Lime & Ice

Landscape Character Assessment

Hambleton and Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership Area

The CAN DO Partnership

December 2007
The CAN DO Partnership is based around a common vision and shared aims to develop:

**An area of landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity excellence benefiting the economic and social well-being of the communities who live within it.**

The organisations and agencies which make up the partnership have defined a geographical area which covers the south-west corner of the North York Moors National Park and the northern part of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The individual organisations recognise that by working together resources can be used more effectively, achieving greater value overall.


The area was selected because of its natural and cultural heritage diversity which includes the highest concentration of ancient woodland in the region, a nationally important concentration of veteran trees, a range of other semi-natural habitats including some of the most biologically rich sites on Jurassic Limestone in the county, designed landscapes, nationally important ecclesiastical sites and a significant concentration of archaeological remains from the Neolithic to modern times. However, the area has experienced the loss of many landscape character features over the last fifty years including the conversion of land from moorland to arable and the extensive planting of conifers on ancient woodland sites.

### Aims – agreed by the CAN DO Partnership

**Biodiversity**  Encourage management in the area that delivers the maximum possible bio and geo-diversity

**Cultural Environment**  Characterise, conserve and enhance the cultural environment of the area

**Landscape**  Improve the landscape to develop the character & distinctiveness of the area

**Information**  Provide a high standard of information and interpretation so as to enhance understanding of the area’s cultural and natural heritage and of how they are linked.

**Access**  Demonstrate this linkage by improving sustainable access to the area.

**Best Practice**  Establish the area as a national model for the management and presentation of natural and cultural heritage.

**Integration**  Use the area's special qualities to foster Integrated Rural Development, recognising, balancing and delivering environmental, economic and social benefits.

**Partnership**  Demonstrate that a wide variety of public bodies can work effectively together and with the private sector and local communities in pursuit of a common purpose.

**Sustainability**  Encourage high standards of environmental good practice in terms of resource protection, renewable energy, waste management and minimising resource inputs

**Co-ordination**  Ensure that no actions are implemented in isolation and that consideration is given to linking other aims, objectives and actions and to the environmental, social and economic impacts as far as possible.
The landscape character of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership Area is based around the following qualities:

- Variety in land form and topography creating exposed and enclosed places
- Distinctive and unique escarpment and limestone plateau
- Glacially shaped landscape features and deposits
- Unifying natural and cultural heritage elements
- Expansive and panoramic views across lowland vales
- Rich in cultural traditions and built heritage
- Distinctive and intimate villages and communities
- Varied past represented by a valuable archaeological record
- An area of interesting ecological character with diverse habitats
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1. **Introduction**

1.1 **Scope of the Assessment**

This Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken on behalf of the CAN DO Partnership during period of November 2006 to April 2007. The study examines a selected area of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills in North Yorkshire.

The Hambleton & Howardian Hills CAN DO (Cultural and Natural Development Opportunity) will submit a bid to the Heritage Grants scheme in December 2007. The CAN DO Partnership, in existence since 2003, is a collaboration of organisations working collectively with a common vision to create:

> ‘An area of landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity excellence benefiting the economic and social well-being of the communities that live within it.’

The overall objectives of the Landscape Character Assessment are to:

- validate how and why the Hambleton & Howardian Hills is a unique and distinctive landscape
- understand what local people and visitors regard as special and how they appreciate the area’s sense of place
- ascertain any forces for change and development pressures
- provide information and guidance to those determining changes at a landscape scale

1.2 **The Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area**

The Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area covers the south west corner of the North York Moors National Park and the northern part of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The area is approximately one hundred and sixty square kilometres. This represents about half of the total area covered by the CAN DO Partnership. It was felt appropriate that a smaller area was selected for the purposes of the Heritage Grants scheme and any future landscape scale funding applications. A smaller area will allow for greater measurable impact and greater likelihood of creating landscape scale change. Further discussion about the selection of the area and decisions made over boundary choices can be found under Appendix i.

Figure 2 and Figure 3 provide maps of the location and context of the area.
Figure 3 Landscape Partnership Area
1.3 Relationship to Existing Assessments

Existing landscape character assessments which cover the Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area are the:

- North York Moors National Park Landscape Character Assessment (2003) – undertaken by White, Young, Green Associates on behalf of the North York Moors National Park Authority
- The Howardian Hills Landscape (1995) – undertaken by Cobham Resource Consultants on behalf of the Countryside Commission
- Howardian Hills Joint Character Area 29 (1996) – Countryside Commission
- North Yorkshire Moors and Cleveland Hills Joint Character Area 25 (1996) Countryside Commission
- Vale of Mowbray Joint Character Area 24 (1996) Countryside Commission

This additional assessment is required as it is specific to the Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area. Furthermore, the survey and analysis have been carried out at a more localised level providing a greater level of detail. This assessment has taken heed of the prior assessments listed above, respects the process of their undertaking and does not contradict their findings. Figure 3 shows a map of the Joint Character Areas as classified by the Countryside Agency. Figure 4 presents the National Landscape Typology types for the area, also developed by the Countryside Agency.

1.4 Methodology

A Landscape Character Assessment is a tool used to identify what makes a particular area unique, to qualify its strength of character and to an extent its condition. The process of undertaking such an assessment is designed to facilitate a systematic analysis, description and characterisation of the landscape. The assessment should recognise elements and combinations of elements that contribute to and define character.

This information should allow reasoned judgements to be made and helps to justify changes that will affect landscape character.

This Landscape Character Assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Countryside Agency guidance as illustrated in the document Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland 2002. A more detailed description of the process for this assessment is laid out in Appendix ii. This description highlights the key stages and framework for the process including the use of consultation and stakeholder input to development.
Figure 4 Joint Character Areas
1.5 Structure of the Assessment

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Introduces the area of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills and the scope and aims of the assessment

Chapter 2 Character and Influences

2.1 Landscape Character of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area

A summary of the overall character and significance of the area with the recognition of features and elements that render the area unique and distinctive.

2.2 Physical Influences

Summarises the physical influences that have impacted on the formation and character of the area including geology, topography and hydrology.

2.3 Ecological Character

An overview of the area’s ecology with reference to individual habitats and the contribution that biodiversity makes to landscape character and uniqueness.

2.4 Human Influences

Establishes the human influences and the impact on the overall character of the area.

2.5 Perceptions & Interpretations

A discussion of historical and contemporary artistic and literary interpretations of the area.

Chapter 3 Landscape Character

The main component of the assessment with a detailed description of each landscape character type and associated character areas.
2. Character and Influences

2.1 Landscape Character of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership Area

2.1.1 Summary of Landscape Character

The Hambleton and Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area is one represented by a unique and diverse range of natural and cultural heritage. An upland limestone capped plateau dominates terminating abruptly to the south and west in an glacially carved escarpment edge. The plateau and the surrounding lowland vale produce stunning often panoramic views reaching far to the dales of the west, the moors of the east and the vales of the south. The diverse topography is unified by various cultural and natural heritage assets. As a chiefly farmed area, networks of fields bounded by stone walls and hedges create strong patterns across landscape. The concentration of semi-natural woodland which clings to the escarpment and valley slopes presents a well-wooded appearance and the distinctive shapes of the former abbeys and country homes have an impressive influence. Settlements are small and intimate and reflect the use of the local stone as a building material. Settlements often nestle on slopes and at the foot of the striking escarpment.

The area’s geological evolution contributes greatly to the historic environment – firstly through it’s influences over the distribution and availability of raw materials and secondly the topography determining the distribution of high and low ground, water supply and soils. The dictation of human activity by the natural landscape is intriguing and unique. The remains of Iron Age hillforts and Bronze Age burial sites occupy the upland areas taking full advantage of the far reaching views – the same views used during the last century for the positioning of military defence sites. This is truly a distinctive landscape made inimitable by its limestone plateau and glacially carved escarpment. Human activity influenced by the natural heritage has resulted in a rich cultural heritage resource of interest and importance.

2.1.2 Recognitions of Importance

The Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area holds a number of designations. The entire focus area falls within the North York Moors National Park and the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

There are also a number of other statutory designations including SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), Registered Historic Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. These are listed under Appendix iii together with lists of other designated sites.
2.2 Physical Influences

Many of the distinctive qualities and character of the Hambleton and Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership Area originate from the unique geomorphology. The importance of the Jurassic bedrock and quaternary glaciations are the two greatest influences on the area’s geomorphology and subsequently dictate much of the historic environment and contemporary land use.

2.2.1 Geology

The solid geology of the area is almost entirely of Jurassic origin with Upper and Middle Jurassic grits dominating. Deposition of Jurassic sediments began two hundred and thirteen million years ago and continued for some sixty three million years. The Lower Jurassic (Lias) rocks resulting from marine deposition environments comprise a succession of shales and clays with limestones, ironstones, siltstones and sandstones. Figure 6 shows a map of the area’s solid geology and Figure 7 illustrates the area’s drift or superficial geology. Figure 8 marks fault lines and areas of mass movement.

Middle Jurassic deposition was initiated by a marine episode although much of the deposition occurred subsequently under a regime of marshy flats and meandering river channels which were interrupted by further marine incursions responsible for the Lebberston, Gristhorpe, Scarborough and Scalby formations. The Middle Jurassic rock therefore comprises mainly of a sequence of sandstones, pale siltstones and clays with thin ironstones and coals.

In contrast to the marshy freshwater deposition of the Middle Jurassic, the Upper Jurassic was solely the result of deposition under marine environment. The Corallian Group of Upper, Middle and Lower Calcareous grits are of notable importance here representing a phase of shallow, warm water deposition of thick shales and calcareous limestones and sandstones. Interbedded between the grit formations banks of shelly oolites with coral reef are found (Hambleton and Malton Oolites). The Lower Calcareous Grit reached its maximum development across the Hambleton Hills. The outcrop terminates abruptly in the west facing escarpment and then swings to the south-east and is broken by the Coxwold-Gilling Gap and then continues south through the Howardian Hills. The whole Corallian Group is thinner across the Howardian Hills and is heavily faulted.
Figure 7 Superficial Geology
Figure 8 Fault Lines and Mass Movement
2.2.2 Quaternary Developments

Glaciation and glacial deposition

Changes during the Quaternary period played a significant role in the physical shaping of the area. The Quaternary period brought successions of colder climate resulting in both glacial and pereglacial conditions. The Devensian period was the final glaciation of the Quaternary beginning some seventy thousand years ago and ending thirteen thousand years ago. During this final glaciation ice encroached from the west, north and east. The upland areas of the North York Moors and the Howardian Hills remained unglaciated – protruding above the ice as nunataks. As the harder rocks deflected the south-moving ice to the north and west the evidence of glaciation is revealed only in the carving of the steep western facing slopes and the deposition of glacial materials. Ice to the north in the Tees lowland built up to 800m and pushed south with one ice stream pushing across the Vale of Mowbray toward the faulted Vale of York through the Coxwold-Gilling Gap.

In the Vale of Pickering an ice-marginal lake was formed from water supplied by the Newton Dale meltwater channel as it drained the north lying upland areas. Lake Pickering extended through the Coxwold-Gilling gap ending close to where Thorpe Spring Farm is now located. The lake was responsible for a substantial deposition of lacustrine material which today creates the flat fertile vale landscape. The lake was dammed by North Sea ice to the east and eventually formed an overflow channel to the south-west creating the gorge at Kirkham. The change in drift geology demarcating the extent of the lake is marked. To the west glacial tills dominate and are generally an unsorted mixture of rocks, clays and sands.

Against the escarpment edge are lateral moraines – material derived from frost shattering carried along the edge of glaciers and deposited as banks of material following periods of ice recession.

The effects of glaciation have rendered the LP area a truly distinctive landscape cutting the escarpment edge, producing meltwater channel features and well drained upland plateaus. Glacial processes have also been responsible for drift deposits. The effects of glaciation on the area’s geology is the single largest influence on the development of human activity in the area.

Meltwater Effects

Elsewhere across the North York Moors and Howardian Hills the features left by glacial meltwater erosion are more imposing and widespread. Most notably, the meltwater cut channels of Newtondale and Kirkham Gorge represent the greatest influences of glacially associated waters. There are few significant meltwater features within the LP area. However, both Newtondale and Kirkham Gorge are associated with proglacial Lake Pickering which does extend into the south east of the area.
Erosional Processes and Differential Surface Erosion

The recession of the escarpment slopes has been subject to a varying number of erosional processes including rocks falls. Rotational landslips are responsible for the embayment type features close to South Woods Hall and Hood Grange along the western facing escarpment. Figure 8 illustrates the core areas of mass movement. The process of cambering is also notable across the area. Large blocks usually clustered in belts (up to 1km long and 10m deep) successively tilt with increasing dip to the lower ground. Known locally as 'windy pits' each leaves a narrow fissure in the rock narrowing with depth and often part-filled with debris and capped by soil. Windy pits are regarded as being of particular importance, due to the degree of survival of fragile and highly vulnerable prehistoric deposits, features and artefacts within them. Due to their geological significance, several of the windy pits are designated SSSIs. The windy pits are used as an amenity for cavers and potholers, and are nationally important swarming and roosting sites for bats.

2.2.3 Hydrology

The River Rye represents the main drainage channel of the area incising the upland plateau the channel is joined by many smaller tributaries along its course creating a ‘finger-like’ pattern especially to the south-west of the main channel. The commanding Hambleton syncline directs the ramifying drainage system via Rievaulx to form the River Rye. The solution of the limestone floor has controlled the development of the valley shape dictating a generally narrow and steep walled valley generally less than three hundred metres wide. Drainage on the plateau surface is almost entirely absent both on the Hambleton and the Howardian plateau areas. Figure 9 shows the patterns of hydrology and drainage.

2.2.4 Soils

The underlying Jurassic rocks and glacial deposits strongly determine the soil profile. The Upper Jurassic rocks in particular contain important calcareous strata with silty and stony brown rendzina soils. Where colluvial deposits are found on lower slopes brown earths develop especially where there is, or has formly been deciduous woodland. Brown alluvial soils are found in lowland areas, most notably the vales and valley floors where there is a presence of water borne deposits. The Vale of Pickering is underlain by Kimmeridge Clay although it is almost completely covered by later glacio-lacustrine deposits supporting the fertile ground-water gleys (pelo-alluvial). Gleys are characteristic of poorly drained areas often created byC the presence of an impermeable parent rock.
2.3 Ecological Character

The landscape of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills is determined by a varied geology giving rise to an upland plateau and vale with arable farmland, pasture and woodland. The broad plateau extends across much of the area with a vale area separating its extension to the south. The plateau in the north terminates in an abrupt escarpment. The narrow wooded dales that incise the plateau create a stark contrast to the open and exposed plateau tops. The dales are generally wooded with areas of pasture and marshy grassland on valley floors. The complex geography leads rise to varied habitats of ecological significance.

2.3.1 Grassland

Acid, neutral and calcareous grassland are all found within the area. Almost all of the grassland of ecological importance is semi-improved to some extent. Calcareous grassland is the most species rich and significant to the area. It exists because of the underlying Corallian Group (Upper Jurassic) geology which forms the cap of the upland plateau. The most species rich calcareous grasslands are found where soils are thinnest. The extensive arable land use in the area has resulted in the restriction of these grasslands to steep bank sides and on roadside verges. Disused quarries in the area also lend themselves to grassland habitats. Calcareous grassland can support a range of species including a variety of orchids (Bee Orchid, Burnt-Tip Orchid among others), invertebrates (especially butterflies and moths) and birds. The notable Duke of Burgundy butterfly is found at its northern most extent in the area.

Roadside verges throughout the area support a range of species including vetch, violets, primroses and orchids to salad burnet, rockrose and spurge laurel. The diversity of species and their use as habitat network connectors make them important. This tends to only be the case where verges are managed sympathetically.

2.3.2 Woodland

Woodland cover is substantial in this area, in relation to neighbouring areas. A significant proportion of the woodland cover is of planted origin occurring as conifer woodlands on upland areas and semi-natural broadleaved plantations. There are, however, also areas of ancient woodland forming one of the largest concentrations of ancient woodland in the north of England. Intact areas of ancient woodland have survived most notably on steep valley and escarpment sides – land which is unsuitable for cultivation. Many other ancient woodland sites have been replanted with conifers and non-native broadleaved species.

Large numbers of mature field and boundary trees, occurring mainly in the south of the area and across the vales contribute to the well wooded
appearance of the landscape. Woods and trees in the various designed parklands also contribute.

Ancient woodland cover offers the greatest contribution to ecological character. Veteran trees support wide ranges of invertebrates as well as birds, plants, lichen and fungi. Native woodlands have notable numbers of woodland birds and animals including pied flycatchers, wood warblers and badgers. Conifer plantations, while not native nor generally species rich can support less diverse ranges of invertebrates, birds and mammals. Much of the remaining semi-natural woodland is fragmented and isolated, broken by farmland and planted woodland. This can hamper the movement of woodland species.

2.3.3 Farmland

The farmland of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills is a mix of arable and pasture. Increased agricultural activity and intensive management has lead to a decline in the ecological value and character of these areas. This is a result of increased pesticide and fertiliser use, hedgerow removal and field margin eradication. However, farmland does support a range of species including invertebrates and birds such as lapwings and grey partridges.

