

JURASSIC
HILLS

SECTION 8

JURASSIC HILLS



JURASSIC HILLS

PART 1 : THE LANDSCAPE'S CHARACTER

Introduction

8.1.1 The Jurassic Hills are a band of low hills along the western edge of the Yorkshire Wolds escarpment. They occupy two geographically discreet localities north and south of Market Weighton. Both have broadly similar landscape characteristics, but display subtle variations of scenery, mostly relating to their differing topography.

8.1.2 The most southerly of the two areas extends in a broadening wedge from Market Weighton south towards the Humber Estuary. The eastern boundary of this area follows the base of the Yorkshire Wolds escarpment approximately along the line of the A1034. The western boundary is defined by the toe of a low escarpment that rises out of the Vale of York between North Cliffe, South Cliffe and North Cave. Urban development along the north side of the Humber Estuary defines the southern boundary.

8.1.3 The northern area of the Jurassic Hills is larger, extending northwards and westwards from Market Weighton. The eastern boundary is defined by the foot of the Yorkshire Wolds escarpment. The area's northern extent is defined by Langton Wold and its western edge by the River Derwent. The south eastern boundary is more difficult to define. Along this line the heavy drift geology of the Vale of York changes to a shallower drift geology underlain by Jurassic shales,

JURASSIC HILLS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA



muds and limestones. This geological transition is not strongly perceptible in the landscape. However, travelling in a northerly direction from the Vale of York into the Jurassic Hills, the terrain becomes progressively more rolling and the scenery more intimate, wooded and pastoral.

8.1.4 Both Jurassic Hills areas display broadly similar characteristics, such as the occurrence of largely stone built villages, a relatively well wooded nature, proximity



to the Wolds escarpment, high degree of enclosure and mostly smaller scale field systems. However, there are also subtle differences between the two areas:-

(i) To the north the terrain is more open and undulating as opposed to the gently rolling terrain to the south that occupies a narrower terrace between the Vale and Wolds.

(ii) In the north the fields are mostly smaller sized, with a higher hedgerow and woodland cover leading to a perception of enclosure.

(iii) The southern area is characterised by fewer, larger villages, such as South Cave, North Cave and Sancton. In the north, villages, though still largely stone built, are smaller and more evenly dispersed.

(iv) The proximity to the Wolds escarpment is an important feature of both areas. In the south the relationship of the escarpment to the adjacent hills is simple, whilst to the north the relationship is more complex.

Physical Influences

8.1.5 North of the Humber, the Jurassic outcrop forms a narrow bench of alternating mudstones, limestones and sandstones at the base of the Yorkshire Wolds scarp slope. The contrast between the rolling topography north of Market Weighton and the flatter gently undulating terrain to the south reflects differences in the complexity of the underlying solid and drift geological structure. To the north of Market Weighton the Jurassic rocks have been uplifted and shaped by successive periods of gentle folding whilst, to the south, the rocks have been tilted gently eastward but otherwise have been remained largely unfolded.

8.1.6 Local deposits of boulder clay, sands and gravels occur around North Cave, North Ferriby and Swallowpits Beck but have had little effect on landform or land use.

8.1.7 South of Market Weighton there are small pockets of light sandy soils derived from the aeolian or cover sands which were deposited around the margins of the glacially impounded 'Lake Humber', which during the late Quaternary period extended across much of the Vale of York. The free draining nature of

the sandy brown earths, derived from the cover sands, renders repeated arable cropping difficult without high inputs of fertilizer. As a result there has been extensive planting of the area with Scots pine, which has allowed natural regeneration of birch, and subsequently oak, to occur in unplanted or failed woodland glades. Across these areas some relict heathlands remain.

8.1.8 Recent alluvial and river terrace deposits are confined to the narrow valley floor of the River Derwent. The gorge was cut at the end of the last ice-age when the water from the glacially impounded 'Lake Pickering' overflowed through Kirkham Gorge into the Vale of York.

Human Influences

8.1.9 The Jurassic Hills have seen recurrent settlement and exploitation for several thousand years, due to useful natural reserves of fertile, tillable soils, good grazing, stone for weapons and building, natural shelter and an elevated dry position offering both opportunities for defence and transportation above the adjacent wet and wooded Vale of York. The Humber estuary to the south was an important natural trade route and an attractive location for settlement.

8.1.10 The historical development of the area mirrors that seen on the adjacent Vale of York and Yorkshire Wolds. Before the Roman occupation of Britain, the Jurassic Hills had been successively cleared of trees to provide land for small - scale agriculture and settlement. Evidence suggests a predominantly dispersed, relatively isolated pattern of Romano-British settlement lacking the large nucleated settlements which characterise areas south of the estuary.

