

Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment – 2016 Review

Introduction

1.0 This document reviews the findings of the Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment to ascertain whether changes made to the landscape since 2002 have materially altered the findings of the study in respect the landscape types and their respective landscape condition, strength of character, sensitivity and landscape capacity. It also summarises changes to national and local planning policies and cover other local initiatives to enhance the landscape in order to establish whether or not the forces for change remain as they were in 2002.

Review Methodology

2.0 The 2002 Landscape Character Assessment was robustly prepared in accordance with the accepted method promoted by the Countryside Agency at the time and followed on from the Countryside Agency's national review which identified 159 character areas across the country, three of which cross into Barnsley. In 2014 Natural England published updated National Character Area Profiles but the boundaries of the character areas that cross Barnsley are unchanged, which is unsurprising given the time it takes for national character areas to materially change.

2.1 The 2002 assessment identified 6 landscape types representing the great diversity of landscapes in the Borough, these are:

- A. Unenclosed Moorland
- B. Upland River Valleys
- C. Lowland River Floors
- D. Settled Arable Slopes
- E. Settled Wooded Farmland
- F. Upland Farmland

2.2 Given their scale and the relatively short amount of time that has elapsed (in landscape terms) since the last assessment, it is not considered necessary to redefine or remap the landscape types. As such, the scope of this review is to focus on the 24 character areas within the 6 landscape types and to carry out a relatively light-touch review to ascertain whether changes that have occurred materially affect the conclusions reached in 2002.

2.3 To inform the review a desk study was firstly undertaken which involved collecting, reviewing and analysing data and documentation. This was followed by a field survey to test, refine and add to the outputs from the desk study, capturing aesthetic, perceptual and experiential qualities of the landscape. This then informed the conclusions in respect of strength of character, condition, sensitivity and capacity. Accordingly, the review itself does not attempt to reclassify, map and completely re-describe the landscape's character areas, types and characteristics including geological, other physical and socio-cultural influences.

National Policy Context

3.1 The 2002 study was prepared in accordance with PPG7, which stated that local planning authorities should take account of any statutory designations and the weigh the need to protect landscapes (amongst other things). PPG7 was revoked following

the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 but, one of the core principles in the NPPF is that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. It goes on to state that “Local plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside”.

3.2 Planning Practice Guidance provides more detailed advice on preparing and updating Landscape Character Assessments, which are considered a “tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place”. It goes on to indicate that there may be an existing Landscape Character Assessment you can use, or update it but bear in mind its original purpose, age, scale and how much has changed since it was written.

Local Policy Context

4.1 Since the original study was published it is recognised that the policy context has shifted significantly. Firstly with the publication of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy, which identified Barnsley, including Darton and Dodworth, as a Sub Regional Town and designated Penistone, Hoyland, Wombwell Goldthorpe (Dearne Towns), Cudworth and Royston as Principal Towns. The strategy also set out a housing requirement for the borough and an ambitious employment land target. These were reflected in the Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2011 and included a spatial strategy that focussed development around Urban Barnsley and the Principal Towns.

4.2 Following adoption of the Core Strategy the Council has decided to proceed with a composite Local Plan. In respect of housing, this largely reflects the settlement hierarchy approach in the Core Strategy albeit recognising that there is now a need to review Green Belt boundaries. In addition, the approach to employment land has shifted to focussing on fewer but larger sites with good road access that are likely to appeal to the market in order to ensure deliverability and transform the socio economic credentials of the borough. Accordingly, the emerging plan also proposes significant Green Belt release to meet employment land requirements.

4.3 In order to establish which areas of Green Belt should be considered for deletion the Council commissioned ARUP to carry out a comprehensive Green Belt Review, which was published in 2014. The methodology focusses initially on assessing general areas of land alongside existing settlements and assessing them against the 5 purposes of including land in the Green Belt. It then goes on to assess the general areas against three other site based constraints including flood risk, historic environment and “Landscape/Topography/Visual”. This included a landscape character and visual assessment based on character, sensitivity and value of an areas landscape and how it might be affected by development. Following this “resultant parcels” of land were identified, which were reassessed against the 5 purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

4.4 The assessment of landscape character and sensitivity within the Green Belt review was carried out without cross referencing the 2002 study. However, the subsequent site selection criteria adopted by the Council for proposed employment and housing allocations includes a scoring system which recognises both landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity, as identified in the 2002 study. Accordingly, although ARUP carried out an assessment of landscape character and sensitivity in 2014 it is considered prudent to review whether changes to the landscape since 2002

have led to different conclusions in respect of landscape condition, strength of character, sensitivity and landscape capacity.

4.5 The Core Strategy includes a specific policy on Landscape Character (CSP 37), which states:

CSP 37 Landscape Character

Development will be expected to retain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the individual Landscape Character Area in which it is located (as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment of Barnsley Borough 2002).

4.6 The supporting text states that all new development should be in keeping with the surrounding landscape and reflect the character, materials and details of the local area. We will pay particular attention to development in prominent positions, for example, by waterside locations, within conservation areas and on the edge of towns and villages where it is important to maintain a clear distinction between urban areas and the countryside and to ensure development is not obtrusive to the skyline. It also goes on to commit to seeking opportunities for the conservation, management and enhancement of landscape character through development and land management and to produce a Supplementary Planning Document on Landscape Character to provide more detailed guidance on how to assess the impact of development on the landscape. This SPD has yet to be produced because the focus has been on producing a composite Local Plan but it remains our intention to introduce such a document should the Local Plan be adopted.

4.7 In 2012 the Government announced that it was designating 12 Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs), which are a landscape scale approach to environmental conservation. The Dearne Valley Green Heart, which covers a larger area to the south and east of the borough was one of the NIAs designated by the Government. Accordingly the Dearne Valley Green Heart Partnership for the Nature Improvement Area (NIA) was formed with the overall aim of restoring and enhancing the ecological networks of the river, its floodplain, and its link to habitats on surrounding slopes and hills. To achieve this aim four main objectives were identified which are:

1. Create and restore floodplain habitat at Houghton Washlands, Wombwell Ings and Carlton Marsh through direct management.
2. Restore woodland and farmland habitats in low ecologically functioning areas through targeted advisory work and uptake of environmental stewardship, management advice, and training.
3. Embed NIA principles in Local Planning Policy and create opportunities for biodiversity offsetting by working with local planning authorities.
4. Build popular support and understanding in the community through community wardens and a programme of events, cycle tours, education visits and community engagement.