2.3.4 Bracken

Areas of continuous bracken are generally indicators of sites of former woodland. Bracken in this area tends to be found on steep valley and escarpment sides. Within areas of continuous bracken other species such as bluebell, ferns and chickweed can be found, and as such, supports a range of invertebrates and birds

2.3.5 Heath

Much of the upland areas of the Hambleton & Howardian Hills were formerly heather moorland. Remnants of heathland still exist and are especially evident on the floors and rides of the expansive conifer plantations situated on the upland plateau areas.

2.3.6 Windy Pits

Windy pits are of biological and geological interest. They are fissures found in Upper Jurassic limestones and sandstones. They sustain significant populations of bats and function as hibernation roosts. Recorded species includes Daubenton’s and Brown Eared bats. Windy pits are found sporadically across the areas and are determined by the underlying geology.
2.3.7 Rivers, streams and standing water

The River Rye is the main channel in the Hambleton & Howardian Hills LP area and together with its many tributaries exhibits a generally high water quality. The Rye supports a diverse variety of invertebrate fauna including mayflies, stoneflies and caddis flies. Dippers, brown trout and the nationally important white clawed crayfish are also present. Lake Gormire is the only natural body of water supporting a range of marginal fen and bog communities. Ornamental lakes and ponds throughout the area host wintering wildfowl and aquatic plants and invertebrates can be found at farm and village pond sites.

2.3.8 Parkland

Parkland is a significant feature of the area. Veteran trees which are found within parkland can support numbers of invertebrates, birds, plants, lichens, fungi and bryophytes.

2.3.9 Hedges

Hedgerows act as connectivity corridors between habitats linking together, for example, blocks of semi-natural woodland or as refuge in otherwise austere areas. As a result they are often important for birds, small mammals and invertebrates.

2.3.10 Roadside Verges

As with hedges, roadside verges where appropriately managed can be important connecting routes between other habitats. They are becoming an increasingly important and better recognised grassland habitat.
2.4 Human Influence

2.4.1 Geomorphological Influences

The human influence across the Hambleton and Howardian Hills is unquestionably great and has shaped the character of the landscape. The present landscape character is an illustration of the lifestyle and cultural associations of the area’s population. The next chapter (3 Historic Environment) will deal with the historical progression of human use of the area.

The influence of the topography and geology is the greatest influence on how people have used the area over thousands of years. The geography provides an armature for the area’s landscape insofar as it influences climate, soil and vegetation. It is also the greatest influence on the distinctive character of the villages and buildings through the stone, brick and tiles used in construction. The steep escarpment and valley side unsuitable for cultivation has ensured that there is a wealth of remaining semi-natural ancient woodland and veteran trees surviving in this area.

2.4.2 Farming

This is a chiefly farmed landscape dominated by networks of large and medium scale fields. In the north fields are often bounded by drystone walls with some hedges which form important features in the landscape. Arable and pasture are found often with arable land dominating the upland plateau and lowland vale while pasture is more often restricted to valley floors and lower escarpment slopes. Many of the arable areas are intensively farmed and there has been continued eradication of field boundaries and margins over recent decades.

2.4.3 Designations

Much of the area is covered by a National Park designation while the rest has an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation. There are also a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks and Gardens along with other conservation based designations. A full list of these can be found under Appendix iii. While the land designations offer a level of protection the area has lost many landscape character indicators over recent years including the degradation of field boundaries and the planting of conifers on ancient woodland sites.
2.4.4 Recreation

This area is used widely by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. There are numerous footpaths, bridleways and permissive routes across the area. Many of the routes are promoted by the North York Moors National Park Authority. An active gliding club also exists at Roulston Scar. In addition there are a number of visitor attractions open to the public including Rievaulx Abbey (English Heritage), Sutton Bank National Park Centre (NYMNPA), Newburgh Priory (privately owned) and Rievaulx Terrace and Temples (National Trust). The variety of recreational opportunities, attractions and designations creates a large annual number of visitors.
2.5 Historic Environment

2.5.1 Palaeolithic to the Iron Age

Following the end of the Devensian glaciation, a warming climate helped produce a range of different environments. The evidence for human activity in the Palaeolithic is virtually non-existent across the region but by the early Mesolithic a range of flint sites are recorded in upland areas.

During the Neolithic, the introduction of domesticated crops and animal husbandry was tied in with the development of permanent and semi-permanent settlement and the establishment of large ceremonial, religious and burial sites. A number of Neolithic long barrows are recorded across the area. The Neolithic is also associated with the removal of trees and the creation of grassland and moorland.

By the Bronze Age much of the upland area appears to have been managed, although practices tended not to be intensive, but data is not available for when the dales were fully cleared and incorporated. However, as the population and the use of metal tools increased forests were cleared more extensively. Settlements developed on both upland and lowland areas, tending to be clustered on the edges of the most fertile land. Recognisable elements included enclosures, field systems, boundaries, ritual sites and communication routes, although few remain as ‘standing’ monuments. The upland areas, particularly around the western escarpment edge and across Yearsley Moor have a dense distribution of Bronze Age monuments in particular burial mounds, as well as flint, stone and metal artefacts. Along with the long barrows and other burial sites, notably on Grimston Moor and at Cawton Heights, complexes of enclosures and trackways have been recorded at Cawton, Coulton and around Hovingham Spa.

Evidence of the area during the Iron Age exhibits a general continuity in settlement and land patterns but with some expansion and modification to the Bronze Age landscape. Forest clearance continued and extended to the lowland areas which had not previously been so greatly exploited, whilst climatic deterioration appears to have reduced cultivation of the uplands. The greatest reminder of the Iron Age found in the contemporary landscape is that of the hillforts located on the western escarpment edge at Roulston and Boltby scars.

2.5.2 The Roman Period

The Roman Period saw the expansion and intensification of agricultural activity, particularly of arable farming. This included the ploughing of heavier clay-based soils. Other Roman influences include the development of a thriving pottery industry, the establishment of military sites associated with the
development of an associated road infrastructure; the construction of grander and more elaborate buildings, including villas.

2.5.3 The Early Medieval Period

At the end of the Roman occupation in the fifth century the succeeding Angles and Anglo-Saxons found the landscape already organised into a series of complex and well-established land-holdings. The Angles and Anglo-Saxons appear to have generally occupied and developed the existing political, administrative and religious structures and boundaries that had been developed earlier. Many villages found in the area can attribute their names to this period including Coulton, Hovingham and Gilling (the suffixes of ‘ing’, ‘ton’ and ‘ham’ showing their Anglo-Saxon associations). More radical changes did not begin until the late Saxon period when structured villages, large estates and the introduction of the three-field rotation system occurred. These changes continued until the twelfth century. These changes reflect the consciously planned reorganisation of the landscape on a major scale.

2.5.4 The Medieval Period

The major reorganisation of the late Saxon and Medieval Periods can be shown to contribute directly to many still existing features across the whole area. Larger estates, villages, churches, roads, land divisions and woods all have their origins in the Middle Ages. Many of these changes were instigated by local Lords in their castles but also influenced by the monasteries. Local sites include Helmsley and Gilling Castles, plus Rievaulx and Byland Abbey, and Newburgh Priory. The priories at Kirkham and Malton, although outside of the area were also influential in the change to a more ambitious scale of land planning. The area’s priories controlled large areas of land divided between individual farms and granges. As the influence of the monasteries grew, smaller farmsteads were abandoned and this contributed to the growth of centralised villages (with arable land surrounding) around Parish churches.

The farmed landscape during the Medieval was chiefly open arable fields broken sporadically by deer parks and managed woodland. Pasture was found on valley bottoms as well as on the upland plateau areas of moorland. In the main, between two and three unenclosed fields centred on a single settlement and were farmed in common but divided into strips. It was this process that results in the narrow strip fields and older remnant ridge and furrow found today. As demand for arable land increased steeper slopes across the area were terraced for cultivation.

2.5.5 Post-Medieval

The profound landscape changes of the seventeenth and eighteenth century were associated with the systematic enclosure of medieval fields and the creation of large estates. Grand historic houses and parklands were built for
the pleasure of living reflecting a change from the earlier needs of fortification. They were often located on the sites of former castles or the like as with the houses at Gilling Castle and Newburgh, the latter on the site of the old priory. The aristocracy did not rely on the demands of agriculture but aimed to enhance nature for aesthetic effect.

The Enclosure Act created regular patterns of straight-sided rectangular fields from formerly open medieval fields and much of the remaining upland heath areas were enclosed at this time. Most of the Landscape Partnership area, was therefore transformed during this period. Recent changes in agricultural practice, namely late in the last century, have altered the network and pattern of enclosed field systems. Decline of smaller estates has created the assimilation of some parkland areas into agricultural management. There has also been a considerable amalgamation of fields and the associated loss of field boundaries. Land that was still generally rough enclosed heathland on the upland areas was taken for forestry plantation and now dominates much of the Scawton, Grimston and Yearsley Moor areas.

Figure 11 shows the distribution and wealth of recognised sites of historical interest.
2.6 Perceptions and Interpretations

2.6.1 Art and Literature

Artistic and literary perceptions of the area are widespread ranging from depictions by famous artists and local authors to contemporary photographic interpretations. Interpretations vary from the focus on individual sites and places to broader portrayals of the landscape.

St Aelred, Rievaulx Abbey’s third abbot, wrote over eight centuries ago about Rye Dale:

“Everywhere peace, everywhere serenity and a marvellous freedom from the tumult of the world” – were the words used to describe Ryedale by St. Aelred, Rievaulx Abbey’s third abbot.

His sentiment has been echoed many times not least by a number of painters who depicted Rievaulx and the Abbey during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Among them were J.M.W. Turner, Thomas Girtin, Peter de Wint and John Sell Cotman. Many painted the distinctive shapes of Rievaulx Abbey including Turner and Girtin. John Sell Cotman followed Thomas Girtin’s infatuation with hidden spaces, painting the corners and doorways of Rievaulx Abbey. Cotman would often choose a low viewpoint to enhance impact. In 1805 he portrayed a scene at Duncombe Park. Drop Gate, Duncombe reflecting his use of sombre and earthy colours during the particular period of his life.

There are few recorded literary interpretations and perceptions of the Hambleton and Howardian Hills. The sonnet written by William Wordsworth written on his wedding day as he travelled west from the area is among the most notable. Similarly, Wordsworth’s new wife, Dorothy, wrote herself about what she saw from Sutton Bank.

Herbert Read (1893 – 1968) born in Kirkbymoorside lived much of his life in the tiny village of Stonegrave. From there he wrote a novel entitled The Green Child (1935). Read drew heavily on his experiences as child growing up on a Yorkshire farm. The book contains many rich descriptions of Yorkshire landscape.

The more recent works of James Alfred Wight (aka James Herriot) epitomised the local countryside. His work was far reaching supported by the famous television dramatisation of his books – All Creatures Great and Small. Photographer Derry Brabbs later illustrated the book James Herriot Country with a series of photographs which encapsulated the area as seen by Wight.

More recently, photographers such as Joe Cornish have reflected the variety of the landscape – the seasons, views and vivid colours all feature strongly in Cornish’s work.
The Hambleton & Howardian Hills are noted for other famous characters such as Lawrence Sterne who wrote many novels including *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentlemen*. Sterne lived in Coxwold after Baron Fauconberg made him the perpetual curate of the village. Sterne’s house stands today and aptly titled ‘Shandy Hall’ a name given to his home by friends.

2.6.2 Tranquillity

In 2006 the CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England) attempted to map tranquillity across the country. The notion of tranquillity is regarded as the relative sense of naturalness of landscapes contributed to by peace and quiet. It also relates to the aesthetic response to landscape and the enjoyment gained from experiencing it. The CPRE claim that tranquillity contributes to economic well-being, is good for health and reduces stress. The core threats to tranquillity are new roads, planes and runways, increased light pollution, new buildings and infrastructure and inadequate funding for land management. The Yorkshire and Humber regional map of tranquillity shows the area as relatively tranquil. At the time of this report no further detailed information about the LP area’s rated tranquillity could be ascertained.

2.6.3 A Sense of Place

The consultation process, as part of this Landscape Character Assessment, revealed and highlighted many elements that people understand and express creating a sense of place. Information was gathered from both visitors to and residents of the Hambleton and Howardian Hills landscape. A full summary of comments can be found under Appendix v.

Comments from respondents highlighted the following main elements which contribute to a sense of place and make the area distinctive:

- Views - often noted for being distant and panoramic
- Villages - noted for their building architecture and intimacy
- Historic ruins - by their presence in the landscape
- Recreational opportunities - most notably for walking
3. **Landscape Character Assessment**

The Landscape Character Assessment has delineated seven landscape types and nineteen landscape character areas.

The remainder of this report focuses on the descriptions of each individual landscape type and associated landscape character areas. The structure of each unit is as follows:

- **Landscape Type**
  - List of Landscape Character Areas within the Landscape Type
  - Location and Boundaries (map to illustrate)
  - List of Key Characteristics generic to the Landscape Type

- **Landscape Character Area**
  - Description of the location
  - List of Key Characteristics
  - Photographs illustrating the area
  - Summary
  - Physical Influences
  - Ecological Character
  - Human Influences
  - Historic Environment
  - Settlements and Buildings
  - Strength of landscape character
  - Condition of landscape
  - Evaluation – including visible forces for change, landscape sensitivities and landscape guidelines

The structure of the description for each landscape character area (excluding the evaluation table) reflects the structure of the report introduction.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape Type</th>
<th>Landscape Character Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Open Farmland with Plantation</td>
<td>A Cold Kirkby and Old Byland</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B Over Rievaulx</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C Scawton Moor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>D Yearsley Moor</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Enclosed Wooded Dale</td>
<td>A Ryedale &amp; Rievaulx</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B Caydale</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Mason &amp; Oxclose Gills</td>
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<td>3 Wooded Escarpment</td>
<td>A High Barn</td>
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<td>B Sutton Bank &amp; the White Horse</td>
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<td>C Cockerdale &amp; Wass Bank</td>
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<td>D Ampleforth &amp; Oswaldkirk</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Transitional Fringe Farmland</td>
<td>A Boltby to Hood Hill</td>
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<td>B Kilburn to Wass</td>
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<td>C Under Ampleforth</td>
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<td>5 Lowland Farmed Vale</td>
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<td>B Gilling Vale</td>
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<td>6 Farmed Ridge</td>
<td>A Gilling Park &amp; Cawton Heights</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Transitional Plateau Fringe</td>
<td>A Newburgh and Pond Head</td>
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<td>B Oulston</td>
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Figure 12 Landscape Character Types and Areas
LANDSCAPE TYPE 1  OPEN FARMLAND WITH PLANTATION

Landscape Character Areas:

1A  Cold Kirby and Old Byland
1B  Over Rievaulx
1C  Scawton Moor
1D  Yearsley Moor

Location and Boundaries

The Open Farmland with Plantation type comprises four landscape character areas. Boundaries of the areas broadly follow areas of limestone and changes in character are often marked by deeply incised valley or escarpment edges.
Key characteristics:

- Elevated and expansive gently sloping farmland with blocks of coniferous plantations

- Panoramic views enhance the open feeling

- Extensive field networks with large regular fields bounded by dry stone walls, hedges and fences

- Mix of arable, cultivation and permanent pasture

- Scattered farmsteads, often large and some small settlements
1A Old Byland and Cold Kirby

Location

The *Old Byland and Cold Kirby* landscape character area is located in the centre and north. It is bounded by a steep escarpment to the west and deeply incised valley areas to the east. The changes in character are generally reflected in changes in geology and landform. The southern boundary of the area meets the *Scawton Moor* area of the same landscape type.

Key Characteristics:

- Expansive open and windswept mainly arable land with some pasture
- Large regular fields often bounded by incomplete hedges or dry stone walls which are often degraded
- Fields become smaller around settlements
- Rural lanes spanning long straight stretches with wide grassy roadside verges segment the fields
- Sweeping views are framed to the east by the tops of trees in wooded valleys and plantations on elevated land in the distance
- The lack of trees and woods enhances the openness and expanses of farmland with few boundary and hedgerow trees
- Farmsteads are few and far between but often large they are prominent in the landscape and often enhanced by associated groups of large trees
- Sparsely settled with only one small village and a number of low number of large farmsteads
- Extensive horse gallops border the escarpment and the southern end of the area providing the only non agricultural land in the area
Summary

The Old Byland & Cold Kirby area slopes away from the eastern escarpment offering panoramic views to the east across the North York Moors National Park. Elevated moorland can be seen clearly to the east and north of the area. At the escarpment edge that bounds the area to the west panoramic views are offered across the Vales of Mowbray and York. The character of the area is well defined and strong although there is a lack of intimacy. The only settlements, Cold Kirby and Old Byland do not reflect this lack of intimacy and are small and enclosed.

The gently sloping topography, the widespread network of large fields and the panoramic views enhance the elevated and often exposed feeling throughout the area. Only large coniferous plantations that dominate areas of greatest elevation elsewhere disrupt the far-reaching views.

Agricultural activity forms the predominant land use with a mixture of arable cultivation and pasture. Fields are large and are often regular in shape becoming smaller closer to settlements where strip field patterns are still evident but not always complete. Land is given over to horse gallops in the south of the area which breaks the continual pattern of fields elsewhere. The plateau is divided and dissected by narrow wooded dales; the contrast between the open fields of the plateau and the deeply incised valley is marked.

