

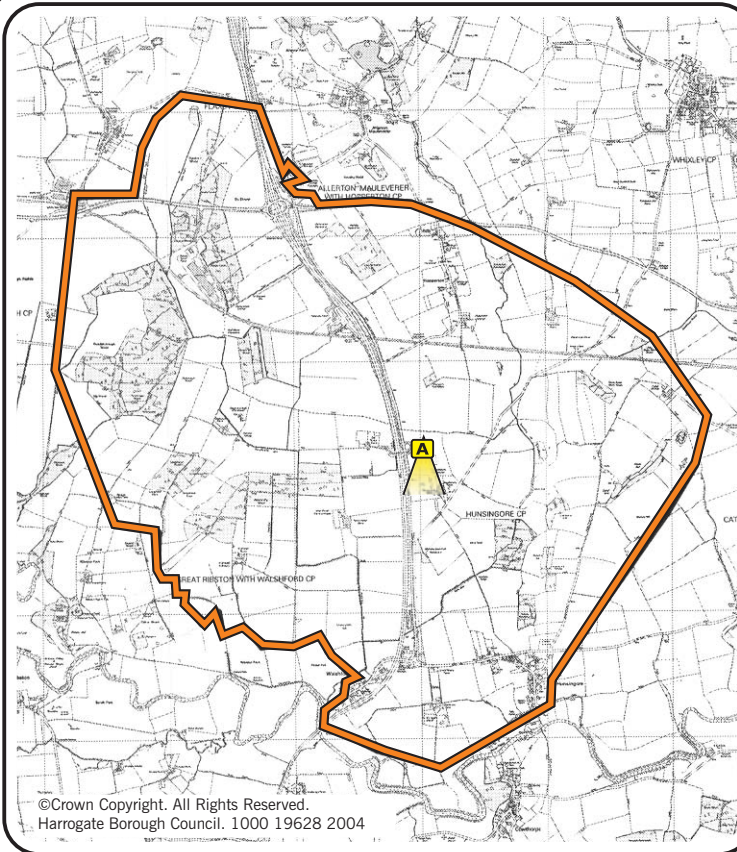
AREA 68

Approved
Feb 2004

A A168 looking south towards Hunsingore.



Hunsingore and Hopperton wooded farmland



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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 is a moderate to large-scale landscape consisting of large fields and several large woodland blocks creating a partially enclosed feel. The area covers approximately 17km² along the A1(M) corridor from Hopperton in the north to Hunsingore and the River Nidd Corridor in the south. The landscape is complex with villages, scattered farmsteads, roads, a motorway, a golf course and industry. It provides the setting for Allerton Park to the north and Ribston Park to the south west. Despite the diversity of characteristics in the area it is generally quite harmonious in part due to the woodland blocks and characteristics of local buildings and settlement pattern. The A1(M) is a chaotic element, which helps to make the area easily accessible. Pattern is organised with some obvious parliamentary enclosure in places and possible remnants of older field systems lost elsewhere due to the amalgamation of fields. The area is well-tended for agricultural purposes. Views are dispersed.

This is a pleasant and attractive area but the presence of the A1(M) and its constant traffic noise is detrimental and the corridor is likely to be subject to future development pressure.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology and drift geology of sandy till, till and silt and clay.
- Deep, fine loamy brown soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging associated with well-drained fine loamy soils in an undulating landscape to the east of the A1(M).
- Slowly-permeable seasonally-waterlogged stoneless clayey surface water gley soil west of the A1(M).

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat to slightly undulating landform between 25m AOD and 32m AOD.
- The area is well drained by numerous ditches and dikes including New Cut, Double Dike, Demesne Dike and Syke Dike,
- Several springs and ponds scattered across the area plus Beatmire Well.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- A mix of large grassland and arable fields.
- Traditional field boundaries are hedges with a few individual trees.
- Post and rail fencing associated with A168 and A1(M) motorway.
- Several large deciduous woodland blocks, clumps and mixed plantations plus the heavily planted corridor of the A1(M) gives this area a well-wooded appearance.
- Approximately half the field boundaries have hedges. The remainder have none and are left open.
- There is a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation at Syke Dike Willows (marshy grassland).

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Hopperton and Hunsingore plus scattered individual farmsteads.
- There was a medieval manor at Hunsingore and the site is scheduled.
- Main building materials are red brick tile or slate and red brick and cobble mix (especially in Hopperton).
- There is a large industrial building in woodland at Flaxby Moor.
- A golf course is under construction to the north of the Character Area at the junction between the A1(M) and A59.
- The A1(M) cuts across the area from north to south. Minor Roads and tracks provide access to the villages and farms from the A1(M) and the A168.
- There are few public rights of way through the area.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The landscape of this area provides the setting to the south of Allerton Park Registered Historic Park and Garden. This setting is already impacted upon as a result of the A1(M), the A168 and the A59. In addition, the new golf course development in the north west quadrant of the A1(M)/A59 junction has resulted in significant changes to the landscape setting of the Park and Garden. The capacity of the landscape to accept further change without detriment to its character and the setting of Allerton Park is limited.
- Pressure for development at A1(M) and A59 junction due to accessibility is likely to continue even though it has been established in the past that this would be detrimental to the setting of Allerton Park. Currently the south west quadrant of the junction is under consideration by the Planning Inspector for a Motorway Service Area (a decision is expected in 2004).

- The area east of the A1(M) is in an Area of Search for gravel extraction. The introduction of quarrying activities would have a considerable impact on landscape character.
- There is some development pressure to provide housing for commuters in villages with easy access to the A1(M).
- Neglect of woodland resulting in a lack of diversity in age structure.
- Continued loss of hedges as fields are amalgamated for arable crops disrupts the established landscape pattern.
- Linear planting along the corridor of the A1(M) is insensitive to landscape pattern.

Guidelines

Aim: To integrate the A1(M) corridor with the surrounding landscape.

- Woodland planting which extends beyond the A1(M) corridor and links with woodland and trees in the neighbouring countryside will help to improve the appearance of the corridor in the landscape.
- Links with hedgerows and new hedgerow planting may also help to link the corridor with its landscape setting.
- New development along this corridor will further conflict with the character the surrounding landscape and add discord.
- Where development is permitted the design will require considerable thought to be given to the landscape setting and overall layout of the design to make links with that setting in particular relating to natural landform and land pattern.

Aim: To protect the setting of Allerton Park

- Woodland and tree cover is important to the southern setting of Allerton Park and should be managed for the future. New planting layout must take into account the contribution that it will make to the setting of Allerton Park in the long term.
- Encourage native planting mixes appropriate to the area (see Harrogate Council's Landscape Design Guide: LDG 8.1.3 for further advice).
- Survey area to determine important hedgerows under the hedge regulations criteria.
- Several man made features already impact upon the setting of Allerton Park. The addition of gravel quarrying would add complexity to the landscape and bring further discord to the setting of the Historic Park and Garden. Proposals for such activities must consider the detriment to Allerton Park as well as impact on views and landscape character.