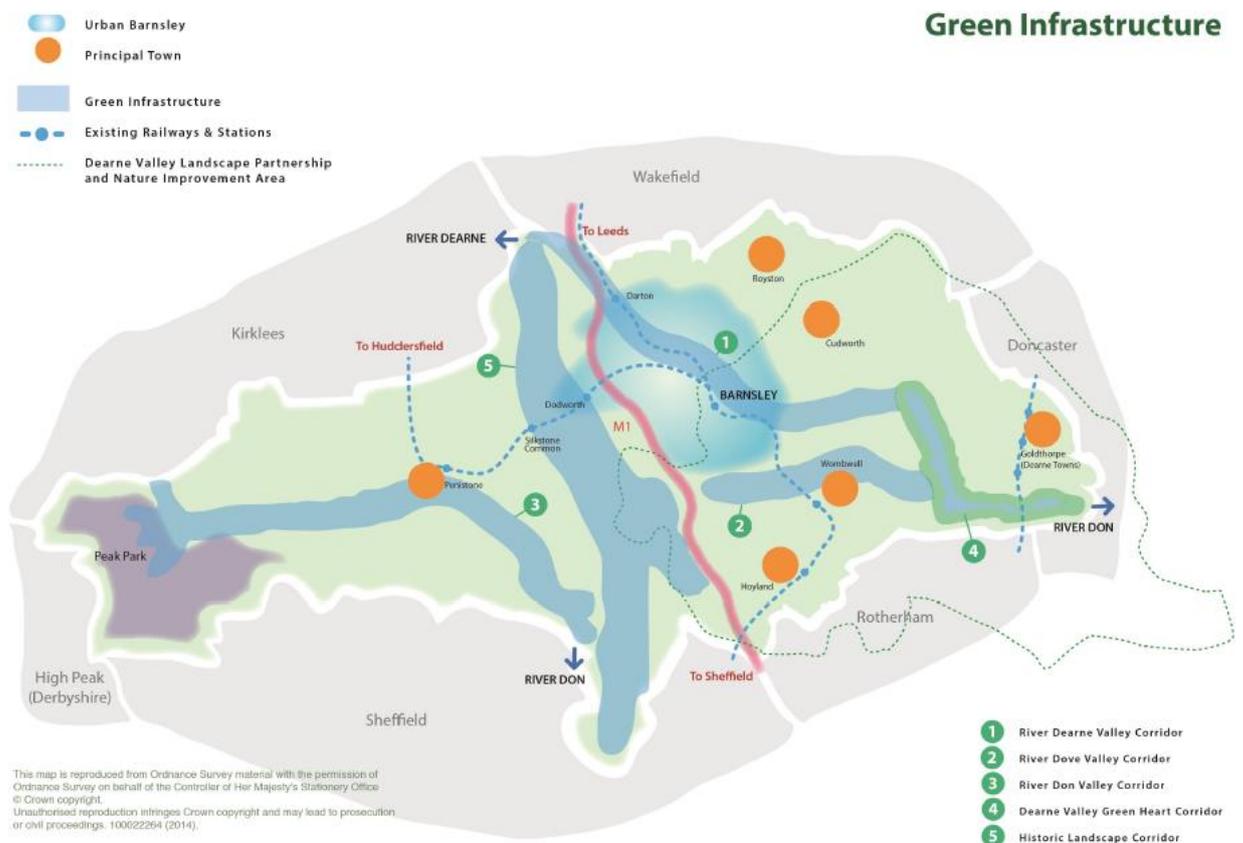
4.8 The NIA and the partnership is therefore a significant, positive force for change that was not present when the 2002 study was completed and is likely to give impetus to conservation, restoration and strengthening of the landscape within the NIA.

4.9 In support of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2011 for landscape partnership funding the Dearne Valley Green Heart Partnership commissioned a landscape character assessment. This described the landscape in the Dearne Valley and described in more detail the five broad landscape character types. These largely replicate the character areas identified in the 2002 study but the assessment uses the term “open coalfield farmland” rather than “settled arable slopes” and refers to settled wooded farmland as wooded coalfield farmland. The assessment goes on to identify the key characteristics of each landscape character type, forces for change and threats to the landscape as well as potential opportunities. However, the assessment does not attempt to re-categorise strength of character, landscape condition or to revisit overall landscape sensitivity and capacity.

4.10 The NIA is reflected in the Green Infrastructure Strategy contained in the emerging Local Plan, which largely carries forward the one included in the Core Strategy. At a strategic level this identifies Barnsley’s Green Infrastructure network and includes 5 corridors, which will be secured through the plan period by protecting open space, creating new open spaces as part of new development, and by using developer contributions to create and improve Green Infrastructure.

4.11 Three of the five corridors are river corridors namely the Don, Dearne and Dove and a fourth corridor in the Dearne Valley Green Heart includes sections of the river Dearne and Dove corridors. The fifth corridor runs from north to south through the borough to the west of the M1 and is considered an historic landscape corridor.

Figure 17.1



4.11 The changing Local policy context summarised above therefore represents a significant force for positive change, particularly within the identified corridors and the NIA. However, the policy context also includes a commitment to significant housing and employment growth up to 2026 in respect of the Core Strategy and beyond this to 2033 in respect of the emerging Local Plan. Whilst the latter could be perceived as a threat, it also represents a significant opportunity to improve poorer areas of land on the urban fringe and to secure developer contributions either through Section 106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy that could be used to ensure better landscape management, restoration and enhancement within identified priority areas.

Main Changes to the Landscape since 2002.

5.0 Given that just 14 years have passed since the study was published, there are negligible changes in respect of physical influences although land reclamation schemes associated with the closure of numerous colliery across the borough are, for the most part, well established.

5.1 However, there have been more noticeable changes in respect of human influences, particularly to the west of the M1 where there are demonstrably more wind farms and individual turbines. These include:

- 3 x 100m high turbines at Hazlehead wind farm at Crow Edge.
- 3 x 101m high turbines at Blackstone Edge wind farm.
- 3 x 95m high turbines at Spicer Hill wind farm.

5.2 To the east, four large turbines are evident within the borough (3 at Park Springs and 1 at Shafton) with wind farms visible beyond the borough boundary at Marr and Brodsworth in Doncaster.

5.3 To the east of the M1 there has also been an increase in the number of large logistics and industrial buildings, particularly alongside the A6195 (Dearne Valley Parkway between Hoyland and Worsbrough and Dearne Towns Link Road between Darfield and Shafton). Most noticeably these include:

- ASOS building at the former Houghton Main Colliery Site
- Symphony building on the Ferry Moor former open cast coal mining site at Grimethorpe and associated redevelopment of the Former Grimethorpe Colliery Site.
- Ashroyd and Shortwood Business Parks at Hoyland
- More recent mixed-use development at J36.

5.4 Elsewhere, the Advanced Learning Centres at Darton, Carlton, Shafton, Wombwell, Hoyland and Pensitone are noticeable features and some of the former secondary schools are in the process of being redeveloped for residential purposes. In addition residential development is taking place on various greenfield sites on the edge of Urban Barnsley and the Principal Towns.

5.5 Other influences since 2002 include road building, in particular the Cudworth and West Green By-Pass and demolition, reclamation and redevelopment of former industrial sites. These include:

- The former Monkton Coking Works at Royston.
- Residential development on the former North Gawber Colliery Site.

- The development of Capitol Park, adjacent to J36 of the M1 and the associated construction of Dodworth by-pass.
- Clearance of the former Oakwell Brewery and Beatson Clark sites around Hoyle Mill.
- Development alongside Wombwell Lane at Stairfoot and the closure of Hansons Brickworks.
- The Aldi Distribution Centre at Highgate.

