



DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

WILSDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2020-2038



Wilsden Parish Council
January 2023

FOREWORD

Wilsden Parish is a former mill village in a picturesque area on the outskirts of the main Bradford conurbation. It has a rich heritage clearly evidenced in the number of historic buildings, reflecting a time when the textile industry dominated the economy of the area.

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan (The Plan) for Wilsden has been led and championed by a Steering Group of Wilsden Parish Council including both parish councillors and residents. A Neighbourhood Plan is a new planning tool, which enables communities to have a greater say in how their neighbourhood develops

The Plan provides an important opportunity to ensure that the parish is developed in a well-planned and positive way; meeting the strategic needs of the District in harmony with the aspirations of the local community. This Plan is based on robust evidence and extensive consultation with the residents of Wilsden and other individuals and bodies with an interest in how the Parish develops. There were a number of clear messages that came through the consultation process, namely the need for the Plan to:

- ensure that further housing and other developments within the area, as specified by City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, reflect and are sensitive to the needs of the area.
- conserve and enhance the built heritage of Wilsden and the surrounding area.
- protect and enhance the natural environment both within the village of Wilsden and in the surrounding countryside.
- maintain a mixed economy with continuing employment in a diverse range of small and medium sized enterprises.
- maintain and enhance community facilities in the area.

The Plan reflects these views; and broadly aims to support development that enhances the area and meets local needs and aspirations. The Plan includes a vision for the area and a set of objectives and planning policies to support this vision.

The Plan, once adopted, forms part of the district-wide suite of planning documents. Its policies will work alongside policies in the Bradford Local Plan, once agreed.

The Plan along with the associated Design Code is now at the draft stage. The Plan is published along with a number of Supplementary Evidence documents which inform the policies detailed below. This means that the Parish Council is satisfied that it has a robust Plan and now invites residents, landowners, businesses, agencies and others to give their views on it. Any comments received during this stage will be considered by the Parish Council, and the Plan may be amended accordingly.

You, as a resident or another interested body or person, are now invited to read the draft Version of the Plan and make any comments you may have. There will be a seven-week period to do this, commencing on January 31st, 2023 and closing on March 21st, 2023.

Wherever possible, please ensure that you specify the policy or section to which your response relates. If you wish to comment on the Draft Plan you can do this:

- By email addressed to: clerk@wilsdenparishcouncil.gov.uk
- In writing addressed to: Parish Clerk, Wilsden Parish Council, Wilsden Village Hall, Townfield, Wilsden, BD15 0HT.

David Overend

Chair Wilsden Parish Council

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used within this Neighbourhood Plan

CBMDC	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
DPD	Development Plan Document
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
RUDP	Bradford Revised Unitary Development Plan
SHLAA	Bradford Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Bradford Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document

INTRODUCTION

Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan

The Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) is a new community led type of planning document for guiding the future development and growth of the parish.

It was decided to produce a Neighbourhood Plan as the community wanted to play a much stronger role in shaping how Wilsden Parish develops.

A Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity for the community to set out a vision and plan for how they want the Parish to develop until 2038 in ways that meet identified local need, make sense for local people and makes Wilsden an even better place.

It enables the community to put in place planning and other policies that will help deliver an agreed vision for Wilsden. It provides the opportunity to specify in more detail what we expect from development in the Parish. Furthermore, unlike parish plans or other kinds of documents that may be prepared by a community, a Neighbourhood Plan forms an integral part of the development plan for an area. This legal status means that it must be taken into account by CBMDC and other relevant bodies when considering planning decisions that may affect Wilsden Parish.

The Plan is informed by extensive research and influenced by robust community engagement. Furthermore, it builds on the existing Parish Plan for Wilsden, agreed in 2010. It provides a vision for how the community wish to see Wilsden develop, and objectives and policies as how they want to achieve this.

It is intended to be a comprehensive plan for the development of the Parish. This means that it sometimes deals with issues that while important to the community and important to the development of the Parish are legally beyond the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan, for example, in relation to housing development in the Green Belt. Where it is considered that such measures are entirely legitimate aspirations for the community, but they cannot be included in the Plan as statutory neighbourhood plan policies they are identified as Wilsden Community Policies.

The Plan area corresponds to that of the Parish Council boundary and the time period 2020 – 2038 mirrors that of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) emerging Local Plan.

The Plan is a legal document and once ‘made’ will form part of the development plan for the Bradford District which includes the Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan area.

How the Plan fits within the planning system

The Localism Act 2011 provided new powers to allow local communities to shape the future development of their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. This includes determining where they want new homes and other forms of development to be built, what those new buildings and other forms of development should look like, whilst at the same time protecting the landscape and character of the community.

Neighbourhood Plans must, however, meet the basic conditions set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). These conditions state that a neighbourhood plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area

- not breach, and be otherwise compatible with EU obligations that remain in force until superseded by UK legislation

The Plan has been developed in accordance with these basic conditions. The Plan has been drafted in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the policies in the adopted Core Strategy of the CBMDC Local Plan.

Subsequent to the adoption of the Core Strategy in July 2017 CBMDC decided to carry out a Partial Review in the light of changes to national guidelines. This Partial Review process commenced in December 2018 and identified the preferred options in 2019. In parallel with this review CBMDC has also been developing the Site Allocation DPD and carrying out a partial review of the Green Belt for the district. In 2020 CBMDC decided to move towards a single Local Plan that integrated policies with site allocations in one plan. The Draft Local Plan preferred options was issued for consultation in February 2021 along with a schedule for adoption in late 2022 or early 2023.

The housing supply policies in this document are informed by the published Core Strategy housing targets. The Plan, once adopted, forms part of the statutory development plan for the Bradford District. At this point, planning applications that affect Wilsden Parish ought to be determined in accordance with the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and the CBMDC Local Plan. This means that the residents of the Parish will have a far greater influence over where development takes place, and what it looks like.

Consultation and the process of developing the plan

The Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan area was designated in December 2014.

The development of the Plan has been led and championed by a Steering Group made up of parish councillors and local residents working under the auspices of Wilsden Parish Council, the Plan's 'qualifying body'.

The Plan is based on strong evidence. The Steering Group has undertaken extensive consultation with the residents of Wilsden and other individuals and bodies with an interest in how the Parish develops.

Public events were held in September 2014, September 2016 and July 2017 informing the community about the neighbourhood planning process and providing an opportunity to identify key issues and potential opportunities under a number of broad themes. Household Surveys were conducted in December 2015 and July 2019 followed by a number of meetings with interested bodies.

In June 2017 a draft Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for the formal presubmission consultation process. In response to consultation responses along with changes to the powers available to neighbourhood planning groups in a revised NPPF it was decided to make fundamental changes to the housing site allocation policies. These changes mean that as the revised plan is significantly different to the 2017 draft Plan it is necessary to carry out a second presubmission consultation.

Further details regarding the consultation undertaken in developing the Plan are provided in the Consultation Statement.

ABOUT WILSDEN PARISH

Wilsden is a predominately rural and historic parish situated approximately 6 miles west of Bradford and just south of Bingley.

The population of the Wilsden Parish Council area, which covers the villages of Wilsden and Harecroft and the surrounding farms and houses, was 4,807 at the 2011 Census. The Parish Council area contained 2,141 dwellings in November 2020 compared to the 1,819 dwellings in 2004, representing a 17.6% increase.

Wilsden dates back to Saxon times, flourishing in the nineteenth century when the presence of coal, water and wool transformed an agricultural area into an industrial landscape based on textiles. Wilsden initially grew as a farming community, looking very different from its present shape. Housing was not focused along a closely built-up main road but consisted of separate clusters of farms in seven separate hamlets. Some farmers diversified very early into home-based aspects of the textile business, the more prosperous ones converting barns into warehouses and eventually building mills.

Local supplies of building stone and coal were factors in Wilsden's industrial development. The population grew rapidly from 913 at the 1801 census to peak at 3,454 in 1851. This led to the surge of house building, which gave the Village its still recognisable shape and character. Numbers then declined, only exceeding the 1851 figure in the second half of the twentieth century.

The Parish still retains many buildings from this period and the historic core of Wilsden was made a Conservation Area in 1977. Whilst some of the original hamlets have been absorbed within the settlement boundaries, others have retained their separate characteristics.



View towards Wilsden Hill

With the decline of the textile industry, most of the working population is employed outside the parish, predominantly in Leeds and Bradford. Although for many Wilsden is a dormitory village,

there are many small and medium size enterprises in the area. The number of people working in the area is over one third of the total working age population, although a significant number of these commute into the parish. The number of people aged over 65 in the area is 19% of the population compared to 13% for the whole district. The proportion of the population of the Bradford district that is under 16 makes it the youngest city in the country but Wilsden with roughly equal numbers of people over 65 and under 16 has a different demographic to the district as a whole.

Fortunately, the shape of the valley, with a degree of vigilance, has ensured the survival of the character of this independent community, even after a second wave of growth.

Wilsden is on a north facing slope with its lowest point above sea level being 115 m (375 ft.) at the boundary with Harden and the highest point being 285 m (937 ft.) at the boundary with Thornton.



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Figure 1 Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan Area

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Challenges and Opportunities

The Plan seeks to address and shape, as far as is possible, the development challenges and opportunities that face the Parish of Wilsden over the coming years.

Consultation with the community identified the following challenges for the area that the Plan might seek to address:

- Preservation of the area's rich heritage including environmental and historical artefacts
- Coalescence of settlements
- Loss of community

A number of potential opportunities were identified by the community and Steering Group to address these challenges through the Plan, and include:

- Identification and protection of non-designated, locally important heritage assets
- Identification of Special Character Areas coupled with design principles to ensure high quality development
- Retaining the physical and visual separation between Wilsden and the surrounding settlements
- Maintain and enhance the services that make Wilsden a strong community

Vision

The Plan has at its heart a vision and core objectives that are based on key issues raised by local people in order to ensure that Wilsden remains the vibrant, distinct, self-contained and forward looking parish that it is.

VISION STATEMENT

The rural character, sense of identity and community spirit of the Wilsden area will be sustained and enhanced through sustainable development, while at the same time preserving and enhancing its heritage and attractive natural and built environment.

Objectives

Underpinning the vision are nine core objectives. The objectives provide the focus for the Plan and seek to realise the vision.

- Support the delivery of housing which meets the present and future needs of the community, is sympathetic to the character and history of the Parish and is of right type and in the right location.
- Manage and influence development to minimise its impact on the natural and built environment and ensure that it supports the attractive and distinctive character of the Parish.
- Support the maintenance of the separation between the villages and hamlets both within the Wilsden Parish and the neighbouring parishes of Sandy Lane, Harden and Cullingworth to help ensure the retention of their distinct and historic identities.
- Aim to retain important local leisure and community facilities, retail and employment provision, and wherever possible, enhance them.
- Conserve and enhance important green spaces, which are valuable to the community and wildlife.

- Ensure that the distinctive rural landscape, settlement pattern, historic buildings and biodiversity are protected and enhanced.
- Create an environment that makes it attractive for the self-employed and small and medium-sized businesses and shops to locate and flourish.
- Support public transport, walking and cycling and address the problems of traffic congestion and the lack of parking along Main Street and on some other roads.
- Reinforce and support the role of the Wilsden Village Centre as the hub and focus of local shopping, community and leisure activities.

POLICIES

This Vision and objectives will be realised by planning and community policies, which are locally significant, consultation shows matter most to the community and to which the Plan can add the greatest value. These locally formulated policies are specific to Wilsden Parish and reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

The policies are designed to complement national and district-wide planning policies and to add more detail, specific to Wilsden.

It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue:

- The whole document and the policies contained in it must be considered together.
- Where there are no policies in this Plan relevant to a planning application or development proposal, the provisions of relevant national and Bradford wide plans and policies apply.

Whilst every effort has been made to make the main parts of this Plan easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements.

1 A SUSTAINABLE WILSDEN PARISH

1.1 A Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

The objective of the UK Planning System, as set out in the NPPF, is to achieve sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as “*ensuring that better lives for ourselves does not mean worse lives for future generations*”.

This Neighbourhood Plan has the purpose of securing sustainable development at its heart. This includes how much new development is required to meet the needs of the local community, where it should best go and how it should be designed, both for now and in the future. This encompasses all proposals for development from the very smallest, such as a minor extension to a house, to major housing and employment developments.

In January 2021 Wilsden Parish Council declared a Climate Emergency. In order that the environmental impact of all new housing is minimised Design Codes have been developed that include recommendations on sustainability and climate change.

The Parish Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals that contribute to sustainable development. This includes working with CBMDC, the local community, developers and other partners to encourage the formulation of development proposals, which clearly demonstrate how sustainable development has been considered and addressed and can be approved without delay.

This Plan is not intended to replace relevant district-wide and national policies such as those contained in the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. The intention is that the Plan, and the policies it contains, sits alongside these documents, to add additional Wilsden specific policies to help achieve the community's vision and in support of key national and district-wide planning objectives. Where suitable policies already exist at the national or local levels, they are not duplicated in the Plan.

GENERAL POLICY PRINCIPLE

The provisions of national and Bradford wide plans and policies apply to all planning applications or development proposals, including when there are no relevant policies within the neighbourhood plan.

1.2 Directing Development to the most Sustainable Locations

One of the key ways in which the planning system can ensure sustainability is to direct development to the most appropriate locations.

The Core Strategy for CBMDC establishes a hierarchy of settlements of the Regional City of Bradford, the principal towns of Keighley, Bingley and Ilkley, local growth centres and local service centres and rural areas. Wilsden has been identified as a Local Service Centre *where “the emphasis will be on a smaller scale of development together with the protection and enhancement of those centres as attractive and vibrant places and communities, providing quality of place and excellent environmental, economic and social conditions”*.

The Core Strategy also adds that by the end of 2030 the Pennine Villages of Oakworth, Oxenhope, Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth and Denholme will *“have retained their individual characters and sense of place whilst seeing a smaller scale of housing development and the provision of amenities served by improved bus and rail links to Keighley town centre, Bradford city centre, Bingley, Queensbury and neighbouring Halifax”*. The community generally supports the role for Wilsden as indicated in the hierarchy of settlements set out in the Core Strategy.

There is overwhelming community support for the use of previously developed land in preference to greenfield development

In seeking to maximise the use of previously developed land, the Core Strategy; Policy HO6 sets a target of 35% of development in local service centres such as Wilsden to be on previously developed land. This target has been reduced to 30% of development on previously developed land in the emerging Local Plan. This Plan supports the effective, efficient and sustainable use of land. To be supported, priority should be given to the use of previously developed (brownfield) land over greenfield sites. Development in the Green Belt will only be supported if it comprises appropriate development in the Green Belt in accordance with national and BMDC Green Belt policy'. This Plan actively encourages development to meet Wilsden's housing needs to be located within the 2020 Settlement Boundary of Wilsden, as shown in Figure 2.

In order to achieve the levels of development identified for the Parish in the Core Strategy and in the most sustainable way, this Plan advocates a focus on carefully controlled and limited smaller scale housing and other forms of development within the established built-up area boundary of the Village of Wilsden. This approach reflects the views of the local community.

