

**Appendix 2 : Extract from Lancashire County Council,  
Landscape and Heritage SPD (July 2006)**

# planning for landscape change

## policy 20

### **POLICY 20: LANCASHIRE'S LANDSCAPES**

LANCASHIRE'S LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES ARE IDENTIFIED ON MAP 13.\* DEVELOPMENT MUST BE APPROPRIATE TO THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE WITHIN WHICH IT IS SITUATED AND CONTRIBUTE TO ITS CONSERVATION, ENHANCEMENT OR RESTORATION, OR THE CREATION OF APPROPRIATE NEW FEATURES.

IN AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER. DEVELOPMENT MUST CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY.

PROPOSALS WILL BE ASSESSED IN RELATION TO:

- (a) LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS;
- (b) THE CONDITION OF THE LANDSCAPE;
- (c) VISUAL INTRUSION;
- (d) THE LAYOUT AND SCALE OF BUILDINGS AND DESIGNED SPACES;
- (e) THE QUALITY AND CHARACTER OF THE BUILT FABRIC;
- (f) PUBLIC ACCESS AND COMMUNITY VALUE OF THE LANDSCAPE;
- (g) HISTORIC PATTERNS AND ATTRIBUTES OF THE LANDSCAPE;

- (h) LANDSCAPE BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS;
- (i) SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE LANDSCAPE TYPE;
- (j) REMOTENESS AND TRANQUILLITY;
- (k) NOISE AND LIGHT POLLUTION.

\* This refers to map 13 in the Structure Plan. This is reproduced as map 2 in the SPG

## planning framework and the landscape character approach

### 2.1

The approach to the identification of countryside character pursued in the Character of England project instituted by the Countryside Commission and English Nature was commended by the now replaced Planning Policy Guidance note 7 The Countryside, Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development (1997), and suggests that it should help in accommodating necessary change without sacrificing local character. The character approach differs from designation in providing a holistic approach, which recognises that all landscapes are of value.

Landscapes are classified according to their distinctive characteristics, which allow them to be identified as particular types or areas. The assessment of landscape character and classification allows strategies to be identified to guide change to be appropriate to a particular landscape. PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas supports the use of landscape character assessments.

## 2.2

In response to the Countryside Commission's (now the Countryside Agency) Character of England map (Map 1) and PPG7, the County Council has produced A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire (2001) using the Countryside Agency's most recent recommended methodology (Interim Landscape Character Assessment Guidance, 1999 published in final version as Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland, April 2002). This Strategy uses the Character of England map as a starting point for its landscape assessment and incorporates as far as possible information from a number of earlier landscape assessments carried out across the County, as well as making reference to studies in adjacent areas.

## 2.3

The application of this approach has resulted in the identification of 21 landscape character types (also referred to as landscape types) across the Plan area. The map of landscape character types and urban landscape types (Map 2) is included in the adopted Joint Structure Plan. A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire identifies landscape character areas within each landscape type, and contains descriptions of character types and areas, identification of key environmental features and strategies and recommendations for each landscape

type. The amount of detail in the study precludes inclusion in the Structure Plan and an explanation of the method of classification, maps, descriptions, key environmental features and strategies and recommendations for the landscape types (but not the details of the landscape character areas) have therefore been published in this document.

## 2.4

It is envisaged that local plans will build on Policy 20, using the supplementary guidance in support by requiring that development be informed by local landscape character as described in Sections 2.20 to 2.231 and be appropriate to the landscape character type in which it is sited, following the guidance of the landscape strategies relevant to the character type.

## 2.5

It will be for local plan authorities to decide whether to use this information to develop detailed local landscape character assessments using the County Landscape Strategy as a framework. The Joint Structure Plan Authorities would support and encourage the production of detailed local assessments in line with the Strategy.

## 2.6

The statutory designation of the Forest of Bowland and Arnsdale/Silverdale Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Map 3) is recognised and is complemented by the landscape character approach. The primary objective of the designation is the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. Development in AONBs, whether in settlements or open countryside, must therefore be consistent with and contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. Additional guidance relevant to

development in the AONBs is contained within the AONB management plans, published in April 2004.

## guidance

### 2.7

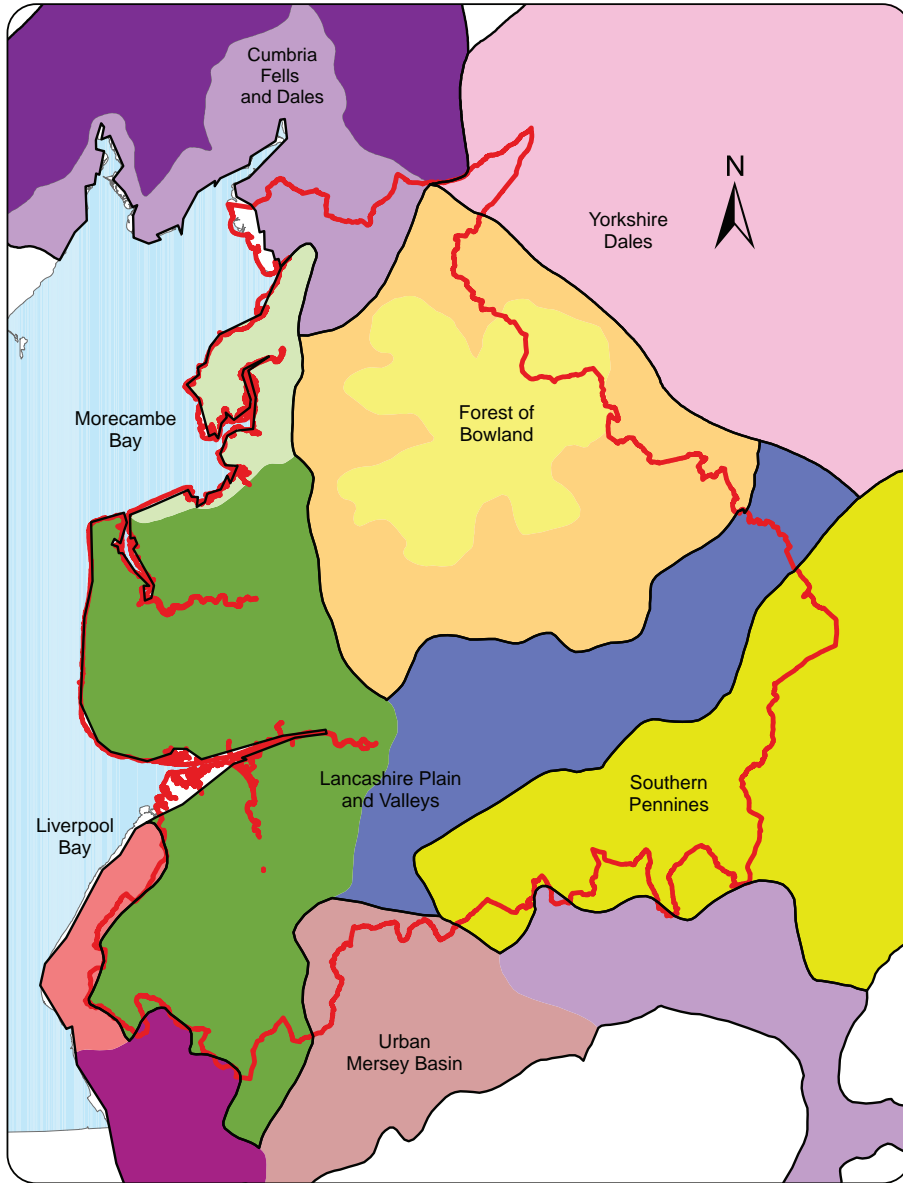
This guidance is in two parts. The first describes the key elements of the Lancashire Landscape Strategy and how, in broad terms, these should be used to guide decisions relating to the impact of development on the landscape. The second part gives details relating to each of the 21 landscape types within the County identified in the Strategy.

