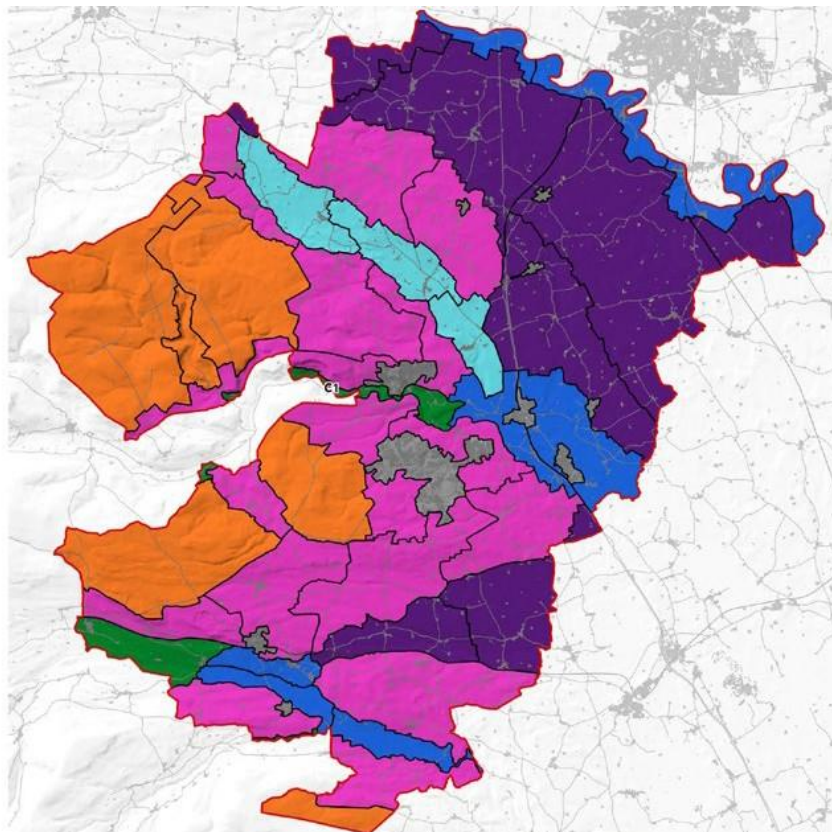




Richmondshire Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study Volume 1 - Landscape Character Assessment





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Approved

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
 - 1.1 Background
 - 1.2 Purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment
 - 1.3 Policy Context
 - 1.4 Landscape Character Assessment Methodology
 - 1.5 Using the Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.0 THE LANDSCAPE OF RICHMONDSHIRE
 - 2.2 Physical Influences
 - 2.3 Human and Cultural Influences

- 3.0 LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION
 - 3.1 General
 - 3.2 National Character Context
 - 3.3 County Character Context
 - 3.4 Neighbouring Areas Character Context
 - 3.5 Richmondshire Landscape Classification

- 4.0 PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGING LANDSCAPE CHANGE
 - 4.1 General
 - 4.2 Agriculture and Land Management
 - 4.3 Development and Infrastructure
 - 4.4 Climate Change
 - 4.5 Mineral Extraction

- 5.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS
 - 5.1 Local Landscape Character Type A: Moors
 - 5.2 Local Landscape Character Type B: Moors Fringe
 - 5.3 Local Landscape Character Type C: Dale
 - 5.4 Local Landscape Character Type D: Narrow Valley
 - 5.5 Local Landscape Character Type E: Broad Valley
 - 5.6 Local Landscape Character Type F: Vale

- 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS
 - 6.1 General
 - 6.2 Local Plan Policy
 - 6.3 Development Management
 - 6.4 Landscape Assessment Toolkit
 - 6.5 Monitoring Landscape Change
 - 6.6 Developing a Green infrastructure Strategy

APPENDICES

- 1 Glossary**
- 2 Bibliography**
- 3 Stakeholder Workshop Note**

FIGURES

- 1.1 Location and Context**
- 2.1 Topography and Hydrology**
- 2.2 Geology**
- 2.3 Landscape and Biodiversity Designations**
- 2.4 Historic Landscape Character**
- 2.5 Heritage Designations**
- 3.1 County Landscape Character Types**
- 3.2 Local Landscape Character Types**
- 3.3 Landscape Character Areas**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Landscape Character Assessment of the Richmondshire Local Plan area provides an in-depth understanding of the study area's landscapes that can assist in informing judgements and decisions concerning the management of landscape change.

The objectives of the Landscape Character Assessment are to:

- Identify, map and describe the patterns, features and elements of the various landscape character types and areas within the study area that contribute to defining local distinctiveness.
- Develop landscape principles and guidance to inform the decision-making process and help manage change in a sustainable and positive manner.

The Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken in line with the principles of Natural England's technical guidance '*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, 2014*'.

Informed by the desk study and field survey work, the study area's landscapes are characterised by classifying, mapping and describing the landscape. Physical and cultural influences combine to create the unique and distinctive character of the study area's landscape. The study area is characterised by a diversity of upland and lowland landscapes, which are represented by six generic Local Landscape Character Types and 49 component Landscape Character Areas that together comprise the landscape classification for the Richmondshire Local Plan Area, as identified in the table below.

For each **Local Landscape Character Type**, its key characteristics and character are described. The Local Landscape Character Types also include an evaluation of the key Sensitivity to Change Issues based on desk studies, field survey and stakeholder consultation. Guidance for managing landscape change to protect, manage and enhance the physical/ecological, cultural/historical and aesthetic/perceptual character of each Local Landscape Character Type is also provided.

More detailed descriptions are provided for the constituent **Landscape Character Areas**, which include a summary of their key characteristics, descriptions of the current and historic landscape character, evaluation of their Landscape Condition and an evaluation of the key Forces for Change that currently, or potentially may in the future, influence the condition of the landscape components that give each Landscape Character Area its distinct and recognisable local identity and sense of place.

Overarching principles and guidance for managing landscape change are also provided to help ensure that the characteristic landscape features that make a key contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place within the study area are appropriately protected, managed and enhanced by proposals.

The Landscape Character Assessment provides a common framework and source of baseline information about Richmondshire's landscapes within the study area. This common framework provides a basis for adopting an integrated, positive approach to managing landscape change by all those involved with, or that have an interest in, the planning, design and management of Richmondshire's landscapes.

Local Landscape Character Types	Landscape Character Areas
<i>Upland Landscapes</i>	
A - Moors	A1: Marrick and New Forest Moor
	A2: Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor
	A3: Gayles and Marske Moor
	A4: Preston and Stainton Moor
	A5: Downholme and Hipswell Moor
	A6: Witton Moor
	A7: Tan Hill Moor
B - Moors Fringe	B1: Newsham Moors Fringe
	B2: Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe
	B3: East and West Layton Moors Fringe
	B4: Melsonby Moors Fringe
	B5: Whashton Moors Fringe
	B6: Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe
	B7: Richmond West Moors Fringe
	B8: Richmond East Moors Fringe
	B9: Downholme Moors Fringe
	B10: Colburn Moors Fringe
	B11: Stainton Moors Fringe (North)
	B12: Scotton Moors Fringe
	B13: Preston-under-Scar Moors Fringe
	B14: Stainton Moors Fringe (South)
	B15: Hauxwell Moors Fringe
	B16: Tunstall Moors Fringe
	B17: Middleham Moors Fringe
	B18: Witton Moors Fringe
	B19: Spennithorne Moors Fringe
<i>Lowland Landscapes</i>	
C - Dale	C1: Lower Swaledale (Richmond West)
	C2: Lower Swaledale (Richmond East)
	C3: Mid-Swaledale
	C4: Lower Wensleydale
	C5: Lower Coverdale
D - Narrow Valley	D1: Ravensworth Narrow Valley
	D2: Gilling Narrow Valley
	D3: Skeeby Narrow Valley
E - Broad Valley	E1: Cliffe Broad Valley
	E2: Stapleton Broad Valley
	E3: Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley
	E4: Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley
	E5: Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley
	E6: Leyburn Broad Valley
	E7: Middleham Broad Valley
	E8: Ulshaw Broad Valley
F - Vale	F1: Caldwell Vale
	F2: Aldbrough Vale
	F3: Barton and North Cowton Vale
	F4: Moulton Vale
	F5: Eryholme Vale
	F6: Constable Burton Vale
	F7: Hornby Vale

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 In April 2019, Richmondshire District Council appointed Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to prepare the Richmondshire Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study (the 'study').

1.1.2 The study comprises two volumes that should be considered and used in conjunction with each other:

- Volume 1 - Landscape Character Assessment (this document)
- Volume 2 - Landscape Sensitivity Study (separate document)

1.1.3 Together, these studies enable better-informed decisions to be made about the future management of landscape change. They provide valuable tools for the Council to use in its role as the Local Planning Authority with regard to assessing and monitoring the landscape implications of potential site allocations in the new Local Plan and planning applications. The studies are also intended to provide useful sources of information and guidance for developers, stakeholders and the general public with respect to informing proposals for landscape change.

1.2 Purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment

1.2.1 The purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment is to provide evidence to inform the Richmondshire District Local Plan review in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance in respect of landscape considerations.

1.2.2 The Landscape Character Assessment aims to help ensure that change and development respects Richmondshire's landscape character within the study area, and that key features are conserved and enhanced.

1.2.3 The objectives of the Landscape Character Assessment are to:

- Identify, map and describe the patterns, features and elements of the various landscape character types and areas within the study area that contribute to defining local distinctiveness.
- Develop landscape principles and guidance to inform the decision-making process and help manage change in a sustainable and positive manner.

1.3 Policy Context

1.3.1 The Landscape Character Assessment reflects the principles of the European Landscape Convention, the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and latest Planning Practice Guidance, and current guidance provided by Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (2014). It provides a valuable context for spatial planning in Richmondshire by informing our understanding of the intrinsic character and value of the District's landscapes within the study area.

European Landscape Convention

1.3.2 Created by the Council of Europe, the European Landscape Convention (ELC) promotes adopting an integrated, positive approach to landscape protection, management and planning, and European co-operation on landscape issues.

1.3.3 Signed by the UK Government in February 2006, the ELC applies to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside; the coast and inland areas; and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection. The ELC highlights the importance of developing policies dedicated to the protection, management and creation of landscapes, and establishing procedures for the general public and other stakeholders to participate in policy creation and implementation. As an international convention, the ELC is expected to continue to apply in the UK after Brexit for the foreseeable future.

1.3.4 Article 1 of the ELC defines landscape as "*an area perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*"¹.

¹ Council of Europe, 2000

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.3.5 With regards to plan-making and landscape considerations, the Government's National Planning Policy Framework states that:

'Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for...conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation'. (paragraph 20).

- 1.3.6 With regards to achieving well-designed places, the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments...(c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)'. (paragraph 127).

- 1.3.7 Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

'(a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...(in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

(b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland...;

(e) ...Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions...

(f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.'

1.3.8 The National Planning Policy Framework also states that:

'Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries'. (paragraph 171).

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.' (paragraph 172).

Planning Practice Guidance

1.3.9 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance on the Natural Environment was updated on 21 July 2019. With regards to guidance for local planning authorities on how planning policies can conserve and enhance landscapes, the Planning Practice Guidance states:

'The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.

Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully'. (paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 8-036-20190721)

1.3.10 With regards to guidance for local planning authorities on how the character of landscapes can be assessed, the Planning Practice Guidance states:

'For a designated landscape, the relevant management plan will contain further information on the area's particular character and beauty.

Where appropriate, landscape character assessments can be prepared to complement Natural England's National Character Area profiles. Natural England provides guidance on undertaking these assessments.

To help assess the type and scale of development that might be able to be accommodated without compromising landscape character, a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment can be completed.

To demonstrate the likely effects of a proposed development on the landscape, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment can be used'. (paragraph: 037 Reference ID: 8-037-20190721)

- 1.3.11 With regards to the statutory duties of local planning authorities in relation to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), the Planning Practice Guidance states:

'Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 and section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 require that 'in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land' in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, relevant authorities 'shall have regard' to their purposes for which these areas are designated. A list of the public bodies and persons covered under 'relevant authorities' is found in Defra guidance on this duty, and Natural England has published good practice guidance.

This duty is particularly important to the delivery of the statutory purposes of protected areas. It applies to all local planning authorities, not just National Park authorities, and is relevant in considering development proposals that are situated outside National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty boundaries, but which might have an impact on their setting or protection'. (paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 8-039-20190721)

- 1.3.12 With regards to how local planning authorities should approach development within National Parks and AONBs, the Planning Practice Guidance states:

'The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the scale and extent of development in these areas should be limited, in view of the importance of conserving and enhancing their landscapes and scenic beauty. Its policies for protecting these areas may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development in full through the plan-making process, and they are unlikely to be suitable areas for accommodating unmet needs from adjoining (non-designated) areas. Effective joint working between planning authorities covering designated and adjoining areas, through the preparation and maintenance of statements of common ground, is particularly important in helping to identify how housing and other needs can best be accommodated.

All development in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Beauty will need to be located and designed in a way that reflects their status as landscapes of the highest quality. Where applications for major development come forward, paragraph 172 of the Framework sets out a number of particular considerations that should apply when deciding whether permission should be granted'. (paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 8-041-20190721)

- 1.3.13 With regards to how development within the setting of National Parks and AONBs should be dealt with, the Planning Practice Guidance states:

'Land within the setting of these areas often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account'. (paragraph: 042 Reference ID: 8-042-20190721)

- 1.3.14 The Planning Practice Guidance also includes updated guidance for local planning authorities on implementing policy to protect and enhance Green Infrastructure. The Guidance recognises that Green Infrastructure exists within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty.

Local Planning Policy

- 1.3.15 The need for a robust evidence base as part of Local Plan production is emphasised throughout the NPPF.
- 1.3.16 Richmondshire District Council is currently carrying out a five-year review of the Local Plan Core Strategy (2012-2028); working towards producing a single Local Plan (2018-2035) to include detailed policies and guide development within the part of the District outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Part of this review will include an area strategy for Catterick Garrison to include site allocations for housing, economic development, leisure and military related uses.
- 1.3.17 In order to inform the proposed detailed policies, this Landscape Character Assessment will form part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan.

1.4 Landscape Character Assessment Methodology

1.4.1 The Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken in line with the principles of Natural England's technical guidance '*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, 2014*'.

1.4.2 Landscape Character Assessment is the process of identifying, classifying and describing variations in landscape character (also known as characterisation). It assesses the distinct, perceptible and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

1.4.3 The key steps that were involved in the Landscape Character Assessment process are set out below.

Step 1 - Define the Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

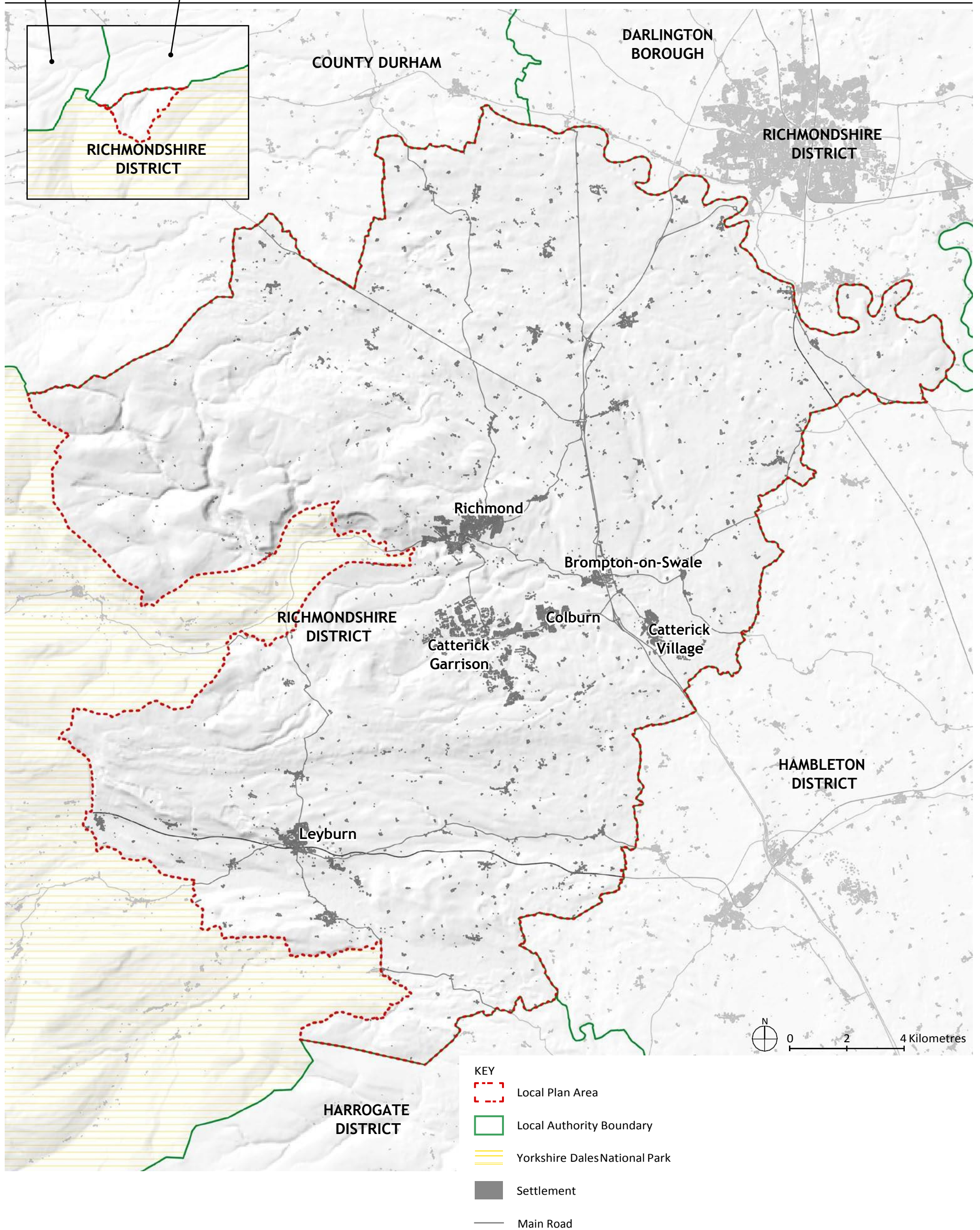
1.4.4 The purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment is to provide evidence to inform the Richmondshire District Local Plan review in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance in respect of landscape considerations.

1.4.5 The study area for the Landscape Character Assessment is the whole of the Richmondshire Local Plan area outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park as shown on **Figure 1.1**.

1.4.6 There has been no previous landscape character assessment at the district scale for the study area. The Landscape Character Assessment draws on and, where appropriate, updates the 1:50,000 scale county-wide landscape character assessment for North Yorkshire² to develop a more detailed assessment of the landscape within the study area at a scale of 1:25,000.

²North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project, 2010, Chris Blandford Associates on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council

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1.4.7 The Landscape Character Assessment provides an up-to-date understanding of the characteristic landscape features that make a key contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place within the study area. It also sets out principles and guidance for managing landscape change to help ensure that the characteristic landscape features are appropriately protected, managed and enhanced by proposals.

Step 2 - Desk Studies

1.4.8 The physical and cultural influences on the evolution of the study area's landscape as a whole were assessed to inform the characterisation process.

1.4.9 The nature, extents and patterns created by the interplay of the following key landscape attributes were then examined using available data:

- Topography and landform;
- Geology and soils;
- Water bodies and hydrology;
- Field shapes and sizes;
- Land uses;
- Land cover;
- Historic landscape character;
- Settlement patterns.

1.4.10 These landscape attributes were identified through the collation and review of relevant studies including relevant landscape character assessment studies, GIS datasets, aerial imagery and OS mapping.

1.4.11 A review of national and county scale landscape character assessment information that provide the framework for classifying and describing the study area's landscapes was also undertaken. This included:

- The four National Character Areas defined at a scale of 1:250,000 by the Character of England Map that fall within the study area;
- The nine Landscape Character Types defined at a scale of 1:50,000 by the North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project that fall within the study area.

1.4.12 Landscape Character Assessments within neighbouring areas were also reviewed to check cross-boundary consistency between landscape classifications.

Step 3 - Field Survey

1.4.13 Field survey work was undertaken to enable verification of the preliminary boundaries of the Local Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas. This also informed the character descriptions by identifying the visual and sensory qualities of the landscape and assessing the current condition of key landscape features within the study area.

Step 4 - Classification and Description

1.4.14 Informed by the desk study and field survey work, the study area's landscapes were characterised by classifying, mapping and describing Local Landscape Character Types and their component Landscape Character Areas:

- **Local Landscape Character Types (LLCT)** have a distinct and homogeneous character and share broadly similar patterns of physical and cultural attributes in terms of geology, topography, drainage patterns, land cover, ecology and historic evolution. They may occur repeatedly in the study area, or in just one place.
- **Landscape Character Areas (LCA)** are unique, individual geographical areas that share common characteristics with other areas of the same type. Each Landscape Character Area has a distinct and recognisable local identity and sense of place.

- 1.4.15 The landscape classification for the study area was prepared in a Geographic Information System (GIS) with mapping undertaken at a scale of 1:25,000. Where appropriate, the boundaries follow distinct features on the ground. It should be noted that there are subtle differences between and within the individual types and areas. The boundaries illustrated, therefore usually indicate transitions rather than marked changes on the ground.

Local Landscape Character Type Descriptions

- 1.4.16 For each **Local Landscape Character Type** its key characteristics and character are described. The Local Landscape Character Types also include an evaluation of the key **Sensitivity to Change Issues** based on desk studies, field survey and stakeholder consultation.

Landscape Character Area Descriptions

- 1.4.17 More detailed descriptions are provided for the constituent **Landscape Character Areas** within each Local Landscape Character Type, which in addition to a summary of their key characteristics include descriptions of the Landscape Character Area's current and historic landscape character. The historic landscape character references the historic landscape character types identified within the North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley historic landscape characterisation project³.
- 1.4.18 The Landscape Character Area descriptions include an evaluation of their **Landscape Condition**. Informed by desk studies and field survey, the condition of the landscape is evaluated by making judgements about how the condition and intactness of the different components create a perception of the overall condition of the landscape.
- 1.4.19 The Landscape Character Areas also include an evaluation of the key **Forces for Change** that currently, or potentially may in the future, influence the condition of the landscape components that give each Landscape Character Area its distinct and recognisable local identity and sense of place. This was based on desk studies, field survey and stakeholder consultation.

³ <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/understanding-our-historic-landscape>

Step 5- Principles and Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

- 1.4.20 Principles and guidance for managing landscape change were developed to help ensure that the characteristic landscape features that make a key contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place within the study area are appropriately protected, managed and enhanced by proposals. This includes overarching principles for managing the key forces for landscape change within the study area as a whole, including agriculture and land management, development and infrastructure, climate change and mineral extraction.
- 1.4.21 Guidance for managing landscape change to protect, manage and enhance the physical/ecological, cultural/historical and aesthetic/perceptual character of each Local Landscape Character Type is also provided.
- 1.4.22 It should be noted that the landscape principles and guidance are not intended to be prescriptive, and local circumstances should be taken into account in consideration of proposals for landscape change.

Stakeholder Consultation

- 1.4.23 Officers from Richmondshire District Council and representatives of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (with respect to Catterick Garrison masterplanning) were involved in the commissioning and development of the study. A workshop was held to engage these stakeholders⁴, who also reviewed and commented on drafts of the report. This provided an opportunity to draw on stakeholders' local knowledge in developing the landscape classification and descriptions.

⁴ See Appendix 3 for details

1.5 Using the Landscape Character Assessment

1.5.1 The range of potential uses and applications of the Landscape Character Assessment for spatial planning and development management are highlighted below:

- Informing local plan policies and policy at the national level
- Assisting studies of development potential, for example to help identify sites for new development.
- Informing the siting, scale and design conditions for particular forms of development such as housing and minerals.
- Contributing to landscape sensitivity studies relating to the supply of land for housing, employment or other land uses.
- Providing an input to Sustainability Appraisals of development plans and policies.
- Providing an input to landscape & visual impact assessment of development proposals.
- Providing a framework and context for the production of more local landscape character assessments and Village Design Statements.

1.5.2 In addition, the Landscape Character Assessment offers a range of uses and applications for landscape conservation, management and enhancement as highlighted below:

- Providing a basis for the preparation of landscape management strategies;
- Helping guide landscape change in positive and sustainable ways, for example programmes of woodland expansion and identifying new uses for degraded land;
- Informing the targeting of resources for land management and agri-environment schemes.

1.5.3 The Landscape Character Assessment provides a common framework and source of baseline information about Richmondshire's landscapes within the study area. This common framework provides a basis for adopting an integrated, positive approach to managing landscape change by all those involved with, or that have an interest in, the planning, design and management of Richmondshire's landscapes, such as:

- Richmondshire District Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Government Agencies (Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England, Forestry Commission, Defra)
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)
- Nidderdale AONB
- Yorkshire Dales National Park
- Developers
- Land Owners & Land Managers
- Community Groups, Parish Councils, Local Interest Groups & Voluntary Organisations
- Educational Establishments & Research Organisations

1.5.4 The structure of this Landscape Character Assessment report is as follows:

- **Chapter 2: The Landscape of Richmondshire** – this chapter enables users to gain a contextual understanding of the main physical and human/cultural influences that have shaped the evolution and character of the study area's landscape as a whole today.
- **Chapter 3: Landscape Classification** – this chapter provides users with an overview of how the study area has been classified into types/areas of similar landscape character within the framework of the North Yorkshire County Landscape Characterisation Study.
- **Chapter 4: Principles and Guidance for Managing Landscape Change** – this chapter provides decision-makers, developers and stakeholders with a set of overarching principles for managing the key forces for landscape change within the study area as a whole.

- **Chapter 5: Landscape Character Descriptions** – the main body of the report enables users to gain an understanding of the Landscape Character Types and their component Landscape Character Areas, and provides decision-makers, developers and stakeholders with guidance for managing landscape change for the variety of landscape types identified within the study area.
- **Chapter 6: Recommendations** – this chapter sets out a recommended approach to applying the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment for informing Local Plan policy development and proposals for landscape change.

2.0 THE LANDSCAPE OF RICHMONDSHIRE

2.1.1 The landscape of Richmondshire is profoundly rural in character. It is characterised by both upland and lowland landscapes that contribute to a variety of qualities and key characteristics across the study area.

2.1.2 An overview of the physical and human/cultural influences that have shaped the evolution and character of the study area is presented below.

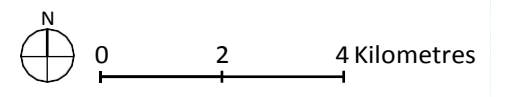
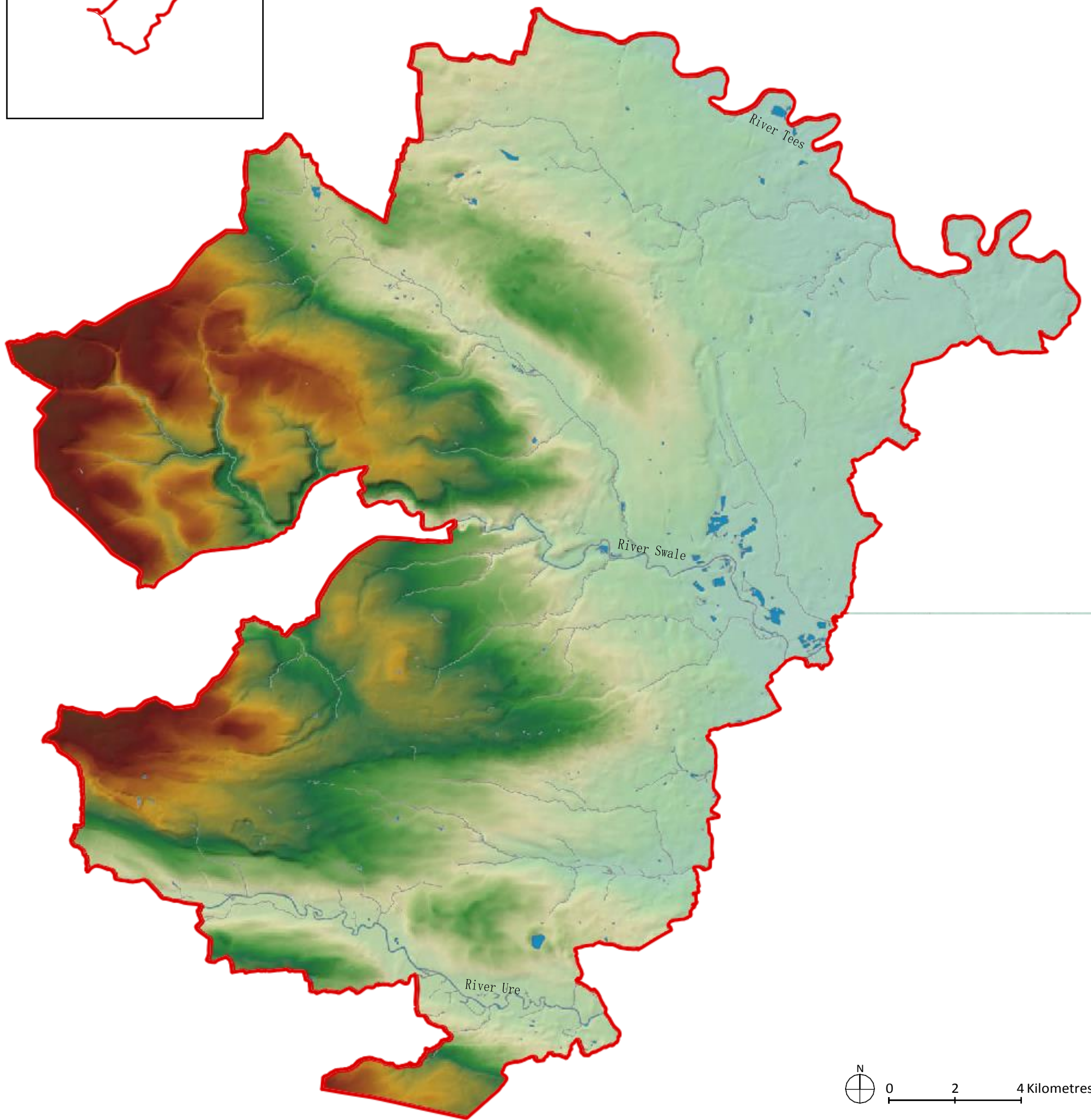
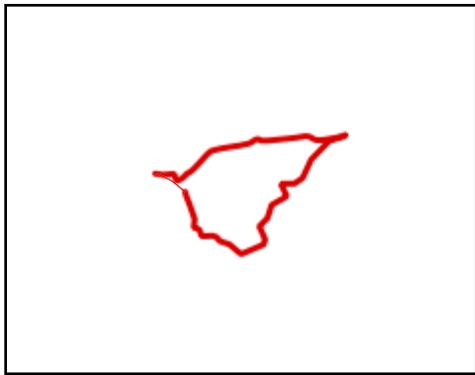
2.2 Physical Influences

Topography

2.2.1 As illustrated on **Figure 2.1**, the study area forms a transitional landscape between the uplands of the Yorkshire Dales in the west to the arable lowlands in the east.

2.2.2 The landform rises gradually to the west from approximately 20m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the valley of the River Tees in the north-east of the study area. The highest topography within the main body of the study area is on Kexwith Moor at approximately 504m AOD close to the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The highest point in the whole study area is in the small outlying area around Tan Hill at approximately 587m AOD.

2.2.3 The Yorkshire Dales form part of a chain of Pennine uplands that forms the centre of northern England. The landform in the west of the study area forms the edge of the designated Yorkshire Dales National Park. It has a varied topography of exposed upland moorland fringes and plateaux dropping to lower foothills, separated by river valleys and incised by numerous minor tributary valleys. The south-east is formed of the low-lying, gently undulating landscape of the Vale of Mowbray with the north-east of the study area a broad, low-lying plain framed of the River Tees.



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2.2.4 The landscape slopes gently from west to east, marking the east-facing slopes of the Yorkshire Dales moorland. The moors fringe is interrupted in places by river valleys that drain west to east. River valleys become broader to the east as they enter the vale landscape.

Hydrology

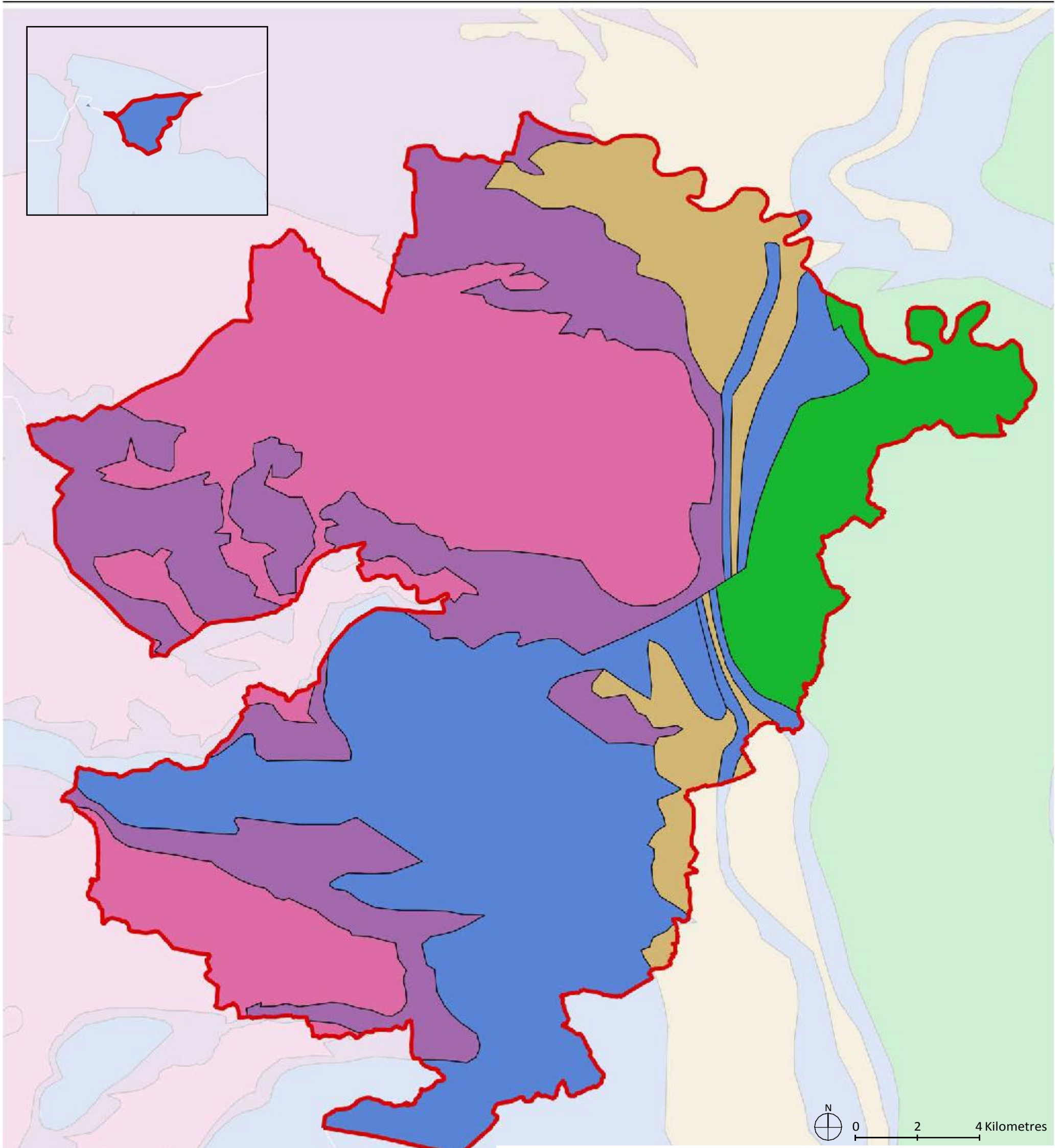
2.2.5 As shown in **Figure 2.1**, the study area includes the mid- to lower sections of the rivers Swale and Ure. These rivers rise in the Dales upland to the west, and flow through the area to drain into the low-lying Vale of Mowbray to the south-east. The slow-moving River Tees forms the north-western boundary of the study area and meanders through the landscape eastwards.

2.2.6 There are a number of areas along the rivers Swale and Ure where there is high flood risk to residential areas, farmland and transport routes, especially near to the A1(M), to the east of Catterick Village. A flood storage reservoir has been constructed to the west of Catterick Village and the A1(M) to alleviate this.


2.2.7 Lakes are common features in the lowlands, associated with former mineral extraction particularly around Catterick Village, Scorton and Brompton-on-Swale.

Geology






2.2.8 Much of the western and central area is underlain by rocks of the Millstone Grit Series, with superficial deposits of peat on the higher ground in the west. The Millstone Grit geology forms typically stepped profiles to the dale sides. Where the gritstone high plateau transitions into the moors fringe, the superficial geology changes to Diamicton.



KEY

 Local Plan Area

Bedrock Geology

-  Dolomitic Limestone and Dolomite
-  Limestone with Subordinate Sandstone and Argillaceous Rocks
-  Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone
-  Sandstone and Conglomerate, Interbedded
-  Limestone, Sandstone, Siltstone and Mudstone

Superficial Geology

- Diamicton (glacial deposits)
- Peat
- Sand and Gravel

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FIGURE 2.2
 GEOLOGY

- 2.2.9 As shown in **Figure 2.2**, the north and west of the study area is dominated by limestone uplands. There are a number of karst (limestone) landforms including shake holes, which are natural depressions formed by the undermining or sudden collapse of the land surface, often as a result of groundwater enlarging cavities in easily soluble rock; cave systems and rock exposures across the Yorkshire Dales and uplands of the study area. This landscape also includes mineralised faults that have been exploited over time and there are various remnant mining features present across the area⁵.
- 2.2.10 The glacial landform of the Vale of Mowbray is underlain by bedrock of soft Triassic sandstones and mudstones. The landscape here is essentially flat or gently undulating, reflecting the relatively less resistant bedrock on which rest glacial sediments forming hummocky terrain and drumlin fields, combined with low ridges and post-glacial river terraces⁶.
- 2.2.11 In the north-east of the study area, the Tees Lowlands Permo-Triassic red mudstones and sandstones⁷ are predominantly covered by glacial till from the Devensian period with alluvium and river terrace deposits present in the river corridor.

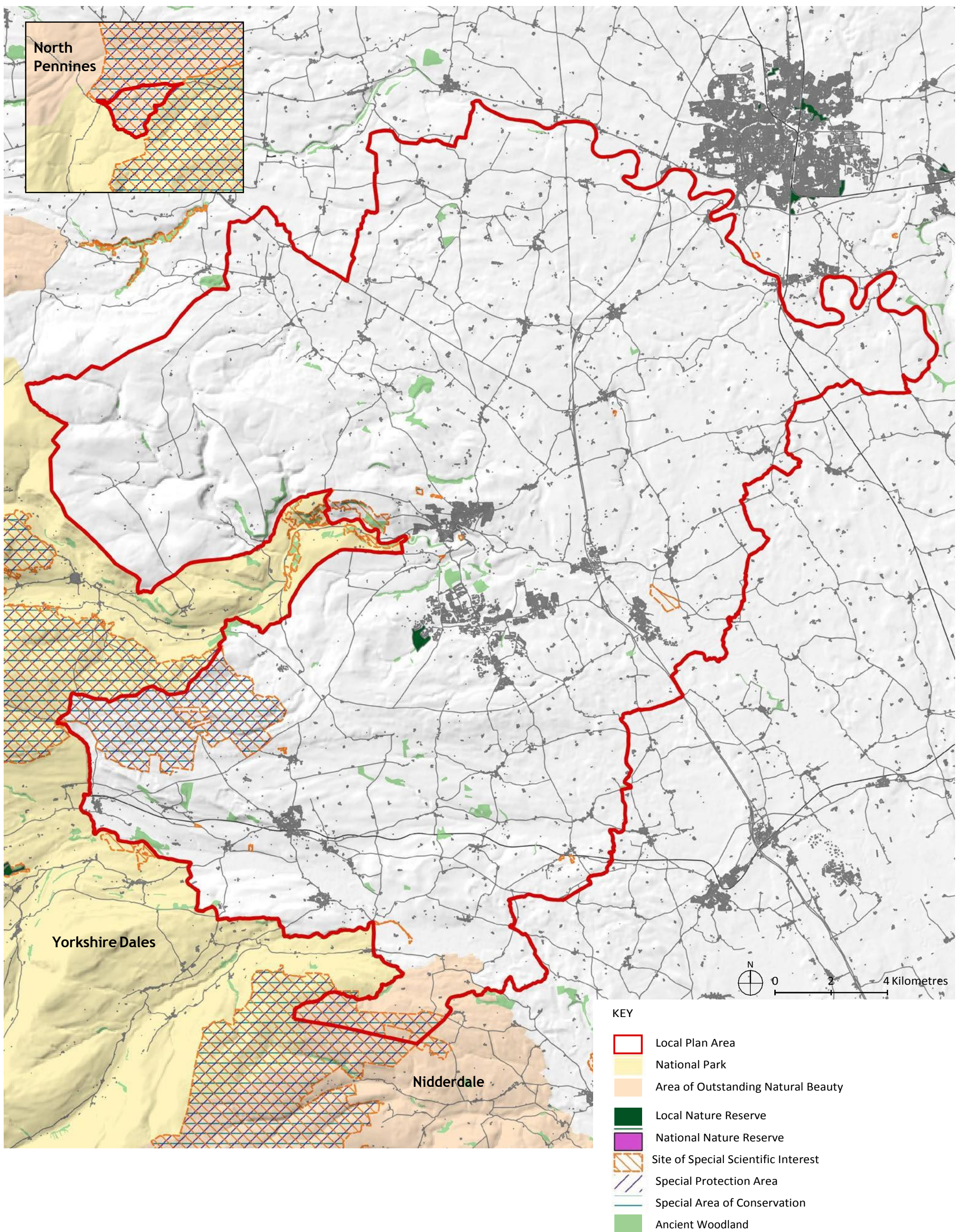
Biodiversity

- 2.2.12 As illustrated in **Figure 2.3** there are several statutory biodiversity designations particularly associated with the upland area to the west of the study area including Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR).
- 2.2.13 The upland heath of the North Pennine Moors SAC & SPA form part of the study area, in both the west (to the north-west of Leyburn) and in the very south (on Witton Moor, south of East Witton). Much of these areas are also designated as SSSIs as outstanding examples of moorland.

