14106: Oakenshaw Cross, Oakenshaw, West Yorkshire

Kirklees Council

Heritage Statement

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02 – updated design and baseline information	Declan Lancaster	Natasha Powers	20/11/2025

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Executive Summary

Ecology Solutions was commissioned by SLC Property on behalf of Kirklees Council to produce a heritage statement to support an application for planning permission and listed building consent for the proposed removal and reinstatement of the Grade II listed Oakenshaw Cross (a Grade II Listed 18th century monument – NHLE: 1184674). The proposed reinstatement includes the relocation of the Cross to a grassy verge c.15m northwest of its original location.

The Oakenshaw Cross is of significance, which is reflected in its status as a Grade II Listed Building. This significance derives from its relative rarity as a surviving 18th century public monument, its architectural associations with the Enlightenment, its association with the important local figure of Dr Richard Richardson, and from its historic importance as a central marker of the village of Oakenshaw. The central village location is perhaps the most important and enduring factor in the Cross' significance, as it has acted as a visual and experiential marker for life in the village over several hundred years. The location of the Cross contributes to its significance, largely retaining a post-medieval 'village' setting despite nearby modern development.

Oakenshaw Cross has in recent years been severely damaged by several vehicle strikes. The monument was dismantled and placed into storage following one such incident in 2022 to protect it from further damage and due to health and safety concerns due to the potential for the collapse of the monument.

The proposed reinstatement location retains the monuments central village location and immediate setting, and as such in NPPF terms represents 'less than substantial harm' to the heritage significance of the Oakenshaw Cross. It will result in the Cross will losing some visual prominence by moving it slightly out of its original setting and context. It will specifically reduce the long views formerly enjoyed to the east along Wyke Lane.

The proposed reinstatement location is off-road, and will protect it from physical harm, whilst ensuring the safety of pedestrians and road users. This will enable long-term conservation and retention of the monument's significance. Creation of additional accessible space around the proposed location, will bring public benefit through the enhancement of the public realm at the centre of the village. Enhancement proposals include the installation of an interpretation board, an adjacent seating area, minor landscaping, and will restore the opportunity for local people to (safely) physically interact with the Cross. The original location will be signposted to provide narrative continuity.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Site Background and Proposals

1.1.1. Ecology Solutions was commissioned by SLC Property on behalf of Kirklees Council to produce a heritage statement to support an application for retrospective permission and Listed Building Consent for the dismantling and storage of the Oakenshaw Cross, a Grade II Listed 18th century monument (NHLE: 1184674), and the reinstatement of the monument on a grassy verge c.15m northwest of its former location.

1.1.2. The planning permission and Listed Building Consent will be for the following (SLC Property 2025a):

- the removal of the Grade II listed cross structure and its temporary storage (retrospective);
- removal of the remaining stones from the highway, making good of the area and a marker to show the original location of the cross;
- enabling works and reinstatement of the Cross on the grass verge on Cross Street.

1.1.3. The Cross received at least three vehicle strikes over 2021 and 2022, which damaged its fabric and caused movement. It had been noted in the late 1990s that the Cross had started to lean to one side (Thornborrow 1997), however this is thought to have become more pronounced from these vehicle strikes, resulting in an approximately 25cm lean. In 2022, the structure was judged to be structurally unsound. It was deemed unsafe after a vehicle strike in February 2022 (Telegraph and Argus 2022). Subsequently the cross was dismantled and placed into storage to remove the risk to traffic and the general public, and to protect the cross from further such incidents. The dismantling of the cross was undertaken on the 30 March 2022 by a team of experienced stone conservationists under the advice of CARE accredited conservation engineers. Detailed recording was undertaken prior to the dismantling of the monument by Blackett-Ord Conservation Engineering. Archaeological monitoring (a watching brief) of these works was conducted (WYAS 2022).

1.1.4. Due to the continued potential for further vehicle strikes if the Cross was reinstalled in its original location, other options were sought. Following consideration constraints, it is proposed to relocate the monument within a grass verge on the corner of Cross Street and Wyke Lane, around 15m to the northwest of its former location (Ecology Solutions 2025; SLC Property 2025b).

1.1.5. The restoration proposals include addition of two supplementary step layers to enhance the durability of the monument. The intention is for the material used to be contrasting yet sympathetic to the monument, to maintain visual harmony whilst demarcating the modern intervention.

1.1.6. The off-road location provides space for an interpretation board detailing the history of the monument, its place in the story of the village and its inhabitants.

The proposals include the installation of a bench, a small path leading to the cross from Wyke Lane, the repair of the roadside footpath on Cross Street, and minor landscaping works including planting of screening vegetation between the monument and an adjacent substation. The proposals also allow safe pedestrian access so that the public can directly interact with the monument.

1.1.7. This heritage statement has been produced in accordance with Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024) and the requirement for applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets, including a contribution of setting.

1.1.8. All work has been carried out in compliance with the code of practice of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2025).

1.2. Location and Description

1.2.1. The Oakenshaw Cross was located at the centre of a small roundabout at the junction of Wyke Lane, Cross Street, and Sykes Lane at the centre of Oakenshaw (NGR: SE 17351 27787) (Figures 1 and 2, Plate 1).

1.2.2. Oakenshaw is a small village located c.5km to the south of the centre of Bradford in West Yorkshire and is part of the Kirklees Council local authority area. The M606 motorway runs immediately to the east of the village. The village is surrounded by agricultural fields, pockets of woodland, and residential and industrial estates.

1.2.3. The grassy verge on Cross Street (the proposed reinstatement location) is a roughly rectangular strip of grass with a narrow protruding strip to the north. It slopes downwards towards Bradford Road, with the highest point to the south. A single established tree is located to the southern end of the verge. A small electricity substation box clad in stone to the sides and with green doors is located at the northern end. The eastern side of the verge fronts onto a pedestrian pavement, whilst the western side is flanked by a property boundary marked by a hedge, a stone wall, and a pebble dashed building.

