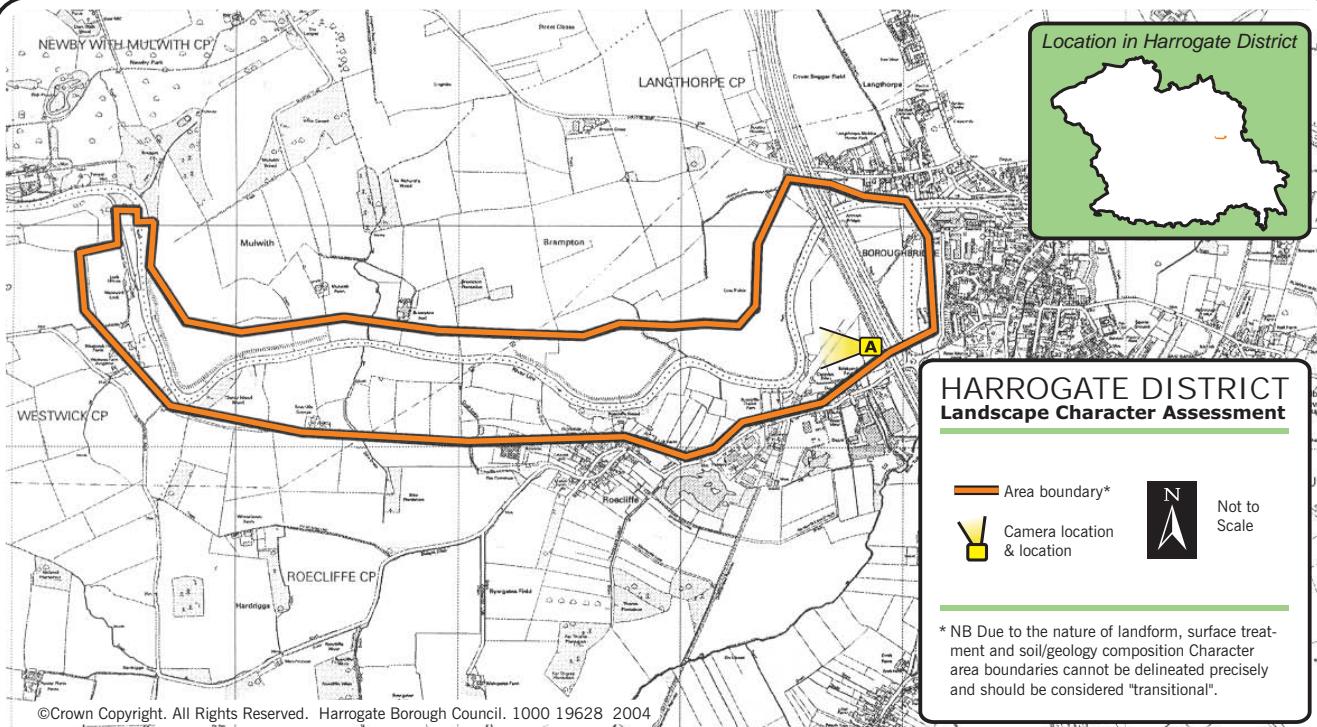


AREA 73

Approved
Feb 2004

[A] River Ure Corridor from the east.

River Ure Corridor (Newby Hall to Boroughbridge Reach)



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Description

This Character Area is the flat, linear floodplain of the River Ure as it flows in an easterly direction between Newby Hall and Boroughbridge. The area covers just over 2km² and is intensively managed for cereal crop production in large open fields crossed by ditches draining into the Ure.

Woodland cover is random and occurs along the riverbanks in patches. Where trees are sparse the river has limited impact on the landscape, becoming almost invisible.

Settlement is sparse within the Character Area but for one or two large farmsteads and the urban edge of Boroughbridge. Neighbouring Character Areas to the north and south contain Farmsteads. The proximity of the river and the lack of a road network mean that the area can feel remote even though it is easily accessible. There are public footpaths along sections of both banks of the river but neither bank has links along its full length through this Character Area. The river is navigable and links Ripon (the most northerly point of the navigable waterways system in England) to the rest of the country.

The A1(M) is a dominant feature to the east where it crosses the River Ure effectively cutting off the river corridor from Boroughbridge.

The prehistoric Devil's Arrows standing stones are situated in the river corridor at Boroughbridge and the site of a Roman camp is nearby.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology and alluvium drift geology along the river bed.
- Stoneless clayey, fine silty and fine loamy soils affected by groundwater.
- Grade 3 agricultural land.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat landform between 20 and 25m AOD.
- The River Ure flows through the area with a network of ditches draining the surrounding farmland.
- There is an intermittent man-made riverbank along the northern bank of the river.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Large fields intensively managed for cereal crop production.
- Open fields without boundaries and some with ditches.
- Woodland cover is patchy with one block of notable woodland called Cherry Island Wood.
- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are Cherry Island Wood and Westwick Island.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Settlement, built environment and communications

- No major settlement within the character area apart from one or two farmsteads including Roecliffe Grange and Brick Yard Farm. The settlements of Roecliffe and Boroughbridge in neighbouring Character Areas do have influence.
- Public footpath along riverside and along Sheaf-fields lane provide important east to west link along corridor.
- A1(M) motorway is a prominent feature where it crosses the River Ure west of Boroughbridge.
- The river is navigable and there is a lock and weir at Westwick.
- The Devil's Arrows and the site of a Roman fort are two important historic features.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The influence of the river on landscape character is restricted to this narrow corridor. This is the result of intensive arable farming and the draining of what was once wetland as well as built development at Boroughbridge and Roecliffe.
- The influence of the urban edge of Boroughbridge, the A1(M) and related development pressures to the eastern extent of this Character Area will further impact upon the character of the river corridor and its archaeological features.
- The Devil's Arrows indicates the importance of the Ure corridor in the distant past and may also link in with the henges found further upstream.
- The maintenance of the navigation channel is important but may result in changes to corridor character if work is too severe.

Guidelines

Aim: Conserve and enhance the influence of the river on the landscape.

- Promote the extension of the river's influence through diversification of the corridor and its immediate environs. Tree planting and wetland creation will help to extend its influence in this arable landscape.
- The river channel and banks require appropriate maintenance to protect character. Engineered structures should be avoided. Where needed they must respect the rural characteristics of the corridor.
- Extension to built development between the A1(M) and Boroughbridge should be resisted to recognise the importance of the river corridor to the setting of the town and the buffer it provides.

Aim: To conserve and enhance the setting of historic features in the landscape.

- The setting of the Devil's Arrows should be preserved and opportunities sought to research their importance and enhance their setting appropriately.
- The lock at Westwick is an important historic feature on the river set among farmed land and riverbank trees. Maintaining tree cover through appropriate planting to respect important views will help conserve character. Hedgerow management and a long term management plan for the area around the lock, in consultation with British Waterways and landowners, will help conserve and improve the picturesque nature of the site.
- The river corridor provides part of the setting for Newby Hall Registered Historic Park and Garden. Development in the corridor, which would affect this setting, should not be permitted.