

Redcar & Cleveland Landscape Character Assessment



April 2006

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1.1 Introduction

Under this Landscape Character Assessment, the range of landscapes across the rural parts of the Borough outside the National Park are identified, mapped and described.

1.2 Landscape Character

The Countryside Agency have defined character as a 'distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse'. (Ref 1)

1.3 Influences on Character

The main factors affecting the landscape character across the Borough are: landform (influenced largely by underlying geology), the presence of woodland cover and field patterns with hedgerows, the degree of enclosure (by woodland or landform), the nature and scale of land use (including areas of biodiversity value), and proximity to urban areas and to the coast.

Glaciation has been a major factor in forming the topography of the region. The Tees Valley floor is overlain with boulder clay, whilst the Eston Hills and Upleatham Hills, which in geological terms are part of the North York Moors, are erosional outliers remaining after glaciation. There is a wide range of natural habitats and there are distinct distribution patterns of plant life, determined to a large extent by varying geology. (Ref 2)

1.4 Character Areas

These character areas are considered initially at a broad scale, with four Landscape Tracts (recognisable areas of landscape, such as the 'East Cleveland Plateau'), moving on to Landscape Types (such as 'moorland fringe farmland'), and finally adding a place name for locational purposes, to identify, on the smallest scale, the individual Landscape Unit.

1.5 Description and Analysis

The Character Assessment provides background and information on variations in landscape character and draws attention to wildlife habitats and ancient woodland. The Assessment also includes a description of each Landscape Tract and of each Landscape Unit, with an analysis of each Unit's positive attributes and negative features.

Positive elements identified in the assessment include: variety of landform, accessibility by pedestrians, extensive

views, standing or running water, hedgerows and woodlands, wildlife habitats, and archaeological and historical features, and, at the coast, beach and cliffs. The presence, condition and nature of these elements, and the way in which they interact, produce visual interest and strength of character to a landscape.

Negative elements include: intrusive urban elements, (such as power lines and towers), urban edges, sparsity (or evidence of loss of) hedgerow or tree cover, limited public access and caravan sites.

1.6 Landscape Classification

This analysis leads to a conclusion as to whether the landscape of each unit has a character which should be retained and where change would be damaging (as a Sensitive Landscape), or whether the landscape may be improved (as a Restoration Landscape). The landscapes of the Borough fall into one or other of these categories.

1.7 The Character of England Map

On a nation-wide scale, the Borough spans two of the character areas identified in the map of 'The Character of England. Landscape, Wildlife and Natural Features,' (Ref 3). These two character areas are the Tees Lowlands, and the North York Moors and Cleveland Hills. Over England as a whole, the map, produced by the Countryside Agency and English Nature, identifies the character of the different landscapes of the countryside as a broad pattern; it acts as a base within which other bodies, including local authorities, can work to add detail at a scale suitable for the purpose of the assessment.

1.8 Landscape Design Guidance

The findings of this assessment will be developed further as a landscape design SPD (Supplementary Planning Document), and adopted as part of the Local Development Framework. The guidance will be provided on a general level for all rural areas of the Borough, then presented as guidance for each Landscape Tract, and finally on the smallest scale, for each Landscape Unit.

Guidance for a Sensitive Landscape will be restricted to retention and minimal change. In contrast, for a Restoration Landscape, an outline of guidance for improvement will be provided; in practical terms, these improvement measures may be either linked to a development, or as part of countryside management per se. Improvements may take

the form of landscape measures with a purely visual purpose or the creation or extension of areas for biodiversity, although in effect the two aims are closely linked.

1.9 Landscape Tracts

Under the Landscape Character Assessment, the countryside of the Borough is divided into four broad Landscape Tracts (similar in extent to those in ref 4). These represent recognisable areas of landscape, determined by a particular combination of physical and land cover characteristics and geographical context. Although these tracts cover large areas of land and may be quite diverse in character, they nevertheless have a distinctive local identity that sets them apart from neighbouring areas.

The four Landscape Tracts are as follows:

- 1 Eston Hills**
- 2 Redcar Flats**
- 3 East Cleveland Plateau**
- 4 Guisborough Lowland**



*RECREATION IN
WILTON WOODS*

1.9.1 ESTON HILLS

Description

The Eston Hills are characterised by a complex of prominent steep-sided hills linked by low saddles which form a parallel series of foothills, or outliers, to the main escarpment of the Cleveland Hills, which lie within the North York Moors National Park. Open moorland and wooded hillsides and escarpments contribute to the distinctive character of this area and give it an identity unlike any other part of the Borough. An area of parkland at Wilton is important within the tract.

Extensive and contrasting views are available from many locations; to the south there is the backdrop of the Cleveland Hills. To the north there are views over the urban and industrial developments of Teesside and Redcar.

The Eston Hills Tract consists of three distinct but closely grouped elevated areas: the Eston Hills upland between Dunsdale and Ormesby, the higher land at Upleatham, and that situated between Skelton and Slapewath. Associated with these uplands are 'saddles' of relatively lower land linking them and the slopes that edge them. Also included are the upper reaches of Skelton Beck, known as Tocketts Beck and Waterfall Beck in this tract.

Landscape Assessment

Under the Character Assessment, the landscapes in this tract are classified into Sensitive Landscapes over the landscape units on the higher land, the beck valleys and the parkland, with Restoration Landscapes over the remainder. The uplands have a high strength of character, a product of a dominant landform and a strong woodland pattern. The lower-lying areas are characterised by a more open landscape structure of isolated woods and hedges set within a farmland context.

In the Sensitive Landscapes, changes in character are discouraged and the emphasis is on retention of landscape elements; indeed, changes will take on a visual prominence over much of this area on the more elevated parts. Location and design are of crucial importance. New planting for screening or integration should closely reflect the nature and detail of the existing vegetation.

In the Restoration Landscapes, landscape improvements are a priority, whilst retention of those features that do exist is important to integrate any new development into the

landscape, to act as the basis for new planting, or for the creation of 'new landscape'.

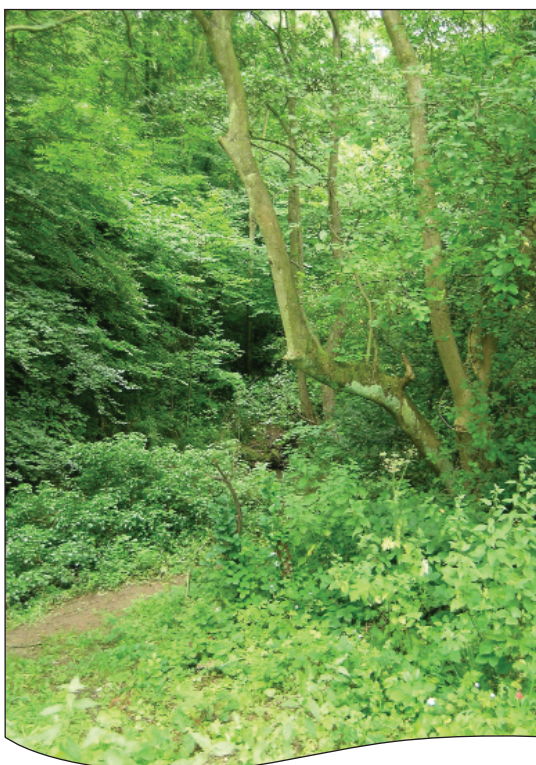
Biodiversity

On the Eston Hills themselves, the moor and much of the non-coniferous woodland over the upland areas and slopes are recognised as important sites for plant communities and are designated as SNCIs, while Lovell Hill Pools, near Wilton Lane, qualify for SSSI status. Woodlands and other habitats provide considerable biodiversity value. In recognition of its archaeological value, the moor, and its edges, are designated as 'Eston Hills Historic Landscape.' On the other uplands, woodlands (designated as SNCIs) cover peripheral slopes rather than the crests.

A number of woods are classified as either Semi natural or Replanted Ancient Woodlands; these are: Park Wood (near Guisborough), part of Wilton Woods, Yearby Wood, the woodland in Skelton Beck valley, part of Errington Wood and the woods to the west of Upleatham.