1.3. Consultations

1.3.1. Pre-application consultation from Historic England was received on 03 November 2025 (HE Reference: PA01204528).

1.3.2. They noted that the Cross is of significance due to its '*landmark character*' in relation to Wyke Lane and Cross Street and its historical association with Richard Richardson of Bierley Hall.

1.3.3. The response from Historic England also considered the impact of the retention of the Cross in situ and its being moved to the grassy verge off Cross Street c.15m to the northwest:

'*Option 1: Retention in Situ*

The reinstatement of the Cross in its current location is considered to have no impact upon the significance of the GII listed building. The reinstatement would mean that the cross is in its original position and therefore would preserve all of those elements of significance relating to views, the physical relationship between the cross and its surroundings, and its role as a memorial.

We understand that to facilitate the reinstatement of the Cross in its original position would also incur the continued risk of being struck by traffic. To mitigate this, protective measures and signage would need to be installed which would likely cause some harm to its significance via its setting. Similarly wider traffic management systems could be implemented to direct traffic way from the Cross to reduce the potential of strikes occurring.

Option 2: Move to Green Area on Cross Street

The repositioning of the Cross to the nearby area of grass on Cross Street would likely cause a less than substantial amount of harm to its significance due to the erosion of its evidential value through being removed from its original context.

It is considered that certain steps could be taken to reduce and mitigate this harm. It has been suggested by the Applicant that a marker of the cross's original position could be installed to demonstrate its original position.

Similarly, if the Cross is to be moved this should remain to be as visible as possible and as close to its original position as possible. This would preserve, as so far is practicable, the Cross's prominence in key views along Wyke Lane and Cross Street.

This most preferable location unfortunately has an established tree on the corner of Wyke Lane and Cross Street. Therefore this would need to moved or removed in order for it to be positioned there.

It would be beneficial if the Cross could be located here as the key views from Wyke Lane and Cross Street would largely be preserved albeit the Cross in a slightly different position. A benefit of moving the Cross to this area would hinge upon the subsequent landscaping and public access/engagement with Cross which would need to be agreed upon before determination. It is hoped that, whilst moving the Cross is harmful, public engagement with the Cross and creating an area where residents can commune and relax by the Cross would help mitigate some of the identified harm.

Plate 1 - Aerial 3D view of the Site (looking northwest) (via Google Earth Pro™ 2025) (red line boundaries marked)

2. Historical Context

2.1.1. There is much debate and conjecture about the origins and history of the Oakenshaw Cross. A timeline of the available documentary records that mention the cross are detailed in Appendix 2, providing a detailed summary of monument's historiography and demonstrating how recent authors have relied on accounts by earlier writers.

2.1.2. The name Oakenshaw Cross is supposedly a reference to it being on the site of an earlier market cross. The 'Cross' consists of a simple sandstone column with four colonnettes located at the cardinal points, and a moulded capitol (Plates 2 and 3). The column is topped with an elaborate finial, at the base of which are sundials corresponding to the colonnettes at the cardinal points, with copper gnomon[1] surviving at the eastern and western faces. The face of the sundial includes the inscribed words 'REDEEM THE TIME' (WYAS 2025), which is possibly a reference to Ephesians 5:16. Set above this is a small stone cap with a decorated cornice, and a ball-shaped top, which previously was topped by a weathervane.

2.1.3. A bold relief of the coat of arms of the Richardson family is located on the north face of the finial. The Richardson's were significant local landowners in the post-medieval period and have a long association with the Cross, with its erected most frequently attributed to Dr Richard Richardson (Plate 4) (Cudworth 1876; Peel 1893; Parker 1902; Cradock 1933; Thornborrow 1997; Oakenshaw History Group 2012).

2.1.4. The base of the Cross is formed by four curving stone steps, the lowest of which is almost entirely buried within the modern road surface. An additional lower course (fifth step) was found during the dismantling works in 2022[2]. Cradock (1933) states that the shaft is reminiscent of a 14th or 15th fluted column, whilst Thornborrow notes that it resembles a pier from a 13th century aisled arcade church and may have been reused from the restoration or rebuilding of an earlier church. Aside from the supposed visual similarity there is no evidence in favour of this idea, and it goes directly against a story recorded by Parker (1902) that the stone for the monument was quarried locally and transported to Oakenshaw on the orders of Dr Richardson (see 2.1.8). Dr Richardson was a noted antiquarian, and it is entirely possible that he would have commissioned a design in a historic style.

2.1.5. There has been some suggestion that the post-medieval Oakenshaw Cross (LB1) is on the site of an earlier medieval market/butter cross and preaching site (Parker 1902; Thornborrow 1997; Oakenshaw History Group 2012). Where this suggestion comes from is however unknown, with no primary sources cited in support of this argument. Articles in the Bradford Observer dating to the 26th of October 1868 and the 21st of September 1869 (via The British Newspaper Archive – Find my Past and British Library 2025) both refer to a

[1] A 'gnomon' is the part of a sundial that casts a shadow
[2] It appears that the 'fifth step' has been hidden by the level of the surrounding road since at least the late 19th century (see Plate 3).

local story that Oakenshaw was the original location of the Bradford market, but no further evidence is presented. Cradock (1933) records that the original cross had been broken, likely during the Civil War, however this is, by his own admission, entirely conjectural.

2.1.6. It may be argued that name of a monument is evidence for a former market cross at this location. However, this could refer to the fact that the monument is located at a key crossroads at the centre of Oakenshaw village (a road alignment that may predate the monument). It could simply reflect a traditional naming convention given to such village centre monuments.

