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The Countryside Agency www.countryside.gov.uk

The Meteorological Office www.met-office.gov.uk

Appendix 2. Study Title: Landscape Character Assessment - Harrogate District

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a brief for a Landscape Character Assessment of Harrogate District which will review the existing Harrogate District Landscape Appraisal¹ to produce an up to date Landscape Character Assessment for Harrogate District which follows current guidance
- 1.2 The 1993 Landscape Appraisal is currently used as supplementary planning guidance to the Harrogate District Local Plan. However, this Appraisal has shortcomings as it does not adequately cover the historic, cultural and ecological aspects of landscape character and did not involve communities and stakeholders in its production.
- 1.3 Landscape Character Assessment methodology has progressed since the early 1990s. In order to remain current in our thinking Harrogate needs an up to date Landscape Character Assessment for the District. This would be in line with PPG7 and the requirement of the Planning Inspector at the Local Plan Review.
- 1.4 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is used to provide basic knowledge of the landscape character and make judgements

related to character. LCA also aims to improve the understanding of the underlying nature of the landscapes and the effect of human activity upon them.

- 1.5 The methodology to be adopted for this LCA is based on the latest Interim Landscape Character Assessment Guidance 1999 produced by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.
- 1.6 Where feasible community participation will be incorporated. It is anticipated that target communities will be identified for participation to take account of limited resources and the need to review current designated Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) with the involvement of local people.
- 1.7 The LCA report will contain:
 - descriptions of character and a map of character types and areas
 - judgements and evaluation resulting in the following:
 1. A review/update of Landscape Planning Policies
 2. A review of the need for and designation of local areas of special recognition (e.g. Special Landscape Areas)
 3. Strategies and Guidelines for development
 4. Capacity studies for key developments e.g. Wind Farms
- 1.8 In addition to the landscape survey and evaluation, which will form the basis of the assessment, key issues regarding the landscape are to be defined. The LCA should be capable of forming a basis for future land use planning policy and provide design advice reflecting the character of Harrogate District linked with the Landscape Design Guide.
- 1.9 The area of the study covers the whole of Harrogate District, which includes Nidderdale AONB.

¹ Woolerton Truscott (1993) *Harrogate District Landscape Appraisal*

2. Context of landscape character assessment and community involvement

- 2.1 The guidelines for conducting LCA have developed over the years. In the 1970's the emphasis was on landscape evaluation, what makes one area "better" than another. Landscape assessment, first used in the 1980's separates the classification and description of landscape from landscape evaluation. During the 90's more emphasis has been placed on the role of landscape character and the process has been widely described as Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).
- 2.2 LCA is now in common use and current guidance is Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland 2002².
- 2.3 The Countryside Agency continues to promote the role of landscape character assessment (LCA) as an important tool in town and country planning. In their recent publication *CA60 Planning tomorrow's countryside* the Countryside Agency state their objective to "respect the character of all landscapes, and protect and enhance the best":
- Every part of the countryside, though, is precious to someone, somewhere – perhaps an area of scenic beauty or part of an old industrial area in need of restoration. This easy point is forgotten by a planning system that in properly protecting the **best**, has tended to neglect the character of the **rest**. The character and diversity of the whole landscape is important in an increasingly standardised countryside. Understanding and acknowledging the diversity of character – its landscape, wildlife and natural features – is an essential part of all decisions that influence landscape change and the degree of protection that we offer.*³
- 2.5 The importance of community engagement is set out in government advice on sustainable development, Local Agenda 21 initiatives, the Rural white paper; and guidance from the Countryside Agency guidance and English Heritage.
- 2.6 English Heritage states "*Character appraisal means understanding and evaluating the*

*significance of a place, and drawing out the management implications so that its significance can be protected and opportunities for change identified. To be effective, it needs to be a participative, inclusive process. It therefore sits well with the concept of community planning, Local Strategic Partnerships and participative neighbourhood renewal.*⁴

*"...Character assessment, carried out in advance of a development proposal, makes this process more transparent and less arbitrary. Experience demonstrates that people are less – not more – resistant to change if they have been involved in identifying what matters in their local environment. The resulting clarity about what is acceptable to the local community has provided much greater certainty for architects, builders and developers.*⁵

- 2.7 *Participation works!* states that "As a general principle, the group of people organising the activity will be most likely to achieve a successful outcome if:
- They come from a known and respected organisation;
 - They are representative of a wide range of organisations within the community;
 - They have credibility within the community;
 - There is a clearly defined purpose for the activity;
 - There are proper mechanisms for analysis and reporting the results to the wider community;
 - There is a realistic chance of positive action/projects as a result of the activity;
 - All those interested in achieving the action/projects can become fully involved."⁶
- 2.8 Effective community involvement in the Harrogate District landscape assessment should be:
- inclusive and representative, seeking out groups which feel excluded or who may not otherwise come forward to for involvement such as the elderly, ethnic minorities, the socially disadvantaged.

² Swanwick, C. and Land Use Consultants. (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland*.

³ Countryside Agency (2000) *CA60 Planning tomorrow's countryside*. Countryside Agency, Cheltenham. p.17

⁴ English Heritage (2000) *Power of Place. The future of the historic environment*. Power of Place Office, London. paragraph 82

⁵ *ibid*, paragraph 84

⁶ New Economics Foundation. *Participation Works* p. 10

- achievable: given the limitation on time and resources
 - efficient: making use of existing information and networks
 - enriching: providing important local information that cannot be acquired in another way
 - enabling: encouraging the local community to contribute positively to decisions about the future landscape of Harrogate District
 - specific and realistic in terms of outcome
 - capable of delivering what it promises
 - robust: being able to withstand possible subversion or sabotage (given its objective as SPG)
- 2.9 The community involvement should help provide a richer and deeper assessment of the landscape accessing local knowledge and identifying local value: the local cultural landscape. This is only one aspect of a fully integrated landscape character assessment: other aspects will include landscape history, nature conservation and archaeology.

3. Purpose of the Study

- 3.1 To raise awareness and understanding of the regional and local factors and processes which have influenced and continue to influence the District and its landscape character within the council and among professions and organisations outside the authority.
- 3.2 Objectives:
- 3.2.1 The LCA is intended to update relevant supplementary planning guidance to the landscape character policies in the Harrogate District Local Plan to assist in informing development control decisions, as part of the Local Plan Review process.
- 3.2.2 The LCA will be used as the basis for the review of Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) in the District.
- 3.2.3 The landscape character assessment will provide a foundation for landscape strategy work for example helping set objectives for Countryside Stewardship targets and for the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Man-

agement Strategy.

- 3.2.4 The “condition” of landscape features identified in the landscape character assessment will provide a benchmark for local community and District-wide *indicators*.
- 3.2.5 The LCA will provide the basis for developing landscape design guidance specific to each character area linked with the landscape design guide (as a separate output at a later stage).
- 3.2.6 Create a document, which can be used to assess capacity to accommodate development e.g. housing, industry, wind farms, in the landscape and inform the Nidderdale AONB Management plan.
- 3.2.7 Act as a post project / post management appraisal document assessing the impact of planning policy on the landscape and to provide a baseline against which future re-assessments may be compared.
- 3.2.8 Inform outside agencies when making decisions, which may impact on the landscape e.g. Countryside Agency and the Joint Advisory Committee for Nidderdale AONB and FWAG.
- 3.2.9 Influence and provide advice through links with the Landscape Design Guide for HBC on proposals put forward by developers through the statutory consultation procedures.
- 3.2.10 Engage communities and key stakeholders in defining landscape character and decision-making relating to the landscape character of the District.