8.1.11 Recurrent settlement in the Roman, Norse and Norman periods is evidenced by roads, place names and the presence of villages. To the south of Market Weighton, the settlement pattern is predominantly linear with villages such as Brough and South Cave strung-out along the A1034. In contrast, the area to the north of Market Weighton exhibits a more dispersed pattern of isolated farmsteads and hamlets.

8.1.12 By the period of the Parliamentary Enclosures, most of the landscape had been enclosed and set to pasture or arable cropping. Some large tracts of open or common land remained, however. These generally

corresponded to the poorer soils of the underlying cover sands.

8.1.13 18th century estate landscapes such as those seen at Hotham, Houghton, Langton, Howsham and Birdsall exploited the natural beauty of the Jurassic Hills and created picturesque enclosures of woodland, pasture and architecture.

8.1.14 The vernacular of the Jurassic Hills is dominated by the traditional building material of limestone often with red brick detailing and soft red pantiles

Ecological Influences

8.1.15 There is a high degree of woodland cover, both in the southern area and in North Yorkshire. Although much is of planted origin, a number of fragments of ancient ash-oak woodland persist, particularly on steeper slopes. The woodlands of Kirkham Gorge are particularly interesting, often supporting a diversity of ground flora.

8.1.16 Other habitats tend to reflect the underlying geology, for example areas of heath and dry acid grassland on blown sand deposits, or calcareous grassland where underlying Jurassic limestone is thinly covered by brown earths.

8.1.17 The River Derwent and its northern tributaries eg Menethorpe Beck, Mill Beck and Whitebeam Beck are of high water quality, supporting a range of invertebrates.

Visual Characteristics of the Landscape

8.1.18 The Jurassic Hills are an attractive agricultural landscape where proximity to the wolds, the presence of trees and woodlands, together with settlements and estate parklands provide local diversity and enclosure.

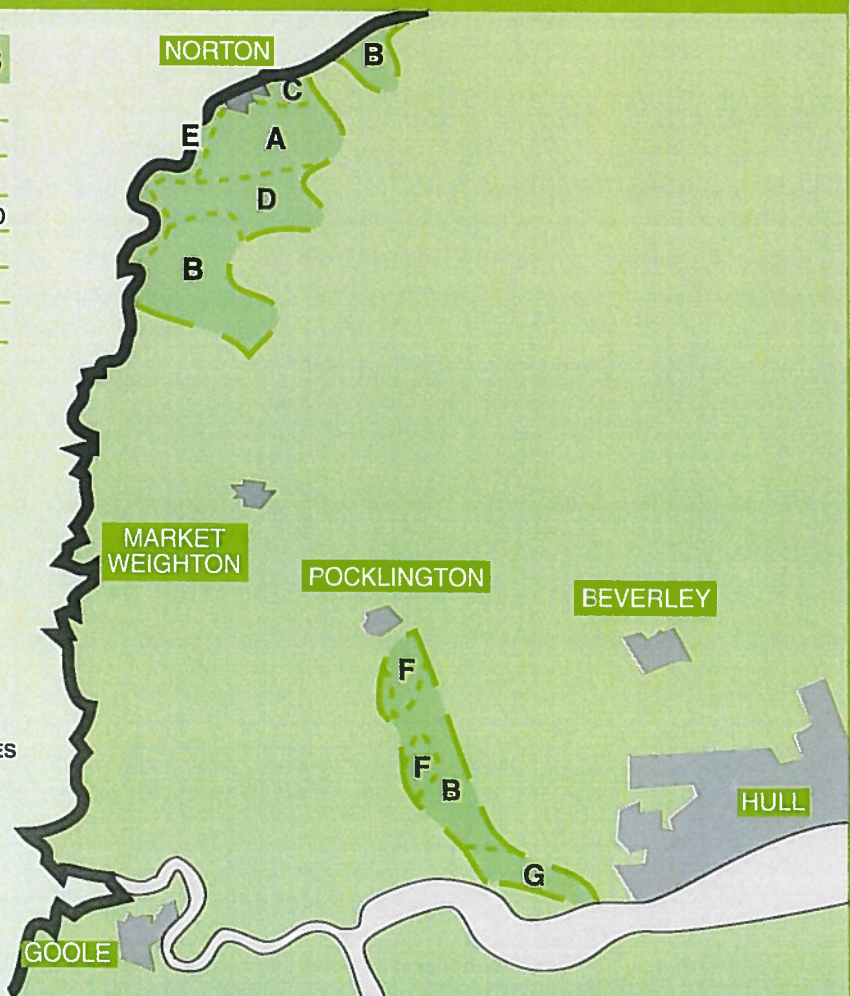
8.1.19 The most extensive local landscape type is the Open Farmland, a landscape of small scattered villages