The consultation carried out during the development of this Plan established that residents recognise the need for limited development in the Parish to accommodate growth, meet housing and other development needs and help sustain local services and facilities. Equally the consultation showed that residents wish to ensure that development will not dominate or have an adverse impact on the distinctive character of the Parish. Concern was also expressed that developments should not place undue pressure on local services and facilities.

The consultation showed that the community wishes to see a smaller more compact pattern of development especially in Wilsden village, reducing the need to travel to access local services and minimising development on green field sites. In the survey of residents 64% (93) of respondents agreed that new housing should be built densely so as to protect green field land. This approach is also consistent with the Core Strategy and national planning policies which seek to focus development in the established built-up areas and avoid development in the open countryside.

A key element of this approach is the scale of development, especially housing, with an emphasis on smaller more compact housing sites. It is considered that this type of development is most suitable for the Parish as it would best complement the existing scale, character and pattern of development, minimise the risk of urban sprawl and effectively promote more sustainable forms of development. This approach recognises in principle that the density of development, especially for housing, may need to be higher to accommodate the growth planned. Policies W/HO/2 and W/HO4 give more detail as to how this Plan proposes to achieve this.

In the smaller villages and hamlets in the Parish a lower level of development will be supported in principle where it is small scale, appropriately designed and located and meets a local need. Furthermore, because the area of the Parish outside of the built-up part of Wilsden is 'washed over' by the Green Belt, its contribution to meeting identified development needs will be limited to those types of development which are appropriate in the Green Belt.

1.3 Wilsden Village Settlement Boundary

A Settlement Boundary is a commonly used tool in planning documents such as neighbourhood plans and local plans/core strategies. It is used to define the extent of a built-up part of a community. It distinguishes between areas where in planning terms development would be acceptable in principle, such as in a town or village, and where it would not be (generally in the least sustainable locations) such as in the open countryside. The current Settlement Boundary was established in the Bradford Replacement Unitary Development Plan (RUDP), adopted in May 2005.

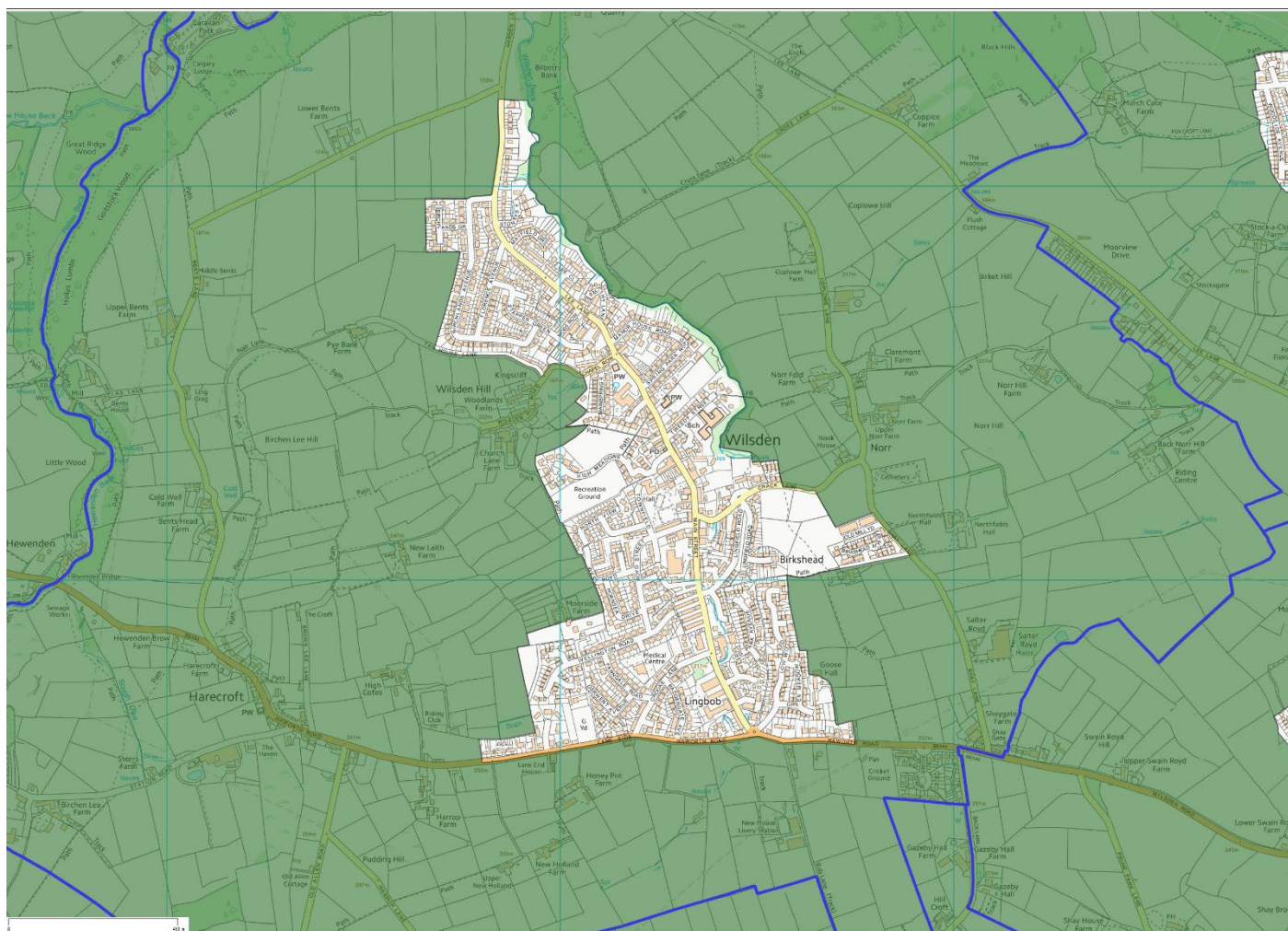
For the purposes of the neighbourhood plan, the settlement boundary is that part of the village that is not in the Green Belt.

The designation of the Settlement Boundary will focus the modest scale of development envisaged for the Parish towards Wilsden village and generally supports the smaller more compact pattern of development which the Plan proposes. This will reinforce Wilsden's role as the local centre and hub for the surrounding area and the wider Parish. In addition, it will help protect the distinctive and beautiful countryside of the Parish, which is protected by Green Belt status and has been identified as being of special landscape value.

The consultation shows that the community also shares the view that Wilsden Village is generally a more appropriate and sustainable location for development than the rest of the Parish. This is a view echoed in the Core Strategy.

The existing Settlement Boundary, as shown in Fig 2, is considered to reflect an appropriate and sustainable settlement boundary. It is however recognised that the proposed housing allocation of at least 200 dwellings as set out in the CBMDC Core Strategy may not be achieved without some changes to the Green Belt boundaries.

Within the Settlement Boundary for Wilsden small scale, sustainable development will be viewed sympathetically.



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Figure 2 Wilsden Village Settlement Boundary

POLICY W/HO1 DEVELOPMENT WITHIN WILSDEN VILLAGE

Within the Settlement Boundary for Wilsden, as shown on the Figure 2 and defined as land not in the Green Belt, development proposals will be supported where it can demonstrate that it has taken into account the following, that:

- a) It respects the size, character and level of service provision of Wilsden;
- b) It retains existing natural boundaries and features such as trees, hedges, streams and walls (especially dry stone) which either contribute to visual amenity or are important for their ecological value, wherever possible and appropriate;
- c) It respects and, where possible, enhances the distinctive qualities of the special and attractive landscape in which Wilsden is situated;
- d) It protects the heritage value and enhances the setting of any locally or nationally designated asset of heritage value, where a proposal would affect the setting of that heritage asset;
- e) It conserves and, where possible, enhances Wilsden Conservation Area and its setting, where relevant;
- f) It does not reduce garden/green space to an extent where it adversely affects the distinctive character of Wilsden or the amenity of the proposed occupiers of the new development or adjacent properties/uses;

- g) It considers the impact on neighbouring occupiers' use by way of excessive overlooking, overshadowing, over-dominance and loss of outlook; and
- h) Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved.
- i) It supports sustainable travel options of walking, cycling and public transport.

In addition to the above Policies W/HO4, W/BH1, W/BH2, W/BH4, W/NE2, W/NE3 and W/NE4 contain detailed policies on specific areas.

1.4 Review of the Green Belt

The majority of Wilsden is designated as Green Belt. It covers much of the open countryside in the Parish, including large swathes of land. The general extent of the Green Belt in the Parish is shown at Figure 2. There is strong community sentiment regarding the Green Belt that generally surrounds the built-up part of Wilsden village. It not only helped retain the distinct character of the area and helps focus development in more sustainable locations, but also provides opportunities for recreation and leisure and contains many key 'Green Infrastructure' assets including sites of nature conservation value.

National Planning policy is clear in its support for the Green Belt, emphasising its essential characteristics of openness and permanence. It also states that inappropriate development (such as the construction of new buildings) which is harmful to the role and function of the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

As the NPPF states in paragraph 137 *'The government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence'*.

The NPPF in paragraph 138 states that Green Belt serves 5 purposes.

- *to check unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas*
- *to prevent neighbouring towns from merging*
- *to safeguard the countryside from encroachment*
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land*

The NPPF also states that changes to the Green Belt can only be made in exceptional circumstances (paragraph 140) and the need for such changes is a strategic decision for the local planning authority. Although the need for such changes to the green belt is a strategic matter the NPPF makes clear that a neighbourhood plan can have a view on how and where those changes take place.

The neighbourhood planning process has highlighted the value and importance that the community place on the Green Belt surrounding Wilsden village and the contribution it makes to local distinctiveness, character and quality of life. Its protection is a top priority for the community.

The CBMDC Core Strategy identifies that some changes to the adopted Green Belt around Wilsden may be required in order for the village to meet the allocated housing number. CBMDC is currently in the process of preparing a new Local Plan and although the housing numbers allocated to Wilsden and the time period over which they are delivered are different some Green Belt changes may be required over the plan period.

This will ensure that the preparation of the Local Plan is used as the mechanism for the detailed identification of the Bradford Green Belt boundaries in accordance with national planning policy. It will also provide the proper opportunity for residents, developers and other interested bodies to

contribute to this debate both in general terms on the Green Belt boundary and to provide the agreed levels of development for the District.

The methodology used to review the Green Belt is defined by CBMDC and is consistent across the whole district. Before considering the issue of land availability the process involved assessing parcels of land against the five main purposes of the Green Belt. Not all land in the district was considered for potential changes to the Green Belt boundary. Parcels with an inner boundary more than 50 metres from the existing boundary were excluded from any changes.

An important factor when considering changes to the existing settlement boundary is whether this results in a village with strong defensible boundaries. Wilsden has two strong and defensible boundaries that must be taken into account when considering possible changes.

- The B6144 Haworth Road from the PC boundary with Sandy Lane to Harecroft is a strong southerly boundary to Wilsden.
- The wooded valley of Wilsden Beck from Bank Bottom to Crack Lane is a strong north-easterly boundary to Wilsden. Access to the village across this wooded valley is extremely limited.

In addition to maintaining strong defensible boundaries, it is also necessary to guard against merging with neighbouring communities.

This assessment of all the parcels of land was then correlated with sites that had been put forward for development. A further factor to consider is the potential housing yield in relation to the allocated housing numbers for Wilsden.

Based upon the available data we would acknowledge changes to the Green Belt boundary may be required such as the sites designated WI2/H and WI3/H (as shown in Figure 3) recommended in the Draft Local Plan are included within a revised Wilsden Settlement Boundary.

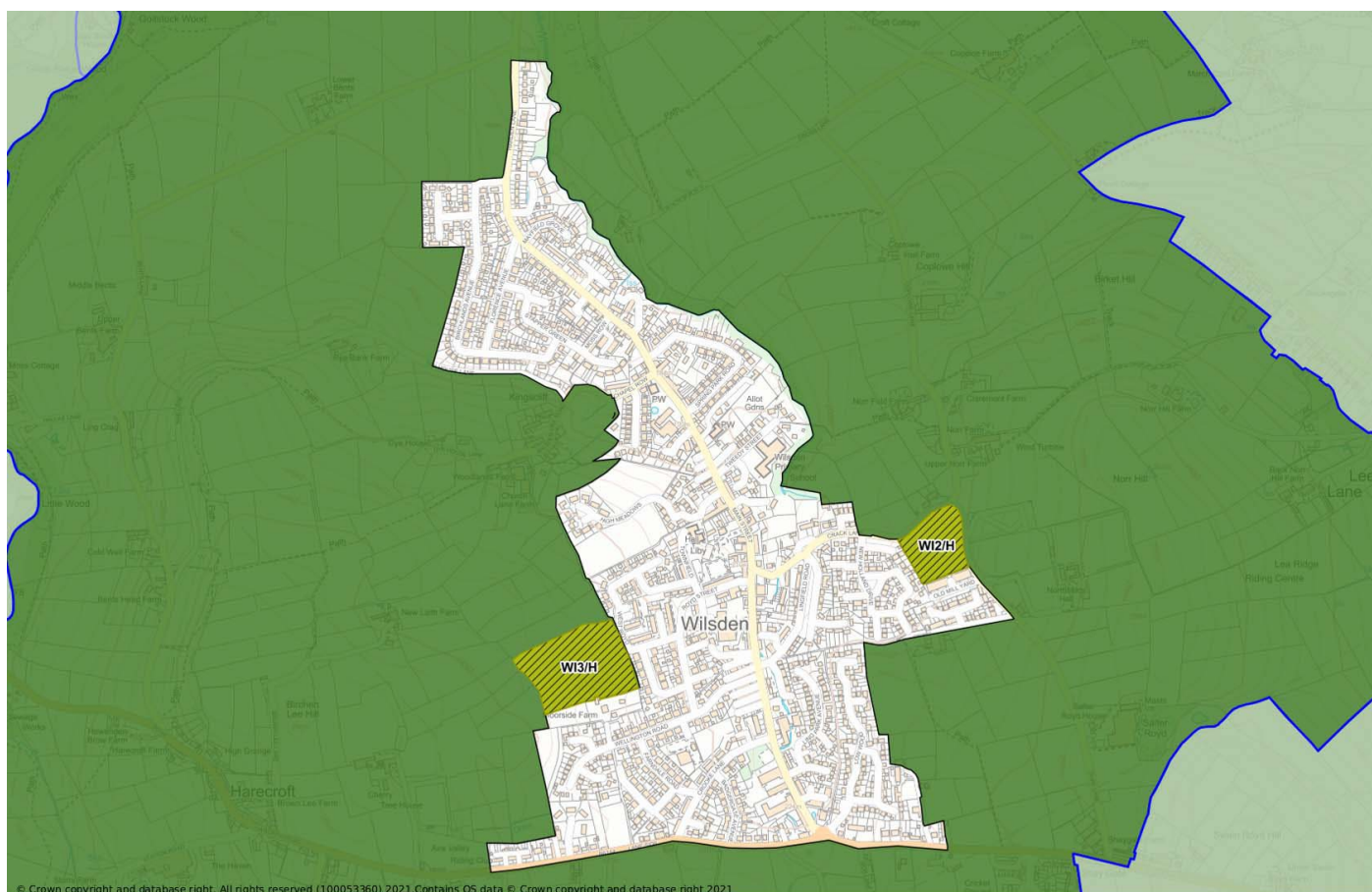


Figure 3 Wilsden Village Settlement Boundary with possible options for change

1.5 Development outside Wilsden Village

In planning terms, land outside a defined Settlement Boundary including any small groups of buildings or small settlements that may be found there is treated as countryside.

