

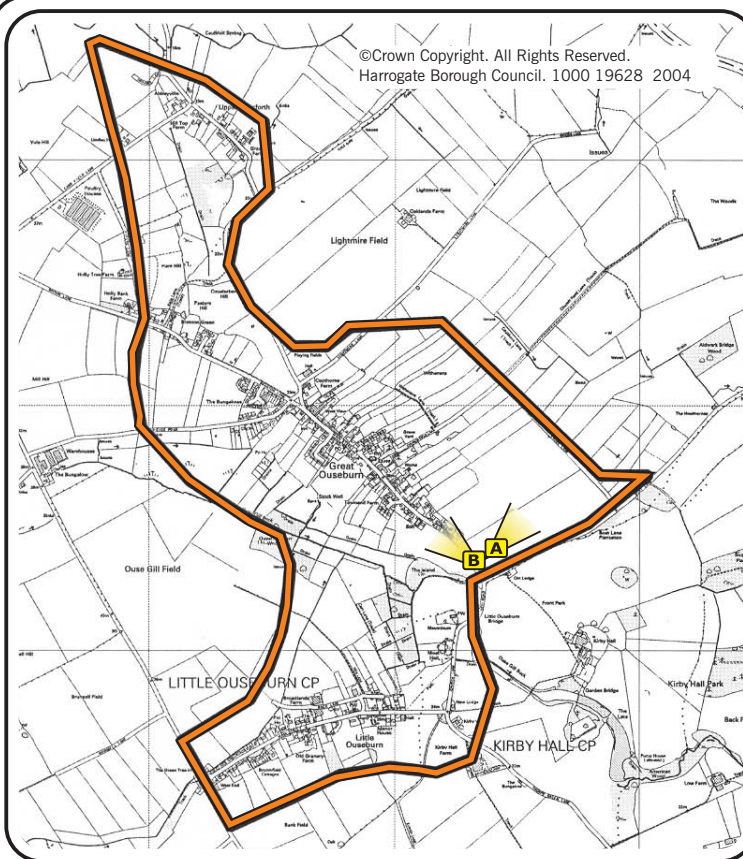
**AREA**  
**92**

**Approved**  
**Feb 2004**

**A** From Little Ouseburn church looking east.

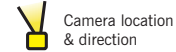


## Ouseburn village and vale farmland



### HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

— Area boundary\*



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 moderate scale area covers 2.8 km<sup>2</sup> and is densely settled with the villages of Great and Little Ouseburn, Upper Dunsforth and Branton Green all quite close together.

The low lying and flat landscape has a diverse mixture of land management. Patches of "wild looking" wet pasture and woodland carr grow alongside Ouse Gill Beck that is densely-wooded which, together with built form, encloses the landscape allowing only glimpses into the farmland beyond. Outside the influence of Ouse Gill Beck, rectangular grassland and arable fields contrast with the enclosures around Great Ouseburn, which are long and linear (typical of medieval enclosures) suggesting a long history of farming.

Great Ouseburn, Little Ouseburn and Lower Dunsforth are linear villages. Great Ouseburn was in the Royal Forest of Knaresborough at the time of William the Conqueror. Buildings in the area generally date back to the 17th and 18th century. The churches date back further and are prominent features in the landscape.

There are many telegraph poles in the area that are often highly visible and detract from views. A good network of roads allows easy access, especially for commuters to reach the nearby A1(M) whilst living in a beautiful and interesting rural setting.

## Key Characteristics

### Geology, soils and drainage

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology and sandy till and till drift geology.
- Deep, fine loamy, slowly-permeable brown soils.

### Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat to extremely gently undulating landform between 20 and 30m AOD.
- Ouse Gill Beck with associated network of drainage ditches, plus several springs.

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

- Land managed as arable and improved grassland plus meadow and patches of carr woodland. Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land.

## Key Characteristics

- ▶ Medium sized fields and medieval toft enclosures important to the north east of Great Ouseburn.
- ▶ With the exception of a stone wall on the approach to Great Ouseburn, field boundaries, where they survive, are hedgerows in good condition.
- ▶ Woodland clumps along Ouse Gill Beck. Sparse woodland cover elsewhere.
- ▶ Very few trees along field boundaries and a few small trees scattered throughout.
- ▶ There is an SSSI at Dunsforth Carrs, a mosaic of wet pasture and carr woodland beside a stream.
- ▶ There is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation at Ouse Gill Beck, grassland of low intensity management with a rich variety of wildflowers.

### Settlement, built environment and communication

- ▶ The main settlements are Great Ouseburn, Little Ouseburn, Upper Dunsforth (all linear) and Branton Green.
- ▶ Churches at Great Ouseburn and Little Ouseburn have medieval origins.
- ▶ Traditional building materials include red brick and tile, white and grey render.
- ▶ The churches are stone with slate roofs.

## Sensitivities & Pressures

- ▶ Backland development in Great Ouseburn has an impact on its setting and linear character and 20th century development can be a discordant element where it doesn't respect the vernacular.
- ▶ Telegraph poles are a detractor in this otherwise well-balanced, diverse landscape.
- ▶ Field pattern and land use are important to the setting and character of the villages amidst the intensive arable farmland of the surrounding character areas. The distinctiveness of the area is sensitive to the loss of the small-scale field patterns and pastoral setting.

- ▶ Current demands for additional housing in the countryside, building conversion and extensions to domestic curtilage could impact on landscape character.

## Guidelines

### Aim: To preserve the setting and rural character of villages.

- ▶ Discourage backland development in these linear villages. In particular, change of use of fields to garden can impact upon the characteristic field pattern important to the historic setting of the villages.
- ▶ Encourage the maintenance of traditional field boundaries important to the villages' settings.
- ▶ Encourage underground power supplies and consider location of new overhead lines in terms of landscape and visual impact.
- ▶ Ensure that new development is appropriate to local settlement pattern and in keeping with vernacular.
- ▶ Barn conversions have resulted in the loss of the character of working rural villages and should only be permitted where conversion to domestic use (including provision of garden) is not detrimental to this characteristic.

### Aim: To preserve the setting and views of historic features.

- ▶ The churches are prominent and important features in the landscape in very different settings that require protection from change that would detract from their contribution to character.

### Aim: To conserve and enhance biodiversity contributing to variety.

- ▶ Wetland habitats are important to the area and their continued management is important to landscape character.
- ▶ The opportunity to create additional wetland habitats along the Ouseburn corridor would benefit wildlife links and contribute to the distinctive nature of the stream.



**B** The entrance to Great Ouseburn.