The distribution of enclosed land is widespread throughout the project area. Notable exceptions are the areas within the two national parks and areas of urban settlement and industry, particularly evident in the Lower Tees Valley, see Figure 15.

**Figure 15** Distribution of enclosed land throughout the project area

**Figure 16** Distribution of internal boundaries throughout the project area, mapped by character

**Distribution**

The distribution of enclosed land is widespread throughout the project area. Notable exceptions are the areas within the two national parks and areas of urban settlement and industry, particularly evident in the Lower Tees Valley, see Figure 15.
Survival

Field systems within North Yorkshire and the Lower Tees Valley take many forms. The results of the HLC project have shown how much they dominate the landscape. In total, covering all periods, enclosed land covers 70 percent of the area, a total of 627,700 hectares. The character of these field patterns varies tremendously, and has a huge impact on how the landscape is perceived. This perception can also be influenced by the character of the boundaries and the extent of boundary loss.

Figure 16 shows trends in boundary type, whether hedges, dry stone walls or ditches, for field boundaries of all periods. The overall pattern reflects how people are responding to their physical environment in different ways, utilising the resources available to them. For example, in the lower-lying areas of North Yorkshire, the field boundaries are often ditches, where the high water table can be utilised as a physical boundary defining property. In upland areas, such as the Yorkshire Dales, field boundaries within the landscape are often dry stone walls. Neither of these types of field boundary are static, requiring maintenance whether through the dredging of ditches or the repair of walls, so too, hedgerow boundaries require active management to maintain coherence.

Key statistics

Boundary change can describe several different processes. This can refer to boundary loss, for example reflecting the removal of hedges due to changes in agricultural practices in the 20th century. It can also refer to boundary creation, leading to the subdivision of larger units, as a result of changes in use. ‘Reorganised boundaries’ refers, specifically, to areas where the boundary pattern has been completely changed since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63). This might be as a result of a completely different field system being imposed, or the straightening of field boundaries. Chart 2 shows the amount of enclosed land boundary change within the project area which has occurred since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63). The greatest trend is towards boundary loss with 81% of enclosure within the study area showing some degree of boundary loss. By contrast, 11% of the field systems have seen no boundary loss whatsoever since 1850. This covers an area of approximately 80,000 hectares.

The map below in Figure 17 shows broad trends in the character of boundary change since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63). There is a pattern emerging, with the central area displaying the most dynamic activity in relation to boundary change. There is a clear trend of significant boundary loss within the central area of the county, with many field systems showing 61-90 percent boundary loss since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63).

Figure 18 shows the enclosed land by period of origin showing the time depth of the enclosed land within the project.
Figure 17  Distribution of boundary change and reorganisation
Figure 18 Enclosed land mapped by period of origin
4.1.1 Planned enclosure

Description

All types of enclosure require a degree of planning, however planned enclosure refers to a specific series of historic events that occurred in the post-medieval period, broadly between AD 1750 and 1850. To quote Richard Muir, “in numerous parishes and regions of England parliamentary enclosure was the most important single factor in shaping the modern countryside”\textsuperscript{100}.

During the early 18th century there was an increased move towards enclosure, however enclosure by private agreement was not an easy process so more and more landowners turned to the mechanism of private act of Parliament\textsuperscript{101}. Following the first Yorkshire Parliamentary enclosure act, in 1726, at Fangfoss cum Spittle, there followed many more enclosure acts across the region. In 1836 the passing of Public General Acts\textsuperscript{102} streamlined the system.

Generally characterised by fairly regular fields, defined by straight boundaries, (see Plate 8) these field patterns occur across the whole of the project area. The actual character of the boundaries, whether they are hedges, dry stone walls or ditches seem to be a response to local conditions of topography and geology. The field patterns have been classed as either large scale private enclosure, or planned large scale parliamentary enclosure, where it has been possible to establish this. These have generally been used where the existence of an Act or agreement can be demonstrated, usually with reference to Barbara English’s Book \textit{Yorkshire Enclosure Awards}\textsuperscript{103} or the Access to Archives website\textsuperscript{104}. For the Lower Tees Valley, the publication \textit{A Domesday of English Enclosure Acts and Awards}\textsuperscript{105} was used. Where it was not possible to identify a specific award for an area of planned enclosure, the character type unknown planned enclosure was used.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{100} Muir 2004, 200
\bibitem{101} English 1985: xi
\bibitem{102} Ibid
\bibitem{103} English 1985
\bibitem{104} A2A.org.uk
\bibitem{105} Tate and Turner 1978
\end{thebibliography}
Distribution

Planned enclosure was characterised across the project area, however it is concentrated in the lower areas. For example, in the Yorkshire Dales it is found in the valleys, while they are not so evident in the higher moorland areas. There is a particular concentration in the Vale of Pickering towards Filey. 817 field systems could be linked to known parliamentary awards. This has allowed the dating for these areas to be tied in to the dates laid out in Barbara English’s book (see footnote 103). Planned enclosure has survived well in the protected areas represented by the two National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. As agricultural practices have changed, particularly in the lower lying areas, there has been a large degree of boundary loss. This has lead in some areas to the agglomeration of fields into very large enclosures, normally over 10 hectares (these will be discussed in more detail below, under the modern improved fields section).

Survival

The survival of the planned enclosure field systems is good throughout the majority of the project area. 154,000 hectares of planned enclosure has seen less than 30% boundary loss since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63). Planned enclosure is found across the whole project area.
Figure 20  Different types of planned enclosure.

The distribution shown in figure 20 highlights several trends. In the western part of the project area, the areas of parliamentary enclosure tend to be much more extensive in size. There is also a concentration around Staxton (TA 0079) and Ganton (SE 9777) to the east in the Vale of Pickering.