⁵ Reference NCA Profile 21 Yorkshire Dales, NE399, Natural England 2015

⁶ NCA Profile 24 Vale of Mowbray, NE442, Natural England, 2015

⁷ NCA Profile 23 Tees Lowlands, NE439, Natural England 2013



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- 2.2.14 There are significant blocks of woodland across the west of the study area, including pockets of ancient and semi-natural woodland around the river valleys of the Swale and Ure. Plantation woodland is characteristic of the moorland areas. Ancient woodland is more associated with the river and tributary valleys.
- 2.2.15 Hanging woodlands are a key characteristic of the river valleys. Lower Swaledale Woods and Grasslands SSSI is a good example of this. It is a large area of 223.66 ha overall and comprises a complex of woodlands, scrub, grasslands, limestone scar and scree. It supports the largest area of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland within Richmondshire⁸. The wooded river valleys provide valuable wildlife movement corridors that link the lowlands in the east to the higher ground in the west.
- 2.2.16 Woodland and tree cover become more dispersed through the broader valley landscape and across the Vale. Veteran trees, parkland trees, field trees and hedgerows are notable features in the landscape particularly within the moors fringe and lowland areas, associated with the various designed landscapes across the study area.
- 2.2.17 The broad river valleys support many small wetlands, which are of great value for biodiversity and a small number of very rare and species-rich hay meadows. The lower slopes of the hills have large areas of rough grazing and unimproved pasture, some of which are important feeding grounds for wading birds.
- 2.2.18 A number of SSSIs within the study area have been designated for their meadows (neutral grassland) such as Bellerby Fields SSSI, Gingerfields SSSI, Newton-le-Willows SSSI and Richmond Meadows SSSI. Thowker Corner SSSI (1.4ha) is one of the finest herb-rich hay meadows in Richmondshire. Within its small area are a range of neutral grassland types which reflect differences in soil depth, drainage and management.⁹
- 2.2.19 There is one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in the study area, this being Foxglove Covert which covers 100 acres of moorland edge adjacent to Cambrai Lines at Catterick. The reserve contains semi-natural woodland, heathland, flower-rich grassland, streams, ponds, a lake, willow and alder carr, coniferous woodlands and wet meadows.¹⁰

⁸ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1003631.pdf>

⁹ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1005839.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.foxglovecovert.org.uk/>

2.2.20 There are also a number of non-statutory biodiversity designations scattered across the study area including Local Wildlife Sites such as Leyburn Old Glebe Nature Reserve, a traditional haymeadow, the richest remaining fragment of Ellershaw, a district well-known to naturalists since the 19th Century and Bolton-on-Swale Lake Nature Reserve, a large area of open water created as a result of sand and gravel extraction.¹¹

2.3 Human and Cultural Influences

2.3.1 The area is etched with the visible imprint of the past. It is rich in prehistoric sites such as Stanwick Fortifications and Scots Dyke and Romano-British archaeology. There are a number of medieval sites including the remains of shrunken and deserted villages including field (ridge and furrow) systems such as Walburn Hall, the dominant and well-preserved fortifications at Middleham and Richmond, monastic houses such as Jervaulx and Easby Abbeys and historic parklands wooded estates, which contribute to a strong sense of time-depth.

2.3.2 There are various recorded sites of archaeological importance across the plan area including archaeologically sensitive areas in and around the historic cores of Richmond and Middleham. There are also a number of Roman military remains along the line of Dere Street, now the A1, including Bainesse roman roadside settlement and Anglican cemetery and Cataractonium Roman forts and town.

Historic Landscape Character

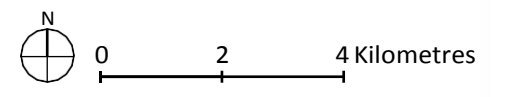
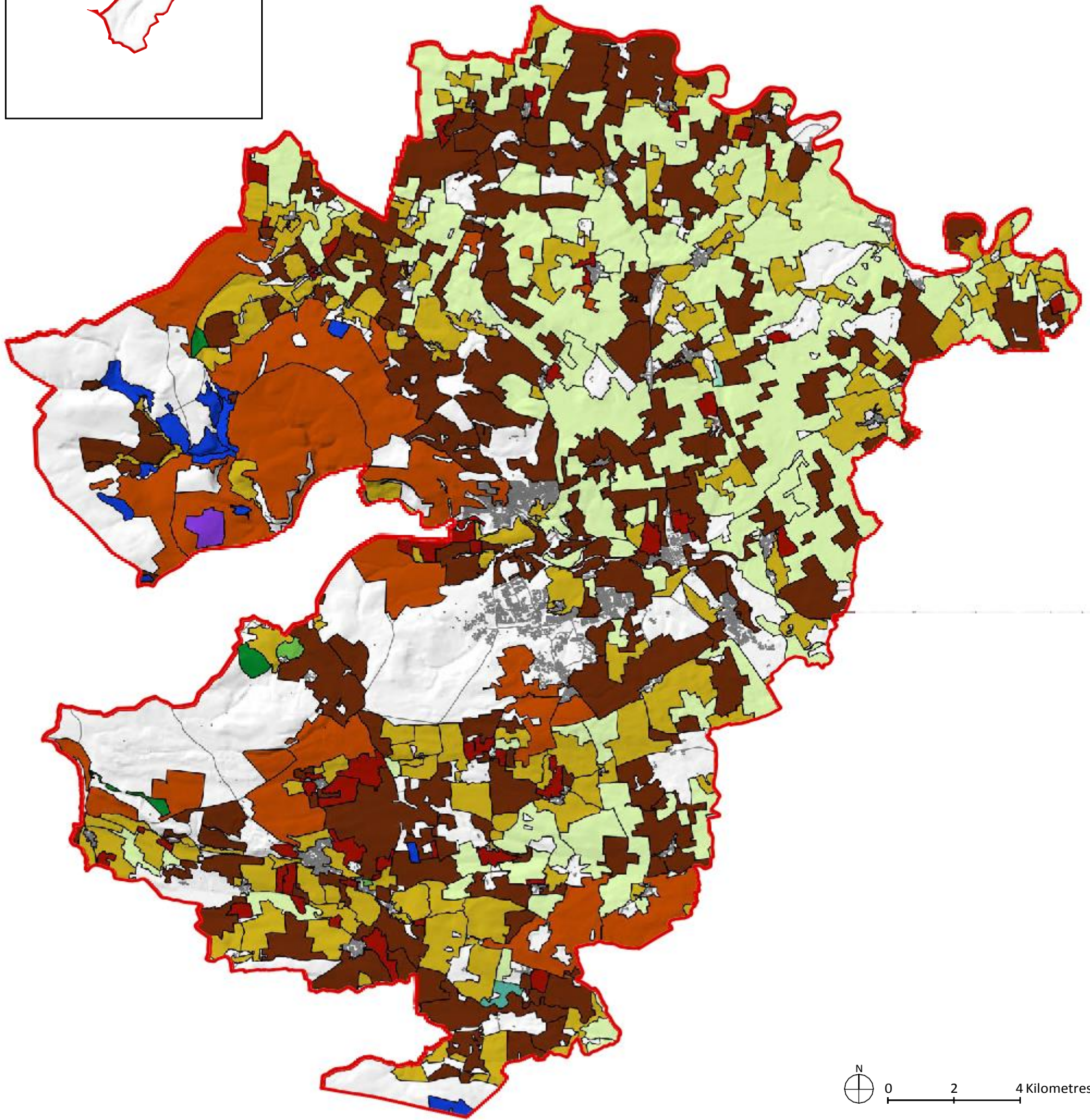
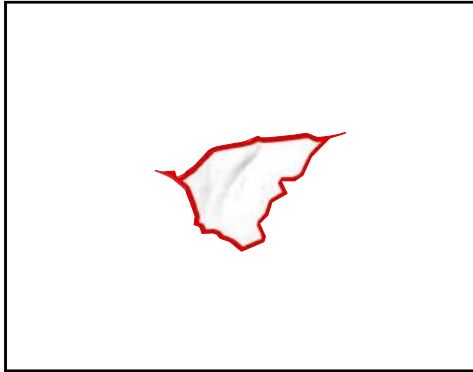
2.3.3 The Richmondshire landscape is the product of various influences which have acted upon it over time. The character of the landscape has altered based on factors such as its underlying geology, the topography and hydrology. These have in turn interacted with the human activity in the landscape and thus the patterns of land use. It is these patterns of land use which demonstrate the cultural dimension of the present day landscape.

¹¹ <https://www.ywt.org.uk/nature-reserves/>

- 2.3.4 The North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Characterisation Project¹² provides a tool for helping understand the “time depth” in the present landscape shaped by episodes of changing land uses, activities and attitudes associated with cultures in different eras through the millennia in response to the physical environment, natural resources and prevailing climate. The North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Characterisation Project identifies 13 Historic Landscape Character Broad Types¹³ within the study area. This information has been used to inform the Landscape Character Assessment descriptions.
- 2.3.5 As illustrated in **Figure 2.4**, the vast majority of the study area is identified as enclosed land. This comprises of a variety of field systems, much of which is identifiable in the present day. The varied character of these field patterns influences how the landscape is perceived, particularly considering the character of the boundaries.
- 2.3.6 Extensive, contiguous areas of unenclosed heather moorland with large blocks of parliamentary enclosures defined by straight, dry stone walls and field boundaries are characteristic of the gritstone high plateau in the west of the study area. There are significant areas of common land and open access land across the moors.
- 2.3.7 As the higher ground transitions to lower lying land in the east, the fields vary from planned large-scale enclosure to small-scale and irregular fields of areas of piecemeal enclosure. The north and east of the study area are largely covered with areas of modern, improved fields with areas of planned and piecemeal enclosure largely defined by hedgerows. There is a pattern of dispersed farmsteads throughout the Vale with many dating from the Parliamentary enclosure period. Areas of large modern fields are common throughout the Vale of Mowbray, with area of planned enclosures characterised by medium sized fields and regular field patterns also present.
- 2.3.8 Other broad historic landscape types that are identifiable within the study area include designed landscapes that are largely concentrated on lower slopes and within the valleys, and extractive and military land across much of the upland areas.

¹² Refer to <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/understanding-our-historic-landscape> for more detail

¹³ <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/understanding-our-historic-landscape>



- KEY**
- Local Plan Area
 - Enclosed Land (HLC broad type)**
 - Early field system
 - Intake
 - Large scale private enclosure
 - Lowland meadow
 - Lynchets
 - Modern improved fields
 - Open fields
 - Pasture
 - Piecemeal enclosure
 - Planned large-scale parliamentary enclosure
 - Strip fields
 - Unknown planned enclosure
 - Assart
 - Cow pasture

Note: Land outside of the Enclosed Land is identified by other historic landscape character (HLC) broad types within the North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Historic Landscape Characterisation Project <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/understanding-our-historic-landscape>

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Settlement Pattern and Built Character

- 2.3.9 Settlement is largely absent from the open moor tops, with scattered properties within the valley areas. Traditional farmsteads often with modern outbuildings are present towards the dales and moorfringes. Small-scale, clustered, nucleated settlements are common in the lower dales, with hamlets and villages radiating out from historic market towns such as Richmond and Leyburn. Many are connected by a network of narrow, winding country roads that often follow the line of the rivers. There are some areas of dispersed settlement with isolated farmsteads and hamlets set within landscapes of 17th century and earlier enclosure.
- 2.3.10 The settlement pattern of the Vale of Mowbray is characterised by small villages on higher ground, often linear in form and of medieval origin. Settlements in the north-east of the study area near to the River Tees have a dispersed pattern generally concentrated on the higher ground, with villages frequently displaying a linear form.
- 2.3.11 Hamlets, villages and small market towns are particularly distinctive, with strong visual unity; being built in local Millstone Grit Group and Yoredale Group stone in the west and Magnesian Limestone in the east, with roofs of stone flags, Welsh slate and some pantiles. Brick-built vernacular cottages and dispersed farmsteads are more typical in the Vale of Mowbray.
- 2.3.12 Traditional farm buildings built of local gritstone are distinctive features scattered through the valleys and valley sides.
- 2.3.13 Military training is very important in the District, with Catterick Garrison, the British Army's largest training camp, situated in the centre of the study area. Within the emerging Local Plan, most of the development growth is connected to development and associated works in and around Catterick Garrison. The Catterick Garrison main site has grown within the parishes of Hipswell, Scotton and Colburn since it was established in 1915. Marne Barracks is located at Catterick Village by the A1. Buildings within the barracks comprise a variety of building types, styles and form including post-world war II to modern day planned communities of two-storey residential properties and three-four storey, modern residential

¹⁵ Richmondshire Local Plan 2012-2028 Core Strategy, Richmondshire District Council

and office blocks. The training estate and military ranges cover large areas of moorland in the west of the District.

Heritage Assets

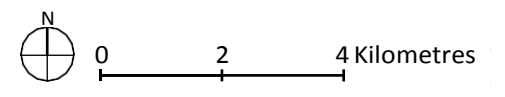
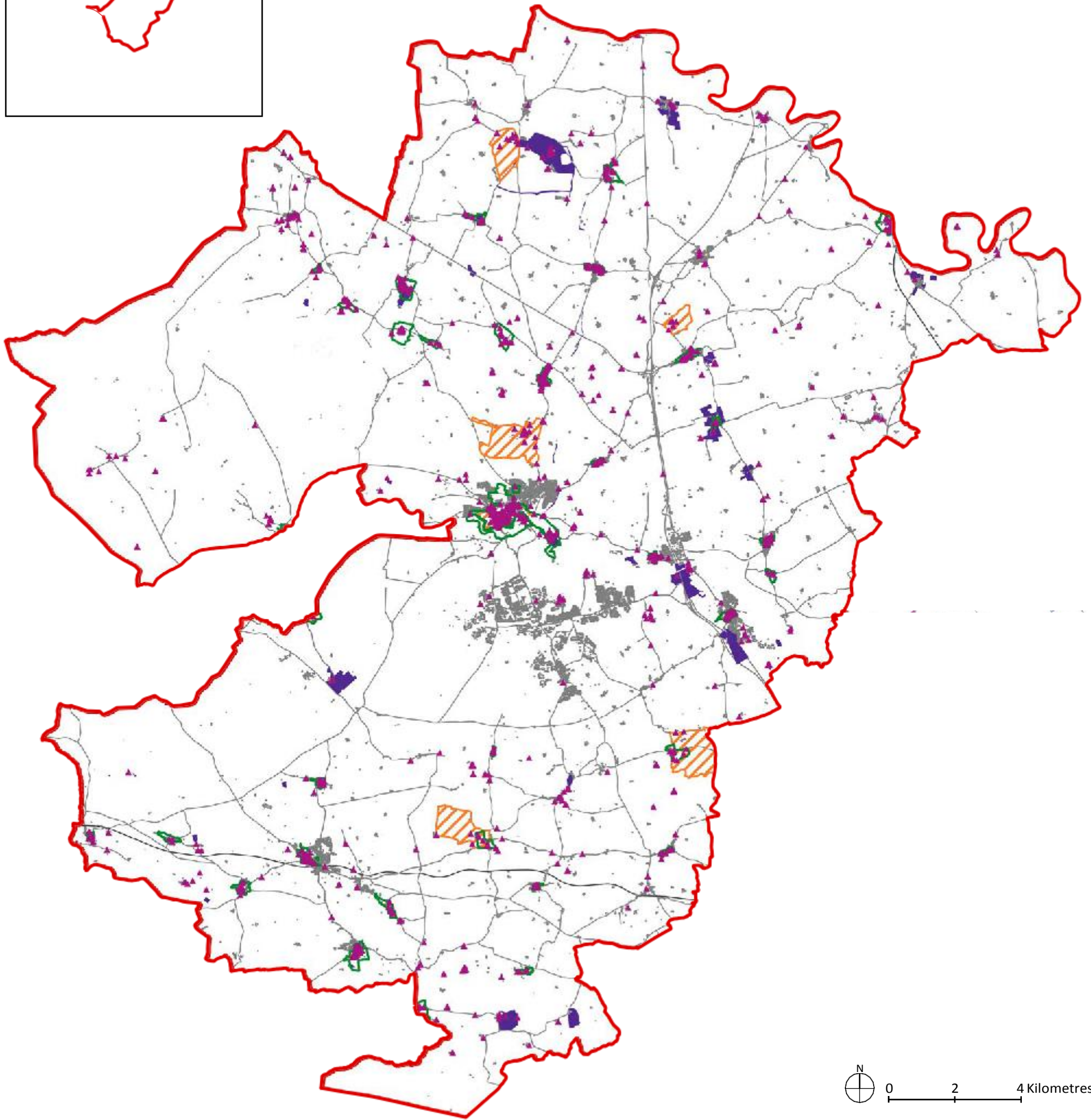
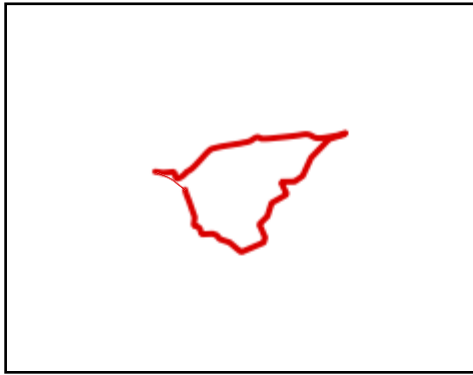
2.3.14 As illustrated on **Figure 2.5** there are a variety of nationally designated sites with statutory protection as well as non-statutory sites scattered across the study area. These include listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens, scheduled monuments and conservation areas. In addition to this, there are several undesignated heritage assets within the study area that include designed landscapes including estates, parklands and gardens¹⁴.

2.3.15 There are 163 scheduled monuments within the District, a large number of which are dispersed across the study area, including medieval villages, motte and bailey sites, castles, Roman settlements and abbeys, including the following notable sites:

- Jervaulx Cistercian Abbey, in the south of the study area;
- Easby Abbey to the southeast of Richmond;
- Richmond and Middleham Castles;
- Cataractonium Roman forts and town near Brompton-on-Swale.

2.3.16 There are over 1200 listed buildings and structures within District¹⁵, with the majority located in the study area and largely within settlements or associated with the dispersed farmsteads. They include structures dating from the medieval period. Properties include churches, halls, cottages, farms and vernacular properties.

¹⁴Note: these are not mapped



- KEY
- Local Plan Area
 - Listed Buildings
 - Registered Historic Parks & Gardens
 - Scheduled Monuments
 - Conservation Areas

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2.3.17 There are seven Registered Parks and Garden within the study area, namely:

- Aske Hall (Grade II*)
- Constable Burton Hall (Grade II);
- Forcett Hall (Grade II);
- Hornby Castle Park (part of) (Grade II);
- Middleton Lodge (Grade II);
- St Nicholas, Richmond (Grade II);
- Temple Grounds (Grade II).

2.3.18 There are 41 Conservation Areas within the study area, predominantly focussed within the centres of settlements, with the largest being Richmond.

2.3.19 In addition to the designated sites there are notable historic landscapes, buildings and other structures associated with local country estates including Croft Hall and Halnaby, Brough Park, Barningham Estate, Cliffe Hall, Bolton Estate and East Witton Estate.¹⁶

3.0 LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION

3.1 General

3.1.1 Landscape character assessments at a variety of scales provide the framework for the landscape classification of the Richmondshire Local Plan area. Typically, the hierarchy of national, county and local landscape assessments fit together with each level of assessment informing the next.

3.1.2 An overview of how the study area's landscape has been classified is presented below.

3.2 National Character Context

National Character Areas

3.2.1 The Richmondshire assessment has been prepared within the framework of the Character of England Map, which identifies broad-brush National Character Areas (NCA) defined at a scale of 1:250,000. The diverse landscapes within the study area are represented at the national level by four NCAs. These are:

- Yorkshire Dales¹⁷
- Pennine Dales Fringe¹⁸
- Vale of Mowbray¹⁹
- Tees Lowlands²⁰

3.2.2 The western part of the study area is characterised by the transition between the Yorkshire Dales into the Pennine Dales Fringe uplands. The east of the study area is lower lying, forming the north of the Vale of Mowbray and western part of the Tees Lowlands that extend east to the coast.

¹⁷ NE399: NCA Profile: 21 Yorkshire Dales, 2015

¹⁸ NE474: NCA Profile: 22 Pennine Dales Fringe, 2015

¹⁹ NE442: NCA Profile: 24 Vale of Mowbray, 2015

²⁰ NE430: NCA Profile: 20 Tees Lowlands, 2015

Nationally Protected Landscapes

3.2.3 The national value and importance of substantial areas of the North Yorkshire landscape are recognised and protected by statutory designation, as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). As shown in **Figure 1.1**, the Yorkshire Dales National Park forms the western edge of the study area and a small part of the Nidderdale AONB extends into the southern part of the study area.

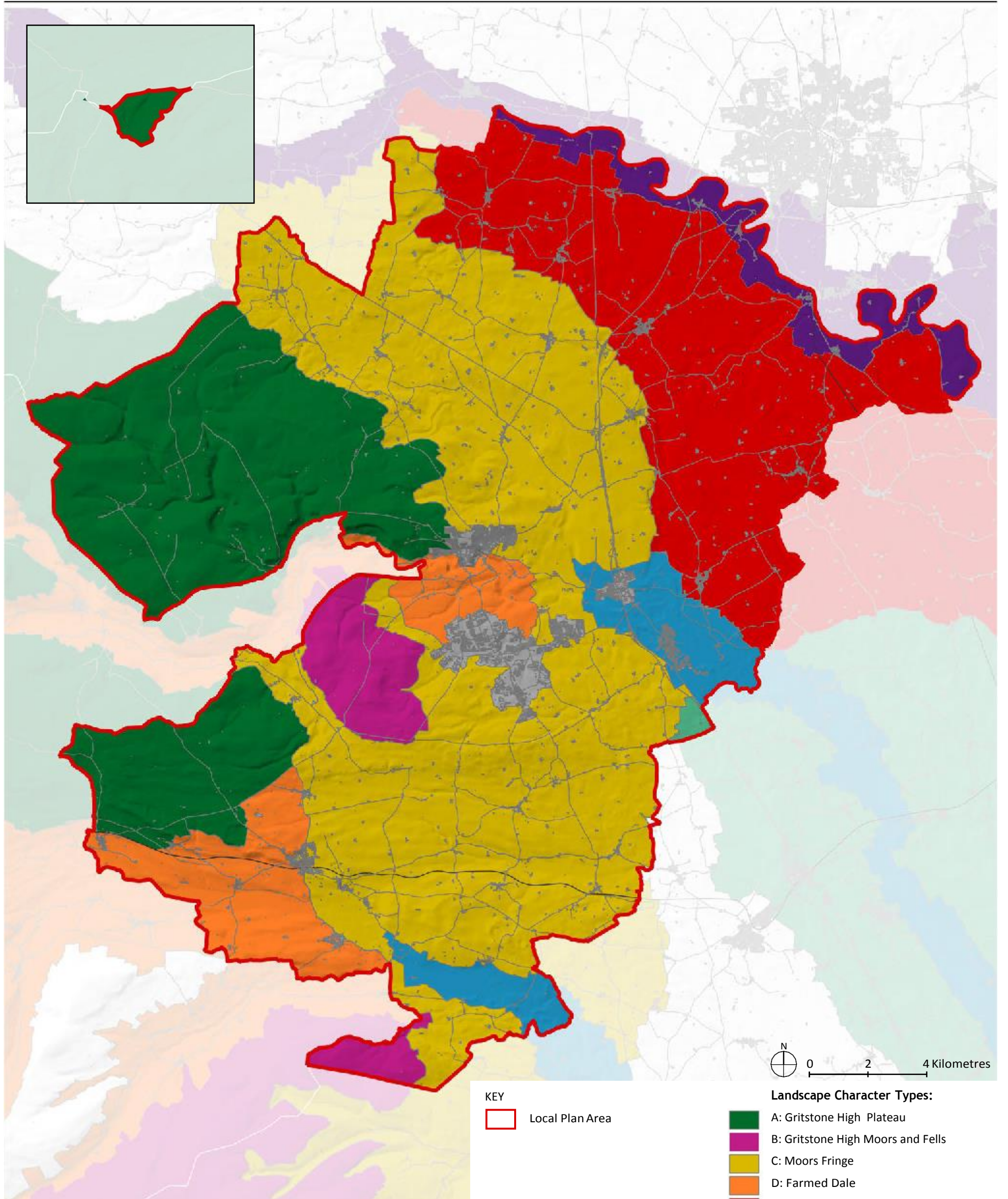
3.3 County Character Context

3.3.1 The North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project²¹ identified 39 Landscape Character Types (LCTs) at a scale of 1:50,000. Nine of these LCTs fall within the study area as shown on **Figure 3.1**:

- Gritstone High Plateau LCT
- Gritstone High Moors and Fells LCT
- Moors Fringe LCT
- Farmed Dale LCT
- Vale Farmland with Dispersed Settlement LCT
- River Floodplain LCT
- Gritstone Valley LCT
- Settled Vale Farmland LCT

3.3.2 The above county-level classification provides a framework for the identification of LCTs within the study area identified at a scale of 1:25,000 to take account of local variations.

²¹ Prepared by CBA for North Yorkshire County Council, 2011



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3.4 Neighbouring Areas Character Context

3.4.1 The following Landscape Character Assessments provide the landscape context for neighbouring areas surrounding the study area:

- Hambleton Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study²²
- Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment²³
- Darlington Landscape Character Assessment²⁴
- County Durham Landscape Character Assessment²⁵
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Landscape Character Assessment²⁶

3.5 Richmondshire Landscape Classification

3.5.1 The physical and cultural influences described in **Section 2.0** have combined to create the unique and distinctive character of the study area's landscape. The study area is characterised by a diversity of upland and lowland landscapes, which are represented by the six generic **Local Landscape Character Types** (LLCT) and 49 component **Landscape Character Areas** (LCA) that together comprise the landscape classification for the Richmondshire Local Plan Area.

3.5.2 The landscape classification for the study area is set out in **Table 3.1** and illustrated on **Figures 3.2** and **3.3**.

3.5.3 The landscape character descriptions for each of the LLCTs and LCAs are provided in **Section 5.0**.

²² Prepared by LUC on behalf of Hambleton District Council, May 2016

²³ Harrogate Borough Council, February 2004

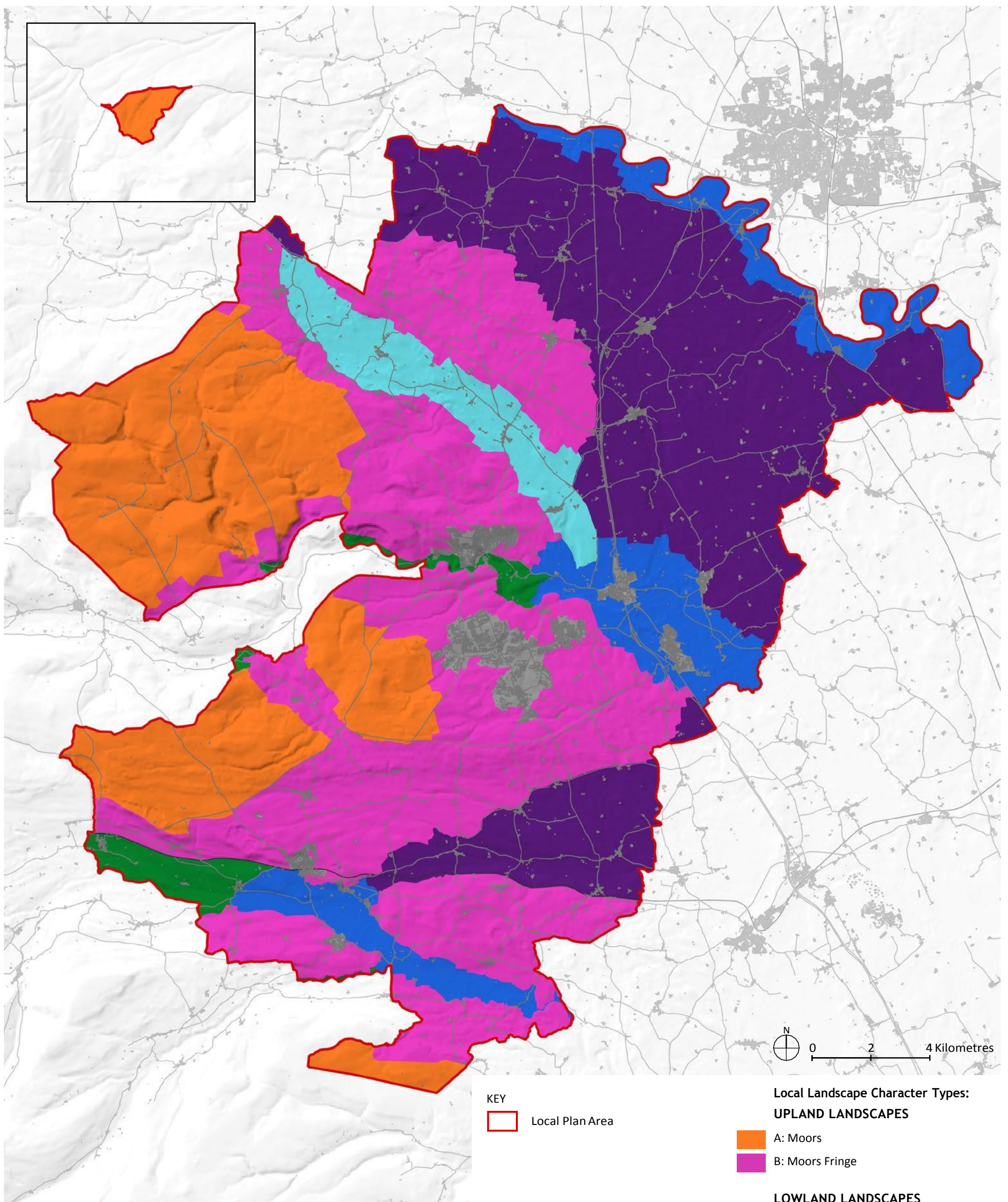
²⁴ Prepared by LUC on behalf of Darlington Borough Council, December 2015

²⁵ <http://www.durhamlandscape.info/article/10092/Landscape-Classification>

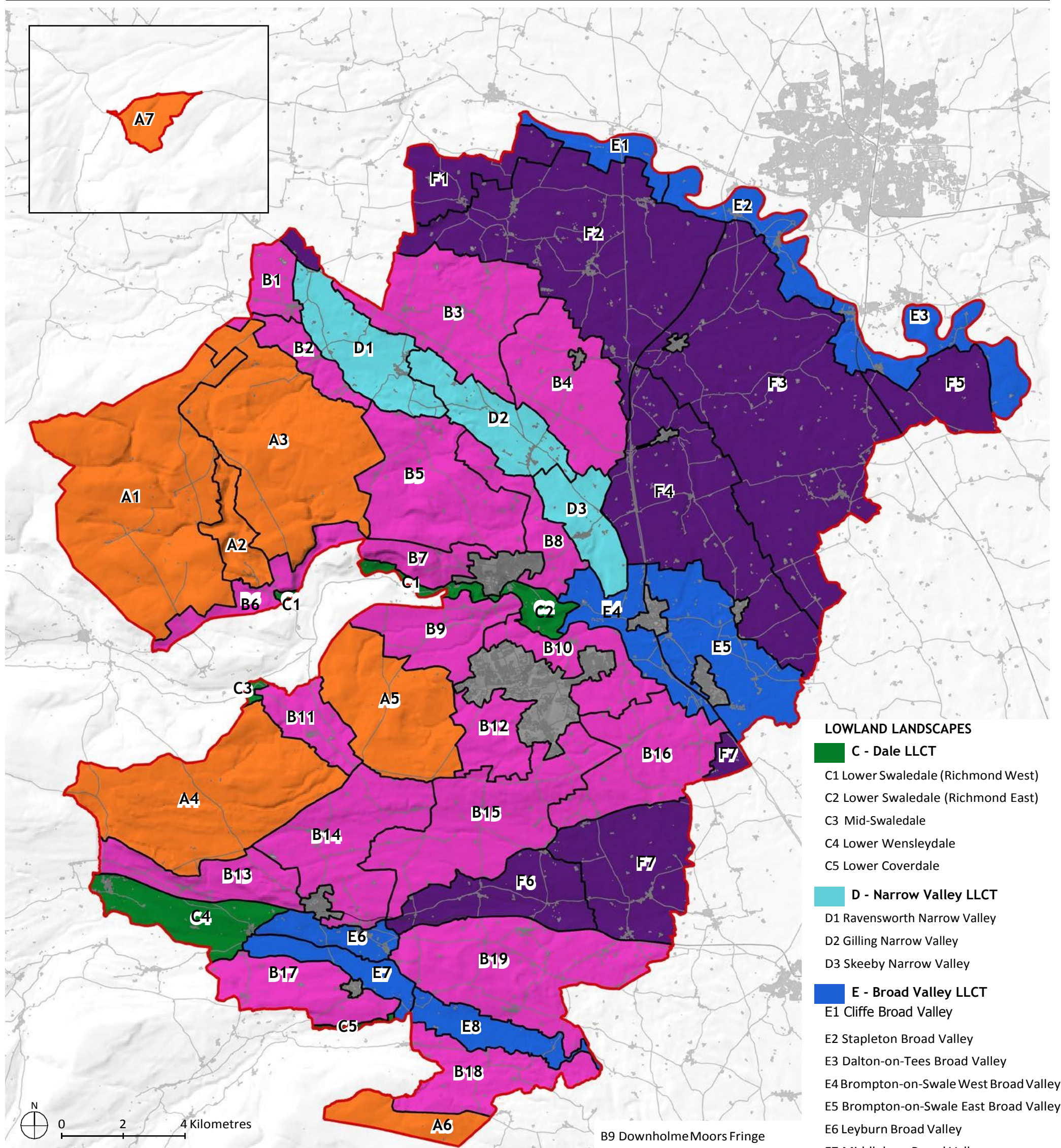
²⁶ Estell Warren Landscape Architects on behalf of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, 2002

Table 3.1 - Richmondshire Local Plan Area Landscape Classification

Local Landscape Character Types	Landscape Character Areas
<i>Upland Landscapes</i>	
A - Moors	A1: Marrick and New Forest Moor
	A2: Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor
	A3: Gayles and Marske Moor
	A4: Preston and Stainton Moor
	A5: Downholme and Hipswell Moor
	A6: Witton Moor
	A7: Tan Hill Moor
B - Moors Fringe	B1: Newsham Moors Fringe
	B2: Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe
	B3: East and West Layton Moors Fringe
	B4: Melsonby Moors Fringe
	B5: Whashton Moors Fringe
	B6: Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe
	B7: Richmond West Moors Fringe
	B8: Richmond East Moors Fringe
	B9: Downholme Moors Fringe
	B10: Colburn Moors Fringe
	B11: Stainton Moors Fringe (North)
	B12: Scotton Moors Fringe
	B13: Preston-under-Scar Moors Fringe
	B14: Stainton Moors Fringe (South)
	B15: Hauxwell Moors Fringe
	B16: Tunstall Moors Fringe
	B17: Middleham Moors Fringe
	B18: Witton Moors Fringe
	B19: Spennithorne Moors Fringe
<i>Lowland Landscapes</i>	
C - Dale	C1: Lower Swaledale (Richmond West)
	C2: Lower Swaledale (Richmond East)
	C3: Mid-Swaledale
	C4: Lower Wensleydale
	C5: Lower Coverdale
D - Narrow Valley	D1: Ravensworth Narrow Valley
	D2: Gilling Narrow Valley
	D3: Skeeby Narrow Valley
E - Broad Valley	E1: Cliffe Broad Valley
	E2: Stapleton Broad Valley
	E3: Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley
	E4: Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley
	E5: Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley
	E6: Leyburn Broad Valley
	E7: Middleham Broad Valley
	E8: Ulshaw Broad Valley
F - Vale	F1: Caldwell Vale
	F2: Aldbrough Vale
	F3: Barton and North Cowton Vale
	F4: Moulton Vale
	F5: Eryholme Vale
	F6: Constable Burton Vale
	F7: Hornby Vale



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- LOWLAND LANDSCAPES**
- C - Dale LLCT**
 - C1 Lower Swaledale (Richmond West)
 - C2 Lower Swaledale (Richmond East)
 - C3 Mid-Swaledale
 - C4 Lower Wensleydale
 - C5 Lower Coverdale
 - D - Narrow Valley LLCT**
 - D1 Ravensworth Narrow Valley
 - D2 Gilling Narrow Valley
 - D3 Skeeby Narrow Valley
 - E - Broad Valley LLCT**
 - E1 Cliffe Broad Valley
 - E2 Stapleton Broad Valley
 - E3 Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley
 - E4 Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley
 - E5 Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley
 - E6 Leyburn Broad Valley
 - E7 Middleham Broad Valley
 - E8 Ulshaw Broad Valley
 - F - Vale LLCT**
 - F1 Caldwell Vale
 - F2 Aldbrough Vale
 - F3 Barton and North Cowton Vale
 - F4 Moulton Vale
 - F5 Eryholme Vale
 - F6 Constable Burton Vale
 - F7 Hornby Vale

- KEY**
- Local Plan Area
- UPLAND LANDSCAPES**
- A - Moors LLCT:**
 - A1 Marrick and New Forest Moor
 - A2 Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor
 - A3 Gayles and Marske Moor
 - A4 Preston and Stainton Moor
 - A5 Downholme and Hipswell Moor
 - A6 Witton Moor
 - A7 Tan Hill Moor

- B - Moors Fringe LLCT**
 - B1 Newsham Moors Fringe
 - B2 Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe
 - B3 East and West Layton Moors Fringe
 - B4 Melsonby Moors Fringe
 - B5 Whashton Moors Fringe
 - B6 Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe
 - B7 Richmond West Moors Fringe
 - B8 Richmond East Moors Fringe
 - B9 Downholme Moors Fringe
 - B10 Colburn Moors Fringe
 - B11 Stainton Moors Fringe (North)
 - B12 Scotton Moors Fringe
 - B13 Preston-under-Scar Moors Fringe
 - B14 Stainton Moors Fringe (South)
 - B15 Hauxwell Moors Fringe
 - B16 Tunstall Moors Fringe
 - B17 Middleham Moors Fringe
 - B18 Witton Moors Fringe
 - B19 Spennithorne Moors Fringe

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4.0 PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGING LANDSCAPE CHANGE

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 In line with the European Landscape Convention, all landscapes of the study area should be managed, planned and protected to retain their distinctive qualities and values.
- 4.1.2 The Landscape Character Assessment provides a detailed understanding of the diversity, character, distinctiveness, evolution and condition of the local landscapes, in order to work towards the goal of achieving distinctive and sustainable landscapes and is essential to effective spatial planning.
- 4.1.3 The landscapes of the study area encompass a number of distinctive aesthetic and perceptual (experiential) characteristics which contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place. These include non-visible elements, such as sense of tranquillity and remoteness, exposure to the elements and visible elements such as dark night skies. Some parts of the study area, particularly associated with the Moors, display a distinctively strong sense of tranquillity and associated dark night skies on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Distinctive perceptual qualities contribute to recognisable sense of place and are often irreplaceable if lost.
- 4.1.4 The pace and scale of landscape changes will continue in the future. A key challenge is to understand, manage and direct future positive change in the landscape in ways that conserve and enhance its essential characteristics and valued attributes, whilst enabling sensitively designed development to be accommodated and to meet social and economic needs.
- 4.1.5 Whilst broad vistas of upland landscapes and the expansive panoramas gained from such upland vantage points are often regarded as the most iconic aspect of the landscapes of the study area and its surroundings, it is the distinctive and varied character of the settlements that reflect the harmonious inter-relationship of humans and landscape in earlier generations and centuries that are equally valued by residents and visitors to the area. Whilst individual buildings and specific areas of settlements have often been defined for special protection and conservation, development pressures have tended to adversely

impact on the overall character and distinctiveness of settlements and their inter-relationships with their landscape setting. It is important to reassess and redefine the distinctive qualities and characteristics of settlements and their sense of place; and their relationship to landscape setting in order to develop a sound basis upon which to make decisions on managing change and thus to retain, protect and restore the distinctiveness of settlements in the future.

