

AREA 77

Approved
Feb 2004

A At Red House Farm looking east.



North of Ripon Farmland

Description

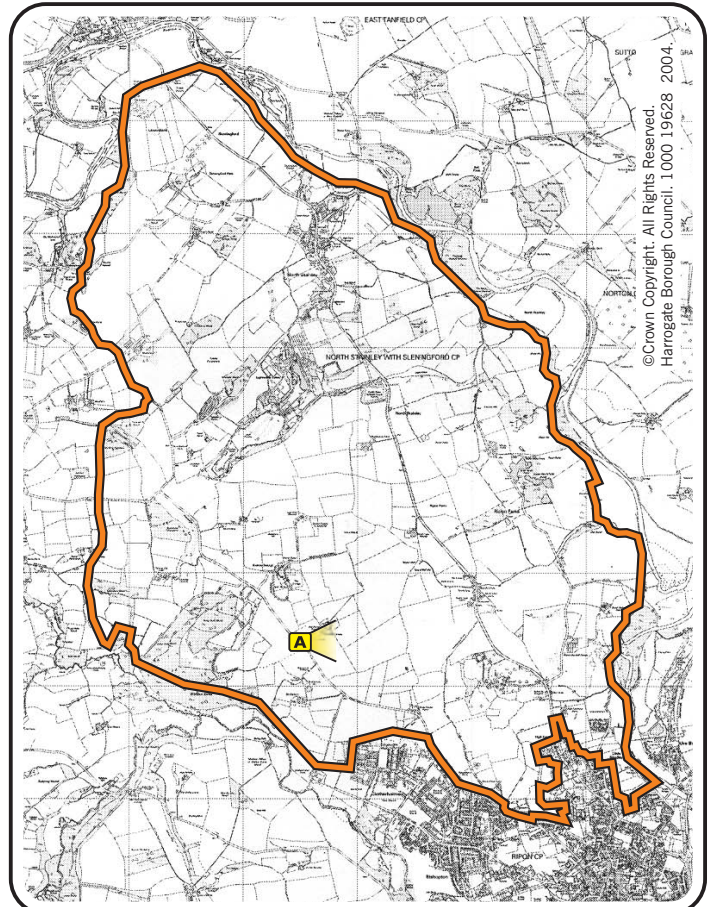
This area is of a moderate to large scale and covers approximately 20.8 km² of gently rolling, open agricultural landscape, with extensive views from high ground becoming partially enclosed with dispersed views in dips, valleys and close to woodland. The area extends from the northern edge of Ripon and the River Laver corridor in the south to the Ure Corridor in the north east. The western boundary of the Character Area is less easy to define due to the transitional nature of the landscape.

The landscape is balanced with large open areas punctuated by farmsteads and woodland blocks. There are occasional discordant features including modern buildings, the main A6108 road and quarrying.

This area is easily accessible with a varied pattern of development and land management. The land is well-tended (clipped hedges, tidy fences, cultivated fields) with areas of manicured appearance around some farmsteads.

Main detractors in the area are traffic noise and the urban edge of Ripon to the south.

A generally pleasant landscape with some interesting features of note (trees and earthworks).



Key Characteristics

Geology soils and drainage

- Magnesians limestone solid geology with sandy till and till drift geology from Palaeozoic and Mesozoic sandstone and shale.
- Deep, fine loamy brown soils with slowly permeable sub soils and slight seasonal waterlogging.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Gently rolling/undulating landform below 100m AOD.
- Gypsum holes are present throughout but are particularly concentrated to the east along the boundary of the Ure corridor.
- Few small watercourses draining the land eastwards to the River Ure.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Land intensively managed for both livestock and arable production.

HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

Location in Harrogate District

- 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".

- Early enclosure field pattern with amalgamation of small fields into large fields.
- Several blocks of deciduous and mixed woodland with large areas in between where there are few individual trees. There is Ancient Semi-Natural wood at Hollin Head Wood.
- Woodland along the valley of Light Water is important in screening the Theme Park.
- Tree lined watercourses running east into the River Ure.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Localised areas of individual trees (e.g. Sleningford Hall parkland remnants.)
- Site of Interest for Nature Conservation at Five Ponds.
- Where there are high concentrations of gypsum holes the wildlife value of the area is improved due to less intensive management e.g. Magnesian Limestone Grassland at Ripon Golf Course.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlement is the village of North Stainley plus scattered farmsteads.
- Traditional building materials are mixed but include local limestone, cobbles and rubble, timber and brick, with blue slate, stone slate and pantile roofs.
- Lightwater Valley is a large theme park, relatively well screened in this open landscape.
- Bridleways (east-west) linking roads (north-south).
- Several disused limestone quarries in the area and two still in use.
- Fountains Abbey managed the area in monastic times and evidence of a long history of settlement includes the remains of a Roman Villa at Castle Dikes on the A6108 (Ripon to Masham Road).
- The area of Ripon Parks once contained a medieval deer park but little evidence of this remains. Veteran trees here may date from this period.

Sensitivities and Pressures

- This open large-scale landscape is sensitive to visible development. However, land-form and tree cover, in places, does give the landscape some capacity to accept change that does not result in the loss of key characteristics and which respects landform and development pattern.
- The urban edge of Ripon is sensitive to change in this area, which provides the northern rural setting of the town. The encroachment of development and urban sprawl will impact upon approaches from the north. Improvements could be made along the urban edge through management and reintroduction of landscape features that are characteristic of the area.
- Quarrying and gravel extraction are influential and likely to continue. There are Areas of Search for mineral extraction (crushed rock) and gravel extraction and three mineral consultation areas cover approximately a quarter of the area. Quarrying and gravel extraction have a significant impact on the current landscape character and future landscape change.
- Loss of field boundaries and hedges over the years has resulted in a large field system and the decline in the contribution this key feature makes to character.

- Threats to historical features are likely to increase along with development pressure and their contribution to landscape character may be lost over time.
- Urban sprawl into the countryside
- Large scale development and expansion of Lightwater Valley Theme Park.

Guidelines

Aim: Preserve and enhance diverse landscape characteristics.

- Encourage reinstatement of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- New agricultural buildings should be of appropriate scale and relate to existing farmsteads and layout.
- Explore the potential for the creation and management of magnesian limestone grassland in this area in accordance with the Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Prepare development guidelines looking at appropriate types, location and mitigation measures.

Aim: To ensure that quarrying and extraction activities are sensitive to the character of the area.

- Promote the use of this Landscape Character Assessment by the local Minerals and Waste Planning Authority (NYCC) as a guide for determining potential landscape impacts and mitigation of quarrying activities, when carrying out their duty to determine policies and planning applications for mineral-related development, and to ensure compliance with conditions of any extant planning permissions.
- Every opportunity should be taken to reinstate key characteristics, through mitigation works, to create new habitats in line with biodiversity objectives, minimise visual impact and limit this to the confines of the site as far as practicable.

Aim: To protect historic and archaeological landscape features both scheduled and unscheduled.

- Further research is needed to identify historic patterns and features in the landscape. Many fields in the area seem to have been enlarged (this is now an area of intensive livestock and arable farming). However, there are remnants of a Roman field system and other early enclosure field pattern highlighting the area's long agrarian history.