

# Embsay Conservation Area Appraisal August 2016

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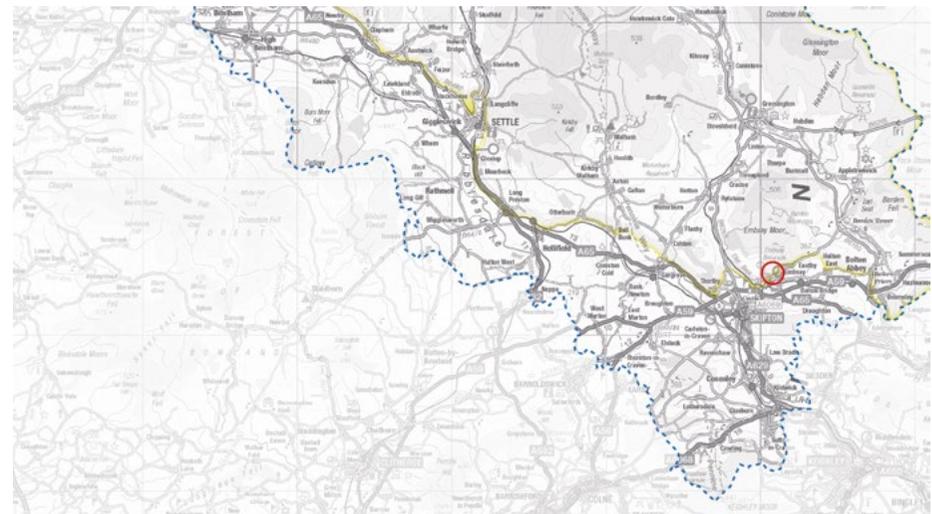


# Introduction

## 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 Embsay



View up to Embsay Crag

## **Overview of the conservation area**

The village of Embsay sits in an exposed position on the Moor to the south of Embsay Crag. The Conservation Area includes the linear settlement of the historic village which runs along an east – west axis. To the north the looming mass of the Crag is ever-present and to the south the Moor continues to slope away. The north half of the village falls within the administration of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. For coherency and completeness this Appraisal describes the whole Conservation Area but the open space assessment only assesses the part within Craven District Council's authority.

Embsay Kirk, part of the Conservation Area was the site of a Priory founded in 1120, which later was relocated (the ruins of the relocated Priory are now known as Bolton Abbey). The foundations of the priory at Embsay were revealed when the current house on the site was built c.1780. Embsay's main employment source in the nineteenth century was the textile industry.

**Designation date:** 1986

EMBSAY MOOR  
RESERVOIR

↑  
TO EMBSAY CRAG,  
EMBSAY MOOR BEYOND



## 1.0 Character

### 1.1 Historic & recent development

- Manor House on Pasture Road is the most notable, pre-eighteenth century building within the Conservation Area. Much of the rest of the housing dates from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- Remarkably little development has occurred within Embsay Conservation Area since the end of the nineteenth century (see the 1891 OS map layer at the front of this Appraisal).
- There are a few new houses that follow the historic pattern of development along the main streets.
- The most evident change is the development of the former mill around Tannery Lane. New houses have also been constructed on the western side of the Car Park on Main Street.

### 1.2 Spatial and urban development

- The historic village of Embsay is essentially a linear development, rarely more than a single house deep. Its position on the moor beneath Embsay Crag makes the settlement feel particularly exposed in its dramatic landscape and is atmospheric in all weathers.
- Most buildings are two-storeys tall, with a few at three-storeys. There are historic farm buildings, some still in use and many short terraces of houses. There is an open quality to the settlement, partly as a result of the wide, expansive landscape that surrounds it but the buildings generally have low boundaries with views to the countryside beyond.
- At the **west end** of the Conservation Area the development is sporadic.

- Further east are good views (**HF1, HD1**) looking along Pasture Road with the stone wall and mill ponds which run alongside the road and historic structures like Manor House and the mill chimney to the south with its successfully-integrated surrounding new development.
- Some small infields of open pasture survive between the houses around the periphery of the core of the village, a characteristic of the settlement.
- The development becomes more dense east of the former mill site. The north side of the street is at a slightly raised level due to the gradient of the moor and, as a result, many of the buildings on this side are on raised terraces with small grassed areas with stone retaining walls in front of them. This is a particularly attractive feature of Nos. 14 -26 Pasture Road which includes a still-working farm at No. 26.
- The **school and nursery** (a converted chapel) are notable buildings in an otherwise modestly attractive streetscape.

- There is a form of centre to the village at the **junction with Elm Tree Square** with the small circular flower bed in the middle of the road and the Elm Tree public house adjacent.
- **Rock View Terrace**, a raised terrace, with its own walled pavement was clearly designed to take in the view to the southeast to the quarry (**MF2**, now partly obstructed) and is a charming piece of townscape.
- **Further east**, Pasture Road becomes Main Street which has an intimate and attractive quality with modest stone cottages, often with small walled front gardens. At its junction with Kirk Lane there are quaint (possibly not authentic) street signs on the north-east side of the road. Kirk Lane opens out, with expansive views across the countryside (**HD2**), St Mary's Church as seen from the road is especially picturesque in its secluded graveyard.



