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# Selby Landscape Character Assessment

Prepared by LUC on behalf of Selby District Council  
November 2019



**Project Title:** Selby Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study

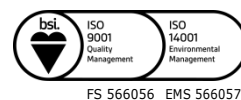
**Client:** Selby District Council

| Version | Date             | Version Details      | Prepared by | Checked by | Approved by |
|---------|------------------|----------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1       | 29 March 2019    | Draft                | EH          | PDM        | NJ          |
| 2       | 5 July 2019      | Final                | EH          | PDM        | PDM         |
| 3       | 20 November 2019 | Final with revisions | EH          | PDM        | PDM         |
|         |                  |                      |             |            |             |

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# 1 Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 Selby District Council has commissioned an updated landscape character assessment (LCA) of the District to inform policy-making, landscape management, and development management decisions.
- 1.2 An LCA of Selby District was carried out in 1999 (Woolerton Dodwell Associates) and its findings informed earlier local plans up to the adoption of the Selby District Local Plan (2005) and the Selby District Core Strategy (2013). The 1999 assessment was carried out before the publication of current good practice guidance (Countryside Agency, 2002; Natural England, 2014). The Council commissioned LUC to provide an updated, more detailed LCA that was informed by the ten landscape character areas identified within the 1999 assessment, though not at the level of the previously defined landscape character types (LCTs).
- 1.3 As part of the same commission, LUC undertook a landscape sensitivity assessment and a review of local landscape designations. These studies are reported separately to the LCA.

## Landscape character assessment

- 1.4 Landscape character comprises the distinct set of elements that makes a landscape recognisable, and gives it a unique “sense of place”. Landscape character assessment is the process of mapping, classifying and describing the patterns and variations which contribute to the character of a landscape.
- 1.5 The European Landscape Convention (ELC; Council of Europe, 2009) came into effect in the UK in March 2007 and is adopted and promoted by the Council of Europe. The ELC definition of landscape is all embracing:  
**“Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”<sup>1</sup>**
- 1.6 Following the introduction of the ELC, a broader approach to ‘landscape’ has been pursued at a national level, grounded in the principle that all landscapes matter, regardless of location or condition. The ELC makes it clear that landscapes do not stop at administrative boundaries.<sup>2</sup>

## National Planning Policy

- 1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; MHCLG, 2019)<sup>3</sup> states that planning policies and decisions should “*contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment*” by:
  - “protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)” (paragraph 170.a); and
  - “recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland” (paragraph 170.b).

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe (2009) *European Landscape Convention*. Article 1.

<sup>2</sup> The ELC also includes consideration of urban landscape, which was not within the scope of the present commission.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework.

- 1.8 The “*conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscape and green infrastructure*”, is one of the strategic priorities to be set out in development plans (paragraph 20).
- 1.9 The NPPF highlights that planning policies and decisions should ensure that “*new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of... the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development*” (paragraph 180).
- 1.10 The associated online Planning Practice Guidance on landscape highlights the need for local authorities to recognise the intrinsic character of the countryside (i.e. rural landscapes), and set out policies for its conservation and enhancement. It continues to state that “*landscape character assessments should be prepared to complement Natural England’s National Character Area profiles*”.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.11 The present Landscape Character Assessment contributes to the aims of national planning policy by:
- Providing reliable evidence of the underlying character of the landscape; and
  - Highlighting aspects of the landscape which are sensitive to future change.

## Study Area

- 1.12 The study area has been defined as the whole of the Selby District. This area is shown on **Figure 1.1** in **Appendix 1**.

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<sup>4</sup> Planning Practice Guidance: Natural Environment: Landscape [<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment#landscape>] accessed 22 March 2019]

## 2 The Landscape of Selby

### General description

- 2.1 The Selby District covers an area of 59,932 hectares (231 square miles), and historically was predominantly part of the West Riding of Yorkshire. It is a primarily rural landscape of relatively flat, low-lying farmland although the northern and western boundaries have greater topographic variation as a result of the Escrick Moraine and Magnesian limestone ridge, respectively. The numerous rivers (including the Rivers Ouse, Wharfe, Aire and Derwent) which flow through the district, and their floodplains, have a major influence on the District's landscape character.
- 2.2 The District has a dispersed settlement pattern consisting of market towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Traditional building style reflects local materials mottled brick and cobbles are frequent in the settlements to the east and south, whilst limestone is more common in the west, within the ridge. Whilst the District features numerous key transport routes including parts of the A1 Motorway, M62, A19, A63 and numerous railway lines, there is still a strong sense of rurality and tranquillity across much of the landscape, particularly in association with less developed areas. The south-eastern and southern areas of Selby feature prominent power stations (Drax and Eggborough) which are key developments visible on the horizon from many locations within the District.
- 2.3 The history of the landscape is apparent in many layers of remnant landmarks. Historic features typical of the region include: iron-age earthworks; Roman settlements and roads; medieval settlements, churches, and field patterns; designed parklands and estates; limestone quarries; and numerous disused coal mines and military airfields. The area includes a considerable number of heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

### Existing landscape character assessments

- 2.4 The landscape of Selby has been assessed at national, regional and district scales. Existing assessments are briefly described here.

#### National character areas

- 2.5 The Landscape Character Profiles published by Natural England divide the landscape into large character areas at a national scale. The profile documents describe the landscape of the study area in terms of parts of the following National Character Areas (NCA), as shown in **Figure 2.1** in **Appendix 1**.

#### *Southern Magnesian Limestone*

- 2.6 The entire western edge of Selby falls into the Southern Magnesian Limestone character area, which is defined by its Permian limestone geology. The Magnesian Limestone NCA forms a long, narrow area extending south from Tadcaster, in the north-west of the District, to Little Smeaton in the south-west. Limestone buildings are prevalent in this area, which has a distinct large scale undulating landform, and there are numerous areas of important limestone grasslands. Important archaeological features include the remains of numerous medieval settlements, roman forts and earthworks and roman roads.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Vale of York*

- 2.7 The northern part of Selby occupies the Vale of York, an area of relatively flat, low-lying land centred on the city of York. The high-quality soils mean that arable cultivation is the predominant

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<sup>5</sup> Natural England (2013) National Character Area profile 30 Southern Magnesian Limestone. NE464.



land use, although there are some localised areas of pasture. The River Ouse flows through the entirety of character area from the north-west of York down towards Kelfield within the Selby District. The south boundary of the character area, within the District boundary, is defined by the Escrick Moraine which rises up to higher elevations.<sup>6</sup>

### *Humberhead Levels*

- 2.8 The majority of Selby falls into the Humberhead Levels character area, which is a flat, low-lying and large scale agricultural landscape. Due to the low-lying nature of the landscape, the majority of agricultural land is pumped to keep the water table down, with drains and ditches commonly defining field boundaries. The lower stretches of several major rivers including the Rivers Ouse, Aire and Derwent drain across the area into the Humber Estuary located beyond the District boundary in the south-east.<sup>7</sup>

### **North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project**

- 2.9 This County-wide study defines 39 County Landscape Character Types (LCTs), which are themselves subdivisions of eight Primary Landscape Units.<sup>8</sup> These largely nest within the national character areas noted above. The County LCTs that occur within Selby are noted in **Table 2.1**, and are shown in **Figure 2.2** in **Appendix 1**.

**Table 2.1 County LCTs within Selby**

| <b>County LCT</b>  | <b>Location</b>  |
|--|--|
| LCT1 – Urban Landscapes                                      | Defined around the settlements of Selby and Tadcaster.   |
| LCT6 – Magnesian Limestone Ridge                             | Corresponding with the Southern Magnesian Limestone NCA, this LCT is defined along the western boundary of the District, although does not extend as far northwards to the north of Tadcaster. |
| LCT23 – Levels Farmland                                      | Corresponding with the Humberhead Levels NCA, this LCT is defined in the central, southern and eastern areas of the district, dissected by corridors of LCT24 – River Floodplain.              |
| LCT24 – River Floodplain                                     | This LCT is defined within the Vale of York, Humberhead Levels and Southern Magnesian Limestone NCAs, and covers the floodplain along the Rivers Ouse, Wharfe, Aire and Derwent.               |
| LCT28 - Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland | Corresponding with the Vale of York NCA, this LCT is defined in the north of the District.   |

### **Landscape Assessment of Selby District (1999)**

- 2.10 At a local level, the landscape is described by the Landscape Assessment of Selby District Council, written in 1999.<sup>9</sup> This LCA defined 10 landscape character areas across the whole of the Selby District, which were divided into smaller character types. The boundaries of the 1999 landscape character areas match the County LCT boundaries in many places, suggesting a good correlation between local and county scale assessments. The boundaries of the 1999 LCTs were also reviewed to identify local-scale variations.

<sup>6</sup> Natural England (2014) National Character Area profile 28 Vale of York. NE367.

<sup>7</sup> Natural England (2014) National Character Area profile 39 Humberhead Levels. NE339.

<sup>8</sup> North Yorkshire County Council (2011) North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project.

<sup>9</sup> Woolerton Dodwell Associates (1999) Landscape Assessment of Selby District. Selby District Council.

### Other relevant landscape character assessments

- 2.11 LCAs published for neighbouring local authorities were consulted when undertaking this study, to ensure a degree of cross-boundary correspondence where appropriate. The following LCA documents were consulted:
- Doncaster Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study (ECUS, 2017);
  - East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment (Aecom, 2018);
  - Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment (Harrogate Borough Council, 2004);
  - Leeds Landscape Assessment (LUC, 1994); and
  - Landscape Character Assessment of Wakefield District (WMDC, 2004).

### Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 2.12 The North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) presents a mapped analysis of the historic components of the landscape. HLC is undertaken according to a standard methodology, dividing the study area into field-parcel polygons. Each of these is assigned a 'historic landscape character type', within a series of 'broad types'. Although a separate process to LCA, HLC can inform the understanding of the historical dimension of landscape character.
- 2.13 **Table 2.2** shows the percentage of the study area covered by each broad type (based on the number of hectares covered by each broad type, expressed as a percentage of the total number of hectares in the study area). Types making up less than 1% of the study area are not shown in the table, as these are not perceived to have a significant influence on the overall character of the study area.
- 2.14 The vast majority of the study area is composed of enclosed land, covering 82% of the area. Within this farmed landscape are small areas of settlement, woodland, parkland and industrial land uses. Several historic transport and communications networks cross the District, including canals, railways and the Great North Road, between Doncaster, Selby and York. Airfields, which also fall within the Communication broad type, have also been a frequent feature of the landscape since the beginning of the 20th century, particularly in the Second World War.

**Table 2.2 HLC Broad Types within the study area**

| Broad type         | Percentage of study area |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Enclosed Land      | 82.15                    |
| Settlement         | 4.48                     |
| Woodland           | 3.64                     |
| Designed landscape | 3.21                     |
| Industrial         | 2.28                     |
| Communication      | 1.64                     |
| Extractive         | 1.50                     |

- 2.15 However, although this may indicate that the historic landscape in the study area is relatively homogenous, the character of the field patterns within the enclosed land varies considerably, and the character of the boundaries are usually influenced by local conditions of topography and geology. The variation in character is reflected in the numerous sub types (HLC Types) that are included within the broad type of enclosed land. The dominant HLC Types within the study area

are modern improved fields, planned large-scale parliamentary enclosure, piecemeal enclosure, unknown planned enclosure, and strip fields. **Table 2.3** shows the percentage of the study area covered by each HLC Type (based on the number of hectares covered by each HLC Type, expressed as a percentage of the total number of hectares in the study area). For simplicity, HLC Types making up less than 1% of the study area are not shown in the table, as these are not perceived to have a significant influence on the overall character of the study area for a broad-brush analysis such as this.

**Table 2.3 HLC Types within the enclosed land Broad Type**

| HLC type                                    | Percentage of study area |
|---|--------------------------|
| Modern improved fields                      | 61.29                    |
| Planned large scale parliamentary enclosure | 13.25                    |
| Piecemeal enclosure                         | 10.59                    |
| Unknown planned enclosure                   | 9.75                     |
| Strip fields                                | 3.4                      |

- 2.16 This analysis indicates that modern improved fields, that have seen considerable consolidation or removal of the field boundaries, account for just over 61% all the farmland in the study area. Planned enclosure, referring to a specific series of historic events that occurred in the Post-medieval period, broadly between 1750 and 1850, is also a significant minority. It is subdivided into parliamentary, i.e. areas of land which have been enclosed through the implementation of a parliamentary act in the 18th and 19th centuries; and unknown, where enclosure could not be tied in with a parliamentary act or a private agreement. There are also extensive areas of piecemeal enclosure, which refers to areas of more irregular fields defined by regular or erratic boundaries, which pre-date the parliamentary enclosure of the 18th and 19th centuries and do not conform to the open field pattern.
- 2.17 Remnant strip fields, consisting of areas of agricultural land marked by distinctive strip patterns, represent early, private enclosure of the former medieval open field systems. They are relatively scarce in the study area, and the LCA has taken note of locations where they contribute to local character.

## 3 Methodology

### Introduction

- 3.1 Current good practice guidance on approaches to landscape character assessment is set out in:
- Natural England (2014) *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*.
  - Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*. 3rd Edition. Routledge.
  - Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*.
  - Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2004) *Topic Paper 6: Techniques and criteria for judging landscape sensitivity and capacity*.
- 3.2 The guidance on LCA recommends a division between the processes of characterisation and the making of judgements to inform decisions. As such, the description of the landscape character of each area is presented separately to the identification of sensitive features and management guidelines for the area.

### Landscape characterisation

- 3.3 The process of landscape characterisation can be summarised in the following key steps:
- Gather baseline information about the landscape of the District;
  - Analyse baseline information to identify areas of consistent landscape character;
  - Draw up a map showing draft landscape character types and areas;
  - Identify draft key characteristics that define the character of these types and areas;
  - Undertake field work to verify the characterisation on the ground; and
  - Finalise mapping and provide written descriptions of landscape character types and areas.
- 3.4 Landscape character assessment can be carried out at a variety of scales, identifying increasingly detailed changes in character at smaller and smaller scales. The Selby LCA has been carried out at a scale of 1:25,000.
- 3.5 The county-wide landscape character types, described in Section 2, served as the starting point for the present landscape characterisation. These LCTs are the result of recent work and form a county-wide framework for local-level assessment. The boundaries of these areas were reviewed and found to be appropriate, and the analysis of baseline information focused on identifying landscape character areas within them.

### Landscape description

- 3.6 The study has identified variations in landscape character and describes these across the District. The LCA has defined distinct landscape character areas, each of which is separately described. Character areas are geographically distinct, with their own unique set of characteristics. The aim of identifying character areas is to determine locally specific qualities and sense of place, which can complement the LCTs defined in the County scale LCA.

### **A note on boundaries**

The mapped boundaries of landscape character areas are relatively precise, following clear features which can be identified on the ground. However, in some cases these boundaries are indicative of a more gradual transition between one character area and another, rather than an abrupt change. It must also be recognised that there are variations within each character area at smaller scales.

## Sensitivity analysis

- 3.7 A key purpose of the Selby LCA is to provide an analysis of landscape sensitivity across the District. The aim of this is to ensure that landscape is given due importance in planning decisions, through an understanding of the sensitive features of each landscape area, and strategic guidelines that will inform decisions.
- 3.8 Landscape sensitivity is concerned with the likelihood that the character of the landscape would be altered by changes in land use or management, including the introduction of development. The sensitivity of a given landscape will vary according to the type of change which is proposed. Topic Paper 6 (Countryside Agency, 2004) states that:
- “Judging landscape character sensitivity requires professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This involves making decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss... and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change”* (paragraph 4.2).
- 3.9 A parallel landscape sensitivity study has been undertaken to examine the sensitivity of particular areas within Selby District to particular types of change. The focus in this LCA is therefore on a more strategic analysis of sensitive features and aspects within each area. These are termed ‘key sensitivities’, and are analysed and presented in relation to the sensitivity criteria set out in **Table 3.1**. These criteria were discussed and agreed with the Council at the project outset, and are the same criteria used in the landscape sensitivity study.
- 3.10 In this LCA a quantitative assessment of sensitivity has not been undertaken, as the purpose of the LCA is to provide general guidance, rather than development-specific analysis that is included in the separate landscape sensitivity study.
- 3.11 **Table 3.1** sets out the landscape and visual criteria used for the assessment of sensitivity in this LCA. For each character area, key sensitivities are noted against each of these criteria to inform judgements about landscape sensitivity to the key development pressures.

### **Table 3.1 Sensitivity analysis criteria**

#### **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Criteria**

##### ***Physical character (including topography and scale)***

This considers the shape and scale of the landform, landscape pattern and landscape elements in relation to the scale of potential development. Smooth, gently undulating or flat landforms are likely to be less sensitive to development than a landscape with a dramatic landform, distinct landform features or incised valleys with prominent slopes. This is because developments may mask distinctive topographical features which contribute to landscape character.

This criterion considers how developments fit with the scale of the landform (understanding the scale of the development proposed is important when applying this criterion). Larger scale, simple landforms are likely to be less sensitive to larger scale developments than smaller scale, enclosed landforms (where large scale developments could appear out of scale with the underlying landform). Conversely, smaller developments may be able to be screened within enclosed landforms, therefore reducing landscape sensitivity. Existing small-scale features in the landscape in the form of existing buildings or trees will influence the scale of development that can be accommodated in the landscape.

## Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

### **Natural character**

This criterion considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape in terms of coverage of semi-natural habitats and valued natural features (e.g. trees, hedgerows) which could be vulnerable to loss from development. Areas with frequent natural features (including large areas of nationally or internationally designated habitats) result in increased sensitivity to development, while landscapes with limited natural features (including intensively farmed areas or areas with high levels of existing development) will be less sensitive.

### **Historic landscape character**

This considers the extent to which the landscape has 'time-depth' (a sense of being an historic landscape, with reference to the Historic Landscape Characterisation) and/or the presence of heritage assets that are important to landscape character (i.e. Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings, archaeological features and remains or other features listed in the landscape character assessment).

Landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns of historic origin are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of modern development than landscapes with large, regular scale field patterns because of the risk of losing characteristic landscape patterns.

### **Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development**

This considers the overall settlement form and character of existing settlement edges and considers whether development in the landscape would be in accordance with the general pattern, setting and form of current development. It also relates to the landscape pattern associated with existing settlement edges (where relevant), for example if it is well integrated by woodland cover or open and exposed to form a 'hard edge' to the adjoining landscape.

This criterion also considers the extent to which the landscape contributes to the identity and distinctiveness of settlements, by way of its character and/or scenic quality, for example by providing an attractive backdrop/setting, or playing an important part in views from a settlement. This also considers the extent to which the area contributes to a perceived gap between settlements (the loss of which would increase coalescence).

### **Views and visual character including skylines**

This considers the visual prominence of the assessment area, reflecting the extent of openness or enclosure in the landscape (due to landform or land cover), and the degree of intervisibility with the surrounding landscape (i.e. the extent to which potential development would be visible).

Visually prominent landscapes are likely to be more sensitive to development than those which are not so visually prominent. Landscapes which are visually prominent and inter-visible with adjacent landscapes (both urban and rural) are likely to be more sensitive to development than those which are more hidden or less widely visible.

It also considers the skyline character of the area including whether it forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline. Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to development because new buildings/structures may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments.

### **Access and recreation**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. They may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land, and outdoor tourist / visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Importance of features may be indicated by designation as long distance footpaths or recreation routes, national cycle routes, proximity to areas of local population, presence of National Trust land ownership, and outdoor tourist attractions often marked on Ordnance Survey maps.

### **Perceptual and experiential qualities**

This considers qualities such as the rural character of the landscape (traditional land uses with few modern human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a traditional rural feel with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development. High scenic value and dark night skies also add to sensitivity in relation to this criterion. This is because development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/naturalness.

- 3.12 Following on from this analysis is an examination of 'forces for change' that are acting within each area. These include development pressures and likely changes in land use or management that could alter the landscape character. Change in the landscape can be both positive and negative, and the analysis therefore focuses on opportunities as well as pressures. The process of landscape change is inevitable, but an understanding of the opportunities and pressures can inform

appropriate management responses, in order to ensure that landscape character is conserved or enhanced.

- 3.13 Forces for change may be active pressures, or potential future pressures, and have been grouped into 'themes', with examples set out in **Table 3.2** below.

**Table 3.2 Key themes identified as forces for change**

| Theme              | Content  |
|--------------------|--|
| Built development  | New housing, commercial or mixed-use developments<br>Redevelopment of vacant or brown-field land   |
| Energy             | Changes to existing energy infrastructure including generation and distribution networks<br>Development of new generation including renewables   |
| Transport          | New or upgraded road and rail infrastructure, including major works to main roads as well as more local upgrades<br>Redevelopment of former airfields for transport use  |
| Trees and woodland | Long term maintenance and viability of woodlands and hedges<br>Future viability of parklands and estate landscapes<br>Future plans for woodland expansion and tree planting<br>Pests and diseases affecting particular species |
| Agriculture        | Changes in land management practices<br>New crops such as biomass<br>Agricultural buildings and infrastructure   |
| Minerals           | Effects of extracting limestone, and associated pressures on the road network<br>Fate of former coal mining infrastructure<br>Exploration for hydrocarbons   |
| Climate change     | Flood risk and flood management<br>Changes in growing season and rainfall  |

- 3.14 Finally, a series of management guidelines is presented for each of the character areas. These comprise:

- general guidelines, that can help to guide decisions about land use change across the character area; and
- location specific guidelines, that relate to particular locations or forces for change within the character area.

## 4 Landscape classification

- 4.1 The following table presents a list of the 17 landscape character areas that have been identified within the study area. These are based on local subdivisions of the County-wide LCTs as shown below. Character areas are illustrated in **Figure 4.1** in **Appendix 1**. Descriptions and sensitivity assessments for each character area are presented in **Chapter 5**.

**Table 4.1 Landscape Character Areas**

| Selby District Landscape Character Areas |                            | County landscape character types (North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project) |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| 1  | York Fringe West           | Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland (28)                                      |
| 2  | York Fringe East           |  |
| 3  | Skipwith Lowlands          |  |
| 4  | Wharfe Valley              | River Floodplain (24)  |
| 5  | Ouse Valley                |  |
| 6  | Derwent Valley             |  |
| 7  | Aire Valley                |  |
| 8  | West Selby Limestone Ridge | Magnesian Limestone Ridge (6)  |
| 9  | Smeaton Ridge              |  |
| 10                                       | East Selby Farmland        | Levels Farmland (23)   |
| 11                                       | Sherburn Farmland          |  |
| 12                                       | North Selby Farmland       |  |
| 13                                       | Haddlesey Farmland         |  |
| 14                                       | Hambleton Sandstone Ridge  |  |
| 15                                       | Camblesforth Farmland      |  |
| 16                                       | Eggborough                 |  |
| 17                                       | Southern Farmland          |  |



# 5 Landscape character areas

## Introduction

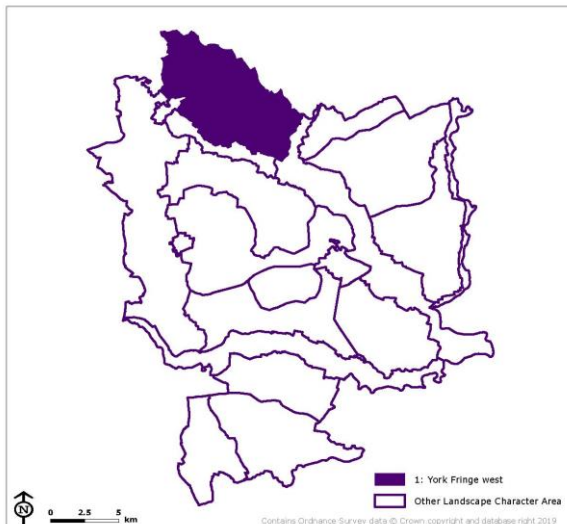
- 5.1 This chapter provides details on each landscape character area, as defined in **Table 4.1** and illustrated in **Figure 4.1** in **Appendix 1**. For each character area the following descriptive information is included:
- A written description of the landscape, presented in a standard format covering:
    - Topography, geology and drainage;
    - Land use and field pattern;
    - Woodland cover;
    - Semi-natural habitats;
    - Archaeology and cultural heritage;
    - Settlement, road pattern and rights of way; and
    - Views and perceptual qualities.
  - Sensitivity analysis for the area, including:
    - Key sensitivities under each of the sensitivity criteria in **Table 3.1**;
    - Forces for change, including commentary under each of the key themes for change; and
    - General and specific management guidelines.

# Character Area 1 York Fringe West

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the north-western part of the District, and is bounded by the River Wharfe to the south and the Ouse to the east. It is located predominantly within the *Vale of York NCA*, with a small portion of the western area of the landscape near Tadcaster within the *Southern Magnesian Limestone NCA*. At a county scale, the landscape falls within the *Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland LCT*.

The area includes the small villages of Appleton Roebuck, Acaster Selby, Bolton Percy and Colton to the east of the A64. To the west of the A64, the villages of Bilbrough, Catterton and Healaugh are included.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Flat and gently undulating low-lying farmland, with areas of woodland scattered throughout the landscape.
- Predominantly arable farmland with a medium-large scale field pattern, defined by mature hedgerows with frequent mature hedgerow trees.
- Scattered settlement pattern with nucleated villages and farmsteads dispersed throughout the landscape.
- Flat and low-lying nature of the landform nature creates a strong sense of openness, with a strong rural character, with limited built development outside of the main villages of Healaugh, Bilbrough, Bolton Percy and Appleton Roebuck.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The York Fringe West character area has a low lying, gently undulating topography which is flat in places, particularly around the floodplains of the River Wharfe to the south and River Ouse to the east. Undulations in the landscape are most prominent in the north-west of the character area, near the settlements of Bilbrough and Healaugh.

The high quality fertile soils allow agriculture to dominate the landscape. The area consists of mainly open arable farmland with some areas of pasture. The predominantly large scale fields are regular in shape and are frequently bordered by mature, dense hedgerows which limit visibility from the roads. There are some areas of smaller fields, particularly near the small settlements within the area, including the remnants of medieval strip fields.

Despite farmland dominating the landscape there remains a number of grassland, woodland, wetland and parkland sites which adds some variety to the landscape. The wetland tends to be to the west of the area such as around Tadcaster Mere, which is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The woodland is predominantly broadleaf and some of it is Ancient Woodland, e.g. at Bilbrough Whin and Shire Oaks. Areas of estate management where farming is less intensive are found towards the southern boundary and associated with the Bolton Percy Estate. These areas have a stronger presence of woodland and mature vegetation.

There are no large settlements in the character area but several villages and farmsteads. These are scattered across the area and tend to be on slightly higher ground. The villages, including Appleton Roebuck, Healaugh and Bolton Percy, are small and nucleated, and are well integrated into the landscape with vegetated boundaries. The village of Bilbrough, in the north-west of the character area is located on the highest point, at approximately 40-50m AOD.

The area is home to a range of historic features. The villages of Bolton Percy, Healaugh and Appleton Roebuck are registered Conservation Areas. Within the villages, as well as across the wider area, there are a significant number of listed buildings such as Healaugh Priory, Nun Appleton Hall and the prominent Old Road Wind Mill. There are four scheduled monuments, including moated sites and Steeton medieval village. Parkland is associated with the historic houses and of particular note is that around 17<sup>th</sup> century Nun Appleton Hall which is a Registered Park and Garden. There are few other built features with the exception of the historic RAF Acaster Malbis at the eastern boundary of the area, which although now disused is still largely intact and demonstrates the role of the area during the war. The eastern fringe of Tadcaster is within the area, which has a local influence.

The settlements are connected by a network of small, winding local roads. Only one major road (A64) runs through the character area north to south, from York to Tadcaster following the course of the old Roman Road. No major roads run from east to west. A railway runs through the area, broadly parallel to the east of the A64, however near Colton it forks with one line continuing towards Ulleskelf and the other towards Hambleton in the south. Two national cycle routes also serve the area. Both of these run broadly east to west, one through the village of Appleton Roebuck and the second further north along the A64 from York to Tadcaster.

Overall the area has a rural character. The nature of the small dispersed villages and lack of major roads mean that in the most part it avoids traffic, giving it a quiet and tranquil feel. Areas in closer proximity to the railway lines and A64 are more prone to noise from passing vehicles and trains. Although generally flat, long outward views tend to be obstructed even from higher ground, by low-lying landforms such as hedgerows and woodland.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the flat open landscape in which new features are readily visible.

Areas with greater topographic variation, such as in the north-west, may have localised reductions in sensitivity due to greater enclosure and reduced visibility of new features and development. Conversely, larger developments on this higher ground may have greater effects than elsewhere, if widely visible.

The large scale of the landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, particularly in the more wooded areas which are less open to views.

### Natural Character

This intensively farmed landscape may have lower sensitivity to change, due to limited natural features, although locally important waterbodies, wetlands and parklands may be more sensitive.

Dense hedgerows and numerous areas of woodland in the south-east and west provide naturalistic features contributing to the landscape, providing a sense of enclosure, and limiting visibility throughout the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is some time-depth in this landscape, particularly within the settlements which feature Conservation Areas, and in areas of intact parkland character. Parts of the landscape have been drained and enclosed as recently as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Localised areas of medieval strip fields, near settlements, are more sensitive to change. The area generally is sensitive to further field-boundary loss. Individual heritage assets including Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The settlements of Healaugh, Catterton, Bilbrough, Bolton Percy, Carlton and Appleton Roebuck, and particularly those with Conservation Areas, are uniform in style and well integrated into the landscape. Subsequently, they would have greater sensitivity to development that did not fit with their characteristic layout and building materials.

The dispersed pattern of settlement across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

There are generally no distinct landmarks visible on the skylines. Skylines are generally undeveloped and dominated by woodland and shelterbelts. Therefore, they may be more sensitive to new development. The gently undulating landscape offers open, long ranging views in some less enclosed areas and areas of higher elevation such as at the Colton Bridge. These areas of greater visibility would be more sensitive to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There is a network of public rights of way, but these are used primarily for local recreation.

Recreational assets that would be highly sensitive include the National Cycle Network Routes 66 and 665 cross this area from Tadcaster towards York.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strongly rural character across most of this area makes it sensitive to built development, since existing settlements are quiet and relatively isolated. This sense of quiet isolation is reduced towards the west, closer to the A64 and Tadcaster, and near the railway lines cutting through the character area.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on Appleton Roebuck as the only designated service village in the area.  |
| Energy              | Some electricity infrastructure that may be added to or upgraded in future.<br><br>Potential for small-medium scale renewables including wind and solar.   |
| Transport           | Road infrastructure is limited, and large scale change is unlikely; however two railway lines are present within the landscape. Incremental change as part of road and rail upgrading could erode character. |
| Trees and woodlands | Removal of hedgerows and field trees has occurred in the past, and while hedges are unlikely to be actively removed, it is likely that lack of maintenance or replacement will lead to further losses.       |
| Agriculture         | Potential large agricultural buildings that may be out of scale with the landscape, and impacting on setting of historic features such as historic villages and individual heritage assets.                  |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along The Fleet and The Foss.<br>Changes in growing season may lead to different patterns   |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

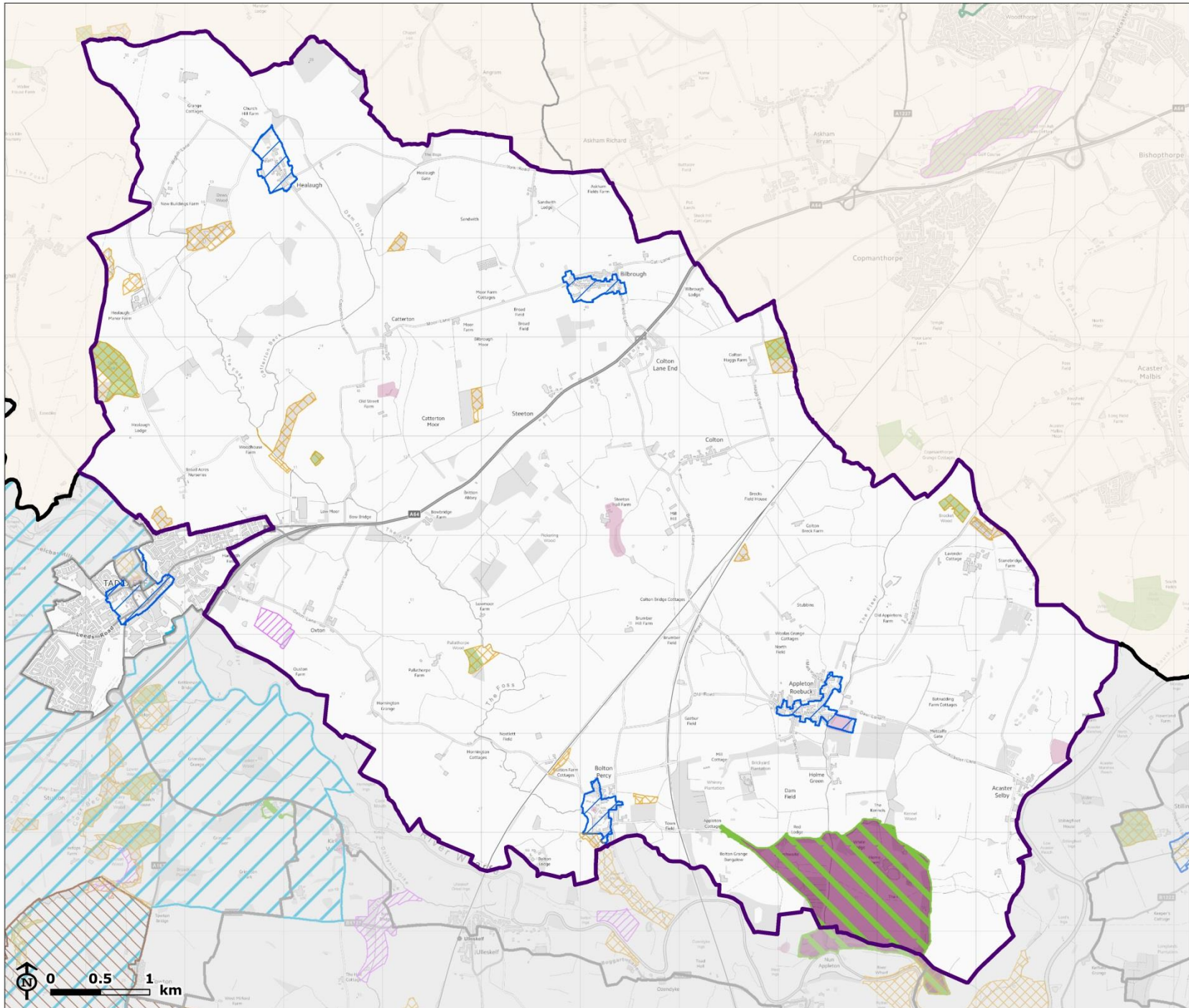
- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and field trees where field boundaries have been lost in the past, such as along field drains;
- Conserve and enhance the woodlands across the landscape;
- Use existing woodland and new woodland planting to integrate built development into the landscape;
- Buildings and compounds, including temporary works, may be highly visible in more open areas and their location and appearance should be carefully considered;
- Housing development should be focused within and around the existing settlements, ensuring that new development is carefully sited to reflect the current pattern of development. Soft landscaping techniques should be used to ensure the development is well integrated with the surrounding landscape; and
- Consider colours of new development, favouring colours that reflect the landscape.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Seek sensitive restoration or reuse of the land around the former RAF Acaster Malbis; and
- Conserve and protect the parkland landscapes at Nun Appleton, including the Registered area and the wider setting, by limiting possible harmful changes of use. Retain mature and veteran trees while planning for the next generation of parkland trees to ensure a sustainable population. Encourage access into these areas through creating circular routes to widen positive use and appreciation.

# Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.1: York Fringe west Landscape Character Area**



- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Locally Important Landscape Area

- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
  - Registered Battlefield
  - Registered Park and Garden
  - Historic Parks and Gardens
  - Scheduled Monument

- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
  - Local Nature Reserve
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:55,000**

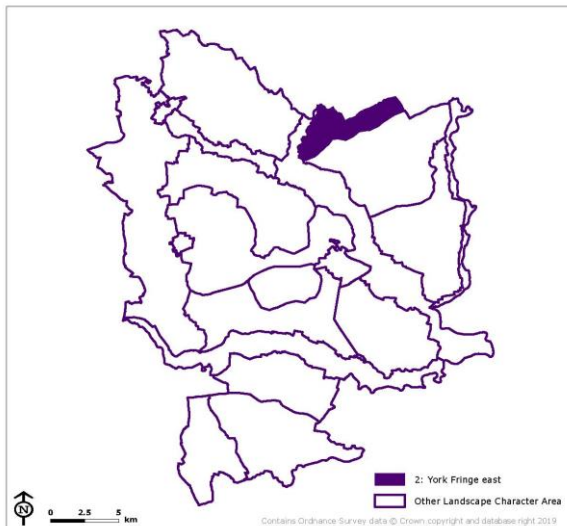


# Character Area 2 York Fringe East

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the northern part of the District. It is located entirely within the *Vale of York NCA*, and at a county scale, within the *Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland LCT*. The landscape is characterised by the Escrick Moraine which runs from the north-east to the south-west across this LCA. The landscape boundary is defined by the River Ouse to the west, the southernmost extent of the Escrick Moraine to the south, and the neighbouring Local Authorities to the north and east.

The area includes the small villages of Escrick and Stillingfleet, in the east and west of the landscape, respectively.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Gently rolling, predominantly arable farmland with areas of woodland plantation distributed throughout the area.
- Strong rural character with small nucleated villages and farmsteads.
- Strong sense of openness resulting from long distance views across the landscape.
- A medium scale patchwork of fields defined by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees, and post and wire fencing.
- Parklands associated with large historic houses.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The area is characterised by the Escrick Moraine, a ridge of glacial deposits running north-east to south-west where it meets the River Ouse. The ridge is undulating giving the area an overall gentle and rolling topography. The moraine formed some 100,000 years ago, and marks the southern-most extent of the Devensian glaciation. The ridge of moraine is generally around 15-25m in elevation, enough to raise it noticeably above the levels to the south.

The soils that overlie the glacial deposits are highly fertile and have resulted in intensive open arable farming across the area. The field pattern is generally irregular, with medium to large scale fields bordered by a mix of mature hedgerows and post and wire fencing. There are also areas of woodland across the area. These tend to be mixed woodlands associated with historic houses and estates. The Stillingfleet Beck is a small watercourse that runs across the area from its origins at Wheldrake to the north-east of the area to the larger river Ouse to the west.

The area has two small nucleated villages at Escrick and Stillingfleet, as well as a number of scattered farm steadings. Both villages include Conservation Areas and contain a range of Grade I, Grade II and Grade II\* Listed Buildings. While the majority of Listed Buildings lie within the villages, others include the historic houses of Moreby Hall and Escrick Park which are strongly associated with the managed parkland and plantation woodland in the area. Moreby Hall is set within extensive grounds which are designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.

The village of Escrick is serviced by the A19 and Stillingfleet by the B1222. Other than this there are a few minor roads throughout the area connecting farmsteads to the villages and larger roads. The national cycle and walking route the Trans Pennine Trail runs through the centre of the area north to south on a former rail bed. This provides extensive foot and bike, and in some parts horse access through the Pennines and from coast to coast. Locally there are footpaths around Stillingfleet, but less so around Escrick.

Some long outward views are available from the higher ground within the area, particularly to the south, which creates a strong sense of openness. Along with the low populations and noise levels, this gives the area a rural character.



## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The large scale, undulating nature of the landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, particularly in areas which are afforded topographic screening and in more wooded areas which are less open to views.

The Escrick Moraine creates a relatively dramatic landform which is highly visible across the area, and changes to its appearance, or development on high ground, will be widely seen.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, though locally important water bodies and woodlands have a greater sensitivity to change.

Large areas of woodland to the north provide naturalistic features contributing to the character of the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is a great sense of time-depth in this landscape, particularly within the settlements of Stillingfleet and Escrick which feature Conservation Areas and numerous Listed Buildings.

The historic houses of Moreby Hall and Escrick Park and their associated parklands are more sensitive to change, especially the Moreby Hall grounds which are designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.

Parts of the landscape have been drained and enclosed as recently as the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Localised areas of medieval strip fields, near Escrick, are more sensitive to change.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The settlements of Stillingfleet and Escrick are well integrated with the surrounding landscape, with Escrick having wooded boundaries. Thus settlements may be sensitive to new development that does not fit with their characteristic layout. Settlements show a degree of unity of style and colour across housing developments, particularly within their Conservation Areas, with most housing being constructed of mottled red brick with pantile roofs.

The dispersed pattern of isolated settlement across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

There are generally no distinct landmarks visible on the skylines, although high points offer distant views of power stations on the horizon to the south. Skylines are generally undeveloped and therefore may be more sensitive to new development.

Skylines to the north are largely wooded and undeveloped, and new development may detract from this.

High points offer open, long ranging views in some areas which would be more sensitive to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There is a network of public rights of way, used primarily for local recreation.

National Cycle Network Route 65, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, crosses the centre of the area, although there are no other recreational assets that would be highly sensitive.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strongly rural character, with little evidence of human influence across this area makes it sensitive to new development, especially as existing development is relatively isolated. The sense of quiet isolation across most of the area is reduced towards the east, closer to the A19.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on Escrick as the only designated service village in the area.  |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area, although changes to power stations to the south may lead to changes in the transmission lines that cross this landscape.                                      |
| Transport           | Road infrastructure is limited and large scale change unlikely. Incremental change as part of road upgrading could erode character.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Removal of hedgerows and field trees has occurred in the past, and while hedges are unlikely to be actively removed, it is likely that lack of maintenance or replacement could lead to further losses. |
| Agriculture         | Potential large agricultural buildings that may appear out of scale with the landscape, especially in more open areas and on high ground.   |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.   |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along Stillingfleet Beck.<br>Potential long-term changes in agricultural practice.   |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

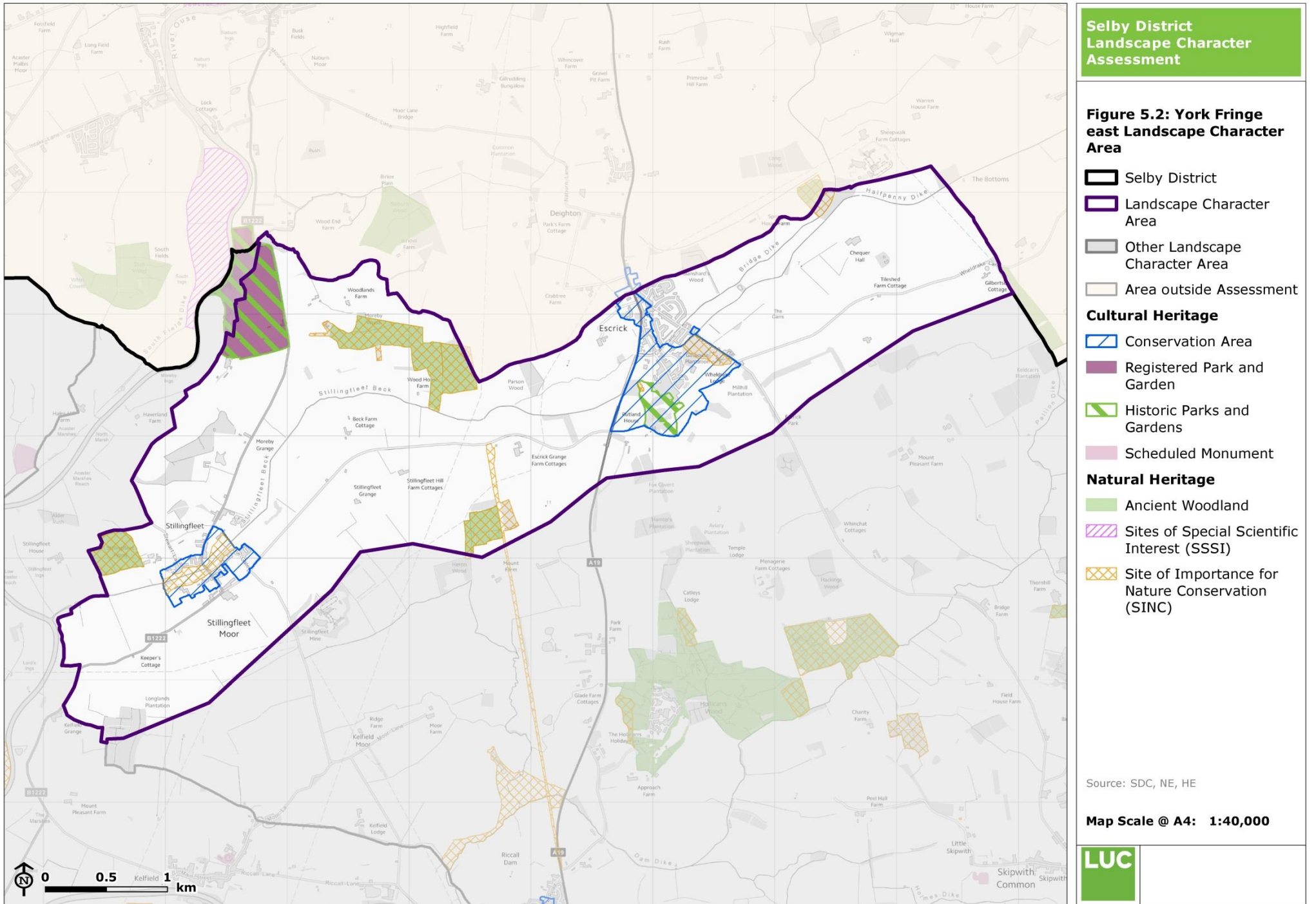
- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and field trees, where field boundaries have been lost in the past, to create a connected landscape pattern, such as along roads and particularly in the west of the character area;
- Seek to secure long-term health of woodlands across the area;
- Use existing woodland and new woodland planting to integrate built development into the landscape;
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape; and
- Consider colours of new development, favouring colours that are sympathetic to and reflect the landscape.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Should seek to establish long-term gains for the landscape at Moreby Wood, such as biodiversity enhancements and securing additional recreational access to the woodland;
- Housing development should be focused on Escrick as the only designated service village in the area, as dispersed settlement is not characteristic of the area; and
- Conserve and protect the parkland landscapes at Escrick and Moreby, by limiting possible harmful changes of use. Retain mature and veteran trees while planning for the next generation of parkland trees to ensure a sustainable population.

## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.2: York Fringe east Landscape Character Area**



- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment

- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
  - Registered Park and Garden
  - Historic Parks and Gardens
  - Scheduled Monument

- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

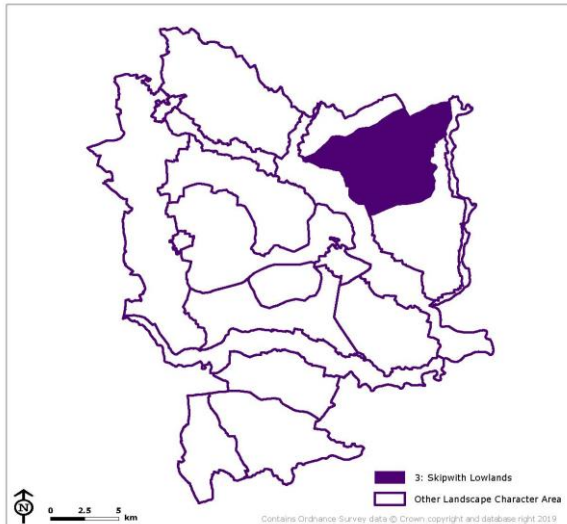
Map Scale @ A4: 1:40,000



# Character Area 3 Skipwith Lowlands

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the north-east corner of the District, adjacent to the Escrick moraine in the north. The area is bounded by the River Ouse and its floodplain to the west, the River Derwent and its floodplain to the east, and extensive areas of flat farmland to the south. It is located predominantly within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA, crossing into the *Vale of York* NCA. At a county scale, the landscape falls within the *Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland* LCT. The area includes the villages of Riccall, Skipwith and Thorganby.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Relatively flat arable farmland, with a strong presence of woodland plantation throughout the landscape.
- Semi-enclosed landscape with extensive areas of woodland plantation concentrated around Skipwith.
- Broad area of heather and heather grassland, of high conservation value, located at Skipwith Common National Nature Reserve (NNR) to the south-west of Skipwith.
- Medium-large scale varied field pattern defined commonly by ditches and dikes or by sparse and irregular hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The topography of the Skipwith Lowlands character area is generally flat, very gently undulating in parts. Its Permo-Triassic (c.250 million years ago) 'Bunter', or pebbly, sandstones are overlain by thick glacial drift deposits. These have formed poorly drained soils that are of lesser quality than those in surrounding areas. The west of the character area is particularly flat along the floodplain of the River Ouse, but the land rarely rises over 10m across this area. Several small tributary rivers cut across the landscape and flow into the larger River Ouse to the west and River Derwent to the east.

The primary land use of the character area is wooded arable farmland. Much of this farmland, particularly to the south, is semi-enclosed. The field size is medium-large and irregularly shaped, and fields tend to be bounded by irregular, low-cut hedgerows or ditches. Characteristic of the area is the scattered pattern of blocks of woodland which reflects the poor quality of the soils for extensive farming. This is largely broadleaved woodland in the south and east and more mixed leaf in the north and west of the area.

To the south of the character area at Skipwith Common there is a broad area of colourful lowland heath. This contains a variety of vegetation cover including heather, scrub, woodland and areas of marsh and ponds. As a result of the varied habitat types, it is home to a wide range of plants and animals and is of high conservation value. It is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and National Nature Reserve (NNR).

Skipwith Lowlands has three small villages: Riccall; Skipwith; and Thorganby which lies on the very edge of the character area. Riccall is the largest of the three and includes a Conservation Area. Scattered farmsteads and cottages reflect the traditional pattern of estate ownership across the area. The largely rural character is only interrupted by one former industrial site at Riccall mine. Now closed, the mine once was a site of coal extraction for electrical power generation and coal was transported nationally by nearby railways, also now closed.

The area has a variety of heritage assets including a range of Grade I, Grade II and Grade II\* Listed Buildings, most of which are found in Riccall and Thorganby, as well as 10 Scheduled Monuments. Cropmarks are found extensively across the landscape which suggests that the area was settled and farmed in in the Iron Age and Roman times.

The number of small farmsteads and cottages across the area are served by a network of minor roads. The A19 and A163 are the only major roads but provide links to the surrounding areas. The A163 borders the area to the south and the A19 to the west cuts through the area north to south skirting Riccall village. The Trans Pennine Trail, a national walking and cycling route runs across the site parallel to the A19, following the former railway line. There are also a number of smaller footpaths and bridleways across the area.

The views across the flat landscape tend to be interrupted by hedgerows and frequent woodland. With the exception of the former mining site, the area has a largely rural character that is associated with quiet and tranquillity, particularly within Skipwith Common which has an isolated character with little visible human development.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the very flat landscape with no distinctive landforms, in which new features and development may be visible.

The more wooded areas of landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, particularly in areas less open to views.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, though locally important water bodies, woodlands and particularly the heathland at Skipwith Common have a greater sensitivity to change.

Areas of woodland throughout the northern and central region provide naturalistic features contributing to the overall character of the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

The time-depth in this landscape varies, with a greater sense within the Riccall Conservation Area and at Skipwith Common which offers a glimpse of an older landscape, now largely vanished from the area.

The majority of the landscape has been extensively drained and enclosed as recently as the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Localised areas of older medieval strip fields, found near Thorganby are more sensitive to change.

Individual heritage assets will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Modern residential development characterises views of Riccall, showing a degree of unity of style and colour across housing developments, particularly from the west, which has a more prominent 'hard' boundary with the surrounding landscape.

The smaller settlements of Thorganby and Skipwith are more intact, with more traditional buildings, and would be sensitive to development that did not fit with their characteristic layout and mottled brick building materials.

The dispersed and isolated pattern of settlements and farmsteads across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

Much of the landscape is visually contained and enclosed by the presence of mature trees and woodland, and therefore may have lower sensitivity to new development.

Development in more open areas may detract from the largely undeveloped skylines and long views, which are characteristic and have a higher degree of sensitivity to change.

### Access and Recreation

There is a minor network of public rights of way, used primarily for local recreation.

National Cycle Network Route 65, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, crosses the area in the west, via Riccall, and the Skipwith Common National Nature Reserve is located within in the south of the area. Both are important recreational assets that would be highly sensitive to change.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strongly rural and nature character of the area makes it sensitive to built development, since many of the areas lack human influence and thus are quiet and isolated. This sense of tranquillity is reduced towards the west and south, closer to the A19 and A163 respectively.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on Riccall as the only designated service village in the area.<br><br>Re-use or redevelopment of the Riccall Mine site.   |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area, though the flat landscape may be attractive for development of solar farms, that could be sited in the context of woodland or hedgerow frameworks.                      |
| Transport           | Road infrastructure is limited, but change as part of road upgrading along minor roads may erode character.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Lack of maintenance or replacement leading to losses hedgerows and field trees.<br><br>Tree diseases may lead to loss of characteristic species.  |
| Agriculture         | Potential large agricultural buildings may appear out of scale with the landscape, especially in more open areas.<br><br>Potential for changes in agricultural management responding to changing growing seasons. |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.   |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along Dam Dike and Holmes Dike.<br><br>Potential changes in heathland if drier hotter summers lead to stresses on typical tree species.          |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:
















- Conserve and enhance hedgerows, including reinstating hedgerows where there are opportunities to do so;
- Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the landscape by promoting appropriate management through natural regeneration;
- Use existing woodland and new woodland planting to integrate built development into the landscape; and
- Consider colours of new development, favouring colours that are sympathetic to and reflect the landscape.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Housing development should be focused on Riccall as the only designated service village in the area, as other settlements are likely to be more sensitive to further housing;
- Seek to establish long-term sustainability of the important Ancient Woodlands, including Hollicars and Common woods, by securing additional recreational access to the woodland;
- Continue to conserve and protect the Skipwith Common National Nature Reserve by limiting development that may be detrimental to its wider setting, and by providing links to other biodiversity reservoirs in the area; and
- In any long-term proposals for the Riccall Mine site, seek to make green links with Skipwith Common for landscape and biodiversity benefit.

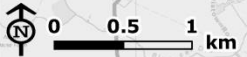
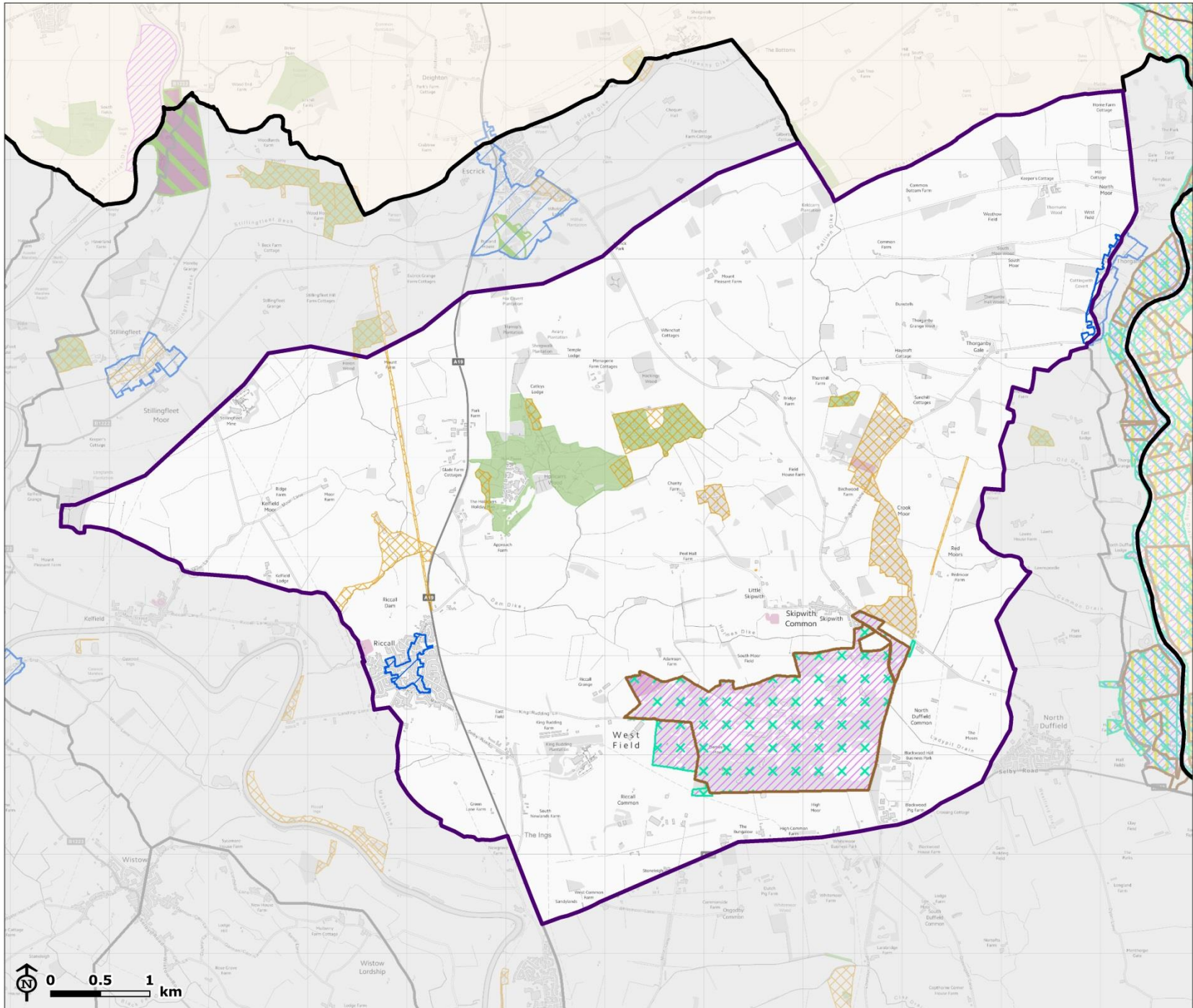
# Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.3: Skipwith Lowlands Landscape Character Area**

-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Registered Park and Garden
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  National Nature Reserve
-  Ramsar
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:55,000**





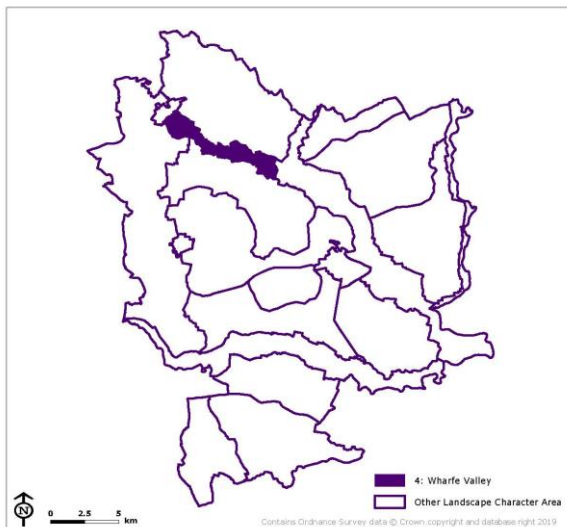
# Character Area 4 Wharfe Valley

## Location and extents

This elongated, linear character area extends from the north-west by Tadcaster, towards the south-east to the confluence between the River Wharfe and River Ouse. This character area follows the path of the River Wharfe, including its floodplains.

The majority of the landscape is located within the *Vale of York* NCA. However, the most westerly part of the area, near the town of Tadcaster falls within the *Southern Magnesian Limestone* NCA, and the most southerly point of the landscape, near the mouth of the River Wharfe falls within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA. At a county level, the landscape is entirely within the *River Floodplain* LCT.

The area includes the villages Kirkby Wharfe, Ulleskelf, Ozendyke and Ryther.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Flat, low-lying floodplains to the north and south of the meandering River Wharfe.
- Relatively narrow floodplain which widens further upstream and towards the Ouse confluence.
- High river banks are frequently densely vegetated with trees, shrub and natural grassland, largely isolating the river from view.
- Complex and irregular field pattern, defined by hedgerows used for pasture and hay baling.
- Small areas of woodland are concentrated to the north-west and along boundary of character area to the north.
- Villages of Kirkby Wharfe, Ulleskelf and Ryther located alongside the river.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The landform of Wharfe Valley is generally flat, with very little topographic variation. The character area comprises the meandering River Wharfe and its floodplains which are found in the north-west of the District, between Cawood and Tadcaster. Most of the area is less than 10m above ordnance datum (AOD), although the land rises gently with distance away from the river, particularly in the west approaching the limestone ridge, near Grimston Park and Tadcaster.

Most of the landscape is underlain by Permian-Triassic sandstones, with calcareous mudstone and dolomitic limestone further west. These are covered predominantly by a layer of alluvial flood deposits comprising clay, silt, sand and gravel. Sand and gravel deposits of glaciogenic origin are found along the south-western boundary of the character area, with moraine deposits present along the north-eastern boundary.

Primary land use within the valley is pasture, with some large areas of arable farming located to the south of the River Wharfe on the land surrounding Ozendyke, Ryther and Grimston Park. To the north of the river arable farmland is limited, with the only significant area being to the south of Bolton Percy.

The medium to large scale fields are often irregular in shape as they are dictated by the meandering river, with field patterns becoming more regular further from the river. Fields are frequently defined by hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. Smaller fields are present around the settlement of Ulleskelf which include remnant Medieval strip fields.

Narrow strips of riparian planting line the river bank for the majority of the river's length, disguising views of the watercourse and preventing access. Lowland meadows are found adjacent to the river between Ulleskelf and Ozendyke. One site, the Bolton Percy Ings, is designated as a SSSI because of its neutral grassland plant community. Several traditionally managed hay meadows, including at Ryther Ings, are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

The Wharfe Valley includes numerous small nucleated settlements including the villages of Kirkby Wharfe, Ulleskelf, and Ryther. The village of Ozendyke is more dispersed, with no apparent village centre. Historical assets are plentiful, with numerous Listed Buildings located within the area, notably the Grade I Church of All Saints near Ryther, and Grade II\* Church of St John the Baptist. The east of the character area, to the north of the river, includes part of Nun Appleton Hall which is a Registered Park and Garden, and there is important parkland at Bolton Percy and Grimston Park further upstream.

The A64 is the only road that crosses the River Wharfe within this area, in addition to two railway lines. There is a public right of way (PRoW) which runs adjacent to the river bank, for much of its length between Tadcaster and Ulleskelf on the southern banks. Numerous other PRoWs are present along the northern banks of the river, to the south of Bolton Percy and Nun Appleton. However, there are no footbridges crossing the river.

The flat landscape with significant vegetation cover results in a sense of semi-enclosure, with predominantly mid-range views across the landscape. However, the frequently densely vegetated river banks often screen the river from view as it flows through the landscape. The flat open floodplains offer longer ranging views, with visibility of neighbouring character areas. Overall, the landscape has a rural character, with little evidence of human elements beyond the small settlements situated along the river banks. The lack of main roads helps contribute towards the overall rurality and tranquillity of the landscape.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the flat and largely open nature of the landscape in which new features may be highly visible. The more vegetated areas of the landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development. The meandering River Wharfe, a key landscape feature which flows through the entire character area, is likely to be more sensitive to development. No other distinctive landforms or features are present.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape which is likely to have reduced sensitivity to change, though locally important meadows, woodlands and water bodies are likely to have greater sensitivity. Riparian vegetation along the river banks contributes positively to the character of the area, increasing the sense of naturalness.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, parts of which have been drained and enclosed between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, with localised areas of medieval strip fields which are more sensitive to change. Parkland is an important element of the landscape, and areas of parkland are of high sensitivity to changes including development and longer term change in land management. Individual heritage assets will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Residential development in the small settlements of Ryther and Ozendyke shows a degree of unity in style and colour. They are traditional in style and would be sensitive to development which does not fit with their characteristic layout and mottled brick building materials.

Ulleskelf, the largest of the settlements, has many traditional buildings within its interior but features more modern new builds on the fringes. The western extent of the village and the small settlement of Kirkby Wharfe feature many buildings and walls constructed from limestone, from the neighbouring Magnesian Limestone ridge to the west. The settlements may have higher sensitivity to development which is not sympathetic to the local vernacular.

The dispersed and isolated pattern of settlements and farmsteads across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic, especially to the north of the river which has very little built development.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

Much of the landscape is visually contained and enclosed by the presence of mature vegetation along roads, the river banks and some field boundaries, and therefore will tend to have lower visual sensitivity to new development. The more open, flat floodplains to the east offer long ranging views and intervisibility with neighbouring character areas, and as such may be more sensitive to prominent new development. There are generally no distinct landmarks visible on the skylines. Skylines to the north, particularly around Nun Appleton, are wooded and undeveloped, and thus may be more sensitive to new development which may detract from this.

