



**Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme - Proposed Marl Hill  
Section**

**Volume 6**

**Proposed Ribble Crossing**

**Appendix 6.1: Landscape Character Baseline**

June 2021



**Water for the North West**



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# 1. Landscape Character Baseline

## 1.1 Introduction

- 1) A review of published landscape character information has been carried out in order to gain an understanding of the nature and value of the landscape character within the detailed assessment area. Baseline information is available at national, county, district and local levels as described in the paragraphs below.
- 2) National-level landscape character areas have not been assessed within this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This is because of the broad geographical coverage of these character areas, which does not adequately relate to the scale of the Proposed Ribble Crossing. Instead, the distinct local-level landscape character assessments listed below have been considered. These areas are of a smaller geographical scale and therefore better inform an assessment more related to the scale and extent of the landscape character in the assessment area.
- 3) Refer to Figure 6.4 for the location and extent of landscape character.

## 1.2 National Character Areas

### 1.2.1 33. Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill

- An undulating, rolling landscape, with local variation created by numerous river valleys and by the moorland outliers of Beacon Fell, Longridge Fell and Pendle Hill. At the northern edge, drumlins are characteristic, while on the south, strong mounded outcrops or 'reef knolls' of limestone form distinct landscape features
- Semi-natural woodland, much of which is ancient, occurs in the main valley bottoms, side valleys and ridges, and is dominated by oak, ash and alder
- Small to medium-sized fields are defined by hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. Drystone walls are also common in some areas. Metal railings around estate boundaries and highway corners and junctions are characteristic of the southern and western edges
- Land use is mainly permanent, improved pasture for livestock and dairy farming
- To the west is the Bowland Fells Special Protection Area (SPA), designated for its important populations of hen harrier, merlin and lesser black-backed gull
- There are species-rich hay meadows, including several that are nationally and internationally designated. Rough grazing, rushy pasture and traditionally managed meadows at higher elevations are of national importance for breeding waders and important habitats for breeding skylark
- There are numerous rivers of importance for many protected species, including bullheads, salmon, trout, eels, otters, kingfishers and dippers. There are also many brooks and small reservoirs
- There are many archaeological sites, particularly on the moorland fringes and in valleys where agriculture has been less intensive
- A network of winding, hedge-lined lanes connect small, often linear, villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads, mostly in local stone. Traditional stone barns are commonplace on higher ground, and are of stone with slate or stone flag roofs
- Isolated country houses set in formal parkland are typical of the area, and may be enclosed by belts of woodland and estate fencing
- The relatively urban areas of Clitheroe, Bentham and Longridge provide a contrast to the rural feel of the area.

### 1.3 A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire

- 4) A *Landscape Strategy for Lancashire*<sup>1</sup> provides a county-level landscape character assessment for Lancashire, dividing the county into a series of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The key characteristics of the revised LCAs identified within the assessment area are summarised below.

#### 1.3.1 5b. Lower Hodder and Loud Valley

- Undulating lowland farmland to the south of the Forest of Bowland
- Includes the deeply incised wooded course of the Hodder below Whitewell and its tributary, the River Loud
- Underlying bedrock is limestone which is overlain by good soils, providing lush green pastures and good tree growth
- The Hodder is particularly well wooded and the pattern of incised minor wooded tributaries is distinctive to this character area
- Little affected by modern development and the picturesque limestone villages of Chipping and Waddington have retained their vernacular character.

#### 1.3.2 5e. Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn)

- An area forming the southern valley side of the Ribble, between Copster Green and Gisburn, on the lowland fringes of Pendle Hill
- Well settled area and provides a corridor for communications routes along the Ribble Valley, which has encouraged built development and industry
- Large cement works at Clitheroe is a prominent visual landmark for miles around
- Underlain by limestone and has some good examples of limestone reef knolls. Clitheroe Castle is located on the top side of one of these knolls
- A59 runs the length of the area, linking the settlements of Copster Green, Whalley, Clitheroe, Chatburn and Gisburn. The railway links the valley to Blackburn and Yorkshire.

#### 1.3.3 5g. South Bowland Fringes

- Forms the lowland fringes of Waddington Fell, to the south of the Forest of Bowland
- A well-wooded area whose limestone slopes are particularly notable for their pattern of wooded cloughs
- Tributaries which descend the valley side before feeding into the River Ribble
- The villages of Waddington, West Bradford, Grindleton and Holdon are located at the foot of wooded cloughs
- Browsholme Hall has an influence over landscape character; shelter belts and beech hedges are features of the area around Cow Ark.

#### 1.3.4 11a. Lower Ribble Valley

- Open flat and fertile plain of the lower Ribble that is a pastoral, tranquil landscape containing the meandering course of the river
- Its extent is defined by steep wooded bluffs and terraces which enclose the floodplain
- Lush green fields of semi-improved pasture are grazed by sheep and cattle

<sup>1</sup> Lancashire County Council (2000) A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire. Preston, Lancashire County Council. [Online] Available from: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-plans/environmental/landscape-strategy/>. [Accessed: March 2020].

- Large regular fields are defined by gappy hedgerows, supplemented by sections of post and wire, wooden fencing and stone walls
- Array of materials and styles conveys a lack of visual unity despite the natural beauty of the landscape
- Mature floodplain trees are notable features in this character area; ash and oak stand in the floodplain with their silhouettes striking against the open landscape
- There is little settlement within the floodplain itself, but a number of large farms and country halls are positioned on the edges of the floodplain
- Settlements such as Ribchester, Great Mitton, West Bradford, Grindleton and Sawley, are also sited on adjacent river terraces, their extremities sometimes extending onto the floodplain
- There are a number of historic crossing points which coincide with these settlements where old stone bridges are important historic features of the floodplain.

