

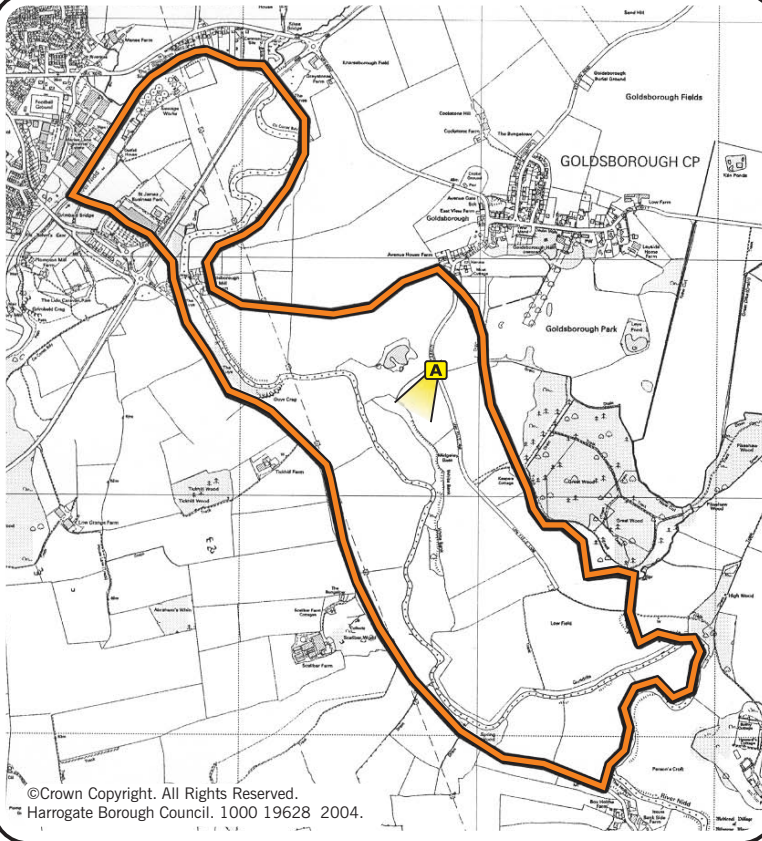
AREA 66

Approved
Feb 2004

A Arable farmland south of Goldsborough.



Nidd Valley at Goldsborough



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 moderate scale area is the flood plain of the River Nidd as it flows southeast between Knaresborough and Ribston Hall. The Nidd meanders sharply across the flat valley floor enclosed by broad sloping sides. The area covers approximately 2.5km². The sloping valley sides are sparsely-wooded. Tree cover is generally associated with built form. In contrast, the river corridor is well wooded and, together with the sloping topography of the valley, partially encloses and hides views of Knaresborough to the east.

Land use is diverse with regular fields managed for both improved grassland and arable production. The amalgamation of smaller enclosures to create larger fields has led to the loss of the original field boundaries. Many hedges are fragmented or have been lost altogether and replaced by post and wire fencing where needed for stock control. Hedges have survived along roadsides and remain in good condition.

There is no major settlement here but for a few scattered farmsteads. However, St James Business Park is a prominent site on the edge of Knaresborough and Goldsborough, in the neighbouring Character Area, does have an impact on views with an area of modern red brick and pantile houses visible from far away.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Magnesian limestone solid geology overlain by alluvium and terrace drift deposits geology.
- Combination of slowly-permeable to well-drained fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey brown and surface water gley soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat valley floor with broad sloping valley sides rising between 30m AOD on the valley floor and 45m AOD.
- Steep riverbank sides in places and some man-made banking but generally gently sloping valley sides.
- The River Nidd is the main watercourse.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Grade 3 agricultural land is managed both for improved grassland (grazing) and arable production.
- Small fields amalgamated to create larger enclosures left open or bound with post and wire fencing for stock control.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Well-wooded river corridor and deciduous clumps with built form.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- There are no major settlements, just a few farmsteads.
- St James Business Park is a large-scale development between the A658 southern bypass and the Nidd where it is the boundary of Knaresborough.
- Sewage treatment works are a detractor at the northern edge of this Character Area.
- The Knaresborough Round public footpath runs through the area and does the A658 southern bypass and Wetherby Road.
- The area is important to the setting of Ribston Park Historic Park and Garden

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The river corridor is impacted upon by the southern bypass and development at St James Business Park at its upstream end adjacent to Knaresborough. Design and layout of the business park has taken little account of the river and its character. Further upstream in the adjacent Character Area 53: Nidd Gorge the river corridor is a distinct and important feature but it is lost briefly at St James Business Park.
- Development of this site is leading to the sprawl of the urban edge.
- At the downstream end of the Character Area is the boundary of Ribston Park Registered Historic Park and Garden. The Park's setting would be affected by changes to this Character Area.
- Downstream of St James Business Park and the southern bypass the distinct rural character of the river corridor is apparent amongst intensively-farmed land. The corridor is narrow and could disappear altogether if intensive arable land use continues to encroach.
- Post and wire fencing that is not maintained is beginning to look untidy.
- Potential of farmstead sprawl with new large modern buildings that detract from the area.
- Loss of field boundaries to accommodate arable farming methods except for along roadsides where hedges are good. Modern farming has resulted in a narrowing of the distinctive river corridor landscape, which could disappear altogether if intensive production continues up to the river edge.

Guidelines

Aim: To improve the integration of development on allocated sites adjacent to Knaresborough with the river corridor landscape.

- Ensure that structure planting agreed to unify the site is carried out in full.
- As development progresses across the allocated site opportunities for structure planting within the site must be considered to break up the mass of building in this rural river corridor landscape.
- Support initiatives to enhance the river corridor and its role in providing a setting for the business park.
- The development of the site is resulting in various building types and arrangements. An overall strategy is needed to ensure the site is unified and not a "chaotic" feature within the landscape.
- Consideration should be given to the space between buildings with respect to landscape character.

Aim: To conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the river corridor.

- The wooded riverbank is a distinctive characteristic requiring management to ensure long-term woodland cover and water quality.
- Fencing should be of appropriate materials to blend with surroundings and should be maintained in good condition to minimise impact and respect the open nature of the landscape.
- Beyond already allocated sites, development in the river corridor should be discouraged.
- Encourage the management of hedges along roadsides and the restoration of field hedges where they are "gappy".
- River corridors provide an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and the diversity of landscape character and texture adding interest to an otherwise uniform landscape.

Aim: To conserve the river corridor setting of Ribston Park.

- Encourage the management and restoration of hedgerows and hedgerow trees in the vicinity of the Historic Park and Garden.
- Changes to the river channel that are not the result of natural process should be avoided.