Implication of these changes on Landscape Types

6.0 Given that these changes are predominantly a result of human influences, which largely involve redevelopment of brownfield sites, it is not considered that they materially alter the conclusions of the study in respect of landscape types and the associated character areas, which are as follows:

Character Types	Character Areas
A Unenclosed Moorland	A1 Thurlstone and Langsett Unenclosed Moorland A2 Whamcliffe Unenclosed Moorland
B Upland River Valleys	B1 Upland Don River Valley B2 Wooded Don River Valley
C Lowland River Floors	C1 Elsecar Lowland River Floor C2 Lower Deame Lowland River Floor C3 Upper Deame Lowland River Floor C4 Dove Lowland River Floor
D Settled Arable Slopes	D1 North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes D2 East Deame Settled Arable Slopes D3 West Deame Settled Arable Slopes
E Settled Wooded Farmland	E1 West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland E2 Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland E3 Grimethorpe Settled Wooded Farmland E4 Hoyland Settled Wooded Farmland
F Upland Farmland	F1 Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland F2 Penistone Upland Farmland

6.1 However, the changes do have the potential to impact on the findings in respect of strength of landscape character and condition as well as landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity. As such an assessment of each of the character areas has been carried out to ascertain whether the changes do materially affect the findings of the 2002 study.

Character Area Assessments

A: UNENCLOSED MOORLAND



The *Unenclosed Moorland* landscape type is highly distinctive as a result of its high elevation (generally above 300m AOD) and unenclosed nature that evokes a distinct sense of exposure and provides expansive panoramic views. The simplistic land use, dominated by sheep grazing, provides a harmonious land cover of unimproved grassland and moorland over a rolling, flowing landform. The large scale landform is subdivided by deep cloughs containing dikes or, where they have been dammed, large reservoirs. Despite the remote nature of the landscape there are some obvious human influences including communication towers and pylons, which occur as striking vertical elements. Although there is an overriding sense of wilderness, there are often views to nearby settlements that are a reminder of the proximity of urban development.

Unenclosed Moorland is found in two areas:

A1 Thurlstone and Langsett Unenclosed Moorland

A2 Wharnccliffe Unenclosed Moorland.

A1: Thurlstone and Langsett Unenclosed Moorland

7.0 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 5 of the report. The key characteristics of the landscape therefore remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002 although a Trans-Pennine Tunnel would be a significant force for positive change by removing traffic from the existing Trans-Pennine routes. **Accordingly, landscape character remains strong and landscape condition good.**

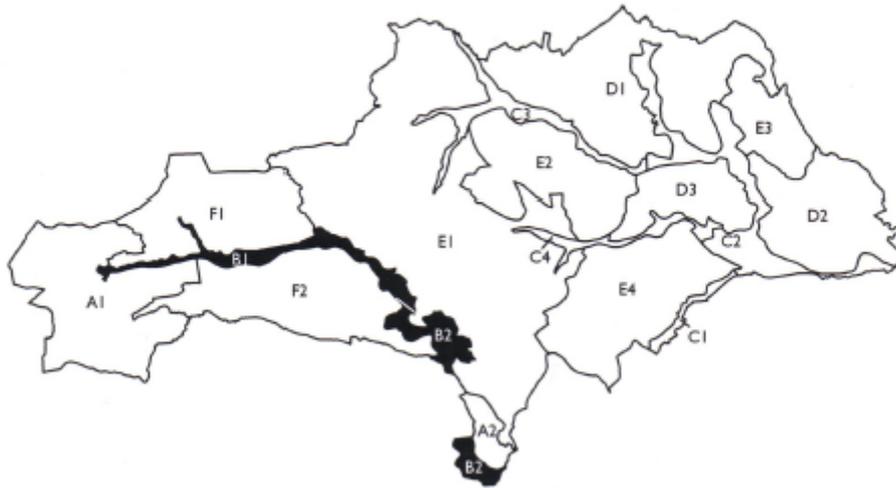
7.1 In light of the above, **the landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be none.**

A2: Wharnccliffe Unenclosed Moorland

7.2 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 3 of the report. The key characteristics of the landscape therefore remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002. **Accordingly, landscape character remains strong and landscape condition good.**

7.3 In light of the above, **the landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be none.**

B: UPLAND RIVER VALLEY



The *Upland River Valley* landscape type is defined by a distinctive valley landform containing the upper reaches of the River Don. The upland river valley can be steep or shallow-sided, but is always enclosed by sloping valley sides that provide a sense of enclosure and human scale that often contrast with adjacent large scale open upland landscapes. The extent of the valley is usually defined by the apparent ridgeline of the valley sides as seen from the valley floor, i.e. the area within which there is a perception of being 'in the valley'.

The valley sides are often clothed in deciduous woodlands that enhance the sense of enclosure. This is a rural upland landscape where pastures, bounded by stone walls, reach down to the water side and unimproved waterside meadows are important wildlife habitats. Generally the fields are smaller where they abut the water, increasing in size as they ascend the valley sides.

The upland river valley contains fast running rivers that have been exploited for their power. Mill races, sluices, weirs and old mill buildings are features of the valley floor. Commercial or industrial development is sometimes found on the valley floor, particularly next to roads that cross the valleys, or on reclaimed land. Residential settlement on the valley floor is rare, but scattered stone farmsteads, hamlets and villages are familiar features of the valley sides. The upland valleys are often corridors of movement through the upland landscape and contain roads and railways. The presence of dismantled railways, disused mines and shafts on the valley sides are also clues to historic land use activity within these valleys.

Upland River Valley is found in two areas:

B1 Upland Don River Valley

B2 Wooded Don River Valley

B1: Upland Don River Valley

8.0 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 3 and so the key characteristics of the landscape remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002. **As such, strength of character remains high and landscape condition is good.**

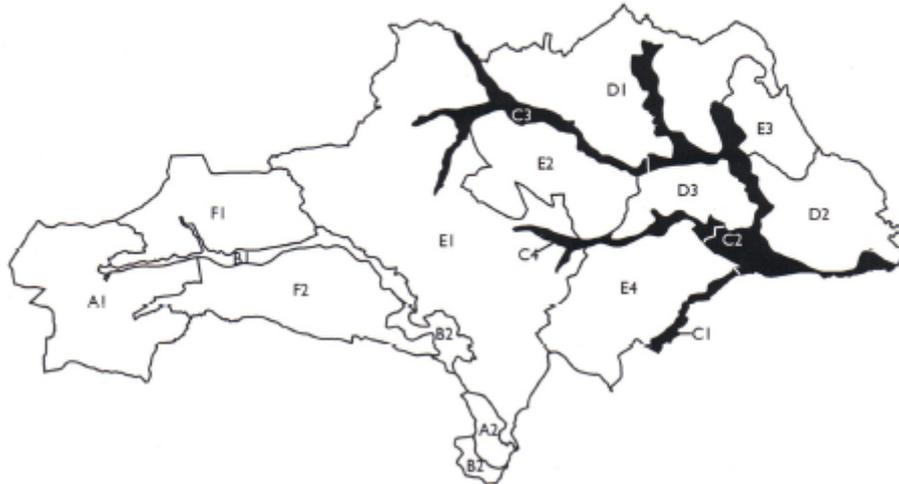
8.1 In light of the above, the **landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be low.**

B2: Wooded Don Valley

8.2 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 3 of the report. The key characteristics of the landscape therefore remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002. **As such, strength of character remains high and landscape condition is good.**

8.3 In light of the above, **the landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be low.**

C: LOWLAND RIVER FLOOR



The *Lowland River Floor* landscape type is mainly defined by landform, consisting of flat valley floors, and by the presence of water in the forms of rivers, lakes, reservoirs and canals. The valley floors can be narrow or broad and are enclosed by sloping valley sides that are part of adjacent character areas, or land outside the Borough. Residential settlement on the valley floor is scarce, but frequent on the valley sides immediately outside the landscape type. Commercial or industrial development is quite common, particularly next to roads that cross the valleys, or on reclaimed land. Other characteristic features include dismantled and active railwaylines, evidence of past industrial development (e.g. old industrial stone buildings, reclaimed land, disused canals and railwaylines), and trees, woodland and scrub which is often dominated by species associated with wet ground (such as willow and alder).