There is strong support for this land to continue as countryside. Since its beginnings, Wilsden has been, and largely remains, a rural parish. Outside the village the land remains overwhelming in open use such as farming. The overall appearance of the countryside remains much as it would have been 100 years ago, despite a degree of modern development.

This countryside is one of the Parish's most valued characteristics, as underlined by the findings of the consultation. Residents wish to see this open countryside protected and, wherever possible, enhanced to remain an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource. Residents want to avoid less sustainable forms of development and prevent urban sprawl resulting in the coalescence of the distinct settlements that comprise Wilsden Parish into nearby villages and settlements.

This strong local wish to support and protect the distinctive character of the landscape and countryside also accords with district-wide and national policy.

In particular, the countryside in Wilsden Parish is designated as Green Belt. The main purpose of this designation is to protect the land around towns and cities from urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Within the Green Belt there are strict planning controls over the type of development, which can take place within it. The NPPF (paragraphs 147 to 151) detail the special circumstances that can result in development being permitted in the Green Belt.

Furthermore, much of this countryside has also been identified as having a special and attractive landscape, not only in terms of its beauty, but also the species and habitats it supports. Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. The Parish forms part of the Yorkshire Southern Pennines Fringe Landscape, of which *the most striking aspect of the landscape is the mingling of predominantly 'gritstone' industrial towns and villages with the strong valley forms and pastoral agriculture of the Pennine foothills.*

POLICY W/HO2 DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE WILSDEN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY - THE GREEN BELT

The Plan supports the continued designation of the open countryside outside of Wilsden village as Green Belt. Within the Green Belt, there will be a strong presumption against development that would conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt or adversely affects its open character.

2 HOUSING NEED

This section considers the amount, location and type of housing over the Plan period. The consultation showed that this is an issue of great concern and interest to local people. The Parish's good quality natural and built environment coupled with its proximity and accessibility to the main urban centres such as Bradford means that it is a popular place to live. Therefore, demand for housing in the Parish is strong.

2.1 Housing Demand

The Plan recognises that future housing development will help to support and enhance local amenities, such as shops, and help to support a balanced and sustainable community.

The impact on the area of the high rate of housing growth in recent years was highlighted as the major concern of local residents as evidenced by consultation undertaken as part of the development of this Plan.

The consultation shows that residents are generally supportive of limited, carefully controlled house building in the Parish that meets a local need. They appreciate that it could help support local services, such as shops, and create a more balanced community and housing stock, especially in the context of the Parish's ageing population. A household survey undertaken in 2015 showed that the community was generally supportive of small housing developments with 76% of respondents favouring developments of no more than 50 houses. There was also strong support for the re-use of previously developed land.

They were concerned about the scale of new housing development that had already taken place and could take place in the future. It was placing pressures on already stretched facilities such as medical, education, sporting and recreational. The general view was that the Parish was not a suitable or a sustainable location for major new housing building as this would inevitably result in high and unsustainable levels of commuting away from the Parish for jobs and services and would have an adverse impact on the natural and built character of the Parish.

2.2 Housing Provision

Wilsden is an attractive parish with generally good local facilities and services such as shops, schools and health care. Transport links to Bradford, Leeds and other nearby towns are good. Consequently, it has a buoyant housing market, as reflected in house prices, which are above the District average.

Land for future housing development in the Parish, however, is extremely limited under existing planning policies. The land outside Wilsden Village lies within the designated Green Belt. Green Belt designation is intended to protect the open character of land designated as such, and within the Green Belt development is only allowed in very special circumstances.

Furthermore, the village of Wilsden is largely 'built-up' and consequently finding suitable land for new housing is difficult.

Legislation requires that a Neighbourhood Plan must support and be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the wider area. In the case of Wilsden, this means that it must be in general conformity with those contained in the adopted Core Strategy of the CBMDC Local Plan. This includes ensuring that the Plan makes its full and proper contribution to meeting any housing requirement these policies set out.

The Core Strategy for CBMDC is required to provide for at least 42,100 new homes between 2013 and 2030 across the District. However, in developing the Core Strategy CBMDC did not make a detailed settlement by settlement assessment of housing need but assessed this on a district-wide basis.

The adopted Core Strategy establishes a hierarchy of settlements across the district as the basis for a district-wide growth strategy. The general principle being the higher up a settlement comes in the hierarchy the more suitable it is considered for future development in the most sustainable way. All the main settlements across the Bradford District were reviewed as part of this hierarchy, including Wilsden.

The village of Wilsden has been identified as a local service centre in the hierarchy with an emphasis on small scale development.

The Core Strategy categorises other smaller settlements in the Parish outside Wilsden Village as being washed over by the Green Belt. The aim of Policy SC4 of the Core Strategy is to prevent unnecessary dispersal of development to smaller settlement and the open countryside, whilst allowing for limited types of development within the open countryside. Any development proposals that come forward should be in line with the provisions of national policy as set out in the NPPF.

The adopted Core Strategy identified a requirement for at least 200 homes in Wilsden between 2013 and 2030. Up to the end of 2020, 93 homes had been completed and a further 13 were under construction leaving a residual requirement of 94 homes. A review of the CBMDC Local Plan is ongoing and based upon the emerging 2021 allocations a minimum of 125 homes will be required between 2020 and 2038.

The consultation shows that the community is concerned about the scale of housing development proposed for Wilsden. Residents feel strongly that the land in the Green Belt should be protected. They are also concerned about the adverse impact it will have on the distinctive character of the Parish, and that it will inevitably worsen the already high levels of commuting away from the Parish for jobs and services.

Although residents object in principle to any changes to the Green Belt it is recognised that some Green Belt changes will be required in order to meet the housing allocation. More details of a green Belt review process are given in 1.4 above.

2.3 Providing this Housing Requirement

Government policy states that neighbourhood plans should positively support the strategic policies for the area and should not promote less development than is required by the Local Plan.

The housing allocation for Wilsden will be met by a mixture of sites within the Settlement Boundary and those that may be newly released from the Green Belt. Wilsden village is largely built-up and undeveloped land suitable for housing (or other forms of development) is limited. This Neighbourhood Plan did consider allocating land to meet this housing requirement but ultimately determined not to do so. The Steering Group did undertake an assessment of potential housing sites capable of accommodating at least five dwellings located within the existing settlement boundary of the village. This assessment concluded that the only available site, off Crooke Lane, has been identified by CBMDC in the emerging Local Plan. It was therefore concluded that to allocate within this Neighbourhood Plan would only duplicate the allocation carried out by CBMDC. There are a small number of sites that could accommodate less than five dwellings including some that have an existing planning approval. These sites are considered as windfall developments and are covered by Policy W/HO5 and an allowance is included in the allocated number of dwellings in the emerging Local Plan.

Wilsden also includes a number of green open spaces within the settlement boundary which the community believes should not be considered for development. These are identified within section 4.1 of this Neighbourhood Plan and covered by Policy W/EN1.

The emerging CBMDC Local Plan proposes to allocate one site within the Settlement Boundary. This site, off Crooke Lane, is partially developed and is designated WI/1H and shown in Figure 4. This site is partially in the Wilsden Conservation Area and as a result of Policy W/BH2 would be considered as being wholly within the Conservation Area. This site is capable of accommodating about 18 dwellings.

As a former mill village, Wilsden has retained a number of mill buildings, some of which have been converted for residential use. Other mill buildings remain as sources of local employment. As emphasised in section 5.1 and Policy W/E1 it is important that these mill buildings are retained as sources of employment where this is economically viable. Where there is no long-term economically viable employment use for these mill buildings residential conversion should be the preferred option. Where these mill building are included within the list of Locally Important buildings and structures detailed in section 3.2, Table 1 Policy W/BH1 will govern any conversion applications.

POLICY W/HO3 DEVELOPMENT OF REDUNDANT MILL BUILDINGS IN WILSDEN

Where a former mill building ceases to have an economically viable function as a source of employment residential conversion will be supported. Where the building is included in the list of locally designated buildings and structures development proposals should take into account Policy W/BH1.

There is an example of a former industrial site, where the previous use may be no longer economically viable within the Wilsden Conservation Area. This site has residential support for housing development is at Prospect Mill, Main Street, Wilsden, a large Victorian former textile mill that was latterly used for furniture manufacture. When it was built in 1884 it was the largest of the Wilsden Mills and its importance to the Wilsden streetscape is evidenced by its listing as a locally important heritage asset in section 3.2. The size and layout make these mill premises is understood to be unviable for its current employment use and the parish council believes the optimum way to conserve this important part of the village's industrial heritage is through residential conversion. The site, shown in Figure 3, is currently subject to an outline planning application for conversion to 31 apartments and 13 additional dwellings use which was supported

by Wilsden Parish Council in February 2021 subject to the conversion taking into account Policy W/BH1. In addition to conserving an important part of the village's architectural heritage this conversion can deliver the type of smaller dwellings identified in our Housing Needs supporting evidence document.

As previously stated, we have a strong desire that previously developed land such as this site is utilised before greenfield sites.



Figure 4 Crooke Lane and Prospect Mill

2.4 Design

In conjunction with this Neighbourhood Plan the Steering Group has adopted a Wilsden Design Code. A technical support package was obtained from Locality and AECOM was appointed to develop this Design Code.

The Wilsden Design Code, in conjunction the CBMDC Homes and Neighbourhoods Design Guide and the National Model Design Code will inform all applications for approval within the parish council area. The Wilsden Design Code also incorporates specific design codes for the three sites that CBMDC proposes to allocate under the draft Local Plan.

In July 2021 a revised NPPF was published containing updated policies with regard to design. In paragraph 127 it says *Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.* In paragraph 134 it says *Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies.*

All developments within the parish council area should incorporate details of how they will address issues of Sustainability, Biodiversity Net Gain and Climate Change in their application. Any development that doesn't meet the standards laid down in the Wilsden Design Code coupled with any relevant district and national design guidance should be considered for refusal unless they provide detailed justification as to why this is not possible.

All developments of sites that CBMDC proposes to allocate in its draft Local Plan must take full account of the site-specific design recommendations in the Wilsden Design Code and where they wish to deviate from the Code they should produce a detailed justification as to why this is the case.

POLICY W/HO4 WILSDEN DESIGN CODE

Development should enhance and conserve local distinctiveness by demonstrating high quality design which both respects the existing character and responds to the distinctive character of Wilsden. They should take full account of and respond positively to the design principles and recommendations contained in the Wilsden Design Code.

Developments that do not take full account of the recommendations and design principles of the Wilsden Design Code will not be supported. Where there are reasons why a development will deviate from the Wilsden Design Code a justification should be given.

Development proposals for the sites allocated through the CBMDC draft Local Plan should have regard to the site-specific recommendations in the Wilsden Design Code unless there are specific technical issues that would preclude this.

Development proposals should be able to demonstrate how they will address Sustainability, Biodiversity Net Gain and Climate Change within their planning application, and failure to do so should be considered as a reason for refusal

2.5 Windfall Development

Windfall development is defined as any residential development that is granted planning permission on land or buildings not specifically allocated for residential development in an approved planning document such as a Core Strategy or a Neighbourhood Plan.

These sites often comprise redundant or underutilised buildings, including former farm buildings, or a small gap within an existing frontage of buildings. These are often small sites suitable for only a single dwelling but can be larger for example through the redevelopment of a business premises or a former mill. Normally windfall development is for new housing although, in principle, could comprise other forms of development such as new shops, employment or community facilities.

Such development has made a regular contribution towards housing supply in Wilsden. In recent years, this has averaged more than two dwellings a year. This is a trend which is expected to continue. Though these sites are not identified, the relatively high land values in the Parish coupled with the level of vacant and underutilised land and buildings, including agricultural related, mean that windfall sites have the potential to provide a modest source of housing and other forms of development.

The Plan is supportive of such suitable designed and located development, and where it respects the overall character of the area.

It is recognised that some windfall development proposals may come forward outside the Wilsden Settlement Boundary; for example, the conversion of a disused agricultural building into residential use. In such circumstances, these will be considered in accordance with relevant policies contained in the Plan, especially, Policy W/HO3 and relevant district-wide and national planning policies.

POLICY W/HO5 WINDFALL HOUSING SITES

Development proposals for small scale (generally less than 5 dwellings) windfall developments on unallocated sites will be supported where they are in accordance with policies in the Plan. Particular attention will be given to conformity with W/HO4, as well as relevant district-wide and national policies.

2.6 New Housing Mix

It is important that any housing growth in Wilsden supports the changing population of the Parish over the plan period. It is essential, therefore, that any homes that come forward are of the right type to ensure that Wilsden is a demographically mixed and balanced community, which provides for, and supports, people of all ages both now and in the future. This is consistent with both national and district wide policy where both the NPPF and Policy HO8 of the CBMDC Core Strategy require a mix of housing to meet the needs of the population. The type of housing must also take account of market conditions by ensuring commercial viability.

This is of special significance as there is evidence that the housing stock of the Parish completed in recent years does not reflect its changing needs and requirements. There is a predominance of under occupied detached dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms in the area. This is coupled with a stable and ageing population and a limited number of smaller new build properties.

Results from the 2011 Census show over 21% of households live in houses with 4 or more bedrooms, which is somewhat higher than the district-wide (20%), regional (18%) and England (19%) averages. Since 1995 Land Registry data shows that 50% of new housing completions have been of detached properties, predominantly with 4 or more bedrooms. The Census data indicates that there is also an under representation of smaller type housing, with around 34% of dwellings having 2 or fewer bedrooms against 39% for the district and region and 40% for England.

In addition, there is some evidence of under-occupancy (having more bedrooms than the notional number recommended by the bedroom standard) in the Parish. Analysis of the 2011 Census shows that around 40% (799) of households have two or more spare bedrooms and approximately 42% (828) have one spare bedroom. Under-occupancy is higher than the district, regional and national rates.

The issue of under occupancy is especially an issue for older person households. Over half of pensioner households have an occupancy rating of +2 or more (meaning there are at least two more bedrooms than are technically required by the household).

At the same time, in common with the national trend, the Parish population is ageing. Around one in five (19%) of residents are aged 65 and over, which is above the district (13%), regional (17%) and national (16.3%) rates. The median age of people living in the Parish is 44 which is higher than the district (34), regional and national (39) rates.

This suggests a need for smaller homes of three bedrooms or fewer which would be suitable for residents needing to downsize, small families and those entering the housing market. Providing suitable accommodation for elderly residents will also enable them to remain in the local community and release under occupied larger properties onto the market which would be suitable for growing families.

This analysis is also supported by the findings from the consultation. When asked about what type of housing is most needed the preference was for smaller homes that are suitable for young families and for older residents wishing to downsize to remain in the Parish. More detailed evidence on this is given in a separate document "Supporting evidence Housing Need and Characteristics". Where a development wishes to deviate from the housing mix requirements

detailed below they must provide evidence to justify why it is proposed to override the general housing requirements for the Plan area.