Physical Influences

Old Byland & Cold Kirby is defined by its underlying cap of Hambleton Oolite limestone of the Upper Jurassic Corallian Group which forms the elevated plateau. A large outcrop of Lower Calcareous Grit is responsible for the abrupt escarpment edge to the west of the plateau. The plateau dips away from the escarpment edge to the east. There are some undulations but the feeling is of flat and gently sloping plateau fields.

Surface drainage is almost entirely absent in the area. The dip slopes are drained by the gills of distinctive enclosed narrow wooded dales which deeply incise the plateau in the north and east. Some of the dales or their upper reaches do not contain water and are dry. Small discreet areas of dry valley deposits can be found.

Ecological Character

The ecological character of this area is degraded due to intensive management of the land and is of limited nature conservation value. Large expansive fields with fenced or walled boundaries and restricted field margins leave little scope for field boundary habitats. The area does support a limited number of farmland birds. There are discrete areas of heath interspersed with bracken and scrub close the western escarpment edge which contribute to the
ecological value and also form a transitional area between the stark open fields and the steep wooded escarpment. The heath supports a range of species.

The valley of Caydale incises the plateau across the north of the area and is designated as a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). Caydale supports a unique range of habitats including grasslands, heathland and fens making it of national importance. Grassland habitats of the upper reaches of Caydale extend into the Old Byland & Cold Kirby character area.

**Human Influences**

The appearance of this area has been changed dramatically by human influence. The area is on the whole farmed and fields are large scale with much change occurring in the last thirty years as agricultural practices have intensified. The presence of horse gallops also has a notable effect on the landscape and is a reminder of long-standing horse racing traditions. There are few roads. Those present are generally long straight stretches and mainly bounded by wide grassy verges.

The North York Moors National Park Authority area National Park Centre holds a prominent location at the top of the infamous Sutton Bank road. Its low construction and surrounding birch trees soften its positioning. Numerous Rights of Way cut across the area chiefly around the escarpment edge. The well-utilised Cleveland Way is the most notable running along the top of the escarpment before cutting across to Cold Kirby. A number of other footpaths and bridleways cross parts of the area, generally running along field edges and along tracks.
**Historic Environment**

The historic environment is both unique and varied reflecting human activity in the area for thousands of years. Linear earthworks, a dense distribution of Bronze Age monuments and flint finds illustrate the extent of human activity and a significant population at the time. Many Bronze Age burial mounds exist in particular in a line along the western escarpment edge although no actual settlement sites have yet been identified from this period. The Cleave Dyke is part of a prehistoric linear boundary system, comprising a series of banks, pits and ditches, which runs for over nine kilometres parallel with and close to the western escarpment edge. The Dyke is thought to date to the Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age. Large parts of the monument have been reduced by cultivation and are only visible in the form of crop-marks.

Boltby Scar is a significant promontory fort close to the escarpment edge in the west of the area thought likely to be Early–Middle Iron Age in date. Ploughing has levelled the eastern two thirds of the site but the remaining third survives well within a small patch of heathland at the escarpment edge. The presence of agricultural activity across the area means that many monuments are regarded as being at risk.

The presence of disused quarries demonstrates periods of increased building activity and lime production for agriculture. Quarries tend to be small scale and relatively discrete.

**Settlements and buildings**

Cold Kirby and Old Byland are the only settlements in the area and most buildings reflect the characteristic local building materials. Cold Kirby is a settlement consisting of a small number of large properties. The village is a good example of a medieval settlement that has been newly created or re-developed (probably in the 12th century) with a regular series of tofts (house platforms) and crofts (narrow strip yards and gardens) laid out around a village green, encircled by a back lane to separate the crofts from the outlying open fields. The present day settlement arrangement comprises of a single no through road with wide roadside verges. Each property is set back from the road and well back within its own plot. The plots are mainly long and rectangular. There is always a clear demarcation of public space divided by hedges or low boundary walls. The regular form and hard boundaries of the individual plots is softened by planting and there are many large trees. A small public green area exists near the church at the end of the village. There are no shops or other amenities.

In contrast, Old Byland is focused around a central large open green and the division of space public and private space is less clear. Again, there are no amenities.
Character

The character of Cold Kirby & Old Byland is well defined and **strong**. The windswept, open and often exposed nature is apparent throughout the year. The distinct lack of trees and any woodland contributes to the openness.

Condition

The overall judgement is to that the Cold Kirby & Old Byland landscape condition is **moderate**. Fencing has regularly replaced hedgerows and dry stone walls. Many remaining walls and hedgerows are gappy. Along with unmanaged roadside verges they lower the quality of the landscape condition and could be enhanced contributing to the unity of landscape character and biodiversity across the whole area. There are also many scheduled monuments at risk.
1B Over Rievaulx

Location

The Over Rievaulx area is located in the north east and is a small area of upland limestone capped plateau – a continuation of the Cold Kirby & Old Byland and Scawton Moor areas. It is divided from those areas by the deeply incised valley of Ryedale.

Key Characteristics:

- Large and medium scale mainly arable fields are bounded by low often gappy hedges with some dry stone walls
- The ground is undulating providing a feeling of rolling plateau
- Views are framed to the west and south by the dip slope of the upland plateau areas across the Ryedale valley
- Distant sometimes panoramic views to the east
- Tree tops within Ryedale can be seen but views down into the valley are limited due to the heavily wooded nature
- Outlooks to the south reveal the expanse of the Duncombe Park estate and beyond to the roof tops of Helmsley
- Remains of the Medieval Grange of Griff are an important feature of the area’s historic environment
Summary

The Over Rievaulx area is a small continuation of the upland plateau to the east of Ryedale & Rievaulx. The core land use is agriculture with both arable fields and pasture. Hedges, fences and a smaller number of dry stone walls divide fields. There are no settlements and the only buildings consist of a small number of large farmsteads. The area is however, rich with archaeology.

There are a greater number of boundary trees than in other areas of the same landscape type. Boundary trees are often large and as such are prominent among the large undulating fields.

The area has spectacular views to Duncombe Park where Duncombe House holds a striking position within a large park plain. Woodlands surround the plain. Duncombe Park falls within the Rievaulx and Ryedale landscape character area.

Physical Influences

The geology of Over Rievaulx comprises of Malton Oolite and Coral Rag (Corallian Oolites) of the Upper Jurassic. The Weaverthorpe Fault runs through the centre of the area. There is very little surface drainage as with other areas of the same landscape type.

Human Influences

Farming is the core land use in the area. Fields are medium to large scale and have an irregular pattern. There are three disused quarries. Two rural roads cut through the area from the B1257 to Rievaulx village.

Ecological Character

Arable fields dominate Over Rievaulx supporting a range of habitats for invertebrates. The hedgerows and scant field boundaries do not encourage much other wildlife but do provide some salvage for a small number of birds and mammals. Hedgerow and boundary trees found throughout the area enhance this. Other significant habitats consist of species rich roadside verges and grassland areas bordering the edge of the valley of Ryedale & Rievaulx.
Historic Environment

The Medieval Grange of Griff situated in the centre and west of the area was surveyed by English Heritage in 2002. It is believed that the Grange was a farming settlement worked by lay brothers of Rievaulx Abbey. The site is likely to have undergone various phases development over the centuries but which include very substantial earthwork and walling remains.

Settlements and buildings

There are no settlements in the area but there a small number of large farmsteads which are prominent in the landscape.

Character

The character of the Over Rievaulx is regarded as strong. The open character is interspersed by patterns of hedges and boundary trees but generally there is a unity to the overall landscape character.

Condition

The condition of the area’s character is considered as moderate. Gappy hedges and degraded stone walls detract from the visual intactness across the area. The repair of these features would enhance the unity of character.
1C  Scawton Moor

Location

The Scawton Moor landscape character area borders the Old Byland & Cold Kirby area of the same type to the west. To the south are steep escarpment edges. The northern boundary of this area is marked by the clear transition into the gills of the narrow valley of Ryedale.

Key Characteristics

- Large field networks bounded by mixtures of dry stones wall, fences and hedges. Dry stone walls are degraded in many places and hedges are incomplete in numerous cases.
- The extensive field networks are broken up sporadically by often large coniferous woodlands which interrupt both the farmland pattern and views
- Forest blocks mainly dominate the areas of greatest elevation and link to areas of woodland associated with the south lying escarpment edge
- Deeply incised gills of Ryedale and from the escarpment edge in the south dissect the landscape
- Expansive views to the east and north enhanced by the dip of the land
- The village of Scawton is the only settlement in the area and other buildings consist of large farmsteads which are scattered throughout the area
- The whole area is divided by the busy A170 road with few other roads and lanes
- The south of the area is bounded by escarpment the demarcation of areas is clear but there is a softer transition zone between the different types in the east
Summary

The Scawton Moor area is an expansive upland farmland area where the open character is sporadically interrupted by geometric but irregular blocks of coniferous plantation. The A170 road carves the area into two and the coniferous plantations dominate the line of sight and disrupt the expansive views characteristic of this landscape type. The whole area dips toward the east and north where the dale of Ryedale & Rievaulx and the smaller valleys of Oxclose and Mason Gills incise the plateau. Impressive views are available to the east and to the north the clear shapes of Hawnby and Easterside Hills offer a focus.

The character of the area whilst easily defined is fragmented to an extent by the sombre uniform character of the coniferous plantations that dominate areas of greatest elevation. Their irregular nature does not allow for the more unified character found in the Cold Kirby & Old Byland character area of the same landscape type. Wass Moor plantation is the largest of the plantations to the south of the A170. Its northern boundary stops at the road and it progresses south where it breaks the stark transition to the steep escarpment which can be found elsewhere. Wass Moor plantation is varied with larch, spruce and firs. There are also notable areas of heath especially at the plantation edges. Understated and discreet patches of heathland offer a reminder of this area before the domination of farming and forestry practices. Such areas soften the pattern of extensive field networks but also add to the fragmented character throughout the area.

Physical Influences

The whole area dips to the east and north toward the Ryedale valley. As with other areas of this landscape type there is limited surface drainage. The area's geology is Corallian Group Lower and Middle Calcareous Grits. There are also areas of Hambleton Oolites and Malton Oolite & Coral Rag. There is little surface drainage. To the north gills in the Ryedale & Rievaulx area form tributaries of the River Rye.

Human Influences

The predominant land use in the Scawton Moor area is farmland and forestry which influence greatly the contemporary appearance of the area. Forested areas have increased over the last fifty years and intensive agricultural practices have increased field sizes chiefly over the last thirty years. The archaeological resource indicates that there has been varied human activity in the area for many centuries.

The Yorkshire Gliding Club is situated in the south west corner of the area occupying a site bordering the escarpment edge and is a prevalent feature. The infamous White Horse appears on the escarpment edge under the location of the Gliding Club within the Sutton Bank & the White Horse
character area. There are a small number of public footpaths and bridleways through the area.

**Ecological Character**

The ecological character of this area, as with other areas of the same landscape type has been reduced due to intensive agricultural practices. The blocks of conifer plantation throughout the area do support a range of invertebrates, birds and mammals. Individual (although relatively isolated) areas of heath exist as well as being found extensively on plantation floors.

**Historic Environment**

The historic record is marked most notably by Roulston Scar hillfort and together with other Bronze and Iron Age monuments and remains indicates a relatively large and active population during these eras. Roulston Scar within the *Scawton Moor* area is the largest hillfort in the north of England. It is little known by the general public. The scar is an Iron Age hillfort believed to be built around 400BC. The former hillfort is thought to have covered an area of about twenty four hectares. The site of the former hillfort is now home to the active Yorkshire Gliding Club founded in 1933 and remains as a broadly open area used for take off and landing. The defensive circuit of the hillfort is over a mile in length, but after centuries of erosion the surviving earthwork remains can be quite difficult to see, the most substantial northern rampart having been mostly removed to clear the area used for landing at the end of the 1960s. The site is bordered by large areas of scrub and coniferous plantation.

Elsewhere, the area has a significant number of Bronze and Iron Age funerary remains. Studfold Ring in the south east of the *Scawton Moor* area is a substantial earthwork enclosure located close to the southern escarpment edge. The enclosure is defined by a ditch and bank. The ditch is within the bank and so is not apparently defensive but may have been subsequently reused and modified. The enclosure is likely to be Iron Age or perhaps late Bronze Age.

**Settlements and buildings**

Scawton is the only settlement in the area consisting of a small number of homes built in the traditional local limestone. There are no shops or amenities. The Hare Inn is a small and traditional public house. There are few other buildings in the area except for a number of often large farmsteads.
Character

The overall landscape character of the Scawton Moor area is judged as moderate. The fragmentation by the large and irregular coniferous plantations decreases the unity of character found in other areas of the same landscape type.

Condition

The condition of the landscape is regarded as moderate. Condition could be improved by the restoration of key boundary features which would also enhance the overall landscape character. Further enhancements could be made by creating new habitat networks.
1D  Yearsley Moor

Location

The Yearsley Moor area is located in the southern and central area. It borders areas of transitional plateau fringe, farmed ridges and flat vale to its eastern perimeter. The change to bordering areas of other landscape types is soft and often not clearly defined.

Key Characteristics

- Upland farmland generally of open rolling character divided by four areas of woodland
- Drystone walls and hedges form some field boundaries but fences are more commonly used. Hedges are often remnants and incomplete.
- A number of minor but relatively busy rural roads run from in a north-south direction
- The area dips gently to the north and looks to the southern facing slope of the Gilling Park Ridge area
- Settlement is sparse with Yearsley as the only village
- Yearsley Moor is the most extensive plantation with Hovingham High Wood as the most varied
Landscape Character Area   Yearsley Moor

[Images of landscapes and paths]
Summary

The Yearsley Moor character area is a characteristic upland landscape of formerly heather moorland now dominated by farmland and woodland. Conifer plantations dominate the places of greatest elevation. Variety is added to the plantations by the undulating topography and isolated patches of semi-natural woodland and additional broadleaved plantation. The feeling across the area is less open and exposed than other areas of the same landscape type. This sense is created by the complex and varied topography combined with the closer proximity of the woodland areas. Various and generally small gills drain the upland areas incising the underlying rock.

The Yearsley Moor plantation is the most expansive of the woodland areas sloping gently to the north where it meets the Gilling Park Ridge character area. Here the vestiges of the Gilling Castle estate where remnants of ornamental planting and a chain of fishponds are found break the sombre and remote quality felt throughout the plantation. Hovingham High Wood at the eastern extent of the character area forms the join to lower flatter vale land and views are available from the edge of the area across the open parkland to the impressive Hovingham Hall.

Physical Influences

The geology of the Yearsley Moor area is complex creating a varied and more diverse topography than other areas of the same landscape type. There are a number of fault lines running across the area which create further intricacies.

Middle Jurassic rocks of the Ravenscar Group underlie the area. The points of greatest elevation comprise of Cloughton and Scarborough (limestone and calcareous sandstone) formations. The underlying geology gives rise to an open upland landscape with undulations and a greater presence of fluvial action. Tributaries that drain, in particular, the upland area of Yearsley Moor plantation reveal underlying Lebberston and Sycarham members of the Cloughton formation. Tributaries draining upland areas contribute to larger channels in the lowland vale areas.

Human Influences

Farming and forestry dominate Yearsley Moor providing evidence of long-standing traditions of people utilising the land for commercial purposes. The former Gilling Park estate and the Newburgh Priory estate to the western fringe offer another dimension to the complex heritage and changing land use across the area.
Ecological Character

The arable, pasture and plantation all make a contribution to biodiversity in the area supporting a range of birds, mammals and invertebrates. Remnant heath is also visible, particularly on plantation floors and contributes to the area's ecological character. The ecological character of this area, as with other areas of the same landscape type has been reduced due to intensive agricultural practices.

At the time of survey there was an undergoing programme of ancient woodland restoration across the area boundary with the Gilling Park Ridge character area. Such initiatives could enhance the landscape character and ecological value of the area.

Historic Environment

Surviving historic features in the Yearsley Moor area include both round barrows and dykes (land boundaries). Barrows are low round-topped burial mounds. The used of such burial sites reached its height in the early Bronze Age. They survive best in areas of woodland, including plantation. Elsewhere, agricultural activity has been unfavourable to their presence in the landscape. Across Grimston Moor and to the west toward Oulston there are numerous holloways believed to be associated with middle age cattle ranching. They have been disrupted by both agricultural activity and road construction.

Settlements and buildings

Yearsley is the only settlements in the area. The village was part of the Newburgh Priory estate of the Wombwell Family until 1944. The small village occupies an elevated position on the upland plateau and consists of large houses standing on individual plots in a linear arrangement. There is a clear separation between public and private space by boundary walls and fences. Garden trees, shrubs and the wide grassy verge soften the separation and often conceal the houses behind. There is a small and unusual church at the southern end of the village. As with other areas of this type buildings tend to be constructed from the local stone. Farmsteads tend to be located on the periphery reinforcing the upland and open feeling on the plateau top.
Character

The strength of character of the Yearsley Moor area is moderate. The inconsistent land use reduces the unity of character.

Condition

The overall landscape condition is judged as moderate. Detracting features include incomplete field boundaries (both hedges and dry stone walls). Restoring these features and enhancing the character of the area generally would improve unity and visual intactness.
## Old Byland & Cold Kirby

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### Sensitivities
- Open and far reaching views in all directions
- Historic remains are sensitive to agricultural practices
- Pressure of visitor impact especially near to Sutton Bank and on the Cleveland Way

### Forces for Change
- Damage to the archaeological resource by agricultural activity
- Increased visitor impact on footpaths, bridleways and car parking
- Continued loss of farmland habitats

### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the simple open character of this upland area and to **restore** key character features and ecological character.