JURASSIC HILLS REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

LOCAL LANDSCAPE TYPES

- A - ELEVATED OPEN FARMLAND
- B - OPEN FARMLAND
- C - FLAT OPEN FARMLAND
- D - WOODED ENCLOSED FARMLAND
- E - KIRKHAM GORGE
- F - ESTATE FARMLAND
- G - FARMED URBAN FRINGE

- EXTENT OF STUDY AREA
- REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA
- LOCAL LANDSCAPE TYPES



and copses set in softly rolling terrain. An increase in the woodland and hedgerow cover categorises Wooded Enclosed Farmland, whilst prominent elevated topography results in the designation of Elevated Open Farmland. The influence of built structures contributes to the identification of the Farmed Urban Fringe and Estate Farmland. A final category, unique to the Jurassic Hills, is the Kirkham Gorge.

8.1.20 In summary, **seven local landscape types** have been identified. Of these three are found only in the area of Jurassic Hills to the south of Market Weighton, whilst four occur only in the hills to the north. Only the Open Farmland is common to both. The exception to this classification is the identification of Flat Open Farmland, east of Norton, just to the north of the Jurassic Hills. This flat, low-lying, drained, agricultural region is characteristic through much of the Vale of Pickering Regional Landscape Character Area, lying mostly outside of the study area. This Flat Open Farmland does not lie within the Jurassic Hills RLCA but is included within this section for the sake of completeness.

8.1.21 In the southern section of the Jurassic Hills the following local landscape types have been identified:-

- (i) **Open Farmland** - extending northwards from the line of the M62 to include the full width of the area between the Wolds and Vale of York.
- (ii) **Estate Farmland** - centred on Hotham Hall and Houghton Hall.
- (iii) **Farmed Urban Fringe** - located south of the A63 as the Jurassic Hills approach the Humber Estuary.

8.1.22 In the northern section of the Jurassic Hills five local landscape types exist have been identified:-

- (i) **Open Farmland** - geographically the most extensive tract, occupying two areas to the north and south of the district. The southern section lies to the north of Bugthorpe, bounded on the east and west by the hamlets of Acklam and Scrayingham respectively. The northern section lies along the north western lee of the Wolds escarpment east of Malton, occupying a broad shallow valley extending into the Wolds adjacent to the Vale of Pickering. The village of Scampston marks its northern extent, bounded by the A64(T).
- (ii) **Wooded Enclosed Farmland** - occupying an east-west belt of land approximately 2 kilometres wide with Birdsall Estate marking the eastern and Kirkham, in the Derwent Valley, the western boundary.
- (iii) **Elevated Open Farmland** - essentially defined by Langton Wold, extending westwards from the Yorkshire Wolds as far as Norton in the north and the River Derwent in the west.
- (iv) **Kirkham Gorge** - a narrow meandering belt of wooded gorge defined by the River Derwent between Malton and Scrayingham.
- (v) **Flat Open Farmland** - small area of low-lying floodplain/vale landscape lying immediately to the east of Norton. This area technically lies outside the Jurassic Hills and within the Vale of Pickering, a Regional Landscape Character Area lying mostly outside the area covered by this report.

PART 2 : LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES FOR THE JURASSIC HILLS

Introduction

8.2.1 This part provides guidance on landscape issues relevant to the Jurassic Hills.

8.2.2 The issues addressed are:-

- (i) Settlements and Buildings
- (ii) Infrastructure
- (iii) Land Management
- (iv) Field Boundaries
- (v) Trees and Woodlands

8.2.3 Part 3 provides guidelines relevant to the individual local landscape types of the Jurassic Hills.

Landscape Strategy

8.2.4 The Jurassic Hills are an agricultural landscape of intimate woodlands, hedgerows and villages set in gently rolling hills close to the escarpment slopes of the Yorkshire Wolds. This is a scenic landscape in which the principal landscape strategies should be to conserve the appearance of the land while offering opportunities for local enhancement.

Settlements and Buildings

(i) Villages and hamlets in the Jurassic Hills tend to have a particular strength of character derived from the predominance of local stone in their construction, the presence of mature trees and the retention of traditional village features, such as May poles, market crosses, coaching blocks, greens and occasionally ponds.

