

Land south of Ravensthorpe Road,
Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury
**Landscape Character
Assessment**

Site ID: H2089



**KIRKLEES COUNCIL
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

SUMMER 2015

Landscape Character Assessment

Introduction

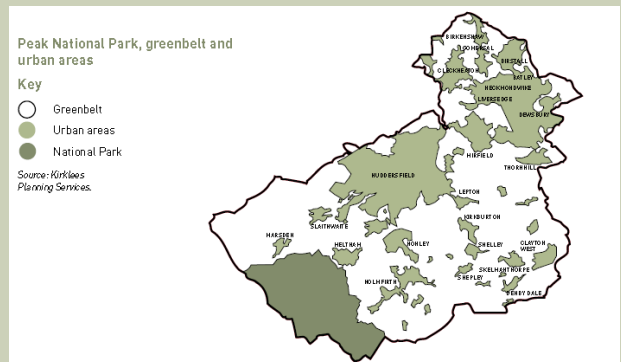
Background

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.

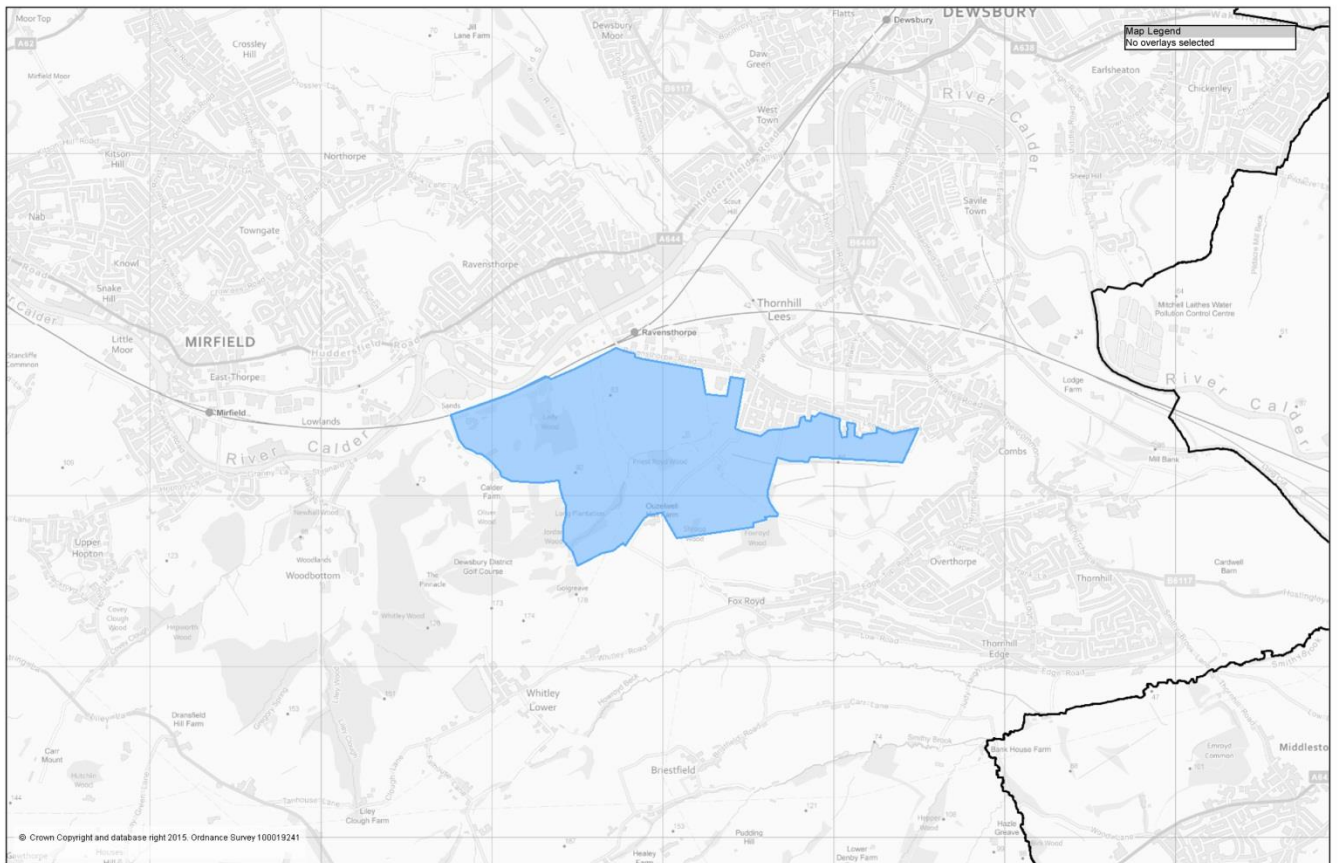
The methodology follows three steps;