It is possible to assess the impact of this housing mix on commercial viability by using the evidence base developed for CBMDC in the preparation of the CIL Charging Schedule. Because this evidence included a specific example in Wilsden there is relevant data on the impact of this policy. This indicates that while a reduction in the number of larger houses may reduce overall profitability it will not impact upon the overall commercial viability.

It is proposed to achieve the desired housing mix by a requirement that all developments in the designated area should have no more than one dwelling in every three with more than three bedrooms. For small developments of more than one or two dwellings this is not practicable but the policy will apply to all developments of three or more dwellings.

POLICY W/HO6 HOUSING MIX

Housing development proposals will be required to demonstrate that they have taken account of the most up to date published evidence of housing needs in Wilsden and Bradford, having regard to other site and market considerations. Priority should be given to the provision of smaller dwellings (less than 3 bedrooms) to meet the needs of young families and older people who wish to downsize.

For development proposals of 3 or more dwellings, the housing mix should include no more than 35% of properties of 4 bedrooms or more.

Should there be changes to the overall housing market conditions in the Wilsden area or should technical issues impact upon the overall viability of a particular development specific evidence may be presented as to why this policy is not applicable.

2.7 Affordable Housing

In the NPPF affordable housing is defined as being for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

While developments such as at Crack Lane have contributed some much-needed affordable housing in recent years, its provision remains a major challenge in the Parish.

There is a high level of disparity between average house prices (both for sale and rent) and average income. The mean house price in the Parish (£186.824 in 2019) is well above the equivalent district figure, although lower than the, regional and national averages.

Further, the proportion of the local housing stock, which is 'socially rented' is significantly below national and district norms. Indeed, its provision at 5% is less than a third of the district average (15%) and the national average (18%), according to the 2011 Census.

In addition, the community consultation indicated that those with a strong local connection were not given sufficient preferential access to affordable housing when it becomes available.

As a consequence, many people who wish to live in the Parish, including those with a local connection, are unable to do so as they cannot find suitable accommodation either to buy or rent. The affordable housing needs of many residents are not being met.

Local planning policy requires that all new housing developments, involving 10 or more dwellings, should have an affordable housing target of 20% on brownfield sites and 25% on greenfield sites. The expected ratio of affordable housing for rent and for sale is 65% rented and 35% for sale.

This Plan supports the provision of affordable housing that clearly reflects and meets local housing need. As part of the development of this Neighbourhood Plan a study was carried out to establish

the local requirement for affordable housing for sale. This study did not identify a local affordable housing requirement that is significantly different to that of similar areas within the CBMDC area.

POLICY W/H07 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated to CBMDC that it is not possible or appropriate to build affordable homes on the site, the development will provide a financial contribution towards the future provision of affordable housing in the Parish of equivalent value to that which would have been provided on site. Priority should be given to residents of the Parish or with a strong local connection to the Parish in the allocation of affordable housing.

3 BUILT HERITAGE

Wilsden has a very distinctive and attractive built environment which gives it a great sense of place and pride.

It contains many fine buildings, some of which have been recognised nationally as being of special historic and architectural importance, which reflect the incremental development of the Parish over many hundreds of years. They embrace farm buildings from the late seventeenth century, as well as mills and cottages dating from the early and late nineteenth century, many linked to textile manufacturing. These buildings are clustered in the historic core of Wilsden, and around former farm buildings and mills.

Consultation shows conserving and enhancing this distinctive built environment is a top priority for residents and visitors, and that new development should acknowledge its character and environment.

In Figure 5 below we show all Wilsden Heritage Assets. Wilsden Conservation Area is shaded green.

3.1 Nationally Important Buildings, Sites and Structures

There are over 20 'Listed Buildings' and one Scheduled Monument within the Parish that have been identified as being of national significance and importance. These include a wide variety of buildings and structures, including former 19th Century Mill Cottages (such as Chapel Row and Club Row); former farmhouses which predate the Industrial Revolution (e.g. Lee Farmhouse) and buildings associated with Wilsden's heritage (e.g. Bents Mill). It also includes structures such as dry-stone walls (e.g. the Walls flanking footpaths to Wilsden Hill) and other buildings (e.g. Hewenden Viaduct). The full schedule of Listed Buildings and Structures in the Parish is shown in Appendix 1.

The designation of these buildings and structures as Listed Buildings gives them special legal protection beyond that which can be provided through a Neighbourhood Plan. It is important, however, that the Plan highlights them, especially to ensure that all interested parties are aware of their local importance, and the need to conserve and enhance this.

3.2 Wilsden Important Buildings and Structures

In addition to these nationally recognised buildings and structures, there are some that have been identified as part of the consultation as having an important and positive contribution to the identity and distinctive character of the Parish and are valued by the local community.

National and local planning policy enables such locally important buildings and structures to have formal recognition in the planning system. CBMDC Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy states that *"The Council, through planning and development decisions, will work with partners to proactively preserve, protect and enhance ... the heritage significance and setting of locally identified non-designated heritage assets"*.

Through detailed consultation and analysis, buildings and structures have been identified as especially important to the character of the Parish; the Plan seeks to help their conservation and appreciation through their identification as Wilsden Character Buildings and Sites.

A list of these buildings and structures is given and more details of individual buildings are given in the separate document, **Supporting evidence for Locally Important Buildings and Structures**.

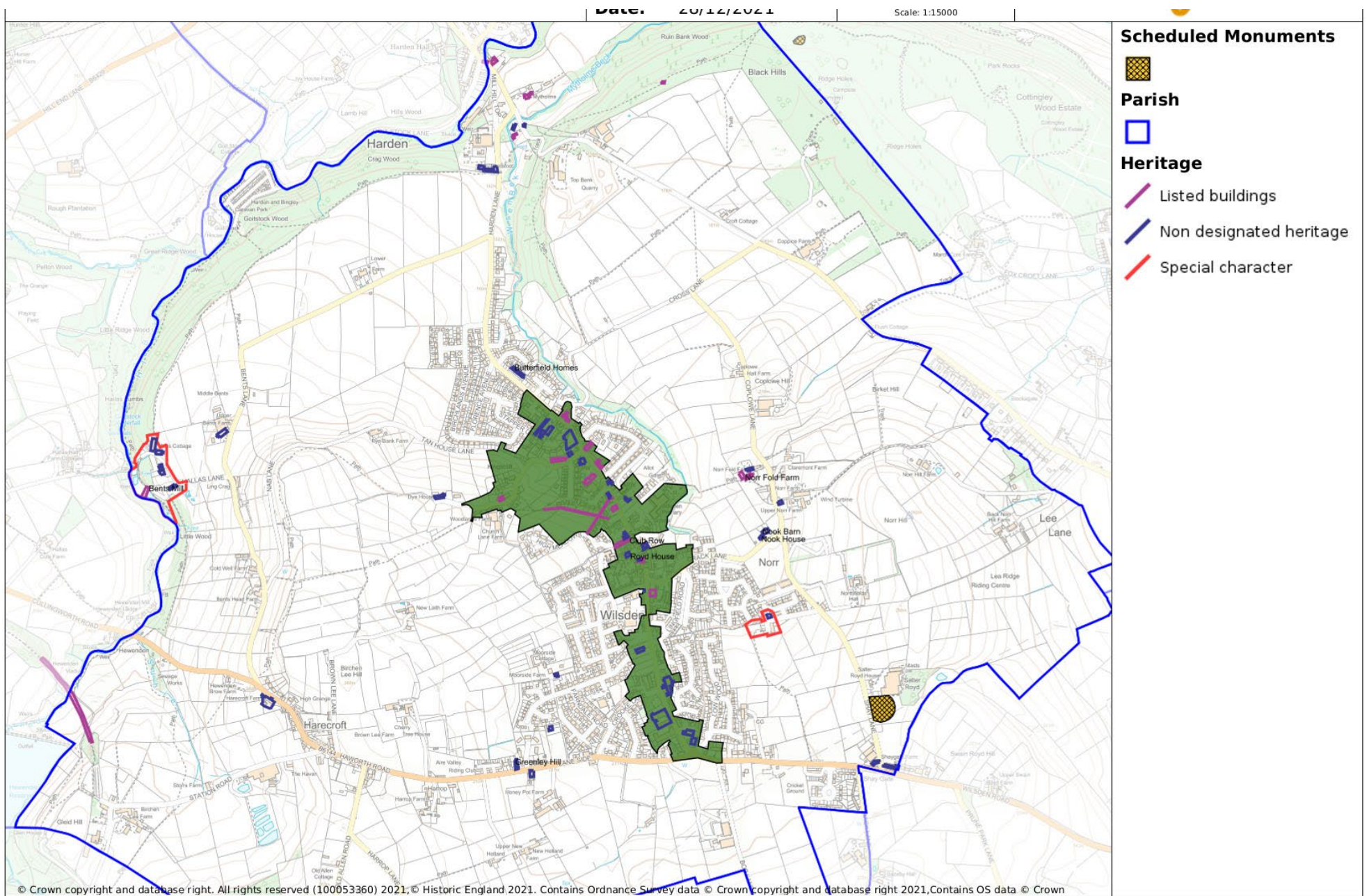


Figure 5 Wilsden Heritage Assets



Former Three Horseshoes, 94 Main Street



Beehive stone shelter at junction of Royd St & Main St

POLICY W/BH1 WILSDEN CHARACTER BUILDINGS AND SITES

The Plan identifies the following buildings and structures as Wilsden Character Buildings and Sites of local heritage interest. These buildings and structures can also be defined as non-designated heritage assets as specified in CBMDC Core Strategy Policy EN3.

Wilsden Conservative Club building, Wellington Street

The New Inn, 114 Main Street

The former Three Horseshoes, 96 Main Street

Rose Cottage Farm, Main Street and the associated small paddock.

Barns to the south of St Matthew's Church, Main Street

The Tap Yard, Springhill Place

Well House, Main Street

Ling Bob Mill

Prospect Mill

Providence Mill

Well House Mill

3 & 6-24 Moss Row

Former National School, 87 and 89 Main Street

1-6, Butterfield Homes, Harden Lane

1 & 2 Dyehouse

Trinity Chapel

The Old Manse, Chapel Row

Royd House, 130 Main Street

Nook House & Nook Barn

Beehive stone shelter at junction of Royd Street and Main Street

Norr Manor

Norr Fold Farm Cottages, Coplowe Lane

3 Springhill

5 & 7 Birkshead

The Old Vicarage - 60a Laneside & 2 The Old Vicarage

Moorside House

1, 3, 5 & 7 Greenley Hill

Lane End House, Lane Side

167 Harecroft

Upper Bents Farm Cottage and Barn, Bents Lane

Hallas Grange, Hallas Bridge

Hallas Mount, Hallas Bridge

Bents House, Hallas Bridge

Hallas Bridge, 2-12

Anslea and Moss Cottage, Hallas Bridge

Cherry Tree Row 1-12

Dales Cottage, Bank Bottom

Former Animal Pound, Mytholme

2--16 Shay Gate, Haworth Road

Shay Gate Farm and Barn, Haworth Road

Development proposals will not be supported that harm the historic significance and setting of Wilsden Character Buildings and Sites, as identified in the Schedule.

Development proposals will be required to take into account the character, context and setting of these locally important assets including important views towards and from them. Development will be required to be designed appropriately, taking account of local styles, materials and detail.

3.3 Wilsden Conservation Area

There is one Conservation Area in the Parish - Wilsden. This was designated in 1977, and covers the historic core of the Village, following a linear pattern along Main Street. It is where a significant proportion of Wilsden's heritage assets are to be found; over half of the Listed Buildings in the Parish are located within it, for example.

Its Conservation Area status means that there is greater control over development within, or affecting its setting, including such matters as demolition, landscaping and trees, and the display of advertisements.

In 2007 CBMDC produced a Conservation Area Appraisal for Wilsden. This sets out the special characteristics of the Conservation Area, and how this can be safeguarded and enhanced. Of

special mention is that it includes a summary of important features and details, which lists the existing features and details that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

The consultation showed that the community supports and takes pride in the designation of the historic core of Wilsden as a Conservation Area, but there is concern that some development has taken place within it of poor design and not in keeping with, and, in some cases, has detracted from its distinctive character.

Special care is also needed in the location and design of development proposals close to Wilsden Conservation Area. Inappropriate development immediately outside the Conservation Area can, and has had, a detrimental effect on the character and setting of the area. Prior to this Plan there has been no clear definition of the area that is described as being immediately outside the Conservation Area. This Plan seeks to provide clarity to this definition by specifying the area surrounding the Conservation Area boundary that can be considered to affect the setting.

Development proposals close to the Conservation Area are particularly important to its setting and these will be expected to respect the character and appearance of Wilsden Conservation Area. They should seek to meet the same standards of design as those within the Conservation Area.

POLICY W/BH2 WILSDEN CONSERVATION AREA

Development proposals within or that affect the setting of the Wilsden Conservation Area must respect and enhance its special character in high quality design proposals that accord with the guidelines set out in Wilsden Conservation Area Appraisal. Any development that when viewed from and/or within the Conservation Area and is up to at least 50 metres outside of the boundary, will be considered to affect the setting of the Conservation Area.

3.4 Hallas Bridge and Birkshead Special Character Areas

In addition to the designated Wilsden Conservation Area, the consultation and analysis conducted as part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan showed that there are other parts of the Parish which are important for their character and the contribution they make to the local identity and distinctiveness.

In particular, it highlighted two areas – Hallas Bridge and Birkshead – each of which has its own distinct and special character. This special character is derived not only because each has historically and architecturally important buildings, but also because of their history, layout and the open spaces within them.

Although they may not be of sufficient historic or architectural interest for designation as Conservation Areas, it is important that their special character should be conserved because of their intrinsic quality and their local importance, and that all new development should be designed with this in mind.

Hallas Bridge Special Character Area

Hallas Bridge is a hamlet situated off Bents Lane between Cullingworth and Wilsden and is approximately a mile west of Wilsden. The boundary of the special character area is shown below along with details of specific heritage assets.



Figure 6 Hallas Bridge Special Character Area

Originally a collection of farms and farmsteads, the building of Bents Mill and associated workers' cottages in the late 18th Century marked the beginning of the area's development.

It is relatively self-contained, set within a steep valley and surrounded by attractive thick woodlands and open countryside. Its self-contained nature and distinct character and history contribute greatly to a sense of place and identity.

The hamlet is dominated by the imposing former Bents Mills, which is now in residential use. Bents Mills is a (Grade 2) Listed Building in view of its special architectural and historic interest.

Scattered across the hamlet are other dwellings, many developed in the 19th Century to house mill workers. These include short rows of terraced properties. Many of the buildings have retained their original traditional features and design, and are relatively unmodernised. Traditional building materials and design predominate. It retains much of its traditional roofscape and skyline, due to the general retention of chimneys and original roofing materials.

There is a predominance of mature trees, which enhance its character and its rural setting.

Development has been gradual and of modest scale. There are also significant open spaces, which add to its value and help maintain its original character.

There are several other buildings that have been identified as being of some local architectural and historic quality. These include Bents House, Hallas Mount and Hallas Grange.

