

Craven Conservation Areas Assessment Project: A General Introduction Revised March 2023



This Introduction is to be read in conjunction with any of the following Conservation Area Appraisals, which were completed in March 2023.

Burton-in-Lonsdale Conservation Area Appraisal

Carleton Conservation Area Appraisal

Cononley Conservation Area Appraisal

Cowling Conservation Area Appraisal

Eastby Conservation Area Appraisal

Embsay Conservation Area Appraisal

Farnhill Conservation Area Appraisal

Gargrave Conservation Area Appraisal

Ingleton Conservation Area Appraisal

Kildwick Conservation Area Appraisal

Kildwick Grange Conservation Area Appraisal

Lothersdale Conservation Area Appraisal

Low Bradley Conservation Area Appraisal

Settle–Carlisle Railway Conservation Area Appraisal

Sutton-in-Craven Conservation Area Appraisal

Thornton-in-Craven Conservation Area Appraisal

A General Introduction to the Craven Conservation Areas Project March 2023

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1.0 Introduction

This document is intended to be read alongside Conservation Area Appraisals that can be downloaded from the Craven District Council website at <http://www.cravendc.gov.uk/article/540/Conservation-Areas>. This is an over-arching introduction to these documents. It provides an explanation of the purpose, context and methodology of the project, including background information on the history, landscape character, geology, architecture and building materials of Craven.

2.0 Purpose and Policy

2.1 What is this project?

This project serves two primary purposes:

1. It supplies Conservation Area Appraisals for 16 Conservation Areas in Craven that are outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park and that do not already have adopted appraisals. They are identified on the map on [page 4](#). These Conservation Areas were prioritised because they are likely to face the greatest development pressures. The Appraisals will aid Craven District Council's Development Management and Planning Policy teams in their statutory duty to preserve or enhance their special architectural or historic interest, and provide valuable information for householders and applicants.
2. It supplied part of the 'evidence base' for Craven District Council's Local Plan, by providing an understanding of how the significance of built heritage assets may be affected by proposed development allocation sites.

To achieve these purposes, the project consisted of three parts:

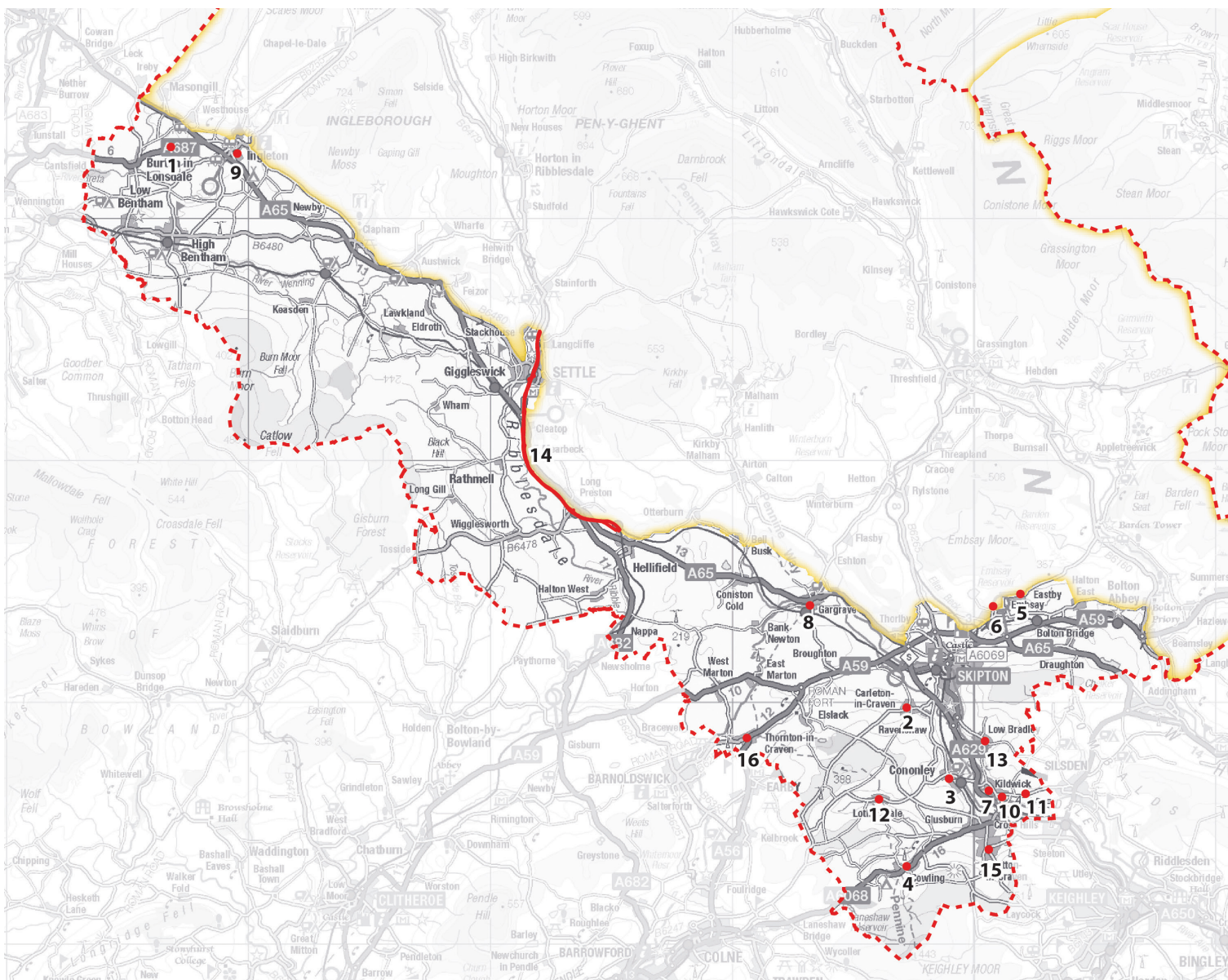
1. sixteen Conservation Area Appraisals;
2. assessments of three further villages for possible designation as Conservation Areas; and,
3. the assessment of the potential impact of development on heritage assets at sites that were under consideration in the early draft of the Local Plan consulted on in 2014.