- 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 south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

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Land south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

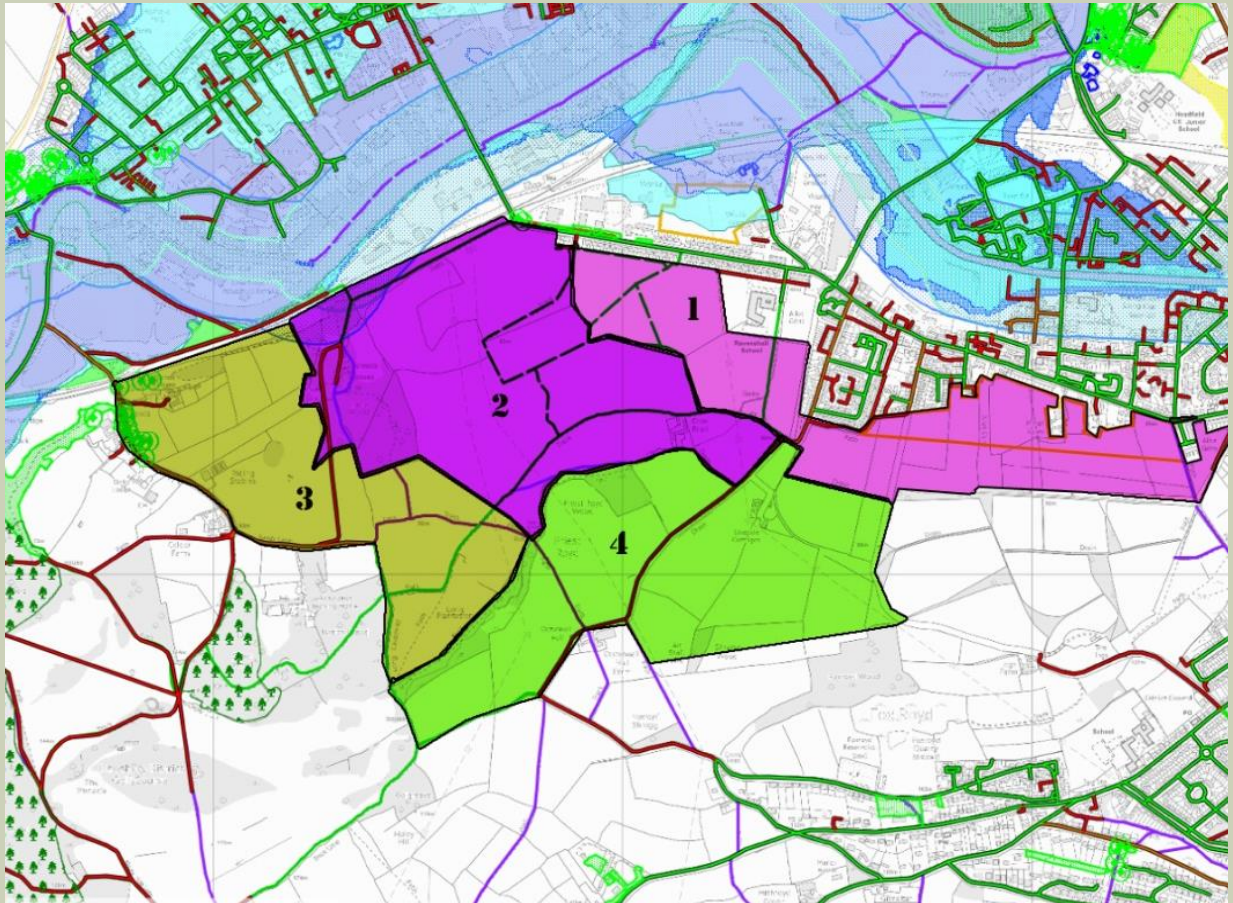
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Scale 1: 19776