### Access and Recreation

There is a network of PROWs which run along sections of the northern and southern river banks. These tend to be used primarily for local recreation. There are no other recreational assets that would be highly sensitive.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

Lack of roads contributes towards the strong rural and natural character of this landscape, which is quiet and tranquil, with many relatively isolated areas that can only be accessed on foot. This sense rurality and tranquillity may be reduced through the introduction of new development.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on Ulleskelf as the only designated service village in the area.   |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Transport           | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area, due to limited road access.  |
| Trees and woodlands | Removal of hedgerows and field trees has occurred in the past, and while hedges are unlikely to be actively removed, it is likely that lack of maintenance or replacement will lead to further losses.<br><br>Parkland landscapes are vulnerable to change if long-term management plans are not in place. |
| Agriculture         | Potential agricultural buildings of all scales that may appear disproportionate with the landscape, especially due to the relative openness of the flood plains.   |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas and in nearby settlements along the River Wharfe.   |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

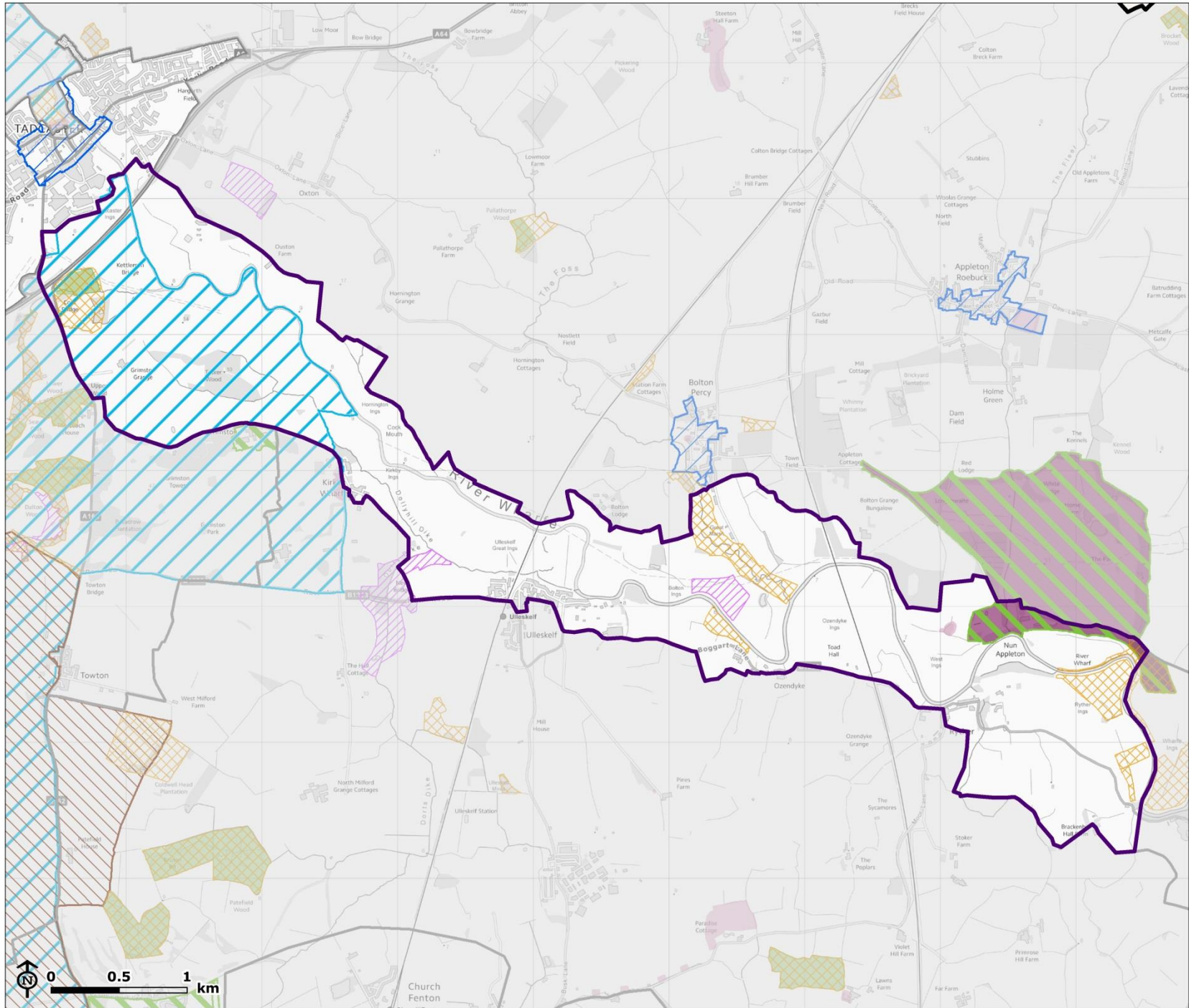
- Conserve and enhance hedgerows, including reinstating hedgerows where there are opportunities to do so;
- Conserve the special character of the river corridor;
- Maintain the sparse settlement pattern of dispersed farms through control of new development, avoiding spread of development along the floodplain; and
- Consider colours of new development, favouring colours that are sympathetic to and reflect the landscape, particularly in open areas.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Housing development should be focused on Ulleskelf as the only designated service village in the area, and should reflect the existing village layout;
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape by improving access along and across the River Wharfe; and
- Continue efforts to conserve and protect traditionally managed lowland meadows.

# Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.4: Wharfe Valley Landscape Character Area**



- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Locally Important Landscape Area

- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
  - Registered Battlefield
  - Registered Park and Garden
  - Historic Parks and Gardens
  - Scheduled Monument

- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE  
**Map Scale @ A4: 1:40,000**



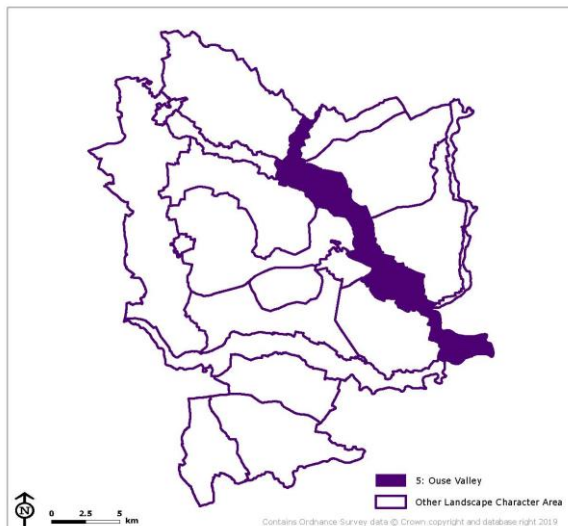
# Character Area 5 Ouse Valley

## Location and extents

This elongated character area follows the course of the River Ouse, including its floodplains, from the north of the district near Stillingfleet towards Barmby on the Marsh, to the south-east of Selby.

The majority of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA. However the landscape to the north of the Wharfe-Ouse confluence falls within the *Vale of York* NCA. At a county level, the landscape is entirely within the *River Floodplain* LCT.

The area includes the villages of Cawood, Kelfield, and Barlby located along the River Ouse, upstream from Selby, and includes the Ouse-Aire confluence and the village of Newland in the south.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Very flat, low-lying floodplains of the River Ouse, used predominantly as arable farmland.
- Medium to large scale patchwork of heavily drained fields, commonly defined by ditches or grassed 'beetle banks'.
- High grassy and vegetated flood embankments help disguise the river as it flows through the landscape.
- Localised areas of wetland and marsh provide valuable biodiversity habitats.
- Significant number of settlements including villages, hamlets and the town of Selby, located along the course of the River Ouse.
- Confluences of the Wharfe and Ouse to the north of Cawood, and the Ouse and Aire at Airmyn to the south-east.
- Strong influence of human elements including the prominent Drax Power Station, Rusholme Wind Farm, pylons running through the landscape, and river levees.
- Distinct lack of woodland and tree cover creates a sense of vast openness.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The topography is low-lying and very flat, forming the flood plains of the meandering River Ouse, which flows through the Selby District. The river flows from the north, near Stillingfleet, towards the south-east. It forms part of the eastern boundary of the District. The topography of the area is predominantly below 10m above ordnance datum (AOD) although there are subtle variations in elevation. Topography rises to nearly 40m AOD in the south-east of the character area, to the north-west of Drax Power Station, due to the artificial landform created from ash disposal.

The entirety of the landscape is underlain by sandstones from the Triassic and Permian periods, hidden by a thick layer of alluvium comprising clay, silt and sand, with localised areas of peat. In addition to the clays and silts, coarser sands and gravel of fluvial and glaciogenic origin cover the bedrock throughout the Ouse Valley.

Primary land use across the character areas is arable farming, with farmland for pasture more common in the northern valley, upstream of the Wharfe-Ouse confluence. The generally large scale fields have a predominantly irregular field pattern, with the meandering river often dictating the shape of those fields immediately adjacent. Smaller, more regular fields tend to be located near settlements, particularly near Kelfield and to the south of Barlby. Fields are commonly defined by ditches and dikes or grassed margins with occasional hedgerow trees.

Narrow strips of riparian planting line the river bank for the majority its length. Numerous sites designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are located within the Ouse Valley, including: Wharfe Ings; Kelfield Ings; Mulberry Farm Ponds; Roscarrs Ponds; and Staynor Wood.

The River Ouse floodplains feature several settlements, small hamlets, isolated properties and farm steadings, each located on subtly higher ground. Larger, more nucleated villages, including Cawood, Kelfield, and Barlby, contrast with the village of Newland which is more elongated and dispersed, with no defined centre. The Ouse Valley is enriched with historical assets, including the sites of Cawood Castle and Castle Garth, and moated sites at Kelfield and Scurff Hall, all designated as Scheduled Monuments. Numerous Listed Buildings are scattered throughout the valley, concentrated in the nucleated villages of Cawood, Barlby and Kelfield.

The A63, A19, and B1222 are the only roads that cross the river, with no other means of crossing. This means that long sections of the riverside are inaccessible by road, or only by long dead-end routes. There are a number of public rights of way which run adjacent to the river bank, for most of its length, though not continuously and seldom on both sides. National Cycle Route 65 (Trans Pennine Trail) runs adjacent to the river around Barlby and Selby and south of Hemingbrough.

The flat landscape with limited tree cover creates a sense of exposure with long outward views across the area. The high vegetated river embankments often disguise the river as it flows through the landscape. Occasionally they are topped with sheet piles, emphasising the man-made nature of this drained landscape. The Drax Power Station and Rusholme Wind Farm towards the south-east form distinctive human elements visible from within this landscape, having localised effects on the rural character of the area, and associated tranquillity. Elsewhere the lack of through access leads to a sense of isolation and tranquillity despite the lack of wholly 'natural' landscape features.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the large scale flat open landscape in which new features would be readily visible. The River Ouse is a key landscape feature, which itself is highly sensitive to development. The high embankments which run adjacent to the River Ouse, and in some areas further back in the floodplain, are prominent features visible in an otherwise flat landscape.

### Natural Character

This landscape is intensively farmed for arable and pasture purposes, though locally important water bodies, grasslands and woodlands are sensitive to change.

Riparian planting along the river banks contributes positively to the character of the area, increasing the sense of naturalness. The area has had significant field-boundary loss and is generally sensitive to further loss of remaining hedges and trees.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, with the greatest sense present in the Cawood Conservation Area where a number of Grade I and II Listed Buildings are present. Localised areas of medieval strip fields near Cawood and Cliffe are also representative of older landscapes. Parts of the landscape have been drained and enclosed relatively recently, and this is a strongly human-modified landscape. Individual heritage assets will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The nucleated villages of Wistow, Cawood and Kelfield are contained with vegetated soft boundaries with the surrounding landscape. These settlements may be sensitive to new development beyond the existing settlement boundary. Modern residential development characterises views of Kelfield from across the river to the south, and the western edge of Barlby, with a range of style and form across housing developments. The highly dispersed pattern of settlement across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic of the settlement pattern, which is dependent on subtle topographical changes.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

Selby Abbey is a noticeable landmark visible on the horizon, alongside industrial buildings in the town. The Drax and Eggborough power stations are prominent on the horizon, although skylines are generally indistinct and therefore of limited sensitivity.

The scale of trees in the distance emphasise the scale of the landscape and openness, with some intervisibility between landscapes. Therefore these open areas may be more sensitive to development.

### Access and Recreation

Public rights of way are present along most of the length of the river, with further footpaths cutting across the floodplains, these are used primarily for local recreation and provide the only access to much of the riverside. National Cycle Network Route 65, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, cuts through the central region, near Selby, though there are no other recreational assets that would be highly sensitive.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strongly rural character across much of this area makes it sensitive to built development, since these areas are quiet and relatively isolated. This sense of rurality is reduced near Selby and the Drax Power Station due to the increased presence of built development, and thus is less sensitive to new development. The great sense of openness is maintained due to the lack of development on the floodplains. New development may detract from this.



## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Major mixed-use and employment allocations between Selby and Barlby on the east bank of the Ouse.<br><br>Further development pressure is likely to focus on Selby, and the designated service villages of Barlby and Cawood.                           |
| Energy              | Changes at Drax, including the move away from coal, may require new or altered infrastructure in and around the plant.<br><br>Long-term completion and restoration of the ash disposal site will alter the setting of the river corridor in this area. |
| Transport           | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area, due to limited road access, except in the area around Selby where further road upgrades may come forward, with potential impacts on the river banks.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Lack of maintenance may lead to loss of hedgerows and field trees.<br><br>Loss of trees due to disease may change the make-up of riparian vegetation.  |
| Agriculture         | Potential agricultural buildings of all scales that may appear disproportionate with the landscape, especially due to extensive openness of the flood plains.  |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along the River Ouse.<br><br>Changes in arable land management may occur with lengthening growing seasons.  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

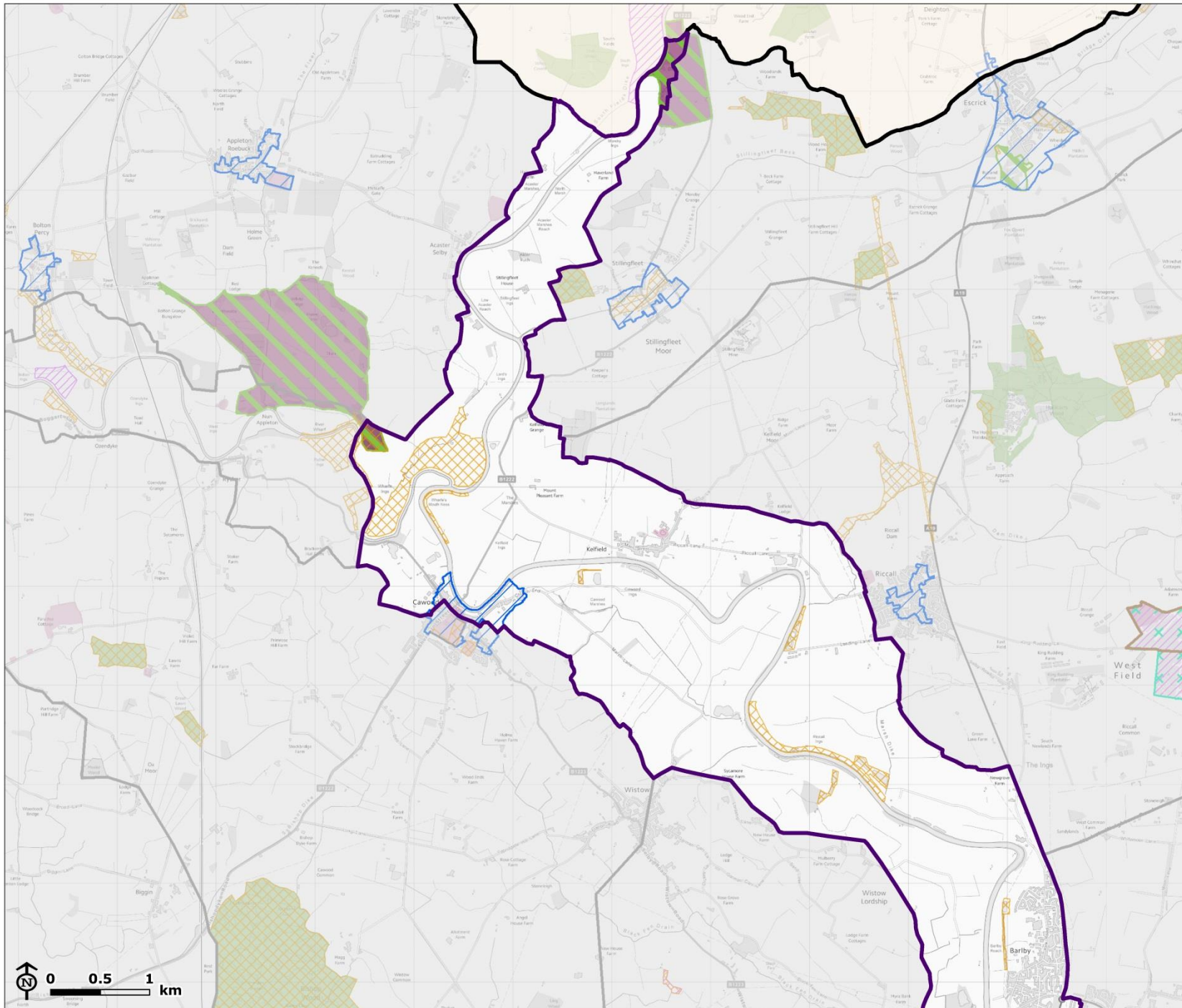
- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and field trees where field boundaries have been lost in the past, such as along field drains;
- Encourage planting of shelterbelts and small woodlands on underused land;
- Conserve the special character of the river corridor;
- New developments on the edge of settlements may be highly visible and their location and appearance, including colour and structure planting, should be carefully considered; and
- Maintain the sparse settlement pattern of dispersed farms through control of new development, avoiding spread of development along the floodplain.












Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Housing and commercial development should be focused on the Selby, and to a lesser extent Barlby and Cawood as the main villages within the character area. Development should be sited to reflect village layout or in appropriate locations on the boundaries, which would not result in settlement dispersion;
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape by improving access along and where possible across the River Ouse; and
- Seek opportunities to soften flood defences in association with flood alleviation schemes, such as re-creating flood meadows or replacing flood walls in the south of the character area with grassed embankments.

**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.5a: Ouse Valley  
Landscape Character Area**



-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Registered Park and Garden
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  National Nature Reserve
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:55,000**



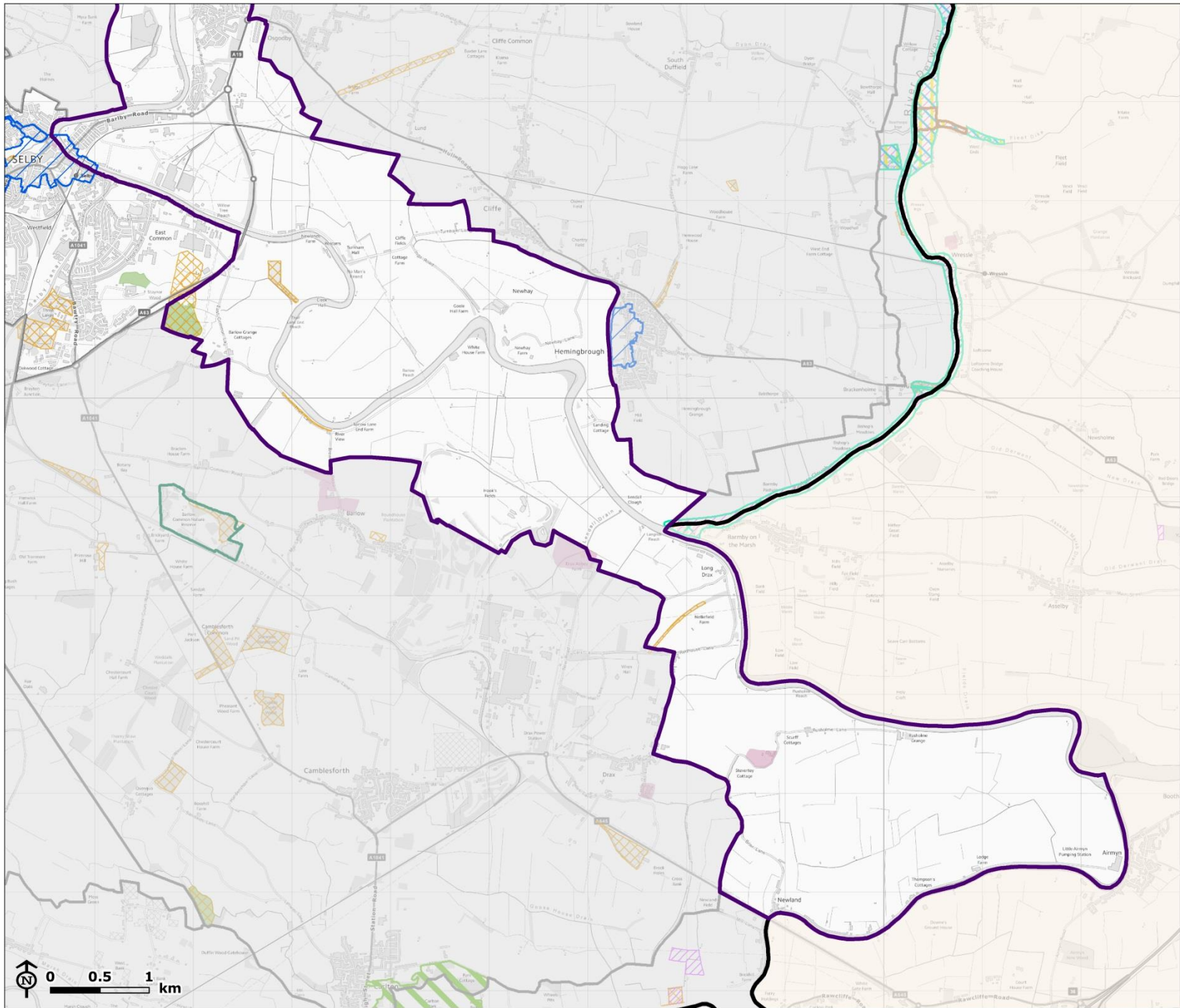
## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.5b: Ouse Valley  
Landscape Character Area**

- Selby District
  - Landscape Character Area
  - Other Landscape Character Area
  - Area outside Assessment
- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
  - Historic Parks and Gardens
  - Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
  - Local Nature Reserve
  - National Nature Reserve
  - Ramsar
  - Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
  - Special Protection Area (SPA)
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:55,000**



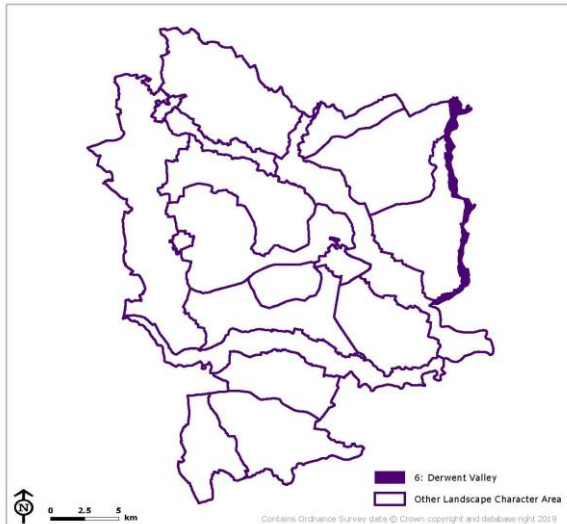
# Character Area 6 Derwent Valley

## Location and extents

This narrow elongated character area follows the course of the River Derwent, extending from the most north-easterly point of the district down the eastern boundary to the confluence with the Ouse. The area forms the western part of the Derwent Valley, and should be regarded as continuous with the eastern half in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

The entirety of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels NCA*, and on a county scale within the *River Floodplain LCT*.

The area includes the village of Thorganby and a number of isolated houses and farmsteads.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Very flat, low-lying western floodplain of the meandering River Derwent.
- Narrow floodplain with local variations in width, with wetlands and meadows of high nature conservation value.
- Low grassy flood embankments with areas of traditionally managed meadows for pasture or to produce hay.
- Limited road access, with main routes crossing the river rather than following it.
- Rectilinear field patterns, defined by occasional hedgerow trees and the River Derwent.
- Recreational boating and wildlife watching attract people to this tranquil area.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The topography is low-lying and very flat, forming the western flood plains of the meandering River Derwent, which marks the eastern boundary of the district. The topography of the area remains below 10m above ordnance datum (AOD) although there are subtle variations in elevation. The entirety of the landscape is underlain by sandstones of Triassic and Permian age, thickly covered by a layer of alluvium comprising clay, peat and silt.

Primary land use across the character area is farmland for pasture, with arable fields more common further south towards the confluence with the River Ouse. Many are traditionally managed hay meadows. Fields are of a medium to large scale, and with larger fields more common further downstream. They are often defined by ditches and dikes, or occasional hedgerow trees. The meandering river influences the irregular shape of these fields. Narrow but dense strips of riparian vegetation line sections of the river bank, particularly further downstream towards the River Ouse.

The River Derwent is notable for a concentration of national and international biodiversity designations, including the Lower Derwent Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, which are designated for their species-rich flood meadows which support a range of waders, ducks and swans. Several areas are also protected as SSSIs and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. Many of these areas are within the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve. Again, these designations are continuous across the river and administrative boundary.

The narrow floodplains feature some isolated properties and farmsteads, however with the exception of Thorganby on the boundary in the north, no other significant settlements are present. There are a few Listed Buildings within the Derwent Valley, concentrated in the Thorganby Conservation Area which lies on the boundary of the character area in the north. There is more settlement on the eastern bank, which is often visible from the west.

The A63 and A163 are the only roads that cross the river, with no other means of crossing and few means of access to the river. There are a limited number of public rights of way close to the river, but these tend to be located north of the A163, near the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve. There are opportunities for watching wildlife including the bird hides at Duffield Carrs. The river itself is a recreational resource for boat users, with moorings at Brighton and Barmby, on the east bank.

Intermittent vegetation and the winding nature of the character area provide a sense of enclosure with mid-range views within the valley. It is for the most part an isolated landscape, with a high degree of tranquillity. Human elements are visible from within this landscape, but tend to be distant and separate, with more limited effect on tranquillity.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The very flat and open landscape is likely to have higher sensitivity to change as new features will more likely be visible within the landscape.

The meandering River Derwent and its floodplain setting will be highly sensitive to changes that affect the river or its banks.

### Natural Character

The river, its immediate floodplain and areas of adjacent meadow are internationally designated for biodiversity value, supporting a wealth of uncommon plant and animal species. These areas are highly sensitive to any changes in development or land management that would affect them physically or that would affect their setting and natural heritage context.

Limited areas of woodland are of high sensitivity in this landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

Traditional land management and the lack of modern development offer a degree of time-depth in this landscape. A number of individual heritage assets are found in the north at Thorganby and Thicket Priory.

Evidence of landscape enclosure dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century with some areas being enclosed as recently as the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The lack of settlement across the area indicates that any substantial developments would be uncharacteristic.

The small linear settlement of Thorganby, located on the boundary has a traditional style of mottled red brick housing, which should be reflected in any new buildings in or around the village.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

Much of the landscape is visually contained and enclosed by the presence of mature vegetation adjacent to the floodplains; however there is a greater sense of openness and longer-distance views down the valley which would be more sensitive to new development.

The meandering river limits visibility in areas when looking up or down the valley, and thus there may be scope for sensitive siting.

Skylines are largely undeveloped and often wooded. The generally undeveloped skyline is likely to have higher sensitivity to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There are very few public rights of way, and these are used primarily for local recreation and by visitors to the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve. This is an important recreational and educational asset that would be highly sensitive to change.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strong rural and tranquil character of this area makes it sensitive to built development, since these areas are relatively quiet and isolated. This sense of quiet isolation is locally reduced towards the main roads such as the A163 and A63.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Pressure for built development is likely to be very limited in this area. There may be some pressure for recreational development for boat users and wildlife visitors.  |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Transport           | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area, due to limited road access. Upgrades of the A-road crossings would have localised effects.   |
| Trees and woodlands | A lack of maintenance or replacement of hedgerows and trees could lead to further losses.<br><br>Increased risk of tree diseases that may result in losses of particular species.  |
| Agriculture         | Changes in land management of the hay meadows may have particular consequences for the character of this area.<br><br>Potential agricultural buildings of all scales may appear disproportionate with the landscape, especially due to openness of the flood plains. |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along the River Derwent.<br><br>Changes may affect the continued management of hay meadows, and the make-up of species in the protected areas.  |

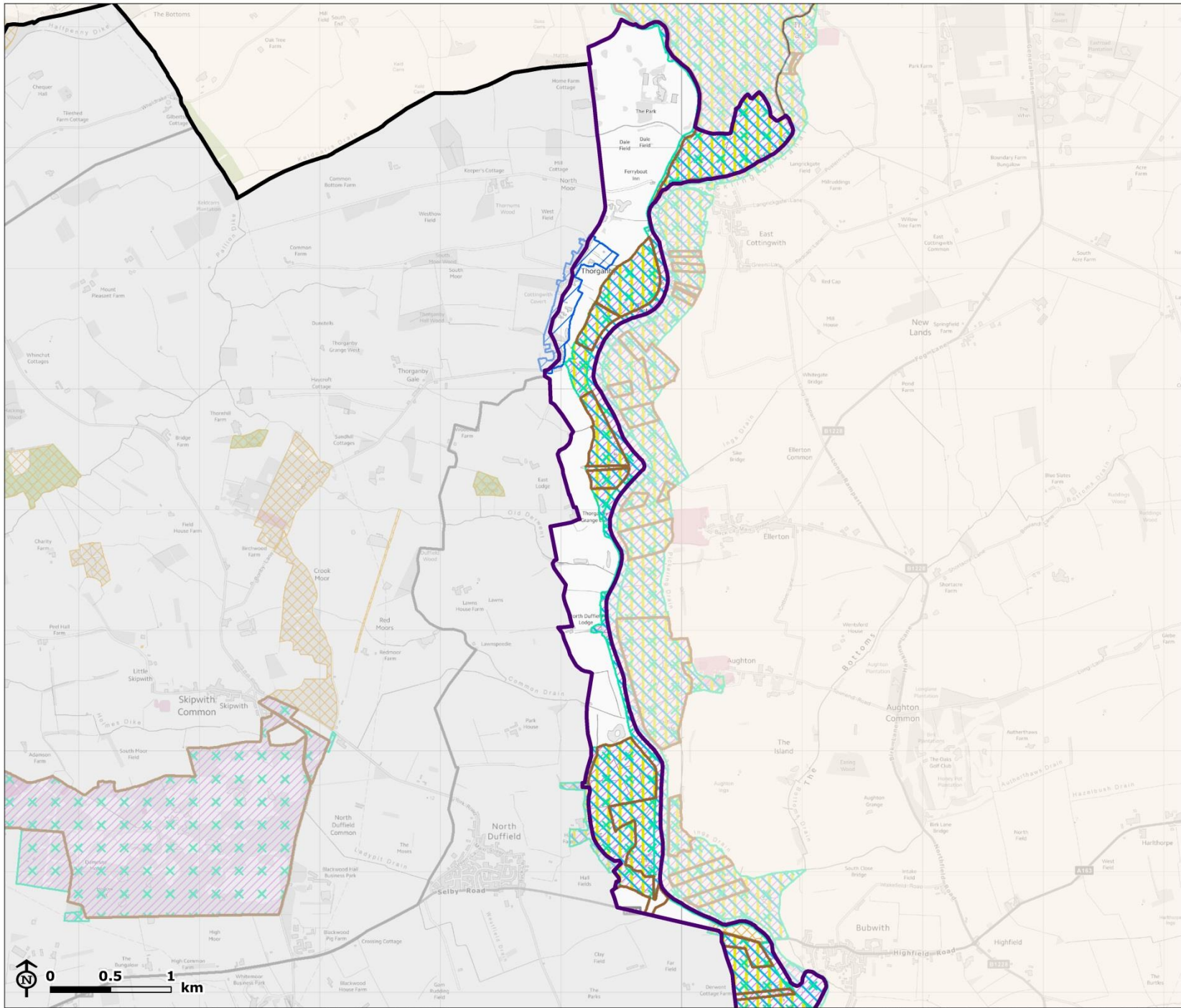
## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and field trees where field boundaries have been lost in the past, such as along field drains;
- New visitor developments may be highly visible and their location and appearance should be carefully considered;
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment by improving the public right of way network along the river, potentially including providing footbridges over the river;
- Conserve the scenic quality and natural heritage value of the river corridor;
- Encourage and maintain areas for flood water which provide valuable wetland environments and flood alleviation; and
- Continue to protect the biodiversity value of the Lower Derwent, through cross-boundary and partnership working at district and local levels.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape by improving access to the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve, whilst managing recreational pressure on the river;



**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.6a: Derwent Valley Landscape Character Area**

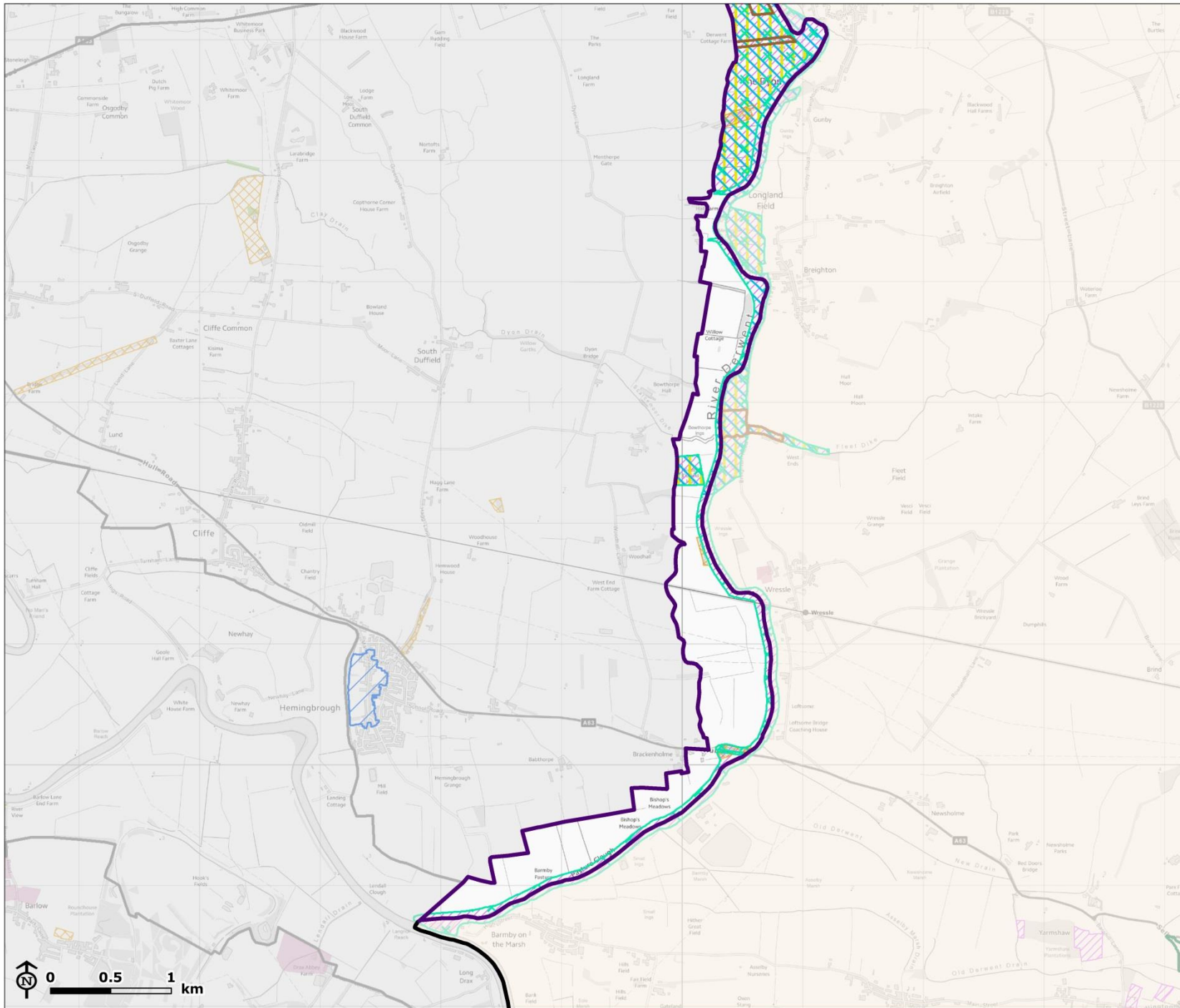
- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Ramsar
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:45,000**







## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.6b: Derwent Valley Landscape Character Area**

- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
- Local Nature Reserve
- National Nature Reserve
- Ramsar
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:45,000**



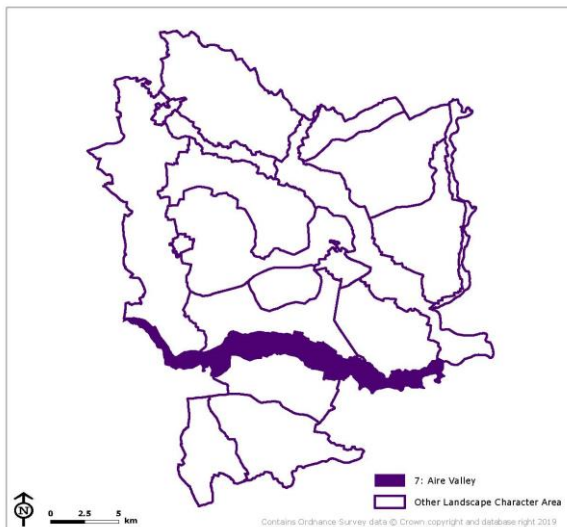
# Character Area 7 Aire Valley

## Location and extents

This elongated linear character area follows the course of the River Aire, extending from the west by Fairburn, towards the confluence with the River Ouse in the east. The character area is bounded to the north and south by farmland, with the most westerly section of the area bounded by the West Selby Limestone Ridge. To the east the southern half of the river valley is within East Riding of Yorkshire.