Birkshead Special Character Area

This is a small cluster of terraced former mill cottages off Birkshead Drive in the Parish of Wilsden.

Densely developed, they are located on a prominent position overlooking the valley of Wilsden Beck, with good views over the surrounding countryside. The boundary of the special character area along with designated heritage assets is shown below.



Figure 7 Birkshead Special Character Area

The immediate setting of the area is dominated by a mixture of modern developments to the north and east and open fields to the south and west.

Despite this dominance by the modern housing development that replaced Birkshead Mill the area is the most complete example of the pre-Industrial Revolution agricultural hamlets that were gradually merged into the modern village during the 19th Century. Fox's map of 1818 clearly shows that many of the cottages in the special character area predate Birkshead Mill.

At its height Birkshead Mill (which closed in 2002) was one of the major employers in the area, providing work for nearly three hundred people. Unlike many of the Wilsden mills where the workforce lived in cottages immediately around the mill the Birkshead workers lived in the main village that was built up during the 19th Century.

Birkshead comprises three short groups of terraced houses, many of which predate the opening of the Birkshead Mill in 1820. They show a high degree of uniformity in design. Generally, they are two storeys with slate roofs and built from local sandstone. A significant number of the buildings have retained many of their traditional features and details. Modern extensions to the properties are limited. They follow common linear build lines generally set behind small front gardens. A feature is that one of the terraces is set perpendicular to the road.

They provide a contrast with twentieth century suburban style housing developed on the former mill site.

No 5 is dated 1768 with the inscription John Hill MB, who as well as being a medical practitioner was a major local landowner. No 1 is the former Mill Owner's cottage and is larger and features a higher level of architectural ornamentation than the other cottages.

The fields to the south add to the character of the area and give impressive views in and outside of Birkshead, as well as a green break between the hamlet and the surrounding settlements.

A particularly interesting characteristic of the hamlet is the network of paths that link it to the surrounding communities. Many were created in the 18th Century to link mill workers' cottages to their place of work. The most striking example of these are from the site of the former Birkshead Mill to the communities of Ling Bob and Wilsden.

There are no buildings included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

POLICY W/BH3 HALLAS BRIDGE AND BIRKSHEAD SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

Within the Hallas Bridge and Birkshead Special Character Areas as identified on Figures 5 and 6, development proposals should be of **high** quality and must be designed so as to conserve and enhance their distinctive local character, having regard to scale, density, height, landscape, layout, materials and access.

3.5 Hallas Bridge Conservation Area

The analysis and consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Plan considered that the quality and interest of Hallas Bridge built and natural environment was so significant that it was worthy of designation as a Conservation Area.

This reflects not only the quality of the built environment within Hallas Bridge with many buildings of historic and architectural interest, some of which are 'Listed', but also its history as a mill settlement and the quality of the green spaces in and around it.

The consultation shows strong support for its designation, which would provide protection for one of the most special and valuable areas of architectural and historic interest in the Parish.

It is recognised that legislation does not allow a Neighbourhood Plan to designate a Conservation Area – this would need to be done by CBMDC. The Plan can, however, highlight the need, case and local importance for such a designation.

COMMUNITY ACTION 1 HALLAS BRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA

The Parish Council will actively pursue with CBMDC and other stakeholders the designation of a Conservation Area based on the historic centre of Hallas Bridge

3.6 Dry-stone Walls

The attractiveness of Wilsden is not only a result of the buildings to be found within it, but a combination of topography, trees, open spaces and other features that characterise the Parish.

Particularly important are the dry-stone walls. These were the traditional field boundaries in this part of Yorkshire and are an important and much appreciated part of the character of the Parish. They are also of bio-diversity value providing important linear wildlife corridors especially for invertebrates as well as supporting lichens and other plant life.

Their importance to the community is not only reflected in the findings from the consultation but also studies and reports such as Bradford landscape character assessment description of Wilsden Valley and the Yorkshire South Pennine Fringe Landscape both of which draw attention to the importance of dry stone walls in the local area.

Some of these walls are protected, including a pair of crossed pathways which has Listed Building Status. However, the majority do not have special protection, with some falling into disrepair and others being removed as part of development schemes.

This network of dry-stone wall across the Parish is especially valued by residents and visitors. This is not only reflected in the findings of the consultation, but also the number of people who volunteer their time in repairing them through bodies such as the Wilsden Wall Building Group.



Listed walled footpaths



Characteristic dry-stone walls

POLICY W/BH4 DRY-STONE WALLS

Dry-stone walls are of particular importance to the history and distinctive character of the Wilsden area as identified in the Natural Environment section of this Plan and highlighted in Policies W/NE4 and W/NE5 and Policy PN1D of the CBMDC Core Strategy. Development proposals should be designed to retain or enhance dry-stone walls where appropriate.

The Wilsden Design Code provides guidance on boundary treatments in new developments and Policy W/HO4 details how this should be addressed in development proposals. **Development proposals that would result in the removal of, or have an adverse impact on, a natural stone wall** will only be supported where it can be demonstrated to CBMDC in consultation with the Parish Council that the benefits of the development will outweigh the harm caused by the removal of the wall or a replacement dry-stone wall of equivalent value is provided in a suitable location in the Parish. Any development proposal within Wilsden Conservation Area or in the countryside as defined in Policy W/HO2 that will involve boundary treatments as part of a development should use natural stone walls.

4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Wilsden Parish is mainly rural and open in character.

Much of it is countryside and its landscape is characterised by attractive, gently rolling hills, predominantly grazing pastureland, interspersed with tracts of wooded areas. The Village of Wilsden is the only large settlement, but there are separate smaller hamlets of Harecroft, Norr, Hallas Bridge and Shay Gate plus farms and small groups of cottages. The countryside around the main settlements is notable for a historic network of narrow winding lanes, footpaths and packhorse trails. The dry-stone wall field boundaries are an important characteristic of the area.

This rural and open character of the Parish is defined not only by the countryside, but also by the open spaces within Wilsden Village and the other hamlets across the Parish.

Evidence shows that the rural and open nature of the Parish is important and cherished by the community, not only for the important contribution it makes to its attractive and distinctive character, but also for the wider contribution it makes to well-being. For example, it provides opportunity for exercise, sport and active recreation as well as protecting and enhancing the natural environment including its wildlife and wildflowers.

4.1 Important Local Green Spaces

Wilsden Parish has a diverse mix of local green spaces such as parks, recreation areas, grassed areas and children's playgrounds that mainly exist around, within and between the main settlements.

Individually and collectively these areas make a significant contribution to the distinctive and attractive character of the Parish, and deserve protection for the benefit of the residents, as well as its wildlife.

The National Planning Policy enables a Neighbourhood Plan to identify for special protection green areas of local importance. In addition, Policy EN1 of the Core Strategy of the CBMDC Local Plan states that, *"The Council will work with local communities to identify areas of Local Green Space in the local plan and neighbourhood plans. Local greenspace which is valued for amenity, recreation and wildlife or contributes towards character, distinctiveness and visual quality will be protected from development, other than in very special circumstances which are supported by the local community."*

To be designated as Local Green Space, however, it must meet specified criteria as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. These are:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green space concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The many green spaces in the Parish were evaluated for their suitability for Local Green Space designation through the Plan. After careful consideration, seven green spaces have been identified that are considered to have the greatest importance and meet the criteria for designation. More details of the evidence to support the identification of these sites along their detailed boundaries are given in a document detailing **Supporting evidence on Local Green Spaces** as a part of this Plan.

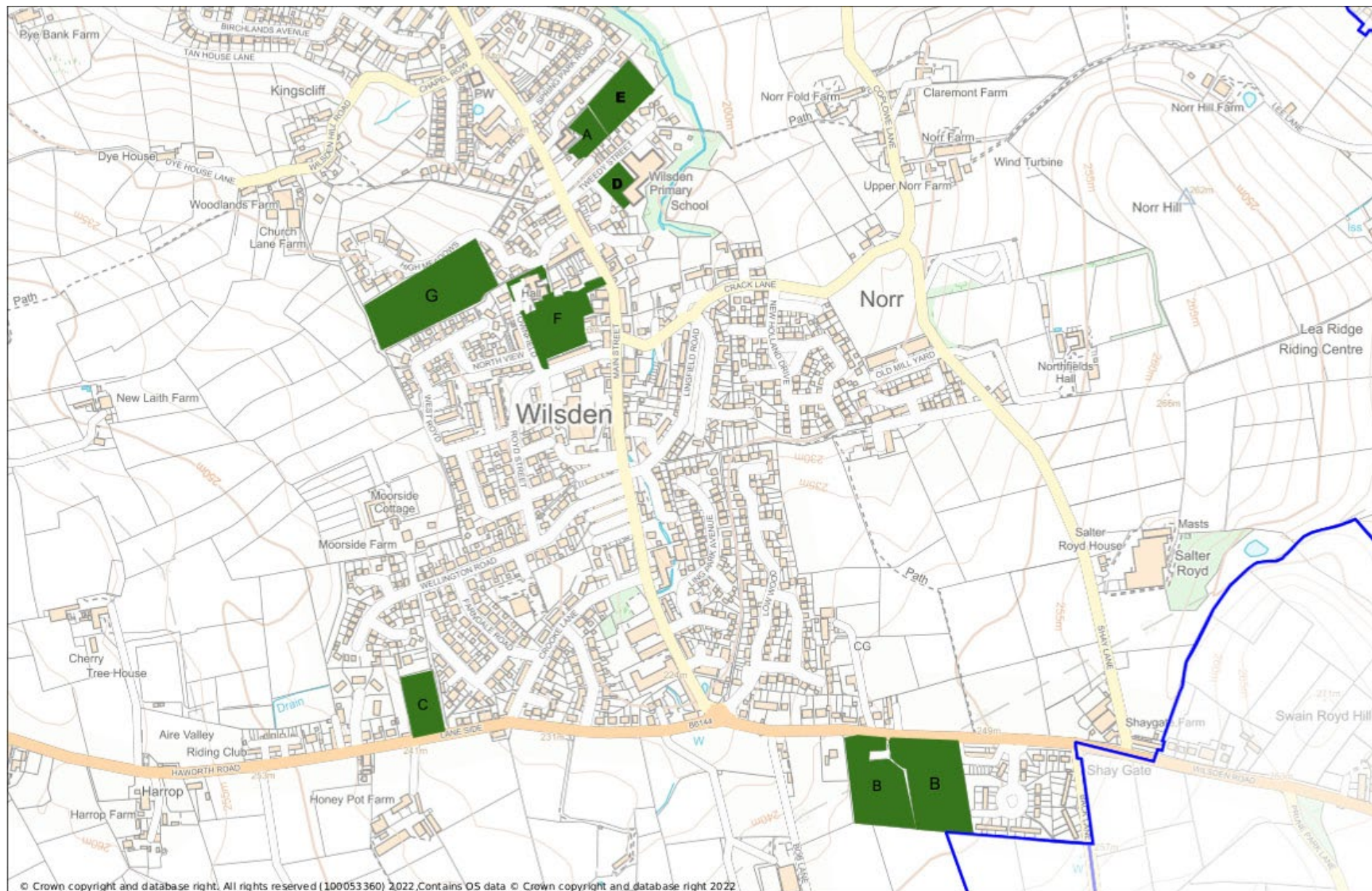


Figure 8 Important Local Green Spaces

The specific sites are detailed in Table 1 and shown in Figure 8.

Table 1 – Local Green Spaces

		Area (ha)
A	Fields to the East /Northeast of St Matthews Church	0.244
B	Cricket Pitch and adjacent field (formerly football field).	2.239
C	Closed graveyard, old St Matthew's churchyard.	0.459
D	Wilsden Primary School field.	0.178
E	Wilsden Allotments	0.518
F	Royd House Park and Play Area	0.817
G	Wilsden Recreation ground	1.486

POLICY W/NE1 IMPORTANT LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The spaces listed above shown on Figure 8 and identified above are designated as Local green Spaces on which development will only be supported in very special circumstances.

4.2 Ecology and Biodiversity

Biodiversity includes all kinds of animal and plant species, from the commonplace to the critically endangered as well as the habitats which support them. The 2021 Environment Act introduces a mandatory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain in the planning system, to ensure that new developments enhance biodiversity and create new green spaces for local communities to enjoy.

Wilsden is rich in ecology and biodiversity. This is due to the different type of habitat that can be found in the Parish such as upland pasture and woodlands as well as the variety of wildlife and wildflowers these areas support, including rare and declining species such as the curlew.

Nationally important ecological and bio-diversity sites are protected by law, notably through their designation as a Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Whilst there are no sites of national importance, there are a number of sites and habitats that are of local and regional importance. These sites include a number of designated Local Wildlife Sites and the Bradford Wildlife Habitat Network. These sites are illustrated in Figure 9 which has been prepared in conjunction with the West Yorkshire Ecology Service.

An example of a Local Wildlife Site within the Bradford Wildlife Habitat Network is Goitstock Wood and Grassland (an extensive woodland site). The Bradford Ornithological Society reports that the bird life of Goitstock Wood includes the presence of Wood Warblers and Spotted Flycatchers. Dippers are present along the river, and Grey Wagtail usually breed there; Kingfishers also inhabit the river.

In addition to the Bradford Wildlife Habitat Network the emerging CBMDC Local Plan in Policy EN2 establishes the category of Local Wildlife Habitat Networks. This Plan establishes a number of Wilsden Wildlife Habitats that have been identified by the local community in partnership with West Yorkshire Ecology Service. These sites are shown in Figure 9.

POLICY W/NE2 ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

The biodiversity of Wilsden, including local and nationally important sites as Identified in Figure 9, should be protected and enhanced. All development proposals should deliver biodiversity net gain.

4.3 Trees

Trees form an important part of Wilsden's distinctive and attractive character and landscape and are important for their amenity value.

There are a significant number of trees and areas of woodlands scattered across the Parish including some mature specimens. Some of the areas have remained as woodland for many hundreds of years. Figure 8 shows important local and district wide Woodland Wildlife areas.

The wooded valleys of both Wilsden and Harden Beck are an important feature of the landscape character and in maintaining the ecology and biodiversity of the area. While some individual specimens are protected through a Tree Preservation Order and other national designations, many are not specifically protected.

Consultation shows that trees are important to the local community and that tree coverage in the Parish should be protected and, wherever possible, increased.

CMBDC Core Strategy policy 'EN5: Trees and Woodlands' seeks to protect and enhance all trees and woodlands that are important to the character of the district. This is something that the Plan strongly supports. It is important that future planting is sympathetic to the local landscape character in terms of scale, species type and contributing to biodiversity.

POLICY W/NE3 TREES

The Plan supports the planting and management of trees. The trees to be planted should be matched to site and climatic conditions with a preference towards native and productive species. Any tree planting should take account of the value of existing habitats when identifying suitable locations. Trees and hedgerows of good arboricultural, biodiversity and amenity value should be protected from loss or damage as a result of development.

Development proposals that may damage or result in the loss of trees that make a significant contribution to the appearance of the Parish, the local street-scene or local amenity will not be supported. In particular, trees on the main roads into and within Wilsden village are of special importance to their setting.

