

AREA 37

Approved
Feb 2004

A Looking west from Warthermarske.



Ilton to Nutwith Wooded Upland Fringe Grassland



Description

This moderate to large-scale area covering 11km² located south of the River Burn forms part of the river's north facing valley side. Topography slopes down northwards towards the River Burn and east towards the River Ure with several small valley streams incising the valley side (Sole Beck, Eller Beck and Dan Beck). The high stone walls that surround Swinton Park form part of the northern boundary to this area, important to the setting of the Registered Park and Garden. The monochrome appearance of grassland fields is broken by the valley's incision in the landscape and the good tree cover. The fields are managed for livestock and have hedge boundaries in varying conditions often reinforced with fencing. There are several small, scattered plantations and a few individual trees along field boundaries. Trees are also dotted within fields echoing the parkland character of neighbouring Swinton Park (which shares other characteristics with this area).



In the west, the character area abuts the upland moorland where field pattern is more organised with rectilinear enclosures bound by stone walls. Sole Beck flows from its source in the moors, incising the character area on its journey to meet with the River Burn.

This is a generally pleasant landscape with few detractors but for the angular conifer plantations that are insensitive to the organic landform and landscape pattern.

This is a transitional character area within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty from the upland fringe with Ilton Moor in the west down to the River Ure Corridor in the east. The area could be split into the elevated upland conifer wooded grassland fringe at the moorland edge and the upland deciduous/mixed wooded grassland fringe.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

-  Millstone grit and coal measures solid geology and till drift geology.
-  Deep well-drained, fine loamy brown soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging plus area of less well-drained fine loamy over clayey surface water gley soils.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Landform and drainage pattern

- Undulating landform falling northwards towards the River Burn and eastwards to the River Ure.
- Sole Beck, Den Beck and Eller beck flow northwards across the area to eventually join with the River Burn.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Small to medium sized fields managed for both livestock and arable production.
- Field boundaries are a mix of walls, hedges and fences in varying condition.
- There is one large block of woodland at Nutwith Common and several medium sized blocks mainly associated with the becks, e.g. Sole Beck.
- Few individual trees.
- Gill Head Farm Fields (neutral grassland) is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Ilton, Wathermarske and Swinton plus a few isolated farmsteads.
- Roman camp, Cairn enclosure and strip lynchets are all of historical interest.
- The Druids Temple is a local attraction and views from this high point on the edge of the character area are extensive.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- This area is a highly visible valley side and sloping landscape. As a result the potential impact of development on the visual characteristics of the area is considerable. Loss of key characteristics such as field pattern, the wooded nature of the gills and becks and the sparse and scattered nature of the farmsteads would impact upon character and the setting of the Registered Park and Garden at Swinton.

- Individual trees in the area are of a similar age which could result in the sudden loss of this characteristic.
- The historic and archaeological elements of the landscape are not well marked or interpreted resulting in limited understanding of their contribution to the distinctiveness of the area. Old field systems in particular can help to indicate how an area has developed.
- Vernacular buildings and drystone walls are sensitive to neglect.
- Conifer plantations at the upland fringe are prominent and highlight the sudden change in character between the gritstone moorland and upland fringe.

Sensitivities & Pressures

Aim: To preserve the setting of Swinton Historic Park and Garden and other historic features in the area.

- Ensure that key characteristics and features are retained.
- Promote the proactive management of woodland and trees in the area to ensure long term wooded character of the area.
- Development will only be allowed where it does not impact upon the setting of the Registered Park and Garden and where historic and archaeological features are not affected.

Aim: To protect and enhance diverse transitional nature of this wooded landscape.

- Promote the maintenance and repair of drystone wall and hedge field boundaries.
- Explore opportunities to improve the diversity of conifer woodland and the upland edge with the gritstone moor.
- Encourage diversification of grassland habitats at the boundary with the gritstone moor through less intensive management practices in line with the Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan.



From Knowle Lane.