2.1.7. Gray (1890) recorded that an '*ancient pavement'* was found '*a few years ago'* during digging near the Cross. This is repeated by Parker (1902) who notes that the remains were Roman in origin (pavement was the term often used to refer to a mosaic). However, there are no further references to this discovery, and the veracity of these claims are impossible to assess.

2.1.8. A watching brief conducted during the dismantling of the monument in 2022 failed to identify any clear evidence for an earlier cross. The foundation deposits related to a single event (i.e. the erection of the Cross). It was noted that this does not preclude evidence for an earlier cross having been removed during the installation of the post-medieval monument (WYAS 2022).

2.1.9. It is generally agreed that the current monument was erected at some point in the 18th century. It is commonly accepted that the monument was built by Dr Richard Richardson (1663-1741) in either 1702 or 1703 as a memorial to the death of his first wife, Sarah, and his first son, the former in childbirth and the latter not much after. A connection between the Cross and the Richardson family is confirmed by the inclusion of the family's coat of arms (WYAS 1997). It is certainly the case that Sarah and her child died in 1702, however a direct connection to the erection of the Oakenshaw Cross is not so certain. The earliest mention of this connection found is made by Parker (1902). Several biographies were written of Dr Richardson in the 19th century confirming Sarah's death and the death of their infant son due at childbirth in 1702 (Turner 1835; Holyroyd 1873). Holyroyd (1873) records that there are monuments to her at Bradford Church and Cleckheaton Chapel, omitting any mention of a further commemoration of her in Oakenshaw.

2.1.10. Parker (1902) records that the letters S-R-R / MDCCOII are on the northern face of the cross and suggests that this refers to 'Sarah and Richard Richardson – 1702'. This inscription is not referenced in any other known documentary sources and is not visible in any of the illustrations or photographs of the monument available for this assessment.

2.1.11. Notably, several late 19th century writers (Cudworth 1876; Peel 1893) link the monument to Dr Richardson, but do not mention Sarah, and instead link it to his scientific pursuits as a noted botanist and amateur antiquarian (as the monument is topped with four sundials and the remains of a weathervane). Cudworth (1876) notes that there is much 'conjecture as to its origins and use', whilst Peel (1893) notes that most of the traditions explaining the origins of

the monument 'tax our credulity to a considerable extent'. Frustratingly, neither writer elaborates.

2.1.12. There is a further suggestion that Dr Richardson placed the monument to be visible from Bierley Hall, the Richardson family seat. If the monument does relate to Dr Richardson, then it may have been built as late as 1741 (the year of his death). Parker (1902) records the local tradition that the stone for the cross was quarried at the Buttershaw Roughs in Bradford, and that Dr Richardson commandeered all the horses in Oakenshaw to draw the stones the c.6km to the village.

2.1.13. One strange tradition surrounding the Cross is recorded by Cudworth (1876). The story is that a debtors manor court had formerly been held in the village, and that a common form of punishment for defaulters was to be sent to the Cross and have their hair combed with an iron comb that was kept tied to a tree near to the cross. This was allegedly 'considered a great disgrace' surmounting to a public shaming. Peel (1893) on the other hands notes that the Cross was used as a meeting place for 'all the fathers of the town', who would meet once a week to discuss and settle the villages affairs (although you would imagine that this would be weather dependent).

2.1.14. The Cross is not depicted on historic mapping available for this assessment prior to the 1849 Tithe Map of Cleckheaton (Plate 5) and the 1854 Ordnance Survey (OS) map (Plate 6). This omission from previous maps is due to their scale and level of detail.

Plate 2 – View of the Oakenshaw Cross in March 2019 (looking east/north-east) (via Google Maps 2025)

Plate 3 - Current view of the site of the Oakenshaw Cross (looking south/southeast)

Plate 4 – Dr Richard Richardson (1663-1741) (portrait of Richard Richardson (1663–1741), English physician, botanist and antiquarian by James Basire) (c.1800)

Plate 5 – An extract from the Ordnance Survey (1854) (reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