Lowland River Floor is found in four areas:

- C1 Elsecar Lowland River Floor
- C2 Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor
- C3 Upper Dearne Lowland River Floor
- C4 Dove Lowland River Floor

C1: Elsecar Lowland River Floor

9.0 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 6 of the report. The key characteristics of the landscape therefore remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002. **Landscape character therefore remains strong but as poorly managed pockets of farmland and buildings remain landscape condition is also judged to remain moderate.**

9.1 In light of the above, the **landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be none.**

C2: Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor

9.2 The character area includes the A6195 and the adjacent former colliery sites that have been developed for logistics and industrial purposes, some of which appear relatively incongruous. In addition 3 x 126.5m wind turbines now stand on the hillside overlooking the river valley. However, the landscape has been positively transformed by virtue of the reclamation of spoil heaps, particularly immediately to the south of Grimethorpe, although this still remains relatively immature. Elsewhere, the Cudworth and West Green by pass crosses the character area at the narrow

point between Carlton and Cudworth. **As such the strength of character and condition of the area are weaker than they were in 2002 but they are both still deemed moderate.**

9.3 In respect of landscape sensitivity and capacity, the landscape remains sensitive to change, particularly at narrow points that are pinched between existing development at either side of the character area. **The overall landscape sensitivity in this character area remains high and landscape capacity is low.**

9.4 In 2002 the Landscape Character Assessment included a more detailed commentary on land to the western edge of Grimethorpe. It concluded that development to the west of the A6195 would be uncharacteristic of the undeveloped character of C2 and would truncate the open valley floor. Despite this, in 2005 outline planning permission was granted for redevelopment of the former open cast colliery site linked to a regeneration initiative.

9.5 A large warehouse occupied by Symphony now stands on the site and is an extremely prominent feature in the landscape. Smaller structures have been erected alongside it and some land remains undeveloped immediately to the north of the building. The objective in the 2002 Assessment to keep the land to the west of the A6195 undeveloped was not therefore achieved. This resulted in a narrower gap between Grimethorpe and Cudworth with the western extent of Grimethorpe now defined by the alignment of a dismantled railway line rather than the road. In order to preserve landscape character it is considered essential that this gap (located within the North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes character area) remains open and that any further development to the west of the A6195 should be limited to infill development on brownfield sites.

9.6 Elsewhere within the character area, the original HS2 route was proposed to run from north to south through the character area emerging from a tunnel close to Lundwood Sewage Treatment Works and continuing on the former railway alignment running between Lundwood and Cudworth and then on between Royston and Shafton. If delivered, this would serve to further weaken landscape character and condition but it is now likely that the route will run further to the east of the borough.

C3: Upper Dearne Lowland Valley Floor

9.7 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 3 of the report but a new road has been created at Old Mill linking Burton Road with Wakefield Road. Whilst this is in a narrow gap, the road is modest in scale and there remains visual separation between the northern and southern slopes of the valley. The key characteristics of the landscape therefore remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002. **As such, strength of character and landscape condition remains moderate.**

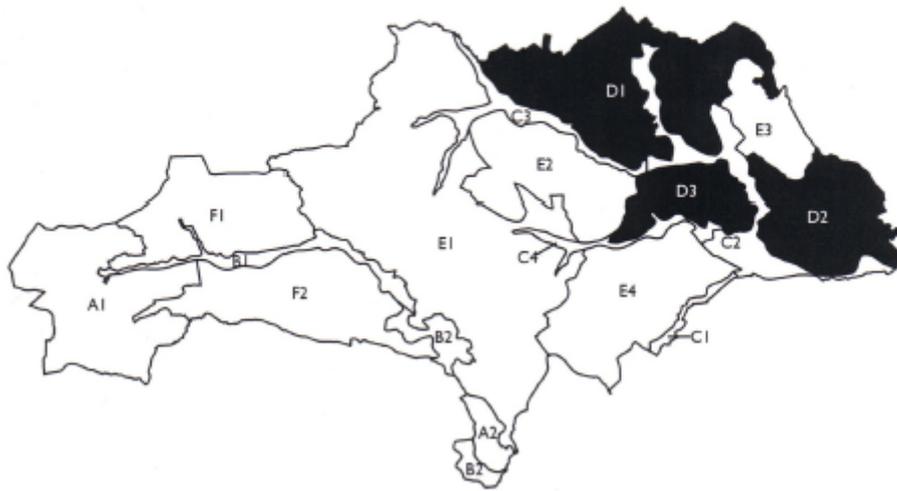
9.8 In light of the above, **the landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be none.**

C4: Dove Lowland Valley Floor

9.9 The character area has been unaffected by the changes identified in section 3. The key characteristics of the landscape therefore remain unchanged and forces for change remain as they were in 2002. **As such, strength of character and landscape condition remain strong and good respectively.**

9.10 In light of the above, **the landscape sensitivity to built development remains high and landscape capacity is judged to be none.**

D: SETTLED ARABLE SLOPES



The *Settled Arable Slopes* landscape type is largely characterised by its landform and land use patterns. The landform varies from stronger undulations to areas of gentle, even slopes with the latter particularly evident at lowland elevations close to the adjacent river valleys, and at higher elevations on the broader ridge tops. Land use activity is largely characterised by large scale arable farming and residential settlement. There are significant tracts of relatively intact arable farmland but many areas on the urban-rural interface exhibit signs of landscape decline. Settlements are typically former colliery villages or towns and are predominantly residential although recent light industrial estates are a feature. The settlements indicate the area's heavy industrial past, further emphasised by the presence of disused spoil heaps, workings, and railway lines found across the landscape. Field boundaries or divisions are inconsistent varying from stonewalls, and short flailed and overgrown hedgerows, to post and rail fencing or none at all. Low tree cover results in a sense of exposure. The dominance of infrastructure and built development, commonly located on ridge or hilltops, but often spreading down valley sides, compound a striking sense of urbanisation across much of the landscape.

Settled Arable Slopes is found in three areas:

- D1 North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes
- D2 East Dearne Settled Arable Slopes
- D3 West Dearne Settled Arable Slopes

D1: North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes

10.1 The 2002 study identified a landscape in a state of flux and changing character as a result of new industrial estates and residential developments. The landscape was therefore considered to be in decline due to present day land use activity most apparent at rural-urban interface. Strength of character was therefore deemed moderate and landscape condition poor.

10.2 In respect of the potential for built development recognised the scope for new development to potentially improve the urban edges, concentrating new built form within existing settlements to avoid development spilling out onto open and exposed arable slopes. It focussed on the potential for built development around Brierley, Shafton and Cudworth to the east and to the west:

- Land east of Carlton, between Royston & West Green.
- Land east of Lundwood

- Land north of Royston
- Land west of Staincross
- Land south of Staincross, Mapplewell and New Lodge
- Land between Staincross and Royston.

