

NIC STEELE

Retired, Redacted, Re-used or Regenerated?

I chose Old Lane purely down to its outstanding history, being one of the main routes in Halifax for its textile industry and travel back in the day. It had everything going on back then! A railway station which opened in 1881 and was used right up until May 1955: the old station timber platform building still standing, partly derelict and overgrown of life but now used by a second hand car dealer / scrap merchant! The steep cobbles leading down also still remain, used for the transport of goods between Halifax and Keighley and rare excursions for some lucky Halifaxians.

The whole of the lane was used for the cloth/textile industry mainly – drying houses for cloth lined the way, a pub and a mill, all long since demolished or left to ruin. The railway line still exists in parts, though its tracks are long since removed. The tunnels are still present, but blocked off - well partly - as it was a good dare back in the 80s to go into it: rumour had it was haunted - well everything was back then!

Many buildings however still remain – the workhouses of the mills no longer employed in their old capacity but in recent decades re-purposed to house Insurance companies, restaurants, bars, theatres, offices and banks. So new life was given into what was decaying for such a long time, whilst keeping the exterior character was very pleasing to see and is one of our favourite points of call for a night out of late.

The old chimney of the mills and goods yard still remain as a shadow over 'The Lane' which form a big part of its character, as does the old mill owned by the historic Rawson family - sadly of late it's home to many undesirables and is currently in a dangerous state of repair. I'm unsure why it hasn't yet been removed or re-purposed – probably cost? But it makes a great back drop for photographic purposes!

The majority of the cobbled lane (it was *all* cobbles at one time) still remains on/off throughout the length of Old Lane, which I feel adds to the character and hopefully they'll never be removed.