- 4.1.6 Distinctiveness is reflective of the layers of time and stages in the development 'written' in the landscape. The landscapes of the study area provide a window into earlier relationships between man and landscape and of the earliest post glacial vegetation patterns. It is, therefore, important to understand and appreciate earlier landscapes in decision making on managing landscape change.
- 4.1.7 It is also important to retain the distinctiveness of landscapes, as represented by their unique landscape character as a key factor in maintaining the economy of the study area and contributing to the well-being of communities.
- 4.1.8 The conservation and maintenance of landscape distinctiveness supports the emergence of the concept of green infrastructure, which puts an increasing emphasis on the multi-functionality of landscapes. There is a need for the re-balancing of decision making in managing landscape change to ensure appropriate emphasis is placed on supporting natural processes and the well-being of land and landscapes, including ecosystem services and benefits which are integral to the health and quality of life for communities and land and landscapes. This supports the need to work towards a long-term goal of creating more harmoniously planned landscapes that support more locally sustainable communities in the future.
- 4.1.9 The European Landscape Convention²⁷ is fundamental for the promotion of landscape protection, management and planning. It stresses the need for analysis of the forces and pressures transforming the key characteristics of landscapes and defines landscape planning, protection and management as key purposes of the Convention:

²⁷ <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm>

- Landscape planning – ‘Strong, forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes’;
- Landscape protection – ‘Actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value, derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity’;
- Landscape management – ‘action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes’.

4.1.10 In line with the key purposes of the European Landscape Convention, this section sets out a series of suggested ‘high level’ overarching principles for informing decision-making in relation to managing landscape change. Principles have been developed for the following four key drivers of landscape change:

- Agriculture and Land Management
- Development and Infrastructure
- Climate Change
- Mineral extraction

4.2 Agriculture and Land Management

4.2.1 The following section examines the key forces for change related to agriculture and land management within the study area and identifies suggested ‘high-level’ landscape management principles.

Agriculture

4.2.2 The study area has a diverse rural landscape which supports a range of agricultural activities from pastoral grazing to cereal and vegetable production. Farming plays an important role in creating a ‘sense of place’ in all the landscapes within the study area.

4.2.3 Following the major reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in 2000, farmers have found the receipts from rural development subsidies more important than those from production-related subsidies. Effects of this have been diversification of land uses

and changes in market demand that have caused types of land use to fluctuate as the relative demand for various commodities changes. This can be related to things such as increase in demand for organic products and requirement for biofuel.

- 4.2.4 More recent reform of agri-environment schemes (AES) have been introduced to reward farmers for agricultural production methods compatible with the protection and enhancement of the environment. These schemes can assist and encourage agriculture to face the competitive challenges of the growing and diversifying rural markets. Areas of land in the Yorkshire Dales are managed under AES and funding has been used to repair dry-stone walls and traditional agricultural buildings; and manage hay meadows and moorland.
- 4.2.5 As a result of the Renewables Obligation (which was designed to incentivise the generation of electricity from eligible renewable sources in the United Kingdom) there has been an increase in demand for renewable energy crops, such as flax and hemp, biomass or woodfuel. The scale and form of these crops has increasing potential impacts (both positive and negative) on the landscape character of the study area. There is a need to assess the desirability of certain typologies of biocrop where this might conflict with wider transitional efforts of reducing global warming (for example competition between different strains and global food production and forest protection).
- 4.2.6 The current, proposed Agricultural Bill would introduce a new environmental land management system with the aim to improve environmental outcomes of farming such as biodiversity protection and enhancement and protecting rural heritage and distinctive landscape features. However, future changes that may result from increasing competition in a global market place and post-Brexit funding for agri-environmental schemes are yet to become clear. There may be ongoing adverse effects on landscape character, as well as important opportunities to enhance and restore character as a result of changes in policy.
- 4.2.7 Parts of the study area is managed as upland farmlands, predominantly supporting breeding sheep and suckler cows. These areas are classified as Less Favoured Areas (LFA) in terms of agricultural land quality. Payments from agri-environment schemes (such as the Upland Entry Level Stewardship Scheme) have become increasingly important to

upland farmers and make a moderate or significant contribution to the income of farms across the moorland.

- 4.2.8 A network of hedgerow field boundaries is a key component of the landscape pattern within the lowlands of the study area. The key threats to hedgerows are neglect and over management. Hedges have, in many cases lost their function as stock proof barriers and are now uneconomic to maintain. There is a general imbalance in the age structure of hedgerow trees within the study area, with a large proportion of mature trees. Natural ageing processes, together with water stress in summer and the effects of pathogens will cause many of these trees to become stag headed or die within the foreseeable future. There are incentives for positive hedgerow management as part of many of the Environmental Stewardship schemes.
- 4.2.9 There has been a dramatic loss of species rich meadows since 1930 with conversion to arable, cultivation and reseeded, use of fertiliser and herbicide, and changes to traditional management activities such as hay making. Fragmentation of habitats is also an issue. There is potential to restore and enhance key habitats through Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) agreements with landowners.
- 4.2.10 The study area retains a relatively large number of traditional barns which have not yet been converted. Converted farm buildings may provide an ideal location for rural businesses to act as a catalyst for local training and employment and they represent a means for preserving historic structures which are important local landscape features. However, the trend may lead to negative landscape impacts in sensitive, remote and often prominent rural locations and also to the loss of key features related to architecturally or historically important barns. Barn conversions also place considerable pressure on dwindling populations of barn owls and various species of bats. Ornamental garden plants, garden fences, driveways, car parking and power lines all contribute to the suburbanised character that often accompanies this sort of development. This has a visual impact on the landscape.
- 4.2.11 Within the study area, numbers of farmers have fluctuated over time. As a result of this, diversification is common. Combined with an increase in the number of people visiting the area, there are an increasing number of farmhouses and associated buildings being sold

and converted into housing, often for holiday homes. The domestication of buildings can have a considerable impact on the character of the landscape, especially in more remote locations.

Moorland

- 4.2.12 The landscape character of the moorland within the study area relies largely on traditional management practices including extensive sheep grazing and controlled burning and cutting to create a suitable habitat for grouse.
- 4.2.13 Upland heathland and blanket bog are priority UKBAP habitats which make a defining contribution to the character of the upland areas. They are particularly valuable ecologically for their population of nesting birds and areas are designated as SSSIs or SACs. The large deposits of peat are also an important carbon sink. This habitat requires appropriate levels of grazing and cutting to maintain vegetation structure. There is often pressure from grouse moor managers to carry out burning, which can result in damage to peat soils. Maintaining hill flocks may become increasingly uneconomic in the future. Development of clough and gill woodland may also be desirable to stabilise the soil. Woodland planting is also desirable, to increase the rate of infiltration of rain water, reduce sediment run off and capture carbon. Yorkshire Peat Partnership is working to restore and conserve upland peat resources to ensure the long-term future of the valuable habitat.
- 4.2.14 Overgrazing of moorland and uncontrolled moorland fires have in some areas caused degradation to habitats (particularly blanket peat bog) and an increase in rough grass moorland. Past farming and forestry activities have resulted in the drainage of upland areas causing a loss of peat hags and wet flushes, damage to archaeological features and increased surface water run-off. Recreational activity has caused extensive erosion to some footpaths and summits. Active management is required to re-establish vegetation on bare ground.
- 4.2.15 Wet acidic grassland provides an important habitat for invertebrates, particularly the small pearl-bordered fritillary, and wading birds. The study area also contains some areas of high floristic diversity. Reduced grazing would alter these habitats favouring the development of dwarf-shrub heath, however, this would also require rabbit proofing. Drainage or

agricultural intensification would also be likely to have a negative effect on the ecology of these habitats.

Woodland

- 4.2.16 Across North Yorkshire, traditional coppicing activities in woodland have generally ceased causing increased shade and the loss of native ground flora. The spread of Rhododendrons within woodland is also threatening native species. There is often imbalance in the age structure of woodlands with a large proportion of semi-mature/mature trees. Natural ageing processes, increased water stress in summer and the effects of pathogens threaten these trees. Sheltering of stock within woodland, together with increased numbers of roe deer, rabbits and grey squirrels, has led to an absence of saplings to regenerate woodland in some areas. Woods can become isolated where habitat linkages between them are broken, preventing the dispersal of species.
- 4.2.17 In general, there is a move towards low input forestry systems which meet a number of social, environmental and economic objectives. Woods will be managed to promote recreation, biodiversity, health and learning. The contribution woodlands make to the visual quality of the landscape is also acknowledged by the Forestry Commission. The new emphasis on extensive management, and continuous felling rather than clear felling, will help to create less disruptive forest patterns. Mixed woodlands are also being promoted to improve biodiversity. Coniferous forests provide good habitat for certain bird species and can increase the diversity of woodland habitats. The Forestry Commission also propose to diversify some existing coniferous woodlands.
- 4.2.18 A demand for wood may re-emerge as it is a sustainable building material and a carbon-neutral energy source. Wood may in the future be used for co-firing at existing coal fired power stations, at new biomass power plants and in combined heat and power systems. This may create an incentive to manage existing woodlands or to plant new woodland, providing opportunities to maintain or enhance landscapes with a wooded character.
- 4.2.19 Woodlands may be used positively to manage soil and water resources. The Forestry Plan for North Yorkshire envisages an increase in woodland and more intensive management of existing woodland to produce carbon-neutral fuel and building material.

Guiding principles for managing agricultural and land management change

Strategic programmes, plans, policies and proposals should:

- Contribute to the protection and enhancement of the historic dimension of the present agricultural landscape, including particular historic assets and their setting;
- Encourage the adoption of less intensive farming practise and promote the regeneration of existing hedgerows to enhance key landscape linkages;
- Encourage measures to conserve hay meadows, semi-natural grasslands and species-rich grass verges and encourage the creation of diverse arable field margins;
- Contribute to the positive management of moorland through a carefully controlled burning/cutting regime to maintain and improve the mosaics of moorland habitats including heather, blanket bog and calcareous grassland;
- Encourage the application of grazing management regimes that promote more favourable condition of upland semi-natural vegetation;
- Encourage the restoration of associated areas of degraded blanket bog and peat;
- Ensure that new woodland is planned and created in line with Regional Forestry Frameworks;
- Promote the use of native and planting stock of local origin for the creation of new woodlands and management of existing woodlands;
- Encourage the sensitive restructuring of existing commercial/plantation woodlands (for example the introduction of broadleaved woodland edges) to help reduce visual impact;
- Promote habitat networks;
- Restore and strengthen the functions of landscapes as ecosystems

4.3 Development and Infrastructure

4.3.1 The following section examines the key forces for change related to development and infrastructure within the study area and identifies suggested 'high-level' landscape management principles.

4.3.2 Buildings make a valuable contribution to the scale and identity of landscapes within the study area. Today, the distinctive character of the area's buildings and settlements is a product of local vernacular circumstances. The landscape is constantly changing and there is likely to be pressure from several different types of development, other than just buildings within the future. The key potential future forces for change relating to development within the study area include:

- Small-scale cumulative development (e.g. building extensions, residential boundary treatment, roadside concrete curbing and signage) resulting in erosion of integrity and quality;
- Suburbanisation of rural buildings, such as the conversion of farm buildings and the introduction of diversification activities such as equine, camping/caravanning etc;
- Suburbanisation of the landscape around villages and towns, as a result of small-scale extensions to existing settlements;
- New housing development at the edge of settlements;
- Introduction of new overhead transmission lines;
- Increase in traffic pressures on minor rural road corridors as a result of development;
- Expansion of military and associated development;
- Strategic direction of growth areas; and
- Tall, vertical developments including wind turbines or telecommunications masts, which can be visually intrusive and impact on the landscape character of the area.

4.3.3 Richmondshire District Council, through their development plan, seek to achieve suitable forms of development that meet the housing need without compromising the distinctive landscape characteristics of the study area.

4.3.4 Following Catterick Garrison being identified in the Richmondshire Local Plan Core Strategy as the main focus for housing and economic growth, as well as the strategic

announcement of further military expansion, there is pressure for the settlement to expand.

- 4.3.5 The use of standardised solutions in highway design in terms of minimum curves, visibility, safety barriers and signage have eroded the rural character of roads in places which are characterised by hedges, ditches, verges and trees. New roads can introduce a source of noise and disturbance into the surrounding landscape. If present trends in car use continue, congestion will become an increasing problem especially in and around towns and cities. This may result in the overall sense of remoteness and tranquillity being lost in rural areas. Measures to avoid this should be encouraged.
- 4.3.6 Leisure and Tourism is an important industry in Richmondshire, particularly associated with the high quality natural and built environment. It is important that new development maintains the character and quality of the landscape, as it plays an important role in attracting tourists to the area.
- 4.3.7 Tourism can generate large volumes of traffic within rural landscapes such as the National Parks and AONB's. The majority of visitors travel to the region by car, placing considerable pressure on rural roads and parking infrastructure. Large volumes of traffic can lead to the tranquil, rural character (for which people visit the area) being eroded by vehicle noise, congestion and parking problems within villages and at popular visitor locations. There can also be a problem with tourists choosing not to use car parks. New infrastructure such as car parks, signing, road improvements and new buildings, could result in gradual suburbanisation, loss of tranquillity and the introduction of standardised elements into distinctive landscapes. Large numbers of walkers or cyclists on popular routes can cause loss of vegetation cover and erosion of paths and summit areas. Illegal use of motorbikes on green lanes, footpaths and bridleways can cause significant noise, damage to footpaths and disturbance to other users and local residents.
- 4.3.8 The gradual move towards renewable energy and a low carbon future also puts pressure on the landscape to accommodate the associated infrastructure and integrate with new development.

Guiding principles for managing development and infrastructure

Strategic programmes, plans, policies and proposals should:

- Encourage careful siting of new housing and economic development, in keeping with existing landscape patterns and characteristics, to reduce landscape and visual impacts;
- Promote the development of design guidance for new housing and economic development which links character with design, promotes high quality development that respects landscape character, and offer positive opportunities for community engagement in design issues;
- Promote the principle that new development should respect existing landscape features such as trees, hedgerows or traditional stone walls that are important to local character and should be retained;
- Encourage the design of new housing and economic development to respect the distinctive landscape setting of settlements, including key approaches to the settlement, inward and outward views, woodland, trees, river corridors and open spaces;
- Encourage the retention of species-rich roadside verges as key landscape features and important habitats;
- Promote design of new highways infrastructure which avoids and minimises the potentially adverse landscape and visual impacts of new road schemes through careful route selection and engineering design, retention of mature landscape features, on- and off-site planting and sensitive lighting design to limit light pollution and retain dark skies (particularly associated with the moorland areas);
- Encourage new minor road improvements that respect existing character and features and avoid the introduction of new features such as boundary treatments that are alien to existing character;
- Encourage sensitive location of overhead transmission lines, telecommunications masts and renewable energy infrastructure, avoiding sensitive skylines;
- Encourage providers to share masts to help minimise impact on the landscape and visual character;
- Promote the production of complementary Green Infrastructure Strategies as an integral part of development strategies, plans and proposals;
- Encourage the use of local building materials and styles when restoring traditional vernacular buildings and in new build developments.

4.4 Climate Change

4.4.1 The following section examines the key forces for change related to climate change within the study area and identifies suggested 'high-level' landscape management principles.

4.4.2 Climate change is increasingly acknowledged as a key driver of future landscape change. The UK Climate Projections 2018²⁸ reviews recent trends and predicts the type of climate changes that might be expected in the future. General climate change trends projected in the UK for the 21st century include:

- All areas of the UK will be warmer, with warming greater in summer than winter;
- Seasonal and regional variation in rainfall, but overall resulting in drier summers and wetter winters;
- Sea levels will rise, but this will be greater in the south of the UK than the north.

4.4.3 On the moors and fells, winter storms and increased incidences of heavy rainfall could wash nutrients from soils. During warmer summers, important peat soils could dry out and begin to release carbon into the atmosphere and there is also a risk of increased incidences of peat and bracken fires. The erosion of gullies from moorland grips as a result of freak rainfall or flash flooding is also a potential issue.

4.4.4 Increasing frequency of storm events and heavy rainfall are likely to cause continuing problems of flooding within the study area. Flooding events can often cause damage to, and loss of, historic bridges and buildings. Flooding therefore poses a major risk to the historic character of riverside settlements such as Richmond. In order to protect settlements it may be necessary to adapt buildings, create wash-lands to store river water within the floodplain, or undertake woodland planting or water impoundment measures upstream. Restoring degraded peat bogs could also help to alleviate flood risk as the bog acts as a store for water.

4.4.5 From a biodiversity perspective, natural habitats and species may be put under severe pressure from changes in temperatures. The impacts of climate change on peat bogs within the study area are also a particular concern. If peat bogs dry out, they could

²⁸ UKCP18 - <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/collaboration/ukcp>

potentially release thousands of years' worth of stored carbon into the atmosphere. The erosion of vegetation cover from blanket bog can reduce its water retention capacity and increase the risk of downstream flood peaks. In this context, the implementation of the Water Framework Directive²⁹ is likely to have a significant influence on land use and water resource policy in the study area in the medium to long term. This may assist in the preservation of blanket peat bog areas and increase the extent and quality of wetland habitats through more integrated and ecosystem-led approaches to catchment management. It is not clear how this would continue to be implemented post-Brexit.

4.4.6 The current reliance on unsustainable groundwater abstraction means that agricultural practices will need to change. There is also a need to use water more efficiently and this should be reflected in the design of new buildings and their surroundings. Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) will be crucial within new development and measures can be taken to retrofit buildings and settlements. Increasing pressure on water resources, depleted aquifers and a hotter, drier climate will make low-flow events in rivers more likely, and this will have a negative effect on river habitats.

4.4.7 As a response to climate change, there is a strong emphasis on moving towards generating energy from renewable as opposed to finite sources. Renewable energy can include a number of forms, from wind technology (single turbines and wind farms) to biomass, solar and hydro-electric technologies, all of which are likely to have impacts on the landscape if not sensitively designed and sited. It is important to ensure that renewable energy development does not detract from the special qualities of the landscape. The scale and form of wind farms should be compatible with the character of the local landscape and that of the wider area in which they are visible. Care should also be taken to ensure that the cumulative impact of wind farms in any one locality is not excessive. Overhead power lines and other wires can also have an intrusive impact on the landscape, particularly within those landscapes with high visual sensitivity.

4.4.8 Rising to the Climate Crisis³⁰, sets out planning guidance to aid the preparation of strategic and local development plans to encourage future action on climate change and appropriate development of sustainable energy within local areas.

²⁹ 2000/60/EC

³⁰ A Guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change, TCPA and RTP1 2018

Guiding principles for managing climate change

Strategic programmes, plans, policies and proposals should:

- Encourage sensitive site selection for renewable energy technologies including of sensitive skylines and important views;
- Encourage sensitive design of renewable energy technologies such as wind turbines, biomass plants and energy crops;
- Encourage habitat linkage within the agricultural landscapes to increase robustness to climate change;
- Encourage the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) within the design of new housing and economic development both within and outside flood risk areas;
- Encourage the retention of a range of ecological habitats and species to encourage the local spread of species if a habitat becomes inhospitable as a result of climate change;
- Encourage the maintenance and creation of a series of ecological networks, with buffer zones around high quality habitats;
- Encourage the natural development of rivers to increase the potential for species and habitats to adapt naturally to these changes;
- Encourage the implementation of a multi-functional network of greenspaces and links (Green Infrastructure).

4.5 Mineral Extraction

- 4.5.1 The following section examines the key forces for change related to mineral extraction within the study area and identifies suggested 'high-level' landscape management principles.
- 4.5.2 Mineral extraction has a long history across North Yorkshire. It has been suggested that the Romans were interested in occupying Yorkshire in order to exploit the mineral wealth of the region, especially the Pennine Moors. However, mining activities probably began long before Roman occupation. The disruptive nature of mining activities to the landscape can be seen in many of the upland areas in North Yorkshire where spoil heaps and heavily eroded water gullies are remnant landscape features.
- 4.5.3 There are a number of active quarries within the study area providing a range of products including sand and gravel aggregates and limestone. There is evidence of historic mining within the moorland in the west of the study area. There are large quarries within the Yorkshire Dales and moorland areas near Leyburn in the study area, associated with the limestone regions and producing crushed rock aggregate for use in the construction industry. There are also active extraction sites near Barton and Forcett in the north of the study area and at Scorton where former gravel pits form a series of lakes near to the River Swale.
- 4.5.4 Use of vernacular building materials, particularly stone, is considered important in maintaining and strengthening the character of settlements within the study area. Many of these vernacular materials are imported from China and India. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has shown an interest in the development of local quarries which could provide a source of building stone. The effects of each individual proposal on the environment should be assessed and cumulative effects should also be considered.
- 4.5.5 Extensions to quarries or development of new quarries will result in changes to landform, land use and vegetation cover. Quarries may be prominent within views depending on location and topography. Recent quarrying activity can create artificial landforms and the colour contrast of exposed rock can increase the visual prominence of the quarry. Banks or planting intended to screen quarries may introduce new and discordant features into

the landscape, particularly where local species or boundary features are not used. Quarries may cause an increased number of large vehicles in rural areas detracting from the tranquillity of the area and increasing pressure on the road system. Road improvement schemes associated with quarries might introduce standardised road design, including safety barriers, embankments and cuttings, fencing, and signing, which are poorly integrated with their rural setting.

- 4.5.6 There is considerable scope for mitigating the landscape and visual impacts of quarrying. Blasting can be used to restore more natural landforms and vegetation cover can be easily re-established. Limestone quarries in particular can become valuable habitats while lowland gravel extractions have become important wetland sites.
- 4.5.7 It should be noted that North Yorkshire County Council is the minerals and waste planning authority with statutory responsibility for minerals planning within Richmondshire.

Guiding principles for managing mineral extraction

Strategic programmes, plans, policies and proposals should:

- Promote the design of any new mineral development in sympathy with existing landscape character or of earlier stages of landscape evolution;
- Encourage the enhancement of landscapes and habitats through the creative restoration of mineral workings to restore or enhance local landscape character. Particular care should be taken to encourage the creation of post mineral extraction landscapes that have an affinity with their existing landscape setting or of earlier stages of landscape evolution;
- Contribute to the protection of features of mining and quarrying heritage (such as old quarries) which may offer opportunities to understand and enjoy aspects of the study area's geology, history and building materials;
- Encourage the preparation of a mitigation strategy that embraces a landscape scale approach and conserves and enhances the distinctiveness and well-being of the surrounding landscape and supports the development of a green infrastructure approach.

5.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Local Landscape Character Type A: Moors

Characterisation

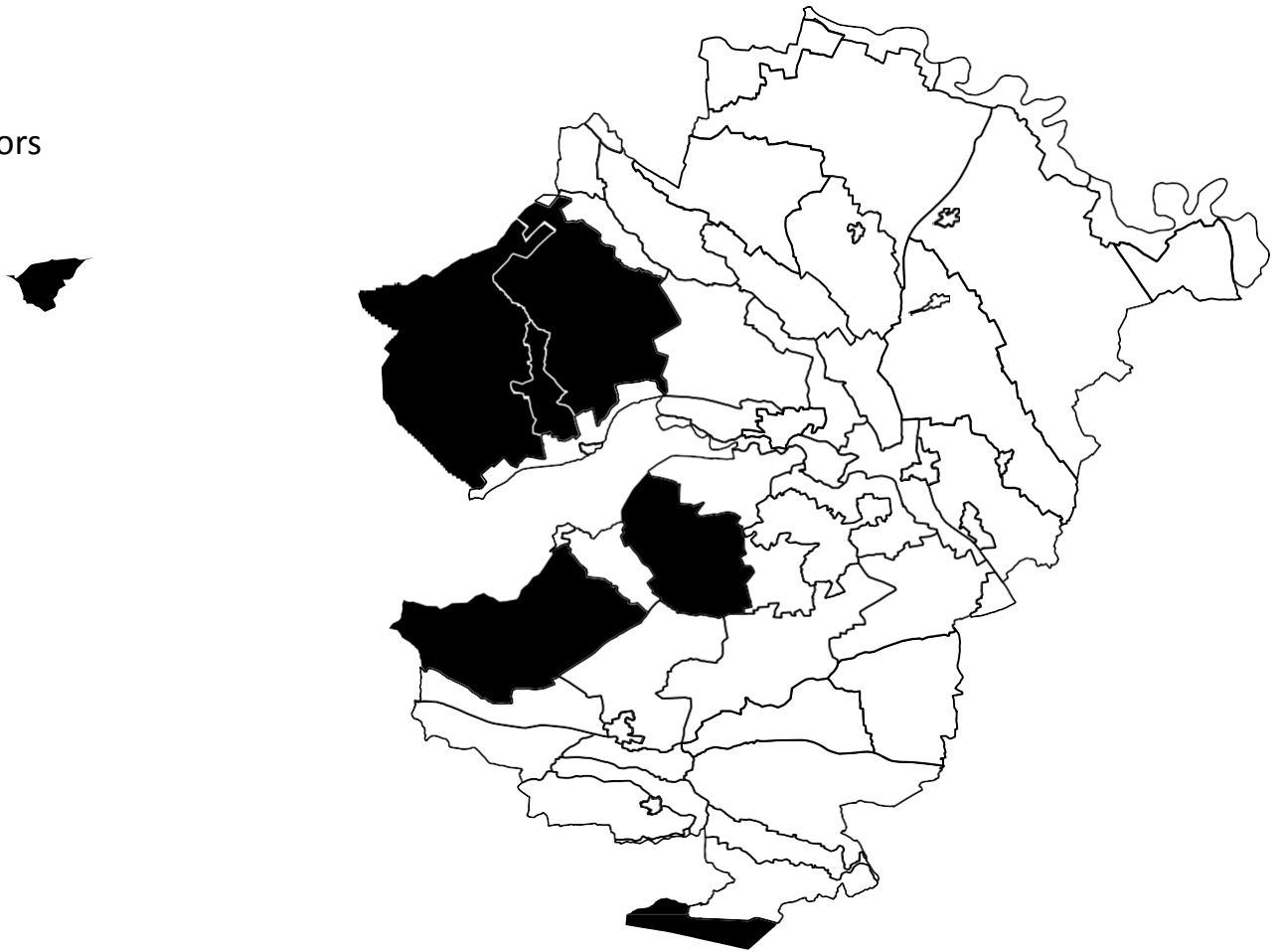
Key Characteristics

- Flat upland plateaux of high moorland, with convex slopes and occasional gritstone outcrops
- Strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness throughout, with associated dark night skies and low levels of intrusion and light pollution
- Expansive, strongly rural, undeveloped character
- Open skylines, wide panoramic/extensive views over wider lowland landscape
- Characteristic moorland vegetation composed of heather and dwarf shrubs with blanket bog
- The colour changes with the seasons and gives rise to dark hilltops which contrast with the green of the valleys and upland fringe
- MOD ranges incorporating plantations (e.g. Feldom and Bellerby ranges)
- Evidence of historic land use from prehistoric times through to the present still highly visible as a result of relatively low levels of cultivation and development
- Large tracts of open access land and common land
- Remnants of lead mining, particularly to the west

Description

- 5.1.1 The LLCT comprises elevated, gently rounded hills, often with stepped sides facing valleys, forming broad plateaux to the north and south of Swaledale. Plateaux are dissected by steep sided gullies, and plateaux edges are often defined by dark, blocky gritstone outcrops, with scree below. Watercourses tend to be rocky, with grass, heather or rush banks and occasional trees on rock and cliffs in sheltered gills.

A: Moors



- 5.1.2 Deep layers of peat overlay carboniferous rocks, while millstone grits outcrop locally in summits and gullies. Land cover is dominated by extensive tracts of acid grassland, blanket bog and upland heath, creating an interesting and recognisable landscape pattern. The landscape is widely grazed by sheep and heather moorland is managed for grouse shooting. Settlement is generally absent from the open moor tops, with scattered traditional farmsteads with modern outbuildings are often located at the fringes.
- 5.1.3 This is a large-scale, rural landscape with an associated strong sense of isolation and tranquillity. Long distance views across open moorland to distant summits, as well as panoramic views of the northern dales contribute to a recognisable sense of place. The moors generally have a rugged, unmanaged and remote character, with human influences largely limited to occasional fences and cairns, with few roads or tracks crossing the plateaux. The extensive moorland and heath support diverse upland bird communities.

Evaluation

Sensitivity to Change Issues

- **High visual sensitivity** as a result of elevated, open nature of this landscape, which facilitates panoramic views across adjacent LLCT;
- **High ecological sensitivity** as a result of the distinctive patchwork of blanket bogs and heather moorland which provide key habitats for plants and birds and are designated as part of the North Pennine Moors SPA, SSSI and SAC;
- **High landscape and cultural sensitivity** resulting from the predominantly intact landscape pattern of blocky gritstone outcrops, predominantly rural character and strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity throughout, with associated dark night skies.

Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

Physical and Ecological Character

- Protect and positively manage large, open and expansive areas of moorland comprising blanket bogs and heather moorland for biodiversity, sense of place and resilience to climate change;
- Seek opportunities to restore, extend and re-link moorland habitats to achieve a strong habitat network;
- Seek opportunities to block moorland grips to benefit soil and water management and habitat restoration;
- Where possible, restore acidic grasslands to dwarf-shrub heath communities and implement sustainable grazing regimes and burning programmes to promote structural and biological diversity;
- Manage livestock densities to avoid poaching of soils and aid water infiltration, limiting surface runoff;
- Improve and maintain blanket bog in good condition in order to preserve the high soil carbon content and protect underlying archaeological and paleo environmental deposits;
- Protect important geological exposures, including gritstone outcrops, using semi-natural land cover to enhance landform features

Cultural and Historical Character

- Maintain the visibility of upstanding archaeological remains and ground features;
- Encourage the use of local (gritstone) building materials for the repair and restoration of stone walls and building;
- Protect historic landscape features such as remnant mines, quarries and roadside limekilns;
- Restore and provide interpretation of extractive and industrial sites such as quarries and limekilns;
- Maintain sustainable grazing intensities and low levels of scrub to ensure the integrity and visibility of archaeological sites.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character

- Maintain public access to enable enjoyment of this landscape and the sense of 'escapism' and 'inspiration' it provides whilst protecting vulnerable habitats, through the network of public footpaths and open access land;
- Protect key views to adjacent Moors Fringe and Dales;
- Conserve the predominantly rural character, overall sense of tranquillity and remoteness; and dark night skies

Local Landscape Character Areas

5.1.4 There are seven landscape character areas within this LLCT, namely:

- A1 – Marrick and New Forest Moor LCA
- A2 – Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor LCA
- A3 – Gayles and Marske Moor LCA
- A4 – Preston and Stainton Moor LCA
- A5 – Downholme and Hipswell Moor LCA
- A6 – Witton Moor LCA
- A7 – Tan Hill Moor LCA

Landscape Character Area A1: Marrick and New Forest Moor

Location

5.1.5 This LCA is an expanse of high moorland in the very north-west of the study area, including High Moor, Kexwith Moor, Holgate Moor, Hurst Moor and Marrick Moor. It is bounded to the west by the Yorkshire Dales National Park, to the south by Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe LCA B6, to the east by Throstle Gill/Marske Beck LCA A2, the north-east by Gayles and Marske Moor LCA A3 and extends north into County Durham.

Key Characteristics

- Expansive, flat upland plateaux of high moorland, with convex slopes and occasional gritstone outcrops
- A vast area of rugged, moorland dissected by fast-running becks that create narrow, often wooded valleys that incise the plateaux
- Remote character, with human influences largely limited to occasional farmsteads, hamlets, dry stone walls and cairns, with only a few roads or tracks crossing the plateaux
- Numerous visible remnants of lead mining, including disused shafts, tips and pits particularly in the southwest of the area
- Strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness throughout, with associated dark night skies and low levels of intrusion and light pollution
- Open skylines, wide panoramic/extensive views particularly west across the moorland of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and east across the vale and beyond to the North Yorkshire Moors National Park

Current Character

5.1.6 This LCA covers some of the highest topography in the study area, ranging from approximately 290m AOD in the east to 500m AOD in the northwest. The landform rises up from the valley of LCA A2, through a moderate to steep gradient, to the plateaux of Kexwith Moor and Holgate Moor in the north of the LCA.

- 5.1.7 The moors are dissected by steep sided gullies, and plateaux edges are occasionally defined by dark, blocky gritstone outcrops and stepped valleys. Watercourses tend to be rocky, with grass, heather or rush banks and occasional trees on rock and cliffs in sheltered gills.
- 5.1.8 This is a sparsely vegetated landscape. Land cover comprises of large areas of unenclosed heather moorland or rough grass, interspersed with blocks of parliamentary enclosure defined by straight, dry-stone wall boundaries. Much of this is classified as common land, with open access. The narrow valleys often contain woodland planting including areas of ancient woodland, particularly at Holgate Beck. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.1.9 There is limited settlement within this LCA, comprising farm properties and occasional individual and clusters of cottages often on the valley sides. There is a concentration of former mine workings including disused shafts, pits and quarries to the west of the LCA and becoming less apparent to the east.
- 5.1.10 This is a predominantly exposed landscape with big skies, and panoramic views from higher slopes and summits across to the lower lying land in the east of the study area. Historic areas of parliamentary enclosure are visually conspicuous, divided by straight, dry-stone wall boundaries.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.11 The area is dominated by mineral extraction (lead mining), especially in the west and north-east. Towards the north, there is a large area of reverted moorland. The remainder of the LCA is largely a mix of piecemeal and planned enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by drystone walls. Areas of intake are also scattered across the LCA.

Landscape Condition

5.1.12 Due to the predominantly unsettled and remote character, the expansive moorland landscape is largely intact, with important areas of peat bog and heath. The condition of this has been affected by land management practices, with localised areas experiencing over-grazing and removal of moorland heath. Dry-stone wall boundaries are generally well-maintained. Overall, the landscape is in good condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in land management practices that would result in fragmentation of moorland habitats;
- Potential impact of large-scale development in nearby LCA on panoramic views;
- Potential conversion of rural properties that would alter the settlement pattern;
- Increase in population and visitor numbers resulting in associated recreation impacts, demand for tourism infrastructure/signage etc and overall tranquillity;
- Potential impact of vertical structures such as masts and renewable energy developments as a result of increasing infrastructure demands that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and particularly blanket bog structure.

Landscape Character Area A2: Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor

Location

- 5.1.13 This LCA is a narrow valley within the moorland in the north-west of the study area, to the north of Swaledale. It is bounded to the west by the Marrick and New Forest Moor LCA A1, to the north and east by Gayles and Marske Moor LCA A3 and to the south by Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe LCAB6.

Key Characteristics

- Narrow, incised valley cut into the high moorland
- Stepped valley sides with rock outcrops
- Scattered trees and woodland on the valley sides
- Largely unenclosed landscape of rough grassland with some dwarf shrub
- Remote, tranquil character associated with the rural, pastoral landscape and very little settlement influence
- Enclosed visual character due to the steep-sided valley slopes

Current Character

- 5.1.14 This LCA consists of the narrow, incised valley containing the watercourses of the Marske Beck, Throstle Gill and Waitgate Gill. Orgate Force is a single drop waterfall on Marske Beck in the south of the LCA. The valley is characterised by the exposed, steep-sided valley sides. Rock outcrops on the upper slopes mark the edge of the LCA with the moors to the east and west. The highest land is in the north-east close to Cordilleras Lane (365m AOD). The lowest point at approximately 170m AOD is alongside the Marske Beck in the south.
- 5.1.15 Contrasting with the exposed moors, this is a wooded landscape. Scattered, isolated trees are characteristic of the rocky valley sides that form the east of the LCA. Trees enclose the southern reaches of Marske Beck (south of Orgate Bridge) form the edge of Clints Wood in the south. Waitgate Gill in the north of the LCA cuts through a narrow, wooded valley including an area of ancient and semi-natural woodland. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites in this LCA.

- 5.1.16 There is very little settlement in this LCA and only one road into the south of the valley, providing local access. Farm tracks including bridleways meander across the valley sides between dispersed farmhouses and barns. These tracks include public footpaths and bridleways that link to open access land in the adjacent moors.
- 5.1.17 This is a distinctive, steep-sided valley landscape with exposed slopes and stepped rock outcrops. It has a much more enclosed character than the open moorland, giving a heightened sense of tranquillity associated with scattered, pastoral settlement character.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.18 The north is largely an area of intake consisting of an irregular enclosure pattern with drystone wall boundaries. The south is a mixture of piecemeal and planned enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by drystone walls. There is also a significant block of broad-leaved woodland in the south-west.

Landscape Condition

- 5.1.19 Due to the predominantly unsettled and remote character, the wooded valley landscape is moderately intact. The condition of this has been historically affected by mining and existing grazing of the valley slopes resulting in woodland becoming fragmented. Dry-stone wall boundaries are generally well-maintained. Overall, the landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- High visitor numbers on the fringes of the Yorkshire Dales, across the moors;
- Potential impact of tall structure such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on habitat structure.

Landscape Character Area A3: Gayles and Marske Moor

Location

- 5.1.20 This LCA consists of an expanse of high moorland in the north-west of the study area including Gayles Moor, Marske Moor and Feldom Ranges. It is bound to the west by the Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor LCA A2, northwest by Marrick and New Forest Moor LCA A1, to the north by County Durham, to the north-east by Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe LCA B2, to the east by Whashton Moors Fringe LCA B5 and to the south by Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe LCA B6.

Key Characteristics

- Varied topography of upland plateaux transitioning to less elevated, more undulating land particularly in the north and associated with gills and becks
- A vast area of exposed moorland dissected by fast-running gills and becks
- Expansive, generally undeveloped and remote character
- Dominated by Feldom Ranges, an MOD training area with restricted public access
- Scattered remnants of former lead mining
- Significant number of shake holes across the landscape, associated with the underlying geology
- Open skylines with wide, panoramic/extensive views
- Characteristic moorland vegetation composed of heather and dwarf shrubs with occasional blocks of plantation woodland

Current Character

- 5.1.21 The LCA comprises of elevated, undulating moorland topography, ranging from approximately 200m AOD in Feldom Gill in the south to the highest land in the central western area of Grass Moor at approximately 396m AOD. Landform is more undulating than the moors to the west, particularly the slopes to the north and east, associated with small watercourses flowing east into the valley. There are a significant number of shake holes across the LCA.

- 5.1.22 The moors are dissected by the steep sided gullies of the fast-flowing gills and becks including Rake Beck and Dalton Beck in the north and Hey Gill and Feldom Gill in the south. Watercourses tend to be rocky, with grass, heather or rush banks and occasional trees on rock and cliffs in sheltered gills.
- 5.1.23 The predominant land cover is heavily grazed open moorland or rough grass and bracken with blocks of coniferous woodland scattered across the landscape. There is a small area of ancient woodland at Park Wood on the northeast edge of the LCA. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.1.24 Much of the area has a rugged and remote character, with human influences limited to occasional farmsteads, dry stone walls and fences. MOD signage for Feldom Ranges often stands out in this landscape. The land use in this LCA is predominantly the MOD training area, which is mostly comprised of high moorland with grazing to the north-west of Richmond.
- 5.1.25 A small number of designated heritage assets are located within the LCA including a stone ring cairn scheduled monument on Gayles Moor and Castle Steads hillfort, which forms part of a spur overlooking the steep valley of Dalton Beck on the northeast edge of the LCA.
- 5.1.26 This is a predominantly exposed landscape with big skies, and panoramic views from higher slopes and summits, particularly across valley slopes and towards the Vale in the east of the study area. Wide views are available from public rights of way that are generally in the southeast and north of the LCA. There are also small areas of open access land on Marske Moor and Harker Moss in the south and north of the LCA, respectively. Public access is limited across much of the LCA, due to the MOD training area.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.27 This is largely an area of planned parliamentary enclosure with scattered coniferous plantation. Towards the north of the LCA are areas of piecemeal and planned enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by dry stone walls.

Landscape Condition

5.1.28 MOD land use and management has historically altered the moorland landscape and habitats have become fragmented. The historic dry-stone wall enclosure boundaries are generally well-maintained. This is generally a well-managed landscape that is in overall moderate condition.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats;
- Changes in military activity potentially leading to alterations to the management of the moorland including woodland blocks;
- Potential impact of large-scale development such as settlement expansion in surrounding LCA in panoramic views;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area A4: Preston and Stainton Moor

Location

- 5.1.29 This LCA is an expanse of high moorland to the north-west of Leyburn in the west of the study area, including Redmire Moor, Preston Moor and Stainton Moor. It is bounded to the north and west by the Yorkshire Dales National Park, a small area of Mid-Swaledale LCA C3 to the north, north-east by Stainton Moors Fringe (North) LCAB11, to the south-east by the Stainton Moors Fringe (South) LCA B14 and to the south by Preston-under-Scar Moors Fringe LCAB13.