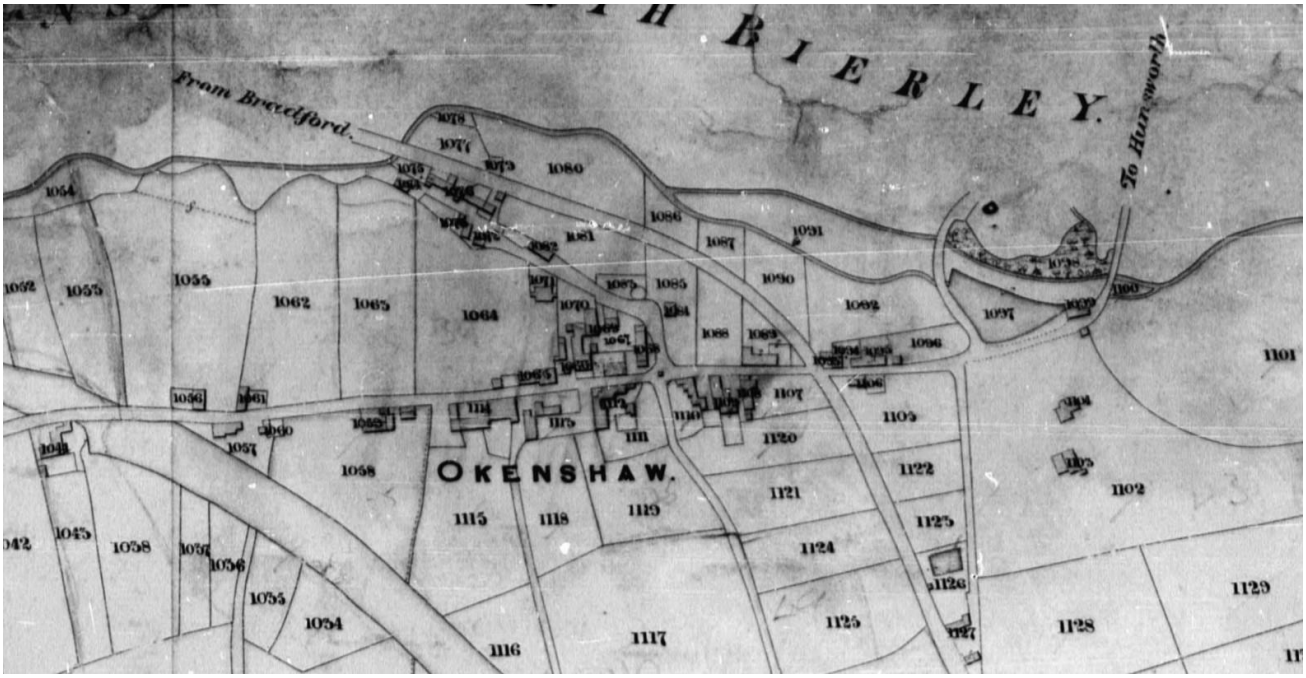

Plate 6 – An extract from the Tithe Map of Cleckheaton (1849) (reproduced with permission of the National Archives – accessed via The Genealogist™)

3. Proposals and Potential Impacts

3.1. Proposals

3.1.1. The proposal is (retrospectively) for the removal of the Oakenshaw Cross from its original location, the removal of any remaining stones, and the reinstatement of the Cross at a new location c.15m to the northwest on a grassy verge on Cross Street. The Cross will be reinstated with the same orientation. The existing tree to the south of the grassy verge will be retained.

3.1.2. A small path will be installed leading from the pavement on Wyke Lane running c.10m to the site of the reinstated monument. An interpretation board and seating area will be erected on the western side of this path.

3.1.3. The Cross will be reinstated using all of its original stones and in its exact original orientation and form. Additional steps will be added to the northeastern side to provide a stable and level foundation. Due to the level change of the verge these steps will not be present/visible on the southwestern side, and the Cross will instead abut directly to the new path. The additional steps will be constructed of locally sourced York Stone, which will be visually complimentary whilst at the same time will allow for a clear understanding of the old and new fabric.

3.1.4. Additional minor landscaping and vegetation planting will surround the Cross.

3.1.5. The proposed location has been conceived to allow pedestrian access and for people to stand or sit on its base.

3.2. Significance

3.2.1. The significance of Oakenshaw Cross is reflected in its designated status as a Grade II Listed Building. Grade II structures 'are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them' (Historic England 2021). The Cross is of a High level of archaeological/historical importance.

3.2.2. Consultations with Historic England (see Section 1.3) noted that the Cross is of significance due to its 'landmark character' in relation to Wyke Lane and Cross Street and its historical association with Richard Richardson of Bierley Hall.

3.2.3. The 18th century saw a significant rise in the erection of public monuments, although relatively few of these survive (Historic England 2017). This rise came as part of the 'rediscovery' of classical antiquity during the Enlightenment, with the erection of such monuments a conscious attempt to mimic the commemorative activities common in the classical cultures. The architectural form of the Oakenshaw Cross is in this sense significant being perhaps the most recognisably classical architectural form, the column. This context links the monument quite clearly with the person who is thought to have commissioned the Cross, Dr Richardson, who was a noted amateur antiquarian.

3.2.4. As such, some of the Cross' significance derives from its architectural form, its possible association with an important local historical figure (Dr Richardson), and its relative rarity as a surviving 18th century public monument.

3.2.5. The key significance of the Cross however is its association with the village of Oakenshaw, having provided a focal point for local life through the post-medieval and into the modern period (as noted in the Cross' listing description). Whatever the origins of the monument, the different traditions surrounding it are an indication of its local significance over an extended period. One of the monuments key characteristics is therefore its setting and location.

3.2.6. The setting of the monument at the centre of the historic village, has made it a key part of the life of the Oakenshaw community since it was erected, with Peel (1898) describing the monument as the central meeting place (see Plates 7-9). It should be noted, however, that the character of the village is by no means uniform, and is instead rather piecemeal, with modern buildings located throughout. Views to the Cross from along Wyke Lane to the east and west, and from Cross Street to the north are deemed as of particular importance, although to the west, views of the monument are not long distance due to a steep drop in the elevation of the road (Plates 10-12). The current setting of the Cross is also dominated by the noise that emanates from the M606 and Bradford Road at the eastern end of the village.

3.2.7. It has been previously stated that the monument was built in part to be visible from Bierley Hall, the seat of the Richardson family (located at NGR: SE 17585 29291). Bierley Hall was demolished in the late 1960s after having been used as a smallpox isolation hospital for the best part of a century (Sheeran 1989). Foundations of the hall survive; however, it is not possible to assess the potential historic intervisibility between the Cross and the Hall as the latter is now located within mature woodland. Satellite imagery indicates that views towards Oakenshaw are further blocked by a modern industrial estate and the M606 road. Bierley Hall was located up slope from Oakenshaw at c.170m AOD as compared to the c.120m AOD at which the monument stands. As such visibility from the Hall is theoretically possible, especially given the height of the monument (3m) and the fact that the built environment to the north of the Cross opens up along Cross Street (Plates 13 and 14). However, when the distance when the distance between the two (c.1.5km) is considered, it is less likely that the monument would have been visible (or was specifically meant to be visible) from the Hall. If this had been the intention, such a monument might have been more likely to have been built closer to the Hall, perhaps within its landscaped gardens (as was common in the 19th century – see Historic England 2017).

3.2.8. Any landscape connectivity Oakenshaw village could have once held with the Hall was lost with the construction of the railway and further removed by the building of the M606 and industrial estate.