10.3 In respect of Cudworth, Shafton and Brierley to the east, the most significant change has been the construction of the by-pass, which provides a strong western boundary. Elsewhere, Shafton ALC has been erected in part to replace Willowgarth Secondary School, which is proposed to be redeveloped for housing. The construction of the by-pass lends weight to the recommendation in the study that some development may be possible to the northwest of Cudworth without adversely affecting landscape character. Elsewhere to the east the changes that have occurred do not warrant a different approach to that advocated in the 2002 study.

10.4 In respect of the areas to the various areas to the west:

Land east of Carlton, between Royston & West Green.

- Carlton ALC has been erected and Cudworth & West Green by pass runs east to west. The former Carlton Colliery site is in the process of being remediated and planting associated with reclamation of Wharnccliffe Woodmoor Colliery continues to establish. Overall the landscape has therefore seen some improvements but these have been offset by some harm associated with build development. As such, the commentary regarding scope for development in this area remains relevant.

Land east of Lundwood

- Very little has changed to the east of Lundwood although this area would potentially have accommodated the original HS2 route. The study did not recommend development in this area due to the existing good and well-hidden edge to the urban form. Given the lack of change, this recommendation retains its legitimacy.

Land north of Royston

- Other than residential development on sites that were identified in the Unitary Development Plan in the vicinity of Common Lane, very little has changed to the north of Royston. Accordingly the judgement regarding scope for development remains relevant.

Land west of Staincross

- The study did not recommend development immediately to the west of Staincross other than on small pockets of land that might be able to accommodate single or small pockets of land. This was principally a result of the relatively steep and complex landform. Nothing has changed since to warrant a different conclusion.

Land south of Staincross, Mapplewell and New Lodge

- The study did not recommend new development on the sloping valley sides as it would be uncharacteristic of settlements within the character area as a

whole. As with the land to the west of Staincross, nothing has changed within the locality to warrant a different conclusion.

Land between Staincross & Royston

- The study generally discourages development that intrudes into arable farmland and onto relatively undeveloped valley sides. Nothing has changed within the locality to warrant a different conclusion although landscape character and condition has weakened to the west of Royston on the north side of Lee Lane as a result of poor management of land and the ad hoc construction of stable buildings and agricultural structures.

10.5 The study concluded that the **overall landscape capacity in the North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes character area was medium and this is considered to remain the case.**

D2: East Dearne Settled Arable Slopes

10.6 The 2002 study identified a landscape type with a varied landform but which lacked some of the other elements found within other character areas of the same landscape type. Strength of character was therefore deemed to be moderate. In addition, primarily due to the intensive farming, landscape condition was deemed poor. Although land reclamation schemes on former colliery sites have continued to establish and that, since the study, the area has been designated as the Dearne Valley Green Heart Nature Improvement Area the character area continues to be intensively farmed and the Aldi distribution centre, whilst partially screened by a bund and immature planting, is now a noticeable feature within the character area. The Landscape Character Assessment undertaken on behalf of the Dearne Valley Green Heart Partnership in 2011 also recognises some of this change. **It is therefore considered that strength of character remains moderate and that landscape condition is poor.**

10.7 In respect of sensitivity and capacity **none of the changes referred to above alter the conclusion that the character area has medium sensitivity and medium capacity to accommodate built development in areas of landscape decline that are less visually sensitive.**

10.8 The study went on to assess three settlements within the area for their potential to accommodate built development. These were:

- Land to the south west of Great Houghton
- Thurnscoe
- Goldthorpe-Bolton Upon Dearne.

10.9 In relation to each of these the study concluded the following:

Land to the south west of Great Houghton

10.10 The report discourages development on the southern and south eastern edges of Great Houghton and nothing has changed to warrant a different conclusion.

Thurnscoe

10.11 The report discourages development to the south of Thurnscoe to avoid merging with Goldthorpe and discourages development to the west to prevent merging with Great Houghton on sloping arable land. The report also discourages development to the north due to open intact farmland but identified land to the west of the railway line as being potentially suitable for development. The report also references clear signs of out-migration and dereliction of buildings as reasons to encourage built development within existing urban fabric. Whilst it remains appropriate to focus on existing urban fabric, the settlement is within a growth area in the Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan and has formed part of Goldthorpe (Dearne Towns) Principal Town since it was designated as such in the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Spatial Strategy. Accordingly, whilst there have not been sufficient changes to the landscape to warrant a different approach to that advocated in the 2002 study the policy context is very different.

Bolton Upon Dearne

10.12 The 2002 study considered Bolton Upon Dearne and Goldthorpe to be one settlement and, as indicated above, this was subsequently recognised in the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Spatial Strategy and thereafter in the Core Strategy. The study discouraged development to the east and south of the settlement in order to conserve the setting of the River Dearne and landscape character areas C2 Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor. In addition, it considered that development along the western edge would negatively influence landscape character of the area by threatening the intact nature of farmland through further encroachment onto exposed arable land. The study there identified limited opportunities for growth on land south of the A635.

10.13 The main change in the character area has been the development of the Aldi Distribution Centre, which has inevitably had a negative influence on landscape character, albeit this would reduce once tree planting on the landscaped bund establishes. To the south of this Lacewood Primary School has been erected on the western edge of Bolton Upon Dearne. To the east and south development has been limited although residential developments by Gleasons Homes are progressing well on sites at Lowfield Road and Barnburgh Lane to the east of Goldthorpe. Accordingly, the overall conclusions reached in the study still ring true albeit in a different policy context with an adopted spatial strategy (Core Strategy) and Strategic Economic Plan that now identify Goldthorpe Principal Town as a growth area.

D3: West Dearne Settled Arable Slopes

10.14 The 2002 study concluded that the character area exhibits typical characteristics of the landscape types with gently sloping intact arable farmland punctuated by dense settlements and with a variety of lesser land uses and spare tree cover. It recognises that landscape character has been weakened due to pylons and modern housing and judged overall strength of character to be moderate. By virtue of the poorly managed, fragmented field boundaries and that associated farmsteads were in decline, landscape condition was considered to be poor.

10.15 Aside from commercial (predominantly retail) development alongside the A633 (Wombwell Lane) and the closure of Stairfoot Brickworks nothing has changed to materially affect the conclusions of the 2002 study and so land **landscape character remains moderate and landscape condition poor**.

10.16 Due to the intermittent enclosure on the valley sides and their visibility from the valley floor and from longer distance views, built development on the valley sides

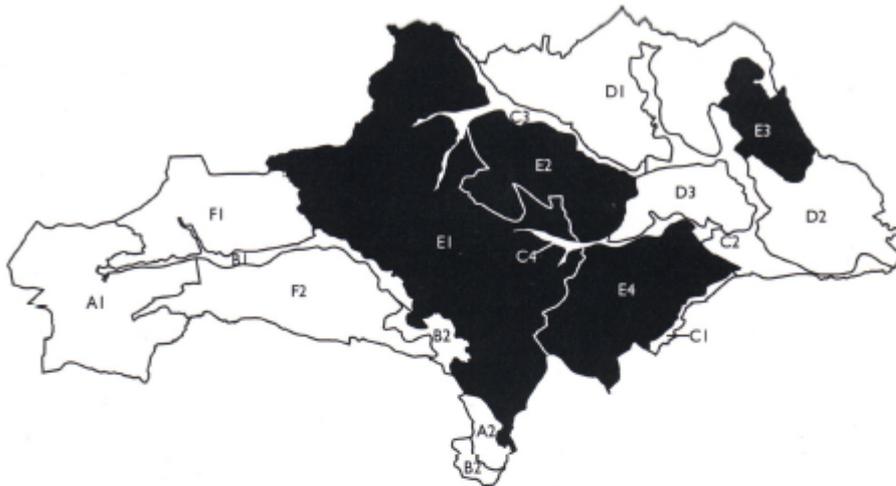
would be highly conspicuous. The study therefore advocated maintaining farmstead in their rural setting but recognised that there are areas on the margins of urban edges where the character is less sensitive.