Key Characteristics

- Upland plateaux of high moorland dissected by gills and becks, with convex slopes and numerous gritstone outcrops and geological features
- Millstone grit geology with slowly permeable, seasonally to permanently waterlogged peaty soils
- The moors generally have a rugged, unmanaged and remote character, particularly in the west
- A large area of MOD training area covers the east of the area, with conspicuous rifle ranges
- Open skylines with wide, panoramic/extensive views
- Characteristic moorland vegetation composed of heather and dwarf shrubs and very limited tree cover

Current Character

- 5.1.30 This LCA is comprised of high moorland forming broad plateaux to the south of Swaledale. The highest point of the LCA is approximately 470m AOD in the north-west, sloping south towards Redmire. The lowest topography is approximately 230m AOD within the shallow valley of Black Beck in the south-east of the LCA. Landform is more rugged and undulating across Redmire Moor and Preston Moor in the west. Smoother contours slope down from the plateau summit at Whit Fell towards the eastern edge of the LCA. Surface geology including remnants of mining activity are characteristic of the west of the LCA.

- 5.1.31 A number of watercourses rise in the uplands of this LCA, flowing south and west through shallow valleys that contribute to localised undulations of the landform. Valleys are occasionally rocky, with exposed geology. The valley sides are generally rough grassland with scrub and shrubs on the upper slopes. Tree cover is limited to the south and east edges of the LCA, where it begins to transition into the adjacent Moors Fringe LCAs.
- 5.1.32 Much of the LCA is designated as North Pennine Moors SAC and SPA, which (along with the North York Moors) hold much of the upland heathland of northern England. At higher altitudes and wetter areas, the heaths grade into extensive areas of blanket bog.³¹ Lovely Seat – Stainton Moor SSSI extends into this LCA. This SSSI forms part of a vast area of upland rock on the watershed between Wensleydale and Swaledale, which is designated as an outstanding example of North Pennines moorland, having an extensive and complete west to east transition from blanket bog to dry heathland.³²
- 5.1.33 The west of the LCA has a rugged and remote character with numerous, often distinctive remnant mining features, some of which are designated scheduled monuments. These include remains of a water-powered smelting mill, fuel store and associated buildings, with the remains of flue system leading to an intact chimney.
- 5.1.34 The east of the LCA becomes less rugged with smoother land cover. The east of the LCA is characterised by the MOD training area of Bellerby Ranges, which includes a number of conspicuous rifle ranges and associated buildings. There is very limited settlement in this LCA. Dry stone walls are generally concentrated around the lower slopes and define small-scale enclosure. They occasionally stretch into the distance, over the rising slopes of the moors, where they define larger areas of enclosure such as Bellerby Deer Park.
- 5.1.35 A large area of open access land covers much of the west of the LCA, including a number of defined public footpaths and tracks, from which wide-ranging views are available across the surrounding landscape. This is a predominantly exposed landscape with big skies, and panoramic views from higher slopes and summits across to the lower lying land to the north, east and south.

³¹ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0030033>

³² <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000028.pdf>

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.36 The area is dominated by areas of former mineral extraction (lead mining), especially in the north and the west. There is an existing large military training area on Bellerby Moor with the south a mix of planned enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by drystone walls. There are areas of pasture in the north-east and south-west and the designed landscape of Bellerby Deer Park in the south-east.

Landscape Condition

- 5.1.37 Designated as part of the SSSI, this is an important and intact area of moorland. MOD land use and management has locally altered the moorland landscape and habitats have become fragmented on the fringes. The historic dry-stone wall enclosure boundaries are generally well-maintained. This is a well-managed landscape that is in generally good condition.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming and land management practices (including changed military activity) leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats, including woodland blocks;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- High visitor numbers to open access land including historic mining sites
- Localised pressure for mineral extraction, considering existing quarries to the south;
- Conversion of barns, especially where new access arrangements and domestication of the setting are required, is likely to change the predominantly rural character;
- Potential impact of large-scale development in surrounding LCAs on panoramic views;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Changes in military requirements and activities;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and particularly blanket bog structure.

Landscape Character Area A5: Downholme and Hipswell Moor

Location

5.1.38 This LCA is an expanse of elevated moorland to the west of Catterick Garrison, including Downholme Moor and Hipswell Moor. It is located in the west of the study area, extending north-west into the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It is bounded to the west by the Stainton Moors Fringe (North) LCAB11, to the south by the Stainton Moors Fringe (South) LCAB14 and Hauxwell Moors Fringe LCAB15, to the south-east by Scotton Moors Fringe LCAB12 and north-east by Downholme Moors Fringe LCA B9. The urban area of Catterick Garrison and associated settlements is to the east of the LCA.

Key Characteristics

- Undulating high moorland with hill tops
- A large number of watercourses drain this LCA
- Swathes of plantation woodland set within undulating rough grassland
- Expansive landscape, with very limited settlement
- Numerous access tracks associated with former quarry workings
- Open skylines with wide, panoramic/extensive, often 360° views
- MOD influence due to proximity to the barracks at Catterick Garrison

Current Character

5.1.39 This LCA is an elevated moorland forming a broad plateau in the north-west of the LCA. The landform generally slopes west to east, down towards the outer edge of Catterick Garrison. The highest point is approximately 312m AOD towards the west of the LCA at Seat How. The undulating landform in the east of the LCA falls to approximately 200m AOD in the east, at the edge of the barracks.

5.1.40 The area is more wooded in nature than the other Moors LCAs and is less elevated but retains an overall exposed character with long-distance, panoramic views over the study area. Much of the land cover is rough grassland. Significant blocks of predominantly plantation woodland extend through the LCA with Bardon Moor, in the east, surrounded

by blocks of coniferous woodland on lower slopes. There is a small area of ancient and semi-natural woodland within the valley of Risedale Beck to the east of the LCA. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA. Foxglove Covert Local Nature Reserve covers a large area of moorland edge on the eastern fringe of the LCA, in the adjacent Moors Fringe area.

- 5.1.41 Although this is a predominantly open and exposed moorland landscape, human influences are greater than in other Moors LCA, given the proximity to Catterick Garrison and the associated MOD training areas. Coniferous plantations, fence enclosure, signage and network of access tracks with access barriers contribute to a more managed landscape character than across the other Moors LCAs.
- 5.1.42 There is no public access within this LCA, beyond the three roads that pass through the centre, east and south of the area. Views from the highest topography are wide ranging across the study area, including across the Swale valley to the north towards Richmond on the rising slopes. From lower topography, views become more restricted by the woodland blocks and undulating landform.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.43 The east of this LCA is largely an area of military (accommodation) with the west dominated by unenclosed moorland. There is a significant area of former deep shaft coal mine on Hudswell Moor and an area of unknown planned enclosure in the south. Blocks of mixed plantation and coniferous plantation woodland are present in the north-west.

Landscape Condition

- 5.1.44 MOD land use and management has historically altered the moorland landscape and habitats have become fragmented. Plantation woodlands are well maintained and contribute to screening of MOD development/land uses. This is generally a well-managed landscape that is in overall moderate condition.

Forces for Change

- Changes in military activity potentially leading to alterations to the management of the moorland including woodland blocks;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Potential conversion of rural properties that would alter the settlement pattern;
- Potential impact of large-scale development in surrounding LCAs on panoramic views;
- Potential impact of vertical structures such as masts and renewable energy developments as a result of increasing infrastructure demands that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and particularly blanket bog structure.

Landscape Character Area A6: Witton Moor

Location

- 5.1.45 This LCA is an expanse of elevated moorland comprised of Brown Rigg and Witton Moor, in the south of the study area. The LLCT extends beyond the study area boundary into the Yorkshire Dales and Harrogate District. It is bounded to the north by Witton Moors Fringe LCA B18.

Key Characteristics

- Flat upland plateaux of high moorland within the Nidderdale AONB
- Millstone grit geology with slowly permeable, seasonally to permanently waterlogged peaty soils with blanket bogs
- A strongly rural, undeveloped character with strong sense of tranquillity and dark night skies
- Expansive landscape with open skylines and extensive views over the lowland landscape
- Characteristic moorland vegetation composed of heather and dwarf shrubs and very little tree cover

Current Character

- 5.1.46 This LCA is comprised of elevated moorland that generally rises through the area from the east to the west, with localised undulations around Tranmire Hill. The LCA continues beyond the study area boundary and forms part of the Nidderdale AONB. The lowest landform is approximately 237m AOD in the east near to Elligstree, the highest ground approximately 390m AOD at Brown Rigg in the west.
- 5.1.47 A number of watercourses rise in the north and east of the LCA, flowing through shallow gullies that contribute to the gently undulating landform across much of the area. There is little variation in land cover across this LCA.
- 5.1.48 This is a predominantly exposed landscape with big skies, and panoramic views from higher slopes and summits across to the lower lying land in the east of the study area. The

predominant land cover is heath with areas of grazing and rough grassland with bracken and occasional shrubs often in proximity to the watercourses. There is little or no tree cover. The colour of the vegetation changes with the seasons and gives rise to dark hilltops which contrast with the green of the valleys and upland fringe.

- 5.1.49 The majority of the LCA forms part of the North Pennine Moors SAC & SPA and East Nidderdale Moors (Flamstone Pin – High Ruckles) SSSI due to the international importance of the blanket bog and heather moorland³³ across the region and including across much of the LCA. There are no nationally designated historical sites within the LCA.
- 5.1.50 A small farmstead at Tranmire is the only settlement within the LCA in the study area. Grouse shooting is a key land use of the area and butts and boxes are visible in the exposed landscape.
- 5.1.51 The vast majority of the LCA is open access moorland that forms part of the Nidderdale AONB. Long-distance, panoramic views of the varied surrounding landscape are available from across the LCA. In turn, the exposed moorland ridgeline stands out in views from the adjacent LCA and is a key landscape feature in the south of the study area. The Six Dales Trail, long-distance walk, passes along the eastern boundary of the LCA and takes in the variations in the Yorkshire landscape along its route. It is a remote, tranquil landscape with characteristic dark night skies.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.52 This is primarily an area of unenclosed moorland, with a small area of medieval intake in the south-east around a small farmstead at Tranmire.

Landscape Condition

- 5.1.53 This is an important moorland landscape with designated, intact areas of heath and blanket bog. It forms part of the Nidderdale AONB. The landscape is well managed and in good condition throughout the LCA.

³³ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000106.pdf>

Forces for Change

- Changes in land management practices that would result in fragmentation of moorland habitats;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- High visitor numbers on the fringes of the Yorkshire Dales, across the moors;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and particularly blanket bog structure.

Landscape Character Area A7: Tan Hill Moor

Location

- 5.1.1 This LCA is an outlying pocket of elevated moorland on the north western edge of the district, that lies within the North Pennines AONB, adjacent to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The LLCT extends beyond the study area boundary into the Yorkshire Dales to the south and the North Pennines AONB in County Durham and Eden District to the north. It is isolated from other LCAs in Richmondshire District.

Key Characteristics

- North-facing moorland within the North Pennines AONB
- Superficial deposits of peat cover much of the landscape
- A strongly rural, undeveloped character with strong sense of tranquillity and dark night skies
- Expansive landscape with open skylines and extensive views over the North Pennines AONB
- Characteristic moorland vegetation composed of heather and dwarf shrubs and very little tree cover

Current Character

- 5.1.2 This LCA is comprised of elevated moorland that generally rises through the area from the north to the south, giving predominantly north-facing slopes cut by gullies. This is the highest landform within the study area. The lowest landform is approximately 427m AOD in the north to the west of Brock's Hill, the highest ground approximately 590m AOD in the far south of the LCA.
- 5.1.3 A number of small watercourses rise in the LCA, flowing mostly northwards through gullies that contribute to the gently undulating landform across much of the area. Some of these are steep-sided, such as at Mirk Fell Gill. There is little variation in land cover across this LCA.

- 5.1.4 The majority of the LCA forms part of the North Pennine Moors SAC & SPA and Bowes Moor SSSI, which in this LCA is blanket bog with dry heath³⁴. The heath is interspersed with pockets of grazing and rough grassland with bracken and occasional shrubs often in proximity to the watercourses, that contribute to changing seasonal colour. There is little or no tree cover.
- 5.1.5 There is no settlement within this LCA. Grouse shooting is a key land use of the area and butts and boxes are visible in places in the exposed landscape. This area is also scattered with disused pits and shafts, evidence of the history of mining in the region, and the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park is marked by a number of boundary stones. There are no nationally designated historical sites within the LCA.
- 5.1.6 The LCA comprises open access moorland that has an exposed and remote character. Views are of rolling heath with big skies and panoramic views of surrounding moorland and rising landform in the longer distance. It is a remote, tranquil landscape with characteristic dark night skies.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.1.7 This is an area of unenclosed moorland that spans the surrounding moors.

Landscape Condition

- 5.1.8 This is an important moorland landscape with designated areas of heath and blanket bog. It forms part of the North Pennines AONB. The landscape is well managed and in overall good condition.

³⁴ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1001397.pdf>

Forces for Change

- Changes in land management practices that would result in fragmentation of moorland habitats;
- Neglect of dry stone wall management;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines and would impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and particularly blanket bog structure.

5.2 Local Landscape Character Type B: Moors Fringe

Characterisation

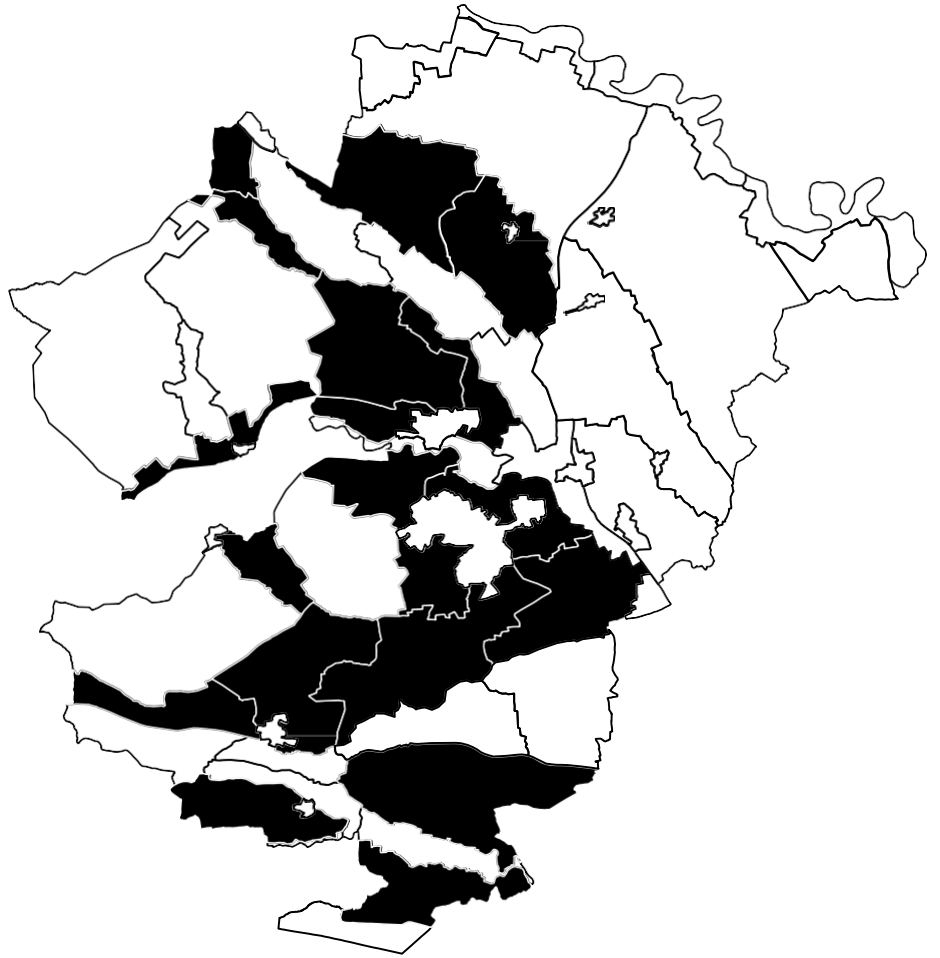
Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping landscape which forms a transition between higher moors and fells to the west and the vale landscape to the east
- Predominantly rural landscape with an associated relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- The LLCT is dissected by several significant river valleys running from west to east, including the Swale and Ure
- A patchwork of arable and pastoral fields which are delineated by stone walls and hedgerow field boundaries
- A mosaic of landscapes including moorland and acid grassland with variety of woodland cover, particularly associated with the valleys, many copses and plantations on the side slopes, and hedges and trees in the lower-lying arable areas
- Dispersed settlement pattern of small villages and large farmsteads linked by a network of minor roads
- Settlements generally display buildings which are predominantly constructed from local stone, resulting in strong visual unity
- Historic parklands and wooded estates enclosing a number of country houses are scattered throughout the landscape

Description

- 5.2.1 This LLCT forms much of the central part of the study area. It forms the slopes at the edge of the Moors, into the valley areas and transitioning into the Vale. It comprises the gently sloping eastern fringes of the Yorkshire Dales to the north and Gritstone Moors and Fells to the south. There is local variation in topography.
- 5.2.2 The Moors Fringe is divided by the valleys of the River Swale and River Ure which drain west to east. This is a transitional landscape lying between predominantly arable landscapes to the east and pastoral farming to the west.

B: Moors Fringe



- 5.2.3 Enclosure patterns vary greatly depending on location and historic origin, including larger scale enclosures with very strong landscape patterns, and small-scale, irregular field patterns, close to villages and often of medieval origins. There is a transition in the type of field enclosure, varying from hedges in the east to dry stone walls at higher elevations in the west. This is essentially a rural landscape that is largely undeveloped with an associated relatively strong sense of tranquillity. It supports a moderate density of small villages and large farmsteads linked by a network of minor roads. Settlements in the area are predominantly constructed from local stone, thereby resulting in strong visual unity and sense of harmony with the surrounding landscape, mostly using Millstone Grit but with some limestone in the east.
- 5.2.4 A mosaic of landscapes is present including moorland and acid grassland. There is a variety of woodland cover, with blocks of plantations and scattered copses across valley slopes, and hedges and tree field boundaries in the lower-lying arable areas. Historic parklands and wooded estates enclose a number of country houses including Aske Hall and Jervaulx. Large farmsteads are also scattered throughout the LLCT.

Evaluation

Sensitivity to Change Issues

- **High visual sensitivity** as a result of strong intervisibility with adjacent higher and lower LLCT.
- **Moderate ecological sensitivity** overall as a result of the numerous small woodlands and hedgerows which provide key habitats. These have, however, been depleted in places by agricultural improvement.
- **High landscape and cultural sensitivity** as a result of the predominantly intact pattern of hedgerows and drystone walls at field boundaries, the patchwork of historic designed landscapes, predominantly rural character and relatively strong sense of tranquillity.

Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

Physical and Ecological Character

- **Protect** the pastoral character of the Moors Fringe LLCT;
- **Conserve and restore** drystone walls, particularly where they are highly visible within the landscape and form strong patterns with a high degree of integrity;
- **Manage** areas of woodland, allowing to thicken;
- **Manage** grazing to facilitate the natural regeneration of woodland;
- **Encourage** the management of permanent pasture to maximise its ecological value by avoidance of ploughing, re-seeding, artificial fertiliser, drainage and other potentially damaging farming operations as well as encouraging appropriate stocking levels and land use cycle;
- Where possible, **remove** invasive, non-native species.

Cultural and Historical Character

- **Manage and restore** historic parklands and traditional buildings, retaining veteran trees and reintroducing wood pasture;
- **Ensure** that the strong visual unity of settlements and traditional buildings is maintained using appropriate local materials – mostly Millstone Grit for buildings and walls;
- **Protect** the rich range of historic landscape features including variety of designed historic parks and gardens and their settings;
- **Maintain** sustainable grazing intensities and scrub management on archaeological sites and earthworks;
- **Restore and manage** historic parklands, retaining mature veteran trees and restoring vistas;

- Encourage a built form which respects the simple architecture of farmsteads and cottages and reflects the characteristic settlement pattern of small villages, linked by minor roads.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character

- Maintain public access to enable enjoyment of this landscape and the sense of 'escapism' and 'inspiration' it provides whilst protecting vulnerable habitats, through the network of public footpaths and open access land;
- Seek opportunities to develop new educational access schemes to promote the strong agricultural, forestry, cultural and historical significance of the landscape

Local Landscape Character Areas

5.2.5 There are 19 landscape character areas within this LLCT, namely:

- B1 Newsham Moors Fringe
- B2 Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe
- B3 East and West Layton Moors Fringe
- B4 Melsonby Moors Fringe
- B5 Whashton Moors Fringe
- B6 Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe
- B7 Richmond West Moors Fringe
- B8 Richmond East Moors Fringe
- B9 Downholme Moors Fringe
- B10 Colburn Moors Fringe
- B11 Stainton Moors Fringe (North)
- B12 Scotton Moors Fringe
- B13 Preston-under-Scar Moors Fringe
- B14 Stainton Moors Fringe (South)
- B15 Hauxwell Moors Fringe
- B16 Tunstall Moors Fringe
- B17 Middleham Moors Fringe
- B18 Witton Moors Fringe
- B19 Spennithorne Moors Fringe

Landscape Character Area B1: Newsham Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.6 This is the transitional area between the high moorland of Barningham Moor to the lower-lying land in the Ravensworth Valley and includes the village of Newsham. It forms part of the north edge of the study area. It is bounded to the north and west by County Durham, north-east by Caldwell Vale LCA F1, to the east by Ravensworth Narrow Valley LCA D1 and to the south by Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe LCA B2.

Key Characteristics

- A gently sloping, transitional landscape between the upland moorland to the west and the lower-lying landscape of the Ravensworth Valley to the east and River Tees Valley to the north-east
- A patchwork of arable and pastoral fields which are delineated by a combination of stone walls and hedgerow field boundaries with trees
- Predominantly rural landscape with an associated relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- Dispersed settlement pattern of small villages and large farmsteads linked by a network of minor roads
- Generally enclosed pattern and visibility

Current Character

5.2.7 The landform within this LCA slopes gently from the moorland edge at approximately 220m AOD in the south-west to lower lying land at approximately 160m AOD at Dyson Beck. To the north of Dyson Beck, the lie of the land changes, with lower-lying, gentle west-east slopes down to approximately 140m AOD.

5.2.8 Dyson Beck divides the LCA into north and south, where field pattern and tree cover changes. The beck is identifiable by an east-west sinuous line of riparian trees and shrubs. Small copses and tree field boundaries connect south up slope, connecting with small woodlands/tree blocks often around farmsteads.

- 5.2.9 The arable landscape encompasses the linear village of Newsham on the eastern boundary of the LCA. This comprises a pattern of generally small-scale, regular shaped predominantly arable fields defined by a combination of dry-stone wall and hedgerow boundaries with trees. Fields increase in size and tree cover reduces towards the north of the LCA as it transitions into the valley landscape. South of the village of Newsham, the field pattern is more irregular with scattered trees, remnant of former parkland. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA
- 5.2.10 Settlement comprises the village of Newsham in the southeast of the LCA and dispersed farmsteads and cottages in the wider area, accessed via minor roads and long tracks. There are a number of listed buildings scattered through the area, including a cluster of properties in the village of Newsham.
- 5.2.11 The LCA comprises a rural, generally still landscape. Visibility is predominantly enclosed by the pattern of hedgerows and tree boundaries. Occasionally, views open up across the valley to the north. The A66 forms the north-east boundary of the LCA and has some local intrusion on the still landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.12 This is predominantly formed of an area of modern improved fields, particularly in the north and through the centre. The south is dominated by piecemeal enclosure of the late medieval period, characterised by dry-stone walls. There are also a couple of areas of strip fields, in the north-west and in the south.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.13 Farming practices have resulted in localised fragmentation of field boundaries. Tranquillity is interrupted by the nearby A66. Riparian vegetation provides important habitat structure. The landscape is in generally moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes to farming practices, such as through amendments to subsidies and intensification, impacting on field boundaries and use/appearance of farm buildings;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Potential impact of local development such as alterations to existing buildings and expansion of farm complexes and village edge;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on rural views and impact on remoteness;
- Future impacts of climate change on crops and habitats

Landscape Character Area B2: Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.14 This LCA forms undulating mid-slopes to the east of Gayles Moor. It includes the settlements of Dalton and Gayles and is located in the north-west of the study area. It is bounded to the north by the Newsham Moors Fringe LCA B1, to the east by the Ravensworth Narrow Valley LCAD1, to the south by Whashton Moors Fringe LCAB5 and to the west by the Gayles and Marske Moor LCAA3.

Key Characteristics

- Undulating, often steeply sloping landform across mid-valley slopes
- Predominantly rural landscape with an associated relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- A patchwork of arable and pastoral fields which are delineated by stone walls and hedgerow field boundaries
- Dispersed settlement pattern of small villages and large farmsteads linked by a network of minor roads
- Settlements nestled within undulating contours and small-scale enclosure pattern
- Woodland on the upper slopes defines the edge between Moors and Moors Fringe and form the skyline in views across the LCA

Current Character

5.2.15 The LCA forms the transition between the upland moorland to the west and the lower-lying landscape of the Ravensworth Valley to the east. The landform slopes gently from south-west to north-east. The highest point is approximately 260m AOD near Park Wood in the south-west. The lowest point is approximately 160m AOD at Dalton, where the gradient becomes less steep into the adjacent valley.

5.2.16 Several small watercourses drain this LCA. These rise in the adjacent moorland and generally flow through vegetated gullies into the valley landscape to the east of the LCA.

- 5.2.17 The predominant land use is arable farming. Medium, irregular fields are characteristic of the area. Smaller, more regular shaped fields often surround the settlements. The LCA has an overall wooded character, created by the scattered woodland blocks linked by field boundary trees and trees along watercourses, and occasional field trees. There is a small block of ancient and semi-natural woodland at Swinery Wood. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.18 Settlement is generally concentrated on the lower slopes of the LCA. There are two, small villages located on the lower slopes, on the main vehicular route that follows the slope contours along the eastern LCA boundary. Small clusters of farm buildings and cottages are dispersed across the rising slopes. There are a several listed buildings through the area, which are largely clustered within the village conservation areas. Listed buildings include Gayles Hall and Dalton Hall, which are prominent features on the rising slopes of the LCA.
- 5.2.19 The undulating, upland landscape has strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA, particularly considering views across the narrow valley of the moors fringe to the east. This is a predominantly exposed landscape of undulating slopes, that is broken up by blocks of woodland that often form the skylines in views from the east. Views from the public footpaths that cross the LCA, are often wide-ranging along and across the valley to the north and east.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.20 This LCA is a patchwork of piecemeal enclosure, unknown planned enclosure and modern improved fields. There are blocks of mixed plantation and coniferous woodland and an area of strip fields around the west of Dalton. An area of elite residence³⁵ is present around Gayles Hall.

³⁵ HLC settlement character

Landscape Condition

5.2.21 Changes in farming practices and land management have resulted in a mosaic of land cover and varying enclosure patterns. Field boundary hedgerows and trees are generally well maintained and link with managed woodland blocks. The landscape is in moderate-good condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and boundaries;
- Potential large-scale agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements, resulting in changes to settlement character;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B3: East and West Layton Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.22 This is a continuation of the moors fringe landscape between the narrow valley and vale LLCT in the north of the study area and continues west into County Durham. It is bounded to the north by Caldwell Vale LCA F1 and Aldbrough Vale LCA F2, to the south-east by Melsonby Moors Fringe LCAB4 and to the south and west by Ravensworth Narrow Valley LCA D1 and Gilling Narrow Valley LCA D2.

Key Characteristics

- Rounded, gently sloping hillsides;
- A rural landscape with an associated sense of tranquillity
- Well-wooded slopes with a number of small, plantation woodlands
- A predominately arable landscape with irregular field pattern delineated by hedgerow field boundaries
- Dispersed settlement pattern of small villages and large farmsteads linked by a network of minor roads
- Settlements generally display buildings and walls which are predominantly constructed from local stone, resulting in strong visual unity
- Areas of aggregate quarrying

Current Character

5.2.23 The LCA is a continuation of the Moors Fringe from the west. It forms the northern part of an elongated hill between the Narrow Valley and Vale landscapes in the north of the study area. The landform gently slopes up from approximately 130m AOD on the edge of the Ravensworth and Gilling Valleys towards East Layton on the crest of the hill (approximately 170m AOD). The ridgeline continues north-west and south-east across gently undulating landform.

- 5.2.24 There are a small number of watercourses that drain the LCA. These generally follow field boundaries and are not conspicuous in the landscape. Small lakes have been formed in former gravel pits in the north of the area.
- 5.2.25 The predominant land use is arable farming comprising a mixture of small, regular often linear fields in proximity to settlements and large, irregular fields on lower slopes. The landscape has a variety of tree cover, including remnant parkland planting around West Layton, blocks of plantation on slopes to the north and south of East Layton, dispersed woodland blocks, hedgerows and shelterbelts. There are significant blocks of deciduous woodland at Scot Butts (southern edge of Forcett Hall Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and classified ancient woodland) and around Forcett Quarry. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.26 East Layton and West Layton are the two villages in this LCA. They have different characters, from the linear settlement of East Layton to the cluster of properties and walled gardens and paddocks around the Manor House and church at West Layton. A small number of farmsteads are dispersed across the LCA, with rural businesses including farm shop and caravan park to the south of the A66.
- 5.2.27 There are several heritage assets that are locally apparent within the LCA including woodland that forms the edge of Forcett Hall RPG and earthworks associated with the Iron Age and Medieval settlement at Stanwick (in the adjacent LCA).
- 5.2.28 The vegetation pattern creates an overall sense of enclosure and contributes to a generally still landscape. Localised intrusion is associated with the quarry works in the north of the LCA and traffic on the A66 that transects the southern part of the LCA. Quarry works have historically been a part of this landscape, although modern workings are more intrusive.
- 5.2.29 Due to undulating landform and vegetation cover visibility is generally contained. Long-distance views occasionally open up, particularly south along roads and footpaths sloping down to the south of the LCA, looking across the valley to the edge of Gayles and Marske Moor. There are also wide views across the vale landscape to the north and east.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.30 This area largely consists of unknown planned enclosure and modern improved fields. Small areas of piecemeal and planned enclosure are present. There is a significant block of broadleaf woodland at Scot Butts and Fox Covert Wood in the north-east and scattered coniferous plantation.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.31 Farming practices and quarrying of the landscape has historically altered the landscape pattern, resulting in fragmentation of land cover. The historic, rural character of the villages is intact including characteristic stone buildings. The landscape is in moderate to poor condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns, neglect of stone wall boundaries and conversion of permanent pastures to arable that could affect archaeological features including earthworks;
- Potential large-scale agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Localised pressure to expand limestone extraction;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B4: Melsonby Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.32 This is a continuation of the moors fringe landscape between the narrow valley and vale LLCT in the north of the study area. It contains the village of Melsonby. It is bounded to the north-west by East and West Layton Moors Fringe LCA B3, to the north by Aldbrough Vale LCA F2, to the south-east by Moulton Vale LCA F4 and to the south by Gilling Narrow Valley LCA D2 and Skeeby Narrow Valley LCA D3.

Key Characteristics

- Rounded, gently sloping hillsides;
- Sparsely vegetated landscape, with concentration of woodland on steeper, lower slopes in the south
- Primary village with scattered farms, granges and cottages with access tracks from main routes
- Pockets of aggregate quarrying
- A rural landscape with an associated sense of tranquillity
- Irregular pattern of medium- to large-scale arable fields with historic strip fields in proximity to Melsonby
- Designed parkland characterises the lower, edge of valley slopes
- Strong intervisibility with the vale landscapes

Current Character

5.2.33 The LCA is a continuation of the Moors Fringe from the west. It forms the southern part of an elongated hill between the Narrow Valley and Vale landscapes in the north of the study area. The landform gently slopes up from approximately 150m AOD on the south-east edge of Gilling Narrow Valley LCA, moderately steeply at first, becoming more gentle to the north of the A66 and rising to approximately 180m AOD along the crest of the hill. Landform is more undulating on the north facing slopes, down to approximately 125m AOD on the edge of the vale.

- 5.2.34 This is a largely open landscape of large fields across an elevated plateau and gentle slopes with limited vegetation cover. There is local variation in this particularly considering the parkland including woodland around Sedbury Park to the south of the A66 and small blocks of woodland near Langdale. The land use is typically arable farming with large, modern fields present. Field boundaries are commonly low hedgerows with occasional trees. Scattered, small tree clumps and shelterbelts are often located in proximity to farmsteads and settlement. Overall, it is a sparsely vegetated, large-scale arable landscape. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within this LCA.
- 5.2.35 The village of Melsonby is located on the rising north slopes of the LCA. A number of large farmsteads are dispersed across the landscape; accessed via tracks off the four main routes that pass through the LCA and meet at the cross-roads in the centre of Melsonby. Scattered large barns, country houses and small quarry works stand out in the open, sparsely vegetated landscape. There are a number of intrusive elements in this landscape, including the A66, quarrying activity and transmission lines that cut across the open fields.
- 5.2.36 Sedbury Park is a substantial designed landscape on the transitional valley slopes to the south of the LCA. It includes formal gardens, plantation woodland and parkland trees that frame local views. It should be noted that part of Scots Dyke is scheduled within the south of the area but has lost visual links with the section that continues south around Richmond.
- 5.2.37 This is an exposed, moderately diverse arable landscape that has varying levels of tranquillity that are particularly affected by the A66 and localised quarry works.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.38 This is primarily an area of modern improved fields although the eastern slopes are formed of unknown planned enclosure. An area of strip fields forms the western fringe of Melsonby and an area of piecemeal enclosure extends north and west of this. In the south of the LCA is the designed landscape of Sedbury Park and the broadleaved woodland of Sedbury Plantation

Landscape Condition

5.2.39 Intensification of arable farming has altered the landscape pattern, resulting in fragmentation of land cover and visually conspicuous modern barns. Historic parkland and associated woodland are well-maintained. The landscape is variable, in moderate to poor condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Potential large-scale agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Pressure for commercial development along major road corridors that have potential for visual impact and alteration of rural landscape character;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B5: Whashton Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.40 This LCA forms part of the transitional landscape between the high moorland and lowland valley landscapes in the north-west of the study area. It is bounded to the west by Gayles and Marske Moor LCA A3 and Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe LCA B2, to the north by Ravensworth Narrow Valley LCA D1 and Gilling Narrow Valley LCA D2, to the east by Richmond East Moors Fringe LCA B8 and to the south by Richmond and Richmond West Moors Fringe LCA B7.

Key Characteristics

- Undulating, often steep, exposed slopes
- Mosaic of vegetation and land cover with significant plantation woodland
- A patchwork of arable and pastoral fields which are delineated by a combination of stone walls and hedgerow field boundaries
- Predominantly rural and agricultural landscape with an associated relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- A number of springs and tributary becks rise across this landscape, contributing to the undulating landform
- Dispersed, low-density settlement pattern including small villages in the north, and scattered halls, farms and cottages across the south
- Significant designed landscape at Aske Hall on the eastern slopes

Current Character

5.2.41 The landform within this LCA slopes gradually east from approximately 320m AOD in the west to approximately 130m AOD in Gilling Valley to the east, being the transition from the high moorland of Gayles and Marske Moors to the narrow valley. Land slopes more steeply in places, which result in conspicuous landform such as at Coalsgarth Edge. The underlying geology and rising watercourses create an undulating occasionally rough landform. Surface geology is occasionally visible, particularly at former extraction sites.

- 5.2.42 A number of springs and watercourses rise in this landscape, initially flowing through shallow, open channels before converging into faster flowing becks that cut deeper, often wooded channels through the steeper slopes. These flow in a generally west-east direction into Ravensworth and Gilling Valleys.
- 5.2.43 Land cover varies across the LCA, including exposed rough grassland, pockets of heath, small areas of arable, blocks of woodland, formal parkland and meadow near Low Moor that is designated as SSSI. The land use follows a general west-east direction from rough grassland and moorland habitats to mixed pastoral and arable, enclosed fields in the east. There is substantial tree cover across this LCA with a number of large blocks of mixed woodland plantations and more sinuous bands of deciduous woodland that are largely ancient woodland that follows the line of steeper contours. Mixed woodland, including a band of ancient replanted woodland forms a large part of the Aske Hall registered park and garden in the south of the LCA. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.44 Low-density settlement is dispersed across the undulating slopes. Whashton and Kirby Hill are small settlements on the transitional slopes at the edge of the LCA with the valley LCA to the east, which are formed around village greens. There are a variety of properties that form part of the Aske estate in the south of the LCA, including large country house, formal stables, chapel, gardens and other out-buildings and cottages. Large farmhouses with barns and cottages are also scattered across the LCA, a number of which provide B&B facilities. The majority of built form is local stone, and a number of properties are listed.
- 5.2.45 There is strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA, including the moors to the west and valley to the east. There are panoramic views from Beacon Hill (319m AOD), particularly looking south across Swaledale and views over the low-lying landscapes to the east are available from much of the LCA. It has an overall exposed character, which occasionally becomes more intimate due to intricacies of landform and woodland cover.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.46 The south and west are comprised of areas of planned, large-scale parliamentary enclosure, together with the coniferous plantations of Beacon Plantation on Richmond Out Moor and Sturdy Wood. The north and the east are largely areas of unknown planned enclosure with large blocks of mixed plantation woodland at Gilling Wood and Black Plantation. The south-east of this LCA is characterised by the designed landscape of Aske Park.

Landscape Condition

5.2.47 Changes in farming practices and land management have resulted in a mosaic of land cover and varying enclosure patterns. Field boundary hedgerows and trees are relatively well maintained and often link with managed woodland blocks. Parkland at Aske Hall is well managed and much of the historic design and features are intact. The landscape is in moderate-good condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Potential large-scale agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Change in management and potential for expansion of plantation woodland that could alter landscape character / be visually intrusive;
- Pressure for development on the outskirts of Richmond;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage features and landscapes;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and land uses.

Landscape Character Type B6: Marrick and Marske Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.48 This LCA forms the lower, southern slopes of Marrick and Marske Moors, which continue south into the National Park and transition into the Dale landscape. It is bounded to the north by Marrick and New Forest Moor LCA A1, Throstle Gill/Marske Beck Moor LCA A2 and Gayles and Marske Moor LCA A3, to the east by Richmond West Moors Fringe B7 and south by Lower Swaledale (Richmond West) LCA C1.

Key Characteristics

- Steep, undulating occasionally rough sided slopes with exposed geology
- Steep-sided, fast-flowing becks cut through the contours, creating a stepped watercourse with waterfalls
- A pastoral landscape with varying enclosure including open, rough grassland and small, stone-walled fields
- Hanging woodlands frame the exposed pastoral slopes
- Remnants of historic mining associated with the wider moorland
- A textured, rural landscape with an associated sense of tranquillity

Current Character

5.2.49 This LCA has an overall steeply sloping, undulating topography, the transitional upper slopes to the north of Swaledale that range from approximately 345m AOD on the upper slopes of Cock How, to approximately 154m on the edge of Marske Beck. Tributary becks cut through the slopes, through their own steep-sided, narrow valleys. The slopes are generally south facing, although topographical variations and features contribute to variation in slope aspect particularly associated with the hill of Cock How and the valley of Marske Beck. More gently sloping landform is experienced between the narrow valleys and particularly in the south where the LCA forms an extension to the Marrick Moor plateau and the landform is a greater distance from the River Swale.

- 5.2.50 Three becks transect the LCA, creating a folded, undulating landform where they flow through steep-sided valleys into Swaledale. The main watercourse that passes through the LCA is the Marske Beck which flows through several waterfalls as it transitions between the Moors and Dales landscapes. Other watercourses include Dales Beck and Clapgate Beck. A number of springs rise in this LCA, which flow south into tributaries of the River Swale.
- 5.2.51 Tree cover is sparse across much of the LCA and vegetation is concentrated on the valley slopes of Marske Beck. Scattered trees and clumps of riparian vegetation along tributaries are characteristic of the upper slopes. The narrow Marske Valley is wooded, including Clapgate Spring Plantation (ancient replanted woodland) that encompasses the upper valley slopes to the north of Marske. Land cover across the slopes of the LCA is generally rough grassland used for grazing. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.52 Settlement is limited to a small number of farms and halls scattered across the slopes and cluster of cottages in the Marske Valley. Buildings are generally of local stone and a small number of them are listed. Stone wall field boundaries are characteristic of these slopes. Field enclosure is generally a regular pattern of small fields. More open, often rocky stepped slopes are found on the upper slopes where the moor transition through this LCA. Remnants of historic mining are evident across the area, including exposed rock, disused quarries, pits and tips.
- 5.2.53 This is a predominantly exposed landscape with big skies, and often panoramic views from higher slopes and summits across to the lower lying land to the south. Dry-stone wall boundaries are visually conspicuous in places. More intimate character is associated with the wooded valley of Marske Beck. This is a tranquil, calm and simple landscape

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.54 This is largely an area of planned, large-scale parliamentary enclosure, from the late medieval period, defined by drystone walls. There is a small area of early field system on Cock How and a band of ancient replanted woodland at Clapgate Spring Plantation.

