-Carlisle Railway Conservation Area is unique. It was designated in 1991 to conserve the character and appearance of the entire railway line from Settle to Carlisle. At 78 miles this is believed to be the longest Conservation Area in England. It crosses a number of local planning authorities: Craven District Council, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Eden District Council and Carlisle City Council. It is also unique in that it is a working railway, which is subject to operational, legislative and commercial regulations, as well as the pressures and functions associated with running the national rail network. There are no other such Conservation Areas in England.

### **Scope of this appraisal:**

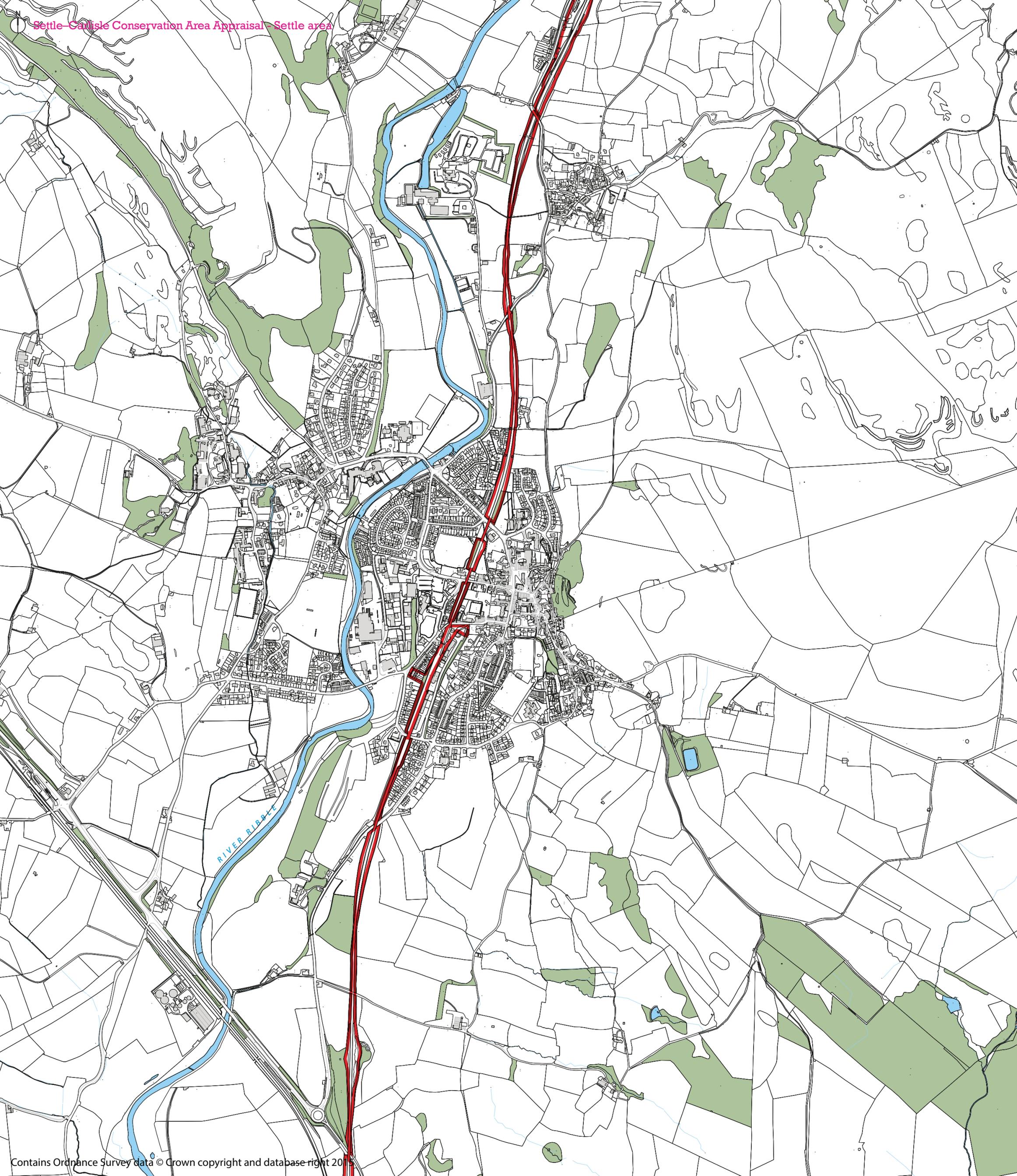
This appraisal is written for that part of the Conservation Area that is in Craven District Council's planning preveue; it focuses on the sections of the Area in and around Hellifield and Settle, where development pressures are greatest. As shown in the appraisal plan, the Conservation Area adjoins two other Conservation Areas: Settle Conservation Area and Long Preston Conservation Area