The project supports Craven's duty under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to consult the public about the proposals.

2.2 What is the relationship to the Yorkshire Dales National Park?

The southern part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park is in Craven District. The National Park authority is responsible for its own planning policy and control, and therefore Craven is not the planning authority for those areas of the District that fall within the National Park.

As a result, this project is only concerned with conservation areas outside the National Park. In some instances, such as Embsay, the boundary of the National Park runs adjacent or close to the conservation areas. In such circumstances, landscape and settlement within the Park boundary is only assessed as is necessary to understand the context of the conservation area.



Key

- Craven District
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Boundary
- Conservation Area
- 1** Burton-in-Lonsdale
- 2** Carleton
- 3** Cononley
- 4** Cowling
- 5** Eastby
- 6** Embsay
- 7** Farnhill
- 8** Gargrave
- 9** Ingleton
- 10** Kildwick
- 11** Kildwick Grange
- 12** Lothersdale
- 13** Low Bradley
- 14** Settle-Carlisle Railway
- 15** Sutton-in-Craven
- 16** Thornton-in-Craven

Location of Conservation Areas

2.3 What are conservation areas?

Conservation areas are areas of "special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" – in other words, they exist to protect the features and the characteristics that make a historic place unique and distinctive.

They were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967, and they are normally designated by the local planning authority, in this case Craven District Council. Designation imposes a duty on the Council, in exercising its planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. In fulfilling this duty, the Council does not seek to stop all development, but to manage change in a sensitive way, so that those qualities which warranted designation are sustained and reinforced rather than eroded.

2.4 How might living in a conservation area affect you?

Although conservation areas mean some extra planning controls and considerations, these exist to protect the historic and architectural elements which make the place special. They are most likely to affect owners who want to work on the outside of their building or any trees on their property.

Demolition

Specifically, if you live in a conservation area and want to demolish your building, you will need Planning Permission. If the building is listed you will also need Listed Building Consent.

Trees

If you want to cut down, top or lop any but the smallest of trees in a conservation area you must notify Craven District Council six weeks before work begins. The authority will then consider the contribution the tree makes to the character of the area and if necessary create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it.

Other changes and proposals

More generally, the preservation or enhancement of the conservation area is a 'material consideration' for any planning application that might affect it. However, conservation area designation does not control all forms of development. Some changes to family houses (known as 'permitted development') do not normally require planning permission. These include minor alterations such as the replacement of windows and doors, or the alteration of boundary walls. Where such changes would harm local amenity or the proper planning of the area (for example, by damaging the historic environment), the Council can introduce special controls, known as Article 4 directions, that withdraw particular permitted development rights. The result is that planning permission is required for these changes. Elements of three conservation areas in Craven are currently subject to Article 4 directions: Skipton, Settle and Farnhill.

2.5 What is the purpose of a conservation area appraisal?

A conservation area appraisal outlines the history of an area and identifies and explains what makes it special, including its landscape, history, architecture and townscape. It can also provide some general guidelines on managing and carrying out development in the conservation area.

2.6 Where can I find further information?

For further information on conservation areas, how they are managed and how this might affect you, please see Craven District Council's website at <http://www.cravendc.gov.uk/article/540/Conservation-Areas>, and Historic England's advice on living in conservation areas: <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/owning-historic-property/conservation-area/>

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Authors

This report, the conservation area appraisals and the allocation assessments were written and prepared by Alan Baxter Ltd with Bob Sydes BA, MCIfA, Research Associate, University of York.