*Sabden, Forest of Bowland AONB in winter*



*Woodland in the Arnside and Silverdale AONB*

# map 1: the character of england map

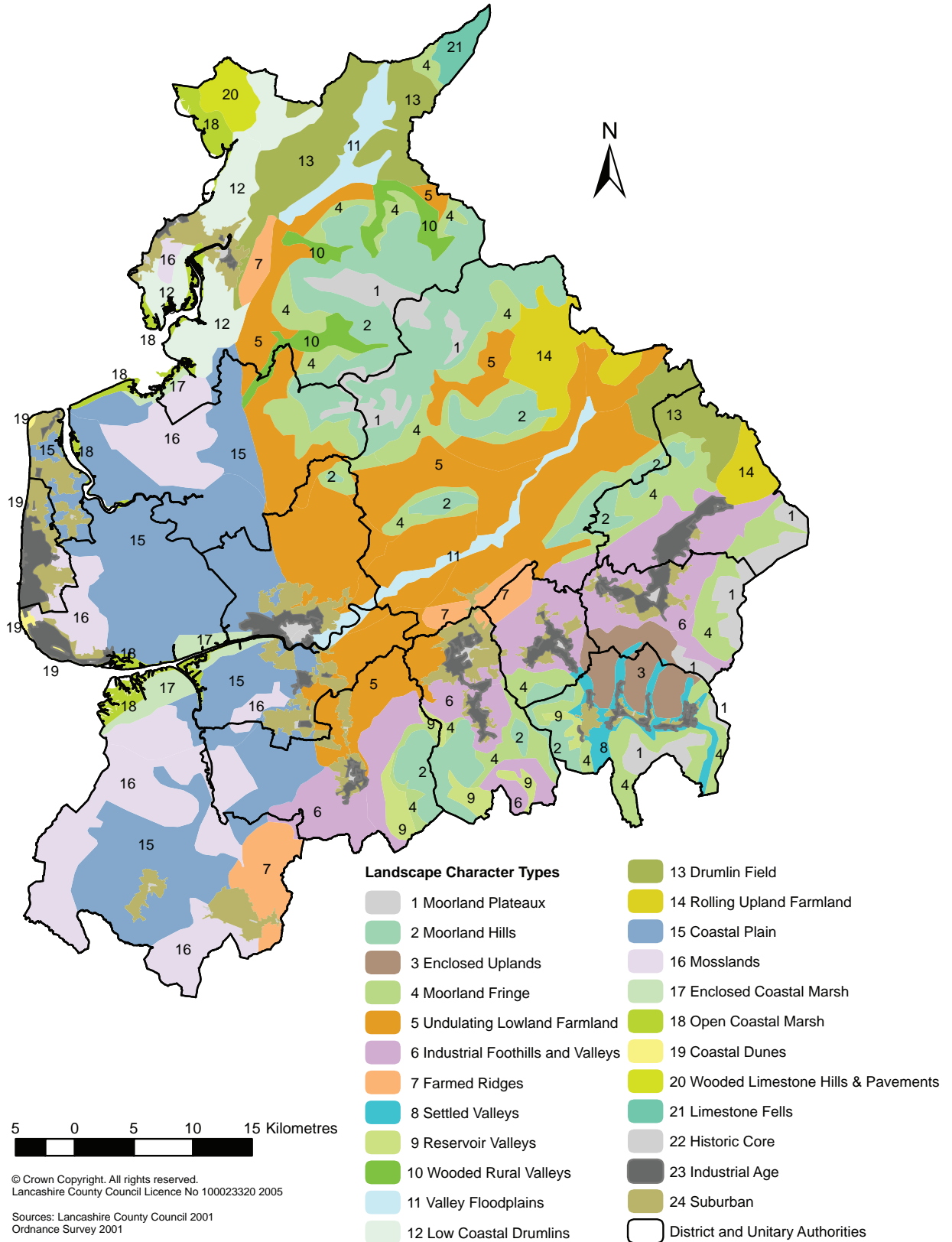


- Natural Areas (English Nature)  
Countryside Character Areas (Countryside Agency)
- Cumbria Fells and Dales**
  - South Cumbria Low Fells
  - Morecambe Bay Limestones
- Forest of Bowland**
  - Bowland Fells
  - Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill
- Lancashire Plain and Valleys**
  - Lancashire Valleys
  - Lancashire and Amounderness Plain
  - Morecambe Coast and Lune Estuary
- Urban Mersey Basin**
  - Lancashire Coal Measures
  - Manchester Pennine Fringe
  - Merseyside Conurbation
  - Sefton Coast
- Southern Pennines**
  - Southern Pennines
- Yorkshire Dales**
  - Yorkshire Dales
- Joint Structure Plan Area**

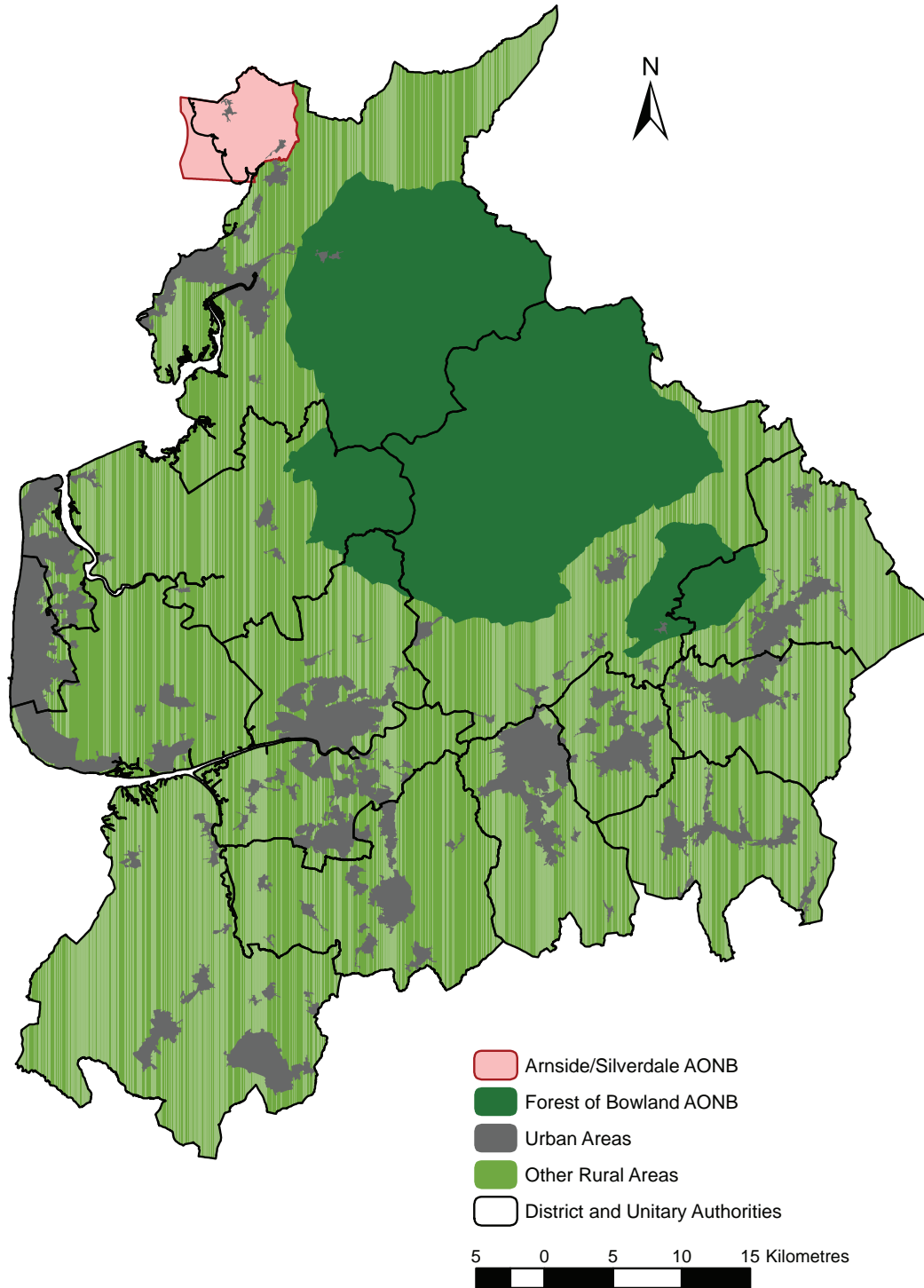
5 0 5 10 15 Kilometres

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Sources: Lancashire County Council 2001  
Ordnance Survey 2001