Landscape types plan

Land south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

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This area is on the fringes of the existing residential development along Ravensthorpe Road, Ravensthorpe.

It lies within the Kirklees Character Profile area LCA E7: Emley Moor Northern Fringes and the National Character Area Profile No. 37 - Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe

The area has been divided into 4 separate local landscape types:

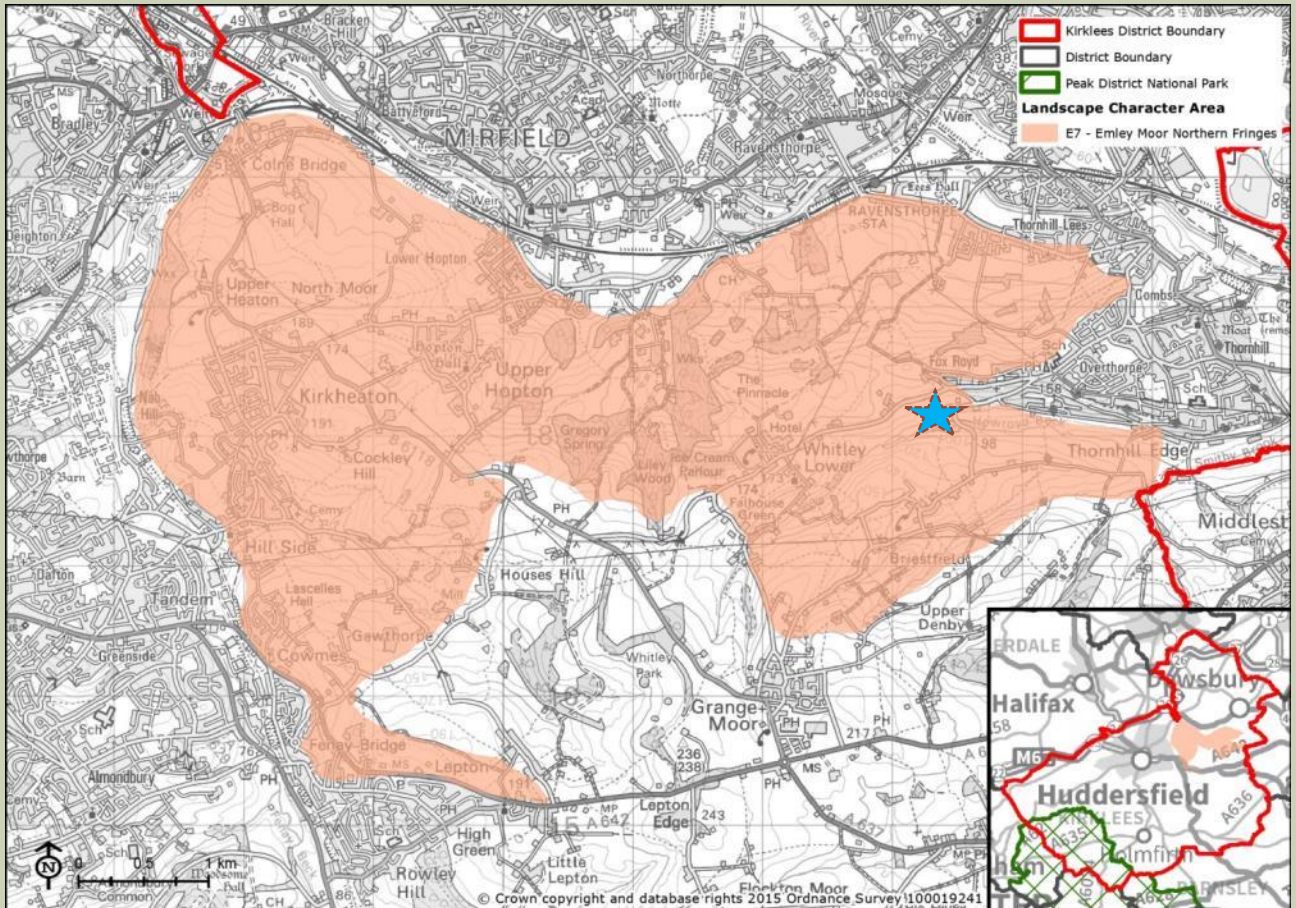
- 1- Fringe farming
- 2- Traditional farming
- 3- Open Plateau
- 4- Valley side