4. Study Area

- 4.1 Harrogate District extends from Masham in the north to the outskirts of Wetherby, Ilkley and Otley in the south, and from the boundary with the Yorkshire Dales National Park in the west to the outskirts of York in the east. The total area is 13008 km².
- 4.2 The LCA will cover the whole of Harrogate District. The District-wide assessment will be set within the context of the regional character areas identified by the Countryside Commission and English Nature, and will seek to achieve consistency of landscape character assessment at the boundaries with

other authorities. It will take account of previous landscape appraisals within Harrogate District and move forward to a fully integrated assessment in accordance with current guidance⁷.

- 4.3 The District contains a variety of landscape character types and areas from the dales in the west to the Vale of York in the east. This diversity of landscape character is a resource, which requires recognition and management for change.
- 4.4 The character types and areas for Harrogate District defined in the Harrogate District Landscape Appraisal 1993 will provide a basis for this study along with the Countryside Character areas⁸ defined at a national level and the character types identified regionally.
- 4.5 Current projects in the District, which have relevance to the LCA, include the AONB Heritage Lottery bid, Tree wardens' scheme, Department of Leisure and Amenity Services (DLAS) open space review, etc.
- 4.6 There is the potential for collaboration with the Countryside Agency North Yorkshire County Council, English Heritage, neighbouring Districts, local groups and stakeholders. Appendix 1 lists potential stakeholders some of whom it may be appropriate to invite onto a Steering Group for the LCA.

5. Scope of the work

- 5.1 Landscape Character Assessment for Harrogate District identifying character types and areas using a methodology based on the Interim Landscape Character Assessment Guidance. Priority will be given to the description of landscape character areas in order to reflect strong local identity.
- 5.2 The assessment will comprise:
 - Landscape character report identifying landscape types, landscape character areas and key characteristics (mapping, classification and description)
 - Landscape appraisal identifying landscape condition, integrity/intactness, landscape sensitivity, capacity and robustness, what features/aspects are valued and why

- Trends: consideration of future change and its nature and direction
- Guidelines for conserving or enhancing landscape character.

- 5.3 The assessment will be carried out at 1:25,000 scale although specific areas may be at scales of 1:10,000; for ease of publication the assessment will also be presented at 1:50,000.
- 5.4 The level of detail will be built up from a single field unit to accommodate the fine-grain of landscape history and Phase 1 habitat studies (based on the Historic Landscape Characterisation approaches used in Cornwall and Hampshire)⁹ and simultaneously assessed against larger scale landscape elements such as geology and geomorphology to result in robust landscape character areas and types.
- 5.5 The outputs will be:
 - Harrogate District Landscape Assessment Report comprising *landscape* characterisation with illustrations and maps; landscape judgements (evaluation); trends; and guidelines for landscape change; in a format capable of update and amendment; to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance as part of the Local Plan Review (2005)
 - Layer(s) in the Harrogate District GIS
 - A report on the community engagement process
 - A website where the landscape character types, areas and descriptions can be accessed.
- 5.6 The assessment will be reviewed as part of the Local Plan Review process every 5 years.
- 5.7 Resources will primarily comprise:
 - Harrogate Borough Council Conservation and Design Team DTS (primarily the landscape architect who has experience in landscape character assessment and landscape history, with input from the conservation officer, conservation architects, countryside officer, AONB project officer and countryside ranger)
 - Harrogate Borough Council GIS team and Graphics/Cartographic Technicians.

⁷ Swanwick, C., Land Use Consultants, (2002) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland.

⁸ Countryside Commission (1998), Countryside Character, Volume 3: Yorkshire and the Humber

⁹ Swanwick, C., Land Use Consultants, (2002) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, page 40 box 5.2

- In addition input from other professions within the authority with an interest in landscape issues would be welcome on a formal or informal basis e.g. planners, archaeologists, parks managers etc.
- 5.8 Assistance from relevant government agencies particularly the Countryside Agency and the Rural Community Council will be sought.
- 5.9 Input by the Harrogate Borough Council Local Agenda 21, Information Technology, Rural Forum, Estates and Parks/ Arboricultural officers will be welcomed.
- 5.10 Initially the level of community participation will be restricted as a result of resources available. Methods, which might be adopted to involve the wider community, could include questionnaires, a web site link for people to find out about the LCA and comment, and newspaper articles.
- 5.11 Target communities will be identified for a more thorough participation process involving workshops and appropriate, agreed participatory methods based on methods suggested in Topic Paper 3 which accompanies the latest Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland⁹. Appendix 3 outlines proposed methods for community engagement.
- ## 6. Method
- 6.1 The proposed methodology for the update of the Harrogate District landscape character assessment draws on two principal strands of guidance: the interim landscape character assessment guidance of 1999 as amended and updated by the Durham pilot scheme; and community engagement techniques such as those outlined in *Participation Works!* by the New Economics Foundation and the Village Design Statement technique by Countryside Commission.
- 6.2 The landscape character assessment will integrate professional assessment and stakeholder input:
- landscape character research and analysis (desk study, field survey and appraisal) carried out by the Council's landscape architect (DTS)
 - information from stakeholders of interest (government agencies, non-governmental organisations, parish councils etc.)
- information from target communities of place (local residents, local groups, parish councils etc.)
- 6.3 Harrogate Borough Council will be the lead authority in the landscape character assessment. However, it would be helpful to set up a landscape character assessment steering group which includes representatives from organisations such as Nidderdale AONB Joint Advisory Committee, North Yorkshire County Council, Parish Councils, Countryside Agency, Rural Community Council, Forestry Authority, Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, and Council for the Protection of Rural England.
- 6.4 Partnerships will be needed with the organisations listed in Appendix 1 and with interested individuals, to provide information and comment on the emerging and draft assessments.
- 6.5 The focus for the participation of target communities of place will be the *characterisation* and *judgement* aspects of landscape character assessment, identifying those aspects of the local landscape that have meaning or value to their local residents. This role together with the objectives of the landscape character assessment (see section 3.0 of this brief) and mechanisms for analysis and reporting (agreed with the steering group) will be publicised through the proposed website, the newspaper article, letters to the Parish Council for inclusion in Parish Magazines and directly at workshops and in the questionnaire.
- 6.6 Recognition of the limited resources available will mean that target communities for participation will be identified.
- 6.7 The procedure followed for the LCA will be as identified in the Interim Landscape Character Assessment Guidance document¹⁰ and summarised as follows:
- i) Step One: Define Scope
 - ii) Step Two: Desk Study
 - iii) Step Three: Field Survey
 - iv) Step Four: Characterisation
 - v) Step Five: Research and Analysis
 - vi) Step six: Making Judgements/ Evaluation
- At each step the opportunity to involve communities will be investigated and implemented.

¹¹ *ibid*, page 13, Figure 2.4

6.9 Step One - Define the scope of the study.

This first step will identify:

- the purpose of the study;
- the level of detail and scale at which the LCA is to be conducted;
- the skills and resources required;
- the scope for stakeholder input.

Section 3.0 of this brief outlines the purpose of this study and Section 5.0 outlines the intended scope of this LCA which needs to be agreed in detail in consultation Harrogate Borough Council Planning staff.

