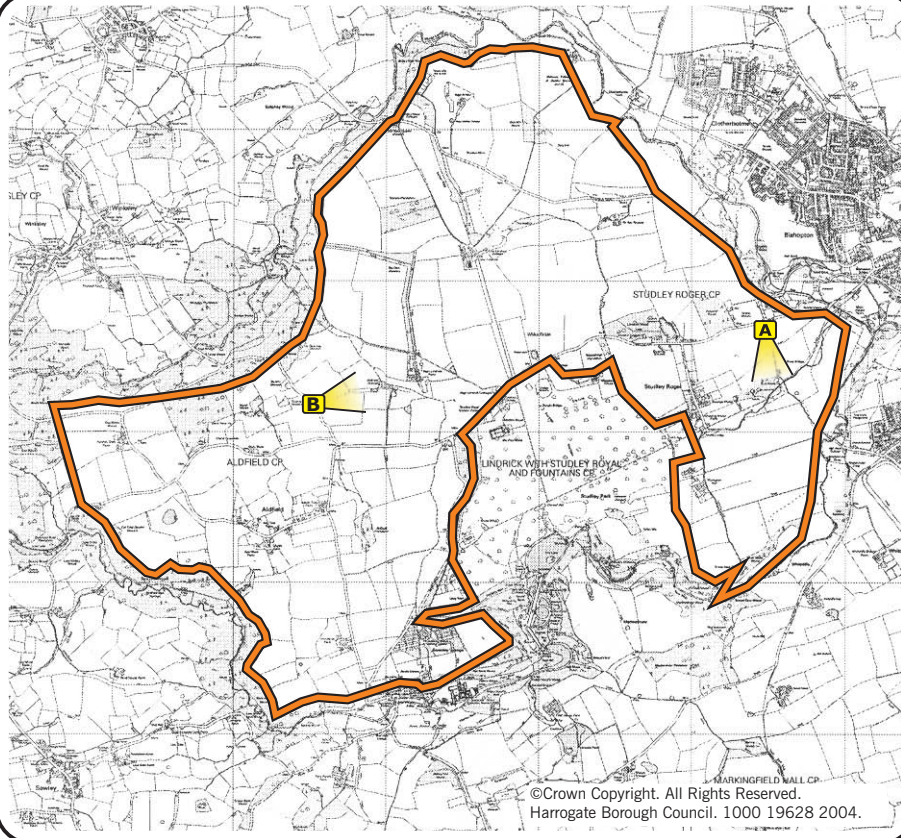


AREA
44

Approved
Feb 2004

A Public footpath and new planting.

Aldfield to Studley Vale Fringe Farmland



HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

- Area boundary*
- Camera location & direction
- Not to Scale

* NB Due to the nature of landform, surface treatment and soil/geology composition Character area boundaries cannot be delineated precisely and should be considered "transitional".



Description

This area covers 10.4km² to the west of Ripon and north of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site. It is moderate in scale with a gently undulating to flat landform. Fields are large. Individual trees in fields and hedgerows are typical, particularly in the area between Ripon and Fountains Abbey. Visually, these features link the area with the parkland of the World Heritage Site (which has been identified as a separate Character Area due to its distinctive water gardens and parkland). Veteran trees and village earthworks at Aldfield reflect the influence which Fountains Abbey had on the landscapes immediately beyond the boundary of this World Heritage Site.

Tree cover consists of individual trees and several blocks of woodland and clumps of trees. A large amount of new woodland and hedge planting has taken place between the edge of Ripon and Studley Park particularly along public rights of way linking Ripon with Fountains and scattered within fields maintaining the parkland character. The established trees are dense and screen the urban edge of Ripon as well as framing some excellent views of Ripon Cathedral.

Landscape pattern appears organised and harmonious and reflects the historic aspect of the landscape.