Any new buildings should be designed in a manner sympathetic to the context and detail of their architectural setting. 'Village Design Statements' can act as a useful guide to appropriate design.

(ii) Rural settlements tend to be relatively nucleated, however, farms and their adjoining buildings tend to be situated along, or close to the area's lanes and roads.

Pressures for new buildings should seek to be accommodated by limited, and carefully controlled expansion of larger villages. Particular care should be taken to maintain the relationship between built elements and open space.



Ensure all new housing developments reflect and relate to their immediate architectural environment.

Pressure for new development should ideally be catered for by limited expansion of larger villages.

(iii) Recent pressures for village expansion have been particularly noticeable in the south of the area where proximity to Hull and the A63(T) has encouraged development. The suburbanising influence of such development is clearly apparent and has resulted not only in the loss of historic patterns of rural settlement but also the dilution of village character. These suburbanising elements are particularly noticeable at the edges of settlements.

Tree planting within, and around, new development is one of the best ways to soften hard urban edges. Integration can be best achieved by allowing mature trees to extend into new development sites and by designing new planting to break up built edges. Opportunities should also be sought, perhaps through Section 106 agreements, for extensive offsite woodland planting. Locally indigenous trees and shrubs should be used in planting mixes. Quick growing screens such as 'Leylandii' should be avoided.

Landscape mitigation techniques should be introduced to soften the interface between rural settlements and their adjacent countryside.

(iv) Farmsteads and associated buildings are commonly situated close to lanes. Typically they are mature in character. Most farmhouses are stone built, often with brick detailing, substantial in size and usually include a number of mature trees or small copses in close vicinity.

New agricultural buildings are often necessarily large and visually intrusive. The appropriate siting and design of new farm buildings is critical as a building that is badly situated or designed will be difficult to fit into the landscape. Careful selection of complementary building materials, colours and detailing can help to reduce the perceived mass of such buildings. Locations close to existing buildings should be preferred, ideally in close association with any existing trees or woodlands.

New farm buildings should, wherever possible, cluster around existing buildings and reflect their massing and architectural detail.

Infrastructure

(i) Many of the lanes are distinctive. Often they are narrow and well hedged, offering a contrast to the open, widened verged enclosure award roads characteristic in the adjacent Wolds.

Care should be taken to control the use of concrete kerbing, fencing, railings, lighting, standardisation of road signs and imposition of new alignments. These features often appear alien in a rural setting and introduce a suburbanising influence. Opportunities should be sought to utilise more traditional materials such as stone kerbs, half buffer kerbs and locally distinctive road signs.

Ensure any road improvements, especially along smaller lanes, consider the use of 'traditional' materials.



Land Management



(i) Agricultural land in the Jurassic Hills is mostly classed as grades 3 and 2. Productivity is relatively high, although the occasional occurrence of sandy-loam soils has precluded some agricultural production and has led to the localised development of scrub heathland and plantations, particularly in the south, eg Houghton Moor.

Wherever possible the existing pattern of fields, hedgerows, woodlands, heathland and lanes should be retained. The more intimate and diverse qualities of the scenery are largely the result of the balance of these landscape elements.

Encourage the protection and conservation of existing landscape patterns of fields, hedges and woodlands.

(ii) Heathlands, some of which have now been planted for soft wood production, are important ecological and visual features.

Heathlands should be managed to enhance their ecological importance. Long-term management plans should be developed for coniferous plantations that seek to; avoid blanket felling, introduce deciduous mixes, particularly around the woodland edge, and allow limited heathland development.

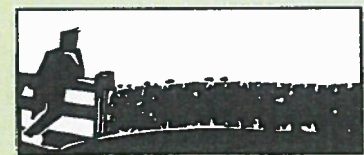
Encourage the maintenance of heathlands and plantations to maximise their visual and ecological importance.

(iii) There is continued uncertainty in the farming economy. It appears, following recent Government publications, that farm diversification and tourism will be growing rural issues. It is likely that increasing numbers of farmers will consider a diversification of farming activities as a financial alternative.

Farm diversification could lead to the dilution of landscape character as farmsteads increasingly provide farm shops etc. Whilst such diversification should be encouraged care should be employed to detail appropriately new elements and artefacts into the landscape.

Encourage farm diversification with appropriate design of new facilities.

Field Boundaries



(i) The landscape of the Jurassic Hills, particularly their northern extent, is relatively wooded and well enclosed. The higher than average extent and quality of the field boundary hedgerows is contributory to this perception.

As far as possible all existing hedgerows should be protected and management policies initiated to ensure their long-term survival.