3.2 Guidance

Two Historic England publications supplied relevant and widely-recognised guidance for this project:

Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management; Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second edition), Historic England (2019) <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/heag-268-conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management/>

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second edition), Historic England (2017) <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

Other guidance and advice documents that were consulted are listed in amongst the Sources in [Section 5.1](#) below.

3.3 Designation data

The location, name and grade of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens were extracted from Historic England's National Heritage List for England in early 2022. Every effort has been made by the authors to correct any inaccuracies in the Historic England mapping data, but any errors that remain are errors on the National Heritage List and not the responsibility of Craven District Council.

3.4 Contents

Applying this best practice and guidance, the assessment of each conservation area is divided into the following elements:

- Introduction
- Assessment of Character
- Landscape and Open Space
- Views
- Traffic and Movement
- Management Recommendations
- Further Information

3.5 Character assessment

The character and appearance of conservation areas were analysed by a combination of site visits and the consultation of sources such as historic mapping, books, articles and the North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record.

Two layers of the interactive map record aspects of this assessment: the historical development analysis and archaeological analysis layers. Both of these mapping layers are high level assessments. They convey general themes and professional judgments. They should not be taken to be accurate in every detail: the time and resources required for a fine-grain level of analysis were beyond the scope of the project, and not essential to the core planning and development management functions of the appraisals.

3.6 Views analysis

Significant views have been identified both because they encapsulate the special character of each Conservation Area, and because they are a tool for assessing the impact of new development and other change. The methodology

applies best practice from English Heritage's (now Historic England's) guidance documents *Seeing the History in the View* and *The Setting of Heritage Assets*. At the heart of the methodology is the analysis of the 'significance' of each view in terms of its historical, architectural, townscape, aesthetic and community interest, and of the key landmarks (or 'heritage assets') visible within it.

The purpose is to identify views that capture and express the special and unique character of each Conservation Area, although the list in each appraisal does not claim to be exhaustive. Views are categorized as views from fixed positions or 'dynamic' views that are experienced continuously along streets, roads, lanes and paths - often evolving and changing in the process.

3.7 Open space assessment

A methodology was devised in collaboration with Historic England to assess the contribution of open space to the character and appearance of each Conservation Area. The geology and landform of the Aire Gap is such that the wider

landscape frequently makes a significant contribution to the special interest of Conservation Areas. The hills and dales form a magnificent backdrop to historic streetscape and the topography generates many fine long-distance views of the settlements. The distinctive form of upland villages is such that the farmed landscape frequently extends into the historic core, blurring the distinction between open space within the settlement and the landscape beyond.

In this context, conventional views analysis, whilst useful, was felt to provide only a partial understanding of the relationship between historic settlements and open space. By enhancing views analysis with a complimentary analysis of open space a more rounded and useful assessment of significance is possible.

Definition

Open space is defined as common land, farmland, countryside and recreational spaces (including school grounds, churchyards and cemeteries.) Private gardens and private car parks are excluded.

Analysis

The analysis considered open space inside and outside the Conservation Area boundary, where it formed its immediate context.

Fieldwork was combined with an analysis of historic mapping and other secondary sources. From this, the following factors were taken into account in assessing the contribution of open space to the character and appearance of each Conservation Area:

1. the historical relationship and function of open space
2. its contribution to the form and structure of historical settlements
3. how open space is experienced and viewed from within the boundary of the Conservation Area (for example, there are many long views from within Conservation Areas to the wider landscape that are fundamental to their character and appearance)

4. how the pattern of historic settlements and their relationship to the wider landscape can be understood when looking in from outside (and sometimes at considerable distance, from hills and scarps)

Grading

Using this analysis, open space is graded according to the following hierarchy:

Open space that makes a **strong contribution** to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
(mapped in purple)

Open space that makes **some contribution** to character and appearance of the Conservation Area *(mapped in yellow)*

Open space that makes **no or negligible contribution** to character and appearance of the Conservation Area
(mapped in brown)

Extent of mapping

The wider landscape context is complicated to map. The mapping layer illustrates the contribution of open space to a depth of approximately two field boundaries around the entire settlement (not just the Conservation Area boundary). This is not intended to delineate the full extent of the contribution that open space makes to the character and appearance of each Conservation Area as its contribution may continue beyond this point.

3.8 Potential conservation area assessment

Craven District Council, in common with all local planning authorities, has a duty under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 from time to time to assess whether there are additional places that possess sufficient special architectural or historic interest to be designated conservation areas, and to designate them.