Landscaping schemes, in connection with new development, are encouraged to place an emphasis on the use of local native planting.

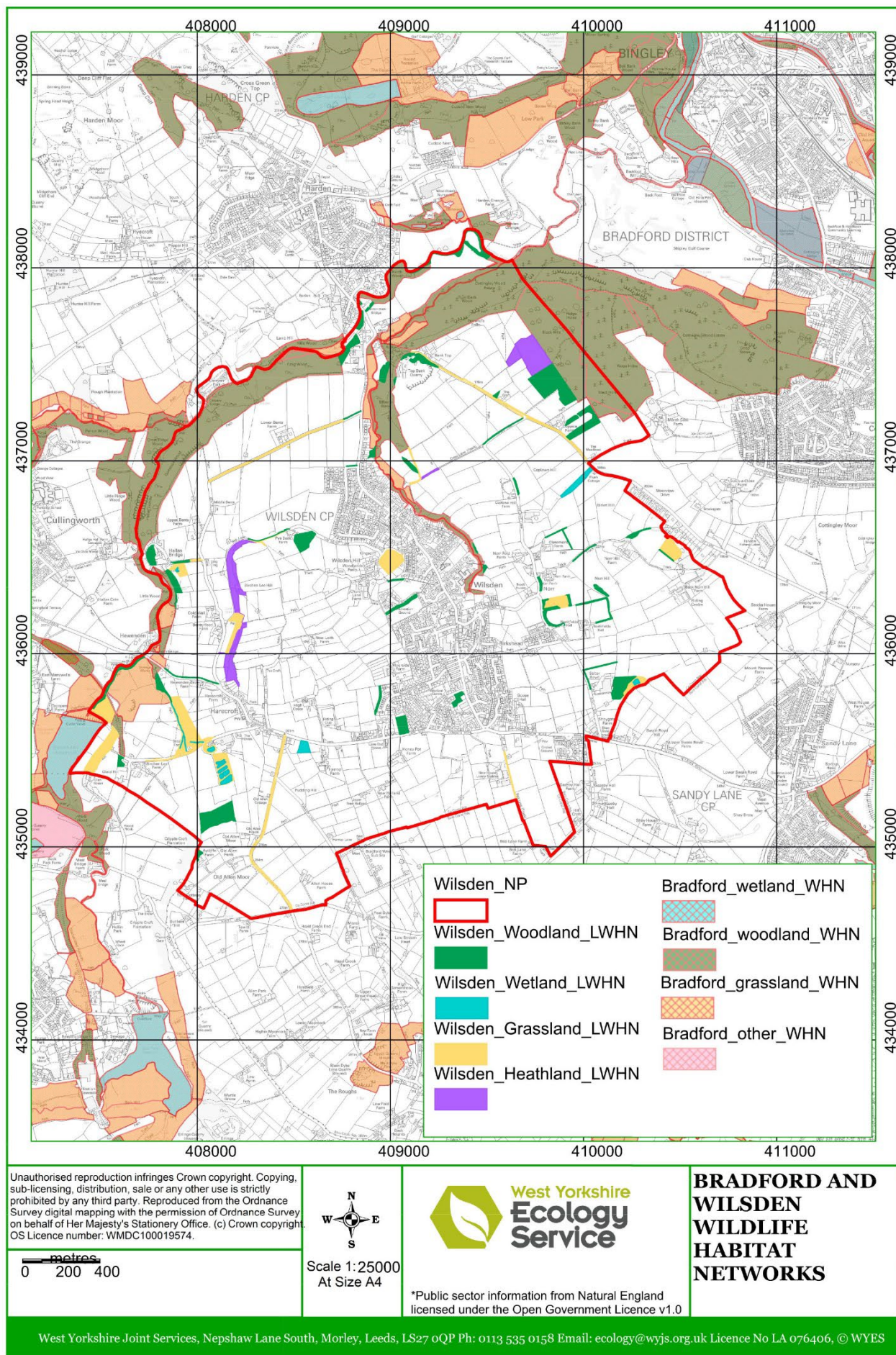


Figure 9 Bradford & Wilsden Wildlife Habitat Networks

4.4 Landscape

Wilsden has a distinctive and attractive landscape that provides a rural setting for the Parish and helps to define its unique character and attractiveness.

In 2008 CBMDC adopted a series of Landscape Character studies as a part of the development of the Local Plan. The designated area of this neighbourhood plan is covered by two volumes, Volume 9 Wilsden and Volume 6 Thornton.

This identified the special nature of the landscape in Wilsden. This described it as being *“characterised by a gently rolling, open elongated bowl-shaped valley sloping in a north easterly direction towards the Aire Valley”*.

It also highlighted the following landscape features as being especially important to the Parish and the wider area:

- Rolling, concave plateau landform.
- Improved grasslands extensively farmed and managed.
- Strong field pattern with stone wall boundaries.
- Significant woodland cover including mixed plantations.
- The principal settlement of Wilsden and the hamlets of Harecroft and Hallas Bridge.

This Study also highlighted the strength and importance of this landscape, its sensitivity to change and development, and that development would require careful siting.

The findings of the Study have been reinforced by other reports and studies. Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. The Parish forms part of the Yorkshire Southern Pennines Fringe Landscape, of which *“the most striking aspect of the landscape is the mingling of predominantly ‘gritstone’ industrial towns and villages with the strong valley forms and pastoral agriculture of the Pennine foothills*

It is important, therefore, that any development contributes positively to the distinctive character of Wilsden’s landscape, ensures that its distinctive character and quality is retained and that it is sympathetic to landscape setting and landform.

POLICY W/NE4 LANDSCAPE

To be supported, development proposals must respect and where possible enhance the quality, character, distinctiveness and amenity value of the local landscape.

4.5 Important Views and Vistas

During the development of the Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan the Steering Group undertook a number of community consultations through both meetings and drop-in sessions and through a questionnaire that was delivered to every household. Through these events it is clear that the panoramic views of the countryside around Wilsden were important to residents.

The results of these consultations established that while there were a number of points where residents had favourite views and vistas there were five locations which commanded the panoramic views that were most valued. These locations are described below and illustrated on a map in Figure 10.

- The panoramic view from Wilsden Recreation Ground looking east and north that encapsulates the character of the Wilsden area, showing the wooded valleys running up to the Wilsden, Harden and Cullingworth.

- The view southwest from Harecroft towards the Hewenden Viaduct of the wooded incline leading into the wooded valley, which runs across the mixed upland pasture.
- The view northeast from Hewenden Viaduct towards Harecroft shows the quarries where the stone was taken to build the viaduct in the foreground. This illustrates how the settlement merges into the mixed upland pasture and the patchwork of stone walls.
- The views from Wilsden Hill looking north and east show how the settlements are separated by the mixed upland pasture. The view north illustrates the separation between Harden and Wilsden and the dominance of the field pattern in the landscape, where the patchwork of stone walls stands out on the gently sloping terrain. The view east shows the village in the foreground with a mix of more modern housing blending with the core of the Victorian mill village
- The views from Norr Hill looking north and west show the settlement of the Norr in the foreground with the main village nestling in the valley bottom and the settlement of Wilsden Hill in the middle distance. Beyond Wilsden Hill there are views of Cullingworth and the far distance Haworth Moor.

Detailed evidence to **support the important views and vistas** is given a separate supporting document to this Plan.

Any development proposal shall take these views and vistas into account and ensure that they are respected and enhanced.

POLICY W/NE5 IMPORTANT OPEN VIEWS AND VISTAS

To be supported, development proposals must respect and, wherever possible, enhance the identified important views identified and shown on Figure 10 by ensuring that the visual impact of development on these views is carefully and sympathetically controlled.

4.6 Areas of Local Separation

It is important to ensure that individual and historic settlements that make up the Parish retain their own character and identity. Public consultation during the development of this Plan showed that this is a top priority for local people. Three particular areas of separation were identified as being of high priority to residents.

- Land between Wilsden and Sandy Lane/Allerton.
- Land between Wilsden and Harden.
- Land within Wilsden between the settlements of Norr and Wilsden Hill.

Existing CBMDC Green Belt planning policies as well as policies contained in this Plan, notably W/HO4, will perform an important role in maintaining the physical separation of these settlements.

As the Wilsden Landscape Character SPD states *“There is a real danger of the villages joining up through development, particularly Harden and Wilsden. Further development along routes through the countryside would cause fragmentation of this unit of landscape by creating urbanised traffic corridors of developed land bearing little relation to the particular character of the individual villages.”*

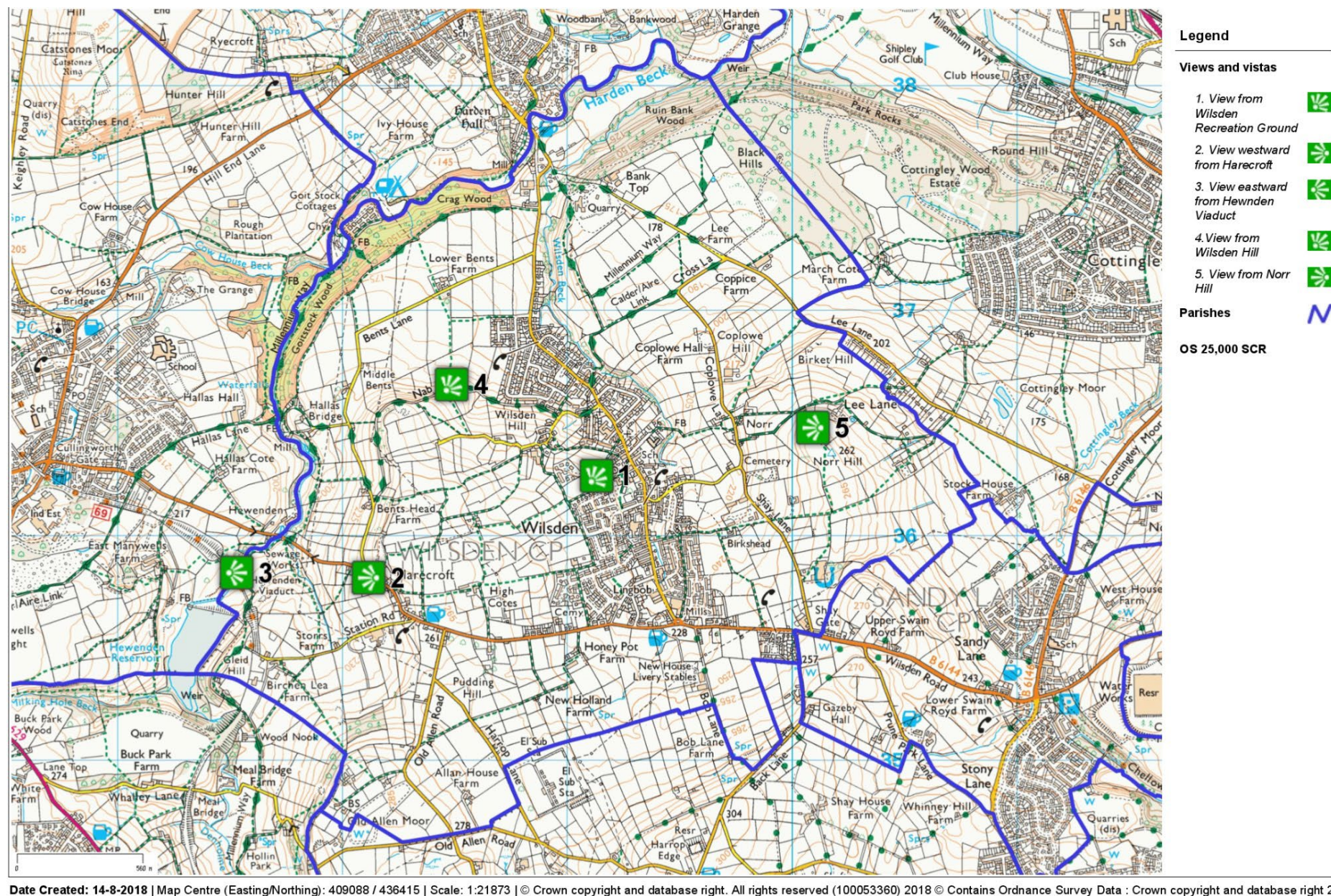


Figure 10 Important Views and Vistas

5 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Employment, businesses and economic growth are key to sustainable, vibrant and prosperous communities.

The Parish is home to a wide range and growing number of businesses and levels of economic activity are high.

Traditionally the main business activities in the Parish have been related to farming and the textile industry. It was a farming community until the growth of the textile industry in the early 19th century.

Whilst farming and, to a much lesser extent, the textile industry remain important, other types of business activity have come to the fore. The Parish is home to over 125 employers spanning a wide and diverse range of sectors, such as education, retail, farming, manufacturing and tourism. The vast majority of these are small, employing less than ten people. There are, however, some larger employers such as R Bunton Ltd, Caterleisure, Stephen H Smith's Garden Centre, Laurel Bank Nursing Home and Wilsden Primary School.

In recent years a number of small, specialised businesses who trade online have been established in Wilsden. The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in significant growth for many of these businesses. This plus the trend towards more home working has resulted in changes to employment in the area and if continued at the current rate could significantly change the employment opportunities.

Its residents are more likely to be in employment and hold a higher-level qualification than the district and national norms according to the 2011 Census.

The Parish is connected to major employment areas such as Bradford and Leeds, where many of its residents work.

Consultation reveals that residents do not consider that the Parish would be appropriate for significant new business or industrial development, especially as it would lead to more journeys by road and further congestion. This would have an adverse impact on the amenity and character of the Parish.

They do give support to the retention and safeguarding of existing employment sites and buildings that meet the needs of modern business.

5.1 Protecting and supporting existing Employment Uses

These businesses are located across the Parish. There are, however, a few areas in the Parish where businesses are clustered. This includes those based in purpose built industrial estates such as Wilsden Business Park, or in former mills that have been converted into premises for small businesses e.g. Spring Mill and Well House Mill.

The historical development of Wilsden has meant that residential and employment areas have developed simultaneously, and many of the current businesses are situated within or adjacent to residential areas. This includes a growing and above average number of residents who work from home. The vast majority of such businesses can operate and prosper in residential areas without issue. There have been some concerns, such as noise, parking and traffic with a small number of businesses, especially where they are in sites and buildings that were not designed for, nor can be adapted to, modern business needs.

It is national and local planning policy that existing employment sites and buildings should be normally retained for this purpose a policy stance this Plan supports. It is recognised, however, that there may be some circumstances where alternative uses may be appropriate such as where

the site does not meet the need of modern business or where there is no reasonable prospect for the site being used for employment purposes. The CBMDC Core Strategy in Policy EC4 gives detailed criteria that outline how economic and employment growth will be managed in a sustainable manner.

POLICY W/E1 EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES

The Plan supports the retention of existing sites or buildings in employment use unless where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes. The following specific employment sites exist within the designated area that support several small and medium sized businesses and it is particularly important that these sites are retained as employment sites.

Spring Mill

Well House Mill

Wilsden Business Park, Birkshead

5.2 Supporting and nurturing Small Businesses

Many current businesses in the designated area are very small, and many operate from a home office or a small workshop. There is evidence that the number of businesses that operate from home is growing fast and at a rate higher than the national and district averages.