Encourage the protection and management of all established hedgerows.

(ii) Although hedges are predominantly hawthorn, there also occur a number of other hedgerow species, such as holly, field maple and hazel.

The species diversity of hedgerows should be maintained and locally occurring species used in any new hedgerow planting.

Allow hedges to develop in size and structural diversity.

(iii) Most hedges, particularly along roads and lanes, are managed on a yearly cycle. This results in the creation of a mostly well maintained farm landscape with low hedges.

Consideration should be given to altering management cycles to a cut every 3 years to both increase the visual presentation of hedges and enhance their ecological significance.

Utilise locally occurring species in all new planting.

(iv) Hedgerow trees are common along existing hedges and as free standing trees left isolated in enlarged fields where hedges have been grubbed out. Most trees are pedunculate oak, although ash and sycamore are also locally occurring. There is little evidence of tree regeneration or planting of younger trees.

To continue the long-term survival of a well-wooded, mature landscape, it is important to ensure that younger trees develop in hedgerows. This is usually most effectively achieved planting standard trees in hedgerows. An alternative cheap and effective technique to develop hedgerow trees is by allowing naturally occurring tree saplings to develop through careful management. This would usually involve less reliance on machine cutting.

Promote the planting and/or regeneration of hedgerow trees.

(v) In a number of localities it is common to see mature trees isolated in fields marking former hedgelines.

Wherever possible hedgerow incentives should be promoted to renew former hedge lines particularly alongside lanes, public right of ways, streams or parish boundaries

Seek to selectively plant new hedge-lines.

Trees and Woodlands



(i) The Jurassic Hills display a generally well-wooded and attractive character, particularly to the north, where woods tend to be smaller, more numerous and randomly dispersed.

The current distribution of farm woodlands should be maintained.

Seek to maintain the current distribution and extent of woodland.

(ii) Many woodlands have limited species or age diversity

Management plans should be developed that seek to diversify the nature of these woodlands. The development of more shrubby edge thickets should be encouraged.

Seek to diversify the ecological composition of established woodlands.

(iii) Around mature farm houses it is common to have groups of mature trees or small copses.

New farm buildings should seek to include similar scale planting.

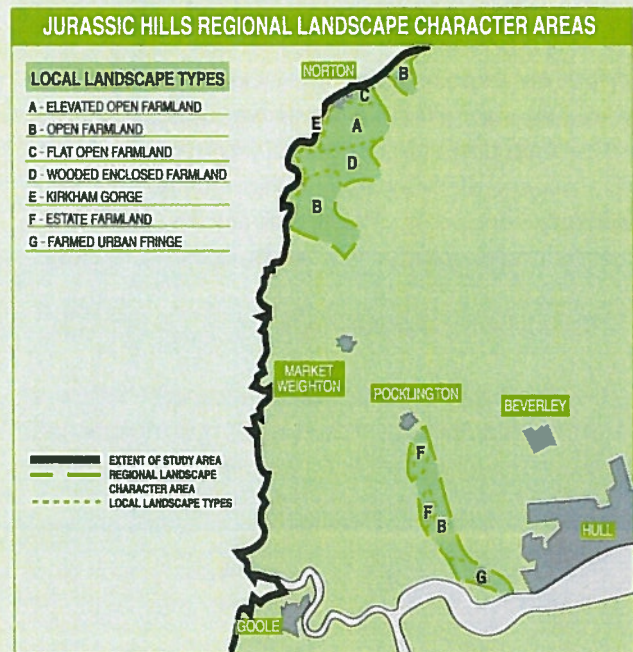
Ensure, where appropriate, new farm developments include provision for new tree planting.

PART 3 : GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL LANDSCAPE TYPES WITHIN THE JURASSIC HILLS

8.3.1 This part provides specific guidance for the seven landscape types identified through the Jurassic Hills. These guidelines are concerned with local issues such as trees and woodland, field boundaries and land management rather than area-wide issues such as settlement and infrastructure. Guidelines for the latter have been provided in Part 2 above.

8.3.2 In this section the appropriate strategy for each landscape type is followed by a set of guidelines. The following local landscape types are considered:-

- (i) Open Farmland
- (ii) Estate Farmland
- (iii) Farmed Urban Fringe
- (iv) Wooded Enclosed Farmland
- (v) Elevated Open Farmland
- (vi) Kirkham Gorge
- (vii) Flat Open Farmland (NB: this area lies within the Vale of Pickering RLCA)



Open Farmland - South Cave, Leppington and Thorpe Bassett

Landscape Strategy :

Seek to locally enhance degraded landscape structure within broad strategies of general landscape conservation in what is mostly an attractive rural landscape.