In support of this duty, this project has assessed three settlements: Glusburn, Low Bentham and High Bentham. The methodology for these assessments was similar to that adopted for the existing conservation areas. Historic England's *Advice Note No1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (2nd edition 2019) provides useful guidance on how to assess areas for designation.

3.9 Allocation assessment

Craven's emerging Local Plan included sites under consideration for allocation for development. Those sites that are included in the final, adopted, version of the Local Plan are locations where the principle of development is acceptable. In order to assess the suitability of such sites for development, this project assessed what contribution 28 of these sites made to the significance of heritage assets, and what impact development might have. These assessments formed part of the 'evidence base' underpinning the Local Plan.

The following methodology was devised, from best practice and discussion with Craven and Historic England officers, for assessing the impact of development on the significance and setting of designated heritage assets – meaning listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens.

1. From a combination of site visits, secondary sources and the National Heritage List for England, the location and significance of heritage assets was mapped.
2. Next, an open space assessment was undertaken, using the methodology described in section 3.3 above.
3. The contribution of the site to the significance of heritage assets was then evaluated in the following ways, as applicable in each case, and presented in tabular form:


- i. Views of heritage assets
 - ii. The setting of heritage assets, if the site is outside the boundary of a conservation area
 - iii. The contribution the site makes to the character and appearance of a conservation area, if the site is inside a conservation area.
- 4. Measures to mitigate the impact of development was then analysed, for example the footprint of the development, the design of the development, the use of landscaping and screening.
 - 5. A narrative conclusion of the impact of development on the historic environment.

3.10 Interactive maps and links

Software

Documents created as part of this project have been designed to be viewed digitally. They will work best on Adobe Reader or Adobe Acrobat Pro versions X or later on a PC or laptop. Please be aware that some interactive features such as layered maps and navigation buttons currently do not work on many other pdf readers, or on the version of Adobe Reader which is used on many mobile devices such as I pads and mobile phones. Because the layered maps are an integral part of the document, we recommend using Adobe on a desktop PC or laptop only.

Navigation


To navigate through the document, click on the relevant title on the contents page, or use the 'bookmarks panel', which is revealed by clicking the  button on the left hand side of the screen.


Hyperlinks - identified by bold text - throughout the document take you to the relevant view.

To return to a page after clicking a hyperlink or viewing the map, click the 'back' button in the bottom left hand corner of the document. Alternatively, hold down the 'alt' key and press the left navigation arrow on the keyboard.

Layered maps

Throughout the documents, a 'map' button in the bottom right hand corner of every page links you to the relevant map. Each of these maps consists of several layers, each displaying a different piece of information. These layers can be put together in any combination.

Layers can be switched on and off using the 'layers panel', which is revealed by clicking the  button on the left hand side of the screen. On this panel click the small box alongside the layer name to turn the layer on or off.