### Guidelines
- Promote rough margins around arable fields to enhance habitats
- Encourage active and appropriate management of roadside verges to improve biodiversity
- Encourage restoration and consolidation of hedges and dry stone walls
- Minimise small scale changes such as signage, way marking or improvements to the road network which could disrupt the simple open character
- Protect the archaeological resource especially at Boltby Scar
- Survey and monitor the archaeological resource
- Provide greater interpretation of the unique historic environment
### Sensitivities
- Historic remains are sensitive to agricultural practices
- Open views toward Duncombe Park and Helmsley

### Forces for Change
- Damage to the archaeological resource by agricultural activity
- Continued loss of farmland habitats

### Strategy
The strategy is the **conserve** the open character and **enhance** key character features.

### Guidelines
- Promote rough margins around arable fields to enhance habitats
- Encourage restoration and consolidation of hedges and drystone walls
- Protect the archaeological resource especially at Griff Grange
- Utilise opportunities to enhance the biodiversity value of disused quarries
## 1C Scawton Moor

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### Sensitivities
- Recreational value of the coniferous plantations
- Open views
- Loss of farmland habitats such as field margins
- Contrast between open farmland and plantation blocks
- Ecological value of grassland and remnant heathland

### Forces for Change
- Increased visitor impact on footpaths, bridleways and car parking
- Continued loss of farmland habitats

### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the generally open character of this upland area and to **restore** key character features.

### Guidelines
- Take opportunities to increase access combined with considered visitor management to prevent erosion to landscape fabric
- Conserve the small scale settlements and retain their historic character and use of traditional building materials
- Protect the archaeological resource especially at Roulston Scar and the Cleave Dyke
- Provide greater interpretation of the unique historic environment and relation of features to the landscape
- Promote rough margins around arable fields to enhance habitats
- Sensitive restoration of heathland for ecological value and openness of character
- Retain fragments of former heathland vegetation
## 1D Yearsley Moor

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### Sensitivities
- Recreational value of the coniferous plantations
- Open views across the vale areas
- Historic remains are vulnerable to farming activities

### Forces for Change
- Damage to the archaeological resource by agricultural activity
- Increased visitor impact on footpaths, bridleways and car parking

### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** this farmed and forested area and to **enhance** landscape features for strength of landscape character.

### Guidelines
- Ensure consistent management of forested areas with sensitive felling operations
- Ensure sustainable management of recreational activities and visitor impacts especially within Yearsley Moor forest
- Protection and monitoring of the archaeological resource
- Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites
- Encourage replacement of fences with hedges and walls
- Retain fragments of former heathland vegetation
LANDSCAPE TYPE 2  ENCLOSED WOODED DALE

Landscape Character Areas

2A  Ryedale & Rievaulx
2B  Caydale
2C  Mason & Oxclose Gills

Location and Boundaries

The Enclosed Wooded Dale type is divided into three landscape character areas. The types consists of two neighbouring units that link geographically in the north east of the study area. The third area is slightly further to the south. The areas are clearly marked by their incision into the upland plateau of the Hambleton Hills.
Key characteristics:

- Steeper slopes are dominated by mixed woodland with coniferous plantations on some slopes

- Deeply incised dale characterised by a main fluvial valley characterised by a branching pattern of smaller tributaries

- Smaller dales are deeply incised by gills and becks which feed the main channel of the River Rye

- Steeply sided upper slopes becoming less graded and opening to flatter valley floors along the main dale and in some of the larger tributary dales

- Areas of flatter valley floor are utilised mainly as pasture and medium scale fields are present generally bounded by wire fences

- Rarely visible shallow rivers and becks meander on valley floors marked by covering lines of native broadleaved trees

- Few buildings can be found and the only settlement is the village of Rievaulx dominated by the large ruins of an Cistercian abbey
2A  Ryedale and Rievaulx

Location

The *Ryedale & Rievaulx* valley is situated in the north east of the area. The core valley runs from the north east corner of the area down to Helmsley with numerous tributaries and associated gills joining the main valley from the east and west sides.

Key Characteristics:

- Narrow steeply sided valley with mainly wooded sides and a flat valley bottom
- A feeling of enclosure, intimacy and seclusion
- Rievaulx Abbey as the most prominent structure rises from the valley floor dominating the hamlet of Rievaulx
- Rievaulx Terrace flanks the upper edge of the valley sides overlooking the Abbey and village
- Narrow gills which feed the River Rye where the feeling is even more secluded with steep mainly wooded sides
- Valley floors are predominately used as pasture land with small irregular fields normally bounded by fences
- The River Rye meanders across the flat valley bottom and is fed by many small gills, springs and small becks creating a finger like arrangement around the main valley
Summary

The area of Ryedale & Rievaulx is a deeply incised valley which dissects the expanses of the open plateau farmland. The main fluvial channel is the River Rye which meanders along the flat valley floor where improved pasture dominates. The river cannot often be seen but its path is regularly marked by sometimes large deciduous trees. The area is greatly varied with respect to land use and cover but feels generally cohesive and uninterrupted. There is multiplicity to the character with farmland, woodland, parkland. However, the feeling throughout the whole valley is one of enclosure and seclusion creating a sensation of unity and tranquillity. There are few roads or lanes. The only settlement, the village of Rievaulx – a small cluster of old stone built homes which are shadowed by the impressive nature of the ruins of the Cistercian built Rievaulx Abbey.

The area is of great ecological importance with the riparian habitat of the River Rye, many springs and associated marsh, varied woodland and notably the presence of ancient trees. A number of statutory designations reflect its ecological significance. Similarly, two Scheduled Ancient Monument sites and an extensive registered Historic Park and Garden represent the significance of the historic environment.

Physical Influences

The incision of the River Rye and associated drainage channels into plateau produces a varied geological profile across the area. Upper and Middle Calcareous Grits are found on upper slopes overlaying exposed older Hambleton Oolite and Lower Calcareous Grits. On lower slopes Oxford Clay is present although is largely overlain by alluvial deposits on valley floors.

Duncombe Park more broadly reflects the geology of the upland areas with Malton Oolites and Coral Rag plus discrete areas of Upper Calcareous Grit.

The River Rye meanders through the valley floor fed by springs and resulting tributaries which mainly feed in from the west where they incise the open limestone plateau. Springs also contribute to the wetland habitats found on the valley floor.

Ecological Character

Ryedale & Rievaulx is of important ecological value and character. The variety of habitats is reflected by the designation of two nature reserves and SSSIs – at Duncombe Park and Ashberry & Reins Wood. A third SSSI is designated at the Castle Hill site – an example of relict wood pasture with large ancient trees.

Within the Duncombe Park reserve many ancient trees reflect the conditions of the wild wood that covered the valley thousands of years ago. The trees
provide a home for rare invertebrates and fungi, wood-feeding insects and roost sites for birds and bats.

The slopes of the valley are generally well wooded and include distinct areas of coniferous, broadleaved and mixed plantation and semi-natural broadleaved woodland. Woodland is occasionally interspersed by unimproved neutral and calcareous grasslands. On the valley floor and particularly at the Ashberry & Reins Wood nature reserve there are extensive areas of unimproved and marshy grassland partially fed by springs.

The River Rye provides a good habitat for many invertebrates and other riparian fauna.

**Human Influences**

The character of *Ryedale & Rievaulx* presents an impression of naturalness but in reality much of the landscape has been changed by human presence. Discernable changes have been made to the landscape by a variety of groups and communities. The key changes and shaping of the cultural landscape are associated with the impact of the Cistercians.

The peaceful and tranquil setting led the Cistercians to the valley in the twelfth century where they established a monastery with a large abbey as its focus. Walter Espec, lord of Helmsley granted the land to the order in 1132. Stone was quarried from the valley sides and the large abbey and associated buildings. The ruin of Rievaulx Abbey remains extensive today and its prominence has a notable effect on the area.

After the dissolution of the monastery in the dale further change took place as industrial activity expanded. The demand for iron prompted a surge in activity and the village of Rievaulx was established to house workers and associated forges. These early changes in the area's cultural history have shaped the landscape and continue to have a notable influence over the area's identity.

**Historic Environment**

The historic environment of *Ryedale & Rievaulx* is of noteworthy interest and consequence to the contemporary landscape character.

The ruins of Rievaulx Abbey, as already discussed, rise sharply from the valley floor dominating views north and south. The associations and shaping of the landscape by the Cistercian order is also evident.

Above the village of Rievaulx stands the visible Rievaulx Terrace where two classical Georgian follies stand at either end of the grassed terrace. Thomas Duncombe II of the neighbouring Duncombe Estate constructed the terrace in the late eighteenth century. Guests to the estate could enjoy a walk along the terrace and glimpse exceptional views to across the abbey ruins and the
valley. These distinctive views are retained today for visitors to the now National Trust owned site.

The Duncombe Park estate, also open to visitors, dictates the character of the southern reaches of the area. The estate comprises of a large mansion and associated parkland with terraces, formal gardens and follies. The eighteenth century landscape overlays a medieval hunting park - elements of which, are still visible.

**Settlements and buildings**

Large and prominent buildings within Ryedale & Rievaulx are Duncombe Mansion, the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey and Helmsley Castle. The only settlements are Rievaulx and Helmsley. There are also a number of scattered farmsteads and houses.

The small hamlet of Rievaulx nestles on a slope just above the abbey and was built primarily to house workers of the iron industry. Many original buildings were pulled down following the end of the area’s iron workings. New homes were built in the 18th and 19th centuries which remain today. A school and church were built for the growing population. The traditional nucleated arrangement of Rievaulx is still retained.

Helmsley is the largest settlement across the Hambleton & Howardian Hills Landscape Partnership area. Helmsley is a distinctive market town and the large market place serves as focus reflecting the town’s ancient origins as a meeting place for celebrations and to conduct business. The vast majority of buildings present today were built after the seventeenth century as the overall form of Helmsley was completed. Most buildings are small scale and constructed from the distinctive local cream coloured stone and red pantile roofs. Larger buildings and civic amenities are more commonly built in ashlar stone and slate. The general consistency in building materials and the convergence of the market square add a great unity and sense of place to the town. The ruin of Helmsley Castle is located in the centre of the market town and is an important feature.

**Character**

The character of the *Ryedale & Rievaulx* character area is regarded as strong. This is supported by the feeling of enclosure and seclusion felt across much of dale’s reaches.

**Condition**

The condition of the landscape is strong. There are a number of landscape features, which could be enhanced, but generally unity and visual intactness are sound.
2B Caydale

Location

*Caydale* is located in the centre and north of the area. It is a significant extension to the west from *Ryedale & Rievaulx*. *Caydale* incises the open upland plateau of the *Cold Kirkby & Old Byland* character area.

Key Characteristics:

- Steeply sided valley with a range of diverse habitats including grasslands, fen and heath
- Varied nature of land cover creates a fragmented feeling while the steep valley sides create intimacy and enclosure
- A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation covering much of the character area represents the national significance of its varied habitat range
- Three gills converge to form a larger tributary stream which flows down the valley to join the River Rye in the main dale
- A single road runs across the dale crossing the beck by a long ford
Summary

*Caydale* is a relatively secluded and intimate valley enhanced by the steep valley sides and framed views. A single road runs over the dale crossing a distinctive ford on the valley floor close to the only building in the area. The variation in land use and cover creates a patchwork effect throughout the area. Valley sides are steeper and drier and with thinner soils and exhibit areas of unimproved grassland along with bracken, scrub and woodland. The lower slopes and the valley floor sustain marshy grasslands and flushes. This is an extremely varied area with a diversity of vegetation coverage. The range of habitats provides much of *Caydale* with a nationally recognised SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) designation.

Outwith the SSSI area, the Deep Gill tributary joins Caydell beck. Here, the valley sides are more wooded with areas of ancient woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites. These wooded areas contribute to the varied nature of the character area.

Physical Influences

The incision of the valley into the plateau produces a diverse underlying geology to the *Caydale* character area. Along with Lower Calcareous Grits there are significant areas of older Oxford Clay. Small areas of Quaternary Calcareous Tufa and scree are present. The steep valley sides have also created landslip deposits. The varied underlying geology along with human influence is largely responsible for the diversity of habitats across the valley. Tributaries fed by springs at the head of the valley nourish flushes and marshy grasslands on the valley floors.

Ecological Character

The ecological character of *Caydale* is important and recognised by its SSSI status. The diverse range of habitats makes the dale of national importance. The area supports a range of relatively unimproved habitats from calcareous grasslands on the upper slopes to wetter fen meadow and mire on the valley floor. Mosaics of grassland and scrub support suitable breeding habitats for the Duke of Burgundy butterfly, which is at its most northerly extent in the Hambleton area. There are also areas of heathland and particularly unusual mosaics of heather and acid grassland. *Caydale* supports a further range of invertebrates, birds and butterflies.

Human Influences

The main land use throughout *Caydale* is agriculture and woodland. There are a small number of footpaths. The SSSI designation, is itself an influence offering a level of protection to the varied mosaic of habitats.
Historic Environment

The Old Byland Water Race cuts along the south side of the dale. Fed by a spring at the head of the dale the Race is among one of Joseph Foord’s water courses found within the wider area. The manufactured course fed the settlement of Old Byland. Caydale Mill, the only building in Caydale was a working mill until the early 1960s. Built to grind corn from nearby fields it was later used to grind animal feeds. A number of decorative corbels are assumed to be from the ruins of Rievaulx Abbey.

Settlements and buildings

There are no settlements in the Caydale landscape character area. The only buildings are associated with Caydale Mill close to where the only road crosses Caydell beck via a long ford arrangement.

Character

The strength of landscape character of Caydale is considered to be moderate. The variety of land cover creates fragmentation and although there is a feeling of enclosure the diversity of habitats detracts from the strength of character.

Condition

The overall landscape condition is regarded as moderate. The area is important for biodiversity but there is scope for enhancement and improvement.
2C  Mason and Oxclose Gills

Location

*Mason and Oxclose Gills* are located in the centre and eastern extent. They incise the upland farmland area of *Scawton Moor*.

Key Characteristics:

- Incised wooded narrow dales
- Open access woodland
- Divided by the continued upland limestone plateau
- Planted and semi-natural woodland cloak the dale banks
- Enclosed and almost remote feeling
- Woods join Pry Rigg plantation in the *Scawton Moor* character area
Summary

*Mason and Oxclose Gills* are two relatively small wooded gills that incise the upland limestone plateau area of *Scawton Moor*. They are mainly wooded narrow dales with the trees on the highest areas of the valley slopes rising above the plateau top. There is a range and variety of woodland cover including conifer and broadleaved plantation. At the head of Mason Gill there are small areas of continuous bracken and dry heath cover. There are no rights of way through the woodlands although they are classed as areas of open access land. There feeling is of enclosure and tranquillity. At their western reaches they adjoin to the extensive conifer plantations that sit on the plateau top.

Physical Influences

The underlying geology is of the Lower and Middle Calcareous Grits characteristic of much of the area. The gills are not deeply incised enough to reveal the geological stratigraphy produced with other areas of the same landscape character type. There are no current water channels within the gills.

Ecological Character

The dominance of woodland within the gills supports a range of invertebrates, mammals and birds.

Human Influences

The key human influence is the planting of conifers and broadleaved species on the uncultivable gill banks.

Settlements and buildings

There are no settlements or buildings within the character area.

Character

The character of is strong contributed to by the continuous woodland cover and enclosed tranquil feeling throughout.

Condition

The overall condition is regarded as moderate owing to the interrupted of natural woodland cover by the presence of planted woodland sites.
### 2A Ryedale & Rievaulx

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#### Sensitivities
- Enclosed and tranquil dale
- Pressure of visitor impact especially from Rievaulx Abbey visitors
- Variation of habitats
- Surviving historic remains associated with the Abbey and the iron industry

#### Forces for Change
- Loss of secluded and tranquil nature
- Increased visitor impact especially on footpaths, bridleways and car parking

#### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the inherent qualities of the dale and to **enhance** habitats for biodiversity.

#### Guidelines
- Ensure sustainable management of recreational activities and visitor impact especially around Rievaulx Abbey and Duncombe Park
- Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites
- Encourage the sustainable management of woodlands with practices such as coppicing
- Minimise small scale incremental change such as signage which could change the rural character
### Strength of Character

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### Sensitivities

- Diversity of habitats important nationally
- Pressure of recreational users
- Remote and tranquil feeling

### Forces for Change

- Reduction in tranquillity
- Continued degradation of important habitats
- Increased visitor impact on footpaths

### Strategy

The strategy is to **conserve** the dale and the many habitats which give it national importance and to **enhance** those habitats for ecological value while retaining the remote and peaceful nature.

