

Land to the north and south of
Leeds Road, Mirfield
Landscape Character
Assessment

Site ID: E1832



**KIRKLEES COUNCIL
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

SUMMER 2015

Landscape Character Assessment

Introduction

Background

The Kirklees district is situated in the south west of West Yorkshire, and is bounded by the boroughs of Calderdale and Bradford to the north, Leeds and Wakefield to the east and the Peak District National Park to the south—and Greater Manchester to the west.

Kirklees occupies an area of approximately 409 square kilometres, making it the 3rd largest metropolitan district in terms of area.

Although Kirklees is comprised of urban areas, including Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Mirfield, Batley, Marsden and Holmfirth, there are extensive swathes of countryside within the district, the majority of which are designated as Green Belt.

11% (4,574 hectares) of the borough is located within the Peak District National Park.



The objectives of the landscape assessment is to...

(i) describe and analyse the landscape character of a specific area identifying individual landscape types and those features/elements which characterise them;

(ii) provide a landscape framework to:

- guide and inform those responsible for development, landscape change and the management of landscape;
- seek to conserve and enhance the characteristic landscape types of the area;
- seek to avoid management methods and forms of development which would be detrimental to landscape character;
- specify measures to meet land management objectives;
- identify areas where little or no original fabric remains, where there are opportunities to create new landscapes.

(iii) identify the factors which have had an influence upon landscape change in the past and those that are likely to do so in the future, in making recommendations on how to respond to these changes;

(iv) have regard to local perceptions of landscape both past and present, 'sense of place' and areas of local landscape value.

Landscape Character Assessment

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Key to Landscape types

Fringe farming



Traditional farming



Open plateau



Maintained grassland parkland



Valley side



Woodland development



Woodland brownfield



Industrial



Methodology

Landscape Character Assessment is a standard methodology for identifying, describing, classifying and mapping what is distinctive about our landscapes. It shows us their variety, and helps us to understand what makes one landscape different from another.

This Landscape Character Assessment has been produced following nationally recognised guidelines.

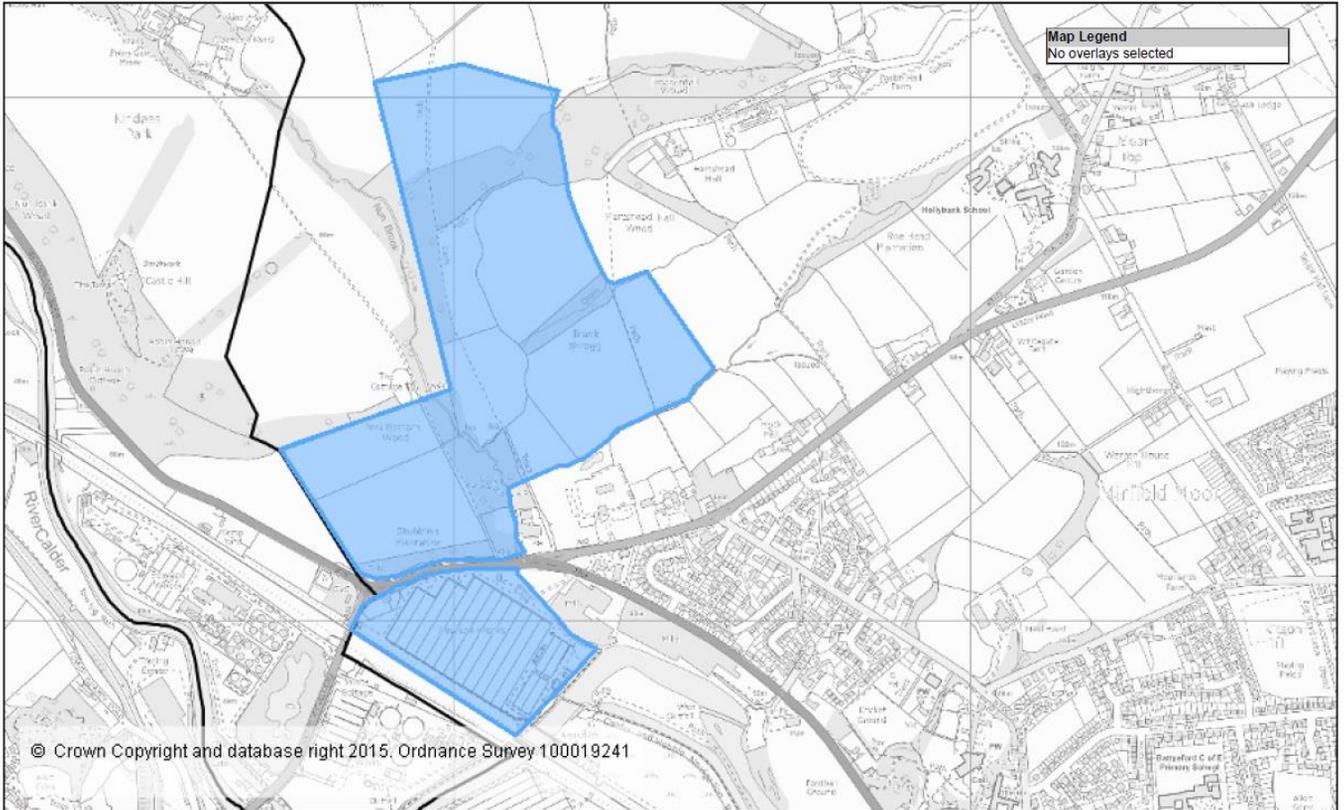
The methodology follows three steps;

- i) collection and review of data as a desk study, giving a general preliminary indication of landscape character areas or types
- ii) a period of field study recording both objective data and subjective responses to the landscape itself and testing the draft character areas;
- iii) an analysis and description of the collected information in the form of the report, with recommendations such as landscape guidelines or planning policy guidance, as required.