The upper reaches of Skelton Beck form a branched steep-sided wooded valley through much of this tract, with the woodland designated as SNCI, as is the vegetation and pond at Chaloner Pit near Mount Pleasant

Sites and areas of biodiversity value occur outside these designated sites, with value both in themselves and as wildlife links or potential areas for development of wildlife habitat.



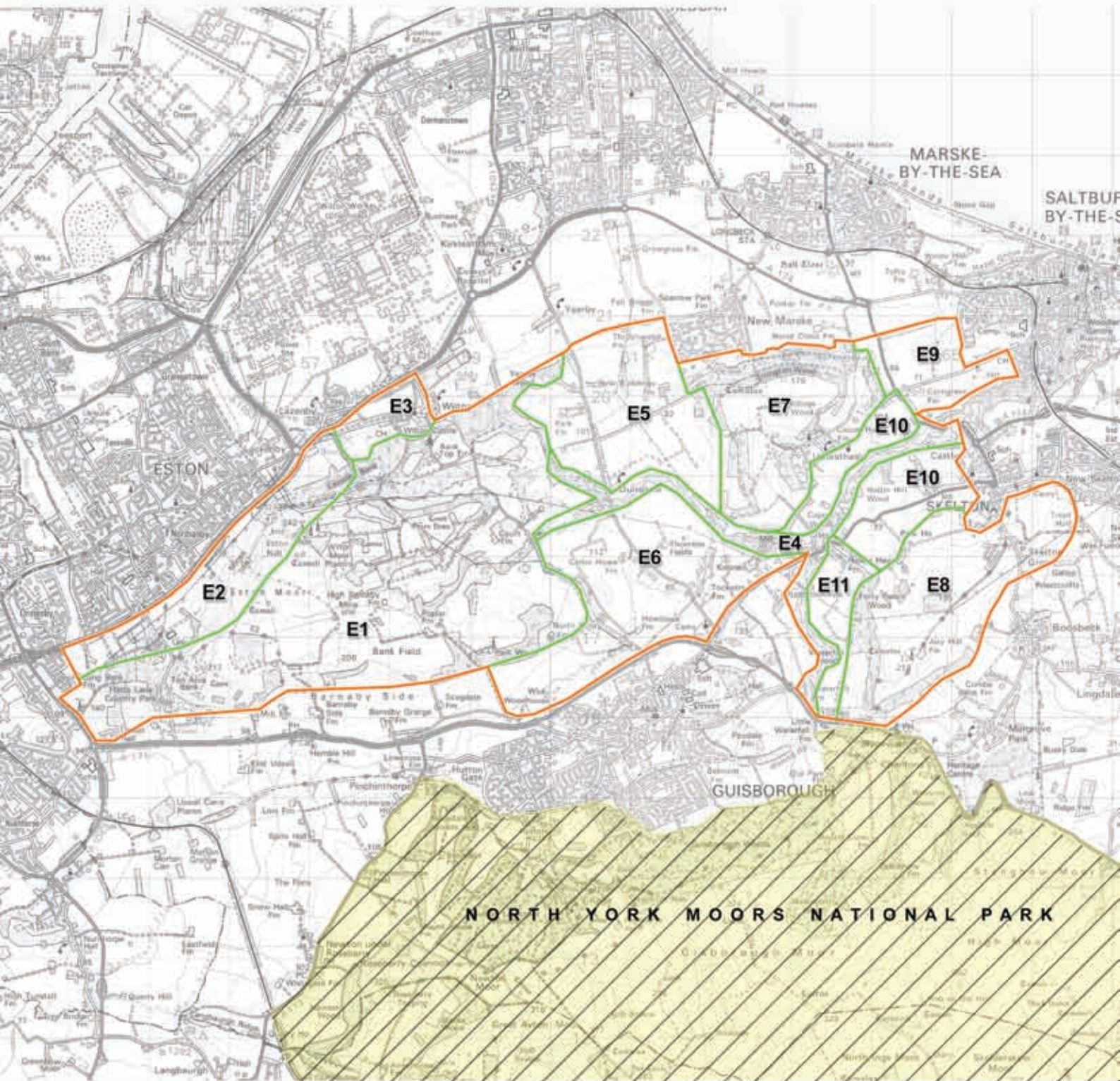
WILTON WOODS

Landscape Character Assessment of Eston Hills Landscape Tract

Landscape Units

E1	Upland	(Eston Hills / Eston Moor)
E2	Escarpment	(Eston Hills)
E3	Parkland	(Wilton)
E4	Wooded valley	(Tocketts Beck etc)
E5	NE slopes	(Eston Hills)
E6	SE slopes	(Eston Hills)
E7	Upland	(Upleatham)
E8	Upland	(Skelton)
E9	Eastern slopes	(Upleatham)
E10	Valley sides	(Upleatham)
E11	Hillfoot farmland	(Skelton)

Redcar and Cleveland Landscape Character Assessment



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ESTON HILLS LANDSCAPE TRACT

E1, E2 ... LANDSCAPE UNITS

DESCRIPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE UNITS

Landscape Unit

E1 Upland (Eston Hills / Eston Moor)

Landform

An elevated plateau top, the westernmost part of the Eston Hills Tract, forming one of a discontinuous series of topographic outliers of the North York Moors (continuing to the east at Upleatham).

The Eston Hills, attaining 242m altitude at Eston Nab, are bounded by a scarp slope to the north and gentler slopes to the south. A shoulder of high land terminates the upland to the west linked to the main body of high land by a lower coll (crossed by Flatts Lane). To the east, an extension of the upland falls gently to the wooded course of Tocketts Mill Beck. Eston Moor occupies a central position within this landscape unit.

Land use

Mixed farming (arable and grazing), wood pasture and mixed woodland (deciduous woods and coniferous plantations). Eston Moor is an area predominantly of heathy grassland. A number of footpaths provide access through the area.

Wildlife and other designations

The moor and much of the non-coniferous woodland are designated as SNCIs (Eston Moor, Flatts Lane Complex and Wilton Woods Complex). A wide area covering much of the upland comprises the 'Eston Hills Historic Landscape', a designation which reflects the area's archaeological value.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- A dominant landform, particularly to the north, where the scarp slope presents a marked contrast to the Tees Lowlands
- High strength of character, a product of a dominant landform coupled with a range of vegetation types
- Variety of habitat with considerable biodiversity and visual value
- Significant value of archaeological sites
- Accessible by the public
- Extensive views over a variety of landscapes

Negative attributes

- Collection of masts on Eston Nab

Landscape Unit E2 Escarpment (Eston Hills)

Landform

An undulating scarp slope, on the northern edge of the Eston Hills, steeper on its higher levels, becoming more gentle as altitude falls, and interrupted near its western end by the valley followed by Flatts Lane, beyond which gradients are more shallow.

Land use

Varied land cover ranging from dense woodland (largely deciduous), to agricultural fields, rough grass, bracken and amenity grassland.

Wildlife and other designations

Much of the woodland is designated as SNCI ('Flatts Lane Complex') and the eastern part of the landscape unit falls within the 'Eston Hills Historic Landscape'.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- A prominent landform presenting a sharp contrast to the adjacent lowland
- Variety of habitat with considerable visual and wildlife value
- Extensive views over a variety of landscapes
- Accessible by the public
- Significant value of archaeological sites

Negative attributes

- Overhead power lines
- Farmland next to A 174 has a poorly managed and degraded appearance. A 174 is visually intrusive and produces traffic noise

Landscape Unit
E3 Parkland (Wilton Castle)

Landform

Gently sloping and level land at the foot of the slopes of the Eston Hills

Land use

A small planned estate village with church, castle and wooded parkland with formal tree avenue.

Wildlife and other designations

No part of the estate falls under a wildlife designation, but an ancient semi-natural woodland and SNCI (part of the Wilton Woods complex) adjoins the estate on rising ground to the south. Much of the Unit is a Conservation Area.

Landscape analysis

The unit is a formal grouping of landscape and built elements making up Wilton Conservation Area

Positive attributes

- The unit has a strong character comprising attractive built form and formal planting which define a number of spaces of varied size, with scale reduced by individual trees

Negative attributes

- A 174 is visually intrusive and produces traffic noise

Landscape Unit

E4 Wooded valley (Dunsdale Wood / Tocketts Beck)

Landform

Narrow steep-sided valley, the upper reaches of Skelton Beck complex.