### Guidelines

- Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites
- Retention and enhancement of varied habitats to include activities such as scrub clearance on grassland sites
- Explore opportunities for greater interpretation of the area’s qualities without promoting any greater access
- Keep signage discrete in character
## 2C Mason and Oxclose Gills

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### Sensitivities
- Enclosed dale
- Remote and secluded nature

### Forces for Change
- Pressure for greater public access by increased rights of way leading to the open access areas

### Strategy
The strategy is the **conserve** the remote nature of these well wooded and little accessed dales.

### Guidelines
- Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites
LANDSCAPE TYPE 3  WOODED ESCARPMENT

Landscape Character Areas

3A  High Barn
3B  Sutton Bank & the White Horse
3C  Cockerdale & Wass Bank
3D  Ampleforth & Oswaldkirk

Location and Boundaries

The Wooded Escarpment type comprises four character areas. This type consists of a long escarpment which spans from the north west of the area and then cuts across the area to the west. The area is clearly defined by its steep nature and is often bounded generally by farmland in both the upland and lower lying areas.
**Key Characteristics:**

- Steely graded escarpment marking the edge of the upland-lowland transition
- Exposed rock outcrops
- Creates a clear demarcation between the upland areas and lower lying land
- Domination of woodland on the escarpment slopes
- Steep cliff-like edges give way to more sinuous slopes bordering areas of lowland vales to the south
- Panoramic views from the top of the escarpment across the low lying Vales of Mowbray and York and to the east over the dip slop
- Settlements of Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk cling to the escarpment sides
- Narrow but often deeply incised gills cut back into the limestone plateau in the areas of the southern facing escarpment edge
- The White Horse is a prominent feature of white painted chippings uncharacteristic of the local geology
3A High Barn

Location

The High Barn area of escarpment lies in the north west of the area. It is bordered by large expanses of open plateau farmland to the east at the top of the escarpment. At the foot of the escarpment is an area of transitional farmland. High Barn joins the Sutton Bank & the White Horse character area to the south.

Key Characteristics:

- Generally grassed escarpment with rough grazing and semi-improved pasture

- The presence of grazing on the escarpment slope creates a softer transition to the farmland below.

- The building of High Barn is a prominent feature standing alone on the ridge with a surrounding copse of trees and is visible for many miles

- Evidence of quarrying is pronounced with former rock faces protruding in an otherwise grassed area

- Views are offered east across the Vale of Mowbray but interrupted to the north and south by areas of greater elevation
Landscape Character Area

High Barn
Summary

The *High Barn* area of the western escarpment edge is the only area which exhibits pasture from the top to the foot of the escarpment. A small wooded area together with a number of large trees interrupts the grassed slopes but does not detract from the general character of open steeply graded escarpment. The absence of continual woodland cover found elsewhere on the escarpment creates a more gentle transition to the farmland below. Far reaching panoramic views are offered to the west. To the north the landscape changes quickly and areas of greater elevation with plantations and moorland can be seen. The character of the area differs from the majority of the escarpment because of the differing land use and as such vegetation cover.

Physical Influences

The whole escarpment area presents a stratigraphical record of the area’s geological history with Upper Jurassic rock at the plateau surface to Cloughton Formation Middle Jurassic rocks at the escarpment foot. However, much of the escarpment, including *High Barn*, is overlain with landslip and glacial moraines. Other than exposed rock outcrops on the upper slopes there is little surface evidence of the geological record.

Ecological Character

The ecological character of *High Barn* is varied with mosaics of semi-improved calcareous and acid grasslands with dry heath. Unimproved calcareous grassland also exists owing largely former quarrying activities. Areas of continuous bracken and sporadic broadleaved trees mark former areas of more continuous woodland. These habitats support a range of species.

Human Influences

The main human influences revolve around the presence of farming and former quarrying activities resulting in a mainly grassed escarpment area with few remaining trees and woodland cover. Quarrying activities have produced grassed undulations of materials and an exposed rock face at the upper reach of the escarpment.

Historic Environment

In addition to the remnants and visual evidence of quarrying there is also evidence of prehistoric bank and ditch features across the *High Barn* area.
**Settlements & Buildings**

There are no settlements in the *High Barn* area. The only building is High Barn itself. The barn is used although not wholly intact. The ring of trees around the barn enhances its location within an otherwise pasture rich area. The trees and barn can be seen on the escarpment top from many miles away.

**Character**

The character of *High Barn* is regarded as *moderate*. While land use is generally consistent, the character area deviates from the generally wooded character of the other escarpment areas.

**Condition**

The condition of the High Barn area is *moderate*. Evidence of former quarrying activity produces a rougher appearance in places and the transition to the wooded escarpment areas to the south is hard.
3B Sutton Bank and the White Horse

Location

*Sutton Bank and the White Horse* is a character area forming a constituent in a chain of areas of the same landscape type. To the north borders the *High Barn* area and to the east the *Cockerdale & Wass Bank* area. Elevated plateau and lowland transitional areas at the escarpment foot mark the boundaries.

Key Characteristics:

- Well wooded escarpment with mixed woodland and plantations
- Rocky outcrops on the upper slopes break the continuous woodland
- The famous White Horse flanks the slope celebrating long standing horse racing traditions
- Areas of heath border the top of the escarpment creating an area of transition between woodland and upland farmland areas
- Ecological character is diverse with a range of habitats and a designated nature reserve on part of the escarpment
- A single road (White Horse bank) curls up the escarpment
- Views are panoramic and far reaching
- Forest tracks run through parts of the area and are well utilised by walkers
Summary

The steeply graded and well wooded escarpment area of Sutton Bank & the White Horse stands prominently offering vast panoramic views from the top across the Vales of Mowbray and Pickering below. The escarpment faces both west and southwest as the escarpment curls around revealing the infamous landmark of the White Horse. Rocky outcrops on the upper slopes intersperse the continual belts of conifer and broadleaved plantation. The top of the escarpment is open and exposed but within woodlands the feeling is markedly different and presents a more secluded and peaceful nature. Lower slopes are often given over to pasture with gorse and scrub. The whole area is varied but generally unified due to the high level of woodland cover and the defined topography.

Physical Influences

Most of the escarpment, especially the lower slopes, are overlain by landslip and material associated with glacial moraines and freeze-thaw processes. The underlying geology reflects the same pattern to other areas of the same landscape types presenting a geological stratigraphy with Lower Calcareous Grits of the Upper Jurassic lain over Middle Jurassic formations at the lower slope levels.

Ecological Character

At the escarpment top there are linear stretches of acid heath and semi-improved neutral grassland where soils are shallowest. Further down slope there are coniferous and broadleaved plantations with marshy grassland at the foot of the slopes. Semi-improved acid grassland also appears with some areas of continuous bracken. The variety of habitats across the area supports a range of species from invertebrates, to birds and mammals as well as a diversity of flora. A small part of the area is designated as a Nature Reserve (Garbutt’s Nature Reserve). There has been extensive scrub encroachment onto heath and grassland around the area of the White Horse.

Human Influences

Recreational use plays a noteworthy role in the use of the area. Visitors utilise the many footpaths, bridleways and forest tracks most notably around the White Horse, Hood Hill and along the upper escarpment edge. These paths are well known and well used.

Historic Environment

The one hundred and fifty year old White Horse is a renowned feature of the area symbolising the centuries old horse racing traditions in the area. The
carved figure overlain with white wash and chalk chippings covers just over an acre on the escarpment. The elevated position means the White Horse can be seen for many miles around breaking the continuous woodland and scrub cover.

As, with the neighbouring *High Barn* escarpment area complexes of banks and ditches are found across the escarpment.

**Settlements and buildings**

There are no settlements and the only buildings consist of a small number of generally large homes found either close to the escarpment edge or on the escarpment slopes accessed from the main Sutton Bank road.

**Character**

The character of the area is **strong**. While the area is varied the strong topography and generally unity of land cover create strong cohesion throughout.

**Condition**

The overall condition of the landscape is deemed **moderate**. While unity is strong improvements to habitats would enhance the condition.
3C Cockerdale & Wass Bank

Location

The Cockerdale & Wass Bank area borders other areas of the same landscape type to the east and west. To the north are expanses of farmland and coniferous plantation which make up the Scawton Moor area. At the foot of the escarpment to the south is the area of Oldstead.

Key Characteristics:

- Predominantly south facing area of escarpment
- Slopes are wooded with mixtures of semi-natural woodland and coniferous plantations usually found on the upper slopes
- Deeply incised gills and becks cut into the escarpment reaching back into the upland limestone plateau fragmenting the nature of the area
- Cockerdale is the largest of the incised valleys with wooded slopes and pasture on the valley floor
- Distant views from the top of the escarpment edge to the south across the Howardian Hills and the Vale of York
- Incised valleys feel enclosed and secluded contributed to by the wooded slopes and framed views to the south
- Wass Bank road rises steeply from the village of Wass to join the A170 on the upper plateau
Summary

The Cockerdale & Wass Bank area represents a more diverse landscape than other areas of the same type. The escarpment is incised by narrow gills that cut back into the upland plateau creating a series of secluded, wooded dales. The broader dales have pasture on lower slopes but remain chiefly wooded on steeper upper slopes. Distant views are offered from the top of the escarpment becoming framed in the intimate and enclosed dales. The incisions on the plateau create a more sinuous and softer escarpment edge than elsewhere. Where dales meet conifer plantations on the upland plateau particularly at Wass Moor the transition between character areas is less abrupt.

Physical Influences

This escarpment area presents a more sinuous appearance than elsewhere. A number of springs feed small gills which have incised the escarpment edge cutting back into the upland plateau. This has resulted in a series of small and enclosed dale-like features. The dales continue to be well-wooded. The geology is complex with Upper Jurassic Oxford Clays overlying Middle Jurassic Formations (Cloughton, Scarborough and Scalby) on the lower slopes. Cockerdale, the largest of the incised features is further complicated by the presence of landslip material and pereglacial head (frost shattered material in a clay matrix).

Ecological Character

Semi-natural broadleaved woodland and conifer plantation covers most of this character area supporting a range of woodland species. On the upper slope areas there are pockets of both semi-improved neutral and acid grassland. Marshy grassland is found in the enclosed dales where there is a less woodland cover and a greater presence of water.

Human Influences

This area is used widely for shooting, most notably within the conifer plantations on former ancient woodland sites. Traditions of woodland management are evident in the area with former coppiced woodland, such as that of Elm Hag wood. There are a number of footpaths and cycleways (including a National Cycle Network trail) that cut through the area, showing the presence of recreational users. There are no official bridleways.
Historic Environment

Scotch Corner, located within Cockerdale, was the site of the 1322 Battle of Byland. The Scots army defeated the forces of King Edward II and the site has been name Scotch Corner since. A small and unusual chapel also stands close to the site as a World War II memorial.

Settlements and buildings

There are no settlements in the character area. There are a small number of farmsteads, often hidden within the small dales and their presence on the landscape is generally scant. Mount Snever Observatory built in 1838 to commemorate the coronation of Queen Victoria stands at the top of the escarpment.

Character

The landscape character is defined as strong. The well-wooded nature of the area adds cohesion and unity to the area.

Condition

The overall condition of the landscape is strong with intact woodlands and peaceful dales.
3D Ampleforth & Oswaldkirk

Location

Ampleforth & Oswaldkirk character area is the most westerly character area of the Wooded Escarpment landscape type. It borders a neighbouring escarpment area to the west. To the north is the Scawton Moor, upland farm area and to the south there is a transitional area before the lowland vale.

Key Characteristics:

- Villages of Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk cling to the steeply graded escarpment
- The settlements display a linear arrangement with characteristic stone and tile roofed buildings
- Pasture on upper escarpment slopes creates a smooth transition to the upland farmed areas of the plateau
- Banks of mainly broadleaved woodland wind across the escarpment
- Views to the south across the lowland vale are interrupted by knolls and undulations of the transitional areas
- Fault line that broadly follows the course of the road marks the northern extent of the Coxwold-Gilling Gap
- Ampleforth Abbey and College occupies a prominent position and has a notable effect on the landscape
Landscape Character Area  Ampleforth & Oswaldkirk
Summary

*Ampleforth & Oswaldkirk* is characterised by the two villages that name the area. The villages cling to the escarpment with stretches of woodland behind and pasture on the upper slope areas. Ampleforth Abbey and associated buildings is a key feature and have significant presence within the landscape. The escarpment remains steeply graded although it becomes lessens in height at this easterly point.

Physical Influences

A fault line runs along the escarpment edge following broadly the course of the road which links the villages of Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk. The fault line marks the northerly extent of the Coxwold-Gilling Gap. Above the fault line, and associated with this character area is Lower Calcareous Grit of the Upper Jurassic. A narrow gill, Smith Hill Howl, cuts into the plateau at the western edge of Ampleforth village. Here, a discrete area of Upper Jurassic Oxford Clay is found.

Ecological Character

Banks of broadleaved woodland and semi-improved neutral grassland (with some areas of scrub) represent the ecological character of the area. A particularly rich and colourful roadside verge runs between the settlements with both grassland and woodland flora present.

Human Influences

The greatest human influence is represented by the two settlements within the character area and by Ampleforth Abbey. Pastoral fields are found on the upper parts of the escarpment and the large bank of woodland behind the Abbey and Oswaldkirk show evidence of traditional coppicing techniques.

Historic Environment

The village of Ampleforth displays evidence of being a twelfth century designed village. Ampleforth Abbey and the associated college buildings reflect the influences of monastic orders across the wider area.

Settlements and buildings

The village of Ampleforth exhibits a linear arrangement bordering the road that follows the escarpment edge throughout the whole character area. The buildings are characteristic of the area with cream coloured stone walls and
pan tile roofs. The village expanded during the post-war period and in the 1960s. Most expansion took place south of the main village area (most new building is included in the Under Ampleforth transitional fringe character area.

Oswaldkirk reflects the characteristic buildings of neighbouring Ampleforth. Both villages have a strong and relatively intimate character. They are both designated Conservation Areas.

Outwith the villages, Ampleforth Abbey is a notable landmark building. The Abbey is surrounded by a number of other large-scale buildings associated with Ampleforth College. The Abbey sits prominently on the escarpment edge and has a notable presence on the landscape.

Character

The strength of character is regarded as strong. The height of the escarpment is lessened in the east and the present of settlements creates variety.

Condition

The overall landscape character is moderate. Replacement and restoration of hedges and boundaries on upper slopes would aid unity.
### 3A High Barn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength of Character</th>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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### Sensitivities
- Cleveland Way National Trail
- Far reaching views to the west
- Surviving historic remains

### Forces for Change
- Increased volume of people using rights of way, in particular the Cleveland Way

### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the generally open character and grassland habitats

### Guidelines
- Encourage appropriate management of visitors and walkers to the area
- Minimise small scale additions such as signage, fencing etc which could detract from the simple open character
### 3B  Sutton Bank & the White Horse

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<th>Strength of Character</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Bearing of visitors on footpaths and bridleways especially close to the National Park Centre and around the White Horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cleveland Way National Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Views to the west and south</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Surviving historic remains</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forces for Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased number of visitors putting pressure on facilities, car parking and rights of way</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The strategy is to <strong>conserve</strong> the well wooded escarpment, to retain visitor access and <strong>enhance</strong> recreational opportunities and ecological character</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sustainable management of recreational users and associated influences such as way marking and car parking to reduce their impact on rural character</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 3C Cockerdale & Wass Bank

<table>
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<th>Strength of Character</th>
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#### Sensitivities
- Surviving historic remains
- Tranquil and secluded nature of the incised dales
- Ecological value of woodland and pasture

#### Forces for Change
- Loss of tranquillity owing to other factors
- Increases in visitor numbers
- Scrub encroachment on grassland areas

#### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the peaceful and tranquil nature of the area and to **enhance** recreational experiences and places of ecological value

#### Guidelines
- Encourage interpretation in ways that do not impact on the peaceful character of the area nor are disruptive to ecology and the historic environment
- Ensure that signage, paths and parking remain sensitive
- Monitor and survey the archaeological resource
- Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites
- Encourage sustainable management of woodlands
### Strength of Character

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### Sensitivities

- Traditional stone buildings
- Village layout and arrangements

### Forces for Change

- Pressure for infill development
- Increases in passing traffic

### Strategy

The strategy is to **conserve** the key qualities of the area and to **enhance** key built and natural landscape features.

### Guidelines

- Ensure that signage, paths and parking remain sensitive
- Conserve the historic village centres and general settlement arrangement
- Encourage continued sustainable management of woodlands including using traditional techniques such as coppicing
LANDSCAPE TYPE 4  TRANSITIONAL FRINGE FARMLAND

Landscape Character Areas:

4A  Boltby to Hood Hill
4B  Kilburn to Wass
4C  Under Ampleforth

Location and Boundaries

The Transitional Fringe Farmland type consists of three adjoining character areas. The areas are parallel to the escarpment edge which runs from the north west of the area and then cuts across the area to the west. They form the transition between the steep escarpment slopes and flatter vale land.
Key characteristics:

- Complex patchwork of topography and land use characterises this landscape type
- Sinuous knolls create the transition between the steep escarpment and flatter low lying areas
- Multifarious landscape is the consequence of glacial deposits and subsequent landslips
- Clumps of trees are intermingled with improved and semi-improved pasture which becomes more dominated by scrub vegetation closer to the areas of escarpment
- Fields are medium size and feel semi-enclosed where undulations create the effect of a valley between the escarpment and vale areas
- Visual intactness is interrupted by large numbers of pylons in some places
- Small characteristic settlements with traditional stone buildings nestle close to the escarpment edge
- The historic environment is represented by a landscape influenced and shaped by monastic orders and their land uses
4A Boltby to Hood Hill

Location

*Boltby to Hood Hill* character area is found in the north west of the character area. To the east is the steeply graded escarpment. To the south it borders an area of the same landscape type.