The majority of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA, while the westerly part of the area near Fairburn falls within the *Southern Magnesian Limestone* NCA. At a county level, the landscape is entirely within the *River Floodplain* LCT.

The area includes the villages of Brotherton, Beal, West Haddlesey, Chapel Haddlesey, Temple Hirst, and Hirst Courtney.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Flat, low-lying floodplains to the north and south of the meandering River Aire, which widens further downstream.
- High river banks are frequently densely vegetated with shrub, natural grassland and occasional trees, partially isolating the river from view.
- Patchwork of fields use primarily for arable farming, defined commonly by ditches, dikes and hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.
- Areas of wetlands, marshy grasslands and fen located within the floodplain, which offer high nature conservation value.
- Power stations and pylons form distinctive human elements visible from within this landscape.
- Numerous bridges cross the River Aire, including the A1 in the west.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

This area is low-lying and predominantly flat, with little topographic variation. The topography of the whole area remains below 10m above ordnance datum (AOD). The broad and meandering River Aire runs mainly through the wide farmed levels, though in the west it becomes a narrower flood plain contained by rising ground as it crosses the limestone ridge. The majority of the landscape is underlain by sandstones of Permian age (300-250 million years ago), with bands of calcareous mudstone and dolomitic limestone to the west. Most of the bedrock is covered by a layer of alluvium comprising clay, silt, sand and gravel.

Arable land covers the vast majority of the floodplain, with a small area of pasture in the east. The shape and size of the large scale fields are dictated by the meandering river, and often defined by ditches and dikes which drain the farmland. Smaller more regularly shaped fields are frequently located near settlements and are often defined by hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

Narrow but dense strips of riparian planting line the high banks of the riverside, partially isolating the river from view. The floodplains feature very few woodland areas, the largest being located at Carlton Park in the east, and around Fairburn in the west. Numerous sites located along the path of the River Aire are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), including Newland Ings, Carlton Park Pond, and Beal Carrs. The Eskamhorn Meadows SSSI in the east of the character areas is nationally designated for its species-rich unimproved neutral grassland.

There are numerous riverside settlements, including Kellingley, Beal, Birkin, West Haddlesey, Chapel Haddlesey, Temple Hirst and Hirst Courtney, which are sited on subtly higher ground within the floodplain. Settlements tend to be small and nucleated, located along the Birkin to Haddlesey road. There are a handful of Listed Buildings within these small villages, including the Grade I listed Church at Birkin. The parkland at Carlton Towers extends into the river valley, forming the most significant area of woodland in this character area.

The A1(M), A162, A19, A1041 and A645 roads all cross the river, with only one minor road crossing at Beal. There are several rail crossings as well as pipe bridges and weirs. National Cycle Route 62 crosses the River Aire on the A1041 road bridge, before continuing westwards along Hirst Road to Temple Hirst. There are intermittent public rights of way running along both the banks of the river, though with significant gaps. Public access to the river is available at Fairburn Ings in the west.

The flat landscape with limited tree cover creates a sense of exposure with open views across the landscape. Limited access in places, and the small scale of settlement, contributes to a sense of tranquillity. Power stations and pylons form distinctive human elements visible from within this landscape, having localised effects on rural character and associated tranquillity.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the flat open landscape in which new features are readily visible. Conversely, the more enclosed nature of the landscape in the west may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development as the increased presence of vegetation reduces open views. The high embankments which run adjacent to the River Aire and, and in some areas further back in the flood plain, are prominent features visible in an otherwise flat landscape

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, though locally important water bodies, meadows and woodlands are likely to be more sensitive to change. The more vegetated landscape in the east, past Carlton creates a more rural and natural character, which is less likely to be sensitive to new changes in the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, most of which has been relatively recently drained and enclosed. Localised time-depth is present in small traditional villages which have a well-established character. Individual heritage assets will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised and tend to be within settlements.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The small settlements located along the minor road to the north of the River Aire are each contained and well integrated into the landscape, with soft landscaping around the boundaries. Thus they may be sensitive to development that is not well sited within the existing settlement layout, and would have limited capacity for change.

The general design and style of residential houses throughout each of the settlements is relatively uniform, commonly featuring red brick walls and pantile roofs. Settlements further west, including Brotherton, West Haddlesey and Birkin tend to feature more buildings and walls constructed of limestone from the nearby ridge. These settlements are likely to be more sensitive to changes which do not conform to the character of the local materials.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

The Eggborough, Drax and Ferrybridge power stations are key skyline features visible from many areas within the landscape. This is anticipated to change with planned redevelopment at the three sites. There are few other landmarks though church spires are locally important. Skylines are generally indistinct and therefore are of limited sensitivity, however areas with undeveloped skylines dominated by trees and vegetation are likely to be locally more sensitive.

Long, straight roads in the west of the character area provide vistas through the landscape, with more open visibility, whereas the east features more winding roads with less visibility and thus is likely to be less sensitive to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There is a good network of public rights of way in the west, but becomes scarcer in the east. They are used primarily for local recreation, and would be sensitive to any reduction in access.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The area has a largely rural feel and is quiet and tranquil in most places, and therefore is likely to be more sensitive to new development in the area. Sense of tranquillity is reduced further west near the A1, therefore these areas may have a lower sensitivity.

The largely open nature creates a sense of exposure, which increases the landscape's sensitivity to change as it is likely new development would be highly visible. In contrast, the more enclosed east and west may be able to absorb development better and thus has a lower sensitivity.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme                      | Scope  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Built development          | Development pressure likely to be limited in this area due to flood potential, though some potential for development around Brotherton.  |
| Energy                     | Potential demolition and redevelopment of Eggborough Power Station will change the southern skyline of this area, and may require changes in associated infrastructure such as overhead power lines. |
| Transport                  | Road infrastructure is limited, but change as part of road upgrading along minor roads may erode character.  |
| Trees and woodlands        | Lack of maintenance or replacement of hedgerows and trees may lead to further losses.  |
| Agriculture                | Potential large agricultural buildings that may appear out of scale with the landscape, especially in the more open floodplains in the west.   |
| Minerals                   | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate and climate change | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along the River Aire.<br>Changes in agricultural practice with lengthening growing seasons.   |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

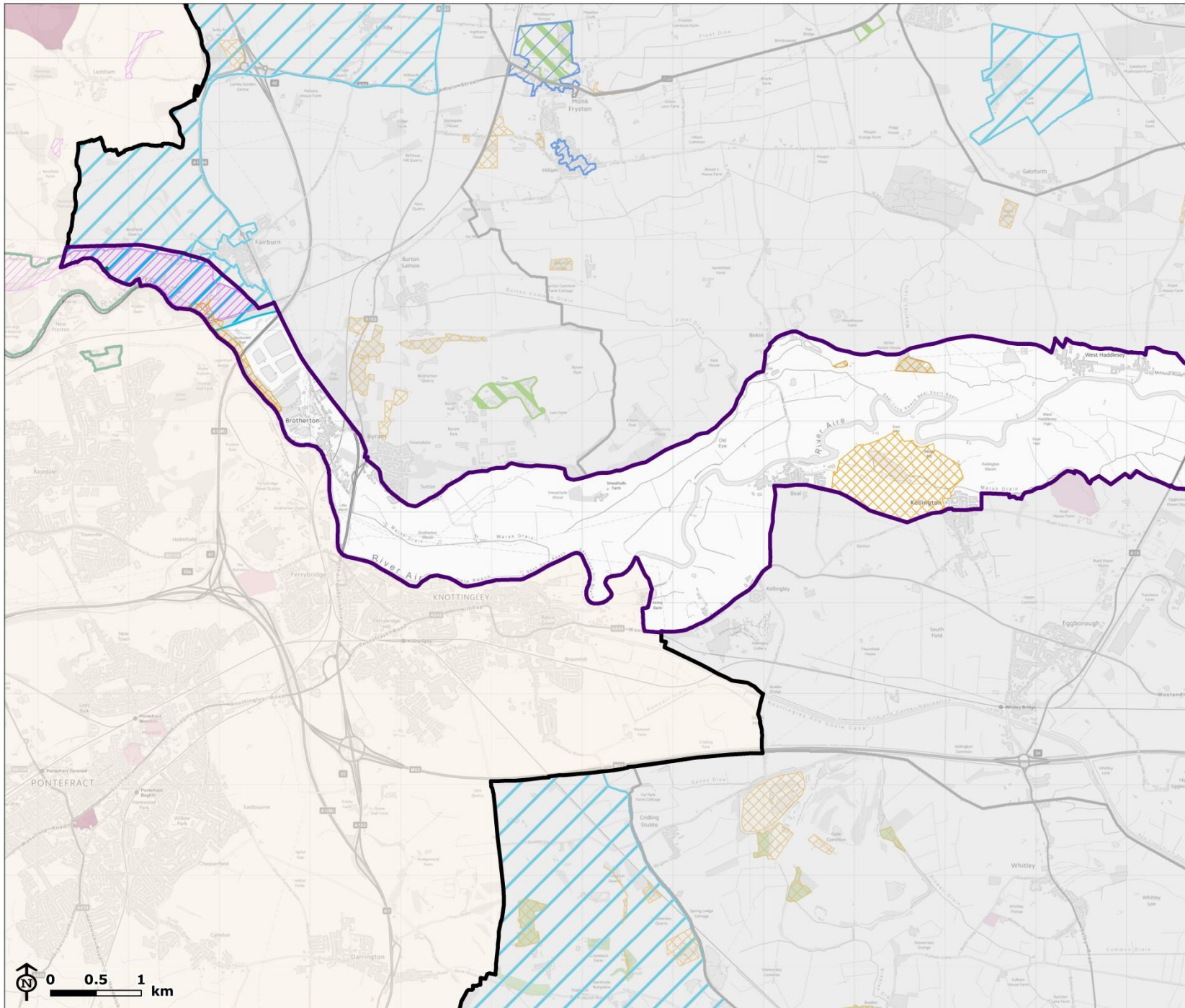
- Encourage planting of shelterbelts and small woodlands to create more naturalistic features in the environment, and provide important habitats for wildlife;
- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and field trees where field boundaries have been lost in the past, particularly along field drains in the west of the area;
- Conserve the special character of the river corridor;
- Consider colours of new development, favouring colours that are sympathetic to the colour of the surrounding landscape;
- Encourage and maintain areas for flood water which could also provide valuable wetland environments; and
- New developments may be highly visible, and their location and appearance should be carefully considered.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment by improve the public right of way network along the river, including providing footbridges over the river if possible; and
- Housing development should be focused within the Carlton and Brotherton designated service villages in the area, avoiding further development on the floodplain,
- New development should not be sited so as to result in further elongation of smaller villages along the Birkin-Carlton road.

**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.7a: Aire Valley  
Landscape Character Area**



- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
- Registered Park and Garden
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
- Local Nature Reserve
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)






Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:60,000**






**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.7b: Aire Valley  
Landscape Character Area**

-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
-  Locally Important Landscape Area

**Cultural Heritage**

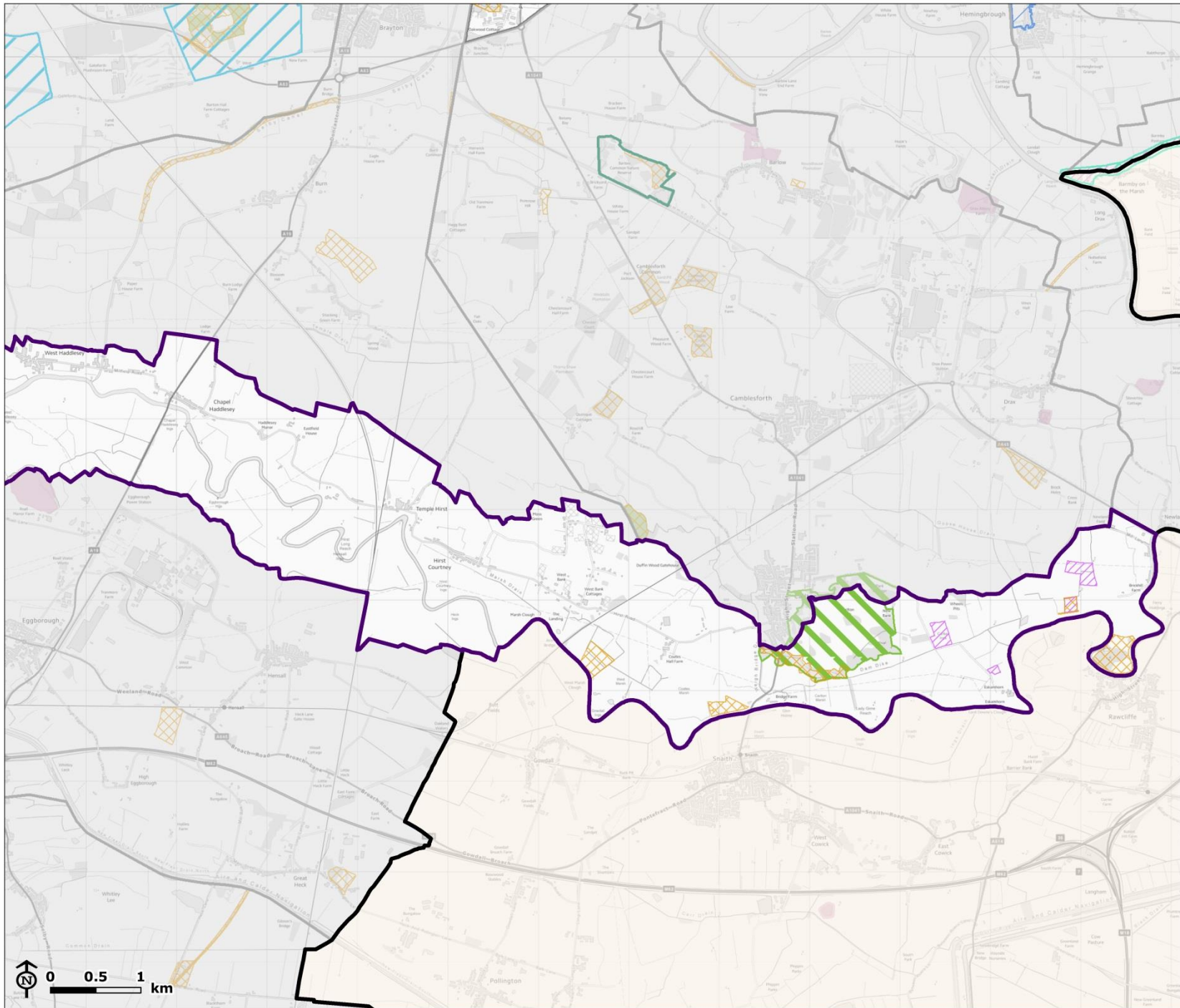
-  Conservation Area
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Scheduled Monument

**Natural Heritage**

-  Ancient Woodland
-  Local Nature Reserve
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:60,000**



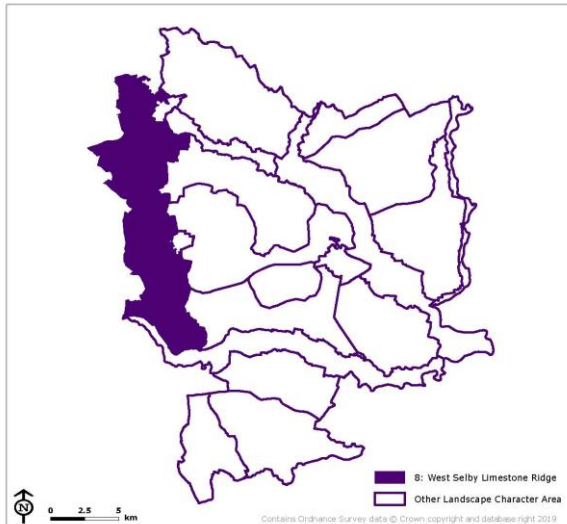
# Character Area 8 West Selby Limestone Ridge

## Location and extents

This linear character area is located along the western boundary of the district, extending from the north to the south.

The majority of the landscape is located within the *South Magnesian Limestone* NCA. However, a small narrow section to the east transitions into the *Humberhead Levels* NCA. At a county level, the landscape is entirely within the *Magnesian Limestone Ridge* LCT.

The area includes the market town of Tadcaster in the far north, and the villages of Towton, Stutton, Saxton, Sherburn in Elmet, South Milford, Fairburn, Burton Salmon and Byram.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Low ridge of Magnesian limestone with large scale rolling arable farmland.
- Irregularly shaped, large scale arable fields, defined by hedgerows and field margin buffers with intermittent hedgerow trees, or occasionally ditches.
- Strong presence of large areas of calcareous woodland to the west of the character area, providing a sense of semi-enclosure.
- Major transport links dissect this landscape, including the main trunk roads A1, A63, and A64, and railway lines.
- Local influences include parkland landscapes and mineral sites for limestone extraction.
- Sparse settlement pattern outside the town of Tadcaster and small villages, with few isolated properties and farmsteads.



## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

Unlike much of the surrounding landscape to the east, this landscape has a varied topography which undulates throughout the character area, creating a medium-large-scale rolling landscape rising up from the relatively low-lying and flat land in the east, to higher elevations of 80m AOD in the interior of the Limestone Ridge to the west. The area is underlain by predominantly dolomitic limestone and dolomite, commonly known as the Magnesian Limestone. Most of the bedrock has no overlying superficial deposits resulting in highly fertile soils, but there are localised areas of clays, sands and gravels of glaciogenic origin. Magnesian limestone mineral extraction sites are recurrent throughout the landscape, although tend to be concentrated in the west in the slopes of the limestone ridge. Active sites include Brotherton Quarry, Newthorpe Quarry and Jackdaw Crag.

Most land in the character area is used for arable farming, with a generally large-scale, irregular field pattern. Some areas have a smaller scale field pattern, notably in the north, around Tadcaster and in the central region within the valley of the Cock Beck. Forestry is frequent across the character area, particularly in the west and on the upper slopes of the limestone ridge. Pasture becomes more frequent where land is lower-lying and flatter, including along the lower reaches of the Cock Beck valley. This corresponds with the smaller scale field pattern. Two watercourses cut across this landscape: the Cock Beck flowing from the western boundary towards Tadcaster in a deeply incised valley; and the Newthorpe Beck which flows into the Mill Dike, towards South Milford. Unlike surrounding character areas, the variations in topography across this landscape mean field drains are less frequent.

Irregular medium-to-large scale fields are commonly defined by low, fragmented hedgerows or occasional ditches, which promotes a sense of openness, with long ranging views across parts of the landscape and the surrounding lowlands. Localised areas have higher, denser hedgerows which limit visibility across the landscape, especially when travelling along the winding road network. Woodland, hedgerows and the undulating topography has localised effects on the distance of visibility, providing a stronger sense of enclosure than elsewhere within the character area. Parkland is a feature around Tadcaster and Stutton in the north, and at Byram in the south.

Large areas of calcareous woodland, many of which are identified as Ancient Woodland and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), are distributed throughout the landscape. They tend to be focused on the western edge of the character area, with a higher concentration of smaller pockets in the north and east around Tadcaster. Numerous sites are designated as SSSIs, including Stutton Ings and Sherburn Willows which are both designated for their rich grasslands influenced by the underlying Magnesian limestone. Fairburn and Newton Ings SSSI has become permanently flooded providing extensive areas of marsh and wet pasture, which dissected by dykes and farmland form a mosaic of different habitats.

This area has an enriched historic environment with a variety of heritage assets distributed evenly throughout the area, including: ten Scheduled Monuments including Roman forts and roads, and medieval settlements; a Registered Battlefield; three Conservation Areas; and a significant number of Listed Buildings. Although higher concentrations of Listed Buildings are found within the Conservation Areas at Newton Kyme, Tadcaster and Saxton, many more isolated clusters of Listed Buildings are found at Grimston Park, Hazelwood Castle, Huddleston Hall, Streeton Hall and along the A162. In addition, the area contains the site of the Battle of Towton which was fought in 1461 during the Wars of the Roses. Historic parkland is an important local influence in several areas.

The settlements within this area, including the town of Tadcaster in the far north, and the villages of Stutton, Saxton, Sherburn in Elmet, South Milford, Fairburn, Burton Salmon and Byram, are served by a multitude of major and minor winding roads which cut through the character area, including the A1(M) to the west, the A162 in the east, and the A64 in the north. The character of the small nucleated settlements is defined by the limestone construction materials commonly sourced from the numerous quarries within the limestone ridge. Beyond the settlement boundaries, built development is dispersed and isolated.

Despite major roads, mineral sites, energy transmission infrastructure, and views of Hook Moor Wind Farm to the west, the landscape preserves a rural character with a tranquil and occasionally remote feel. Much of this landscape character area is designated as a Locally Important Landscape Area (LILA) as the rolling limestone ridge is one of the more scenic landscapes within the district due to its varying landform and tree cover.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may have a lower sensitivity to changes, due to the highly undulating landscape in which new features would likely be screened by intervening topography. However, elevated locations will be more sensitive, particularly to tall development which may be widely visible. The large scale of the landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, particularly in areas which have a greater presence of woodland and hedgerows which are less open to views.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, though locally important watercourses, marsh and wetlands, grasslands and woodlands are sensitive to change. Woodland on the upper slopes of the limestone ridge contributes greatly towards the character of the landscape and LILA, and often dominates the distant skylines. Therefore, this woodland would be highly sensitive to changes from new features and development in the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is a great sense of time-depth across this landscape, with numerous settlements including Tadcaster, Newton Kyme and Saxton featuring Conservation Areas, and important areas of parkland. Most of the landscape comprises large amalgamated fields, with localised areas containing earlier enclosures on steeper ground, and strip fields of medieval age around the settlements of Saxton, South Milford and Burton Salmon. There are numerous individual heritage assets, including the Towton Registered Battlefield, Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. Whilst these will be sensitive to change, their contribution to landscape character is localised.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Settlements within this area are nucleated and quite contained, with wooded edges that create softer, more integrated boundaries with the surrounding landscape. Higher levels of sensitivity may be present in these areas, especially for new developments that are not sensitively sited in relation to the settlements. The settlements are largely traditional in style, with a character defined by the local building material of limestone. Greater sensitivity is likely to developments which do not correspond with the existing vernacular. The highly dispersed pattern of settlement with relatively few isolated properties and farmsteads across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic. Evidence of quarrying is present throughout the landscape, and cumulative effects will need to be considered when planning for new mineral extraction sites.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

There are few landmarks visible from this landscape. Skylines are generally indistinct although most of the skylines across the character area, including the LILA, are wooded and undeveloped. Subsequently, they are likely to be more sensitive to development and change. The limestone ridge itself forms the skyline from the lower landscape to the east, and contributes to the setting of villages on the east side of the ridge. The upper parts of the area are highly sensitive to development that may have detrimental effects on views from the east.

### Access and Recreation

There is a relatively limited network of public rights of way, which are used primarily for local recreation, and thus have a relatively low sensitivity to change. There are few recreational assets that would be highly sensitive.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strong rural and tranquil character throughout this area increases its sensitivity to built development that was at odds with this character. The sense of tranquillity is reduced towards the fringes of the character area due to proximity to major roads including the A1 (M) in the west, the A64 in the north, and the A162 in the east.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further housing development pressure is likely to focus on South Milford as and around Tadcaster in the north.  |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area  |
| Transport           | Several key transport corridors pass through this area, and change as part of road upgrading may potentially erode character.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Increase in tree disease may lead to losses of particular species.<br>Lack of maintenance of woodlands, hedges and parkland may lead to lack of regeneration and loss of woodland loss in the future. |
| Agriculture         | Large agricultural buildings may appear prominent within the landscape, especially in less enclosed areas.  |
| Minerals            | Continued demand for limestone leading to proposals for the mineral extraction may result in changes in appearance.   |
| Climate change      | Changes in agricultural practices with longer growing seasons.<br>Stress on particular species arising from changing climate may affect woodland and wildlife sites.                                  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

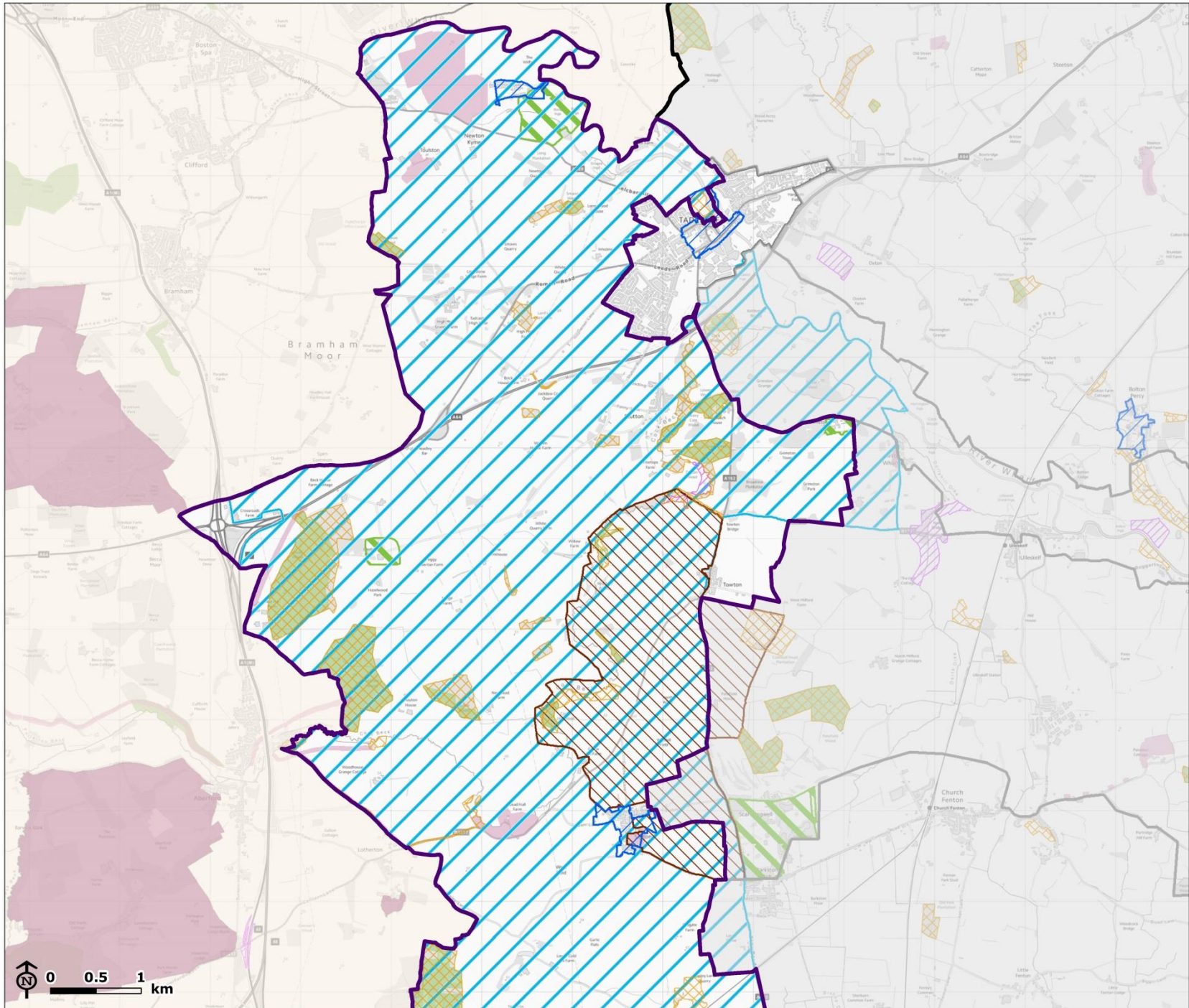
- Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the landscape by promoting appropriate management of woodland and parkland through natural regeneration;
- Seek to ensure development is well-integrated in the landscape by steering proposals away from the highest ground, and encouraging use of existing and new landscape screening where appropriate;
- Promote green infrastructure links, enhancing connections for people and wildlife and building on the existing woodland network in this area; and
- Ensure the colours of new development are sympathetic to and reflect the local landscape, avoiding colours which may be prominent and draw the eye such as white.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Mineral extraction sites should seek to establish long-term gains for the landscape during restoration, such as creating net biodiversity gains by introducing new habitats, and creating potential access to safe parts of the site for recreational purposes;
- Housing development should be focused within appropriate boundary locations which will not dramatically alter the overall form of the village or intrude into the landscape; and
- Protect the special character of the limestone valleys, including their management, appearance and undeveloped nature.