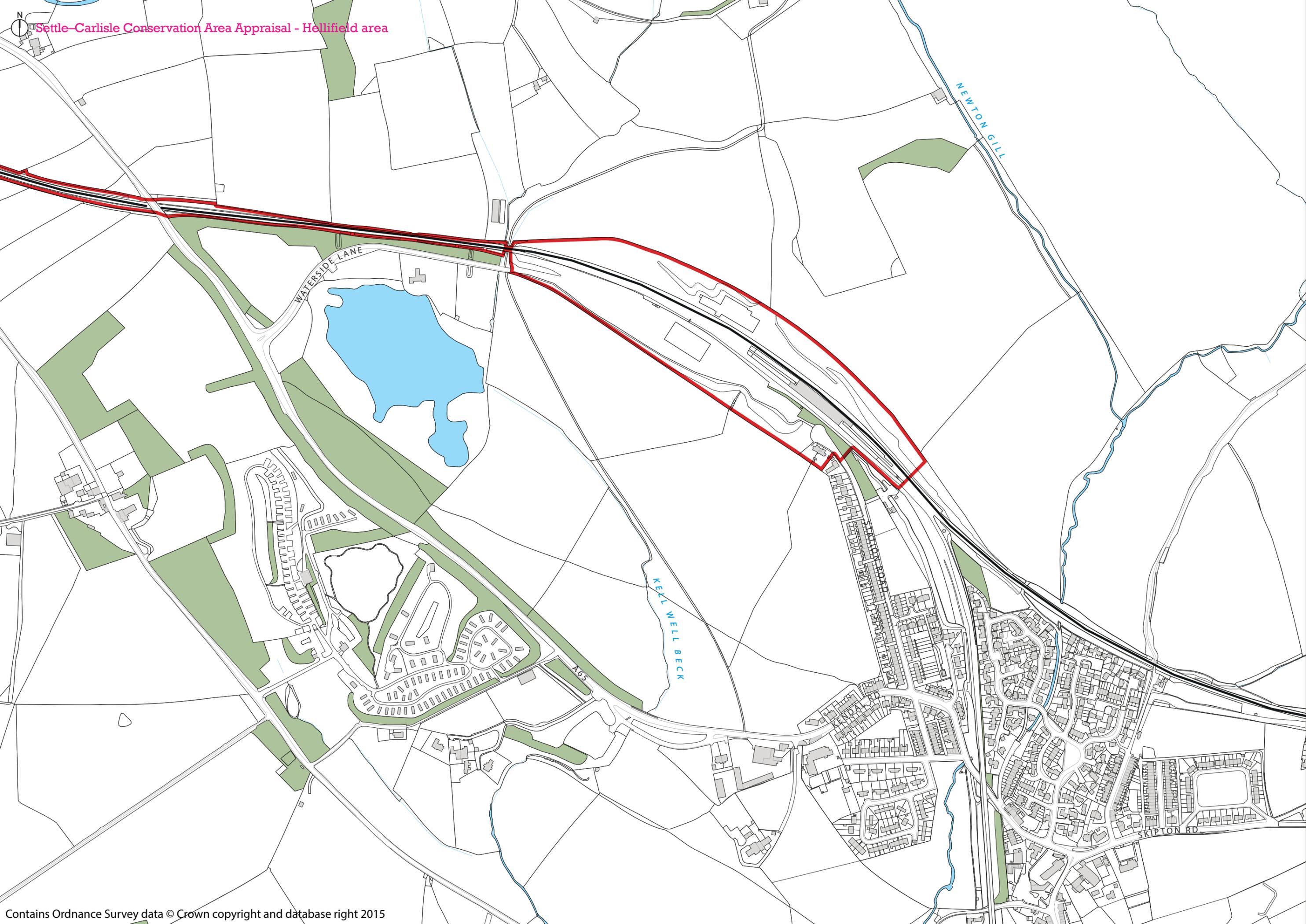
The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority adopted a comprehensive Appraisal for the section of the railway that runs through the National Park in 2010. This is the source of much of the background to this Appraisal, and it is recommended reading for anyone interested in the history and significance of the Settle-Carlisle Railway. A pdf can be found at this link: **<http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/living-and-working/historic-buildings/conservation-areas/careview-settlecarlislerailway-full-final.pdf>**

