

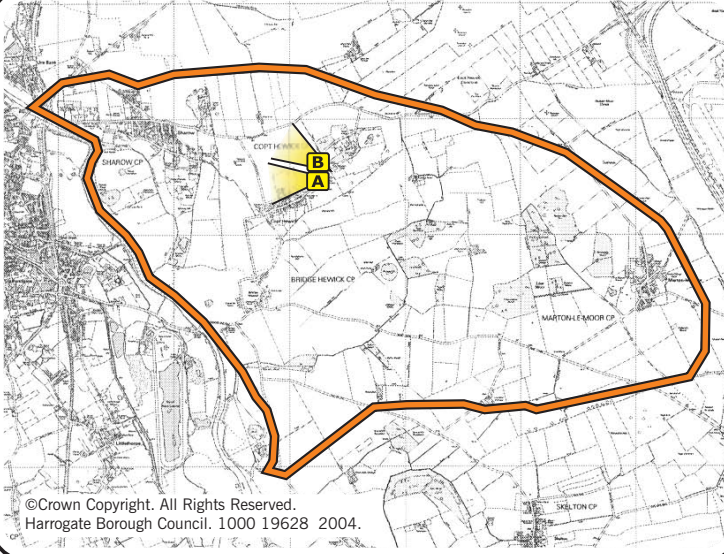
**AREA  
76**

**Approved  
Feb 2004**

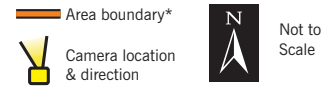
**A** West from Copt Hewick.



**East of Ripon 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 small-scale area lies east of Ripon between the River Ure and the A1(M) corridor at Dishforth and covers approximately 12km<sup>2</sup>.

The rolling landform is accentuated by the diversity of agricultural and woodland land use and field pattern. Large organised arable fields contrast with the more random pattern of grass fields that cluster around settlements. These settlements are heavily wooded and enclosed, with channelled views creating an intimate setting. Beyond the villages the landscape becomes more open as woodland blocks are scattered offering dispersed views of Ripon churches and the Cathedral.

The area has been settled and farmed for many centuries and possible remnants of that historic landscape may remain. There may be blocks of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland that are too small to register (less than 2 hectares) and some of the remaining field boundaries may be the result of medieval enclosure. A henge site is located on the north east edge of the area and, although its influence on the landscape is minimal due to ploughing, its presence gives an indication that people have been coming to this area since before Neolithic times.

This is a stunning and well-tended area easily accessible by road and public footpaths that are of great value to locals and tourists. The area is also important to the setting of the Cathedral City of Ripon.

**Key Characteristics**

**Geology, soils and drainage**

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology overlain with sandy till and till drift geology.
- Underlying Magnesian limestone geology also has some influence on the landform.
- Deep, fine loamy, slowly permeable subsoils, slight seasonal waterlogging brown soils.

**Landform and drainage pattern**

- Rolling to undulating landform between 20m and 55m AOD.
- River Ure corridor along western boundary.

**Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife**

- Arable land use with grassland around settlement, grade 2 agricultural land.
- Medium sized fields bound by hedges reinforced with post and wire and post and rail fencing.
- Several small to medium sized deciduous woodland blocks/clumps and mixed clumps.
- Devonshire Wood and Maynards Wood to the west of Marton-le-Moor are Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands.
- Individual trees scattered along field boundaries and around settlement.

## Key Characteristics

### Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Copt Hewick, Sharow, Bridge Hewick and Marton-le-Moor.
- Several scattered farmsteads.
- Traditional materials include red brick and pantile roofs with some render and stone and slate roofs.
- Minor road network provides links with Ripon and the A1.
- The Sharow Cross is the only surviving remnant of eight crosses marking the limits of the sanctuary within one mile of the monastery founded by St Wilfred.

## Sensitivities & Pressures

- This area is the setting for the eastern edge of Ripon and is important in terms of views to and from the City and its cathedral. The area has little capacity for change along its western edge. Sharow already contains areas of modern development and extension of this could impact on landscape character.
- Development pressure for residential houses in the area is likely to increase due to the proximity of the A61 and A1 for commuting.
- Limited knowledge of the heritage features in the area will result in neglect.
- Fragmentation and decline of hedgerows and absence of hedgerow trees in some areas, particularly away from settlement, is impacting upon the strength of landscape pattern and resulting character. In addition neglect of existing trees and woodland could reduce their contribution to the character of the area.
- The rolling landform plays an important role in the capacity of the area to accept change. Development that would impact upon the natural landform would be detrimental to character.
- Telecommunications and mobile phone masts in the area will impact negatively on character.

## Guidelines

### Aim: To conserve and enhance views of Ripon Cathedral.

- Avoid development and planting that would detract from the views of Ripon Cathedral.
- Identify key views from the area and develop opportunities for framing and enhancing views of the Cathedral.

### Aim: To conserve and enhance the diversity of the pattern.

- Identify heritage features of interest and develop strategy for their protection.
- Encourage the planting of gaps in hedgerows and the planting of hedgerow trees.
- Promote good woodland management practices and new planting to respect this small scale area, its rolling landform and contribution to the setting of Ripon.
- Protect fields and woodland important to village setting from development. Woodland and tree planting can be used to define development limits.
- Changes of use of grass fields adjacent to villages should be discouraged where that use would change the rural pastoral character of the setting of the village.

### Aim: To integrate development with landscape pattern.

- Ensure that communications masts, where needed, are appropriately located and that alternative designs are considered for each location.
- New residential development must respect vernacular and settlement pattern.



**B** From Copt Hewick looking north west.