The consultation showed there was support for encouraging people to run businesses from home or a workshop. This could include the construction of extensions, conversion of outbuildings, or the development of new free-standing buildings from which such small-scale businesses can operate.

Generally, this should be within the built-up part of Wilsden but may include the conversion of existing buildings, for example for tourism, light industry and homeworking outside the built-up areas, especially where this would support the diversification of the local hard pressed farming community.

High speed broadband connection is currently available in the centre of the Village but not in some of the surrounding areas. The lack of high-speed broadband is an inhibitor of business growth in these areas.

While home working and other such small-scale business development do not necessarily need planning permission, where it is required the Plan is generally supportive of this type of development, where it is in a sustainable and appropriate location. Any such development, however, should respect the distinctive character of Wilsden and the amenity of the surrounding area.

POLICY W/E2 NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Development proposals for new or expansion of existing, small scale employment uses will be encouraged subject to amenity and accessibility considerations.

6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities such as churches, pubs, sports and social clubs, educational facilities and health centres are key to healthy and sustainable communities. Their provision can also reduce the need to travel and provides opportunities for social interaction.

The proven health and community benefits of sport mean that the activities of associated clubs and facilities should generally be supported and encouraged.

6.1 Important Community Facilities

Wilsden has a good range of community facilities including the Village Hall, public houses, primary school, pharmacy and medical centre as well as three active churches, two worshipping in their own buildings.

These meet many of the day-to-day needs of the community, and act as a hub and focus of community life.

Some of these facilities such as the medical centre and the primary school are under pressure. When Wilsden Post Office closed in 2015 there was no local business willing to operate a post office. In response to strong community demand a community interest company was established and now runs a Community Post Office.

With a growing and ageing population and restricted public transport, access to such locally based services will become increasingly important.

Consultation shows that these are highly valued and prized by the local community. They are a key ingredient in the generally high quality of life in the Parish and its strong sense of community and identity. The community wishes to see these community facilities protected and, wherever possible, enhanced.

POLICY W/CF1 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The following community facilities shown in Fig 11 will be protected

WCF1 - St Matthews Church, Main Street

WCF2 - Trinity Church, Chapel Row

WCF3 - Wilsden Medical Centre, Ling Bob Court

WCF4 - Wilsden Primary School, Tweedy Street

WCF5 - Wilsden Village Hall, Townfield

WCF6 - Wilsden Community Post Office, Main Street

WCF7 - Black Hills Scout Camp, Lee Lane

WCF8 - New Inn, Main Street

WCF9 - Villager, Peel Street

WCF10 - Ling Bob, Haworth Road

WCF11 - Station Hotel, Harecroft

WCF12 - The Malt, Wilsden Road

Development proposals that result in the loss or change of use of an identified community facility will not be supported, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that

- a) a replacement facility of an equivalent or better standard in terms of quantity and quality is provided in an equally suitable location or
- b) the service or facility is no longer required by the community.
- c) The facility is no longer viable or suitable for continued community use. This should be demonstrated by submission of evidence of marketing for a period of 6 months as a community facility and that there has been no demand for it.

Wilsden Village Hall

Wilsden Village Hall was built as a result of extensive community fund raising and opened in 1976. It is a registered charity and incorporates a youth club, a community run library, a squash club and the parish council offices.

The Village Hall hosts the Wilsden Village Nursery School in addition to the Youth Club. The hall is also the base for a number of active groups such as senior citizens, a luncheon club, indoor bowls, dance classes and the scouts and guides.

A library was incorporated as part of the original design of the Village Hall. In 2011, when CBMDC cut funding, it became a community run library. Provision of books is still from CBMDC and lending is integrated into their central system but staffing is by volunteers.



Wilsden Village Hall

Community Sport and Play Facilities

There are a number of sports clubs wholly based in the Village including a cricket club, a crown green bowling club and a squash club. There are also three riding stables and a number of private livery stables. In addition, there are clubs such as Wilsden Juniors AFC who use the football pitches in Harden, Thornton and Keighley with their main base in Harden. There are also clubs such as Wilsden Badminton Club who go outside the Village to find suitable facilities.

Wilsden Cricket Club has played at its current ground since 1947 and was established in 1874. The club has a 15 year lease on their ground and the adjacent football field at Shay Gate, Haworth Road and recently built a new pavilion with support from Sport England. The club has two all age

men's teams and five junior teams covering an age range from 9 to 17 years of mixed teams of boys and girls.

Royd House Bowling Club play at a council maintained green in Royd House Park. They are an active club with 6 teams and the green is used 5 days per week for matches, plus social bowling, during the season. In common with many bowling clubs in the district, players often play in a number of different clubs.

Wilsden Squash Club has two courts along with a bar area in a facility which adjoins and is owned by the Village Hall. In addition to squash, racket ball is also played.

Wilsden Juniors AFC, which has its main base in Harden, has indicated that they would like to establish an integrated football facility that will enable all their teams to operate from one site. This would involve one grass pitch and one pitch with a synthetic surface. In addition, this would incorporate changing rooms, a clubhouse and car park.

In addition to the above sports facilities there is also a Recreation Ground that was given to the Village of Wilsden in 1928 as a site for playing fields. It is not currently used for organised sports but is a widely used open space in the Village.

A children's play area is sited on Royd House Park, adjacent to Townfield along with a floodlit, fenced multi use games area suitable for football and basketball.

In common with similar clubs in the area, membership of all these clubs is not exclusively drawn from people living within Wilsden.

Medical Facilities

The Wilsden Health Centre is the main facility for the Wilsden Medical Practice and, along with a smaller facility in Cullingworth, serves the villages of Wilsden, Harden, Cullingworth and part of Denholme. The practice takes an integrated approach to GP provision in all the villages with Wilsden generally providing the more specialised services. With an ageing population demand will increase. When considering the need for additional medical services within the practice the need in the coming years is likely to be best supplied by additional facilities in Denholme and Harden, which would reduce the pressure on Wilsden.

The location of Wilsden Medical Practice and the associated pharmacy is not easily accessed by public transport. People who do not have access to private transport, especially if they have mobility difficulties, can find it difficult to reach the Health Centre by foot.

Allotments

There is one allotment site in Wilsden, which is owned by Wilsden Parish Council. The plot is managed by Wilsden Gardening Association under lease from the Parish Council.

Wilsden Community Company CIC

This community interest company was established to run a Community Post Office at the site of the former post office 112 Main Street, Wilsden. This property was originally listed as an Asset of Community Value. The company, which is owned by the residents of Wilsden, has been structured such that it is able to own other community businesses and operate in other areas that will benefit the community.

POLICY W/CF2 NEW AND ENHANCED COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development proposals involving the provision of small scale new or enhanced community facilities will be supported where it can be demonstrated to CBMDC, in consultation with the Parish Council, that it meets a parish need. The provision of new or enhanced medical facilities will be supported.

COMMUNITY ACTION 2 COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN NEIGHBOURING VILLAGES

Proposals for new or enhanced medical facilities in the neighbouring villages that will help reduce the pressure on Wilsden Health Centre will be supported in principle.

POLICY W/CF3 COMMUNITY SPORTS FACILITIES

Development proposals that will result in either the loss of, or have significant adverse effect, on a community sports facility will not be supported unless this is replaced by an equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in an equally suitable location or can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of CBMDC in consultation with the Parish Council that it is no longer required by the local community.

The following community sports facilities, shown in Fig11, are identified within the Plan.

WCSF1 - Wilsden Cricket Club and pavilion

WCSF2 - Royd House Bowling Club

WCSF3 - Wilsden Squash Club

6.2 Assets of Community Value

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the right for a parish council and other voluntary and community organisation to nominate land or property for listing as an 'Asset of Community Value'.

An asset can be listed as such if its principal use furthers their communities' social well-being or social interests and is likely to do so in the future. If a listed asset then comes to be sold, a moratorium on the sale of up to six months may be invoked. This provides the local community with a better chance to raise finance, develop a business plan and to make a bid to buy the asset on the open market, in order to save the asset that they value. However, it should be noted that the seller does not have to sell to the local community.

Wilsden Post Office, the New Inn and the Ling Bob Inn have already been designated as Assets of Value. Other assets of special importance to the well-being of the Parish and to which local people have a strong affinity and wish to protect may come forward over the lifetime of the Plan.

COMMUNITY ACTION 3 ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Development proposals that support the longevity, appreciation and community value of an Asset of Community Value (in the Register of Assets of Community Value held by Bradford MDC) will be supported. Development proposals for a change of use that would result in the loss of an Asset of Community Value will only be supported where it is demonstrated the asset is no longer viable or no longer required by the community, or the asset is replaced by an equivalent or better facility in terms of quantity and quality in an equally suitable location.

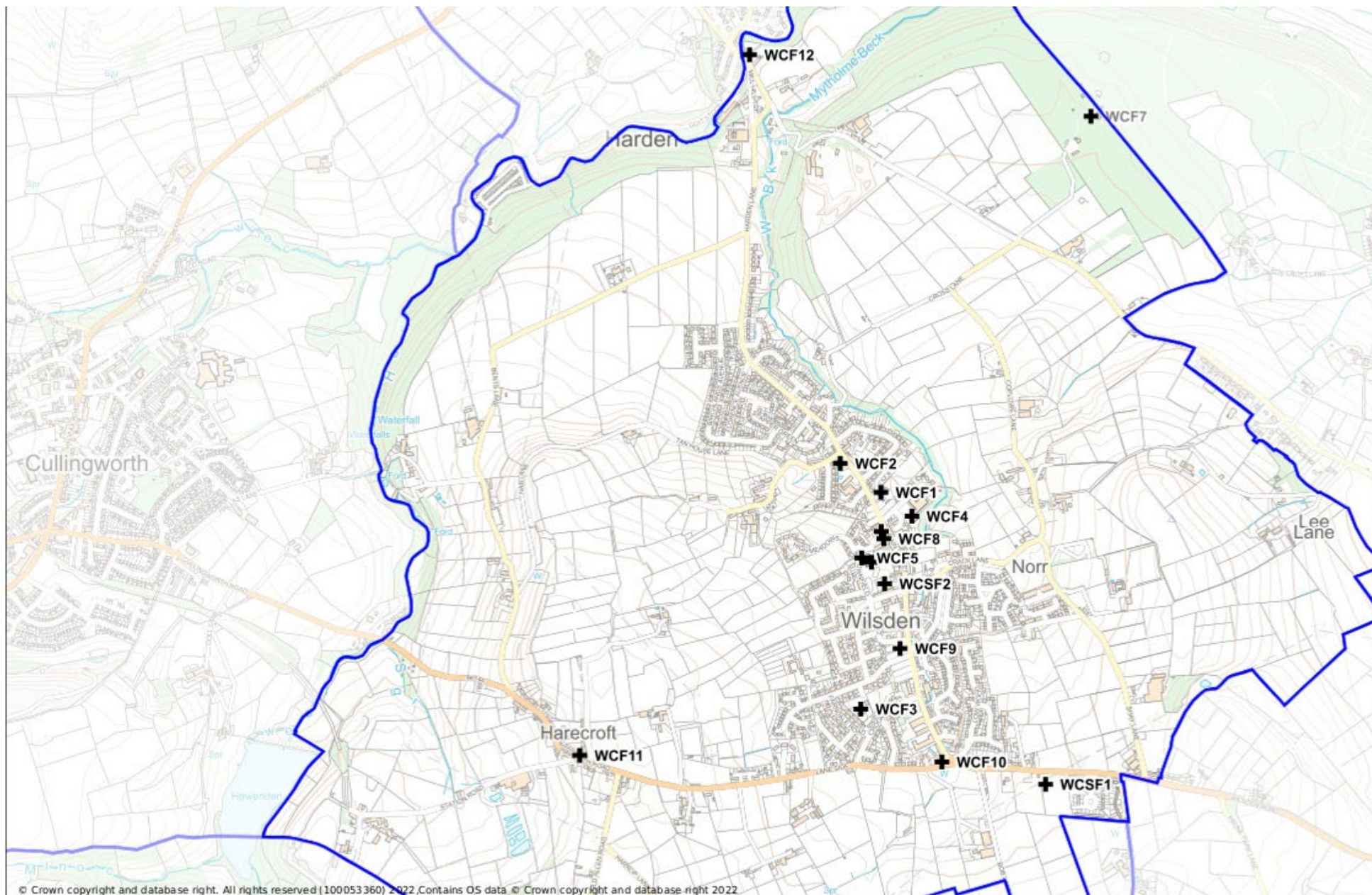


Figure 11 – Community Facilities

7 SHOPS AND SHOPPING

Shops and local centres are vital for vibrant, sustainable and thriving communities. These are at the heart of a community.

They provide a valuable service in meeting the day-to-day needs of residents as well as providing opportunities for investment and local employment close to where people live. They also reduce the need to travel, and act as a focal point for local life and social interaction.

Wilsden has a good range of shops. These include a small supermarket ('the Co-op'), a butcher, a sandwich shop, a cafe, chemist, hairdressers and hot food takeaways. They are convenient and well used by residents.

Many residents use local shops for their day-to-day shopping needs such as the purchase of bread, milk and other necessary items. The larger centres of Keighley, Bradford and Leeds tend to be where residents go to make their larger shopping purchases.

Recent years have seen a continued and marked change in shopping provision in Wilsden. There has been a gradual decline in 'traditional forms' of shops such as those offering fresh food and clothing (for example, between 1970 and 2006 the number of dedicated greengrocers in the Parish went from 3 to 0). This decline in number has been partly offset by an increase in other forms of shops, such as hot food takeaways.

Shops in Wilsden face competition from shops outside the Parish as well as other forms of shopping. The mix of shops is less exposed to the move towards online shopping than much of the retail sector and recent trend towards more local shopping as a result of Covid-19 pandemic has strengthened many local shops. There is also the competition from their change of use to more 'profitable uses', notably the conversion of shops into housing.

It is important that shopping provision can change to reflect the changing needs and profile of the population. This is particularly important given the ageing population of the Parish. The consultation showed that the protection and enhancement of shops is a top priority for local people.

7.1 Wilsden Local Centre

Most of the retail outlets in the Parish are clustered along Main Street. This area acts as the focal point for shopping in the Parish and is relatively popular and well used. This is also reflected in the findings of consultation and other studies and reports. The 2019 Retail and Leisure Study produced by CBMDC in support of the Local Plan, for example, concluded 'that Wilsden appears to be stable and performing well. It has a good number and range of shops. There are 26 retail units within the centre, with the convenience offer being centred around the Co-op Food store and is supported by a butcher, a Post Office that is also a newsagent supplying stationery and greeting cards and a gift shop. There are also a small number of other retail outlets for example a bridal-wear store, animal feed supplier and car sales showroom. In addition, there are a range of services such as estate agents, hairdressers, a beauty salon, takeaways, restaurant and public houses'.

This area is also part of the Wilsden Conservation Area which means there are additional controls over development, for example there are no permitted development rights for the conversion of a shop premises to residential use.

In preparing the Plan the opportunity has been taken to review and update the village centre boundary, taking into account the various Bradford Retail and Leisure Studies prepared by CBMDC.

