

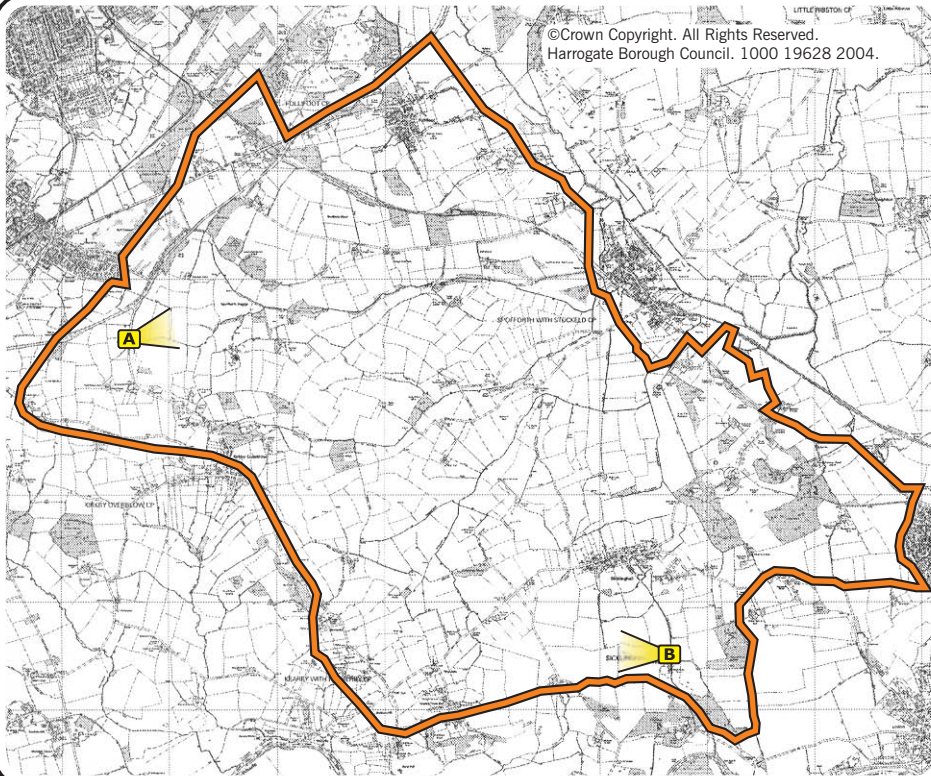
AREA 65

Approved
Feb 2004

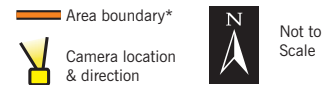
A Looking east over Spofforth Haggs.



South East Harrogate farmland



HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment



* 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 moderate scale, rolling landform is the dip slope of an escarpment. It falls away from Kirkby Overblow towards the north east where it meets the Crimple Valley. The area covers 27.5km². Small woodland blocks grow on higher ground enclose and disperse views. There are also some trees scattered along field boundaries.

Landscape pattern is random due to a diverse mix of land management including manicured fields managed for horses with stark post and rail fencing, which contrast with the less notable agricultural fields.



As well as the post and rail fencing the view of a communications mast detracts from the area. However, despite these negative elements the area is pleasant and attractive and can feel remote with a sense of peacefulness.

Rudding Park is a Registered Historic Park and Garden located on the northern boundary of the Character Area and shares some of its characteristics with the Park, i.e. landform and traditional building materials, as well as with the neighbouring Character Area 58: Middle Crimple Valley. The area is important to the setting of Rudding Park. Stockeld Park (not registered) is included within this Character Area.



The area is important to Harrogate's setting in separating the conurbation of Leeds from Harrogate town.

Key Characteristics




Geology, soils and drainage

-  Millstone grit solid geology.
-  Slowly-permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, loamy over clayey soils with patches of well-drained coarse loamy brown soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

-  Rolling landform gently falling eastwards.
-  Several springs and wells feed a number of becks which flow from west to east and into the River Crimple.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

-  Agricultural land managed for both livestock and arable production.
-  Medium sized fields enclosed by hedges and/or fences and walls of good condition plus distinctive post and rail fencing used around horse paddocks.
-  Small woodland blocks on higher ground including Ancient Semi-Natural woodland at Devonshire Whin and Parkin's Wood.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Localised areas of parkland trees at Stockeld Park (unregistered) and Rudding Park (a Registered Historic Park and Garden).
- There is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation at Devonshire Whin and Park House Farm fields.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Follifoot, Sicklinghall, Kirkby Overblow and Kearby with Netherby of which Follifoot and Kirkby Overblow have village Conservation Areas. There are scattered farmsteads and houses between villages.
- The earliest record of Follifoot is 1167. The village cross is Saxon. "Follifoot" derives from an Old English word meaning "horse fight". The settlement may be Norse. It seems to have been a centre of Medieval pottery industry
- In the 16th century there were three forges. In the 19th century it had a thriving diverse economy.
- The dominant traditional building material is gritstone with stone flag roofs and some pantiles and Welsh slates. There are also some Magnesian limestone buildings.
- Pre-historic cup and ring mark rocks are an important historic feature at Lodge wood.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The landscape has some capacity to absorb rural development if small in scale, associated with existing settlement/farmsteads and if appropriate planting is used to help integrate development.
- Views across the area are enclosed in places and extensive in others.
- The area is currently covered by the West Riding Green Belt which gives some measure of protection against inappropriate development.
- Farmstead and barn conversions have resulted in a change to the rural character of the area which is becoming increasingly more "manicured" in appearance. Pressure to convert existing buildings is likely to continue because the area's Green Belt designation restricts new built development.

- The conversion of farm buildings changes their character and impacts on their contribution to landscape character.
- This area is important to the setting of Rudding Park Historic Park and Garden (this setting has already been intrinsically changed with the construction of the A658 southern bypass). Further change would be detrimental to the rural setting of the Park.
- New fencing looks stark in the landscape.
- Overhead pylons and telegraph poles detract from characteristics and views.

Guidelines

Aim: To conserve the intricate early enclosure field pattern.

- Encourage the continued maintenance of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and restoration in area of neglect and fragmentation.
- Research the historic and wildlife importance of hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations criteria.

Aim: To promote woodland management and new woodland and tree planting.

- Protect and manage of all woodland especially Registered Ancient Semi-Natural woodland.
- Encourage awareness of the value of unregistered parkland and veteran trees especially at Stockeld Park.
- Trees are important to the setting of settlements and require proactive management.

Aim: Protect and enhance the setting of Rudding Park.

- Promote the management of roadside tree planting and links with woodland in the surrounding countryside to improve upon the integration of the southern bypass with the surrounding countryside.
- Encourage the management and replacement of parkland trees outside the designated parkland to maintain and enhance setting.
- Explore opportunities to put overhead wires underground in key areas, particularly within the setting of Rudding Park and the villages.



B View west along bridleway south of Sicklinghall.