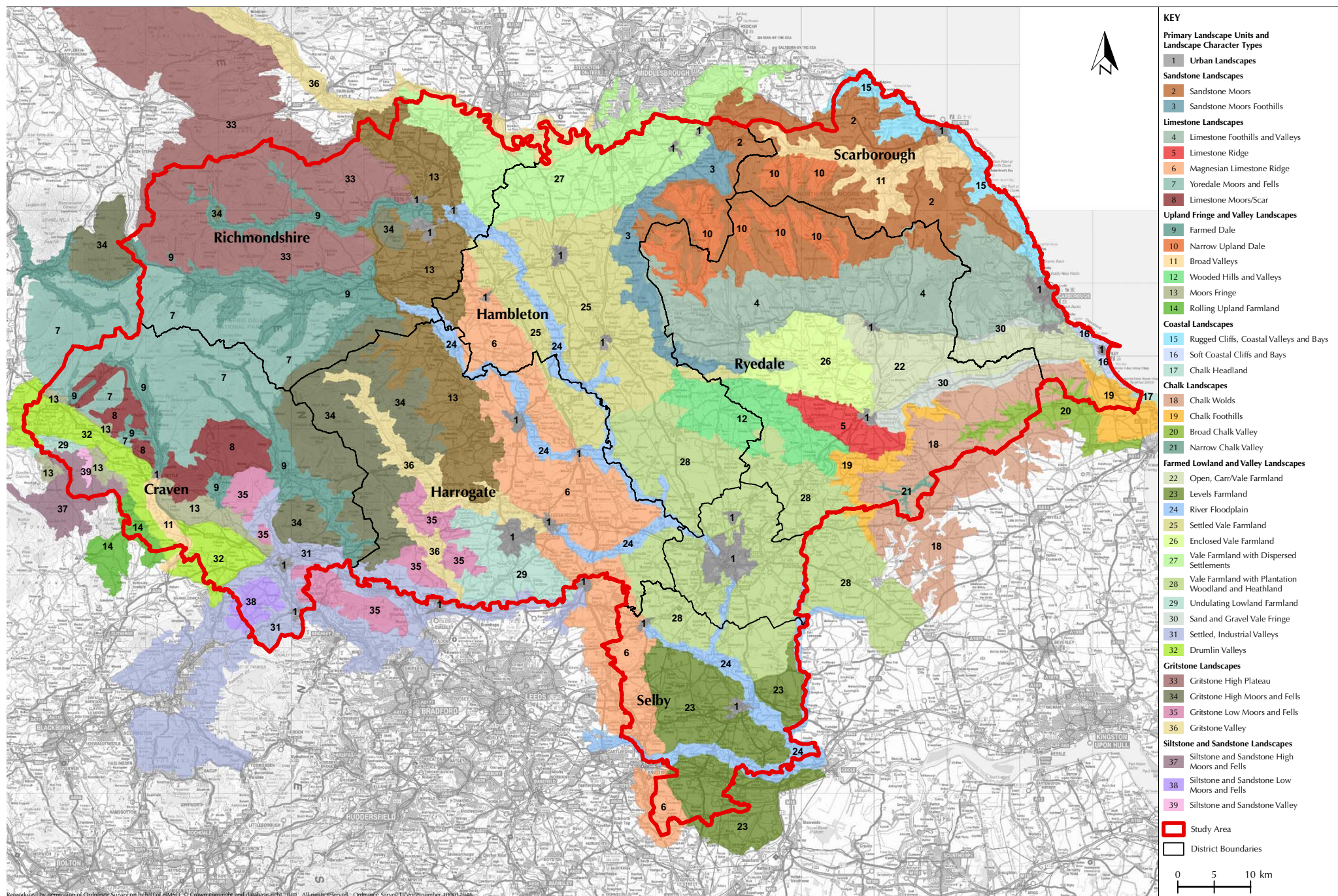
If there are several layered maps in the document, all the layers will by default appear as one long list. To limit the list to only the layers for the map you are viewing, click the  button in the top left hand corner of the layers window and select 'List layers for visible pages'.

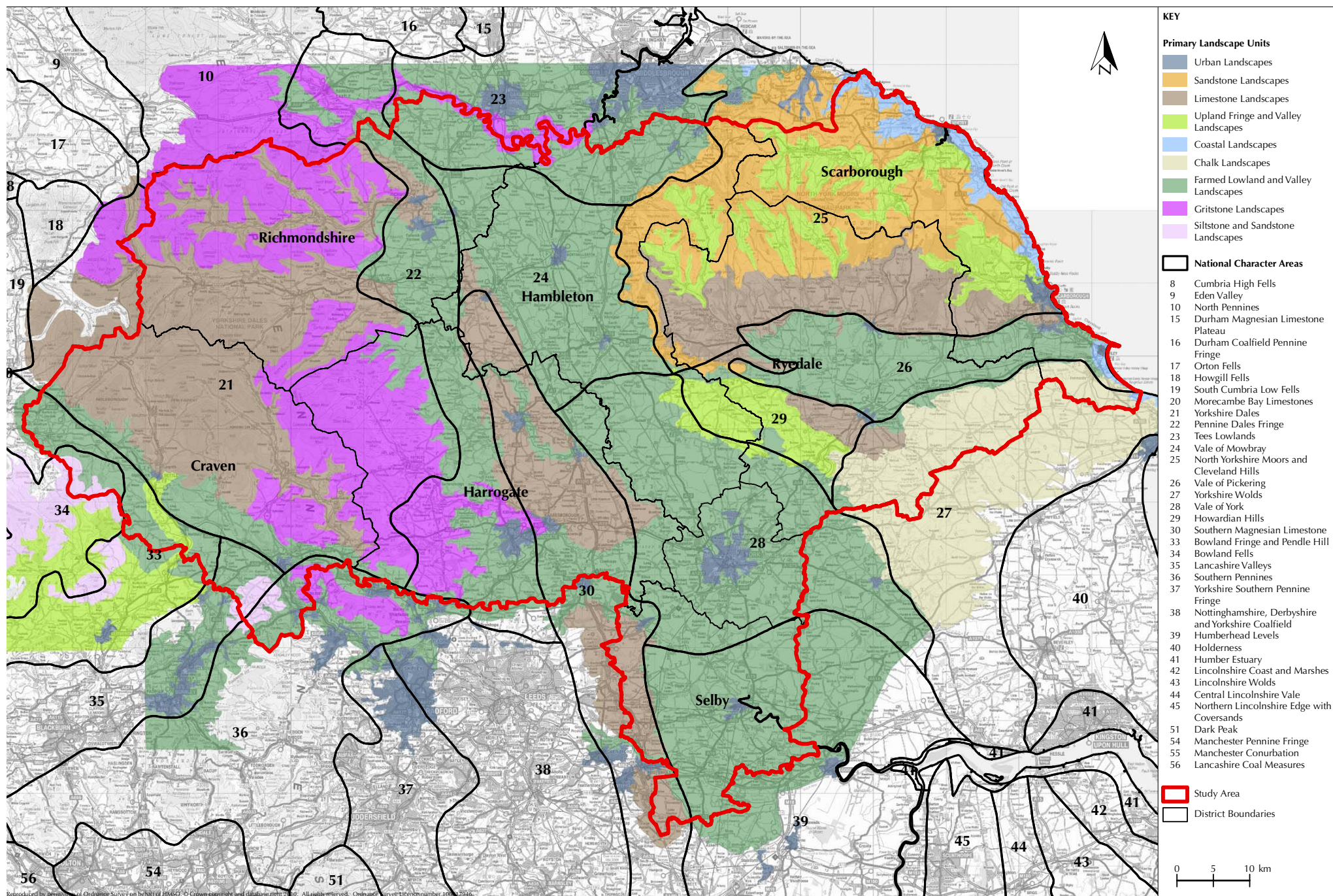
4.0 History and Character of The Aire Gap