Key Characteristics:

- A generally farmed landscape with pasture fields bounded by hedges with many boundary trees and woodland clumps
- Hood Hill stands tall and distinctively and is a wooded conical shaped hill with the remains of a castle on the hill top
- Gormire Lake, the only natural body of water, represents another unique feature created by Quaternary glaciation processes
- A mainly uniform and intact area with variety added through its natural and historical features
Summary

Characteristically, for this landscape type Boltby to Hood Hill is a varied and undulating area created by glacial action, deposition and landslip. The area is farmed with patterns of hedges and trees separating pasture fields. The steeply graded escarpment dominates to the east and focus is to the lower land in the west. The features of Hood Hill and Gormire Lake add unique elements to the landscape. The well-wooded slopes of Hood Hill reflect the slopes of the neighbouring escarpment but the Hill stands prominently alone to the west away from the Roulston Scar area of escarpment. Gormire Lake, contrasting, is more hidden and best seen from the top of the escarpment.

Physical Influences

The underlying geology is Middle Jurassic rock with varying quaternary deposits and subsequent landslip deposition. A discrete area of lacustrine deposits can be found south of Boltby creating a uniformly flatter area of land. Elsewhere there are mosaics of pereglacial head, fluvio-glacial sands and gravels. Further away from the escarpment the complex drift geology breaks and the area is dominated by overlying glacial tills. Hood Hill forms an extension of the elevated plateau but was separated by flow from a glacial meltwater channel. Gormire Lake lies at the end of a former meltwater channel which was blocked by a landslip and is a natural standing body of water.

Ecological Character

Along with the networks of hedges, boundary trees and copses there are pockets of broadleaved woodland, semi-improved neutral and acid grassland, dense scrub and continuous bracken throughout this generally farmed landscape. Gormire Lake and the immediate surrounding area have SSSI status. The lake and woodland which encircles the lake supports acid fen vegetation, marginal bog communities. The woodland itself comprises a mixed canopy with ash, oak and elm all present. The ground flora represents the acid conditions with bluebell, wood sorrel and broad buckler-fern. Hood Hill exhibits mixed woodland plantations, conifer plantations and semi-improved grassland on its south facing slope.

Human Influences

The Sutton Bank (A170) road cuts through the area before it starts the steep ascent up the escarpment. The main influences across the area are the presence of farming activity (mainly pasture) and the recreational usage around the Hood Hill area.
Historic Environment

The Scheduled Ancient Monument at Hood Hill has been identified as the site of Hood Castle, constructed by Robert de Stuteville. The motte and bailey castle occupies a prominent position on the hill top, although much of the monument is overgrown. Tang Hall Moat is a heart shaped ditched platform with traces of former structures within, recorded as the site of Ravensthorpe Manor House (documented in 1301), and formerly associated with a settlement which was recorded in the Domesday Book.

Settlements and buildings

Boltby is a small nucleated village marking the northern boundary of the character area. The settlement flanks the slope marking the beginning of the steeper escarpment area. Buildings are small scale and built traditionally from local stone.

Character

The character of Boltby to Hood Hill is regarded as strong. The area is varied but clearly defined and bounded by the escarpment and lower flatter land to the west. Fields are medium scale and bounded by generally intact hedges with mature boundary trees.

Condition

The overall condition of the character area is considered to be strong. Condition is enhanced by the general intactness of key landscape features.
4B Kilburn to Wass

Location

The Kilburn to Wass character area is found in the west and centre. To the north is the distinctive escarpment and lower vale joins the area in the south. To the east and west areas of the same landscape type are found.

Key Characteristics:

• Transitional area between the more clearly defined steep escarpment and the flatter vale to the south

• Undulating knolls and grassy hills form the transition

• Mixtures of pasture, woodland, copses and scrub

• Villages of Kilburn, Wass and Oldstead are small and characteristic of the local settlements

• Fields are bounded with hedges with hedgerow trees and boundary trees present

• Field networks create sinuous patterns across the undulating land

• Peaceful feeling with limited interruptions

• Complex underlying geology of glacially shaped land with ranges of quaternary deposits
Landscape Character Area  Kilburn to Wass
Summary

The complex geology of *Kilburn to Wass* creates an undulated and diverse landscape. A series of grassy knolls create a varied transition between the escarpment and flatter vale landscapes to the south. At the foot of the escarpment the knolls interrupt far reaching views creating enclosed tranquil pockets. The villages of Wass, Kilburn and Oldstead are small but create a focus to the area with their characteristic cream coloured buildings with pantile roofs. This is predominantly a farmed landscape with evidence of monastic influences around the village of Wass, not least reflected by the strong visual of the Byland Abbey ruin.

Physical Influences

*Kilburn to Wass* marks the transformation between the steeply graded and well defined escarpment and the lower, flatter vales. The area is characterised by undulating knolls. This is chiefly an area shaped by glaciation and contributed to by quaternary glacial deposits as well as pereglacial head matter. Rocks of the Middle Jurassic are overlain by head, alluvium, lacustrine deposits and glacial tills. Landslip material is also present. The complexity of the deposits and the effect of ice have determined this undulating and varied landscape.

Ecological Character

The ecological character is contributed to by banks of broadleaved woodland, hedgerows and pockets of semi-improved neutral and marshy grassland. Rural lanes provide often rich roadside verge habitats supporting a range of species.

Human Influences

The main human influences across the area, involve the monastic landscape influences around Byland Abbey and the dominance of agricultural activity. There is a greater presence of arable farming here than in other areas of the same landscape type. The area’s settlements and buildings are not expansive but provide a focal point to the area with small and distinctive villages clustered close to the escarpment.

Historic Environment

Monks settled at the site of Byland Abbey in 1177. The order cleared woodland, built drainage ditches and embarked on extensive alterations to natural watercourses. This included the draining marsh lands and the construction of fish ponds, dams and lakes. Many of these structures remain today.
Settlements and buildings

The three villages of Kilburn, Wass and Oldstead are small and intimate. They are characteristic of settlements in this area displaying the qualities of traditional nucleated villages with small stone cottages built from the local cream coloured stone. There are few amenities in each village but the attractions of Byland Abbey near Wass and The Mouseman Centre at Kilburn draw visitors during the summer months. Oldstead and Wass nestle close to the escarpment while Kilburn stands further back offering impressive views of the White Horse. The ruin of Byland Abbey dominates the area around the village of Wass rising sharply from an area of flatter land. Much of the north side of the abbey and the thirteenth century west end still stand. Away from the villages and the striking Byland Abbey there are large farmsteads and granges scattered throughout the area.

Character

The strength of character is deemed as strong. The landscape is varied, undulating with mixed land use clearly representing the transitional nature of this character area.

Condition

The condition of the area is regarded as strong. Many key character features are intact creating good unity.
4C Under Ampleforth

Location

*Under Ampleforth* is located in the east and centre. To the north is the escarpment slopes and the villages of Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk. To the south is flatter vale land.

Key Characteristics:

- Permanent pasture fields are bounded by hedges and fences with boundary trees
- Thin bands of woodland on knolls become more scrub like on upper slopes
- Variety is created by undulations, copses, clumps and pasture
- Knolls with convex slopes become steeper on lower slopes
- Sinuous field patterns are created because of the irregular and rolling landform
- A small number of large granges and farmsteads cling to slopes
- The southern reaches of Ampleforth village meander down the slope meeting the vale beyond
- Uniform geology of mudstones and thin limestones underlay the entire area
Landscape Character Area Under Ampleforth
Summary

Under Ampleforth represents a varied but generally unified transitional area between the escarpment and lowland vales. Knolls with convex slopes dominate the area, determined broadly by the underlying mudstone geology. The landscape is mainly pastoral and fields are bounded by hedges although they are often gappy and fragmented or replaced by fences. There are few other trees. The discrete areas of Spring Wood and Craykeland Wood exist as the only woodland cover. The lower part of Ampleforth village is also within the area.

Physical Influences

The northern boundary of Under Ampleforth is marked broadly by a fault line which delineates the northern extent of the Coxwold-Gilling Gap. The fault line creates an abrupt change in the underlying geology with the whole area underlain by Kimmeridge Clay. This is one of the few places where the Kimmeridge Clay is not overlain by the fertile glacio-lacustrine deposit found across the rest of the vale area.

Ecological Character

The underlying geology creates poor drainage in some areas and as such the wetter areas in combination with the farmed landscape creates a habitat for wading birds. The hedges and small woodland areas provide some salvage for other birds and invertebrates.

Human Influences

The key human influences are the presence of mainly pastoral farming and the Ampleforth Abbey grounds. Farmland ranges from improved to unimproved with pasture becoming dominated by scrub on areas of steeper slope.

Settlements and buildings

There are no whole settlements within the character area. The southern reaches of Ampleforth are included and captures, in the main, the post-war development and extension to the village.
Character

The character of *Under Ampleforth* is *moderate*. There is a lack of cohesion throughout the area in relation to other more peaceful areas of the same landscape type.

Condition

The overall condition is *moderate*. The unity of the area is interrupted and fragmented by gappy boundaries and detracting features such as pylons.
## 4A Boltby to Hood Hill

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### Sensitivities
- Pressure of recreational users especially on the archaeological resource around Hood Hill
- Generally tranquil nature
- Archaeological sites i.e. Tang Hall Moat
- Natural lake of Gormire

### Forces for Change
- Increased pressure from visitors and users particularly onto Hood Hill
- Development pressures and changes to building use

### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the peaceful nature of the farmed landscape retaining important character features

### Guidelines
- Minimise small scale incremental change such as excessive new signage which could interrupt the rural character
- Encourage the appropriate and continued management of hedgerows
- Promote sustainable access for visitors and recreational users most notably at Hood Hill and Gormire Lake to ensure the continued existence of an intact archaeological record
### 4B Kilburn to Wass

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#### Sensitivities
- Peaceful nature
- Cultural heritage assets including the small and intimate villages
- Recreational value of the assets especially Byland Abbey

#### Forces for Change
- Development pressures and changes to building use
- Increasing visitor numbers primarily to Byland Abbey and the nearby White Horse

#### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the peaceful but varied nature of the area with its unique cultural and natural heritage assets.

#### Guidelines
- Protect, conserve and interpret the rich cultural heritage in a way sensitive to the peaceful nature
- Minimise small scale incremental change such as excessive new signage which could interrupt the rural character
- Conserve the peaceful and intimate character of settlements
4C Under Ampleforth

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Sensitivities
- Views across the vale to the south
- Presence of the Abbey/College on hillside
- Limited public access

Forces for Change
- Pressure for development at the Abbey and College
- Development pressure for infill and extension of southern reach of Ampleforth

Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** and **enhance** the areas landscape features such as hedgerows and discrete areas of woodland.

Guidelines
- Encourage the retention of the remaining discrete areas of woodland e.g. Spring Wood and Crakeland Wood
- Support small-scale extensions of the existing woods on steeper slopes
- Allow only sensitive development in settlements
- Enhance key features such as hedgerows
- Retain the south reaching views
LANDSCAPE TYPE 5  LOWLAND FARMED VALE

Landscape Character Areas

5A   Long Beck Vale
5B   Gilling Vale

Location and Boundaries

Both character areas of the Lowland Farmed Vale down can be found adjacent to one another running from the east of the area across to the western parameter of the area. They form a long sweep of generally flat farmed vale. To the north they are bordered by areas of transitional farmland.
Key Characteristics:

- Long expansive span of principally flat farmed vale known as the Coxwold – Gilling Gap
- Different topography creates a sharp contrast between the vales and the steeper slopes which border the areas
- Becks drain the area with a network of associated field drainage channels
- Mixture of arable farmland with areas of permanent pasture, fields bounded by hedges, fences and mature boundary trees
- Flatter land in the east gives way to undulations occur in the west with a greater number of trees and woodland
- The parkland setting of Hovingham Hall creates variety and is an important contribution to the landscape character
- There are a number of small villages with most buildings constructed from the local stone
- A disused railway line runs across both vale areas
- Underlying geology reflects the impact of glacial and periglacial activity with till and lacustrine deposits
5A Long Beck Vale

Location

The Long Beck Vale character area is located in the west and centre. It is bordered mainly by areas of transitional land to both the north and south. To the east it joins a second area of the same landscape type. The division broadly follows a change in the underlying geology.

Key Characteristics

• Flat and undulating topography determined by the underlying glacial tills
• Medium and large scale irregular arable and pasture fields bounded by hedges and fences
• Hedges range from mature and well kempt to gappy and fragmented
• The small and discrete areas of Thorpe Spring and Craykeland Wood provide the only woodland cover
• Boundary and field trees are present often in the form of large mature oaks
• Trees and hedges break the views along the vale and the upland areas bound views to the north and south
• A disused railway line threads along the vale lying close to the area’s northern extent
• Drainage becks cut along field boundaries marked by lines of trees and shrubs
• Long Beck itself is not natural and represents the monastic influence across the landscape and changes made to watercourses.
Landscape Character Area Long Beck Vale

120
Summary

The Long Beck Vale character area is a gently undulating vale which is mainly given over to arable farming. Fields are bounded by hedges and although often gappy assist the field pattern which runs throughout. Long distance views are offered to the escarpment in the north and similar although less great slopes to the south. Views along the vale are broken by boundary trees and the soft undulations. Drainage becks are often marked by lines of smaller trees and shrub.

Physical Influences

This area is underlain Kimmeridge Clay overlain by a belt of glacial till. This unsorted depositional moraine provides the area with its gently undulating nature. This contrasts to the neighbouring vale area which is much flatter and determined by a series of lacustrine deposits. The boulder filled glacial till in the Long Beck Vale area delineates the western extent of a massive former glacial melt water lake formed some twelve thousand years ago.

Ecological Character

This generally farmed area with network of hedges supports a range of animals, birds and invertebrates. Becks, streams and occasional standing water create good habitats for wading birds.

Human Influences

This is a mainly farmland landscape with medium and large scale fields. Pasture fields are present but generally this is an arable landscape. Fields tend to bounded by hedges with few hedgerow trees present. The disused railway is at times prominent in the landscape, enhanced by its occasional treed coverage. Rural roads cross in a generally north-south direction connecting the villages of Coxwold and Byland Abbey as well as the road leaving Ampleforth to the south.

Historic Environment

Long Beck itself joins Newburgh Priory, a former Augustinian monastery with Byland Abbey a second former monastic site. It is believed that the beck is among one of a number of features associated with the diversion of water courses undertaken during the period that the priories were active. A disused railway runs through the area once used for goods and passenger transport.
Settlements & Buildings

There are no settlements. A few often large farmsteads are present. The limited settlement contributes to the relatively simple and continuous pattern of vale fields.

Character

The character of the area is strong. The gently undulating ground, fields and many hedges create a cohesive feeling providing simplicity and a generally unified feeling throughout.

Condition

The overall condition is regarded as moderate. While character is strong a number of features would benefit from enhancement works most notably field boundaries which create clear patterns across the vale.
5B  Gilling Vale

Location

*Gilling Vale* borders the *Long Beck Vale* area to the west. To the south and north there are areas of greater relief including the prominent ridge of *Gilling Park and Cawton Heights* to the south.

Key Characteristics

- Underlying glacial lake deposits provide the flat expanses and rich fertile soils suited to cultivation
- Mainly flat arable vale with large scale regular fields bounded by hedges and fences
- Views are framed by the upland areas to the north and south
- Field and boundary trees lend variety to the assemblage of field networks and the flat topography
- Drainage becks marked by scrub and small trees
- Hedgerows, where present are generally intact, but evidently absent elsewhere
- Hovingham Park and its sweeping grounds add a diversity and evident esteem to the area breaking the generally continuous pattern of fields and hedges
- The traditional and picturesque villages of Hovingham, Gilling East and Stonegrave are cling to the peripheral areas
- Recreational grounds associated with Ampleforth College cut across the vale in the west
Summary

Gilling Vale is a predominantly flat farmed vale landscape dominated by arable agricultural activity with medium scale fields bounded by hedges. Views are offered to the upland areas in the north and south but fragmented along and within the vale itself owing to the presence of boundary and hedgerow trees. This creates a more enclosed feeling which supports a sense of peacefulness despite the prominence of farming activity. Farmland is broken only by the grounds of Hovingham Park in the east and the sports fields of Ampleforth College in the west.

Physical Influences

Kimmeridge Clays with overlying lacustrine deposits determine this area’s generally flat appearance. A former glacial meltwater lake, Lake Pickering, was responsible for the rich and fertile deposits at the end of the last ice age. The abrupt change in deposition to glacial till to the west marks the end of glacial lake.

Ecological Character

The presence of hedgerows and irregular/isolated broadleaved tree blocks all contribute to the area’s ecological character supporting a range of flora and fauna species. Drainage becks cutting through the area also provide support to a varied number of farmland and wading birds.

Human Influences

This is a farmed landscape supported by rich and fertile soils. Large and irregular fields divide the area and are bounded by often fragmented and incomplete hedges. Farm tracks and lanes with wide grassy verges form the only real breaks within the fields as settlements and buildings tend to be located on the periphery of the area. To the west is the extension of Ampleforth College’s recreation fields in the vale, taking advantage of the broad sweeps of flat land while the Abbey itself presides from the northern slopes that border the vale.

Historic Environment

The historic environment of Gilling Vale is varied. Evidence of early prehistoric settlement is found around Hovingham, suggesting long use of the fertile soils within the vale. Excavation around the Hovingham Hall site has revealed a large Roman bathhouse, domestic quarters and another building with a decorative mosaic. Village names suggest the influence of Scandinavian settlers during the medieval period. Although, long farmed greater change did
not occur until the ninth century when structured villages began to develop along with large estates.