Land use

Dense mixed woodland apart from a break at Dunsdale, continuing beyond the tract boundary to the east.

Wildlife and other designations

An SNCI designation (site LA 16) covers this woodland and the remainder of the woodland along Tocketts Beck, and SNCI site LA 15 lies to west of Dunsdale extending over a complex of woodlands on Eston Hills. The woodland is also designated as Ancient Woodland.

Landscape analysis

The woodland forms a strong visual element in the local landscape of predominantly open agricultural land, and presents a linear feature which emphasises the topographic valley form.

Positive attributes

- 'Natural' visual and botanical quality of semi-natural woodland with associated flora and fauna in a natural wooded river course
- Intimate enclosure, seclusion and sense of tranquility
- Absence of visual intrusion of built elements (except at Dunsdale)
- Sensory stimulation in running water and birdlife

Negative attributes

- Limited public access (conversely a benefit in wildlife terms in reducing disturbance)

Landscape Unit**E5 North east slopes (Eston Hills)**

The tract covers the col (or saddle) between the Eston Hills upland and Upleatham upland, extending north towards the flatter land near Yearby.

Landform

The tract has a localised high point at Park Farm and forms a broad saddle centrally, with general slopes down to the south and more steeply to the north, with two streams forming small shallow valleys. Rising land to the east forms the base slopes of Upleatham upland.

Land use

Mixed farming with medium - sized and large fields, established woods (with some conifer content), principally on stream-sides, and recent woodland planting.

Wildlife and other designations

None in the Landscape Unit itself.

Landscape analysis

An intermediate landform located between two uplands and two lowlands, with the tract bounded by woodland to three sides but open to the north, allowing extensive views in that direction.

A localised high point at Park Farm and a broad saddle centrally, with general slopes down to the south and more steeply to the north, with streams on this side forming local shallow valleys and a gently undulating landform.

Positive attributes

- Extensive outlook combined with views of uplands and woodlands which provide a pleasant character of openness with an element of enclosure

Negative attributes

- Pylon towers and lines are conspicuous elements
- Neglected hedges and evidence of hedgerow loss

Landscape Unit E6 South East Slopes (Eston Hills)

Landform

The tract covers the south eastern slopes of the Eston Hills upland, merging into the broad valley of Chapel Beck. The tract has a general slope to the south and east, but flatter land covers the plateau to the south of Dunsdale and a varied landform characterises the broad shallow valley of Chapel Beck, beyond which levels rise generally toward the Guisborough Bypass and the A 173.

Land use

Mixed farming with large fields and small isolated woods associated with the lower levels, farm buildings and stream sides. A public waste disposal site and restored landfill areas occur on the plateau area.

Wildlife and other designations

SNCI known as 'Challoner Pits' which consist of subsidence ponds containing newts, frogs and toads (Phase 1 survey).

Landscape analysis

In the southern part of the tract, the character is of an undulating landscape with small linear woodlands and hedges dividing large fields, with sporadic vegetation along the beck. To the north and east, the landscape of the plateau is more open, with few hedges and trees, except those associated with farm buildings.

Positive Attributes

- The elevated position allows extensive views to the south, especially from the B1269, and of nearby woodland on Tocketts Beck and at Park Wood.

Negative Attributes

- Restored but unvegetated landfill sites are obvious even in the substantially open landscape of the plateau area
- Pylon towers and lines are conspicuous elements
- Relatively low level of hedgerow density
- Neglected hedges, some overgrown, and lack of any large woodland blocks

Landscape Unit E7 Upland (Upleatham)

Landform

The eastern part of the Eston Hills, an elevated outlier of the North York Moors separated from the main body of the Eston Hills by the saddle of lower land around Dunsdale. A well defined upland bounded by steep slopes to all sides except to the south east where gentler undulating slopes descend to Skelton Ellers Beck.

Land use

Much of the peripheral slope of the upland is wooded, most noticeably in the case of Errington Wood. Agricultural fields cover the remainder, with the fields to the west of the village having a parkland character on land associated with the former Upleatham Hall.

Wildlife and other designations

Errington Woods are Council-owned and managed by the Countryside Section as a Local Nature Reserve. They consist of Marske Bank Plantation and Soap Well Wood, and are a replanted ancient woodland and an SNCI with a range of woodland types: mixed, broadleaved and conifer plantations of 18th Century commercial origins. Small areas of ancient woodland species are found and there are three small ponds with marginal plants. Upleatham Village is a Conservation Area.

Landscape analysis

The tract provides a dominant landform emphasised by the peripheral woodlands and accentuated by the well-defined steep edging slopes.

Positive attributes

- High strength of character, a product of a dominant landform and strong woodland pattern
- Both woodlands and farmland accessible by the public along paths
- An important recreational resource for local people. Errington Woods is a Local Nature Reserve and has open access throughout

Negative attributes

- Relative lack of hedgerow trees over the higher farmland and a number of gappy hedges

Landscape Unit E8 Upland (Skelton)

Landform

An elevated outlier of the North York Moors.

Land use

Wooded farmland separated from the Upleatham upland by the valley of Skelton Ellers Beck. A well-defined upland bounded by steep slopes to west and south-east sides, but falling more gently towards the north east. Much of the steeper slopes are wooded, but agricultural fields cover the remainder of the upland. The Cleveland Way follows Airy Hill Lane.

Wildlife and other designations

Slapewath (or Rockhole) Quarry is an SNCI and proposed RIG (as at March 2006).

The woodland on the western slopes of the upland (ie Rawcliffe Banks Wood and Forty Pence Wood) is an SNCI, part of the Skelton Beck Complex. An SNCI (Hobdale Terrace near Boosbeck) is described as 'pasture with scrub.' The woodland on the south side of the upland is also recorded in the Local Plan as an SNCI.

Landscape Analysis

The tract takes the form of a dominant landform, emphasised by the large woodland blocks and accentuated by the well-defined steep edging slopes to west and south.

Positive attributes

- A dominant landform emphasised by strong woodland blocks and steep slopes
- High strength of character, a product of a dominant landform and strong woodland blocks

Negative attributes

- Relative lack of hedgerow trees over the higher farmland

Landscape Unit E9 Eastern Slopes (Upleatham)

Landform

The tract forms a broad shoulder of land extending the higher land of Eston Hills and the Upleatham upland towards the north-east, whilst reducing in altitude.

Land use

Agricultural land, with a single field boundary woodland strip connecting to stream-side trees at Pitt Hills Stell.

Golf course to the south of Hob Hill Lane and mixed uses, including school playing field to the north of the Lane.

Wildlife and other designations

None in the Unit.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Relatively elevated position allows outward views (close by of woodland to the south and distant to north and westerly directions)
- Attractive scrub land close to Saltburn

Negative attributes

- Low level of hedgerow density. Relative lack of hedgerow trees over the farmland and a number of gappy hedges

Landscape Unit **E10 Valley Sides (Upleatham)**

Landform

Valley-side slopes centred on Skelton Beck. The sinuous course of the beck and its small tributary valleys form an undulating landform near the beck, whilst on the higher land to each side, the landform is more uniform.

Land use

Predominantly agricultural land, but woodland units of varied sizes follow the beck in a discontinuous pattern and extend up the valley sides as woodland blocks and strips, sometimes associated with hedgerows.

Wildlife and other designations

An SNCI designation follows the woodland and associated clearings along Skelton Beck. This is also ancient woodland, both semi-natural and replanted.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- A valley form of open nature on its higher levels, grading into enclosure and small scale spaces near the beck
- Extensive views from higher levels
- Intimate enclosure at lower levels
- Variety of habitat and good visual value over varied landform and vegetation pattern

Negative attributes

- Public access limited to public path between Upleatham Church and Barns Farm

Landscape Unit

E11 Hillfoot farmland (Skelton)

Landform

A gently-sloping shoulder of land between the partially wooded slopes of the 'Skelton Upland' and the incised wooded valley of Skelton Beck (Waterfall Wood).