**Designation date:** 1991

**Reason for designation:**

Opened in 1876, this famous mainline railway was created by the Midland Railway as a direct route to Scotland, independent of its rivals the LNWR and GNR/NER. Construction drove the Midland Railway to an ambitious act of engineering that has left its mark on the Yorkshire Dales. Today the combination of the natural beauty and bold man-made structures still provides a drama for both rail passengers and people roaming the countryside. The collection of viaducts, bridges, stations, tunnels and other more humble structures constitute the best preserved Victorian mainline railway in the UK. Combined with the civil engineering of the line – the cuttings and embankments, the archaeology of construction and the stupendous natural landscape, the route forms a coherent and outstanding historic railway landscape of national significance.





## 1.0 Character

### 1.1 Historic & contemporary development

The Midland Railway was one of the most powerful and wealthy of the Victorian railway companies. Headquartered in Derby, its wealth was generated by the coal it transported from its Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire heartland. In 1868 it reached London, announcing itself with St Pancras Station; next it turned its attention northward, to open its own route to Scotland. This became the Settle-Carlisle railway, the most important work of the company's highly competent chief engineer, J.S. Crossley.

Construction lasted from 1869 to 1876, and required 6,000 navvies. They built a line up and over the Pennine watershed that is characterised by typical Crossley structures: superbly built out of local stone, rugged and well detailed. Together with the Midland's systematic approach to the design of stations, signal boxes and other ancillary structures, this creates a coherent sense of identity the length of the route.

What is special about the route is the rate of survival and the absence of alterations. Most mainline railways have been subject to wave after wave of modernisation and expansion as technology evolves and usage expands. Since the early 20th century, the Settle-Carlisle has been a secondary route and not subject to these pressures. It therefore survives in an unusually pristine state.

Moreover, because it passes through upland areas of the Pennines, the landscape context of the line has not changed greatly and the settlements that it passes through have not changed as significantly as in other parts of the country. The line rises up the Aire valley and then climbs up Ribblesdale to the summit at Ais Gill, before descending to Carlisle along the Eden valley. This therefore forms three main character areas. The section in Craven District Council is the first of these: the relatively gently climb up through the Aire Gap before the more dramatic section is reached in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This means that the civil engineering was less challenging and there are no tunnels or major viaducts.

## **1.2 Spatial and Urban Character**

### ***Area 1: Hellified***

Modern Hellifield is a creation of the Midland Railway: here a junction was formed with the arrival of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway across the Aire Gap from Carnforth. The station for this junction was opened in 1880 and was designed by the Midland's architect, Charles Trubshaw. It is celebrated for its extensive iron and glass canopies. The original engine and goods sheds have been demolished. The settlement grew up to the south east of the station, around the A65. Therefore the context of the Conservation Area, which starts at the station, has two distinct parts: streets and housing to the south and east and open country to the west and north. The most distinctive and evocative element of the settlement is immediately outside the Conservation Area: the rows of railway cottages lining Station Road on the approach to the station. The street is dead straight, an urban form that is historically alien in the Dales and represents the arrival of the industrial world that the railway represents.

### ***Area 2: Settle***

Settle is one of the largest towns that the Settle-Carlisle railway passes through. It bisects the modern settlement, and is west of the historic core. Mostly it is elevated on an embankment and bridges, as it climbs up the valley. Settle Station is a significant cluster of historic structures, presenting a well-preserved small town station. These structures include the station itself, the footbridge, water tower and the former Settle Junction signal box. From its largely elevated position, the railway looks down on the town, with views that open up over bridges, such as the bridge over Penyghent View, and on the approaches north and south of the town, where the landscape setting of Settle can be understood.

### **1.3 Materials and palette**

- Squared and coursed and / or quarry-faced millstone grit
- Westmorland slates;
- cast and wrought iron glazed canopies on station platforms
- timber boarding signal boxes

### **1.4 Key buildings and structures**

- Hellifield Station – Grade II-listed
- A65 overbridge – unlisted
- Settle Station, footbridge, signal box and water tower – some Grade II
- Church of Holy Ascension, Settle – Grade II-listed
- Bridge of Penyghent View – unlisted
- Watershed Mill chimney - unlisted



*Hellifield Station (c) David Ingham*



*Settle Station Water Tower (converted into a house)*

## **1.5 Relationship with other settlements**

There are no other major settlements that are visible from the Conservation Area here. The railway is a thread that joins other settlements historically, physically and by designation. In this way the Conservation Area is linked to Long Preston and its Conservation Area.