Local Character Profile Plan

Land south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

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**The site lies within the Local Character Profile area LCA E7: Emley Moor Northern Fringes
Within the National Character Area Profile No. 37 - Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe**

Character area Summary

Land south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

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• **Physical influences**

- **Topography** – The dominant landscape characteristic in this area is low lying topography, with steep slopes to the south. The area lies within the broad valley area of the River Calder to the north. As stated in the Kirklees LCA E7 the area is 'Gently undulating elevated slopes...the landscape drops in elevation towards the river Calder to the North'.

• **Geology**

- The general geology of the area is mainly milestone grit, overlaid with sandstone and coal deposits.

• **Ecological influences**

- There are areas of acid grassland, scrub and hay meadow amongst the mostly improved grasslands within the area.
- As stated in the Kirklees LCA E7, the area is made up 'Smaller scale pattern of grassland pasture enclosed by gritstone walls as well as hedgerow boundaries. Majority of the fields are improved and grazed ...Horse paddocks are also frequent, particularly around settlements.' Hedgerows are predominantly Hawthorn. Woodland cover- Kirklees LCA describes the area as having '...frequent trees along field boundaries and in fields, as well as numerous blocks of broadleaved woodlands...'

• **Human influences**

- The area is associated with the existing residential areas, bordering the area. Public access via vehicle is limited as Ouzlewell Lane is only partly adopted and then turns into a private track. There are however many public footpaths through the area.
- The area is currently used for commercial farming.
- **Past settlement-** *Settlement hasn't altered much since the 1900's within this area, As stated in the Kirklees LCA E7 'Distinctive settlement character of scattered farms, individual rural houses ...buildings are typically of a traditional stone vernacular. Proximity of the urban centre exerts an influence on landscape character with urban fringe land uses evident in many areas, a large number of overhead pylons also cross through this area.'*
- **Industrial patterns** – From the 1900's the area was used for mining coal and this operation expanded through the decades incorporating it's own railway link, all of which has since gone out of use with no trace left behind.
- **Visual Character**
- The visual character is one of low lying fields with distinct hedgerows, with restricted views, due to the valley location and close proximity to built development.
- Described in the Kirklees LCA E7 'Although often well-treed, longer distance views, typically focused to the north, reveal the more densely settled lower lying urban areas. These include long views east towards Wakefield district from higher ground. A strong rural landscape, which in areas characterised by a dense network of narrow winding lanes and woodland, retaining a tranquil character.'

Landscape Type 1.

Fringe farming

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- **Key Characteristics**

Arable fields onto existing residential development.

- **Landform**

Flat, valley bottom.

- **Vegetation**

Isolated small trees, hedgerows.