The Hovingham estate offers a notable grandeur to the area with a sweeping lawns and an attractive stream with a decorative bridge. A gradual evolution of the estate can be traced as fashions for parklands changed and estates adapted. The planting of certain trees, the expansion and retraction of water features to the west of Hovingham Hall (built in the eighteenth century) and woodland development can all be traced.

**Settlements & Buildings**

Gilling East, Stonegrave and Hovingham villages are spread on the edges of the character area. Hovingham has a particularly strong identity with a picturesque linear village, broad grassy verges and traditional white and cream stone buildings with pantile roofs. A small and attractive beck flows through the village. Buildings are generally simple in design and together present an attractive uniformity throughout the village. The frontage of Hovingham Hall sits back from the main street but is noted by its distinctive façade and large central archway. Gilling East is similarly a linear settlement with a small number of buildings built from local stone. A beck runs parallel to the main road through the village dividing buildings from the street. Stonegrave is the smallest village and clings to the edge of Caulkleys Bank on the busy B1257 road.

**Character**

The character of the area is strong. The flat expansive field networks create a clear vale landscape enclosed by the upland areas to the north and south.

**Condition**

The overall condition is regarded as moderate. While there is cohesion to the area many hedgerows are absent and gappy presenting a fragmented appearance in places and would benefit from some enhancement works.
## 5A Long Beck Vale

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<tr>
<th>Strength of Character</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
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### Sensitivities
- Remaining hedgerow boundaries
- Views to the upland areas and bounding northern escarpment
- Sense of semi-enclosure
- Pastoral fields
- Ecological value of drainage becks and ditches

### Forces for Change
- Infill development in settlements
- Continued increases in agricultural intensification resulting in a loss of traditional farmland features including hedgerow boundaries

### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the area’s simple patchwork of fields and to **enhance** key character features such as hedgerows and promote greater ecological value

### Guidelines
- Promote the retention, good management and appropriate restoration of hedgerow boundaries especially those in the most visible locations
- Encourage the best practice of roadside verge management to encourage habitat networks
- Promote rough field margins to encourage new wildlife habitats
- Promote appropriate management of watercourses for visual presence and wildlife
- Encourage retention of semi-natural vegetation on remaining sections of the disused railway
### 5B Gilling Vale

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#### Sensitivities
- Network of rural lanes
- Remaining hedgerow boundaries
- Views to the upland areas and bounding northern escarpment
- Sense of enclosure
- Drainage beck and ditch value to ecological character

#### Forces for Change
- Pressure for infill development
- Changes in building use
- Continued increases in agricultural intensification resulting in a loss of traditional farmland features including hedgerow boundaries

#### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the simple qualities and to **enhance** the patterns of fields and boundaries and contributions to ecological value

#### Guidelines
- Protect remaining hedgerows and promote restoration and good future management
- Encourage the best practice of roadside verge management to encourage habitat networks
- Endorse rough margins around arable fields to enhance flower and invertebrate habitats
- Conserve the historic village centres
LANDSCAPE TYPE 6  FARmed RIDGE

Landscape Character Areas:

6A  Gilling Park & Cawton Heights

Location and Boundaries

There is only one character area of the Farmed Ridge landscape type. To the south the area borders lowland vale and to the north upland areas of the Howardian Hills.
6A Gilling Park & Cawton Heights

Location

The Gilling Park & Cawton Ridge character area is situated in the south and east of the focus area. To the south the area borders lowland vale and to the north upland areas of the Howardian Hills.

Key characteristics:

• A distinctive ridge bordering the flat farmed vales of the Coxwold-Gilling Gap

• Varied land use with fields, historic parkland, golf course, woodlands and St. Martin's School

• Differences in land use create a fragmentation of character unified only by the topography

• Semi-improved pasture and arable fields are found on the ridge top, fields are often large and hedges are incomplete and absent in many cases

• Ploughed fields display the mass of underlying limestone

• Views are offered to the uplands of the Howardian Hills in the south and across the vale to the prominent escarpment in the north

• Woodlands curl around the periphery of the ridge with mixtures of semi-natural woodland, broadleaved and coniferous plantations

• Three ornamental fishing ponds are located at the foot of the western edge
**Summary**

The *Gilling Park & Cawton Heights* area is an extension of the upland plateau located to the north of the vale. Much of the area is farmed while the remainder is given over to banks of woodland on the ridge slopes and to the Gilling Castle estate. The areas of greatest elevation retain an open upland character while wooded areas create pockets of seclusion. A more extensive area of coniferous plantation is found on the western side of the ridge creating an uninterrupted transition to the plantations of the neighbouring *Yearsley Moor* character area. Gilling Castle and the reaches of its former estate have a notable influence across the landscape with its designed grounds, chain of fish pools and remnants of ornamental planting.

**Physical Influences**

Fault lines run to the north and south of the ridge marking the area’s extent. The Coxwold-Gilling-Linton fault marks the southern boundary of the Coxwold-Gilling gap and the flat lowland vale beyond. Lower Calcareous Grit and Corallian Oolites underlie the area. A thin crescent of Oxford Clay (mudstone) and an area of Middle Jurassic Scalby clay curl around the western periphery of the ridge.

**Ecological Character**

Conifer plantation, semi-natural woodland and arable land present contribute to ecological character supporting a range of species. However, the removal and incomplete nature of field boundaries and margins reduces the available habitats on arable land. The ornamental fishponds have associated acidic peat mire habitats. The upper lake supports Sphagnum mire around its inflow and aquatic flora while the lower lake is more calcareous with species such as fringing sedges and reedmace.

**Human Influences**

The main human influences are associated with the former presence of the Gilling Estate, the school at Gilling Castle, agricultural and recreational activity in the form of a golf course around the Castle grounds. The Gilling Estate is a Registered Historic Park and Garden. St Martin’s School which occupies the Gilling Castle site has a secluded feel as is enclosed by the dense wooded slopes of the ridge.

**Historic Environment**

The historic environment is represented by a rich archaeological resource from prehistoric finds to its use during the Second World War.
A large number of recorded sites relating directly to prehistoric settlements are found north of Cawton across the ridge. Enclosure and trackway complexes are also found in a similar area. A number of square barrows are also recorded as part of the prehistoric landscape in this area although investigations have highlighted have shown these enclosures to be constructed for purposes other than burial.

Elsewhere, in the western areas remnants of the former Gilling estate dominate. Gilling Castle itself presents a largely eighteenth century mansion built on the foundations of a fourteenth century castle. The ornamental fishponds to the west of the castle at the edge of the ridge are likely to be of medieval origin. Many indicators of the former Estate have been absorbed into the modern agricultural system. During the Second World War there was a landing ground near the castle.

The production of lime for mortar by the burning of limestone is highlighted by limekilns at Cawton and between Cawton and Hovingham. Lime was also produced, in part, as a flux in smelting and for spread on arable fields.

**Settlements and buildings**

Cawton is the only settlement and occupies a position on the edge of the ridge in the north west of the character area. It is a small village with a number of homes and farmsteads. Buildings are set back from the road in a generally linear nature. The village presents the feeling of being a small and intimate farming community. Gilling Castle, the historical home of the Etton and Fairfax families is now utilised by St. Martin’s School under the jurisdiction of Ampleforth College. The Castle is situated on the northern facing slope of the ridge and although a large prominent building it can rarely been seen owing to the surrounding woodland cover. The Castle is a mixture of building styles having had a number of additions, rebuilds and phases of remodelling over the last six centuries.

**Character**

The overall strength of character is strong although the variety of land uses creates a sometimes fragmented appearance and feeling.

**Condition**

The overall condition is regarded as moderate. Detracting features and a lack of visual unity reduce the overall landscape condition.
6A  Gilling Park Ridge

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<th>Strength of Character</th>
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**Sensitivities**
- Recreational use by golfers and walkers
- Historic parkland status and associated features
- Grounds of St. Martin’s school and use of Gilling Castle
- Panoramic views
- Farmed landscape
- Traditional stone farmhouses and buildings in settlements

**Forces for Change**
- Pressure on footpaths
- Increase and change in agricultural practices
- Development pressures and changes in building uses at settlements

**Strategy**
The strategy is to **conserve** the features of the ridge especially the wooded slopes and parkland features and to **restore** other key character features such as field boundaries and semi-natural woodland.

**Guidelines**
- Appropriate restoration of ancient woodland sites
- Encourage interpretation of the parkland assets including the varied history of Gilling Castle itself
- Encourage interpretation of WWII defence sites
- Take opportunities to improve public access for walkers and horse riders within the wooded areas where it can be married sensitively to the needs of conservation and landscape character
- Ensure small scale changes such remain sensitive to character
- Encourage insightful placing and construction of farm associated buildings considering landscape character and sensitivity
- Restoration and repair of field boundaries, namely hedges
- Provide rough margins on arable fields for wildlife
- Maintain and restore features associated with the parkland setting
LANDSCAPE TYPE 7   PLATEAU FRINGE FARMLAND

Landscape Character Areas:

7A   Newburgh and Pond Head
7B   Oulston

Location and Boundaries

The Plateau Fringe Farmland landscape type comprises two character areas. The areas neighbour one another but reflect different individual identities. Bordering upland areas to the east, this landscape type forms the transition to lower lying areas in the north.
Key characteristics:

- Undulating farmland with boundary trees and copses interspersing large fields

- Coxwold and Oulston are the only settlements with scattered farmsteads throughout

- Newburgh Priory sits against the north facing slopes with distinctive clipped yew hedges and a large pond

- Newburgh parkland has a ranging influence over the area with walled grounds, round tree copses and lodge houses

- Panoramic views are offered, especially from the least wooded areas in the west across the Vales of Mowbray and Pickering
7A Newburgh and Pond Head

Location

*Newburgh and Pond Head* is located in the south west of the focus area. It borders upland area to the west and an area of the same landscape type to the west.

**Key Characteristics:**

- Mature tree belts, boundary trees and parkland planting litter the area creating a sense of a well-wooded landscape
- Newburgh Priory sits to the foot of the south facing slopes with its walled pleasure grounds rising behind
- The Priory itself is distinctive with a large ornamental fish pond, illustrious gateway and clipped yew hedges
- A complex topography with flatter areas at the greatest elevation, steeper lower slopes and undulating ground
- Arable and pasture fields roll sinuously down slope bounded by hedges and fences
- A reservoir nestles in a small wooded valley on the south facing slopes
- Limited settlement with only a small number of farmsteads and homes, with names often reflecting their parkland associations such as High and Low Lions Lodge
Landscape Character Area

Newburgh and Pond Head
Summary

*Newburgh and Pond Head* is strongly influenced by the presence of the Newburgh Priory estate in the north and the presence of agricultural activity to the south. The grounds of Newburgh rise from the vale where the house and ornamental pond are located. The walled grounds accommodate mature tree belts, sweeping grassy fields and circular copses. As the area slopes southward the parkland ends giving way to a mainly pastoral landscape broken by Oulston Reservoir which nestles against a woodland belt in a valley-like undulation. The diverse nature and influences across the area are further reflected by the varied historic remains, found mainly in the areas of greatest elevation including tumuli and vaccary features. This is an area of diverse influence and varied topography with convex slopes and many undulations.

Physical Influences

This area was both partially glacially and is the product of depositional landform presenting a varied geology with many of the lower slopes around Newburgh Priory covered by glacial tills. Middle Jurassic (mainly Scarborough, Cloughton and Gristhorpe formations) bedrock dominates throughout the area. Covered by till in the south and glacial sand and gravels in the west. There are also discrete areas of fluvio-glacial sand and gravel deposits.

Ecological Character

The presence of the parkland within the area contributes to the ecological character with a varied range of tree belts and grasslands. These habitats can support a range of birds, mammals and invertebrates.

Human Influences

This is area dominated by the presence of historic parkland and agricultural activity. The parkland of Newburgh Priory lends an illustrious tone to the area as its walled grounds sweep down the north facing slopes. The grounds and woodland dominate much of the character area. Today, Newburgh is open to the public at certain times of the year and used for a range of activities such as weddings and estate shooting. Elsewhere, the main land use is agricultural with a mixture of arable and pasture farming. Fields were traditionally bounded by hedges although today many are incomplete or have been replaced with wire fences.
Historic Environment

The historic environment ranges from the medieval monastic influences associated with Newburgh Priory, its later 18th Century remodelling and the tumuli and vaccary features found on the hill top. The remains of the monastery at Newburgh are located west of the current arrangement of buildings and are not clearly visible. Newburgh Priory was established by Augustinian Canons during the 14th Century. The house present today, however, was built during the 17th and 18th centuries. The subsequent remodelling of the Jacobean building was carried out by Earl Fauconberg transforming the site to an outward looking park fashionable of the era.

There are numerous holloways believed to be associated with middle age cattle ranching across the areas of greatest elevation which span into the neighbouring character area. Similarly, Bronze Age burial mounds have been discovered reflecting the long standing human use of the area and the importance of the upland locations for burial. In places these archaeological features have been disrupted by both agricultural activity and road construction.

Settlements and buildings

There are no settlements in the area but individual buildings are wide-ranging. The buildings associated with Newburgh Priory are distinctive with the entrance to the west which removes initial focus from the main house, which becomes based initially on the stable block and courtyard. Elsewhere, the estate lodges named High Lions and Low Lions Lodge reflect the historic links that the Wombwell Family (of Newburgh after Fauconberg) had to a travelling circus community.

Character

The character is strong and although varied the influence of the Newburgh Priory estate, the mature tree belts and patterns of hedges lends cohesion throughout.

Condition

The overall condition is regarded as strong although possibilities for enhancement exist particularly with boundary restoration and management of mature tree belts.
7B Oulston

Location

*Oulston* is located in the south west of the focus area. It borders an area of the same landscape type to the east and lowland vale to the north.

Key Characteristics:

- Rolling fields, often large, bounded by hedges and fences
- Sporadic boundary and field trees offer the only woodland cover
- Coxwold is a distinguished village sitting on elevated ground at the northern extent
- The small and intimate village of Oulston nestles on the south facing slopes
- The least wooded area although with a relatively large number of field and boundaries trees becoming fewer toward the south
- Buildings outside of the settlements are restricted to farmsteads, often large and are scattered and prominent on the southern slopes
- Buildings reflect the use of local materials
- Wide and far reaching views are often in nearly all directions with the White Horse to the north especially prominent
- Areas of greatest elevation are flatter with greater undulations on the northern and southern slopes
Summary

The Oulston area is typified by convex farmed slopes forming the transition between the lowland vale and upland plateau areas. The slopes have different aspects and along with small valleys that indent the landscape they provide a varied character to the area. This is one of the least wooded character areas; there are many hedges and boundary trees but only one small bank semi-natural trees in a narrow valley forming the only area of woodland cover. Holly and mature oaks border fields and winding lanes have rich wide grassy verges creating attractive green corridors. The villages of Oulston and Coxwold are both small and distinctive occupying the southern and northern slopes respectively.

Physical Influences

The many undulations across the area are the product of a glacially shaped landform with associated deposits. The majority of the area is covered with glacial tills. A narrow band of Middle and Lower Jurassic rocks (Saltby and Whitby Mudstone Formation respectively) are exposed to the east of Husthwaite represented in land cover by the only patch of continuous woodland in the character area.

Ecological Character

The Oulston character area is one of the least wooded areas, however there is still a strong presence of mature boundary and field trees throughout. Trees, hedgerows and grassy roadside verges contribute to the ecological character.

Human Influences

This is a mainly farmed landscape occupied by both arable and pasture farming activity. There are a small number of

Historic Environment

The presence of Bronze Age archaeological remains in the neighbouring character areas demonstrates the early use of this area. The pottery industry around Coxwold was one of the main centres for the production of Ryedale Ware dating from the late 16th Century. Recent investigation confirmed the location of one kiln site and associated waste pottery sherds were discovered probably signifying the presence of other kilns locally.
**Settlements and buildings**

The village of Coxwold occupies an elevated position in the north-east corner while Oulston village nestles to the south facing slopes. Coxwold is an attractive linear village with small cream coloured terraced houses on either side of the main street. Broad and neatly kempt grass verges between the road and the houses creating an open thoroughfare although generally the village feels intimate and peaceful. St. Michael’s church occupies a prominent position at the west end of the village offering a focus and creating a certain presence across the village. Coxwold is also the location of Shandy Hall, the former home of Laurence Sterne author of the Tristram Shandy novels. For a time, Sterne was the village curate. Oulston does not present the clear assemblage and structure that Coxwold exhibits but is smaller and more organic in nature. Homes are clustered around the main road although set back at different proximities and are of differing sizes and styles.

**Character**

The character of the area is strong. The variety across the area, many slopes, fields, hedges and mature boundary trees present a feeling of harmony and cohesion to the character.

**Condition**

The overall condition of the area is regarded as moderate. Key character features such as hedges and roadside verges
### 7A Newburgh and Pond Head

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<th>Strength of Character</th>
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#### Sensitivities
- Panoramic views
- Parkland setting and attributes
- Veteran field and boundary trees

#### Forces for Change
- Increase and change in agricultural practices
- Increases in recreational pressures created by assets within and around the local area

#### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** the variety and attributes of the area especially those associated with the parkland.