## 2.0 Landscape and Open Space

### 2.1 Overview

The relationship between the railway and the landscape is determined by the very prescriptive requirements of railway engineering. Gradients and radii are limited by the power and speed of the trains. These limitations require man-made intervention in the form of cuttings and embankments. They define the alignment of the railway relative to the landscape at a localised and a wider level, since the route of the line is determined by the strategic need to get over the watershed, which requires steady climbing at a prescribed maximum gradient for many miles to reach a pre-determined point many miles to the north. It is the relationship between these now mature civil engineering works and the natural form of the land that creates the distinctive character of the Conservation Area.

This means that in Craven District the route of the line follows the foot of the hills on the eastern edge of the Aire and Ribble valleys, as it begins the climb up towards Ribbleshead. When the line is elevated or on the level, the long and close views from it out over the Aire Gap and the Yorkshire Dales National Park are excellent, and passengers can gain a very good understanding and enjoyment of this landscape

## 2.2 Methodology

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 the 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: Hellifield**

- The immediate context of the station is open space that makes a limited contribution to character and appearance. This land was once heavily employed as railway sidings and sheds and so had an industrial character from the creation of the junction here until the later 20th century when goods and locomotive facilities were withdrawn and largely demolished
- To the south and east the fringes of the railway and its backdrop contain elements of Hellifield which are of no interest and make no contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- To the west and the north the unspoilt upland landscape makes a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area



*Typical view from the train*

### **Character Area 2: Settle**

- The open landscape north and south of the town of Settle makes a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area where it is visible from the train.
- South of Settle, west of the line, this contribution is not as strong because of the shape of the landscape and the tree cover (note: this is not the opinion of Alan Baxter Ltd and its subconsultants\*).
- These landscapes are interesting for their contrasts: south of the Settle the landscape is the broad, open Aire Gap; north of Settle the line enters the much more enclosed Ribblesdale, in the Yorkshire Dales National Park



*Settle Cricket Club - the railway line is on an embankment behind the trees*

\*The authors, Alan Baxter Ltd, and the two commissioning partners, Craven District Council and Historic England, were able to reconcile their views throughout the course of the project, except on a limited number of occasions when all parties were satisfied with the inclusion of this note to qualify the opinion expressed. In the 16 appraisals produced by the project, the note appears in only three places: Carleton, page 15; Embsay, page 12; and Settle-Carlisle, page 14. (This explanatory footnote is provided by Craven District Council.)

## 3.0 Views

Refer to the map at the front of this appraisal.

### 3.1 Highly significant fixed views (HF)

HF1 The view from Hellifield Station is the beginning of the 76 mile Conservation Area, and illustrates for the first time on that journey how the railway and its landscape are interrelated.

HF2 This is the first significant view from the railway of the hills to the North of the line, having left the cutting in which the station is located. It is the first opportunity on the train in the Conservation Area to appreciate and enjoy the landscape setting of the journey.

HF3 The views from the A65 overbridge west of Hellifield in both directions are significant as an excellent location for road users to understand the Conservation Area, the civil engineering of the route (radii, alignment and gradient, in contrast to those of roads) and the relationship of the railway to the landscape.

HF4 The view from Settle Station footbridge is highly significant because it is an excellent vantage point from which to view the significant group of historic railway structures that make up the station complex, and to understand how rigid the alignment of the railway is slicing through the organic form of Settle and the landscape around.

HF5 The view east along Penyghent View is highly significant because the railway overbridge illustrates the scale and quality of the civil engineering structures on the line, and this is set against the highly picturesque backdrop of High Mill Hill.

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

- HD1 On the southern approaches to Settle there are excellent views out from the train to the East over the beautiful lower flanks of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, rising up to Kirkby Fell. This is one of the best views from this part of the Conservation Area
- HD2 North of Settle, the landscape setting of the Conservation Area changes considerably because the line has swung north out of the Aire valley and into the enclosed, intimate landscape of Ribblesdale. This change and the charm of this landscape is understood in highly significant dynamic views from the train to the east and to the west, when it is on the embankment before the line enters the National Park.

## 4.0 Traffic and Movement

Settle Station was designed for limited amount of road use. It is under pressure now because of leisure and tourist use. This is essential for public access to the Settle – Carlisle Railway, which promotes sustainable transport in the Dales, reduces traffic pressures on the roads and opens up access to the railway itself. However, it needs to be monitored and managed to minimise harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## 5.0 Recommendations for further work

- Identification of railway structures that positively or negatively contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

# Alan Baxter

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