*Rock View Terrace*

### 1.3 Materials and palette

- Walls: Gritstone set in courses; ashlar sandstone dressings
- Window reveals: Gritstone, sometimes tooled
- Gateposts: Gritstone
- Roofing: Westmorland slates, Grey slates (Yoredale sandstone)
- Windows: Timber windows: traditionally casements but sashes used widely in the nineteenth century, numerous instances of historic windows having been replaced with upvc
- Pavements: York stone paving; extensive areas that have been replaced with tarmac
- Road surfaces: tarmac
- Street furniture: Street lighting is generally galvanized steel columns.
- Other: Some good surviving ironwork on front boundaries



*Millstone Grit*

#### 1.4 Key buildings and structures

- Manor House, Pasture Road: Grade II\*
- Nursery, Pasture Road: Unlisted
- St Mary's Church, Kirk Lane: Grade II



*Manor House*

#### 1.5 Relationship with other settlements

The bulk of recent housing development at Embsay is located south of the historic village and Conservation Area. It is separated from the historic development by at least the distance of a field, making it seem like an unconnected place. There is little visual connection between the recent housing development and the centre of the Conservation Area; only at the southern periphery is it easily visible.

To the north-east the Conservation Area includes Embsay Kirk and a small cluster of buildings around it on the location of the historic priory. This too is separate from the main settlement, across about four hundred metres of fields. The parish Church of St Mary is located between the main village and Embsay Kirk.

Eastby is a distinct village (and conservation area) to the north-east of Embsay but much smaller. It too is an historic linear development but less dense and is probably not dissimilar to the character Embsay would have had in the mid nineteenth century. Its raised position above Embsay means there are some long views towards the village between the buildings, most notably to the Church of St Mary (**MF5**).

## 2.0 Landscape and Open Space

### 2.1 Overview

Embsay has a particularly strong relationship with the surrounding countryside. Its dramatic setting on the slopes below Embsay Crag allows long views across much of the landscape. To the south of the Conservation Area is Skipton Rock Quarry which forms a dramatic feature in the landscape. The Conservation Area boundary takes in the historic settlement which is a linear development, running east to west across the hillside and extends to the north to take in its immediate landscape setting. The building line is rarely more than a single building deep, allowing constant views between them to the landscape beyond.

To the south of the Conservation Area is more recent housing development which is separated from the historic core by areas of open space.

A large section of the Conservation Area is within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and therefore subject to the planning control of that authority. The open space within the National Park has not been addressed in this assessment.

### 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

### ***East of the Conservation Area: Bounded by Kirk Lane, Low Lane***

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

- The north-east side of the Conservation Area, parallel with Kirk Lane which runs north to Emsay Kirk, is open pasture with fields demarcated with a mixture of hedgerows and stone walls.
  - Kirk Lane leads away from the centre of the historic settlement and into the open countryside. St Mary's Church stands isolated in its graveyard between the village to the south and Emsay Kirk at its northern end. The boundary for the National Park and the Conservation Area runs along Kirk Lane, including the church and Emsay Kirk.
  - There are long views to the north, east and west across the countryside. This open space is an important aspect of the settlement and the Conservation Area's setting.
- The church and site of Emsay Kirk have always been separate from the core historic settlement and this space allows long views up to the Crag. To the east the open space separates the village of Eastby from Emsay.
- There are long views of Emsay Church from within the village of Eastby (also a Conservation Area) across these open fields. The open space and views between them are a part of their historic relationship.
  - At the east end of Main Street, there is a small spur of the Conservation Area that includes a historic group of buildings around Green Bottom Farm and Cherry Trees House. This was unconnected to the main settlement until the mid-twentieth century housing estate to the south linked them. The open space to the east of this spur and north maintains some legibility of the historic urban grain at this end of the Conservation Area.

- To the south-east, parallel with the more recent housing estate, the open space to the east (F1) is further divorced from the context of the Conservation Area and makes a **negligible contribution** to its character or appearance.

***To the south of the Conservation Area (outside its boundary): South of Shires Lane, east of East Lane and west of Low Lane***

*Predominantly makes a **negligible contribution** to character and appearance (Note: this is not the opinion of Alan Baxter Ltd and its subconsultants)*

- This side of the settlement has been much extended in the twentieth century, reducing the legibility of the historic core. To a certain degree the designation of the Conservation Area has prevented the new development from extending right up to the historic core, leaving areas of open space between the new grain and old.

- Shires Lane is an historic southern boundary to the historic development. On the 1891 OS map no development is shown on its south side, except for a few houses on the southern junction of Shires Lane, Elm Tree Square and East Lane. This is still the case. Houses were built along the north side to take in the view of the Aire Valley and Skipton Rock Quarry to the south; Because of the topography, condition of the land and the impact of the modern residential development at Moorland Rise to the East, the open space south of Shire Lane makes a negligible contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Although the Cricket Ground to the south of Shires Lane is not directly adjacent to the Conservation Area it is part of the view across the countryside to the south seen from Shires Lane.