Context Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

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Kirklees
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Kompass
Kirklees Mapping Service

Tel: 01484 221757 (internal 860 1757)
E-Mail: maps@kirklees.gov.uk

Land to the north and south of Leeds road, Mirfield

0 m 300 m 600 m

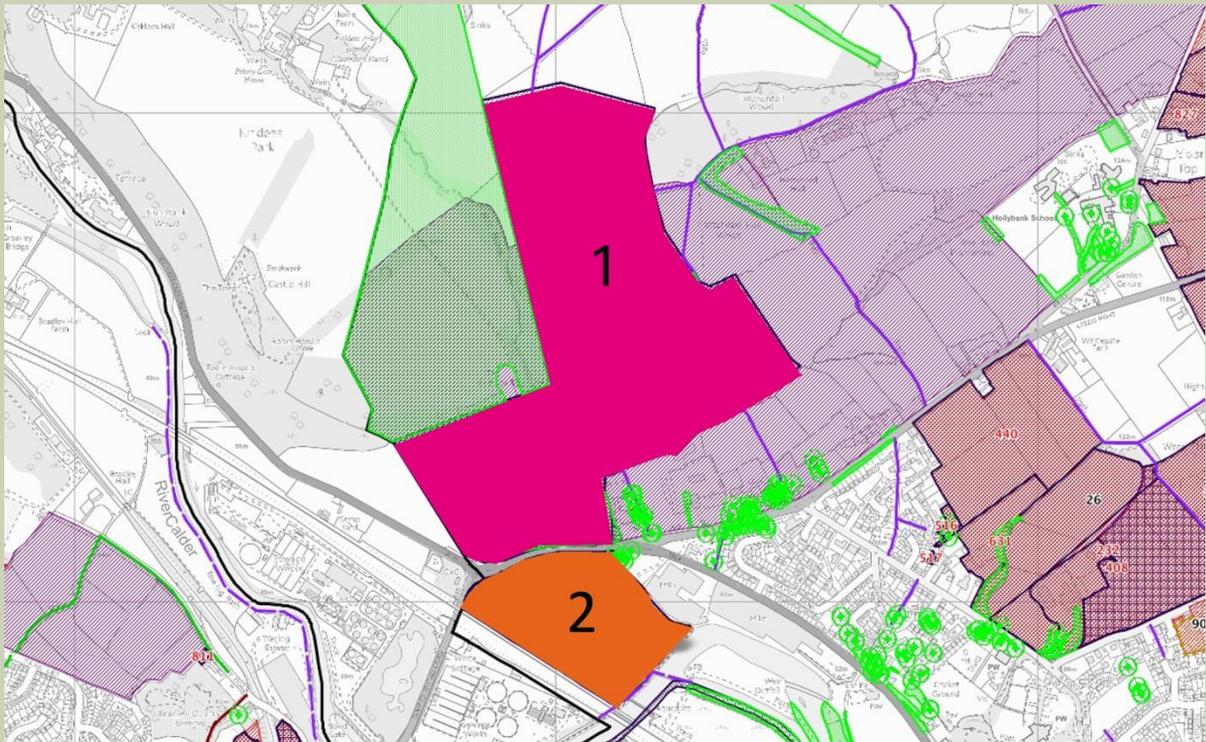
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Landscape Types Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

