

## LCT 8: Central Valley Landscape Character Type



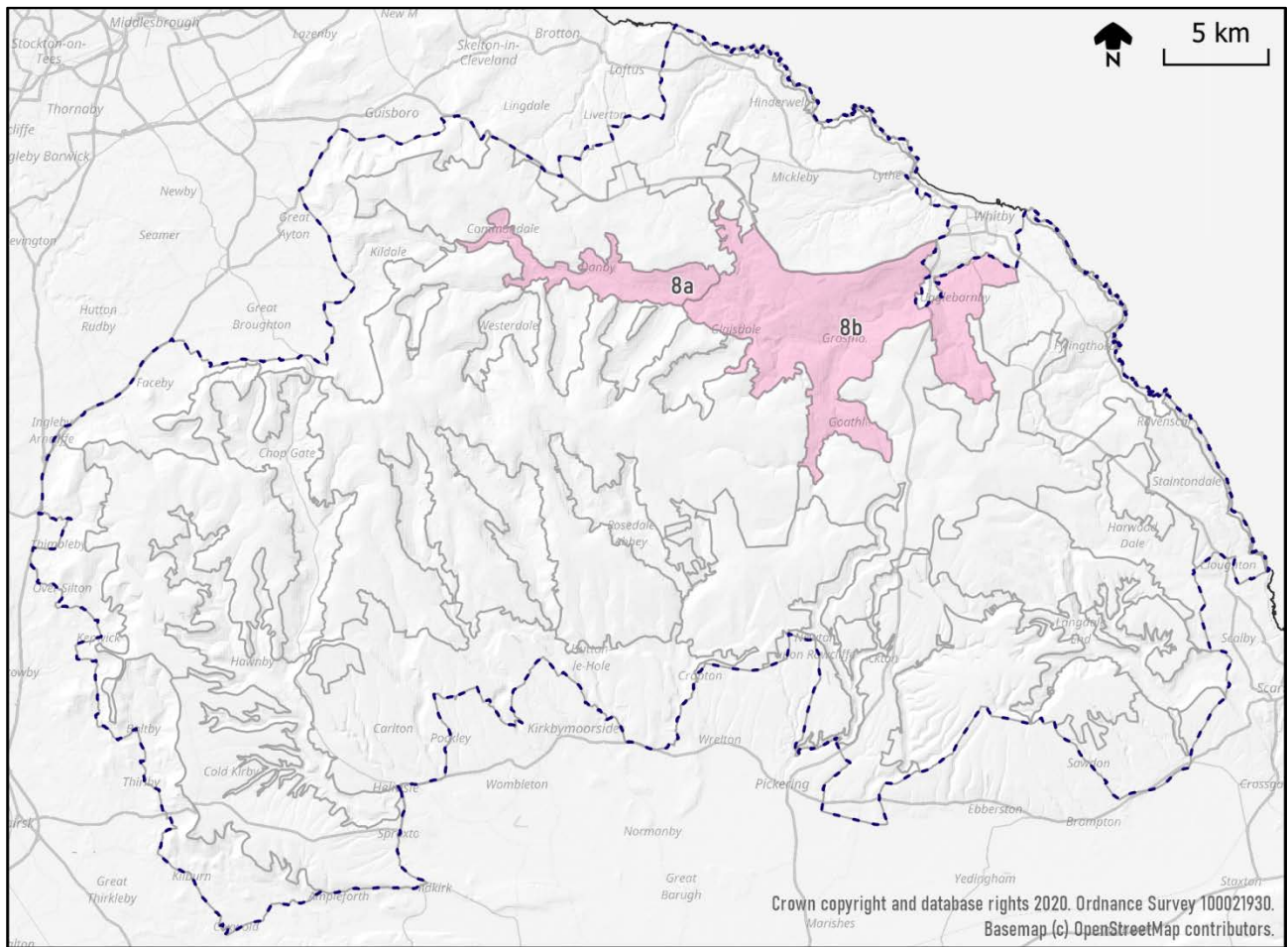
Fig.114 A typical scene within the Central Valley, looking north from Glaisdale village

### Location, Context and Setting

This Landscape Character Type (LCT) is located towards the north of the North York Moors National Park, and runs between Comondale and the National Park boundary around Whitby and Sleights. It is relatively densely settled and includes several villages, including Castleton, Danby, Lealholm, Ainsthorpe, Glaisdale, Grosmont, Goathland, Aislaby and Egton, as well as numerous hamlets and many isolated farms. Its character is strongly influenced by the surrounding Moorland (LCT 1) and Moorland Dales (LCT 2) and to a lesser extent by the Coastal Hinterland (LCT 4) in the east. It is also influenced by (and visible from) land outside the National Park around Whitby and Sleights.