- **Tree cover**

No tree cover.

- **Land Use**

Recreational walking, arable farming. Horse riding, cycling.

- **Enclosure and views**

Wire fences and hedgerows. Views are enclosed by inclining valley side to the south and residential development to the north. Wider views are blocked by clusters of woodland.

- **Settlement and buildings**

The area is bounded to the north by residential development dating from early 1900's to modern day.

- **Transport and Access**

The area is accessible via a private track, use by farm vehicles and bicycles, there is also Ouzlewell Lane which a part adopted part private lane, providing access only to farming buildings.

- **Landscape condition**

The area is managed grassland, used for grazing and grown as a crop for winter silage, mainly. The condition is good, with field boundaries defined by mature well maintained hedgerows.

Landscape Type 1.

Fringe farming

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- **Recreational**

The area incorporates a dense network of tracks and footpaths used for recreational walking, biking and horse riding.

- **Noise**

In the area, virtual no traffic noise can be heard, apart from the odd farm vehicle passing along the tracks, the dominant sound was bird song.

- **Historical cultural**

The area retains a feel of traditional local farming.

- **Subjective description.**

After a five minute walk from the edge of the housing development you quickly get the feeling of being in a tranquil more rural-feeling area, surrounded by the sound of bird song hedgerows give only intermittent glimpses of the urban edge.

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:

This local landscape character area is weak with declining condition. The areas character needs to be strengthened and enhanced through positive development done in a sympathetic way, using materials of local vernacular and enhancing existing hedgerows.

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.

Traditional farming

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- **Key Characteristics**

Grazing fields for cattle, managed grassland, traditional farming buildings, fields enclosed by stone walls and hedgerows, with clusters of deciduous woodland.

- **Landform**

Gently sloping incline down to flatter valley bottom.

- **Vegetation**

Mature hedgerow, mainly hawthorn, with intermittent trees. Maintained grassland used for grazing, of dairy cattle.

- **Tree cover**

Clusters of mature woodland edge the area to the west and south.

- **Land Use**

Grazing for dairy farming. Horse riding, cycling, recreational walking,

- **Enclosure and views**

Stone walls, fences and hedgerows. Views are enclosed by inclining valley side to the south and mature hedgerows. The site is enclosed by the railway to the north. Wider views from the south to north are of the town of Ravensthorpe and beyond. Looking south wider views span across the whole site, but are constrained by the landform.

- **Settlement and buildings**

The area is bounded to the north by the railway. With one isolated farming house and associated buildings. No other built development.

- **Transport and Access**

The area is only accessible to the public, on foot via public bridleway and private track.

- **Landscape condition**

The area is managed grassland, used for grazing and grown as a crop for winter silage, mainly. The condition is good, with field boundaries defined by mature well maintained hedgerows. And managed woodland areas in good condition.

Landscape Type 2.

Traditional farming

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- **Recreational**

The area incorporates a network of tracks and footpaths used for recreational walking, biking and horse riding.

- **Noise**

In the area, no traffic noise can be heard, apart from the odd farm vehicle working the fields, the dominant sound was bird song.

- **Historical cultural**

The area retains a feel of traditional local farming.

- **Subjective description.**

Definite rural feel of traditional farmland good quality grassland and healthy looking hedgerows. Wildlife such as birds are highly visibly.



Typical images of landscape type 2



Landscape Type 2.

Traditional 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:

This local landscape character area is of strong landscape character and in good condition. Therefore the case to conserve the area is strong the preservation of hedgerows, stone walls and tracks through the area, preserving and incorporating more of the local materials and style of construction. Due to the topography of this area, it wider context should be taken into consideration for any future development, an LVIA (Landscape Visual impact assessment) should be provided.

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 3.