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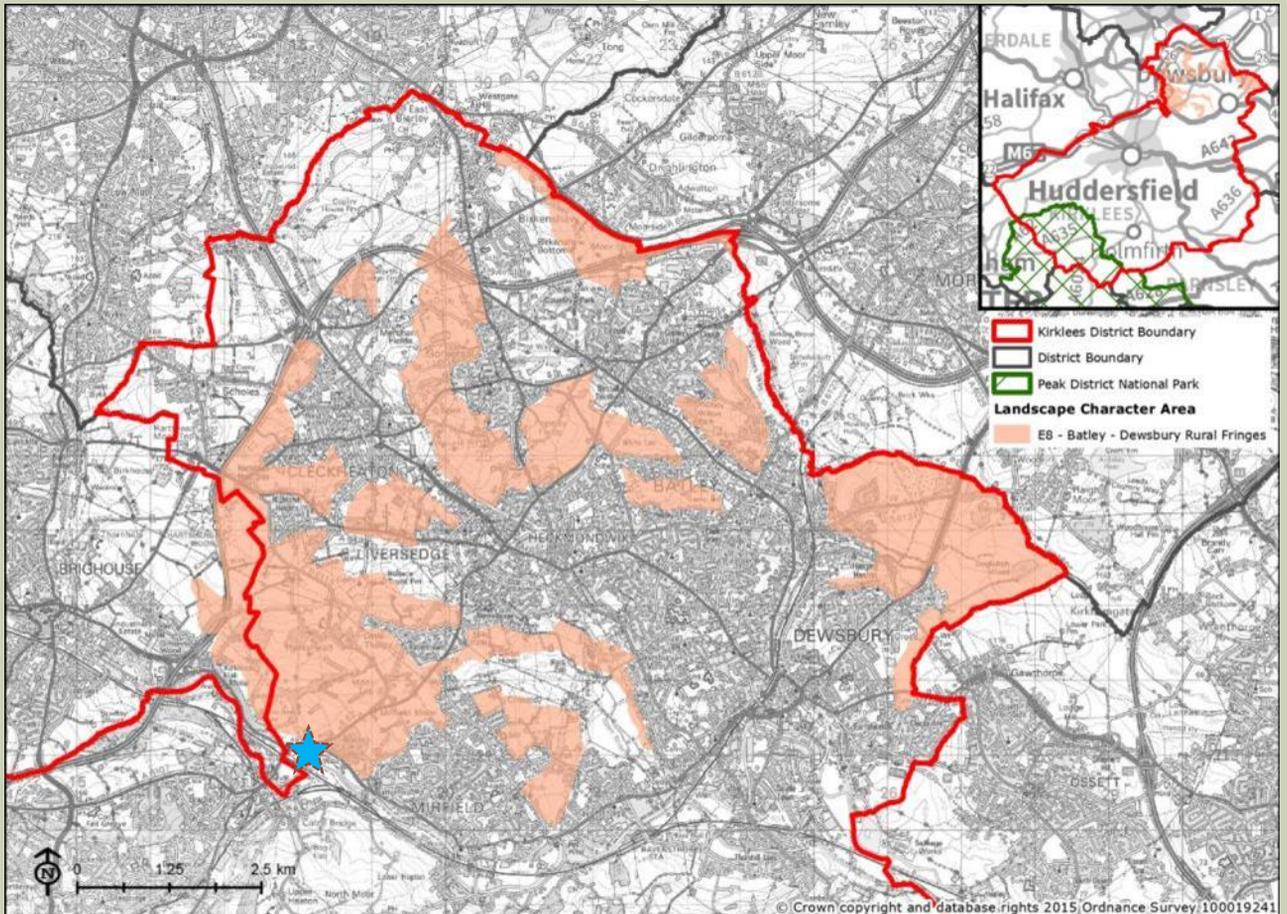
This area is on the fringes of the existing industrial & residential development along the A644 & A62. It lies within the Kirklees Character Profile area LCA E8: Batley – Dewsbury Rural Fringes and the National Character Area Profile No. 37 - Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe. The area has been divided into 2 separate landscape types :

- 1- Fringe Farming 
- 2- Industrial 

Local Character Profile plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

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Local Character Profile areas LCA E8: Batley – Dewsbury Rural Fringes, the site is marked by a blue star.

National Character Area Profile No. 37 - Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe

Landscape Character area Summary

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

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• **Physical influences**

• **Topography**

- As described in LCA E8, the area comprises of gently undulating land between approximately 100 and 200 metres in altitude. The land typically falls in elevation towards the surrounding urban areas.

• **Geology**

- As stated in the LCA E8: Bedrock geology consists of the Pennine Coal measures formation typical of much of the District, with areas of alluvium deposits associated with watercourses.

• **Ecological influences**

- The area has varied tree cover with trees in shelterbelts, along field boundaries and areas of woodland as well as following Nun Brook.
- The area has a field pattern of small scale grassland pastures and a mix of field boundary types including hedgerows and fences.
- The industrial area where the former water treatment works is located is in close proximity to the River Calder and hence sits on the flood plane. Nun Brook also borders the site boundary to the north.

• **Human influences**

• **Landscape Type 1:**

- There is a rich history of human influences within the immediate and surrounding area dating back to Roman times and with a report of Robin Hoods grave on the adjacent Armitage Estate (Kirklees Park).
- Farmsteads and small settlements are scattered throughout the site.

• **Landscape Type 2:**

- Sewage works have been evident on this site from the early 20th century when the area became more populated after the arrival of the railway. Industry arrived during and after World War 2 with the building of Nun Brook Mills (now the John Cotton Group) adjacent to the site.

• **Visual Character**

- The visual character is diverse with the gently undulating fields with distinct field boundaries of the estate. The site has scattered farmsteads and a sense of grandeur with the tree lined drive and gatehouse. Views extend to the horizon from within the site, interrupted by woodland and tree lines. There are residential urban fringe areas to the north and east, in contrast to the busy industrial landscape bordering the A62 and A644.

Landscape type 1.

Fringe Farming

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- **Key Characteristics**

- Pastoral plateau fringe farmland – mixed broad leaved woodland. Scattered farmsteads and settlements.

- **Landform**

- Gently undulating plateau area.

- **Vegetation**

- Pastureland and areas of mixed leaf woodland with naturalised native planting along site and field boundaries.