Land use

Farmland bounded by woodland

Wildlife and other designations

- There are no designations within the landscape unit itself, but peripheral woodland has SSSI status

Positive attributes

- Enclosed field with hedgerows

1.9.2 REDCAR FLATS

Description

The Redcar Flats are contained by the escarpment of the Eston Hills to the south and the coast to the north. Over the inland part of the tract, the presence of high quality farmland has encouraged intensive arable cultivation and the enlargement of fields. The hedgerow pattern is sparse and there are few landscape features to interrupt the open, gently sloping landscape.

Long views predominate in this landscape, and skyline features take on particular importance. The industry at Wilton Works, and the abrupt urban edges of Redcar, Marske, New Marske, Saltburn and the A174 and railway corridors have a strong local influence on landscape character.

Landscape Assessment

Under the Character Assessment, the coastal zone in this tract is classified as Sensitive Landscape. In this open landscape, largely the product of maritime exposure, any development will be very open to view. Location and design are of major importance, and opportunities should be taken to integrate the development into adjacent urban areas and to screen by planting, with shelter provided where exposure would otherwise hinder or prevent successful establishment.

Other Sensitive Landscape areas in this tract are the parkland at Kirkleatham and the wooded valley at Hazel Grove, where the priority is the retention of existing landscape constituents.

The remainder of this tract, inland of the coast, is classified as Restoration Landscape. Existing features in this denuded landscape are relatively sparse, due to hedgerow decline and loss, and their retention is important to 'place' new development, to act as the basis for additional planting, or for the creation of 'new landscape.' Additional planting may comprise, for example, a hedgerow to continue the line of an existing one, or, in preference, form a hedgerow pattern or network and combine with tree planting to create an enhanced landscape structure.

Biodiversity

The wetland at Coatham is designated as SNCI and much of the coastal dune and inter tidal rock formations are

SNCIs or SSSIs / SPAs

Sites and areas of biodiversity value occur outside these designated sites, with value both in themselves and as wildlife links or potential areas for development of habitat.

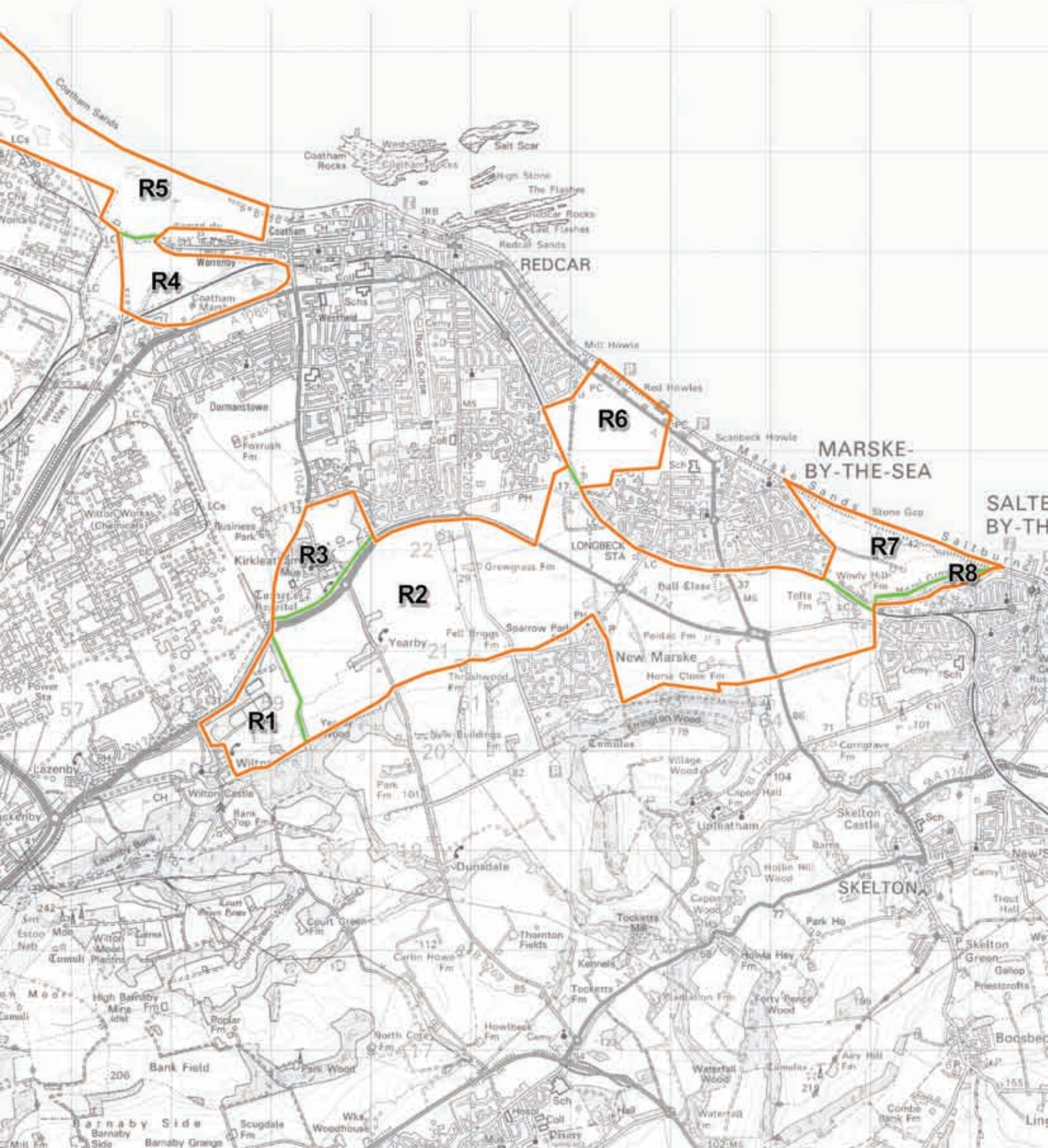


Landscape Character Assessment of Redcar Flats Landscape Tract

Landscape Units

R1	Urbanised farmland	(East of Wilton)
R2	Lowland farmland	(South of Redcar and Marske)
R3	Park and estate land	(Kirkleatham)
R4	Coastal marsh	(Coatham Marsh)
R5	Sandy shoreline	(Coatham Sands)
R6	Coastal farmland	(Redcar to Marske)
R7	Coastal farmland	(Marske to Saltburn)
R8	Incised wooded valley	(Hazel Grove)

Redcar and Cleveland Landscape Character Assessment



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REDCAR FLATS LANDSCAPE TRACT

R1, R2 ... LANDSCAPE UNITS

DESCRIPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE UNITS

Landscape Unit

R1 Urbanised farmland (East of Wilton)

Landform

The unit is located at the foot of the steep slope of Wilton Woods and continues as a gentle northerly slope.

Land use

Reservoirs and grassland, with peripheral woodland strips.

Wildlife and other designations

None on the unit itself.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Areas of water, but with little wildlife value

Negative attributes

- (Available views in to the site are insufficient to determine negative attributes)

Landscape Unit**R2 Lowland farmland (South of Redcar and Marske)****Landform**

Predominantly flat or gently sloping farmland.

Land use

Agricultural land of high quality.

Wildlife and other designations

None within this Landscape Unit.

Landscape analysis**Positive attributes**

- Extensive views, some of which include the coast
- Physical separation between urban areas
- Linear tree and scrub vegetation associated with Roger Dike, Cat Flat Lane and Fishpond Road is of wildlife and visual value

Negative attributes

- Large field size and sparse fragmented hedgerow pattern, with general absence of hedgerow trees
- 'Hard' industrial and urban edges, with, in particular, New Marske intrusive in a largely open landscape

Landscape Unit

R3 Park and estate land (Kirkleatham)

Landform

Essentially flat landform with very minor broad undulations.

Land use

Outside the village itself, land use is mixed, with woodland providing a dominant element of land use and enclosure to a series of open spaces, the larger ones under recreational use.

Wildlife and other designations

Conservation Area.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Publicly-accessible woodland and grassed open spaces
- Parkland character

Negative attributes

- Woodland under-managed

Landscape Unit
R4 Coastal Marsh (Coatham Marsh)

Landform

Area of low relief with local hillocks.

Land use

Fresh water ponds, marsh and grassland managed by Tees Valley Wildlife Trust.

Wildlife and other designations

Most of the Landscape Unit is an SNCI (LA 3).