6.10 Step Two - Conduct a desk study:

- (i) The purpose of the desk study is to gather and analyse information resulting in the identification of draft character types and areas and key locations requiring field survey observations.
- (ii) The desk study shall include consultation with the appropriate staff and other interested parties. These consultations are to be used as the basis for an in depth review of recent literature, research, surveys, planning policies, etc.
- (iii) HBC holds considerable information and documentation from various sources. Appendix 2 lists the background information available for this assessment.
- (iv) The desk study will contribute to the understanding of District landscape character through investigation of the many different influences, which have helped to shape it. The landscape assessment must identify clearly the patterns of landscape character which have been formed by these influences and describe them meaningfully, and indicate what this means for the future.
- (v) Map overlays ideally should encompass:
 - Natural Factors: geology, landform, river and drainage systems, soils, semi natural vegetation cover, woodland/tree cover
 - Social Factors: land use (including farm types), settlement pattern, patterns of field enclosure, 'time depth' – the historic dimension of landscape

- (vi) Community and stakeholder consultation will begin during this stage of the assessment through dissemination of information and introductory workshops in target areas (in particular related to SLAs)

6.11 Step Three: Conduct a Field survey:

- (i) The survey sheets for field survey shall be based upon those in the interim guidance. The survey sheets and selected photographs (fully cross-referenced) are to be supplied as appendices to the study report.
- (ii) The extent of the field survey required and the method to be followed when gathering information shall be clearly identified at the outset and shall include the following:
 - a written description of the character observed at particular points or in certain areas;
 - an illustrative sketch;
 - a checklist of landscape elements and their significance;
 - a checklist of aesthetic and perceptual factors; and
 - space for observations about the condition, sensitivity and management needs of the landscape.
- (iii) Stakeholder and community input in target areas in the form of workshops and participatory field surveys.

6.12 Step Four: Characterisation: Classification and Description:

- i) Classification requires the identification of patterns in the landscape, created by the way in which the natural and human influences on the landscape interact to create character.
- ii) Use professional and stakeholder opinion about boundaries along with manipulation of data collected and analysis of map data to help inform professional/stakeholder judgements about the boundaries of landscape classes.
- iii) Landscape character types will identify generic areas which have broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern in every area where they occur.
- iv) Landscape Character Areas occur within landscape character types and share generic characteristics but also have their own particular characteristics.

- v) A draft report of characterisation and description with maps will be produced for review.

6.13 Step Five: Research and analysis:

Research and analysis of information collected during the field survey and desk study will be carried out to inform judgements to be made in order to meet the objectives of this assessment.

- i) Review key characteristics and features of landscape character, its current state – condition of elements and overall intactness and evidence of landscape change and its consequences.
- ii) Identify trends in land use change and potential future development pressures e.g. wind farms
- iii) Identify the impact of current local plan countryside and SLA policy implementation in relation to trends in land use change, possible future change and development pressures.
- iv) Identify the perception of stakeholders on land use change and impact on landscape character?
- v) Define threats to key characteristics
- vi) Predict the consequences of trends and development pressures for the landscape. What will be the effects of predicted change on key characteristics, both negative and positive?
- vii) Define threats to key characteristics as a result of adverse consequences of change. Define opportunities for enhancement where scope for beneficial change. Define guidelines on intervention required for different land uses to counter threats and realise opportunities. Define priorities for action and methods of implementation.

6.14 Step 6: Making Judgements/evaluation

- i) Develop a landscape strategy for the District based on landscape quality, identifying policy zones.
- ii) Based on the landscape strategy determine the need for change in current landscape policy by answering the following questions based on the results of research and analysis:
 - Do SLAs contribute to the protection, restoration, enhancement of high quality landscapes and high value landscapes?

- Does current countryside policy in the local plan adequately protect the diverse land character of the District and actively encourage restoration and enhancement of landscape character where appropriate?

- iii) Determine the ability of the landscape to accommodate wind farms and other renewable energy resources by looking at sensitivity, capacity and robustness of each landscape character area.

- iv) Integrate the Harrogate District LCA with the Landscape Design Guide and other relevant design guides.

7.0 Output Schedule

- 7.1 The report shall be A4 (Landscape or portrait to be agreed with the client), black wire bound between plastic encapsulated covers.
- 7.2 All maps shall have a north point, barscale and Harrogate Borough Council logo. Consultant's logo and address shall appear only on the back cover. All maps shall be OS based. Where appropriate maps will refer to a master key inside the back cover.
- 7.3 All maps shall be in GIS
- 7.4 All landscape types and areas shall be fully quantified by in both absolute and proportional terms.
- 7.5 The Landscape Character types and areas and policy zones shall be presented in GIS/ Arcview format.
- 7.6 The cover is to include title, colour images, Harrogate Borough Council logo, plastic encapsulated.
- 7.7 The title page is to include title, a strong colour image, Harrogate Borough Council logo, authorship and data. The reverse of the title page shall contain the Harrogate Borough Council copyright statement.
- 7.8 The report is to consist of:

PART 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1. BACKGROUND
 - HBC role and responsibilities
 - The landscape character assessment
 - Relationship with other plans and studies
 - Location map showing the extent of the study

2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY
3. FORMAT OF THE REPORT

PART 2 THE LANDSCAPE OF THE HARROGATE DISTRICT

4. A BRIEF LANDSCAPE HISTORY
 - The meaning of landscape
 - Physical Development of the District: Geology and Landform (including maps); Soils and Drainage (including maps); Ecological Character (including maps)
 - Historical development Introduction, Pre-roman, Roman, Saxon and Norman, Medieval, Tudors and Stuarts, Georgian, Victorian, 1900-1980, 1980-present day

Include at least 3 historic maps to same scale for easy comparison with modern map, together with key published diagrams or illustrations relevant to the landscape. Also include an O.S. based "Heritage Map" highlighting all archaeological and historical sites shown on the Ordnance Survey, and significant sites and structures identified on the County Sites and Scheduled Monuments Records and the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. In addition sites or structures of heritage value identified in the Field Survey shall be included. For example historic but unlisted structures such as bridges, mills, etc, that have particular heritage value.

5. CLASSIFICATION OF THE LANDSCAPE
 - Assessing Landscape Character
 - Landscape character types
 - Landscape Character Areas
6. JUDGEMENT/EVALUATION OF THE LANDSCAPE
 - Evaluation process
 - Evaluation methods used
 - Landscape quality
 - Landscape value
 - Landscape capacity

PART 3 LANDSCAPE OF CHARACTER TYPES AND AREAS

- Introduction (This part of the report presents the main findings and recommendations for each character type/area in turn).
- For *each* character type/area present the following:
 - Small location map and short introductory text
 - Landscape character and pattern
 - Character and Key features
 - Key issues, landscape policies and design guidance
 - Landscape policy zones and recommendations

The landscape planning guidelines shall be illustrated by colour symbols on 1:50,000 OS base maps, one each for urban form, access and activity, visual and environmental quality, green space and habitats. Supporting text on facing page.

PART 4 APPENDICES

PART 5 APPENDICES TO MAIN REPORT

8. Copyright

- 8.1 All Intellectual Property rights in all works that are originated, conceived, written or made by Harrogate Borough Council whether alone or with others, in the production of this Landscape Character Assessment shall be retained by the Council.

APPENDIX A. Stakeholders (communities of interest)

Council for the Protection of Rural England
 Countryside Agency
 English Heritage
 English Nature
 Environment Agency
 Forestry Authority
 Local residential/nursing homes and day centres
 Local schools
 Local groups and societies
 Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
 National Farmers' Union
 Nidderdale AONB Joint Advisory Committee
 Nidderdale archaeology working group

Nidderdale Society
North Yorkshire County Council
Parish councils and meetings
Rural Arts North Yorkshire
Rural Community Council
Women's Institute
Yorkshire Dales National Park
Yorkshire Water
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

APPENDIX B. Background information for Landscape Assessment

Current and first edition Ordnance Survey mapping
Sites and Monuments Record
Parks and Gardens Register
Conservation Area Statements
Phase one habitat survey, SINCR and SSSI records
Existing parish maps and other village appraisal
such as VDS
Nidderdale pollard survey
community archaeological project
Local Environment Action Plans
Biodiversity Action Plans
*Harrogate and Knaresborough Local Plan
Background Paper: Landscape Conservation*
(1987)
Ripon Local Plan Landscape Appraisal (1990)
Harrogate District Landscape Appraisal (1993)
The Nidderdale Landscape (1991)
aerial photographs
land use and land cover maps
geology and soils maps
Nidderdale AONB Dry Stone Wall project
Countryside Character Areas and Natural Areas
maps and descriptions

APPENDIX C. Proposed methods for community engagement in landscape assessment

A3.1 *Questionnaires* have the advantage of achieving a wide coverage of population and are reasonably inexpensive, but provide generally superficial information. Hertfordshire County Council's approach of using questionnaires in conjunction with maps on which respondents can mark their interpretation of landscape character areas could be useful. 'Village Appraisals for Windows' may provide a model for

development of a questionnaire and analysis of response; the Rural Community Council may be able to offer further advice and assistance. The inclusion of a question "would you be interested in assisting further with landscape character assessment?" may help identify local participants for the working groups (see below) who might not otherwise come forward.