Landscape Condition

5.2.55 Due to the predominantly unsettled and remote character the exposed, moorland edge landscape is largely intact. Dry-stone wall boundaries are generally well-maintained and the historic enclosure pattern intact. Ancient and semi-natural woodland is an important and intact valley feature. Overall, the landscape is in good condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns including potential neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Potential for large-scale agricultural buildings that could introduce conspicuous landscape elements;
- Lack of management of existing broad-leaved woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on key habitats.

Landscape Character Area B7: Richmond West Moors Fringe

Location

- 5.2.56 This LCA consists of the steep slopes to the west of Richmond. It is bounded to the north by the Whashton Moors Fringe LCA B5, to the east by Richmond, to the south by Lower Swaledale (Richmond West) LCA C1 and to the west by the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Key Characteristics

- Steep sided, upper valley slopes
- Wooded, often rocky slopes
- Important woods and grasslands habitat
- A patchwork of pastoral fields which are delineated by stone walls
- Evidence of past quarrying activity
- Visually prominent site of the Georgian racecourse on the ridgeline north of Richmond

Current Character

- 5.2.57 This LCA has a somewhat varied topography, from gently sloping uplands that transition to the steep sided north slopes of the River Swale. Topographical range is from approximately 315m AOD on the north edge, falling to approximately 125m AOD north of Reeth Road near the cemetery. It is the transitional landscape between the high moorland to the north and Lower Swaledale to the south. The very steep, south facing Limestone slopes of Whitcliffe Scar dominates the landscape in the west. The narrow valley of Deep Dale forms the western boundary. High Moor and Low Moor span open, gentle slopes across the north of the LCA.

- 5.2.58 Land cover is largely rough grassland and pasture with woodland and scattered trees. A large area of woodland covers the steep slopes of Whitcliffe Scar and continues east and south through Whitcliffe Wood, which includes areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland and forms part of the Lower Swaledale Woods and Grasslands SSSI. The SSSI continues west and also along the southern slopes of Swaledale, comprising of a complex of woodlands, scrub, grasslands, limestone scar and scree that is characteristic of the western slopes of this LCA. Trees and shrubs are dispersed across the wider LCA, with very little vegetation cover across the upper slopes. High Moor and Low Moor are largely exposed, Grass Moorland with some shrubs.
- 5.2.59 There are a small number of stone cottages and farms scattered through the LCA, on the Whitcliffe ridgeline or on lower slopes towards the valley floor. There is a small eco-lodge holiday development set within woodland and shrubs on the northern edge of the LCA. There is strong intervisibility with the historic town of Richmond that is seen from open slopes. The north, more modern edge of the town also has visual presence on the northeast edge of the LCA.
- 5.2.60 This is an important area for tourism, with strong physical and visual links between Richmond, Swaledale and the moors to the north. There are a variety of public rights of way (including part of the coast to coast route) that link along the contours, south to the river banks and north to the open moorland. The footpaths also provide important physical and cultural links to a scheduled Romano-British fort on Whitcliffe Scar and the Georgian Racecourse (conservation area) at Low Moor that includes a number of listed buildings.
- 5.2.61 There is strong intervisibility with the adjacent LCA, particularly to the south, but including the rising moorlands to the north. There are wide, long distance views available from the high ground in the north across the wooded dale landscape and to the south, and beyond to the rising moors of Nidderdale. It is a calm and tranquil landscape that is culturally important as part of the rural, dales setting of Richmond.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.62 This is largely an area of planned, large-scale parliamentary enclosure and piecemeal enclosure, from the late medieval period, defined by drystone walls. Woodland of Whitcliffe Wood and along Whitcliffe Scar characterises the south-west slopes of the LCA. Richmond Racecourse (horse racing) spans Low Moor in the north-east of the area.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.63 Due to the predominantly unsettled nature the transitional character of the upper valley slopes is generally intact. The extended edge of Richmond is locally intrusive on the valley character. Dry-stone wall boundaries and woodland structure are generally well-maintained. Overall, the landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Lack of management of existing broad-leaved woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Pressure for development on the fringes of Richmond;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B8: Richmond East Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.64 This LCA forms the gently sloping landscape east of Richmond. It is bounded to the west and by Whashton Moors Fringe LCA B5, to the north by Gilling Narrow Valley LCA D2, to the east by Skeeby Narrow Valley LCA D3, to the south by Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley LCA E4 and Lower Swaledale (Richmond East) LCA C2.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping, often exposed slopes
- Generally sparse vegetation cover
- Predominantly arable landscape delineated by stone walls and hedgerows
- Scattered, often prominent farms
- Strong intervisibility with lowland landscapes

Current Character

5.2.65 This LCA consists of the gently sloping moorland fringe landscape to the east of Richmond. These slopes frame the valley landscapes to the east and south, at the confluence of Skeeby Beck and the River Swale. The landscape is characterised by a mostly east-facing, exposed slopes. Steeper, more undulating slopes characterise the north of the LCA, where the landscape appears terraced. The highest land is on Pilmoor Hill on the north edge of Richmond at approximately 190m AOD, sloping gently south-east to approximately 102m AOD.

5.2.66 The LCA marks the transition from the wooded upper moorland fringe slopes in the west, to the more sparsely vegetated lowland, valley landscape to the east. Contrasting with Whashton Fringe LCA B5 to the west, this is a sparsely vegetated landscape with arable farming being the key land use. There are several small areas of mixed woodland, which include riparian woodland following the line of Crayfish Beck, shelterbelts along the steeper contours in the north near Gillingwood Hall and narrow woodland belt that follows

the historical line of Scots Dyke scheduled monument around the eastern of Richmond. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites in this LCA.

- 5.2.67 Medium to large farmsteads are scattered through this landscape. They generally comprise of a large, stone farmhouse with variety of barns and outbuildings accessed by tracks that also provide public rights of way routes off the two arterial roads between Richmond and outlying settlements. A combination of stone walls and hedgerows delineate the field pattern, with occasional boundary trees. The residential eastern edge of Richmond is enclosed and generally well screened by the woodland belt that follows Scots Dyke in a north-south direction and links with woodland to the south.
- 5.2.68 The slopes have an open, often exposed character, given the large fields and limited vegetation cover. There are long-distance views from the LCA, particularly east across the valley and to the vale landscapes beyond. It is a relatively simple and calm landscape across which arable farming is the predominant land use and modern farm buildings are occasionally conspicuous.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.69 This LCA is a patchwork of modern improved fields and unknown planned enclosure with modern improved fields more common in the south and east. There is a small area of piecemeal enclosure on Anchorage Hill in the south-west, together with a small area of broadleaved woodland to the north-east of St Trinian's Hall.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.70 Changes in farming practices and land management have resulted in varying enclosure patterns and fragmentation of vegetation cover resulting in locally exposed arable fields. The landscape is in moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and potential neglect of stone wall boundaries;
- Lack of management of existing broad-leaved woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Pressure for development on the fringe of Richmond leading to land use changes and visual intrusion;
- Pressure for commercial development along nearby major road corridors that have potential for visual intrusion on skylines;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- New large-scale farmsteads and agricultural buildings can introduce dominant landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Future impacts of climate change on key habitats.

Landscape Character Area B9: Downholme Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.71 This is a patchwork landscape between Downholme Moor and Swaledale to the south-west of Richmond. It is bounded to the north by Lower Swaledale (Richmond West) LCA C1 and the Yorkshire Dales National Park, to the north-east by Lower Swaledale (Richmond East) LCA C2, to the east by Colburn Moors Fringe LCA B10, to the south-east by Catterick Garrison and to the south-west by Downholme and Hipswell Moor LCA A5.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping, locally undulating landform
- Linear, wooded watercourses cut through the landscape
- Significant tree cover along watercourses
- Tight, varied field pattern predominantly defined by hedgerows and trees
- Patchwork of arable and pastoral farming
- Military training land

Current Character

5.2.72 The landform of this LCA gently slopes down in a generally west-east direction from the uplands of Downholme Moor (approximately 280m AOD) to the edge of Lower Swaledale (approximately 120m AOD). There is variation in slope aspect where the land falls from the surrounding moors towards the valley. The edges of the LCA are characterised by steeper slopes than those through the centre, between Sand Beck and Badge Beck. Watercourses cut through the LCA, along narrow, often steep-sided gullies and contribute to locally undulating landform.

- 5.2.73 Land use is predominantly pastoral farmland across a patchwork of small-scale fields. A small area of meadow is designated as SSSI north of Sandbeck. Long, narrow strip fields, delineated by hedgerows with trees are characteristic of the northern part of the LCA, around Hudswell and Round Howe Wood. Fields become larger, although predominantly of regular form across the rest of the LCA, with the greatest alteration to enclosure patterns within the MOD land in the south. Scattered field trees and field boundary trees are characteristic of this area and combine with hedgerows and riparian woodland to create a textured, well-vegetated landscape. Woodland on rising moorland slopes to the south contributes to wooded skylines. There is significant tree cover along the watercourses and much of woodland along Badger Beck and Throstle Gill is ancient replanted woodland. The treed hedgerows link, tangent to this woodland and woodland along Sand Beck. Small woodland blocks contribute to a more enclosed landscape in the south of the LCA, with the MOD training land.
- 5.2.74 The linear village of Hudswell is located on the ridgeline between this LCA and Swaledale to the north. It retains much of its historic form and a variety of road-fronting, stone dwellings and boundary walls. Away from this, the LCA is a sparsely populated area with scattered farmsteads linked by minor roads, tracks and public footpaths. Much of the southern part of the LCA is an active MOD training area with a network of access tracks crossing the landscape and linking into Bourlon and Munster Barracks. Within this area are a number of secluded built structures including rifle range, water storage and offices.
- 5.2.75 This is a relatively simple and calm pastoral landscape. Contours and vegetation pattern create a textured often enclosed pattern. There are moderate levels of intervisibility with adjacent LCA. Moors woodland contributes to wooded skylines. There are panoramic views from the higher land in the west, looking east over the gently sloping landform, beyond to the low-lying vale landscapes.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.76 The west of this LCA is largely an area of planned large-scale parliamentary enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by dry-stone walls. Strip fields extend south of Hudswell and the east of the LCA is largely a patchwork of piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned enclosure, interspersed by the broadleaved woodland along Sand Beck and the ancient and semi-natural woodland along Throstle Gill. The south-east is dominated by an area of military accommodation to the west of Catterick Garrison.

Landscape Condition

5.2.77 Changes in farming practices and land management has historically altered the landscape pattern leading to some fragmentation of vegetation and habitats within the LCA. There are significant areas of intact historical enclosure pattern although field boundaries are in varying condition. MOD land use has reduced the landscape condition in the south. The landscape is in moderate to poor condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Potential large-scale agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements;
- Changes in military activity potentially leading to alterations to the management of the moorland including woodland blocks;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Potential impact of large-scale development such as settlement expansion in surrounding urban areas in panoramic views;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B10: Colburn Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.78 This LCA wraps around the east of the settlements of Hipswell and Colburn. It is bounded to the north-west Downholme Moors Fringe LCA B9, to the north by Lower Swaledale (Richmond East) LCA C2, to the east by Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley LCA E4 and to the south by Tunstall Moors Fringe LCA B16.

Key Characteristics

- Rolling lower slopes of the moors fringe
- A number of becks cut shallow valleys through the landform
- Variety of tree cover comprising woodland blocks, parkland trees and riparian trees
- Irregular pattern of arable fields
- Brough Park is a significant area of parkland in the south-east of the LCA including a number of historic features and designed landscape
- Visible built edge of neighbouring settlements

Current Character

5.2.79 This LCA consists of undulating, foothills of the moorland fringe landscape that extends east from Hipswell Moor. These slopes form the fringe to the east of Catterick Garrison, where they become more undulating as tributary watercourses cut through them and flow into the adjacent valley landscape. There is greater landform variation across these slopes than those to the west of Catterick Garrison, as a result of glacial influence on rising slopes of the adjacent valley landscape. The highest landform is approximately 145m AOD on the north edge of Hipswell. The lowest topography on the eastern slopes, at approximately 80m AOD on the eastern edge of Brough Park.

- 5.2.80 A number of tributary becks flow through the LCA. Colburn Beck is the most notable, flowing north out of Hipswell and forming an undulating that slopes gradually north through the historic village of Colburn and into the River Swale. Sour Beck takes a more meandering, shallow course in a west-east direction around the southern edge of Colburn (town) and through Brough Park. The watercourses are generally well-vegetated and seen in the landscape as sinuous bands of trees. As Sour Beck flows through Brough Park, it opens up and becomes a meandering feature between the parkland trees and sloping landform.
- 5.2.81 The land use is largely arable, with pastoral fields on the steeper valley slopes in the north of the LCA and around Colburn Beck and in Brough Park. Field boundaries are a combination of hedgerows and fencing. In the north, hedgerow boundaries with trees link with woodland blocks and riparian vegetation along the becks. However, there is limited tree cover across much of the LCA. Woodland blocks form the edge of Brough Park, with more sinuous woodland designed through the park itself. Where there is woodland, a more intimate character is created within the predominantly open landscape. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within this LCA.
- 5.2.82 The settlement edges and associated infrastructure of Hipswell and Colburn interrupt the rural, often peaceful character of the LCA. The eastern edge of Catterick Garrison is less imposing and identifiable by the treed boundary. The LCA itself contains little settlement, generally focussed around the historic settlements of Colburn (village) and in Brough Park. Scattered farmsteads are linked by minor roads, tracks, bridleways and public footpaths. Colburn, including grade II* Colburn Hall, is nestled in contours and woodland on the north edge of the LCA and as a result, is separated from the more modern suburbs of Catterick Garrison. Brough Hall and other properties within the parkland are also nestled within the landscape, although prominent in designed views through the parkland from local roads and footpaths. The grade II* listed church is particularly prominent, with the steep roof and stained glass gabled end standing out against the gently rolling parkland landscape.
- 5.2.83 There is limited intervisibility with surrounding LCA due to a combination of gently undulating landform and woodland cover. The rural landscape is influenced by the diversity of surrounding land uses that intrude on the overall calm character associated with the gentle undulations and often intimate views. Movement of traffic along Catterick

Road and along the A1(M) corridor is often conspicuous from the near surroundings and locally intrusive. Pockets of the LCA retain a more intimate, tranquil character particularly along country lanes and associated with the historic village and parkland to the north and south respectively.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.84 This is largely an area of piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned enclosure with significant blocks of ancient and semi-natural woodland in the west (West Wood, Wilson Wood and Park Wood). A strip of broadleaved woodland stretches along the lower slopes of the moorland fringe at Colburn Beck Wood.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.85 Changes in and variety of land use, and expansion of settlement has altered the landscape pattern and fragmentation of vegetation structure. The historic parkland structure of Brough Park is largely intact with characteristic designed views. There is localised intrusion on parkland character from the A1(M) corridor/junction and Catterick Road. The landscape is in moderate-poor condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- Lack of management of existing broad-leaved woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential impact of settlement expansion and commercial development along nearby major road corridors on historic features including designed landscape at Brough Park and for visual intrusion on skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B11: Stainton Moors Fringe (North)

Location

5.2.86 This LCA is located between Stainton Moor and Downholme Moor in the west of the study area. It spans across the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary to the north, it is bounded to the east by Downholme and Hipswell Moor LCA A5, to the south-east by Stainton Moors Fringe (South) LCA B14 and to the west by Preston and Stainton Moor LCA A4.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping, rolling landform between the high moors
- Open, unvegetated watercourses meander through the landscape including Gill Beck with exposed, terraced slopes through the centre of the LCA
- Pastoral landscape with stone wall and fence field boundaries and scattered trees
- Tree cover is sparse across much of the LCA with small woodland blocks in the south
- Evidence of previous mineral extraction including exposed rock and undulating land surface
- Communication poles and wires stand out in views across the open fields

Current Character

5.2.87 The landform of the LCA gently slopes down from approximately 270m on the edge of Stainton Moor to approximately 200m AOD where Gill Beck cuts through the landscape, before gently rising north-east to approximately 255m AOD on the edge of Downholme Moor. There is local variation in landform across the area, related to medieval farming and where mineral extraction has previously taken place. Terraced slopes rise to the east of Gill Beck.

5.2.88 Gill Beck takes a meandering, open course through the centre of the LCA, flowing north-west towards the River Swale. A number of tributaries flow into Gill Beck from Stainton Moor and Walburn Moor, through exposed, narrow, meandering gullies. Church Gill flows off Sour Moor Hill in the north of the LCA, through Downholme and has a small waterfall to the south of the village.

- 5.2.89 This is an exposed, pastoral landscape including rough grassland, shrubs and scattered trees. The landscape is sparsely vegetated, with occasional field and roadside boundary trees, groups of trees and small woodlands on rising slopes including Crowhill Gill ancient replanted woodland. Small plantation woodlands encompass Boston Farm and Wathgill Camp towards the south of the LCA. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.90 There is a variety of settlement within the area. The small nucleated settlements of Stainton and Downholme comprise of clusters of stone-built properties with stone boundary walls that extend into the surrounding landscape. Walburn Hall is a grade I listed fortified, stone manor house adjacent to the site of the scheduled earthworks of the medieval settlement and remnant ridge and furrow field system, in the shallow valley of Gill Beck. The MOD's Wathgill Camp is well-screened by woodland in the centre of the LCA, on the edge of the firing ranges on Stainton Moor. The military presence is apparent although not as dominant in this LCA as across the adjacent moors. Farm tracks meander across the landscape between dispersed farmhouses and barns but there are very few public rights of way, given the danger area of Bellerby Ranges. This is an open landscape with views across to the higher moorland and into and across the valley of Swaledale in the north-west. Land use in this LCA is a mix of arable and pastoral farming.
- 5.2.91 This is a rural, generally still landscape although MOD land use results in some local intrusion upon the pastoral character. It is an open landscape with strong intervisibility with the surrounding LCA, particularly moors tops to the east and west, as well as longer views to moorland north.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.92 This is primarily an area of unknown planned enclosure. To the west, there are areas of piecemeal enclosure and open field. In the south is the military accommodation training area of Wathgill Camp and mixed plantation around Boston Farm. There is a small area of designed landscape at Manor House, to the south of Downholme.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.93 Changes in farming practices and land management has influenced the landscape pattern. Dry-stone wall boundaries and distinctive landform and features are well-maintained. Woodland blocks are generally well managed to screen potentially intrusive land uses. The landscape is in generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats;
- Changes in military activity potentially leading to alterations to the management of the moorland;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Lack of management of existing broad-leaved woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

Landscape Character Area B12: Scotton Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.94 This LCA is located between the high moorland of Hauxwell Moor and Hipswell Moor and the settlement of Catterick Garrison in the centre of the study area. It is bounded to the south by Hauxwell Moors Fringe LCA B15 and to the west by Downholme and Hipswell Moor LCA A5, with Catterick Garrison to the north and east.

Key Characteristics

- Undulating, sloping, transitional moorland landscape
- The slopes encompass the extent of the barracks
- Strong military influence with variety of tracks and training areas
- Scotton Beck is the main watercourse flowing through the centre, fed by a number of springs that rise in the LCA
- Large plantation and scattered woodland screen much of the area
- Predominantly rough grassland and meadow grazing across the landscape

Current Character

5.2.95 Undulating landform slopes generally east from Hipswell Moor, towards the south-west edge of Catterick Garrison. The highest landform is approximately 255m AOD on the edge of the moors at Range Road. This slopes away to approximately 215m AOD in the south-east and approximately 155m AOD in the north adjacent to the barracks.

5.2.96 There are a number of minor watercourses and ditches/drains within the LCA, that contribute to the undulating landform. They often follow the line of the tracks that dominate the landscape. Occasionally the watercourses meander across the open pasture, through shallow inconspicuous channels.

- 5.2.97 The combination of undulating, sloping landform and woodland creates a more enclosed landscape than the adjacent moors. Small woodlands along the gently rising contours of the southern edge of the LCA screen the military land beyond. The large areas of plantation along Range Road also restrict views across this landscape. MOD signs and entrances to tracks are conspicuous along the roads that surround this LCA.
- 5.2.98 Land cover is largely pastoral, rough grassland with areas of meadow and scrub. Woodland dominates the skylines and screens the military land and adjacent barracks settlement. The woodland is predominantly plantation with a small area of ancient and semi-natural woodland along Risedale Beck and forming part of Foxglove Local Nature Reserve that contains a mosaic of habitats in the north of the LCA.
- 5.2.99 This is primarily a MOD training area, with a golf course in the north of the LCA. There are a couple of farmsteads in the north of the LCA, with smaller scale field pattern around them. The buildings within the adjacent barracks are generally well screened by surrounding woodland planting, although security fencing and boundary security lighting is often visible. This is a discordant landscape which has a strong military influence.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.100 This is largely an area of planned parliamentary enclosure with significant blocks of mixed plantation woodland and a covert at Hunton Whin. The north and west of the LCA is dominated by military training land.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.101 Changes in land management has resulted in a discordant landscape pattern and fragmentation of vegetation and habitats. MOD land use and management has altered the landscape across much of the LCA. Woodland structure and edges are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable; in generally moderate-poor condition.

Forces for Change

- Changes in military activity potentially leading to alterations to the management of the moorland including woodland blocks;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Lack of management of woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential landscape and visual impact of large-scale development such as settlement expansion in surrounding urban areas;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats associated with the moorland and network of watercourses.

Landscape Character Area B13: Preston-Under-Scar Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.102 This LCA forms the fringe between the high moorland of Preston and Stainton Moor and lower slopes of Wensleydale in the south-west of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Preston and Stainton Moor LCA A4, to the east by the Stainton Moors Fringe (South) LCA B14 and Leyburn, to the south by Lower Wensleydale LCA C4 and Leyburn Broad Valley LCA E6, and continues west into the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Key Characteristics

- Exposed cliffs of the limestone scars define the edge of Redmire Moor
- A steep, wooded south facing slope
- Fast-flowing watercourses cut through the slopes
- Evidence of historic mining activity including exposed rock, quarries, pits and remnants of smelt mills and mine complexes
- Large quarry workings on upper slopes

Current Character

5.2.103 This LCA consists of a steep slope, south from the exposed cliffs of the limestone scars of Preston Scar, Redmire Scar and Low Scar in the north down to The Wensleydale Railway in the south. The highest land is on Redmire Scar (345m AOD). The lowest point at 170m AOD is alongside The Wensleydale Railway in the south, at Leyburn Shawl Plantation. The landscape is characterised by the exposed cliffs of the limestone scars particularly forming the edge of Redmire Moor, together with a steep, generally south-facing slope. The scars further east become wooded and less distinctive.

5.2.104 There are two fast-flowing, discrete watercourses that cut through the slopes of the LCA. Wensley Brook flows over several waterfalls, through woodland to the east of Preston-under-Scar and is the site of the scheduled Keld Heads smelt mill and mine complex. Barney Beck is less vegetated and cuts through a narrow gully south of Redmire Scar.

- 5.2.105 Contrasting with the exposed moors to the north, this is a wooded landscape. Bands of woodland span the steep slopes of Preston Scar and Leyburn Shawl. These include significant areas of ancient and semi natural and replanted woodland such as Gillfield Wood through the valley of Wensley Beck. Large areas of pasture span between the woodland. These are characterised by a small-scale field network that is defined by dry-stone walls. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.106 There is a long history of quarrying and extraction across this landscape, and the existing works at Black Quarry dominate the upper slopes in the east of the LCA. Remnants of extraction include exposed rock and shallow pits within the field network as well as the scheduled Keld Heads smelt mill. There is a strong relationship with the works that span the moors to the north. There is also another, large active quarry site on the edge of the moors at Preston Pasture which has influence over this LCA.
- 5.2.107 The linear settlement of Preston-Under-Scar is located on the mid-slopes of the valley beneath the limestone scar at the centre of the LCA. A small number of single properties including farms are dispersed across the slopes, predominantly along the roadsides. Local stone is used throughout properties and boundary walls in this LCA. The Wensleydale Railway is a single track heritage railway that cuts across the slopes of Wensleydale on the southern edge of the LCA. It is defined by the line of trees along the side of the cutting and links between Redmire to the west and Leyburn to the east of the LCA.
- 5.2.108 The steep-sided slopes have a predominantly exposed character with some intimacy created by woodland particularly around Wensley Beck. Quarry works have a strong influence across this area and contribute to a discordant and fragmented rural landscape. There are wide views available across and along Wensleydale which are experienced from the public footpaths that follow the line of the limestone scars in many places.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.109 This LCA is a mosaic of planned parliamentary enclosure, piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned enclosure. There are several areas of strip fields to the south of Preston-under-Scar and large areas of quarry workings. The area has significant blocks of ancient and semi-natural woodland and broadleaved woodland.

Landscape Condition

5.2.110 The distinctive, limestone scar landscape is relatively intact. Quarry workings are intrusive, although woodland structure is well-maintained to provide some screening. Stone wall boundaries are generally well-maintained. This is generally a well-managed landscape that is in overall moderate condition, with local degradation associated with quarry works.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats;
- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Changes in military activity potentially leading to alterations to the management of the moorland including woodland blocks;
- Pressure for expansion of mineral extraction sites that would impact on distinctive landscape features;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and distinctive landscape features.

Landscape Character Area B14: Stainton Moors Fringe (South)

Location

- 5.2.111 This LCA forms the moors fringe north of Leyburn, between Stainton and Hipswell Moors. It is bounded to the north by the Downholme and Hipswell Moor LCA A5 and Stainton Moors Fringe (North) B11, to the east by Hauxwell Moors Fringe LCA B15, to the south by Leyburn Broad Valley LCA E6, and to the west by Preston-Under-Scar Moors Fringe LCA B13 and Preston and Stainton Moor LCA A4.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping, rolling landform
- Open landscape with dispersed vegetation pattern
- Mixed arable and pastoral landscape with some diversity of land use
- Dispersed settlement pattern of small villages, farmsteads and halls/granges linked by a hierarchy of local roads and lanes
- Evidence of past mining and quarrying activity in disused pits, shafts and quarries

Current Character

- 5.2.112 This LCA consists of gently sloping, transitional landscape between the high moorland of Stainton and Hipswell Moors in the north and Lower Wensleydale in the south. Landform varies across the LCA, generally sloping south from approximately 270m AOD on the edge of Hipswell Moor to approximately 150m AOD on the upper slopes of the broad valley south of Leyburn.
- 5.2.113 A small number of springs and becks rise and flow through this LCA in a general west-east direction. These are not particularly distinctive and often follow the line of field boundaries. Vegetation cover in this area is generally sparse. Smaller scale, historic field networks particularly around Bellerby, are defined by walls and hedgerows with trees. These boundary trees are distinctive and create physical and visual links through the LCA. Small blocks of mixed woodland combine with boundary trees on steeper slopes to create a more intimate character in the north-east. Vegetation reduces across the wider area,

particularly to the south where fields increase in size and the lower slopes become more exposed. There is a single SSSI, which is a small area of unimproved neutral grassland that forms part of a mosaic of grassland communities present across the transition zone between upland and lowland landscapes.

- 5.2.114 Leyburn is the main settlement, with the modern extended north of the town forming the south-west edge of the LCA. Bellerby is a nucleated village to the north of Leyburn, which retains much of its historic form with stone cottages lining the main routes around which it is focussed. Modern farms and small developments have extended this in places. A variety of farms and halls/granges are dispersed across the wider area, including some large farm complexes and tourism accommodation.
- 5.2.115 This is a varied, agricultural landscape that retains a strongly rural and intimate character associated with the historic field pattern in the north and is influenced by modern development and tourism in the south. There is strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA that form part of the wide valley landscape that this fringe transitions into.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.116 The north and east of this LCA is a mix of planned large-scale parliamentary enclosure and piecemeal enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by dry-stone walls. The south and east comprise of areas of unknown planned enclosure with significant areas of strip fields present to the east of Bellerby.

Landscape Condition

- 5.2.117 Intensification of arable farming has resulted in exposed fields and fragmented, often gappy hedgerows with limited vegetation across much of the LCA. Stone wall and hedgerow boundaries are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and diversification of land uses;
- Potential for farm expansion and large-scale agricultural buildings that could introduce conspicuous landscape elements;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Pressure for additional/increased tourism and recreational development;
- Lack of management of woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Pressure for development on settlement fringes that could be incongruous with settlement pattern and local landscape character;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and landform.

Landscape Character Area B15: Hauxwell Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.118 This LCA forms the moors fringe south of Hipswell and Catterick Garrison. It is bounded to the north by Downholme and Hipswell Moor LCA A5, Hipswell Moors Fringe LCA B12 and the settlements of Catterick Garrison and Scotton, to the east by the Tunstall Moors Fringe LCA B16, to the south by Constable Burton Vale LCA F6 and to the west by Stainton Moors Fringe (South) LCA B14.

Key Characteristics

- Gentle- to moderately sloping, often undulating landform
- Shallow becks meander along generally vegetated courses across the lower slopes, east towards the vale
- Generally well-vegetated landscape, particularly associated with the designed landscapes
- Variation in enclosure associated with woodland and field pattern combined with topography
- Relatively sparse settlement pattern of dispersed farms and granges with rural villages
- Simple, rural, agricultural landscape with important designed landscape features and generally high levels of tranquillity

Current Character

5.2.119 This LCA comprises of the gentle- to moderately sloping, transitional landscape that extends east from the uplands of Stainton and Hipswell Moors to the low-lying vale landscape in the east of the District. The landform of the LCA slopes generally south, from approximately 260m AOD at the edge of Hipswell Moor to approximately 120m AOD at the edge of the vale. Moderate slopes span the north of the LCA, transitioning to gentler slopes across the south.

- 5.2.120 A number of shallow becks cut across the centre of the LCA and generally mark the change in slope. The watercourses are generally identified as sinuous lines of riparian vegetation that follow the contours in a west-east direction. These are often linked to woodland including ancient and semi-natural and replanted woodland at Obelisk Wood on the southern edge of the Hauxwell designed landscape and Brode Green Wood and Carter's Wood forming the north edge of Burton Park. The steep-sided Burton Beck flows through the woodland north edge of Burton Park, south through Constable Burton and continues through the vale.
- 5.2.121 This is a generally well-vegetated landscape. Woodlands including plantations and riparian blocks are concentrated on the gentler, lower slopes in the south-west of the LCA. Smaller blocks form the designed landscape around Hauxwell Hall. East of this, woodland decreases in size and has a dispersed pattern occasionally linked by hedgerow trees to shelterbelts around properties. The upper slopes of this LCA are more exposed and there are panoramic views south across the vale to the moors beyond.
- 5.2.122 This is a varied, agricultural landscape comprising of an irregular pattern of arable and pastoral fields. There is a tight, generally small-scale pastoral field pattern to the south of Scotton, largely defined by hedgerows with trees. South of this, the field size increases and vegetation is more limited. The LCA is a mosaic of small- to large fields with a tighter pattern common around settlement edges and associated with the designed landscapes in the west. There are no designated landscape or biodiversity sites within this LCA.
- 5.2.123 There is a relatively sparse settlement pattern that largely comprises dispersed farms and granges. The low density northern edge of Hunton is in the south-east of the LCA, characterised by small-scale fields and boundary tree vegetation. East Hauxwell is a small, linear village formed of clustered, predominantly stone properties. Hauxwell Hall is enclosed by woodland to the south-west of the village. Minor roads link villages in the vale, north to Catterick Garrison and west to the moorlands. Narrow lanes and farm tracks including public footpaths and bridleways meander across the landscape between dispersed farmhouses and barns.

5.2.124 This transitional landscape has an open feel with long-distant views across the vale landscapes to the south and east. There are few human influences in the landscape, giving a heightened sense of tranquillity associated with the sparse settlement character across much of the LCA.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.125 This LCA is a mosaic of planned, large-scale parliamentary enclosure, piecemeal enclosure, unknown planned enclosure and strip fields, the latter of which surround East Hauxwell and form the north-west of Hunton. Broadleaf, coniferous and mixed woodland is scattered across the landscape, including areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland. The LCA contains the elite residence of Hauxwell Hall, together with part of the ornamental parkland of Burton Park.

Landscape Condition

5.2.126 Changes in farming and land management have altered the landscape pattern overtime. However, the rural character and key features are well-maintained. Designed landscape features and particularly woodland cover are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally good-moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns, including loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- New large-scale farmsteads and agricultural buildings could introduce intrusive elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated historic and landscape features;
- Lack of management of woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and land use.

Landscape Character Area B16: Tunstall Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.127 This is a continuation of the moors fringe that extends south-east of Catterick Garrison towards the broad valley of the River Swale. It is bounded to the north by Colburn Moors Fringe LCAB10, to the west by the Hauxwell Moors Fringe LCAB15, to the south by Hornby Vale LCA F7, and to the north-east by the Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley LCA E4 and Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley LCA E5.

Key Characteristics

- An expansive, open, gently rolling landscape
- Scattered vegetation with small woodlands
- Linear settlement, along connecting routes
- Largely arable landscape with some small-scale diversification of land use
- Dispersed, often large farmsteads linked by narrow roads and lanes
- Designed landscapes have local influence on the enclosure and vegetation pattern
- Generally open views with large skies and often long-distance east towards the vale

Current Character

5.2.128 This LCA is a continuation of the general west-east slopes, between the edge of Hipswell Moor and the broad valley of the River Swale. The landform of this LCA is more gently sloping and rolling than the topography to the west. The topography is more undulating on higher land in the west, sloping down from approximately 165m AOD around Moor Lane to approximately 60m AOD near the A1(M) in the east. The landform also slopes gently south through the south-west of the LCA, towards the Hornby Vale landscape.

5.2.129 Slow flowing watercourses enter the LCA from the west, and confluence at the village of Tunstall, into Tunstall Beck that takes an open, meandering course north-east towards the River Swale. There are small, discrete ponds scattered in the south of the LCA that are generally identified as clumps of trees in the landscape.

- 5.2.130 This is a predominantly large-scale arable landscape with an irregular field pattern defined by low hedgerow boundaries. There are scattered, small woodland blocks in the south of the LCA, some of which form the northern part of the designed landscape of grade II listed Hornby Park that extends south and east into the adjacent LCA. Roadside trees and hedgerow boundaries link between the woodlands and create a more textured landscape in the south of the LCA than across the more exposed slopes to the north and east. There is a small block of ancient and semi-natural woodland at Limekiln Wood on the east edge of the LCA. Trees occasionally link along hedgerow boundaries particularly in proximity to settlement, but this is predominantly an exposed agricultural landscape. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.2.131 Settlement is scattered through the LCA, generally located in proximity to the roads. Tunstall is a linear village along the main route that links through the LCA from Catterick in the east, towards the south of Catterick Garrison and beyond to the moors. The village largely retains its historic, linear form with pockets of small-scale expansion. The estate of Hornby is on the southern edge of the LCA. There has been some modern development incorporated within the formal layout of the former gardens and is encompassed by ponds and vegetation. A variety of farms, cottages and houses are scattered through the wider landscape and often located on the narrow lanes. Farmsteads are generally large; comprising clusters of large barns and variety of outbuildings. Other land uses in this area include tourist facilities, a solar farm and horse training facilities. These are largely compatible and well-integrated in the exposed landscape. Vertical communication poles stand out in lines across the open fields in places.
- 5.2.132 This is a varied, predominantly exposed landscape. There are long-distance views across the vale and broad valley landscapes to the south and east are across much of the LCA. Designed woodland in the south provides local intimacy associated with the historic parkland. The rolling landform with scattered vegetation alters perception of built features when moving through the landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.2.133 This area is formed of large areas of piecemeal enclosure, unknown planned enclosure and modern improved fields. The designed landscape of Hornby Castle forms part of the landscape in the south, and extends into the adjacent LCA.

Landscape Condition

5.2.134 Changes in and variety of land use and management has altered the landscape pattern in part, although the overall structure is generally well-maintained. Expansion of farmsteads and diversification of land use is relatively well-integrated. The landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage and landscape features;
- Pressure for additional renewable energy installations/expansion of existing;
- Pressure for commercial development along nearby major road corridors that have potential for visual intrusion on skylines;
- Potential impact of large-scale development such as expansion of nearby settlements;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and land use.

Landscape Character Area B17: Middleham Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.135 This LCA forms the fringe to Melmerby Moor in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, to the south. It is bounded to the north and east by the Middleham Broad Valley LCA E7, to the south by Lower Coverdale LCA C5 and to the north-west by Lower Wensleydale LCA C3.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping, landform that forms the south slopes of the broad river valley
- Exposed, sparsely vegetated landscape with scattered trees
- Horse training has been a key land use in this landscape for over 200 years, evident by the regular pattern of paddocks and historic racecourse on Middleham Moor
- The exposed ridgeline of Middleham Low Moor dominates the southern part of the LCA
- The historic town of Middleham and iconic castle and key features associated with this landscape
- Panoramic views of Wensleydale, particularly from Middleham Low Moor

Current Character

5.2.136 This LCA forms the gentle slopes to the south of the River Ure, forming part of the wider valley of Wensleydale. Middleham Low Moor forms a narrow plateau in the south of the LCA. The landform generally slopes down from approximately 260m AOD on the southern edge near Naylor's Hill, to approximately 110m AOD at the edge of the broad river valley. The south-east of the LCA slopes south-east from approximately 190m AOD on the edge of Middleham Low Moor, to approximately 110m AOD at the edge of the broad valley.

5.2.137 A small number of springs rise on the mid-slopes of the LCA and narrow, slow watercourses drain the lower slopes. They form shallow gullies through the open landscape and occasionally follow field boundaries. Vegetation cover is relatively sparse, particularly in the eastern part that is defined by larger fields with low hedgerow boundaries. More intact, historic enclosure defined by stone walls and hedgerows with trees is characteristic of the east of the LCA, particularly north-west of Middleham. Woodland that defines Coverdale

forms the south-east edge of the LCA. Plantation woodland encompasses Spigot Lodge in the south-west and shelterbelts link into the wider landscape from this. Roadside trees and scattered field boundary trees contribute to localised enclosure and occasionally intimate areas. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.

5.2.138 The LCA is characterised by horse training facilities, paddocks and particularly the gallops at Middleham Low Moor. There is a long history of race-horse training associated with this area that contributes to the cultural landscape and tourism associated with the LCA. Middleham Castle is a significant feature that dominates the town of Middleham on the eastern edge of the LCA. Modern expansion of the settlement has taken place to the north-west, which has an exposed edge in parts although has been generally integrated in the historic field pattern. Farms and particularly race-horse training facilities are scattered within this LCA, with occasional stone huts set within the stone wall boundaries.

5.2.139 This is a visually prominent landscape, particularly considering intervisibility with the valley and slopes to the north. However, it is relatively inaccessible with a single road through the west and small number of public rights of way concentrated around Middleham. These link with historic and cultural features including the moors, Middleham Castle and north into Wensleydale.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.140 This is largely an area formed of piecemeal enclosure together with unknown planned enclosure. There is an area of unenclosed moorland on Middleham Low Moor in the south and areas of strip fields are present in the north and east.

Landscape Condition

5.2.141 Changes in land management and commercialisation of horse-racing over time has resulted in changes to the local landscape. Training facilities are often conspicuous but form part of the heritage of the area. Stone wall and hedgerow boundaries are generally well-maintained and historic field patterns are apparent. The landscape is in generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Potential for changes in farming practices resulting in diversification, fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats and neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Potential for modern/large agricultural buildings to be conspicuous in the landscape;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- Lack of management of woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Pressure for settlement fringe development that could be incongruous with settlement pattern and local landscape character;
- Potential impact of tall structures such as masts and renewable energy developments that would be intrusive on the skylines;
- Future impacts of climate change on key valley habitats.

Landscape Character Area B18: Witton Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.142 This LCA forms the fringe to the north of Witton Moor in the south of the study area. It is bounded to the north and east by Ulshaw Broad Valley LCA E8, to the south by Witton Moor LCA A6 and the fringe landscape continues east and west beyond the study area.

Key Characteristics

- Steeply sloping, often undulating wooded slopes
- Glacial landforms on the lower, river slopes
- Steep sided, wooded beck cuts through the steep slopes
- Significant woodland cover, particularly on upper slopes is linked through the landscape by boundary trees and shelterbelts
- The walled parkland estate of Jervaulx Park containing the remains of Jervaulx Abbey is a key cultural feature on the lower slopes
- The LCA is framed by the moors ridgeline to the south
- Expansive views from upper slopes, and particularly strong intervisibility with the valley landscape

Current Character

5.2.143 This LCA is an undulating upland landscape that slopes steeply south, down from approximately 300m AOD on the edge of Witton Moor to approximately 100m AOD on the lower slopes that form the transition to the flat valley floor. The Nidderdale AONB extends across much of this LCA from the south, taking in the upland landscape.

