

AREA 54

Approved
Feb 2004

A Looking south-west from north of Forest Moor.



Harrogate - Knaresborough Corridor

Description

This undulating area, which slopes gradually down eastwards, covers just under 5.7km² and separates the towns of Harrogate and Knaresborough. It shares its boundary with Character Area 49: Nidd Gorge in the north and east and with Harrogate urban edge to the west and extends as far south as Forest Moor Lane and Calcutt. The area is of recreation value to local residents for golfing, walking and horse riding and is also important to the rural setting of Harrogate and Knaresborough. The landscape pattern is dominated by small to medium sized parliamentary enclosure fields on an undulating landform. Field boundaries are mainly hedges with trees of various height and displaying different management regimes. The land is managed for livestock and where hedges have become fragmented fences fill the gaps so that they remain stockproof. The manicured appearance of Harrogate Golf Course contrasts with the less formal appearance of the fields.

Woodland cover is sparse consisting of a few small woodland blocks and clumps generally associated with large scattered farmsteads and individual houses. However, the landscape is quite well-treed and a valued local asset.

Although there are few houses and farmsteads within the area its character is heavily influenced by the built form both of Harrogate and Knaresborough. Old Bilton is a small village and its vernacular style is important in maintaining rural character so close to urban development. Views across parts of the area to Holy Trinity Church, Knaresborough are greatly valued by locals.

There are roads and a railway connecting the two towns and several public footpaths and bridleways.

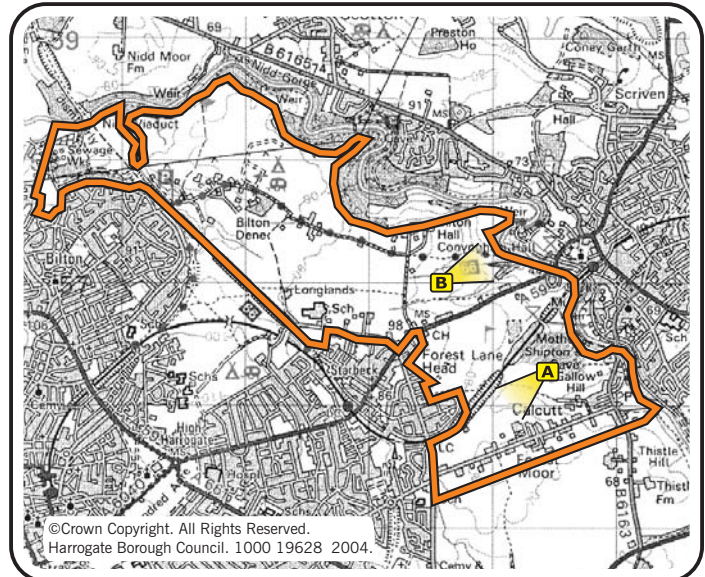
Much of the area is designated Green Belt in recognition of its role in separating the two towns. The area is also within the boundary of the Royal Forest of Knaresborough, a former medieval hunting park.

The area is the subject of a Local Heritage Initiative project along with Character Areas 53 and 55.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Magnesian limestone solid geology with sandy till and till drift geology.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, fine loamy over clayey soils.



HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

Location in Harrogate District

- 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".

Landform and drainage pattern

- Rolling landform between 100m and 60m AOD falling eastwards.
- No major water feature but the Nidd Gorge is an influential adjacent Character Area.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Grade 3 agricultural (grass)land with recreational use at Harrogate Golf Course.
- Mixed early and parliamentary enclosure field pattern. Hedge boundaries (some overgrown).
- Few small woodland blocks. Individual trees scattered along boundaries are more numerous.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Old Bilton, Bilton Hall, Calcutt and Forest Moor road as well as the urban edges of Harrogate and Knaresborough.
- Several footpaths and bridleways including the Knaresborough Round and Harrogate Ringway connect Harrogate and Knaresborough.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Harrogate to Knaresborough railway line.
- Thistle Hill Nursing Home and a college are both major developed sites in the Green Belt.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The rural pastoral character of the area is sensitive to encroachment from built development and the loss of hedges and trees. The impact of encroachment can be seen along Forest Moor Lane.
- To the east the Nidd has contained the development limit of Knaresborough. There is no physical feature to help define the eastern extent of Harrogate although the dismantled Harrogate to Ripon Railway line has acted as the limit in places.
- Pressure for various types of development exist in this area due to the proximity of Harrogate and Knaresborough and easy access from the A59 and Forest Moor Lane.
- There is development pressure as a result of its location in close proximity to Harrogate and Knaresborough. The demand for recreation and tourist facilities has resulted in some pressure for development
- Neglect and loss of field hedges important to the character of the area and for stock control.
- Detractors in the area include the A59, joining Harrogate and Knaresborough, and the York to Harrogate railway line.
- Extension of Harrogate Golf Course will impact upon rural character by extending the manicured appearance of the course.

Guidelines

Aim: To retain rural character of the area and its role in separating Harrogate from Knaresborough.

- Proposals for change of use and built development must assess impact on landscape character, views and openness of the area. This 'green' space between the towns is sensitive to development which encroaches on the countryside.
- Promote the maintenance and reinstatement of hedges and hedgerow trees to preserve field pattern and rural land use.
- Tree planting could be used to help define the urban edge and limit encroachment into the countryside.
- Where need is established new agricultural buildings should be of appropriate scale and design and relate to existing farmsteads and layout as well as landform and overall character.
- Development other than diversification of an existing use should be discouraged.
- Ensure that the expansion and creation of new recreation facilities does not adversely impact on openness, landscape character or views.
- Avoid future linear development along the A59
- Avoid the loss of key landscape features .



B Looking east to Knaresborough from Bilton Hall Drive.