**To the south of Main Street and Pasture Road and north of Shires Lane and East Lane**

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

- There are a number of small open spaces behind the buildings on the south side of the main roads.
- The open space to the south of Pasture Road (F2) reflects historic croft boundaries (see *Introduction to Craven Conservation Area Appraisals*) and has clearly been deliberately included within the Conservation Area. This has preserved their form despite recent development to the south. Travelling north up West Lane this open space allows views to the back of the buildings along Main Street and therefore an understanding of the historic grain of the village and Conservation Area. These areas are historically important to the urban grain and make a **strong contribution** to the character of the Conservation Area. The south-eastern part of F2, by contrast, makes a less strong but still **some positive** contribution
- The other spaces further to the east, south of Main Street, are also important in that they maintain the clear distinction of the historic development. There are a couple of open spaces that front onto Main Street which are remnants of when fields existed in the middle of the developed historic core. Not only are these part of the historic character of the Conservation Area but they are important amenities and contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area.

## 3.0 Views

Refer to the map at the beginning of this Appraisal.

### 3.1 Highly significant fixed views (HF)

**HF1:** From Pasture Road, roughly in front of No. 30 looking south-east over the mill pond, the redeveloped mill site and towards the valley beyond.

This is an un-planned long view over the Aire Valley with the mill chimney providing a locally significant feature in the foreground.

### 3.2 Highly significant dynamic views (HD)

**HD1:** View along Pasture Road looking north and east.

Pasture Road winds gently, allowing glimpses ahead of the historic buildings and former farmsteads that gradually become denser. This view takes in important features of the town's industrial history (the mill ponds and the chimney) and some significant historic buildings. Views north towards Embsay Crag from Main Street and Pasture Road are a constant reminder of the village's relationship with the landscape.

**HD2:** Dynamic views east and west from Kirk Lane between St Mary's Church and Main Street. Long views up to the Crag to the north and panoramic views of the wider landscape.

### 3.3 Moderately significant fixed views (MF)

**MF1:** View east towards the mill chimney along the mill ponds from the small foot bridge at their west end. This is long vista along the mill ponds with the chimney in the distance is significant for its association with Embsay's industrial past.

**MF2:** From Rock View Terrace south-east towards over the Aire Gap, towards Skibeden quarry. – This terrace of Victorian houses was built to take in the dramatic landscape view of the quarry and is an example of the urban development responding to the landscape.

**MF3:** View looking north from the public car park in the middle of Main Street – This a particularly prominent view from the middle of the settlement looking north to Embsay Crag, the most conspicuous feature of the landscape around the Conservation Area.

**MF4:** From the houses on the north side of Shires Lane to the southeast across the valley – This view is similar to MF2 but without the recent development in the foreground.

**MF5:** View from outside 3 and 5 Barden Road, Eastby towards St Mary's Church, Embsay – This is a long view with the church visible across the fields separating the two villages.

**MF6:** View from Kirk Lane to St Mary's Church to the west – The church is surrounded by tree coverage on its south, west and north side so it is only from an almost parallel position on Kirk Lane that the Church can be appreciated. Its graveyard and surrounding planting create an attractive setting to the building.

**MF7:** View to Hill Top Farm from the west end of Pasture Road - This group of historic farm buildings is characteristic of the relationship of the buildings and landscape in Craven.

**MF8:** Panoramic view across the landscape north-east to south-east from the west end of Pasture Road – This point is the western extremity of the Conservation Area and these are the expansive views out, across the countryside.

**MF9:** View north along Elm Tree Square towards the Elm Tree public house – The pub and the small flower bed in the road in front of it form a sort of centre to the village and are surrounded by attractive buildings.



*View from Main Street north (HD1)*



*Junction of Main Street and Kirk Lane*



MD3



HD1

## 4.0 Traffic and Movement

### 4.1 Pedestrian

The pavements are inconsistent and rare away from the middle of the Conservation Area. Along Main Street and Elm Tree Square there are sections of pavement with stone paving and cobbles which enhance the character of the Conservation Area. Some sections of the kerbs are stone.

### 4.2 Vehicle

Embsay is located north of the A65, the main road through Craven, and therefore does not have a lot of through-traffic.

The roads through the Conservation Area are narrow and have limited markings, which add to its rural character.

### 4.3 Parking

Residents seem to largely park on the roads through necessity, though this makes the already narrow roads even narrower. This has been addressed in an example of new housing on Main Street by setting the houses back to create parking spaces in front. This disrupts the street line to create prominent areas of hard surface which harms the character of the area.

There are areas of double yellow lines on Main Street, Elm Street and Kirk Lane. These prevent the roads becoming too narrow due to on street parking, which makes it difficult for people to pass.

## 5.0 Recommendations for Further Work

- Identification of buildings which enhance and detract from the character of the Conservation Area
- Suggested Article 4 Directions
- Further research into the historical development of the village
- Identification of problems, pressures and potential solutions

# Alan Baxter

**Prepared by** Heloise Palin, Bob Sydes, Richard Pollard, Gemma Fowlie

**Reviewed by** Henry Cumbers - Craven DC and Ian Smith - Historic England

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