Landscape Guidelines :

- (a) Existing landscape features such as hedgerows, woodlands and hedgerow trees should be protected from further losses wherever possible.
- (b) Policies including hedgerow renewal and repair, woodland planting and management and grass verge management should be initiated to repair local features which have become degraded and are significant elements in the structure of the landscape.

(c) Limited scale woodland planting should be promoted to augment the existing perception of visual diversity and interest. New woodland planting should relate to existing patterns of fields and woodlands.

(d) The design of new woods should aim to frame and control views rather than to completely close them off. To emphasise topography new planting should be targeted, where possible, on rising ground.

(e) New woodlands should be in scale with the rest of the landscape. To help give the impression of increased woodland coalescence, woodlands should be designed with inter-locking shapes especially when viewed from primary transportation corridors and settlement fringes.

(f) Seek to conserve village and hamlet character by limiting insensitive expansion or excessive infill of open space within settlements.

Estate Farmland - Houghton Hall, Hotham Hall

Landscape Strategy :

A mature landscape of framed views, controlled tree grouping and generally attractive appearance. In these landscapes strategies should seek to conserve the scenery whilst providing opportunities for local enhancement. It is critical that any improvements carefully reflect local context and historical precedent.

Landscape Guidelines :

- (a) Seek to maintain existing estate character. Features such as metal railings, mature, often ornamental and statuesque trees, pasture, vistas and framed views all combine to create parkland character.
- (b) Seek to implement restoration plans in parkland landscapes. These should be prepared with full

appreciation of the historical context of each landscape.

(c) Although most estates are private, the effect of occasional inner views and the presence of parkland features combine to influence the wider landscape. Techniques of farm management should seek to ensure that estate features are conserved. The retention of parkland trees is particularly important.

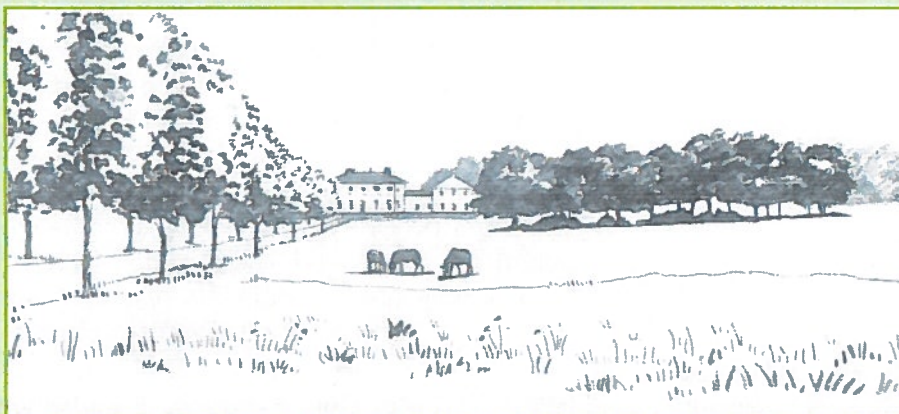
(d) In the vicinity of estates the hedgerows tend to be more robust and continuous. To develop the estate character consideration should be given to the development of roadside tree avenues.

(e) The presence of grazed pasture is typical of estate farmland. Owners should be encouraged to retain this pasture and the husbandry of livestock associated with it.



BEFORE

- 1. Due to lack of management/ investment estate character is often becoming fragmented.
- 2. Estate woodlands are commonly becoming overmature.



AFTER

- 1. Estate restoration plans should be developed that are responsive to local history
- 2. New tree and woodland management plans should seek to diversify species, age and woodland structure.

Farmed Urban Fringe - South of A63(T), Ellerker, Elloughton and Brough**Landscape Strategy :**

In these areas, due to their proximity to improved transportation corridors and urban centres, evidence of pressures for development have been, and remain significant. The rural landscape structure is largely lost and suburbanising influences have altered the district's broad character. Landscape strategies should be concerned with enhancement and localised consideration given to the creation of new landscapes.

Landscape Guidelines :

(a) In this area settlement edges are particularly intrusive. Typically, town and village edges are visible over wide areas due to the lack of hedges and woodlands around them. The siting of these rural settlements on slightly elevated ground also emphasises their prominence. Strategies should be employed to increase woodland cover around settlements.

(b) New woodland planting should be large scale. These areas lie adjacent to the wooded escarpment of

the Yorkshire Wolds and large scale forestry planting should seek to integrate new woodlands both with these established blocks and with any woodland close to the settlements.