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Open water and vegetation

Negative attributes

- Views of steel works

Landscape Unit
R5 Sandy shoreline (Coatham Sands)

Landform
Essentially flat.

Land use
Open land extending to and including South Gare and golf course in the eastern part.

Wildlife and other designations
Much of the Landscape Unit is an SSSI, part of which is also a Special Protection Area (SPA). The intertidal area of the SSSI is also a European Marine Site. The SSSI as a whole, known as 'South Gare and Coatham Sands' includes intertidal mud and sand, sand dunes, salt marsh and freshwater marsh, which have developed since construction of the South Gare breakwater in the 1860s. The SSSI also includes Coatham Rocks.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Coastal location, standing water, open views to sea, fishing, wildlife interest

Negative attributes

- Views of steelworks

Landscape Unit
R6 Coastal farmland (Redcar to Marske)

Landform

Gently sloping foreshore and low cliff banks backed by an essentially flat agricultural field.

Land use

Sandy foreshore, backed by open agricultural land.

Wildlife and other designations

SNCI LA 7, 'Redcar to Saltburn Coast' covers the sandy foreshore, which is an important winter feeding area for wading birds, and the low boulder clay cliffs with maritime vegetation.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- The beach, sea views and open, coastal character

Negative attributes

- Obtrusive urban edges to Redcar and Marske
- Large agricultural fields

Landscape Unit

R7 Coastal farmland (Marske to Saltburn)

Landform

Gently sloping foreshore and low cliff banks backed by an essentially flat agricultural field.

Land use

Sandy foreshore, backed by open agricultural land.

Wildlife and other designations

SNCI LA 7, 'Redcar to Saltburn Coast' covers the sandy foreshore, which is an important winter feeding area for wading birds, and the low boulder clay cliffs with maritime vegetation.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- The beach, sea views and open, coastal character

Negative attributes

- Obtrusive urban edges to Marske
- Large agricultural fields

Landscape Unit
R8 Incised Wooded Valley (Hazel Grove)

Landform

Steep-sided wooded valley.

Land use

Woodland.

Wildlife and other designations

SNCI (LA 9) mixed woodland with a good range of woodland herbs.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- The vegetation in the gill forms a strong visual element in the local landscape and presents a linear feature which emphasises the topographic valley form

Negative attributes

- Caravan site on adjacent land

1.9.3 EAST CLEVELAND PLATEAU

Description

This tract comprises an open, elevated coastal plateau rising towards the south to meet the North York Moors. The plateau has an exposed, open rural character with large-scale farmland bordered by hedges. A number of lanes are also characterised by hedges on each side. The plateau is dissected by a complex system of deeply-incised sheltered, heavily-wooded valleys or gills, which meet the coast at two points within this tract; these are separated by higher land, where dramatic cliffs fall to wave-cut platforms at sea level.



A history of mining and related industries within the tract has left its mark on the landscape, and pockets of industry associated with villages and, in the open countryside, spoil heaps and disused mineral railways, have a strong influence on the landscape character. Many of the spoil heaps have now been regraded and planted, as at Liverton Mines and Lumpsey, and some have been removed as at Lingdale. Others, though, remain, most notably that at Kilton which is visible over a wide area.

Landscape Assessment

Under the landscape Character Assessment, the wooded valleys and coast are classed as Sensitive Landscapes, whilst the remainder of the tract falls in the Restoration Landscape classification.

In the Sensitive Landscapes inland, changes in character are discouraged, and the emphasis is on retention of landscape elements. New planting for screening or

integration should closely reflect the nature and detail of the existing vegetation.

The coast within this tract, classified as Sensitive Landscape in the Character Assessment, is within 'The North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast,' where protection of character is given priority. Where development does take place, its location and design are of crucial importance. New planting for screening or integration should closely reflect the nature and detail of the existing vegetation.

The landscape over the area classified as Restoration Landscape is essentially an open one, with comparatively few features (woodland and hedges) and large fields; the retention of these landscape features is important to 'place' new development, to act as the basis for additional planting, or for the creation of 'new landscape'. Additional planting may comprise, for example, a hedgerow to continue the line of an existing one, or, in preference, form a hedgerow pattern or network and combine with tree planting to create an enhanced landscape structure.

Biodiversity

The gill woodlands in the tract are designated as SNCIs, or SSSIs (in the case of Saltburn Gill); most of the gill woodland is also either Semi natural or Replanted Ancient Woodland. Most of the woodlands are growing on boulder clays, with oak and ash co-dominant. There is a diverse range of species, associated with both acidic and alkaline conditions.

Sites and areas of biodiversity value occur outside these designated sites, with value both in themselves and as wildlife links or potential areas for development of habitat.



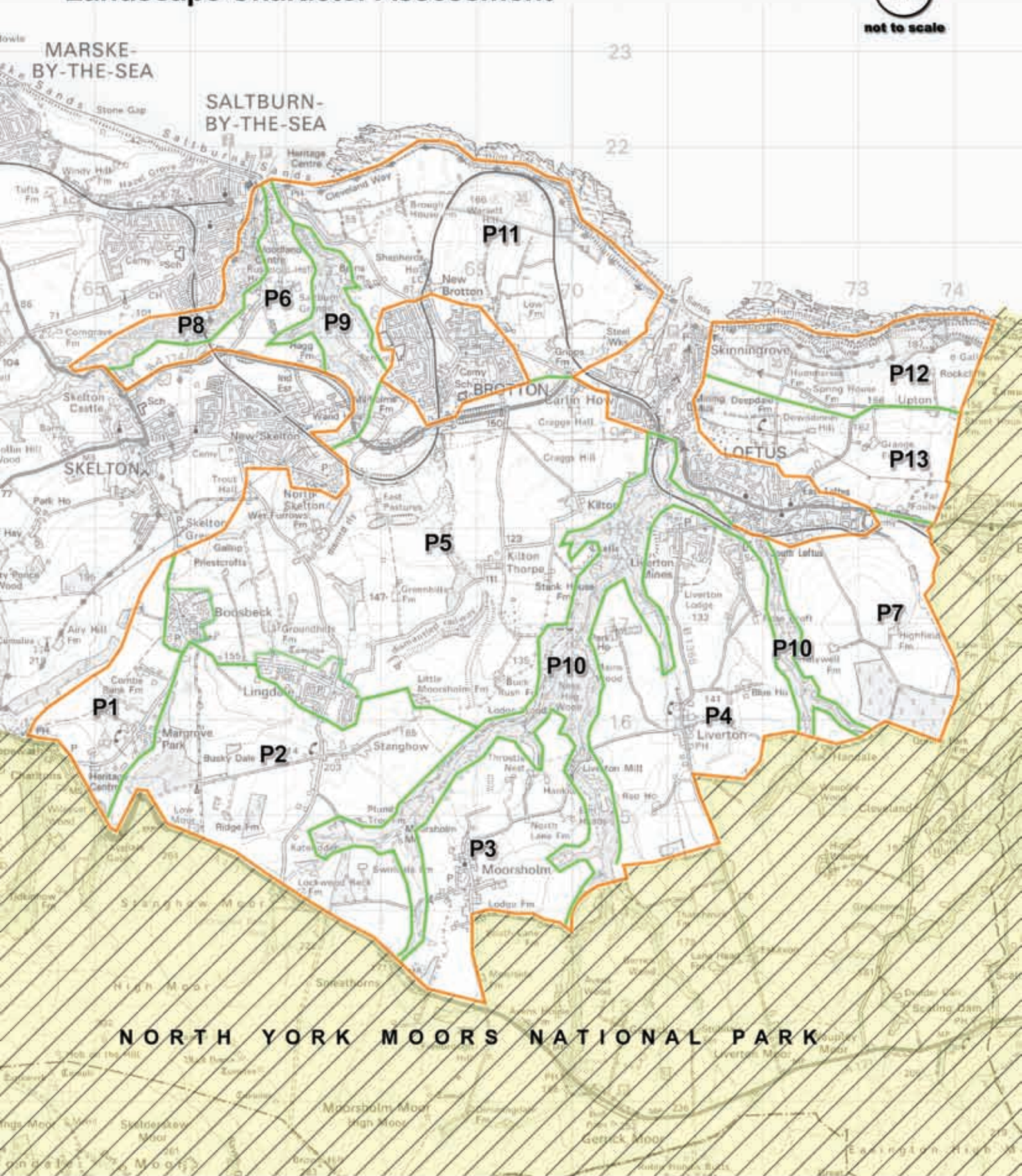
THE PLATEAU ABOVE BOULDER CLAY 'CLIFFS'