Open plateau

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• **Key Characteristics**

Low quality grazing fields used mainly for horse paddocks. Industrial type farm buildings. Hedgerows are mostly removed and replaced with wire fencing and steel gates. Enclosed to the north by the river and railway. The site is enclosed to the east, west and south by woodland belt and clusters. Some individual larger houses are positioned to the edge of the area along Sands Lane.

• **Landform**

Level plateau area to the south with gentle incline to the north down to the valley bottom.

• **Vegetation**

Poor quality grassland.

• **Tree cover**

Clusters of mature woodland edge the area to the south, west and east.

• **Land Use**

Some grazing but mainly paddock for horses. Horse riding, cycling, recreational walking,

• **Enclosure and views**

The area is open with views constrained at the edges by mature woodland. Wider views to the south of Ravensthorpe and Mirfield.

• **Settlement and buildings**

The area is bounded to the north by the railway. With a few individual houses edging the area, built along Sands Lane. One isolated farm/equestrian centre is located within the area.

• **Transport and Access**

The area is accessible by foot and car, along sands Lane. A public right of way bridleway runs through the area.

• **Landscape condition**

The area is low quality grassland mainly used as paddocks for horses. Managed woodland areas in good condition.

Landscape Type 3.

Open plateau

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- **Recreational**

The area incorporates a public right of way bridleway and footpaths used for recreational walking, biking and horse riding.

- **Noise**

In the area, minor traffic noise can be heard along Sands Lane.

- **Historical cultural**

Nothing of historical or cultural significance.

- **Subjective description.**

Lower quality grassland with more modern farm buildings. Sands Lane feels segregated, bounded by large individual houses with limited views across the area due to mature trees along Sands Lane.



Typical images of landscape type 3



Landscape Type 3.

Open plateau

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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:

This local landscape character area is of weak landscape character and declining condition, there is a case for strengthening the character of the area through sympathetic development which will enhance the area.

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 4.

Valley side

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• **Key Characteristics**

Low quality grazing fields used mainly for horse paddocks. Industrial type farm buildings. Hedgerows are mostly removed and replaced with wire fencing and steel gates. Enclosed to the north by the river and railway. The site is enclosed to the east, west and south by woodland belt and clusters. Some individual larger houses are positioned to the edge of the area along Sands Lane.

• **Landform**

Level plateau area to the south with gentle incline to the north down to the valley bottom.

• **Vegetation**

Poor quality grassland.

• **Tree cover**

Clusters of mature woodland edge the area to the South, west and East.

• **Land Use**

Some grazing but mainly paddock for horses. Horse riding, cycling, recreational walking,

• **Enclosure and views**

The area is open with views constrained at the edges by mature woodland. Wider views to the South of Ravensthorpe and Mirfield.

• **Settlement and buildings**

The area is bounded to the north by the railway. With a few individual houses edging the area, built along Sands Lane. One isolated farm/equestrian centre is located within the area.

• **Transport and Access**

The area is accessible by foot and car, along Sands Lane. A public right of way bridleway runs through the area.

• **Landscape condition**

The area is low quality grassland mainly used as paddocks for horses. Managed woodland areas in good condition.

Landscape Type 4.

Valley side

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- **Recreational**

The area incorporates a public right of way footpaths used for recreational walking, biking and horse riding.

- **Noise**

The area is dominated by the sounds of birds and the occasional cow.

- **Historical cultural**

Historical farm buildings lie within the area. Ouzlewell Manor and Ings Farm.

- **Subjective description.**

An area of good quality managed grassland for cattle grazing.



Typical images of landscape type 4 

Character area 4.

Valley side

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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:

This local landscape character area is of moderate landscape character but a good quality landscape, which would indicate a need to conserve the landscape quality and to strengthen the character of the area, through use of local materials, preserving hedgerows where possible and incorporating the local vernacular.

Due to the topography of this area, it wider context should be taken into consideration for any future development, an LVIA (Landscape Visual impact assessment) should be provided.

