Appendix 6.B National and Regional Landscape Character

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This appendix summarises the relevant National and Regional Landscape Character Assessments considered in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). It is set out as follows:

- Section 1.2 - National Landscape Character Areas
- Section 1.3 - Peak District National Park Landscape Character
- Section 1.4 - Barnsley Landscape Character Areas
- Section 1.5 - Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas

1.2 National Landscape Character Areas

Table 1.1: National Character Areas

National Landscape Character Areas (NCA)[1]	Key Characteristics
37. Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe	– A transitional landscape dissected by steep-sided valleys, dropping from the high gritstone hills in the west to lower land in the east, and thus creating an important backdrop to the many industrial towns and villages within and beyond the NCA. – Sandstones and gritstone beds of Millstone Grit (Namurian) age underlying smooth hills and plateaux in the west. These are overlain in the east by beds of sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of Coal Measures age. – Rivers creating a deeply dissected landscape, with high plateaux cut by steep-sided valleys, and fanning out in 'fingers' across valleys of the NCA. – Treeless hill tops with tracts of rough grazing and extensive areas of enclosed pasture to the west, but with broadleaved woodland on steeper valley sides, giving the impression of a well-wooded landscape, especially to the north and west of Sheffield. – Predominantly pastoral farming, especially in western areas, with a shift to more arable land in the drier eastern areas. – Boundary features that change from distinctive patterns of drystone walls on the upland hills, to hedgerows becoming the predominant field boundary in the east. – Close conjunction between rural landscapes and the rich industrial heritage of the urban areas, including settlements associated with the textile industry, with large mills and tall chimneys, and large factories and forges associated with the iron, steel and manufacturing industries. – Urban development constrained within valley floors and up side slopes, with location and layout strongly influenced by the landform. – Industrial wealth revealed in magnificent civil architecture in town centres, notably Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield and Sheffield, and several stately homes with designed parklands.

[1] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/587130

National Landscape Character Areas (NCA)[1]	Key Characteristics
37. Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe (continued)	– Evidence of bronze-age and Roman habitation still present on uplands, and old pack-horse routes that once joined settlements across the Pennines still in place, or now forming modern major road routes. – Extensive and dramatic views from higher land out over lower-lying land to the east, even from within urban areas. – Several reservoirs contained within narrow valleys contributing a distinct character as well as providing popular places to visit. – Small patches of fragmented priority habitats providing important refuges locally for wildlife. Grassland mosaics are particularly important in supporting waders and the twite that breeds on adjacent moorland areas; lowland woodland is also an important feature. – In places a dense network of roads and urban development, with many road, rail and canal routes crossing the NCA, and a high density of footpaths throughout.

National Landscape Character Areas (NCA)[1]	Key Characteristics
38. Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield	– Sharply defined, elevated and vast plateau with gritstone ridges and edges and long, uninterrupted views. – Wild and remote semi-natural character created by blanket bog, dwarf shrub heath and heather moorland which support internationally important habitats and assemblages of upland birds and breeding waders. – Contrasting valley heads created by a combination of sheltered, deeply incised cloughs with fast-flowing streams around the plateau margins, with their greater diversity of vegetation, including semi-natural broadleaved woodland. – Pastoral character of margins created by in-bye land with dispersed farmsteads, gritstone wall boundaries (hedgerows in valley bottoms) and the small scale of enclosure. – Major valleys, some of which are dominated by coniferous woodland and reservoirs; these supply drinking water to distant urban conurbations including Derby and Nottingham. The wider valleys also provide habitats for wintering and breeding birds and other important species such as fungi, as well as high-quality recreational experiences for visitors. – Durable and stocky architectural style to dispersed buildings and settlements constructed from local gritstone with typical blackened appearance. – Extensive prehistoric field systems and settlement behind the gritstone edges, with early post-glacial occupation beneath the higher, deeper peats. – Historic routes traverse the moorland as well as more modern trails such as the Pennine Bridleway and Pennine Way. More recent road and rail routes are located along valley bottoms.