Plate 7 - View of the Oakenshaw Cross (probably late 19th) (after Erskine Stuart 1892)

Plate 8 - 19th century sketch of the Oakenshaw Cross (source unknown)

Plate 9 - A view of Oakenshaw Cross looking east (c.1930s) (source unknown)

Plate 10 – View towards the Oakenshaw Cross from the east along Wyke Lane (looking west)

Plate 11 – View towards the Oakenshaw Cross looking north from Cross Street

Plate 12 – View of the Oakenshaw Cross from the west along Wyke Lane (looking east)

Plate 13 - View towards the former Bierley Hall from the Oakenshaw Cross (looking north/north-east)

Plate 14 - View towards Oakenshaw from the surviving foundations of Bierley Hall (looking south/southwest)

3.3. Impact

3.3.1. This section (retrospectively) considers the impacts that the dismantling of the Oakenshaw Cross would have upon its setting, key views, and overall significance. A consideration is also given to the impact of the reinstatement of the Cross at the proposed new location c.15m to the northwest.

3.3.2. Historic England in their consultation of 03 November 2025 note that the reinstatement of the Cross in its original position would mean that it would continue to be at risk from traffic strikes. Mitigating this would require wider traffic management systems and the installation of additional signage. The latter of which would likely cause an impact to the significance of the monument due to a change in setting. A traffic statement has been commissioned by Kirklees Council to accompany this application and concludes that wider traffic systems sufficient to ensure the protection of the monument in its original position would not be possible due to wider issues.

3.3.3. This assessment has concluded that the Oakenshaw Cross gains its significance from its relative rarity, its architectural associations with the wider enlightenment period, its potential associations with Dr Richardson, and its historic importance as the central marker of the village of Oakenshaw. The

monument is a visual and experiential reminder of local post-medieval and modern life. The location of the Cross contributes to its significance, with its original location largely retaining a post-medieval 'village' setting.

3.3.4. The removal of the Cross from its original location will reduce the visibility of it from the approaches to the centre of the village from the west and east along Wyke Lane, slightly diminishing its prominence as a central marker. The proposed location is adjacent to a pebble-dashed house, with a modern electricity sub box located immediately to the north. As such the backdrop to the new location will be markedly modern. This will be mitigated in design through the planting of screening vegetation. The proposed new location is c.15m from the original location, and as such retains the monuments association with Cross Street and Wyke Lane and with the village core. Overall, therefore the removal of the Cross from its original location and reinstatement c.15m to the northwest represents 'less than substantial harm' in NPPF terms. The proposed new location takes the monument out of the road and protects it from further vehicle strikes, preventing the risk of total loss of significance resulting from damage or destruction. The proposed location has the added benefit of allowing the Cross to be physically accessible, potentially returning the monument to its former role as a central meeting place. Public realm enhancements will be made, including an interpretation board which would chart the history of the Cross, the installation of adjacent seating, and additional minor landscaping. These works will provide minor enhancements to the historical significance of the Cross by increasing understanding and the ability to directly experience the Cross. The more accessible location will also allow for easy access for any future conservation works.

3.3.5. Historic England consultation comments of 03 November 2025 also note that there is an established tree located on the corner of Wyke Lane and Cross Street immediately south of the proposed reinstatement location, and that this '*would need to be moved or removed in order for it to be positioned there'.* An arboricultural report has been commissioned by Kirklees Council to accompany this application and explores the reasons why the tree is proposed to be retained.

4. Recommendations

4.1.1. The removal of the Oakenshaw Cross from its original location and its reinstatement at the proposed location is considered the only realistic option for its long-term preservation and will result in less than substantial harm to its significance. This harm should be balanced against the public benefits of its return to the village centre, restoration, and the proposed enhancements.

4.1.2. It is recommended that the local community and other relevant stakeholders are consulted on these enhancements. Special importance should be given to the design and content of the proposed interpretation board, and input to this should be sought from the Oakenshaw Local History Group.

4.1.3. The excavation of the original location of the Cross to remove the lowest (fifth) step from its position in situ under the road surface should be monitored by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist. Archaeological monitoring should also be undertaken during the groundworks conducted at the site of the proposed new location of the Cross due to the potential identified in a previous study for archaeological remains in this area (Ecology Solutions 2025).

5. Summary and Conclusions

5.1. This assessment has found that the Oakenshaw Cross is of heritage significance, which is reflected in its status as a Grade II Listed Building. This significance derives from its relative rarity as a surviving 18th century public monument, its architectural associations with the enlightenment period, its potential association with the important local figure of Dr Richardson, and from its historic importance as a central marker of the village of Oakenshaw. The latter is perhaps the most important and enduring factor in the Cross' significance, acting as a visual and experiential marker for life in the village over the last several hundred years. The location of the Cross contributes to its significance, with its original location largely retaining a post-medieval 'village' setting.

5.2. Based on the previous incidents and information provided regarding the danger of future vehicle strikes, the relocation of the monument is the only realistic option ensuring its future preservation.

5.3. Relocation will result in a minor change to the setting of the monument, removing it from long views along Wyke Lane but retaining its association with the village core, Wyke Lane, and Cross Street. The proposed location provides potential enhancements to significance by allowing the Cross to be physically accessible, potentially returning the monument to its former role as a central meeting place. Public realm enhancement, including an interpretation board which would chart the history of the Cross, the installation of adjacent seating, and additional minor landscaping, will provide public benefit and minor enhancement to its historical significance through storytelling. The more accessible location will also allow for easy access for any future conservation works.

5.4. It is recommended that there is public consultation during the proposed enhancements. It is also recommended that archaeological monitoring is conducted during all groundworks associated with the removal of the fifth step from the roadway and the reinstatement of the Cross at the proposed new location.