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 south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

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Type 1 Conclusion:

Condition: Declining

Character: Weak

Conclusion: STRENGTHEN & ENHANCE

This local landscape character area is weak with declining condition. The areas character needs to be strengthened and enhanced through positive development done in a sympathetic way, using materials of local vernacular and enhancing existing hedgerows.

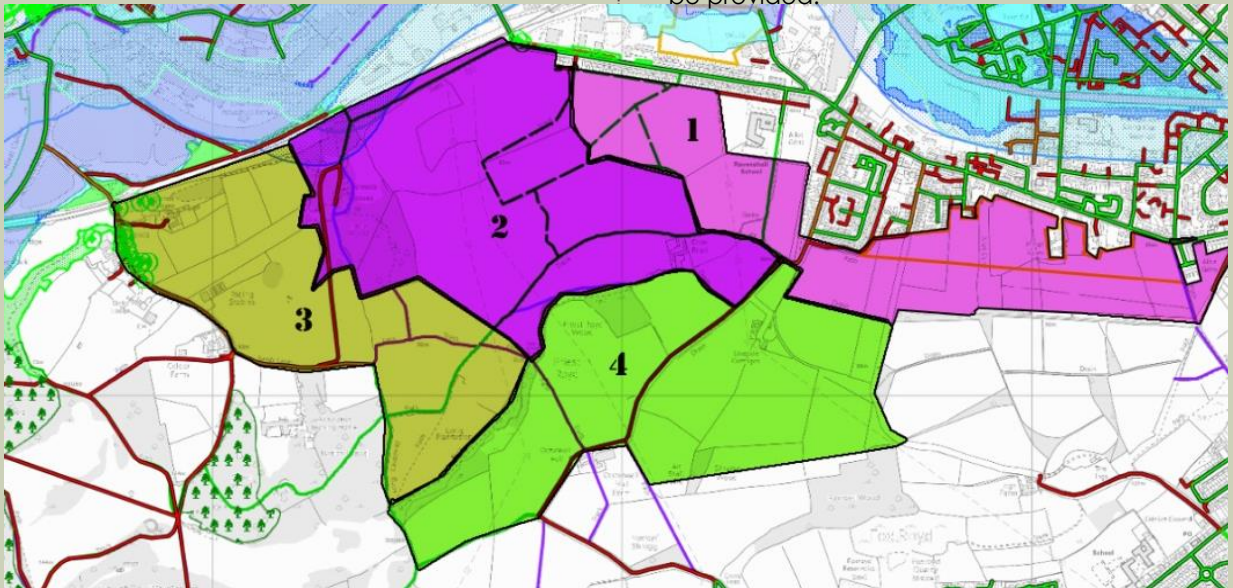
Type 2 Conclusion:

Condition: Good

Character: Strong

Conclusion: CONSERVE

This local landscape character area is of strong Landscape character and in good condition. Therefore the case to conserve the area is strong the preservation of hedgerows, stone walls and tracks through the area, preserving and incorporating more of the local materials and style of construction. Due to the topography of this area, it wider context should be taken into consideration for any future development, an LVIA (Landscape Visual impact assessment) should be provided.



Type 3 Conclusion:

Condition: Declining

Character: Weak

Conclusion: STRENGTHEN & ENHANCE

This local landscape character area is of weak landscape character and declining condition there is a case for strengthening the character of the area through sympathetic development which will enhance the area.