Landscape Character Assessment of East Cleveland Plateau Landscape Tract

Landscape Units

P1	Inland valley	(Margrove)
P2	Moorland fringe farmland	(South Lingdale)
P3	Moorland fringe farmland	(Moorsholm)
P4	Moorland fringe farmland	(Liverton)
P5	Plateau farmland	(Lingdale to Brotton)
P6	Plateau farmland	(Skelton to Saltburn)
P7	Plateau farmland	(S of Loftus)
P8	Incised wooded valley	(Skelton Beck)
P9	Incised wooded valley	(Saltburn Gill / Millholme Beck)
P10	Incised wooded valley	(Kilton Beck / Handale Beck)
P11	Coastal farmland	(North of Brotton)
P12	Coastal farmland	(East of Skinningrove)
P13	Coastal farmland	(North of Loftus)

Redcar & Cleveland Landscape Character Assessment



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	EAST CLEVELAND PLATEAU LANDSCAPE TRACT
	P1, P2 ... LANDSCAPE UNITS

DESCRIPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE UNITS

Landscape Unit

P1 Inland Valley (Margrove)

Landform

A broad, relatively flat valley floor sloping generally from north east down to south west.

Land use

Mixed landuse, including arable farmland, both rough and improved grazing, and allotments.

Wildlife and other designations

Margrove Ponds, Tilery Carr Ponds and the shale heap together make up an SNCI (LA 35).

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Dramatic contrast between the broad flat valley floor and the steeply sloping valley sides
- Wetlands, grassland and scrub vegetation provide considerable wildlife value
- Stone walls, waterbodies and hedgerows make an important contribution to a distinctive and varied character

Negative attributes

- Some harsh interfaces between the rural landscape on the one hand and the urban edge and industrial units on the other, although recent planting has improved the situation
- The unvegetated part of the spoil tip is conspicuous
- Many hedgerows are fragmented

Landscape Unit

P2 Moorland Fringe Farmland (South Lingdale)

Landform

A broad plateau bordering moorland to the south and enclosed by incised wooded valleys to the other sides.

Land use

Mixed arable farmland, with permanent pasture. Small woodland belts follow streams, and woodland covers the steep slope to Margrove Valley.

Field sizes are generally large in the southern part of the area, becoming smaller to the north near settlements.

Wildlife and other designations

The western wooded steep slope is an SNCI, Skelton Warren (LA 36).

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Moorland fringe character
- Low intensity of farming and permanent grassland and scrub provide habitat diversity

Negative attributes

- General absence of hedgerow trees
- Hedges and stone walls are neglected in many locations
- Detracting elements on village edges, including untidy land

Landscape Unit

P3 Moorland Fringe Farmland (Moorsholm)

Landform

A broad plateau bordering moorland to the south and enclosed by incised wooded valleys to the other sides.

Land use

Mixed arable farmland, with permanent pasture.

Wildlife and other designations

None on the Unit itself but the peripheral woodland is an SNCI.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Hedgerows and moorland fringe character
- Low intensity of farming and permanent grassland and scrub provide habitat diversity

Negative attributes

- General absence of hedgerow trees
- Hedges are neglected in many locations and there is evidence of hedgerow loss
- Detracting elements on village edges, including untidy land

Landscape Unit**P4 Moorland Fringe Farmland (Liverton)****Landform**

A broad plateau bordering moorland to the south and enclosed (and partly dissected) by incised wooded valleys to the other sides.

Land use

Mixed arable farmland with permanent pasture.

Wildlife and other designations

Woodland peripheral to the landscape unit is Ancient Woodland and SNCI.

Landscape analysis**Positive attributes**

- Hedgerows and peripheral woodland
- Moorland fringe character
- Low intensity of farming and permanent grassland and scrub provide habitat diversity

Negative attributes

- General absence of hedgerow trees

Landscape Unit
P5 Plateau Farmland (Lingdale to Brotton)

Landform

A broad undulating plateau.

Land use

Farmland and dispersed woodland blocks.

Wildlife and other designations

SNCIs at Kilton Mine, Kilton Thorpe Railway (LA 24)

Claphow Reservoir Wood (LA 23) and Wygrave Wood (LA 79)

Lumpsey Grassland and Merrys Wood Grassland (LAs 19 and 61).

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Hedgerows are significant landscape elements, although in decline
- Dismantled railways form valuable wildlife and recreation corridors and associated scrub vegetation provides important linear element in the landscape
- Several woodlands and grasslands are important for wildlife
- On elevated land in the unit, there is a 'coastal feel', with views of the coast

Negative attributes

- Some abrupt and intrusive edges to large villages which have a degraded appearance due to industrial/commercial uses on former mining sites
- Decline in field hedgerows and hedgerow trees and low level of woodland cover
- Intensively farmed land with low wildlife value

Landscape Unit
P6 Plateau Farmland (Skelton to Saltburn)

Landform

A ridged landform separating Skelton Beck and Saltburn Gill.

Landuse

Farmland and dispersed woodland blocks.

Wildlife and other designations

There are no designations within the unit, but peripheral woodland has SNCI and SSSI status.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Hedgerows are significant landscape elements, although in decline
- On parts of the unit, there is a 'coastal feel', with views of the coast
- There is a small area of attractive woodland associated with Rushpool Hall

Negative attributes

- Intrusive element of Skelton and Brotton Bypass
- Decline in field hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Intensively farmed land with low wildlife value

Landscape Unit
P7 Plateau Farmland (South of Loftus)

Landform

A broadly domed landform lying to east of Handale Beck.

Landuse

Farmland and woodland blocks and copses.

Wildlife and other designations

Warren House Plantation is an SNCI (LA 32).

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Hedgerows are significant landscape elements, although in decline
- A group of three copses are prominent in the landscape

Negative attributes

- Decline in field hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Intensively farmed land with low wildlife value

Landscape Unit
P8 Incised Wooded Valley (Skelton Beck)

Landform

Narrow steep-sided valley. A wooded stream valley, with only minor side valleys, from Skelton Castle to the sea, including Saltburn Valley Gardens. (Upstream of Skelton Castle, the valley is included in the Eston Hills Landscape Tract).

Landuse

Dense mixed woodland with a break at Marske Mill, where grassland dominates.

Wildlife and other designations

SNCI (LA 16), except for the land at Marske Mill, extending to the boating lake. Most of the woodland is classed as Ancient Woodland, both ancient semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Woodland forms a strong visual element in the local landscape of predominantly open agricultural land, and emphasises the topographic valley form
- Saltburn Valley Gardens consist of formally designed gardens and open land with a boating lake
- 'Natural' visual and botanical quality of semi-natural woodland with associated flora and fauna in a natural wooded river course
- Intimate enclosure, seclusion and sense of tranquility
- Absence of visual intrusion of built elements
- Sensory stimulation in running water and bird life
- Public accessibility is easier than in many woodlands

Landscape Unit**P9 Incised Wooded Valley (Saltburn Gill / Millholme Beck)****Landform**

A wooded stream valley, with side valleys, extending from Millholme Bridge to Old Saltburn, expanded in places to include associated woodland close to the valley sides, for example Hagg Wood.

Landuse

Dense mixed woodland.

Wildlife and other designations

SSSI on much of the eastern slopes, with SNCI (LA 12) over the remainder. Most of the woodland is classed as Ancient Woodland, both ancient semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland.

Landscape analysis**Positive attributes**

- Woodland forms a strong visual element in the local landscape of predominantly open agricultural land, and emphasises the strong valley form
- 'Natural' visual and botanical quality of semi-natural woodland with associated flora and fauna in a natural wooded river course
- Intimate enclosure, seclusion and sense of tranquility
- Absence of visual intrusion of built elements
- Sensory stimulation in running water and bird life

Negative attributes

- Limited public access (conversely a benefit in wildlife terms in reducing disturbance)

Landscape Unit

P10 Incised Wooded Valley (Kilton, Waytail and Handale Becks)

Landform

Narrow steep-sided valleys.