### Summary Description

The Central Valley is a substantial valley running east-west, cut deep into the moorland which surrounds it and forms its horizons. It has many tributary valleys, and its unusual landforms are the result of glacial activity in the last Ice Age, some modified by later erosion by rivers which creates deep gorges. Streams rush along tributary valleys, bouncing over waterfalls and through woodland. Many historic villages, hamlets and farms sit within the landscape, mostly constructed of local stone with pantile or slate roofs. Some villages are popular with tourists and have a busy feel, but elsewhere there is a strong sense of peace and tranquillity. Trains (including the steam trains of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway) add dynamic features into the landscape and also provide opportunities to watch the ever-changing patterns of scenery. This is a well-treed and gentle farmed landscape which contrasts with and complements the surrounding open moorland. There are long views along and across the strongly rural landscape of the Central Valley.



Location map for Central Valley Landscape Character Type (LCT)  
 8a = Commondale – Upper Eskdale; 8b = Lower Esk Valley

## Key Characteristics

- Underlying geology of deltaic sandstones, Lias mudstones and Cleveland ironstones, overlain by glacial and alluvial deposits.
- A deep valley with many tributaries, particularly on the south side. Hummocky topography in areas of glacial deposition, cut through by river gorges.
- Many springs and streams (sometimes with waterfalls) flowing into the meandering River Esk.
- Mainly agricultural land use (primarily improved pasture and arable), with extensive tree cover.
- Semi-natural habitats include extensive woodland, meadows, streams and riparian habitats, verges, and pockets of rough grass and moorland.
- Trees (mainly deciduous) in woodland in valley floors and sides, and in hedgerows.
- Complex and generally small-scale field pattern, often becoming larger and more regular on valley sides. Generally divided by hedgerows in valleys and walls higher on valley sides.
- Many historic villages (in variety of forms), hamlets and farms, constructed of local stone.
- A network of winding ancient lanes, with many fords and bridges.
- Railway lines and associated architecture (including steam railway) add to character.
- Many historic landscape features, including bridges, castles, churches and industrial remains.
- Very strong topographic, cultural and visual relationship with surrounding moorland and dales.
- Long views along and across valley with strong, smooth moorland horizons.
- Strong sense of tranquillity away from ‘honeypot’ villages and strongly rural feel.

## Natural landscape features

The underlying geology is deltaic sandstone from the Jurassic period, overlaying softer Lias mudstones and Cleveland ironstones. These softer rocks have eroded when exposed at the surface to form a broader valley landform. The drift geology is also very important in this LCT, and comprises extensive glacial deposits which have led to a hummocky topography. Rivers flowing through the glacial deposits have created deep gorges. There are also bands of more recently-deposited river alluvium on the valley floor which form fertile soils.



Fig.115 Hummocky topography created by glacial deposits in the Central Valley, Egton Banks

The Central Valley is deep and winding, and carves through the surrounding moorland. It widens in the middle reaches where the underlying rock is more easily eroded. The valley is generally more open on the southern side, where it is joined by a number of moorland dales, and the tributary valleys of the Murk Esk and the Little Beck. The northern side of the valley is steeper, with fewer tributaries. The eastern end of the valley is more complex in form due to extensive glacial deposition of sand and gravels by ice and meltwater in the last Ice Age.

The River Esk follows a meandering course along the valley floor. It is often lined with trees, and occasionally runs through deep wooded gorges where it has eroded a route through glacial deposits. It is joined by

tributaries along its length, some of which are substantial streams. Waterfalls occur where the tributary streams drop down the steep valley sides – Thomason Foss, Mallyan Spout and Falling Foss are notable examples.

