

Annex 41.1

Summary of Adopted
Landscape Character
Assessments

(Ryder Landscape Consultants)

Summary of Adopted Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape Character: National assessments

A41.1 With reference to **Figure 20.4**, The Countryside Agency's publication 'Countryside Character Volume 3 – Yorkshire and Humber' includes the Site within Joint Character Area (JCA) 41 'Humber Estuary'. The key characteristics of this area include the following:

- Expansive, flat, low-lying, sometimes remote estuarine landscape dominated by the Humber and with an ever-changing character due to tidal influences.
- Dominance of sky and open views over the estuary, mudflats and salt marshes, where flood embankments allow.
- A predominantly reclaimed, formerly inter-tidal landscape of rectilinear fields with boundaries formed by dykes, drains and embankments.
- A landscape of mainly arable farming with some conspicuous areas of market gardening, particularly around Hull.
- Internationally important coastal mudflats and other wetland and coastal habitats, including the Spurn peninsula.
- Urban and industrial influences especially around Hull and on the south bank.

A41.1 The chapter also includes the following pressures on the landscape that should be resisted to maintain and enhance the character:

- A decline in deposition of silts within estuary areas that is considered likely to result in the loss of existing mudflat and intertidal habitat.
- Demand for industrial development is resulting in a loss of openness and exposed character of the agricultural landscape.
- Intensification of agriculture has led to the loss of many trees, hedgerows and woodland although the farms are small-scale and fragmented.
- Currently unrealised opportunities for habitat and woodland creation have contributed to the loss of large tracts of wetland habitat to leave a currently impoverished landscape with only remnants of past habitats.

County-wide assessments

A41.2 In November 2005 the East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment was adopted by East Riding Council. Completed to the Countryside Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage 2002 methodology the land containing and adjacent the Site is contained within Landscape Character Area 21: Low-Lying Farmland of the Humber Estuary as illustrated on **Figure 20.4**. This study includes the following points:

- Flat low lying flood plain of the River Humber.
- Regular drainage pattern forming field boundaries.
- Sparse tree cover concentrated around scattered farmsteads
- Large scale fertile arable landscape.
- Open, extensive views across the simple remote landscape.
- The sky dominates views across the flat open landscape.
- Few hedgerows, many of them fragmented.
- Scattered farmsteads of nucleated form.
- Views of Salt End industry to the west on the edge of Hull.

A41.3 The Landscape Character Study subdivides Area 21 into four sub-areas; the site is located within Area 21B: Sunk Island which is described including the following:

- Areas of reclaimed land protected from flood by clay embankments aligning the Humber north bank.
- Parts of Area 21B are designated Conservation Area in recognition of its historical importance illustrating land reclamation since the 17th century.
- Landscape retains some elements of its previous wet pasture state prior to reclamation and it is still well used by birds.
- Other key elements include canals, brackish pools, marshes and damp grassland that provide for important fauna diversity.
- Generally, a bleak landscape uniquely and strongly characteristic of East Riding with isolated homes and farmsteads and few landscape elements although where found, such as the avenue of trees on Ottringham Road, these are highly prized.
- General lack of tree cover or vertical elements results in openness with long distance views and big skies.
- Landscape character is assessed as being of good to high quality.

A41.4 Pressures on Area 21 include changes in land management techniques that will impact through changes in a landscape character that has existed since the 17th century as well as pressure for wind farm development.

A41.5 The landscape of Area 21 is assessed to have a high sensitivity to, and thus low capacity for, new built development due to:

- Its low lying, open nature.
- The openness and neatness of the arable landscape characteristic.
- Wind turbine development although the assessment notes that low-lying, sparsely settled areas have a greater capacity for renewable energy development than more densely settled, upland areas.

A41.6 The landscape strategy for Area 21 generally includes:

- Conserve landscape form and patterns arising from land reclamation and subsequent arable farming.
- Maintain the open, bleak and featureless nature of the landscape.
- Restrict new tree planting to areas around existing settlements and in locations that respect the open views and character of the landscape.
- Changing land management regimes should respect the neat, open, large-scale nature of the landscape.
- Avoid incremental development that will cumulatively result in increased settlement density.
- Avoid field amalgamation.
- New vertical structures should be avoided within Area 21.

A41.7 Development proposals can affect landscape character by introducing changes in the fabric, character and quality of the landscape. An assessment of the effects of the development proposals on landscape character shall require to include identifying:

- Direct effects on specific landscape elements, that in combination create landscape characteristics (para 6.32, CA/SNH 2002), directly attributable to a defined element or characteristic of the proposed development.
- Indirect effects on the overall pattern of elements that give rise to landscape character and regional and local distinctiveness.