10.17 they were potentially appropriate for development. These were:

- Darfield
- Ardsley
- Land to the east of Kendray and Worsbrough Dale

10.18 In relation to Darfield and Ardsley the study concluded that they were not favourably locations for development in respect of the resultant impact on landscape character but it did suggest that some limited development to the east of Kendray and Worsbrough could potentially tidy up and unify the urban edge. In light of this and **given the lack of significant changes to landscape character and condition, it is therefore considered that sensitivity remains medium and capacity is low.**

E: SETTLED WOODED FARMLAND



The *Settled Wooded Farmland* landscape type is defined by gently rolling landform, settlement ranging from isolated houses and farmsteads to large towns, deciduous woodlands, substantial areas of intact agricultural land (mainly in arable use), fields bounded by hawthorn hedgerows and some stone walls, small water courses that are tributaries of the rivers Don, Dearne or Dove, and stone farmsteads that are either still used as farms, or have been converted to purely residential developments. Views are often open and distant from higher ground, and enclosed by landform in valleys. Some areas of Settled Wooded Farmland are intact open countryside, free from the effects of urban development. Others areas are surrounded by or on the edges of urban areas, and strongly influenced by the proximity of development. There is great variety in the proportion of developed land to open countryside, and in the character of settlements, between character areas within this type. At one extreme *E1 West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland* is characterised by unspoilt, open countryside with small settlements and villages and, at the other extreme, *E2 Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland* is characterised by isolated pockets of countryside and Urban Greenspaces within and adjacent to the large settlement of Barnsley.

Settled Wooded Farmland is found in four areas:

- E1 West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland
- E2 Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland
- E3 Grimethorpe Settled Wooded Farmland
- E4 Hoyland Settled Wooded Farmland

E1: West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland

11.1 The 2002 assessment concluded that the area exhibits characteristics typical of the Settled Wooded Farmland landscape, which were widespread and generally intact. Few incongruous landuses or elements were identified that adversely affect character and it was therefore judged to be strong. Since 2002 there have been several wind turbines erected varying from 15m to in excess of 30m which have cumulatively weakened landscape character, particularly where several of the turbines are visible from the same vantage point. However, in all other respects, strength of character is very strong. **Accordingly, whilst the impact of the turbines is clearly evident and does weaken landscape character, it is considered to remain strong.**

11.2 Landscape condition was judged to be good in 2002 and despite the emergence of the turbines that remains the case. **Accordingly, the overall landscape condition in the character area remains good. The 2002 assessment**

concluded that landscape sensitivity to further built development was high and landscape capacity low and that remains the case in 2016.

E2: Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland

11.3 The character area has been dominated by urban development in and around Barnsley and that continues to be the case. Although the character area includes a strong underlying topography as well as farmland and woodland, due to the fragmentation of former characteristics of the landscape and the presence of incongruous features and land uses, its character was judged to be moderate. Since 2002 development has continued on the urban fringe but this has generally been on infill or brownfield sites. **Other characteristics remain largely unchanged and as such landscape character is considered to remain moderate.**

11.4 The 2002 assessment identified degraded pockets of farmland and urban greenspace surrounded by extensive urban development. This remains the case today and so landscaping condition is judged to remain poor. Accordingly, four areas associated with the existing urban edges were considered to establish their appropriateness for development. These were:

- Urban greenspaces
- A small pocket of land north of Dodworth, between Dodworth tip and the M1
- Isolated farmland between the settlement of Higham/Barugh Green/Barugh and Barnsley
- A narrow strip of land north of the Redbrook/Wilthorpe suburbs of Barnsley and the valley floor of the River Dearne

11.5 In relation to urban greenspaces, whilst strength of landscape character was deemed to be weak, it was identified that they are likely to have value as corridors for wildlife and for their recreational value.

11.6 The 2002 assessment identified some farmland to the north of Dodworth as being potentially developed without it having a significant adverse effect on the wider countryside but that such development would adversely affect landscape character. A similar conclusion was also arrived at in respect of farmland between Higham/Barugh Green and Barnsley and land north of Redbrook/Wilthorpe/Honeywell suburbs with a particular emphasis on the latter being restored, conserved and enhanced.

11.7 Overall landscape sensitivity and capacity were judged to be medium in 2002 and little had changed to alter this conclusion.

E3: Grimethorpe Settled Wooded Farmland

11.8 The 2002 assessment concluded that area exhibits characteristics typical of the Settled Wooded Farmland landscape type and that despite the presence of some large areas of suburban style housing, the use of a limited range of materials and building styles unifies the urban areas and minimises adverse effects on landscape character. Accordingly landscape character was judged to be strong. Condition was deemed fairly good but with minor signs of degradation. As such overall condition was deemed to be moderate. Little has changed since 2002 to warrant a different conclusion and so **landscape character remains strong and landscape condition moderate. In addition, given the lack of changes, landscape sensitivity remains high and landscape capacity remains low.**

E4: Hoyland Settled Wooded Farmland

11.9 Despite including the characteristics typical of the settled wooded farmland landscape, the character area includes extensive urban development, former and modern industrial uses and major roads. This is also recognised in the Landscape Character Assessment undertaken on behalf of the Dearne Valey Green Heart Partnership in 2011. **Accordingly, overall strength of character is considered to remain moderate. In terms of landscape condition, whilst land reclamation schemes are now more established the overall condition remains poor.**

11.10 Given the above, eight areas were identified for their development potential. These were:

- East of Birdwell
- West of Wombwell (north of A6096)
- South west of Wombwell (south of A6096)
- North west of Hoyland
- South west of Hoyland
- South east of Hoyland between Milton & Elsecar
- Land between Elsecar Jump and Hemmingfield
- Jump Valley
- North of Jump and Hemmingfield, south of the A6195

11.11 The 2002 Assessment concluded that in most cases development would depreciate landscape character but that some areas could be developed with relatively limited harm. This included parcels of land to the north and south west of Hoyland. Whilst there have been significant changes along the A6195, the recommendations remain largely relevant and so **landscape sensitivity is judged to remain low and landscape capacity is judged to be medium.**

F: UPLAND ROLLING FARMLAND



The *Upland Rolling Farmland* landscape type is upland hill country defined by a distinctive undulating topography above 200m AOD. The underlying geology of Lower Coal Measures is a series of complex beds comprising bedded sandstones, shales and mudstones with intermittent coal seams that have given rise to differential weathering of the seams and a characteristic undulating or 'stepped' landform.