- **Tree cover**

- Tree preservation orders are prevalent on individual and groups of trees, including the line of boundary trees bordering the A62. A large swathe of woodland to the east of the east of the site is covered by TPO's. (refer to information plan).

- **Land Use**

- Allocated as Green Belt, the land use is pastoral fringe with low level grazing and mixed leaf woodland, some of which is classed as ancient replanted woodland.

- **Enclosure and views**

- The area is low level with traditional post and rail farm fencing defining the field enclosures in association with mature hedgerows. Views reach to the horizon, generally interrupted by treelines and /or hedgerows.

- **Settlement and buildings**

- Farmsteads and small housing groups surround the site to the north and east, the public house (The Three Nuns) lies at the junction of the A644 & the A62 to the south.
- There is a rich history of settlement in this area from Roman times through to present day.
- There is a Scheduled Ancient Monument on adjacent Kirklees Estate.

- **Transport and Access**

- The area is accessed for farming, along access tracks and through field gates. There are Public Rights of Way [PE/155/30, SPE/155/40, SPE/158/20] that cross through the site.
- The A644 & A62 are busy dual carriage ways to the south providing access to Dewsbury and Leeds to the east with Manchester and the M62 (approx. 2km) to the west.

- **Landscape condition**

- The area is managed grassland with well maintained woodland.
- The landscape condition is moderate to high.

Landscape type 1.

Fringe farming

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- **Recreational**
- The PROW SPE/155/30, SPE/155/40, SPE/158/20 are popular with walkers across the site.
- **Noise**
- There is steady and continuous traffic noise from the busy A644 & A62.
- This noise diminishes as you travel north through the site.
- **Historical cultural**
- The fields retain a feel of traditional local farming with grade II listed cottages just beyond the eastern boundary of traditional hammer-dressed stone. Pitched stone slate roof and stone mullioned windows.
- **Subjective description.**
- A tranquil farmed landscape with extensive far reaching views.



Typical images of landscape type 1



Landscape type 1. Fringe Farming

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Main strategies

Conserve where landscape character is strong, in good condition and has features, which distinguish the area from other areas.

Restore where the underlying character is still reasonable strong but the overall structure and individual elements and features are in decline.

Enhance where the underlying character is weak with no clear defining structure, and where positive action is needed to create an improved landscape structure.

Create where there is opportunity for a radical change to the existing landscape.

Condition /character matrix



Conclusion: STRENGTHEN & CONSERVE

Condition: GOOD

Character: MODERATE

This local landscape character area is of moderate landscape character and in good condition. There is a case for conserving and strengthening the character of the area and any development should be sympathetic.

Condition	Good	Strengthen	Strengthen And Conserve	Conserve
	Declining	Strengthen And Enhance	Conserve And Enhance	Conserve And Restore
	Poor	Creation	Restore And Enhance	Restore
		Weak	Moderate	Strong
		Character		

Landscape type 2.

Industrial

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- **Key Characteristics**

- Disused sewage works in key location to A62, A644, Calder & Hebble canal and trans Pennine railway line.

- **Landform**

- Flat valley floor situated on the flood plane of the River Calder. Nun Brook runs along the north east boundary of the site.

- **Tree Cover & Vegetation**

- Strong, mature and dense treeline to boundary along the A62 Leeds Road providing an effective screen to the site. Further coverage along the land bounding the River Calder. Groups of mature trees and scrub are intermittent throughout the rest of the site.

- **Land Use**

- Formerly a sewage works and water treatment plant established in the early part of the 20th century encompassing a greater area beyond the railway line, now no longer in use. The site is adjacent to the John Cotton Group factory.

- **Enclosure and views**

- The site occupies a flat area and is currently enclosed with low walled boundaries contrasted by high metal industrial fencing, with the River Calder and Nun Brook enclosing the north east & south east boundaries. The banking of the railway line borders the south. Views from the site are restricted due to the low level topography.

- **Settlement and buildings**

- Two residential dwellings are situated on the west boundary in close proximity to the roundabout. A brick office building is close to the entrance from the A644 to the works with a cluster of steel industrial buildings.

- **Transport and Access**

- The area is largely inaccessible to the public and is restricted to authorised access from the main entrance of the A644 and entry from the A62 Cooper Bridge although claimed path DEW/dmno app 72/50 traverses the site to the southern end.

- **Landscape condition**

- The area is dominated by structures / works relating to the former water treatment plant. Within the site there are small pockets of grass and naturalised planting.
- The landscape condition is poor.



Landscape type 2.

Industrial

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- **Recreational**

- There is limited public access within the site boundary, the claimed path DEW/dmmo app 72/50 follows the boundary to the southern end of the site.

- **Noise**

- Continual vehicle noise can be heard from the A644 & A62.

- **Historical cultural**

- The area has been a sewage treatment plant from the early 20th century.

- **Subjective description.**

- The site is quiet in parts, although background traffic noise is ever present, with areas of unkempt naturalised vegetation between the few buildings and structures. The area feels separated from the surrounding landscape due to the screening trees and vegetation which surrounds the boundary security fence.