#### Guidelines
- Minimise small scale incremental change such as signage which could change the rural character
- Protect remaining hedgerows and promote restoration and good future management
- Encourage the best practice of roadside verge management to encourage habitat networks
- Endorse rough margins around arable fields to enhance flower and invertebrate habitats
- Conserve and restore appropriately field and boundary trees
- Take opportunities to investigate the rich archaeological resource combined with the conservation of features to reduce risk to future intactness
- Maintain the landscape features associated with the parkland setting and discourage new woodland planting that detracts from the parkland character
### 7B Oulston

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#### Sensitivities
- Far reaching views
- Character of the settlements

#### Forces for Change
- Increase and change in agricultural practices
- Development pressures and changes in building uses at settlements

#### Strategy
The strategy is to **conserve** and **enhance** the key character indicators.

#### Guidelines
- Minimise small scale incremental change such as signage which could interrupt or disturb the rural character
- Conserve the historic village centres
- Protect remaining hedgerows and promote restoration and good future management
- Retain and restore, where appropriate deciduous field and boundary trees especially in the most visible locations
- Take opportunities to investigate the rich archaeological resource combined with the conservation of features to reduce risk to future intactness
Figure 13 Strength of Character
Appendices

Appendix i  Boundary decision notes
Appendix ii  Methodology
Appendix iii  Sites with statutory and other designations
Appendix iv  Comments from the consultation process
Appendix v  Bibliography
Appendix vi  Glossary of Terms
Appendix i  Note on the area selection and boundary limits

The Hambleton and Howardian Hills CAN DO (Cultural and Natural Development Opportunity) Partnership, in existence since 2004, covers a geographical area which covers the south west corner of the North York Moors National Park and the northern part of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This area is 382.65 square kilometres.

The decision was made to select an area within the CAN DO area which would be suitable for submission for the Heritage Grants scheme as well as future funding bids. It was felt that the selection of a smaller area would significantly increase the ability to make landscape scale changes and offer greater impact across the aims of landscape related funding applications or projects.

The finally determined area is 160.32 square kilometres.

The area and the boundary of the area have been based around landscape, practicality and creating an area which is easily identified.

Discussions took place between members of the North York Moors National Park Authority Conservation Department and Howardian Hills AONB, the CAN DO Coordinator and the Landscape Partnership Officer. The CAN DO Steering Group partners agreed to the decision on the proposed area.

The A170 from Sutton Bank to Helmsley forms a ‘central’ corridor to area. The selected boundaries follow roads in the main to the north and east extents.

The eastern boundary follows the existing boundary of the eastern CAN DO extent. The western limit, in part, follows the CAN DO area boundary but with a small area subtracted south of Helmsley.

The northern and southern boundaries were chosen to delineate and create a unit of landscape. In most cases, the boundaries use mappable features such as roads, lanes and field boundaries. These features are used for practicality reasons and do not always represent the changes in landscape character.
Appendix ii Methodology

Research Design

The objectives of this assessment determined an exploratory study with a mixed method approach. The core methods were observation, the use of documentary evidence and consultation. There were five main stages to the process:

Five main stages:

1. Data Collection
2. Characterisation
3. Field observation study
4. Consultation
5. Refinement and evaluation

Data Collection

The data collection stage involved the compilation of baseline information incorporating the wide use of baseline maps including geology, topography, Phase I habitat survey and registered/designated sites. A broad review took place of designation notifications, Natural Area Profiles and existing landscape character assessments covering the area. At the time of writing there was no available historic landscape characterisation.

Information gathering and analysis of artistic and literary perceptions added an extra and diverse element to the process of characterisation and the representation of a sense of place.

Characterisation

Research during the data collection stage allowed for draft characterisation to occur following the Countryside Agency’s guidelines for best practice. The process ensured that landscape character types were formulated and represented by a number of landscape character areas.

Landscape types share common patterns, elements and combinations of geology, topography, land cover and land use. Landscape character areas are individual and unique. They are distinct geographical areas of the associated landscape type. Character areas reflect the characteristics of the landscape type but have their own identity and unique sense of place.
Field observation study

Following the data collection and draft characterisation a series of field observation sessions were made into the focus area. The field study centred on:

- Refining boundaries of the individual character areas
- Corroborating the draft types and areas identified
- Recording the strength of landscape character
- Considering landscape condition and future strategy

A systematic process of recording was implemented. Observations were recorded using 1:25 000 scale maps and a field data record form. A thorough photographic record was kept which was subsequently updated throughout the seasons to create a comprehensive record reflecting the changing landscape over the course of a year.

Boundary notes – Appendix 1 deals with the decisions made about the extent of the focus area and the boundary choice. Boundaries representing the change between individual character areas often represent areas of transition as rarely does landscape character change abruptly.

Character areas – It is important to note that single character areas are not homogeneous but reflect a sense of place which makes them different to neighbouring areas or areas of the same landscape type.

Buildings and settlements – This is predominantly a rural assessment to inform a landscape related scheme. While note and consideration has been given to settlements and buildings it is with consideration to their relation to landscape. Descriptions of the built environment are not intended to be full or complete appraisals of their character.

Limitations for characterisation

Limitations to this character assessment were negligible. The fieldwork was, in the main, carried out through the winter period. This is not recommended by the Countryside Agency guidance. However, the timescale for the project rendered it necessary and the lack of vegetation in many cases was a useful tool for viewing. This limitation was mediated by a series of verification field survey visits which were carried out through the spring and summer. Adjustments were made in retrospect to the character descriptions but no changes were required to the overall characterisation of landscape types and areas.
Consultation

Involving the public and stakeholders has been an integral part of this landscape character assessment. During early spring 2007 a series of eight consultation events were held around the area. The events were widely publicised and intended to both inform local residents and visitors to the area about the Landscape Partnership Scheme bid. Specific invites were sent out to wildlife groups, local history societies and parish councils etc.

The events were utilised to benefit and augment the landscape character assessment.

The objectives were to:

- Explain the process of landscape characterisation
- To test the boundaries and names applied to the individual character areas
- Build an understanding about the perceptions and unique ‘sense of place’ of the Hambleton and Howardian Hills
- Understand the pressures and opportunities for landscape related issues as recognised by local people

Data was gathered by:

- Comments cards relating to specific landscape elements including cultural traditions and views
- Notes placed on post-it notes relating to exhibition materials and prompting questions
- Discussion with the Landscape Partnership Officer and other staff

Issues across the wider scheme were addressed and included questions relating to access and awareness of the area’s heritage. The resulting information was used to enhance the assessment.

In addition, stakeholder input was a ongoing process with comments and suggestions incorporated from a wide basis of individuals and organisations.
Evaluation

There is no definitive method of making judgements and evaluating landscape character. The intent of this Landscape Character Assessment is to inform and support the projects to be carried forward as part of the CAN DO Partnership’s bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund’s Landscape Partnership Scheme. The evaluation process and the suggested strategies are based around the remit and scope of the objectives of the overall scheme. The evaluation process therefore deals with evident forces for change and inherent landscape sensitivities with less focus placed on specific developments and landscape capacity.

Strength of Character

The strength of landscape character is marked by the parameters of strong, moderate and weak. There are no character areas which exhibit a weak strength of character. The judgement on strength of character is based on the completed characterisation and revolves around the area’s distinctive quality and integrity. It is the combination of the patterns of natural and cultural features and an overall sense of place. Determining strength of character is also a relative process and strength is ascertained by the strength of character areas of the same landscape type.

Condition of the Landscape

The condition of each landscape character area has been described. The selections are strong, moderate and weak. There are no areas which have been deemed to have a relatively weak condition. The condition indicator is based on the overall condition of the landscape. It is based around the perception of its condition and relates mainly to the intactness of the features that provide character and integrity.

Landscape Sensitivities

Sensitivities refer to the key aspects which provide and strengthen character.

Visible Forces for Change

The identification of key change issues which have occurred in the recent past and could potentially occur in the future and would have an impact on landscape character. These changes can be both negative and positive.
**Landscape Strategy**

The strategy is presented for the whole character area but identifies specific management of individual elements. The strategy is a set of broad principles relating to these elements and encourages protection of landscapes of high quality and positive change in degrading landscapes.

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<th>Conserve</th>
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<td>Landscapes which are strong and moderate in both character and condition where retention of character should be stressed and the specific elements which contribute. Current management should be maintained with continued best practice continued and adopted where appropriate.</td>
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<td>Landscapes which are strong and moderate but where individual features and character indicators may have suffered degradation or decline.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restore</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landscapes may still be strong in character and condition but where the restoration of key characteristics would improve the character. This includes both changes to management regimes and the introduction of positive new components.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Guidelines**

Guidelines are based on the landscape changes identified and the factors which would help to ensure that the distinctiveness of character is retained. Guidelines are therefore both recommended actions and inactions. They are an extension of the landscape strategy statement.
Appendix iii Sites with statutory and other designations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Character Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sites of Special Scientific Interest</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gormire</td>
<td>4A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caydale</td>
<td>2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryedale Windy Pits</td>
<td>2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashberry and Reins Wood</td>
<td>2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rievaulx Woods</td>
<td>2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Hill Wood</td>
<td>2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaw Gates Quarry</td>
<td>1C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Field Gilling</td>
<td>6A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncombe Park</td>
<td>2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Nature Reserves</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Nature Reserves</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashberry Pastures YWT</td>
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<td>Garbutts Wood YWT</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Site of Importance for Nature Conservation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Boggs Plantation</td>
<td>7A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colley Broach Road Pasture</td>
<td>7A and 5A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder Slack</td>
<td>1D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foxfoot Hay</td>
<td>5A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardy Bank</td>
<td>7A</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Lions Wood (Yearsley Moor)</td>
<td>1D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Fir Plantation</td>
<td>7A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oulston Reservoir</td>
<td>7A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Wood Fish Ponds and the Wilderness</td>
<td>1D and 6A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Spring Wood</td>
<td>5A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thorpe Grange Dismantled Railway</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calf Close Wood</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grange Farm, Gilling</td>
<td>6A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mill Wood</td>
<td>6A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scar Wood</td>
<td>6A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piper Hill Plantation</td>
<td>6A and 1D</td>
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<td>Cawton Bank</td>
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<td>Cawton Fens</td>
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### Conservation Areas

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<td>Hovingham</td>
<td>5B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold Kirkby</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Byland</td>
<td>1A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oswaldkirk</td>
<td>3D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ampleforth</td>
<td>3D and 4C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kilburn</td>
<td>4B</td>
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<td>Coxwold</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oulston</td>
<td>7B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boltby</td>
<td>4A</td>
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<td>Rievaulx</td>
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### Historic Parks and Gardens

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<td>Newburgh Priory</td>
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<td>Gilling Castle</td>
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<td>Rievaulx Terrace</td>
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### Scheduled Ancient Monuments

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<td>NY172</td>
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<td>NY45</td>
<td>Studford Ring</td>
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<td>NY553</td>
<td>Double dykes on Painter Rigg</td>
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<tr>
<td>NY884</td>
<td>Dropping Gill round cairns</td>
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</tr>
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<td>NY885</td>
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<tr>
<td>NY886</td>
<td>Long Grain round barrows</td>
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<td>Long Grain round barrows</td>
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<td>NY973</td>
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<td>NY973</td>
<td>Byland Moor round cairns</td>
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<td>HELMSLEY CASTLE: TWELFTH CENTURY RINGWORK, TWELFTH TO FOURTEENTH CENTURY ENCLOSURE CASTLE AND SIXTEENTH CENTURY MANSION</td>
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<td>13279</td>
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<td>RIEVAULX ABBEY CISTERCIAN MONASTERY: INNER &amp; OUTER PRECINCT, WATER-MANAGEMENT WORKS, AGRICULTURAL FEATURES, ENCLOSURES AND ANCILLARY BUILDINGS</td>
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<td>13282</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 150M NORTH EAST OF SILVER HILL FARM</td>
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<td>25560</td>
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<td>25562</td>
<td>ROUND BARROW 650M EAST OF SOUTH WOODS</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 450M NORTH WEST OF GARBUTT FARM</td>
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<td>WAYSIDE CROSS KNOWN AS COOPER CROSS ON SUTTON BANK</td>
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<td>25582</td>
<td>ROUND BARROW 600M WEST OF GRANGE FARM</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 350M SOUTH OF LONG PLAIN FARM</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 200M EAST OF HIGH BARN</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW IN CLIFF PLANTATION</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 230M EAST OF SUTTON BANK FARM</td>
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<td>26927</td>
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<td>26932</td>
<td>BOLTBY SCAR PROMONTORY FORT AND TWO ROUND BARROWS</td>
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<td>26933</td>
<td>TWO SECTIONS OF THE CLEAVE DYKE SYSTEM, ONE KNOWN AS THE CASTEN DIKE, AND A ROUND BARROW SOUTH OF KILBURN MOOR PLANTATION</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 550M NNW OF WOOL KNOLL</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 530M NORTH OF WOOL KNOLL</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 250M WEST OF CALF CLOSE WOOD</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 450M SOUTH WEST OF CONEY HILL FARM</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW 810M NNE OF WATERLOO FARM, THE NORTHERNMOST OF THREE ROUND BARROWS IN Far MODE PLANTATION</td>
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<td>ROUND BARROW ON SPROXTON MOOR, 410M NORTH OF TOM SMITH'S CROSS</td>
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<td>SQUARE BARROW ON SCAWTON MOOR, ADJACENT TO THE QUARRY BETWEEN SNIP GILL SLACK AND SWORD RIGG SLACK</td>
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<td>DYKE AT THE NORTH EASTERN END OF STONE BRIDGE HOWL, 760M NORTH WEST OF COURT HOUSE FARM</td>
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</table>
Appendix iv Summary of Consultation Results and Comments

The following is a summary of the comments produced at through the public consultation events about the aspects of the area that people regard as contributing the identity of the area.

Views mentioned

• Sutton Bank
• The Beacon between Ampleforth & Helmsley
• Hawnby Hill
• Views from Sutton Bank – both directions
• Roppa Edge
• Oswaldkirk through to Stonegrave
• The North York Moors from the Ebor Way at the top of Oswaldkirk Bank
• The North York Moors from Caukleys Bank
• The North York Moors and Howardian Hills from the Troy Maze
• Ampleforth to Oswaldkirk Road
• From near Studford Ring looking south
• On the road north of Thorpe Grange to the north toward Ampleforth Abbey etc
• Looking west from High Kilburn (or other places above Kilburn) to the Pennines. Often stands out in snow
• View from Kilburn/Coxwold road looking towards White Horse
• From the scarp edge between the White Horse all the way along to Sneck Yate.
• From Sproxton looking towards Ampleforth (SW) across the mainly pastoral valley.
• From Terrington Lavender Farm towards Sherriff Hutton and York Minster.
• Viewpoints when driving from Coulton to Hovingham.
• Views of White Horse and surroundings from Kilburn Oulston Carlton Hushwaite, its all so beautiful.
• Descent into Helmsley (A170).
• Ampleforth Abbey/grounds
• Castle Howard over lake
• Looking up to White Horse from Kilburn
• From the Gliding Station.
• Caukleys Bank (going north).
• Garbutts Ghyll looking north-east
• Looking west towards the Dales from the path north of Sutton Bank
• Hazel Heads, Hawnby Hill, surprise view Rievaulx, view of house in Duncombe Park, Sutton Bank on route to White Horse
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places mentioned that offer a ‘sense of place’ for visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Kilburn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hovingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Old Byland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rievaulx Abbey and Terraces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helmsley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nunnington Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sutton Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Castle Howard Estate and Arboretum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ampleforth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sutton Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sutton Bank Info Centre &amp; walk along scarp edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helmsley Information Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Roulston Scar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helmsley Castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rievaulx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places mentioned that help to bring the history of the area ‘to life’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Byland Abbey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helmsley Castle – particularly the visitor centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Any of the Abbeys and tie in with Ampleforth Abbey, if possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mouseman Visitor Centre (Ampleforth Abbey has a beautiful Thompson library if it was permitted to visit). Many churches in area also have Mouseman furniture – would do a Mouseman Tour!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The White Horse – a tour could be done which takes in the best views of this from different vantage points in the AONB/Hambleton Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Helmsley and Pickering Castles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rievaulx Abbey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Castle Howard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-enactments at various venues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walks, bike and horse rides mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The new Helmsley / Rievaulx walk is brilliant!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Along the Cleveland Way from Sutton Bank northwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ridge Walk known as ‘Sheepwalk’ crossing Castle Howard Drive east to west from Easthorpe to Hovingham/Sheriff Hutton Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• From Oswaldkirk through Nunnington to Harome to outskirts of Helmsley &amp; back via Sproston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hovingham walks leaflet, Sutton Bank to Sneck Yat by bike then up the drove road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Walk along Rappor Edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good ride for children ( or beginners) is Polly Broach Road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix v Bibliography


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Countryside Commission (1996) *JCA029 Howardian Hills*


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### Appendix vi Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NYMNPA</td>
<td>North York Moors National Park Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAN DO</td>
<td>[Hambleton &amp; Howardian Hills] Cultural and Natural Development Opportunity [Partnership]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>Landscape Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AONB</td>
<td>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHAONB</td>
<td>Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SINC</td>
<td>Site of Importance for Nature Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWT</td>
<td>Yorkshire Wildlife Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNR</td>
<td>National Nature Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>HLF</td>
<td>Heritage Lottery Fund</td>
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