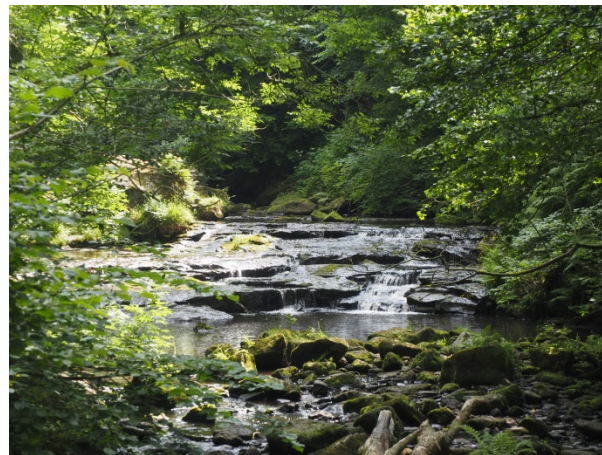


Fig.116 Waterfall and valley woodland in the Murk Esk tributary valley.

Broadleaved woodland (including Ancient Woodland and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites) is a feature of the upper, middle and lower valley sides, and woodland and riparian trees also follow the river and the tributary becks. . Trees (including veteran trees) occur in hedges, alongside roads, as infield trees, and in association with buildings and settlements. There are also occasional blocks of conifer plantation. The overall impression is of a well-treed, verdant landscape.

Semi-natural habitats include woodland, flushes, valley-floor grasslands, streams, and patches of rough grassland and moorland (mostly high on the valley sides, adjacent to LCT1). Some are designated nationally or internationally. Littlebeck Wood (in the Littlebeck Valley) is a Local Nature Reserve.

Designation	Sites
SAC and SPA	Small areas of the North York Moors SAC, SPA and SSSI occur within this LCT near the margins with LCT 1.
Sac	Arnecliff and Park Hole Woods
SSSI	Arnecliff and Park Hole Woods; Beck Hole; Littlebeck Woods
LNR	Little Beck Woods (Yorkshire WT)

Key designated nature conservation sites

## Cultural landscape features

This is a well-settled landscape with a long history of occupation and a strong sense of history. This is reflected in the density of settlement, with numerous attractive villages, hamlets and farms within the LCT. In general, the buildings exhibit a consistency of materials (mostly stone walls and pantile (or very occasionally slate) roofs) but there are some exceptions, such as Comondale (built in locally-fired brick). However the form of the traditional settlements is very varied, with no clear pattern across the LCT. Some villages (for example Castleton and Lealholm) are nucleated in form. Others (such as Egton and Aislaby) are more linear, whilst others (such as Goathland and Glaisdale) are more dispersed and include village greens. Many villages have some later ribbon expansion along roads which can create the impression of a linear village. Some of the larger settlements such as Grosmont and Goathland were heavily influenced by the development of the iron industry. In addition to the villages, there are numerous hamlets and farms at the edge of the valley floor or on the valley sides. Farms are often nestled into sheltered hollows of the landform.



Fig.117 Vernacular buildings in Castleton village

Settlements are linked by a network of steep, narrow, winding lanes made for horses rather than cars. The lanes are characterised by fords and bridges where they cross rivers, streams and railway lines. There are many historic and more modern bridges within the Central Valley. Beggar's Bridge is a particularly good example of a packhorse bridge, built in 1619.



Fig.118 Beggar's Bridge over the River Esk, Glaisdale

The Central Valley connects at its western end with Kildale to create a through route between the Tees lowlands and the coast at Whitby. The Middlesbrough – Whitby line therefore runs along the floor of the Central Valley, with several stations serving local villages. In addition the northern part of the North York Moors Railway descends from the moors into Goathland, and then runs through the Murk Esk tributary valley before joining the Middlesbrough-Whitby line at Grosmont. Railway lines and their associated

architecture, sounds, and the smells of steam trains therefore make a significant contribution to the sense of place.



Fig.119 Goathland Railway Station, on the North Yorkshire Moors Steam Railway

As well as the working railway lines there are tracks of former tramways and inclines which used to serve quarries (mostly ironstone) on the valley sides.

There are castles at Castleton and Danby, both of which are Scheduled Monuments. The 14<sup>th</sup> Century Danby Castle was the home of Catherine Parr (later a wife of Henry VIII). The park pales of medieval hunting estates can still be seen on the valley sides.