5.2.144 Glacial features and deposits create undulations in the landform on the lower slopes. Deep Gill Beck cuts a steep valley, with waterfalls along the west edge of the LCA. The watercourse splits and flows north-east and north-west along shallower courses to the River Ure.

- 5.2.145 This is a predominantly small-scale, pastoral landscape. The LCA generally has good tree cover, especially in the south where plantation woodlands span the steep, upland slopes. Ancient and semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland covers the steep sides of Deep Gill Beck and woodland continues along the course of the becks as they split and flow towards the river. Trees within fields and along boundaries are common features across the mid- to lower slopes and particularly characteristic of the designed landscape around Jervaulx Abbey.
- 5.2.146 There is relatively little settlement in this LCA, which comprises of East Witton that is partly within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and scattered farm complexes often with large barns. East Witton largely retains its historic character of terraced stone cottages fronting onto a linear village green. Narrow lanes and farm tracks link between the farms and main road through the north of the LCA. There is a cluster of properties around Jervaulx Hall, including cottages and farmhouses that have largely been converted or changed use to provide for tourism in this area. Stone walls characterise the formal landscape associated with this area.
- 5.2.147 The scheduled monument of Jervaulx Cistercian Abbey includes standing ruins, earthwork and buried remains of the Cistercian Abbey of Jervaulx that are an important cultural feature that draws tourism to this area. A network of public rights of way including the Six Dales Trail pass through the LCA and links with surrounding iconic landscapes including the moors and Wensleydale.
- 5.2.148 This is a varied, strongly rural landscape with high levels of tranquillity. It forms part of the cultural landscape associated with the Yorkshire Dales and variety of heritage sites through Wensleydale. There is strong intervisibility with adjacent landscapes and expansive views of the valley.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.149 This is largely an area formed of piecemeal enclosure together with unknown planned enclosure. An area of modern improved fields is present near to the River Ure in the east. The designed landscape (ornamental parkland) of Jervaulx Abbey dominates the north of the area. Broadleaved woodland is present along the course of Gill Beck including ancient replanted woodland.

Landscape Condition

5.2.150 Changes in land management have altered the landscape over time. However, the rural character and key features are well-maintained. Tourism has been sensitively accommodated and characteristic features and settlement is retained. Dry-stone wall boundaries and woodland structure are generally well-maintained. Overall, the landscape is in good-moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- Change in management and potential for expansion of plantation woodland that could alter landscape character / be visually intrusive;
- Lack of management of woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and heritage/landscape features.

Landscape Character Area B19: Spennithorne Moors Fringe

Location

5.2.151 This LCA is a continuation of the fringe to Witton Fell, north of the broad valley. It is bounded to the north by the Constable Burton Vale LCA F6 and Hornby Vale LCA F7, to the south by Ulshaw Broad Valley LCA E8, to the west by Leyburn Broad Valley LCA E6 and Middleham Broad Valley E7 and continues east into Hambleton District.

Key Characteristics

- Rounded, gently sloping occasionally undulating hillsides between the lowland landscapes
- A diverse rural landscape with an overriding sense of tranquillity
- Dispersed vegetation cover with woodland often linked by hedgerows and trees within boundaries
- A primarily arable landscape with scattered parkland and tourism land uses
- Settled landscape with variety of farms, halls, villages, hamlets and clustered properties
- Strong intervisibility with adjacent LCA, particularly south across the broad valley of Lower Wensleydale to higher ground in the far distance

Current Character

5.2.152 This LCA forms a gently sloping, rounded, low hill between the broad valley of the River Ure and the Constable Burton vale landscape. The slopes rise from approximately 120m AOD around the north, south and west slopes, to approximately 190m AOD at the highest point near Buck Bank/Hutton Hill. More undulating topography characterises the north-east of the LCA, creating dips and local hilltops.

5.2.153 Narrow, wooded gills and becks drain north-south down the north slopes of the LCA, into the vale. Thornton Steward Reservoir is a small, recreational lake at the centre of the LCA.

- 5.2.154 Land use is predominantly a mixture of arable and pastoral across an irregular pattern of medium-scale fields. Larger arable fields span the more gentle, upper slopes whilst pasture is generally across lower slopes and around settlement. Other land cover includes poultry farming, designed parkland, education and small-scale holiday parks including lodges and camping pods often forming part of farmsteads.
- 5.2.155 Fields are largely defined by low hedgerow and grass verge boundaries often with trees at regular intervals particularly along roads. Vegetation has a generally dispersed pattern. Hedgerows, scattered trees and small woodlands combine in expansive views to create the impression of a treed landscape with occasionally intimate areas. Woodland is concentrated in the south on the south-east slopes of Arklow Hill, encompassing the west of Thornton Steward and smaller blocks continue west through the designed landscape around Danby Hall, including the ancient replanted Spennithorne Wood. There are smaller, scattered blocks and shelterbelt planting across the wide area, often in proximity to settlement/properties. There is a single SSSI south of Newton-le-Willows, which is a small area of unimproved neutral grassland that forms part of a mosaic of grassland communities present across the transition zone between upland and lowland landscapes.
- 5.2.156 A variety of farms, halls, villages, hamlets and clustered properties are dispersed across the LCA. Thornton Steward is a 'green village' that largely retains its historic form of low-density stone cottages fronting onto the linear green and along the main village road. Finghall also retains much of its historic linear form in the north of the LCA. Changes in farming practices have led to large barns across the landscape, including the outskirts of the villages. A number of large farmsteads and farm houses are dispersed across the landscape, linked by a network of local roads. Aysgarth School, Thornton Steward Reservoir and water treatment works, small holiday parks and farm complexes contribute to diversity in this landscape and are generally well-integrated by the undulating contours and vegetation.
- 5.2.157 This is a varied, agricultural landscape that retains a strongly rural and occasionally intimate character associated with areas of woodland and historic settlement. There is strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA that form part of the wide valley landscape that this fringe transitions into.

Historic Landscape Character

5.2.158 The west of this LCA is formed of piecemeal enclosure, while the east is largely planned large-scale parliamentary enclosure. There are few modern improved fields present. There is a small area of designed landscape (ornamental parkland) near Danby Hall in the south, and small, single ancient farm at Sun Hill in the north.

Landscape Condition

5.2.159 Intensification of arable farming has resulted in areas of exposed fields and fragmented boundaries in places. Woodland and hedgerow trees are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and moorland habitats;
- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Potential for farm expansion and modern agricultural buildings to be conspicuous in the landscape;
- Pollution of watercourses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage and landscape features;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and designed valley landscapes.

5.3 Local Landscape Character Type C: Dale

Characterisation

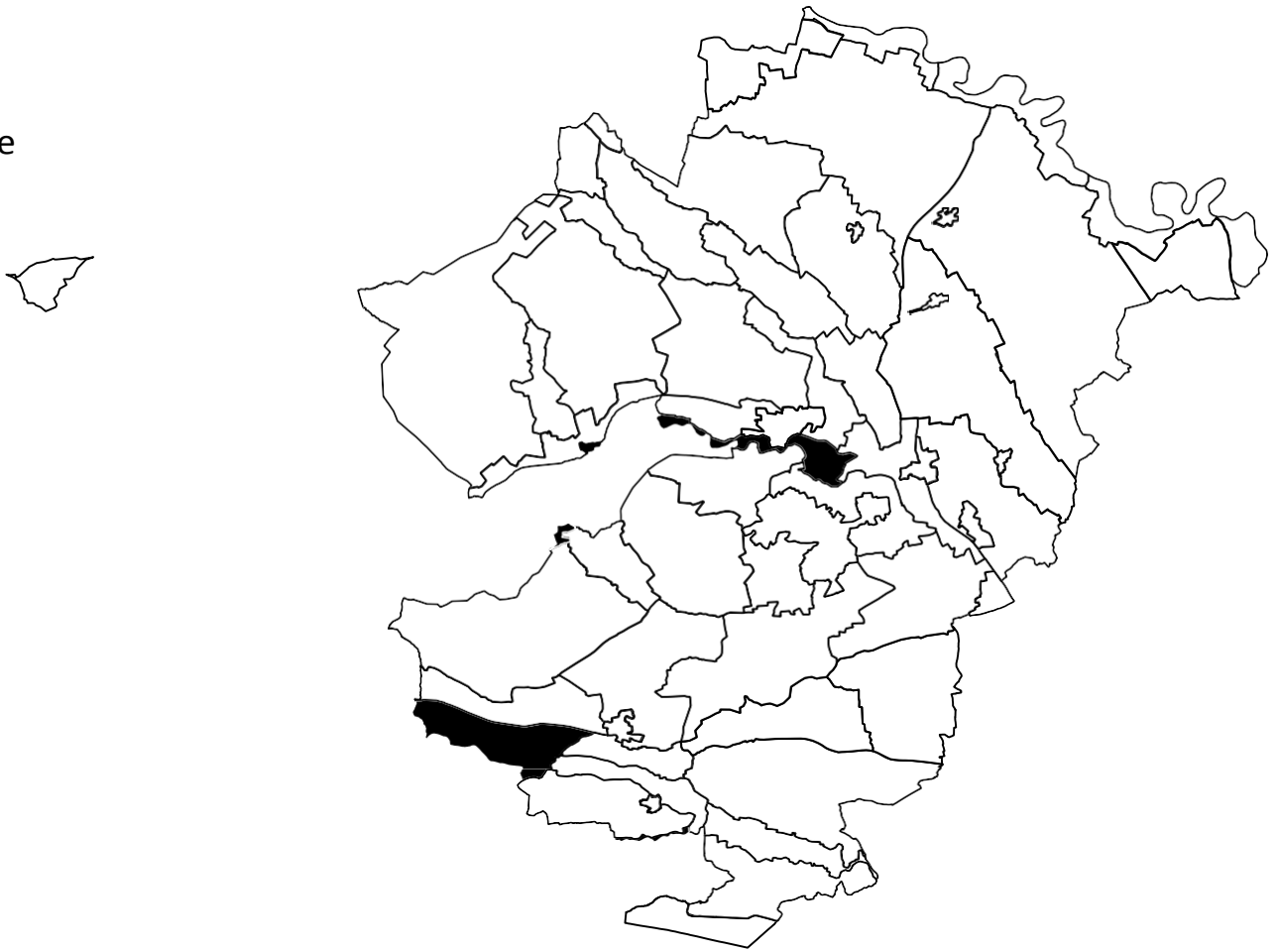
Key Characteristics

- Each dale has its own distinctive, recognisable sense of a place and identity, based on the underlying geology, shape and cultural use
- Strong relationship between landscape and underlying geology
- Predominantly pastoral character throughout the dales, with distinctive and recognisable field patterns and boundaries
- Dales comprise a series of intimate u-shaped and v-shaped valleys
- A diverse pattern of land-cover, including calcareous grassland pasture, species rich upland hay meadows and pockets of broadleaf and coniferous woodland
- Dry stone walls (constructed from local stone) are characteristic enclosure boundaries
- Traditional stone field barns are key features
- Tree-lined river corridors, often with hanging woodland
- Predominantly rural landscape, with an associated strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness within the dales, with associated dark night skies
- Strong sense of unity within settlements and harmony with the landscape as a result of the use of locally sourced building materials and distinctive vernacular building designs
- Species-rich meadows and pastures, mosaics of rushy and managed pastures on hill sides
- Strong intervisibility with adjacent Moors and Moors Fringe LCT

Description

- 5.3.1 This LLCT includes the eastern mid- to lower reaches of Swaledale, Wensleydale and Coverdale. There is variation in the physical shape of the dales within this LLCT, with a combination of broad, open, relatively shallow sided u-shaped and narrower v-shaped stretches of valley.
- 5.3.2 The lower slopes and dale floors are predominantly sheep grazed, supporting rough or improved pasture. Dry-stone wall boundaries are characteristic of the Dales; defining

C: Dale



small- to medium sized, irregular shaped fields. These become less apparent in the transition to the lower reaches.

- 5.3.3 Settlement pattern is dispersed and comprises scattered farmsteads and nucleated villages, which are located on lower slopes or along the valley floor. Stone field barns are scattered through the dales. There is unity in building materials throughout much of this LCT. Roofing flags of hard sandstones are a common vernacular building material. Rows of stone cottages are also distinctive features. There is a variety of visible historic features, including Richmond Castle. Stone bridges crossing the river corridors are landscape features.
- 5.3.4 There are occasional far reaching views of bare, open hilltops. A sense of remoteness and tranquillity is strong throughout most of this LCT. However, this varies locally with the degree of settlement within each dale.

Evaluation

Sensitivity to Change Issues

- **High visual sensitivity** as a result of strong intervisibility between Swaledale / Wensleydale / Coverdale and the adjacent Moors LLCT.
- **High ecological sensitivity** as a result of the patchwork of species-rich meadows and pastures, mosaics of rushy and managed pastures on hill sides and swathes of calcareous grassland on limestone, many of which are of national importance for their landscape and biodiversity value.
- **High landscape and cultural sensitivity** as a result of the strongly recognisable landscape pattern and sense of place, coupled with strong historic integrity, numerous historic features (including drystone walls, field barns, hedgerows and prehistoric monuments) and overall sense of tranquillity within this predominantly rural landscape.

Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

Physical and Ecological Character

- Protect and enhance pastoral character and distinctive field patterns / boundaries;
- Maintain mosaic of pastoral land uses, aiming for extensive grazing;
- Control use of fertilisers to retain biological diversity and protect water quality;
- Protect unimproved and species-rich meadows and pastures, and mosaics of rushy and managed pastures on hill sides, and improve resilience to climate change;
- Maintain, restore and extend calcareous grassland communities on limestone;
- Maintain and restore strong patterns of drystone walls, and managing and re-planting, if necessary, hedgerows in dales where they are characteristic;
- Improve management of broadleaved woodlands and extend / link woodlands, particularly on steeper slopes in valleys;
- Ensure short rotation coppice is grown for energy on a small scale and does not displace important grasslands or obscure historic field patterns/ground features;
- Create less intensively managed floodplains and restore and re-link fens, mires and carr woodlands;
- Plan for increase in woodland within ghylls and valleys for biodiversity / landscape benefits;
- Encourage new riparian and floodplain woodland in river valleys to increase natural storage of water and carbon, stabilise banks and reduce flooding downstream;
- Restore, extend, link, and manage fragmented areas of broadleaved woodland

Cultural and Historical Character

- Maintain the visibility of upstanding archaeological remains and ground features;
- Encourage the use of local building materials for the repair and restoration of stone walls and buildings (including Millstone Grit and Great Scar Limestone);
- Conserve historic farms and small field barns that are distinctive features particularly within Swaledale and Wensleydale;
- Protect the rural, dispersed settlement pattern and the local built vernacular by maintaining the nucleated character of villages in most of the dales, often on bridging points and on key transport routes;
- Conserve the generally dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads on valley sides;
- Protect historic landscape features such as remnant quarries, lead mines, ore , lime works, prehistoric monuments, abbeys, priories, historic houses and parklands, including their settings;
- Maintain sustainable grazing intensities and low levels of scrub to ensure the integrity and visibility of archaeological sites.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character

- Maintain public access to enable enjoyment of this landscape and the sense of 'escapism' and 'inspiration' it provides whilst protecting vulnerable habitats;
- Protect key views to adjacent LLCT, including Moors and Valley LLCT;
- Conserve the overall sense of tranquillity and remoteness; and dark night skies

Local Landscape Character Areas

5.3.5 There are five landscape character areas within this LLCT, namely:

- C1 – Lower Swaledale (Richmond West) LCA
- C2 – Lower Swaledale (Richmond East) LCA
- C3 – Mid-Swaledale LCA
- C4 – Lower Wensleydale LCA
- C5 – Lower Coverdale LCA

Landscape Character Area C1: Lower Swaledale (Richmond West)

Location

- 5.3.6 This LCA extends south and west into the Yorkshire Dales. Within the study area it forms the north slopes of the River Swale to the west of Richmond and including the lower valley of Marske Beck. It is bounded to the south by Downholme Moors Fringe LCA B9, to the east by Lower Swaledale (Richmond East) LCA C2 and the north by Richmond West Moors Fringe LCA B7.

Key Characteristics

- Winding u-shaped valley that narrows into Richmond
- Steep upper valley slopes
- Well wooded, with deciduous and mixed woodland following the line of the valley contours
- Steep banks of ancient woodland are a particular feature
- Upland edges are occasionally visible
- Small, pastoral fields encompassed by woodland
- Intimate, enclosed rural landscape, with associated strong sense of tranquillity
- Use of locally sourced stone creates unity through the landscape
- Temple Grounds Registered Park and Garden with distinctive Culloden Tower

Current Character

- 5.3.7 The LCA forms the steep-sided vale of lower Swaledale, as it enters Richmond from the west. The u-shaped dale begins to narrow at the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, as it approaches Richmond. Here, the river begins to straighten before meandering around the southern edge of the town. The northern edge of the LCA, within the study area, gently slopes from the edge of the river before transitioning to steeper slopes of the moors fringe landscape. The southern dale sides rise more steeply from approximately 120m-250m AOD within the LCA. Topography is distinctive and varied through the LCA.

- 5.3.8 This is a well-wooded landscape that incorporates the largest area of ancient and semi-natural woodland within Richmondshire along with large areas of species-rich limestone and neutral grassland. The mosaic of habitats and vegetation contribute to the textured and varied appearance of this LCA and areas of grassland and woodland are designated as SSSI. These are appreciated from the network of public routes that link through this area from Richmond to the surrounding moors.
- 5.3.9 The historic town of Richmond forms the eastern edge of the LCA. The built form rises up from the river valley and is generally well screened by woodland on the valley slopes. The castle tower and walls are clearly visible at the end of the view, along the river from the meander at Billy Bank Wood and the edge of Temple Grounds. There are a number of nationally important heritage features associated with this LCA particularly within the study area. These include Richmond Bridge (scheduled monument) and the Grade II registered park and garden of Temple Grounds, which is a parkland and pleasure ground that occupies a rolling 15ha site on the south-east of Richmond. The land falls steeply from the north-east to the south and south-west towards the river valley, allowing the house and park to be viewed from many riverside points within the town.
- 5.3.10 The coast to coast long distance walking path established by Alfred Wainwright passes very briefly through this LCA along Applegarth Scar and continues over Richmond Bridge.³⁶ From here the intimate character of Swaledale can be appreciated, set within the rising moorland landscape to the north and south. This is an intimate landscape with high levels of tranquillity which is particularly appreciated at the stony beaches on the river bends.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.3.11 This is primarily an area of piecemeal enclosure and planned large-scale parliamentary enclosure from the late medieval period, defined by drystone walls. Broadleaved woodland can be found running alongside the River Swale in several areas. Temple Grounds registered park and garden forms the southwest edge of Richmond within this LCA.

³⁶ https://www.ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?path_name=Coast+to+Coast+%28Wainwright%29

Landscape Condition

5.3.12 Due to the predominantly unsettled character the enclosed, wooded valley landscape is moderately intact. Small-scale holiday parks and edge of settlement development is locally intrusive on the intimate landscape character. Dry-stone wall boundaries and woodland structure are generally well-maintained. Overall, the landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Disrepair/loss of drystone walls and field barns due to changes from intensive to extensive grazing practice;
- Decline in hay production resulting in a change from rough pasture/hay meadows to improved meadow and pasture, particularly on the lower dale slopes;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage/landscape features;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Inappropriate conversion of existing redundant or derelict farm buildings in a style which is inconsistent with the local vernacular;
- Potential widening of or improvements to main road corridors with associated noise and visual intrusion;
- Increased pressure for tourist related developments, such as holiday cottages, camping sites and caravan parks, potentially affecting the character and quality of the landscape;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and land use pattern.

Landscape Character Area C2: Lower Swaledale (Richmond East)

Location

- 5.3.13 The LCA forms the widening valley of Lower Swaledale as it transitions to the broad valley to the east of Richmond. It is bounded to the north by the southern edge of Richmond and Richmond East Moors Fringe LCA B8, to the east by the Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley LCA E4 and to the south by Colburn Moors Fringe LCA B10.

Key Characteristics

- Steep, low-sided dale with small areas of floodplain
- Partly wooded, with deciduous and mixed woodland on steep slopes
- Small pastoral fields transition into medium-scale arable land
- Upland edges are visible from the valley floor
- Strong estate and monastic influences including preserved remains of Easby Abbey
- Area of cultural and recreational importance

Current Character

- 5.3.14 The LCA forms the lower slopes of the meandering River Swale as it flows around the south of Richmond. Past the town, the valley begins to widen to a more open valley floor in places, enclosed by low, steep slopes and woodland. The highest point of the LCA is approximately 147m AOD on the south-east edge of Richmond, with the lowest land approximately 80m AOD along the river course.
- 5.3.15 The river flows around the south of the castle mound, meanders around a sharp bend south-east of Richmond before sweeping south of Easby. A number of tributary streams flow into the southern meander of the river, through steep, wooded, narrow v-shaped valleys.

- 5.3.16 In this part of the dale, the woodland cover begins to reduce. Broadleaf and mixed woodland is characteristic of the steeper and upper slopes within the valley. This contributes to an intimate character through the valley, which begins to open up towards the east in the transition to broader river valley. Land use begins to change to arable farming as evidenced in fields around Easby. A small section of the North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC is located on open slopes maintained through hay meadow management south-east of Richmond.
- 5.3.17 There are a number of cultural and heritage sites and associations with this LCA. The coast to coast long distance walking path established by Alfred Wainwright passes over Richmond Bridge and follows the southern banks of the River Swale from St Martin's Benedictine Priory.³⁷ Easby Abbey, noted as one of the best-preserved monasteries in Britain stands out on the wooded banks of the river. There are visual and physical relationships between other heritage features and sites within the LCA including Richmond Castle that stands out in views of the town from the river footpaths. A number of public rights of way pass through the area, to link with cultural sites including The Station visitor centre on the south-east of Richmond.
- 5.3.18 This is a tranquil, rural, river landscape that forms part of the landscape setting to historic Richmond.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.3.19 This is largely an area of unknown planned enclosure and modern improved fields with significant blocks and stretches of broadleaved woodland including ancient and semi-natural woodland. The scheduled religious land at Easby Abbey is an important landmark feature in the centre of the LCA.

³⁷ https://www.ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?path_name=Coast+to+Coast+%28Wainwright%29

Landscape Condition

5.3.20 Important historic features are well managed as part of relatively intact wooded, lower dale landscape. Woodland edges are well-maintained to frame the river and abbey landscape. Some fragmentation of field boundaries has occurred in the south due to changes in farming practices. Overall, the landscape is in good-moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Disrepair/loss of drystone walls and field barns due to changes from intensive to extensive grazing practice;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage and landscape features;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Pressure of tourism numbers leading to inappropriate conversion of existing redundant or derelict farm buildings in a style which is inconsistent with the local vernacular;
- Increasing traffic could put significant pressure on the network of narrow lanes within the dales leading to congestion and loss of sense of tranquillity;
- Increased pressure for tourist related developments, such as holiday cottages, camping sites and caravan parks, potentially affecting the character and quality of the landscape;
- Future impacts of climate change such as flood events on habitats and valley landscape.

Landscape Character Area C3: Mid-Swaledale

Location

- 5.3.21 This is a pocket of Mid-Swaledale LCA that is a continuation of the character area defined within the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It is bound to the south by Preston and Stainton Moor LCA A4 and Stainton Moors Fringe (North) LCA B11.

Key Characteristics

- Mixed woodland that follows the line of the valley side contours
- Woodland frames the moorland edge and river below

Current Character

- 5.3.22 The LCA within the study area, is a pocket of woodland that defines the edge of the moors as the steep-sided dale sides drop down to the River Swale. It forms part of the wider Mid-Swaledale character area that is defined as part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Landscape Character Assessment³⁸. The woodland slopes down to the river's edge and continues in a narrow woodland, north along the river banks towards Oxque Bridge. It provides a clear boundary between the moor and valley landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.3.23 This is an area of woodland, which is a combination of spring wood defined by drystone walls and ancient and semi-natural coniferous woodland on upper valley slopes.

³⁸ Reference Figure 4 and Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Chapter of the YDNP LCA 2002 <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about-the-dales/landscape/landscapecharacterassessment>

Landscape Condition

5.3.24 The areas of ancient and semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland are well-maintained. The landscape of the LCA within the study area is in good condition.

Forces for Change

- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Disrepair/loss of drystone walls and field barns due to changes in land management.

Landscape Character Area C4: Lower Wensleydale

Location

- 5.3.25 This LCA is a continuation of the Lower Wensleydale character area within the Yorkshire Dales National Park in the south of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Preston-under-Scar Moors Fringe LCA B13, to the east by Leyburn Broad Valley LCA E6 and Middleham Broad Valley LCA E7 and to the south-east by Middleham Moors Fringe LCA B17.

Key Characteristics

- Broad, large-scale, open, u-shaped valley
- Wide, gently meandering river that is largely wooded and often hidden from view in the wider context of the valley
- Varied field pattern of smaller, hedgerow bound fields in the west to larger, open fields in the east
- Strong parkland character to the west of Wensley, with woodland blocks framing the deer park, formal gardens and lawn
- Major villages with scattered farms and country houses
- Good intervisibility with surrounding LCA, particularly sweeping views of the valley and rising moorland to the south

Current Character

- 5.3.26 The LCA forms the northern part of the broad river valley of Lower Wensleydale between the villages of Redmire and Wensley. The river defines the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, across which the LCA continues. It consists of a south-facing slope between the Wensleydale Railway in the north down to the River Ure which forms the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park to the south. Landform slopes gently from approximately 170m AOD on the north edge near Redmire to approximately 120m AOD at the river's edge. There are local undulations and variation where tributary streams flow through wooded gullies from the north through Wensley and east of Bolton Hall.

- 5.3.27 The River Ure gently meanders through the low valley floor. The river is lined with woodland and is generally hidden in view within the wider context of the valley. It is identified by the sinuous bands of woodland through the valley floor. A number of tributaries flow down the northern valley slopes, often along a wooded course.
- 5.3.28 There are a variety of habitats across the landscape, including areas of woodland with a significant block of ancient and semi-natural deciduous woodland at West Wood, which links to the wooded pasture and parkland landscape of Bolton Hall. There are also important grasslands and a small area of lowland fen that contribute to the varied landscape. This is a largely pastoral landscape with varying field pattern of small rectangular fields particularly near to settlements and larger irregular fields across the gentler slopes moving east. Field boundaries are predominantly hedgerows with occasional stone walls. Trees often form parts of boundaries and provide physical and visual links across the valley slopes to woodland blocks and the wooded river course.
- 5.3.29 The LCA contains a variety of heritage features, which include the expansive designed landscape of the country estates at Bolton Hall and Wensley Hall that characterise much of this LCA. There are clusters of listed buildings and features within the two villages and through the parkland including bridges, churches and country houses that contribute to the heritage of the valley.
- 5.3.30 Whilst vegetation creates an intimate character in places, there is strong intervisibility with the surrounding LCA. Wide views of the broad valley are common, with clear views of the dominant moors landscape of Nidderdale to the south. Overall, this is a tranquil landscape with a varied sense of enclosure and strong relationship with the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.3.31 The west of this LCA is formed of an area of piecemeal enclosure and modern improved fields. The east is primarily planned enclosure that encompasses the designed landscapes (country estates) of Bolton Hall and Wensley Park. There is a small area of strip fields south of Redmire. West Wood is an expanse of restored ancient and semi-natural woodland along the north bank of the River Ure.

Landscape Condition

5.3.32 Changes in farming practices and land management has altered the enclosure pattern over time. Dry-stone wall boundaries are generally well-maintained. Despite removal of field boundaries in places, much of the historic structure is evident. The designed landscape of Bolton Hall is largely intact and well managed, particularly maintaining the swathes of woodland. Overall, the landscape is in good-moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Disrepair/loss of drystone walls and field barns due to changes in farming practices and land management;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage and landscape features;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Increasing visitor numbers and traffic in the wider Dales area could put significant pressure on the network of narrow lanes within the dales leading to congestion and loss of sense of tranquillity;
- Inappropriate conversion of existing redundant or derelict farm buildings in a style which is inconsistent with the local vernacular;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and river valley landscape and features.

Landscape Character Area C5: Lower Coverdale

Location

- 5.3.33 This is a narrow part of the Coverdale character area that is largely within the Yorkshire Dales National Park to the west and south of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Middleham Moors Fringe LCA B17 and to the east by Middleham Broad Valley LCA E8.

Key Characteristics

- Steep, wooded river bank
- Intimate and tranquil river valley
- River has an enclosed, narrow, gently meandering profile
- Lower reaches of the long, sinuous, u-shaped glacial valley
- Deciduous woodland defines the river sides

Current Character

- 5.3.34 The LCA comprises of the steep, north banks of the River Cover in Coverdale, which forms the southern edge of the study area. This narrow LCA forms the north-east edge of the wider character area that is defined within the Yorkshire Dales National Park Landscape Character Assessment³⁹.
- 5.3.35 The steep-sided bank is cloaked in deciduous woodland for most of its length, much of which is designated ancient and semi-natural woodland.
- 5.3.36 The River Cover rises on high ground within the National Park and flows in a south-west to north-east direction through the long sinuous valley to confluence with the River Ure at Ulshaw in the adjacent LCA.

³⁹ Reference Figure 4 and Wensleydale Chapter of the YDNP LCA 2002 <https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/about-the-dales/landscape/landscapecharacterassessment>

- 5.3.37 The promoted route of the Six Dales Trail follows the north bank of the river through the LCA, between Middleham and Jervaulx Abbey. The LCA has an overall intimate character created by the woodland along the steep banks. There is limited intervisibility with surrounding LCA, although a strong physical relationship with the wider dale landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.3.38 This is largely an area of ancient and semi-natural woodland with areas of unknown planned enclosure on the higher parts of the valley sides.

Landscape Condition

- 5.3.39 The enclosed, wooded valley landscape is largely intact. Woodland structure is well-maintained. The landscape of the LCA within the study area is in good condition.

Forces for Change

- Neglect of dry-stone wall management;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats.

5.4 Local Landscape Character Type D: Narrow Valley

Characterisation

Key Characteristics

- Relatively flat valley floors with gently rising sides to the higher ground of the Moors Fringes
- Fast flowing watercourses (becks) especially after heavy rainfall on the upland moors
- The becks flow generally north-west to south-east joining the River Swale to the north-west of Brompton-on-Swale
- The watercourses are often tree lined
- Generally open landscape with little tree cover away from the course of the river;
- Arable farming is the predominant land use within the LLCT
- This is a predominantly rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity throughout;
- Numerous ponds and wetlands along the valley floor of the LLCT

Description

- 5.4.1 This LLCT consists of the tributaries of the River Swale to the north and east of Richmond which are made up of a number of becks – Skeeby Beck, Gilling Beck, Hartforth Beck, Holme Beck, Dalton Beck, Stalwath Beck and Browson Beck. Many of the watercourses have their sources on the high moorland to the west. They confluence in this narrow valley and flow south towards the River Swale.
- 5.4.2 The valley is formed by moderately steep, lower slopes that begin to rise more steeply in the adjacent Moors Fringe LLCT. It has a narrow valley floor that is generally well-treed. Vegetation comprises of sinuous lines of riparian trees and shrubs that define watercourses, hedgerow boundaries with trees, scattered field trees and small blocks of woodland particularly concentrated in the centre of the LLCT.

D: Narrow Valley



- 5.4.3 This is a rural landscape with scattered settlement of historic nucleated villages and scattered farms, manor houses and cottages linked by a network of winding, often narrow lanes. Land cover is largely pastoral, with a small- to medium scale, irregular field pattern. Fields increase in size and become more regular on less steep landform in the south.
- 5.4.4 There are a variety of historic features dispersed through the LLCT, including Ravensworth Castle and small areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland. There are a number of conservation areas including villages and variety of estates.

Evaluation

Sensitivity to Change Issues

- **High visual sensitivity** as a result of strong intervisibility between adjacent Moors Fringe LLCT and distinctive cross-valley views.
- **Moderate ecological sensitivity** as a result of scattered woodlands including pockets of ancient and semi-natural woodland, often linked by hedgerows through the valley.
- **Moderate landscape and cultural sensitivity** as a result of the dispersed settlement pattern with remnants of historic parkland and woodland and predominantly rural character.

Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

Physical and Ecological Character

- **Protect and enhance** the pastoral character of the valley;
- **Manage, restore and thicken** hedgerows for landscape structure and biodiversity;
- **Manage** areas of woodland, allowing to thicken;
- **Restore, extend and link** existing fragmented areas of broadleaf woodland;
- **Ensure** effective catchment management to sustain water quality;
- **Encourage** conservation of existing key habitats and landscape features and expand the resource through habitat restoration and re-creation guided by ecological networks.

Cultural and Historical Character

- **Manage and restore** historic parklands and features, retaining veteran trees and reintroducing wood pasture;
- **Conserve** historic and archaeological sites and consider the setting of these when planning and implementing landscape management actions;
- **Protect** the dispersed settlement pattern of villages;
- **Encourage** use of local materials and vernacular styles in developments to strengthen local character, including limestone and gritstone;
- **Strengthen** historic field patterns through hedgerow restoration and management.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character

- **Protect** the predominantly rural character and associated sense of tranquillity;
- **Conserve** key cross-valley views to areas of adjacent Moors Fringe and rising Moors to the west;
- **Protect and enhance** public enjoyment of the landscape, including appreciation of the sense of escapism it provides, through management and improvements to existing public rights of way.

Local Landscape Character Areas

5.4.5 There are three landscape character areas within this LLCT, namely:

- D1 Ravensworth Narrow Valley
- D2 Gilling Narrow Valley
- D3 Skeeby Narrow Valley

Landscape Character Area D1: Ravensworth Narrow Valley

Location

- 5.4.6 This LCA comprises the northern part of a narrow, shallow valley in the north of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Caldwell Vale LCA F1 within County Durham, to the east by East and West Layton Moors Fringe LCA B3, to the south-east by Gilling Narrow Valley LCA D2, to the south by Whashton Moors Fringe LCA B5 and to the west by Newsham Moors Fringe LCA B1 and Dalton and Gayles Moors Fringe LCA B2.

Key Characteristics

- Shallow valley where a number of becks confluence
- Sinuous, often tree-lined watercourses cross the landscape
- Ponds and wetlands within valley floor, particularly focussed around Ravensworth Castle and Smallways
- Variety of dispersed tree cover
- Scattered farmsteads and manors, and historic village at Ravensworth
- A rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity throughout
- Irregular pattern of arable and pastoral fields

Current Character

- 5.4.7 This LCA is a narrow, shallow valley where becks flowing from the high moors in the west, confluence and wind their way south towards the broader valleys in the centre of the District. There is little topographical variation in the north of this LCA, ranging from approximately 160m AOD on the side slopes to 140m AOD in the centre. Steeper slopes form the southern edge of the valley, from approximately 210m AOD near Kirby Hill to 120m AOD at Ravensworth.
- 5.4.8 A number of becks and tributary streams rise in the north of this LCA and also flow into the LCA from the moors to the west. They confluence into Dalton Beck to the northwest of Ravensworth. Ponds and wetland areas are common through the valley floor and marshland at Ravensworth is particularly noteworthy.

- 5.4.9 This is a rural landscape that comprises a mixture of arable and pastoral farming. The sinuous watercourses combine with more angular field boundaries to create an irregular field pattern of small- to large-scale fields. Field boundaries are predominantly hedgerows and verges with trees. Stone walls occasionally form boundaries to the west of the LCA and in proximity to settlement.
- 5.4.10 Vegetation is varied and has a generally dispersed character across the LCA. Sinuous lines of trees follow the line of the watercourses, linking with hedgerow field boundaries and small blocks of woodland. Scattered clumps and individual field trees are also characteristic of this LCA. Parts of the LCA have a well-treed character, whilst other parts are more open such as near Smallways in the north. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA, however the ponds and wetlands are locally valued for the habitats they provide.
- 5.4.11 Settlement comprises of scattered farmsteads often with large farmhouses and range of stone and modern barns, manor houses and cottages linked by a small number of country lanes. Ravensworth is an historic settlement with ancient origins. The current village is laid out around a village green, with a number of listed properties dating from the 18th Century and constructed from stone reclaimed from the castle. The remains of the castle are locally prominent and form part of the wider Scheduled Monument that includes the defensive marsh and buried remains of the medieval village. There are numerous cultural links with Ravensworth, which features in poems and artwork.
- 5.4.12 This is a predominantly still landscape, with localised intrusion in the north from the A66 and associated with the large-scale nursery at Ravensworth. It is a generally enclosed landscape due to the surrounding moors fringe slopes and vegetation dispersed through the valley. Low hedgerows and dispersed vegetation allow occasional long views along the valley and of the rising landform to the east and west.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.4.13 This LCA is a mosaic of piecemeal enclosure, unknown planned enclosure, strip fields and modern improved fields. There is the large natural lake near to Smallways and scattered blocks of mixed and broadleaved woodland.

Landscape Condition

5.4.14 Changes in farming practices and land management have resulted fragmentation of vegetation structure. Retained field boundaries and dispersed trees and woodland are generally well-maintained. Modern land uses are occasionally conspicuous in the strongly rural landscape. The landscape is in moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees; Conversion of remnant grassland to arable or pasture, resulting in the loss of relict field systems around farmsteads as well as the remnants of traditional farming such as grazing meadows;
- Disrepair of traditional farm buildings resulting in gradual decay and loss. Conversion has the potential to introduce standardised suburban elements which are not consistent with local landscape character;
- Potential for modern agricultural buildings to introduce conspicuous built features;
- Future impacts of climate change that could impact on valley settlements and habitats;
- Potential for river/flood management to impact upon the character of the river corridors.

Landscape Character Area D2: Gilling Narrow Valley

Location

- 5.4.15 This LCA forms the central part of the narrow, shallow valley in the north of the study area. It is bounded to the north by East and West Layton Moors Fringe LCA B3, to the west by Melsonby Moors Fringe LCA B4, the south by Skeeby Narrow Valley LCA D3 and Richmond East Moors Fringe LCA B8, to the west by Whashton Moors Fringe LCA B5 and north-west by Ravensworth Narrow Valley LCA D1.

Key Characteristics

- Narrow valley with gently sloping valley sides
- A sinuous, treed beck flows through the centre of the LCA
- Dispersed vegetation with woodland blocks
- Irregular pattern of arable field with hedgerow boundaries
- Dispersed settlement with a number of halls, manor houses and large farmhouses
- Vernacular properties built from local stone
- Tourism features including fishing lakes, barn conversions and hotels

Current Character

- 5.4.16 This LCA is a narrow valley with generally undulating, gently sloping sides. The valley sides slope more steeply to the north of Gilling West, from approximately 90m AOD up to the 180m AOD where the LCA transitions to moors fringe.
- 5.4.17 The valley floor is narrow and contains Holme Beck that becomes Hartforth Beck where watercourses from the moors confluence at Hartforth Wood. Watercourses meander through the landscape and are generally identified by sinuous lines of vegetation. Several fishing lakes have been formed in the south of the LCA, near to Gilling West

- 5.4.18 The land use is dominated by arable farming with areas of parkland and woodland in the centre of the LCA. Field boundaries are varied; comprising of woodland edges, watercourses, open grass verges with scattered trees and occasional post and wire fences. Some of these are remnant of former enclosure patterns, but in many places field size has increased over time. A number of parkland features around the large properties are intact including tree-lined roads. Hartforth Wood is a large area of ancient replanted woodland. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.4.19 Settlement is dispersed through the centre of the LCA, largely along the valley floor. Large country houses and manors are accessed along private drives from the country lanes. The properties are often enclosed by parkland trees and small woodland boundaries. Hartforth is a small, clustered village of stone cottages and barns, many of which are listed, established around a green and separated from Hartforth Hall by remnant parkland. Hartforth Hall is a grade II* listed country house built from sandstone.⁴⁰ Gilling West is a linear village in the south of the LCA, containing a large proportion of listed buildings.
- 5.4.20 An enclosed landscape is created by the vegetation pattern and undulating valley sides. The LCA is well connected with adjacent LCA and areas of interest including the historic town of Richmond to the south. It is a still, rural landscape with a relatively tranquil feel particularly associated with the sheltered parkland landscape. Visibility is often contained by scattered vegetation, although longer views along the valley floor open up in places.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.4.21 This is largely an area of modern improved fields and unknown planned enclosure. There is an area of strip fields to the east of Gilling West. In the centre of the LCA, there are the elite residences of Hartforth Grange and Hartforth Hall. There is also a large area of mixed plantation woodland at Hartforth Wood.