National Landscape Character Areas (NCA)[1]	Key Characteristics
51. Dark Peak	– Sharply defined, elevated and vast plateau with gritstone ridges and edges and long, uninterrupted views. – Wild and remote semi-natural character created by blanket bog, dwarf shrub heath and heather moorland which support internationally important habitats and assemblages of upland birds and breeding waders. – Contrasting valley heads created by a combination of sheltered, deeply incised cloughs with fast-flowing streams around the plateau margins, with their greater diversity of vegetation, including semi-natural broadleaved woodland. – Pastoral character of margins created by in-bye land with dispersed farmsteads, gritstone wall boundaries (hedgerows in valley bottoms) and the small scale of enclosure. – Major valleys, some of which are dominated by coniferous woodland and reservoirs; these supply drinking water to distant urban conurbations including Derby and Nottingham. The wider valleys also provide habitats for wintering and breeding birds and other important species such as fungi, as well as high-quality recreational experiences for visitors. – Durable and stocky architectural style to dispersed buildings and settlements constructed from local gritstone with typical blackened appearance. – Extensive prehistoric field systems and settlement behind the gritstone edges, with early post-glacial occupation beneath the higher, deeper peats. – Historic routes traverse the moorland as well as more modern trails such as the Pennine Bridleway and Pennine Way. More recent road and rail routes are located along valley bottoms.

1.3 Peak District National Park Landscape Character

Table 1.2: Peak District National Park Landscape Character Areas and Types (Peak District National Park Landscape Strategy and Action Plan 2009 – 2019)

Peak District Landscape Character Areas (LCA) [2]	Peak District Landscape Character Types (LCT)[3]	Key Characteristics
Dark Peak LCA	**Open Moors LCT**	– Undulating high gritstone plateau – Localised rock outcrops and boulders, in the form of rocky edges and tors – Thick deposits of peat with incised groughs (drainage channels) – Unenclosed heather and grass moorland and extensive areas of blanket bog – Rough grazing land – Wild, unsettled landscape with vast panoramas over surrounding hills and lower ground
	Dark Peak LCA/ Enclosed Gritstone Upland LCT	– Rolling uplands and broad ridge summits with some steeper slopes – Thin soils over gritstone bedrock with localised pockets of peat – Remnant patches of rough land with bracken and gorse, some heather and bilberry – Permanent pasture and rough grazing enclosed by gritstone walls – Regular pattern of medium to large fields – Straight roads with wide verges of grass and, in some places, heather – Isolated gritstone farmsteads with stone slate roofs – Trees grouped around farmsteads to provide shelter

[2] Peak District National Park Authority and Countryscape. (2009), *'Landscape Strategy and Action Plan 2009 – 2019'* Peak District National Park Authority

[3] Peak District National Park Authority and Countryscape. (2009), *'Landscape Strategy and Action Plan 2009 – 2019'* Peak District National Park Authority

Peak District Landscape Character Areas (LCA) [2]	Peak District Landscape Character Types (LCT)[3]	Key Characteristics
Dark Peak Yorkshire Fringe LCA	**Moorland Slopes and Cloughs LCT**	– Steep slopes and cloughs rising to the moorland plateaux above – Prominent gritstone outcrops, boulders and scree slopes – Thin soils over gritstone bedrock – Rough acid grassland, bracken and heather moorland grazed by sheep – Exposed views over lower ground, sometimes limited by clough sides – Numerous springs and flushes arising on slopes and clough sides – Relict areas of oak-birch woodland in cloughs
	Slopes and Valleys with Woodland LCT	– Steeply sloping and undulating topography – Gritstone edges characterise the tops of some steeper slopes – Patches of acid grassland and bracken – Irregular blocks of ancient semi-natural and secondary woodland – Permanent pasture in small fields enclosed by hedges and gritstone walls – Narrow winding, often sunken lanes – Scattered gritstone farms and loose clusters of dwellings

1.4 Barnsley Landscape Character Areas

Table 1.3: Barnsley Landscape Character Areas (Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment)