Land use in the Central Valley is a mixture of improved pasture, arable agriculture (mostly on the valley floor), woodland and unimproved grassland. There are also patches of bracken, scrub and moorland (mostly at the tops of valley sides and forming a transitional boundary with the adjacent Moorland LCT). Field patterns vary in terms of shape and size, but the overall impression is of an intricate, small-scale pattern of field covering much of the valley, and larger, more regular fields on the upper valley sides. In the upper part of the dale, fields are generally divided by low dry-stone walls of local stone. Hedges (often with frequent hedgerow trees) are more common in lower areas.

Designation	Sites
Scheduled Monuments	Castleton Castle; Danby Castle; Prehistoric barrows on Ugthorpe Moor and Egton Low Moor; Roman Fort on Lease Rigg; Wheeldale Roman Road (part)
Conservation Areas	Numerous, including Castleton, Lealholm, Egton, Egton Bridge, Aislaby and Goathland.
Listed Buildings	Numerous, including houses, farms, churches, schools, shops, bridges, pubs, manors, railway features and a walled garden. Concentrated in Conservation Areas.

Key designated heritage conservation sites

### Perceptual qualities and views

There is a sense of enclosure within the Central Valley, but also a constant awareness of the moorlands above. The gentle feel of the Central Valley contrasts with the surrounding open moorland. In places the topography creates a small-scale and intimate feel. But elsewhere the scale is larger, and the valley opens up to become more expansive. However it still retains its strongly rural feel. Deciduous woodland and field patterns create variety and interest in views, with seasonal changes as trees and hedgerow plants come into leaf and flower, and autumn colours become more vivid. In late summer, the flowering heather creates striking purple horizons.

Some villages such as Castleton and Goathland are particularly popular with tourists (the latter partly because of the presence of the North Yorkshire Moor's Steam Railway, and the village's use as a filming location). This can give them a 'honeypot' feel, with lots of people and parked vehicles. However, despite the settled feel of the Central Valley, there is still a strong sense of peace and tranquillity, particularly in the less accessible parts of the LCT. Small parts of the LCT are remote land in planning

policy ENV3 because of their woodland land cover.

The starry skies can be appreciated at the Dark Skies Viewpoint at The Moors National Park Centre near Danby, although the LCT is not within the Dark Skies Core Area or Buffer Zone.

Where topography permits there are long views along the valley from the valley floor. There are also frequent views across the valley from the valley sides.

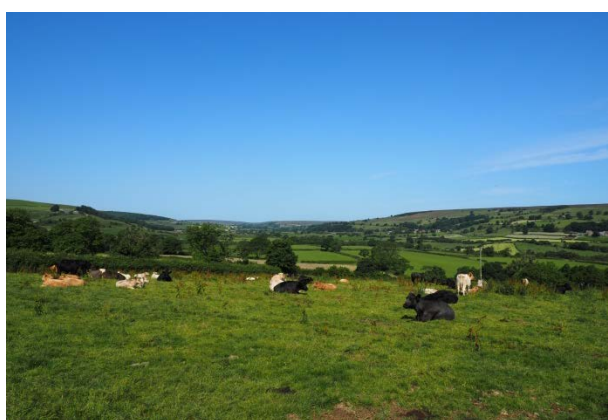


Fig.120 A long view looking west along the Esk Valley, from the valley floor south of Houlstyke

The surrounding Moorland and Moorland Dale LCTs have very close topographical, cultural and visual relationships with the Central Valley LCT. Moorland forms strong and smooth horizons in almost every view. The simplicity of the surrounding moorland contrasts with the intricate and green Central Valley. There are also strong visual connections with the adjacent Moorland Dales LCT, specifically Danby Dale, Fryup Dale and Glaisdale.

The network of lanes and the railways enable people to travel through the LCT appreciating its ever-changing patterns of scenery.

Around Sleights there is strong intervisibility with land outside the National Park boundary, which forms the setting of the National Park.