- A3.2 The *Village Design Statement* approach could be modified for local community landscape appraisals. For defined areas, working groups made up of a core of local people interested in their local landscape would be introduced to the concept of landscape character assessment in a workshop setting. The groups would undertake site visits and seek out the views of their community then undertake some initial analysis to identify characteristics and valued features. This method can be amended or the *Age to Age* technique could be used for other groups such as school classes, youth groups and elderly day-care centres.
- A3.3 The *Jigsaw* approach pulling together photographs and other representations of the local landscape within a parish to show character and distinctiveness may be a useful way of revealing visual aspects of landscape.
- A3.4 *Participatory Appraisal* technique may be helpful in the analysis stage (facilitators experienced in PA will be required: contact the Hull and East Yorkshire Participatory Appraisal Network).
- A3.5 Some groups may wish to produce a *Parish Map* to celebrate their findings (assistance is available through Rural Arts North Yorkshire and advice from Common Ground).
- A3.6 Involving the District Panel will provide representativeness and could be used as a *focus group* to validate the final draft assessment; however, it is unlikely to be able to provide primary data or help with initial assessment work.

Appendix 3. Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment result of community involvement activities conducted in May 2003

Introduction

Several evening meetings were arranged throughout May 2003 inviting District and County Councillors, parish Councils and local interest groups and organisations to attend. These meetings aimed to tell interested parties about the Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment and to give people the opportunity to tell us their views on landscape, the issues relating to landscape change and possible guidelines for the future.

The following meetings were arranged:

Wednesday 7th May 2003, Ripon Town Hall, 6.00 – 8.30pm

Monday 12th May 2003, Langthorpe and Kirby Hill Community Centre, 6.00 – 8.30pm

Wednesday 14th May 2003, Tockwith Village Hall, 6.00 – 8.30pm

Thursday 22nd May 2003, The Sun Pavillion, Harrogate, 5.30 – 8.30pm

Tuesday 27th May 2003, The Memorial Hall, Pateley Bridge, 6.00 – 8.30pm

People were invited by letter and asked to reply to give an indication of whether or not they or representatives or their organisation could attend. The response for each of the area meetings was mixed.

In Ripon only one person attended when six had replied that they would attend. This led to the decision to cancel the meeting at Langthorpe and Kirby Hill Community Centre as there had been only three positive responses to the invite.

Ten people attended the meeting in Tockwith representing Bilton and Bickerton Parish Council, Tockwith with Wilstrop Parish Council, Tockwith Residents Association, Marston Moor ward and Marston Moor Internal Drainage Board.

Twenty nine people attend the meeting in Harrogate representing Knaresborough Town Council, Knaresborough Civic Society, Burton Leonard Parish Council, Pannal Village Society, Stone Rings Bank Amenity Group, Rudding Dower, Save Crimple Valley, the Ramblers Association, Killinghall Parish Council, NYCC, Knaresborough Horticultural Society, Stray Defence Association,

Friends of Harrogate District Museums, Knaresborough Chamber of Trade, Starbeck Residents Association, Housing Forum, Harrogate Ladies Probus Club, Harrogate Spa Ladies, Knox Valley Residents Association, Bilton Conservation Group, Goldsborough Parish Council, Friends of Valley Gardens and Killinghall Moor Conservation Group.

Fourteen attended the meeting in Pateley Bridge representing the Nidderdale Society, Birstwith Parish Council, Dacre Parish Council, Upper Nidd Parish Council, NYCC, Hartwith cum Winsley Parish Council, Nidderdale AONB, Nidderdale Tree Wardens, and Washburn, Lower Nidderdale and Mashamshire Wards.

Although we were not able to get any formal input for the Ripon and North East area of the District due to the lack of interest in the meetings there have been more informal discussions relating to specific landscape concerns so there is an awareness of the landscape issues faced in that area.

Format of the meetings

The meetings began with an opportunity for participants to look at a display about the Landscape Character Assessment and the findings for their area so far. This was followed by a brief presentation explaining the process of Landscape Character Assessment, how it is used and why it is being done. Questions were then invited from the participants.

The main focus of the meeting was to find out what people thought of their local landscape, what is important and why, the threats to the local landscape and what might be done about them. This led to three questions being asked:

1. What makes your local area/landscape special and distinctive?
2. What are the threats to that landscape and what might result in change in the future?
3. What do you think could be done to manage change in landscape?

The structure of the meetings did vary depending on the dynamic of those attending but the findings have been arranged to answer the above questions.

Tockwith meeting 14th May 2003

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

What makes your landscape special/distinctive?

- Rudgate the Roman road should be named and mentioned.
- Traditional building materials include red brick and pantiles
- Common ground
- Medieval field systems ridge and furrow at Wilstrop
- Marston Hill – the use of this name for a character area is not popular.

What are the landscape threats/issues?

- Thorpe Arch Trading Estate
- Activities on Tockwith Airfield
- Loss of hedgerows around airfield and else where
- 24 hour workings at the airfield creating noise pollution, light pollution
- Business park employees have no respect for the local community
- A1 creates a barrier with less consideration given to Tockwith side, things are ‘dumped’ upon them
- Rubbish, untidiness from trading estate
- Flooding due to increased building
- Flat landscape allows structures to be highly visible
- Moving of walls have altered appearance of village
- Dangerous entrance at thriving school due to new housing

What are the possible guidelines to manage landscape change?

- Create wetland storage
- Leave drainage water courses free draining and uninhibited by reed beds etc. They must remain functional to aid agriculture
- To consider the surrounding character areas that area all impacted by the airfield.
- Ruralisation (want to feel like North Yorkshire)
- Screening of the airfield/business park
- Control height, amount, colour of development
- Contain work/storage within buildings to keep tidy
- Possibility for tourism due to proximity to York and battlefield
- Planting to mitigate impact of bridges across railways and roads
- Reinstate original road access across airfield to school, safer (New Lane)
- Repair materials (kerbstones) should be sensitive to place

Sun Pavilion, Harrogate meeting 22nd May

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

What makes your landscape special/distinctive?

South Harrogate

- Diversity of the River Crimple
- Valley floor and the gently sloping sides
- Footpath network
- Winding country roads
- Disused railway could be used
- Views along footpaths towards Almscliffe Crag or Crimple viaduct
- Pannal and Harrogate green buffers of land maintain lovely approach.
- Church Lane, Crimple Valley
- Wildlife
- Rare plants

Knaresborough and Nidd Gorge

- The river itself, must mention river more
- Knaresborough Castle and gardens
- Churches such as Holy Trinity and St Johns. (Spire can be seen clearly from Goldsborough)
- Historic buildings
- Views vital to attract tourists
- Viaducts and their reflection in the water
- Diversity of geology
- Nidd gorge, ancient quarries
- Castle, Priory and the bridges
- Ancient semi-natural woodland
- Wildlife very important, endangered
- Access to the gorge

North Harrogate

(character areas 98/7/52/9/49/51)

- Diversity of scenery throughout the seasons
- Variations in topography of valleys
- Rock outcrops
- Mineral water supplies
- Coniferous plantations/woods
- Ancient Forest of Knaresborough
- Open countryside and its connection with the urban town
- Good public footpath network
- Wide variation in boundary treatments
- Like the appearance of grassland and dislike arable fields
- Long distance views are attractive/important
- Wide range of wildlife and endangered species
- Tidy hedgerows look well kept
- Areas that are well wooded
- Wish the area to be conserved

What are the landscape threats/issues?