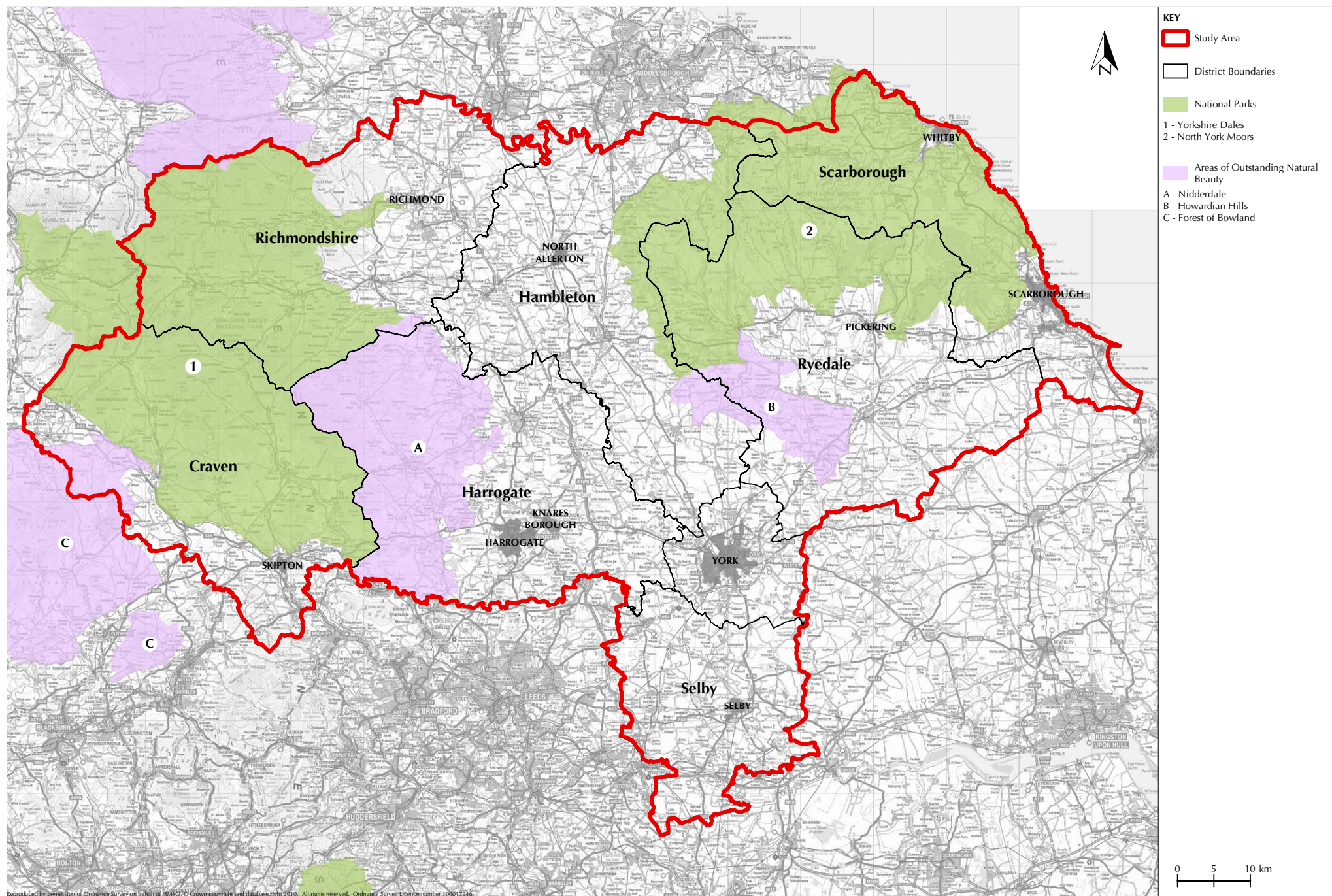
4.1 Landscape characterisation

Landscape character assessment is a way of describing and understanding landscape and the influences that have helped to shape it. The European Landscape Convention emphasises that all landscapes are of value, not just the 'best' bits, and that an accessible and integrated approach is needed to shape and manage landscape change.