Fig.121 View from Aislaby church over the National Park setting around Sleights

## Ecosystem Services provided by the Central Valley LCT

Type of Ecosystem Service	Existing Contributions	Opportunities
Cultural Services	The historic villages, buildings and railway lines create a sense of history. This cultural heritage is valued by local people and visitors. Views from trains, roads and footpaths provide opportunities for aesthetic experiences in enjoying tranquillity, contributing to people's health and wellbeing. The Moors National Park Centre near Danby provides educational resources and opportunities to appreciate dark skies. The geodiversity of this LCT also offers opportunities for research and education regarding glacial landforms.	There are further opportunities to connect railway stations with villages (perhaps through additional bus services) and to create walks/ cycle routes from or between stations. There is also potential for a geology trail telling the story of Esk Dale's glacial features.
Provisioning Services	Fertile soils support arable and pastoral agriculture, directly contributing to food supplies, and also fibre in the form of wool. Trees provide timber, wood fibre and biomass, and the extensive network of rivers and streams provide fresh water.	Opportunities to manage farmland and woodland to enhance biodiversity and reduce pollution. Changing climatic conditions provide opportunities to experiment with growing new crops, which could also benefit biodiversity.
Regulating Services	Woodland helps with carbon sequestration and improves air quality by absorbing pollutants. Soils and vegetation absorb rainwater and slow water flow (particularly in tributary valleys), helping to regulate downstream flooding. Valley floor floodplains also help to regulate flooding downstream. Plants and trees provide habitat for pollinating insects	Tree planting/ colonisation schemes have potential to increase carbon storage and reduce pollution. Trees and hedgerows can also contribute to Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes. Changes to agricultural practices could reduce pollution and runoff.
Supporting Services	The LCT provides habitats and habitat links for a range of species, particularly along river corridors, woodlands, verges and hedgerow networks. It also contributes to soil formation and photosynthesis.	Carefully-designed tree and hedgerow planting, and good management of field edges and verges can enhance habitat links. There are opportunities to increase pollinator habitats.

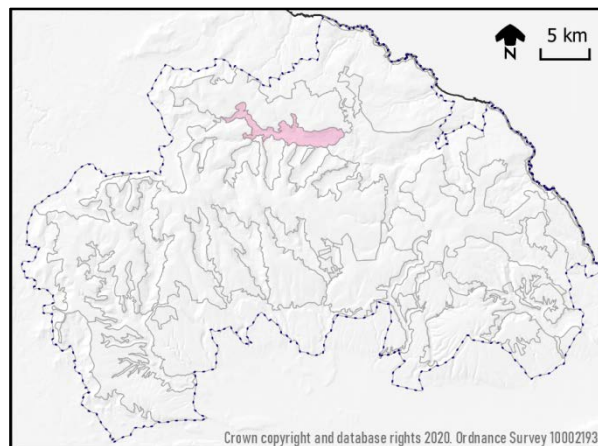
## Landscape Character Area Descriptions

There are two distinctive Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the Central Valley LCT. These are described on the following pages.

## Landscape Character Area 8a: Commondale – Upper Eskdale



Fig.122 A typical scene in LCA 8a, looking east from Danby Castle. Both sides of the valley can be seen



Map showing the location of LCA 8a within the National Park

This LCA is located to the north of the centre of the National Park. It comprises the western end of the Central Valley LCT, from Commondale to Lealholm.

The western end of the LCA is marked by the watershed between Esk Dale and Kildale. Here, the Sleddale Beck rises as springs and moorland streams, before joining the Commondale Beck, then the River Esk itself near Castleton. East of Danby, the valley floor broadens out, before the River Esk enters the steep and wooded Crunkly Gill gorge west of Lealholm.

To the north is the smooth profile of Danby Low Moor and Danby Beacon; whilst to the south are the Moorland Dales of Westerdale, Danby Dale and Fryup Dale, separated by the elevated moorland ridges of Castleton Rigg, Danby Rigg and Heads. The Central Valley is relatively narrow within this LCA, and it is easy to see both sides of the valley in a single view, creating an intimate and enclosed feel. The tributary valleys are steep and V-shaped with narrow valley floors.

The village of Castleton stands on a knoll at the end of Danby Dale, at the meeting point of several roads across the moor. The site of its castle overlooks the Esk Valley. The valley floor at Castleton, with its cricket pitch, pub, bridge and riverside trees is a bucolic scene. Danby and Ainthorpe are both settlements with older cores which have seen modern linear development. Commondale is unusual in that many of the buildings (including houses, a chapel and offices) are constructed of a distinctive orange-red brick, made in the former brickworks here. Roads tend to follow the valley sides, but the railway line runs along the valley floor, occasionally crossing meanders on bridges. There are also numerous bridges where lanes weave over and under the railway line.

