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Yorkshire Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Project

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**Document 5.3.6D ES Chapter 6 Appendix 6D - Landscape Character
Baseline**

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1. Landscape Character Baseline

1.1.1 The key characteristics recorded for each Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Character Types (LCT) as reported in the published assessments are set out below. The key characteristics are referenced in determining the sensitivity of the LCA or LCT to change as a result of the Project, as set out in **Appendix 6E, Volume 5, Document 5.3.6E**. The sensitivity that inputs into the assessment of effects is outlined in detail in **Appendix 6F, Volume 5, Document 5.3.6F** and reported at **Section 6.9 of ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Amenity, Volume 5, Document 5.2.6**.

1.2 **6D.1: Key Characteristics of Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland Regional LCA from the North Yorkshire and York Regional Landscape Character Study (2011)¹ (Figure 6.12, Document 5.4.6)**

- A patchwork of low lying, predominantly arable fields, often delineated by a network of mature hedgerows and interspersed with patches of regular-shaped mixed and coniferous plantation woodlands;
- Large heathlands are key features on sandy soils;
- Distant visual containment is provided by higher LCT to the east and west;
- Strong sense of openness throughout much of this LCT;
- Scattered settlement pattern of towns, villages and farmsteads within the landscape around the main historic City of York (which forms part of the Urban Landscapes Primary Landscape Unit); and
- A network of trunk roads linking the larger settlements and towns.

1.3 **6D.2: Key Characteristics of River Floodplain Regional LCT from the North Yorkshire and York Regional Landscape Character Study (2011)¹ (Figure 6.12, Document 5.4.6)**

- A series of flat, low lying, relatively narrow river corridors which flow through the different types of Vale Farmland LCT within the Study Area;
- The 'Ings' - flood meadows maintained by traditional hay making activities;
- Landscape pattern comprises a mixture of flood meadows, neutral grasslands and floodplain mires;
- Halls and manor houses are key landscape features;

¹ Chris Blandford Associates on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council. (2011). North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project. (Online) Available at: <https://www.cravenc.gov.uk/media/8643/north-yorkshire-and-york-landscape-character-assessment.pdf> (Accessed 22 September 2022)

- River engineering features such as Levees assert a human influence over the landscape;
- Power stations, pylons and former collieries are present in parts of this LCT; and
- The A1(M) introduces a source of noise and visual intrusion in several places.

1.4 6D.3: Key Characteristics of Magnesian Limestone Ridge LCT from the North Yorkshire and York Regional Landscape Character Study (2011)¹ (Figure 6.12, Document 5.4.6)

- A low ridge of gently rolling landform which is covered by a pattern of fertile farmland and well wooded estates;
- Landform is intersected by a series of relatively intricate dry valleys;
- Wooded limestone gorges, caves and crags are key landscape features;
- The prominent transport corridor of the A1(M) which runs through the southern section of this LCT;
- Large-scale arable fields dominate the landscape, facilitating long distance views, extending as far as Kilburn White Horse on the edge of the North York Moors National Park;
- Intimate scale and grain of the landscape derived from complex topography and land use patterns;
- Several historic country houses and associated designed landscapes, often containing mature veteran trees;
- Limestone quarries are a relatively common landscape feature; and
- Use of limestone as a building material which creates a unified character.

1.5 6D.4: Key Characteristics of Huby and Shipton Vale Local LCA from the Hambleton Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study (2016)² (Figure 6.15, Document 5.4.6)

- A simple, open landscape of flat floodplain, open and homogenous with only occasional undulations and localised higher ground;
- Drainage ditches and modified becks cross the landscape, with areas prone to flooding;
- Very large arable fields, though linear field patterns remain intact in places. Smaller-scale pasture fields persist around villages;
- Blocks of conifer plantation are the main woodland cover. Hedges are gappy and sparse, with some field trees;

² LUC on behalf of Hambleton District Council. (2016). Hambleton Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study. (online) Available at: <https://www.hambleton.gov.uk/downloads/download/187/hambleton-landscape-character-assessment-and-sensitivity-study> (Accessed 22 September 2022).

- Some native woodland along watercourses, and areas of wetland on undrained soils;
- Large estate landscapes with extensive parkland and distinctive architecture;
- A busy landscape of roads, railway and other infrastructure, with the influence of York in the south experienced through heavier traffic flows; and
- An open landscape, though views are filtered by multiple layers of trees. An intensive rural area with a lack of intimacy.