Barnsley Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[4]	Key Characteristics
A1. Thurlston and Langsett Unenclosed Moorland	– Open and exposed moorland with wide and expansive panoramic views. – Upland, elevated and gently undulating landform evoking a wild character. – Underlain by a geology of Millstone Grit and Peat. – Detailed network of cloughs, dikes and butts creating subtle sinuosity in the landscape. – Sheep grazing and grouse shooting are dominate land use activities. – Obvious absence of tree cover resulting in a visually simplistic and vulnerable landscape. – Disused quarries to the north-west offering enclosure and an intimate scale to the landform. – Busy A628T road dramatically increasing the pace and reducing the tranquillity of the landscape. – Pylons carrying overhead wires are prominent features in a landscape of few vertical elements. – Reservoirs associated with the upland reaches of the Don River Valley. – Natural Heritage and SSSI status. – Landscape sensitivity to built development is judged to be **high** and landscape capacity is judged to be **none**.

[4] Environmental Consultancy University of Sheffield and Land Use Consultants (2002) *'Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment'*, Barnsley Borough Metropolitan Council

Barnsley Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[4]	Key Characteristics
B1. Upland Don River Valley	– Faster flowing upper reaches of the River Don extending into the open moorland. – Meandering river set within a valley that is of varying width and depth, and which provides enclosure. – Deciduous woodland belts located on the steeper valley sides and alongside the course of the river. – Largely undeveloped character with pasture occurring on the valley sides and floor up to the water's edge. – A dismantled railway line defines the edge of the valley to the south. – Weirs, sluices and mills are indications of the former wool weaving industry. – Stone bridges and stone walls are attractive man-made elements. – Landscape sensitivity to built development is judged to be **high** and landscape capacity is considered to be **low**.

Barnsley Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[4]	Key Characteristics
F1. Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland	– Stepped landform rising to 367m at Upper Whitley Edge. – Fields of pasture comprising medium geometric field units strongly defined by distinctive stone walls. – Beech plantations stand out on the skyline, sometimes enclosed by stone walls. – Unimproved pasture with scrub on steeper slopes. – Scattered farmsteads of sandstone, quarried from the local area. – Villages of Thurlstone and Millhouse Green on the character area border with the valley of the River Don, both with links to the former fulling mills along the river. – Windfarm at Spicer Hill is visually prominent on the skyline. – Single lane rural roads criss-cross the open countryside, bounded by stone walls. – Disused industrial quarries, shafts and mines indicate the importance of the area for the extraction of coal and stone. – Panoramic views over adjacent river valleys and towards the open moorland of the Peak District National Park. – In view of the above, landscape sensitivity to built development is judged to be **high** and landscape capacity is considered to be **low**. – 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. (this point taken from Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment – 2016 Review [5])

Barnsley Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[4]	Key Characteristics
F2. Penistone Upland Farmland	– Stepped landform rising to 364m at Hartcliffe Hill. – Fields of pasture comprising small to medium geometric field units strongly defined by distinctive stone walls. – Linear or circular beech plantations stand out on the skyline, sometimes enclosed by stone walls. – Unimproved pasture with scrub on steeper slopes. – Scattered farmsteads of local light coloured stone. – Isolated trees form silhouettes against the skyline. – Pylons and power lines are visually prominent on the skyline. – Single lane rural roads criss-cross the open countryside, bounded by stone walls. – Disused industrial quarries, shafts and mines indicate the historical importance of the area for the extraction of coal and stone. – Panoramic views over adjacent river valleys and towards the open moorland of the Peak District National Park. – In view of the above, landscape sensitivity to built development is judged to be **high** and landscape capacity is considered to be **low**.

[5] Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. (2016) Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment – 2016 Review. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/4582/eb87-barnsley-landscape-character-assessment-2016-update.pdf. [Accessed 14 September 2017].

1.5 Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas

Table 1.4: Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas (Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment*)*

Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[6]	Key Characteristics
A2. North Peak (Wessenden & Meltham Moors)	– The underlying Millstone Grit geology creates distinctive physical features such as frost weathered tors and jagged moorland edges. – Woodland cover is sparse due to exposure, limited to occasional shelterbelts associated with isolated farmsteads. – Important archaeological landscape, with disused quarries and shafts providing evidence of the area's industrial heritage. – Remote and sparsely settled landscape with isolated farmsteads focused on the lower lying, more sheltered areas around the fringes of the LCA or strung out along the sparse road network. – The A62 crosses through this LCA. Some minor roads also provide further access, but on the whole the road network is limited – emphasising the landscape's remote character. – A perception of remoteness, isolation and wildness owing to the landscape's altitude, absence of trees and settlements and expansive nature of views.