Typical images of landscape type 2



Landscape type 2.

Industrial

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Main strategies

Conserve where landscape character is strong, in good condition and has features, which distinguish the area from other areas.

Restore where the underlying character is still reasonable strong but the overall structure and individual elements and features are in decline.

Enhance where the underlying character is weak with no clear defining structure, and where positive action is needed to create an improved landscape structure.

Create where there is opportunity for a radical change to the existing landscape.

Condition /character matrix



Conclusion: CREATION

Condition: POOR

Character: WEAK

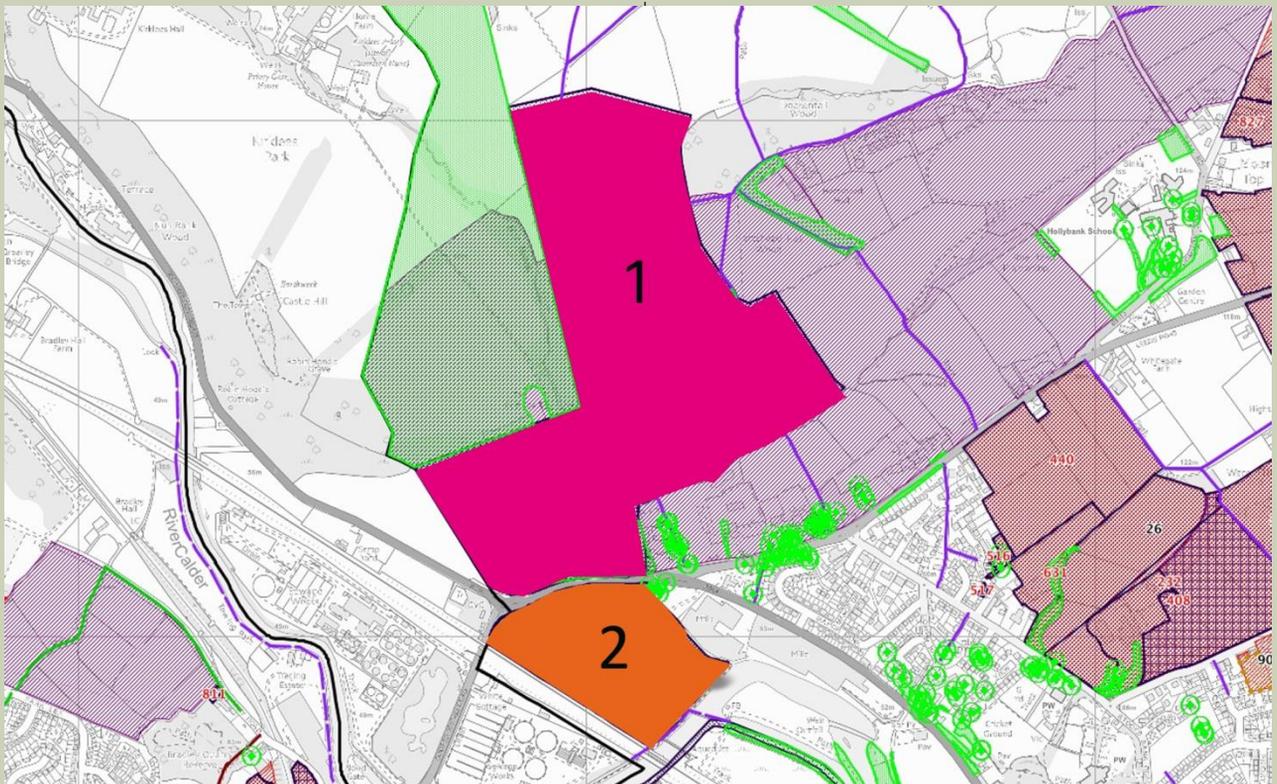
This local landscape character area is of weak landscape character and in poor condition. There is a case for development which could link more closely with the surrounding character of the area, drawing on the quality of the landscape and any such development should be sympathetic to this.

Condition	Good	Strengthen	Strengthen And Conserve	Conserve
	Declining	Strengthen And Enhance	Conserve And Enhance	Conserve And Restore
	Poor	Creation	Restore And Enhance	Restore
	Weak		Moderate	Strong
		Character		

Conclusion Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

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Type 1 Conclusion: **STRENGTHEN & CONSERVE**

Condition; Good
Character ; Moderate to Strong

This local landscape character area has a moderate to strong landscape character and is in good condition. There is a case for preserving permeability of the site, managing the flood risk as stated in the Initial Green Infrastructure Recommendations in conjunction with Kirklees Economic Strategy and conserving and strengthening the character of the area. Any development should be sympathetic and preserve and enhance the landscape with particular attention to the landscape's historical past.