## 1.4 Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment

5) The *Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment*<sup>2</sup> provides a local-level assessment of the Forest of Bowland's landscape. It divides the landscape into a series of LCTs and LCAs. The key characteristics of the relevant LCAs identified within the assessment area are summarised below.

### 1.4.1 F2. Bolton by Bowland to Waddington

- Gently sloping limestone topography is incised with a pattern of wooded cloughs which descend the slopes and flow into the valley of the River Ribble
- The villages of Waddington, Grindleton, Holdon and Bolton-by-Bowland are situated at the foot of the wooded cloughs or brook. Waddington and Grindleton are two relatively large, linear villages, which display terraces of traditional stone buildings lining the road corridors
- The brook corridors are lined with mature deciduous trees and woodland which provides a sense of enclosure and breaks up the surrounding predominantly pastoral farmland. Between Waddington and Grindleton, the wooded brooks flow from northwest to southeast. This woodland is key feature within views across the area
- Framed views southwards across the broad valley of the River Ribble
- The Copy Nook hotel is a recognisable landscape feature which contributes to sense of place and orientation
- Stone bridges which cross the River Ribble are landscape features
- At Grindleton, bluebells introduce strong colour when in season
- A network of narrow lanes cross the landscape, often lined with hedgerows, stone walls and white railings. Lanes in the Forest Becks and Bolton-by-Bowland area are often lined on one or both sides with trees, shrubs, varied flora and mixed hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Lanes in the Holden and Copy Nook area are often lined with drystone walls and white railings
- The Sawley and Gisburn B roads run east-west across this area, connecting the villages and introducing a source of noise and movement into the landscape
- Patches of woodland provide a sense of enclosure and single deciduous trees at the edges of the road corridors and within fields are also a feature
- The smell of wild garlic within the numerous woodlands is recognisable in the Spring.

<sup>2</sup> Lancashire County Council (2009) Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment. Preston, Environment Directorate. [Online] Available from: <https://www.forestofbowland.com/Landscape-Character-Assessment>. [Accessed: March 2020].

#### **1.4.2 G7. Browsholme**

- Dramatic, open views northwards towards the central Bowland fells, which provide a distant sense of enclosure
- The Duchy of Lancaster own part of this area, which is reflected in the management of the landscape and the colours of gates and signs. Duchy metal field gates are recognisable landscape features
- Park woodlands are shaped with drystone walls or fenced boundaries
- Limestone, drystone walls are a feature of the northern half, whilst mixed hedgerows with hedgerow trees are a feature of the southern half
- Browsholme Hall is a key landscape feature; On the Browsholme Estate, beech hedgerows and beech within woodlands contribute to recognisable sense of place
- Relatively large blocks of coniferous and mixed woodland contribute to a varied sense of enclosure
- Mixed, ancient semi-natural woodland and strips/blocks of damp birch woodland contribute to a mixed sense of enclosure. In-field trees, including oak, alder and ash are landscape features
- Influenced by activity associated with pheasant, partridge and duck shoots
- The small hamlet of Cow Ark and a series of scattered, isolated farmsteads contribute to settlement pattern
- A network of relatively narrow rural lanes, lined with stone walls, hedgerows and occasional white railings, crosses this landscape. Between Bashall Eves and north Waddington, narrow, sunken lanes are lined with mixed hedgerows (including holly) and trees.

#### **1.4.3 H1. Clitheroe and Chatburn**

- Landscape pattern dominated by the large town of Clitheroe situated at the convergence of major road and railway corridors
- Transport corridors introduce a source of noise and visual intrusion and disturb the overall sense of tranquillity
- Clitheroe contains an assortment of housing (much of which is terraced and built from local stone) and commercial buildings
- Clitheroe Castle, situated on a limestone outcrop above the town, is a landmark within views towards this area
- At the eastern edge of the area, the small village of Chatburn, with its rows of terraced cottages, further contributes to settlement pattern
- Large-scale quarries and associated works (including tall vertical chimneys) to the east of Clitheroe and west of Chatburn are a dominant human influence within views towards this landscape
- Views northwards, across the corridor of the River Ribble are dominated by the rising mass of the central Moorland Hills and Plateau, whilst Pendle Hill contributes to recognisable sense of place within views southwards
- At the edges of the urban development, patchworks of predominantly pastoral fields are delineated by, in places remnant, hedgerows, with frequent hedgerow trees.

#### **1.4.4 J2. Ribble**

- Open, flat, fertile plain encompassing a patchwork of pastoral fields which are delineated by a combination of hedgerows, wooden fencing, post and wire fencing or stone walls
- The gently meandering course of the river Ribble is defined by the steep wooded bluffs and terraces which enclose the floodplain

- Lush green fields of semi-improved pasture are grazed by sheep and cattle. The large regular fields are defined by gappy hedgerows
- Mature floodplain trees are notable features; ash and oak stand in the floodplain, their silhouettes striking against the open landscape
- General absence of settlement within the floodplain itself, but a number of large farms and country halls are positioned along the edges of the floodplain
- There are a number of historic crossing points which coincide with these settlements where old stone bridges are important historic features of the floodplain
- Panoramic, open views towards the central Bowland Moorland Hills and Plateaux to the north and Pendle Hill to the south
- In the south of the area, the small village of Great Mitton is nestled within the valley corridor, at the point at which a minor road corridor crosses the river
- There is a relatively strong sense of remoteness within much of the river corridor, which is slightly interrupted when it meanders around the northern edge of Clitheroe
- Buildings associated within the Castle Cement works are dominant landmarks within views to and across this area.