A network of intact gritstone walls provides a strong, and distinctive, geometric field pattern over the hills. Field sizes vary corresponding to elevation with the older, smaller fields located in the lower and more sheltered areas and the larger, later enclosed fields over the higher moors. Most of the farmland is now improved grassland grazed by sheep, but remaining unimproved areas on the steeper or more elevated slopes, and damp pastures alongside dikes and springs, are valuable for nature conservation. The area is largely devoid of woodland, although ribbons of deciduous woodland thrive in the shelter of the incised valleys of the dikes. Stands of beech and sycamore are familiar features of this upland landscape type and stand silhouetted against the skyline. The area has a sense of remoteness and the settlement pattern is one of scattered hamlets and agricultural settlements. Past industrial activities are indicated by the presence of disused mines, quarries and shafts.

Upland Rolling Farmland is found in two areas that are separated from each other by the valley of the River Don:

F1 Ingberchworth Upland Rolling Farmland

F2 Penistone Upland Rolling Farmland

F1: Ingberchworth Upland Farmland

12.1 The 2002 assessment concluded that the area was a good example of the Upland Rolling Farmland landscape type as a result of its distinctive stepped topography, intact network of stone walls, rural upland character and panoramic views. Strength of character was therefore considered to be strong. However, because some stone walls were eroding and vernacular buildings were in a state of dereliction, combined with a lack of replacement of natural regeneration of trees, overall landscape conditions was described as moderate.

12.2 Whilst the condition of the landscape is largely unchanged since 2002 (and so remains moderate) the erection of 6 wind turbines (3 at Blackstone Edge and 3 at Spicer Hill) measuring approximately 100m high has inevitably had a significant impact on the landscape. These were partly allowed in the knowledge that 13 turbines at Royd Moor are due to be decommissioned in 2018 and this remains

the case. In addition to the 6 large turbines, a number of single turbines associated with farmsteads have also been erected in the borough and over the border in Kirklees. **Cumulatively the turbines have detrimentally impacted upon strength of landscape character but it is considered to remain strong.**

12.3 The area still remains rural in character and its low density settlement pattern and distinctive field patterns make the landscape sensitive to built development and so **landscape sensitivity remains high and capacity is considered low.**

F2: Penistone Upland Farmland

12.4 The 2002 assessment concluded that the area is a good example of the Upland Farmland landscape type as a result of its strong topography, intact network of stone walls, rural upland character and panoramic views. These characteristics remain unchanged despite some residential development on the periphery of Penistone as well as redevelopment within the town itself. **Accordingly, strength of landscape character remains strong. However, landscape condition scores moderate** for the same reasons given in the Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland character area.

12.5 The area is considered to remain particularly sensitive to build development outside the boundaries of Penistone Principal Town as a result of its visibility from the Peak District National Park and the presence of Regionally Important Geological Sites. **As such landscape sensitivity remains high and landscape capacity remains low.**

Conclusion

13.1 Following the desk study and field review into the 24 character areas is considered that strength of character and landscape condition are largely as they were. There are areas where condition and strength of character has weakened but not to the extent that a different score is warranted and there are also character areas where weakening in some parts of the area has been offset but strengthening in others. This is principally as a result of the establishment of the restoration schemes on former colliery sites.

13.2 Given the lack of change in respect of landscape condition and strength of character, overall conclusions in respect of landscape capacity and sensitivity in each of the character areas are unchanged.

Appendix 1 – Aerial Photographs

The original 2002 assessment did not include a photographic record of the landscape but there a comprehensive aerial survey of South Yorkshire was carried out. Whilst it is not possible to draw conclusions on landscape character and condition based on such aerial photography, it does allow a comparison to be made with aerial surveys carried out more recently. The photographs in this appendix are therefore included to evidence the changes described following the field surveys. For ease of reference they have been arranged in character area.

C2: Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor

Former Ferry Moor Open Cast & Grimethorpe Colliery Sites

2013 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The aerial photographs demonstrate the significant progress made reclaiming the land to the west of Park Spring Road and the delivery of a significant quantum of employment floorspace, most notably the large Symphony building. Elsewhere, agricultural fields and their boundaries remain largely unchanged.

ASOS Building at Park Springs

2013 Aerial Photograph



2013 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The aerial photographs demonstrate the significant impact that the ASAO building has had on the landscape, which is far more evident when viewed on the ground. Two of the 126.5m high wind turbines are also visible as well as the associated track. Elsewhere, the establishing landscape following restoration of the Former Houghton Main Colliery is evident with scarring less visible and tree planting starting to mature.

Land at West Green

2016 Aerial



2002 Aerial



Summary

The 2016 photograph shows sections of the Cudworth and West Green by-pass and the new roundabouts. To the north the landscape appears to be a combination of scrub land and poorly defined agricultural buildings.

D1: North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes

Land North of Darton

2016 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

To the far north of the 2016 photograph is residential development on the former Wooley Grange Colliery site with evidence of restoration immediately to the south. The photograph shows that the fields pattern associated with agricultural use remains largely as it was with the exception of one hedgerow that has been lost.

Land south of Mapplewell

2016 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The 2016 aerial photograph shows the former North Gawber Colliery site being readied for housing development. To the south the land remaining in agricultural use with field boundaries unchanged.

Land west of Royston

2016 Aerial



2002 Aerial



Summary

Since 2002 there has been ad hoc development to the north of Lee Lane, which can clearly be seen on the aerial photograph. To the south the land continues to be intensively farmed albeit with some other uses closer to the residential area.

Land east of Carlton

2016 Aerial



2002 Aerial



Summary

The 2016 photograph shows Carlton ALC in the north west corner and a modest residential development between Shaw Lane and the large bakery building to the south. Elsewhere, the land remains largely as it was albeit with restoration of the former Carlton Colliery site in the south east corner now more advanced.

D2: East Dearne Settled Arable Slopes

Aldi Building at Highgate

2016 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The aerial photographs demonstrate the significant impact that the Aldi building has had on the landscape. Elsewhere land to the east remains in agricultural use with field boundaries largely unchanged.

East Goldthorpe

2013 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The aerial photographs demonstrate the establishment of the landscaping following restoration of Hickleton and Goldthorpe Collieries and the development of industrial buildings clustered around the roundabout. Immediately to the south east of Goldthorpe residential development is progressing on a greenfield site but this wasn't started in 2013. In addition, residential development has progressed further on the former Goldthorpe Colliery site.