Type 2 Conclusion: **CREATION**

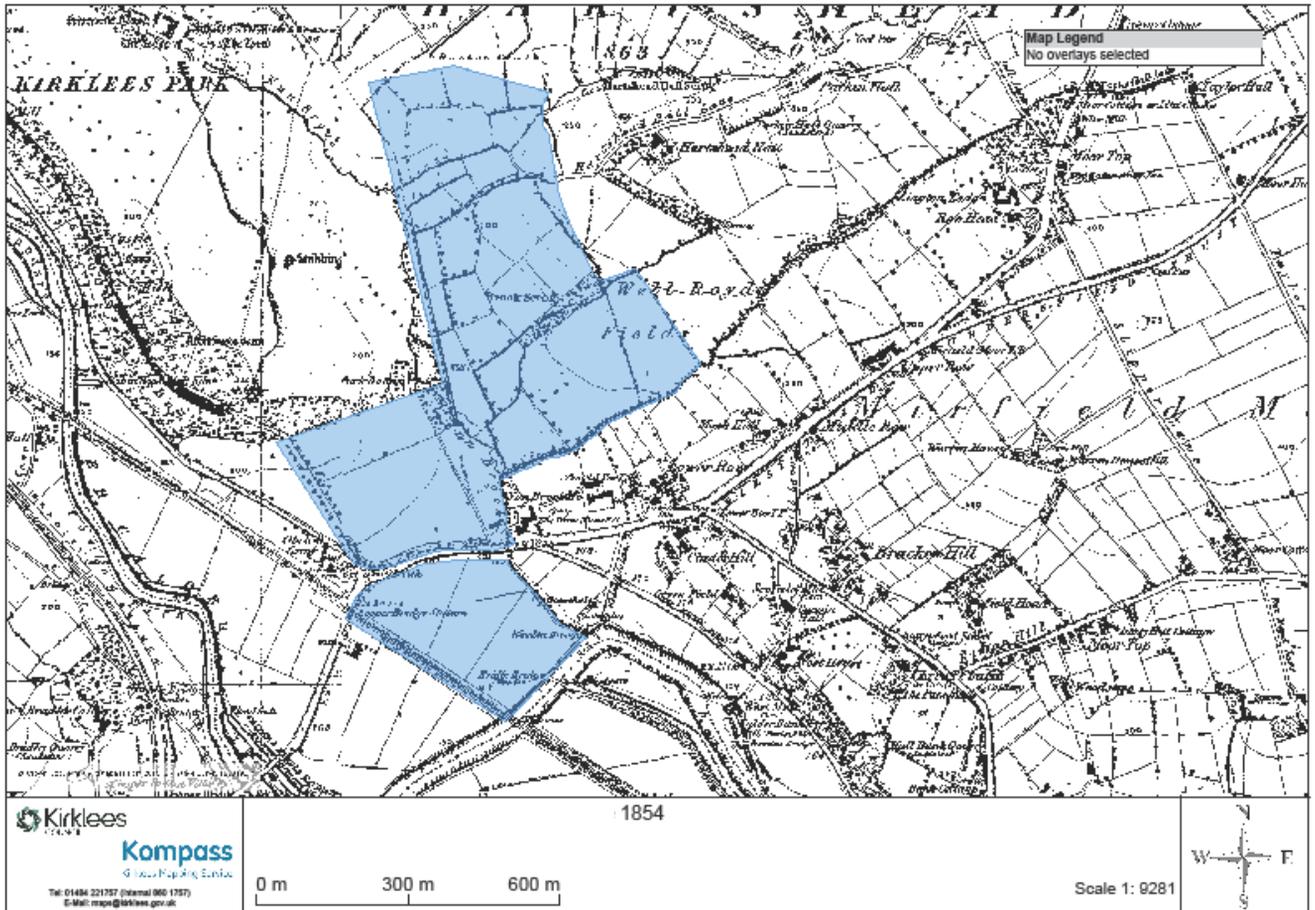
Condition; Poor
Character ; Weak

This local landscape character area is of weak landscape character and in poor condition. Permeability should be increased and there is a case for comprehensively managing the flood risk as described in the Initial Green Infrastructure Recommendations as previously stated for Type 1. Development needs to absorb and reflect the stronger and 'good' elements of the landscape of Type 1 and should be sympathetic and enhancing and improving the landscape.