South Harrogate

- Urban sprawl south and southeast
- Harrogate – Pannal bypass do not want to engulf bypass
- Threats to wildlife
- Loss of farming activity especially on Council land
- Ridding Lane over commercial development of Ridding park estate and Ripley Castle
- Country setting ruined
- Winding narrow roads link series of villages unique close to town.
- Telecommunications mast.

Knarborough and Nidd Gorge

- Access, important to have continuity which there isn't, good links into gorge as they are not clear
- Views obscured by trees, tree management, lots of self-seeding and trees get too big.
- Rubbish dumping in the gorge.
- All bypasses, roads a problem.
- Impact of caravan sites that are developing and not screened
- Tourism signs and information lacks
- Inappropriate development/buildings
- Access for elderly and pushchairs and wheelchairs

North Harrogate (character areas 98/7/52/9/49/51)

- Light pollution (Penny Pot camp and Menwith Hill)
- Support farmers 'if we don't look after them they won't look after us!' (Countryside stewardship etc.)
- Killinghall Bypass proposals
- Land use
- Traffic noise and pollution
- Urban sprawl or any development including new roads
- Condition of some field boundaries becoming poor
- Protection of rights of way needs to be managed especially in response to open access

What are the possible guidelines to manage landscape change?

South Harrogate

- No detrimental development
- Education information generic
- Rubbish and vandalism – police liaison
- Reduce effects of traffic

- Improvement to stiles and footpaths
- Endorse suggested guidelines
- South Beck – showground north preserve, distinct, high value

Knarborough and Nidd Gorge

- Policing and monitoring developments
- Preserving Green Belt
- Education about rubbish, vandalism and dog poo!
- Provide information so that people can use area more efficiently
- Free car parking (won't help character)
- Guided walks
- Improvement of footpaths and build a footbridge
- Tree works to open and preserve views.
- History trail
- Roving receptionists

North Harrogate (character areas 98/7/52/9/49/51)

- Increase awareness to farmers of stewardship schemes and of their role in the landscape
- Monitor planning issues
- Assess visual impact of field barns however they would rather conversion than the building lost altogether
- More awareness and implementation of the various schemes available such as farm stewardship and hedgerow relaying, stonewall building will encourage long term maintenance
- Verges maintenance cut too deep into wild flowers
- Control of lighting pollution.
- Environmental policy, improve and develop.
- Education for everybody
- Efficient communication like consultation
- Promotion of the District
- District website

The Memorial Hall, Pateley Bridge Meeting, 27th May 2003

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

What makes your landscape special/distinctive?

- Stone walls for stock control and provide shelter
- Individual field barns 100-200 years old
- Wildflowers
- Set aside for its provision of different habitat. (Lapwings)
- John o' Gaunts.
- Windmill top of Old Church Lane

- The local vernacular, proud of their local identity
- Diversity of roadside hedges. (Heather Garnett has produced booklet on this)
- Heather Moorland

What are the landscape threats/issues?

- Farmers are the custodians of the future
- Maintenance of country roads, some are flooding due to the loss of roadside drainage gulleys. Condition of roads/walls important to support/attract the tourist industry
- Trees close to walls are knocking them down
- Hedges are protected yet stonewalls are not and some farmers do not take responsibility for their maintenance or sell them
- Highways requirements/methods are insensitive to place and destroying character of the country lanes with the need for sight lines for example
- Gripping is moving water away from the uplands too fast and causing flooding notably at Gouthwaite and Ramsgill
- Water eroding valley side at Murrayfield Glen (left hand side of Bouthwaite)
- Developers moving into the area from elsewhere are destroying smaller local industry
- Developers do not respect local settlement pattern/scale/materials. For example at Markington sewage works have aluminium handrails that can be seen from afar
- Tourist impact – tourists can scare wildlife
- Daffodils are prolific across the District and not native look overpowering
- Ragwort is prolific should be removed now spreading from verges into fields
- Meadows lost from the 40s and 50s
- Monoculture (part of the character?)
- Horses change character of fields (overgrazing, muddy, post and rail fencing, jumps, stables)
- Too many commuters live in the countryside and are not educated about its character and how it should be managed
- Too many trees of the wrong species and in insensitive straight edged blocks.
- Yorkshire Waters planting around their reservoirs is insensitive
- Self-seeding Sycamores are not managed and grow to block views, for example the river Nidd is not visible due to its thick wooded corridor
- Management/grant aid for bracken control is only short term and in the first instance so the problem keeps returning
- Grouse becoming scarcer due to wetter winters and disease having impact on shooting season and cost of the bird

- Redundant buildings left standing to deteriorate
- New tracks laid up to individual barns have impact on landscape character
- Modern industry is at such a scale these days it is destructive to the landscape
- Renewable Energy targets – Biomass, Wind etc

What are the possible guidelines to manage landscape change?

- Reintroduce the maintenance of stonewalls into tenancy agreements
- Silt traps to reduce soil erosion from areas affected by flooding Water Authority involvement/responsibility to these issues
- Encourage movement of cables or new cables to be placed underground.
- Recognise that important barns are not just those in remote areas but close to settlement/ built form too
- Planting of wildflowers along roadside (plugs) and gorse
- County to remove Ragwort
- Reintroduction of lost meadows to provide diversity of habitats, mixed traditional pasture
- Horse related buildings should be temporary/ timber so that they can be easily removed if the horses move on. Enforcement of removal of jumps that are temporary structures also
- Liaison between farmers and horse owners as to the overgrazing of land and how it can be prevented
- Planting of deciduous trees around coniferous plantations in a more random shape.
- Management of river banks to open up views to the water and let light in. (coppicing)
- Long term grant aid packages that continually fight the bracken
- Maintenance of heather despite dwindling grouse
- Conversion of redundant buildings into affordable housing for local people who work the local land

NB. During the meeting there was a brief discussion about Wind Farms and possible future pressure for them and their impact on landscape. At this time the following Councillors felt it necessary to leave the room as they are currently part of the committee considering a Scoping Report for a Wind Farm at Knabs Ridge just outside the Nidderdale AONB: Councillor R Grange, Councillor E March, Councillor Tom Watson.

A list of those invited to the meetings and those who attended is available from the Landscape Architect, Conservation and Design, Planning Division, Harrogate Borough Council.

Appendix 4. Biodiversity and Landscape in Harrogate District

The Harrogate District encompasses a great variety of wildlife habitats. Their distribution reflects the influence of the underlying geology and the topology of the area. However, their modification by human land management is an equally important influence. Harrogate District includes parts of four of English Nature's 'natural areas': 'The Yorkshire Dales', 'The Pennine Dales Fringe', 'The Southern Magnesian Limestone' and 'The Vale of York'. The sequence of these divisions runs roughly from the high ground of the Pennine fringe in the west to the lowlands of the Vale of York in the East of the District. These natural areas are cut through by the major dales rivers, which run very broadly in a northwest to south-easterly direction. The following concise introduction to the biodiversity of the Harrogate District follows a broadly similar sequence.