5.5. With the design considerations outlined above, the removal of the Oakenshaw Cross from its original location and reinstatement c.15m to the northwest represents 'less than substantial harm' to its significance in NPPF terms.

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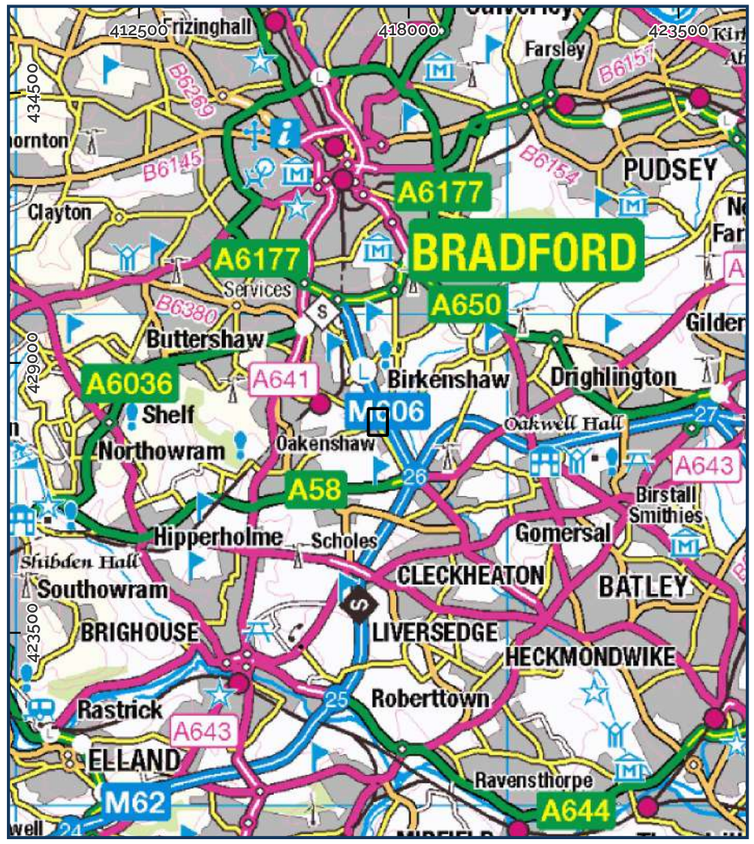
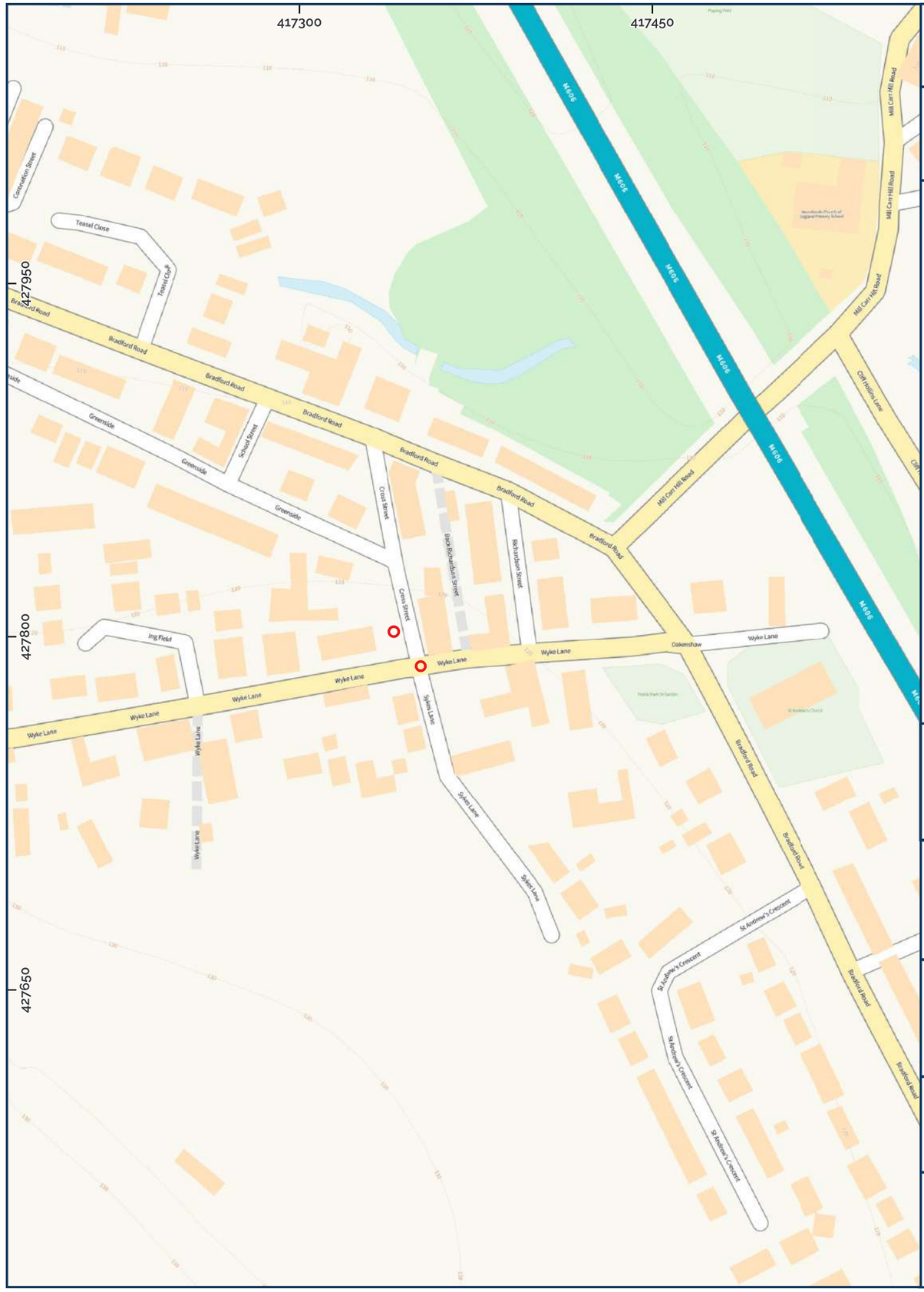
Appendix 1: Figures