Historical Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

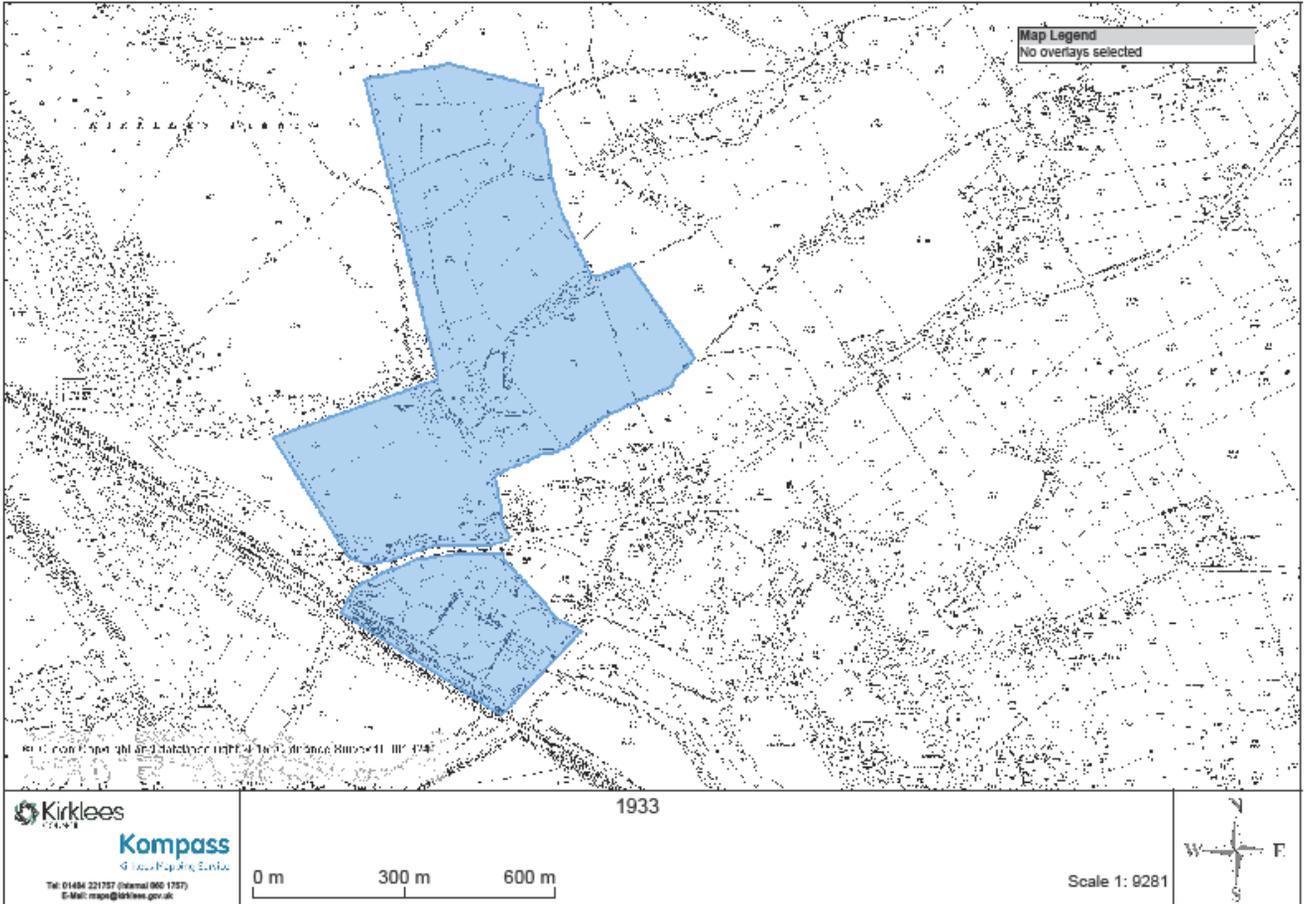
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Historical Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

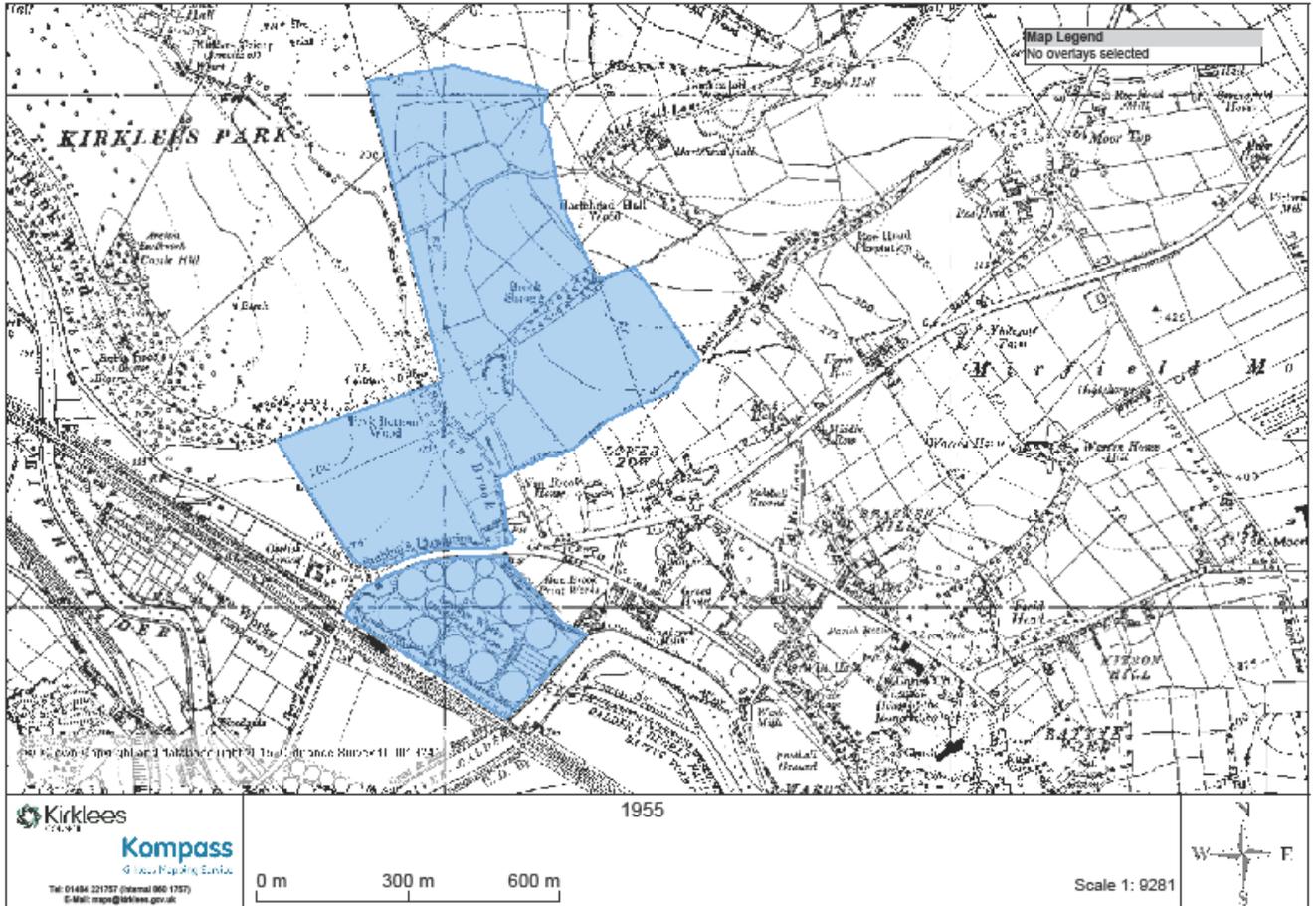
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Historical Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

