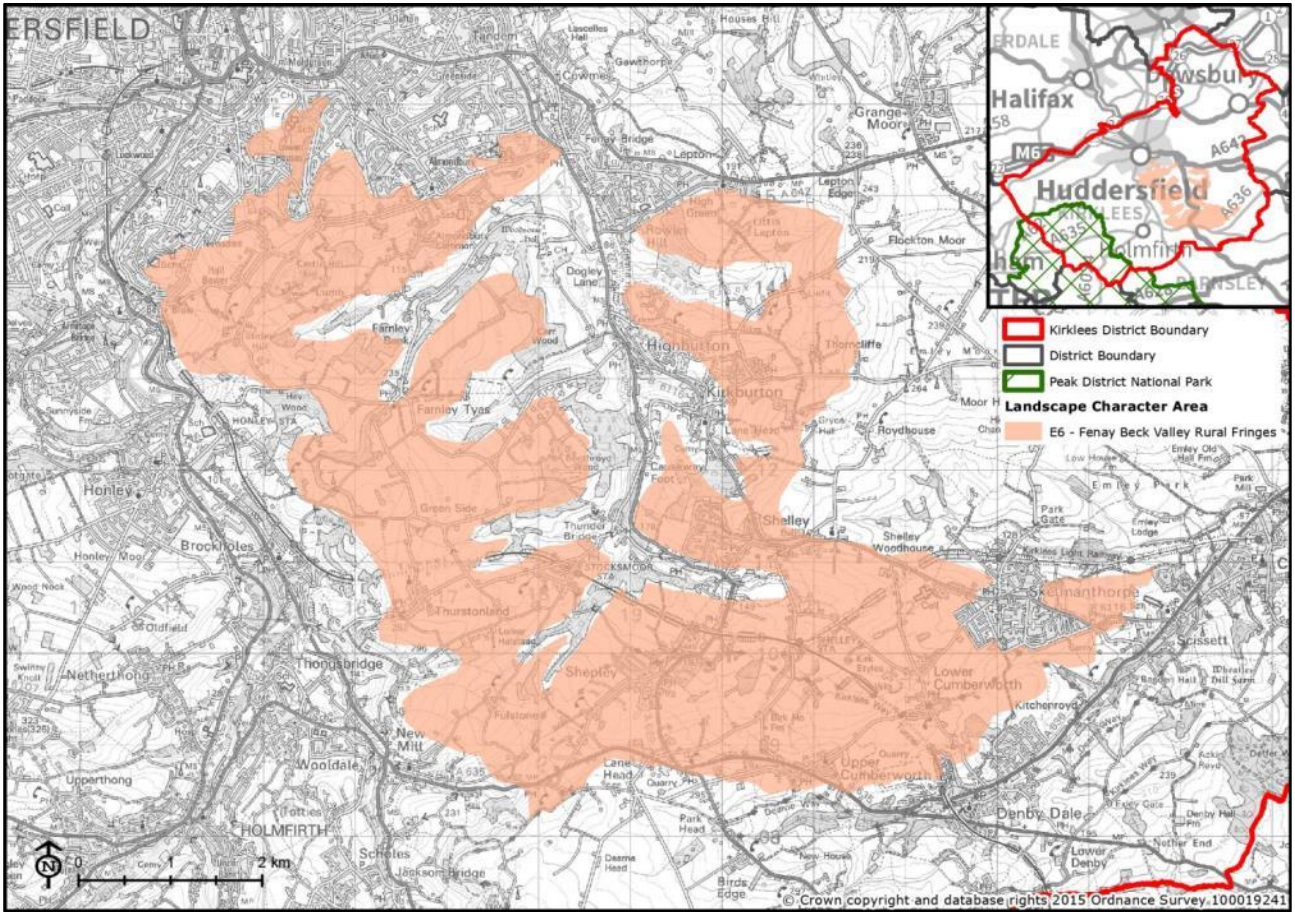


# LCA E6: Fenay Beck Valley Rural Fringes

Figure 3.19: Location Map



## Representative photographs

Figure 3.20: View of Victoria Tower from south



Figure 3.21: View of Shelley and Shepley beyond.



This LCA is formed of rural fringe land located to the south-west of Huddersfield and centred on the Fenay Beck Valley. The LCA is fully contained within Kirklees District.