**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.8a: West Selby  
Limestone Ridge  
Landscape Character Area**



- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Locally Important Landscape Area

- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
  - Registered Battlefield
  - Registered Park and Garden
  - Historic Parks and Gardens
  - Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)














Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:60,000**



## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

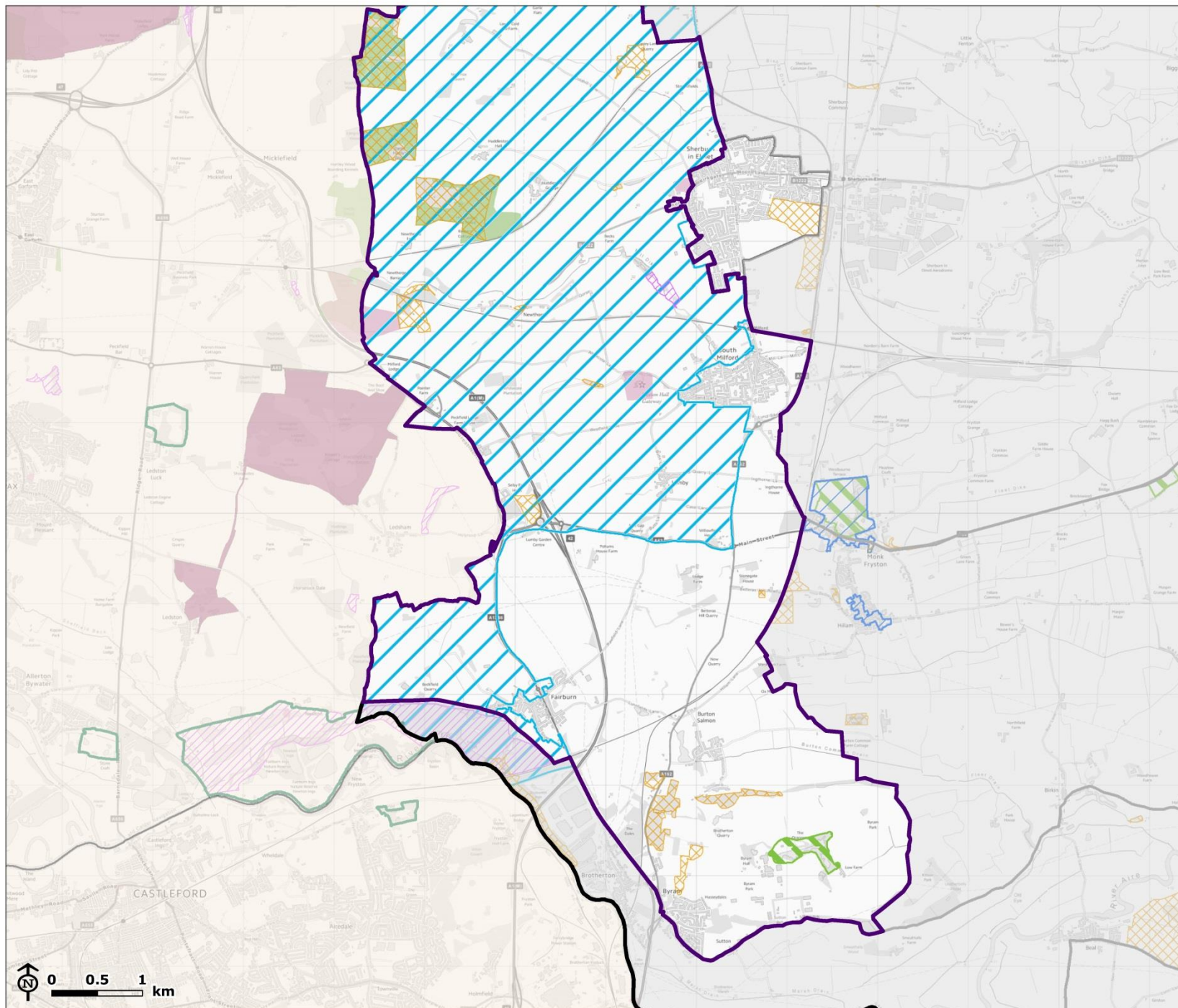
**Figure 5.8b: West Selby Limestone Ridge Landscape Character Area**

-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
-  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Registered Park and Garden
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Local Nature Reserve
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:60,000**

**LUC**



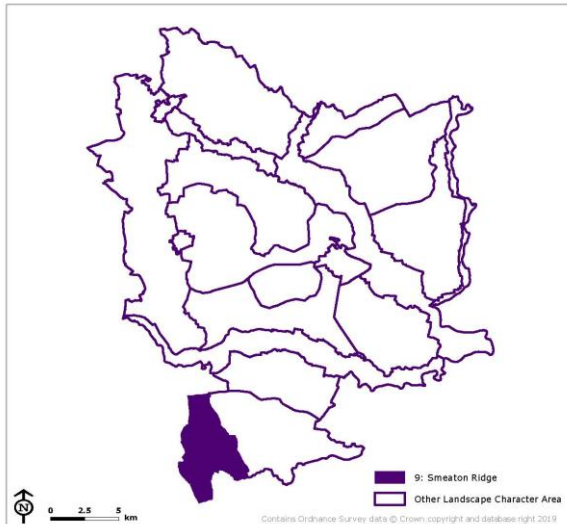
# Character Area 9 Smeaton Ridge

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the south-west of the district. It represents the southernmost part of the Magnesian limestone ridge which runs from the north to south along the western border of the district. It is bounded to the north, south and west by neighbouring authorities, and the east by the *Southern Farmland* LCA.

At a national scale, the entirety of the landscape is located within the *Southern Magnesian Limestone* NCA, and at a county scale falls within the *Magnesian Limestone Ridge* LCT.

The area includes the villages of Stapleton, Womersley, Little Smeaton and Kirk Smeaton.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Low ridge of Magnesian limestone with large scale gently rolling arable farmland.
- Distinct lack of hedgerows, with fields commonly defined by grassed 'beetle banks' and occasional hedgerow trees.
- Long distance views to surrounding landscape.
- Strong presence of large areas of calcareous woodland distributed evenly throughout the landscape.
- General sense of openness, but more enclosed around woodland.
- Settlement concentrated within the nucleated villages of Womersley, Little Smeaton and Kirk Smeaton.
- Evidence of limestone extraction at the active Darrington and Barnsdale Bar quarries, and disused Northfield Quarry.
- Local influence of small scale parkland landscapes.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The landscape rising up from the relatively low-lying and flat land in the north and east, to higher elevations of 65m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the limestone ridge to the west, resulting in an undulating topography. The Womersley Beck and the River Went watercourses both flow through this landscape in an easterly direction. Whilst the Womersley Beck is fed by drains, on the low-lying, flat land in the east, the River Went flows through the deeply incised valley cutting through the limestone ridge to the west. The varying topography of this landscape means field drains are less common.

The underlying bedrock of this ridge comprises bands of dolomitic limestone and dolostone running from the north to south of the character area, with localised areas of calcareous mudstone. Whilst much of the bedrock has no overlying superficial deposits, there are localised fine deposits of glaciolacustrine and aeolian origin. The deeply incised River Went valley to the south-west has a layer of alluvium deposits. Past and present mineral extraction sites located in the north and south of the area, including the active Darrington and Barnsdale Bar quarries, and disused Northfield Quarry.

Arable farming is the main land use across the area, with large scale regularly shaped fields often defined by grassed 'beetle banks' and field margins, with occasional hedgerow trees, creating a general sense of openness. Smaller, regular fields are commonly used for pasture near settlements including to the south-west of Womersley, and north-west of Stapleton. Extensive areas of land to the west and south of Kirk Smeaton contain remnants of medieval strip fields. Large areas of the character area include ornamental parkland associated with setting of Stapleton House and Womersley House.

Large areas of calcareous woodland are distributed evenly throughout the landscape, including the Brockdale SSSI in the Went Valley, and numerous Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), their status dependent on the underlying geology. Clusters of woodland around the settlement of Stapleton are identified as Ancient Woodland, including Wake Wood and Kingsland Wood.

The character of the nucleated settlements of Kirk Smeaton, Little Smeaton and Womersley are defined by the limestone construction materials extracted from the limestone ridge. The settlement of Stapleton is highly dispersed with no defined centre, although follows the limestone character of nearby settlements. The three main settlements have Conservation Areas, which are wholly or partially within the character area. They contain a number of Listed Buildings, including the Grade II\* Church of St Peter. Older remains are found in a medieval settlement near Womersley, and a multivallate enclosure near Norton Mills, both designated as Scheduled Monuments.

The settlements are served by a multitude of minor roads which connect with the major road network beyond the character area, including the A1(M) which bounds the area to the south-west, and the M62 to the north.

General lack of hedgerows and hedgerow trees promotes a sense of openness across parts of the landscape, with long distance views to the surrounding landscape, particularly to the east. The presence of woodland and undulating topography in the west contribute to a greater sense of enclosure. The lack of major roads, traffic, and human elements gives the landscape a strong rural character with a quiet and tranquil feel. This section of the ridge is designated as a Locally Important Landscape Area (LILA) as it is considered one of the most attractive landscapes within the District due to its topography and rich tree cover.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, particularly in the more wooded areas which are less open to views, and where development can be absorbed by topography. Less enclosed and more elevated areas, such as to the north of Little Smeaton, may be more sensitive to change as developments are more likely to be visible.

### Natural Character

This is a semi-intensively farmed landscape, though locally important woodlands and ecological designations, including the Brockadale SSSI and nature reserve are more sensitive to change. The incised Went Valley is an intact semi-natural landscape that is sensitive to change.

Woodland blocks including Ancient Woodland and plantations contribute towards the natural character of the area, and thus will have a higher degree of sensitivity compared to areas lacking natural features.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is great sense of time-depth within this landscape, with all the main settlements including Womersley, Little Smeaton and Kirk Smeaton featuring Conservation Areas containing numerous listed buildings.

There are areas of parkland character, and extensive areas of medieval strip fields, which are more sensitive to change, located near Kirk Smeaton. Individual heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and disused railway bridges are present within the landscape.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The contained villages of Womersley, Little Smeaton and Kirk Smeaton are sited within hollows and show a high degree of unity in style and colour across their buildings, with most being constructed of locally sourced limestone. They would be highly sensitive to development and change which is not sympathetic to the local vernacular or thoughtfully sited.

The very sparse pattern of settlement across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic. Evidence of quarrying is present throughout the landscape, and sensitivity to new sites will vary.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

Skylines are generally wooded and influenced by the undulating topography, and are generally undeveloped, and subsequently may be more sensitive to change, particularly where visible from the lower landscape to the east.

Some areas are more visually enclosed, and some receptors such as road users may be less sensitive, since roads are generally winding and bordered by vegetation with limited views.

### Access and Recreation

There is a small network of public rights of way which is valued for local recreation. The Brockadale Nature Reserve is an accessible and attractive wooded valley forming a valuable recreational resource.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strongly rural and tranquil character of this area makes it more sensitive to built development which may detract from these key features, particularly in areas of parkland and in wooded valleys. The sense of tranquillity is reduced towards the M62 in the north and the A1 in the south-west, and locally affected by mineral extraction sites.



## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on the main villages of Womersley, Little Smeaton and Kirk Smeaton.   |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area, though changes in electricity generation may require new or different overhead power lines crossing the landscape.  |
| Transport           | Whilst large scale change is unlikely, incremental change resulting from local road upgrading may potentially erode character.  |
| Trees and woodlands | Lack of maintenance of woodlands and hedgerows, with limited natural regeneration, may lead to further loss in the future.<br><br>Increased occurrence of tree diseases may lead to losses of characteristic species. |
| Agriculture         | Potential large agricultural buildings may appear prominent within the landscape, especially in less enclosed areas to the north of Little Smeaton.   |
| Minerals            | Potential proposals for the extraction of limestone from the ridge may result in localised changes in appearance.   |
| Climate change      | Changes in woodland species arising from climate related pressures.<br><br>Changes in agricultural management in response to lengthening growing seasons.   |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

- Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the landscape by promoting appropriate management through natural regeneration;
- Encourage reinstatement and regeneration of hedgerows and field trees where field boundaries are missing or gappy;
- Location and appearance of development should be carefully considered to respond to the undulating topography, and should advantage of soft landscaping techniques to better integrate it into the landscape; and
- Seek the restoration of roadsides which have experienced erosion due to extensive use of large vehicles, particularly around mineral extraction sites.

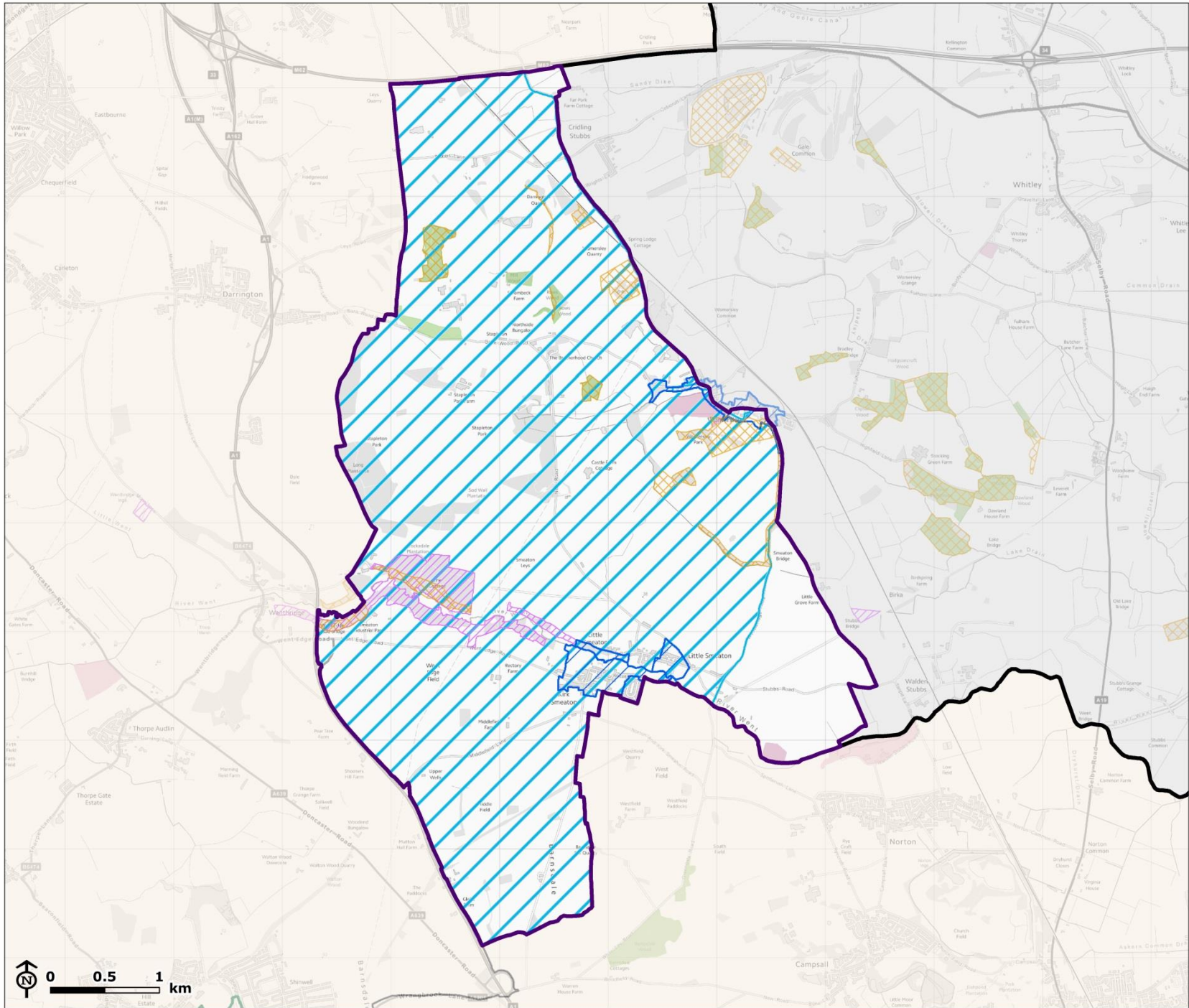
Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Mineral extraction sites should seek to establish long-term gains for the landscape and biodiversity: by encouraging the creation of important new habitats during restoration phases, with links to existing woodland to create networks; and by creating potential recreational opportunities once extraction ceases or in safe areas of the site which are now restored;
- Seek improvements to the areas around existing mineral extraction sites, to ensure they are sympathetically absorbed into the landscape; and
- Housing development should be focused within and around the main villages, to prevent the spread of settlement, and should reflect the limestone vernacular.

## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.9: Smeaton Ridge  
Landscape Character Area**

- Selby District
  - Landscape Character Area
  - Other Landscape Character Area
  - Area outside Assessment
  - Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
  - Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
  - Local Nature Reserve
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)



Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:50,000**



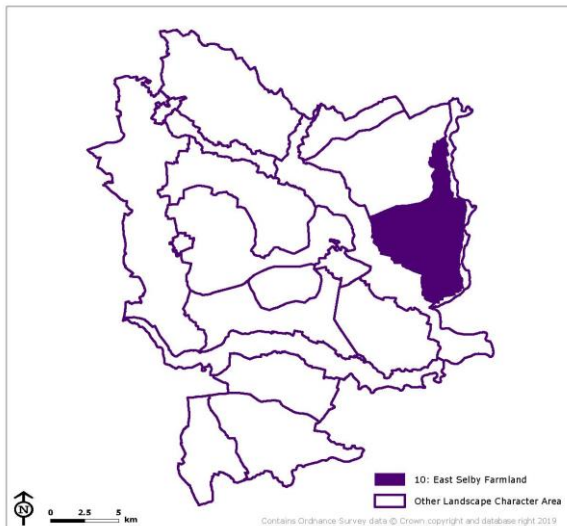
# Character Area 10 East Selby Farmland

## Location and extents

This character area is located to the east of Selby. It is located entirely within the *Vale of York NCA*, and at a county scale, within the *Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland LCT*.

The landscape is bounded to the east and south-east by the River Derwent and its floodplains, the west and south by the River Ouse and its floodplain. The northern extent of this landscape character area is partially bounded by the A163, however further east including North Duffield, the landscape area extends further north towards the village of Thorganby.

The area includes the villages of Osgodby, North Duffield, Cliffe and Hemingbrough.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Very flat, arable farmland, with a strong presence of tree lines along field boundaries obscuring the skyline.
- Relatively regular field pattern comprising medium scale fields defined primarily by mature hedgerows with frequent mature hedgerow trees which provide a strong sense of enclosure.
- Numerous farmsteads and small villages dispersed evenly across the landscape.
- Strong rural character, with limited built development visible due to intervening vegetation across the landscape.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The land in this area is mainly flat, with most of the area having an average elevation of less than 10m above ordnance datum (AOD), rising to a high point of just over 10m AOD in the village of Osgodby and around the Whitemoor Business Park in the north. The entirety of the character area is underlain by Triassic and Permian sandstones, obscured by a layer of glaciogenic deposits comprising clay, silt, and sand. The Dyon Drain and the numerous drains that feed into it, flow across the interior of the character area before discharging into the River Derwent in the east. Modifications to watercourses are evident in long straight field boundaries and ditches which dissect the entirety of the character area.

Arable farmland is the main land use throughout the area, with large scale rectilinear fields defined predominantly by mature hedgerows with frequent well-established hedgerow trees. The central region of the area and the landscape around the main settlements features smaller scale field patterns, with extensive areas around Cliffe and a small area at North Duffield featuring remnant medieval strip fields. There are very few areas of woodland within this landscape character area; however the presence of hedgerows and hedgerow trees help create a strong sense of enclosure throughout the area. The only parts the character area that are not classified as arable farmland are a few small pockets of pasture, including to the north of North Duffield, at Dyon, and east of Cliff Common.

Very few sites are designated for their ecological and nature value, although Cliffe Wood and woodland at Broad Lane are identified as Ancient Woodland. In addition, Scruton Wood in the northern tip of the character area, and Hagg Lane Green at Hemingbrough, are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

The character area features numerous Listed Buildings, which tend to be concentrated in the Hemingbrough Conservation Area, and the villages of Cliffe and South Duffield. A few more isolated Listed Buildings are present to the east, near the Derwent River, including Grade II Dyon House, and Grade II\* listed Holmes House.

The village of North Duffield is located along the A163 in the north, and Osgodby, Cliffe and Hemingbrough along the A63 in the south of the area. The villages are well connected with one another, and the larger settlements outside the character area including Barlby and Selby. They each are quite contained and have a high level of unity in design, with most houses built from mottled red brick. In contrast, South Duffield is more dispersed and less geographically contained. In addition to major roads, the villages are each serviced by numerous minor roads and public rights of way radiating from the settlements, providing further connectivity with the wider landscape.

The semi-enclosed nature of the character area, alongside the distinct lack of large-scale human elements promotes a strong rural character, with associated tranquillity, particularly along minor roads and in smaller villages and farmsteads, where there is a sense of quiet.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be highly sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the very flat and open nature of the landscape in which new features are likely to be highly visible. Conversely, the large scale of the landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, particularly in areas which have a greater sense of enclosure due to the presence of mature vegetation.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, though locally important woodlands and shelterbelts introduce natural features which are likely to have a higher sensitivity to change.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is relatively limited time-depth in this landscape, although there are a number of listed buildings within the villages of Cliffe, South Duffield and Hemingbrough, which are likely to be sensitive to change, although their contribution to the landscape character is localised.

Most of the farmed landscape is the result of modern field amalgamation, though areas of earlier enclosure remain legible in places. Localised areas of medieval strip fields, around Cliffe and North Duffield, are more sensitive to change.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Settlements show a degree of unity of style and colour, and tend to be well integrated with the landscape, with harder boundaries located along the main access roads. They may be sensitive to changes or developments which are unsympathetic to the local vernacular or not sited sensitively with relation to the existing development.

The dispersed pattern of settlement across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

There are relatively few landmarks within the area, although the spire of the 12<sup>th</sup> century church in Hemingbrough is a noticeable feature on the skyline, along with the castle ruins on the other side of the River Derwent.

Skylines are generally indistinct, featuring distant hedgerow trees. The principal landmarks tend to be human features such as the Drax and Eggborough power stations and wind turbines. Roads tend to be straight, providing long range visibility in some areas through the landscape, which would be more sensitive to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There is a network of public rights of way which is valued for local recreation. National Cycle Network Route 65, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, briefly crosses the south-west of this area.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

Much of the area has a strongly rural character with a great sense of openness, in which built development would be highly visible across large areas of the landscape. Tranquillity is most apparent away from main roads and larger villages.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on Hemingbrough, Osgodby and North Duffield which are all designated service villages.<br><br>Future redevelopment of Whitemoor Mine site.   |
| Energy              | Changes in nearby power stations may lead to changes in view and new transmission lines  |
| Transport           | Whilst large scale change is unlikely, incremental change as part of road upgrading, including street lights, could erode character.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Removal of hedgerows and field trees has occurred in the past, and while hedges are unlikely to be actively removed, it is likely that lack of maintenance or replacement could lead to further losses.<br><br>Increase in tree diseases may lead to loss of characteristic features leading to an opening up of this landscape. |
| Agriculture         | Potential agricultural buildings of all scales may appear disproportionate with the landscape, especially due to the openness which would make development readily visible.  |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along Dyon Drain and low-lying areas to the east of Osgodby.<br><br>Changing agricultural management practices in response to lengthening growing seasons.  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:















- Encourage reinstatement and restoration of hedgerows and hedgerow trees where boundaries have been lost in the past and are at risk of further loss in the future, particularly along field drains;
- Seek long-term sustainability for hedgerow and field boundary tree management;
- Encourage the plantation of more areas of woodland, including shelterbelts, to introduce more naturalistic features into the landscape and provide net biodiversity gains including green links;
- The location and appearance of new development should be carefully considered, using landscape frameworks to better integrate it into the landscape, as it is likely it would be readily visible in this flat landscape;
- Consider colours which are sympathetic to the landscape for new development, avoiding bright and prominent colours such as white which may draw attention in long views; and
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- New development should be focused on the main villages in the area – Hemingbrough, Osgodby, and North Duffield – as they are more likely to be able to accommodate development within and around the edges of the settlements.
- Further elongation of Cliffe should be resisted, as should further dispersal of South Duffield.

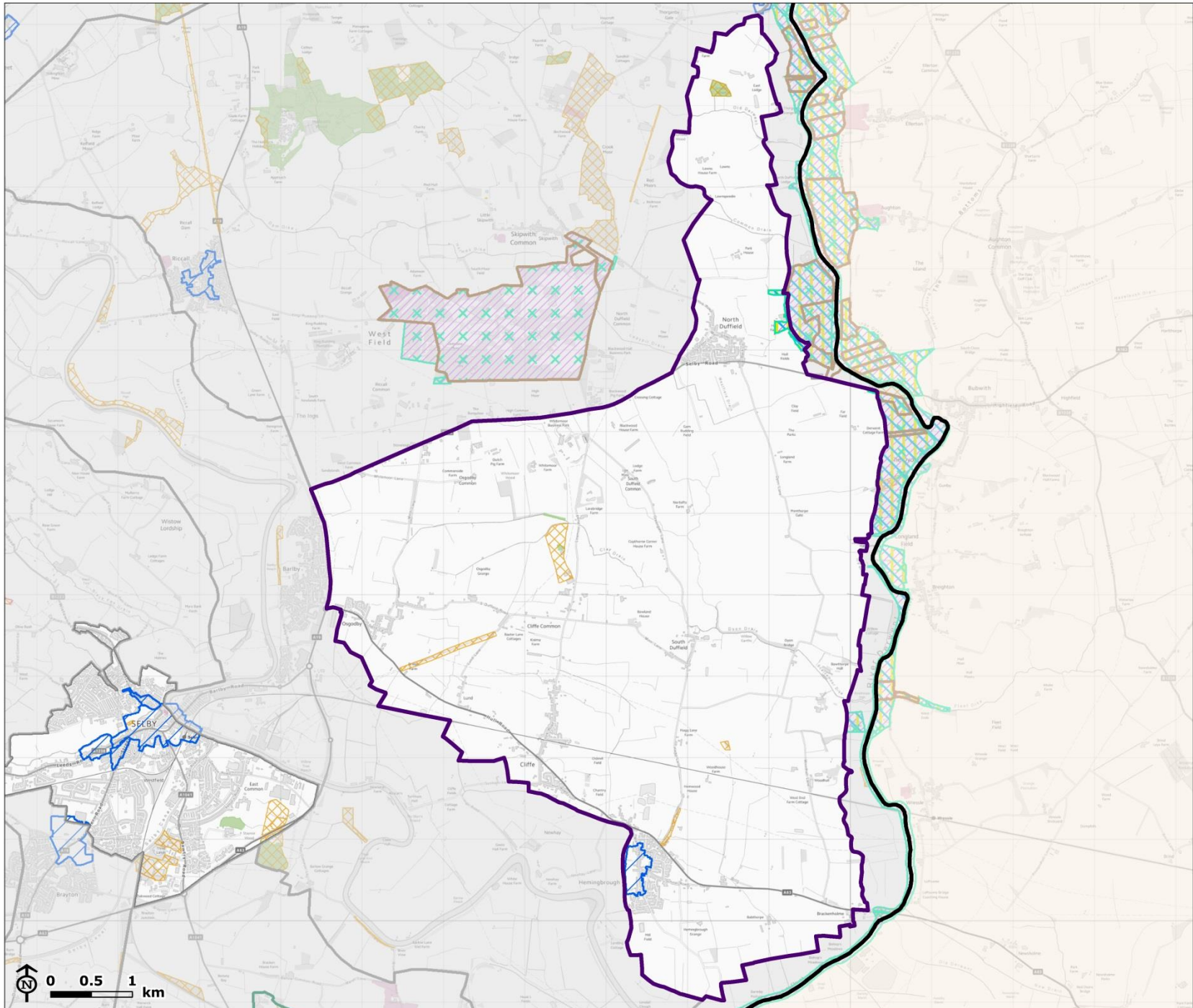
**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.10: East Selby  
Farmland Landscape  
Character Area**

-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Local Nature Reserve
-  National Nature Reserve
-  Ramsar
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:67,000**



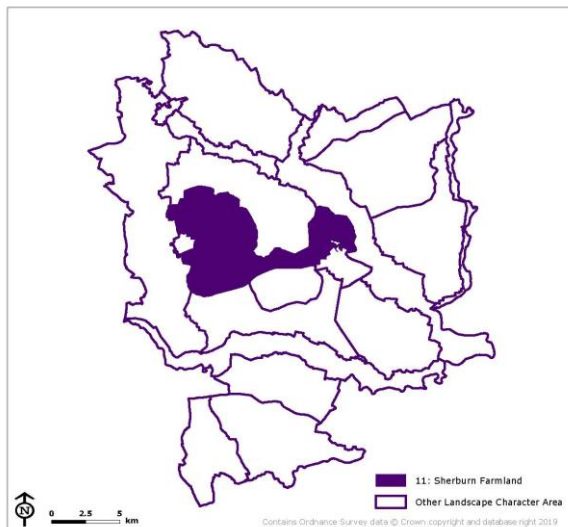
# Character Area 11 Sherburn Farmland

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the centre of the district, to the west of Selby. It is bounded to the east by the River Ouse and its floodplains and the west by the West Selby Limestone Ridge. To the south, the landscape character area is bounded by the A63, the Hambleton Sandstone Ridge and further east, the urban area of Selby. To the north of the area, is further farmland with a greater presence of woodland.

At a national scale, the entirety of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels NCA*, and at a county scale falls within the *Levels Farmland LCT*.

The area includes the villages Church Fenton, Little Fenton, Barkston Ash and Biggin north of the B1222 and, Sherburn in Elmet and Monk Fryston to the south. The village of Wistow to the east of the character area is also included.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Flat low-lying predominantly arable farmland with little tree cover and few hedgerows.
- Large scale fields often defined by dikes or ditches and irregularly spaced isolated trees.
- Outside the main villages within the area, settlement is sparse with occasional isolated properties and farmsteads.
- Small dispersed areas of broadleaved woodland, including intermittent woodland belts.
- Predominantly rural character with a strong sense of openness, however with dominant industrial scale human elements to the west around Sherburn in Elmet.



## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

This area is predominantly flat, with the majority of the area having an average elevation of less than 10m above ordnance datum (AOD), rising to an artificial high points of 45m AOD to the north-east of the disused Gascoigne Wood Mine, and 29m AOD on the bunding around the mine. Topographic elevation also starts to gradually increase further west towards the West Selby Limestone Ridge. The majority of the character area is underlain by Triassic and Permian sandstones, with the western extents of the area underlain by mudstone and dolomitic limestone. Most of the bedrock in the area is obscured by a layer of younger glaciogenic sand, clay and silt deposits.

The good quality soils overlying drift deposits result in arable farming as the predominant land use throughout the area. Landscape consists of intensively cultivated large scale rectilinear fields, defined predominantly by ditches and drains, and grassed field margins, with occasional irregularly spaced boundary trees. Smaller scale, semi-regular fields are common around settlements including Biggin, Little Fenton, Wistow and to the north-west of Selby. These tend to be used for pasture. An extensive area of smaller fields is present to the north of Sherburn in Elmet, including the remnants of strip fields of medieval age. There are localised areas of strip fields around Church Fenton. There are very few areas of woodland within this landscape character area, which contributes to the sense of openness and long distance views.

Whilst there are no rivers flowing through this character area, there are many smaller drains and ditches, often along artificially straightened courses. The Selby Dam and the numerous drains that feed into it flow from the north-west of the character area, near Church Fenton, around the south of Bishop Wood and towards Selby in the east.

Few sites are designated for their ecological and nature value, however the Barber Rein/Ash Rein woodland to the north-east of Thorpe Wood is identified as Ancient Woodland. Burr Closes, near Selby, is a small area of damp alluvial meadowland designated as a SSSI. Areas of more traditionally managed pasture are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

The character area features one Scheduled Monument, a moated grange site at Thorpe Hall on the southern boundary. There are a number of Listed Buildings, predominantly in Church Fenton and the south-east of the character area, including the Grade I Church of St Mary the Virgin, and Grade II Listed Buildings at Elfold Farm, Flaxley Lodge Farmhouse and Hempbridge Farm.

The west of the character area features large areas with extensive human intervention, including industrial, mineral extraction and aerodrome use, including the Sherburn Enterprise Park, the disused Gascoigne Wood Mine and the Sherburn in Elmet Airfield. The nucleated villages within this character area, including Church Fenton, Sherburn in Elmet, and Monk Fryston in the west, and Wistow in the east tend to be located on higher ground in the fringes, with good access to the main road network including the A162, A63, B1222 and B1223, and a connected network of public rights of way. Most settlements are well-incorporated into the landscape with wooded boundaries, and are constructed of predominantly mottled brick with some evidence of limestone from the neighbouring character area. Sherburn in Elmet is very contained with more distinct boundaries with the surrounding landscape, and features more modern new build housing, especially on its boundaries.

Whilst generally the landscape has a rural character with a strong sense of openness, the presence of extensive human intervention, particularly in the west of the character area, introduces large scale human elements which have effects on the perceived rurality and sense of openness. Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff are landmarks in views to the south.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be highly sensitive to relatively small changes in the landscape, due to the very flat, unenclosed nature of the landscape which enables new features of all scales to be highly visible. Areas of increased enclosure further east would be less sensitive to change where development could be absorbed within the greater presence of trees.

The hill to the north-east of the disused Gascoigne Mine creates a dramatic landform which is highly visible across the area. Changes to its appearance would be widely seen across the landscape, and thus would have a greater sensitivity to change.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape with relatively few natural features within, though locally important woodlands and pastures are likely to be sensitive to change. Low hedgerows and isolated field trees positively contribute towards the character of the area.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, with most heritage assets being located within the settlements of Church Fenton, Barkston Ash and Monk Fryston. Individual heritage assets will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised.

Most of the landscape has been heavily drained and enclosed as recently as the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with high levels of boundary loss which has resulted in the large-scale modern fields present today. There are localised areas of older enclosure, which are more sensitive to change, including pockets of medieval strip fields around Church Fenton, Barkston Ash and Monk Fryston, which also has a small parkland.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Most settlements, including Biggin, Little Fenton, and Church Fenton are relatively spread out, with more dispersed boundaries. Barkston Ash is more contained, and defined in character by limestone construction materials. Settlements are generally uniform in design and style, and may have greater sensitivity to developments which are not sympathetic to the existing character.

The area of existing development around Sherburn in Elmet Airfield may be of reduced sensitivity to further large-scale commercial and industrial development, though providing this does not extend human influence further across the area.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

The hill adjacent to the mine is a key landform which is visible on the skyline. There are numerous landmarks within the character area, generally corresponding with the industrial and commercial development at Sherburn Enterprise Park, which introduces prominent man-made features on the southern skyline.

Views to the south generally consist of skylines with significant human influence, and thus are less sensitive to changes. Views northwards and to the east are generally less developed, and therefore would have a greater sensitivity to change. Selby Abbey and the sandstone hills of Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff are landmarks in the east and south of the character area.