North Yorkshire Council's *North Yorkshire and York Landscape character assessment* provides a reference document for everyone interested in the sustainable management of the countryside, coast and settlements and is intended as a planning and land management tool. It has been one of the principal reference works for this project and a number of the most important maps are reproduced here:







4.2 Geology

The underlying geology of Craven District comprises two types of sedimentary rock: sandstone (Millstone Grit) to the south and limestone (Carboniferous) to the north. The interface between the two forms part of the nationally significant Craven Fault. Between the sandstone uplands of the Southern Pennines (Skipton and Sutton Moors for example) and the Limestone moors and scarps of the Yorkshire Dales (Ingleborough Hill, Settle for example), lies the lowland valleys and hills of the Aire Gap comprising drift deposits of fluvial and glacial origin. The area around East and West Marton for example comprises a striking landscape of glacial drumlins.

4.3 Landscape

The solid and drift geology of Craven District defines landscape and setting in a very unique way, perhaps more so than other parts of Yorkshire. Nowhere more aptly illustrates this than the journey by car along the A65, or by train on the Settle to Carlisle railway through the low altitude Aire Gap which links the Vale of York to Lancashire

across the Pennines. The A65 in particular takes in a number of characterful settlements including Gargrave and Ingleton as well as extraordinary views across the Aire and Ribble valleys. Landscape features are strong. There are a number of prominent peaks and hills across Craven that dominate the landscape including the Three Peaks of Ingleborough, Wharfedale and Pen-y-Ghent as well as Pendle Hill (in east Lancashire).

Views

It is in medium and long landscape views from settlements and key landmarks that Craven excels. These views, from all points of the compass take in a landscape that has changed little since publication of the first Ordnance Survey maps of the region in the 1850s. Landscape legibility is strong, with a recognisable historic grain that in many cases dates back to 15th and 16th centuries. Good examples of this can be found around East and West Marton and in Lothersdale. Boundaries are a mix of limestone or sandstone drystone wall and hedge, depending on location. Craven is an open landscape with relatively little woodland. The high moors are generally unenclosed areas of heath and bog.

Settlement distribution

The majority of settlements in the south cling to the edges of the sandstone uplands overlooking flood plains and river systems. The historic and visual relationship between them and their landscapes is strong and relatively untroubled by 20th century development. Even Skipton, which can be viewed from many miles in any direction is relatively limited in its growth and intrudes little on the wider landscape. Views from Carleton-in-Craven are good examples of this.

Other settlements such as Burton-in-Lonsdale and High Bentham perch above river valleys, intimately linked to their surrounding landscapes.

Significance

Although the surrounding landscape clearly make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of all Craven's settlements, the settlements themselves make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the landscape. This synergy is not common in Britain.

4.4 History and archaeology

Archaeological understanding

There has been little substantial 20th and early 21st century development in Craven District and consequently there have been few significant archaeological investigations and few discoveries of substance that shed light on Craven's past. The majority of archaeological research over the past few decades has been associated with the later medieval and early modern periods, principally relating to the industrial landscape.

Prehistoric Craven

That said, prehistoric activity is evident, particularly on the high moors. Cup-and ring carvings (Skipton Moor); enclosures; and a variety of stray finds of stone, bronze and iron are recorded in the North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record across the District and there is an early Iron Age hillfort on Ingleborough Hill. An excavated Roman villa with earlier Iron Age round houses and associated burials at Kirk Sink near Gargrave attests to change and continuity within the landscape in the 1st to 4th centuries.

A Roman fortification at Burwen Castle, Elslack and traces of the Roman road from Keighley across the Pennines to the west attest to the importance of the Aire Gap as a routeway across the Pennines from earliest times (North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record).

Medieval Craven

For much of the medieval period, the economic and social life of Craven centred on a mixed economy of arable, animal husbandry and textile working. This is reflected in the inherited character of many settlements such as Sutton-in-Craven and Lothersdale. Within them, former farms and farm cottages retain their weaving lofts, reflecting this varied economy. Plots, and land boundaries on the edge of historic settlements, often reflect the continuing legacy of **'tofts' and 'crofts'**. Tofts were the enclosed productive land of a house plot in the Middle Ages. A croft was an enclosed field used for crops or pasture, typically attached to the toft and worked by the occupier. Together these provided the small-scale farmer with some independence from the communal medieval farming regime.