The uplands surrounding Nidderdale and the Upper Washburn Valley comprise the south-eastern part of the Yorkshire Dales natural area. The highest land in the District, at almost 700m, is on the upper fells of Great Whernside. The hill tops and higher rolling moorland of the western fringes of the District are mostly covered with blanket bog, underlain by deep peat, derived primarily from sphagnum moss. Other dominant components of bog vegetation include cotton grass, bilberry and heather. Sundew and bog asphodel also occur and crowberry occurs on the highest slopes. On those upland sites where sheep grazing predominates, overgrazing may occur and heather is lost. However, management for grouse shooting is the predominant land use. It maintains a mosaic of stands of heather at different ages, which incidentally creates habitats which are also beneficial for many other species of birds. However, too frequent burning may result in a lack of mature heather and a loss of sphagnum moss. This lack of sphagnum means that peat formation can no longer occur, bringing the long-term future of the blanket bog ecosystem into question.

Most of the eastern moorlands lie on an undulating plateau between 300-400m and comprise a dry acid heath underlain by thin soils over millstone grit. This is a man-made habitat, derived from the clearance of oak birch woodlands in the Neolithic period (c. 400 yrs BC). Today controlled burning and grazing maintain heather moorland. It exists in

mosaics with wetter heath, which is characterised by the presence of different species such as cross-leaved heath and purple moor grass. Wet flushes provide good habitat for invertebrates and birds such as waders and pipits. The sponge-like character of blanket bog and wet heath helps to prevent ecologically damaging spate-flooding of the dales rivers downstream. Since the war, moorland has frequently been drained by 'gripping'. Many moorland landowners now recognise the value of wetter areas as sources of insect food for red grouse chicks.

These uplands hold internationally important populations of birds such as golden plover, merlin, hen harrier and short-eared owl for which large areas are designated as Special Protection Areas. These habitats are also designated under European legislation as Special Areas of Conservation for their plant communities, which are virtually unique to northern Britain. Upland heaths are also important habitats for adders and common lizard.

Around Greenhow there are outcrops of carboniferous limestone, outliers of the huge Craven block of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Here there are mosaics of calcareous grassland interwoven with more acid soils and spoil-heaps from the lead-mining industry. This produces a distinctive flora of spoil-heap specialists such as alpine penny-cress, spring sandwort together with upland limestone plants such as mountain pansy. Natural tarns are scarce in the Harrogate District but ponds associated with lead mining or the water industry form some of the best habitat for upland pool specialists such as the black darter dragonfly.

The rough grassland on the upland fringes below the moorland wall was traditionally the 'in-bye', the extent of which has fluctuated with the economic fortunes of farming. Upland marshy grassland and flushes are important for breeding waders such as curlew, redshank and snipe, although intensive drainage or over-dominance by soft rush can both threaten this habitat. Black grouse depend on a habitat mosaic of unimproved permanent pasture with adjacent heather and scrub woodland. The loss of black grouse as a breeding bird in Harrogate District is indicative of agricultural improvement of much of the moorland fringe in recent years by drainage, fertilisation and reseeded of grass monocultures.

The streams and gills at the heads of the dales rivers dissect the uplands. Upland streams are important habitats for species such as the golden ringed dragonfly and the dipper. Many of these are gills are clothed in Upland Oak Woodland which is another national BAP priority habitat associated with the North and West of Britain. It is characterised by oak and birch with varying amounts of rowan, holly and hazel in the understorey. These woods hold birds such as pied flycatcher and wood warbler and have a rich fern and bryophyte ground layer. Such woodland would have been the predominant vegetation cover of most of the uplands prior to clearance from the Neolithic period onwards. Despite being heavily influenced by human management over the centuries, much of what remains is ancient semi-natural woodland. Some of this will have been continuously wooded since the end of the last ice-age. However, most of the best timber trees have since been removed and in many instances, oak has been replaced by non-locally native broadleaves or alien conifers. Rhododendron, introduced as an ornamental shrub and for pheasant cover is very invasive in some of these woodlands and casts an impenetrable shade.

More recent forestry and woodlands grants favour the re-establishment of native broadleaves and though it will be many years before these policies bear fruit, this is a very welcome development. Conifer plantations, however, can be a valuable wildlife habitat in their own right; the younger stages support populations of nightjar and tree pipit, while mature conifer plantations hold populations of goshawk.

Dense stands of bracken in grazed woodlands where regeneration of trees has been inhibited or on better-drained valley sides may shade out an otherwise rich ground flora. However, bracken itself provides an important habitat for some species such as whinchat.

Many of the valleys of the upland fringe are underlain by impermeable gritstone and have been impounded for water supply. Though generally nutrient poor, the reservoirs support several rare aquatic plants. Some hold important wintering and passage populations of wildfowl and waders and Gouthwaite has long been a famous site among birdwatchers.

In the lower dales, much of the farmland is still under pasture, although the proportion, which has gone over to arable, has increased in recent years. Most of the grassland that remains has been subject to improvement and intensification. Where unimproved grassland occurs it is mostly acidic and although the characteristic species of this habitat such as heath bedstraw or heath milkwort

may be relatively common, it forms an attractive and valuable plant community. Nidderdale and the Washburn Valley are both still boast a relatively rich and varied countryside but the loss of lesser horseshoe bats since the end of the nineteenth century may indicate a general deterioration in the quality of the landscape.

There are many historic parklands in the District, some, such as Studley and Ripley deer parks date back to medieval times. Such parks hold significant numbers of veteran ancient trees some of which are around 800 years old. These veterans provide niches for many specialised invertebrates, such as stag beetle, and fungi such as oak polypore.

Many species of birds are associated with mature trees in parkland or in woodland. These include lesser spotted woodpecker, spotted flycatcher and hawfinch. Noctule bats breed almost exclusively in holes in trees

The middle reaches of the dales' rivers hold good numbers of trout and grayling which feed on the numerous mayflies, stoneflies, caddis flies and other insects at the base of the food chain. Salmon numbers are also slowly recovering. These salmonid fish depend on good water and habitat quality. The River Ure holds populations of the nationally declining migratory river lamprey and the scarce depressed river mussel.

Since the banning of organochloride pesticides, the otter is now making a good recovery from virtual extinction in the District in the nineteen eighties. However, the water vole, once common is now almost locally extinct due to a combination of habitat loss and predation by the introduced American mink. The native white-clawed crayfish is rapidly losing ground on the Ure and the Wharf to the disease-carrying American signal crayfish. Many invasive alien plants also tend to follow water courses and the ubiquitous summertime pink of Himalayan balsam bears testament to what must now be one the most successful plants in the District.

Remnants of wet woodland along the river valleys of the middle and lower dales hold scarce species of plant such as Yellow Star of Bethlehem, declining birds such as willow tit and many rare insects. Examples of wet woodlands include Hackfall Woods, High Batts, Sharow Mires, Cow Mires and Upper Dunsforth Carrs.

A narrow ridge of magnesian limestone runs through the District from Wetherby in the south to just east of Masham. It supports a unique flora and many scarce invertebrates. Attractive wildflowers associated with this limestone include clustered bellflower, carline thistle, squinacywort and bee

orchid. Thistle Broomrape, a species confined in the UK almost entirely to magnesian limestone grassland in Yorkshire, has its stronghold in the Harrogate District. Unimproved magnesian limestone grassland is nationally scarce and is included within the lowland calcareous grassland priority habitat action plan. Much of it within the District is designated as SSSI, such as at Burton Leonard, Quarry Moor and Ripon Parks. Management of this unique resource is crucial to its conservation.

On the calcareous soils associated with limestone, ash is the predominant woodland tree. Prior to the onset of Dutch elm disease, Wych elm was often co-dominant in woodlands and it often still persists through suckering. The understorey may be very diverse and may include shrubs such as guelder rose, dogwood, buckthorn and spindle.

Immediately to the east of the magnesian limestone escarpment, in the lower dales valleys, the rivers begin to meander and shingle beds are often exposed. These riversides and their floodplains provide habitats for typical lowland dales birds such as sand martin, common sandpiper, oystercatcher and lapwings. Yellow wagtail, once a common bird in this habitat, is now very scarce. The gravel beds, which were laid down in pre-glacial times along the courses of the proto-Ure and proto-Nidd (the current rivers predecessors) have been extensively exploited since the war. The presence of large expanses of open water, left behind by former gravel workings, is responsible for increases in many species of birds in the District such as little ringed plover, grey-lag goose and cormorant. Many of these former gravel pits are now managed as nature reserves and there are plans to further increase their biodiversity value by the establishment of extensive reedbeds which are likely to attract marsh harrier and bittern.

Much of the lower land in the south east of the District lies within the floodplain of the lower reaches of the dales rivers, which eventually all join the River Ouse in the Vale of York. These lower reaches are broader and apparently more slow flowing. They are often bordered by lines of alder or willow. They are muddy bottomed and support coarse fish and emergent plants such as flowering rush and club rush.

The surviving wet meadows and fens are the valuable remnants of what were once much more extensive wetlands. Several of the best remaining examples are such as Farnham Mires, Bishop Monkton Ings and Aubert Ings are designated as SSSIs. Many of the best sites have a calcareous influence from limestone further upstream in the catchment. These fens are dominated by tall

herbs, grasses and sedges and have a very diverse flora made up of plants such as meadow rue, sneeewort and gypsywort. They support populations of declining species of birds such as reed bunting and sedge warbler

The Vale of York is a flat, open landscape, mostly underlain by impermeable boulder clay. The many hollows and ponds support significant populations of great crested newts, including one site at Kirk Deighton, which is designated as a Special Area for Conservation.

Most of the farmland on the Vale of York is arable, much of it very intensively farmed. Many of the typical farm birds of this habitat are in serious decline. These include corn bunting, tree sparrow, skylark and grey partridge. Cereal field margins are now a national BAP priority habitat and agri-environment schemes, which promote conservation headlands, winter stubble and game/wild bird crops are now beginning to be taken up. However it does not appear that these initiatives have yet begun to turn around the fortunes of many of the declining species in this District.

Across the District human settlement provides important wildlife habitats. These range from farm buildings in the dales, utilised by bats and swallows to urban gardens which support butterflies and hedgehogs and declining birds such as song thrush and house sparrows. In the face of agricultural intensification garden ponds provide some of the most important refuges for frogs and toads. On the urban fringe, local nature reserves such as Rossett Acres in Harrogate or Quarry Moor in Ripon provide the opportunity to conserve wildlife whilst allowing local people to appreciate its beauty.

Whilst indicating some of the wealth of the District's wildlife, much of this brief outline catalogues a decline in biodiversity in recent years. This Landscape Character Assessment, however, provides a tool, which can be used to help restore the balance. It can help to ensure that wildlife is taken into consideration in decisions taken about the control of development, mitigation of its impacts and even point the way towards enhancement through planning gain. It could assist in the appropriate targeting of conservation measures through, for example, Countryside Stewardship and other environmental schemes. Together with the forthcoming Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan, it can contribute to ensuring that we conserve the immense richness of wildlife of the District.

Appendix 5. Buildings of the Harrogate District

Building Materials

Apart from scale, the greatest impact on the character of buildings and their appearance in their setting is due to their external materials. The majority of buildings erected prior to the late 19th Century were constructed of local building materials using methods passed from each generation to the next. This has resulted in strong vernacular that is locally distinctive.

The materials used in vernacular buildings are directly related to the geology of the District. Buildings to the West are of local grit stone, buildings to the East are generally have brick walls and pantile roofs made from local clays, and those over the magnesium limestone belt are of limestone or brick with tile roofs.

Render was commonly applied to failing brickwork and also to eroded magnesian limestone and soft sandstone. However the use of render on the more durable gritstone is not common, therefore there are few rendered buildings in the West. Cobbles were commonly used in conjunction with brick in the East of the District. Hence there is a greater variety of building materials in the East contributing strongly to its local distinctiveness compared to the limited grey stone of the West.

There are old buildings that do not reflect the vernacular; ecclesiastical, public or pretentious buildings were often built of materials that were transported from a distance if the local material was not considered appropriate to the use, for example the churches in the vale of York are built of sandstone, not of brick or cobble. Generally, other than in the large towns, these buildings form landmarks in a scene of modest vernacular buildings.

The introduction of the railway in the 19th century instigated, not only the rapid development of Harrogate town but also the common use of building materials that were not locally derived, particularly welsh roofing slate. Most new buildings were constructed with welsh slate roofs and many existing thatched buildings were re-roofed in slate. As the 20th century drew on, other materials were introduced, which have influenced the character of the buildings, particularly in the large towns. However, these other materials have had little impact on the rural settlements of the District.

The large agricultural buildings and warehouses of the second half of the 20th century have impacted on the countryside. Their cladding materials, which are both practical and economic for the large spans, are visually obtrusive compared to traditional buildings materials derived locally.

Building Form

The basic forms of houses and agricultural buildings are similar throughout the county. They are derived from the typical spans of timber utilised for the structural elements of floors and roofs. Dwellings typically are two storeys in height, but only one room deep and commonly two rooms wide. Further rooms are accommodated in modest extensions to the rear or sides. The basic building blocks are thus similar in size and proportion throughout the District, however roofing materials dictate the pitch of the roofs: a thatch (whether ling or long straw) requires a steep pitch to maximise run off; pantiles need a steep pitch because they are small units with small laps, and; large stone slates, not so affected by the wind driven rain, are laid to lower pitches to reduce the stress on the pegs holding the slates in place. The consequence of these different pitch requirements is that buildings of stone in the West of the District have lower pitched roofs and hence a squat appearance compared to the high pitched tiled roofed buildings of the East.

There are however other differences in agricultural buildings within the District. The form of these utilitarian buildings relates directly to their function. For example, the small sheep farms of the uplands required field barns to store winter feed close to the animals. These barns are not only isolated, but they are very different in scale to the large threshing barns with gingangs seen on the cereal farms of the vale of York which form part of farmstead groups.

Elevation Treatment

Traditionally buildings were orientated to maximise the available sunlight and minimise the effect of cold winds. Thus outside the larger settlements, where topography allows buildings face southwards and have minimum openings on the north walls. Older houses have small windows and

very rarely have windows in their side, or gable, walls. There are more significant differences between the fenestration of older houses in the west and east, than those built in the 19th century and later. The older houses of the East were typically timber framed, many were refaced in brick at which time more fashionable windows were inserted and so there are few with original mullioned windows. Whereas in the West, the older buildings originally constructed in stone still have their stone mullioned windows in existence.

A window type traditional to the area is known as the Yorkshire Sash; this is a horizontally sliding sash window that requires no weights and little ironmongery. Generally they have one fixed and one sliding light, but are often seen with three lights in the East because their strong timber frames can support the brickwork over. There are locations where wide Yorkshire lights were used, for example in Scriven where extra light was required for the flax cottage industry.

Later the windows used in houses were predominantly vertical sliding sash windows, which have very different proportions to the Yorkshire sashes, and commonly floor to ceiling heights were increased to ensure elegant

proportions. The fenestration of houses of the 20th century has developed rapidly from the vertical sash, through wide picture windows back to smaller energy efficient windows. This and national building techniques has unfortunately reduced local distinctiveness.