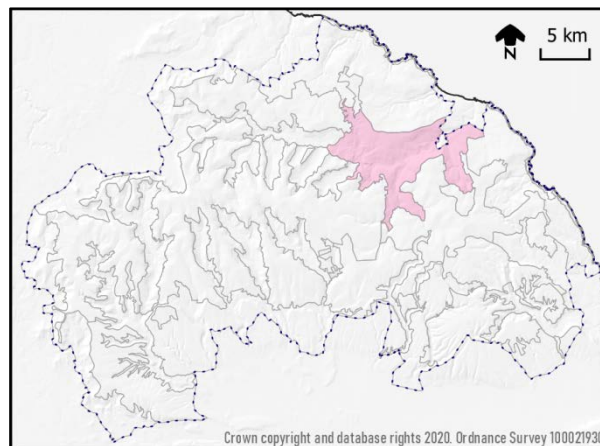
Danby Castle sits on the valley side at the end of Danby Rigg. Dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, it comprises a central courtyard with four towers and is still used for the Danby Court Leet. On the opposite side of the valley is its former hunting lodge, now The Moors National Park Centre. Medieval park pales, which demarked the hunting estate, can still be seen on the valley side.



## Landscape Character Area 8b: Lower Esk Valley



Fig.123 A typical scene in LCA 8b, looking west from Fair Head Line, east of Grosmont



Map showing the location of LCA 8b within the National Park

This LCA is located in the north-east of the National Park, and comprises the lower, broader part of the Esk Valley between Lealholm and Sleights. It also includes the broad tributary valleys of the Murk Esk, Stonegate Beck and Little Beck. The villages of Lealholm, Glaisdale, Egton, Egton Bridge, Goathland, Grosmont and Aislaby are all within this LCA, as well as hamlets including Ugglebarnby, Littlebeck and Iburndale. In addition there are numerous farms on the valley sides. Most of the buildings are vernacular in style, constructed of local stone, with pantile or slate roofs. There are also some more modern properties, particularly on the edges of villages which can in places create a localised more suburban character (for example on the edge of Sleights). Railway architecture is also apparent along the railway lines, particularly at Grosmont, where the Middlesbrough-Whitby line and North Yorkshire Moors Steam Railway meet.

Within the broad valley landform there is a complex topography of glacial deposits, resulting in a hummocky appearance. The roads and paths through the valley are often steep and winding as they negotiate the uneven topography. Towards the east the valley floor floodplain becomes slightly wider, and the river meanders larger. There are extensive areas of woodland on the valley floor and sides which (together with the hedgerow and infield trees) add to the soft and verdant appearance of the landscape.

There is a gradual transition at the tops of the valley sides with the surrounding Moorland and Coastal Plain LCTs. Here, the presence of rough grassland and stone walls creates a more upland feel.

Views are often panoramic from valley sides, and also sudden, revealed in gaps between trees or by the topography. Within the broad valley it is an intricate, small-scale landscape which contrasts with the open moorlands above.

