

Heritage Impact Assessments

Oakworth

October 2026

Bradford District Local Plan – Evidence Base

Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)

Local Plan Site Ref	H818
Site Name:	Pasture Avenue
Regulation 18 Site Ref	OA1/H
Former SHLAA Site Ref	OA/002
Site Address	Pasture Avenue
Settlement	Oakworth
Gross Site Area (ha)	1.06
Regulation 19 Site Status	Allocation

Site description

- 1.1 The site is roughly triangular and is bounded by a drystone perimeter wall with mature trees along the southern boundary. The site slopes generally towards the south, opening to expansive views over the valley, which has a predominantly rural and pastoral character. The site shares its eastern boundary with the Oakworth Conservation Area, and there are modern housing developments to the north and west. The site forms part of the Green Belt.

Identified heritage constraints

1.2 Designated assets

- Oakworth conservation area

1.3 Non-designated assets

- None identified.

- 1.4 WYASS Comments: Eastern border very close to Conservation Area. No apparent significant direct archaeological implications.

- 1.5 Historic England Comment: The site adjoins the boundary of the Oakworth Conservation Area. Development of this area could harm elements which contribute to the significance of the CA.

Significance of assets

- 1.6 Oakworth Conservation Area covers an area of suburban development with a distinct village character with a rural aspect to the south-west of Keighley Town Centre. The conservation area was designated in 1981, though there have been subsequent reviews of the unique historic value of the settlement and its setting since that time.
- 1.7 The village originally developed as a self-sufficient agricultural community located alongside an ancient road between Yorkshire and Lancashire. During the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, the growth of the textile trade and the advent of the Industrial Revolution had a major impact on the form and character of Oakworth and by the middle of the 19th century the settlement, which had previously consisted of several agricultural hamlets, had expanded and developed into a busy mill village. The panoramic location of the settlement on the south-facing valley side above the River Worth affords the village an attractive backdrop and setting. The open fields around Oakworth are mostly protected by Green Belt designation, which prevents inappropriate development. The name 'Oakworth' is thought to be a derivative of an Old English term meaning 'enclosure of oaks' and was first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086.
- 1.8 The village is surrounded by a green and rural landscape that adds much to the character and feel of the place. To the south of the village the land slopes steeply downwards towards the valley bottom and the River Worth. This dramatic topography affords panoramic views southwards out of the conservation area along the Worth Valley. Long distance views such as these are important as they allow the settlement to be viewed in context with its wider surroundings. To the west of the conservation area the landscape is mainly open and rural in character. Traditional stone walls divide the fields and patches of woodland are clearly visible on higher ground. The moorland to the northeast of Lidget rises up steeply behind the settlement and creates a rugged but green backdrop to this part of the conservation area.
- 1.9 In summary, the significance of the Oakworth conservation area derives from its rural setting, topography, long-distance views and historic village form. The heritage value of the Conservation Area is **medium**.

Impact of development on significance

- 1.10 The site at present is mostly open and set to pasture. There are dry stone boundaries and scattered trees evident on site and along the southern boundary of the site. From within the site, the undulations of the site and the tree cover along the field boundaries result in a more rural and agricultural feel and sense of place.
- 1.11 The site sits on the edge of the Oakworth conservation area to the east and later development surrounds the boundary to the north-east side. The development of the site would further encroach upon the rural valley-side topography and panoramic views into and out of CA, along with detrimentally altering the character of the wider setting.

- 1.12 The Scale of impact is determined to be **Moderate**: *The proposed changes will directly or indirectly negatively alter the significance, overall character and/or setting of the heritage asset. It will likely disturb key features and detract from the overall heritage significance. Change of this magnitude should be avoided where possible but can be minimised through positive mitigation.* (Bradford Council Local Plan -Heritage Impact Assessment Methodology 2020).
- 1.13 This assessment is based on the understanding that the development of this site would not include high-rise development or tall infrastructural works.

Mitigation measures/ Opportunities to enhance significance

- 1.14 The site is at the rural fringe of Oakworth. Beyond this, the landscape character changes to rural agricultural groupings and with long-range open views. While development will inevitably alter the rural setting, sensitive design may minimise harm across parts of the site.
- 1.15 Notwithstanding this, development of the site will need to be informed by and respond to the surrounding high-quality development. Likely, the layout, design and scale of dwellings within the site should take design cues from the nearby traditional buildings and that this should also be reflected in the materials. Design and materials should be of a very high quality. Careful consideration of the landscape strategy, including retention of the existing mature trees, will be needed. The existing stone boundary wall along the boundary of the site should also be incorporated to ensure that this element of the rural character of the site is retained. The proposed buildings should not turn their backs to the Pasture Ave and should not be more than two storeys in height to avoid excessively dominating the existing buildings in the wider context.
- 1.16 A landscaped buffer or area of open space is likely to be required around the buildings in the context of the site to enable views and to allow the buildings to be viewed in the context of open space and to allow an understanding of their function. This should be substantial enough to provide meaningful and effective separation between the development and the existing context buildings.

Conclusion

- 1.17 There is potential for the new development to be accommodated on the given site. However, any development to the eastern section (towards the Oakworth Conservation Area) is likely to result in **less than substantial harm (unacceptable)**. If sufficient design and appropriate mitigation measures are employed on the site, then the rest of the site (except the eastern section) is likely to result in **less than substantial harm (acceptable)**. The development should be carefully considered and further investigations resulting in mitigation to protect the landscape, views, and character of the wider setting. On this basis, development would be **ACCEPTABLE**.

Site Photographs



The images show the undulating slope present on the site with mature trees and panoramic views into the Wroth Valley.



Image showing the dry-stone boundary wall to the periphery of the site.