⁴⁰ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1131933>

Landscape Condition

5.4.22 Changes in farming practices and land management have resulted in a mosaic of land cover and varying enclosure patterns. Woodland, field boundary hedgerows and trees are generally well-maintained and link through this LCA. Hartforth Beck is a well-managed watercourse that characterises the valley. The landscape is in moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Pasture improvement and arable expansion threaten areas of ridge and furrow and other historic earthworks, as well as the remnants of traditional farming such as grazing meadows;
- Conversion of remnant grassland to arable or pasture, resulting in the loss of relict field systems around farmsteads as well as the remnants of traditional farming such as grazing meadows;
- Disrepair of traditional farm buildings resulting in gradual decay and loss. Conversion has the potential to introduce standardised suburban elements which are not consistent with local landscape character;
- Potential for modern agricultural buildings to introduce conspicuous built features;
- Future impacts of climate change that could impact on valley settlements and habitats;
- Potential for river/flood management to impact upon the character of the river corridors.

Landscape Character Area D3: Skeeby Narrow Valley

Location

- 5.4.23 This LCA forms the southern part of the narrow valley between Gilling West and the River Swale. It is in the centre of the study area and is bounded to the north by Gilling Narrow Valley LCAD2 and Melsonby Moors Fringe LCAB4, to the east by Moulton Vale LCAF4, to the south by Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley LCA E1 and to the west by the Richmond East Moors Fringe LCA B8.

Key Characteristics

- Shallow valley with gently rising valley sides
- Meandering, vegetated watercourse flows through the centre of the LCA
- Arable landscape with limited tree cover
- Central village with dispersed farms, granges and cottages
- Medium-scale, open, rural landscape
- Open valley views and strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA

Current Character

- 5.4.24 The LCA is a narrow, relatively shallow valley with gently sloping, locally undulating valley sides. Topography varies from approximately 80m AOD at the lowest part of the valley floor along Skeeby Beck in the south, to approximately 140m AOD to the north-east along Barracks Bank. Landform comprises relatively smooth slopes with localised undulations associated with tributary becks and springs rising near Skeeby.
- 5.4.25 Gilling Beck takes a relatively straight course through flatter landscape in the north of the LCA. South of Skeeby, Skeeby Beck has a more meandering, vegetated course through the narrower valley floor in the south of the LCA.

- 5.4.26 The land use is dominated by arable farming across a generally regular field pattern delineated by hedgerows and occasionally grass verges with trees. Field boundaries are often tangent to the slope contours and link from the outer edges of the LCA towards the central watercourse. Narrow, sinuous strips of pasture follow much of the course of Gilling Beck and Skeeby Beck. Small woodland blocks and tree groups break up the pasture in the south of the LCA. There are no designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.4.27 Skeeby is a linear village and the centre of the LCA, on the route between Scotch Corner and Richmond. Local stone walls and properties, including a small number of listed stone buildings, form the road frontage. More modern development is set back and within cul-de-sacs behind the historic settlement line. There are a small number of scattered farms, clusters of cottages and granges across the wider LCA. These stand out in views through the undulating valley and over low hedgerow field boundaries. Two vehicular routes provide good connection with other valley settlements to the north and south and between Richmond and the A1(M) Scotch Corner junction. There is also a robust network of public rights of way linking through the valley and between settlements.
- 5.4.28 This is a generally still and balanced rural landscape with characteristic vernacular features. It is a tranquil landscape, particularly associated with the meandering watercourses and limited vehicular movement. There are long, valley views across the rural landscape of this LCA and beyond to rising moorland slopes. Views are more contained within the pastoral, narrow valley floor in the south.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.4.29 This is largely an area of modern improved fields and unknown planned enclosure with a small area of strip fields in the very south-east. There is small planned estate forming part of the village of Skeeby.

Landscape Condition

5.4.30 Farming practices have historically altered the landscape pattern, resulting in large fields fragmented hedgerow boundaries. The intimate character of the beck is well-maintained through much of the central valley. Shelter belts and hedgerow boundaries in the south are well-structured and link through the landscape. The landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Pasture improvement and arable expansion threaten areas of ridge and furrow and other historic earthworks, as well as the remnants of traditional farming such as grazing meadows;
- Conversion of remnant grassland to arable or pasture, resulting in the loss of relict field systems around farmsteads as well as the remnants of traditional farming such as grazing meadows;
- Disrepair of traditional farm buildings resulting in gradual decay and loss. Conversion has the potential to introduce standardised suburban elements which are not consistent with local landscape character;
- Potential for modern agricultural buildings to introduce conspicuous built features;
- Future impacts of climate change that could impact on valley settlements and habitats;
- Potential for river/flood management to impact upon the character of the river corridors.

5.5 Local Landscape Character Type E: Broad Valley

Characterisation

Key Characteristics

- Broad, low-lying and open plain between Moors Fringe and linking Dale and Vale landscapes
- Slow moving rivers meander through the landscape
- A distinctive area of low-lying farmland, with low woodland cover and large fields
- There are a variety of habitats including a mixture of flood meadows, neutral grasslands and floodplain mires
- Quarry workings are common in this landscape and a number of former extraction sites are now lakes and include nature sites
- Settlement is dispersed through the area, often clustered at road junctions and historic river crossing points
- Principal transport corridors, power lines and energy infrastructure are occasionally conspicuous elements in the landscape
- Key historic features include halls, manor houses and parkland
- The valleys are often defined by wide views to distant hills

Description

5.5.1 There are three occurrences of the LLCT within the study area. The LLCT is defined by meandering rivers in their lower reaches, which have formed broad valleys with gentle slopes at the foot of the Moors Fringe landscapes. These rivers divide the study area in a west-east direction, including the River Tees on the north edge, River Swale through the centre and River Ure in the south.

5.5.2 The river courses are often lined with trees and lush, diverse vegetation. In places, river corridors are, therefore, relatively enclosed, resulting in an intimate scale in contrast to the open exposed nature of the adjacent flood meadows and lowland landscapes.

E: Broad Valley



- 5.5.3 Halls and manor houses provide historical interest, together with traditional settlements particularly towards the fringes of the LLCT. A medium-scale, regular field pattern persists across much of the LLCT. Smaller-scale, more intimate fields are characteristic of settlement fringe
- 5.5.4 The A1(M) transects the central area of the LLCT. This and other infrastructure including transmission lines and commercial development occasionally form conspicuous elements in the low-lying, flat landscape.

Evaluation

Sensitivity to Change Issues

- **High visual sensitivity** as a result of the predominantly open character and flat landform, which facilitates long distance open views across the landscape and promotes strong intervisibility with the adjacent Moors Fringe and Vale LLCT.
- **Moderate ecological sensitivity** associated with the patchwork of arable and improved grassland fields, interspersed with small patches of fen, marsh and flood meadow including small areas designated as SSSI.
- **High landscape and cultural sensitivity** as a result of the variety of historic features within the LLCT as well as those on the edges of adjacent LLCT, including historic settlement sites, archaeological sites and designed landscapes, coupled with an overall sense of tranquillity within this predominantly rural landscape.

Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

Physical and Ecological Character

- **Ensure** effective catchment management to sustain water quality;
- **Encourage** the creation of new woodland along appropriate riverbanks, which complements the existing woodland pattern;
- **Conserve** the natural form of the rivers by avoiding engineered solutions to water management;
- **Conserve** natural river floodplain features, such as meanders, oxbows, old river channels, ponds and islands;
- **Restore and enhance** wetland habitats;
- **Target** agri-environment scheme support for broadleaved woodland, wetland pasture and meadow habitats;
- **Encourage** conservation of existing key habitats and landscape features and expand the resource through habitat restoration and re-creation guided by ecological corridors.

Cultural and Historical Character

- **Encourage** the use of local materials and vernacular styles in developments to strengthen local character, including limestone and gritstone;
- **Conserve and enhance** the distinct pattern of stone walls and hedgerows delineating field boundaries in order to maintain landscape structure;
- **Conserve** historic and archaeological sites and consider the setting of historic and archaeological sites when planning and implementing landscape management actions;
- **Ensure** highway improvement schemes respect and reflect local character and encourage the use of traditional signage where possible;
- **Ensure** the protection and setting of halls, manor houses and other landscape features.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character

- Conserve open views along and across the river floodplains towards adjacent LLCT;
- Protect and enhance public enjoyment of the landscape, including appreciation of the sense of escapism it provides, through identifying opportunities to create new circular routes or links to existing public rights of way

Local Landscape Character Areas

5.5.5 There are eight landscape character areas within this LLCT, namely:

- E1 Cliffe Broad Valley
- E2 Stapleton Broad Valley
- E3 Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley
- E4 Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley
- E5 Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley
- E6 Leyburn Broad Valley
- E7 Middleham Broad Valley
- E8 Ulshaw Broad Valley

Landscape Character Area E1: Cliffe Broad Valley

Location

- 5.5.6 This LCA forms part of the broad valley along the River Tees in the north of the study area. It is bounded to the north by County Durham and Darlington Borough, to the south by Caldwell Vale LCA F1 and Aldbrough Vale LCA F2, and to the east by Stapleton Broad Valley LCA F2.

Key Characteristics

- Gentle valley slopes
- Slow-flowing River Tees meanders through the landscape with well-wooded banks
- Medium-scale arable fields with hedgerow boundaries
- Historic landscape features associated with river crossing at Cliffe and Cliffe Hall parkland
- Limited settlement generally in proximity to the river
- Long valley views often open up between vegetation cover

Current Character

- 5.5.7 This LCA forms the gentle, southern slopes of the broad Tees valley, between Manfield and Gainford Mill. The topography comprises of moderate slopes down from the vale landscape towards the meandering River Tees, ranging from approximately 90m AOD to 45m AOD at the river banks.
- 5.5.8 The slow-moving River Tees meanders through the landscape and is characterised by stony banks lined with broadleaved trees and small blocks of woodland. There are a small number of tributary watercourses flowing through the LCA in a south-north direction, including a stream through woodland within the Cliffe Hall estate, to join the River Tees.

- 5.5.9 This is a predominantly arable landscape with regular pattern of medium-scale fields. Field boundaries are varied, including hedgerows particularly along roads, estate and post and wire fencing, grass verges and trees. Small blocks of woodland often follow the line of the river and link with woodland through the Cliffe Hall estate. Tree cover is less towards the east of the LCA, where fields have a more exposed character. The grounds of Cliffe Hall comprise woodland and tree groups that create designed vistas, scattered specimen trees and avenue trees along the entrance drive. West Wood is a broad strip of ancient and semi-natural woodland that links with other woodland and parkland trees in this LCA. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.5.10 Cliffe is a small village with variety of archaeological history including Scheduled Monument remains of a Roman Bridge that would have linked with the Roman Fort at Piercebridge. It is an important crossing point of the River Tees. The park at Cliffe Hall is noted as being formed in the 13th century⁴¹, with a number of intact features and including buried round barrows. Cottages and farm buildings associated with the estate are nestled within vegetation west of the hall complex. In the wider LCA there are scattered farms and cottages on the main routes or accessed by long farm tracks.
- 5.5.11 Views associated with this landscape are varied due to diversity of vegetation across the valley slopes. Woodland and parkland planting contain views and creates vistas associated with the estate. There are occasional long views east along the valley, towards rising landform in the east. This is a generally tranquil and still, rural landscape with areas of cultural value.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.5.12 This is largely an area of unknown planned enclosure together with several areas of piecemeal enclosure. Cliffe Hall designed landscape and a blocks of broadleaved woodland are at the centre of the LCA.

⁴¹ <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/north/vol1/pp186-190>

Landscape Condition

- 5.5.13 Farming practices have historically altered the landscape pattern, resulting in increased field size, fragmented hedgerow boundaries and need for fence boundaries. Woodland and parkland vegetation is generally well-maintained and contributes to the historic integrity of the designed landscape. The landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to further fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and vegetation;
- Disrepair of traditional farm buildings resulting in gradual decay and loss. Conversion has the potential to introduce elements which are not consistent with local landscape character;
- Potential large agricultural buildings could introduce conspicuous landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are vulnerable. Future river management may require new features such as wetlands and detention basins to manage flood water and protect urban areas. Future flood defence systems and options for river management, including flood bunds and wetlands, may impact upon the character of the river corridors;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area E2: Stapleton Broad Valley

Location

- 5.5.14 This LCA forms the southern plain of the River Tees between Manfield and Croft-on-Tees in the north of the study area. It is bounded to the north and east by Darlington Borough, to the south by Aldbrough Vale LCA F2, Barton and North Cowton Vale LCA F3 and Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley LCA E3 and to the west by Cliffe Broad Valley LCA E1.

Key Characteristics

- Broad low-lying, open plain
- Slow-moving River Tees meanders through the landscape with wooded banks
- Medium-scale arable fields within the meanders of the river
- Limited vegetation cover often concentrated along road and watercourse boundaries
- Dispersed settlement pattern influenced by the River Tees
- Intrusion from major roads of the A1(M) and A66(M) that pass through
- Locally open character but views are often enclosed by mid-distance vegetation

Current Character

- 5.5.15 This is a generally flat area of river plain, with some local topographical variation. A steep bank divides the LCA in a northwest-southeast direction forming the edge of the river, which meanders and encloses the settlement of Cleasby. This creates a terraced landform in the east of the LCA. Contours range from approximately 40m AOD across the lower plain, to 70m AOD on the southern edge of the LCA.
- 5.5.16 The meanders of the River Tees form the northern boundary to this LCA and are identifiable by the wooded banks. Clow Beck flows along a well-vegetated course along the southern boundary of the LCA into the river near Croft-on-Tees. Former quarry lakes are largely hidden in the landscape near to Cleasby.

- 5.5.17 This is a predominantly arable landscape of medium to large-scale fields within the meanders of the river. There are local pockets of pasture in proximity to the settlements as part of a smaller scale field network. Field boundaries are often open or low hedgerows that contribute to an open visual character. Riparian vegetation and wooded river banks are conspicuous landscape features that locally contain views and create pockets of well-treed landscape within the more exposed plain. There is a single strip of ancient and semi-natural woodland on the banks near Stapleton Grange and following the line of the Teesdale Way long distance path. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within this LCA.
- 5.5.18 Settlement is dispersed across the plain and largely concentrated in the villages of Cleasby and Stapleton. These villages comprise a variety of property types established around a central village green and cross-roads. Large farms, manor houses and granges are outlying properties to the villages. Settlement is linked by narrow, country lanes and tracks.
- 5.5.19 The A1(M) and A66(M) cut through the LCA. The raised section of the A66(M) is particularly dominant and intrudes on the overall calm character associated with this rural landscape. Treed roadside banks reduce this in part but contribute to the visual separation of the landscape. However, the villages retain a strong, rural character.
- 5.5.20 Views across this LCA are varied due to the textured land cover, particularly bands of trees along watercourses, roadside trees and small woodland blocks on the settlement edges. Long, open views of the wider valley are particularly characteristic of the northern part of this LCA. These become more restricted by vegetation through the centre of the LCA, particularly along the major roads.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.5.21 This area is predominantly formed of modern improved fields, with smaller areas of unknown planned enclosure.

Landscape Condition

5.5.22 Farming practices have historically altered the landscape pattern, resulting in increased field size and fragmented hedgerow field boundaries. Vegetation is generally well-maintained, particularly along watercourses, around settlements and road corridors. The landscape is in moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of riparian vegetation, hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to further fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and vegetation;
- Disrepair of traditional farm buildings resulting in gradual decay and loss. Conversion has the potential to introduce elements which are not consistent with local landscape character;
- Potential for increase in vehicle usage to impact upon local tranquillity and require expansion of road corridors;
- Potential large agricultural buildings could introduce conspicuous landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are vulnerable. Future river management may require new features such as wetlands and detention basins to manage flood water and protect urban areas. Future flood defence systems and options for river management, including flood bunds and wetlands, may impact upon the character of the river corridors;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area E3: Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley

Location

- 5.5.23 This LCA forms the meandering river plain between Croft-on-Tees and Sockburn in the northeast of the study area. It is bounded to the north and east by Darlington Borough, to the south by Eryholme Vale LCA F5, to the west by Barton and North Cowton Vale LCA F3 and to the north-west by Stapleton Broad Valley LCA E2.

Key Characteristics

- Broad, low-lying, open plain which gently slopes in the south
- Slow-moving River Tees meanders through the landscape with well-wooded banks
- Predominantly medium to large-scale arable land use
- Concentrated areas of woodland cover
- Dispersed settlement pattern influenced by the River Tees
- Strong intervisibility with adjacent LCA

Current Character

- 5.5.24 This LCA comprises of broad areas of open river plain and gently sloping valley sides. The landform varies as the river flows south, meandering through the broad valley landscape. The head of the meanders is generally flatter, with rising slopes towards the vale south of this LCA. The topography ranges from approximately 25m AOD at the edge of the river near Hurworth-on-Tees, to approximately 50m AOD along various parts of the vale edge.
- 5.5.25 The meanders of the River Tees form the northern boundary to this LCA and are identifiable by woodland along its banks. Tributary watercourses through the LCA including to the south of Croft-on-Tees and in the south at Eastfields Farm are also wooded and divide the open valley landscape.

- 5.5.26 This is a predominantly arable landscape, comprising of a network of medium to large-scale fields that generally have open boundaries with occasional trees and low, gappy hedgerows. Plantation woodland blocks are characteristic in the southern part of the LCA and link with areas of ancient woodland that follow the river meanders beyond the study area boundary. There are no nationally designated landscape of biodiversity sites within this LCA.
- 5.5.27 The settlement is dispersed along the meandering line of the river. Villages and hamlets are linked by a hierarchy of roads from rural lanes to a-roads linking larger settlements across the wider area. Croft-on-Tees and Dalton-on-Tees were historically formed around a central green and linked by a single route. Croft-on-Tees is at the crossing point of the River Tees that connects into the south of Darlington. The village contains a number of historic, often listed buildings including the restored 14th century road bridge. The layout of Dalton-on-Tees has been altered by modern development and re-routing of the road, but there is buried evidence of Roman and Medieval settlement at this location. Settlement in the east of the LCA is more scattered, comprising of the hamlet of Eryholme, isolated manor houses and farms.
- 5.5.28 This is a diverse landscape due to the vegetation and settlement pattern that is related to historic settlement along the River Tees. It has an overall still character with open views along the valley. Wide views that span the adjacent LCA and landscapes outside of the study area are often available across the large-scale fields.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.5.29 This LCA is a mix of modern improved fields, piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned enclosure. There is a small area of strip fields to the north of Eastfields Farm in the east of the LCA. Significant blocks of broadleaved woodland are present, particularly alongside the River Tees and in the south-east of the LCA.

Landscape Condition

5.5.30 Intensive farming practices have resulted in increased field size with exposed and gappy hedgerow field boundaries. Significant areas of woodland in the east of the area are generally well-maintained as part of the river corridor. The landscape condition of the LCA is variable, and in an overall moderate-poor condition.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of riparian vegetation, hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to further fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and vegetation;
- Disrepair of traditional farm buildings resulting in gradual decay and loss. Conversion has the potential to introduce elements which are not consistent with local landscape character;
- Potential for increase in vehicle usage to impact upon local tranquillity and require expansion of road corridors;
- Potential for new and large agricultural buildings that could introduce conspicuous landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are vulnerable. Future river management may require new features such as wetlands and detention basins to manage flood water and protect urban areas. Future flood defence systems and options for river management, including flood bunds and wetlands, may impact upon the character of the river corridors;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area E4: Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley

Location

5.5.31 This LCA comprises of gently undulating valley slopes between Richmond and Brompton-on-Swale. It is bounded to the north-east by the Richmond East Moors Fringe LCA B8, the north by Skeeby Narrow Valley LCAD3, the north-east by Moulton Vale LCA F4, to the east by Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley LCA E5, to the south by Tunstall Moors Fringe LCA B16 and to the west by Colburn Moors Fringe LCA B10 and Lower Swaledale (Richmond East) LCAC2.

Key Characteristics

- Broad, gentle slopes
- Slow moving River Swale meanders through the landscape
- Confluence of Skeeby Beck with the River Swale
- Mixture of arable and pastoral farmland with meadows
- Dispersed settlement and tourism features
- Intrusion from major road corridor of A1(M)
- Varying sense of enclosure
- Historic landscape links with adjacent LCA

Current Character

5.5.32 The landform across the LCA is gently undulating with gradual slopes forming the broad valley sides. Topography ranges from approximately 105m AOD in the north of the LCA to approximately 60m AOD in the valley floor.

5.5.33 The River Swale meanders through the middle of the LCA, flowing west-east between Richmond and Brompton-on-Swale. A number of lakes have been formed in the meadows within the river's meanders and along the lower reaches of Skeeby Beck as it flows into the Swale at Brompton Bridge. Brough Beck flows through the shallow valley in the south of the LCA, into the adjacent LCA where it confluences with the Swale.

- 5.5.34 Medium-scale arable fields characterise much of the valley slopes. Smaller scale, strip fields of pasture are delineated by hedgerows with trees to the north of Brompton-on-Swale. Treed banks define the line of the watercourse through this landscape and create a locally intimate scale in contrast to the more open valley slopes. Small woodlands form the meanders of the river, including a band of ancient and semi-natural woodland along Colburn Beck Wood in the south of the LCA. Tree cover is generally limited to within field boundaries and around properties across the rest of the LCA. Vegetation often screens development such as at Brompton-on-Swale Caravan Park and around farmsteads. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within this LCA.
- 5.5.35 The western part of the village of Brompton-on-Swale is encompassed by this LCA. The settlement edge is often defined by hedgerow and tree boundaries with some more open property curtilages on the northwest edge. Settlement is generally dispersed across the LCA, including large farms accessed along via narrow lanes and tracks with hedgerow boundaries. Visitor accommodation including lodge, caravan and camping sites are located along the river course including a smaller site along Skeeby Beck. Public rights of way provide links between the valley and adjacent moors fringe landscapes and into the nearby settlements. There are several heritage assets within the valley, which are not visually conspicuous but are of cultural value particularly considering links with other sites north and south along the River Swale.
- 5.5.36 The A1(M) and Catterick Road junction are intrusive features in this rural landscape. Fast moving vehicles are conspicuous in the southern part of the LCA and distract from the calm character across the wider area. Visual character varies across the LCA, due to diversity of land uses and vegetation cover. There is moderate intervisibility with adjacent LCA and views are often more intimate within the lower valley.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.5.37 This is largely an area of modern improved fields and unknown planned enclosure, together with a few smaller areas of piecemeal enclosure. There is an area of strip fields to the west of Brompton-on-Swale. The edge of Brough Park designed landscape is within the south of the LCA.

Landscape Condition

5.5.38 Settlement expansion and changes in agricultural and land management practices have resulted in a discordant and fragmented landscape. The A1 (M) road corridor and Catterick Road are intrusive features that interrupt the rural landscape. Field boundaries are in varying condition across the LCA. Overall, the landscape is in moderate-poor condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and threatening alluvial habitats;
- Pressure for tourism and development on the edges of existing settlement may be incompatible with the rural character;
- Pressure for commercial development along major road corridors that would further degrade the rural character;
- Potential introduction of and alterations to agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are vulnerable. Future river management may result in additional features such as wetlands and detention basins to manage flood water and protect urban areas. Future flood defence systems and options for river management may impact upon the character of the river corridors;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area E5: Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley

Location

5.5.39 This LCA is a continuation of the broad valley of the lower reaches of the River Swale in the east of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Moulton Vale LCA F4, to the south by Hambleton District and Hornby Vale LCA F7, to the south-west by Tunstall Moors Fringe LCA B16 and to the west by Brompton-on-Swale West Broad Valley LCA E4.

Key Characteristics

- Broad, relatively flat floodplain
- Slow moving River Swale meanders through the landscape
- Scattered lakes created by sand and gravel extraction
- A diverse, predominantly arable landscape
- Intimate, wooded river corridor
- Hierarchy of settlements
- Roman and Medieval sites and links with adjacent LCA

Character Description

5.5.40 This LCA forms part of the wide floodplain of the River Swale that extends south beyond the study area. The landscape to the northeast of Brompton-on-Swale gently slopes down from approximately 85m AOD to approximately 55m AOD on the north banks of the River Swale. There is little variation, between 40-55m AOD through the southern part of the LCA.

- 5.5.41 The River Swale takes a gently meandering course through the centre of the LCA, along which it is joined by a small number of tributary becks including Brough Beck from the adjacent LCA E4. There are a variety of man-made lakes along the line of the river, which have been created by sand and gravel extraction. These include Swale Lakes SSSI, which comprises of a shallow lake, feeder streams and pond with associated areas of tall fen vegetation, scrub, broad-leaved and mixed plantation and grassland⁴². The lakes and river provide important habitats and vegetation that links through the LCA. Vegetation cover is varied, with tree cover concentrated along the River Swale. There is significant deciduous woodland cover at Castle Hills and around Oran House in the south of the LCA.
- 5.5.42 This is a diverse landscape with a variety of land uses. Arable farming with occasional grazing spans much of the higher slopes within the LCA, encompassing the more varied land uses along the valley floor. Fields are bound by hedgerows with trees. Gravel extraction is ongoing and there are several working quarries in the north and central part of the LCA. These are often part screened by woodland plantation and bunds. However, there is localised visual and noise intrusion associated with these sites. Catterick Racecourse is one of the most conspicuous land uses in the LCA because of its open character and location between the two main settlements. Other land uses include recreation and tourism associated with the lakes and network of footpaths across the LCA.
- 5.5.43 The LCA encompasses the settlements of Brompton-on-Swale and Catterick on the western edge. The smaller villages of Scorton and Bolton-on-Swale form the east edge of the LCA and the hamlet of Ellerton-on-Swale is set amongst the gravel lakes in the centre of the plain. Stone and brick properties are characteristic of the historic village centres. Light industrial and MOD land uses at Brompton-on-Swale and Catterick respectively, reduce the tranquillity of the rural landscape in proximity to the settlements. These land uses are generally screened and have little influence across the wider LCA.
- 5.5.44 There are several heritage assets within the valley, which are not visually conspicuous but are of cultural value particularly considering links with other medieval and Roman sites north and south along the River Swale. Castle Hills is a well-preserved example of a motte and bailey castle which has added importance as part of the 20th century defences for RAF Catterick including links with Oran House.

⁴² <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1012425>

5.5.45 The A1(M), light industry and quarry works are intrusive features associated with this rural landscape. The diversity of land uses contributes to a locally busy but overall calm perceptual character across the LCA. Visual character varies, due to diversity of land uses and vegetation cover. There is moderate intervisibility with adjacent LCA and views are often more intimate along the course of the river.

Historic Landscape Character

5.5.46 The area is formed of a mosaic of modern improved fields, unknown planned enclosure and piecemeal enclosure. There is a small area formed of strip fields to the north-east of Brompton-on-Swale. Much of the area alongside the river is formed of extracted land.

Landscape Condition

5.5.47 Condition is variable across the LCA. Changes in farming has resulted in changes to enclosure patterns and fragmentation field boundaries. Vegetation along the river corridor is generally well managed and provides valuable screening of the variety of land uses in this LCA. Mineral extraction and the A1(M) are intrusive and have degraded the rural character in part. Lakes and associated habitats in former quarries are important and are well managed. Overall, the landscape is variable but in moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and threatening alluvial habitats;
- Pressure for tourism and development on the edges of existing settlement may be incompatible with the rural character;
- Pressure for commercial development along major road corridors that would further degrade the rural character;
- Potential introduction of and alterations to agricultural buildings could introduce dominant landscape elements, resulting in changes to existing landscape character;

- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are vulnerable. Future river management may result in additional features such as wetlands and detention basins to manage flood water and protect urban areas. Future flood defence systems and options for river management may impact upon the character of the river corridors;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses;
- Pressure for expansion of sand and gravel extraction that would be intrusive and result in alteration of landscape features and habitat structure.

Landscape Character Area E6: Leyburn Broad Valley

Location

5.5.48 This LCA is set within the broad valley along the River Ure between Wensley and Spennithorne, in the south of the study area. It is bounded to the west by Lower Wensleydale LCA C3, to the north by Scotton Moors Fringe LCA B13 and Stainton Moors Fringe (South) LCA B14, to the north-east by Constable Burton Vale LCA F6, to the east by Spennithorne Moors Fringe LCA B19 and to the south by Middleham Broad Valley LCA E7.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping, north slopes of the valley
- Numerous springs and tributary becks drain south into the River Ure
- Rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- Ridgeline villages
- Small-scale, often intimate field pattern
- Wide views across the valley of the distinctive landform to the south
- Scattered tree cover generally associated with field boundaries

Current Character

5.5.49 This LCA is essentially a gently undulating south-facing slope within the broad valley of the lower reaches of the River Ure. The landform slopes up from approximately 105m AOD at the edge of the valley floor, to approximately 165m AOD along the ridgeline between Leyburn and Spennithorne.

5.5.50 There are numerous springs rising across the slopes, which drain along small tributary becks into the River Ure. Many of these becks follow the line of field boundaries and are fast flowing when it rains. The boundaries where the becks flow are generally well vegetated and follow a more sinuous line in contrast with strip fields in the west of the LCA.

- 5.5.51 The landscape is characterised by an irregular field pattern of small to medium-scale fields. It is a mixture of arable and pastoral land use, with grazing often found in proximity to the settlements. Field boundaries are a combination of hedgerows and stone walls with trees. Tree cover is dispersed with small woodland blocks on lower slopes and in the east around Spennithorne and the grounds of Thorney Hall. There is a small SSSI in the west of the LCA designated for its biodiversity, which is in proximity to the River Ure and meadows in the LCA to the south.
- 5.5.52 The edge of Leyburn and villages of Harmby and Spennithorne stand out on the ridgeline that forms the north edge of the LCA. The settlements stand out in cross-valley views from the south. Farmsteads and country houses are dispersed across the slopes of the LCA. Small stone buildings are also scattered within fields or set within the line of a stone wall. Built form stands out against the valley sides.
- 5.5.53 This is a relatively simple, balanced rural landscape with high levels of tranquillity. Whilst the slopes have strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA, the vegetation and enclosure structure create a locally intimate scale. There are wide views across the valley from the network of footpaths across this LCA.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.5.54 This is largely an area of piecemeal enclosure with a large area of strip fields to the east of Wensley stretching between Wensleydale Railway in the north and Low Lane in the south. There is a small block of wet woodland in the east of the LCA, to the north of Bedale Hill.

Landscape Condition

- 5.5.55 Changes in farming practices and land management has altered the enclosure pattern overtime and resulted in some conspicuous farm buildings. Dry-stone wall boundaries are in moderate condition. Hedgerow boundaries are gappy in places but generally well maintained. Overall, the landscape is in moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Disrepair/loss of dry stone walls, traditional stone barns and hedgerow boundaries due to changes in farming practices and land management;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns;
- Increasing visitor numbers and traffic in the wider Dales area could put significant pressure on the network of narrow lanes within the dales leading to congestion and loss of sense of tranquillity;
- Inappropriate conversion of existing redundant or derelict farm buildings in a style which is inconsistent with the local vernacular;
- Pressure for expansion of village settlements that could be out of character with the wider settlement pattern and rural valley character;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and river valley landscape and features;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are potentially vulnerable. Future flood defence systems and options for river management may impact upon the character of the river corridors.

Landscape Character Area E7: Middleham Broad Valley

Location

5.5.56 This LCA forms the valley floor of the River Ure between Wensley and Ulshaw in the south of the study area. It is bounded to the west by Lower Wensleydale LCA C3, to the north by Leyburn Broad Valley LCA E6, to the east by Spennithorne Moors Fringe LCA B19, to the south-east by Ulshaw Broad Valley LCA E8 and to the south by Middleham Moors Fringe LCA B17 and the Yorkshire Dales.

Key Characteristics

- Flat river floodplain
- Slow moving River Ure meanders through in a west-east direction
- Mixture of arable and pastoral farmland with meadows and grazing marsh
- Generally sparse tree cover, with wooded river banks
- A still, rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- Open views along the valley and strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA
- Distinctive heritage features stand out in this LCA and adjacent LCAs

Current Character

5.5.57 This LCA comprises the generally flat valley floor through which the River Ure meanders. There is very little topographical variation. The landform gently slopes from approximately 100m AOD along the valley floor to approximately 120m AOD north of Ulshaw.

5.5.58 The slow-moving River Ure follows a sinuous course through the LCA. Several small becks flow into the river from the valley slopes in the north and moors fringe in the south. There are small areas of marsh and fen within the meanders of the river. There are three historic crossing points over the River Ure in this LCA, at Wensley, Middleham and Ulshaw. The three stone bridges are listed or scheduled for their significance, with Middleham Bridge a particular landscape feature due to the abutments and turrets that stand out in views through the valley.

5.5.59 There is very little settlement within the LCA, limited to scattered farmsteads and cottages between Middleham and Ulshaw. Stone walls often define roadside boundaries. Field boundaries are a combination of stone walls and hedgerows with occasional trees. There is generally sparse vegetation cover across the LCA. The banks of the river are defined by trees in places and there are scattered clumps of trees and small woodland blocks that link with these along field boundaries. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.

5.5.60 This is a mixed arable and pastoral landscape comprising an irregular field pattern of medium to large-scale fields. The limited vegetation cover contributes to the exposed character of the landscape. There are wide, open views across this LCA and particularly south over the slopes of the moors fringe towards Nidderdale.

Historic Landscape Character

5.5.61 The west of this LCA is dominated by modern improved fields, while the east is a mix of piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned exposure. Areas of strip fields form a large part of the LCA, particularly the area to the north-east of Middleham.

Landscape Condition

5.5.62 Changes in farming practices and land management has altered the enclosure pattern overtime and resulted in some conspicuous farm buildings. Dry-stone wall boundaries are generally well-maintained. Hedgerow boundaries are fragmented but historic pattern is still apparent. The LCA contains important habitats. Overall, the landscape is in moderate condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Disrepair/loss of drystone walls, traditional stone barns and hedgerow boundaries due to changes in farming practices and land management;
- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and important alluvial habitats;
- Increasing visitor numbers and traffic in the wider Dales area could put significant pressure on the network of narrow lanes within the dales leading to congestion and loss of sense of tranquillity;
- Inappropriate conversion of existing redundant or derelict farm buildings in a style which is inconsistent with the local vernacular;
- Pressure for expansion of village settlements that could be out of character with the wider settlement pattern and rural valley character;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and river valley landscape and features;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are potentially vulnerable. Future flood defence systems and options for river management may impact upon the character of the river corridors.

Landscape Character Area E8: Ulshaw Broad Valley

Location

- 5.5.63 This LCA forms the valley floor along the course of the River Ure between Ulshaw and edge of the study area near Kilgram. It is bounded to the west by Middleham Broad Valley LCA E7, to the north by Spennithorne Moors Fringe LCA B19 and to the south by Witton Moors Fringe LCA B18.

Key Characteristics

- Flat river floodplain
- Slow moving River Ure meanders through in a west-east direction
- Mixture of arable and pastoral farmland with areas of grazing marsh and fen
- Dispersed broadleaf woodland and tree cover
- Designed, ornamental landscapes with halls, granges and farmsteads
- A still, rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- Occasional open views along the valley and moderate intervisibility with surrounding LCAs

Current Character

- 5.5.64 This LCA comprises the generally flat valley floor through which the River Ure meanders. There is little topographical variation along the length of the river. The landform gently slopes from approximately 90m AOD along the river, north through Low Park to approximately 130m AOD.
- 5.5.65 The River Ure meanders through the LCA, flowing around islands to the east of Ulshaw where the River Cover joins the Ure and the river widens. From here the river follows a relatively straight course to Jervaulx Hall and becomes more sinuous in the east of the LCA. A number of ponds have been created along the course of tributary streams and likely associated with historic designed landscapes that influence this LCA.

- 5.5.66 There are a variety of habitats that contribute to the textured character of this LCA, including an expanse of floodplain grazing marsh within the river meanders, scattered broadleaf woodlands, a large area of wood pasture and parkland and the River Ure Grasslands SSSI along the banks of the River Cover and Ure in the west of the LCA. The variation in land cover is what is distinctive of this LCA. The landscape is generally well wooded, particularly in the west.
- 5.5.67 The designed landscapes within and adjacent to the LCA are important features and there are a number of heritage assets associated with this. Halls, large farmhouses, formal gardens and parklands are scattered across the LCA. The country properties are often contained by surrounding vegetation but stand out when viewed in proximity from public rights of way, particularly grade I listed Danby Hall. There are two scheduled ancient monuments within the LCA, Ulshaw Bridge and Kilgram medieval monastic grange, which has links with Jervaulx Abbey to the south. The Six Dales Trail promoted route passes through this LCA, to take in the important features associated with this particular landscape.
- 5.5.68 This is a textured, often intimate floodplain landscape across which longer views open up particularly from the rising slopes to the north. The landscape has strong cultural and historical influences. It is a strongly tranquil and relatively remote landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.5.69 This is largely an area of piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned enclosure with a large area of lowland meadow in the centre of the LCA. Blocks of woodland contribute to the designed landscapes of Danby Hall and Jervaulx Abbey.

Landscape Condition

- 5.5.70 Changes in farming practices and land management have resulted in fragmentation of vegetation and enclosure pattern. Designed landscapes and historic features are generally well-maintained and characteristic of this LCA. The LCA contains important habitats that are relatively well linked. Overall, the landscape is in moderate-good condition throughout the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Changes in farming practices leading to fragmentation of historic enclosure patterns and important alluvial habitats;
- Increasing visitor numbers and traffic in the wider Dales area could put significant pressure on the network of narrow lanes within the dales leading to congestion and loss of sense of tranquillity;
- Inappropriate conversion of existing redundant or derelict farm buildings in a style which is inconsistent with the local vernacular;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated heritage features and landscapes;
- Future impacts of climate change on habitats and river valley landscape and features;
- Climate change is expected to bring an increased risk of flooding and settlements within the valley are potentially vulnerable. Future flood defence systems and options for river management may impact upon the character of the river corridors.

5.6 Local Landscape Character Type F: Vale

Characterisation

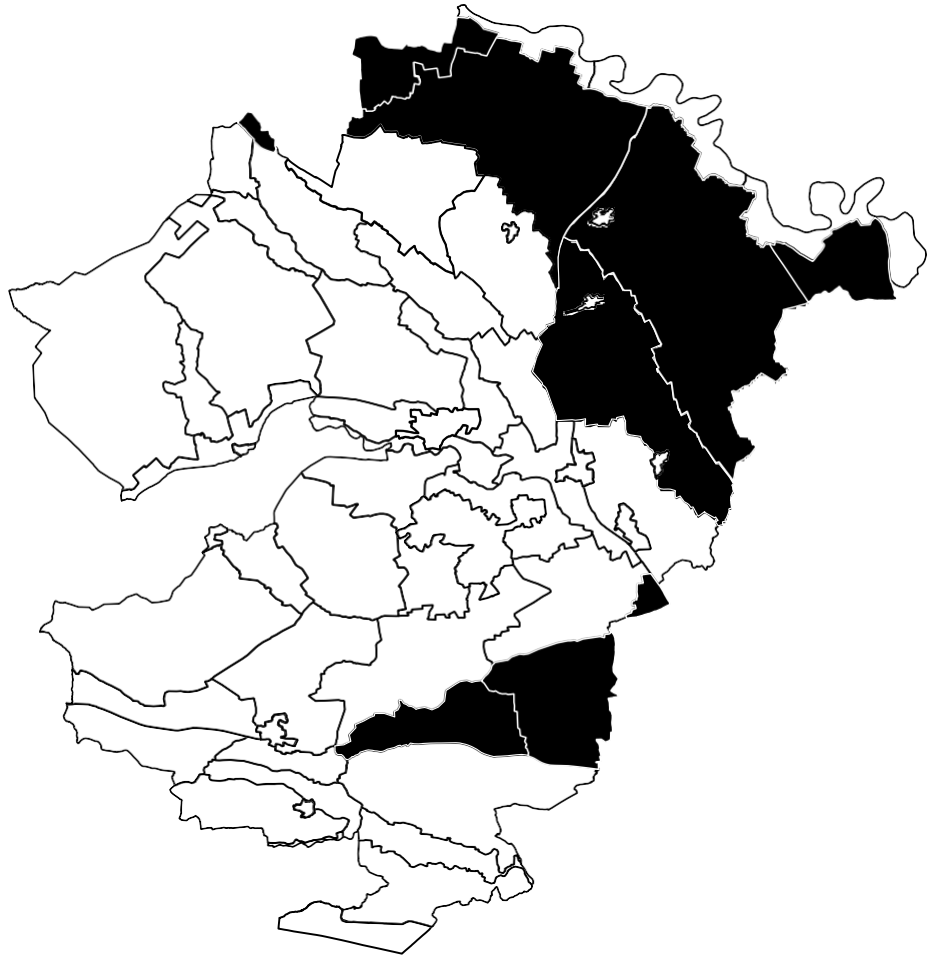
Key Characteristics

- Generally low lying, gently rolling landscape which contains several small river corridors
- Distant sense of enclosure in views east and west provided by the backdrop of the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales
- A medium to large-scale, predominantly arable landscape which is delineated by a network of mature hedgerows, often containing hedgerow trees
- Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads, small hamlets and villages
- The A1(M) corridor runs in a north-south direction across the landscape and is often a dominant feature in the landscape

Description

- 5.6.1 The landform in this LLCT is predominantly flat to gently rolling. A number of tributary watercourses confluence and flow through the LLCT in shallow valleys, often distinguishable by sinuous lines of riparian planting that divide or bound large, arable fields.
- 5.6.2 The landscape displays a patchwork of medium to large-scale arable fields which are interspersed with pockets of improved grassland and deciduous woodland that contribute to an intermittent sense of enclosure. Fields are generally delineated by a network of mature hedgerows, often containing hedgerow trees.
- 5.6.3 There are several historic houses or halls and their associated, designed parkland landscapes scattered throughout this landscape. These often contribute dispersed woodland cover within the LLCT.

