

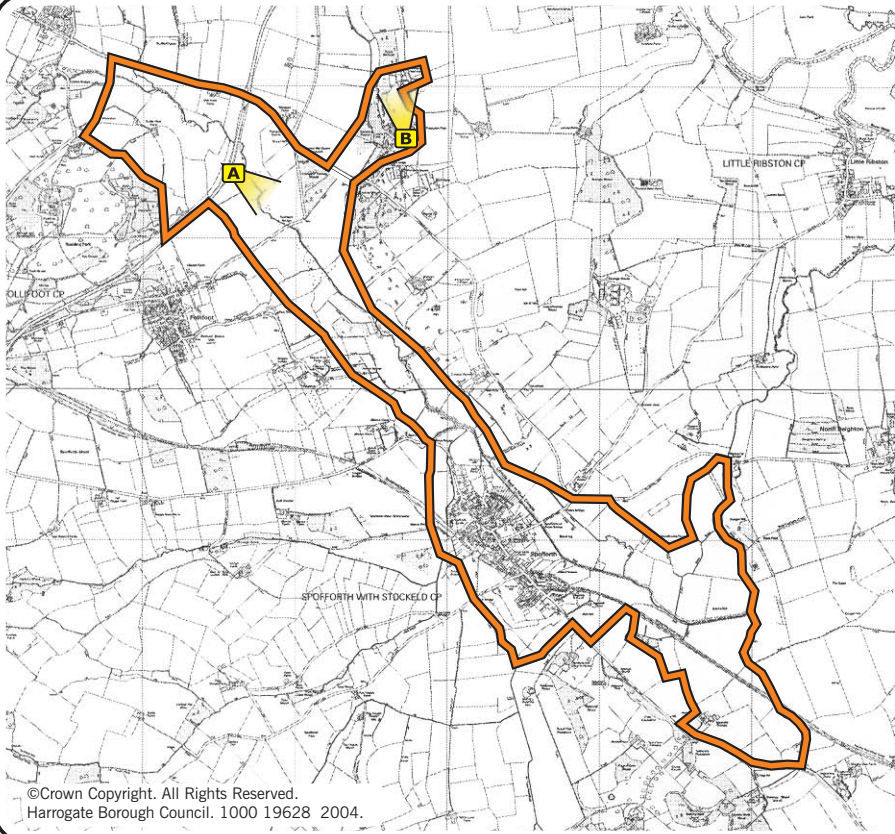
AREA
57

Approved
Feb 2004

A View south east from the A658 southern bypass.



Crimple and Park Beck Corridor



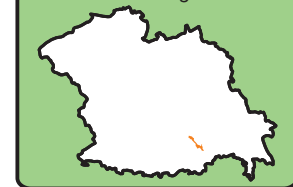
HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

— 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".

Location in Harrogate District



Description

This area is the shallow valley through which Crimple Beck flows south east away from the urban edge of Harrogate on its meandering course to meet the River Nidd. Park Beck joins the Crimple at Spofforth before the beck turn northwards. The area covers over 4km². The settlement of Spofforth occupies the low ridge between Park Beck and Crimple Beck that has been farmed since medieval times. Today land management is a mixture of grass and arable fields of various sizes.

Woodland cover is sparse except for occasional trees along field boundaries and where associated with Crimple Beck. The valley is relatively broad and partially enclosed and there are views across it from the east and, to a lesser extent, the west. The distinctiveness of the Crimple Beck corridor is a result of landform and the influence that the Beck has had on land use (predominantly grassland with occasional arable fields).

On the upper valley sides there are occasional gritstone outcrops which link with the formations at Plumpton Rocks, a Registered Historic Park and Garden. This Character Area has a pleasant corridor landscape.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Millstone grit solid geology with alluvial drift geology.
- Stoneless, clayey, fine silty and fine loamy soils affected by groundwater.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Shallow valley landform with the flat valley bottom of the River Crimple.
- The valley floor is at 35m AOD and the rim, at its highest, is 46m AOD.
- Crimple Beck and Park Beck with ditches along field boundaries draining into them.
- Occasional rock outcrops along the valley side particularly to the east is a characteristic shared with Plumpton Rocks Historic Park and Garden adjacent to this area where the characteristic is much more pronounced.
- Plumpton Rocks' lake was formed by damming a tributary of the River Crimple.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Agricultural land managed for both livestock and arable production.
- Plumpton Rocks is managed for tourism and fishing.
Individual trees along hedged field boundaries.
- Tree-lined watercourses of Crimple and Park Becks.
- Engineered levee structures to channel river.
- Newsome Bridge is an SSSI.
- There is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation at Braham Hall.
- Strip lynchets earthworks indicate medieval farming activity.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- Spofforth is a linear settlement on a low ridge between Park Beck and Crimple Beck. It has a village Conservation Area and the remains of a 14th century castle. The church is of Norman origin. Apart from Spofforth there is no settlement in this valley.
- Local building material is sandstone with sandstone flags or pantile roofs. Houses from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in traditional materials with 20th century houses introducing materials different to the older vernacular.
- Three road bridges cross the valley in this area.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The river corridor is overlooked. The landform and limited woodland cover mean that the area has little capacity to absorb development without detriment to the intimate character of the corridor.
- The northern end of this Character Area is in the West Riding Green Belt. However, the remainder of the corridor does not have the same protection. Pressure for development may be limited due to potential flooding but does exist within Spofforth. The village character has altered considerably with new development.

- Possible loss of strip lynchets and other historic earthworks to modern farming methods.
- Modern engineered structures along the river are unattractive (e.g. the A658 bypass bridge).
- Lack of management of woodland blocks leading to over-maturity.
- The area is important to the setting of Plumpton Rocks which is located on a tributary of Crimple Beck to the south of Harrogate.
- Agricultural management for arable production has potential to impact on water quality.

Guidelines

Aim: To maintain the corridor character that differs from the surrounding intensively farmed land.

- Encourage woodland management and new planting, connecting isolated clumps of trees to create and enhance wildlife corridors.
- Encourage native tree planting and appropriate boundary planting to gardens to better integrate the village edge with the surrounding landscape.
- Encourage reinstatement of riverside meadows along the valley floor to create buffer zone between the river and intensive farming practices.
- Protect features of archaeological interest/value such as ridge and furrow and strip lynchets.

Aim: To protect and enhance the setting of Plumpton Rocks.

- Encourage woodland and tree planting along the corridor to Plumpton Rocks to improve links.
- Promote the improvement of footpath links to Plumpton Rocks from Harrogate via Crimple Beck.
- Garden features need repair and management to maintain their integrity. Provide support for grant applications to restore the engineered features in the garden.



B View over the lake at Plumpton Rocks