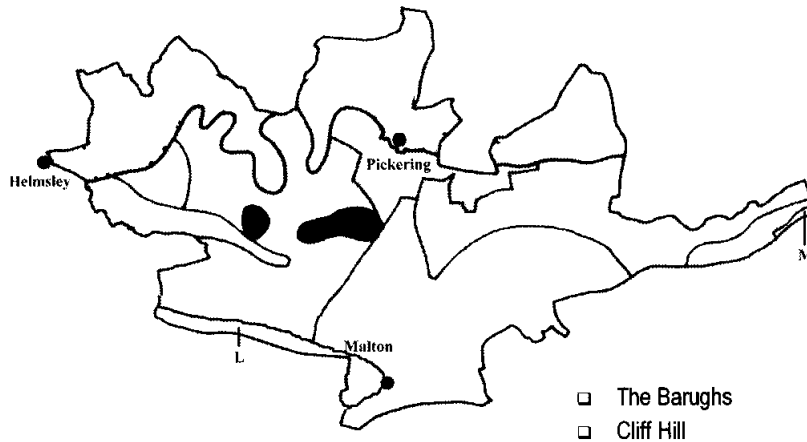


AREA A Undulating Farmland**Key Characteristic Features**

- Gently rolling, relief.
- Varied patchwork of farmland and small woodlands defined by hawthorn hedgerows.
- Predominantly arable land with some pasture set in medium, regular shaped fields.
- Villages tend to be nucleated and located on the higher ground.
- Roads traverse the area in a regular pattern, usually with wide grass verges and bounded by hedgerows.

Landform and Context

Undulating farmland in the Vale of Pickering occupies two discrete areas. These share many characteristics in common with the *undulating farmland* in the Fringe of the Moors to the north. The larger area rises to around 40m AOD and is centred on the villages of Great Barugh, Little Barugh and Kirby Misperton. The second area rises to 46m AOD and is much smaller. Known as Cliff Hill, it lies just to the east of Salton, close to the confluence of the rivers Rye and Dove.

This landscape type is very much a product of the underlying geology, which has created small pockets of slightly higher ground in the western Vale. These areas of higher ground are emphasised due to the flat and low lying nature of the surrounding landscape.

Land Use and Landscape Pattern

The overall appearance of this strongly rural landscape is of medium, predominantly arable, straight edged fields enclosed by hedgerows with occasional trees. Regular small scale woodlands, that are predominantly mixed deciduous, introduce further enclosure and visual interest. Villages, hamlets and farms are concentrated on the higher ground of this local landscape type and are linked by narrow lanes, typically enclosed by hedgerows with wide grass verges.

Settlement

Historically, settlement has favoured the higher ground in and around the Vale in preference to the wetter lower lying areas. This settlement pattern prevails today, with the areas of *undulating farmland* containing a higher concentration of settlement than the surrounding low lying parts of the Vale.

The main villages are Great Barugh, Little Barugh and Kirby Misperton. The largest of these settlements is Kirby Misperton, which is notable for its associations with Flamingoland, a theme park that is one of the most visited tourist attractions in the north of England. All the settlements have an essentially linear character that is typically orientated along a main street. In Little Barugh this linearity is enhanced by 'the Green' which is a visually important open space that serves to enhance the setting of the village.

The villages exhibit a wide range of building materials including brick, variegated brickwork and dressed sandstone with red pantile, slate and thatched roofs. Farm complexes feature prominently in local views, although they are often partially screened by tree cover.

Subjective Response

The *undulating farmland* is an attractive agricultural landscape with a gently undulating topography that is elevated above the surrounding Vale. There are some important views out across the low lying ground, a feature that sets this local landscape apart from other open farmland types. The scenery has a harmonious rural quality that nevertheless displays subtle variations in character throughout. In many ways, the landscape is reminiscent of the surrounding Fringe of the Moors.

Sensitivity to Change

Due to its elevation and visual prominence, much of the landscape of the *undulating farmland* is visible from the surrounding lower lying land. It follows that this landscape is sensitive to change and that any form of built development could have a widespread influence. However, the hedgerows, small woodlands and particularly the undulating landform, allow some scope for small scale development, provided it is carefully sited in sheltered locations and that associated planting is designed to integrate closely with the surrounding landscape pattern.

Any changes in the landscape pattern should seek to strengthen the visual structure and identity of the local landscape. Although small scale, relatively scattered changes to the landscape pattern could, and have been, absorbed, the cumulative effect of piecemeal changes can result in a degraded landscape, where the overall integrity of the visual structure is lost.

In some parts of the area, pressures from intensive arable farming have led to field enlargement and the removal of hedgerows. This has resulted in the erosion of the strong hedgerow network and an overall loss of visual structure and cohesion. Elsewhere, pressures from recreation are apparent. Despite its size, the Flamingoland development at Kirby Misperton has little visual impact on either the local or the wider landscape. Indeed, the mature trees within its grounds and the buff coloured brick lodge provide an attractive focal point to the northern end of the village.