F: Vale



- 5.6.4 Settlement is generally concentrated on higher ground and is scattered throughout the landscape, resulting in a dispersed pattern. Villages often display a linear pattern, following the line of road corridors. Farmsteads are dispersed throughout the Vale, with many of them dating from the Parliamentary enclosure period. There is a variety of historic features including moated sites, medieval settlements and halls. Church towers and spires are often prominent landmarks.
- 5.6.5 This is a predominantly rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity throughout. Croft motor-racing circuit and the A1(M) corridor are locally intrusive in this predominantly calm, rural landscape.

Evaluation

Sensitivity to Change Issues

- **Moderate visual sensitivity** as a result of the combination of open views to adjacent LLCT and sense of enclosure provided by dispersed woodland and hedgerow boundaries.
- **Low ecological sensitivity** overall. Much of the LLCT comprises improved agricultural fields or grassland with pockets of deciduous woodland and species-rich floodplain meadows that provide key habitats in places.
- **High landscape and cultural sensitivity** as a result of the dispersed, historic settlement pattern, pockets of historic parkland and predominantly rural character.

Guidance for Managing Landscape Change

Physical and Ecological Character

- **Manage, restore and thicken** hedgerows for landscape structure and biodiversity;
- **Ensure** effective catchment management to sustain water quality;
- **Encourage** conservation of existing key habitats and landscape features and expand the resource through habitat restoration and re-creation guided by ecological networks;
- **Seek** opportunities to revert arable farmland to permanent pasture, particularly in floodplains or areas of archaeological interest;
- **Create** small, native broadleaf woodlands (including characteristic copses by farmsteads) and actively managing these to achieve a diverse age range;
- In arable areas, **introduce and manage** arable options such as conservation headlands, pollen and nectar mixes to improve habitats;
- **Restore, extend and link** existing fragmented areas of broadleaf woodland and actively manage these.

Cultural and Historical Character

- **Protect** the dispersed settlement pattern of villages, small hamlets and farmsteads;
- **Minimise** disturbance and damage to archaeological sites resulting from cultivation;
- **Strengthen** historic field systems and patterns through hedgerow planting and management;
- **Conserve and enhance** local vernacular through restoration of traditional farmsteads, farm buildings and cottages and use of traditional materials (mottled brick and pantile) in conservation projects;
- **Protect** historic landscape features including deserted medieval village, castles and moated sites;
- **Strengthen** historic field patterns through hedgerow restoration and management;
- **Protect and manage** parklands, retaining veteran trees and reintroducing wood pasture.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character

- Protect the predominantly calm, rural character;
- Maintain key views to adjacent LLCT;
- Protect and enhance public enjoyment of the landscape, including appreciation of the sense of escapism it provides, through identifying opportunities to create new circular routes or links to existing public rights of way

Local Landscape Character Areas

5.6.6 There are seven landscape character areas within this LLCT, namely:

- F1 Caldwell Vale
- F2 Aldbrough Vale
- F3 Barton and North Cowton Vale
- F4 Moulton Vale
- F5 Eryholme Vale
- F6 Constable Burton Vale
- F7 Hornby Vale

Landscape Character Area F1: Caldwell Vale

Location

- 5.6.7 This LCA is an area of open vale in the north of the study area. It extends north and west into County Durham. It is bounded to the north-east by Cliffe Broad Valley LCA E1 and to the east and south by Aldbrough Vale LCA F2.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying, gently rolling landform
- Forms the wide, southern vale of the River Tees
- Open landscape with little vegetation cover, limited to occasional shelterbelts and individual trees
- Large-scale arable farmland
- Dispersed, rural settlement character of small villages and farmsteads
- Expansive views across the vale, with large skies and views of distant hills

Current Character

- 5.6.8 This LCA comprises the low lying, gently rolling, vale landscape located between the moors fringe and the River Tees Valley. The landform generally slopes in a south-north direction; gently sloping from approximately 150m AOD in the south-west to 90m in the north-east, as it transitions into the Tees Valley. Glacial features and deposits create minor undulations in the landform.
- 5.6.9 This is an area of arable farming, with large fields bound by low, gappy hedgerows. There is generally sparse vegetation cover across the LCA. Tree cover is restricted to small shelterbelts often adjacent to farmsteads and individual trees within hedgerow field boundaries. Trees within field boundaries are more common towards the east of the LCA and define the line of a former railway. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.

5.6.10 Settlement has a dispersed pattern, around the nucleated village of Caldwell that is located on the main road through the area (B6274). Farmsteads are accessed along open tracks off the B6274, and stand out in the open landscape. Stone buildings with red-pantile roofs are typical of this landscape.

5.6.11 This is an open landscape with strong intervisibility with surrounding LCA and beyond the study area to the north. There are expansive, long-distance views across open field network. The moors and dales form a distant backdrop to views. This is a still, rural landscape with relatively strong sense of tranquillity throughout.

Historic Landscape Character

5.6.12 This is largely an area of modern improved fields, with pockets of piecemeal enclosure present; a small number of strip fields also exist and there is a sizeable area of unknown planned enclosure to the north-east of Caldwell.

Landscape Condition

5.6.13 Intensification of farming practices has altered the field pattern over time. Some historic enclosure is retained in proximity to the settlement. Hedgerows are frequently gappy and tree cover is sparse, although there is evidence of recent shelterbelt planting. The landscape is in generally moderate-poor condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Decline in the management of hedgerows;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- New development within historic villages may be inconsistent with the historic form of the village and the vernacular materials and design of buildings;
- Potential pressure for the development of infrastructure within the vale including road expansion and vertical structures such as renewable energy, transmission pylons and lines;

- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on crops and habitat structure;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt, to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area F2: Aldbrough Vale

Location

- 5.6.14 This LCA forms part of open vale in the north of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Caldwell Vale LCA F1, Cliffe Broad Valley LCA E1 and Stapleton Broad Valley LCA E2, the south-east by Barton and North Cowton Vale LCA F3 and to the south by Melsonby Moors Fringe LCA B4 and East and West Layton Moors Fringe LCA B3.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying, gently rolling, open landscape
- A number of tributary becks meander across the vale in a typically west-east direction
- Predominantly arable farmland, dominated by large modern improved fields
- Scattered vegetation generally associated with field boundaries
- Rural landscape with a generally strong sense of tranquillity, locally interrupted by the major road corridor along the east boundary
- Clusters of heritage features including the late iron age and medieval settlement at Stanwick, designed country estates, scattered halls, granges and farms
- Dispersed, historic settlement constructed largely of vernacular materials
- Expansive views with large skies, across the vale towards the distant higher ground

Current Character

- 5.6.15 This LCA comprises the low lying, gently rolling, vale landscape located between the moors fringe and the River Tees Valley. The landform generally slopes in a south-north direction; gently sloping from approximately 135m AOD in the south-west to 70m on the north edge, as it transitions into the Tees Valley. Glacial features and deposits, along with the meandering watercourses create local undulations in the landform across the LCA.
- 5.6.16 Tributary becks meander slowly through the landscape, in a generally west-east direction. These are often defined by associated riparian vegetation along their course. Ponds have been created along these in places, including the fish pond as part of the designed landscape of Forcett Park registered park and garden.

5.6.17 This is primarily arable farmland with areas of pasture in the south, often associated with the parkland landscape. Field pattern is varied, with a smaller scale pattern defined by hedgerow boundaries in proximity to settlements and larger, irregular pattern across much of the wider area. There is generally sparse vegetation cover across the LCA. Ancient and semi-natural woodland forms the north, west and south of Forcett Park. Small woodland blocks and shelterbelts are scattered across the landscape but particularly focussed around settlement. Hedgerow field boundaries often contain trees, and watercourses are defined by sinuous riparian vegetation. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.

5.6.18 Settlement has a dispersed pattern of historic hamlets and villages with surrounding country estates, halls and farms. There is a focus of historic settlement features in the south around Stanwick St John and Forcett Park. The grade I listed Church of St John is a prominent, isolated feature in this landscape, forming part of the wider scheduled late iron age oppidum and having strong cultural associations with nearby surrounding settlements and landscape features. Stone and brick properties are characteristic of the historic village centres. There are a number of historic features and associations with this landscape. The integrity of these has been eroded by changes in farming and land management, although a strongly rural settlement character persists.

5.6.19 This is an open, rural landscape with a predominantly strong sense of tranquillity. The A1(M), is an intrusive feature associated this rural landscape and there is localised visual and noise intrusion associated with this major road. There are expansive views to more distant, higher ground. A more intimate character is associated with settlement and parkland areas that are often surrounded by trees.

Historic Landscape Character

5.6.20 This is largely an area of modern improved fields and unknown planned enclosure. There are also areas of strip fields present, to the east of Eppleby and south-east of Manfield and to the south-west of Cleasby. A number of significant, isolated areas of piecemeal enclosure exist, such as alongside Dere Street. Broadleaved and coniferous woodland are scattered across the LCA. The designed landscapes (country estates) of Forcett Park,

Stanwick Late Iron Age oppidum, iron age and medieval settlement and Carlton Hall are clustered together with the elite residence of Kirkbridge, to the north of Stanwick St John.

Landscape Condition

5.6.21 There have been significant changes to this landscape over time and a number of landscape and cultural features have been removed. Remnant vegetation structure associated with these features is maintained in part. Intensification of arable farming has resulted in fragmented vegetation. There is a moderate level of historic integrity and woodland and parkland features are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Conversion of permanent pastures to arable could potentially affect archaeological features;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- New development within historic villages may not be consistent with the historic form of the village and the vernacular materials and design of buildings;
- Potential pressure for the development of infrastructure within the vale including road expansion, renewable energy, transmission pylons and lines;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that could affect water levels and impact on habitat structure;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area F3: Barton and North Cowton Vale

Location

5.6.22 This LCA is an area of open vale in the north-east of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Stapleton Broad Valley LCA E2, to the east by Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley LCA E3 and Eryholme Vale LCA F5, to the south-west by Moulton Vale LCA E4 and the vale extends south into Hambleton District

Key Characteristics

- Generally low lying, gently rolling landscape with shallow undulating valley
- Predominantly arable farmland, with irregular medium to large-scale field pattern
- Open landscape with relatively little tree cover, apart from those contained within hedgerows
- Rural landscape with a generally strong sense of tranquillity, occasionally interrupted by local landuses
- Scattered historic and cultural features including remnants of medieval settlement and designed, parkland landscapes and scattered halls, granges and farmsteads
- Dispersed settlement character of villages, hamlets and farmsteads
- Open views with large skies, and often long-distance views towards distant higher ground

Current Character

5.6.23 This LCA comprises the low lying, gently rolling landscape between the broad valleys of the River Swale in the south-west and River Tees in the north. The landform generally slopes in a west-east direction; gently sloping from approximately 85m AOD down to approximately 20m AOD in the east at Eryholme.

5.6.24 A number of tributary becks flow through the LCA. In the north, becks flow west-east towards the River Tees. Watercourses are generally inconspicuous in the landscape, although can be picked out in part as more sinuous lines of vegetation defining the edges of fields.

- 5.6.25 This is primarily arable farmland with an irregular, medium to large-scale field pattern that is largely defined by hedgerows with occasional trees. Smaller scale enclosure is present in proximity to settlements. Vegetation cover is generally sparse across the LCA, although less so than Vale LCAs F1 and F2 to the north. While trees are mostly restricted to field boundaries, there are small woodland blocks scattered across the landscape, as part of designed landscapes and often in proximity to farmsteads. Several significant blocks of deciduous woodland are present near to Croft Grange and Clervaux Castle and there is a small block of ancient woodland at Hinkle Wood, to the south of Barton village. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.6.26 Settlement is dispersed across the landscape, including green villages at Barton and North Cowton. Stone and brick properties are characteristic of these village centres. There are a combination of large farms, granges and occasional halls scattered across the landscape, many of which have formal landscape elements including laid gardens and avenue tree planting along driveways. Parkland and designed landscapes are present in this LCA, although not as prominent in the landscape as they are in other vale LCAs.
- 5.6.27 This is a diverse, rural landscape with relatively strong sense of tranquillity. The A1(M) forms the north-west boundary and exerts a human influence, as does Croft Circuit (motor racing circuit on a former airfield) in the east of the LCA. The landscape has a generally open character with more intimate areas occasionally created by woodland and tree vegetation. There are often open views with large skies across the gently rolling landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.6.28 Modern improved fields dominate this LCA, although there are also significant areas of piecemeal and unknown planned enclosure throughout. The designed landscapes of Clervaux Castle and Halnaby Hall, together with the former airfield at Croft Circuit are present in the centre of the LCA. Small blocks of broadleaved, coniferous and mixed plantation woodland are also scattered across the LCA.

Landscape Condition

5.6.29 There have been significant changes to this landscape over time and a number of landscape and cultural features have been altered. Intensification of arable farming has resulted in fragmented vegetation. Woodland and hedgerows are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- Pressures for settlement expansion and housing along main road corridors could affect the dispersed settlement pattern and predominantly rural character;
- New development within historic villages may not be consistent with the historic form of the village and the vernacular materials and design of buildings;
- Potential pressure for the development of infrastructure within the vale including road expansion, renewable energy, transmission pylons and lines;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on habitat structure;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area F4: Moulton Vale

Location

- 5.6.30 This LCA forms the western edge of the open vale in the west of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Aldbrough Vale LCA F2, to the east by Barton and North Cowton Vale LCA F3, to the south by Brompton-on-Swale East Broad Valley LCA E5, and to the west by Skeeby Narrow Valley LCA D3 and Melsonby Moors Fringe LCA B4.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying, gently undulating landscape
- Tributary becks generally drain in a north-south direction towards the River Swale
- Predominantly arable farmland, with variation in field form and scale
- Open landscape with dispersed vegetation cover
- Variety of settlement type dispersed along the line of the becks
- Villages contain a mix of historic houses constructed from vernacular materials and modern settlement expansion
- Rural landscape with a generally strong sense of tranquillity, locally interrupted by the major road corridor through the west
- Often expansive views across the vale towards the distant higher ground

Current Character

- 5.6.31 This LCA comprises the low lying, gently undulating landscape that forms the western part of the vale landscape between the River Swale and River Tees. Topography is more varied than the adjacent LCA F3, undulating around a shallow valley formed by tributary becks between Middleton Tyas and Uckerby. The landform generally slopes in a west-east direction; from approximately 140m AOD at Scotch Corner to approximately 60m AOD in the east of the LCA as it transitions east to the lower-lying vale.
- 5.6.32 Several becks flow through the landscape in a generally north-south direction, from south of Barton, through Middleton Tyas and Moulton towards the River Swale. Watercourses

are generally inconspicuous in the landscape, although can be picked out in part as more sinuous lines of vegetation defining the edges of fields.

- 5.6.33 This is primarily arable farmland with an irregular, medium-scale field pattern that is largely defined by hedgerows with trees. Smaller scale, often more intimate enclosure is present in proximity to settlements. Isolated woodland blocks are dispersed across the area, with a significant block of mixed plantation woodland in the south at Hodber Hill Plantation, and substantial woodland cover at Middleton Lodge in the north of the LCA. A small block of woodland identifies the SSSI of Black Scar, on the site of a disused quarry to the south of Middleton Tyas.
- 5.6.34 There are a variety of settlement types, dispersed north-south through the LCA along the line of the becks. These include the hamlets of Moulton in the centre, and Scorton and Bolton-on-Swale to the south. Middleton Tyas is a linear village in the north of the area, that has expanded west over time. Properties constructed of stone are characteristic of the historic settlement cores, many of which are listed. There are a number of scheduled, buried medieval features including settlements at Moulton and Uckerby and mine at Middleton Tyas. Grade I Moulton Hall and grade II* Middleton Lodge including the registered park and garden are important country houses and estates in the LCA.
- 5.6.35 Mineral extraction is common in the local landscape, within this and adjacent LCAs to the south and west. There are active workings at Barton Quarry, on the A1(M) corridor in the north of the LCA. There is localised intrusion on the rural character from both the workings and the major road corridor. Screening woodland and boundary planting reduce the effects, and this remains a moderately tranquil, rural landscape.
- 5.6.36 The landscape has strong cultural and historical influences, which have been impacted on in part by the surrounding arable land use and infrastructure. This is an open landscape with large skies. The gently undulating landform often contains views within the LCA. More expansive views to the east open up as the landform gently slopes east from the edge of the settlements. It is a strongly rural, moderately tranquil landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.6.37 This LCA is dominated by modern improved fields but there are significant areas of piecemeal and unknown planned enclosure present. There is evidence of the extraction industry, both past and present, with the copper mine and ridge and furrow fields to the south-east of Middleton Tyas and Barton limestone quarry in the north of the LCA. In addition, the elite residence of Middleton Lodge is located in the north of the LCA.

Landscape Condition

- 5.6.38 There have been significant changes to this landscape over time and a number current land uses locally intrude on the rural character. Intensification of arable farming has resulted in fragmented vegetation. Woodland and hedgerows are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Conversion of permanent pastures to arable could potentially affect archaeological features including earthworks;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- New development within historic villages may not be consistent with the historic form of the village and the vernacular materials and design of buildings;
- Pressure for commercial development close to Scotch Corner and infrastructure within the vale;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on habitat structure;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area F5: Eryholme Vale

Location

5.6.39 This LCA is part of the open vale in the eastern extent of the study area. It is bounded to the north and east by Dalton-on-Tees Broad Valley LCA E3, to the west by Barton and North Cowton Vale LCA F3 and extends south into Hambleton District.

Key Characteristics

- Generally low lying landscape with gentle undulations around the course of Dalton Beck to large-scale field pattern
- Open landscape with relatively little vegetation cover, predominantly comprising of hedgerow and roadside trees and fragmented hedgerows
- Predominantly arable landscape with medium to large-scale fields with low boundaries that contribute to the open character
- Rural landscape with a generally strong sense of tranquillity
- Scattered farms and cottages
- Generally open and long-distance views with large skies

Current Character

5.6.40 This LCA comprises the low lying, gently rolling landscape that forms the western part of the vale landscape, as it transitions into the broad valley of the River Tees. There is little variation in topography, with the landform ranging between 50m on locally high points to 25m in the north, closer to the River Tees Valley. The landform is undulating in places such as around Eryholme Grange and Humbleberry Hill. Dalton Beck cuts a shallow valley in a south-north direction that contributes to locally undulating landform. A number of other watercourses cross the LCA, generally following more sinuous field boundary lines.

- 5.6.41 Arable farming is the main land use, comprising of an irregular, medium to large-scale field pattern. There is generally sparse vegetation cover across the LCA and trees are mostly restricted to field boundaries, which are a mixture of hedgerows with occasional trees. There is a single block of woodland in the south-east of the LCA and occasional, small groups of trees near properties, watercourses and near to the railway in the east. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.6.42 There is very little settlement within the LCA. Farms, including converted buildings and clustered large barns are scattered across the area and accessed along tracks leading from the main routes. These are generally well-integrated by undulating landform and boundary vegetation.
- 5.6.43 This is an open, often exposed landscape with wide, often long-distance views across the vale to rising hills and moors. The landscape has few cultural and historical influences. It is a reasonably tranquil and rural landscape.

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.6.44 This LCA is a mosaic of modern improved fields, piecemeal enclosure and unknown planned enclosure. There are two small blocks of woodland present, one broadleaved (Forty Acre Plantation), the other mixed plantation.

Landscape Condition

- 5.6.45 Intensification of arable farming has resulted in exposed fields and fragmented, often gappy hedgerows. Modern agricultural buildings and conversions are generally well-integrated in the rural landscape. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Lack of management of existing woodlands and trees resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Potential for agricultural development to be conspicuous in the low-lying landscape;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on habitat structure. Flooding is likely to pose an increased risk in lowland areas and farmers should consider planting flood resistant crops wherever possible;
- Agriculture will have to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent water courses. There is potential to introduce buffer zones to water courses.

Landscape Character Area F6: Constable Burton Vale

Location

- 5.6.46 This LCA is part of the open vale in the south of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Hauxwell Moors Fringe LCA B15, to the east by Hornby Vale LCA F7, to the south by the Spennithorne Moors Fringe LCA B19 and to the west by Leyburn Broad Valley LCA E6.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying, rolling landscape
- A number of significant tributary becks meander through the landscape
- A moderately wooded landscape created by scattered woodland blocks, riparian vegetation and trees within hedgerows
- A mixture of arable farmland across gentle slopes, with areas of pastoral farming often in proximity to settlements
- A number of tourism and recreational activities are located within this landscape
- A generally still, rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- Designed, ornamental landscapes with halls, granges and farmsteads
- Generally dispersed settlement pattern including the hall and estate village of Constable Burton, variety of farms and cottages, and camping/caravan sites
- Undulating landform and vegetation contribute to an enclosed landscape and visual character

Current Character

- 5.6.47 This LCA comprises the low lying, rolling landscape that forms the vale landscape that extends east from Lower Wensleydale towards the Vale of Mowbray beyond the District boundary. The topography of the rolling landform varies from the moors fringes at approximately 165m AOD in the north-west and 140m AOD in the south-west, to approximately 60m AOD in the shallow valley of Lemming/Moor/Newton Beck in the south-east.

- 5.6.48 There are a number of tributary becks that take meandering, generally vegetated courses through the LCA. These flow generally in a west-east direction and confluence near Akebar in the south-east of the LCA.
- 5.6.49 This LCA has a wooded character, created by scattered blocks of woodland including areas of ancient replanted woodland at Croft Wood and Wild Wood, riparian woodland and trees, field boundary hedgerows with trees and shelterbelts associated with the golf course and farms. Woodland and parkland trees within the Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden of Constable Burton Hall are prominent areas of vegetation in the centre of the LCA. The site consists of a park with medieval origins, gardens dating from the 18th century.⁴³ There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.6.50 This is a moderately diverse landscape, with variety of farming types, tourism/recreation sites and significant parkland landscape. Medium to large-scale arable fields characterise the west and gentler slopes in the east of the LCA. Grazing is located on steeper slopes and in proximity to the settlements. Tourism and recreation contribute to the landscape, including Wensleydale heritage railway along the southern boundary, Wensleydale Golf Club and camping/caravan park sites at Constable Burton Hall and Akebar Farm.
- 5.6.51 The LCA encompasses the estate village of Constable Burton which has properties, including listed properties, mostly constructed of local stone in the historic village centre. Farms and cottages are dispersed through the wider area and include listed stone farmhouses.
- 5.6.52 This is generally an intimate, rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity. There are occasionally expansive views to more distant, higher ground from upper slopes. Recreational and tourism land uses are locally intrusive, although generally well-integrated in the wider landscape pattern.

⁴³ https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/rpg/2062.pdf

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.6.53 This is largely an area formed of modern improved fields, with areas of unknown planned enclosure in the west. There is a large area formed of strip fields to the south of Constable Burton. The designed landscape (gardens and pleasure grounds) of Constable Burton Hall is in the centre of the LCA. Blocks of broadleaved and mixed plantation woodland are scattered across the area including a large block of ancient replanted woodland at Wild Wood.

Landscape Condition

- 5.6.54 Changes in farming practices have resulted in expanded fields and boundary fragmentation in parts. Estate character is generally well-maintained around Constable Burton. Woodland and boundary vegetation are generally well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Lack of management of existing woodland and trees resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- New development within historic villages may not be consistent with the historic form of the village and the vernacular materials and design of buildings;
- Increased pressure for tourist related developments, such as holiday cottages, camping sites and caravan parks potentially affecting the character and quality of the landscape;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on habitat structure;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

Landscape Character Area F7: Hornby Vale

Location

5.6.55 This LCA forms part of the open vale in the south of the study area. It is bounded to the north by Tunstall Moors Fringe LCAB16, to the south by Spennithorne Moors Fringe LCA B19, to the west by Constable Burton Vale LCA F6 and extends east into Hambleton District.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying, gently rolling large-scale landscape
- Open landscape with dispersed vegetation cover
- Pockets of woodland and riparian vegetation create more intimate landscape in places
- Predominantly large-scale arable farmland with pockets of enclosed pasture
- A generally simple, still, rural landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity
- Registered park and garden of Hornby Castle and surrounding woodland in the north-east
- Dispersed historic villages, farms and houses constructed largely of vernacular materials
- Expansive views across the vale towards the distant higher ground

Current Character

5.6.56 This LCA comprises the low lying, gently rolling landscape that forms the vale landscape that extends east from Lower Wensleydale towards the Vale of Mowbray beyond the district boundary. The landform gradually slopes in a general west-east direction from approximately 115m AOD to the east of Hunton to approximately 60m AOD in the east, continuing beyond the study area.

5.6.57 A small number of tributary becks meander through the LCA. In places these are defined by vegetation along the watercourses and in the north ponds and lakes have been created along the watercourses as part of the designed landscape.

- 5.6.58 This is a generally open, often exposed large-scale arable landscape with generally limited vegetation cover. There are smaller scale, often enclosed areas of pasture alongside watercourses and in proximity to settlement. Woodland is clustered in the north-east, where plantations form the edge of the designed parkland landscape and smaller woodland blocks form the edge of the Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden of Hornby Castle Park. Smaller, sinuous woodland blocks follow the line of watercourses to the east of Newton-le-Willows. Hedgerows and riparian vegetation occasionally provide links through the landscape. However, hedgerows are generally low with few trees. There are no nationally designated landscape or biodiversity sites within the LCA.
- 5.6.59 Hornby Castle is set on a high point and commands distant views to the North York Moors in the east and the Yorkshire Dales to the west. It was formerly a large medieval hunting park that was modified as landscaped pleasure gardens in the 18th century and since then altered by changes in farming and land management. It retains a number of parkland trees and clumps and is bisected by the tree lined drive from Hackforth Lodge to Hornby. Boundaries to the park are not strongly defined, but this is thought to have been deliberate to make it appear more expansive by visually taking-in the surrounding countryside.⁴⁴
- 5.6.60 There are a variety of settlement types, dispersed across the LCA. Newton-le-Willows and Patrick Brompton are small villages in the south of the area, comprising low-density settlement largely built from local stone, with a small number of listed buildings through Patrick Brompton. Farms and houses are dispersed across the wider landscape and the buildings are often well-screened by surrounding tree boundaries. Model farms form part of the designed landscape around Hornby. Communication wires and poles are conspicuous, linking across the open landscape.
- 5.6.61 This is an open landscape with expansive, long-distance views across the vale and lower, fringe slopes to distant, higher land. Woodland and parkland vegetation creates more intimate pockets of landscape around historic settlements. It is a strongly rural, moderately tranquil landscape.

⁴⁴ <https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/hornby-castle-northallerton>

Historic Landscape Character

- 5.6.62 This LCA is primarily a mosaic of modern improved fields, unknown planned enclosure and piecemeal enclosure. There is a significant area of planned large-scale enclosure in the south-east of the LCA. The north-east of the LCA is dominated by the designed landscape of Hornby Castle/Hornby Park.

Landscape Condition

- 5.6.63 Changes in farming practices have resulted in expanded fields and fragmentation of hedgerows and vegetation in parts. Key parkland features are generally well-maintained around Hornby Castle. Woodland and boundary vegetation are relatively well-maintained. The landscape condition is variable, with generally moderate condition across the LCA.

Forces for Change

- Intensification of agriculture resulting in loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Lack of management of existing woodland and trees resulting in a gradual decline with a large proportion of over-mature trees and lack of young trees to replace them;
- Pollution of water courses from adjacent arable fields;
- Decline in the management of parkland and associated features;
- New development within historic villages may not be consistent with the historic form of the village and the vernacular materials and design of buildings;
- Increased pressure for tourist related developments, such as holiday cottages, camping sites and caravan parks potentially affecting the character and quality of the landscape;
- Future impacts of climate change such as higher rainfall in winter that would affect water levels and impact on habitat structure;
- Agriculture will likely need to adapt to use less water, carbon and other resources, and reduce runoff of water, soil, fertiliser and pesticides into adjacent watercourses.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 General

6.1.1 This Landscape Character Assessment provides an in-depth understanding of the study area's landscapes that can assist in informing judgements and decisions concerning the management of landscape change.

6.1.2 In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, and consistent with best practice advocated by the Government's Planning Practice Guidance, it is recommended that Richmondshire District Council uses the findings of this study as set out below.

6.2 Local Plan Policy

6.2.1 In conjunction with the findings of Volume 2 of the study, it is recommended that the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment should be used to inform Local Plan policy formulation and consideration of potential site allocations with regard to:

- Maintaining the dispersed and rural settlement character throughout the study area;
- Provision of accessible and biodiverse green infrastructure networks;
- Recognising the intrinsic value of landscapes in their own right, as well as landscapes that make a strong contribution to the historic significance and setting of heritage assets;
- Identifying opportunities for helping to protect and enhance local landscape distinctiveness through mitigation of development-led change and appropriate land management practices;
- Highlighting opportunities for restoring areas where the landscape character has been eroded or compromised by insensitive past development and/or inappropriate land management.

6.3 Development Management

- 6.3.1 In conjunction with the findings of Volume 2 of the study, it is recommended that the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment should be used to support development management decisions with regards to informing the assessment of planning applications coming forward within the Local Plan area in respect of landscape impact and design considerations.
- 6.3.2 As the Local Planning Authority, the Council should use the key landscape features identified in the Landscape Character Assessment to assist in the development control process. Development assessed as having potential to have a significant effect on key landscape features may be a candidate for refusal or require mitigation through appropriate planning conditions that ensure important features are not lost.
- 6.3.3 The Local Planning Authority should aim to avoid a standardised approach to design by using the Landscape Character Assessment to inform the process of negotiation between planning officers and developers. The Local Planning Authority should seek to be proactive in specifying to developers how their proposals can be designed to reflect and enhance local landscape character. For example, officers may use the Landscape Character Assessment to (i) highlight to developers characteristic features of the landscape that should be considered for enhancement, restoration or conservation etc, and (ii) to identify specific criteria and landscape considerations that a development proposal should take account of prior to approval and subsequently be assessed against.
- 6.3.4 The Local Planning Authority should, where appropriate, encourage developers to use local building materials, building styles, native species and other characteristic features and elements of a particular landscape to strengthen local distinctiveness.
- 6.3.5 Developers and other agents for change should be encouraged to adopt creative solutions to conserving and/or enhancing local landscape character, and identify the means by which development and land management proposals might be successfully integrated into the existing landscape character. Consideration should be given to the scale of development, layout and relationship to existing development and field patterns. In addition to informing new development on greenfield sites, the Landscape Character Assessment should also be used to help identify opportunities for creating new landscapes

and restoring habitats on previously developed brownfield sites that offer limited landscape features for new development to refer to.

- 6.3.6 The Local Planning Authority should also consider the cumulative effects of small-scale development on landscape character. Incremental changes can gradually erode landscape character and local distinctiveness if the wider context of a development or land management initiative is not considered. The Landscape Character Assessment highlights key characteristics such as distinctive field patterns, features and settlement patterns that are particularly susceptible to incremental change. However, the Landscape Character Assessment should also be used to identify the means by which such developments may be successfully incorporated into the landscape and indeed enhance particular characteristics.
- 6.3.7 The Council should encourage developers to use the Landscape Character Assessment as a baseline for informing Environmental Impact Assessments of developments. The impact of development on key landscape features and characteristics should be assessed and where impacts are found to occur, scheme modification or mitigation measures should be required to remove or reduce potential adverse impacts.
- 6.3.8 The Local Planning Authority and developers should give priority to protecting key landscape features. Wherever possible, opportunities to introduce new features should be identified to compensate for loss or degradation elsewhere. This might include ensuring that where a particular habitat or area of planting is lost as a result of development, habitat creation or planting is undertaken at a suitable location close by to offset the loss and provide a net environmental gain.
- 6.3.9 The Local Planning Authority should ensure that change is appropriate to landscape character. Proposals should be pursued that are appropriate for the features and characteristics that define local distinctiveness in a given Landscape Character Type(s) and relevant Landscape Character Area(s). Perceptual aspects such as tranquillity, remoteness and wilderness should also be considered.

6.4 Landscape Assessment Toolkit

- 6.4.1 It is recommended that Richmondshire District Council gives consideration to preparing a 'Landscape Assessment Toolkit' to provide a user guide to help planning officers, developers and other stakeholders effectively apply the findings of the study in assessing and shaping development proposals.
- 6.4.2 The Toolkit could take the form of a step-by-step guide, illustrated by case studies, for assessing landscape sensitivity to development proposals, developing appropriate landscape mitigation measures and identifying landscape enhancement opportunities, potentially using a set of landscape and visual sensitivity criteria in the form of a simple checklist to signpost users to relevant information in the study.
- 6.4.3 This could also involve making the key findings of the study available on an Interactive Mapping tool on the Council's website to provide a visual aid in the assessment of development proposals.

6.5 Monitoring Landscape Change

- 6.5.1 It is recommended that Richmondshire District Council gives consideration to monitoring landscape change to enable it to assess the practical effectiveness of Local Plan policies and initiatives, and to help modify policy and management regimes in light of actual trends.
- 6.5.2 The information arising from a programme of monitoring patterns of landscape change can be used for a variety of purposes including decision-making in the development control process, and the identification of priorities and targets for funding and landscape enhancement initiatives.
- 6.5.3 The Landscape Character Assessment can be used to identify a range of indicators to assist in the monitoring of landscape change whether this is deemed to be positive or negative.

6.6 Developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy

- 6.6.1 It is recommended that Richmondshire District Council gives consideration to developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy in accordance the Government's Planning Practice Guidance on the Natural Environment which states:

'How can a strategic approach be taken to green infrastructure?

Strategic policies can identify the location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks and set out appropriate policies for their protection and enhancement. To inform these, and support their implementation, green infrastructure frameworks or strategies prepared at a district-wide scale (or wider) can be a useful tool. These need to be evidence-based and include assessments of the quality of current green infrastructure and any gaps in provision. Existing national and local strategies – for example on tree and woodland provision – can inform the approach to green infrastructure; and standards such as the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard can be applied when assessing provision.

The green infrastructure strategy can inform other plan policies, infrastructure delivery requirements and Community Infrastructure Levy schedules. In view of their potential scope and use, authorities need to collaborate with neighbouring authorities and stakeholders such as Local Nature Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Local Enterprise Partnerships when developing green infrastructure strategies.' (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 8-007-20190721)

- 6.6.2 The Planning Practice Guidance recognises that Green Infrastructure exists within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty. This suggests that a complementary strategic approach to recognising the role of Green Infrastructure and landscape in achieving well-designed places would be beneficial going forward.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Glossary⁴⁵

Characterisation

The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.

Characteristics

Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a particular contribution to distinctive character.

Classification

Is concerned with dividing the landscape into areas of distinct, recognisable and consistent common character and grouping areas of similar character together.

Elements

Individual components that make up the landscape, such as trees and hedges.

Features

Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements in the landscape, such as tree clumps, church spires or wooded horizons.

Key Characteristics

Those combinations of elements and features that are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place.

Landscape

An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

Landscape Character

A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements and features in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Landscape Character Areas

These are single, unique areas that are the discrete geographical areas within a particular landscape type. Each has its own individual character and identity, even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other areas of the same type.

Landscape Character Assessment

This is the process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.

Landscape Character Types

These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use and settlement pattern.

⁴⁵ Adapted from Glossary of Terms in An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England, 2014

Landscape Management

Action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes that are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes.

Landscape Planning

Strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes.

Landscape Policy

An expression by the competent public authorities, of general principles, strategies and guidelines that permit the taking of specific measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes.

Landscape Protection

Actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape justified by its value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity.

Landscape Condition

This is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape; about its intactness, from visual, functional and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements that make up the character in any one place.

Sensitivity

A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.

Susceptibility

The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.

APPENDIX B

Bibliography and Data Sources

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, 2014, Natural England
- County Durham Landscape Character Assessment - <http://www.durhamlandscape.info/article/10092/Landscape-Classification>
- Darlington Landscape Character Assessment, December 2015, LUC on behalf of Darlington Borough Council
- European Landscape Convention, 2000, Council of Europe
- Hambleton Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study, May 2016, LUC on behalf of Hambleton District Council
- Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment, 2004, Harrogate Borough Council
- National Character Area Profile 21 Yorkshire Dales, NE399, 2015, Natural England
- National Character Area Profile 22 Pennine Dales Fringe, NE474, 2015, Natural England
- National Character Area Profile 23 Tees Lowlands, NE439, 2013, Natural England
- National Character Area Profile 24 Vale of Mowbray, NE442, 2015, Natural England
- National Planning Policy Framework, 2019, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project, 2010, Chris Blandford Associates on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council
- Planning Practice Guidance, 2019, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Richmondshire Local Plan 2012-2028 Core Strategy, Richmondshire District Council
- Yorkshire Dales National Park Landscape Character Assessment, 2002, Estell Warren Landscape Architects on behalf of Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Landscape Layer	Dataset	Date	Source
Contours	OS Topography - https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendatadownload/products.html	Downloaded May 2019	Ordnance Survey
Geology	bgs.ac.uk/products/digitalmaps/digmapgb_625.html	Downloaded May 2019	BGS
Watercourses	OS Vectormap District - https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendatadownload/products.html	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
Flood risk zones 2 and 3	https://data.gov.uk/dataset/bed63fc1-dd26-4685-b143-2941088923b3/flood-map-for-planning-rivers-and-sea-flood-zone-3 https://data.gov.uk/dataset/cf494c44-05cd-4060-a029-35937970c9c6/flood-map-for-planning-rivers-and-sea-flood-zone-2	Downloaded May 2019	Environment Agency
National Character Areas	North East England NCA	Downloaded May 2019	Data.gov.uk
AONBs	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Natural England
National Parks	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Natural England
European Wildlife Sites	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Natural England
SSSIs	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Natural England
National/Local Nature Reserves	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Natural England
Conservation Areas	Conservation Areas Dataset	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
Open Spaces	RDC_Open Spaces	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
MOD Land Use	RDC_Barracks Extents and Military Training Areas	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
Development Limits	RDC_Development Limits	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
Registered Parks & Gardens	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Historic England
Scheduled Monuments	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Historic England
Listed Buildings	https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Dataset_Download_Summary.htm	Downloaded May 2019	Historic England
Historic Landscape Characterisation	The North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley HLC Dataset	Received May 2019	North Yorkshire County Council
Aerial Imagery	https://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/	Downloaded May 2019	Google Earth
Base Mapping	OS Landranger Basemapping 1:50000	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
Base Mapping	OS Explorer Basemapping 1:25000	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council
Base Mapping	OS Vector Map Local	Received May 2019	Richmondshire District Council

APPENDIX C

Stakeholder Workshop Note

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT AND SENSITIVITY STUDY

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTE

23rd May 2019, Friars Room, RDC, Mercury House, Richmond

Attendees

Matthew Usher	Richmondshire District Council, Senior Policy Officer
Harriet Westwood	Richmondshire District Council, Policy Officer
Ann Smith	Richmondshire District Council, Conservation Officer
Kathryn Donnelly	GL Hearn, Senior Planner
Colin Boynton	Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Estates Surveyor
Dominic Watkins	Chris Blandford Associates (Facilitators)
Jenny Gay	Chris Blandford Associates (Facilitators)

Apologies

Mark Robson	Richmondshire District Council, Principal Policy Officer
Ian Nesbit	Richmondshire District Council, Planning Officer
Steve McGavin	GL Hearn, Planning and Development Director
William Brennan	Defence Infrastructure Organisation

Purpose of Workshop

To brief the key stakeholders on the study's methodology and process, and to review and discuss the preliminary landscape character assessment work (Stage 1)

Stakeholder Feedback

1. RDC suggested CBA review the county Landscape Character Type (LCT) 'Moors Fringe', particularly consider:
 - Redefine/rename as not all of the draft Landscape Character Areas (LCA) seem to fit this typology;
 - Alter the LCT boundary so doesn't extend so far east.

2. Suggestion of district level LCT to take account of smaller scale variation in landscape typology such as the transitional landscape of the Gritstone High Plateau-Moors Fringe-Settled Vale Farmland and also picking out the river valleys.

3. RDC identified several heritage assets/features that are undesignated – particularly designed parklands/estates that contribute to the local landscape character [Note. RDC do not have a list of undesignated features]

4. Considering the following Stage 2 Landscape Sensitivity Study:
AS identified the importance of the physical and visual relationship between settlements of Richmond and Catterick Garrison. Note key views south from the castle and Georgian race course.



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