The present landscape, particularly the lowland areas, comprise field systems that reflect a piecemeal approach to enclosing former open grazing, common open fields and waste since at least the 15th century (*North Yorkshire, York and Lower Tees Historic Landscape Characterisation Project*).

The two main medieval power centres in the District were the ecclesiastic Bolton Abbey, an Augustinian House founded in the mid 12th century, and the secular Skipton Castle built around the late 12th century. A second, smaller castle survives as a motte and bailey earthwork in Burton-in-Lonsdale. Hellifield Peel Tower is a surviving testament to the instability that was still felt in the 15th century: a tower house fortified against Scottish raiders.

Industrialisation of the landscape

From the 15th century onwards, Craven became increasingly industrialised albeit on a smaller scale than the West Riding towns further downstream such as Keighley, Bingley and Shipley. Exploitation of minerals including Barytes (eg. Lothersdale) and lead (eg. Cononley), together with quarrying for buildings stone and crushed lime became common. Raygill Quarry (Lothersdale) and Thornton Quarry (Thornton-in-Craven) are two of the largest and longest lasting (both working up to the late 20th century). By far the largest industry was textile production and both water (eg. Ickornshaw) and steam powered mills (eg. Carleton-in-Craven) survive in many settlements as a testament to this industry. With the exception of Skipton - and in contrast to towns downstream - textile production remained an essentially rural industry.

The Leeds Liverpool Canal (1770-1781), various Turnpike roads (eg. Keighley and Kendal Turnpike – 1753) and the railways (Settle to Carlisle Railway - 1870s) provided much needed transport links through the Aire Gap.

20th Century

Change in the 20th century has left much of the overall landscape character intact, and the historic core of many settlements survives in large part. However, the decline of the textile industry has resulted in the physical loss of many mills since the late 20th century. All four of Cowling's mills have been demolished and redeveloped for residential in the late 20th and early 21st century. Surviving mill chimneys are however, still a common feature in the landscape. By the late 20th century many settlements have morphed into dormitory or commuter villages, with residential extensions. There are exceptions. High Bentham, Settle and Skipton for instance, have retained their role as key market centres.

4.6 Contemporary character

Materials

The majority of Craven settlements retain a significant inherited built environment, constructed in the main out of locally derived natural materials – usually stone and commonly either sandstone (gritstone) or limestone. Brick is an extremely rare material. A common feature is the use of locally sourced sandstone (mostly yoredale series) tiling on roofs, especially within the smaller more rural settlements. Welsh slate is more common in the larger settlements such as Skipton. Later 20th century and early 21st century developments also utilise stone, although this is predominantly used as a cladding over other materials.

Settlement forms

Historic grain tends to survive very well in the majority of settlements and their mid 19th century form as indicated on Ordnance Survey maps prepared in the 1850s can be easily appreciated. Burton-in-Lonsdale is a particularly excellent example of a settlement with high historic legibility. Extensions to settlements have tended to be relatively

modest, primarily dating to the 1950s and 1960s and the very late 20th and early 21st centuries. The latter increasingly in the form of brown field development as in Cowling and Sutton-in-Craven where former industrial sites have been redeveloped. Where industrial buildings survive, particularly textile mills, settlement character benefits significantly.

Within settlements, conversions of former agricultural and industrial buildings to residential has been largely complete by the time of this study and there are few village farms and rural industries surviving. The majority of conversions have been sympathetic in terms of materials used and the extent of surviving fabric (for instance, Carleton Mill), although the historic function of the buildings is not always clear. New window and door insertions are a common feature (for example, the former Corn Mill, Low Bradley).

A very common feature throughout Craven, and impacting negatively on character, is the use of uPVC window replacements for traditional timber sash windows.

Streetscape

The public realm or streetscape, tends to be fairly clear of unnecessary clutter but the survival of traditional surfacing materials such as cobbles, setts and stone flags is mixed. Pavements are, in the main, surfaced with asphalt and edged in many cases with traditional sandstone kerbs. Traditional materials survive best in yards, alleys and passages (for instance, Cowling and Glusburn).

Street furniture

Street furniture is a mix of utilitarian 20th century and contemporary 'heritage style'. Lighting columns range from mid 20th century concrete and cast iron varieties to contemporary steel tubing. It is with the luminaires that the greatest variety exists. The more recent examples, such as Thornton-in-Craven's heritage style are probably referencing local desire for more characterful street furniture. Traditional cast iron fingerposts survive in many settlements.

5.0 Sources and Acknowledgements

5.1 Sources

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