Landscape Guidelines

Landscape Strategy

This is an elevated landscape of arable fields and pastures, with small villages and hamlets set in undulating terrain. Fields are medium to large and bounded by hawthorn hedgerows and occasional woodland blocks. There is a sense of elevation with some important views out across the Vale. It is an attractive and visible landscape that should be conserved and locally enhanced.

Land Management

The visual structure of this landscape should be assessed from the surrounding Vale to ensure that the relationship between the higher land and its adjacent landscapes is well balanced.

Panoramic views from the higher land out across the Vale towards the Howardian hills to the south and the Fringe of the Moors to the north are a distinctive feature of this landscape, which should be considered when planning landscape change.

Specific landscape features such as individual farm buildings, copses, hedgerows and landform are of considerable importance, particularly in distant views from the Vale. The visual quality of such features is valuable to the landscape. Attractive features should be conserved and those that have a negative visual influence should be identified as a priority for removal, enhancement or screening.

It is important that the tradition of quiet enjoyment of this countryside is maintained through the control of new recreational facilities. Any further expansion of Flamingoland, including the provision of tall rides or upgrading of the local road network should be carefully considered to ensure that any adverse visual effect on the wider landscape is minimised.



Source: Environment Agency

Great Barugh (GR 748 791)

Area A

Undulating Farmland



Brawby

Modern farm buildings are often out of scale and constructed from less appropriate building materials.



Field Boundaries

The scale of its patchwork of fields, hedgerows and woodlands determines the visual structure of this landscape. Future management should ensure that the existing hedgerow network is maintained and reinforced along its existing alignments. Linkage between hedgerows and woodlands should be encouraged to maximise visual and wildlife benefits.

The conservation and management of all existing hedgerows should be encouraged. Any suburbanised hedges that contain exotic species such as laurel or conifer should be replanted.

Where they have been removed due to agricultural intensification and field enlargement, hedgerows should be replanted along historic alignments. New planting should be designed to strengthen the existing hedgerow network, defining the lane and field boundaries in areas where it has been depleted. Gaps should be replanted using locally occurring native species such as hawthorn, holly or hazel.

Traditional hedgerow management techniques should be encouraged and mechanical over-flailing avoided.

Hedgerow trees are an important visual and historic feature in this landscape. However, many are overmature and in need of surgery or replacement if they are to continue to play a positive role. Any trees requiring surgery or removal should be checked for roosting bats or nesting birds before any work is undertaken. Naturally regenerating hedgerow trees should be encouraged and trained up.

New hedgerows should be planted to provide visual links with woodlands and to enhance the setting of farms and villages within the wider landscape.

Trees and Woodlands

The existing cover of small woodlands and shelterbelts should be maintained. Existing woodlands tend to be small and regularly arranged. Whilst the current distribution of tree cover could be increased, any new planting should seek to replicate this arrangement, be of an appropriate scale and relate to the landform and existing field pattern. New planting could include a variety of forms such as hedgerow trees, copses and individual specimens.

To conserve the existing landscape character, new woodlands should be broad-leaved, using locally occurring native species.

Settlements and Buildings

Traditional farm buildings should be conserved wherever possible. Although conversion of redundant buildings may be appropriate, this should be handled sensitively and only permitted if the traditional architectural features and rural setting are to be retained. All alterations or restorations of existing farm buildings, should take into account their use by birds during the nesting season, and roosting bats. Restoration work should include, where possible, the preservation of bat roost access points so that the roost may be maintained.

To conserve the rural character of this area, large scale development should be resisted. Although some small scale village infill may be appropriate, this should be handled sensitively. All efforts should be made to resist suburbanisation through inappropriate construction and detailing. Empty plots are often archaeologically sensitive, containing important information about the development of the village. Planning conditions will often be required to ensure that this information is recorded.

Development should seek to strengthen the existing pattern of nucleated village form.

Infrastructure

The existing character of the rural lanes should be maintained, resisting upgrading schemes such as road widening or straightening and the introduction of kerbs, which can be a suburbanising influence. Informal car parking on grass verges, lay-bys and farm entrances should be controlled.

Verges and banks should be managed to encourage native grassland and wildflower species.

Because this area is generally visible by virtue of its elevation, proposals for the siting of urban structures such as power lines or telecommunications masts should be strongly resisted.

Priorities for Action

- Conserve the existing landscape pattern of medium sized fields, becoming smaller and more treed near settlements.*
- Conserve and, in many instances, restore hedgerows and hedgerow trees to enhance the structure of the landscape.*
- Manage woodlands to maximise their ecological diversity.*
- The character of the built environment should be protected.*