1.6 6D.5: Key Characteristics of Ouse Floodplain Local LCA from the Hambleton Landscape Character Assessment and Sensitivity Study (2016)² (Figure 6.15, Document 5.4.6)

- A series of wide rivers, long and meandering, set in a broad expansive floodplain which continues west into neighbouring Harrogate;
- Some notable woodland associated with the river, particularly associated with designed landscapes at Beningbrough, Myton and Helperby;
- Evidence of modifications and engineering works in the floodplain, notably of long, raised flood banks and drainage channels;
- Field size and shape varies, but is primarily arable; and
- Clear sense of being in a flat and low-lying landscape, with openness of views dictated by vegetation.

1.7 6D.6: Key Characteristics of the Scagglethorpe Moor Mixed Farmland Local LCA from the Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment (2004)³ (Figure 6.15, Document 5.4.6)

Geology, soils and drainage

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology overlain with silt and clay drift geology; and
- Slowly-permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, stoneless, clayey and fine loamy over clayey surface water gley soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat landform below 15m AOD;
- The River Foss forms the eastern boundary of the Character Area (and of the District). Several minor tributaries and associated ditches along field boundaries are characteristic; and
- A large proportion of the area is in floodplain.

³ Harrogate Borough Council (2004). Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment. (online) Available at: <https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/conservation-landscape-ecology/landscape-character-assessment> (Accessed 22 September 2022)

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Grade 4 agricultural land intensively managed for arable and livestock production including several large scale poultry units;
- Medium sized fields bound by hedges, post and wire and post and rail fencing;
- Large mixed plantation called Red House Wood plus a few small deciduous plantations;
- Red House Wood is Ancient Semi-Natural woodland; and
- Few individual trees and hedgerow remnants associated with areas of grassland and built form.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- No major settlement, large scale scattered farmsteads including poultry sheds.

1.8 6D.7: Key Characteristics of the Lower Nidd Grassland Local LCA from the Harrogate District Landscape Character Assessment (2004)³ (Figure 6.15, Document 5.4.6)

Geology soils and drainage

- Sherwood sandstone solid geology overlain with silt and clay drift geology plus alluvium along the riverbed; and
- Slowly-permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, stoneless, clayey and fine loamy over clayey surface water gley soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Flat landform below 15m AOD; and
- The River Nidd plus few minor associated drainage ditches along field boundaries.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Improved grassland fields, grade 4 agricultural land;
- Area of parkland with the Priory at Nun Monkton;
- Small to medium-sized fields some typical of parliamentary enclosure plus older field systems around settlement;
- Lots of hedgerows of various condition often reinforced with post and wire fencing where needed for stock control;
- Woodland clumps plus few trees along field boundaries including oak, sycamore and ash; and
- Surviving ridge and furrow.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlements are Nun Monkton and Moor Monkton; and

- Traditional building materials include red brick and tile or slate plus occasional Magnesian limestone buildings and walls to properties.

1.9 6D.8: Key Characteristics of the West Selby Limestone Ridge Local LCA from the Selby Landscape Character Assessment (2019)⁴ (Figures 6.16 and 6.17, Document 5.4.6)

- Low ridge of Magnesian limestone with large scale rolling arable farmland;
- Irregularly shaped, large scale arable fields, defined by hedgerows and field margin buffers with intermittent hedgerow trees, or occasionally ditches;
- Strong presence of large areas of calcareous woodland to the west of the character area, providing a sense of semi-enclosure;
- Major transport links dissect this landscape, including the main trunk roads A1, A63, and A64, and railway lines;
- Local influences include parkland landscapes and mineral sites for limestone extraction; and
- Sparse settlement pattern outside the town of Tadcaster and small villages, with few isolated properties and farmsteads.

1.10 6D.9: Key Characteristics of the Open Arable Farmland, East Bramham Local LCA from the Leeds Landscape Character Assessment (2011)⁵ (Figure 6.16, Document 5.4.6)

- Open gently rolling farmland;
- Large regular arable fields;
- Sparse tree cover;
- Low gappy hedgerows;
- Isolated mixed plantations;
- Wide grass verges; and
- Large farm buildings and houses.

⁴ LUC on behalf of Selby District Council (2019) Selby Landscape Character Assessment. (Online) Available at: https://www.selby.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Selby_LCA_Report_Combined.pdf (Accessed 22 September 2022)

⁵ Landuse Consultants on behalf of Leeds City Council. (1994). Leeds Landscape Character Assessment. (Online) Available at: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/1%20Parts%201-3%20reduced.pdf> (Accessed 22 September 2022)

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