### Access and Recreation

There is a sparse network of footpaths valued for local recreation, and few other recreational assets that would be highly sensitive to change.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

Whilst the northern and eastern parts of this area have a stronger rural character with associated tranquillity, the highly industrial skyline and lighting in the west results in a reduction in perceived naturalness and tranquillity, and thus is less sensitive to new development.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on Church Fenton as the only designated service village in the area.<br>Re-use or redevelopment of the Gascoigne Wood Mine site.<br>Further expansion of industrial uses around Sherburn and the airfield. |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Transport           | Upgrading of transport links into the Sherburn industrial area, including lighting.<br>Consequent upgrading of the minor road network may have localised effects on the character of the area.   |
| Trees and woodlands | While hedges are unlikely to be actively removed, it is likely that further losses may be experienced due to lack of maintenance or reinstatement.   |
| Agriculture         | Loss of prime agricultural land to industrial and commercial development.  |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along the Selby Dam and numerous drains which drain the landscape.<br>Changes in farming practices resulting from changes in the growing season over time.                                |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:













- Encourage woodland plantation, including shelterbelts to increase the perceived naturalness of the character area, and provide valuable habitats for local biodiversity; and
- Encourage the restoration and re-establishment of hedgerows and hedgerow trees which have been lost in the past due to field expansion, particularly along roads and field drains.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Secure landscape enhancement as part of any new development at Sherburn Enterprise Park, providing visual screening as well as green infrastructure benefits, and avoid further encroachment of industrial/commercial development into the open countryside;
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape, potentially by improving access to the hill by Gascoigne Wood Mine in the south, and to Bishop Wood in the neighbouring character area, and promoting green links;
- New housing development should be limited and focused on the existing villages in the area, including Biggin, Church Fenton and Little Fenton; and
- Long-term proposals for the restoration of Gascoigne Wood Mine should seek to provide net gains to biodiversity, and valuable green infrastructure for recreational purposes.

## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

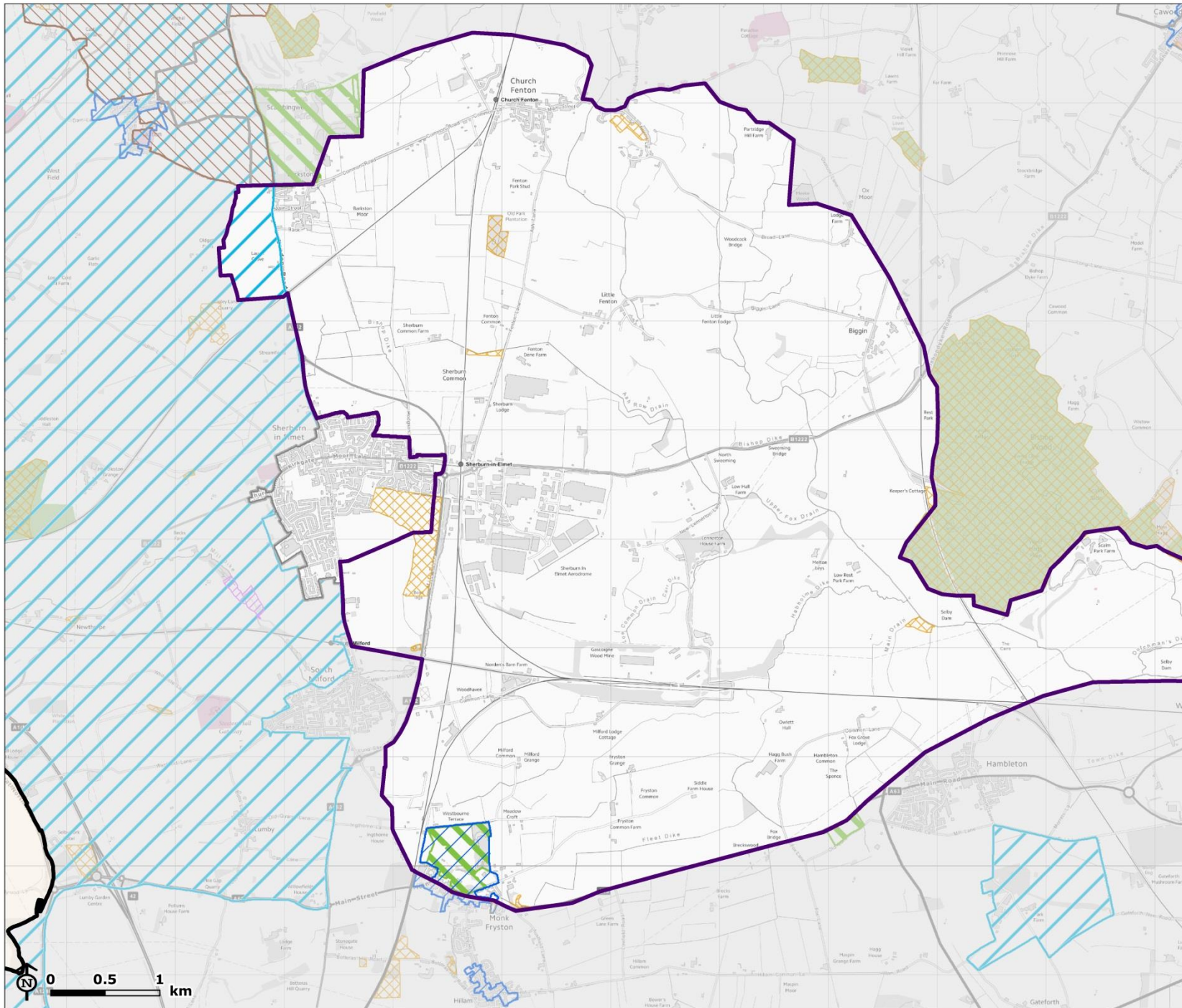
**Figure 5.11a: Sherburn Farmland Landscape Character Area**

-  Selby District
  -  Landscape Character Area
  -  Other Landscape Character Area
  -  Area outside Assessment
  -  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
  -  Registered Battlefield
  -  Historic Parks and Gardens
  -  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
  -  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  -  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE












**Map Scale @ A4: 1:50,000**

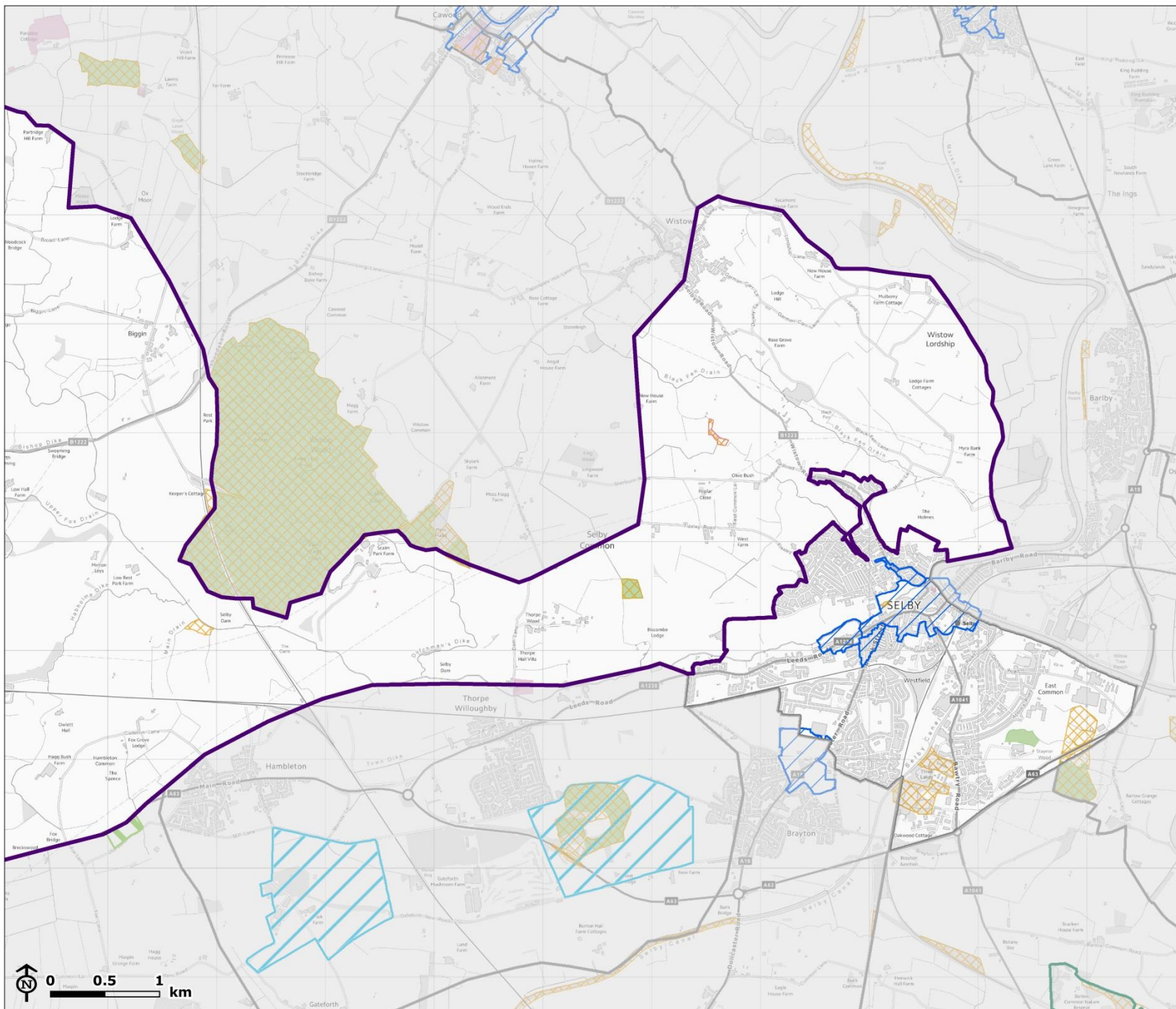
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## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.11b: Sherburn Farmland Landscape Character Area**

-  Selby District
  -  Landscape Character Area
  -  Other Landscape Character Area
  -  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
  -  Historic Parks and Gardens
  -  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
  -  Local Nature Reserve
  -  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  -  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)



Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:50,000**



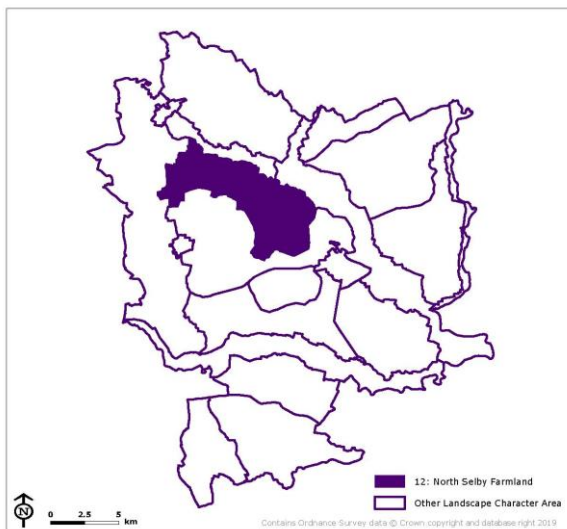
# Character Area 12 North Selby Farmland

## Location and extents

This character area is located to the north-west of Selby. It is located predominantly within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA with a small section in the north-east within the *Vale of York* NCA. At a county level, it is within the *Levels Farmland* LCT.

The landscape is bounded to the north and north-east by the Wharfe Valley and Ouse Valley, respectively. To the west, the character area is bounded by the limestone ridge. To the south this generally wooded area merges into similar but more open farmland. The transition between the two areas follows an uneven east-west line.

The area includes the villages of Ulleskelf, Ryther, Cawood and Wistow, and also has numerous isolated farmsteads across the area.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Predominantly flat low-lying farmland with a strong presence of woodland scattered throughout the landscape, providing a frequent sense of enclosure.
- Settlement pattern is sparse with villages concentrated in the fringes, and isolated farmsteads within the interior.
- Extensive areas of broadleaved woodland, including Bishop Wood, the largest woodland in Selby.
- Flat and open in some areas, with long distance views around Leeds East Airport (former RAF Church Fenton).
- Medium-large scale field pattern, defined by hedgerows with mature trees, and areas of woodland.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

This low-lying area in the central region of the district is predominantly flat, with few topographic undulations. The vast majority of the area averages an elevation of less than 10m above ordnance datum (AOD) and rising to just above 10m AOD in numerous locations in the north of the area, although this is generally related to road infrastructure. The majority of the character area is underlain by Triassic and Permian sandstones, with the western extents of the area underlain by mudstone and dolomitic limestone of the same period. The bedrock in the area is completely covered by a layer of silts, clays and sands of glaciogenic origin.

Intensive arable farming is the primary land use, consisting of large scale fields, defined by thick and high hedgerows with mature trees and areas of woodland. Areas of smaller fields are found in the north around the Leeds East Airport, and around isolated farmsteads within the interior of the character area. These areas are frequently used for pasture, especially in the north-west of the area, around Church Fenton. A large more open area in the north is occupied by the current Leeds East Airport (former RAF Church Fenton).

Some large fields in the north of the character area near the airport are more open with boundaries defined by low hedgerows or field drains, which offers long distance southerly views into the interior of the character area.

Areas of woodland, ranging in size, are scattered throughout the character area, although tend to be concentrated more so in the north-west and central regions of the area. Bishop Wood in the south of the character area, and Patefield Wood in the north-west are notably extensive woodlands. Bishop Wood, Great Lawn Wood, Paradise Wood, Patefield Wood and Carr Wood are all identified as Ancient Woodland and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). In addition, Haighs Grass, Castle Garth and Keesbury Hall Close are all designated SINCs. Kirkby Wharf SSSI is located within the north-west of the character area. It is an area of flood land around Dorts Dike, and is one of very few remaining sedge and rush dominated marshland communities remaining in the Vale of York.

The presence of woodland contributes to an increased sense of enclosure. In areas where woodland is not as common such as in the east or along the northern fringes of the character area, dense hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees create a continued sense of enclosure. As such, long distance views from within the character area are largely limited. An exception is the land to the south of Ryther and Ulleskelf, and parts of the B1223, which are significantly more open. Whilst there are no major water courses flowing through the character area, the entirety of the area is heavily drained, dissected by numerous drains and dikes.

The character area features an array of heritage assets including a number of Scheduled Monuments comprising the World War II airfield defences from RAF Church Fenton. Older remains include Cawood Castle and a number of moated sites. In addition, a Registered Battlefield is present to the south of Towton, covering the site of the Battle of Towton (1461). Listed Buildings are scattered through the character area, but are concentrated at the settlements of Ulleskelf, Wistow, Scarthingwell and the Cawood Conservation Area.

The area features numerous nucleated settlements which tend to be located in the fringes of the area, adjacent to the River Ouse and River Wharfe, where they are well served by the local road network and numerous public rights of way. Most settlements are nucleated with distinct but well-incorporated boundaries with the surrounding landscape. They are uniform in character, featuring predominantly red brick properties. There are relatively few isolated properties and farmsteads within the interior of this character area.

The character area has very little evidence of human elements and development. The lack of built development and major roads enhances the overall quiet rural character of the area, and increases the associated tranquillity. Views are generally limited by woodland and shelterbelts, although longer ranging views are experienced through gaps in vegetation and in the more open areas in the north.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

This area, being predominantly flat, may be sensitive to small changes and new development as there is a greater chance it would be visible. However, the frequent woodland enclosure of the landscape may be able to absorb sensitively sited development where views are more limited. Areas further north which are more open would have greater sensitivity to development as it is more likely to be visible on the horizon.

### Natural Character

Although much of the landscape is used for intensive farming, the presence of woodland and tree cover along field boundaries creates a strong sense of naturalness which has a higher sensitivity to change.

The openness of the land around the East Leeds Airport contrasts with the wooded character elsewhere, and thus the landscape may be more sensitive to development on the fringes of the airport which are more visible.

### Historic Landscape Character

Time-depth in this landscape is focused within the settlements on the fringes including Cawood, Wistow and Kirkby Wharfe, as well as in the areas of Ancient Woodland. The vast majority of the landscape has been drained and enclosed relatively recently, with some localised areas of older, medieval strip fields which are more sensitive to change around the settlements of Cawood, Wistow and Kirkby Wharfe. Sensitive recent history is found in the landscape of the former RAF Church Fenton.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Settlements are generally well-integrated into the landscape and traditional in style with unity in design and construction materials. They would be sensitive to new development not sympathetic with the local vernacular. However, the village of Ulleskelf features more prominent, modern developments along the southern boundary which are visible from across the farmland, and any new development should seek to enhance settlement boundaries.

The dispersed pattern of settlement and limited number of isolated properties and farmsteads throughout the interior of the landscape suggest that higher density housing beyond the settlement boundaries would not conform to the local landscape character.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

There are few landmarks other than Bishop Wood within this landscape, though there are longer views to Selby Abbey in the east. Skylines are generally dominated by woodland and mature hedgerow trees, and therefore are more sensitive to development than skylines featuring more development.

### Access and Recreation

There is a well-connected network of public rights of way, in the north-east of the character area, valued for local recreation. There are few other recreational assets that would be highly sensitive to change.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

This area has a strong rural character, resulting from the general lack of built development and major roads. The semi-enclosed nature of the landscape and general sense of tranquillity make are sensitive to changes involving noise and lighting.



## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on the settlements located in the fringes, including Wistow, Cawood and Ulleskelf as the main villages in the area.<br><br>Redevelopment or expansion at Leeds East Airport which may affect historic features of RAF Church Fenton.          |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.   |
| Transport           | Piecemeal upgrading of the minor road network, including lighting, may have localised effects on the character of the area.<br><br>Upgrades to Leeds East Airport, including road access to the site.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Tree diseases may have effects on woodland and field boundaries if particular species suffer widespread loss.<br><br>Long term sustainability of small woodlands.   |
| Agriculture         | Whilst agricultural buildings are likely to be well screened within this landscape by woodland and shelterbelts, the human influence may contrast with the largely undeveloped form of many of the views and skylines, and thus may appear to detract from the natural feel of the landscape. |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.   |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying areas along the Dorts Dike and numerous drains to the north of Bishop Wood.<br><br>Changes to agricultural practices in response to changing growing seasons or flood events.  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

- Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the landscape by promoting appropriate management to ensure long-term sustainability, and promote new woodland cover;
- Seek to improve recreational access across the landscape, including between and within the many woodlands; and
- Make use of the existing woodlands and field boundaries to better integrate new development into the landscape.

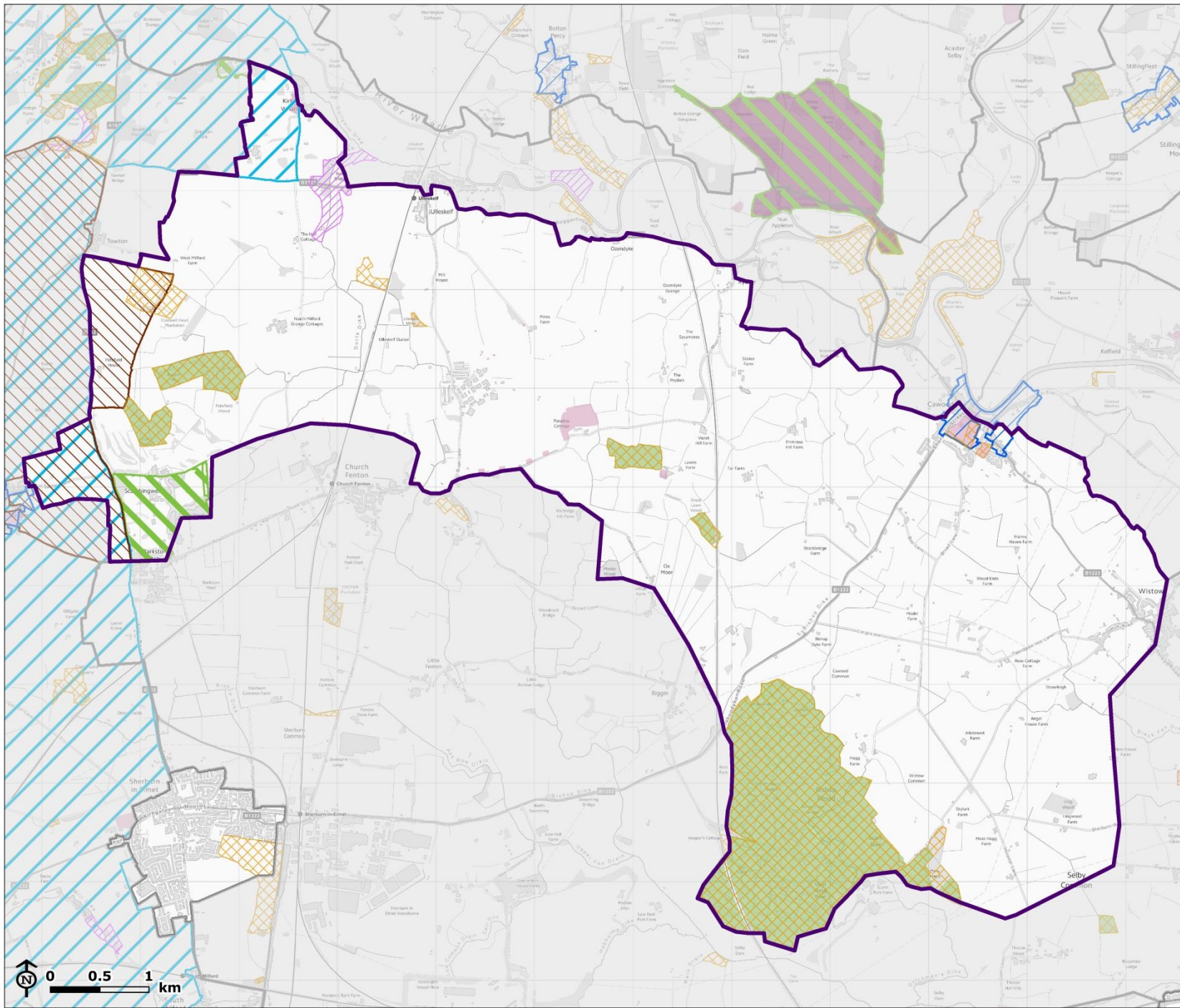
Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Care should be taken to not add to the prominence of modern housing at the edges of the main villages, including Cawood, Ulleskelf and Wistow; and
- Seek to provide additional recreational access to and within Bishop Wood, connecting it with other smaller woodlands in the landscape to enhance the green network.

**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.12: North Selby  
Farmland Landscape  
Character Area**

-  Selby District
  -  Landscape Character Area
  -  Other Landscape Character Area
  -  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
  -  Registered Battlefield
  -  Registered Park and Garden
  -  Historic Parks and Gardens
  -  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
  -  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  -  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)



Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:55,000**



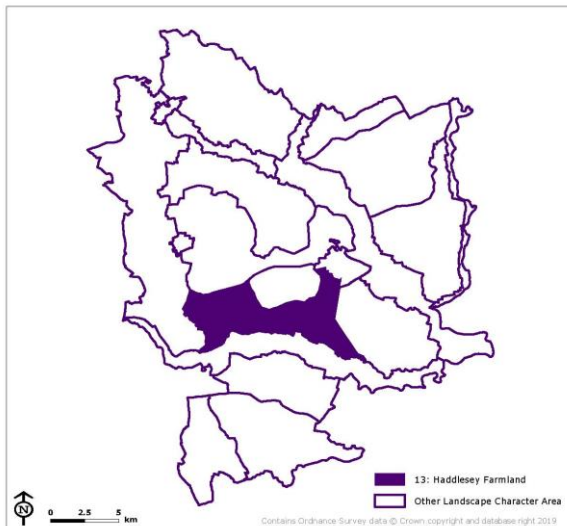
# Character Area 13 Haddlesey Farmland

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the central region of the district, to the south-west of Selby. It is bounded to the west by the West Selby Limestone Ridge, the south by the River Aire and its floodplains, the north by the A63, the Hambleton Sandstone Ridge and the urban area of Selby. To the east it merges into the farmland surrounding Camblesforth.

At a national scale, the entirety of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels NCA*, and at a county scale falls within the *Levels Farmland LCT*.

The area includes the villages of Monk Fryston, Hillam, Burn and Birkin, in addition to numerous individual scattered properties and farmsteads.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Flat arable farmland arranged in a patchwork of regularly shaped fields of a large scale, defined predominantly by grassed field margins, and occasional trees.
- Distinct lack of hedgerows, creating a vast sense of openness with long distance views and lack of enclosure.
- Very sparse settlement pattern, with few isolated properties.
- Areas of woodland distributed unevenly through landscape, with significant areas concentrated near Gateforth.
- Major energy transmission infrastructure present, with prominent views of power stations, transmission lines and occasional wind turbines.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

This low-lying area is predominantly flat, with few topographic undulations. The majority of the area averages an elevation of less than 10m above ordnance datum (AOD). The entire character area is underlain by Triassic and Permian sandstones, completely covered by a layer of clay and silt deposits of glaciolacustrine origin, and glaciogenic sand deposits.

The primary land use throughout the area is intensive arable farmland consisting of large scale rectilinear fields, defined predominantly by drains, with occasional field boundary trees. Smaller scale fields are particularly distinctive near the settlements of Monk Fryston and Hillam. Although there is a small concentration of woodland areas to the north of the character area, near Gateforth, there is generally a lack of woodland and tree cover across the area. Thus, this landscape has a great sense of openness, with long distance views from many locations. Two areas of woodland, Staker Wood and Bywater Wood, are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). The only other non-arable farmland is Burn Airfield in the east, a WWII-era airfield now used by a gliding club.

The Selby Canal is the main watercourse located within the character area. It extends from the north-east, near Selby, down through the centre of the character area towards West Haddlesey and the River Aire. The low-lying area is otherwise dissected by many ditches which drain the wet farmland. These drains commonly mark the field boundaries.

A number of Listed Buildings are present in this landscape, most of which are within the Hillam and Monk Fryston Conservation Areas. Outside these villages, a limited number of more isolated Listed Buildings include two 18<sup>th</sup> century bridges crossing the Selby Canal.

The settlement pattern across the landscape is sparse, with most development located within the nucleated villages of Hillam and Monk Fryston to the north-west, and Burn in the north-east. Smaller settlements such as Birkin are more dispersed and integrated into the landscape. Settlements further west tend to have more limestone buildings compared to those in the east, due to their proximity to the neighbouring limestone ridge. Beyond the boundaries of these settlements, there are relatively few isolated properties and farmsteads.

Villages tend to be located along main roads, including the A19, A63 and A162, along with many minor roads and public rights of way which splay off from each settlement, connecting them with the wider surroundings and settlements. There is limited east-west access across this character area.

Energy transmission infrastructure cuts across the south-western and south-eastern corners of the character area. The Ferrybridge and Eggborough power stations are clearly visible on the horizon from many locations. These elements have localised effects on the perceived rurality and tranquillity of the area, though this is anticipated to change with redevelopment of these sites, and elsewhere infrastructure has a more limited influence. Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff are key landmarks in northward views from this area.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to its very flat and very open nature in which new features could be highly visible. The area is overlooked from the sandstone hills to the north and the limestone ridge to the west. The large scale and horizontal aspect may be less sensitive to other development types.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape with very few areas of woodland or other semi-natural character. Areas around woodland near Gateforth may have locally increased sensitivity, as they represent rare natural features within this landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, most parts of which have been drained relatively recently. The Selby Canal with its associated bridges and cottages is a key historic feature of this landscape.

Most of the landscape is the result of modern field amalgamation, although some areas closer to the settlements of Brayton, Hillam and Monk Fryston contain earlier enclosures. Localised areas of older medieval strip fields around these settlements are more sensitive to change.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Settlements tend to be well integrated with the landscape, with boundary vegetation creating positive settlement edges. New development would need to fit with the general settlement pattern and not detract from these edges. Burn is more modern with a harder more prominent boundary with the surrounding landscape. Villages will be sensitive to new development that is not sympathetic to the vernacular.

Beyond settlements, there are relatively few farmsteads or properties which indicate that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

The sandstone hills and the church spire at Brayton are key sensitive landmarks in views.

Skylines are frequently indistinct with limited vegetation, and therefore are less sensitive to change.

There are long, relatively straight roads that provide vistas through the landscape, and most of the areas with open visibility would be more sensitive to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There is a network of public rights of way that cuts across the landscape, but these are generally used for local recreation purposes only.

National Cycle Network Route 62, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, crosses through the east of the area and runs adjacent to the railway line bordering the area to the east. Selby Canal is used for leisure boats, passing from the Aire to the Ouse.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The area has a very strong rural character away from the influence of transmission lines, making it more sensitive to new development and change.

Generally the landscape is quiet and tranquil, away from the major roads that have a localised influence.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on the designated service villages of Monk Fryston / Hillam and Brayton.   |
| Energy              | Potential demolition and redevelopment at Ferrybridge and Eggborough Power Stations may change the skyline of this area, and could have knock on effects on transmission infrastructure.   |
| Transport           | Potential upgrading of main transport routes, including the A19 and A63.<br><br>Re-use or redevelopment of the Burn Airfield.<br><br>Recreational and leisure development along the Selby Canal.   |
| Trees and woodlands | Extensive removal of hedgerows and field trees has occurred in the past, and while hedges are unlikely to be actively removed during the present, it is likely that further losses may be experienced due to lack of maintenance or reinstatement. |
| Agriculture         | Large scale agricultural buildings may appear disproportionate with the landscape, especially due to the openness which would make development readily visible.  |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across many low-lying areas within this landscape, particularly in the east.<br><br>Changes in intensive land management in response to longer growing seasons.  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

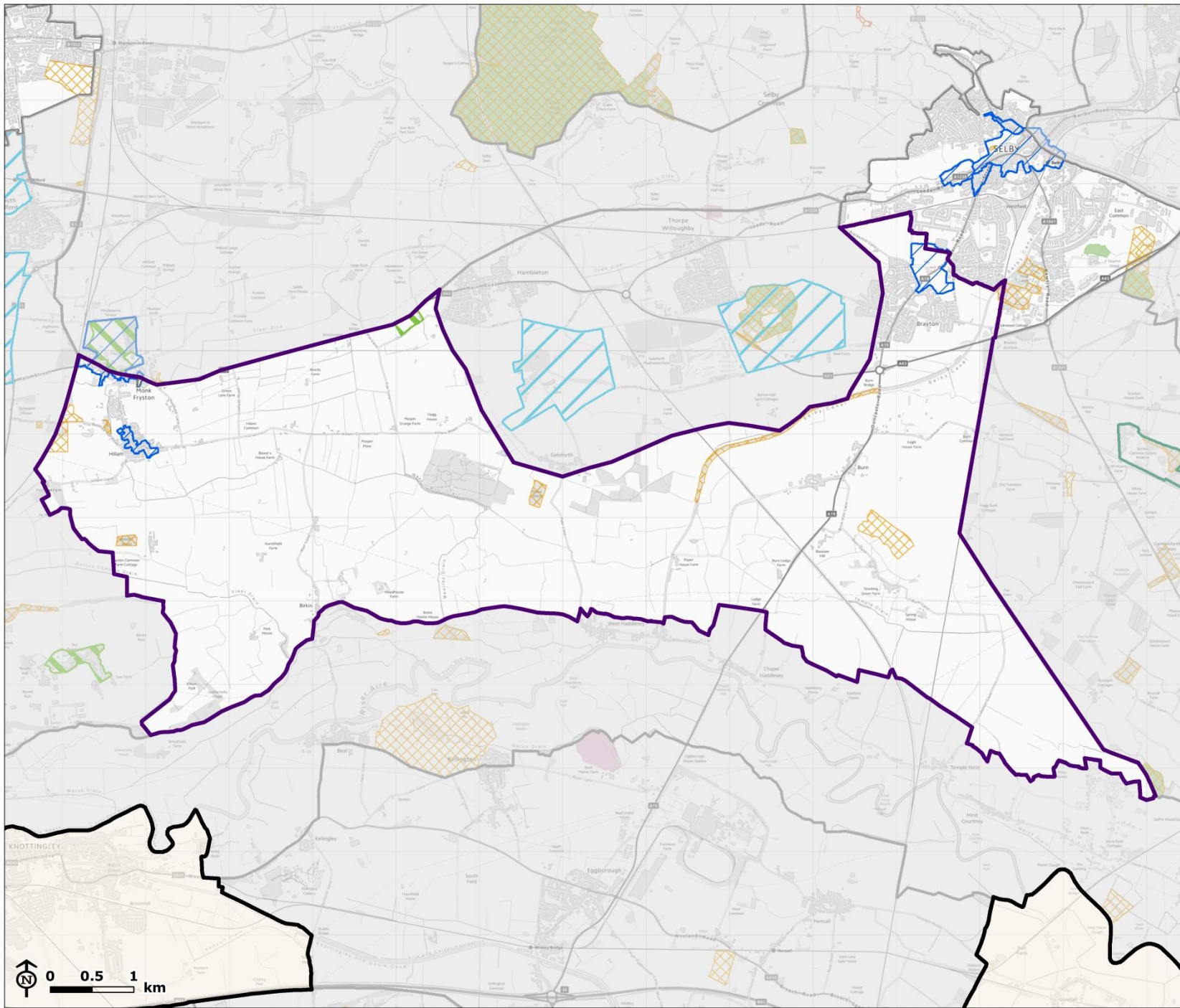
- Encourage woodland plantation, including shelterbelts, to increase the perceived naturalness of the character area, and provide valuable habitats and corridors for local biodiversity;
- Encourage the restoration and re-establishment of hedgerows and hedgerow trees which have been lost in the past due to field expansion, particularly along roads and field drains in the east;
- Seek to secure long-term health of existing woodlands and hedgerows within the area;
- The location and design of new development, including temporary works, should be carefully considered as it is likely to be highly visible throughout this flat and open landscape; and
- When considering the design of new development, avoid colours that may prominent and attract the eye at long distances in this open landscape.




Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- New housing development should be focused within and around existing settlements, including Hillam, Monk Fryston and Burn, and should avoid areas within the open landscape where it would likely be highly prominent;
- Preserve the setting of the Selby Canal as a leisure and green network resource; and
- Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape by e.g. providing improved access to and within Gateforth Wood.

**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.13: Haddlesey Farmland Landscape Character Area**



-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
-  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Local Nature Reserve
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:65,000**



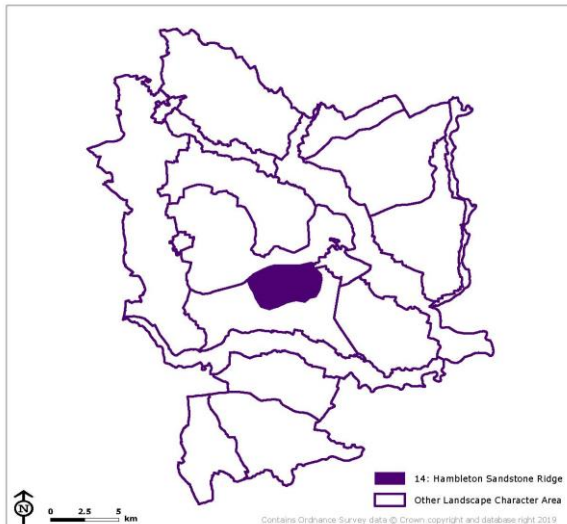
# Character area 14 Hambleton Sandstone Ridge

## Location and extents

The Hambleton Sandstone Ridge character area is located within the central region of the district, immediately to the west of Selby. It forms a distinctly raised areas within an otherwise flat expanse on all sides. Though low in height, the ridge has a markedly different character to the surrounding levels.

The entirety of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels NCA*, and at a county scale falls within the *Levels Farmland LCT*.

The area includes the villages of Hambleton, Thorpe Willoughby and Brayton.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Distinctive low sandstone ridge, forming the only outcropping of the Sherwood Sandstone Group in the District.
- Characterised by two low but distinct and densely wooded hills: Brayton Barff; and Hambleton Hough, which offer panoramic views.
- Gently undulating low-lying arable farmland surrounds the hills, with rectilinear fields defined by low hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Influence of the local transport network around Selby, though with many areas of woodland that mask these features.
- Valued recreational area with good access from populated areas and a wooded countryside setting with associated sense of tranquillity.



## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The Hambleton Sandstone Ridge character area is located at the heart of the Selby District, to the west of Selby. It has a varying topography dominated by two low but distinctive wooded hills: Brayton Barff; and Hambleton Hough. The hills rise to 55m above ordnance datum (AOD) and 46m AOD, respectively, well above the surrounding levels. Beyond these hills, the average elevation across the area is 10-20m AOD, dipping down to below 10m AOD at the interface with the levels.

The sandstone ridge is formed of an outcropping of the Sherwood Sandstone Group, sedimentary rocks laid down by rivers between 237 to 272 million years ago, and expressed here as a reddish sandstone. Although this rock underlays most of the District, this is the only area where it is visible at the surface. The sandstone weathers to a pinkish sand that is visible on some footpaths.

Hambleton Sandstone Ridge has a strong presence of mixed woodland, concentrated on the hill tops of Brayton Barff and Hambleton Hough, though conifers on the latter have been cleared. Extensive woodland is also present between the two hills, around the A63 and across Selby Golf Course. There is parkland woodland and trees around Gateforth Hall, including a distinctive avenue along the ridge, and elsewhere hedgerow trees along field boundaries and occasional woodland belts adjacent to roads. The Brayton Barff woodland is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

The increased sense of enclosure towards the centre of this character area contrasts strongly with the rest of the district. The farmland within this character area is not heavily drained due to the variations in topography. Fields are used for arable cultivation and are predominantly medium scale and regular in shape, defined by intermittent hedgerow trees. A small area on the northern boundary features larger, more irregularly shaped fields.

The area features two main settlements: Hambleton and Thorpe Willoughby. Both feature predominantly modern housing, with village centres comprising a handful of more traditional properties, commonly constructed of mottled red brick. The villages are well served by the local road network, including the major roads of the A63 and A1238 leading in to Selby: the A63 creates a degree of severance in the landscape. Gateforth is a much smaller estate village to the south, with stronger historic character. Brayton Barff is topped by a reservoir, and there is a large disused farm in the centre of the area, but otherwise non-residential development is limited.

Numerous Listed Buildings are generally concentrated within Hambleton and Thorpe Willoughby. Gateforth Hall is Grade II\* listed, and the parkland features a number of designated heritage assets including lodges, cottages and a ha-ha.

The hills are highly valued for local recreation, and both are served with small car parks and marked footpaths that are clearly well used. Thorpe Willoughby is well connected to Brayton Barff and Brayton via an extensive network of public rights of way (PRoW), while Hambleton Hough is linked by PRoW to Hambleton and Gateforth. However, there is no footpath access between the two hills, although recreational access is taken along Field Lane, now severed by the A63.

Both hills offer panoramic views in all directions, with Selby Abbey and Brayton church as the key local landmark. Longer views extend south to the power stations, and north towards the Yorkshire Wolds. The wooded landscapes offer a high degree of tranquillity, despite the proximity to busy roads and settlements, with opportunities for walking, wildlife watching and quiet reflection. The hills are individually designated as Locally Important Landscape Areas for their distinct character and value as recreational resources.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area is generally gently undulating rising to two distinctive hills in the centre of the character area. These distinctive landforms are highly visible across the area and changes to their appearance would be widely seen. They are more sensitive to change compared to the flatter more undulating land surrounding them. Away from the hills themselves, the density of woodland may allow sensitive siting of some development, though this should respect the setting of the hills.

### Natural Character

Areas of woodland within this area are highly sensitive, due to their importance for recreation and biodiversity, and also their relative rarity within the wider landscape. Positive management of the woodlands is evident, with recent removal of non-native species from Hambleton Hough.

Though the central woodlands are most valued, the wider network of hedges and trees in this landscape provides a network of natural features that provide green infrastructure and which have a higher sensitivity to change.

### Historic Landscape Character

Time-depth in this area is focused around the parkland and estate landscape of Gateforth Hall, with its prominent avenue planting along the ridge east of Hambleton Hough, and its relationship to Gateforth village. The former Brayton Barff Pumping Station is an unusual feature in the landscape south of the hill. More recent changes affect large parts of this area, with expanding settlements and transport corridors, though areas of older historic field boundaries can still be discerned.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The main settlements within the area have abrupt linear boundaries as a result of serial expansion into the landscape. Housing is relatively uniform in character and style, though with variations reflecting the late 20<sup>th</sup>-century dates of different developments. Neither settlement has a strong core. The village of Gateforth will be sensitive to any large-scale development. Elsewhere in the character area, settlement is limited to the estate buildings at Gateforth Hall, and a small number of farms of red brick. The landscape is sensitive to further expansion of settlements, where this could affect the setting of the ridge.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

The distinctive Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff are key landmarks across this area and beyond. Skylines are distinctly wooded looking up to these hills, with the avenue trees at Hambleton Hough being particularly sensitive.

Panoramic views of the landscape are experienced from the top of both hills, with distant views of the Yorkshire Wolds to the north. Relatively few prominent features are seen in these long views across the expansive levels farmland. Development that obstructs these views would affect the setting of the hills.

### Access and Recreation

There is a highly valued PRoW network around both these hills, used for local recreation and by visitors to the area. However, wider PRoW links through the area are lacking.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The wooded hills are valued for their quiet and tranquillity, particularly given the proximity to built up areas. These woodlands are highly sensitive to any changes that introduce visual or noise intrusion, including new lighting.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure for continued expansion of Brayton, Hambleton and Thorpe Willoughby, towards the wooded hills.<br><br>Re-use or redevelopment of the site of the former Gateforth Mushroom Farm.            |
| Energy              | Unlikely to be a key issue.  |
| Transport           | Further upgrading of main transport routes, including the A1238 and A63, could lead to additional severance.<br><br>More development would lead to urbanisation of minor roads in the area, diminishing rural character. |
| Trees and woodlands | Increased tree diseases could adversely affect woodland and single-species stands in estate landscapes.<br><br>Long-term security of estate plantings and other woodland.  |
| Agriculture         | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | Changing land management in response to changes in the growing season.<br><br>Increased pressures on particular species may affect flora and fauna within the woodlands.   |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:










- Seek to conserve and enhance the wooded landscape by promoting appropriate management and ensuring sustainable regeneration for the long term;
- Resist urbanisation of minor roads, for example street lighting; and
- Encourage the reinstatement and ongoing maintenance of hedgerows and field trees where these are currently gappy.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Housing development around Hambleton, Thorpe Willoughby and Brayton should be sensitively sited and designed so as to respect the setting of Hambleton Hough and Brayton Barff, and so as not to significantly impact on views from these hills;
- Seek enhanced green infrastructure across the ridge, in particular seeking to link the two hills for recreation and biodiversity benefit, connecting both hills with the neighbouring villages and Selby to allow car-free access; and
- Encourage positive redevelopment of the derelict Gateforth Mushroom Farm site, utilising woodland context to accommodate change while securing landscape, biodiversity and recreational gains.

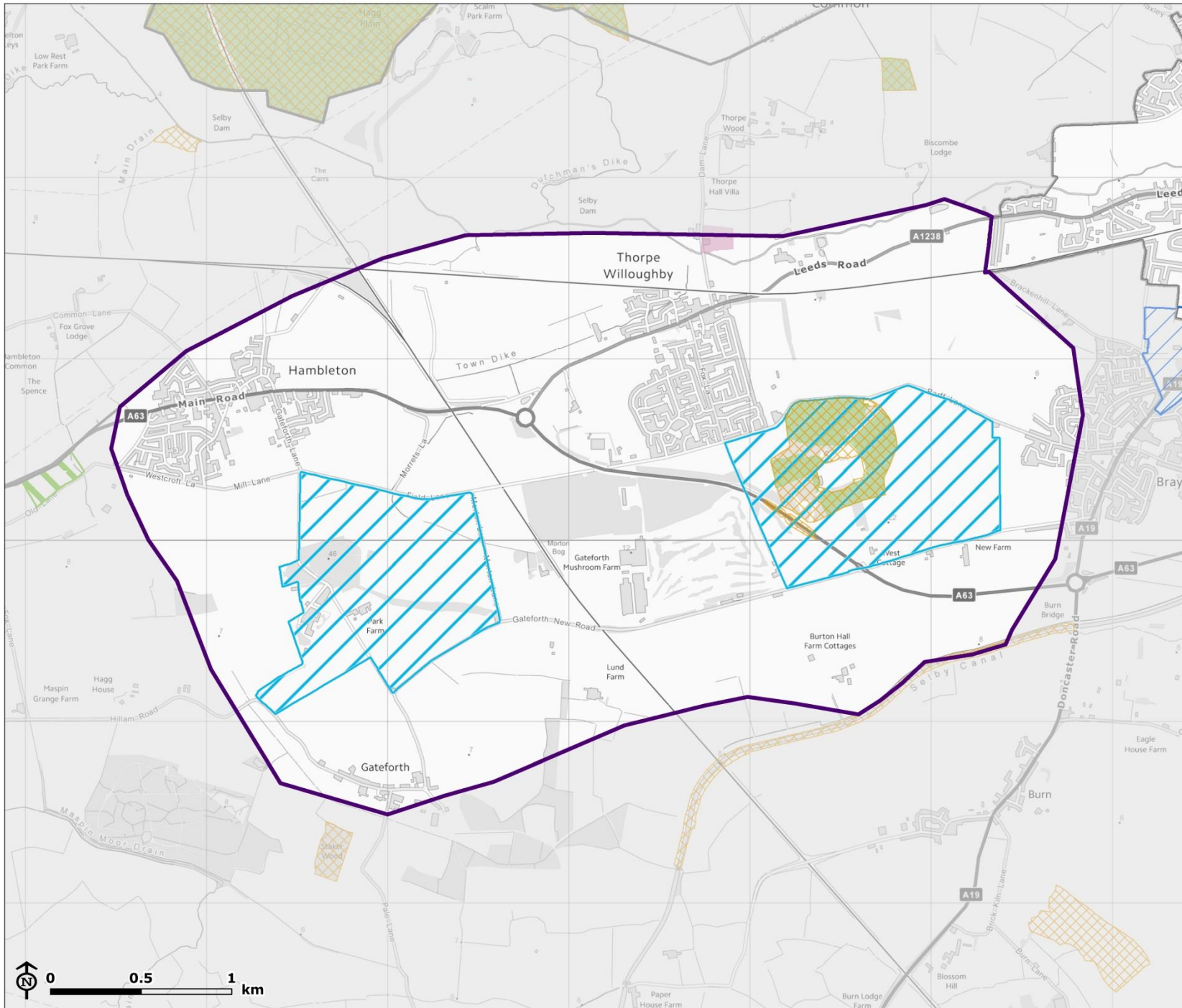
**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.14: Hambleton Sandstone Ridge Landscape Character Area**

-  Selby District
  -  Landscape Character Area
  -  Other Landscape Character Area
  -  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
  -  Historic Parks and Gardens
  -  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
  -  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:30,000**



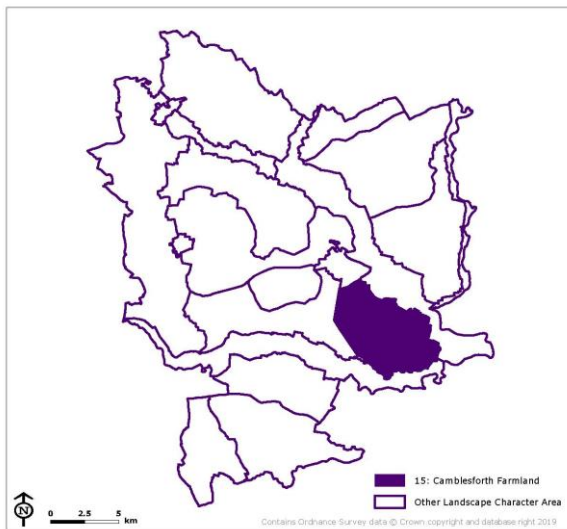
# Character Area 15 Camblesforth Farmland

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the south-east of the district, immediately south-east of Selby. It is bounded to the east and north by the River Ouse and to the south by the River Aire. To the west, the area transitions into a more open farmland character, with the boundary marked approximately by the railway line and farmland, and to the north-east by the urban area of Selby.

At a national scale, the entirety of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels NCA*, and at a county scale falls within the *Levels Farmland LCT*.

The area includes the villages Barlow, Carlton, Camblesforth, and Drax. The area also includes the prominent Drax Power Station in the north-east of the landscape character area.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Flat arable farmland with a high concentration of small areas of broadleaved woodland and shelterbelts, creating a sense of enclosure.
- Medium-large scale rectilinear field pattern, frequently lined by hedgerow trees.
- Sparse settlement with very few isolated properties and farmsteads.
- Strong human influence from the industrial Drax Power Station, highly visible from throughout the landscape.
- Time depth from the juxtaposition of the power station with the historic village of Drax.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

This low-lying area is predominantly flat, with few topographic undulations. The majority of the area averages an elevation of less than 10m above ordnance datum (AOD) however rises to a high point of 40m AOD at Barlow Mound, between Drax Power Station and Barlow, where an artificial ash disposal mound has been raised. The area is underlain by sandstone, thickly covered by a layer of superficial clay deposits.

Intensive arable farming is the primary land use, consisting of medium to large scale rectilinear fields, with a small area of land used for pasture in the north-west, near Selby. Much of the interior of the character area features medium scale fields, with many small areas of broadleaved woodland.

The largest woodland is recently planted, located on and beside Barlow Mound to the west of the Drax Power Station. Many small pockets of woodland are present, but tend to be concentrated in the west of the area, to the south-west of Barlow. Much of the woodlands to the south-west of Barlow, including the Barlow Common Nature Reserve, are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Whilst areas of woodland are less frequent in the east of the character area, the presence of hedgerow trees along field boundaries provide significant tree cover in views, creating a strong sense of enclosure.

The landscape features numerous Listed Buildings located primarily within the villages of Carlton, Camblesforth and Drax. Several scheduled monuments point to a long history of settlement, including medieval settlements and moated sites, and early post-medieval garden earthworks around Barlow Hall. The scheduled earthwork remains of the medieval Augustinian Priory at Drax are located immediately north of the power station, presenting a unique conjunction of time depth.

There are no large settlements within the character area. The village of Camblesforth is located in the centre of the area and is served by major roads including the A1041 and A645. A network of minor roads provide access to the smaller villages including Carlton, Barlow and Drax, which are often sited off the modern highways. Settlement form differs: Drax and Barlow are long and linear, extending along a curving main street, while Camblesforth and Carlton are more nucleated. Carlton and Drax have a traditional village character, with uniform red brick buildings, and Carlton is influenced by the parkland around Carlton Towers. Camblesforth has a more modern character, with less consistency in housing style.

Public access to the countryside is relatively limited, though National Cycle Route 62 passes through Carlton in the southern tip of the area. A network of footpaths links Drax and Long Drax, though elsewhere there are fewer public routes. The Skylark Centre and Nature Reserve is located at Barlow, providing access to Barlow Mound and associated woodlands.

Drax Power Station is a major human element which overwrites the landscape of the area between Barlow, Drax and Camblesforth, due to its scale and extent. The cooling towers are highly visible from across the wider area, and serve as a key landmark of the District. Although the power station may detract from the rural character of the area, the maturity of the screen planting reduces the effects on tranquillity, which remains quite high in locations very close to the power station. Transmission lines and railways radiate out from the power station, and lighting can be intrusive. The more traditional villages and church spires retain a rural character.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

More open areas of this landscape may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the flat nature of the landscape in which new development and change may be easily visible. Barlow Mound, the ash disposal site to the north-west of Drax power station creates a dramatic landform which is highly visible. Changes to its appearance are likely to be highly noticeable.

The large scale of the landscape is likely to be able to accommodate development which is sympathetically sited and designed, particularly in areas with a stronger presence of vegetation which may limit views.

### Natural Character

Whilst it is an intensively farmed landscape which has a generally low sensitivity to change, water bodies and woodlands are likely to be more sensitive to change. The strong presence of mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, contributes to the overall natural feel of the landscape, and thus are more sensitive to change and new development. New woodland on the Barlow Mound provides naturalistic features which contribute positively to the character of the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is strong time-depth in this landscape, particularly where historic sites are juxtaposed with modern development. Traditional villages are also sensitive to change. The wider landscape is of more recent origin, having been drained and enclosed since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, with localised areas of larger amalgamated modern fields around the fringes of the landscape.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The larger villages of Carlton and Camblesforth are well contained and relatively well-integrated into the landscape with generally positive boundaries. The settlements are generally quite uniform in style, with Carlton having a traditional character of mottled brick houses and Camblesforth containing more modern houses. Barlow and Drax are more linear: Barlow has a largely modern character; whereas Drax is more traditional in appearance. Higher sensitivity is likely for development which does not fit with the form and character of each settlement.

The highly dispersed pattern of individual properties and farmsteads across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be unsympathetic to the character of the landscape. The presence of large scale infrastructure may serve to reduce the apparent scale of new industrial or commercial structures.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

Drax cooling towers are the key landmark features of the area, with Barlow Mound ash disposal providing foreground in some views. Skylines towards the power station are generally dominated by the cooling towers, pylons and powerlines. Views towards the west, south, and away from the power station are generally less developed, and therefore are likely to have a greater sensitivity to change. Wide views are available from the upper parts of Barlow Mound.

### Access and Recreation

The network of public rights of way is locally valued. The Skylark Centre provides valuable access into the woodlands at Barlow Mound.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The landscape generally feels more rural in the east, and in the west where there is a greater presence of vegetation and views of the nearby power station are largely reduced. Sensitivity is reduced around the more built up areas, particularly the power station which decreases the sense of rurality and tranquillity, though this remains in pockets quite close by. The sense of tranquillity is reduced closer to the main A1041 road which cuts through the landscape towards Selby and gives rise to noise intrusion.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope  |
|---------------------|--|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure is likely to focus on the larger settlements of Carlton and Camblesforth which have potential capacity for new, sensitively sited development.<br>Potential for commercial development around Drax Power Station. |
| Energy              | Redevelopment at Drax may alter the overall appearance of the development.<br>Changes in generation may require changes in the transmission network.   |
| Transport           | Further upgrading of the A1041 may affect rural character.<br>Incremental upgrading and lighting on more rural roads.  |
| Trees and woodlands | Lack of maintenance of hedgerows and woodlands leading to loss of tree cover and field boundaries.<br>Increase in woodland with completion of Barlow Mound disposal.<br>Tree diseases may lead to losses of characteristic species.            |
| Agriculture         | Large scale agricultural buildings and commercial glasshouses.   |
| Minerals            | Unlikely to be a key issue for this area.  |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across most of the low-lying landscape.<br>Changes in climate leading to pressures on native species, affecting woodlands.<br>Changing agricultural practices with changing growing seasons.         |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

- Seek to secure long-term health of woodlands across the area by promoting appropriate management and natural regeneration, and promote creation of an inter-connected network of green infrastructure;
- Encourage continued maintenance of hedgerows and field trees, and where the opportunity arises encourage reinstatement of hedgerows where field boundaries have been lost;
- Enhance informal recreational across the landscape by improving public access throughout the area, especially to and within woodlands, and linking settlements with resources; and
- New development should be sited to take advantage of the screening offered by the existing woodland and boundary vegetation. In more open areas, encourage the use of soft landscaping techniques.














Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Housing development should be focused on the larger settlements of Carlton and Camblesforth, subject to further study edges of the settlements;
- Preserve the settings of smaller villages of Drax and Barlow, including views to church spires and small wooded fields that surround them; and
- Encourage continued maintenance and enhancement of Barlow Mound to create further gains for local wildlife and improve recreational opportunities.



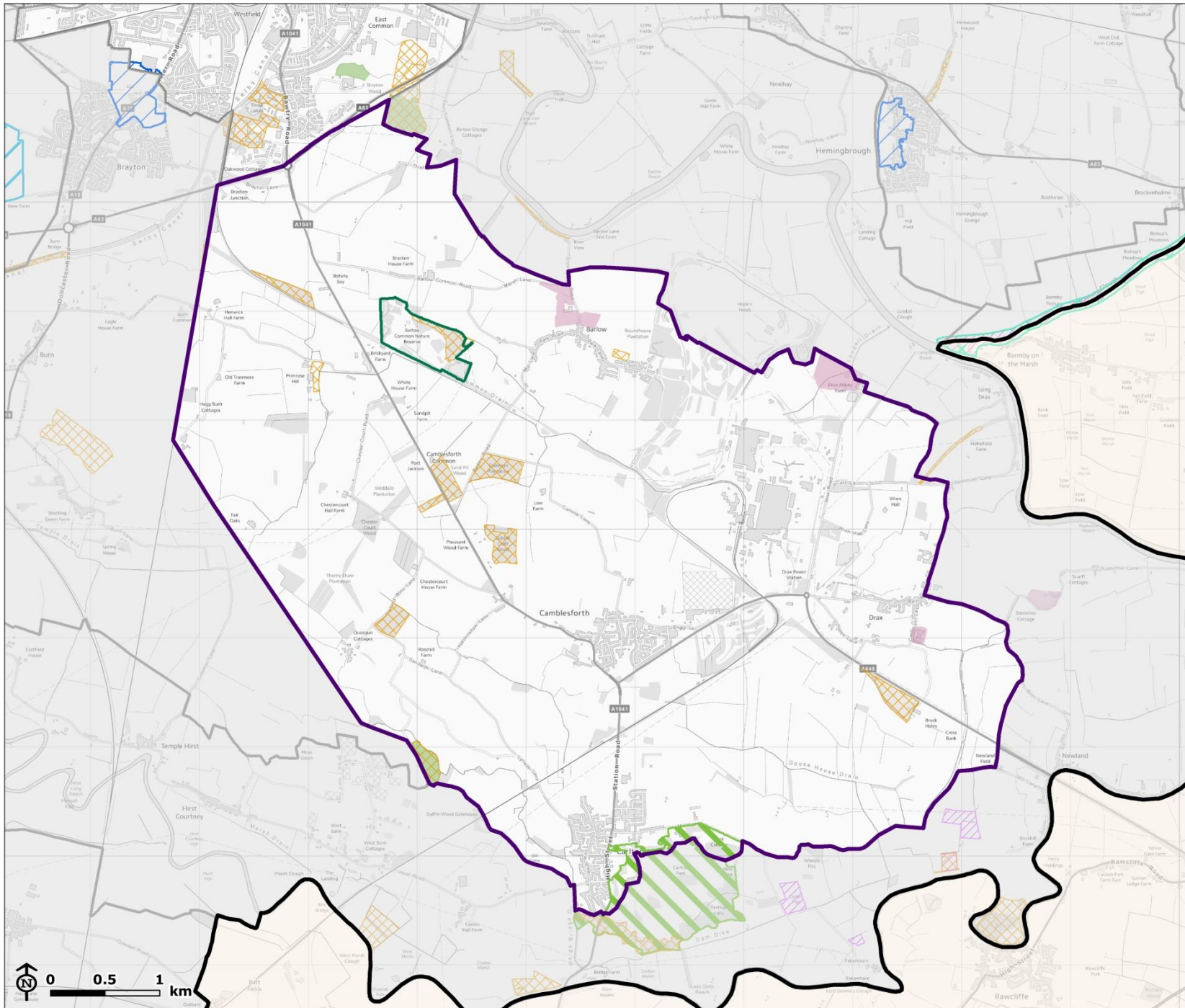
**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.15: Camblesforth  
Farmland Landscape  
Character Area**

-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
-  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Local Nature Reserve
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:50,000**



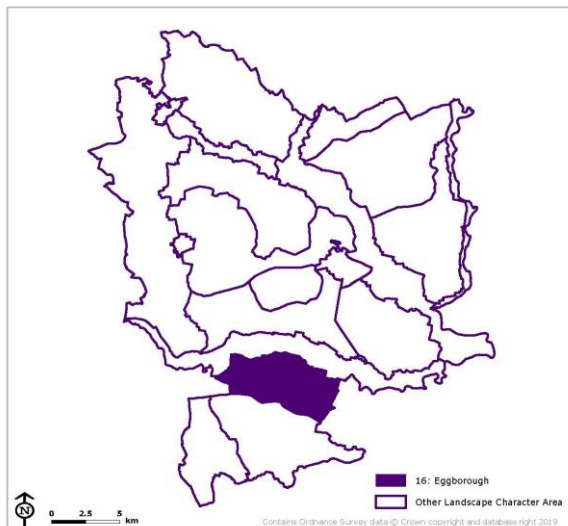
# Character Area 16 Eggborough

## Location and extents

This character area is located towards the south of the district. It is bounded to the north by the River Aire and its floodplains, and to the east and west by neighbouring authorities. To the south the boundary follows the line of the M62 and the Knottingley and Goole Canal.

The majority of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA. However, a small area along the western boundary falls within the *Southern Magnesian Limestone* NCA. At a county level, the landscape is entirely within the *Levels Farmland* LCT.

The area includes the villages of Kellingley, Kellington, Eggborough, Great Heck, and Hensall. It also includes the Eggborough Power Station.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Predominantly low-lying but very slightly raised above the floodplain farmland to the north.
- Arable farmland with large, rectilinear fields defined by hedgerows with rare hedgerow trees.
- Strong human influence in the form of major transport infrastructure including the highly prominent Eggborough Power Station and energy transmission infrastructure.
- Evenly distributed villages with very few isolated properties and farmsteads.
- Major east-west transport corridor including the M62, A645, Knottingley and Goole Canal, and railway line, all following the route of the river.
- Historical features, such as windmills used in the past to drain the lowlands.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape Character

The topography of the Eggborough character area is very subtly raised above the floodplain to the north and the flat farmland to the south. A very slight ridge runs east-west, roughly along the line of the A645, and rising most noticeably to the south of Kellington village. The area is underlain by sandstone, with localised areas of mudstone and siltstone further west, but is thickly overlaid by glacial sand and gravel deposits. Several sand quarries are operated in the area, and ponds mark the site of former sand pits. The Knottingley and Goole Canal flows adjacent to the M62, and forms part of the southern boundary. There are no other major watercourses within this character area; however there are numerous dikes and ditches draining the farmland.

The landscape has a generally open character, emphasised in areas of slight elevation, with very few areas of woodland. Arable farming is the predominant land use, with large-scale rectilinear fields enclosed by drains, hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees. There are some areas of smaller scale fields, notably the remnants of medieval strip fields to the north and south-east of Eggborough. In these areas field trees help to partially enclose the landscape, compared to the more open landscape adjacent to the M62 and canal. There are no identified wildlife sites in the area. Woodland is most extensive around the power station.

In the north of the area, to the east of Kellington, are the remains of a scheduled Roman Fort with its original layout preserved. The most prominent Listed Building is the Church of St Edmund (Grade I), located on an elevated site south of Kellington and forming a local landmark. There are Grade II\* buildings at Hensall, including the 19<sup>th</sup>-century church.

The large village of Eggborough is located at the heart of the character area, focused on the crossing of the old A19 and the A645 roads. There is little by way of a historic core, with extensive modern housing which differs in style throughout the settlement. The village is intrinsically linked to the power station just to the north, with extensive commercial development in the area between. The cooling towers are iconic landmarks of the area, seen from the M62 and other routes. The extensive site of the former Kellingley Colliery is located in this area: the last deep mine in the UK, it formerly supplied the power station.

There are numerous smaller nucleated settlements dispersed throughout the character area including Kellingley, Kellington, Hensall and Great Heck. Of these smaller villages, Hensall has retained a traditional form, with a number of older painted buildings along the main street. More recent development has expanded the settlements, and there are playing fields and play spaces with trees. Between the villages there are several large agricultural and commercial sites.

Transport routes are a feature, with the area having long served as an east-west link. The A645, Knottingley and Goole Canal, railway and M62 all follow broadly the same route through the landscape. Kellington and Hensall are accessed via minor roads, and have a more rural character. Public rights of way are limited though the canal towpath is accessible. The prominence and frequency of large scale human elements and associated noise means that tranquillity is frequently limited in this area, though pockets of quiet rurality can be found.

## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

The area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to its openness and slight elevation, with development potentially highly visible throughout the landscape.

The more noticeably elevated areas will be of increased sensitivity to larger scale development, and coincide with the areas of least woodland cover.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, though there are a number of smaller scale fields that are more sensitive to change. Field boundary trees form dense networks in some areas, linking with ponds on former extraction sites. Maturing woodland surrounding Eggborough Power Station introduces naturalistic features which positively contribute to the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, although long use as a transport route east-west, and north-south. The landscape setting of St Edmund's Church at Kellington is highly sensitive. Most of the landscape has been modified in recent times, through built development, sand extraction and modern agriculture. Localised areas of older strip fields, such as to the north and south-east of Eggborough are more sensitive to change.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

The main settlement, Eggborough, has a predominantly modern character with relatively open edges with the surrounding landscape. The smaller villages tend to be better integrated into the landscape, and thus more sensitive to new development which may affect the overall setting of the village.

Whilst most smaller villages tend to retain a modern feel, Hensall has a greater mixture of more traditional housing which would likely have a higher sensitivity to development which was not sympathetic to the general vernacular of the village.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

The key landmarks are the Eggborough Power Station cooling towers, visible for miles around, and the church at Kellington, smaller but no less important locally. Skylines are generally indistinct except in the more elevated areas, and are generally highly influenced by structures such as pylons that may limit their sensitivity to certain development types. The topography of the landscape enables long ranging, open views across the landscape to the north and south, which are generally more sensitive to change.