(c) In a wider context the encouragement of woodland planting in this area would improve the 'gateway' approach to Hull and can be considered as part of a large scale policy of woodland planting around the city.

(d) New woodlands should seek to embrace the philosophy and intentions advanced for 'Community Woodlands'. The new woods should be considered as part of a wider viable rural economy that combines agriculture, forestry, industry and public access.

(e) Development pressures for new housing are likely to continue. In the provision of new houses, provision of public open space should be a development priority. A mechanism for new woodland planting could be through planning conditions and 'Section 106' agreements.

Wooded Enclosed Farmland - Birdsall, Burythorpe and Westow**Landscape Strategy :**

This is an attractive landscape where the higher than average distribution of small copses, hedgerow trees and gentle topography create intimate relatively small scale scenery. Landscape strategies should seek to conserve the scenery whilst offering scope for localised enhancement.

Landscape Guidelines :

(a) Although mostly small in size existing woodland blocks have an important compositional role in the landscape providing an enhanced level of enclosure and visual diversity. Existing woodlands should be protected and retained.

(b) Many woodlands have limited diversity of shape and species composition. Effective woodland management, including selective re-stocking, should be a priority. Introduction of thicket edge shrub mixes

and the encouragement of a varied understorey, through coppice rotation and thinning, would aid the development of habitat diversity and promote natural woodland regeneration.

(c) The planting of new woodland blocks is not a high priority. However, in selective areas small copses and farm woods would be appropriate to augment existing woodland cover.

(d) New woodlands should be designed to relate with existing field patterns. To maximise their visual impact they should be designed with inter locking shapes and ideally sited in more elevated situations.

(e) Much of the area's enclosure and the perception of well wooded cover is created by the presence of hedgerow trees. It is important that these are protected.

(f) Most hedgerow trees are mature and there is little occurrence of younger regenerating or planted trees to replace them. Management strategies should be employed to promote the development of new hedgerow trees. The cheapest and most effective method of achieving this would be by allowing, through careful hedge management, the regeneration of naturally occurring hedgerow saplings.

(g) Within this area there is local variation in landscape character not easily recorded at a county scale assessment. Some areas, such as around Birdsall Estate, have a well wooded, intimate and attractive appearance, while other areas, mostly further west, away from the Wolds escarpment, are more open in character. It is important that landscape initiatives reflect this localised diversity of character.



BEFORE

1. Well enclosed landscape with mature hedgerows and trees.
2. Many hedgerows are overmature and not regularly maintained.
3. Many trees are now mature.



AFTER

1. Important to protect the attractive enclosed nature of the landscape.
2. Other than along roadsides hedges should not be routinely maintained.
3. Encourage the planting and management of hedgerow trees.

Elevated Open Farmland - Langton Wold

Landscape Strategy :

Langton Wold, though not of chalk formation, displays many of the visual characteristics seen in parts of the Yorkshire Wolds. Extending in an east-west direction from Settrington and North Grimston, this wide 'whale-back' hill rising to 95 metres, contrasts sharply with the more varied topography seen through most other parts of the Jurassic Hills. For this reason it has a strong visual presence and landscape strategies should be developed that seek to conserve and enhance its local distinctiveness.

Landscape Guidelines

- (a) Due to its high visibility from surrounding areas any development that changes the intrinsic character of the landscape should be resisted.
- (b) The open nature of the landscape should be protected.
- (c) Existing robust hedgerows should be protected and where gappy or discontinuous re-planted to enhance the regularity of field systems.

(d) New woodland planting should be restricted.

(e) Where new woodlands are considered necessary they should be of a shelterbelt nature. Thickening of established hedgerows would be locally appropriate.

(f) Effective woodland management, including selective re-stocking, should be a priority. The introduction of thicket edge shrub mixes and the encouragement of a more varied understorey, through thinning and coppice

rotation, would aid the development of habitats and promote natural woodland regeneration.

(g) Archaeological sites of importance should be recognised and protected. Of particular note are the 'three dikes' earthwork. This prominent feature is visible over an extensive area and consideration should be given to promoting local access to it. Its alignment, along a bridleway, renders it ideally suited to offer the potential of improved interpretation to the general public.