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Red Line Boundaries

Basemap: © Crown copyright and/or database right 2025 OS (Open Government Licence)

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Rev: 01
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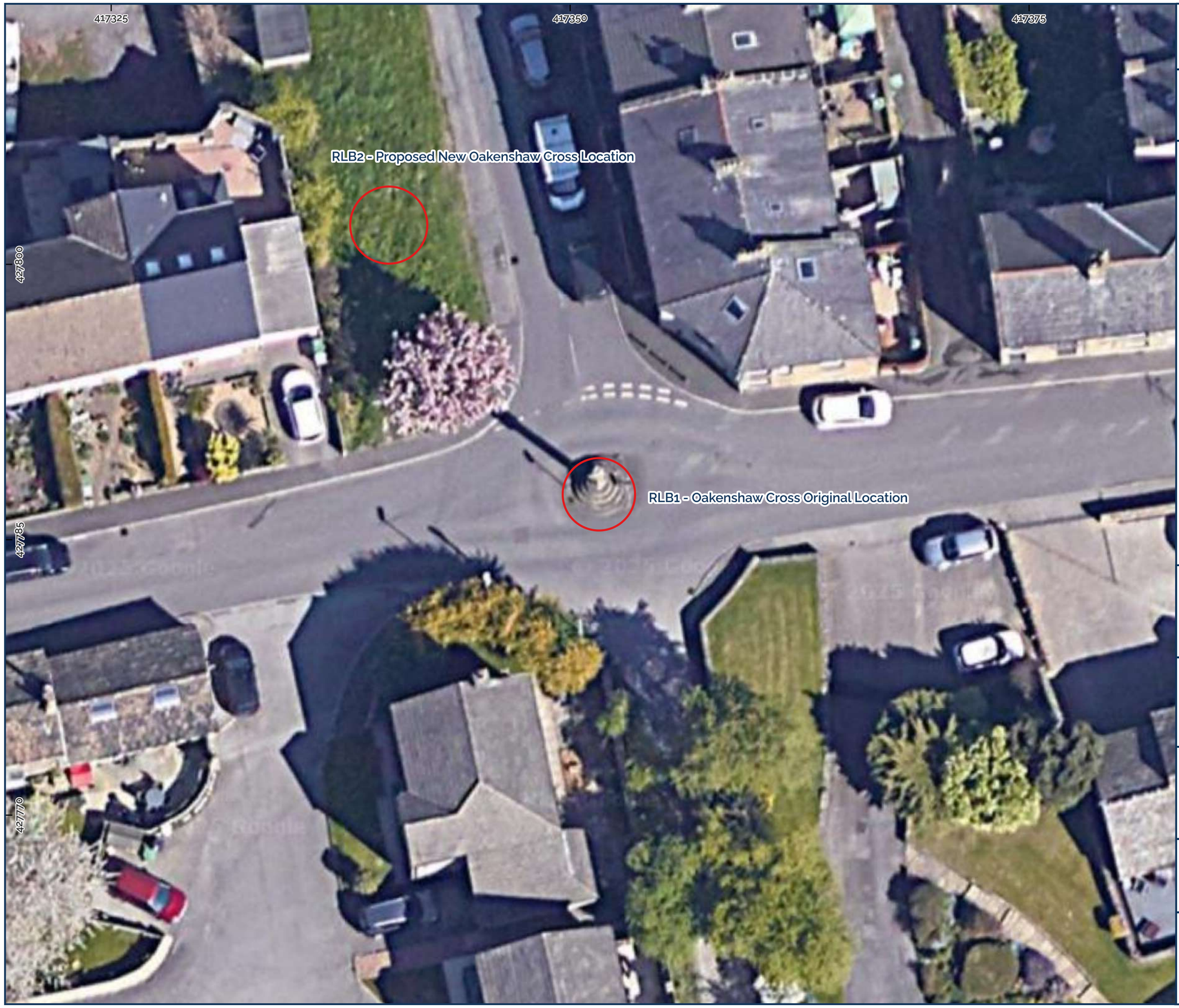
Figure 1: Site Location Plan



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Red Line Boundaries

Basemap: © Map Data Google 2015

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Figure 2: Satellite Imagery

Appendix 2: Evidence Timeline

Richardson, R. 1835. Extracts from the Literary and Scientific Correspondence of Richard Richardson. (ed.) D. Turner. Yarmouth: Charles Sloman

Edited notes from Richard Richardson (1663-1741) including a short biography. Notes that his first wife Sarah died in 1702 along with their infant son. No reference made here to the cross (or to its role as a memorial).

Bradford Observer – Monday 26 October 1868 (accessed - Find My Past & British Library. 2025. The British Newspaper Archive. https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/)

Presence of an '*ancient stone cross*' at Oakenshaw noted - "*in the opinion of some antiquarians, is an indication that at one time a market was held here*'.

Bradford Observer – Tuesday 21 October 1869 (accessed - Find My Past & British Library. 2025. The British Newspaper Archive. https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/)

Notes that the inhabitants of Oakenshaw say that the cross marks the original location of Bradford market.

Holroyd, A. 1873. Collectanea Bradfordiana. Saltaire

Records the death of Dr Richardson's first wife Sarah in 1702, and mentions memorials to her at Bradford Church and Cleckheaton Chapel (no mention of the cross as an additional monument).