Planned enclosure has been recorded as one of three types, depending on the supporting evidence. The following charts show the relative size of these areas, county wide.

**Key statistics**

Chart 3 shows the number of areas characterised as each type of planned enclosure. From this it can be seen that the predominant type of planned enclosure is for those areas where a specific award wasn’t possible to identify, and is therefore Unknown Planned enclosure. The next largest number of areas is for parliamentary enclosure followed by a small number where land has been planned by private agreement.

Chart 4 shows the total hectarage for each type of planned enclosure, which broadly reflects the trends in Chart 3.

The earliest identified parliamentary enclosure, within the project, is in the parish of Rillington in Ryedale (SE 8375) and dates between 1657 and 1780.

While it is generally accepted that parliamentary enclosure dates approximately between 1750 and 1850, (these dates have been used for planned enclosure where an award could not be identified.) there are a number of awards within the project area which fall before this date range.
Probably the most substantial area of parliamentary enclosure is the Forest of Knaresborough award. This dates from 1770 to 1778, (with amending awards in 1774, 1789 and 1795) and covers an estimated area of 20000 acres (approximately 8093 hectares). This is an extensive planned landscape and includes 11 constabularies within the Harrogate area. As part of this study the large scale planned enclosure that was identified within this area was characterised as parliamentary enclosure and seems to have captured most of the extent of the award.

© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. North Yorkshire County Council. 100017946 2010

Figure 21 Forest of Knaresborough parliamentary award.

\[106\] English 1985
4.1.2 Modern Improved Fields

Description

“Modern improved fields” has a very specific definition within the scope of the project. This refers to areas of enclosure which have seen a large degree of boundary loss since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63) to create large enclosures over 10 hectares, see Plate 9. These were normally defined by identifying areas of large fields on the modern mapping and then establishing whether this was the original field pattern or as a result of boundary removal. This boundary loss has occurred between 1900 (broadly the date of the second edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1889-99)) and the modern MasterMap (while a number of versions have been utilised during the life of the project this 2003 can be taken as a cut off date). The creation of these large fields needs to be seen within their historic context, particularly the role of the Common Agricultural Policy and the aims and ambitions of the Mansholt Plan\textsuperscript{107}. The Mansholt Plan aimed towards consolidation which led to three European directives in 1972, one of which was aimed at the modernisation of agricultural holdings.

Distribution map

![Distribution map](https://example.com/figure22.png)

© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. North Yorkshire County Council. 100017946 2010

Figure 22 Distribution of modern improved fields within the project.

Survival

Modern improved fields are mainly restricted to the lower lying Vales of the North Yorkshire landscape. This is supported, and recognised in the national character area key characteristics for this area. Natural England, in the key characteristics for the Vale of York, refers to “medium- to large-sized open fields intensively cultivated

\textsuperscript{107} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Agricultural_Policy
for arable crops but with some dairy farming\textsuperscript{108}. This can also be seen in the Vale of Mowbray, Vale of Pickering, Humberhead Levels, on some areas of the Southern Magnesian Limestone as well as in limited areas on the Yorkshire Wolds. These field patterns are large scale and extensive reflecting the intensification of arable agriculture in the 20th century in response to modernisation of farming methods as a result of initiatives such as the common agricultural policy. While the mapping only enabled the project to really characterise this process as being broadly 20th century, it is likely that it mainly dated to the latter half of the century.

**Key statistics**

In total modern improved fields account for 175,064 hectares of the project area. Modern improved fields are derived from other, earlier character types. Chart 5 compares the amount by area of the previous HLC. By far the largest proportion was previously enclosed land, with 106,600 hectares (60\% of modern improved fields) originally planned enclosure.

54,270 hectares (31\% of all modern improved fields) were originally piecemeal enclosure. It is useful to compare the current extent of piecemeal enclosure at the time of the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63) with the area that is now modern improved fields. In 1850, 242,380 hectares were piecemeal enclosure. This suggests that 22\% of piecemeal enclosure has seen significant enough boundary loss since the first edition six-inch County Series Ordnance Survey mapping (1846-63) to become modern improved fields.

\textsuperscript{108} http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/jca28_tcm6-5682.pdf
4.1.3 Enclosed strip fields

Description

Strip fields, at the time of the open field farming system, formed the basic unit of farming and tenancy\(^{109}\). These have been identified by the characteristic reverse S-curve of the boundaries. The current field pattern normally results from the grouping together of strips within the open field system and the formalising of the boundaries in the later part of the medieval period. These strips, originally open become defined by more formal physical boundaries, see Plate 10. The character of the boundaries can take many forms, depending on more local conditions. The overall trend is for medium sized fields (between two and ten hectares) although a fairly significant percentage of the fields (30%) are small in size. The enclosed strip fields identified during the HLC project have a good level of survival, with 404 field systems identified having less than 30% boundary loss.

Outside the large areas of unenclosed land and extractive landscapes medieval strip field systems have a fairly even distribution across the project area. However there are some concentrations that can be recognised, even at a county level; for example around the Pickering area. There is also a particularly high density of strip field systems in the Vale of York, to the south west of the Howardian Hills AONB.

Due to the acceleration in mechanised farming methods since the beginning of the 20th century, as well as the major expansion of settlement there has been a large amount of strip field systems which are no longer visible within the landscape. The map below shows the extent of enclosed strip fields in the current landscape.

Distribution map

© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. North Yorkshire County Council. 100017946 2010

Figure 23 Distribution of strip fields.

\(^{109}\) Muir 2004: 245