Kirkham Gorge - Kirkham Gorge

Landscape Strategy

The deeply incised and winding gorge of the River Derwent cuts through the Howardian Hills in the north-west of the study area. It lies outside the County of Humberside but nevertheless forms one of the most remarkable areas of scenery studied. It lies at the eastern edge of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, reflecting the quality of the scenery. The steep and winding valley slopes are largely clothed in woodlands interlinked by small fields of pasture bounded by tall bushy hedgerows, giving the landscape an attractive, pastoral and traditional character. At the entrances to the gorge to the north and south, the valley floor broadens and its alluvial soils are used for intensive arable cultivation. The York to Scarborough railway line follows the river closely through the gorge but elsewhere the lack of vehicular access increases the sense of solitude in many parts of the valley, and gives it a particularly secluded and peaceful character. This blend of traditional landscape elements set in a unique local landscape results in the formulation of guidelines that seek to conserve the landscape character.

Landscape Guidelines

(a) The extensive tracts of mature woodland lining the sides of this gorge are visually important and lend much to the area's aesthetic appeal. They should be conserved.

(b) Many woodlands have a high coniferous content as a consequence of previous planting incentives. To increase the visual and ecological appeal of these woods, more recent incentives to increase the content of deciduous species should be promoted.

(c) Recreational activity in the gorge is largely concentrated around highly attractive formal attractions,

such as Kirkham Priory. Although these sites receive thousands of visitors each year, signs of damage from over-usage of footpaths is not obvious. Despite this, in anticipation of increasing car-borne visits, facilities including car parks, interpretation boards and footpath signage, should be continually monitored.

(d) In accommodating pressures for increased recreation a careful balance is required not to compromise nature conservation interest. A recent legal case has demonstrated that there is not a public right of navigation along the River Derwent. This clarification will reduce the likely recreational pressure on the river which had been proposed as a navigation route. Monitoring the effects of bankside recreation should continue and measures employed to combat any localised damage.

(e) Although the effects of agricultural intensification have not been pronounced in the gorge, land management policies that seek to protect traditional landscape elements such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees and older farm buildings should be encouraged.

(f) There is little evidence of excessive or inappropriate new housing development in the gorge, despite its obvious attraction as a place to live. There have been some barn conversions and new buildings in villages but mostly these have been sensitively implemented. This trend should be continued.

(g) The main threats to the unspoilt, traditional character of this area come from a more gradual 'suburbanisation'. Cumulative small-scale changes are eroding the rural character in ways that are difficult to quantify. Features such as new accesses; use of non-vernacular materials for kerbs; and the introduction of street lighting in road improvements are having a gradual and insidious suburbanising effect and should where possible be combatted.



BEFORE

1. Well wooded landscape, particularly the valley sides, with a high percentage of conifers.
2. Many hedgerows are fragmented or removed.



AFTER

1. Encourage the development of a greater deciduous tree content on valley-side woodlands.
2. Where possible thicken hedgerows and introduce trees.

Flat Open Farmland - Norton Moor and Settrington

Context

This area lies outside the actual boundaries of the Jurassic Hills Regional Landscape Character Area. It forms part of the Vale of Pickering Regional Landscape Character Area, large tract of low lying drained agricultural land extending from Filey on the Coast in the east and Hemsley, Nunnington and Hovingham in the west. The tract is bounded to the north by the North Yorkshire Moors and to the south the Yorkshire Wolds and Howardian Hills.

The majority of the Vale of Pickering lies outside the study area and hence this small portion of 'Vale' landscape is included within the Jurassic Hills section.

Landscape Strategy :

The area east of Norton is mostly a level, low lying agricultural landscape with scattered tree and hedgerow cover providing local shelter and enclosure. The edge of Norton is extensively visible due to the limited extent of tree cover. General strategies should seek to enhance the landscape quality, in particular around Norton.

Landscape Guidelines :

(a) The landscape of this area has lost much of its rural

structure. Hedgerows have been removed, trees have been lost and proximity to built up areas has resulted in semi-urban scenery. Policies of hedgerow renewal and tree planting should be initiated to repair degraded rural landscape structure.

(b) The edge of Norton is visible across a large area due to the flatness of the landscape and the lack of screening trees and hedgerows. New trees and hedges should be encouraged in concentrations close to the town edge. Such a strategy would aid the integration and assimilation of Norton into the wider landscape.

(c) Drainage dykes, channels and ditches, generally with a linear arrangement, are common across the area. They contribute little visually or ecologically to the landscape. Strategies should be introduced that improve their local prominence, through limited waterside planting and, where possible, profile re-modelling.

(d) Care should be taken to accommodate pressures for the expansion of rural settlements. Any town expansion should have a thorough accompanying environmental impact assessment. Due to the flat and open nature of the landscape east of Norton it would be very difficult to assimilate, in the short term, any significant town expansion.