## Forces for Change acting on the Central Valley LCT

Issue/ Force for Change	Landscape sensitivities and potential impacts	LCAs affected
Infrastructure and communications	The populated nature of the Central Valley means that there is demand for telecommunications coverage, which is a challenge in a strongly rural landscape. Existing examples of masts include a standard design mast sited in a fairly prominent elevated location in the centre of the valley, and a bespoke design mast (painted dark green to blend with the surrounding trees) located in a discreet valley-floor location.	All
Settlement expansion	The LCT contains several of the 'larger villages' within the National Park, which may be a focus for future small-scale expansion (e.g. small affordable housing schemes). There may therefore be pressure for settlement expansion which does not fit traditional settlement form, or which would be overly intrusive (e.g. extending linear settlements so they appear to expand into open moorland). There is also a risk that building designs and boundary treatments may be suburban rather than rural in character.	All
Biodiversity loss	Past decades have seen a decline in biodiversity resulting from farms switching from hay to silage. Hay meadows support much richer biodiversity than grass grown for silage, and their rich variety of herbs and grasses provide habitat and food for pollinators, butterflies and birds. Grassland may also have been lost to arable, reducing biodiversity and potentially increasing risk of soil loss. The 20 <sup>th</sup> century also saw some replanting of Ancient Woodlands with plantation, reducing their variety of trees and habitats, and the species they could support.	All
Abandonment of traditional agricultural buildings, and demand for new buildings	Changing farming practices require larger and more modern farm buildings. Old buildings no longer serving their original purpose may become derelict unless an alternative use can be found (e.g. conversion to holiday accommodation or business premises). This may result in loss of historic integrity and fittings associated with its original use. New larger agricultural buildings are likely to be much more prominent in the landscape and may also contribute to light pollution unless carefully designed. Stone walls and hedgerows may become derelict/ gappy if they are no longer required to be stockproof, or be replaced with post and wire fencing.	All
Tree disease and invasive species	Ash dieback is present in nearby LCTs and will presumably spread to this LCT in coming years. It will affect many woodland ash trees, as well as those in fields and hedgerows, and alongside roads. Other tree diseases and invasive species of plants and animals threaten the appearance of the landscape and the functioning of woodland and river ecosystems.	All
Additional tree cover	There are opportunities to increase tree cover within this LCT, for example through new woodland planting, woodpasture, hedgerow trees, riparian trees, infield trees and parkland trees. There may be opportunities for natural colonisation on valley sides close to the surrounding moorland, or in valley floors to create wet woodland.	

Issue/ Force for Change	Landscape sensitivities and potential impacts	LCAs affected
	<p>When thinking about increasing tree cover, it is important to consider any potential impacts on the distinctive field patterns which are a feature of the landscape, or the blocking of views within the valley. It could also damage sites (such as flower-rich grassland) which are already important for biodiversity. Not all these sites are designated or recorded. It may also damage buried archaeology, or affect the settings of Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings.</p>	
Climate change	<p>Rising temperatures will affect the species of trees which can thrive, potentially affecting the composition of woodlands and hedgerows. Increased rainfall and intensity of storms will lead to flooding and damage to trees and buildings. Drought will affect river levels and cause problems for crops and livestock. Warmer temperatures and longer growing seasons may affect farmers' crop choices, with new crops becoming part of the landscape.</p>	All
Loss of rural character	<p>Increased signage and 'clutter' on roads, and urbanising features such as concrete kerbs, can lead to a loss of rural character. It can be a particular issue on the approach to villages, and may be associated with village-edge development. Some traditional signposts are sometimes in poor condition.</p>	All
Visitor pressure	<p>Concentrations of visitors at key destinations can lead to issues such as inappropriate parking, erosion of paths, littering, trampling of sensitive habitats and wildlife disturbance.</p>	All
Farming and land management	<p>The consequences of past changes in farming practices are described in 'biodiversity loss' above. In addition the artificial fertilisation of fields, and the farming of livestock, may result in nitrate enrichment and the pollution of water supplies unless carefully managed. Forthcoming changes to agricultural grant schemes are likely to result in changes to how land is managed, with payments for 'public goods' such as climate change mitigation measures and supporting nature recovery. This is a change in emphasis to the subsidy system which will hopefully be a positive force for change in the landscape.</p>	All
Loss of tranquillity and dark skies	<p>Dark skies are threatened by new development, traffic, street lighting, security lighting and lightspill from agricultural buildings. None of the LCT is within the Dark Skies core or buffer areas. Levels of tranquillity are impacted by development, traffic, noise and people.</p>	All
Changes outside the National Park and in adjacent LCTs	<p>At the eastern end of the National Park there is intervisibility between the LCT and the area outside the National Park around Sleights, Ruswarp and Whitby. Poorly sited or designed development here could result in adverse impacts on the setting of the National Park. Fields outside the National Park but adjoining existing development are particularly vulnerable. Development outside the National Park may also contribute to light and noise pollution, and may be cumulative in its effects.</p> <p>There is very strong intervisibility and ecological connection between</p>	8b

Issue/ Force for Change	Landscape sensitivities and potential impacts	LCAs affected
	the Central Valley, and LCT 1 (Moorland), LCT 2 (Moorland Dales) and LCT 4 (Coastal Hinterland). Therefore changes taking place in these LCTs may impact on the Central Valley. Conversely, changes (such as new tree planting) within the Central Valley will be visible from surrounding higher LCTs.	