# map 2: landscape character types



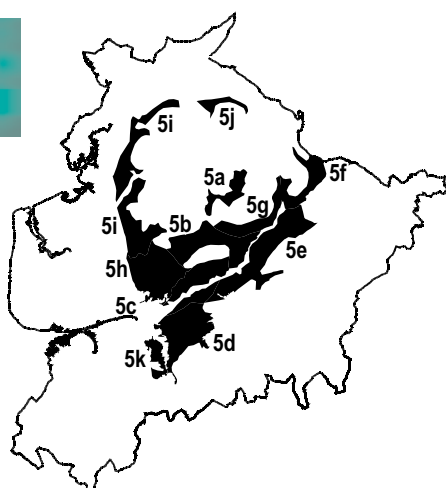
# map 3: areas of outstanding natural beauty



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Sources: Lancashire County Council 2001  
Ordnance Survey 2001

**Appendix 3: Extract from Lancashire County Council,  
Landscape Strategy for Lancashire,  
Landscape Character Assessment (December 2000)**



## UNDULATING LOW- LAND FARMLAND

### Character Areas

- 5a Upper Hodder Valley
- 5b Lower Hodder and Loud Valley
- 5c Lower Ribble
- 5d Samlesbury-Withnell Fold
- 5e Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn)
- 5f Lower Ribblesdale (Gisburn to Hellifield)
- 5g South Bowland Fringes
- 5h Goosnargh-Whittingham
- 5i West Bowland Fringes
- 5j North Bowland Fringes
- 5k Cuerden-Euxton

### Landscape Character

Generally below 150m, the Undulating Lowland Farmland lies between the major valleys and the moorland fringes. The underlying geology is largely masked by heavy boulder clays and hedgerows predominate over stone walls. This lowland landscape is traversed by deeply incised, wooded cloughs and gorges. There are also many mixed farm woodlands, copses and hedgerow trees, creating an impression of a well wooded landscape from ground level and a patchwork of wood and pasture from raised viewpoints on the fells. Some of the most picturesque stone villages of the county occur within this well settled landscape type. The towns of Longridge and Clitheroe also occur within this type, but are not typical of the settlement pattern. The area also has many country houses whose boundary walls and designed landscapes add to the species diversity and visual appeal. There is a high density of farms and scattered cottages outside the clustered settlements, linked by a network of minor roads. Typical view - photo 19 below.



### Physical Influences

The Undulating Lowland Farmland forms a transitional zone between the low lying plains of soft glacial deposits and the high fells of Bowland, formed from Millstone Grit. To the west of the Forest of Bowland, running along the line of the M6, a substantial fault separates the soft Triassic rock of the lowlands from the harder Carboniferous rocks of the fells. The Clitheroe Reef Knolls SSSI, located between Worston and Downham, comprise an important geological feature. This is one of several Reef Knolls which support species-rich calcareous grassland.

This landscape type, whether composed of limestone, grit, shale or sandstone, is of gentle topography when compared to the fells and hills. Glacial action has accentuated the differences by further tempering the relief of the low-lying areas by the deposition of glacial drift. Deep drift is conspicuous where hedges predominate over stone walls, as quarrying is only possible where the drift is sufficiently thin.

Many of the woodlands which survive on the steep slopes of the deep cloughs and valley sides are of ancient origin and represent a rich natural resource. They include alder and ash woods on the base-rich soils of the valley floors grading through to lowland oakwoods and upland oak woods on the upper valley sides. Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods, situated east of Preston between Ribbleson and Grimsargh are classified as SSSI's and are important for their extensive examples of ash-wych elm woodland and alder woods. Hedges and hedgerow trees are also important as habitats in an otherwise intensively managed landscape.

Standing bodies of water are important habitats within the area; especially for birds. Rough Hey Wood, located south east of Garstang is designated as a SSSI and contains one of Britain's largest heronries.

### Human Influences

The landscape proved more favourable to early settlers than the nearby uplands. At Portfield above Whalley, large earthworks of Iron Age date defend the neck of a steep-sided promontory whose flat top had been utilized since the Neolithic period. The presence of a large aisled barn of probably

18th century date points to an earlier, perhaps medieval, successful farmstead, attesting to the favourable nature of the site.

By the Roman period it is probable that much of this landscape type was already settled fairly densely and the fort established at Ribchester is known to have had some civilian government functions. Whilst Roman remains (besides roads) outside the immediate area of the forts are poorly represented in the record, the presence of Roman Kilns at Quernmore show that they exploited the natural resources of the area.

Medieval population pressures, which saw the utilisation of small areas of the mosslands elsewhere in Lancashire also led to the continuation of small woodland clearances along the Ribble and the Lune. This created a small scale intimate landscape of scattered farms linked by winding roads with irregular fields and patches of surviving woodland on stream and field edges, a landscape which has remained intact to this day.

The majority of enclosure dates from the medieval period and has created a landscape of small fields which are mostly hedged although stone walls are evident where geology lies close to the surface.

Country houses are a feature of the area and are often surrounded by parklands and well managed estates. They are evidence of the developing industrial enterprise and increasing wealth between the 16th and 19th centuries. Architecturally distinctive yeoman and gentry houses are also characteristic of this type and date from the 17th century onwards.

During the 17th century lime was used for land improvement in these lowland fringe areas and many small farm kilns remain in the landscape, along with the larger industrial kilns and quarries of the 19th and 20th century. The mining of Millstone Grit also proved to be important in this landscape type. Where suitable stone was available, querns and millstones could be quarried and manufactured to meet the needs of the population. Remains of 19th century millstone production near Quernmore can still be seen on the flanks of Clougha Pike. Lead and Silver were extracted in Rimington from the 17th century and mined and manufactured in places such as at Quernmore to meet the demands of the rapidly industrialising county.

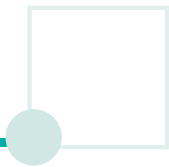


## CHARACTER AREAS - UNDULATING LOWLAND FARMLAND

Undulating Lowland Farmland occurs on the lower fringes of the uplands, below about 150m AOD, across the whole study area.

Local	Character Areas	Description
5a	Upper Hodder Valley	<i>This is a unique hidden area of settled farmland enclosed by shale and limestone uplands and the grit moorland of the Bowland Fells. It is a lush oasis in the middle of a bleak landscape. The landscape is centred around the upper River Hodder and its tributaries and is well wooded. The underlying geology is largely overlain by boulder clays although the underlying limestone is evident as outcrops known as 'Reef Knolls' as well as in the white stone walls, bridges and limestone built villages, such as Slaidburn. The Reef Knolls are particularly characteristic of this area as are stands of beech which are often visible on hill tops.</i>
5b	Lower Hodder and Loud Valley	<i>This area forms part of the Undulating Lowland Farmland to the south of the Forest of Bowland and includes the deeply incised wooded course of the Hodder below Whitewell and its tributary, the River Loud, as far as its confluence with the Ribble. The underlying bedrock is limestone which is overlain by good soils, providing lush green pastures and good tree growth. The course of the Hodder is particularly well wooded and the pattern of incised minor wooded tributaries is distinctive to this character area. The area is little affected by modern development and the picturesque limestone villages of Chipping and Waddington have retained their vernacular character.</i>
5c	Lower Ribble	<i>The Lower Ribble is an area of lowland gritstone farmland between Longridge Fell to the north and Mellor Ridge to the south. It has a distinctive broad valley landform; the north and south valley sides are separated by a flood plain which contains the meandering course of the River Ribble. There is a particularly distinctive pattern of wooded cloughs which descend the valley sides, their streams emptying into the Ribble. A complex pattern of hedges and woodland form links to these wooded cloughs, giving an overall impression of a well wooded landscape. Although a rural valley, the area is well settled; a dense network of winding country lanes and tracks link the large number of stone farm buildings. Other features of this area are the country houses and designed landscapes, for example Stonyhurst College, Huntingdon Hall and Showley Hall. The Roman settlement of Ribchester is sited at an historic crossing point of the Ribble, a tranquil village in the centre of the valley.</i>
5d	Samlesbury-Withnell Fold	<i>An area between the Ribble Valley to the north and the Industrial Foothills to the south. It is underlain by millstone grit and sandstone, but the landscape is influenced by the mantle of glacial till which covers the surface, producing a gently undulating landscape of large lush green pastures divided by low cut hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Dramatic steep sided wooded valleys wind their way through the landscape carrying the River Darwen and its tributaries. Designed landscapes and parkland associated with Samlesbury Hall, Woodfold Hall, Pleasington Old Hall and Hoghton Tower add to the overall woodland cover in this lowland landscape and Witton Country Park provides a countryside resource on the edge of Blackburn. It is also influenced by infrastructure (major road</i>