Type 4 Conclusion:

Condition: good

Character: Moderate

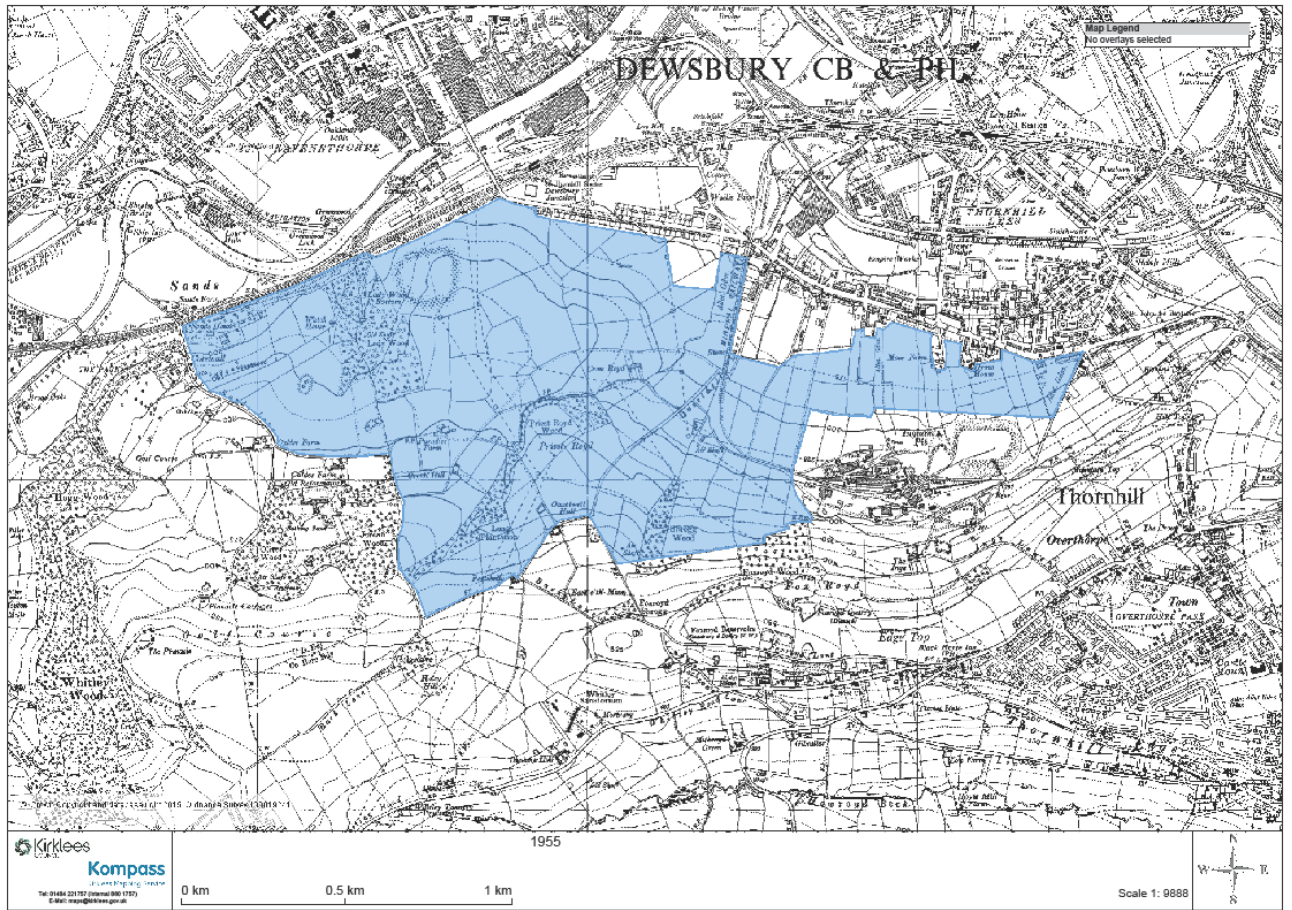
Conclusion: STRENGTHEN & CONSERVE

This local landscape character area is of moderate landscape character but a good quality landscape, which would indicate a need to conserve the landscape quality and to strengthen the character of the area, through use of local materials, preserving hedgerows where possible and incorporating the local vernacular.

Due to the topography of this area, it wider context should be taken into consideration for any future development, an LVIA (Landscape Visual impact assessment) should be provided.

Historical Plans

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1955

Information plan

Land south of Ravensthorpe Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury

