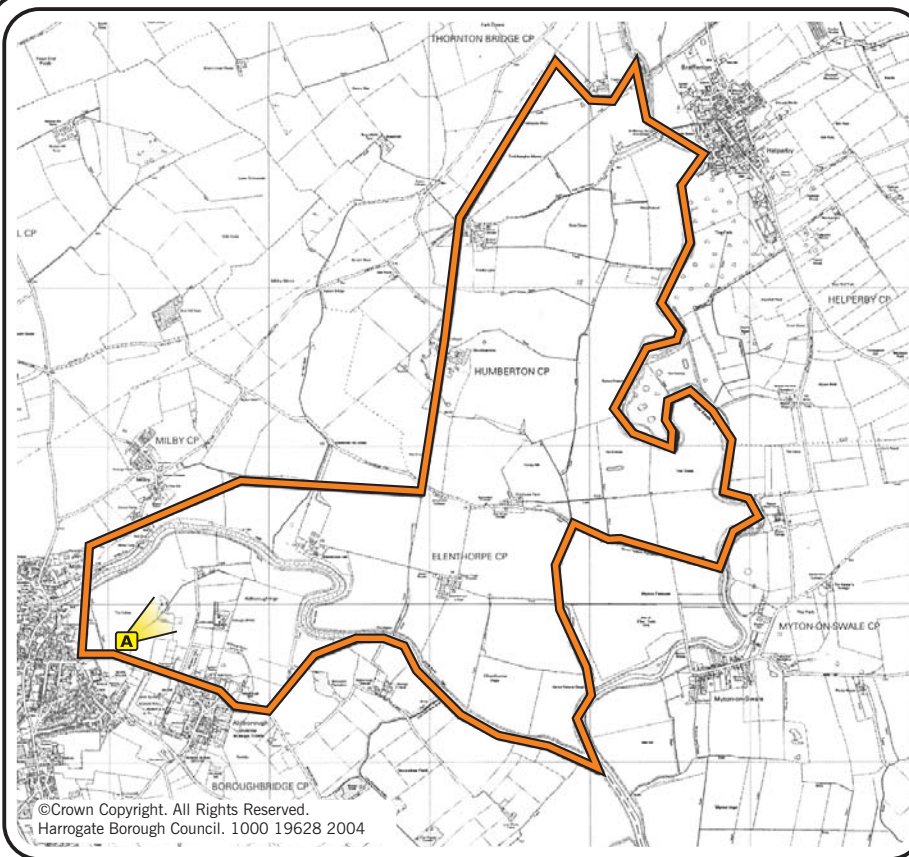


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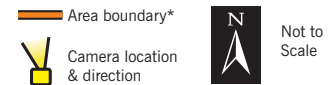
Approved
Feb 2004



A Looking east over Aldborough Ings.



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 large-scale Character Area covers 7.5km² and is the low-lying floodplains of the River Swale and River Ure before they converge. It stretches from the village of Aldborough eastwards to the Swale and northwards up the Swale as far as Treble Sykes Farm.

The area has been influenced by a wealth of historic activity dating back to Roman times and possibly before. The Holms and Aldborough Ings lie to the north of Aldborough and south of the River Ure and are a mix of open floodplain meadow and pasture enclosed in the 18th century.

In the crux of the River Ure and River swale is Myton Pasture, prone to flooding and drained by Myton Pasture Stell. Here remnants of ridge and furrow survive from the medieval era when the land was farmed for grain. Today the land continues to be managed for arable production.

Fields are large and regular in shape bound by neglected fragments of hedgerow. Views are extensive, interrupted only by a sparse scattering of woodland and settlement.

Large lodges and halls such as Humberton and Ellenthorpe are the sites of medieval villages that

prospered when the Ure served as an important trade route and are now large residences often surrounded by a cluster of smaller fields.

Much of this area was also the site of the registered site of the Battle of Myton (1319) but this has had no impact on the fabric of the landscape we see today.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology overlain with alluvial drift geology.
- Combination of stoneless, permeable and slowly-permeable soils. Surface water gley, brown and ground water gley soils along the river bed.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat river floodplain landform below 20m AOD.
- The Rivers Swale and Ure are the main water features plus a network of drainage ditches.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- A flood bank built in the 1990s protects Boroughbridge.
- The Milby Cut was built in the 18th century extending the trade route by river into Boroughbridge.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Arable land and improved grassland managed for livestock grazing, grade 3 agricultural land.
- Large fields bound by hedgerows.
- Small woodland blocks associated with watercourses.
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation at Brafferton Embankment, long established grassland with low intensity management and rich variety of wild flowers.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Aldborough and Humberton.
- Few, large scattered individual farmsteads including Ellenthorpe Lodge, Ellenthorpe Hall and Burton Grange.
- Aldborough is built on the site of the Roman town of Isurium which can still be seen as earthworks around the village.
- Myton battlefield, to the east of the area, is an important historic feature.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The area is heavily influenced by the rivers and associated floodplain which has, to some extent, restricted development to that associated with agriculture. The landscape is quite simple and uniform with an open appearance and as a result it is sensitive to development which would introduce diversity and built form.
- Neglect of historical features important to the understanding of landscape character in the area will result in continued change.
- Being in the floodplain the pressure for development is limited to agriculture. However, flood defence schemes may impact on the character around Boroughbridge in the future.

Guidelines

Aim: To maintain and enhance the open and uniform character of this floodplain landscape.

- Flood defence works should respect landscape character and avoid earthworks. Opportunities to enhance the wildlife value of the area should be considered, allowing for seasonal flooding and the possible reintroduction of water meadow management.
- Tree planting should respect the open nature of this Character Area and will help enhance existing wildlife corridors.
- Built development should be avoided. Where necessary development should be located outside the floodplain and associated with existing buildings but should not impact upon archaeological features.
- Management of drainage ditches and dikes should respect landscape character. Avoid re-routing drainage channels.

Aim: To conserve and enhance the historic fabric of the landscape and the setting of historic features.

- Development that impacts upon historic features and their settings should not be permitted.
- Historic survey and information gathering and the identification of archaeological sites should be a priority in the area.