Local	Character Areas	Description
		<i>and rail routes), industrial works, the airfield at Samlesbury and built development on the edges of Preston.</i>
5e	Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn)	<i>This area forms the southern valley side of the Ribble, between Copster Green and Gisburn, on the lowland fringes of Pendle Hill. It is a particularly well settled area and provides a corridor for communication routes along the Ribble Valley. The A59(T) 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. This communication structure has encouraged built development and industry; the large cement works at Clitheroe is a prominent visual landmark for miles around. This character area is underlain by limestone and has some good examples of limestone reef knolls, particularly around Clitheroe; Clitheroe Castle is located on top of one of these knolls.</i>
5f	Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn)	<i>This character area follows the upper reaches of the River Ribble between Bolton-by-Bowland and Long Preston on limestone geology. It occurs on the fringes of the Slaidburn Rolling Upland Farmland between 100 and 150m AOD. It is a highly rural area which is dominated by lush green pastures divided by hedgerows with many hedgerow trees. The mixed plantation woodlands associated with estates of Bolton Hall and Halton Place and the ancient woodlands along the Ribble itself contribute to the wooded character of this landscape character area.</i>
5g	South Bowland Fringes	<i>This character area forms the lowland fringes of Waddington Fell, to the south of the Forest of Bowland. It is a well wooded area whose limestone slopes are particularly notable for their pattern of wooded cloughs - the tributaries which descend the valley side before feeding into the 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.</i>
5h	Goosnargh-Whittingham	<i>The undulating lowland farmland on the north-east fringes of Preston forms a transitional landscape between the upland landscape of the Bowland Fells to the north-east and the agricultural Amounderness Plain to the west. It is an historically interesting area on the fringe of the Forest of Bowland AONB. The landform gently descends from 150m at the moorland fringe of Beacon Fell to the 30m contour (approximately) which defines the edge of the sandstone agricultural plain of the Fylde. However, this is not a clear boundary and the visual transition from one to the other occurs across a broad area between the M6 and main Preston to Lancaster railway line. As a result of this gradual transition it demonstrates characteristics of both the Fylde and the Bowland fringes. It is a pastoral landscape which is relatively open and intensively farmed with much hedgerow loss and few trees or woodlands although hedgerows along the network of lanes are important landscape features. There are often clear views over the plain below. The area is under pressure from built development as a result of its proximity to Preston. Vernacular buildings are of local stone, although a number of incongruous materials are seen throughout the area. The area is rich in evidence for Roman occupation.</i>



Local	Character Areas	Description
5i	West Bowland Fringes	<i>A transitional landscape between the gritstone scarps of the Bowland Fells and the coastal plain of Amounderness. A fault line provides a corridor along which the motorway, road and railway run and provides a transition to the agricultural plain. However, this transition is softened by glacial deposits, for example at Galgate where the lowland farmland merges imperceptibly with the low drumlin fields. However, at Quernmore, there is a dramatic wooded ridge (7c) which forms a definite boundary between the grit lowland fell edges and the adjacent glacial landscape to the west. The transition from fringe to fell is quite striking, particularly to the north-west below Claughton Moor where it occurs over a short distance. The valleys of the Brock, Calder and Wyre are also relatively dramatic, descending from the fells in deeply incised wooded valleys. There are exceptional views of the Amounderness Plain from the hillsides and the scarps of the Bowland fells are never far away.</i>
5j	North Bowland Fringes	<i>The north-facing gritstone slopes, known as the Forest of Mewith, is an area of undulating marginal farmland on the northern edges of the Bowland Fells. It is bordered by a drumlin field to the north which influences the landform of the lowland fringe; the broadly undulating landform contrasts with the steep scarps of west Bowland. This is a rural area which is crossed by a dense network of footpaths and farm tracks; a number of small stone farm holdings are found at the end of these dead-end farm tracks.</i>
5k	Cuerden-Euxton	<i>The rural character of this landscape is largely obscured by built development which has taken place since the late 1970s. Motorways and motorway junctions dominate the northern sector. The principal landscape feature is Cuerden Valley Park, based upon the woodland and valley of the river Lostock. The park is managed for nature conservation and recreational use and is an important local resource. Pockets of farmland and vernacular buildings survive as a reminder of earlier land use and settlement pattern.</i>



**Appendix 4: Extract from Forest of Bowland AONB,  
Landscape Character Assessment (September 2009)**

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE H: UNDULATING LOWLAND FARMLAND WITH SETTLEMENT AND INDUSTRY

### Key Characteristics

- 1 Gently undulating farmland, divided by a network of drystone walls and hedgerows.
- 2 Towns and some heavy industrial sites which are associated with main transport corridors.
- 3 Backdrop of Moorland Hills provides a sense of enclosure and contributes to recognisable sense of place within views.



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## 4.9 H: UNDULATING LOWLAND FARMLAND WITH SETTLEMENT AND INDUSTRY

### CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

#### Location

- 4.9.1 The Undulating Lowland Farmland with Settlement and Industry Landscape Character Type occurs in three locations in the southern part of the Study Area. This Landscape Character Type is generally located adjacent to other lowland LCT's, and is bordered along its northern edge by the Valley Floodplain Landscape Character Type.

#### Landscape Character Description

- 4.9.2 Undulating Lowland Farmland with Settlement and Industry Landscape Character Type generally occurs below 150m within the Study Area (outside the boundaries of the AONB). It encompasses a patchwork of pastoral fields that are punctuated by main transport corridors and relatively large urban areas (including Clitheroe and Whalley). This landscape is generally viewed against either the backdrop of Moorland Hills (looking northwards) or Pendle Hill (looking southwards).
- 4.9.3 The pastoral fields are enclosed by an intricate network of hedgerows, which often contain hedgerow trees and provide texture to the landscape; and post and wire fences. These fields surround the towns of Clitheroe and Whalley, providing the setting for a combination of Victorian and later buildings within the built up areas. A number of major road corridors and a main railway line also dissect this Landscape Character Type, disturbing the overall sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
- 4.9.4 Pockets of industry including farmac works, cement works and industrial estates also punctuate the surrounding pastoral landscape. The scale and form of these buildings provides a strong visual contrast with the buildings and settlement patterns of adjacent Landscape Character Types.

#### Key Environmental Features

##### Physical

- 4.9.5 Similarly to the Undulating Lowland Farmland Landscape Character Type (E), this LCT generally occurs below 150m and is underlain by a combination of soft glacial tills which separate the higher fells of Bowland to the north (formed from Millstone Grit) from Pendle Hill to the south. At Clitheroe, these are quarried for rock and used in cement manufacture. Where these deposits are located close to the surface, they are visible within the landscape in the form

of small, isolated hills or reef knolls, such as at Worston at the western edge of Pendle Hill. In its lowland position adjacent to the relatively wide meandering course of the River Ribble, this Landscape Character Type has flat to gently undulating topography. Within this landscape, Coplow, Salthill and Bellmanpark quarries have been designated as SSSI for their geological interest.

### **Ecological**

- 4.9.6 Within the Lowland Farmland with Settlement and Industry Landscape Character Type the key ecological habitats include small stream corridors, hedges and hedgerow trees. Intensive farming practices, interspersed with industrial and urban land uses, however, limit the nature conservation value of this area.

### **Cultural and Historical**

- 4.9.7 The landscape proved much more favourable to early settlers than the nearby uplands to the north and south, probably due to its position adjacent to the corridor of the main River Ribble. By the Roman period it is probable that much of this Landscape Character Type was already settled fairly densely and the fort established at Ribchester (outside the southern boundary of the AONB) is known to have had some civilian government functions. The origins of urban settlement in this landscape date to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, when the market town of Clitheroe received its first charter in 1114. Similarly, settlement is known to have existed in Whalley to the south, in 1296, when an Abbey was founded. Clitheroe is dominated by a partially ruined Norman castle (situated on a limestone crag above the town). Despite modern expansion, the town retains much of its historic character, encompassing a winding main street which is lined in places by white fronted Georgian houses. The majority of enclosure within this type dates from the medieval period and has created a landscape of small fields which are mostly hedged although stone walls are evident where geology lies close to the surface. In the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, rapid changes in the large-scale application of technology resulted in a move towards an industrialised society. To the east and of Clitheroe and west of Chatburn, limestone quarries, (associated with rich surface geological deposits) became prosperous and are still in operation today, providing local employment and introducing industrial features into the landscape.

### **Development, Settlement and Buildings**

- Settlement pattern is dominated by the large towns of Clitheroe (containing a mixture of historic and more modern houses, shops, hospitals and schools) and Whalley to the south;
- Houses within these towns are often terraced and display a range of local building materials including limestone and gritstone;
- To the north of the area the large village of Chatburn, once a mill village associated with the cotton industry, contains rows of terraced stone cottages;

- Outside these towns and villages, settlement pattern consists of occasional, scattered, isolated farmsteads;
- Clitheroe Caste is a key landmark buildings within views across this landscape;
- The imposing Hall at Standen (erected in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and rebuilt in 1757) is also a key built feature within the landscape;
- Modern industrial buildings and chimneys associated with cement workings and tarmac works introduce a dominant human element within this landscape and are visible within most views across the Landscape Character Type.

### **Landscape Character Areas**

4.9.8 Landscape Character Areas within this Landscape Character Type include:

## Landscape Character Area H1: Clitheroe and Chatburn



- Landscape pattern within this Landscape Character Area is dominated by the large town of Clitheroe, which is situated at the convergence of major road and railway corridors;
- These 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;
- The tower of 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 to this landscape from surrounding Landscape Character Types and Areas;
- 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.

## Landscape Character Area 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 in this Landscape Character Area; 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.

## CURRENT AND FUTURE LANDSCAPE CHANGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Forces for Change

#### Past Landscape Changes

4.10.9 Observable changes in the past include:

- Loss of open floodplain views and riparian habitat by fencing out of river corridors, sometimes associated with tree planting;
- Eutrophication of the rivers as a result of high levels of nutrient input from surrounding pastoral farmlands;
- Decline of prominent scattered floodplain trees due to over-maturity;
- Loss of semi-natural wet meadow habitats due to agricultural intensification and amalgamation of farm units.

#### Current Landscape Condition

4.10.10 The overall condition of the Valley Floodplain Landscape Character Type is considered to be good to moderate, resulting from survival of the mosaic of linear freshwater and wetland habitats and remnant areas of neutral grassland, wet meadows, domed mosses, areas of standing water and marshland; and the mature landscape structure of woodland and field trees. There are some elements showing decline in places, particularly the loss and poor maintenance of occasional hedgerows, which have been supplemented in sections by post and wire fencing; and the loss of species-rich hay meadows.

#### Future Landscape Changes and Opportunities

4.10.11 In the short-term (5 years) it is likely that there will be positive changes in the form of managing important habitats through nature reserves and key landscape features in the wider landscape, such as hedgerows at field boundaries, woodland and field trees. However, negative changes are likely to include an increasing pressure on the quality of the landscape from tourist-related developments. Increasing traffic problems may also lead to highway improvements that detract from the rural character of some roads and reduce tranquillity.

4.10.12 Longer-term changes (20+ years) will be dependent on prevailing incentives and policies and it is therefore challenging to be prescriptive. The AONB Management Plan will provide a key tool in managing change and ensuring a positive future for the area. Potential longer-term changes and key guidelines within this Landscape Character Type are outlined below:

- *Agricultural Change and Land Management* – The amalgamation of farms and increased drive for efficient farm businesses or farms being sold as farmers and their families leave the industry; all have a direct impact on how the land is managed. As the key characteristics of

the area are significantly influenced by agricultural practices, change in the industry could lead to an encroachment on the woodland lining the river corridors. This may have a knock on effect on the maintenance of key landscape features, in particular boundary features and species rich pasture and floodplain habitats.

- *Climate Change* – Increasing temperatures may encourage expansion of tourist-related activities, putting further pressure on limited resources. Water quality in rivers may also be affected, having a negative effect on aquatic habitats and expansion of alien species into upper catchments. There may also be an increased incidence of flooding. Open grown-trees and some woodland may be at risk from a combination of summer drought and increased severity and frequency of storm events.
- *Development* – The built environment is predominantly in the vernacular style and is currently a distinct element of the landscape fabric. A loss of traditional skills and a reduction in the use of appropriate local materials will erode this distinct characteristic of the landscape, with increasing pressure on the landscape around towns from residential and other development. Features are vulnerable to highway improvements, expansion of villages and tourism facilities. Potential large-scale renewable energy developments and overhead transmission lines on the skyline of the valley sides may erode key views. Increasing traffic associated with tourism and recreation pressurising the road system may lead to inappropriate highway improvements, increased provision for car parking on undeveloped land and reduced tranquillity from noise and movement. Increased tourism and growth in holiday developments will lead to a loss of pasture or estate land developments.

### **Sensitivities and Capacity for Change**

- 4.10.13 Overall visual sensitivity within the Valley Floodplain Landscape Character Type is considered to be high, as a result of the generally strong intervisibility with surrounding higher Landscape Character Types and the strong sense of openness within views along the valleys. A diverse patchwork of linear freshwater and wetland habitats remnant areas of neutral grassland, wet meadows, domed mosses, areas of standing water and marshland contribute to overall high ecological and landscape character sensitivity. In addition to this, there is a strong cultural pattern of hedgerows and stone walls which delineate field boundaries and contribute to overall high cultural sensitivity. As a result of the above factors, this Landscape Character Type is considered to have limited capacity to accommodate change without compromising key characteristics.

## GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING LANDSCAPE CHANGE

4.10.14 The overall strategy for the Valley Floodplain Landscape Character Type is to conserve the diverse pattern of standing water, floodplain hay meadows, mature floodplain trees and the network of hedgerows and dry stone walls. The strong intervisibility with surrounding Landscape Character Types should also be conserved and key landscape features appropriately enhanced where in decline. Where lost, the natural river form should be restored and conserved (referring to Environment Agency guidance).

4.10.15 Specific guidelines include:

### Physical Character

- **Ensure** effective catchment management to sustain water quality;
- **Encourage** the creation of new woodland along appropriate riverbanks, which complements the existing woodland pattern;
- **Conserve** the natural form of the rivers by avoiding engineered solutions to water management, such as canalisation, bank hardening and river straightening;
- **Conserve** natural river floodplain features, such as meanders, oxbows, old river channels, ponds and islands.

### Ecological Character

- **Conserve** valuable floodplain habitats by encouraging low intensity grazing in the remaining semi-natural habitats (which include mire, fen, flushes, marshy grassland and wet meadow);
- **Link** woodlands on the fringes of the floodplain with those on valley sides forming strong ecological linkages<sup>60</sup>;
- **Allow** natural regeneration through grazing restrictions wherever possible<sup>61</sup>;
- **Frame** strategic views from higher ground and bluffs<sup>62</sup>;
- **Bring** all woodlands into active management to secure their long-term future<sup>63</sup>;
- **Ensure** that settlements encroachment does not threaten the existing woodland resource<sup>64</sup>;
- **Preserve** long, open views of the valley plains through careful selection of planting sites and species<sup>65</sup>;
- **Ensure** that woodland creation does not adversely affect existing areas of ecological value<sup>66</sup>;
- **Restore** and **enhance** wetland habitats;

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<sup>60</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

<sup>61</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

<sup>62</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

<sup>63</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

<sup>64</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

<sup>65</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

<sup>66</sup> Lancashire Woodland Vision, Lancashire County Council, Forestry Commission, TEP.

- **Target** agri-environment scheme support for management of broadleaved woodland, wetland pasture and meadow habitats;
- **Encourage** conservation of existing key habitats and landscape features and expand the resource through habitat restoration and re-creation guided by ecological networks;
- **Ensure** that UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats are appropriately managed.

#### **Cultural and Historic Character**

- **Encourage** use of local materials and vernacular styles in developments to strengthen local character, including limestone and gritstone;
- **Conserve** and **enhance** the distinct pattern of stone walls and hedgerows delineating field boundaries in order to maintain landscape structure;
- **Conserve** historic and archaeological sites in the Valley Floodplains and consider the setting of historic and archaeological sites when planning and implementing all landscape management action;
- **Ensure** that highway improvement schemes respect and reflect local character and **encourage** the use of traditional signage where possible;

#### **Aesthetic and Perceptual Character**

- **Conserve** open views along and across the valley floodplains towards adjacent Landscape Character Types.

**Appendix 5: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment  
prepared by The Appleton Group, June 2012**

# Waddow View, Clitheroe

## THE APPLETON GROUP

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**Howard'Document Reference:** 1840\_Waddow View, Clitheroe\_L&VIA Landscape Text

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Comments			

## Waddow View, Clitheroe

### 3.22 Landscape and Visual Impact Revision B – 01.10.12

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#### Background and Methodology

3.22.1 The site has been assessed in terms of the landscape, visual and character impacts of the proposed residential development on the existing site and the surrounding area. It has been carried out in general accordance with the recommendations contained within the 'The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact' 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition published jointly in 2002 by The Landscape Institute and The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. In carrying out the study, the site and the surrounding environment were visited and a desk top study undertaken. A photographic survey of the sites was made from public viewpoints and receptor points using a camera lens generally equivalent to the focal length of the human eye. The baseline condition of the site has therefore been established and an assessment of the positive and negative impacts in terms of landscape, visual effects and landscape character has been made.

#### Landscape Context and Townscape Character

3.22.2 The location of the site is shown on **Figure TAG 1**. The town of Clitheroe is a planned nucleated settlement situated on a triangle of land in the lower Ribbledale between the River Ribble to the west and the Mearley Brook to the east at NGR SD 444 418 (centred). The historic core of the town is centred on the high point of a limestone reef knoll where the castle and surrounding gardens are located within a Conservation Area with later residential and commercial development in industrial and modern times spreading south-west and north-east along the communication arteries of the High street and the railway line, and towards the A59 which bypasses the town to the south-east. The knoll forms a small highpoint in a landscape of gently undulating drumlins, with the castle at a height of around 117m aOD. The land falls away gently to the west and the River Ribble, to a height of around 59m aOD at Low Moor and Brungerley Bridge. East of Clitheroe, the countryside rises sharply, to a height of around 110m aOD on the eastern edge of the urban area, placing Clitheroe on the lowland fringes of Pendle Hill, which overlooks and dominates the entire area some 5 kilometres to the east. The reef knolls and drumlins are characteristic of the area of rolling, undulating landscape within the broad valley of the River Ribble, contrasting with the open moorland and fell of Pendle Hill approximately 7 kilometres to the

south-east and the Bowland Fells to the north. The valley is mainly pastoral in character, with small to medium sized fields bounded by hedgerows and with mature hedgerow trees, creating a sense of intimacy in contrast to the surrounding fells.

3.22.3 A Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment published by Lancashire County Council and the former Countryside Agency in 2000 places the area with Landscape Character Type 5e, 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' and describes the area as being particularly well settled with good communication routes along the Ribble Valley (railway and A59). It also refers to the communication network as encouraging built development and industry with the large cement works to the immediate north of Clitheroe, being a prominent visual landmark for miles around.

### **Landscape Character and Policy Issues**

3.22.4 There are no statutory or local landscape designations applicable to the site with the land lying outside but abutting the urban boundary as defined on the Proposal Map of the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan, adopted in June 1998. The site is subject to Policy ENV 3, Open Countryside (proposed replacement by EN2 and DME2 in the draft Core Strategy) and G5 Development outside the main settlement (proposed replacement by DS1 and DMG2 in the draft Core Strategy). To the north, south and south east of Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley the land is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is a nationally protected landscape managed by a partnership of landowners, farmers, voluntary organisations, wildlife groups, recreation groups, local councils and government agencies, who work to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of this special areas. Clitheroe itself benefits from the beauty of the surrounding landscape and with most of the town enjoying the views of the surrounding undulating landscape and fells.

3.22.5 The site itself is currently pastoral in character with small sized fields visually divided by hedgerows and limited mature trees. It relates to the wider countryside landscape towards the northern boundary but is influenced by strong urbanizing features to the south, east and north east, particularly residential buildings from the late nineteenth century to modern times and Waddington Road where the easterly field boundary meets the main road. To the north east and north the character is influenced by 'urban fringe' features where the landscape interfaces more subtly with urban features.

3.22.6 The characteristics of the site and the local environs is shown on **Figure TAG 2**.

## Site Description and Baseline Environs

- 3.22.7 The site located directly adjacent the urban boundary of Clitheroe on the north western side. It is gently undulating with a rise from the northern boundary towards the urban settlement of approximately 3 metres. The site is accessed by agricultural vehicles from Back Commons on the southern boundary and from the western corner and eastern boundary off Waddington Road. Residential housing directly abuts the site to the north and south with a parcel of land to the east which has recently been the subject of a planning application for residential use. (This land parcel is within the urban settlement boundary). Housing to the north east is older stone terraced property built between 1860 and 1914 together with a cul-de-sac (Brungerley Avenue) of semi-detached properties built in the intermediate post war years. Towards the southern side of the site residential housing of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century is more dominant with larger detached properties in spacious gardens overlooking the site (Back Commons).
- 3.22.8 The cemetery and older burial ground are located towards the north of the site (Waddington Road) with a small field used as horse and poultry pasture forming an intervening land parcel. The burial ground associated with the building structure is a graveyard of older burials with the larger separate cemetery on the opposite side of Waddington Road set out for more recent internments and memorial stones. A recent extension to the south west of the cemetery has provided for green burial and is generally more landscaped to the boundaries with trees and shrubs. A footpath follows the boundary of the cemetery and connects into the wider footpath network following the course of the river channel. The cemetery is proposed for a further extension which would see the boundary of the cemetery land abutting the proposed development site along approximately half of the length of the northern boundary.
- 3.22.9 Land beyond the site to the north and north west is pastoral with a slight rise in the landscape before falling steeply toward the river channel. The river itself is located in a deep gorge and is overlooked on the far side by Waddow Hall. This is a large stone built manor house of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century set in spacious well landscape ground with rolling lawns. The house is currently used for Girl Guide camping and outdoor activities and as a conference centre.
- 3.22.10 The site is accessible to the public by a public footpath which bisects the site from north west to south east. This footpath allows access from the town to the wider countryside beyond and was observed as being used by local walkers, dog owners and people taking longer walks beyond the town environs.

3.22.11 Internally, the site is visually enclosed when viewed from the north towards the town with boundary and internal hedgerows and trees to the boundaries providing visual interruption along field boundaries. Trees are generally mature native specimens forming lines of vegetation. Views towards the north are more expansive with open vistas to the rising landscape of the Bowland Fells and Longridge Fell.

### **Visual Amenity**

3.22.12 The topography of the site, the rural nature and the trees and hedgerows provide filtered screening of the lower levels of the existing townscape when viewed from the north and north west and also screens the site from Waddington Roads on the north east side. Rising ground between the river channel and the site itself precludes inter-visibility from close views. The more open nature of the landscape to the north beyond the river is such, however, that intermittent middle distance views are possible. Longer distance views from Longridge Fell are so distant as to render the site indeterminate within the general features of the Clitheroe town.

### **Access and Potential Visual Receptors**

3.22.13 The site is accessed by a well used public footpath with additional footpaths along the northern and south western boundaries. A number of residential properties overlook the site which are situated within the edges of the current urban settlement boundary, particularly those on Back Common and at the cul-de-sac end of Brungerley Avenue on the north side. People visiting the cemetery and older burial grounds will have some intermittent views of the site although this is filtered by fairly dense vegetation and trees within the grounds and on the boundary to the site along Waddington Road. Visitors to the cemetery are generally tending graves and less inclined to observe the wider landscape. Views from the publicly accessible Castle 'balconies' enjoy views over 360 degrees in all directions given the elevated location of the monument in the centre of the town. Views of the site and the wider landscape of the Fells beyond are clearly visible from this location. The locations of photographic views of the site are shown on **Figure TAG 3**.

### **Visual Envelope (ZVI)**

3.22.14 Based on field analysis and with reference to existing screening, including built structures and vegetation identified from mapping and air photography a predicted zone of influence (ZVI) of the development has been prepared. The ZVI is shown on **Figure TAG 3**. The ZVI is indicative of the part of the landscape from which views of the proposed development might be gained. It does not imply that views would be

possible from all points within the area delineated nor does it indicate that all the developments might be seen or that the development would be highly perceivable.

### **Impacts and Significance**

3.22.15 In considering the impact on the landscape the degree of change in respect of the loss or impact on natural landscape assets such as trees or hedges, manmade features such as walls or the modification of the topography and quality of existing features is assessed. This is known as '*landscape impact*'.

3.22.16 The '*visual impact*' of the proposed development on the general public is assessed. Such impacts could be the result of visual intrusion into an important viewpoint or the direct obstruction of views into the wider landscape. Visual receptors that have a greater awareness of the view, such as walkers and residential occupiers will notice the introduction of new features more than those who are not absorbing it. However, it must be remembered that in respect of residential occupiers that within planning law there is no right to a view. The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed site, the duration of the impact, the scale and massing of the proposed development and the elevation of the proposed feature from the viewpoint are all assessed to determine the degree of impact.

3.22.17 An assessment to establish the '*character impact*' is made to assess the degree of change affecting both the site and the wider environs. Adverse changes in landscape character can occur as the result of the loss of landscape features which are acknowledged components of local distinctiveness, or the construction of new features that do not match those that already exist.

3.22.18 To assess the significance of the potential impacts the degree of change, both adversely and beneficially, acting on the baseline conditions and the sensitivity of receptors is objectively considered. This is considered with and without mitigation based on prescribed criteria.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

### **Construction Phase**

#### Phasing

3.22.19 It is uncertain at this stage as for how long the construction phase will last, but it is envisaged that the construction of the proposals would be broadly in the following sequence:

- Placement of protection measures for any vegetation to be retained.
- Construction of access road and infrastructure.
- Building out of the residential properties and hard areas.
- Where appropriate, structure planting could be undertaken prior to the commencement of building operations especially on landscape buffer strips between the development and existing housing adjacent to the site and against the northern boundary where it abuts the open countryside.

#### Predicted Impacts

3.22.20 An assessment of the potential impacts of the construction phase have been based on the proposals put forward in the indicative Masterplan put forward by mck architects. It is important to note that some of the impacts during this phase would be temporary in nature. The predicted impacts are as follows:

### **Predicted Landscape Effects/Impacts**

#### *Removal of existing trees and hedgerows and loss of grassland pasture*

3.22.21 The proposed development will involve the removal of a limited number of trees internally (approximately 4/5no.). They are Alder and Ash species and assessed as 'average to poor' in terms of their possible retention. Internal hedgerows will be removed to accommodate the built arrangement. These are assessed as intact but species poor and generally unmanaged. There should be no impact on hedgerows to the boundaries with the exception of breaking through the very gappy hedge and vegetation off Waddington Road and off Kilmoor Road to create the access points into the proposed development. There is also the opportunity at this access point to increase and enhance pedestrian routes and linkages from Waddington Road to the town centre. The pre-existing footpath which crosses the site will be accommodated within the development layout and will remain on its current alignment. The areas of pasture grassland will be removed to accommodate the development but the existing brook and associated bankside features will be retained. An area of grassland, approximately 20-30 metres in depth, will be retained on the northern boundary

where it abuts the open countryside beyond. The existing footpath within the site may be temporarily closed or rerouted during the course of construction.

3.22.22 The total loss of the landscape resource prior to mitigation would be **moderate adverse impact** in terms of the direct loss of a landscape element. In terms of replacement this could be readily mitigated by extensive new planting on the site, which would also enhance the biodiversity of the site from its current position. But there would also be adverse impact in both visual and character terms as the removal of the vegetation until new planting takes effect, increase prominence of the site with new buildings and infrastructure from certain viewpoints.

### **Predicted Visual Impacts**

*Visual amenity of users of the footpaths and views from adjacent residential properties*

3.22.23 Users of the footpaths are considered to be sensitive users. The proposals include the removal of some trees and internal hedgerows, some modification to land levels (considered not significant), rerouting of the existing footpath through the site and the construction of new houses with associated infrastructure. These operations would result in a **moderate adverse impact** on close distance views from the public footpath network within and around the site. The impact will reduce with distance.

3.22.24 Views from adjacent houses immediately abutting the site will be private views in the context of their own garden surrounds. Visual impact will vary in degrees depending on the alignment of dwellings and the location of windows. Properties which directly overlook the site on Brungerley Avenue, Back Common and Kirkmoor Avenue will be impacted upon by the changes and similarly public views gained directly from Back Common which is closest to the new access construction. These are considered to be **moderate to major adverse**.

3.22.25 Significant new planting within an appropriately landscape buffer area on the north western boundary, in advance of the main construction phase would reduce the visual impact of the proposed development. Similarly, internal planting associated with the road network, gardens and areas of open space would reduce longer term impacts on sensitive receptors in close up views. All views gained from the north west will be in the context of the existing townscape of Clitheroe and it will not be possible to observe the full extent of any new development other than in close views, as the rise and crest of the land obscures views when approaching from the river. The new buildings are likely to average 7-8 metres in height and will not breach the general height of the surrounding houses within the urban settlement. The juxtaposition of the

houses clusters with intervening new planting and landscaping will serve to integrate the proposals into the adjacent settlement and reduce impact to **minor adverse impact**.

3.22.26 There will be opportunities to mitigate the visual impact of the building by the choice of materials and colour, which will have immediate effect on the completion of construction prior to any screen planting becoming established. The degree of retention of existing trees and hedgerows to the boundaries is important in assessing the extent of the visual impact on all sensitive receptors, since some of the trees perform a screening function already.

#### *Views from the Castle*

3.22.27 A panoramic view of the site is possible from Clitheroe Castle highest viewing area and, as an historic environment, is considered to be more sensitive in landscape terms. In the context of the overall landscape the site does not take up much of the view and would be a 'sliver' of development set within the edge of the urban settlement. Visitors to the Castle are naturally drawn to the wider landscape of the AONB beyond. However, due to the elevation of the Castle it will not be possible to totally screen the proposed development and its construction would be visible as a middle distance view. The selection of building and roofing materials will give opportunities for mitigation. The impact is considered to be **moderate adverse**.

#### *Longer distance views and from other directions*

3.22.28 Views from Waddington Road and the cemetery areas are screened by existing intervening vegetation and the field parcels although the construction of the new access has the potential to open up views into the site from Waddington Road to the east of the site. Some views into the approach of the proposed development will be visible from this point and views of the access will be possible from the grounds and approach path to the older burial grounds. Views from longer distance and from the AONBs are severely limited by intervening topography and tall tree vegetation and hedgerows. The site is generally lost to view at approximately 0.25 kilometres distance from the site. Views from Waddow Hall are greatly interrupted by trees within the grounds and from rising land from the river channel. At greater distance from the site and within the AONB areas the site is lost in the general townscape features given its close and tight proximity to the urban settlement. The impact is considered to be **minor adverse to negligible at distance**.

## **Predicted Landscape Character Impacts**

3.22.29 The character of the surrounding landscape has two contrasting characters; pastoral and urban townscape. The capacity for the site to absorb the development needs to be viewed in the context of both character types. The proposed temporary change of character due to the construction phase would be of a scale that would be discordance with the surrounding countryside character and without mitigation is evaluated as ***moderate adverse***. The proposed development, however, adjacent to existing residential and commercial land within the nucleated town which already has an urbanising impact on the adjacent landscape. Whereas a new development in isolation might be considered to be unacceptable in landscape character terms, this proposed development will be an extension to an existing town scene in an enclave of land which is wrapped around on two sides by existing residential development. Moreover, the parcel of land to the west of the railway car park is the subject of an outline application for residential development which will be directly overlooked by existing properties on Kirkmoor Road, Milton Avenue and Chester Avenue and thus influence the degree of visual impact and instigate a change in landscape character in the short term in this part of the town.

## **Mitigation Measures**

3.22.30 The construction phase would bring about changes to the landscape and visual amenity. Whilst some of these are inevitable and of a temporary nature it is beneficial to mitigate them where appropriate. Proposed mitigation is likely to include the following:

3.22.31 The phasing of the site operations such as the advance planting carried out at the earliest opportunity to provide buffers between existing houses and the open countryside.

3.22.32 The detailed design of features in the context of retention of as much on-site vegetation as possible and the development of a carefully designed primary access with landscape features which reflect the character of the immediate surroundings and land use.

3.22.33 Appropriate protection and management of existing boundary hedgerows and trees to be undertaken in line with recognised best practice.

## **Operational Phase**

### Predicted Impacts

3.22.34 For the purposes of the assessment the operational phase is classified as the period when all the new buildings, infrastructure and associated landscape works have been completed. Predicted impacts are likely to be more **long term** in this phase. The following assessments are based on the consideration of the proposals as a whole, including the new access, the internal road and footpath system, the movement of vehicles within the site and the night time impacts of lighting on the wider landscape.

### **Predicted Visual Amenity Impacts**

#### *Visual amenity of users of the footpaths*

3.22.35 Without mitigation the visual impact of the proposals on the public footpaths outside and adjacent to the site would be **moderate adverse**, though development would be seen in the context of the townscape in views from the northwest. Mitigation measures are therefore required, mainly in the form of new landscape features and areas of open grassland integrated throughout the development. It is also important for the detailing of the new properties and their juxtaposition to be thoroughly addressed to allow opportunities for landscaped areas of open space, pockets of trees and new hedgerow lines to be integrated throughout the development and to prevent the coalescence of built forms in a visual massing. Wide buffer zones of open grassland and planted areas to the boundaries would also aid in the screening and assimilation of views of the existing townscape. The relationship between the existing footpath within the site and the new development would be a changed experience for users but this could be associated with the open spaces areas in the development and which would provide a positive experience in amenity terms.

3.22.36 New landscape planting will grow from planted heights over the years. During the winter months during establishment close views will be possible to a degree through the planting, but it is anticipated that the planting would assimilate views all year round after a 15-20 year period. Overall the long term impact on the users of the local footpath network is evaluated as **minor beneficial** as the planting would moderate views of the existing properties.

#### *Visual amenity of views from adjacent residential properties/public roads*

3.22.37 The proposed development would have a moderate adverse impact of the visual amenity of receptors from close adjacent properties due to their physical proximity. These views would primarily be a combination of houses, roads and garden areas, although approximately 50% of these receptors would already be viewing residential development on the land off Milton Avenue. Receptors from Waddington Road and

the adjacent older burial grounds would see an opening up and the urbanising effect of development of a currently pastoral setting on this part of Waddington Road. This is also considered to have a moderate adverse impact. The impacts would be off set by mitigating landscape and tree planting and sensitive design of the new primary access and it is considered that impact on these receptors would be over the long term **minor adverse**.

#### *Visual amenity of views from the Castle*

3.22.38 The views from the historic centre of the town would impact on the amenity that the public currently enjoy from this vantage point by the extension of urban features further into the open land beyond the current town edge. However, views from this point would see the new development as a narrow band of building set in the context of urban features to the immediate south side and forming a 'closed edge' to built form as it wraps around to meet with properties along Waddington Road. Mitigation by means of internal tree planting would allow the proposed development to assimilate well with the existing scene, particularly at roof scape level. The impact is considered to be **moderate adverse** moving towards **minor adverse** over the longer term as the development is accepted as part of the whole townscape.

#### **Night time Impacts**

3.22.39 Street lighting and lighting from houses would impact on the amenity of existing receptors to a minor degree. Footpaths are not generally used to the same extent as in daylight hours and views from existing houses are generally inverted as occupiers close their curtains to the darkness. However, a degree of intrusions would exist from the baseline of no lighting which is considered **minor adverse**. The use of appropriate down lighters to reduce light spillage and the specification of lighting columns to reflect the scale and character of the town would help to mitigate this issue.

#### **Cumulative impact**

3.22.40 The existing townscape can currently be seen in views from the north and north west. The addition of a further parcel of residential development would not significantly increase the bulking effect of building or have any further impact on the character of the town if the detailing of the built forms is adequately addressed. It is therefore anticipated that there would be a **negligible cumulative impact**.

### **Local Landscape Character**

3.22.41 The proposals would involve the building of a new residential area of some 325 houses. Once built and established in the overall landscape scene and with appropriate screening it is considered that it would not adversely impact on the character of the existing wider open countryside beyond its boundaries. Similarly, the proposed development would not adversely impact on the existing townscape of Clitheroe. The impact on local landscape character and of the wider landscape is considered *negligible*.

### **Mitigation Measures**

3.22.42 The operational phase would bring about changes to the landscape and visual amenity. Mitigation which is shown illustratively on the Masterplan would allow the development to be more easily assimilated into the landscape. The inclusion of new hedgerow features, hedgerow trees and a strong treescape for the development as a whole will reduce the impacts significantly. Appropriate planting to buffer zones would become effective within a 5-7 year period and reduce perception of both the proposed buildings and ancillary features. It is envisaged that new tree planting would assimilate all views after approximately 15 years. Proposed planting would use native species of a local provenance wherever possible with management and maintenance undertaken to ensure that future viability and quality is retained.

3.22.43 Materials and colours for building would be carefully selected to integrate with the type and character of buildings within the town. Any effects of proposed lighting could be minimised by sensitive location of external lighting and the use of low glare directional lighting design. Proposed landscape trees would also aid in the reduced perception of any light glare.

3.22.44 In terms of enhanced biodiversity the site would benefit positively from this type of development where a vastly increased range of plant species can be introduced for wildlife enhancement. The development of internal wildlife zones and associated wetland areas and attenuation ponds would add to the increased value of the site in ecology terms.

## Summary

- 3.22.45 Clitheroe sits within the lower Ribble valley close to areas of outstanding natural beauty and within the countryside rolling pastoral fringes of Pendle Hill. The town is nucleated settlement with an historic core and a Castle located on an elevated knoll. In modern times the town has developed and spread and offers good communication lines by means of the railway and station and the A59 by pass.
- 3.22.46 The proposed residential development site lies to the north west of the urban settlement and abuts the settlement boundary and a parcel of land which is the subject of a current outline application for residential development. The site consists of semi improved grazing land with limited internal hedgerows, a brook, a public right of way and surrounding hedgerows with trees.
- 3.22.47 The proposed development would result in the loss of a number of existing landscape resources but would retain existing boundary hedgerows and trees and the internal brook and its bankside features. The proposals would affect the visual amenity of users of the site and from views that are generally at close quarters as seen by walkers using the nearby public footpath network, from existing residential properties rather than longer distances where the proposals are lost in the general townscape of Clitheroe, from the users of a short section of Waddington Road on the east side and from the older burial grounds on the north side of Waddington Road. Both the construction phase and the operational phase would see some changes to the character of the site and these are seen in the context of both the existing townscape and the adjacent countryside.
- 3.22.48 There are good opportunities to provide mitigation for all the impacts that may be predicted on the landscape and visual amenity of the site and its affect on the adjacent land. The planning of significant landscape buffer areas and the introduction of an integrated landscape and tree planting scheme to the development will serve to integrate the new houses and associated features into the adjacent settlement and provide a significant screen and fringe of landscape against the adjacent countryside. With sensitive choice of building materials and the careful planning of the housing clusters the development will be assimilated into the town and views from more sensitive receptor will be significantly reduced and diminished over time as new landscaping matures. Overall it is considered that the landscape and visual impact will, with mitigation, be minor adverse to negligible/minor beneficial with new landscaping providing an enhance biodiversity within the locality.
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Revision A – 17.07.12