A complex pattern of wooded valleys, in which are found Clarksons, Whitecliff, Rosecroft and Loftus Woods.

Landuse

Dense mixed woodland.

Wildlife and other designations

The woodlands are designated as an SNCI (LA 25). Most of the woodland is designated as Local Nature Reserve and as Ancient Woodland, both ancient semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland. Whitecliff Wood includes a RIGS (a Regionally Important Geological Site).

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Woodland forms a strong visual element in the local landscape of predominantly open agricultural land, and emphasises the topographic valley form
- 'Natural' visual and botanical quality of semi-natural woodland with associated flora and fauna in a natural wooded river course
- Intimate enclosure, seclusion and sense of tranquility
- Absence of visual intrusion of built elements
- Sensory stimulation in running water and bird life

Negative attributes

- Limited public access (conversely a benefit in wildlife terms in reducing disturbance)

Landscape Unit

P11 Coastal farmland (north of Brotton)

Landform

A north-south ridge culminates in the dome of Warsett Hill, from which levels fall gently to east and west but are truncated by sea cliffs, notably by Hunt Cliff.

Landuse

Predominantly agricultural land, with a golf course to the north-east of Brotton and small areas of scrub vegetation.

Wildlife and other designations

Low Mill slag tip is an SSSI (LA 10) colonised by herb-rich flora. Cattersty Pond (SSSI LA 69) is a small reservoir with associated vegetation. This landscape unit lies within The Heritage Coast.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Open elevated coastal character
- Dramatic sea cliffs and associated wildlife
- Ponds and vegetation at Cattersty Pond
- The Cleveland Way and National Trust land provide public access to the cliff top and an adjacent area

Negative attributes

- Abrupt urban edge to Brotton

Landscape Unit**P 12 Coastal farmland (East of Skinningrove)****Landform**

North-facing undulating slopes, terminated by the valley of Skinningrove Beck to the west and sea cliffs to the north.

Landuse

Predominantly agricultural land. The Cleveland Way provides public access to the cliff top.

Wildlife and other designations

Boulby Quarries are an SSSI. The sandstone cliff and the rocks forming the wave-cut platform make up part of the Saltburn to Staithes Coast SNCI (LA13), important for birds, including kittiwakes. The westward-sloping fields near Skinningrove are an SNCI (LA 72). The fields support an important diverse flora.

Landscape analysis**Positive attributes**

- Open elevated coastal character
- Dramatic sea cliffs and associated wildlife
- The landscape unit forms part of the Heritage Coast and lies adjacent to the National Park

Landscape Unit

P 13 Coastal farmland (north of Loftus)

Landform

An undulating inland-facing slope.

Landuse

Agricultural land with few hedges.

Wildlife and other designations

None.

Landscape analysis

Negative attributes

- General absence of hedgerow trees
- Facing away from the sea and with less coastal character than adjacent Landscape Unit to north

1.9.4 GUISBOROUGH LOWLAND

Description

This tract encompasses Guisborough and lies to the south of the Eston Hills. It is gently undulating with a distinctive lightly wooded character. Woodland blocks are numerous but small, and hedges tend to be thin or gappy with few trees. It is physically confined, sandwiched between Eston Hills to the north and the Langbaourgh Ridge to the south. The largely arable farmland is undulating in the west, but is flatter towards Guisborough and starts to rise towards Roseberry Topping.



GUISBOROUGH LOWLAND

The urban edge of Nunthorpe has an intrusive visual impact on fringe farmland, and the A171 is prominent locally.

Landscape Assessment

The tract to the west of Guisborough takes its character largely from the hedgerow network over the farmland, with only scattered small woodlands, rather than from any strongly wooded content.

To the east of Guisborough, however, there is a varied character of farmland, hedges and woodland associated with the parkland at Gisborough Hall.

Under the Character Assessment, the landscape in this tract is classified as Restoration Landscape, except for the parkland at Gisborough Hall, which is a Sensitive Landscape.

In the Restoration Landscapes, improvement takes priority, whilst the retention of existing features is important to visually ‘place’ any new development, to act as the basis for additional planting, or for the creation of ‘new landscape’. Additional planting may comprise, for example, a hedgerow to continue the line of an existing one, or, in preference, form a hedgerow pattern or network and combine with tree planting to create an enhanced landscape structure. The landscape of this tract outwith the parkland is noted for the scarcity of hedgerow trees and the scattered small woodland blocks.

Biodiversity

Grove Hill Plantation, to the west of Guisborough, and Upsall Carrs Plantation are SNCIs. To the east of Guisborough, however, there is a varied character of farmland, hedges and woodland associated with the parkland at Gisborough Hall, and SNCI designation covers small woodlands in and near the parkland and the vegetation along the former railway

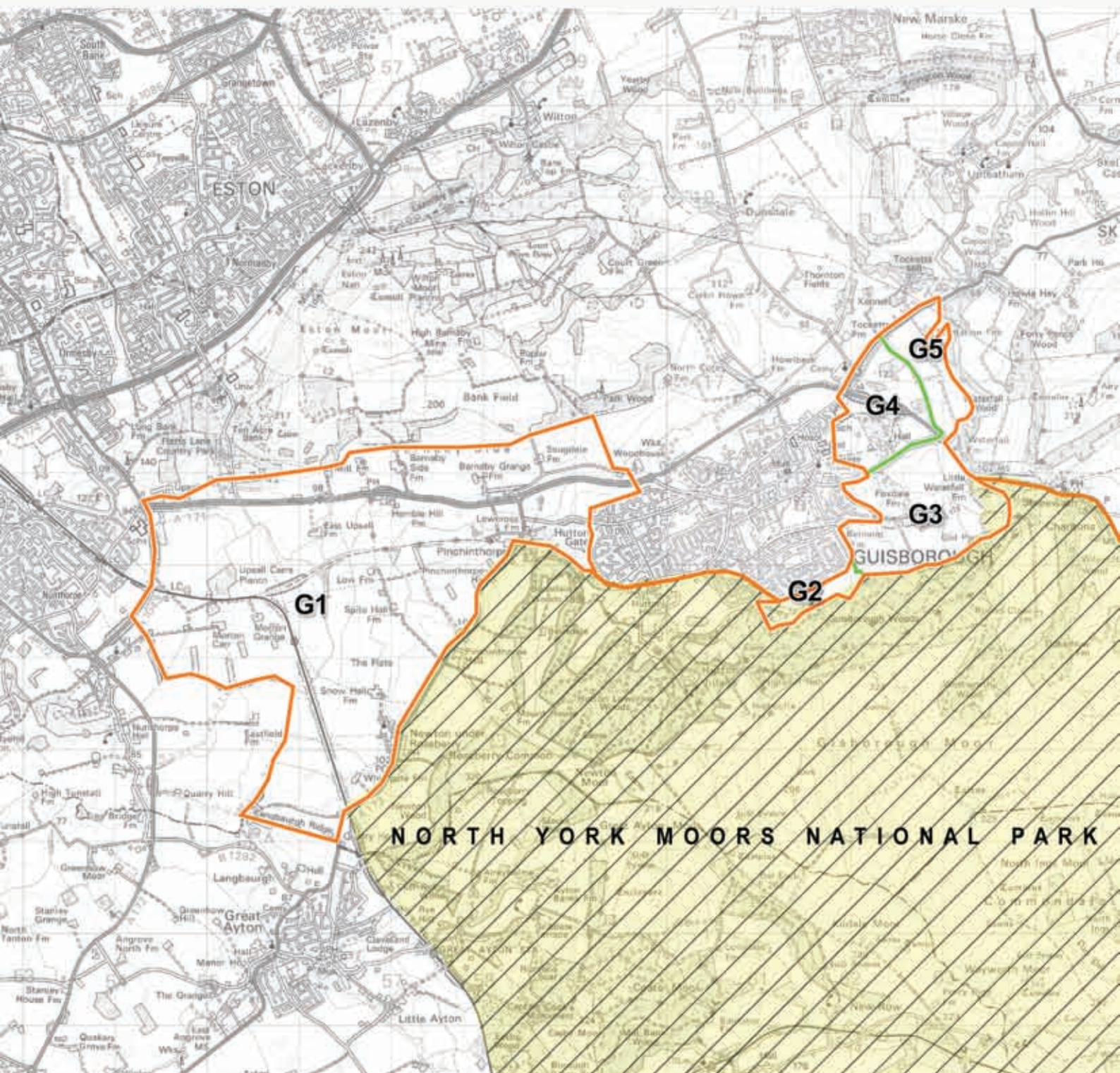
Sites and areas of biodiversity value occur outside these designated sites, with value both in themselves and as wildlife links or potential areas for development of habitat.