## Landscape Guidelines for the Central Valley LCT

### Protect

- Protect prominent skylines within the valley. Avoid siting telecommunications masts or buildings where they would break sensitive skylines.
- Protect dark night skies.
- Protect historic buildings and the distinctive built forms of this LCT, including those associated with former industry and the railway lines. Ensure that conversion of redundant farm buildings is sensitive to their former use and location.
- Protect the relationship between farms/settlements and the surrounding landscape. Where new buildings are required, maintain this relationship through careful siting, design and mitigation (see National Park Design Guide). Pay particular attention to the settings of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.
- Protect the settings to settlements, and the diversity of distinctive settlement forms.
- Protect archaeological sites, and take an integrated approach to managing those sites which are vulnerable to damage by climate change, changing management or visitor erosion.
- Protect the smooth skylines which form the horizons to this LCT (these may be in other LCTs).
- Protect the sense of tranquillity found in the more remote parts of this LCT
- Protect the setting of the National Park, particularly from highly intrusive or cumulative development.

### Manage

- Encourage active management of broadleaved woodland where it will provide clear landscape and biodiversity benefits alongside production of wood products where appropriate. Seek opportunities to revert Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites to native deciduous woodland.
- Manage grassland, riparian and moorland habitats, seeking opportunities to create connections with similar habitats in this LCT and adjacent LCTs, and to expand flower-rich grassland sites.
- Manage farmland, seeking opportunities to enhance biodiversity and to reduce pollution and runoff.
- Manage rivers and watercourses, seeking opportunities to reduce water pollution and flood risk using Natural Flood Management techniques.

- Manage hedgerows and dry stone walls using traditional methods where possible. Use hedgerows to improve habitat connectivity between woodlands, using species present in existing local hedgerows.
- Manage roadside and hedgerow trees, allowing new trees to grow out as standards.
- Manage SSSIs, Scheduled Monuments and other significant heritage sites, attempting to retain them in optimal condition.
- Consider opportunities for dynamic boundaries between farmland, scrub and moorland where this LCT adjoins LCT 1.

## Plan

- Consider opportunities for increasing tree cover, for example through encouraging roadside and hedgerow trees, woodpasture and new native woodland. Ideally this would extend and link existing areas of deciduous woodland. It could include valley floor wet woodland, or mixed woodland on valley sides. Avoid planting woodland in areas of strong field patterns, or where trees would obscure popular views. Also avoid planting woodlands with straight edges or containing straight lines of trees. Include glades and rides to maximise habitat diversity, and use a mix of native species. There may also be opportunities for natural colonisation in moorland fringe locations. Before commencing any tree planting, professional advice should be sought to ensure that there will be no negative effects on the historic environment, ecology or access.
- Promote Natural Flood Management techniques where appropriate.
- Ensure development proposals within the National Park's setting are appropriately assessed, and adequate mitigation is in place, particularly where there may be cumulative impacts.
- Use existing or new hedgerows or woodlands to screen any new development on the peripheries of settlements and help it to integrate into the landscape.
- Where communications masts or other vertical features are unavoidable, site them close to existing trees or buildings, and consider non-standard designs to minimise visual impact. Avoid siting masts on open skylines.
- Seek opportunities to underground overhead wires and poles where possible.
- Retain the rural character of settlements, avoiding unnecessary signage and urbanising features such as concrete kerbs, tarmac pavements/ driveways and close-boarded fencing.
- Plan any new small-scale development in villages to ensure that it complements and enhances the existing village form, for example avoid linear expansion to a nucleated village.
- Take great care in the design and siting of new farm buildings, ensuring that they are located close to existing farm buildings, and that their design and materials will minimise their visual impact. Use native tree and hedgerow planting to help screen them, and minimise the use of cut and fill.
- Ensure that change to heritage assets is informed by an understanding of their importance, and can retain and where possible enhance their significance. Provision should be made for management plans, and research into materials, where appropriate.

- Work with transport providers to develop and promote walks from or between railway stations. This would be a sustainable way to encourage visitors from the Middlesbrough conurbation to visit the National Park.
- Explore the potential to enhance links (for example bus services or regular taxis) between stations and local villages so that local people can use trains more easily and are less reliant on cars for travel.