

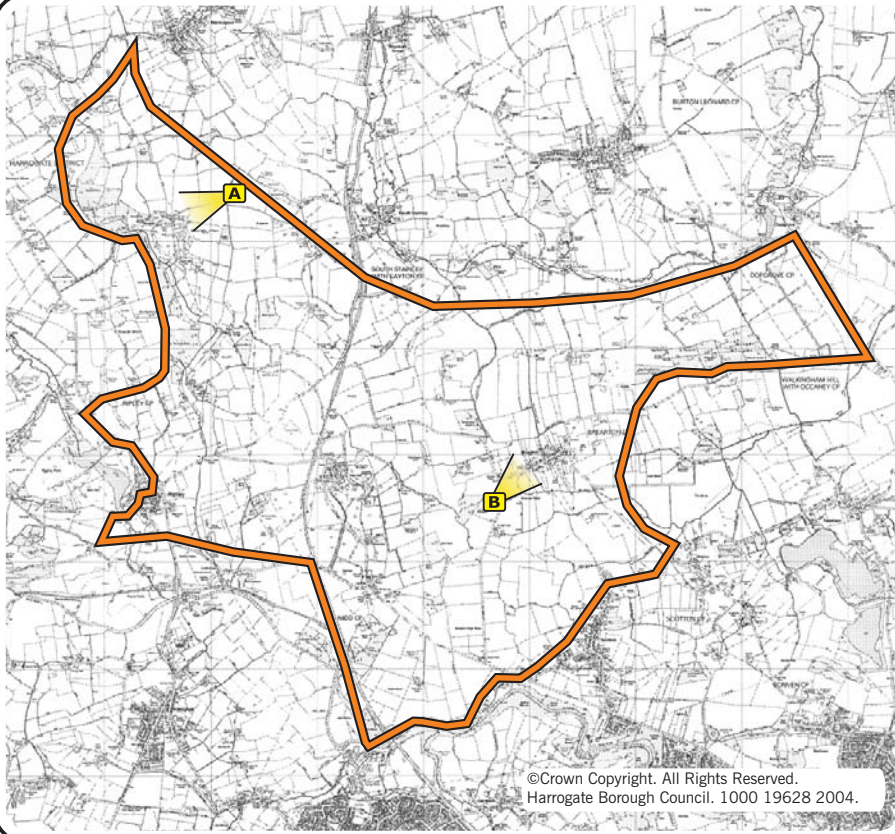
**AREA
50**

**Approved
Feb 2004**

A Farmland at Cayton.

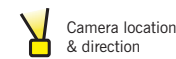


Brearton and Nidd Arable Farmland



HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

— Area boundary*



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".

Location in Harrogate District



© Crown Copyright. All Rights Reserved.
Harrogate Borough Council. 1000 19628 2004.

Description

This is a moderate scale landscape that gently undulates with fair to good woodland cover. The area covers nearly 20km² of mixed farmland. Individual trees grow along field boundaries and cluster around settlement enclosing and dispersing views.

Land use is predominantly cereal crop production giving a uniform appearance with muted green fields during spring.

The balance of landscape elements (trees and fields) is harmonious and consistent. The trees help to integrate settlement with the landscape.

Field pattern is a mix of random (due to the irregular shaped fields of pre-parliamentary enclosure) and organised (where patches of rectilinear parliamentary enclosures are found). At Brearton there is an important field pattern of medieval strip land holdings called 'tofts' to the rear of the settlement indicating a long farming history and providing a distinct setting for the village.

This area is well-tended and intensively managed. The A61, although a discordant linear feature with noise and pollution, makes the area easily accessible.

Overall this is a pleasant and attractive Character Area with some beautiful and stunning views.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- ▶ Millstone grit and Magnesian limestone (north of Brearton) solid geology
- ▶ Slowly permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, fine loamy over clayey soils with patches of deep well-drained, coarse, loamy brown soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

- ▶ Gently undulating flat landform generally below 100m AOD and sloping down gradually to the east.
- ▶ Cayton Gill, Newton Beck and Jumwell Beck are the main water features and there is a network of drainage ditches along field boundaries.
- ▶ Nidd Hall has one large fishpond and there are many small ones scattered throughout the area.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- ▶ Arable fields are largely without boundaries. Some have hedges particularly alongside roads. Post and wire fencing encloses grass fields for livestock control.

Key Characteristics

- Clumps of both new and established deciduous woodland plus mixed woodland and plantations.
- A lot of trees are scattered along field boundaries plus parkland trees scattered within the grounds of Nidd Hall.
- Registered Ancient Semi-Natural woodland at Barsneb Wood.
- There are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation at Horse Hill Wood and Cayton Gill Marsh.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- Main settlements are Brearton and Nidd plus scattered individual residential buildings and farmsteads.
- Local building materials are Magnesian limestone, white render, red brick and tile plus modern farm buildings.
- Cayton, the site of a Fountains Abbey Monastic Grange, is also the site of a deserted medieval village.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- Historic features here are susceptible to loss due to intensive farming practices. The deserted medieval village of Cayton and features associated with the Monastic Grange are Scheduled Monuments. However, this landscape has been farmed for generations and, where they have not already been lost, many historic elements are threatened.
- Nidd Hall and its associated parkland, although not a Registered Historic Park and Garden, does have parkland which is extremely important to the character of this area and it should be protected.



B Brearton farmland

- The area provides the eastern setting of Ripley Park which is a Registered Historic Park and Garden.
- The A61 is a detractor and contributes to the accessibility of the area generating development pressure along its corridor.
- Trees along the A61, which contribute to the setting of Ripley and which are associated with its designed landscape, are of a similar age so there is a possibility that many will be lost at the same time.

Guidelines

Aim: To protect the historic fabric of landscape character.

- Ensure that archaeological features are protected from damaging farming practices and explore opportunities to create a buffer in consultation with landowners to improve protection.
- Identify historic elements that are not scheduled but which contribute to landscape character and conserve them in liaison with landowners, English Heritage and NYCC.

Aim: Protect the setting and character of both registered and non-registered parks and gardens.

- Parkland trees are important to diverse landscape pattern and require a programme of replacement and management.
- Veteran trees require protection from damaging activities.
- In general, settlement is scattered and small scale and proposed development which does not take account of this (and other key landscape characteristics) should be resisted.
- Requirements for farm buildings, and buildings for other rural businesses, should be accommodated within existing farmstead footprints.

Aim: Maintain and protect tree cover for the long term.

- Encourage management of woodland to improve biodiversity and woodland structure.
- Promote woodland and tree planting to respect landform and landscape pattern, strengthening key woodland and tree characteristics.