## Summary of landscape character

### Key characteristics

#### *Topography, geology and drainage*

- Gently undulating plateau ranging from between approximately 150 and 280 metres altitude.
- The LCA is located above the Holme and Fenay Beck River Valleys, rising up in the east towards Emley Moor.
- Local variations in topography create some areas of more complex landform including deeply incised valleys with small tributaries and watercourses which flow towards Fenay Beck.

#### *Woodland cover*

- Large blocks of tree and woodland cover found on slopes, particularly in the north east of the LCA. Most are broadleaved woodlands, although there are occasional mixed woodlands with small scale coniferous plantations.
- Shelterbelts and mature in-field and boundary trees contribute to a well-wooded character.

#### *Land use and field patterns*

- Land cover patterns are small scale and relatively complex, and vegetation cover is varied.
- Small grassland pastures are enclosed by gritstone walls as well as some hedgerow boundaries.

#### *Semi-natural habitats*

- There are areas of acid grassland, scrub, hay meadow and wet pasture found amongst the improved grassland.
- Numerous areas of locally important woodland contribute to naturalistic character, including Upper Park Wood and Wither Wood.

#### *Archaeology and cultural heritage*

- A strong historic landscape character with traditional stone-built cottages, farm buildings and historic villages.
- The nationally important Castle Hill Fort, to the north-west of the LCA, occupies a prominent position to the south of Huddersfield. In the same location, the Victoria Tower Monument is a widely visible landmark in views from across the District.

#### *Settlement and road pattern*

- Dense network of minor roads and narrow winding lanes, which radiate out from the A629 which traverses the Fenay Beck Valley.
- Larger settlements in the south and east, expanding from a historic core (Highburton, Shepley and Skelmanthorpe).
- Elsewhere groups of dwellings are clustered into small villages and the landscape includes numerous scattered farms/individual rural houses.

#### *Views and perceptual qualities*

- Mostly a settled and rural landscape, often with long views north across the district and beyond, as a result of elevation.
- There are high levels of intervisibility with Emley Moor (LCA N1). There are also distant views to the Peak District National Park from higher ground near Shelley.

## Landscape evaluation

Valued landscape features and attributes	
Geodiversity and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>LNR:</b> There are two Local Nature Reserves; Castle Hill and Upper Park Wood, collectively covering 11.6 ha.</li> <li>• <b>LWS:</b> A total of 19 Local Wildlife Sites are located wholly or partially within the LCA and cover a total of 83 ha – many of which are woodlands.</li> <li>• <b>LGS:</b> Additionally, there are two Local Geological Sites; Castle Hill near Huddersfield and Upper and Lower Stone Woods near Stocks Moor (3.3 ha in total).</li> </ul>
Cultural and historical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scheduled Monuments:</b> The LCA has one Scheduled Monument at Castle Hill Fort.</li> <li>• <b>Listed Buildings:</b> There are total of 181 Listed Buildings in the LCA (three are Grade II*, whilst the remainder are Grade II).</li> <li>• <b>Conservation Areas:</b> The LCA contains eight Conservation Areas; Almondbury, Farnley Tyas, Fulstone, Highburton, Shepley, Skelmanthorpe, Thurstonland and Upper Cumberworth.</li> </ul> <p>None of these assets are on the Heritage at Risk Register.</p>
Perceptual qualities (including levels of tranquillity)	This is mostly perceived as a tranquil landscape with a traditional rural feel, although this is impacted upon by the main roads and urban development around Shepley.
Role as a setting to development	The LCA provides a direct setting to Shepley and Skelmanthorpe. It also forms an elevated backdrop to valley settlements in LCAs G8, G9 and G10, including Denby Dale, Kirkburton and Armitage Bridge.
Access and enjoyment of the landscape	<p>There is a small pocket of open access land located to the south of Shepley Marsh.</p> <p>There are several public rights of way emanating into the wider countryside from settlements, although some areas of the LCA are less accessible. The Kirklees Way long distance walking route runs through the south of the LCA, whilst the Holme Valley Circular Walk is located in the west.</p>
Contribution to the setting of the Peak District National Park	Although not adjacent to the National Park, there are distant views to the Peak District National Park from Shelley.