Cudworth, W. 1876. Round About Bradford: A Series of Sketches of Forty-Two Places within Six Miles of Bradford. Bradford: William Cudworth

Links the cross with Dr Richard Richardson and suggests that it was built '*as a hobby*' (with Dr Richardson well known for his scientific and antiquarian pursuits), and that it may have been a landmark from his house, Bierley Hall.

Gray, J. 1890. Where to spend a half-holiday. One hundred and eighty pleasant walks around Bradford. Bradford: T. Brear & Co. Limited

Notes that the cross is '*tolerably well preserved*'. Records that '*but as to its use or origin history and tradition are equally silent*'. Also notes that the '*remains of an ancient pavement*' were a few years ago in digging near to the cross.

Jackson, R. 1891. Jackson's handbook for tourists in Yorkshire and complete history of the county. Leeds: Richard Jackson

Described as '*a fine village cross, said to be very ancient*'.

Peel, F. 1893. Spen Valley, Past and Present. Heckmondwike: Senior and Co

Records that the cross was the centre of village life and the main gathering place for the community for '*several generations*', and that sixty years previous the '*fathers of the little community*' would assemble on the steps of the cross once a week to discuss village matters.

Notes that there are a number of traditions as the origin of the cross, but that they '*tax our credulity to a considerable extent*'. Peel does not explore the traditions but does say that he regards the most likely explanation to be that it was erected by Dr Richardson (but does not indicate the reasoning).

Parker, J. 1902. Illustrated History of Wibsey, Low Moor, Oakenshaw, Wike, Norwood Green, Judy Brig, Royds Hall, Coley and Shelf. Great Horton

Parker records that the cross was erected on the site of a previous ancient cross by Dr Richardson in memory of this first wife Sarah who died in 1702. Records that the letters S-R-R / MDCCOII (Sarah and Richard Richardson – 1702?) are on the north side of the cross (NB. Earlier and later writers do not mention this inscription, and it has not been possible to inspect the cross to confirm or deny its presence).

As with Gray 1890, notes that there was an '*ancient pavement'* found near to the cross, which Parker records was Roman.

Records that '*There are many traditional stories told about the inhabitants and its cross which still linger in the folk-lore of the district'*, including that local farmers sold eggs and butter from the steps of the cross, and that it was used as a preaching place for missionaries.

Records that the stone for the cross came from quarries from the Buttershaw Roughs in Bradford, and that Dr Richardson used all of the horses in Oakenshaw to draw the stones to the village – '*This interesting piece of information was given to us by Mr. Charles Firth, butcher of Low Moor; who had it from his father, Peter Firth, who lived at Oakenshaw, and who combined the position of farmer, brewer, and cloth maker; and he had heard it from his uncle, Harry Firth*'.

Cradock, H.C. 1933. A History of the Ancient Parish of Birstall, Yorkshire. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge

Records that the cross was restored by Dr Richardson (rather than having been built by him) and is a fluted column deriving from the 14th or 15th century. Says that the cross had been broken off at the base, presuming that this occurred during the Civil War.

Historic England Official List Entry (c.1984) (Accessed - https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1184674?section=official-list-entry)

'Market cross, probably late C.18. Slender stone column, with 4 engaged colonnettes, on 4-step circular podium. The column is surmounted by an elaborate finial, the square base of which has a sundial to each face. Important village centre site'.

Thornborrow, P.H. 1997. No.7 The Cross, Oakenshaw, in Kirklees Monuments Survey. Vol. II (Historic Buildings Consultation Report). West Yorkshire Archaeology Service

Monument survey conducted by the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service in 1997. Records that the monument resembles a pier from a 13th century aisled arcade church, and postulates that it is a reused medieval column that was erected and restored in 1702, which included the addition of the sundial. States that the reuse of a church pier in this way is not known in any other example, and that it may have come from the restoration or rebuilding of a nearby church.

Notes that the steps have been damaged but is generally in a good condition. Shaft noted to be out of the vertical (leaning) and has sunk to the west. Repeats Cradock (1933) and says that the cross is erected on the site of a medieval market cross that had been destroyed during the Civil

War and was erected in 1702 by Dr Richardson as a memorial to his first wife Sarah. Suggests that the steps may have been the from the supposed medieval cross.

Danger of traffic to the monument explored, with the report recommending that the roundabout should be widened to provide more room to drive around the monument, while a one-way system is also suggested. The report also notes that the monument appears to be in its original location, and that it should not be moved.

Oakenshaw History Group. 2012. *Oakenshaw Links to the Past: Early Beginnings - Pre 1066 to Victorian Times*. Oakenshaw

Repeats suggestion that the monument is on the site of a medieval market cross and preaching location.

WYAS. 2022. Oakenshaw Cross, Oakenshaw, West Yorkshire. Archaeological and Architectural Building Recording (Photographic Record) and Structural Watching Brief 3804

Watching brief conducted by the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service during the dismantling of the monument in 2022. No physical evidence for an earlier cross was found (although it is noted that any such evidence may have conceivably been removed during installation of the post-medieval monument). An additional fifth step was found buried in the road surface. Rubble and mortar foundations beneath the steps found to extend beyond 1m in depth.

WYAS. 2025. Oakenshaw Cross, Oakenshaw, West Yorkshire. Archaeological Recording 4353. Leeds: West Yorkshire Archaeological Service

Archaeological recording of the elements of the cross in storage by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service on 07 August 2025. Repeats that the monument was erected in 1702 by Dr Richardson as a memorial to his wife Sarah and their child.

Elements of the cross stored on wooden pallets and covered by tarpaulin. Individual elements previously spray marked to indicate their position in the complete monument.

Records that the face of the sundial includes the words ‘redeem the time’ (possibly a reference to Ephesians 5:16?).