The diversity and richness of the area's history and attention to detail (e.g. tidy hedges/good public rights of way/easy access) make this area not only stunning in places but interesting too. This well-treed Character Area is very important to the setting of the World Heritage Site and serves to maintain its separation from Ripon.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Magnesian limestone solid geology with sandy till and till drift geology.
- Brown soils, grade 3 agricultural land intensively managed for both livestock and arable production.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Gently undulating landform between 140m and 70m AOD with several flatter areas.
- The area is located on high ground between the confluence of the River Laver with the River Skell.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Large arable fields that appear to be the result of amalgamated early enclosure fields traditionally have hedge boundaries which are now fragmented in places. Closer to Ripon there are some grass fields.
- Several blocks and shelterbelts of new and established woodland.
- Localised areas of well established and immature scattered trees within fields (e.g. fields around Studley Roger).
- The woodland around Studley Royal is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- Main settlements are Aldfield and Studley Roger plus scattered farmsteads and houses.
- Red brick and pantile are the dominant building materials of the area with some limestone, sandstone, cobblestone and render and slate roofs.
- Several public footpaths and bridleways connect Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey (National Trust) with Ripon.
- Historically the area has long been settled and was controlled by Fountains Abbey during monastic times.
- Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal is a World Heritage site.
- Framed views of Ripon Cathedral and an important vista from the obelisk at St Mary's Church in Studley Royal to Ripon Cathedral.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- Characteristic views of Ripon and the church at Studley Park are sensitive to change through inappropriate planting and development.
- The main development pressures result from tourism and demand for public access and recreation facilities.
- There is also pressure from changing agricultural policy and farming practices.
- Loss/neglect of historic features beyond the boundaries of Fountains Abbey.
- Lack of woodland cover in places, particularly away from Fountains Abbey.

- Poor management of hedgerows, field enlargement and decline in frequency of hedgerow trees in places.

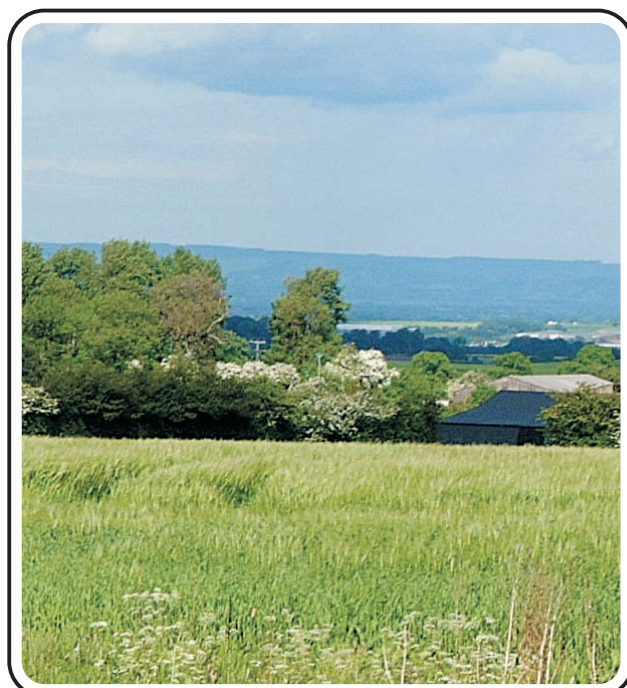
Guidelines

Aim: To protect and enhance the setting of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site.

- Encourage the retention and enhancement of existing agricultural/parkland character between Ripon and the World Heritage Site.
- Promote historic restoration between Ripon and Fountains Abbey, taking account of key views to Ripon Cathedral.
- Promote the repair and appropriate maintenance of hedges and the planting and management of hedgerow trees, particularly to the north and west where there is limited new planting.
- Conserve architectural elements associated with historic parkland and estates.
- Conserve the character of traditional settlements, discourage intrusive development and ensure new development is appropriate in location, layout, scale, materials and design.

Aim: To ensure that recreation facilities and links are appropriate to character and do not detract from the setting of the World Heritage Site.

- New development must respect vernacular and landscape pattern.
- Views to and from the World Heritage Site and, in particular, Ripon Cathedral must be protected.
- New facilities should relate to existing attractions rather than create new ones.



B Looking west from lane north of Aldfield