[6] Land Use Consultants, (2015) '*Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment'*, Kirklees Council

Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[6]	Key Characteristics
D7. Peak Fringe Upland Pastures	– Broad terrace, found between 200 and 350 metres altitude, flanking the slopes and valleys to the east of the South Pennine, Wessenden and Meltham Moors. – Numerous small tributaries, typically flowing from west to east, creating incisions in the landscape. – Small areas of mixed woodland within the valleys, shelterbelts associated with farm buildings and some small blocks of coniferous woodland focused to the higher ground to the south. – Land is divided into a patchwork of small, square fields enclosed by gritstone walls or post and wire fencing, with areas of larger intakes and common land on the moorland fringes. – The outer fringes of the area, on the boundary with the National Park, are internationally and nationally designated for their mosaic of upland habitats including moorland, blanket bog, flushes and mires. – Dispersed settlement pattern comprising scattered farmsteads and occasional short terraces of houses. The density of residential properties increases towards the edges of Huddersfield. – From the enclosed minor valleys, focused, framed views looking down the valley towards the more settled lowlands are obtainable.

Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[6]	Key Characteristics
E1. Holmfirth - Meltham	– This LCA consists of four areas of rural fringe land located to the south-west of Huddersfield. – Some slopes deeply incised by valleys, through which small tributaries and springs flow to join the Holme River below. – Small to medium-scale regular pattern of grassland pastures enclosed by gritstone walls or hedgerows. – A strong historic sense of place with traditional Millstone Grit farmhouses and cottages combining with stone wall field boundaries to create a unified local vernacular. – Disused quarries provide evidence of industrial heritage. – Distinctive settlement character of scattered farms, individual rural houses and groups of dwellings clustered into hamlets and small villages. – A number of larger settlements also exist (including Scholes, Netherton Moor, Honley and Netherthong). – Proximity of the urban centres exerts an influence on landscape character with urban fringe land uses evident in many areas. – A strongly rural landscape with pockets of relative tranquillity away from the main settlements. This is enhanced in the west due to the proximity and intervisibility with the Peak District National Park.

Kirklees District Landscape Character Areas (LCA)[6]	Key Characteristics
F5. Holme & Hall Dyke (Holmfirth & Meltham)Settled Valleys	– Steep incised valleys associated with the upper parts of River Holme and its tributaries. – The land is more elevated in the west as the valley drains down from the moorlands of the Peak District National Park. – Geometric blocks of coniferous plantation are found adjacent to reservoirs in the upper Holme Valley. – Regular, rectilinear pastoral fields are bounded by low stone walls, sometimes supplemented by wire fencing. Scattered trees are often found along field boundaries. – Historic mills with prominent chimneys are found along the watercourses, associated with the textiles industry during the Industrial Revolution. – To the south of Holmbridge there is a clear transition to a more upland character, with features such as reservoirs and coniferous plantation becoming more dominant in the landscape. – In the upper reaches of the valleys there is clear intervisibility with Peak District National Park, with the southern parts of the area falling within the National Park boundary.
G8. Holme River Valley	– The LCA comprises the settled valley of the River Holme located to the south of Huddersfield. The valley runs in a south-east to north-west direction. – Geology is typical of the wider area with Millstone Grit bedrock overlain by the coal rich Lower Pennine Formation. – Deciduous woodland is frequent along watercourses and on the steeper slopes. – Stone walls supplemented by fencing are common as field boundaries. Mature trees are frequently found around the edges and within fields. – A densely settled landscape, with numerous villages concentrated on the valley floor. These are characterised by rows of terraces facing the main road and extending up the valley sides. – The valley is generally low lying and visually enclosed by the steep valley sides. Views to the east are mostly contained by the steep topography.