

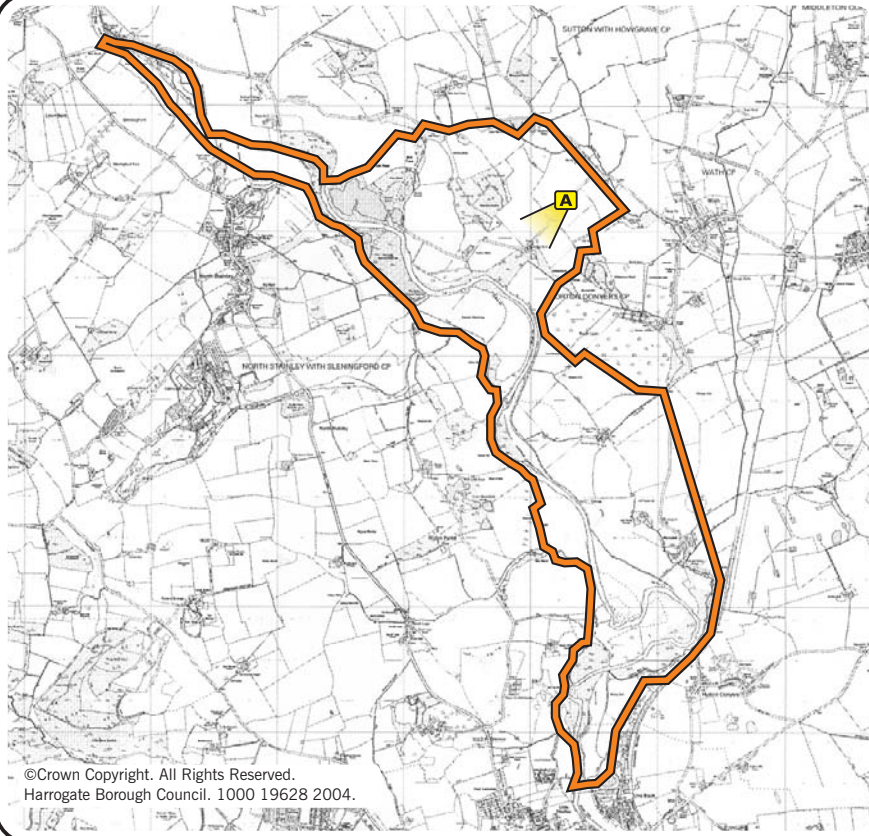
AREA 78

Approved
Feb 2004

A Looking south west towards Badger Bank.



River Ure Corridor (Sleningford water mill to Ripon Reach)



©Crown Copyright. All Rights Reserved.
Harrogate Borough Council. 1000 19628 2004.

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".

Location in Harrogate District



Description

This is a linear character area covering approximately 6.5km² following the River Ure corridor as it meanders gently south-eastwards to Ripon from West Tanfield. The northern extent of the Character Area extends beyond the District boundary into Hambleton to include East Tanfield and its deserted medieval village. The riverbank is generally well-wooded giving an enclosed and intimate feel to the area. The valley sides are shallow and undulating and contribute to the enclosed, sometimes intimate nature of the area. The scale of the landscape is medium and views tend to be channelled along the course of the river. Wildlife is abundant. Although the area is easily accessible there remains a feeling of "remoteness" in places.

Recreation is important, including fishing and canoeing and several caravan and camping sites within or adjacent to the character area. There are few detractors in this Character Area apart from the caravan sites, which are generally well hidden.

Norton Conyers, a Registered Park and Garden, is situated on the west bank of the river and the river corridor contributes its setting.

The river, tree cover and mix of land uses provide a diversity of texture and pattern that are important to the

Beauty this character area. Most of the riverbank is an SSSI for biological reasons and a section of the River Ure bank at Ripon Parks is a geological SSSI where gypsum layers are exposed.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Magnesian limestone solid geology with alluvium drift geology.
- Deep, stoneless, permeable, coarse loamy brown soils over gravel.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat, narrow river corridor flood plain below 50m AOD with gradually sloping undulating valley sides (not within the character area to the west).
- Steep banks, eroded in places, expose Magnesian limestone and gypsum geology.
- The River Ure meanders through the area in a southerly direction.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Mixed land cover/use from recreation and caravan sites, to agriculture, woodland, scrub, marsh and wetland.
- Well-wooded river corridor with shingle beaches plus several lakes and ponds in the corridor providing evidence of previous gravel extraction activities and gysium holes.
- Much of the area between Ripon and North Stainley has an SSSI designation.
- High Batts Nature Reserve, next to the river, is important to wildlife in the area.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- Farmsteads tend to be situated on higher ground at the edge of the Character Area and settlement within the area is limited to caravan and camping sites.
- The village of Nunwick on the east bank is on the edge of this Character Area and includes a listed 16th century barn.
- There is a henge north of Nunwick on the edge of the Character Area and a deserted medieval village at East Tanfield beyond the District boundary. The river corridor is an important prehistoric route linking Cumbria with the North York Moors and Wolds.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- This diverse river corridor is sensitive to change. New development could result in a loss of characteristics and features, impact upon views and increase access to the river. In particular, the wildlife value which stems from the diversity of habitat types, and which contributes to landscape character, is susceptible to changes in land cover and water quality.
- An Area of Search for gravel extraction exists to the north of the Character Area and extends into Hambleton. The river corridor is recognised as a source of sand and gravel so pressure for gravel extraction is likely to continue.
- Recreation facilities have impacted upon character particularly where highly visible. The caravan site at the listed 18th century Slensingford Mill impacts on the Mill's setting.
- Natural processes continue to shape the river corridor and are crucial to wildlife habitats. Attempts to curb erosion and influence the river's course may impact upon water quality, flooding and wildlife as well as landscape character.
- The historic origins of character and cultural heritage (which influences the character of the area) are not very well documented.

Guidelines

Aim: To conserve diverse texture of river corridor habitats and land use contributing to the remote rural character of the area.

- Ensure that valued habitats are not lost. Promote management for the benefit of wildlife in consultation with landowners and the Environment Agency.
- Maintain and enhance the wooded nature of the river corridor landscape through the management of existing trees and appropriate new planting, ensuring light reaches the water course.
- An extension of quarrying activities will further impact upon the landscape character. Every opportunity should be taken to mitigate impact through appropriate design and a programme of restoration. These should create and enable management of appropriate habitats in line with the objectives of the Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Safeguard the more remote stretches of river from development and avoid building in the floodplain.
- Explore opportunities to enter into management arrangements with local landowners under agri-environment schemes to protect landscape character and habitats in consultation with DEFRA.

Aim: To maintain the recreation value of the river corridor, ensuring the character of the area is not compromised.

- Additional recreation facilities should be of appropriate scale and design and not disturb wildlife and habitat value. Consider location, visibility and appropriate materials.
- Opportunities to better integrate existing facilities in and adjacent to the corridor should be considered.

Aim: To enhance the understanding of the cultural heritage and ecological value of the corridor and its origins.

- Promote research of archaeological features in the river corridor and explore ways of buffering sites from modern land management practices where necessary.
- Provide information on cultural heritage and ecology for visitors and locals.
- Identify features that are not protected by designations.