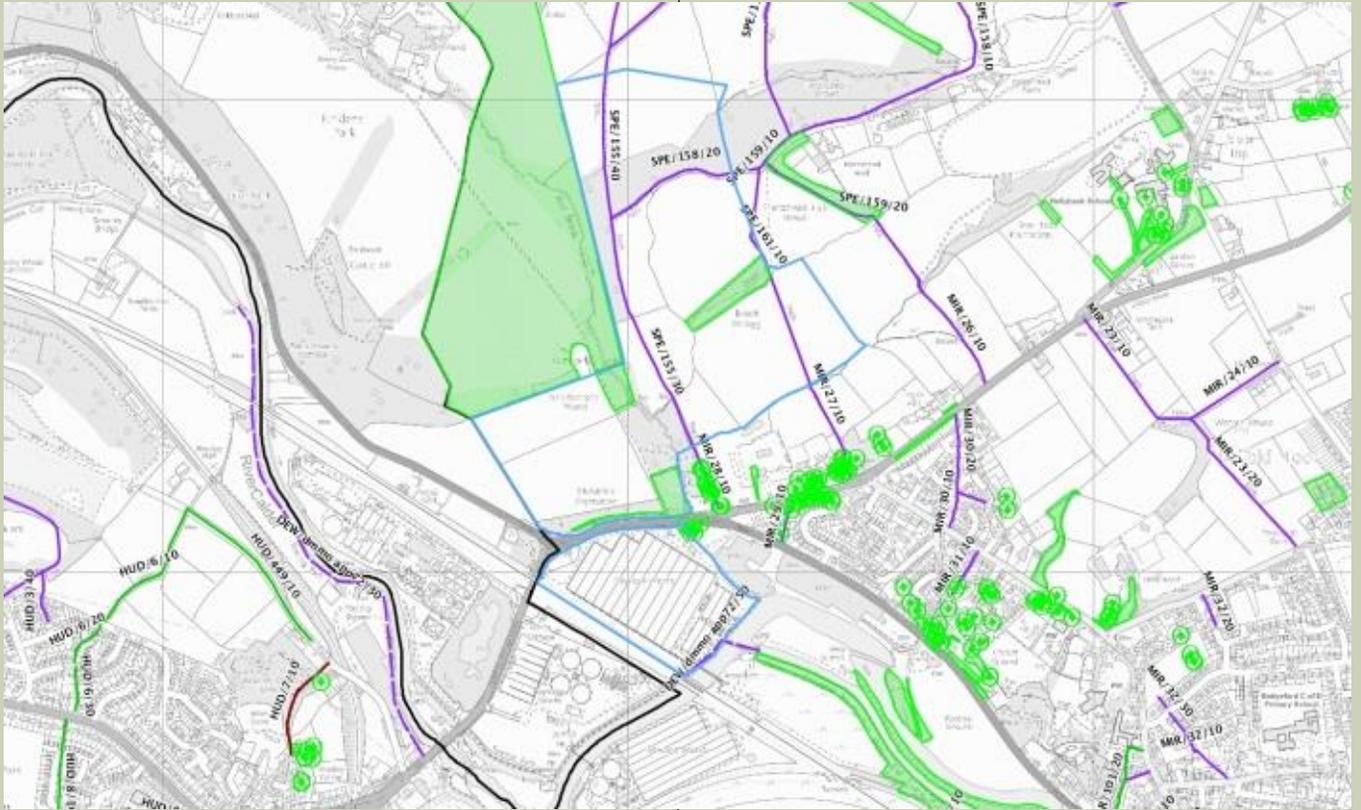
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Information Plan

Land to the north and south of Leeds Road, Mirfield

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TPO's - green
PROW - purple
Site boundary - light blue