**Landscape Character Assessment
of Guisborough Lowland Landscape Tract**

Landscape Units

G1	Broad inland valley	(Nunthorpe to Guisborough)
G2	Urban edge	(South of Guisborough)
G3	Undulating farmland	(South east of Guisborough)
G4	Parkland	(Gisborough Hall)
G5	Undulating farmland	(East of Guisborough)

Redcar & Cleveland Landscape Character Assessment



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GUISBOROUGH LOWLAND LANDSCAPE TRACT

G1, G2 ... LANDSCAPE UNITS

DESCRIPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE UNITS

Landscape Unit

G1 Broad Inland Valley (Nunthorpe to Guisborough)

Landform

Rather flat and low lying but with broad undulations, located between Eston Hills and Langbaugh Ridge, with the southern boundary formed by the road A 173 and backed by the high land of Roseberry Common and the moors.

Landuse

Arable fields in the north part of the tract grade into mixed farmland towards the south with medium - sized fields in a distinct field pattern punctuated with small woodland blocks.

Wildlife and other designations

The largest woodland, Upsall Carrs Plantation, is an SNCI, one of the few sites in the County with water violet. Langbaugh Ridge is an SSSI, important for the exposure of an igneous intrusion.

Landscape analysis

A seemingly flat landscape dominated by uplands to north and south and characterised by a field pattern with woodland blocks, which, because of the low relief, are prominent in the landscape. Low broad undulations in the landform relate to a sinuous pattern of small streams draining the area.

Positive attributes

- There are views out to the uplands to north and south, and views in from bordering roads; Roseberry Topping and the Moors dominate in many views and add a distinct character to the area
- Presence of woodland blocks forming strong features in an essentially open landscape
- Hedges providing strong landscape pattern
- Attractive elevated land bordering area contribute to strong character
- Rural character without intrusive development

Negative attributes

- Intrusive effect of roads bordering the area
- Fragmented hedgerows in many places with few hedgerow trees

Landscape Unit
G2 Urban edge (South of Guisborough)

Landform

Gentle, fairly uniform slopes.

Landuse

Agricultural land, with allotments, disused railway and horse grazing
Pasture.

Wildlife and other designations

None on the site itself, but the woodland to the south in the National Park is an SNCI.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- A space enclosed by both steep slopes and urban edge, taking its character from both, but becoming more rural in character toward the east
- Dominant wooded slope to the south

Negative attributes

- Urban edge and neglected appearance

Landscape Unit

G3 Undulating Farmland (SE of Guisborough)

Landform

A gently undulating landform comprising gently rising land to the break of slope at the foot of the escarpment. Farmland with obvious ridge-and-furrow occurs to the east of Belmangate, evidence of Medieval farming practices.

Landuse

Agricultural land, with a field pattern of varied scale; field sizes are small and narrow in the west near Butt Lane, but are larger to south and east.

A disused railway cutting bisects the unit.

Wildlife and other designations

None on the site itself, but the woodland to the south and north are SNCIs.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Woodland provides enclosure to the south on escarpment slopes and to the north in the grounds of Gisborough Hall
- A strong hedgerow pattern is conspicuous near Butt Lane; to the east and south the land is more open, and here a rolling landform and individual trees produce a parkland character.

Landscape Unit
G4 Parkland (Gisborough Hall)

Landform

The unit is bisected by Guisborough Bypass and bordered by Mucky Lane on its east side. The land is of varied topography but rises generally northward.

Landuse

Large woodland blocks, open space, pasture, ponds, Priory grounds.

Wildlife and other designations

The landscape unit contains the SNCIs of Fishpond Plantation and Meadow Hall Wood.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- A formal grouping of landscape and built elements making up part of Guisborough Conservation Area
- Substantial woodland (Horse Parks Wood) encompasses Gisborough House and Gisborough Hall, with the woodland becoming less dense towards Whitby Road (A 171) where it takes on the character of a parkland with several specimen trees
- Other woodland is distributed in regular blocks over more open agricultural land to the east
- Parkland, woodland and open land form an attractive combination of landscape elements. Mucky Lane is lined with hedges (more characteristic of the eastern part of the Borough)

Negative attributes

- Rigid woodland blocks on the eastern part of the landscape unit

Landscape Unit

G5 Undulating Farmland (East of Guisborough)

Landform

An undulating landform with levels rising from the incised valley of Waterfall Beck (Skelton Beck) westward to the crest in the local landform followed by Mucky Lane.

Landuse

Agricultural land, with a field pattern of medium scale; projecting wooded tributaries extend from Waterfall Beck.

Wildlife and other designations

None on the site itself, but the woodland to the east is an Ancient Woodland and an SNCI (LA 16). The tributary woodland within the landscape unit lies outside the SNCI but within the Ancient Woodland.

Landscape analysis

Positive attributes

- Woodland provides enclosure to the east and rising land reduces views to the west
- Peripheral woodland provides enclosure to the east

Negative attributes

- There is evidence of hedgerow loss

1.10 Summary

Under the Landscape Character Assessment, landscape types over the Borough have been named, mapped and described, leading to a fuller understanding of the rich variety of landscapes in this area.

This Assessment has been prompted by guidance given by the Countryside Agency (Ref 1); in addition, Planning Policy Statement 7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) promotes the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for landscape protection.

Work has started on the Heritage Hedgerows project for Redcar and Cleveland (March 2006), and its findings will increase knowledge and understanding of the development of the Borough's landscape.

Landscape Character Assessment may be used for a variety of purposes. In this Borough, its findings will be developed as a landscape design SPD as part of the Local Development Framework augmented by a number of design principles and additional detail such as species selection.

1.11 Appendix 1, References

- Ref 1 The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002). Landscape Character Assessment. Guidance for England and Scotland
- Ref 2 Ian Lawrence. A Guide to the Wildflowers of Cleveland
- Ref 3 The Countryside Agency and English Nature. Map of 'The Character of England. Landscape, Wildlife and Natural Features.'
- Ref 4 Woolerton Truscott (1992). The Cleveland Community Forest Landscape Assessment

1.12 Appendix 2, Glossary

ASNW	(Ancient semi-natural woodland). This is woodland which is believed to have had a continuous woodland cover from 1600 AD to the present day, and is composed of native tree species which have not obviously been planted. Replanted Ancient Woodlands are ancient woods in which the former tree cover has been replaced, often with non-native trees.
LDF	(Local Development Framework). This is a series of documents which will eventually replace the Redcar & Cleveland Local Plan that was adopted in 1999. It will consider how the Borough will develop over the next 15 to 20 years.
RIGS	(Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Site). The designation is a means of recognising and protecting geodiversity for the future, and is the most important designation for sites which are not SSSIs.
SNCI	(Site of Nature Conservation Importance). These wildlife sites, of local importance, are identified in local development plans where they are protected through the planning system.
SPA	(Special Protection Area). These areas are afforded statutory protection under the Conservation of Natural Habitats Regulations (1994).
SPD	(Supplementary Planning Document). These documents provide more detailed guidance on the implementation of policies in LDF development plan documents.
SSSI	(Site of Special Scientific Interest). These sites are afforded protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and represent England's very best wildlife sites. They are designated by English Nature by virtue of their flora, fauna, or geological value.

This information is available on request in other languages, in Braille, on tape and in Large Print. For further information contact 08456 126 126.

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Bi daxwazê va ev agahî bi zimanên din, bi Braille*, li ser kasetan û bi Tîp û Herfên Mezin heye. Ji bo bêtir agahî, peywendî bi telefona 08456 126 126 dahînin.

Braille*(şiklê ko kesê nikarin baş bibînin dikarin pê bixwînin)

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