### Access and Recreation

There is a limited network of public rights of way used generally for local recreation. The canal towpath provides a longer-distance route.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The presence of transport noise and large-scale built development, including the Eggborough Power Station, limits the sense of tranquillity, though this may change with future redevelopment. There are some localised areas, further from built development, which feel more rural and tranquil.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure for housing Eggborough and Kellington as the only designated service villages in the area.<br>Redevelopment of the Eggborough Power Station.                                       |
| Energy              | Potential demolition and redevelopment of the Eggborough Power Station, with resulting changes in electrical transmission infrastructure.<br>Renewable development such as anaerobic digesters and solar farms. |
| Transport           | Potential upgrading of the motorway and trunk routes.<br>Incremental urbanising upgrades to minor roads to service large commercial sites.<br>Leisure development along the Knottingley and Goole Canal.        |
| Trees and woodlands | Lack of maintenance of hedgerows may result in further boundary loss across the area.   |
| Agriculture         | Large scale agricultural and commercial buildings.  |
| Minerals            | Restoration of the Kellingley Colliery site.<br>Sand extraction from current and new sites.   |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying parts of the landscape in the north-east of the character area.  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:

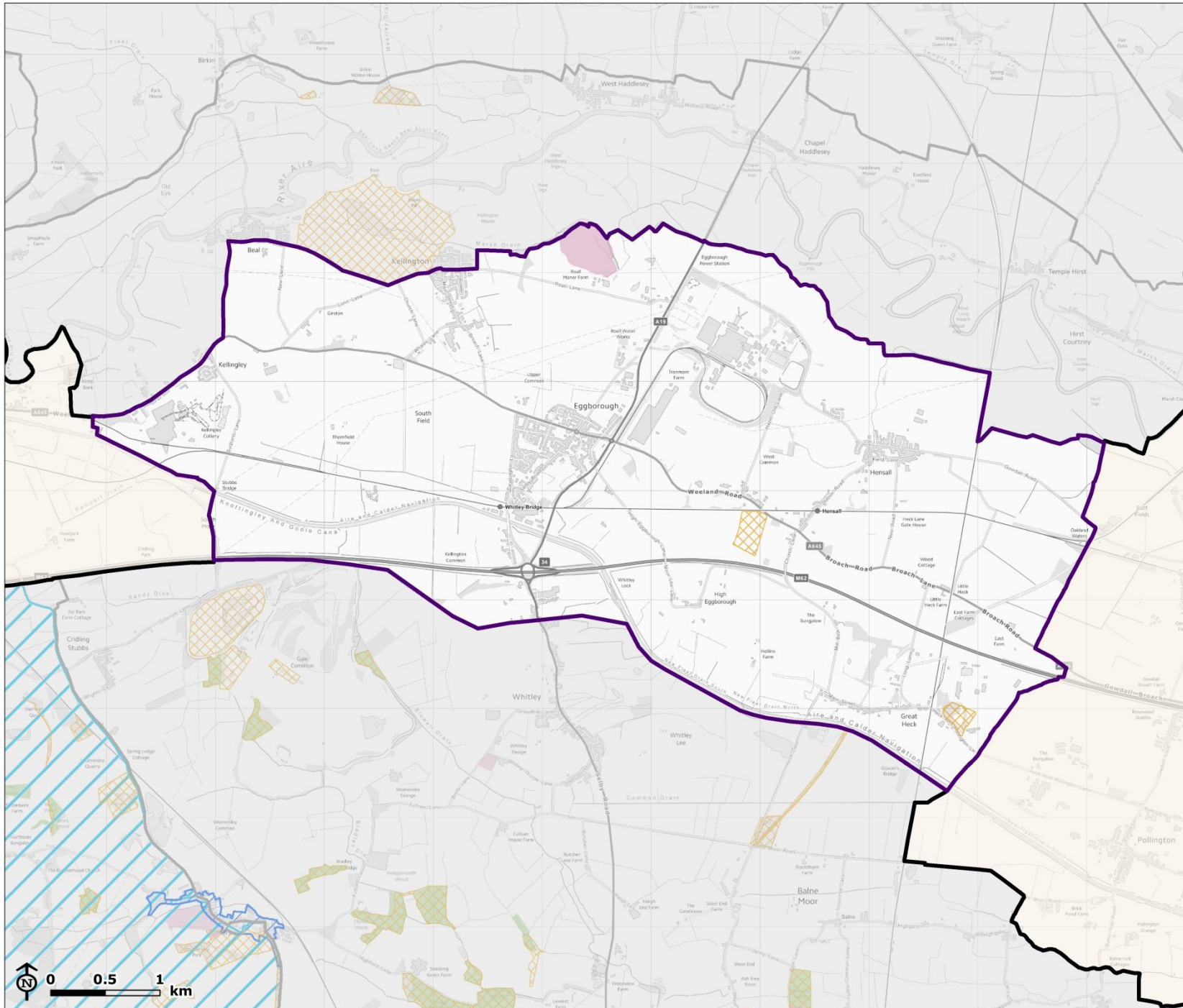
- Seek to increase the level of woodland cover across the area, to absorb existing development into the landscape and provide valuable habitats for local biodiversity;
- Encourage the continued maintenance of hedgerows, and the reinstatement of hedgerows where field boundaries have been lost in the past;
- Seek to enhance recreational access throughout the area; and
- Carefully consider siting of new development, and use structure planting to assimilate new structures that could detract from the landscape character.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Restoration of the Kellingley Colliery site should seek to establish long-term gains for the landscape and biodiversity, such as the establishment of new habitats, green infrastructure and recreational access; and
- Housing development should be focused on the larger settlements of Eggborough and Kellington which are likely to have higher capacity for new development. Development is unlikely to detract from the overall character in these areas due to their proximity to the Eggborough Power Station.

## Selby District Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 5.16: Eggborough  
Landscape Character Area**



- Selby District
- Landscape Character Area
- Other Landscape Character Area
- Area outside Assessment
- Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
- Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
- Ancient Woodland
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE

**Map Scale @ A4: 1:50,000**



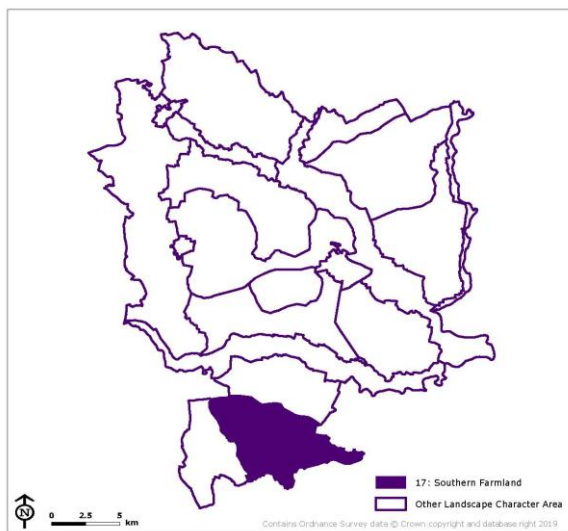
# Character Area 17 Southern Farmlands

## Location and extents

This character area is located in the south of the district. It is bounded to the east and south by neighbouring authorities. The southerly extents of the limestone ridge border the character area to the west, and the M62 and the Knottingley and Goole Canal lie to the north.

At a national scale, the majority of the landscape is located within the *Humberhead Levels* NCA, with the section along the western boundary transitioning into the *Southern Magnesian Limestone* NCA. At a county scale the area falls within the *Levels Farmland* LCT.

The area includes the villages of Whitley, Cridling Stubbs, Balne and part of Womersley.



## Representative photographs



## Summary of key characteristics

- Remarkably flat arable farmland consisting of irregularly shaped fields of a small-medium scale, defined by occasional hedgerow trees.
- General sense of openness, but greater sense of enclosure in the west with a higher concentration of areas of broadleaved woodland.
- Sparse and scattered network of small settlements and winding rural roads, overlaid with straight main routes.
- Overall countryside setting with associated sense of tranquillity.
- The Gale Common ash disposal site forms a large and highly noticeable artificial hill, and power stations characterise northern views.
- Small waterbodies and wetlands scattered throughout the landscape, some of which are associated with medieval moats.
- Farmhouses typically constructed in red mottled brick.

## Landscape Character

### Landscape character

The Southern Farmlands character area is very flat with the vast majority of the area below 10m above ordnance datum (AOD), only rising slightly near Whitley. The flat landscape contrasts with the limestone ridge to the west. In recent times, the land has been raised to almost 70 m AOD at the artificial hill formed by the Gale Common ash disposal site. The area is underlain by sandstones, covered by a thick layer of lacustrine clays. There are no major watercourses within this character area, but there are many small watercourses and ditches draining the farmland, and occasional ponds used for fishing.

This is generally an open area, with little woodland cover, although pockets of broadleaved Ancient Woodland become more common in the west of the character area, including woodland on and around Gale Common. Many are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) including Ox Stocking Wood, Brown Ings Wood, Broadoak Spring, and Grant Spring. The pockets of woodland in this western area, as well as the ash mound and nearby limestone ridge, provide an increased sense of enclosure, compared to the openness of the east.

The primary land use is intensive arable farmland, with fields ranging from very large prairie-like areas, to medium scale fields enclosed by occasional hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Most areas are There are some areas of smaller scale fields, particularly to the south of Balne Moor Road, surrounding the village of Balne, including remnants of medieval strip fields.

The remains of medieval moated sites are present in the area, including two that are Schedule Monuments. There are few listed buildings, almost entirely in the villages of Walden Stubbs and Womersley, which has a conservation area that extends across the character area boundary.

Whitley is a medium sized and very linear village, with modern housing spaced out along its main road, and no defined centre. It lies south of junction 34 of the M62, on a barely noticeable rise in the landscape. Other settlements are more dispersed, such as the clusters of farms around Balne. Womersley is a more nuclear village on the edge of the character area, its character defined by the limestone of the adjacent character area. A network of winding and narrow rural roads links farms and small villages. Main routes are overlaid onto this network and include long straight routes of the A19 and Balne Moor Road.

Public rights of way connect the dispersed villages of Balne and Walden Stubbs with the surrounding areas, but public access is limited across many parts of the character area. National Cycle Route 62 passes briefly through the south-eastern tip of the character area.

The landscape has an overall rural character, with a strong sense of tranquillity resulting from the lack of human features. This quiet rural character is most clearly felt in amongst the minor roads and dispersed farmsteads in the east, and among the woodlands in the west. Sense of tranquillity is lessened towards the north of the character area due to the noise of the M62 motorway along the northern boundary.



## Key Sensitivities

### Physical character (including topography and scale)

Open parts of the area may be sensitive to relatively small changes, due to the flat open landscape in which new features are readily visible. More wooded areas in particular may be able to absorb sensitively sited and designed new development, where woodland can provide containment. The ash disposal site creates a dramatic landform which is highly visible across the area, and changes to its appearance will be widely seen, though it could provide a back-cloth to low level development nearby.

### Natural Character

This is an intensively farmed landscape, with natural heritage interest limited to woodlands, and locally important water bodies which are sensitive to change and to any losses. New woodland on the man-made hill at Gale Common provides new naturalistic features contributing positively to the landscape.

### Historic Landscape Character

There is limited time-depth in this landscape, parts of which have been drained and enclosed as recently as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Localised areas of older strip fields and more traditional settlement are more sensitive to change. The interface with the limestone farmland is more diverse around the village of Womersley which retains a strong vernacular character. The area generally is sensitive to any further field-boundary loss. Individual heritage assets will be sensitive to change but their contribution to landscape character is localised.

### Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/development

Modern residential development characterises views of Whitley across the farmland, showing a degree of unity of style and colour across housing developments.

The traditional form of Womersley is more intact, and would be sensitive to development that did not fit with its characteristic layout and limestone building materials.

The dispersed pattern of settlement across the rest of the area indicates that higher-density housing developments would be uncharacteristic, and is characteristic of the area.

### Views and Visual Character including Skylines

There are few landmarks other than the Gale Common ash disposal site. To the north, the power stations are clearly seen on the skyline. Local skylines are generally indistinct, obscured by woodland, or flat, and are therefore of limited sensitivity.

Gale Common ash disposal site is a key skyline feature, and changes to its form or land cover would be widely visible. There are long, straight roads that provide vistas through the landscape, and areas of more open visibility would be more sensitive to changes.

### Access and Recreation

There is a network of public rights of way in places, valued for local recreation. Aside from a short section of National Cycle Network Route 62, part of the Trans Pennine Trail, there are few other recreational assets that enable enjoyment of the countryside.

### Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

The strongly rural character in the south of this area makes it sensitive to built development, since these areas are quiet and relatively isolated. This sense of quiet isolation is reduced towards the north, which is closer to the M62.

## Principal forces for change

| Theme               | Scope   |
|---------------------|---|
| Built Development   | Further development pressure for housing at Whitley.  |
| Energy              | Renewable development such as anaerobic digesters and solar farms.  |
| Transport           | Incremental urbanising upgrades to minor roads, particularly where these are notably rural in character.  |
| Trees and woodlands | Lack of maintenance of hedgerows may result in further boundary loss across the area.<br><br>Some of the woodlands are of single age, with limited signs of natural regeneration. |
| Agriculture         | Large scale agricultural buildings.   |
| Minerals            | Proposals to extract ash from the Gale Common site.   |
| Climate change      | There is increased likelihood of flooding across low-lying parts of the landscape in the north-east of the character area.  |

## Management guidelines

The following general guidelines apply in this area, subject to adopted local and national planning policies:






- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and field trees where field boundaries have been lost in the past, such as along roads and field drains;
- Encourage planting of shelterbelts and small woodlands on underused land;
- Seek to secure long-term health of woodlands across the area;
- Seek restoration of areas of hardstanding, embankments or other earthworks that may be intrusive within the flat landscape;
- Use existing woodland and new woodland planting to integrate built development into the landscape;
- Buildings and compounds, including temporary works, may be highly visible and their location and appearance should be carefully considered; and
- Consider colours of new development, avoiding white or blue that may be prominent, and favouring colours that reflect the landscape.

Location specific guidelines for this area include:

- Extraction of ash from the Gale Common site should seek to establish long-term gains for the landscape, such as retention of the established landscaping, and securing recreational access to safe parts of the site – areas where ash will be removed should be returned to agriculture or woodland;
- Housing development should be focused on Whitley, and could take the form of infill development within the existing piecemeal village form. Further elongation of this village should be avoided.

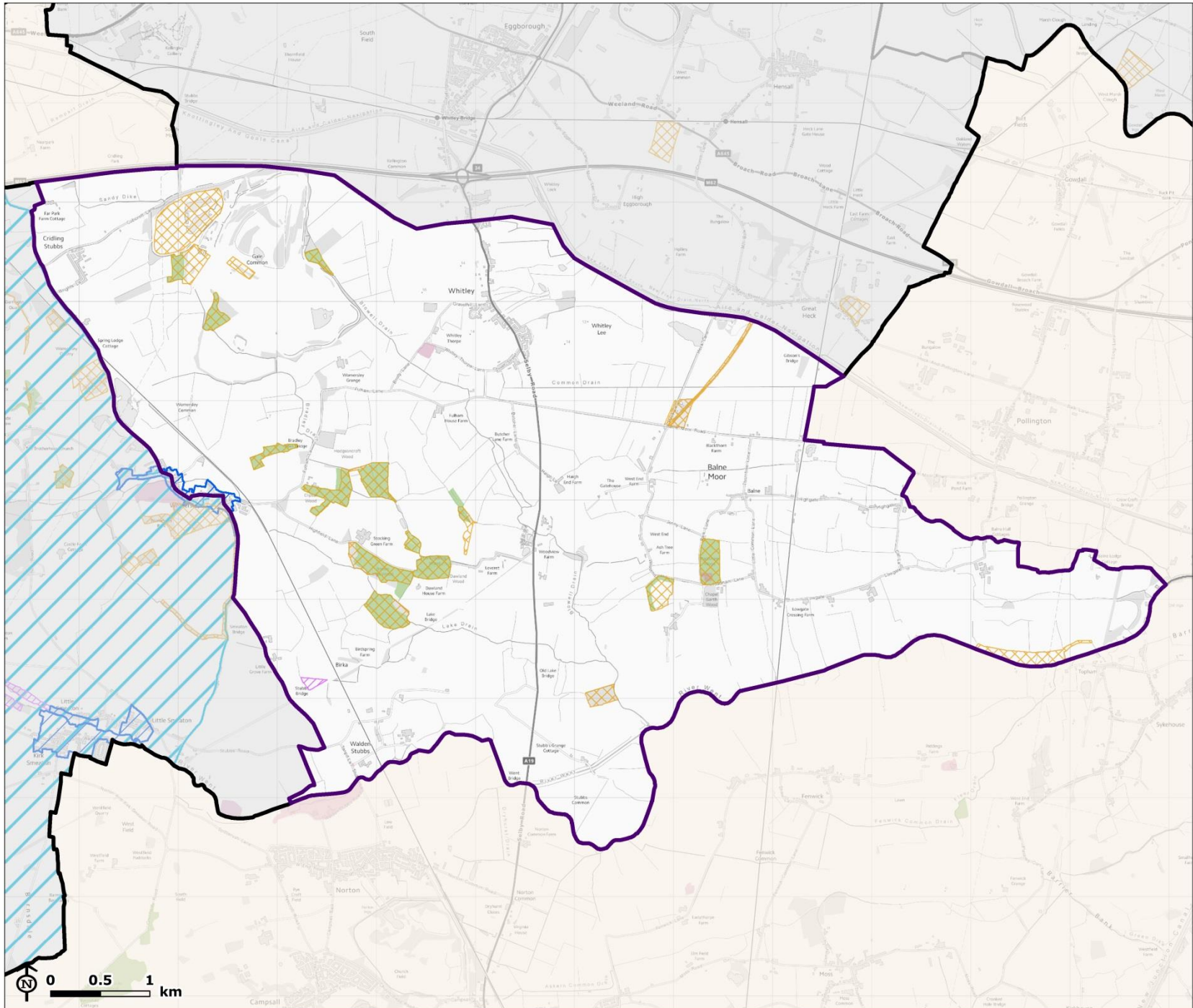
**Selby District  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

**Figure 5.17: Southern  
Farmland Landscape  
Character Area**

-  Selby District
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Other Landscape Character Area
-  Area outside Assessment
-  Locally Important Landscape Area
- Cultural Heritage**
-  Conservation Area
-  Scheduled Monument
- Natural Heritage**
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Source: SDC, NE, HE



**Map Scale @ A4: 1:55,000**

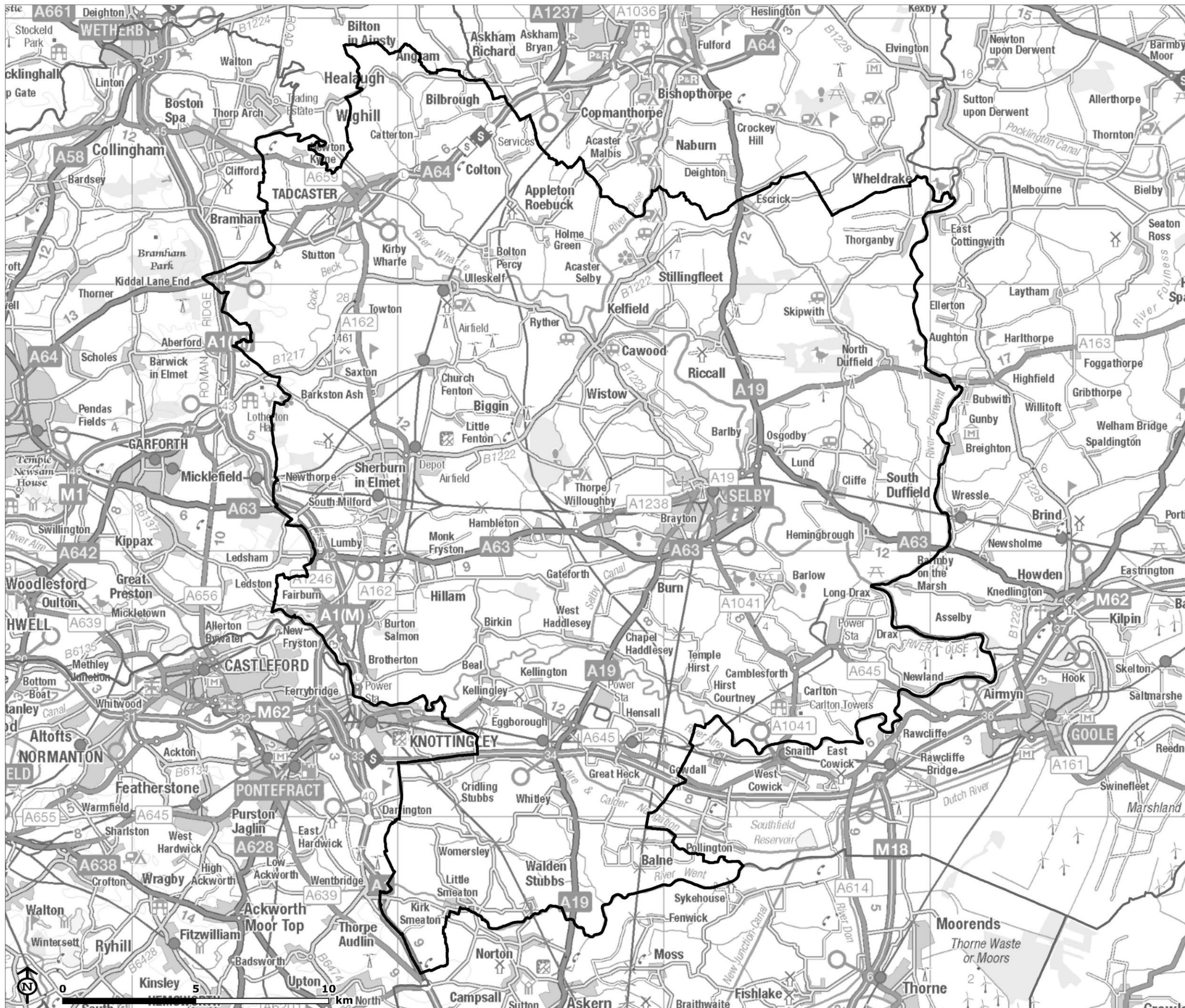


# Appendix 1 - Figures

# Selby District Council Landscape Character Assessment

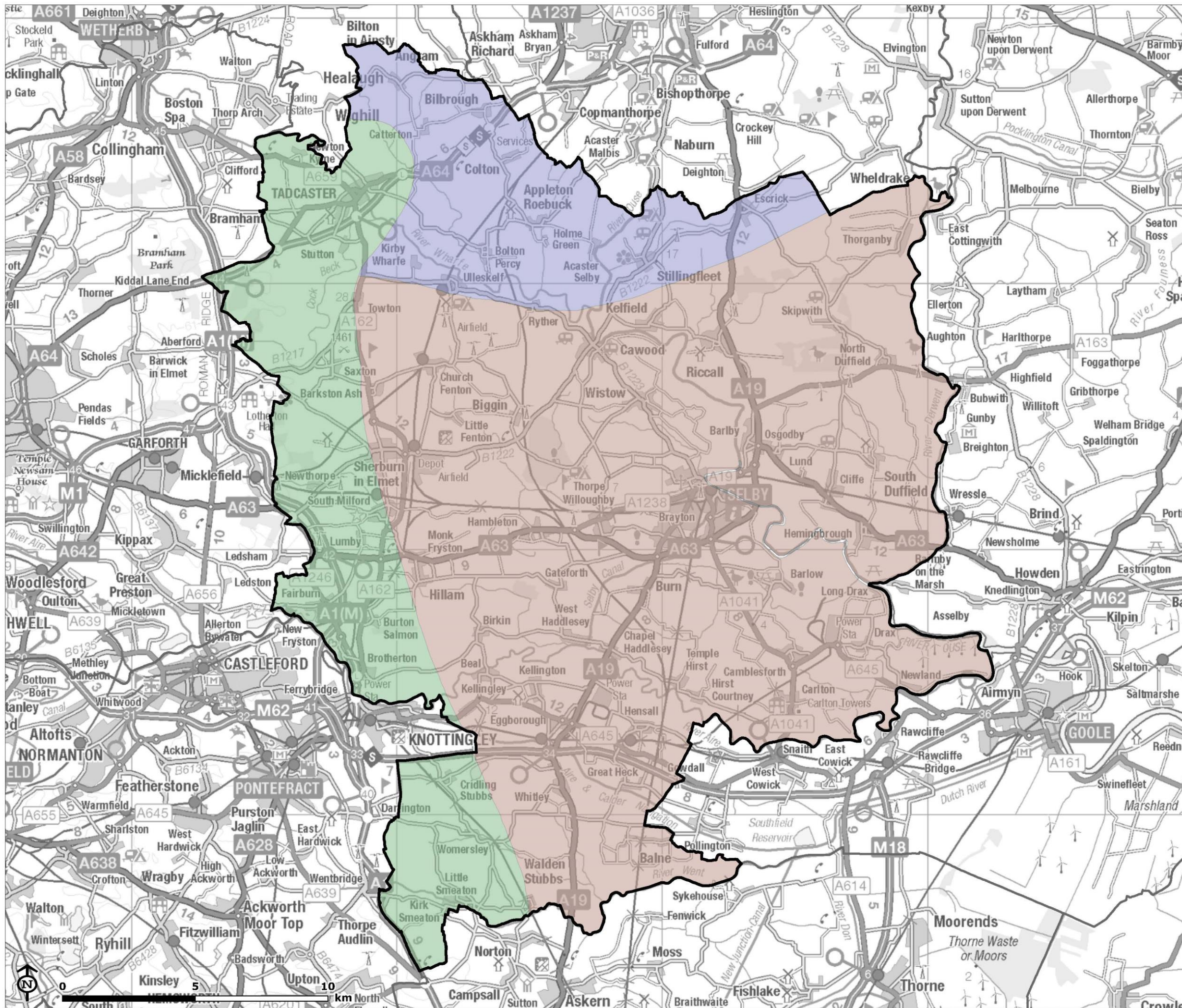
Figure 1.1: Selby District

-  Selby District
-  Neighbouring Local Authority boundary






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# Selby District Council Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 2.1: National Character Areas**








-  Selby District
-  Neighbouring Local Authority boundary
- National Character Area**
  -  Humberhead Levels
  -  Southern Magnesian Limestone
  -  Vale of York

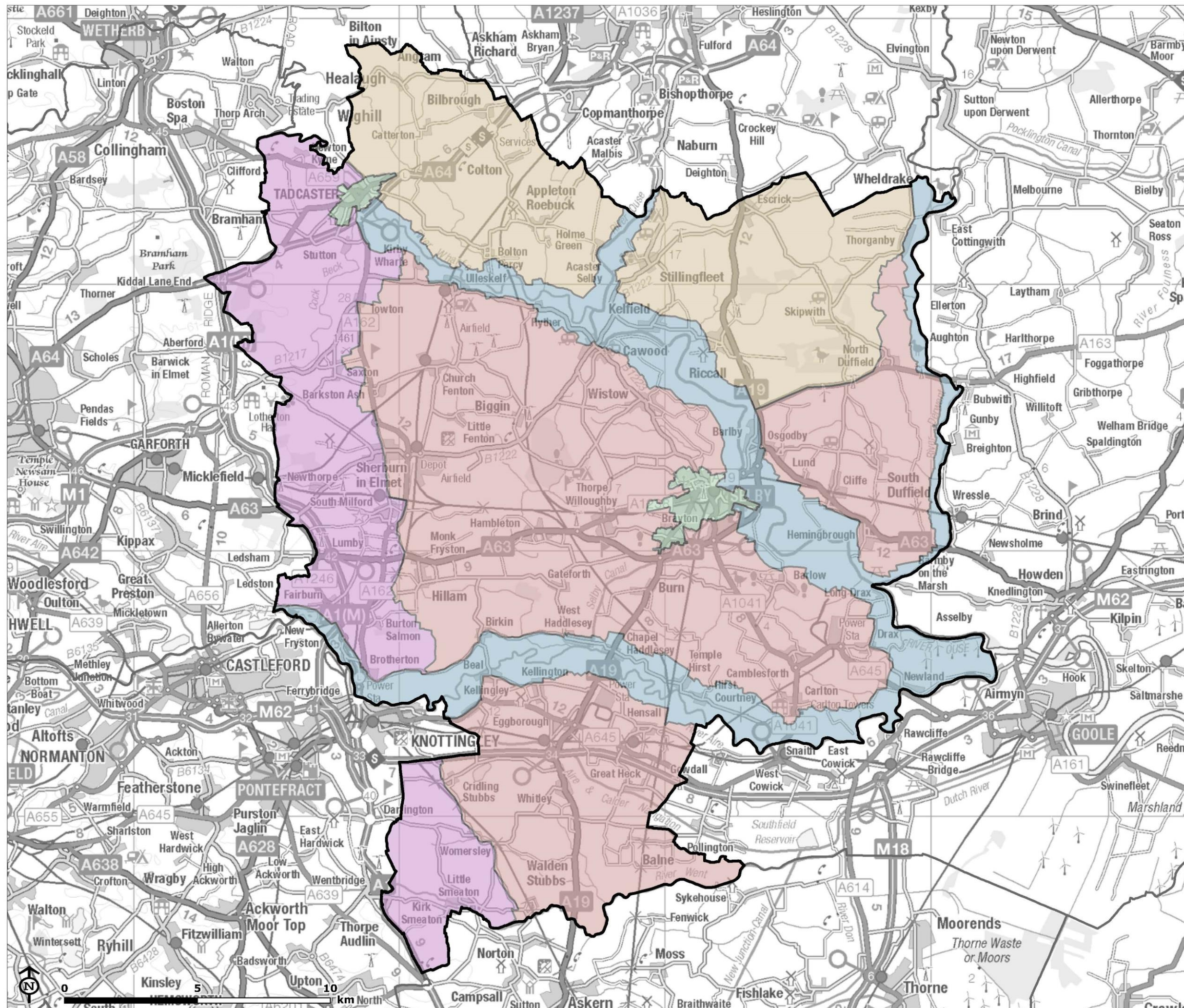
Map Scale @A3: 1:140,000



**Selby District Council  
Landscape Character  
Assessment**

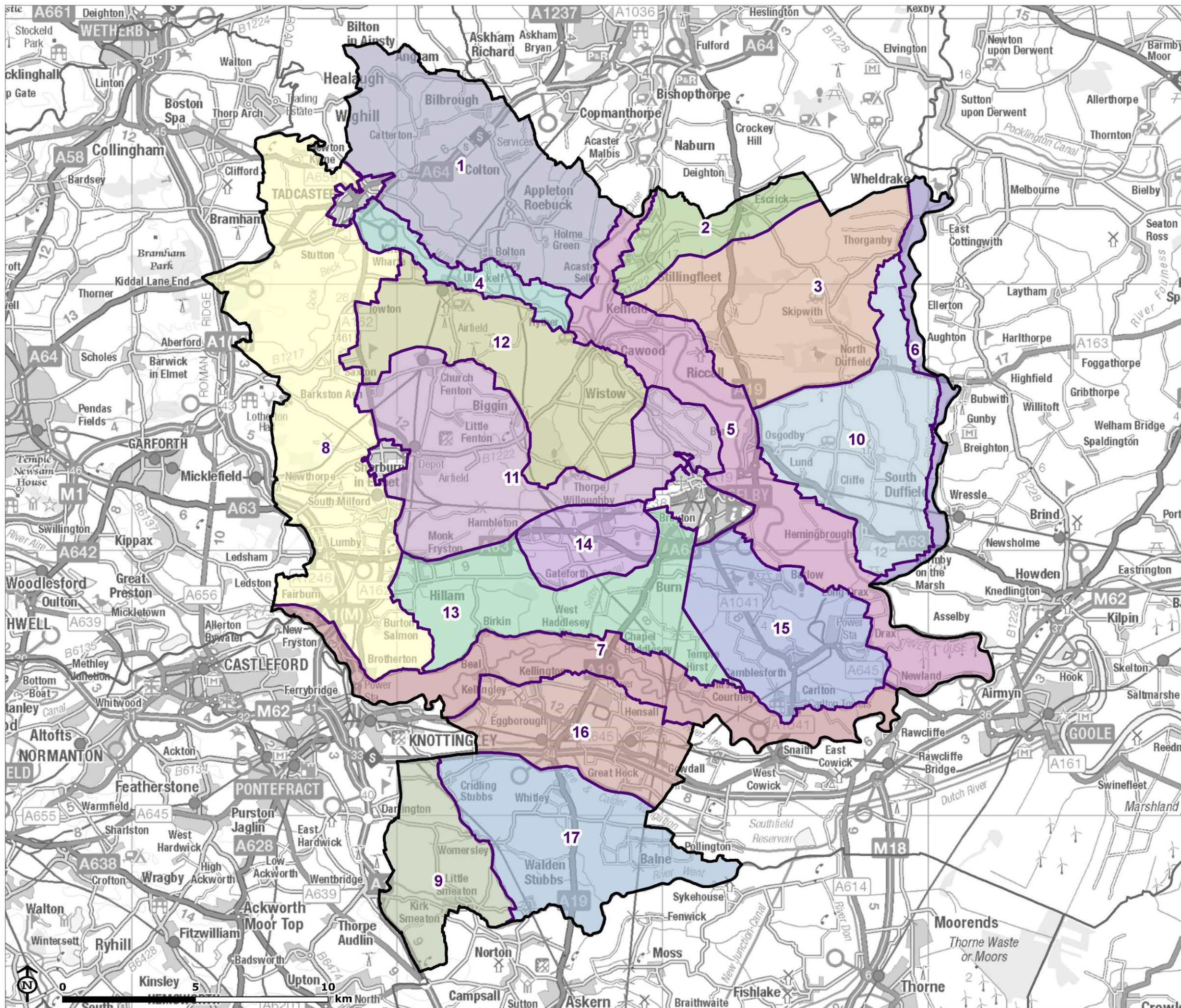
**Figure 2.2: County Landscape Character Types**

-  Selby District
-  Neighbouring Local Authority boundary
- Landscape Character Type**
-  001: Urban Landscapes
-  006: Magnesian Limestone Ridge
-  023: Levels Farmland
-  024: River Floodplain
-  028: Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland



Map Scale @A3: 1:140,000





## Selby District Council Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 4.1: Landscape Character Areas**

- Selby District
- Neighbouring Local Authority boundary
- Landscape Character Area
- 1: York Fringe west
- 2: York Fringe east
- 3: Skipwith Lowlands
- 4: Wharfe Valley
- 5: Ouse Valley
- 6: Derwent Valley
- 7: Aire Valley
- 8: West Selby Limestone Ridge
- 9: Smeaton Ridge
- 10: East Selby Farmland
- 11: Sherburn Farmland
- 12: North Selby Farmland
- 13: Haddlesey Farmland
- 14: Hambleton Sandstone Ridge
- 15: Camblesforth Farmland
- 16: Eggborough
- 17: Southern Farmland

Map Scale @A3: 1:140,000