D3: West Dearne Settled Arable Slopes

Land at Wombwell Lane, Stairfoot

2016 Aerial



2002 Aerial



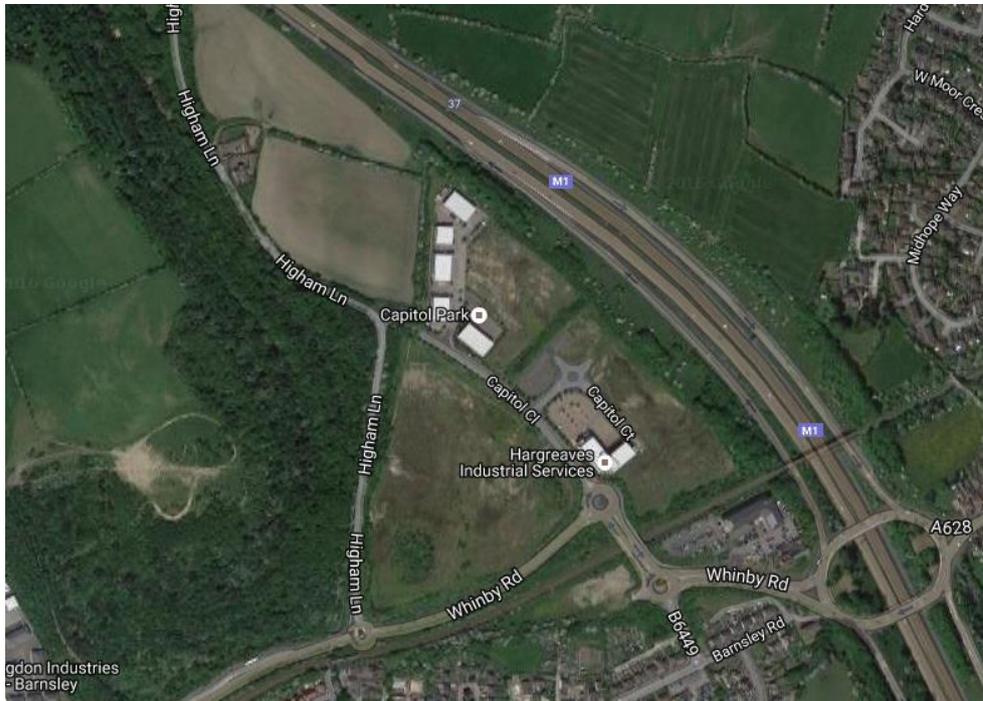
Summary

The 2016 photograph shows a significant quantum of retail warehouse and employment development to the south west of the A633 as well as the fact that Stairfoot Brickworks has closed and the site cleared. Linked to this, there are less obvious scars of the landscape as a result of clay extraction.

E2: Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland

Land at M1 J37

2016 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



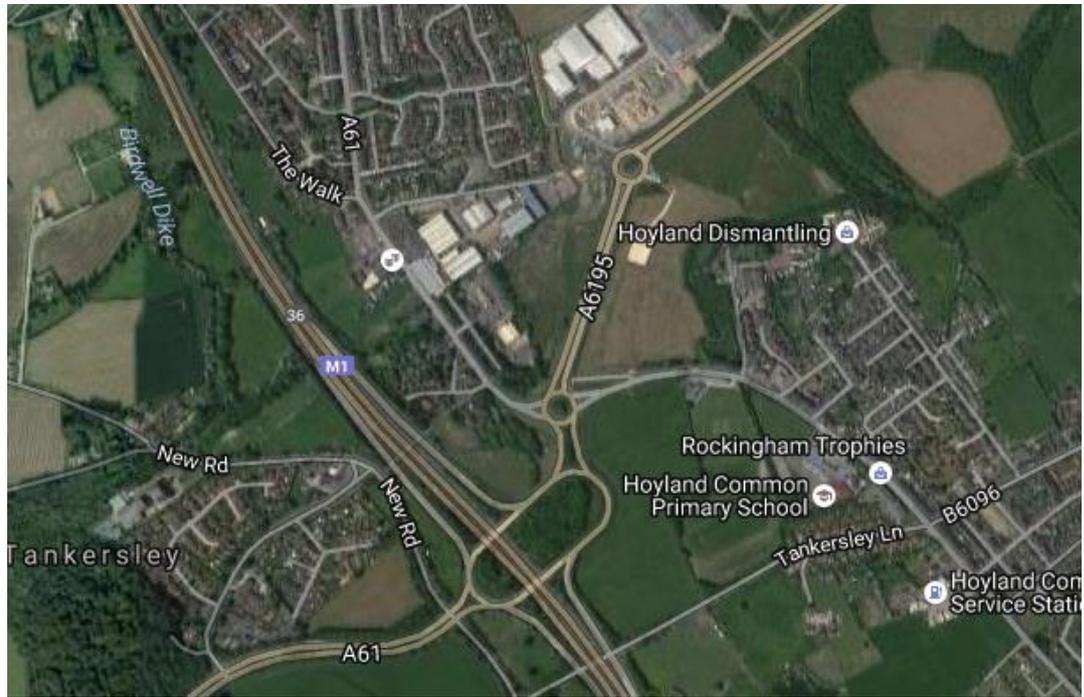
Summary

The 2016 aerial photograph shows employment buildings at Capitol Park and the associated Dodworth by-pass to the north of the railway line. Elsewhere the landscape remains largely unchanged.

E4: Hoyland Settled Wooded Farmland

Land at M1 J36

2016 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The 2016 aerial photograph shows the recently completed buildings on the Gateway 36 mixed use development as well as the Hoyland Common Primary School. Elsewhere the landscape remains largely unchanged.

Ashroyd & Shortwood Business Parks, Hoyland

2016 Aerial Photograph



2002 Aerial Photograph



Summary

The 2016 aerial photograph shows the recently completed buildings on Ashroyd Business Park, off Ryecroft Bank. In the far south west corner there is also evidence of recent excavation associated with the Gateway 36 mixed use development. Elsewhere the landscape remains largely unchanged.

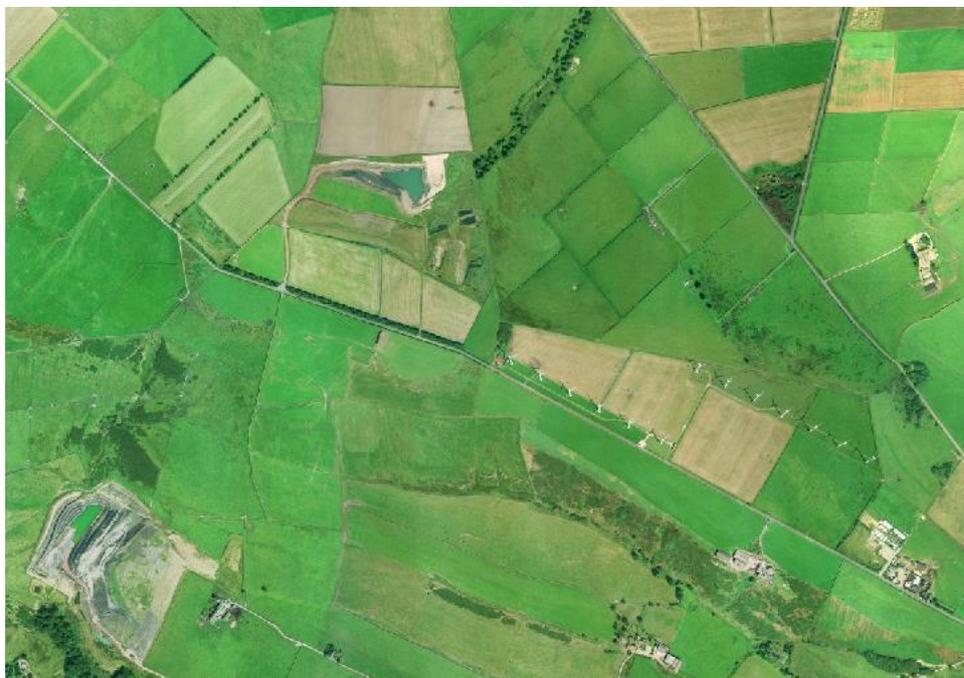
F1 Upland Rolling Farmland

Land north east of Pensitone

2016 Aerial



2002 Aerial



Summary

The photographs show and landscape largely unchanged in terms of building footprint but it is just possible to make out the turbines at Blackstone Edge and Spicer Hill on the 2016 aerial.

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