Conclusion

As two extremes, the taller brick and rendered buildings of the East with their predominantly vertical windows contrast strongly with the solid robust stone buildings of the West, However as one travels through the District, one can see the influences of the imported Welsh slates, use of a greater variety of materials in areas of transition, changes of style and building methods. Each area must be closely studied to fully understand the character of local buildings to ensure that any development is appropriate to its context.

Appendix 6. Soils of the Harrogate District

Soils are a product of their environment, greatly influenced by climate, topography, vegetation, land use, and their parent material which may be underlying bedrock or bedrock blanketed in glacial till.

Harrogate District has 5 main groups of soils that are Peat soils, Podzolic soils, Brown soils, Surface water gley soils and Ground water gley soils.

Peat soils

These are predominantly organic soils derived from partially decomposed plant remains that accumulated under waterlogged conditions. Peat soils within Harrogate District are specifically **raw oligo-fibrous peat** that blankets the upland Millstone grit plateau of the Heather moorlands to the west. The impermeable nature of the millstone grit bedrock together with the flatness of the plateau, means that the soils remain saturated to within 20cm of its surface. They have a fibrous texture and are very acid with $\text{pH} < 4.0$.

They are grade 5 agricultural soils supporting a heath vegetation of heather, bilberry and bracken, managed for grouse shooting and poor quality grazing.

Podzolic soils

These are soils with a black, dark brown or ochreous subsurface horizon resulting from the accumulation of iron, organic matter or both with an unincorporated peaty topsoil. Various patches have formed along the moorland fringe as a result of acid weathering conditions over Millstone grit bedrock and under a natural vegetation cover of heather.

Stagnopodzols are characteristic of their upland situation and the impermeable nature of the millstone grit means that drainage through the soil structure is slow remaining periodically or permanently wet and resulting in mottling. There are two subgroups of this soil in the District namely *iron pan* and *humus-iron pan* stagnopodzols. There is no distinct difference in their distribution but the *iron pan* has a layer of iron <1cm thick cemented by iron and humus and the *humus-iron pan* is the same but for a humus enriched subsoil.

They are generally grade 4 and 5 agricultural soils of poor grazing value and typical of wet moorland habitats and coniferous forestry.

Brown soils

These soils tend to be brown or reddish in colour and develop over permeable materials at elevations below 300m AOD. They are mostly in agricultural use and occur throughout the District.

Typical **brown calcareous earths** occur between Knaresborough and Wetherby over Magnesian Limestone bedrock.

They are non-alluvial, well-drained and fine loamy soils with a weathered calcareous sub soil (1-40% calcium carbonate content).

They are grade 2 agricultural soils managed for both arable (cereal, potatoes) and grassland production.

Brown earths occur in the north of the District and are associated with the rivers Swale, Ure, Burn, Nidd, Laver and Skell.

They are non-alluvial and loamy soils with a non-calcareous subsoil formed over Millstone grit or Magnesian limestone bedrock with one or two patches occurring over Sherwood sandstone. Those that have formed over the Magnesian limestone are more slowly-permeable and therefore have been subject to mild mottling.

They are grade 2 and 3 agricultural soils managed for both grassland and arable production.

Typical **brown alluvial soils** occur along the course of the Rivers Nidd, Wharfe and to a lesser extent the Ure, over a Millstone grit with till and alluvium parent material.

They are fine loamy and loamy soils with a non-calcareous subsurface horizon, deep and stoneless and at risk from flooding due to proximity of watercourses.

They are grade 3 and 4 agricultural soils suitable as short-term grassland for stock and where flood risk is low, some arable production (potatoes, cereals).

Argillic brown earths dominate the gently undulating and low-lying vale in the east of the District developed over a parent material of Sherwood sandstone cloaked in sandy till and till.

They are fine loamy and coarse loamy soils with a subsurface horizon showing significant clay enrichment. They are deep, and despite being well drained are at risk from seasonal water logging due to their low-lying situation.

They are of grade 2 agricultural soils, the highest quality in the District and farmed for arable production plus small areas of grassland commonly around settlement.

Surface water gley soils

These are seasonally waterlogged slowly permeable soils, prominently mottled above 40 cm depth. They are the most frequent soil type that occurs throughout the District.

Stanogley soils have a distinct topsoil and are typical of their lowland situation formed over a parent material of millstone grit or Magnesian limestone cloaked in till.

They are seasonally waterlogged fine loamy over clayey soils, generally grade 3 or 4 agricultural land suited to a variety of permanent and short term grassland plus arable production at its eastern extent around Harrogate and Ripon.

Pelo-stanogley soils are distinct as they are more clayey in nature due to formation over silt and clay parent material that are specifically glacial lake deposits over Sherwood sandstone bedrock. They occur in the low-lying eastern vale of the District across the floodplains of the rivers Swale, Ouse and Nidd.

They are fine loamy and coarse loamy over clayey soils, seasonally-waterlogged, and stoneless.

They are grade 3 agricultural soils suited to a mixture of both grassland and arable production.

Ground water gley soils

These soils have developed within permeable river alluvium over bedrock of Sherwood sandstone. They occur along the river corridors of the Nidd, Ure, Swale and Ouse and have prominently mottled or uniform grey subsoils resulting from the periodic water logging of a fluctuating ground water table. They are better known as **Alluvial gley Soils** specifically developed in loamy or clayey alluvium at least 30cm thick.

GLOSSARY

The following definition of terms has been taken from the latest guidance on landscape character assessment (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002) and the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment second edition 2002 and has been augmented by definitions of terms used in recent landscape character assessments and the specific experience gained during the process of this assessment.

Ancient semi-natural woodland. Woodland area that has had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 and has only been cleared for under-wood or timber production.

Characteristics. Those elements that in combination create the distinctive character of an area.

Character Area. A unique geographic area with a consistent character and identity.

Character Type. A generic term for landscape with a consistent homogeneous character.

Countryside. The rural environment and its associated communities.

Diversity. Where a variety of qualities or characteristics occurs.

Drainage pattern. The pattern of watercourses and water bodies in the landscape resulting from both natural and man made processes.

Element. A component part of the landscape (for example roads, hedges, woods.)

Enclosure. The term used to describe the development of field systems. Parliamentary Enclosure Acts resulted in the creation of rectilinear field systems through Acts of Parliament in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Previous enclosure resulted in varied and random field patterns, the forms of which depend upon when and where they were created.

Enhancement. Landscape improvement through restoration, reconstruction or creation.

Feature. A prominent eye-catching element (for example a church spire)

Field pattern. The pattern of fields defined by boundaries within farmed landscapes.

Heritage. Historic or cultural associations.

Landform. Combinations of slope and elevation that produce the shape and form of the land.

Land use. The primary use of the land, including both rural and urban activities.

Landscape. Human perception of the land conditioned by knowledge and identity with place.

Landscape Analysis. The process of breaking the landscape down into its component parts to understand how it is made up.

Landscape capacity. The degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type or area. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of the change being proposed and is directly related to landscape sensitivity.

Landscape Character. A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that distinguish one landscape from another.

Landscape Character Assessment. The process used to describe, classify and analyse the landscape.

Landscape pressures. The forces for change that could affect character, for example certain types of development or changes in land management.

Landscape sensitivity. The extent to which a landscape can accept change of a particular type and scale that may result from pressures without unacceptable adverse effects on its character. Sensitivity is related to the capacity of the landscape to accept change.

Mitigation. Measures including any process, activity or design to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development.

Ridge and furrow. A distinctive landform created by the continuous ploughing of long narrow strips on medieval or Saxon open-field land. The soil was thrown towards the centre of the strip, producing a high ridge with a deep furrow.

Vernacular. Built form constructed in the local style and from local materials.