The proposed boundary is shown in Figure 12.

It is recognised that the CBMDC Local Plan will set the boundary for the Wilsden Local Centre and the Parish Council will liaise with CBMDC to ensure that this represents the current balance between retail and non-retail usage.

Within this defined Wilsden Local Centre, the predominant use will be shopping and other uses appropriate to a local centre. It is recognised, however, that this area includes some use not traditionally associated with a local centre, such as housing (including the residential use of the upper floors of shops) and community facilities.. These can complement the shopping function of Wilsden Local Centre by, for example, attracting people into it.

There is, however, a need to balance this provision of uses to maintain the primary function of the Local Centre and prevent an over-concentration of non-local centre uses and to ensure that proposals do not have a negative impact on the attractiveness, viability and vitality of it.

POLICY W/SH1 WILSDEN LOCAL CENTRE

The Plan will support development proposals that protect and enhance Wilsden Local Centre's role in providing retail, retail related and community services to the village and the wider area. Within the defined Wilsden Local Centre (as identified in Figure 12),

Development proposals for the use of premises for Class E1 (retail, employment and the provision of local services), F2 (local community) and Pub or drinking establishments (use Class Sui Generis) uses will be supported, where appropriate to their scale, location and nature. Proposals for changes of use of premises currently occupied by Class E, F2 and Pub or drinking establishments for other uses, including for residential uses, will not be supported unless there is evidence that the premises are no longer commercially viable for Class E, F2 and Pub and drinking establishments uses or that alternative facilities are available elsewhere in the neighbourhood area in accessible and convenient locations.

Proposals for changes of use of premises currently occupied by Class E, F2 and Pub and drinking establishment uses for other uses, including for residential uses, will not be supported unless where (i) it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of CBMDC in consultation with the Parish Council that the premises are no longer commercially viable for Class E, F2 and Pub or drinking establishment uses and the building has been actively marketed for at least six months as Class E, F2 and Pub or drinking establishment or that alternative facilities are available elsewhere in the area in accessible and convenient locations (ii) the proposed use will make a positive contribution to the viability and vitality of the Local Centre.

Development proposals for Class E and Class F2 will be expected to be located within the Local Centre except where they (i) meet a village need; (ii) are of appropriate size and scale and (iii) do not have an adverse impact on the role and function of the Local Centre.

The residential use of the upper floors of properties will be supported subject to parking, amenity and other considerations.

The Plan will view positively and encourage development proposals that will improve the visual and physical attractiveness of Wilsden Local Centre.

7.2 Other Shops across the Parish

Outside the defined Local Centre there are a small number of single or small groups of shops scattered across the Parish.

The main shopping facilities outside the Local Centre include Stephen H Smith's Garden Centre and the pharmacy next to the Wilsden Health Centre.

These provide a valuable service in providing for specific shopping needs, and residents would also like to see these enhanced and protected wherever possible. For any developments outside the settlement boundary and not on previously developed land Policy W/HO3 will normally take precedence.

POLICY W/SH2 SHOPS OUTSIDE WILSDEN LOCAL CENTRE

Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, a shopping use (Use Class E and Pub or drinking Establishment) outside Wilsden Local Centre will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated to the CBMDC in consultation with the Parish Council that it is no longer required by the community and/or continued use is no longer viable and the site has been actively marketed for at least six months for shopping purposes.

7.3 Shop Front Design

Because the majority of retail outlets in the Parish are in Wilsden Conservation Area they are covered by more detailed requirements. CBMDC Core Strategy Policies EN3 and DS3 specify that the design of shop fronts and associated advertisement should be in character with the Conservation Area. CBMDC has produced a Shop Front Design SPD and a Shop Front Security SPD, which outline good practice in maintaining the historic features and the streetscape. This Plan supports and reinforces the importance of, the Shop Front Design SPD produced by CBMDC, especially as Wilsden retains many of its traditional shop fronts and it is important to preserve their character. Recent years have seen the conversion of several shops in the Village Centre to residential and other uses. As this trend may continue, the Plan will require in such circumstances the retention of key shop front details and features so that the retail appearance of the area is maintained.

POLICY W/SH3 SHOP FRONT DESIGN IN WILSDEN LOCAL CENTRE

To be supported development proposals for new, or alteration of existing, shop front design, signage and front shop security should be of high quality and contribute to an overall improvement in the character of the surrounding area. In particular, it should demonstrate that it responds positively to:

- a) existing historic shop fronts and features of architectural and historic interest;
- b) the scale, proportions, character and materials of the whole building and where appropriate, adjoining buildings and the wider street scene; and
- c) has regard to the Shop Front Design SPD and the Shop Front Security SPD produced by CBMDC.

7.4 Car Parking within Wilsden Local Centre

Action to improve car parking within the Local Centre is a priority of the community. Wilsden Local Centre was not designed for modern transport needs. The roads are narrow and the areas of older development within it have no provision for off road parking. The car park at Royd House incorporates some short stay parking that is low cost and some limited residents' parking. This is insufficient to ensure that customers' in cars are always able to access shops within the Local Centre. This lack of car parking provision which is exacerbated by the high levels of traffic that passes along Main Street and through the Local Centre can result in practical and environmental

problems. It detracts from the character and the quality of the Local Centre and its attractiveness as a place to visit and shop.

POLICY W/SH4 CAR PARKING IN WILSDEN LOCAL CENTRE

Development proposals should include provision for adequate off-road vehicle parking spaces in accordance with CBMDC standards.

Development proposals should not result in an overall reduction in car parking provision in Wilsden Local Centre except where:

(a) it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of CBMDC in consultation with the Parish Council that the loss of parking will not have a severe adverse impact on parking provision and road safety in the Village and/or will not have an adverse impact on the viability of shops within Wilsden Local Centre or

(b) adequate and suitable replacement car parking provision is provided on the site or a nearby suitable location in or adjacent to Wilsden Local Centre.

Proposals to improve the quality and range of car parking provision to serve Wilsden Local Centre will be supported in principle.



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Figure 12 Wilsden Local Centre

8 TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

The self-contained nature of the Village of Wilsden means that it can generally support the needs for day to day living for the majority of its residents.

However, the geographic location and rural nature of the Parish means that people often have to travel long distances to access services and functions such as work, secondary education, healthcare, and shops.

Many of these journeys are made by car, with the 2011 Census recording that 86% of residents travel to work by car. Most residents in the Parish have access to a car, and it provides the principal mode of transport for many residents. A small but significant number of households (12% in 2011) do not have access to a car and a further 42% of households in 2011 had one car.

Bus services are provided through a mixture of commercially operated services and through subsidy from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Whilst bus services to Bingley and Bradford were considered to be adequate before Covid and are now reduced through slower returning patronage and crew shortages, services to other towns and villages in the area are not, e.g., Shipley and Denholme. The direct service to Keighley is infrequent and extended in journey time through the merging of routes. It is currently not possible to travel to other South Pennine settlements such as Denholme and Thornton or to other towns such as Shipley without changing buses.

Public transport provision needs to be maintained to a least pre-Covid levels and improved to meet changing needs (its ageing population) and increased demand arising from housing growth in the Parish.

The 2011 Census indicated that the number of people travelling to work by train had increased nearly threefold over the previous 10 years. It is therefore important to maintain and improve bus services to the railway stations at Bingley and Bradford.

The Parish is also threaded through with footpaths and, to a lesser extent, cycle routes and bridleways. Walking and cycling are popular pastimes for residents of, and visitors to the Parish as well as an important means for local residents to access local services and facilities. The 2011 Census showed that the number of people travelling to work on foot or by bicycle had increased over the previous 10 years although the numbers remain small.

The consultations show that local residents wish to reduce their reliance on the car and encourage more people to walk, use a bicycle and make use of public transport (41% of survey responses indicated a difficulty in reaching some destinations by public transport). This can be achieved by, for example, improved public transport provision and better and safer pedestrian links. This can bring significant benefits not only in terms of reducing car journeys, but also reducing harmful emissions and creating healthier communities. Increased opportunities to walk or cycle to work, school or to access the local centre and other facilities can lead to decreased car use, reduced congestion, reduction of pollution and improving public and individual health.

In 2021 and 2022 Wilsden Parish Council partnered with the neighbouring local councils from Cullingworth, Denholme and Harden to carry out the Bingley Rural Green Travel Project which took a community led approach to sustainable transport planning and development. This project looked at ways of reducing car use and encouraging greater use of public transport, walking and cycling. The results of this project will be shared with key partners and will inform future policy development.

The Core Strategy of the CBMDC Local Plan states in Policy PNI an objective to *“Improve public transport within and between the settlements of the South Pennines, in particular bus improvements”*.

POLICY W/TA1 TRANSPORT

The Plan will support development proposals that promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport and will require that all major development proposals should include appropriate provision for footpaths and cycle routes including, through agreements for Section 106, CIL funds or similar to be dedicated to local (Parish) improvements.

8.1 Footpaths, Cycleways and Bridleways

There are more than 26 km of footpaths, bridleways and unsurfaced byways crossing the area, including Bradford’s Millennium Trail, the Great Northern Railway Trail and the Aire-Calder Bridleway Link. Many of these originate from when Wilsden evolved from a group of separate hamlets into a village, which supported the mills of the Industrial Revolution. Most notable of these are the Grade II listed walled footpaths leading from Main Street and Cranford Place to the Recreation Ground and Wilsden Hill. Although many of the roads are too narrow to allow a dedicated cycle lane there is a stretch of cycleway on Harden Lane.

Consultation shows that these are cherished by both the local community and visitors to the Parish, the footpaths and bridleways being popular with local people whether on foot, on horseback or bicycle. They are especially important for health, the environment and well-being, as well as adding to the distinctive history and character of the Parish. The CBMDC Core Strategy emphasises *“the importance of the link between health and recreation”*.

POLICY W/TA2 FOOTPATHS, CYCLEWAYS AND BRIDLEWAYS

The Parish Council will actively work with CBMDC and other relevant agencies to support opportunities to secure improvements in the present network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.

Priority should be given to improvements that would (a) improved links between the main residential areas (including proposed) and Wilsden Village Centre and/or essential services such as the primary school and health facilities and (b) the extension and joining up of the network and circular routes between and around the settlements in the Parish. Development proposals that result in the reduction in the existing network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways in the Parish will not be supported unless accompanied by appropriate mitigation.

8.2 Traffic along Main Street, Wilsden

The consultation showed Main Street in Wilsden to be a significant traffic concern. This is the principal road running through the village which bisects it in a roughly north south direction. A lot of traffic passes through it. However, it is not suited (nor designed) to modern traffic needs. It is often congested, particularly during peak commuting hours and around the school during drop-off and pick-up times. On-street parking adds to the congestion and restricts visibility for both drivers and pedestrians. Car parking on pavements can be a major issue for pedestrians, particularly those with mobility difficulties. In many locations, the footpath along the Main Street is very narrow, making it hazardous for pedestrians, especially for the elderly and for parents with young children. This can act as a barrier to people making use of the shops and services along it.

Local people have expressed concerns about road safety, noise and vehicle emissions associated with the volume and speed of traffic passing along Main Street. They are also concerned that road and pedestrian safety along Main Street will worsen in the years to come as a result of

planned development in the Parish, and more significantly, initiatives outside the Parish boundaries.

POLICY W/TA3 TRAFFIC ALONG MAIN STREET, WILSDEN

Traffic management measures that improve highway and road pedestrian safety along Main Street in the Village centre will be encouraged.

Development proposals must not result in severe direct or cumulative impact on traffic congestion or highway and pedestrian safety along Main Street.

9 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Development can bring significant benefits to the local community, including new homes and jobs. It can also have negative impacts, for example, where additional demand is placed on facilities and services which are already at or near capacity. Planning conditions and obligations which are considered in the NPPF, paragraphs 55 – 58 show how these may be used to secure infrastructure or funding from a developer. For example, a planning obligation might be used to secure a financial contribution towards improving existing recreational facilities or affordable housing. However, planning obligations can only be sought where they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The main process through which developer contributions are assessed is through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will require developers to make a payment to CBMDC based on the size and type of development that is proposed. The proceeds of the levy will then be used to provide infrastructure necessary to support growth across the district. A proportion of these CIL receipts will automatically be devolved to the relevant Parish Council for allocation to neighbourhood priorities. This proportion is set at 25% in areas where there is a Neighbourhood Plan in force. CBMDC introduced a CIL Charging Schedule from July 2017 and this will be the main mechanism for collecting developer contributions. In addition, Section 106 agreements will be used for securing affordable housing through the planning system and will also be used to mitigate the direct impact of the development proposed, for site specific measures to make a development acceptable in planning terms.

Through the preparation of the Plan, the Parish Council in conjunction with the community and other stakeholders has identified a small number of priority projects they wish to secure funding (either in whole or in part) through the use of planning obligations.

POLICY W/DC1 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Financial contributions towards off-site provision of neighbourhood infrastructure obtained either through the Community Infrastructure Levy or negotiated planning obligations will, as appropriate, be used to deliver investment into a number of areas consistent with the broad objectives identified in this Neighbourhood Plan. These overall objectives would include the following:

- Investment in improved community and recreational facilities, especially at Wilsden Village Hall.
- Investment in projects to enhance Wilsden Conservation Area.
- Investment in projects to enhance the important local green spaces.
- Investment in local transport infrastructure as specified in Policy W/TA1, W/TA2 and W/TA3.
- Investment in the repair and maintenance of Dry Stone Walls.

Where appropriate, developers are encouraged to engage with the Parish Council prior to the preparation of any planning application to confirm these and other local objectives, ensuring that where appropriate and viable, the facilities proposed to complement any development proposals reflect these aspirations.

10 MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is anticipated that the Neighbourhood Plan will last until 2038. During this time, it may be that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address could change.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by the Parish Council in conjunction with CBMDC as the local planning authority on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the review of the CBMDC Core Strategy if this cycle is different.

Appendix 1 Listed Buildings in Wilsden (2022)

- St David's Ruin, Ruin Bank Wood.
- Manor House and Attached Barn, Main Street.
- Wesleyan Independent Sunday School, Main Street (now Stone Cross apartments).
- Walls flanking footpaths to 'Wilsden Hill' and the Recreation Ground, Main Street.
- 2-16, Chapel Row.
- 4-20, Club Row including 118 Main Street.
- Norr Fold Farm Cottage, Norr Fold Farmhouse, Coplowe Lane.
- Norr Fold Farm Barn, Coplowe Lane
- Number 38 (Woodlands Farmhouse) and Cottage, Wilsden Hill.
- Mytholme, Wilsden Road.
- The Malt Shovel, Wilsden Road.
- Hewenden Viaduct.
- Spring Mill House, 90, Main Street.
- 134 and 136, Main Street.
- 71-77 (odd) Main Street and Number 1-3 Garden View (adjoining to north east).
- Lee Farmhouse and Attached Barn, Main Street.
- Bents Mill on the North Bank of Hewenden Beck.
- Bank Bottom Cottage, Sandy Banks.
- Mechanics Institute, Main Street.
- Harden Beck Bridge adjacent to the Malt Shovel.

Scheduled Monument

- Circular late prehistoric settlement at Salter Royd